

Managing Boundaries between Organizations and Communities: Comparing Creative Commons and Wikimedia

Abstract

In this paper we investigate the dialectical relation between informal communities and related formal organizations by looking at Wikimedia and Creative Commons. While delivering their services with the help of related communities of volunteers from the very start, both organizations struggle with dynamics of community development and governance in general and with the management of boundaries between organization and community in particular. In our comparative longitudinal case analysis we contrast attempts of coping with these challenges via partial outsourcing (Creative Commons) and via partial integration (Wikimedia) respectively. Thereby we show why the pragmatist concept of “corrigible provisionality” might be a promising approach for capturing the practices dominating boundary management between organizations and related communities.

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1. Introduction

At the beginning of the 21st century, changes in technology, economic organization and social practices have contributed to the viability of newer forms of network organization not just in manufacturing and production but also in the realm of information and media industries (Benkler 2006; Sabel 2006). In addition to the focus on purchaser-supplier-relations (Sydow 1992; 2010; Jarillo 1993) and the importance of regional and personal networks for recruiting (Saxenian 1996; Saxenian et al. 2002), this also emphasizes the interface to (communities of) consumers (e.g. Holzer 2006) and users (e.g. von Hippel 2006). For one, the interaction of consumers/users in online social networks increasingly exerts a decisive influence on the success of cultural goods such as texts, music or films (e.g. Asur and Huberman 2010). For another, active participation of consumers and users in creation and improvement of products and services is widely recognized (von Hippel 2001; Prahalad and Ramaswamy 2004; Ritzer and Jurgenson 2010). At the same time, borders of market and non-market modes of production coevolve, leading to cooperation and conflict between (for-profit) business and (non-profit) civil society organizations in the production of all kinds of cultural goods.

For both types of organizations alike, this leads to new challenges for the management of their respective organizational environment in general and related communities of consumers, users or even contributors in particular; this holds independent of whether these communities are effectively delivering the content of new knowledge services as is the case in the online encyclopedia Wikipedia or the photo-platform Flickr, or whether these are ‘merely’ contributing with feedback to the marketability of products and services. Both online and offline, organizations increasingly face the non-trivial task of mobilizing communities of practice (Wenger 1998), whose members mostly do not belong to the organization itself. This integration of user and practice communities in the core processes of good and service provision seriously blurs the boundary between organization and environment, making its management via specialized “boundary spanning units” (xxx) difficult at best, obsolete at worst.

The role ambiguity and uncertainty imported via the interface or even overlap between organization and community requires new forms of coordination and organization. Especially organizations, which strive as “market rebels” (Rao 2009) to alter established norms, taken-for-granted assumptions and market structures, regularly rely on (the resources of) communities of consumers, users or practice; facilitating such communities poses challenges similar to those of managing volunteers (Lofland 2006) and is of utmost importance for the social-movement-like struggles of those organizations, be they non-profit or for-profit. Following King and Pearce (2010), such community-based attempts of creating or changing market institutions work via influencing corporate strategies, participating in private regulatory endeavours and/or the creation of new actor categories within globalizing economic fields.

One such globalizing economic field (Hoffman 1999) is the field of copyright industries, where transnational communities play an increasingly important role both as actors in regulatory processes (Djelic and Quack, forthcoming) and as providers of goods and services via commons based peer-production (Watson et al. 2005; Benkler 2006). Regarding the former, a broad typology of communities has emerged, ranging from epistemic communities (Haas 1992) and advocacy coalitions (Keck and Sikkink 2008) to policy networks (Marin and Mayntz 1991; Rhodes 1997) and communities of practice (Wenger 1998; Wenger and Snyder 2000). As far as communities as producers of (mostly: digital) goods and services are concerned, existing research evolved around prominent empirical examples such as Free/Open Source Software (Von Hippel 2001; Benkler 2002; Weber 2004; Demil and Lecocq 2006, Hemetsberger and Reinhardt 2009) or Wikipedia (Viégas et al. 2007; Forte and Bruckman 2008; Garud et al. 2008). Mobilizing and coordinating activities of community members are prerequisites for successfully performing both these roles – as regulatory actors and as providers of goods and services. Therefore, most of the works cited above deal in one way or another with issues such as motivation or identity of community participants.

The same time, however, these works share a reluctance to investigate the relationship between communities and related formal organizations (Mayntz 2008; for a notable exception see O’Mahoney and Bechky 2008) in processes of mobilization and coordination. Group structures and dynamics of communities are typically characterised as informal and portrayed as stark contrast to classic organizational bureaucracies (see, for example, Hemetsberger and Reinhardt 2009). But while hardly any of the different phenomena subsumed under the umbrella of diverse community concepts above evolves completely detached from related

formal organizational bodies, digital communities in particular rely on commercial (e.g. Canonical in the case of Ubuntu Linux) or non-profit (e.g. Wikimedia Foundation in the Wikipedia case) carrier organizations or “platforms” (Elkin-Koren 2009b).

In spite of its relevance, formal organizing is not identical to the organizational features and dynamics of its respective communities. In spite of partial overlaps, we conceptualize communities as being part of an organization’s environment, the borders being continually and reciprocally re-produced and re-shaped by the actors involved (Giddens 1984). In this regard, formal organizing may (strategically) irritate, influence, foster, guide and control community development but it is not community development itself. This is similar to the relationship between a social movement and related social movement organizations (see, for example, Della Porta and Diani’s 2006). Existing typologies of these or similar civil society organizations however rarely cover organizational fluidity and change rooted in reciprocal interactions of community and organization (e.g. Salomon und Anheier 1996; Anheier und Themudo 2005a, 2005b). Similarly, the efficacy of organizations in giving orientation, direction and voice to diffuse communities in their attempts of challenging institutions is understudied (Mayntz 2008; for an exception see O’Mahoney and Bechky 2008). Both these shortcomings are even more salient for the case of organizations, whose transnational scope of activities require addressing heterogeneity of community members rooted in national and local diversity. Therefore, the general question we are addressing is: How do organizations in digital information economy manage the boundaries to related focal communities?

For empirically investigating this question we look at the (trans-)formation of transnational non-profit franchise network organizations (see Sydow 1994; Oster 2006). In a franchise network (1) a focal franchisor (2) licenses exactly defined business concepts and rights (including trademarks) to (3) economically and legally autonomous franchisees, which in turn (4) pay regular and standardized franchise fees.¹ Regularly presented as a strategy for fast internationalization and for dealing with related heterogeneity (e.g. Quinn 1998), franchise networks seem to be particularly attractive as carrier organizations for digital communities: being “born globals” (Knight and Cavusgil 2004), their (contributions to) goods and services are online and thus globally available from the very start and at least potentially attract users and contributors from all over the world. This poses with particular urgency the question of how to organizationally cope with challenges of a community’s immediate transnationality

¹ In the case of political franchising networks as described by Oster (2006), participation in and contribution to fundraising campaigns may substitute for regular fundraising fees.

such as multiple languages, geographical distance or legal and cultural diversity. And while a lot of research deals with transnationalization of for-profit organizations (e.g. Johanson and Wiedersheim-Paul 1975; Bartlett and Goshal 1989; Ohmae 1994), our focus on non-profit carriers contributes to the still sparse body of research on transnationalization non-profit organizations (see, for example, Baguley et al. 2004; Anheier and Themudo 2005b).

Responding to regular demands for comparative studies (e.g. Tsui-Auch and Lee 2003), we compare two prominent examples of transnational non-profit franchising: In the case of Creative Commons an organizational network around a focal non-profit NGO develops and propagates a set of alternative copyright licenses. Founded in 2002, Creative Commons managed to port its licenses into 50 local jurisdictions with the help of over 70 affiliate organizations within no more than 6 years (Dobusch and Quack 2010). As Creative Commons licenses can be applied to all kinds of copyrightable material – from audio and video to educational and scientific works – Creative Commons has to deal with (demands of) a fast growing and highly diverse community of license users. The second case we are investigating is Wikimedia, which has been created as a formal organization to support the communities behind Wikipedia and its related sister projects such as Wiktionary, Wikinews or Wikibooks.² While having been established as a US-based foundation in 2003, it officially recognizes 21 local “Wikimedia chapter” organizations by the end of 2008. These Wikimedia chapters have all been newly set up and are legally and financially autonomous.

In both cases the formal organization provides a regulatory framework, within which communities of contributors create (a commons of) digital goods and services. This, together with further similarities of Creative Commons and Wikimedia in terms of founding date (2002 and 2003 respectively), place (US) and organizational form (non-profit franchise network) as well as in terms of central mission (community building and development), allows focusing three theoretically interesting differences in terms of (1) organizational structure, (2) organization-community relation and (3) transnationalization process.

In the subsequent section we introduce a theoretical framework for capturing these three dimensions. After a brief discussion of methodological issues in section three, we present a joint description of the organizational processes around Creative Commons and Wikimedia from 2002 to 2008 in section four. In section five we then evaluate and compare both cases

² See http://wikimediafoundation.org/wiki/Our_projects [accessed: 15 May 2009]

with the help of our theoretical framework, before we present conclusions and suggestions for further research in section six.

2. Theoretical Framework

Discussing change, overlap or even dissolution of boundaries between organizations and related communities first and foremost requires a clear analytical distinction of the two, which, in our understanding, can be drawn alongside the dichotomy of formal and informal organizing. While formal organizing regularly is equated with some form of centralized hierarchy (Mintzberg 1979), the degree of both centralization as well as of hierarchical power might vary significantly. This holds for franchise networks, as well, which range from hierarchies similar to those in integrated corporations to loose and heterarchical networks (Rometsch and Sydow 2006). The latter concept has been developed Hedlund (1986: 9) in the context of multinational corporations (MNCs) to describe more complex but still stable forms of organization with “many different kinds of centers, where subsidiaries take strategic responsibility for the whole MNC”. Similarly, a growing body of research on hybrid forms of organizing between (or even beyond) market and hierarchy (Williamson xxx) focuses strategic alliances and networks (see Gulati et al. 2000; Jarillo 1993; Sydow 1992). But also in the fields of political science and sociology recent works deal with new organizational forms, speaking of “networked” or “pragmatist organizations” (Sproull and Kiesler 1991; Sabel 2006). In the literature on social movement organizations there is the tendency “from movement organizations to social movement networks” (Della Porta and Diani 2006: 156). And for Sabel (2006: 119) “[t]he tip-off is the formalism of the new organization. On anything but the cursory inspection there are simply too many formal procedures – routines – to square with the notion of the networked organization as organized informality.”

