Food System Transformations

Social Movements, Local Economies, Collaborative Networks

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8   Transformative communities in Germany

Working towards a sustainable food supply through creative doing and collaboration

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8.1 Introduction

With the new millennium, the ecological movement in the food sector has been gaining strength and developing alternative concepts to the growth-driven consumer society. Alternatives to global "Big Food" (Clapp and Scrinis 2016; Williams and Nestle 2016; Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung et al. 2017) are emerging that operate locally, ecologically, in a way which is socially aware, on a small scale and based on solidarity. Global industrial processes of value creation based on the division of labor and sole dependence on non-local supply chains are gradually being dismantled, reflecting the advance of growth-critical approaches (Paech 2012). The activation of people's own resources, along with the production of local goods as a means of circumventing long-distance and complex value chains, are important elements in the process of reconfiguring the food supply system. Local food initiatives and enterprises[1] that operate in a community-oriented, collaborative and grassroots-based democratic manner (Renting et al. 2012) are key contributors in this. They stand for a "self-determined life and dignity for all" (Burkhart et al. 2017, 109). Rather than focusing on consuming goods and services and constantly seeking more and more material opportunities for self-fulfillment (Benson 2000; Bauman 2007), such efforts are aimed at jointly developing practices of provision and mutual care that change conventional patterns of consumption and, therefore, coexistence (Jackson 2009, 187ff.). Also referred to as the grassroots movement (Seyfang and Smith 2007; Rossi 2017), urban gardening projects, community-supported agriculture, food co-ops and producer–consumer networks establish links between producers and consumers (Carlson and Bitsch 2018), promote "prosumerism"[2] (Blättel-Mink et al. 2017) and create learning spaces to support processes of self and group empowerment.

Focusing as it does on the community orientation of these enterprises, this chapter addresses the following questions: what emancipatory, creative potential do local food enterprises develop in their role as *transformative*

communities that are working towards achieving a sustainable food supply? How can they change the dominant food system through community-based economic activity?

In the following, we begin by outlining the theoretical framework and the method of investigation (section 8.2) before then clarifying the concept and significance of transformative communities in local food enterprises (section 8.3). Finally, we present the results of the empirical study (section 8.4) and discuss the possibilities and limitations of transformative communities with regard to socio-ecological change (section 8.5).

8.2 Theoretical framework and empirical design

To analyze the significance of community in local food enterprises we opted to use the Strategy-as-Practice (SAP) approach (Vaara and Whittington 2012, 289ff.; Golsorkhi et al. 2016). SAP connects the theory of strategic management with social practice theory.

Strategic management concentrates on the planning, development and implementation of a company's objectives. The focus here is mostly on strategy development at upper control levels with the aim of positioning oneself on the market. By supplementing sociological aspects in SAP, it is also possible to analyze other levels of a company as relevant units of action for strategy development, which is also relevant for us because the enterprises we examine are those that have flat hierarchies and do not make decisions exclusively at management level. Since strategies in SAP are not only taken as normative decisions, but also include actions that actually take place, entrepreneurial action can be considered much more comprehensively.

This broader approach enables us to analyze other types of organizations than traditional businesses using a variety of qualitative methods. Instead of regarding strategies exclusively as top-down management decisions based on corporate visions and clear deliberate strategies for realizing them, we also look at "emergent strategies" that are often a result of social practices within the enterprise. In doing so, we substitute the narrow and individualistic approach of traditional business studies for a holistic one that considers the embeddedness of actors and enterprises within society as well as the variety of actors and their multiple interactions. According to Vaara and Whittington, practices are "accepted ways of doing things, embodied and materially mediated, that are shared between actors and routinized over time" (Vaara and Whittington 2012, 287). Theories developed in cultural sociology enrich the economic approach because they underline the importance of social practices and their reorganization with regard to the contemporary relevance of community approaches to social and political life (Bauman 2007; Delanty [2009] 2010 ; Reckwitz 2017). Thus, SAP provides insights into the world of practitioners and enriches our knowledge of embedded activities in broader societal or macro-institutional contexts.

