Author(s): Siisiäinen, Martti; Kankainen, Tomi; Salminen, Veli-Matti

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CHAPTER

6

Martti Siisiäinen
Tomi Kankainen
Veli-Matti Salminen

Networks and voluntary associations as social capital in local fields

Introduction: problems and approach

This chapter investigates the constellation of different forms of social capital which can be and are utilised to advance interests and acquire other forms of capital in local fields of Lievestuore. Our purpose is to explore and exploit the possibilities provided by Bourdieu's theoretical concepts and apply them to the study of networked social capital – above all, voluntary associations. Bourdieu's theoretical concepts can integrate approaches that look at the activities of individual actors with those that focus on the functioning of voluntary associations and other collectivities. This bisection between individual and collective actors regards research on social capital, social actorhood in general and network studies. In concrete localities and social practices, as Herman Lelieveldt puts it, "both individuals and organisations constitute important categories of political agency, and their behaviour should be studied together" (Lelieveldt 2008, 344). The requirements for comprehensive research on local life that is relational and includes all of Bourdieu's interconnected central concepts

– the forms of capital, field and the habitus – are numerous (see Martin 2003; Emirbayer & Johnson 2008; Vaughan 2008; Alanen 2007). That is why relational studies that systematically adapt all of these concepts and take into consideration the different analytical levels of their manifestations are rare indeed (with exceptions such as Vaughan 1996).

With a view to overcoming to some extent the bisection of individuals and collectives (organisations, voluntary associations), we will analyse both the type and volume of individual and collective social capital in the locality of Lievestuore, reconciling the results with historical dimensions of organised local social capital. Because it is not possible to study all separate voluntary associations as fields themselves (power structures, inner stakes, etc.) or as agents in diverse social fields (culture and arts, politics, welfare, etc), we have analysed voluntary associations as the mediating link between the societal and individual levels of activity: as actors in fields and as associational capital whose social, cultural and economic resources its members can mobilise on with certain preconditions (see Siisiäinen 1988).

The concrete research questions to be answered in this chapter are:

- First, what are the characteristics of voluntary associations acting in local fields of Lievestuore and how has the public "scene" – populated by associations – changed over the last 30 years?
- Second, what is the role of voluntary associations within the total composition of different local actors' social capital, and how can the actors use various kinds of social capitals as their local resource? As participation in voluntary associations seems to be differentiated, we also take a closer look at the dimensions of individuals' participation in associations.
- Third, what kind of players are voluntary associations in local fields, and what kind of relation networks do they have with municipal institutions, trustees and officials, the media, congregations, private companies and other associations? Formal network analysis is complemented by the investigation of the mediators and contents of their mutual interaction.

- Fourth, what were and are the tensions carried out by local associations from the 1980s to the present; and what kind of repertoires have been exploited by various actors – voluntary associations foremost – in their collective strategies?

To answer the research questions, three main data sets are utilised. First, a survey questionnaire was sent to 41 officially functioning local voluntary associations (listed on the Register of Associations), of which 23 (56%) responded. The response rate was doubtless affected by the fact that many of the associations have in reality been suspended, either temporarily or permanently (closedowns, fusions). The suspension is partly due to the proximity of the province capital Jyväskylä. Local participation and memberships – particularly in specialised hobby associations requiring a relatively large population base – often takes place in the province centre. In Finland, as a rule, the association density is smaller in rural municipalities that are situated in the neighbourhoods of big towns than in municipalities farther away from the province centres (see Siisiäinen & Kankainen 2009).

The second data set regarding associations comprises articles in the local newspaper Laukaa-Konnevesi (L-K) in 1984–2009, complemented by the articles in Keskisuomalainen (KSML) distributed within the province centre Jyväskylä[1]. About 250 articles or news reports dealing with substantial activities of voluntary associations in Lievestuore were selected for analysis, 100 of them published after the year 2000. Together with voluntary associations, the newspaper Laukaa-Konnevesi is a central part of the local public sphere and is the main source of information about local events for voluntary associations and other local actors. Jointly with the information from other written documents and from interviews, its news give a plausible picture of what is happening in local surface publicity and about the most central actors and their local contributions.

[1] The news archive has been collected by Mrs. Anneli Orbinski, who kindly offered it for use in the research project.

The third set of data was collected with a survey questionnaire addressed to the inhabitants of Lievestuore. The questions in the survey dealt with the economic, cultural and social resources that people retain in their everyday lives: social capital, associational participation, voluntary activity and informal networks. The data include three age cohorts representing young adults (35-year-olds), the middle-aged (50-year-olds), and the elderly (70-year-olds). Altogether 194 people responded to the survey, representing 58 per cent of the age cohorts.

In a multifaceted study like ours, covering different levels of associational and network activity, it is not possible to realise all the possibilities (or even requirements) of Bourdieu's demanding theoretical approach. By combining the above-mentioned data and adopting corresponding methods in our study, we have striven to take a step towards a comprehensive Bourdieusian analysis of voluntary associations as fields and in fields. The step-by-step procedure in which separate empirical studies can contribute to develop a comprehensive theoretical approach to associations: "As Bourdieu himself suggested, and his close follower Wacquant echoes, the desired objective is to enhance new empirical research – offer a *generative* usage of his concepts – rather than just engage in theoretical exegesis of Bourdieu's work" (Swartz 2008, 46).

Special attention is given to the role that voluntary associations or associational capital play on the one hand in the complex of the agents' social capital, and in or within the orbit of social fields. The central dimensions of social capital are succinctly defined by Bourdieu as follows:

> "The volume of the social capital possessed by a given agent -- depends on the size of network of connections he can effectively mobilise and on the volume of the capital (economic, cultural of symbolic) possessed in his own right by each of those to whom he is connected-- (T)he network of relationships is the product of investment strategies, individual or collective, consciously or unconsciously aimed at establishing or reproducing social relationships that are directly usable in the short or long term, i.e. at transforming contingent relations, such as those of neighborhood, the workplace, or even kinship, into relationships that are at once necessary and elective, implying durable obligations subjectively felt (feelings of gratitude, respect, friendship, etc.) or institutionally guaranteed (rights)." (Bourdieu 1986, 248–249.)

The definition takes into account both the individual agent's level and the collective level of social capital and capital networks. Networks of social capital – for example, relations of association memberships – are usable assets for actors in various social fields. But certain constellations of social networks – for example, voluntary associations – can also act as contradictory collectives in social fields that utilise economic, cultural and social capital assigned to them by their members or mobilised through organisations connected to their networks (collective investments strategies) (Bourdieu 1980; Siisiäinen 1988).

Bourdieu's sociology and the research of voluntary associations

An overarching intent throughout the chapter is the adaptation and thereby evaluation of Bourdieu's concepts regarding the analysis of voluntary associations. Bourdieu's ideas will be complemented by theoretical tools provided by the sociology of associations. The list of various areas studied using Bourdieu's theoretical ideas is long and ever-expanding (see e.g. Grenfell 2008). However, voluntary associations have not been systematically studied or theorised adapting Bourdieu's approach (c.f. Siisiäinen 1988). Emirbayer and Johnson's (2008) lengthy article *Bourdieu and organizational analysis* is a path-breaking account of Bourdieu's importance on organisation studies. Though not all voluntary associations are formal organisations in the strict sense, Emirbayer and Johnson's main organisational ideas can be applied to association analysis as well. The general idea here is to see how association analysis could use Bourdieu's general concepts and, the other way round, how the sociology of associations could complement Bourdieu's arsenal of relational sociology.

Bourdieu's relational sociology is one of the rare new general sociological theories presenting a comprehensive interpretation of agency and social dynamics as a whole. Therefore, actors' association participation and network memberships can also be addressed theoretically by adapting the concepts of habitus, interest, capacities based on the ownership of economic, cultural and social capital, and social fields as arenas of inter-

est-oriented action (e.g. Alanen, Salminen & Siisiäinen 2007; Siisiäinen & Alanen 2009; Siisiäinen 2010).

The general contribution of Bourdieusian theorisations to the sociology of associations is threefold. First, Bourdieu's ideas of interest-directed participation in social fields are directly relevant to the analysis of association as they, by definition, develop around members' common interests. Second, Bourdieu's idea of organisations – such as voluntary associations – as arenas of power struggles and as contradictory actors in fields is a central focus in association theory. Third, participation or membership commitment to a voluntary association can be understood as an agent's choice among various alternatives presented by a certain conjuncture directed and predisposed by her/his habitus (see Bourdieu 1986, 1994b; Siisiäinen 1986, 1988, 1996, 2010; cf. Emirbayer & Johnson 2008).

The establishment of a voluntary association to advance a common interest (or interests) of the founding members has probably been the most important way to compensate for the weakness of actors' individual social (and economic and cultural) capital by inter-subjective co-operation. Associations are expressions of collective interests of agents acting in concert in a certain social conjuncture. Actors' choices between competing associations and networks can be understood from the perspective of practical logic and, more specifically, as causally probable acts (Siisiäinen 2010). Association memberships which demand high investments of economic, cultural and social capital require also that the personal habituses of members are – to a substantial extent – compatible with each other. On the other hand, people with relatively different profiles of personal capital and habitus can participate in recreational associations based on light commitments and requiring only a minor investment of one's personality.

Actor's dispositions, internalised in her/his habitus, are formed through practices during different life phases. At a certain conjuncture of history or moment in life, an actor tends to choose those alternatives most likely to, in the light of her/his past as inscribed in the habitus, lead to positive (or at least bearable) outcomes. This strategic choice is depicted by Bourdieu's concept of the causality of the probable (Bourdieu 1974). The future opens up to an agent as a horizon of possibilities

or personally cognisable opportunity structures. Accordingly the actor tends to choose those alternatives which seem "reasonable", and "make sense" against the backdrop of the totality of her/his resources, the life history and past experiences as they are expressed in the dispositions and cognitive schemes of the habitus. This practical logic is also intersubjective because the presumed future actions of the alter have a conscious or subconscious bearing on the choices of the ego. The choices and ensuing practices of actors do not result from rational calculations or cost-benefit evaluations, but develop as a mixture of rational evaluations and conscious and unconscious feelings of what seems realistic to the actor (Bourdieu 1974, 1977; Siisiäinen 2010.)