We use this distinction between “formal organizing” and “organized informality” to differentiate between “community” and “organization”, which is a precondition for analyzing their reciprocal conditionality: Of course, communities are not “un-organized” as they rely on implicit and explicit rules, its members consciously share a sense of belonging, and they regularly evolve around some form of formal organizational body.³ But differently to formal organizations, community membership is acquired via self-identification, decisions are made without reference to any legally binding rules and there is no “shadow of hierarchy” (Heritiér and Lehmkuhl 2008). Taken together these characteristics lead to the egalitarianism inherent

³ With regard to the Marxian notion of class consciousness (“Klasse an sich” and “Klasse für sich”), we see consciousness of community membership as a defining condition for identifying a community (see also Mayntz 2008)

in many community self-descriptions.⁴ This egalitarian notion of the community concept may be at odds with huge actual status differences among community members but lies nevertheless orthogonally to the implicitness of hierarchical structures within formal organizations, however decentralized, heterarchical or “organic” (Burns and Stalker 1961) these may be.

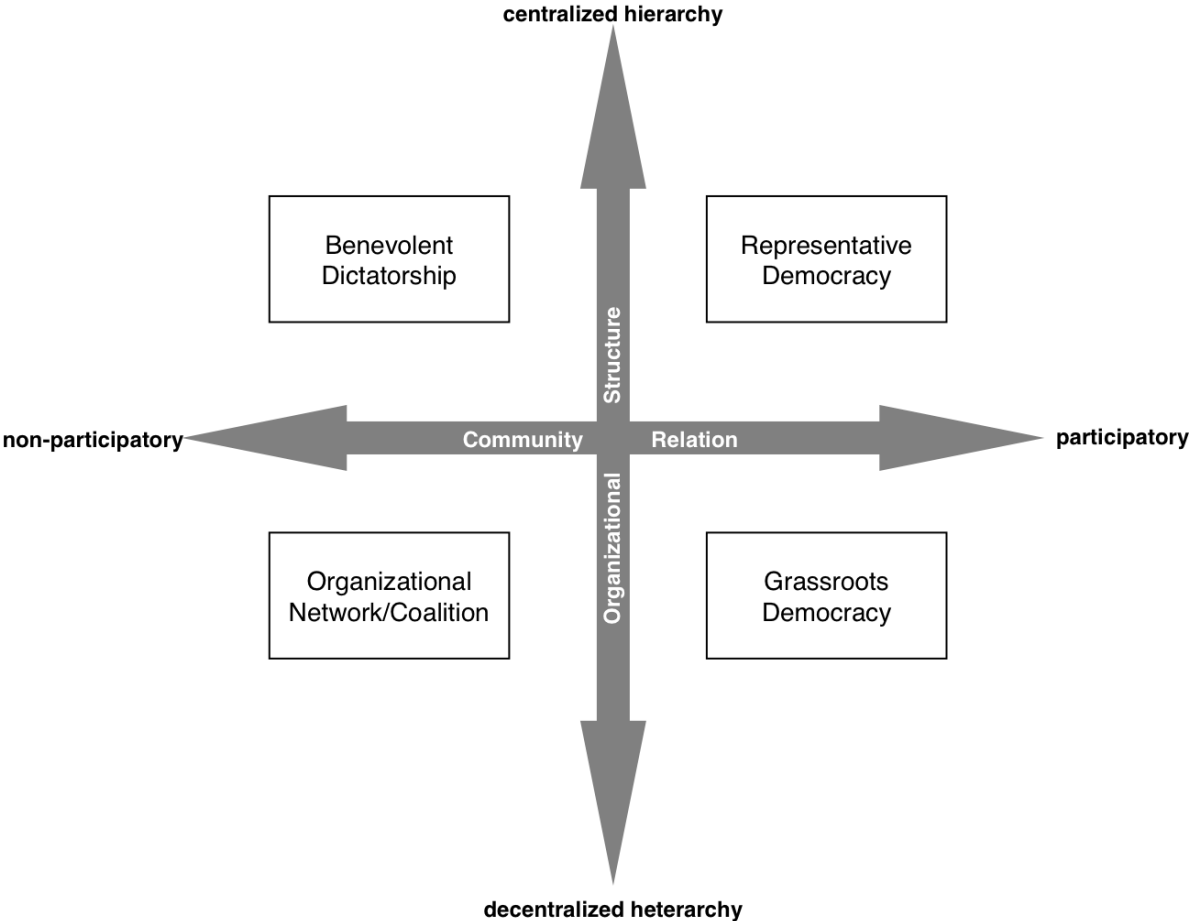


Figure 1: Organizational structure and community relation

But as we are not solely focusing on formal organizations and communities repectively but on the *relationship* between formal organizing and informal community development, the question of hierarchy is only one of two dimensions we are looking at. Figure 1 combines this continuum of formal organizational structuring – ranging from centralized hierarchy to decentralized heterarchy – with different degrees of community participation in formal organizational decision-making procedures as a second dimension. We define participation broadly as any explicit – formal – mode of including community members in organizational

⁴ See, for example, the self-description of Wikipedia stating that “[a]nyone with internet access can write and make changes to Wikipedia articles” (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:About> [accessed: 15 November 2009]).

decision making processes; examples are community polls on selected issues or community elected members in decision making bodies.

Any such formal participation procedure, of course, requires drawing – to a certain degree arbitrary – community boundaries.⁵ These definitorial and to a certain extent performative acts of drawing boundaries is not only central to managing organization-community relations but also inherently precarious and potentially conflict-laden: for one, the formal definition the community that inherently goes along with drawing boundaries need not – and mostly will not – capture all of those actors, who perceive themselves as belonging to a certain community, for another, a formal definition of community boundaries is a necessary precondition for any formal participation procedure, making it a critical but indispensable management task (for the issue of drawing boundaries in the social sciences in general, see Lamont and Molnár 2002)

The same time, community participation has to be differentiated from classical forms of corporate worker participation (Sydow 1999; xxx; Demirovic 2007) and from participation in non-profit organizations (see, for example, Kriesi 1996; Della Porta and Diani 2006): Both these forms of participation regularly solely relate to members of the organization.. In our case, however, we are interested particularly in participation in intra-organizational decision-making processes by communities, which mostly consist of *non*-members; intentionally extending organizational borders to include most or even all of the community members is thus an extreme or fringe case of community participation. Lastly, we are not dealing with classical forms of inter-organizational relations (see Sydow 1992), since the organization is not cooperating with another formal entity.

The two-by-two matrix in Figure 1 leads to four ideal types of organization-community-relations: In the case of *benevolent dictatorship* a single organization sets the scene for the activities of a related community without admitting community members to the organization's decision making. Many prominent examples of digital communities such as Facebook or Flickr⁶ (see Ritzer and Jurgensen 2010) rely on benevolent dictatorship of a corporation, which provides and determines the technological and legal framework for community development. In an *organizational network or coalition* several legally and financially

⁵ Of course, the definitions put forward in identifying community members as eligible for participation in formal decision-making need not and mostly will not be able to capture anybody, who self-identifies herself as a community member. This makes drawing community borders both a necessary and a difficult task for organizing some form of community participation.

⁶ See <http://www.facebook.com> and <http://www.flickr.com> respectively.

autonomous organizations jointly undertake this task, but still do not provide community members with access to their decision making.

While commercial carrier organizations also experiment with community participation (e.g. “user innovation”, see Braun and Herstatt 2009; von Hippel 2001, 2006),⁷ modes of organizing that resemble the ideal types of *representative* or *grassroots democracy* are more common in non-commercial settings. In representative democracies, the constituency of community members takes part in the election of representatives within formal organizational bodies. In grass-roots democracies, membership-based organizations allow formal participation and self-governance, regularly in addition to representative democratic elections. Examples are the Debian project⁸ in the realm of open source software development and, as will be presented in this article, Wikimedia. In these cases community members can influence the formal organization either by direct democratic votes or by becoming part of a membership-based organization, whose divisions act (more or less) autonomously on behalf of its respective members.

Any of the organization-community-relationships described above could principally be carried out on a transnational scale. Research on transnationalization of corporations, however, suggests that transnationalization processes are often accompanied with shifts towards more heterarchical modes of organizing (Hedlund 1986; Bartlett and Ghosal 1989). Whether this shift is a means for transnationalization or transnationalization requires a shift towards heterarchy, is an empirical question.

The latter is also true for the question of how relevant the management of community relations might be for an individual organization. Mobilizing and coordinating community members is, as already mentioned, of importance for an (increasing) variety of corporations; it is particularly crucial however for those businesses, which rely on a large installed base (xxx) of users as the primary competitive advantage in digital network markets (Varian and Shapiro 1999; Varian et al. 2004). Similarly in the realm of non-profit organizations, mobilization and coordination of communities external to a focal organization is amongst the most important means for reaching their political goals (Diani and Bison 2004; Donatella and Diani 2006).

⁷ Take, for example, Facebook’s invitation directed at its user community to participate in drafting and, eventually, vote on new terms of service (Elkin-Koren 2009a).

⁸ Debian is an influential GNU/Linux distribution governed by a decentralized network of individuals and non-profit organizations with a complex system of community participation. (Garzarelli and Galoppini 2003; Vujovic and Ulhøi 2006)

How mobilization, coordination or even organization of relevant communities can be effectively managed is thereby not only contingent on the case under study but also on the socio-historical environment: the strategy of acting as a “benevolent dictator”, for example, may be helpful for initiating and establishing a community but later on be insufficient for managing the relations to it. Investigating these recursive processes of formal organizing and managing community relations and development over time will now be the aim of the subsequent empirical case comparison.