As part of the interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research project *nascent*, this paper focuses on the social practices of community orientation (Pfriem et al. 2015) in local food enterprises and highlights their possibilities and limitations with regard to social-ecological transformation. Taking a transdisciplinary approach (Hirsch Hadorn et al. 2008; Fam et al. 2017), we focus specifically on micro-episodes of strategizing. This is especially important for us due to our particular interest in transformative communities which are part of enterprises or are closely connected to them. These community-enhancing enterprises are very different from classical enterprises/ business models in terms of organization, one example being their use of more participatory structures in decision-making processes.

Empirical data was collected using semi-structured interviews, participant observation, action research and workshops conducted in collaboration with 27 practitioners from local food enterprises and initiatives. The enterprises surveyed are located in five German regions (Oldenburg, Berlin, Leipzig, Munich, the Ruhr district – each with its surrounding area). What they have in common is their focus on comprehensively sustainable production and distribution of food, although they use very different business models for this purpose. While some are closer to the conventional structures of the food industry, such as regional brands, others, such as farms in community-supported agriculture, concentrate more on alternative supply concepts. Other examples of the enterprises we studied are less interested in distributing food than in sharing knowledge and experience. Examples of this are urban gardening projects or self-harvesting fields.

The interviews were subject to computer-aided qualitative text analysis (Kuckartz 2014), while quantitative data was gathered from surveys of the members and customers of the enterprises. In our contribution, we draw on selected contributions from the interviews to demonstrate the relevance of community orientation. In order to protect the anonymity of our interview partners, the quotes are coded.

8.3 Transformative communities in local food enterprises

The qualitative results highlight the prominent role of community orientation in the reorganization of the food supply in local food enterprises (Pfriem et al. 2015). In the following sections, we use extracts from interviews to illustrate and support the findings. The quotations of the practitioners are in italics to identify them clearly. The enterprises investigated confirm the great importance of community for its members. They can participate in joint activities, such as harvesting, workshops or farm festivals, in a variety of ways: *"This is also reflected in surveys, and we hear it when we talk to people, that for many it is actually the community aspect, being with other people, that is the key thing"* (G3-5, 80).

In these newly developing transformative communities, a wide range of actors work together over a given period of time with the aim of forging new

paths in the globalized, anonymized food system. The fact that many people are actually looking for community benefits the food initiatives. Zygmunt Bauman (2001) identifies a *turn to community* in *liquid modernity*, reading it as an attempt to mitigate the uncertainties of the "unlimited risk society" (Beck [1968] 1992) in times of growing global complexity. Gerard Delanty agrees:

> The increasing individualism of modern society has been accompanied by an enduring nostalgia for the idea of community as a source of security and belonging in an increasingly insecure world. ... Community has a contemporary resonance in the current social and political situation, which appears to have produced a worldwide search for roots, identity and aspirations for belonging.
>
> (Delanty [2009] 2010, x)

Today's consumer society is characterized by an ambiguity regarding the individual–collective nexus: on the one hand, people strive for individual self-realization and autonomy and engage readily in competition (Bröckling 2015; Siedentop 2015), while this very set of behaviors simultaneously reinforces a desire for social proximity, empathy and cooperation (Sennett 2013). New forms of economic proximity and interaction are emerging, not least in the form of economic activity based on solidarity as an alternative to the competitive economy and its material maximization of utility. Economic activity can, "as it originally did, serve people and their well-being rather than having an orientation towards profit as the overriding purpose to which people must submit" (Möller [1998] 1999, 19; own translation). The necessary prerequisite for this is the actors' fundamental commitment to "socially competent and cooperative practices based on solidarity" (ibid.; own translation).