The compatibility of a person's dispositions and cognitive schemes on the one hand and the frames of existing associations (ideology, programme, statutes) or other social networks or groupings on the other is a necessary but not sufficient condition for her/his association membership or commitment (c.f. Bourdieu 1977, 1994b; Snow et al. 1986; Siisiäinen 1996). Actors also make conscious or intuitive "estimations" about their chances in order to succeed in the role of the member in available associations. A socially differentiated society develops socially differentiated patterns of associational participation.

The voluntary association as social capital refers to those economic, cultural and social resources which can be mobilised through social networks related to the association on both the associational and individual membership levels. In a Bourdieusian view, the number of social networks *per se* does not guarantee the efficacy of an agent or association in a certain social field. The efficacy depends on the position of the agent in the constellation of network relations and on the value of the forms of capital that can be mobilised via the connections (see Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992; c.f. Lelieveldt 2008). Voluntary associations are the primary method of choosing and struggling collectively in various social fields and multiplying the causal power of individual actors in modern democracies. From this perspective, voluntary associations are participants in large social fields. But they can also take part in a more "modest" way by acting locally and forming a dynamic part of a larger – even global – field together with associations in other localities occupying corresponding

positions relative to the same large field. It can also be argued justifiably that an association is a component of a (larger) field when its trajectory traverses this space and when its intrinsic properties cannot be explained without reference to the effects of the field (c.f. Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992, 110; Emirbayer & Johnson 2008, 30).

The concept of the causality of the probable will help us to understand theoretically and empirically the choices of both individual actors and associations as collectives in local social fields. Actors and collectives tend to favour choices that are likely to lead to positive outcomes, considering their past experiences, ownerships of the form of capital valued in the social field in question and the totality of possible alternatives (Siisiäinen 2010). The hypothesis is that for the most part, both individual and collective agents tend to direct their choices to reasonable – that is, realistic – alternatives. Ruptures and radical changes take place as unintended consequences of a multitude of simultaneous choices and as resultant of the developments of different social fields (see Siisiäinen 2010).

In a country like Finland, voluntary associations have been – and continue to be – among the most important actors in political, cultural, artistic, religious and social welfare field throughout its modern history. It is a special feature of Finnish civil society that there are less reckoned alternatives to associations than in most other countries (see Siisiäinen & Kankainen 2009). The importance of associations has, most likely, been even greater in local fields than on the national level. The potential of economic, social and cultural capital can be made meaningful (recognisable, legitimate) by symbolic means, by transforming them into symbolic capital (Bourdieu 1980, 1986; Siisiäinen 1988). This has also been one of the central functions of voluntary associations. At the same time that formal political organisations have lost their stature, the value of place and interactional meetings has been growing in a cultural and symbolic sense as nodal points of commitment (e.g. Bauman 2001; Urry 2003; Lelieveldt 2008).

Associational symbolic capital is involved in many ways in the functioning of local fields and publicity. If we speak about voluntary associations as "collective actors", we should understand them as "field-like" formations, as spaces of internal conflicts with their own stakes, as sites

of power structures (*Herrshaftsverhälnisse*; Weber 1911) and a hierarchic division of labour (see Emirbayer & Johnson 2008, 22–26; Siisiäinen 2010). However, in practice there are major differences in this respect between different voluntary associations. Nowadays, the position of the chair in local associations seems in most cases to be less tempting as personal investments to the association clearly overweigh the personal benefits from the position. In any case, members can mobilise a part of the associational resources for their own benefit. Rules of representation and delegation appear in all institutionalised groupings, thereby concentrating the associational social capital – no matter what kind – in the hands of association leaders. The associational mandate can also be used as cultural or symbolic capital in an environment that recognises the value of the association which provides the mandated person (leadership and/or rank-and-file members) with associational power surpassing her/his personal weight (see Bourdieu 1980, 1986; Siisiäinen 1988).

Characteristics of local voluntary associations (as field actors)

Probably the most "conspicuous" general feature of Finnish collective action is the dominance of registered associations. All major social movements from Communist to Green parties have registered themselves thereby conforming – at least to some extent – to the prevailing rules of the game. Registration and ensuing legal status involves some obligations, though quite formal and minor, but on the other hand, entitles an association to demand some respect from its public or private exchange partners. A big part of public cultural and leisure activities in Finnish society are based on official or unofficial agreement between registered associations and political or administrative institutions (competitive sports, municipal subsidies, right to use municipal premises etc.) (Siisiäinen 2009). Therefore it is no surprise that registered voluntary associations are also well represented in local media publicity.

Since 1919 almost 80 registered associations have been established in Lievestuore. In addition, many locals belong to associations registered in

the parent municipality Laukaa or in the province centre Jyväskylä. This chapter deals only with associations registered in Lievestuore. During the last ten years, cultural associations and hobby clubs have been dominating local publicity, as revealed by the newspaper analysis (see Table 6.1): Lievestuoreen Setlementti (The Settlement Association) with an adult institute, Lievestuore-seura (Lievestuore Society), sports club Kisa (in 1995–2006 it was known as Ysi5) and the Scouts clubs. Two of these, The Settlement and the Scouts, have religious roots. An old active organisation is also the local branch of Mannerheimin Lastensuojelululiitto working for children's welfare and protection dating back to the years following the Civil War in 1918. All these associations have been able to adapt their collective frames to meet the changing everyday interests of the local people. All associations with high visibility are multi-functional or generalist and, more or less, consensually oriented.

Table 6.1 *Registration year of twelve associations with media visibility in the 2000s*

Association	**Year of establishment**	**Main sphere of activity in local publicity**
Lievestuoreen Setlementti (The Settlement Association)	1946	religion, education, culture, social & welfare
Lievestuoreen Kisa (Ysi5)	1927	sports
Lievestuore-seura (Society)	1979	local identity, local politics, culture
Lievestuoreen yrittäjät (entrepreneurs' association)	1988	interest politics, business
Scouts (girls & boys)	1942, 1937	education, hobbies, nature, religion
The local branch of the Mannerheimin Lastensuojeluliitto	1953	children's welfare, social politics
Lions Club Lievestuore	1976	status group, charity, culture
Social Democratic Party branch	1906	politics (leisure/culture)
Hohon kyläseura (Hoho village association)	2001	local politics, identity & culture
Lievestuoreen Karjalaiset (Karelians' association)	1946	Karelian evacuees, culture, tradition
VAU! youth theatre	2006	culture/drama

In 2008, approximately more than half of the 41 officially registered associations in Lievestuore were functioning actively. About 40 per cent of these can be classified as cultural and hobby associations, one-fifth as sports clubs and one-fifth as social welfare and health associations. Very few associations are professional or political. Most of the party political associations have merged with the associations registered in the municipality centre Laukaa, which explains partly the absence of political associations in Lievestuore. In addition, local trade union activities have been concentrated on the municipal level. Participation in ideological organisations tends to be located at the provincial centre. At the same time, the national tendency is for newly established associations in general to not be members of national central federations. It means on the one hand that their activities cannot easily be directed in a corporate manner via national federations, and on the other hand that the possibilities of local associations to participate in large national fields via central federations have weakened decisively.

Nearly all of the associations that responded to the survey have been registered before 1990. In that respect Lievestuore would seem to deviate from the general Finnish trend. In Finland as a whole, the 1990s was a decade of exceptionally abundant registration of new associations. However, the low number of new associations established during the last 10 years in Lievestuore can be explained by the proximity of the province centre Jyväskylä, which has approximately 130,000 inhabitants. In the 1990s an unusual number of new associations were established in Jyväskylä, even compared with the number of associations founded on the national level. (Siisiäinen 2002, 2009)

A typical association in Lievestuore has 50 to 99 members. The average number of participating members is 38. The ratio between paying members and participants in the activity of associations in Lievestuore is similar to that of the province capital Jyväskylä (Siisiäinen 2002). During the last five years a third of the local associations have lost members, whereas a quarter of the associations have gained more members. Half of the associations report declining rates of actually participating members, and only a few mention that the rate is increasing. Finnish surveys show that the participation of the unemployed and young people in most types of

voluntary associations is especially low (see e.g. Siisiäinen & Kankainen 2009). The association activists in Lievestuore are also worried about the absence of these groups in their rank and file. In every second association the need to recruit new young members is on the agenda.

The concern about the absence of young members is closely related to the future of voluntary work, which also troubles many associations. Not surprisingly, the contribution of voluntary work is essential since the income for associations in Lievestuore is mostly derived from membership fees and primary activity that relies on the members' voluntary work. Only a few associations receive substantial public funding. Local associations typically operate on a minor budget, and thus their share of economic capital is insignificant. In two-thirds of the associations the annual budget remains less than 3,000 euros, and only two out of ten operate on a budget in excess of 6,000 euros.

The number of volunteers has decreased in about 40 per cent of associations, and none of them has been able to gain more volunteers. The respondents are dwelling on how to find new, preferably young volunteers, as many of the current active members are relatively advanced in age, and will soon withdraw from the association. A majority of the associations see the decline in volunteering as a genuine threat for the future of the association. As a whole, it is often a major challenge for associations to get people to participate, especially in long-term projects. It seems to be a general trend in Finland that associational activity takes place on terms set by people's lifestyles and on the basis of temporal commitments. A majority of actors seem to avoid long-lasting associational commitments. This holds true especially for younger generations. (Siisiäinen 2002; Siisiäinen & Kankainen 2009.)

On a general level, local associations set great store by the well-being of their special target group and the whole community. Local associations also continue the tradition of close partnership between the public sector and civil society, which is typical of Finnish society (Siisiäinen 2009; Alapuro & Stenius 2010). In practice all associations also stress the importance of the Finnish type of acting collectively.

