

## Common Tables and Democratic Solidarity

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My central argument is that food is integral to political democratic practices. A defense of local and farmers' markets against global markets, prevalent in much of the literature on the democratization of food, seems inadequate because it does not necessarily undermine class inequalities that are incompatible with democratic citizenship. By exploring the Greek notion of common tables in the writings of Aristotle and Aristotle's and Marx's distinction between use and exchange value, I intend to show that shared meals based on common use instead of exchange and private markets can counter a range of inequalities that ordinarily undermine the practice of democratic citizenship. I will look at the Transition Towns Movement, at a small sustainable farm in Mount Shasta, California and at Slow Food's Terra Madre movement as instances of the democratizing potential of sharing food at "common tables" in both a real and metaphorical sense. [Article copies available for a fee from *The Transformative Studies Institute*. E-mail address: [journal@transformativestudies.org](mailto:journal@transformativestudies.org) Website: <http://www.transformativestudies.org> ©2013 by *The Transformative Studies Institute*. All rights reserved.]

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