Transformative communities are new communities (Goulding et al. 2002; Hitzler et al. 2008; Gertenbach et al. 2010; Davies 2012) formed by people coming together voluntarily to pursue certain aims. In contrast to traditional communities such as families, village communities or religious communities, whose membership is given by virtue of traditional and social ties and which are progressively losing their cohesive power these days, voluntary post-traditional "neo-communities" must first be institutionalized. People decide to participate in them because they are culturally attractive (Reckwitz 2017, 399), and similar to *communities of practice,* in which heterogeneous actors are dedicated to a common goal:

> Communities of practice are groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly.
>
> (E. and B. Wenger-Trayner 2015, 1)

It is also about a new form of self-realization and self-efficacy, expressed in the desire to engage creatively in heterogeneous modes of cooperation. This

is particularly evident among the founders and employees of local food enterprises, who expect to get more from their professional activities than just income:

> *We [founders] didn't know each other at the beginning but immediately realized that we were both in very similar phases of life, where we wanted to somehow reconcile our private, personal values with a professional commitment. … We never dithered for long, but just moved things along quite energetically – we made decisions quickly and unbureaucratically and in fact set up the cooperative before we had even packed and delivered the first vegetable box, because it was clear from the beginning where we wanted to go.*
>
> (G2-4, 26)

Reckwitz (2017) describes this fundamental change as follows:

> The highly qualified citizens of late modernity expect more from their work than just a means of earning a living. Creative work thus becomes a cultural practice in the sense of the strong concept of culture[3] – be it that it gives the workers hermeneutic-narrative meaning (a meaningful and interesting occupation), be it that it promises an aesthetically sensuous experience (the experience of creative flow), be it that it enables qualities of playfulness to be developed or that it is ascribed intrinsic ethical value ("being able to change something") or through the act of creating something new, which is expressed in it.
>
> (Reckwitz 2017, 187–188; own translation)

However, the pursuit of creative and meaningful activity is not limited to gainful employment. The members and customers of local food enterprises who volunteer their free time to engage in or to initiate joint activities also illustrate the relevance of purposeful action.

> *I think we meet very open-minded, interested people here who want to try things out and want to get to know each other on the one hand, and who are willing to take a sustainability-conscious approach, but who also want to pass this approach on. … and that's why it's a very, very nice mode of cooperation.*
>
> (G1-4, 99)

As indicated here, the desire to engage in shared creative activity brings together highly diverse actors. More than this, however, local food enterprises facilitate the creation of spaces and possibilities for discarding the traditional economic roles of consumption and production, spaces where the adoption of "prosumerism" enables people to try out and practice solidarity with one another.

To sum up, transformative communities are voluntary alliances of heterogeneous actors (founders of enterprises, employees, customers, etc.) who embrace the goal of working together in solidarity to change the food system on a local level. These communities arise within or as adjuncts to local food enterprises and are driven by the desire for creative and meaningful activity.

8.4 Sustainable practices, creative doing and social cohesion

In the following, we will take a closer look at creative doing and the associated reconfiguration of social practices in order to clarify the transformative potential of the emerging communities and to characterize them more precisely.

Recent research on social innovation (Haxeltine et al. 2013; Rückert-John 2013) emphasizes the importance of creative doing and experimental testing for the necessary transformation of existing practices in alternative projects. In order to break through well-established routines (Shove and Spurling 2012), it is necessary to "recombine or reconfigure social practices with the aim of solving problems or needs better than is possible on the basis of established practices" (Howaldt and Schwarz 2010, 54; own translation).

The relevance of heterogeneous forms of collaboration in creative doing, mentioned in the previous section as an important characteristic of transformative communities, is underscored by statements made by practitioners in the first workshop of the *nascent* project (in 2015) about the basis for their motivation. The overall high approval values for the items contained in the quantitative member survey in 2017 also underlines this significance. The quantitative member survey carried out by subproject 2 (University of Stuttgart) was conducted from 9 to 13 February 2017 using an online questionnaire. A total of 212 members from the 27 partner enterprises responded. The focus was on questions concerning motivations and goals of participating in the respective enterprise, but also on questions concerning the assessment of the transformation contribution and the effects of membership on other spheres.

