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An Introduction

> There is no faith in America, between either men or nations. Treaties are papers; constitutions books; elections combat; liberty, anarchy, and life, a torment.
>
> *Simon Bolivar, Mirada Sobre America española*[1]

> …conflicts are more threatening among people who distrust one another. Public contestation requires a good deal of trust in one's opponents. They may be opponents but they are not implacable enemies.
>
> *Robert Dahl, Polyarchy*[2]

Our mutual faith in each other is one fundamental essence of democracy. We must have faith that if we lose (an election, an argument) to "the other," we and our interests will nonetheless live to see another day, to make another argument, to discuss another issue, to contest another election.[3] We will not be destroyed forever by our loss today. Some scholars have called this faith in the system and argued that participants must believe that the system will protect them, within reasonable limits, even if they are the (temporary) losers. Moreover, that same system will provide them a level playing field so that, come the next contest, they will have every advantage and at least a reasonable likelihood of winning the next round. But the system, of course, consists of both the citizen members within it and the institutional framework around it. We must trust each other, or trust our institutions, or both before we can trust the system. The ability to trust one another, cooperate, and work together is a valuable asset in the development, consolidation, and continuation of democracy. Particularly when a democracy is new, but also as it consolidates, citizens need resources that they can use to confront authoritarian power and resolve differences among themselves peacefully. Citizens' mutual faith in each other is a resource to combat authoritarianism and resolve disagreements. It is a basis of democracy.

[1] Quito, (1929). Cited in Rippy (1963, p. 22).
[2] Taken from Dahl (1971, p. 152).
[3] Linz and Stepan (1978; 1996).

ECONOMIC AFFLUENCE OR SOCIAL CAPITAL?

The suggestion that citizens' faith in each other is a basis of democracy is an argument in favor of social capital that deemphasizes the importance of affluence to the health of democracy. Barrington Moore, for example, argued that a larger economic pie would allow more individuals to access resources, resources that citizens could then translate into political power.[4] Similarly, Seymour Martin Lipset suggested that the broad distribution of resources would facilitate democratization, while Tatu Vanhannen explored the link between affluence, intellectual and economic resources, and democracy.[5] However, Lawrence Dodd and I have demonstrated that national and individual poverty have not prevented democratization in Nicaragua, although that study does not explicitly address the creation of social capital.[6] The forward movement of democracy in many poor nations calls the argument about affluence into question.

One way to reconcile the steadfast development of democracy in low-income nations with arguments about affluence is to focus upon equality of resources rather than upon the sheer level of resources themselves. Resources per se may or may not be positively related to democratization, but the *relatively equal distribution* of the resources that do exist does, in fact, enhance democracy. The notion that resources are distributed relatively equally, regardless of the absolute amount of economic resources, levels the playing field among citizens in much the same way that Moore's larger economic pie did in more affluent societies. Focusing on equality also allows a connection between the resources argument and the social capital argument, since original arguments about citizen cooperation and associational life underscored the extent to which equality among citizens enhanced cooperation. Tocqueville, for example, in work that originally influenced social capital theory, stressed equality among American citizens along with his focus upon associational life as an explanation for democratic development.[7]

In contrast to affluence theories, arguments that democratization depends on social capital do not privilege national or personal affluence, although they do have an original basis in economics. Modern social science recognizes mutual faith and cooperation as assets and defines them as capital – social capital. But capital was originally economic. The notion of capital originates with Marx's description of economic relations in human society.[8] For Marx,

[4] Moore (1966); Andrew Janos (1992) has made a similar argument with respect to the current process of democratization in Russia.
[5] Vanhannen (1992; 1997).
[6] Anderson and Dodd (2005).
[7] Recent theory on equality and social capital criticizes Putnam's work for its lack of attention to Tocqueville's argument about equality. McLean et al. (2002).
[8] I am indebted to the criticisms of H. Russell Bernard for the discussion in this section. He forced me to look at the ways that disciplines other than political science have considered the concept of social capital.

capital was purely economic. It constituted the surplus created by the laboring classes but retained and controlled by capitalist industrial owners. This definition of capital saw it as a resource essential for building society but simultaneously connected it with exploitation. Capital created by workers was inappropriately expropriated by capitalists, and directed in ways that served them, but not the workers to whom it belonged. Marx's definition of capital constrained it further by defining it as a group phenomenon, something that resulted from the group efforts of many but belonged to no single individual in particular. An implied individual disempowerment inadvertently emerges from Marx's definition of capital, since it is not something created by one person nor can it necessarily be used by any single individual other than the uniquely-positioned capitalist. So while Marx abhorred the exploitation and disempowerment of the individual, his own theory did not see that same individual as capable of using or controlling the capital he or she created.