In a more detailed examination, the associations in Lievestuore consider spreading and passing information the most significant issues of

their activity (see Table 6.2). Not only are the acquisition and distribution of information significant to the associations, but they are also an indication of how the associations have succeeded in using their networks. Typically, voluntary associations in Lievestuore have four different sources of information, the most important ones being their own members and the internet. The strong emphasis on information was found also when studying the associations in Jyväskylä (Siisiäinen 2002, 37). In addition, fundraising, arranging voluntary work and education are rated significant by the associations in both Lievestuore and Jyväskylä. The high significance of club activity in Lievestuore is, however, distinctive for the associations. Preserving the local identity is of high importance. Hence, the maintenance of the associational activity seems to have an

Table 6.2 *The significance of different issues in associational activity*

	Significant or very significant %
Informing about the association's own activity	100
Spreading and passing along information	82
Maintaining club activity	77
Fundraising for the association	71
Preserving the identity of Lievestuore	61
Arranging voluntary work for the community	60
Arranging education	50
Taking care of the interests of members	48
Assisting groups targeted by the association	43
Providing counselling and professional assignments	38
Arranging cultural and artistic events	36
Raising and maintaining discussions on social issues	35
Arranging sport events	33
Arranging trips	32
Ideological activity	29
Providing services that the public sector has previously looked after	15
Service trading with the public sector	9

intrinsic value for the associations. They, too, stress the importance of preserving the local identity, thereby strengthening their belonging in the locality and the production of local social capital.

Association memberships and networks as actors' social capital

In this section we focus first on the composition of social capital retained by local inhabitants, and second on how people are able to use social capital – in other words, what kinds of resources are linked within the networks. The mere volume of social networks is not the most important thing, as the variety of different types of networks and the possibilities for taking advantage of network resources are essential when it comes to social capital (Kankainen & Siisiäinen 2009; van der Gaag 2005). Even though voluntary associations have maintained their central role in Finnish society, the associational resources are not evenly distributed (see Siisiäinen & Kankainen 2009). Therefore this section also analyses the kinds of roles family or friendships on one hand and voluntary associations or informal hobby groups on the other play in the totality of actors' social capital.

Association memberships

Although Finnish associational life as a whole did not suffer from recession of the 1990s, it has gone through a fundamental change. The trend goes from ideological and political associations towards cultural, lifestyle and hobby associations (Siisiäinen 2002; Siisiäinen & Kankainen 2009). The participation of the inhabitants of Lievestuore in voluntary associations follows the Finnish trend, which can be seen in the popularity of sports organisations and clubs, cultural and other leisure associations (Table 6.3). Over 60 per cent of the respondents are members of at least one association.

Given that most of the active local associations and thereby their symbolic frames were created many decades ago, it is not surprising that eld-

erly people (born in 1935 or 1936) have more memberships than younger cohorts. Accordingly, a remarkable proportion of them are members of political organisations and they also find it easier to chair an association (17%), to work as a volunteer (34%), to write a letter to a newspaper's opinion section (14%) and to participate in a demonstration (11%). The middle-aged (born in 1954–56) have the fewest memberships to associations. The passiveness of the middle-aged in Lievestuore appears surprising, as Finnish people in their forties and fifties are typically most likely to be active in voluntary associations (Siisiäinen & Kankainen 2009).

Table 6.3 *Memberships[2] to voluntary associations in Lievestuore, by age cohort*

Type of association	**Age cohort**		
	35 years %	**50 years %**	**70 years %**
Trade union or employers' organisation	49	33	14
Hobby club or cultural association	20	16	26
Sports club	15	19	14
Residents' (or village) association	9	8	14
Disability, social welfare or health association	12	4	11
Political party or organisation	2	3	23
Religious (other than church or congregation)	5	3	0
Humanitarian or charity association	2	1	9
Entrepreneurs' organisation	3	5	9
Other economical or professional association	2	2	9
Home district association	0	3	6
International friendship society	0	1	6
Nature conservation, environmental or alternative movement	2	2	0
Youth association	0	0	3
Student association	2	0	0

[2] The table indicates how many respondents have answered that they are members of associations. The rest of the respondents either are not members or have not answered.

In addition to noting membership to associations, information on actual participation – in the form of association meetings, fundraising contributions and organised events or volunteering – was gathered from the respondents. The correlation between actual participation in meetings, organising events or volunteering and the number of formal association memberships is high, as expected. It is consistent with the finding that persons with only one membership also participate more rarely than those with more memberships. Almost 25 per cent of association members do not take part in any civic activity.

The possession of cultural and economic capital make a difference in participation: people with high levels of education and income are more active members of associations (see Table 6.4). It is striking that those who lack vocational education and those with a monthly income of less than 1000 euros are the population's outliers due to their associational passivity. The same holds true for associational activity in all of Finland: people in higher positions not only have more memberships to associations but also tend to join associations which have members from more diverse backgrounds (Kouvo 2010, 176). Active participants of associations also have higher general confidence and are more active voters (Pääkkönen 2006; Hanifi 2006). It can thus be argued that associational membership fosters a rather middle-class elective identity, as pointed out, for example, by Savage (2009). Associational activity in Lievestuore seems to be strongly locally embedded on the personal level, as activity in associations, participation in local events and sentimental attachment to places seem to be concentrated in the same actors.

These findings can be interpreted in terms of the causality of the probable (Bourdieu 1974). Participation in voluntary associations is clearly an activity more probably partaken by actors who possess necessary capitals that are valued locally, and who are able to choose the options most suitable for them. The eldest group in the survey was socialised at a time when the political subfield was very central in people's lives (the 1930s and 40s). In their youth there were active political associations and ideologically committed hobby associations in the locality, and the political divide (right and left) was very powerful. Many studies show that political socialisation during youth tends to be relatively enduring (cf.

Marin, Pekonen & Siisiäinen 1990). It can also be argued that there has been a shift from a collective type of socialisation (typically compatible with traditional party membership) to an individualised one. At the same time the significance of the political subfield has decreased in people's everyday lives and new agents of socialisation have conquered the scene (the commodity industry, the media, etc.).

A feeling shared by many actors with few adequate resources and disadvantageous positions in the political field is that they lack effective channels of influence. Therefore it may be reasonable from their perspective to choose the option of non-participation and to avoid alternatives that appear to them unrealistic and therefore as sheer wastes of resources. There are many factors decreasing the probability of people with little economic and cultural capital to participate in activities of voluntary associations, particularly political ones: (1) leadership positions require

Table 6.4 *Number of association memberships by age, education and income (%)*

	Number of association memberships (%)					
	0	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4 –**	**TOTAL**
Age cohort						
1970–1972	31	34	20	10	5	100
1954–1956	40	30	21	5	4	100
1935–1936	37	34	5	11	12	100
Education						
No vocational education	63	21	11	5	0	100
Vocational proficiency attained in work	45	37	10	5	3	100
Secondary level	31	33	23	8	5	100
Polytechnic	24	34	22	12	8	100
University level	0	33	33	17	16	100
Monthly income						
Less than 1000 €	51	24	17	5	3	100
1000–2000 €	32	40	13	9	6	100
2001–3000 €	32	25	28	9	6	100
Over 3000 €	27	19	27	9	18	100

mastery of associational skills which correlate with the level of cultural capital; (2) activeness and confidence in the effectiveness of association participation are correlated; (3) the economisation of politics and the perceived distance between local actors and centres of political decision-making might make political influencing via associations seem unrealistic for many actors (Siisiäinen 2010; Kankainen 2007).

Associations and informal networks in the typology of social capital

The respondents' contacts with relatives, neighbours and friends, and the resources which they can obtain from family members, relatives and friends were studied in order to get an understanding of the totality of actors' potential social resources. This was done by adapting the "resource generator" developed by van der Gaag and Snijders (van der Gaag 2005; van der Gaag & Snijders 2005). The method has been developed for measuring social capital by available social resources through network contacts. In our application the respondents were asked whether they had relatives, friends or acquaintances who could provide them with resources such as household work, career guidance, mental support, information or financial help.

The empirical analysis identified two types of resources reminiscent of *expressive* and *instrumental* dimensions described by Nan Lin (1982). These could also be named as resources for "getting by" and "getting ahead" (see e.g. Wacquant 1998; Lowndes 2004; Leonard & Onyx 2003). Expressive resources are generated in discussions about personal or family issues or in participating in cultural events together. Resources connected to issues like career consulting or assistance with different problems in working life are here named instrumental resources.

In order to study the composition of actors' social capital, the respondents were divided into four groups on the basis of two quantitative dimensions. The first dimension is the number of memberships to voluntary associations. The second dimension concerns the frequency of keeping in touch with friends. By splitting the scales of these variables

(see Table 6.5 for the criteria), four groups were created from the pool of all respondents. This typology of social capital has theoretical roots and ramifications. We can connect formal and informal social capital with the types of networks to which people belong, and associate strong and weak ties (Granovetter 1973) with the utilised network connections. Relationships between friends are typical examples of networks based on strong ties. They are created by interaction that is close, intimate and often based on personal trust. One of the central advantages of strong ties is the temporal stability and security, which arises from trust and familiarity. (Ibid.) Voluntary associations can be seedbeds of both strong ties (for example, the friendships formed within the associations) and weak ties. Weak ties, compared to strong ties, are (re)produced by less intensive and temporally shorter interactions. Strong ties usually exist between similar kinds of people who know each other well. Weak ties, on the other hand, bring together people with different social backgrounds and resources, thereby assisting individuals in gaining more versatile and, often, instrumentally more significant help and skills (cf. van der Gaag 2005).

It can be argued that strong ties are more of a help as resources for getting by and weak ties for getting ahead, but, as Blokland and Savage (2008, 13) put it, "weak ties do not guarantee bridging, and strong ties do not guarantee bonding". Many researchers of class organisation, for example Friedrich Engels and Gaetano Mosca, suggest that the "ruling class" or economic elites do not need associations because they are often organised by "strong ties" simply because of their small size (see Schattschneider 1960; Offe & Wiesenthal 1979; Siisiäinen 1986). Thus they "get ahead" in that way. Groups of lower strata might stick to their strong ties which might prevent the development of an upward social trajectory but still enable them to acquire valuable resources from the point of view of their "opportunity structures". Moreover, people may prefer to use their strong ties as long as it is possible (Blokland & Noordhoff 2008, 109) or seems reasonable (= "causally probable"; see Siisiäinen 2010). Thus the differentiation of individual-level social capital examined in this section does not concern so much the differentiation between strong and weak ties as it does the distinction between different social spheres and lifestyles constructed around the ownership of the forms of capital.