According to Reckwitz (2017, 187–188), creative doing implies the following three factors of hermeneutic-narrative meaning: (1) meaningful and interesting activity; (2) aesthetically sensuous experience as one of creative flow; and (3) the intrinsic ethical value of being able to change something. These three factors form the basis of the following evaluation.

Tables 8.1 and 8.2 present the qualitative and quantitative data on collaboration in creative doing. We then compare this data with each other. The specific characteristics of self-efficacy, meaningfulness and sensual doing described by the practitioners, combined with participation, form the hermeneutic-narrative meaning of creative doing. The experience of community and social proximity reflects the second factor of aesthetically sensuous experience. Central for many participants is the experience of creative change

Table 8.1 Qualitative results on creative doing in transformative communities

Creative doing in collaboration with heterogeneous actors (qualitative data, *n* = 25)

Factor 1	*Factor 2*	*Factor 3*
Hermeneutic-narrative meaning (meaningful and interesting activity)	*Aesthetically sensuous experience (experience of creative flow)*	*Ethical value (being able to change something)*
Self-efficacy; meaningfulness and sensual doing	Self-empowerment; being proactive; fun and enjoyment	Experience of creative change and creative power
Participation (participatory agriculture, participatory vegetable growing)	Experiencing community and social proximity	Sense of political and social effectiveness and accountability

Table 8.2 Quantitative results on creative doing in transformative communities

Creative doing in collaboration with heterogeneous actors (quantitative data, *n* = 212)

Hermeneutic-narrative meaning (meaningful and interesting activity)	*Aesthetically sensuous experience (experience of creative flow)*	*Ethical value (being able to change something)*
Appreciation (2.85)[a]	Experience community (3.62)	Participation in and organization of the initiative (4.25)
Acquire new skills (3.69)	Become involved in a "hands-on" way (3.95)	Change something socially (4.39)
Expand knowledge (4.17)	Try new things (4.13)	Make a positive impact (4.64)
Mean 3.57	Mean 3.9	Mean 4.43

Note:
a Five-point Likert scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

and creative power, the feeling of political and social effectiveness and responsibility, which is called ethical value (Table 8.1).

The results of the quantitative survey (Table 8.2) are quite similar to the qualitative ones. The members of the enterprises like to acquire new skills and knowledge in order to increase the appreciation of food, as well as to contribute to the enterprises and the experiences of communities. The item "ethical value" achieves the highest approval rate, with an average of 4.43. This indicates that the objective of social change is the most important with regard to creative doing, suggesting that it is appropriate to characterize such communities as transformative communities.

Another challenge that arises in the context of transformative communities is that of cohesion and the challenges of collaboration in heterogeneous groups. According to theories of post-traditional communities, the cohesion between heterogeneous actors is continuously established and negotiated through the interplay of different criteria (following Lindgren and Packendorff 2006; Hitzler et al. 2008; Gertenbach et al. 2010). Transformative communities form their cohesion within the framework of the following five criteria:

1.   Vision: a shared commitment to contributing to solving social problems
2.   Difference: a differentiation between "us" and "not us" and visibility in the public sphere / politicization
3.   Identity: a sense of belonging, of being actively involved
4.   Value creation: intersubjective appreciation and establishing of meaning
5.   Participation: shared interaction.

The combination of these five criteria constitutes transformative communities. They form a cohesive framework and stabilize the community. However, they are also susceptible to disruption from the community's heterogeneous members, whose cooperative involvement is voluntary. As a result, the criteria may not just stabilize a community but may be responsible for it breaking apart. The balance between maintaining boundaries and practicing belonging therefore needs to be continuously renegotiated. If one of these criteria is disturbed, the cohesion – and very existence – of the community is threatened.