3. Method

Gerring (2004: 342) proposes to define a case study as “an intensive study of a single unit for the purpose of understanding a larger class of (similar) units.” And as was emphasized by Eisenhardt (2006: 25) with reference to Yin (1994), “[c]entral to building theory from case studies is replication logic”, meaning that “multiple cases are discrete experiments that serve as replications, contrasts and extensions to the emerging theory”. So, in this paper, we are putting forward a “comparative-historical” research design (Gerring 2004: 343) by comparing organizational processes of two cases with qualitative research methodology.

For our reconstruction of organizational developments and transnationalization processes we use two main sources of data (see Table 1): *First* we conducted 68 semi-structured, open-ended interviews with actors of both the focal organizations Creative Commons and Wikimedia Foundation as well as with leaders of local affiliate and chapter organizations respectively. In these interviews, we tried to inspire narrations by asking relatively open entry questions, followed by more and more focused questions as the interviews proceeded (Scheibelhofer 2008; Smith 1995). In both cases, the majority of the interviews were conducted via phone; about one third of the interviews were conducted at international conferences such as the “iSummit” (Dubrovnik/Croatia 2007) or the “Wikimania” (Buenos Aires/Argentina 2009), which we also used to collect data via participant observation. Interview length varied significantly, ranging from 15 minutes up to two hours with an average length of 35 minutes. Of all interviews short summaries and verbatim transcripts of relevant passages have been made. About one third of the interviews have been transcribed completely. Interviews conducted early in the research process and with members of the focal organizations were longer (about 70 minutes) than interviews late in the research process, when we reached saturation (Strauss and Corbin 1990). Saturation was also the reason for not completely

transcribing all of the interviews but only of important passages, also extracting information necessary for descriptive statistics given in the subsequent case descriptions and in Appendix 1.

Second, within both organizations a significant proportion of both discussions and coordination of work occurs via publicly accessible mailing-lists and international meetings. While the publicity of mailing-list discussions may have a moderating effect on tone and issues raised, the fine-grained chronological ordering of mailing-list archives allows very accurate reconstruction of processes. In selecting mailing-lists for investigation we distinguished “transnational” and “local” lists and focused on those with significant levels of participation (see Table 1).⁹ For both cases, mailing-list data is publicly available and covers the whole period of their existence, thereby functioning as our main source for reconstructing debates that predate the beginning of our data collection period in 2007. The chronological ordering of mailing-list data allowed selectively searching for debates around issues such as the formation or change of formal organizational structures or procedures, which were raised during interviews or in archival documents.

Together, semi-structured interviews, mailing-list and observational data provide rich and partly complementary data sources. In case of contradictions we gave precedence to mailing-list sources as far as temporal ordering of events or factual information was concerned. Conflicting descriptions of causes and strategies, however, we did not try to “resolve” but rather took them as instances of co-existing differences among actors within the respective organizations. Both interview summaries and transcripts as well as mailing-list data have been included in a case study database presented in Table 1. Appendix A gives a more detailed overview, especially with regard to local affiliate/chapter organizations.

<i>Case</i>	<i>Creative Commons</i>	<i>Wikimedia</i>	<i>Total</i>
interviews (total)	44	24	68
> focal organization	5	2	7
> local affiliate / chapter	39	22	61
Mailing-lists	48	24	72
> transnational	10	3	13
> local	38	21	59

*

Table 1: Case study database as of June 2009

⁹ We did not include transnational mailing-lists with fewer than 100 postings and local mailing-lists with fewer than 10 postings in our case study database. A list with mailing-lists considered can be obtained from the authors on request. Of the local mailing-lists,

4. Case Comparison: Organizational Transnationalization and Community Participation of Creative Commons and Wikimedia

Both, Creative Commons and the now famous online-encyclopedia Wikipedia share the fundamental vision of creating and promoting a global “commons” of freely available digital goods. Wikimedia hosts a framework of hardware (webspaces and bandwidth), software (the wiki-engine “MediaWiki”)¹⁰ and legal rules (copyleft licenses) for several projects of commons-based peer production (Benkler 2006) such as the already mentioned examples Wikipedia, Wikibooks or Wiktionary. Creative Commons, in turn, delivers a set of open content licenses to – not only, but also – legally enable and foster such commons-based peer production projects as put forward by Wikimedia and more generally to build a growing body licensed works for sharing and remixing. Consequently, before Wikimedia eventually adopted one particular Creative Commons license in 2009, Wikipedia founder Jimmy Wales regularly stated that “Wikipedia, had it been founded after Creative Commons, would have certainly been under a Creative Commons license.”¹¹ The timeline in Figure 2 gives an overview of the most important events in the development of both cases, which are described in more detail in the following two sections. While Wikipedia was founded shortly before Creative Commons in 2001, its organizational carrier – the Wikimedia Foundation – was founded about half a year *after* Creative Commons had formally launched its first set of alternative copyright licenses in December 2002

¹⁰ Wiki-engines allow collaborative editing of web pages and were invented by Ward Cunningham in 1994, who designed the first wiki-software called “WikiWikiWeb”. “MediaWiki” is used by all Wikimedia projects and, licensed under the GNU GPL copyleft-license, is itself developed in form of commons-based peer production (see <http://www.mediawiki.org/> [accessed: 29 May 2009]).

¹¹ Jimmy Wales at San Francisco iSummit party on December 1, 2007, see <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TfY9aXZC7Q0> [accessed: 10 April 2009]

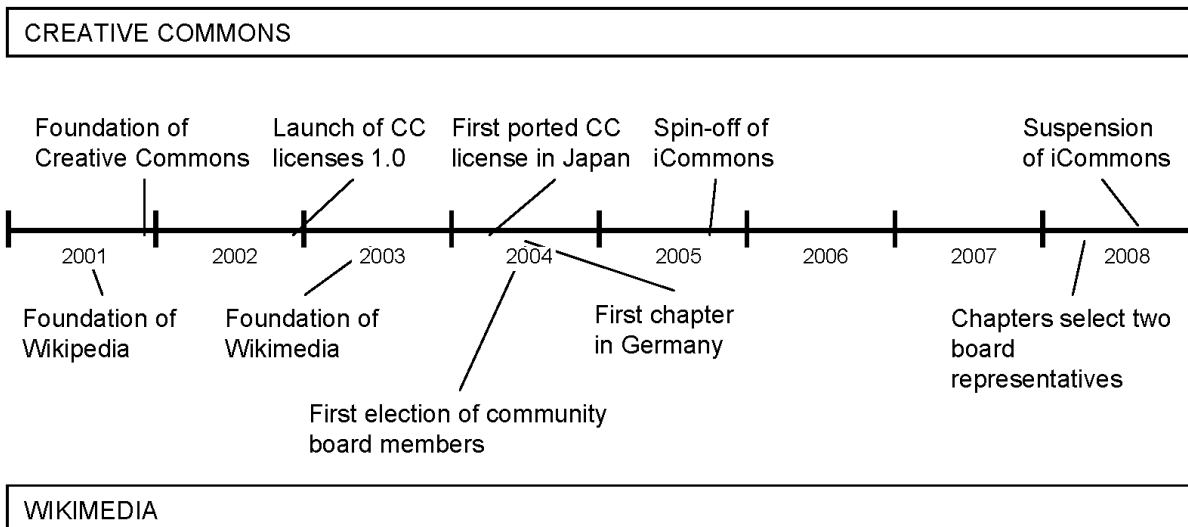


Figure 2: Timeline of the development of Creative Commons and Wikimedia

Interestingly, independent from one another, both organizations very soon after their foundation started to transnationalize their formal organization by developing a transnational network of locally rooted organizations – something we refer to as a “political franchising network” Similar to “strategic networks” in the realm of business research (see Jarillo 1993; Sydow 1992). Their strategies of building such an organizational network were however quite distinct. While Creative Commons followed something we would call a “political franchise” approach, i.e. bonding and cooperating with existing organizations, Wikimedia betted on newly founded grass-root organizations for its internationalization. This difference in strategy in turn also leads to different challenges in managing the relationship between formal organization and informal community: the very fast transnationalization as a consequence of the political franchise approach also partially led to unsustainably small groups of local activists, while the “grassroots approach” slowed down transnationalization in the first place.

Status: end of 2008	Creative Commons	Wikimedia
Focal Organization	Charitable Corporation	Charitable Corporation
Local partner/chapter organizations	73	20
- thereof newly founded and membership based:	3	20
Different countries/jurisdictions*	50	21

* including the US, where the focal organizations are located

Table 2: Organizational features of Creative Commons and Wikimedia

Table 2 gives some data on the organizational structure and scope of both cases as it was by the end of 2008: Creative Commons had formal relations with 73 local partner organizations in 50 different jurisdiction, of which only 3 were newly founded and membership-based organizations. Wikimedia, in turn, officially recognizes 20 local so-called chapter organizations, which all had been newly founded and are membership based. In the following

case analysis we describe emergence and consequences of these differences with focus on the relationship between formal organization and community development.

4.1 Creative Commons: Cooperation and Outsourcing

Creative Commons was founded with financial support from Stanford University and the Center for Public Domain as an US charitable corporation in 2001 by a network of mostly academic lawyers¹² of which Stanford law professor Lawrence Lessig was the central node. Elsewhere we have laid out in great detail, why and how this “epistemic community” (Haas 1992) of lawyers engaged in the development and provision of alternative copyright licenses as a politically motivated endeavor to correct for in their view overly restrictive copyright regulation (Dobusch and Quack 2009, 2010).

Only one and a half year after launching the first US license version, Creative Commons, started to legally translate (“port”) its license modules into local jurisdictions – an unprecedented move in the field of open content licensing.¹³ For porting the licenses into other jurisdictions and for promoting the licenses among creators, Creative Commons teamed up with local affiliate partners. In nearly half (23) of the 50 jurisdiction projects under study,¹⁴ there is even a formal division between people responsible for the legal translation of the license (“legal project lead”) and others, who predominantly deal with the community of license users (“public project lead”). In 11 of these 23 jurisdiction projects, this division of labor manifests in two or more different affiliate partners for each task. Among the other 27 jurisdiction projects, the majority (21 or 78%) is led by only one affiliate organization.