The typology is also reinforced by its practicality in further analysis. Table 6.5 shows that there are differences between the groups not only in terms of association memberships and friendship contacts, but also in terms of e.g. participation in local events and cultural and economic

Table 6.5 *The four groups of social capital in Lievestuore*[3]

		Frequency of contact with friends	
		Once a month at the highest	Weekly or more often
Memberships to associations	0 or 1	*Home-centred people (n=59)* • Scarce economic capital and low level of education, lowest number of expressive and instrumental resources • Civic participation not natural • Few relatives who were born in Lievestuore; minority consider themselves "locals"	*Friendship-centred people (n=73)* • Frequent contact with relatives, neighbours and friends • Majority have close relatives nearby
	2 or more	*Association and culture-oriented people (n=15)* • Friends: instrumental resources • No close relatives living nearby • Associations and hobby groups • Participation in local events, visiting local places • High education and economic capital • Cultural hobbies and societal participation natural	*Widely networked people (n=46)* • Frequent contact with relatives, neighbours and friends • Friends: help in household work, expressive resources • Associations and hobby groups • Participation in local events, visiting local places • High education and economic capital • Cultural hobbies and societal participation natural

[3] Variables used in the typology: number of memberships to voluntary associations (sum variable of all associations of which the respondent is a member; range 0…9); frequency of contacts with friends (sum variable of three types of contacts: phoning friends, meetings friends and meeting workmates or colleagues outside of work; range in each variable: 1 = "never"…6 = "daily").

resources. A somewhat similar classification was made by de Hart and Dekker (2003) between the network dimension (consisting of visiting neighbours, asking and getting help from the neighbours, etc.) and trust dimension (association memberships, volunteering, trust in other people's help and generalised trust) of social capital in two small cities in the Netherlands. A low level of education and longer residence in the locality increased the activities' scores on the network dimension, whereas higher education, high income and personal efficacy correlated positively with the trust dimension. (Ibid., 159–162.)

Friendship-centred people are the most active in meeting or visiting their close friends. They also meet and discuss with their neighbours more often than do the other groups. Networks of the friendship-centred people are thus formed primarily via close friends, and they gain much more expressive and instrumental resources through their friends and acquaintances than the home-centred people. They do not, however, differ from the other two groups in how much these resources are at their disposal. This is a good example of how the number of network contacts in itself does not turn over a higher volume of exploitable resources for the individual (van der Gaag 2005). Friendship-centred people do not have many association memberships. About 40 per cent of them are members of a single association while the rest have no memberships. Only about a fifth of them participate in a hobby group.

Widely networked people also meet frequently with their relatives, friends and neighbours. They feel, in particular, that relationships with friends and acquaintances are a valuable resource when it comes to receiving help in household matters or getting expressive support. This support is also reciprocal, as this group, more than the other groups, feels that they support their friends. Reciprocity and trust are often important in enhancing interaction between individuals (Ilmonen & Jokinen 2002) and the exchange of resources (van der Gaag 2005).

Widely networked people differ from the friendship-centred ones in that they participate actively in voluntary associations and a majority of them take part in hobby groups. Each of them is a member of at least two associations, and over 70 per cent report having participated in the meeting of an association during the last year. Additionally, this group

has the highest number of people who consider it "natural" for them to be involved in voluntary work, participate in trade union meetings, write a letter to a newspaper's opinion section, act as chairperson of an association, support a strike and run for a seat in the local council. It is known from earlier studies that overlapping memberships in various networks (working place, associations, friends, family) increases one's chances of finding useful resources in diverse social fields (cf. van de Bunt 1999).

Association and culture-oriented people are members of several associations and participate in various hobby groups. Each of these people is a member of at least two associations. Approximately 65 per cent of them have participated in the meeting of an association during the last year. In other words, they have the same amount of this type of social capital as the widely networked people in Lievestuore, but their relationships with relatives, friends and neighbours are infrequent. Thus, they embody mainly achieved, associational social capital, whereas ascribed social capital is of less importance: they meet less frequently with their friends and neighbours and also have slightly fewer connections with relatives. This is partly explained by the fact that only less than half of them have close relatives in Lievestuore or in the neighbouring municipalities, which makes them radically different from the friendship-centred people (of whom 80 % have close relatives living nearby). The people in this group feel that they receive, when needed, more instrumental support from their friends and acquaintances than from other people. This support is also reciprocated, as they have also provided resources of instrumental activity most often to their acquaintances.

"Widely networked people" and "association and cultural people" resemble each other in that they have more economic and cultural capital than people in average. In addition to civic engagement, these people also consider cultural hobbies to be more natural forms of activity for themselves than do the other two groups. The widely networked as well as the association-oriented have amassed different forms of capital – social, economical and cultural; they also enjoy visiting several events and places in Lievestuore. Therefore, their chances of meeting new people and gaining more social capital are probably better than those of the others.

Home-centred people differ from the other groups in many ways. They have the least social capital at their disposal, measured in both memberships to associations or hobby groups and the frequency of meeting friends and neighbours. Their contacts with relatives are at the average level. Of all the groups they have the fewest connections that could supply them with resources for expressive or instrumental activity. Neither do they feel at home in social-cum-political action in comparison to other groups. This group has the least amount of economical capital and institutionalised cultural capital as measured by education. The results also suggest that this group is more "alienated" from their home locality because they feel themselves less "local", and they have the fewest close native relatives in the locality.

The types of social capital presented above provide us not only a typology but also a framework within which to consider the social capital of individuals in relation to other forms of capital. For example, high education and economic resources provide a better opportunity to access and utilise more heterogeneous networks like voluntary associations, as was the case with the "widely networked" and the "association-oriented". The "friendship-centred people" have a greater variety of close ties than the "home-centred", probably due to the proximity of close relatives. Relying on the data at hand, we cannot make reliable conclusions about the transformation of capitals from one form into another. Nevertheless, the findings imply that the differentiation of social capital is based on both social and cultural grounds.

Voluntary associations in local fields and interaction networks

In this section the evaluation of the volume of associations' social capital is based on the analysis of their resources and on the examination of their actual intersecting networks and the number of the sources of information they have available. Voluntary associations have participated to varying extents in the struggles of different nation-wide social fields and continue to do so. Their positions and positional activities are also

influenced decisively by structural changes in various national and international fields, economy, politics and culture.

We can speak of voluntary associations as "field actors" in at least three meanings. First, associations can take part directly in the struggles regarding stakes in "big" national (or international) fields such as economy, politics or culture (e.g. about political power positions; direction of economic politics). Second, separate local voluntary associations can be defined as field actors if they occupy analogous structural positions with other associations in other localities in relation to the structure of the "big" nation-wide (or global) field. In this case they would compete for the same type of stakes contributing to the functioning of the field in question representing a category of associations and not as individual actors. For example, associations opposing shutdowns of local schools in different municipalities can be understood en bloc as actors in the educational field. The same holds true for associations for the conservation of lakes or other natural resources. Third, it can also be argued that associations in some locality are field actors, for example in the political field, to the extent that their actions are affected – or preconditioned – by the structures in the field in question, and if their trajectories in social space cannot be understood without referring to the changes in the relations and structures in larger fields. (cf. Emirbayer & Johnson 2008, 6-14.) For example, the ongoing economisation of politics, culture, and welfare services influences in many ways the opportunities of local associations and the intended and unintended consequences of their actions. However, the problem of the "field" can only be solved empirically, not on paper (cf. Bourdieu 1984).

Collective formations such as associations, networks or local festivals organised by several actors – individual and collective – must be tied to some mediators in order to exist and be enabled to act in concert: "almost all of our interactions with other people are *mediated through* objects of one kind or another -- At any rate, our communication with one another is mediated by a network of objects – the computer, the paper, the printing press. And it is also mediated by networks of objects-and-people, such as the postal system. They *shape* it." (Law 1992, 382.) Voluntary associations can be understood as social figurations (Elias & Scotson 1965) of

the members mediated by a common interest. Similar to Bourdieu's sociology, in Norbert Elias' approach society or locality has to be understood relationally, developing via conflicts and oppositional relations between actors. The actors' practices are mediated by such figures as voluntary associations, communities or neighbourhoods (Elias & Scotson 1965, 171). But there are also figures that tie voluntary associations to one another in common ventures in the locality.

In the following analysis, we are aware that the "truth" of any interaction is never fully included in the interaction itself, but instead lies in the larger objective structures of power (Bourdieu 1977). But, on the other hand, the knowledge about what those structures are concretely can only be achieved by relational analysis of interactions. Bourdieu was critical of the network analysis method, as he stressed the importance of the configuration of relationships transgressing the interaction network. Accordingly, what matters in networks are the occupied positions which construct a (temporary) state of power relations. (Emirbayer & Johnson 2008, 6.)

For the associations, organisational ties provide opportunities for the association to establish links to spheres of political or economic power. This is not to say, however, that having regular interaction or contacts as such means actual distribution or sharing of resources, so the network graph drawn provides us with an approximation of the actual contacts of the associations. But on a general level, the social capital of an association can be analogous to the social capital of an individual, defined as the totality of the economic, cultural and social resources that an association is able to mobilise (or "translate") for its own benefit via the various actors which are tied to its networks (cf. Bourdieu 1986).

Figure 6.1 positions local associations (dots) by examining their regular interactions with different local actors (squares). The associations reporting interaction with several actors are placed at the core of the network graph, whereas those with primarily one contact are located at the "periphery" of the graph; the outliers with no reported interaction at all are listed on the left. A majority of associations have interactive connections with local inhabitants (in addition to own members) and other associations. The Evangelic-Lutheran congregation and municipal

authorities are also in regular interaction with more than one-third of the associations.