The key to cohesion in transformative communities is, first, the shared *vision* of contributing to solving social problems at a local level and getting involved in doing so. This finding is consistent with the results from the previous section:

> *Basically, it's the issue of how we shape the environment and the planet. ... People are becoming more and more aware of what that actually means. Is this really just about producing food to feed ourselves, or is it rather about how we live on this planet and what we give back into the cycle? ... It's here that I sense a great transformative power, that some people are becoming more clearly aware of what the part is that we give and don't just take.*
>
> (G2-2, 130-130)

The enterprises considered in the study have a powerful vision; they are pursuing the goal of economic activity based on solidarity (Douthwaite 1996; Möller [1998] 1999; Miller 2005; Voß 2015), and they are seeking local solutions to global problems by focusing on proximity, cooperation, trust, openness, transparency and recognition of needs. They are striving to work differently and cooperatively, not just within their enterprises and with their customers but also with other actors, as the following explanation clarifies:

> *It doesn't matter whether it's in the enterprise or with our suppliers or with our customers ... what is important for us is to do everything a bit differently to the way things are usually run. And it also shows that this actually works. If you're reasonably honest and open with each other. ... Our farmers tell us a price at which they can give us the goods and of course we discuss it together. ... But in the end, we have a rule that we give the farmers more money than they would get from the organic food wholesalers. ... And we also pass this on to our customers at a good price. ... It's not much different in operational terms either. ... And within the framework of what we can do, we try to make it possible. And you don't always have to look at every penny or every minute or every little thing. That's important to me. It actually works quite well.*
>
> (G2-1(2), 66)

The actors not only share a vision; they feel connected to each other by virtue of it. This also makes the initiatives and enterprises transformative communities: in a comprehensive sense they stand for a jointly organized, sustainable food supply, and possess the potential to displace unsustainable forms of food production and distribution.

Second, the community defines a *difference* to the non-sustainable, growth-driven, environmentally destructive food system with its global value chains, and works in the public sphere.

> *What we really wanted to say from the beginning was: "Okay, we want to make an impact". Not only as far as restructuring or agricultural cooperation is concerned, but also as far as civil society is concerned, to work politically in some way, and then, via the charitable association, also refugee work, etc. It's kind of become a whole different bunch of things, what we do.*
>
> (G2-4, 65)

Third, the sense of belonging and participation creates *identity*. Transformative communities are about more than just economic issues. Mutual care and a sense of belonging play an important role, as the following quotation shows: *"Well, I actually do have the feeling that there is something where people support each other somehow or if there's any problem or anything. So there's a kind of caring for each other"* (G2-6, 63). Another practitioner addresses the importance of the sense of community:

> *Well, the surveys also reflect this … and it's what we gather from talking to people, that for many actually the community with the people is so crucial. You know, doing stuff together and also sharing knowledge with one another. That's what we experience at our harvest camps or on the harvest tours. There are always some who are there, some who know a little more than the others and they share their knowledge or whatever with the others as a matter of course, and all that, well yes, also it does make you feel pretty happy. So this happens*

pretty much all the time / we also call ourselves a lucky charm, because it's just fun with the people and that's what the community actually is.

(G3-5, 80)

An important criterion of cohesion, fourth, is *value creation*, not in a narrow economic interpretation as added value but in the sense of intersubjective appreciation and giving meaning to certain activities. Meaningfulness is manifested, for example, in an experience of self-efficacy, of effecting something positive in transformative learning processes.

I feel really good here, just connecting via various aspects of my life with issues that have always interested me in the context of my own life, and doing because there are a variety of aspects of my life which connect to issues in my life I have always been interested in. Living sustainably, how can I contribute to that, where can I support developments so that … and then getting together with people who share the same interests. Outside I had the feeling of being alone with my ideas and values. Here, I feel like I've found a kind of home.