The relationship between the focal Creative Commons organization and its affiliates is probably best described as a form of “political franchising”: The affiliate organizations and Creative Commons sign a “Memorandum of Understanding” (MoU) that predominantly deals with Creative Commons as a brand. License porting procedures in turn are standardized but not formally regulated. All other aspects of the affiliates’ work such as local events, funding or thematic priorities are up to them to decide (for details see Dobusch and Quack 2010).¹⁵ As a result, the activity level between different jurisdiction projects varies substantially. Only a

¹² A list of the 29 participants – 24 of which had been lawyers – at the “Inaugural Meeting” is available online (see <http://cyber.law.harvard.edu/creativecommons/participants.html> [accessed: 29 May 2009])

¹³ No free/open source software license, for example, has been ported into local jurisdictions.

¹⁴ We included all jurisdiction projects in our sample, which had officially launched their localized license version by the end of 2008.

¹⁵ One interview partner reports that he was surprised about the scope of freedom and the lack of central guidelines for the official license launch event: “We had a guest from the Swedish Piratbyran and a speaker who was heavily against the concept of Creative Commons licenses but we did not receive any negative reactions from Creative Commons.” Other interview partners reported similarly

minority of jurisdiction projects (fewer than 10) report that there was some group of volunteers regularly contributing to Creative Commons aside from the official legal or public project leads.

Parallel to the legal and organizational transnationalization of Creative Commons, adoption rates of its licenses experienced exponential growth in various fields of application (see Figure 3), pointing to the formation of a vibrant and transnational community of license users; cautious search engine estimates of the total number of Creative Commons licensed works add up to about 130 million by mid-2008.¹⁶ And while not all license users, of course, would consider themselves as being a member of the Creative Commons community, the local organizational outposts attracted groups of previously non-organized but latently existing actors (Dahrendorf 1959; Dolata 2003) from the diverse fields of license application. The German public project lead explains Creative Commons’ appeal to such pre-existing but often dispersed copyright activists, with the “possibility to legally underpin your own views.”

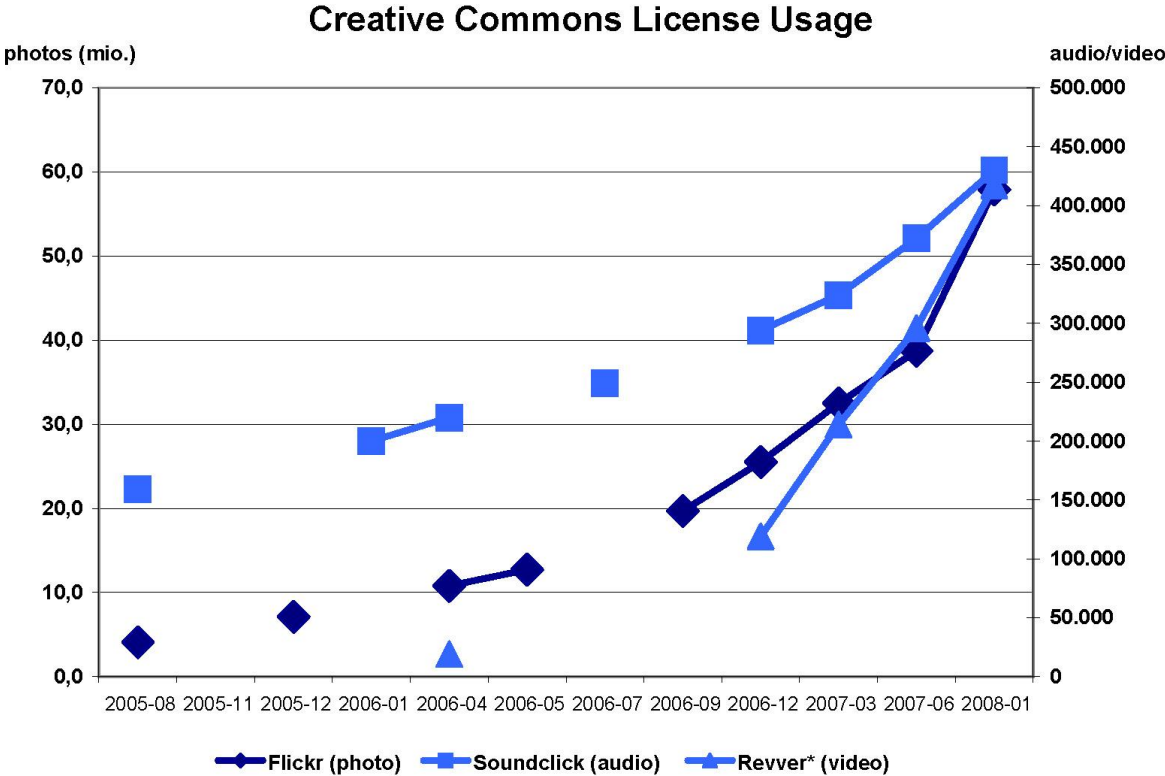


Figure 3: Usage of Creative Commons licenses in different fields of application by number of works available in three content hosting services. (*Revver is an overestimate, probably the total number of uploads; data obtained from http://wiki.creativecommons.org/License_statistics [June 26, 2008])

¹⁶ See <http://wiki.creativecommons.org/Metrics> [accessed: 30 August.2008]

So, after having been initiated by an epistemic community of lawyers, Creative Commons led to and built upon a second, non-legal and heterogeneous community of license users. At different points in time, the importance of these two communities for both organizational transnationalization and license adoption changed: In the beginning of its transnationalization process, finding local affiliate partners worked alongside professional networks: Many of the early project leads had previously participated in seminars or workshops held by the founding members of Creative Commons at Harvard or Stanford and subsequently developed personal contacts with them. The legal project leads of the first two porting countries, Japan and Finland, for example, both attended the same seminar of Lawrence Lessig at Stanford. Ronaldo Lemos, the Brazilian legal project lead, first came into contact with Creative Commons at Harvard's Berkman Center. Back in their home countries, they then convinced their hosting institutions – mostly law schools – to act as affiliate organizations.

Over time, more and more non-legal affiliate organizations and activists joined the Creative Commons network: While in the first half (25) of jurisdiction projects 17 (68%) consisted of at least one affiliate organization with a legal background, this number dropped to 8 (32%) in the second half (for details see Dobusch and Quack 2010). On the Creative Commons board of directors, however, still five out of 11 members had a legal background by the end of 2008.¹⁷

The composition of the Creative Commons board follows a self-selection logic, which remained relatively uncontested over the years – publicly, at least. In interviews and off the record, several jurisdiction project leads bemoaned the lack of insight and participation within Creative Commons' organizational structuring. Leading figures such as Lawrence Lessig justified both the dominance of legal professionals as well as the lack of at least some form of community participation with the need for professional “expertise” and tried to source demands for participation out to a newly founded organizational entity called “iCommons”, hived-off in 2005: “I think in the long run, iCommons should have that democratic relationship to its online communities but Creative Commons has a real brand and product that it needs to guarantee and that requires a component of expertise more than democratic motivation.”¹⁸ (Interview in 2007) iCommons, however, did never live up to these expectations and silently suspended its activities after four years of existence in 2008.

¹⁷ See <http://creativecommons.org/press-releases/entry/8949> [accessed: 2 June 2009]

¹⁸ Lessig distinction resembles the Della Porta and Diani's (2006: 143f.) differentiation between “challengers” and “service providers” as two incompatibly distinct types of social movement organizations.

The rationale for founding iCommons was a change in tasks for local Creative Commons outposts once the license porting process was over. Aside minor legal tasks around versioning of the licenses, the major activity after the launch is promoting the licenses among diverse communities of (potential) licenses users. Consequently, in several interviews project leads with legal background explicitly mentioned their plans to hand over the responsibility to other, non-legal entities due to changing task structures. The Belgian project lead, for example, explicitly mentioned being uncomfortable with the task of promoting the licenses, stating that “I am an academic – I want to be able to critique and I don’t want to be restrained.” As a result, in some jurisdictions such as Japan, South Korea or recently Mexico, local project leads departed from the franchise approach and newly set up local Creative Commons organizations. And many later jurisdiction projects without a strong legal background such as most of the projects in the Balkan region, did not embrace the task of license porting in the first place. The Serbian project lead even claims that “localized licenses are of symbolic, not of practical value” and bemoans “it was hard to explain the need to port the license to local institutions”. For him, criticism of Creative Commons licenses can be embedded in promoting the license – a tactic he calls an “avant-garde approach”.

So, about seven years after its foundation as a project of legal professionals, during which both transnational outreach and license usage grew enormously, Creative Commons faces a “double movement”: More and more activist license users without any legal background are gravitating towards the organization whereas legal professionals are drifting away from it. While this corresponds with changing task structures after the completion of license porting, attempts to mirror these changes in the realm of related communities by altering the formal organizational structures have not been successful, yet.