Later considerations of capital freed it from Marx's restriction of considering it purely economic and primarily a group phenomenon. Scholars began considering human capital something that belonged to one individual and comprised the assets that person brought to the world: education, skills, talents, intelligence, but also acquired or inherited goods. Once individualized in this manner, human capital became something that people could increase of their own volition and use according to their own decisions, thus empowering the individual. The notion of human capital also extended the definition beyond economics, although individual economic resources, particularly when used to increase individual capacities, remained a part of the definition.[9]

From the definition of human capital – which included all resources, some at least partially under individual control – the notion of social capital developed, although in a much more restricted fashion than political science uses it today. A large community of sociologists began studying social capital, defined as resources that individuals could gain through work with others, namely involvements beyond the individual self, as exemplified in the work of Nan Lin.[10] Specifically, we are talking about social networks and the resources that networks brought to the individual: personal connections, enhanced knowledge and wherewithal, and inside information. This understanding of social capital still included economic goods but was not confined to them. It also kept the individual central and personally able to access, control, and increase social capital resources. Sociologists acknowledged that individuals with more human capital (more money, a better job) would be better able to access social capital. Thus, while all people had some access to human capital to create social capital, some had more human capital and thus more social capital. The notion of inequality returned to the study of capital, although not the notion of exploitation. In addition, sociologists saw social

[9] Fernandez and Castilla (2001).
[10] Lin, et al. (2001).

capital as something that individuals could use to their own advantage, and so individualism predominated in their view of this resource.

This understanding of social capital allows sociologists to treat it as something quite specific, tangible, and measurable. If social capital consists of specific, tangible resources, sociologists ought to be able to identify it precisely and measure it quantitatively.[11] This expectation has sent sociology students of social capital off in pursuit of measures of social capital, both how much of it individuals possess (e.g., how many connections they have with what kinds of people) and how much it has enhanced their position (e.g., better jobs, more job offers, higher salaries).[12]

The working definition that political science today uses for social capital comes from this work in sociology and then moves beyond it. Robert Putnam suggests that social capital includes the increased resources that individuals gain from personal connections – the value of the rolodex. He acknowledges that such connections bring better capacities, access, and outcomes to the individual who holds such connections. But social capital, according to Putnam, is much more than just the additional resources one gains through connections. Social capital also includes the connections themselves, which are of inherent and intrinsic value both to the individuals and to society at large.

The difference between Putnam's and Lin's understanding of social capital can be captured in a simple example. Suppose X has a delivery to make but has no vehicle. Through her social connections (and access to social capital) she knows Y. Y, perchance, owns a bicycle – a specific, tangible resource that X lacks. X asks Y if she can borrow the bicycle; Y says "yes" and X makes her delivery that way. For Lin, social capital is the bicycle, a tangible, measurable resource that accrues directly to X as a result of her network connections to Y. For Putnam social capital is the relationship itself between X and Y. The bicycle is only a part of it. Putnam's understanding of social capital defines it as something much less tangible, less measurable, and something that accrues to society as a whole as well as to both X and Y as individuals.

Beyond this, political scientists studying social capital argue that the relationship itself and the myriad of relationships like it have a political effect. Here they move the definition of social capital beyond sociology entirely. Putnam suggests that the relationship between X and Y has a positive, enhancing effect on society at large and on the polity. Through such relationships, individuals learn to like, trust, and respect each other. They learn to work together. Eventually this mutuality translates into the basic faith in each other that is necessary for a society to resolve differences peacefully, make compromises and agreements, and ultimately to function in a democratic fashion. In this sense, many relationships between many Xs and Ys, particularly those enhanced and structured through organizations and associations, create the foundation of a democratic society.

[11] La Duke Lake and Huckfeldt (1998); Dietlind (1998); Smith (1999).
[12] Green and Brock (1998).

In political science today, social capital is individual, but not only individual. The strength of social capital lies primarily in the group, namely, in group cooperation. Social capital is thus social, with broad social advantages. Those social advantages have an important political effect.[13] In addition, the political science notion of social capital makes it far more intangible than sociology has understood it to be, and therefore harder to measure. This is not to say that social capital as understood in political science is immeasurable. But measuring something that is both intangible and of social and political value will be more difficult than measuring the much more individual, tangible, and restricted definition of social capital that many sociologists use.