(G2-3, 271)

And for many people, this sense of community is … so much in the foreground and that makes the whole thing so unique, because you can go out there with the whole family and pick your own fruit. You work/experience yourself as self-effective, you're not somehow dependent, you can determine yourself what you eat.

(G3-5, 238)

Finally, regarding the fifth criterion, personal participation in *shared interactions* such as joint harvesting campaigns, workshops, farm festivals and excursions offers a variety of opportunities for meeting other people and exchanging ideas and knowledge. Creating learning spaces oriented toward empowering people makes participation possible.

To be able to share ideas and views with other people. Simply to give a space where you can think and talk about food and try out new things.

(G1-1, 500)

I have the feeling that the people I mentioned basically support it, that they get along quite well with each other, that they share their visions and ideas well, but that it is also always necessary to have this space, to look at what is actually going on, what do you want to have, what are you working on right now, what really moves you right now. Whenever that doesn't happen enough, then you notice that things start to rumble. Then you have to fight for the setting and the space for it, for encounters, for exchanges.

(G2-2, 28)

The qualitative results confirm the significance of vision, difference, identity, value and participation for the cohesion of transformative communities. They also underline the novelty of an economy of proximity in local food enterprises. Interaction and social practices focus on belonging, involvement and responsibility for sustainable local food supply.

In the previous section, we stated that collaboration involving heterogeneous actors is a prerequisite for this. The three factors of creative doing presented above (hermeneutic-narrative meaning, aesthetic sensuousness and ethical value) are part of the criteria of cohesion. In addition to the fundamental significance of a vision or its ethical value, it is the criteria of value creation and participation that are found in the creative doing of heterogeneous collaboration, manifested as hermeneutic-narrative meaning and aesthetic sensuousness. Thus, transformative communities are characterized above all by criteria and factors that strengthen and support heterogeneity. An explicit difference to "not us" and active identity building is more likely to be found in homogeneous initiatives that are actively driven by strong leaders. This supports the observation that in transformative communities with flat hierarchies it is more likely to find a variety of powerful emergent strategies (strategies based on activities of all members) rather than deliberative ones (strategies from leaders).

Engagement in creative social practices appears to enhance people's confidence and provide them with opportunities to make a contribution toward achieving sustainability. This is how one practitioner involved describes it:

> *And maybe that would also be an option, if you said that everything that happens, happens on the farm. That's where people encounter one another, where the energy and enthusiasm and the inspiration is, where it actually takes place – through* doing*, which is also much more direct. … And maybe then also start to talk together about it. Or whatever. No, actually it's just doing stuff together that automatically creates community.*
>
> (G2-6, 170–172)

8.5 Limitations and possibilities of transformative communities

With their strong vision of the economic activity based on solidarity and social proximity, local food enterprises open up a wide range of opportunities for a shared commitment to a more sustainable food system. Given the five criteria, it indicates that these + are fragile entities. They request community members to participate in personal and group negotiation processes. If these criteria are successfully balanced, they will also strengthen the hermeneutic-narrative meaning, the aesthetically sensuous experience and the ethical value in the creative doing of heterogeneous actors.

The community members come together voluntarily, and their cooperation and assistance in the enterprises are also based on voluntariness. As a result,

their involvement cannot be made obligatory, which makes it difficult to plan activities, and this does lead to uncertainties in work planning within the enterprises. The openness of transformative enterprises and transformative communities (*"Anyone can participate"*) also collides with the need to establish an identity-building core, something that distinguishes them from other kinds of enterprises. In the course of the struggle for recognition, there is the danger of social closure. It is evident in the formation of homogeneous groups. The enterprises and initiatives we surveyed are characterized by an above-average level of education among their members. Although the managers of the enterprises try to open them up and make them attractive, this has hardly been possible so far. In the communities, therefore, those people who are already interested in sustainable practices are particularly active. This does not lead to the dissemination of sustainable practices, but to "fragmentation": community members have very few encounters or exchanges with others (Plessner 1999). This problem also occurs within the community itself, when some members are more active than others: the more passive members may feel excluded while the active members may feel overwhelmed by the many tasks to be accomplished (Gläser 2007). New members may find it difficult to gain access to the community and the external impact may be low.