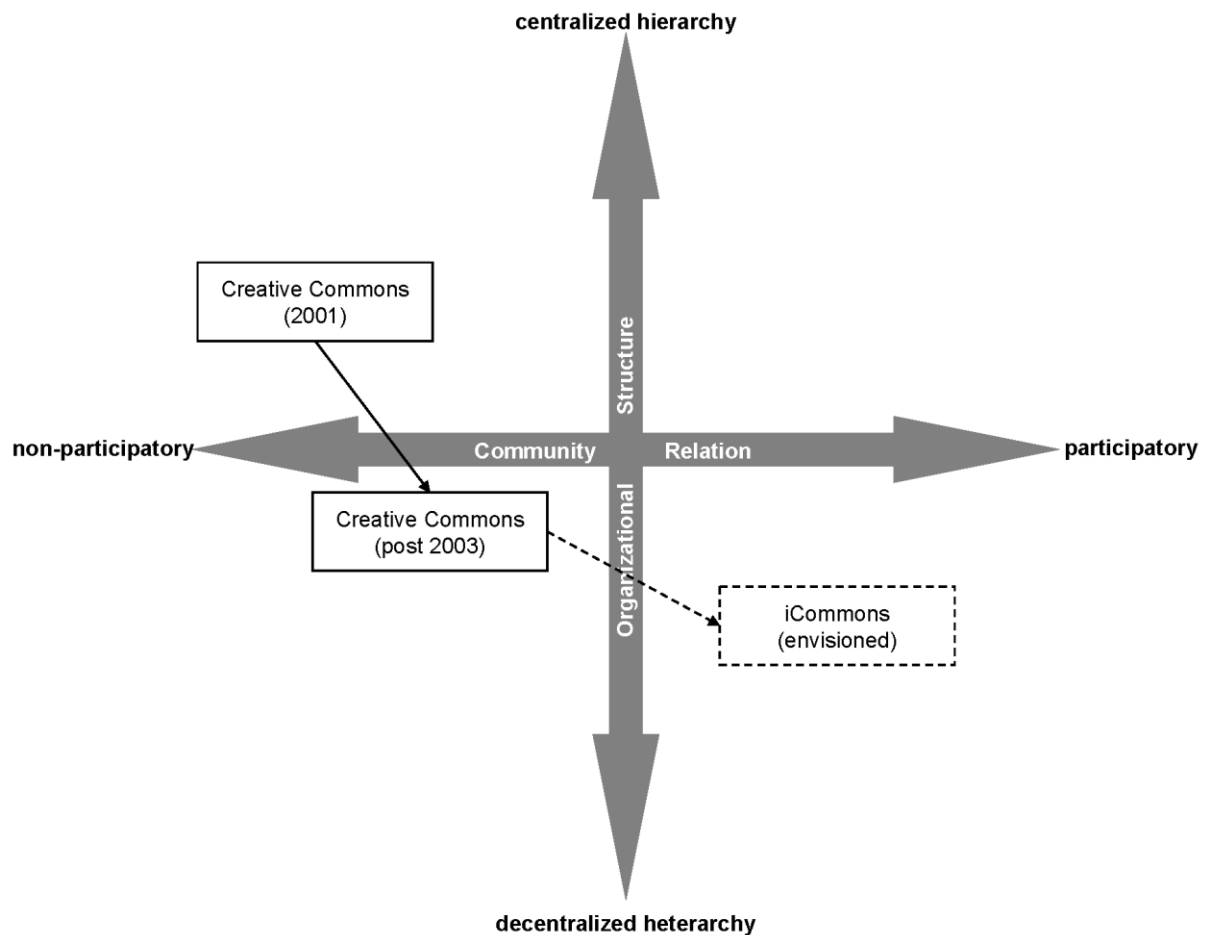


Figure 4: Organizational development of Creative Commons in terms of community relations and organizational structure over time.

Figure 4 shows graphically the organizational development of Creative Commons along the axes organizational structure and community relation during its internationalization process: While after 2003 its increase in geographical scope lead to some organizational decentralization, it did not change the non-participatory relationship between Creative Commons as an organization and neither the epistemic community of lawyers nor the community of license users. The strategy to meet demands for more participation of the latter in form of a separate but still connected legal entity called “iCommons” was never really implemented and, eventually, given up in 2008.

4.2 Wikimedia: Greenfield Foundations and Integration

Differently to the Creative Commons case, Wikimedia’s origin was neither politically nor professionally motivated: Before Jimmy Wales announced the foundation of Wikimedia as a non-profit charitable corporation via mailing-list in 2003,¹⁹ rights holder and infrastructure provider of Wikipedia and its predecessor “Nupedia” had been the start-up company

¹⁹ See <http://lists.wikimedia.org/pipermail/wikipedia-l/2003-June/010743.html> [accessed: 30 May 2009]

“bomis.com”. Wales was one of three owners of this web-advertisement-selling corporation, which mainly provides links to erotic content targeted at male internet users.

Originally founded as a feeder for the quality-controlled Nupedia, Wikipedia’s concept of openness turned out to attract much more contributors, which caused a growth-rate of 1,500 articles per month in the first year of existence.²⁰ And as the software behind Wikipedia allowed different language versions, only two months after the foundation of the English Wikipedia users started to create versions in German, Catalan, Japanese, French and Spanish. Rising costs of the traffic generated by this nascent but quickly growing community of international contributors together with a reluctance to allow advertising²¹ soon led to discussions among these contributors, whether bomis.com was an appropriate organizational carrier for Wikipedia. In a mailing-list discussion under the heading “Ads and the future of Wikipedias” one contributor, addressing “all Wikipedians”, stated the following:

“If you are also worried that Bomis might start to behave irresponsibly some day, find someone willing to host your Wikipedia under better terms. It will either assure that Bomis will behave more reasonably, or if they won't, they will immediately lose.”²²

Having invited volunteer contributors from all over the world to contribute to its project Wikipedia, bomis.com ended up as being considered inappropriate for its further development by the community it helped creating. The importance of credibility and legitimacy of the carrier organization was demonstrated by the Spanish Wikipedia fork “Enciclopedia Libre Universal en Español”, which was founded by contributors of the Spanish-language Wikipedia to avoid any possibility of censorship and of placing advertisements by then Wikipedia host bomis.com.²³ So, not least to avoid similar forks, Bomis.com handed over all Wikipedia related intellectual property to the newly set up Wikimedia Foundation, which soon thereafter started fundraising by publicly asking for donations.²⁴

Differently, again, to the professionally homogenous origins of Creative Commons, Wikipedia was developed by contributors from diverse professional backgrounds from its

²⁰See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Wikipedia [accessed: 15 November 2009]

²¹ Jimmy Wales, on the contrary, was not at all opposed to selling advertisements, as is demonstrated by the following statement he made in November 2001: “I imagine that there will be some resistance to advertising from adamant commies, and from those who think maintaining integrity is more important. I can't really help that, and I can only state for the record that I think such people are seriously mistaken in many aspects of their world view.” (see http://meta.wikimedia.org/wiki/Advertising_on_Wikipedia [accessed: 30 May 2009])

²² See <http://marc.info/?l=intlwiki-l&m=104216592605802&w=2> [accessed: 15 November 2009]

²³ Initially, Enciclopedia Libre grew faster than the Spanish Wikipedia until the latter overtook it in 2004, after the Wikimedia Foundation had been established (see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Enciclopedia_Libre [accessed: 2 June 2009].

²⁴ See <http://lists.wikimedia.org/pipermail/wikipedia-l/> [accessed: 30 May 2009]

very start, some of which also engaged in the realm of Wikimedia. They saw the switch from corporate sponsorship to non-profit governance as an opportunity for increasing community participation in formal decision making processes. For example, one of these contributors, the later community-elected board member Erik Möller, initiated the first official project-wide community votes on Wikipedia policies.²⁵ When in March 2004 Wales announced the community election of two seats of the Wikimedia board,²⁶ this immediately inspired demand for even further participation: “Why is only a minority of the board chosen democratically? I won't argue about Jimbo's right to be in. But is the benevolent dictatorship now extended to a benevolent triumvirate with two guests?”²⁷

The next challenge for organizing participation was then posed by Wikimedia's transnationalization. Differently to *Wikipedia*, which was conceptualized as a multilingual and hence transnational endeavor from the beginning, *Wikimedia's* organizational transnationalization was far less planned: When in 2004 German Wikipedians, who had met at informal “regular's tables” before, formed the first local Wikimedia organization to raise funds for preserving Wikipedias advertisement-free status,²⁸ the Wikimedia Foundation did not have any procedures or guidelines for dealing with such organizations, yet. In officially recognizing the German membership based association as a “Wikimedia Chapter”, the Wikimedia Foundation both paved the way for other local chapter organizations and at the same time established the German example as a role model for followers, as is pointed out by a member of another chapter organization: “Germany was very successful in organizing the chapter as a formal membership association and so all the others stopped thinking about it and did the same.”

As a consequence, Wikimedia's transnationalization strategy exclusively relied on a grass-roots approach with newly founded and legally independent membership-based organizations.²⁹ New chapters have to be approved by Wikimedia's “Chapter Committee” to

²⁵ See http://meta.wikimedia.org/wiki/Power_structure [30 May 2009] and http://meta.wikimedia.org/wiki/International_logo_contest/Vote_instructions [accessed: 30 May 2009]

²⁶ <http://lists.wikimedia.org/pipermail/wikipedia-l/2004-March/014868.html> [accessed: 30 May 2009]

²⁷ <http://lists.wikimedia.org/pipermail/wikipedia-l/2004-March/014873.html> [accessed: 30 May 2009]

²⁸ See interview with Kurt Jansson in Dobusch and Forsterleitner (2007: 166)

²⁹ In 2009, the only exception of this rule is the Brazilian chapter organization, which deliberately decided not to establish a formal legal entity. This decision was made after Wikimedia had approved statutes of a Brazilian association. Representatives of the Brazilian chapter argue that establishing and upholding an administrative bureaucracy would require so much attention and effort that the actual work for free knowledge would suffer; besides, equal participation of community members would be impossible. Instead they emphasize the character of the Wikipedia community as a social movement and call their informal and open structure a strength, leading to social movement dynamics. A position representatives of other Wikimedia chapters strongly disagree with; they see a formal and legal body as an essential and defining precondition of any Wikimedia chapter.

become officially recognized by the Wikimedia Foundation and, similar to the “MoU” within the Creative Commons network, chapters have to sign various formal agreements regarding the use of name and logo in a “chapter agreement”. By the end of 2008 Wikimedia officially recognized 20 local chapter organizations with a total of about 1.800 individual members.³⁰ Wikimedia Germany is the largest chapter in terms of members (about 500), followed by Wikimedia Sweden (200), Italy (160), France and Netherlands (130 each).

The rationales given by founding members of the respective Wikimedia chapters for engaging in the formation of a formal organization were very similar across the board: Most interview partners report requests for contact persons from archives, museums or the local press, e.g. for managing donations of content such as picture archives. A member of the Czech Wikimedia chapter, for example, mentioned “cooperation with local entities” and “trying to get some sponsored project” as the major motive for forming the chapter. Thus, being able to cooperate with other local and formal organizations required local Wikipedia communities to build up a formal organization themselves.

³⁰ In this number of 20 we include the highly controversial Brazilian case, as the bylaws have been formally approved by the Wikimedia foundation, even though they have not been handed in at the local authorities, yet.