In this movement beyond the sociological understanding of social capital, and toward viewing it as having a broad, amorphous political effect, political scientists have moved backward as well as forward. One hundred and fifty years ago, Alexis de Tocqueville, also a student of politics, fielded the notion that a democratic society was more likely to develop where human relationships and interactions were strong and positive. He wrote, "Feelings and opinions are recruited, the heart is enlarged, and the human mind is developed, only by the reciprocal influence of men upon each other. … these influences…must be…created, and this can only be accomplished by associations."[14] "Thus," wrote Tocqueville, "the most democratic country on the face of the earth is that in which men have…carried to the highest perfection the art of pursuing in common the object of their common desires, and have applied this new science to the greatest number of purposes."[15] Thus, action within social associations was a key to why democracy was working in America.[16]

Tocqueville's argument is even more important for the study at hand and, in general, for the study of developing democracies than it is for the large body of political science literature that examines the state of democratic health in established democracies today. This is true for two reasons. First, Tocqueville looked at democracy at a much earlier stage in the development process when he considered the role of associations in American democracy in the mid-nineteenth century. Skocpol also studies associations and social capital in America during this period.[17] This perspective is closer to the subject of this book, since I examine the role of associations in the early stages of democratic consolidation and the relationship between social capital and democracy in its early years. But second, Tocqueville actually emphasized the role of *political* associations specifically in contributing to democracy.[18] In this way, my own

[13] For critiques of the prevailing political science perspective on social capital see Hero (2003) and Kohn (1999).
[14] Tocqueville (1956, p. 200).
[15] Tocqueville (1956, p. 199).
[16] Tocqueville (1956, esp. Chap. 29).
[17] Skocpol (1999; 2003).
[18] Hulliung (2002, p. 184). Hulliung is correct to point out that Tocqueville stressed political associations and that he saw them as *preceeding*, not following, general associations in the process of democratic development. But Tocqueville's argument itself is sometimes confusing

work is also closer to his than to more recent studies of social capital since the findings of this study will underscore the direct importance of political association for the early development of democratic politics. Tocqueville's stress on political associations is often missed in contemporary renditions of his argument about associations and democracy.[19]

Inherent in these arguments about social capital is the notion that capital – human, social, or otherwise – is something that is built slowly over time, with small incremental inputs, not unlike equity in a house or a retirement account. Also inherent in these arguments is the idea of a gradual, forward movement as a result of building on something that has happened in the past. X can use Y's bicycle now because she built a positive relationship with Y in the past. Tocqueville suggests that democracy moves forward better now because members of society joined and worked within associations previously.[20] Within this connection between past actions and positive results now or in the future is the notion of *learning*. Persons X and Y have learned to work together with positive results. Americans are more able to engage in a democratic polity because they learned to interact through their associations. Current theorists of social capital also embrace the notion of learning, although they do not say so explicitly in their arguments. Italians or Americans, the two groups Putnam studies, who have learned to interact with each other in the past are more constructive at making democracy work today. But those who have not learned such interactive lessons are unable or less able to contribute to making democracy work. This book also relies on the role of learning from the past as a key component in understanding how social capital can develop and what kind of social capital develops. That reliance forces us to incorporate history into our understanding of the development of social capital.

CREATING SOCIAL CAPITAL

If many political scientists agree that social capital has a political effect and is a basis for democracy, they are less certain of how societies develop or retain

since there are other places in his writing where he does specifically stress the importance of all kinds of civic associations in making democracy work in America. See Tocqueville (1956, esp. chap. 29).

[19] A decade before the more recent focus on social capital and during the 1980s, Benjamin Barber also noticed that citizens' confidence in national government was in decline while citizen involvement in local level politics was still high. He suggested that after a decade in which national government was characterized by "greed, narcissism and hostility to big government," citizens had turned instead to local and community affairs (1984, p. xi).

[20] Tocqueville's argument and other, more recent views of social capital all assume a stable society where members live in one place for long periods of time. Such assumptions do not apply in migrant societies where most members come and go, staying in one place for only a few years. Yet the evidence is that even in migrant societies, individuals are capable of creating supportive associational relationships, even if only on a small scale. These can be seen as a kind of mobile social capital. While her work is not about social capital and she does not

social capital. Putnam, following Tocqueville, argues for the centrality of citizen organization. The breeding ground of social capital lies in organizations that citizens join for enjoyment, relaxation, and social interaction.[21] These are often casual groups and may be devoted to a variety of activities that matter little for their direct contribution to democracy. It is the fact and habit of interaction, cooperation, and mutual support within these activities and organizations that cause citizens to develop capacities to interact in a democratic fashion – in other words, to develop social capital. Joining is itself the social good and the democratic contributor.