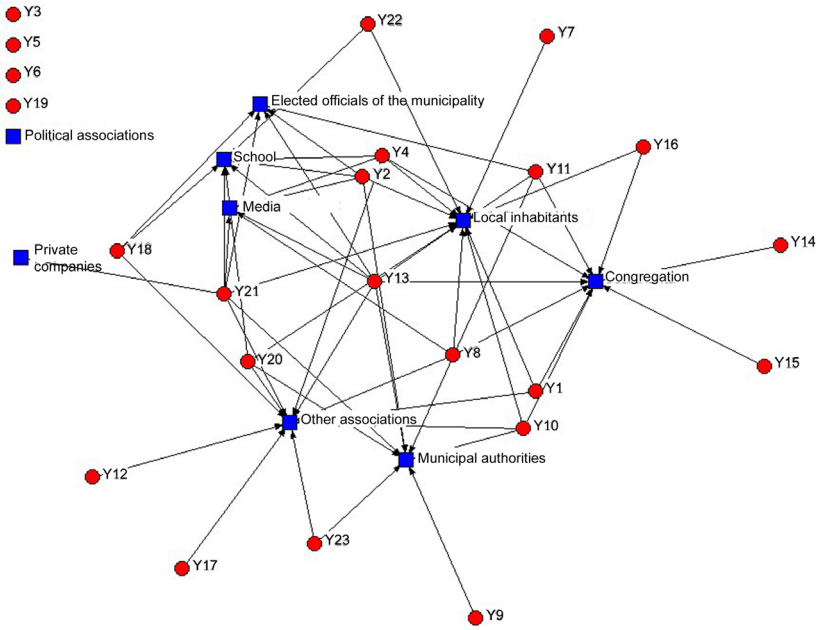

Figure 6.1 *Network graph: regular interaction of the associations with different local actors in Lievestuore*

Interaction with local inhabitants and other associations is more or less part of the "everyday" activity of the associations. Therefore a distinctive and relevant combination of interaction partners could develop when these networks are complemented with ties to municipal authorities, trustees (municipal council or committee members), media and private companies. Only the Lievestuore-society (Y21) has interaction with all five kinds of partners. The society has been established to promote local identity, traditions and development of Lievestuore and today also gives high priority to nature conservation and environmental issues.

Two other associations also have interactions with all other above-mentioned partner categories, except private companies, i.e. the 4H

association (Y2) and the Settlement Association (Y13). The Settlement Association has occupied a very central position in Lievestuore because of its many-sided activity profile, which is reflected also in the diversity of its network contacts. It has been very active in promoting adult education, providing innovative solutions to youth problems and offering possibilities of leisure (e.g. ESF projects). Lievestuore Society, the Settlement Association, together with sports clubs and the entrepreneurs association, have also dominated the local media publicity.

There are several associations in the "periphery" that have one or two contacts, a child welfare association (Y22) for example. It is a well-known association with a long history and a membership rate above the local average; however, at the time the survey was conducted the chairperson of the association perceived the network contacts as scarce. Finally, some associations seem to be outsiders in this context, for example the association for old-age pensioners (Y6). Although seeming to be poor in terms of interaction partners, it turns out not to be isolated or poor with members, which was discovered when interviewing its active members.

The prevalence of the associations' regular contacts with municipal administration was also investigated. It was revealed that only very few associations have contacts with more than one trustee organisation. The leisure committee turns out to be the one that most associations have contacts with, and also one with which the contacts are most often reciprocated. This is understandable, as most of the activities run by associations develop around leisure hobbies. The leisure committee can also serve as an association's "bridge" to other municipality officials.

The most prominent duo, the Lievestuore Society (Y21) and the Settlement (Y13), are the richest in terms of contacts in general and with unique partners such as the Technical Committee (Lievestuore Society, see Figure 6.2) and the Educational Committee (Settlement Association). These two associations, along with the local 4H association, are the only ones contacting both the municipal council and the municipal board. Of the other associations previously mentioned, the pensioners' association (Y6) seems, as in the previous example, to be vaguely networked and the child welfare association (Y22) remains an outsider as far as these contacts are concerned.

For the Lievestuore Society, the observed multitude of network ties to municipal administration stems from its extensive co-operation with the municipality, particularly in the 2000s. The Society has previously been recognised as having political efficacy: in the beginning of the 1990s, the association controlled the allocation of public development money for Lievestuore. Its representatives were also co-opted in a committee for planning work in the Laukaa area. The beginning of the 21st century brought about new activity. During those years the Society initiated certain events in order to refresh the image and public spirit of Lievestuore. Events such as the "village parliament" or market place for local entrepreneurs are still organised regularly. Current main activities include taking part in local environmental work, maintaining the website for Lievestuore and organising or coordinating events, the most important of which is the annual two-week cultural event "Liisan Tarinat" which gathers most of the local associations. The association has taken responsibility for tasks that the municipality previously handled, such as an annual gathering to clean up the village.

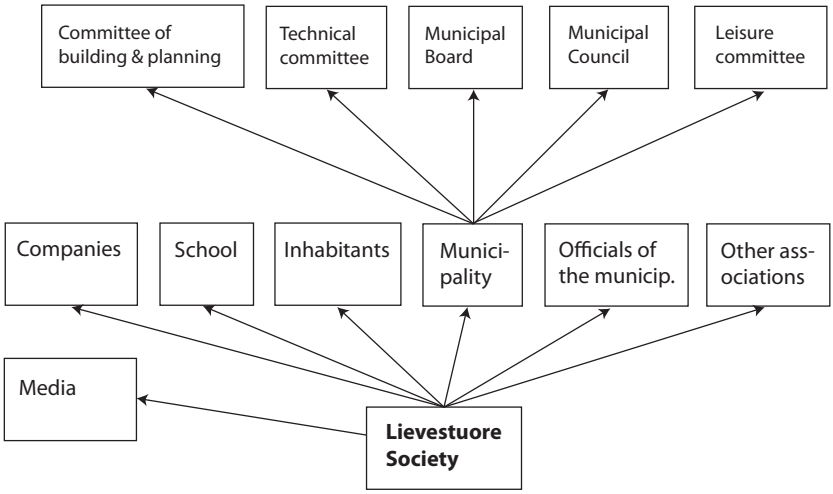

Figure 6.2 *Composition of the interaction network of the Lievestuore Society*

The relationships with various organisations of the community are for the most part instrumental and practical: obtaining economic resources or permission to use municipal premises for organising associational activities. Associations have also tried to advance their interest via their relations with municipal offices and officers. It is part and parcel of the Finnish civic tradition that unconventional repertoires are mobilised only after most common institutionalised means of representative (municipal) democracy have been tested. One example of a functioning interaction with the municipal administration is provided by the pensioners' association. As noted above, the association reported in the survey very few contacts with the municipal administration. However, it considers co-operation with the public sector to be very important and sees council and committee members as important channels for mediating information. This is obviously due to the fact that contacts to municipal administration are established by personal memberships to the committee of social and health care and the council for elderly people in Laukaa. The council for elderly people was established by the initiative of pensioners' associations in the municipality. The council has representatives from all pensioners' associations in the municipality area and receives an annual grant from the municipality. It reports about its activities straight to the municipal board and so far the members have found the work to be effective: all initiatives that have been made have also been successful.

A part of the associations' contacts with municipal trustee organisations may have been established so that members of these municipal committees and boards are also active members of the associations studied. This is the case for example with the Lievestuore Society (Figure 6.2). However, it is not very common for the associations in Lievestuore to have one or several of their board members being affiliated with municipal policy-making, as the survey reveals. Altogether seven associations have members of the municipal council or committees in their own administration. Two of these, the local Lions Club and a trade union association, are "outsiders" in the interaction networks in that they do not have regular contacts with the trustee organisations.

To get a concrete picture of the meaning of the interaction, we will take a closer look at what happens in the networks of the Lievestuore Set-

tlement Association (see Figure 6.3). The only religious community in its networks is the Lutheran Congregation: the priest is on the association board. The congregation is also subsidising the association and providing the association with the use of its large concert hall free of charge. Board members of the Settlement association give their returns as congregation activists. Co-operation with the local school is rather similar: the principal is on the association board, the adult education institute at the association uses school premises, they share teachers and the association has been organising afternoon care for school children and runs a project for developing "work peace" at the school.

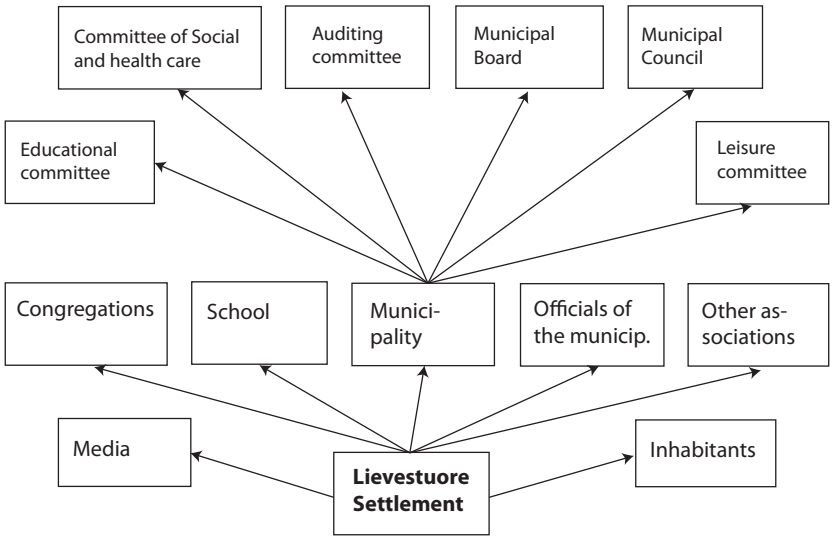

Figure 6.3 *Composition of the interaction network of the Lievestuore Settlement* Association

The Settlement is co-operating with the municipality (including the local public school) on all levels of administration. The associations' relations with the municipal council develop to a large extent via local council-

lors while most concrete issues are handled in specialised organisations. Subsidies to the adult institute and loans for restoration of the house are decided mainly within the municipal board, partly mediated by local board members. The committee for social and health care is the partner in organising pre-school daycare and other related issues while the association has given innovative input to the development of a daycare system. The settlement has been active in generating ESF projects that tackle social issues like youths at risk for social exclusion, low education levels for women, long-term unemployment (organising training courses, employing, etc.). Interaction with the auditing committee is restricted to official money transactions. A great deal of municipal interaction takes place with the educational committee. The settlement has taken to its responsibility issues such as afternoon care for primary-school children that was previously organised by the municipality. The interaction takes place for the most part through officials who run the practical affairs. Again the settlement has made suggestions to the municipality about how to develop this sector. The Laukaa municipality is very exceptional in that it has both municipal- (in the municipality centre) and association-based adult educational institutes (Lievestuore), which has caused problems, as the main flow of resources goes to the centre. The leisure committee is a "natural" partner because the settlement is the local centre for many hobbies.