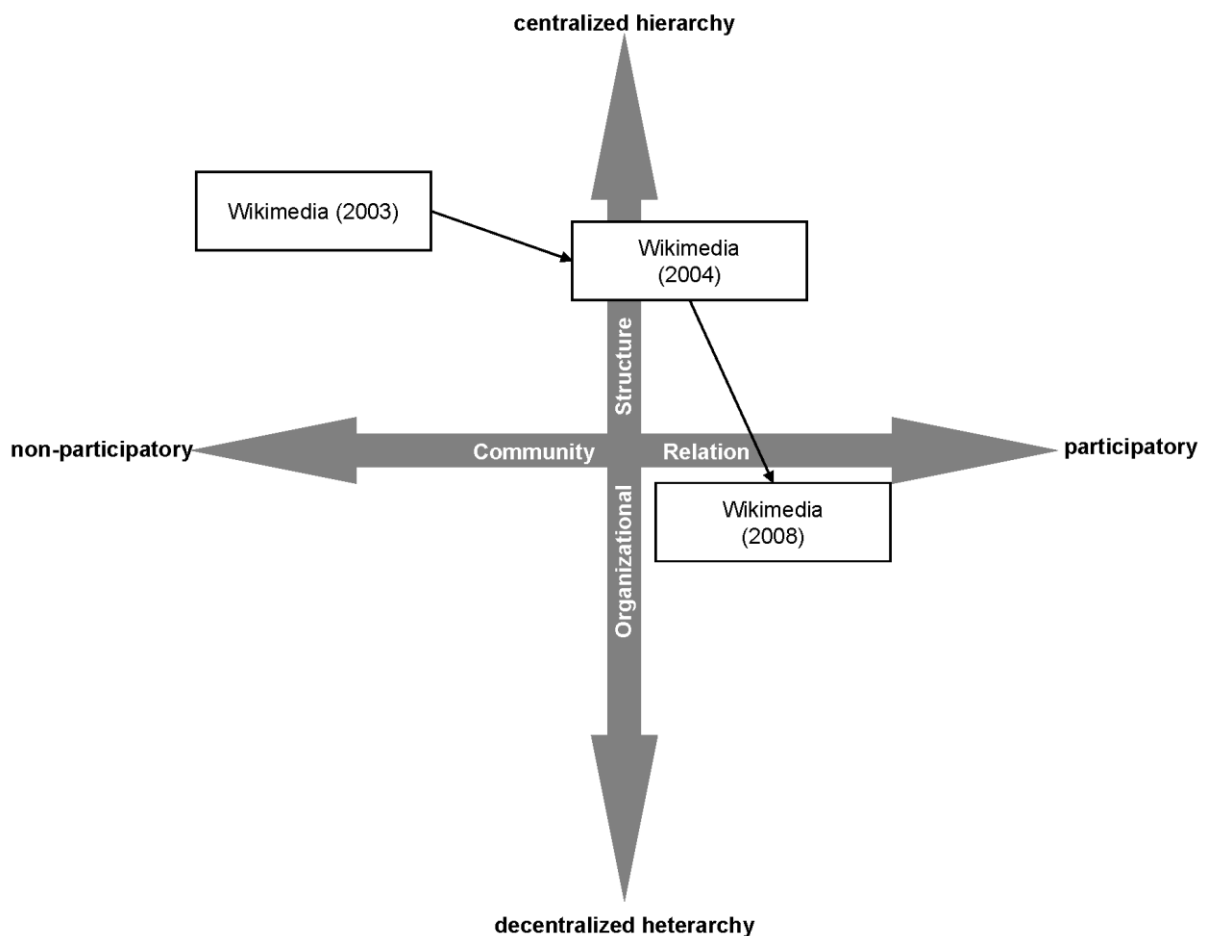


Figure 5: Organizational development of Wikimedia in terms of community relations and organizational structure over time.

As a “natural” recruiting ground for local Wikimedia activists and, hence, founders of local Wikimedia chapters serve the Wikipedia language projects mentioned above. Although participants in language projects are not necessarily geographically close, local meetings of very active contributors (“wiki meet-ups”) function as the basis for further engagement in the realm of chapter organizations. In terms of funding, the amount of financial resources each chapter receives via donations heavily depends on local tax laws and whether donations to the local Wikimedia chapter are exempted from tax. This is, for example, the case in Germany, Switzerland and Poland, as opposed to Austria or the Czech Republic.³¹

In 2008, as a reaction to the growing number and importance of these local chapter organizations, Wikimedia devoted two “chapter-selected” seats to representatives of local Wikimedia chapter organizations in addition to the directly elected community representatives. This most recent change in participation structures is the last instance in

³¹ The possibility to receive tax exempted donations is one of the big advantages of local chapter organizations and even a rationale for founding them as grassroots organizations. The same time, however, it also restricts the flow of funds within the organizational network. Donations to the German Wikimedia chapter, for example, cannot easily be transferred to the focal Wikimedia Foundation in the US due to legal restraints.

Wikimedia's development from a very centralized and non-participatory structure with direct community participation from 2004 onwards, to a more decentralized and partly even heterarchical structure (see Figure 5).

4.3 Creative Commons and Wikimedia: Comparing Transnationalization Dynamics

To better explain the unequal transnationalization and participation dynamics, we take a second and more contrasting look at both organizational developments and idiosyncrasies and their consequences for community management and development.

Figure 6 depicts the growth of the three types of transnational entities mentioned in the above case descriptions, namely Creative Commons' jurisdiction projects with ported license versions, local Wikimedia chapter organizations and Wikipedia language projects reaching the 100-contributor-threshold. Although both Creative Commons and Wikimedia experienced astonishing transnational growth in the first years of their existence,³² Creative Commons managed to establish more than twice as many local jurisdiction projects with ported license sets (49) than local chapters had been approved by the Wikimedia Foundation (21) by the end of 2008 (see Figure 6). The relatively slow organizational transnationalization of Wikimedia is even more in need of explanation when compared to the growth of Wikipedia language projects. Before the first Wikimedia chapter was launched in Germany in 2004, 17 different language projects had already reached over 100 regular contributors, some of them even over 1,000 contributors.³³

³² The example of the Free Software Foundation (FSF) demonstrates that such transnational growth is far from natural: more than 20 years after its foundation, the FSF recognizes only four so-called "sister organizations" in France, Latin America, Europe and India, see <http://www.fsf.org/> [accessed: 11 April 2009].

³³ In June 2004 the Japanese, the German and the French Wikipedia counted over 1,000 active contributors. In 2009 the numbers of contributors varies significantly between different language projects, ranging from over several tens of thousands (e.g. German, French, Japanese, Spanish, Italian) to groups around 100 contributors (e.g. Kurdish, Armenian or Breton).

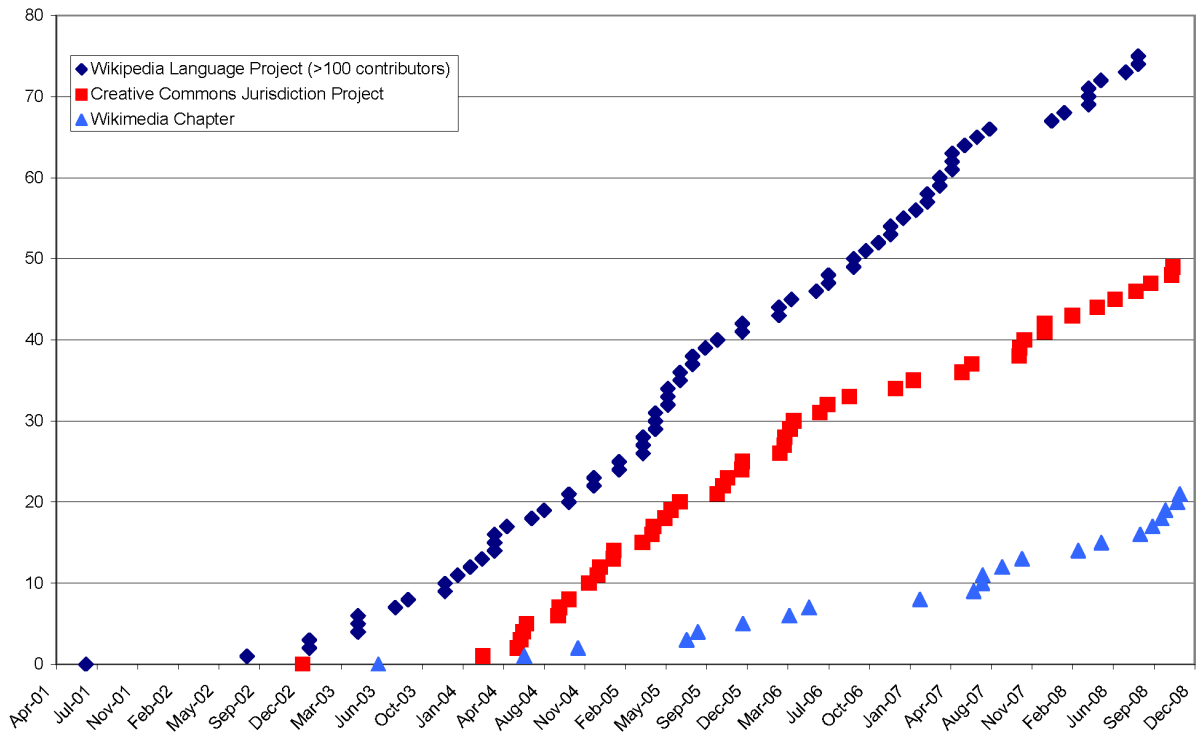


Figure 3: Cumulative number of Creative Commons jurisdiction projects, Wikipedia language projects reaching the 100-contributor-threshold and Wikimedia chapters from 2001 to 2008

Adjusting the data presented in Figure 6 for the different founding dates makes differences in the transnationalization dynamic even more obvious: although setting up a new language project is relatively trivial a task compared to porting a set of copyright licenses into a foreign jurisdiction, Creative Commons managed to transnationalize faster than Wikipedia was able to establish language projects with more than 100 contributors (see Figure 3). The growth of Wikimedia chapter organizations clearly lags behind. This may be due to Wikimedia’s “greenfield strategy” (Harzing 2002) built upon grass-roots activism, as opposed to Creative Commons’ approach of strategic partnerships with already existing organizations, which obviously allowed a faster transnationalization.