In his examination of social capital, especially in Italy, Putnam further argues that these organizations and the development of social capital trace far back into national history, requiring generations, even centuries to develop. Social capital is thus a slowly evolved good that societies can only expect to enjoy if they have had generations of associational experience. Where societies have a long history of mutual association, democracy will work better. Skocpol picks up on this historical perspective, as well, by examining voluntary associations in the United States in the nineteenth century.[22] There is, then, a strong precedent in the study of social capital for considering a nation's history, and particularly the history of that nation's popular organizations and associations. If democracy is governance by the voice of the people, then the history of the popular political experience, particularly the pre-democratic history of the people, ought to be of relevance as democracy takes shape.

The argument that social capital develops slowly contrasts with an earlier position that social interaction and democratic engagement may be attained in a much faster and more effective manner via social revolution.[23] According to this earlier argument, revolution breaks the ice of political tyranny, mobilizes and empowers the population rapidly, and forces the popular agenda onto the political stage in a manner that forever changes the nature of political relationships and power.[24] Although revolutions in the real world have not necessarily bred democracy, those outcomes are more due to leadership that later corrupted the revolutionary ideals than to the nature of citizen

consider the concept of mobile social capital, Lara Putnam (2002) describes mobile associational relationships developed by migrants in Caribbean Costa Rica.

[21] Crawford and Levitt (1999).

[22] Skocpol (2003).

[23] On the relationship between revolution and democracy in the United States, see G. Wood (1969; 1974). See also Elkins and McKitrick (1993). With respect to the relationship between revolution and democracy in France, Moore argues that the French Revolution marked a critical step toward democratic development in that country, first and foremost, by sweeping aside the ancienne regime and its upper classes who were so hostile to democracy (1966, p. 108). Also see Woloch (1994, pp. 91–92) and Hunt (1984). Even today, electoral studies in France emphasize ideology, related to social class, and deep social cleavages, as a result of the impact on democracy that has come from the French Revolution. The study of social cleavage, of course, is also of European origin (Lipset and Rokkan, 1967; Rokkan, 1970).

[24] For a consideration of changes in popular political culture after the Cuban revolution see Fagen (1969).

associations themselves. These, of course, did cooperate to end tyranny and create a visionary society, even if that vision was later lost by leaders who gained power without accountability. The argument in favor of a relationship between revolution and democracy remains because the revolutionary movement ended a tyrannical regime. And it differs from a social capital argument first in allowing for *rapid* advancement of the foundations for democracy and second in acknowledging that *disruptive* citizen organization, despite and indeed because of its dissenting characteristics, can help democracy develop.

THE NATURE OF SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

If we embrace the argument that citizen organization enhances democracy slowly, or we accept the earlier suggestion that revolutionary action builds democratic capacity rapidly by destroying tyranny and empowering citizens, either way we have assumed a positive kind of citizen organization that contributes constructively to democratic political development. Either position suggests that citizen organization has a long-term effect that is positive in its relation to human freedom. The outcome of such involvement is a better society, not a worse one.[25] Association, organization, joining, belonging, all of these activities lead individuals to think better and more positively toward others and to interact with more mutuality and respect. Whether they get there slowly through generations of associational activity or rapidly through revolution, the point at which they arrive has an enhancing effect on democracy. Such associational ties create a "we" that can work together to make society – and democracy – function.

Putnam has called these associational ties "bridging social capital." Bridging social capital teaches individuals and groups to overcome and even value difference and forces those individuals and groups to find a common ground on which to interact, build a relationship, and work toward a mutual future. Another genre of literature has called them "cross-cutting ties," which bind individuals to each other across natural lines of division, such as race, ethnicity, class, or religion. Ties that cut across such natural divisions reduce conflict in society. Reduced conflict enhances the possibilities of compromise and non-violent conflict resolution.[26]

[25] Even in studies of social capital that confine themselves to Latin America, here again the presumption is that social capital is a positive good that enhances democracy. This book challenges that assumption. See, for example, Klesner (2007).