Together with the Lievestuore Society, the Settlement has functioned as a relay and nodal point between all active associations in the locality (see below). These endeavours crystallise in the LYHDE project, which has led to the establishment of the House of Associations and in many kinds of co-operative networks. Through memberships to association boards, and in the adult institute and in the associations of its students, local inhabitants have an opportunity for their voices to be heard. Also, vice versa, in studying circles and other activities, the Settlement receives invaluable information ("weak signals"), making it possible to resonate in its environment to take into consideration local needs in the planning of its future.

Voluntary associations as local mediators

Voluntary associations' activities span across all sectors or domains of the locality, most typically leisure and recreation, sports and culture. In addition, environment protection and nature conservation, health, and education are central spheres of interest for the majority of associations. Only a few associations say that they have anything to do with (party) politics. Associations' short shrift to economic and political issues is in line with their infrequent interactions with private companies and political parties. However, if we widen the concept of politics from formal to include performative and politicisation dimensions, the majority of associations show up as political actors: they challenge, reveal, influence, lobby, find alternative solutions to local problems, criticise, organise village parliaments, take part in EU programmes, etc. Thus their actions have both direct and indirect ramifications for the municipal polity issues and policy mechanisms. Associations also politicise important local issues such as schools and the environment (regarding the dimensions of politics, see Palonen 2003).

In a pluralist, free civil society a strong correspondence prevails between actors' interests and the differentiation of the system of associations. In the last instance, members' interests and interest consciousness precondition their choices in diverse activities. Voluntary associations present themselves to potential members as well as to potential association partners through symbolic frames (Snow et al. 1986). These vary from ideological programmes to practical plans or citizen initiatives accepted in the association meeting. A necessary – but not as such sufficient – precondition for becoming a member or a participant in a certain type of association is the compatibility between an actor's personal frame (reflecting her/his habitus) and the collective frame of the association (see Goffman 1974; Snow et al 1986; Siisiäinen 1996). The co-operation between associations or between associations and a municipal institution also requires that their frames are not exclusionary, enabling the alignment between frames and possibly ensuing co-operation. The mediation between diverse collective and individual frames takes place in local public sphere, on the internet and in such

organisations that connect people from various social contexts (schools, work places, etc.).

The following table is based on the classification of the actions of voluntary associations featured in the local newspaper Laukaa-Konnevesi (L-K) and in the provincial newspaper Keskisuomalainen (KSML). Feature stories or news in the media are classified according to their main topics/sectors. Sometimes there were two or three comparably important topics and in that case they were all taken into the classification. Sports was the most frequent topic in Laukaa-Konnevesi, but it is excluded from the table as a separate category because most of the sports "news" deal only with competition results. Therefore the role of sports clubs will be dealt with in the following section as part of local networks acting together or as components of more general trends (e.g. as in the case of the erosion of ideological sub-cultures in the local community). It is also good to keep in mind that the following table based on frequencies is not a proxy to the local importance or political weight. For example, during the recession of the 1990s or at the time of the pulp factory closing in the

Table 6.6 *Most general topics/issues of association activities in local news/feature stories 1984–2009 (in order of frequency)*

1984–1989	**1990–1999**	**2000–2009**
1. culture (forms of art, festivals)	1. culture	1. culture
2. politics	2. education & schooling	2. collective action & protest
3. collective action/protests	3. welfare & health	3. economy & work & (un)employment
4. economy & work & (un)employment	4. planning & environment & housing & construction	4. youth & children & age
5. planning & environment & housing & construction	5. youth & children & age	5. welfare & health
6. youth & children & age	6. collective action & protest	6. planning & environment & housing & construction
	7. politics	7. nature
	8. economy & work & unemployment	8. education & schooling
	9. nature	9. history & tradition

1980s, the economy is generally present in the news, but often only in a mediated or disguised form in articles dealing specifically with associations. The table presents associations in the local publicity as subjects of the stories. For example, in the 1980s and 1990s many articles were published about the condition of the local lake, but if associations were not named as actors in the text, they were not included in the classification.

The main type of associational issue during the period under study is "culture" and various cultural hobbies (art performances, music, drama, organising traditional evenings, cultural weeks, associational jubilees and anniversaries dances, competitions, etc). It means also that the political influence of local associations has, since the 1980s, been most of all indirect and culturally mediated. For half a century, until the 1970s, the local identity was structured around the local pulp mill. Political organising between the Right and the Left was based too strongly on the class division connected with the mill. But the mill was also the economic and symbolic distinguishing factor in the relations between the industrial groups (workers, local bourgeoisie) and the local peasantry. The mill was also the central basis for the local identity based on the symbolic work by associations and other local actors.

The 1980s was a dramatic and critical time in the locality of Lievestuore: the pulp mill, established in the 1920s, was closed in 1984, charged with polluting the nearby lake and surrounding environment (specific charges include illegal sheltering of waste, faltering of laboratory tests). This development brought an end to the factory's long struggle: it was already closed once around the turn of the 1960s–70s but after minor enhancements was allowed to continue another nearly fifteen years. However, the stop in 1984 turned out to be final. The shutdown of the factory and the ensuing occupation of the factory by the workers in 1971 attracted great national media attention (e.g. a documentary broadcast on the main television channel). Lievestuore became a national celebrity for the factory, its "lye pool" and stink which were made almost "immortal" in a popular schlager (see Kaalikoski 1996; Wolff 2009). The mill disappeared but left behind its negativity and a symbolic mark on the whole community in the form of pollution. It reached almost the level of

regional symbolic stigmata (Bourdieu 1980, 63–67), represented by the lye pool in the minds of both the locals and the outsiders.

The symbolic work carried out by local associations in their cultural events has been tenacious long-term activity toward the creation of a new local identity by creating new connecting symbolic ties. This work has meant creating new performative discourses to create positive presentations of the locality at the same pace as the purification of the lake and environment – e.g. the lye pool – has been made better step-by-step. A new local identity, tied to a newly born pure lake and based on the younger generation, has been built piecemeal over the least twenty years. This process has stressed the significance of cultural and symbolic factors as the influence of old class divisions has gradually faded. Now, new associational spokespersons, such as the Lievestuore Settlement and the Lievestuore Society, have developed to represent the local community. Local identity is thereby a historical artefact that has to be created and reproduced symbolically by "drawing discrete units out of indivisible continuities, difference out of undifferentiated" (Bourdieu 1984, 479; see also Weininger 2005, 95–102).

The cultural turn did not happen in one fell swoop. The rise of unemployment and its multiplicative effects following the shut down of the mill overshadowed both the lives of many local inhabitants and the local publicity and its associational actors in the 1980s and 1990s. The concern over the pollution of nature was intertwined with economic problems, as the factory was the main source of both economic and environmental problems (and social welfare at the same time) – in fact the main cause of the local ecological catastrophe. The effects of the economic crisis can be seen in the structure of issues carried out by associations at the end of the 1980s. Even though culture and hobby associations were the most frequently appearing actors in the local newspaper, the combination of problems originating from the economy (unemployment, political initiatives and demands) and various collective measures to cope with or protest against them (occupation of the factory, strikes, addresses, letters to the editors) colour directly or indirectly the majority of articles in which voluntary associations figure as central actors. It was impossible for any association to avoid traversing the economic power field or political

tensions connected to the economic problems, or being affected by their corollaries.

At the end of the 1980s, to a large extent issues concerning planning centred around the SOFY-project whose central local agent was the Lievestuore Society. The project aimed at developing models of co-operation. It connected public sector actors, entrepreneurs, experts and civil society organisations in order to solve concrete local problems through planning. It is a concrete example of how the Finnish neo-corporatist mechanisms worked on a rural local level (e.g. L-K 5.2.1988; 3.3.1988; 15.4.1992). It is also a good illustration of how interaction networks function concretely and what kind of contents go through their channels.

In the 1990s and ever since, the cultural issues have strengthened their dominant position in the totality of local associational activities. They have also become the favourite topic in the local media, followed by education and schooling, welfare and health and planning. In sports the most important occurrence – reflecting the general national trend – was the amalgamation of two major sport clubs Toive, a member of the workers' sports federation (TUL) (with approximately 300 members) and Kisa (approximately 650 members) (L-K 23.2.1995), thereby locally ending – at least formally – the bisection of Finnish sports that had continued through generations since the beginning of the 20th century (see Hentilä 1982; Siisiäinen 1990). Since then the political character of associational life has become more and more disguised.

The concrete meaning of interaction networks show up in the examination of cultural events and evenings organised through the joint efforts of a number of local associations. A major tour-de-cultural-force has been the organisation of the local annual cultural week (Liisan Tarinat) and mouth organ festival (Liisan Höylät), subsidised by the municipality (L-K 28.3.1996; 22.1.1997; 20.1.2008), as co-operation projects by the majority of the active cultural associations, the Lutheran Church and local entrepreneurs. These two festivals are components in the translation of stigmatised symbols (stigmatising schlager Lievestuoreen Liisa) into the building components of a new proactive local identity (national music festival).

In adult education (in the wide meaning of the concept) the local motor has been the Lievestuore Settlement Association and its adult education institute (kansalaisopisto). It can be said, without exaggeration, that the Settlement has coloured and stabilised the adult education and cultural life of the entire locality for many decades. The association and the institute have also been able to renew themselves and to adapt to the internationalisation of civil society. Good examples of this are many EU projects combining culture, education and employment (such as ADVANCE and EQUAL), in which the association has been participating since Finnish EU membership began 15 years ago (see Kivelä & Kolehmainen 2005; e.g. L-K 15.6.1995; 6.4.2006). This is also a concrete example of the ability of a single association to transform social and cultural capital (capability to organise EU-projects) into economic capital in the forms of new working opportunities.