For the subsequent change in transnationalization dynamics – slower growth rates in the Creative Commons Case after mid-2006, faster growth rate in the Wikimedia case beginning in mid-2008 – the following explanations can be given: In the case of Creative Commons, the professional legal network was exhausted as a “breeding ground” for affiliate partners by mid-2006, Creative Commons being more and more dependent on non-legal affiliate organizations, as has been shown in section 4.1 above. In the case of Wikimedia, the grass-

roots approach obviously requires a longer handling time to establish a chapter organization, leading to time-lag compared to the Creative Commons case.³⁴

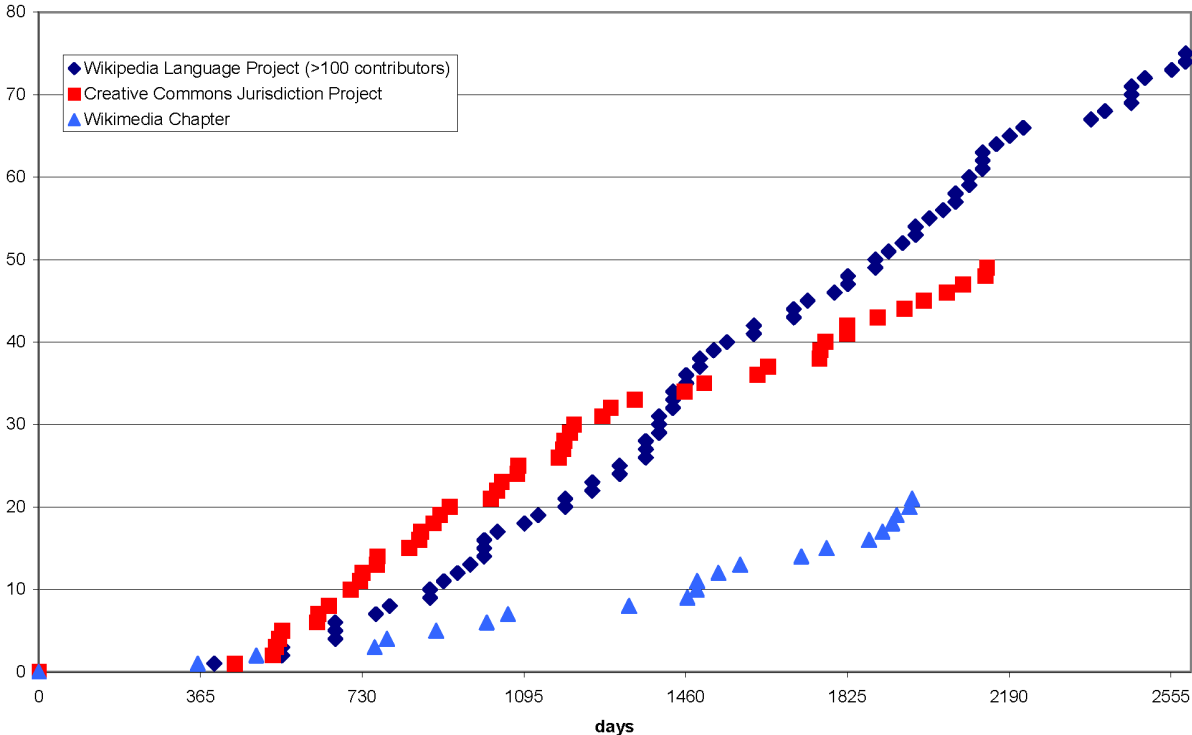


Figure 4: Cumulative number of Creative Commons jurisdiction projects, Wikipedia language projects reaching the 100-contributor-threshold and Wikimedia chapters from 2001 to 2008, adjusted for differences in founding dates.

These differences in strategic conduct and outcome, however, were highly contingent on the organizations constituents and tasks.

First, the legal epistemic community (Haas 1992; Dobusch and Quack 2010) behind Creative Commons provided relatively privileged access to resources of their hosting organizations such as university law schools, law firms or think tanks. So, the challenge was and still is not so much acquiring legal expertise and basic funding but rather spreading the concept among local communities of potential license users. Contrariwise, Wikimedia at least in the realm of its Wikipedia project could rely on a rapidly growing community of contributors and users, which due to their various backgrounds did not as easily provide financial or other organizational resources. This difference is particularly salient in developing countries, where sustainable funding for grass-roots activism is much more difficult than in industrialized countries. In Latin America, for example, only in the relatively rich Argentina Wikipedians were able to legally establish a Wikimedia chapter, while Creative Commons found local

³⁴ Recent developments show that the gap in transnationalization is actually coming to a close, as Wikimedia managed to establish XXX new chapters compared to only XXX new jurisdiction projects of Creative Commons since the end of 2008.

partner organizations in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, and Peru. Consequently Damian Finol, a Wikipedian from Venezuela and member of the Wikimedia chapter committee, explains his failure in setting up a local Wikimedia chapter since 2006 with problems such as raising enough travel funds for foundational meetings and for securing equal participation possibilities for geographically scattered members.

Second, the multiplicity of individual backgrounds in this community, which is clearly a strength of – if not a precondition for – Wikipedia as a project, poses an additional challenge for building formal organizational structures. While members of Creative Commons’ epistemic community already shared a set of principled and causal beliefs, notions of validity and a common policy enterprise, the foundation of Wikimedia chapters requires a shift in identity from being a “mere” contributor to commons-based peer production (Benkler 2006) to becoming a (kind of) political activist.³⁵ But it is this “identity shift” that leads people to take over administrative tasks with less intrinsic rewards, which are key for any formal mode of organizing (see also Stegbauer 2009).

This is related to, *third*, the issue of the affiliate organizations’ major tasks: whereas porting and maintaining Creative Commons licenses is a clear-cut task with recurring elements such as license versioning, Wikimedia chapters – at least in the beginning – had to find and define their role: the chair of the first Wikimedia chapter in Germany even stated that they only “slowly noticed” what the chapter organization actually was helpful for, aside from fund-raising and managing donations it was founded for (see interview with Kurt Jansson in Dobusch and Forsterleitner 2007: 166). Besides, Wikipedia language projects not only provide a recruiting ground for potential Wikimedia activists but also offer enough possibilities for engagement without becoming a member of any formal organization.

So, harvesting an already transnational network of legal professionals and offering clear-cut tasks for local outposts fostered the development and growth of a transnational organizational network around Creative Commons. However, relying so heavily on a network of legal professionals seemingly also led to some regional bias as this strategy worked best in countries with long tradition and diversity in the field of intellectual property law;

³⁵ Regarding the importance of identity construction for collective mobilization and organization, see Roy and Parker-Gwin (1999), Diani and Bison 2004.

consequently, while 5 of 21 Wikimedia chapters (23.8 %) are located in Eastern European countries, only 2 of the first 21 Creative Commons jurisdiction projects (9.5 %) had been so.³⁶

5. Discussion

Whereas Creative Commons managed to transnationalize more quickly than Wikimedia, it has much more difficulties in organizationally coping with demands for some form of community participation. These difficulties, in turn, lead to a substantial amount of frustration among activists with demobilizing effects, as is evidenced by statements such as the following from a European jurisdiction project lead: “I don’t feel I have to do with the organization.”

For Wikimedia, community votes and elections have soon become a regular part of its organizational decision making procedures. In the most recent (2009) and so far largest community vote on the proposal to re-license Wikimedia material to make it also available under the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike license, 17,462 people cast their votes.³⁷ All contributors who had made at least 25 edits to any Wikimedia project prior to March 15, 2009 were invited to vote. And as has already been mentioned, since the first year after its foundation Wikimedia allows its community to elect members of its governing “board of trustees”. In these elections both active and passive right to vote depend on slightly different criteria as more than 400 edits three months prior to the respective election are required to participate. Around 3,000 contributors participate every year in these elections.³⁸

While being obviously arbitrary, the decision to draw community boundaries at certain numbers of “edits” is explicit and transparent. Seemingly, this possibility to clearly define boundaries is a precondition for effective and relatively uncontested community participation in formal organizational decision-making.

Within Creative Commons, on the contrary, defining community boundaries is a problem: While being very successful in porting its alternative copyright licenses into other jurisdictions and in bonding with local “affiliate organizations”, its attempt of organizing community participation within the framework of the separate organization “iCommons” has not been successful. Lacking better criteria for identifying members of the “Creative

³⁶ Even among the existing affiliate organizations in Eastern Europe there are only few law schools but mainly civil society organizations (see Dobusch and Quack 2010).

³⁷ http://meta.wikimedia.org/wiki/Licensing_update/Result [accessed: 2 June 2009]

³⁸ See http://meta.wikimedia.org/wiki/Board_elections/history [accessed: 2 June 2009]

Commons community”, people were invited to register as “nodes” at the iCommons webpage; thereby, new nodes had to be approved by already existing ones. However, only very few people followed this relatively bureaucratic procedure – especially, as the role and benefits of being a “node” remained unclear. As a consequence, granting voting rights to nodes in formal decision-making procedures was discussed but never implemented. Even more, also heavy users and activists in Creative Commons jurisdiction projects had severe difficulties in differentiating Creative Commons – the organization responsible for developing the set of copyright licenses – from iCommons, which was meant to function as an organizational framework for diverse communities of license users. A project lead of a small European country put it bluntly: “I don’t understand this distinction myself. [...] I really don’t care about that.”