Our empirical findings show that local food enterprises are trying to change organizational structures by introducing flat hierarchies and methods of democratic decision making, which on the one hand support participation but on the other hand are often lengthy and frustrating as well. "Prosuming" is practiced and community building promoted. At the same time, the changed organizational structures make social learning necessary: conscious and democratic coexistence must first develop in the communities. Here, local food enterprises face special challenges with regard to business development, which are critical even for "conventional" enterprises without participatory structures (Mintzberg 1980; Greiner 1998). In the potentially conflictual space in which committed individuals – entrepreneurs and active, predominantly voluntary members – interact, there is a risk of exhaustion and frustration. A lack of clarity regarding responsibilities exacerbates the conflict. The result is a complex and at times exhausting coordination effort involving constant negotiation both within and outside the community and enterprise. The risk of destabilization or even failure is ever present.

In addition, the concentration of power in the dominant food system promotes the maintenance of the status quo. Therefore, the diffusion of local food enterprises is encountering lock-ins: path dependencies such as cost efficiency, competition and profit orientation as well as the pursuit of growth represent obstacles to diffusion. Consumption habits and everyday routines also represent barriers.

Despite all this, local food enterprises and their transformative communities have a lot to offer. They act primarily as enablers for sustainable practices of care, welfare and the generation of meaning in creative doing – benefits

that are difficult to assess in monetary terms. Beyond the realm of complete material dependency, new connections are developing between producers and consumers. All are jointly involved in the process of mutual care, forming fair relationships based on solidarity. The issue of care relates both to those involved in the economic process and to nature – the fair shaping of economic activity, the conservation of resources, the protection of plants and animals and the preservation of biodiversity. Creative doing gives meaning by encouraging people's initiative and providing space for new experiences.

The practices being tested on a small scale within local food enterprises also form the basis for cooperative economic activity on a larger scale. Based on their strong vision of a transformative community, they do not focus on competition, self-interest or profit, but rather seek to establish solidarity-based cooperative structures that focus on horizontal growth and dissemination in the sense of both the open-source concept and the new paradigm of scaling (Uvin et al. 2000; Bradach 2003, 2010; McPhedran Waitzer and Paul 2011). These scaling processes are to be achieved through collaboration with other actors (Liesen et al. 2013).

8.6 Conclusion

Local food enterprises are transformative communities with broad creative and emancipatory potential, which they bring to bear using a variety of strategies. In this chapter, we have focused on emergent strategies of creative doing in meaningful and interesting activity, as well as on the experience of creative flow. Heterogeneous actors collaborate with a strong desire for change through positive impacts to achieve a sustainable food supply. Regarding the cohesion of transformative communities, we identified the five criteria of vision, difference, identity, value creation and participation. Due to their reconfiguration of social practices, such communities function as agents of change (Kristof 2017) and constitute important role models for a different way of doing business and a different way of working creatively together. They relate to the political dimension of food production and consumption practices by making visible experiences of alternatives of sustainable food supply. Finally, the words of a practitioner sum up their transformative potential: *"Those who will be there at the end of the day in 2020 … already … represent a quite powerful community …, which really supports the whole thing"* (G2-4, 40).

Notes

1 We use the term enterprise exclusively in its broader sense, namely, in relation to people who are "doing" something together to change the food system. The same applies to urban gardening projects that do not pursue economic goals as community-supported agriculture, in which members jointly finance and participate in agricultural production.

2 Prosumers are persons who are both consumers and producers of the product they use.
3 Reckwitz rejects an essentialist concept of culture and advocates the realization of culture in social practices.

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