[26] See Anderson (2002). Also Ross (1985; 1986; 1993). Cross-cutting ties theory has been used and explored by many authors. For an early description of it, contrasting it with other theories of conflict see Levine and Campbell (1972) who contrast cross-cutting ties methods of describing social divisions with "pyramidal segmentation," arrangements where social members are segmented into separate divisions in hierarchical order. These authors note that pyramidal segmentation is related to higher levels of conflict than are cross-cutting ties (see esp. chap. 4). See also Pruitt and Rubin (1986, p. 68). Similarly, Dahl argues that cross-cutting social contacts and checks are essential in making democracy possible (1956; 1971). For a study confirming the above theories see Harris (1972). In Harris' study, divisions in an Irish

But some scholars of social capital have questioned whether social organizations and associations are always positive.[27] Some scholars suggest that popular organizations do not always enhance respect, cooperation, mutuality, and social cooperation and do not always contribute to democracy.[28] Organizations differ: some enhance mutual respect, cooperation, or egalitarian interaction, while others do not.[29] Some encourage members to empower themselves, work together, reach outward, and create mutuality, cooperation, and respect. Others encourage associational members to view each other positively while viewing non-members negatively, with suspicion, caution, hostility, distrust. Some organizations bind members to each other in large part by defining them as special, different, and better than others, but not necessarily by encouraging them to work together. Some associations create "associational glue" by erecting barriers between members and non-members, insiders and outsiders, "us" and "them."

Putnam's work acknowledges the existence of "bonding social capital" within organizations that bind members to each other but do not enhance mutuality and social respect across society, and recognizes that this bonding social capital does not have a positive relationship with democracy. This aspect of his argument, however, is less developed.[30] The notion of bonding social capital remains largely unexplored and its relationship to democracy poorly understood. If bridging social capital fosters democracy, what does bonding social capital do to and for democracy? Studies of social capital in political science have left this issue largely unexplored and these questions mostly unanswered. Yet if we are to understand fully the relationship between social capital and democracy, we must comprehend the effect of bonding social capital on making democracy work.

The broader social context is also relevant here because organizations do not develop in a vacuum. Rather, they emerge in a social context with its own traditions, and they reflect the values of their social surroundings. Some societies have cultures conducive to relatively egalitarian ties and interactions. There, associations that develop are more likely to build horizontal ties among members and to encourage mutual respect among equals. But other societies have strong traditions of hierarchy, vertical ties, and deference by those at the bottom toward those at the top. Strong hierarchical or clientelist social traditions that encourage vertical ties make it particularly difficult to develop bridging social capital. Most observers agree that the social context in the United States encouraged horizontal cooperation. But in Italy, Putnam found that horizontal cooperation was more common in the north, while hierarchy

community paralleled each other rather than cutting across each other with the result that conflict was more extensive than it otherwise would have been.

[27] Fiorina (1999).
[28] Berman (1997).
[29] Wood (2002).
[30] Putnam (2000, chap. 22).

and vertical ties were more prevalent in southern Italy. Scholars studying civil society in Spain have also argued that hierarchy characterized social relations there, particularly before the return to democracy in 1975. A hierarchical civil society encouraged hierarchical forms of social control in Spain, including the Catholic Church and the fascist state, and the development of democracy had to overcome such hierarchical traditions.[31] Social context affects the nature of the organizations that are created in a particular society.

If organizations create at least two different kinds of ties within themselves – horizontal and vertical – the nature of those ties is determined in part by the style of leadership. In organizations where members consider each other peers and partners, horizontal ties are created, enhanced, and encouraged. Members look sideways toward each other, build and retain an awareness of each other, and consider each other resources. They are "tuned in" to each other. They learn ways of working together as equals. The horizontal ties among them become part of the strength and resources of the organization itself. Members learn that together they can do things that they would be unable to do alone. Horizontal ties empower associational members and encourage citizen initiatives. They build citizen faith in each other.

Vertical ties, on the other hand, emphasize the bond between each individual associational member and the leader. Organizations that encourage vertical ties stress the separate value of a direct connection between each individual and the leader. Individuals who cultivate a strong vertical tie to the leader can create great benefits for themselves. Organizations that promote vertical ties encourage members to look upward toward a leader rather than sideways towards each other. Members are to be loyal followers, and such loyalty may result in greater benefits from organizational membership. But vertical ties do not promote mutual cooperation among peers or faith in each other. In fact, members may not be tuned in to their peers at all because vertical orientation yields greater benefits than horizontal orientation. Vertical organizations may even discourage horizontal ties among members. Vertical ties can promote dependency, passivity, and an incapacity to work together.[32] Citizens tied vertically to a leader above them typically have less capacity for citizen initiative, and such an organization may lack the resources to accomplish tasks that individuals are unable to complete alone. Organizational members bound by vertical ties may even be less able to accomplish group tasks than they would be if they were not associational members because of induced passivity and dependency.

These differences in organizational style create two dimensions along which organizations may relate to democracy: internal relationships inside the organization and outward perspectives toward non-members. Organizations may produce horizontal ties of mutuality and empowerment along with positive or tolerant attitudes toward those outside the organization. Or they may

[31] Pérez-Díaz (1993).
[32] Madsen and Snow (1991).