In the 2000s cultural events have kept up their centrality in the creation of new positive images of the locality, resulting from the co-operation of several multi-functional voluntary associations and local firms, as well as with continuing support from the local church and the municipality institutions. For example, the programme for the local cultural festival week "Liisan Tarinat" organised in 2006, among other events, a gym marathon, a village parliament, church evening, exhibitions, a clown performance, literary evenings, "art goes to cafés", an evening dancing party, concerts and a children's party. Local associational capital is also concentrated in a new Lyhde-project centred in the House of Associations, led by the Settlement Association and accompanied by ten partnering associations. The project is partly financed by the municipality and it connects the most active associations in the locality. Its main goals reveal many local methods of building co-operation: to support open civic activities in the locality by improving the capacity of associations; to increase the "community spirit"; and to enhance the quality of local networks, including the development of the House of Associations (see e.g. L-K 12.3.2009). The same associational actors are on the move again in the expositions organised by the Entrepreneurs' Association and in most of the other larger events and happenings in the locality (L-K 24.11.2005; 25.2.2009).

Cultural festivals and inter-associational projects have been made possible for their part by the availability of the premises offered by various partners for festival use. After the burning down of a traditional hall built for the use of bourgeois associations in the 1920s (L-K 22.11.1988), two proper association halls remain in the village (owned by the Settlement and the Social Democratic Association). In addition, the Savio dancing hall, owned by the Social Democratic association, is an important place for cultural events in the summertime. The Lutheran Church and two religious movements have local houses of their own as well. Across Finland about 2500 association houses are in use at present, surpassing the number of Lutheran churches in the country (see Tuomisto & Pakkala 2008, 12).

Even though there are tensions between the parent municipality and the Lievestuore locality, co-operation in organising local events shows that the boundaries between civil society and the municipal institutions have often been blurred. Often they also are a testimony to the ability of civil society actors to fill somewhat the gaps in the functioning of the welfare state. The local public library is a kind of relay, helping many associations that work with, for example, children and young people. The local adult education institute of the Settlement Association takes care of many services belonging to the municipal sphere of responsibilities (e.g. language courses in co-ordination with the local gymnasium, daycare centres, ESF-projects [training, employment]) (e.g. L-K 4.5.1995; 17.1.2002; Kivelä & Kolehmainen 2005). There is also repeated co-operation between the Lutheran Church, the Orthodox and free religious movements in the form of ecumenical evenings (L-K 2.2.1995; 19.1.2006). Even though no comparative data on Finnish localities are available, it can be concluded that the activity level of local civil society in Lievestuore is above the average of Finnish rural communities.

These interaction processes reveal at the same time the intertwinedness of the associational cultural and social capital with local economic capital. A small-scale example of a mix of cultural and economic capitals is the local flea market organised by the entrepreneurs association (L-K 3.12.2002; 4.8.2005). In a small locality economic and civil society organisations crosscut each other, as the same persons are active in both

domains. Those active mediators combine simultaneously the personal and organisational levels of social capital by (re)producing both vertical and horizontal networks. On a larger scale, the volume of the transformation of the forms of capital into each other may look small, but at the practical level it is a significant factor both for the dynamics and the structure of the local system.

Tensions, changing local fields and repertoires of collective action

It is easy to take the concept of "struggle" more or less literally in the context of social fields. However, struggles in the everyday life of a voluntary association mean tenacious work for association interests and small practices whose consequences become apparent with shorter or longer lag as a co-resultant of other actors' endeavours. Even small associations *en masse* can have strong influence in the political or cultural field as, for example, Finnish village associations showed in the 1970s with their demand for developing the countryside.

In their small-scale political actions, voluntary associations adapt selectively various forms of collective action and use different kinds of repertoires. Institutionalised strategies, public happenings and protesting have alternated in local associational practice in the 2000s. Although protesting has been dealt with relatively often in the local media lately (see Table 6.6 above), it does not mean that social contradictions would be manifested more sharply than 20–30 years earlier. Instead it tells about the dispersion of conflicts, changing class structures and the scale of protesting.

The period from the 1920s to the 1960s was a time of visible local class divisions and political class confrontations. The Haarla pulp mill, built in 1926, dominated local development. Lievestuore is one of the rural communities that grew around the local wood-processing factory. It created the base for capitalist class divisions and, to a large extent, for a political superstructure characterised by juxtaposition between a strong and influential extreme Right (in the 1920s and 1930s), rural (and pro-

vincial) Centre, and a bisect Left. This class-divide covered (and was, in fact, forced to cover by the owner of the factory) most of the ideological and cultural activities, more or less also voluntary organising until the 1960s.

Simultaneously as the national political system started changing towards a more inclusive neo-corporatist system easing off the salience of political confrontations, the local factory headed into a situation in which it was threatened with a close-down at the end of the 1960s (see Kuokkanen 1973; Kaalikoski 1996). Workers responded to the factory closing by occupation in 1971 and demanded guarantees for its future operation. The factory indeed got an extension but ended in cul-de-sac 13 years later and went bankrupt. The occupation of the factory was repeated in 1984 with no success in meeting the demands. The level of environmental consciousness had risen from the 1970s, legal environmental norms and public control were now much stricter. That is why environmental problems as such and the criminal methods used by the factory to hide them led unavoidably to the final close-down. Before it, from 1971 to 1985, a wide repertoire of collective actions was tested by the workers, employees and their supporters. These ranged from the above-mentioned two occupations (1971 and 1984), a hunger strike (1971) (or at least a pretend hunger strike), large support strikes, and burning of dolls in front of the factory. These were backed up with more typical Finnish ways of advancing demands and interests, such as collecting addresses, writing to newspapers, sending delegations, appealing to parties and politicians, organising demonstrations, etc. (e.g. L-K 4.10.1985, 30.9.1985, 12.9.1985; Kaalikoski 1996). Resorting to prevailing, traditional repertoires of collective action excluded the use of violence, fights, destruction of private or public property by the protestors (see Siisiäinen 2004).

The pollution of the lake, air and other environmental problems (such as allergies) connected with the mill triggered many local protests in the mid-1980s. At times, tensions developed along new lines: between nature protectors (including fishery organisations/kalastuskunnat) and those demanding the continuation of the factory (owners and trade unions) (e.g. L-K 12.9.1985; 23.9.1985). At the end of the 1980s, the local conflict that attracted the most media attention concerned the

selling of an un-built outdoor recreational area, Kisapursi, to a local businessman and politician on the cheap. The municipality refused to use its first-call, which did not make the deal any better in the eyes of many locals. It also caused a resurface of the old local suspicion towards the municipality. The new owner got the green light from the committee of planning and building for the exceptional permit to plan the area and the official decision was handed down finally from the municipal institution (e.g. KSML 4.10.1992; L-K 22.10.1992). The process with ensuing lawsuits lasted for many years but ended against the wishes of the local protestors. Once again, almost all of the customary repertoires of action were tested. Local inhabitants established the "commission of people's democracy" (kansanvallan valtuuskunta) to plead their common case. It tried to persuade the municipal institution for its case, made an alternative plan for the area, wrote in the local newspaper, and organised meetings, but to no avail. (L-K 6.8.1992; KSML 23.10.1992)

In the 1990s central reasons for local protesting still concerned nature, environment and planning. As in Finnish society in general, during the recovery from the deep recession (which was at rock-bottom in 1992), many old political-ideological tensions dating from the "pipe-factory era" seemed to be buried. This tendency continued and strengthened, even in the 2000s. In Lievestuore the clearest concrete expression of this tendency was the above-mentioned joining together of the workers' sports association Toive (TUL) and the member club of the "bourgeois" sports movement (SVUL) Kisa in 1995. The main "rational" arguments for the unification were that the clubs complemented each other in terms of the variety of sports and events, and that they had a number of members in common. The union was supposed to bring saves and synergy. The period of consensual unification lasted for ten years, until the club took back the old "bourgeois" name Kisa in the mid-2000s. As a side effect, some members of the old workers' club stood aside. In the 2000s other locally anchored voluntary associations of the working class subculture have also disappeared: the last Social Democratic association abolished itself in 2007 (The Register of Associations).

All present party-political associations acting in Lievestuore are named after the parent municipality Laukaa. Only two pensioners' associations

with ideological-cum-political roots – one in Social Democratic subculture, the other in the political Centre – are left. It is emblematic of the present associational atmosphere that they both today try to conceal these roots and deny any dependency on ideologies or world views. They are also considering joining forces. The Social Democratic subculture, however, influences local cultural development by providing a workers' hall as a place of cultural events.

Simultaneously with the discolouration of old ideologies and the draining of their capacity to trigger associations, the activeness around local issues, like environment education and welfare, has relatively grown. This has happened at the same pace as services have been concentrating both in the wider society and in rural localities. Under the "banner" of protecting nature, in addition to the factory-oriented movements (e.g. demands to decontaminate, clean and plan the old factory place), new citizens' initiatives have developed in the 2000s. A good example of new endeavours is the citizens' initiative for the protection of a beautiful cape backed up actively by the Lievestuore Society, Scout clubs and the Boat association (L-K 13.11.2000). A cause for protest that has come up repeatedly during the last 20 years is connected with motor sports and/or motor-vehicle training (L-K 2.9.2001). The construction and planning for their uses and the dreaded ensuing damages to nature have aroused objections from neighbours. It seems also that motor sports is the only type of sport that divides the local inhabitants into supporters and objectors. Protesting by local villagers, the village association and other actors in the area of Lievestuore has arisen also against the plans of a state-dominated company headquartering in the province centre Jyväskylä to build a waste burning plant in the vicinity of the village Savio. This struggle has continued for 20 years and has, so it seems, finally ended after the recent decision of the Supreme Administrative Court that declared building the plant legal. (e.g. L-K 14.12.2006; 22.12.2009) And again, it is easy to see that local movements in Lievestuore take analogous positions vis-à-vis nature conservation like hundreds of initiatives in other localities, thereby developing en bloc field-like characteristics.

Despite many setbacks, efforts by local movements and associations to protect nature, to improve the material and symbolic environment

and the image as well as local self-consciousness have in many cases been relatively successful and rewarding: the "lye pool", damaging the reputation of the locality, has been emptied and cleared, the lake is currently among the purest in the province and considered a good place for fishing. Cultural festivals and ESF projects have strengthened the image of Lievestuore as a place able to develop and renew itself, and a good place in which to live. This is the sunny side of the picture, whereas the dark side reveals cutting local resources and concentrating them instead to the municipal centre located 30 kilometres from Lievestuore.