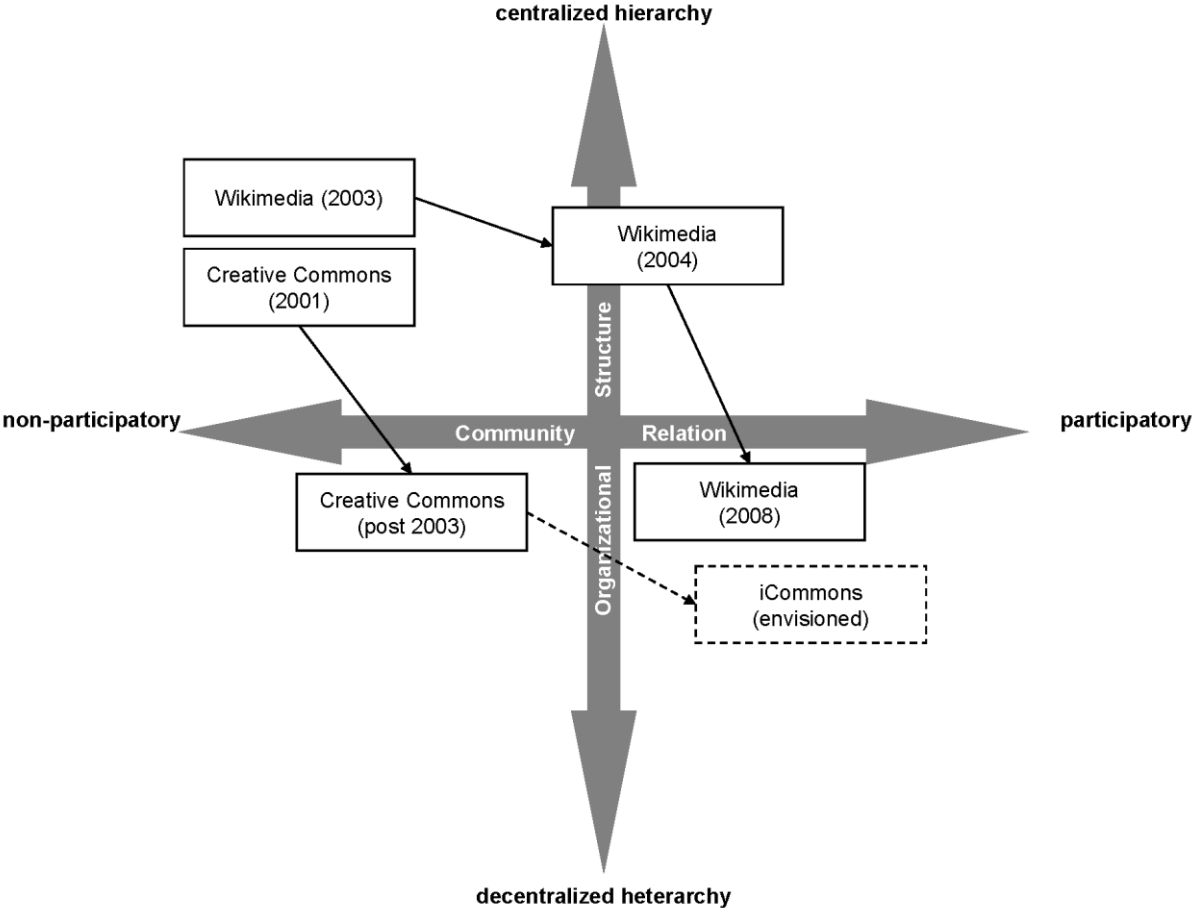


Figure 8: Comparison of the development of the organization-community-relationship in both cases over time

While drawing boundaries of Creative Commons communities is unlikely to become easier in the future, the difference with regard to representation of local jurisdiction projects and chapter organizations is indeed puzzling: although Creative Commons recognizes more than twice as many jurisdiction projects (49) than Wikimedia has chapters, it has not established

any formal participation of its affiliate organization in its formal decision-making processes similar to the chapter-selected seats in the Wikimedia Foundation board, yet.

Comparing the development of the organizational development of Creative Commons and Wikimedia over time (see Figure 8) shows similarities in direction but differences in paths. In the Wikimedia case, increasing participation predates organizational transnationalization and thus decentralization. Hence, the preference for integrating community members within the organization, as evidenced by applying a grass-roots approach for its local chapter organizations and granting them representation rights in 2008, appears a consistent strategy in managing its community relations. Creative Commons, in turn, started its transnationalization as a legal-technical process and encountered a growing activist component with demands for participation as a challenge during this process.

One possible theoretical explanation for this difference in formal participation procedures between Creative Commons and Wikimedia might be “imprinting” (Stinchcombe 1965) of the originally “technical” role fulfilled by the former as a kind of “legal service provider”. Wikimedia, in contrast, was founded not least to provide a credible and legitimate platform for the community’s collective efforts. The growing number of non-legal affiliate organizations together with the simultaneous withdrawal of legal experts might however increase the pressure on Creative Commons, to change its role and its community relations into more “political” ones. The reported complaints by leaders of several jurisdiction projects regarding democratic deficits and lack of transparency within Creative Commons point into this direction.

6. Conclusions

The status of the franchise networks’ digital communities as “born globals” and their potential for rapid growth made design and management of their complementary formal carrier-organizations particularly challenging a task: not only did they have to cope with (static) heterogeneity of transnationally dispersed community members but they also had to account for qualitative changes that followed from quantitative community growth (see also Shirky 2008). At least in the two cases under study, the rganization-community-relationships could be characterized as ‘dialectical’ insofar as the very success of such a relationship was the cause for a subsequent crisis.

The current focus on the informal structuring (digital) communities in the literature not only underestimates the importance of adequate formal organizing for sustained community dynamics but also underexposes problems in such organization-community-relationships. The latter becomes even more obvious in a longitudinal perspective, when quantitative and qualitative change within the community questions even the most basic organizational orientations. This makes traditional organizational typologies such as Anheier and Themudo (2005a) and distinctions such as Della Porta and Diani's (2006: 145ff.) differentiation between "professional" and "participatory movement organizations" not dispensable but requires putting them in a historical perspective: it may be the very success of an organizational carrier in terms of community growth that creates the necessity for re-defining its self-conception and re-structuring its organizational building blocks.

Hence, at least for volatile and transnational organization-community-relationships, we see a growing necessity for pragmatist notions of "corrigible provisionality" (Sabel 2006: 120) within networked forms of organizing. With regard to the general relationship between organizations and their (community-)environment, this implicates to not only recognize the respective boundaries as precarious but rather to make drawing boundaries a central task strategic management considerations. In this area – strategic management of (drawing) boundaries – we also see both great potential and need for further research.

Appendix

#	CC-Jurisdictions	launch date	Affiliates	L/P-Leads	Interview
1	United States (us)	16.12.2002	1	NO	X
2	Japan (jp)	03.03.2004	2	YES	X
3	Finland (fi)	27.05.2004	2	NO	X
4	Brazil (br)	04.06.2004	1	NO	X
5	Germany (de)	10.06.2004	3	YES	X
6	Netherlands (nl)	18.06.2004	4	YES	X
7	Taiwan (tw)	04.09.2004	1	NO	X
8	Austria (at)	07.09.2004	2	YES	X
9	Canada (ca)	01.10.2004	1	NO	X
10	Spain (es)/Catalunya (cat)	01.10.2004	1	NO	X
11	France (fr)	19.11.2004	1	YES	X
12	Belgium (be)	10.12.2004	2	NO	X
13	Italy (it)	16.12.2004	3	NO	X
14	Australia (au)	17.01.2005	1	NO	X
15	Croatia (hr)	19.01.2005	1	NO	X
16	South Korea (kr)	31.03.2005	1	NO	X
17	Poland (pl)	23.04.2005	2	YES	X
18	UK: England and Wales (uk)	27.04.2005	2	YES	X
19	South Africa (za)	25.05.2005	1	YES	X
20	Israel (il)	09.06.2005	1	NO	X
21	Chile (cl)	01.07.2005	2	YES	X
22	Argentina (ar)	01.10.2005	1	YES	X
23	Hungary (hu)	15.10.2005	1	YES	X
24	Slovenia (si)	26.10.2005	2	YES	X
25	Sweden (se)	30.11.2005	1	NO	X
26	UK: Scotland (scotland)	02.12.2005	1	NO	(X)
27	Malaysia (my)	04.03.2006	1	NO	X
28	Bulgaria (bg)	14.03.2006	1	NO	X
29	Mexico (mx)	16.03.2006	2	NO	X
30	China Mainland (cn)	29.03.2006	2	NO	X
31	Malta (mt)	07.04.2006	1	NO	X
32	Denmark (dk)	10.06.2006	2	YES	X
33	Peru (pe)	29.06.2006	1	NO	X
34	Colombia (co)	22.08.2006	2	YES	X
35	Portugal (pt)	13.12.2006	3	NO	X
36	India (in)	26.01.2007	1	YES	X
37	Switzerland (ch)	26.05.2007	1	YES	X
38	Macedonia (mk)	19.06.2007	1	YES	X
39	Greece (gr)	13.10.2007	1	YES	X
40	Luxembourg (lux)	15.10.2007	1	NO	X
41	New Zealand / Aotearoa (nz)	26.10.2007	1	NO	X
42	Philippines (ph)	15.12.2007	1	NO	X
43	Serbia (rs)	15.12.2007	3	YES	X
44	Puerto Rico	21.02.2008	1	NO	X
45	Ecuador	22.04.2008	1	NO	X
46	Norway	05.06.2008	1	YES	X
47	Singapore	27.07.2008	1	YES	X
48	Romania	01.09.2008	1	NO	X
49	Guatemala	22.10.2008	1	YES	X
50	Hong Kong	25.10.2008	1	YES	X

Table 3: Creative Commons Jurisdiction Projects

#	<i>Wikimedia Chapters</i>	<i>launch date</i>	<i>Members in 2009</i>	<i>Interview</i>
0	Wikimedia Foundation	20.06.2003	-	X
1	Germany	13.06.2004	500	X
2	France	23.10.2004	130	X
3	Italy	17.07.2005	160	
4	Poland	14.08.2005	98	X
5	Serbia	03.12.2005	100	X
6	Netherlands	27.03.2006	130	X
7	Switzerland	14.05.2006	67	X
8	Taiwan	11.02.2007	30	
9	Norway	23.06.2007	50	X
10	Hong Kong	14.07.2007	40	X
11	Israel	15.07.2007	15	X
12	Argentina	01.09.2007	60	X
13	Sweden	20.10.2007	200	X
14	Czech Republic	06.03.2008	30	X
15	Austria	02.05.2008	40	X
16	Australia	06.08.2008	60	X
17	Indonesia	05.09.2008	23	X
18	Hungary	27.09.2008	31	X
19	Brazil	07.10.2008	-	X
20	UK	05.11.2008	28	X
21	Russia	11.11.2008	12	X

Table 4: Wikimedia chapter organizations

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