The decisions by the municipal council to make these moves official and put them into practice have highlighted once again the strong undercurrents of distrust and discontent towards the Laukaa municipality that stubbornly reside in the local collective conscience. The first hits targeted village schools. Little by little this had led to the abolishment of all local primary schools in the villages surrounding the population centre of Lievestuore. For example, the local village association of Hoho led the struggle for the village school, without success however, as the school closed in 2001. After the school closed, the next struggle concerned the fate of the schoolhouse – which was the property of the municipality – crystallised in selling the school to the highest bidder. Because the village association did not have enough money and because the municipality did not change its economic-calculative decision to sell, the saviour appeared in the form of a returnee who bought the house and allocated a part of it to the inhabitants' and associations' disposal (e.g. L-K 30.11.2000; 7.7.2001; 10.6.2004). In the list of closedowns, the village schools were succeeded by the local post office (2006), the gymnasium (2007) and the full-time local health centre/municipality service point (2009). All were objected by the locals but without concrete success.

One of the generalisations in social movement research is that all societies have a commonly shared and widely-known repertoire of collective action which tends to change relatively slowly (see Tilly 1988; Siisiäinen 2004). In Finland the modern repertoire has been developed, most of all, by voluntary associations and it can be characterised as favouring well-organised forms of action, law-abidance, peacefulness, confidence in the strength of word and education, discipline, and respect for property. In

general Finnish collective action has been dominated by registered associations and filtered by their dominant mode of action (see Siisiäinen 2004; Siisiäinen & Blom 2009). The analysis of integrative/consensual and conflicting/protesting civic action in Lievestuore reveals the strength and the continuity of the general Finnish patterns of collective action. Meetings, addresses, appeals, delegations, contacts with politicians and campaigns are its central components[4].

There are also some local specialties dating back to the political history of the locality, perpetuated to some extent in the collective memory. Occupations of premises and houses have been more frequent in Lievestuore than in Finnish rural communities on average. In addition to factories, occupations have also been applied elsewhere. In 1984 the old association house from the 1920s was occupied by local youths as a protest against the lack of youth premises. A quarter-century later, students and a faction of teachers occupied the gymnasium in order to protest the plans to close it. One student's explanation for her participation was that if the occupation of the mill in 1971 was successful, would it not be worth trying in the case of the gymnasium as well?

Conclusions

This chapter analysed individual and collective actors' activities in local spheres and social fields. The main focus of the chapter is on voluntary associations, first as (potential) actors in fields, and second, as central components to the totality of individual actors' resources in the form of association memberships. On the individual actors' level, four configurations or types of social capital were identified. The differentiation of social capital corresponds roughly to the differences in the ownership of economic and cultural capital. Wealthy and highly educated locals have

[4] Two exceptions proving the rule of lawful action can be found in the 2000s in Lievestuore: the arson of an outdoor grill owned by a Tunisian-Finnish couple and the levelling of shooting stands (ampumalavat) constructed by a deer hunters association. The arson was carried out by two racist criminals (L-K 2.5.2002). The only trace left behind by the offender of the second misdemeanour was the acronym (EVR/ALF), referring to some kind of connection to the Animal Liberation Front.

more association memberships and they also feel themselves "at home" ("like fish in the water") in various associational activities, such as voluntary work, chairing organisations and holding meetings. People with associational capital are also able to utilise it instrumentally connecting themselves with people outside their family or neighbourhood.

These "capital rich" people are distinguished most clearly from "home-centred" people who have the least volume of disposable social capital, both from associations and from friends and neighbours. In the social position of this group, low control of economic and cultural capital is combined with weak associational ties. Together these factors explain also their lack of a sense of local identity. But there are also those "friendship-centred" people who have a relatively high level of social capital concentrated to friends and neighbours. This is the group most rooted in the locality via family ties. They are able to get both instrumental and expressive resources through these friendship and family networks.

The analysis shows that locality still matters in the development of various kinds of social capital. Home-centred people seem to be withdrawn both from instrumental networks and from local communal relations. On the other hand, locality seems to play an important, though differentiated, role in the lives of all other groups: for association and cultural people, locality encompasses associational activities and cultural events; for friendship-centred people, local community is mediated via family, neighbours and local origin; for widely networked people, locally important places and possibilities for meeting form a central part of their instrumental whole of social networks.

These different kinds of relations also modify the informal ways of transforming capitals. Nevertheless, even if we make distinctions between different types of networks or connections, it is not reasonable to label them as e.g. "bridging" or "bonding" types of social capital as such. Rather, any network connection (such as membership to an association or a contact with a neighbour) can function simultaneously as bridging or bonding social capital (see Kouvo 2010, 168–169).

The construction of various types of social networks can be interpreted from the viewpoint of the causality of the probable. Associational capital is concentrated in people with cultural skills (and adequate habitus),

while friendship contacts are of great importance to others. Participation in voluntary associations seems reasonable and realistic only for those who see it as consistent with their own background and personal resources. In a similar way, maintaining close contacts with some relatives instead of wider networks is a reasonable choice for those, for example, who are attached to the locality via their roots. Most probably, these two different paths of social capital are also appropriate for these two categories of people leading to beneficial or at least tolerable outcomes in relation to their disposable resources. This has to be kept in mind when examining the associational actors in local spheres.

The analysis shows that the totality of different associations does not *en bloc* make a local social field of their own. It is, to a large extent, a fallacy of perspective to see the local political field as a field of its own, rather than seeing it as a subordinate part of a larger national (or even international) field (see Bourdieu 1990a; Koebel 2009, 40–44). Currently, mutual "struggles" or intense competitions between local associations over "stakes" in a tensional proper field are relatively rare. Associations certainly compete with one another for potential members, local prominence and visibility. There may occur, from time to time, "struggles of power" over leaderships inside associations (c.f. Weber 1911; Siisiäinen 1986). In this respect the conception of a social field from a methodological angle can help to discern the inner dynamics of associations. However, the "real life" in small voluntary associations may be very different. Association members tend to employ quickly the exit option when facing unfair uses of power or greedy-for-power leaders. Leaders are continually fighting against the difficulties of getting new members and retaining the old ones. This kind of state of affairs tends to make the power struggles in practice a more or less "theoretical" phenomenon. These days, it is easy in most cases to become an association leader on a local level (see e.g. Warren 2001). The practical motivation of local association leaders is well-captured in the title of Pamela Oliver's article (1984), "If you don't do it, nobody else will". Instead of aspiring to power positions, many – perhaps most – of the local association leaders take their position as a moral obligation born out of a sense of responsibility.

Instead of making an associational field of their own, local associations struggle in larger political and cultural fields on behalf of the interests of their members. Associations operating in the same field or sector can compete for stakes, form coalitions and so forth, but the whole picture cannot be inferred from what happens in single localities. Rather, it has to be formed holistically, looking at small dispersed struggles as related parts of the whole "big" field. From this perspective many local associations are or have been also field actors in national or even international fields. Local party branches take part in political "struggles" at least during election rallies (c.f. Koebel 2009). People also speak out politically by leaving political organisations. Local trade unions and employers' organisations give their more or less influential contribution to the national or global labour market field by doing their share in various localities. During economic crises, the role of (also local) trade unions and political associations tends to grow as class factors become more salient and dominant, whereas in times of stable social development, class tends to be superseded by status group factors (*Stände*), such as cultural hobbies or consumption patterns, as bases of interest organising (see Weber 1976; Siisiäinen 1986).

The tendency of depoliticisation of politics ensuing from the economisation of political decision-making has, for its part, accelerated the flood of cultural and other hobby associations at the expense of party political associations and interest groups in the 2000s. In Lievestuore class factors were influential during the "pipe-factory era" until the 1970s. Since then the associational developments reflect the tendency of ideological discoloration. Visible remnants of political-associational subcultures, once so vibrant, have almost vanished. At the same time political decision-making has been centralised to national and international centres (c.f. Koebel 2009). The depoliticisation, in the disguise of economic rationalisation, has continued on the association level during the recovery from the economic recession of the 1990s, and the creeping dismantlement of the welfare state by all major political parties. Class factors can most easily be seen in the new divisions between socially excluded groups, such as the long-term unemployed and – at least relatively – well-to-do groups, who form the actual basis of local associational life.

The above-described tendencies are all prevalent in Lievestuore. The trajectories of local associations are affected by the developments in the large national and international economic, political and cultural fields. The time from the 1990s witnessed the growing dominance of cultural and other hobby associations in local life and publicity. The most important political influence of voluntary associations comes from their total impact. Associational pluralism is one of the basic preconditions for a democratic political system (see Baer 2007; Maloney & Rossteutscher 2007). Multi-functional local associations, complemented by small specific cultural associations, create and reproduce, oppose, transform and utilise in numerous ways operational preconditions and opportunities of the political and other fields and subsystems. The outcomes of the choices and strivings of local associations depend on the choices of all different agents in diverse social fields from the local to the national and global levels.

The choices of voluntary associations follow the logic of the causality of the probable. Similar to individual actors, voluntary associations tend to choose those alternatives which, against the backdrop of their past experiences, are reasonable, likely leading to good or at least bearable outcomes in the anticipated, contingent future. On the other hand, their strategies are realistic, adjusted to their disposable adequate economic, cultural and social capital. In Lievestuore the paper mill closed down, village schools and public services have been vanishing from the locality regardless of local associations' efforts and citizens' initiatives. But, on the other hand, there are also many examples of successful local projects by associations. Voluntary associations are still the main means of concentrating collective social capital and thereby the causal power in the collective participation in social fields and other domains of action. In Lievestuore the most prominent and visible associations that advance practical interests have been able to enhance the local quality of living in many concrete ways. This task is realised by concerted co-operation between active associations.

In these usually modest and non-dramatic ways, the associational social capital functions as a mediating factor, contributing to the transformation of cultural and social capital into economic and political

resources and potentials on both individual and local levels. Associations have also been able to politicise locally important issues (schools and services, environmental conservation, cultural events, hobby opportunities). These could be interpreted as examples of the causality of the probable: it may often be more realistic and effective to take small steps that have a high probability of success and whose consequences can be controlled by the local people and their voluntary associations. And this could also be, in the long run, once again a practical way to effect changes at the societal level. In Finland there are about 90,000 associations, most of them acting locally. Their power lies in their collective size, and in the consequences – both intended and unintended – of their concurrent choices and practices.