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## Decreasing dependency through self-reliance: Strengthening local economies through Community Wealth Building

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# **Decreasing Dependency through Self-Reliance: Strengthening Local Economies through Community Wealth Building**

**Julia Eder**

# Decreasing Dependency through Self-Reliance: Strengthening Local Economies through Community Wealth Building

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## Abstract

The impact of the global financial crisis of 2007ff. led peripheral communities in the USA and in the UK such as Cleveland and Preston to question their unsustainable, outward-oriented and socially excluding development model. As a consequence, they adopted Community Wealth Building (CWB) as a new and fundamentally different local development strategy. This strategy has been analysed in case studies or in comparison with other contemporary progressive movements, initiatives and strategies, for example cooperative movements or the foundational economy. However, this paper argues that CWB shows equally interesting parallels with historical debates and practices of 'self-reliance' which different actors developed from the 1960s to the 1980s (mainly) in the Global South, and which are worth being studied more in detail. Thus, this paper examines to what extent CWB resembles older self-reliance approaches and how community wealth building could benefit from engaging with the theoretical foundations of the earlier debates. The central thesis is that the commonalities are more relevant than the differences and that, due to this, the actors associated with CWB could benefit from engaging with the legacy of self-reliance to complement the theoretical foundation of their approach. Methodologically, the paper draws on an analysis of policy documents, newspaper articles, and the insights from four exploratory interviews with policy advisers and politicians involved with CWB.

## 1. Introduction

Capitalism is characterized by temporary and spatial uneven development which causes the emergence, reproduction and modification of core-periphery structures. They do not only exist between the Global South and the Global North but also among Northern communities/regions/countries. While in the boom phase after World War II the peripheral units in the Global North might have benefitted from 'growth without development', particularly during and shortly after capitalist crises the prevailing structural imbalances became striking (Weissenbacher, 2018). It was in the context of the global financial and economic crisis starting in 2007 that some actors in peripheral communities of the Global North started to question their outward-oriented development model, stimulated 'from above'.<sup>1</sup> For instance, this happened in Cleveland, Ohio, and in the city of Preston in North West England. Both cities being peripheral communities in the respective countries adopted 'community wealth building' as a development strategy which rests upon similar assumptions that American and European dependency scholars had defended several decades earlier. They figured that the externally stimulated and crisis-ridden dependent development 'from outside' should be substituted by locally-rooted, self-reliant (or auto-centred) and sustainable development.

By prioritising basic needs and struggling for the recovery of the control over the economy, their approach resembles – and takes inspiration from – other progressive movements and initiatives such as the solidarity economy, cooperative movements, economic democracy, new municipalism, and the foundational economy. Furthermore, their aim to shorten supply chains by strengthening local economic circuits also connects them to approaches aspiring to live within the ecological boundaries, e. g. doughnut economics, degrowth or postgrowth. However, I will argue that there exists another – less obvious yet equally interesting – (implicit) and scarcely examined connection to historical debates on 'self-reliance' which evolved from the 1960s to the 1980s mainly in the Global South. Thus, throughout the paper I will examine the following questions: To what extent does community wealth building (CWB) resemble older self-reliance approaches? What are the major differences? How could community wealth building benefit from engaging with the theoretical foundations of the earlier debates? The central thesis is that the commonalities are more relevant than the differences and that, due to this, the actors associated with CWB could benefit from engaging with the legacy of self-reliance to complement the theoretical foundation of their approach.

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<sup>1</sup> Stöhr (1978, 1984) distinguished "development from above" and "from outside" from „development from below“ and “from within”. While the first is outward-oriented and highly dependent on external economic interactions, the latter seeks to use preferentially the local resources and to formulate a development strategy from below, which Stöhr (1984) termed “selective self-reliance”.

After introducing the concepts of dependence and dependency and the central ideas of self-reliant or auto-centred development, I will analyse CWB along the three main features of the historical self-reliance approach, which were: 1) to rely on own resources and thereby strengthening the local economy (= self-reliant development), 2) to establish horizontal relations with other peripheral communities and/or countries and/or regions (= collective self-reliance), and 3) to strive for fundamental changes of the global economic system (= New International Economic Order (NIEO)) in order to end the exploitation of the countries of the Global South. I will draw on different examples throughout the paper, one being the North-West English city of Preston, which adopted CWB from 2011 onwards. Methodologically, this part draws on an analysis of policy documents, newspaper articles, and four exploratory interviews with policy advisers and politicians involved with CWB.

## 2. Self-Reliance

In 1961, many of the recently independent African and Asian nations plus some other countries such as Cuba and Yugoslavia united forces in the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). They debated how to deal best with their situation as developing countries at the peripheries of global capitalism in order to promote development and to decrease their dependence on the economic centres (in many cases, the former colonial powers). Those debates were inspired by heterodox development theories such as Latin American structuralism that surged as a critical response to the then dominant modernisation theories and – later – the Dependency Approach. Those newly developed theories assumed that the global economy is characterized by core-periphery divides, in which the economic, political and cultural development of peripheral communities/countries/regions is conditioned by developments happening in the core countries (or ‘centres’). While the term ‘dependence’ usually refers to an asymmetric relationship among two actors (see Figure 1), ‘dependency’ describes a more complex structural condition in which a unit (country, community etc.) is inserted in an economic system in a way that its autonomous decision-making is strongly limited. Dependency “has an internal anatomy manifesting itself in fragmentation and an external anatomy realized through its responsiveness to foreign economic activity” (Caporaso, 1978, p. 23). Thus, interdependence represents the opposite of dependence, while the opposite pole of dependency is autonomy (Caporaso, 1978; see Figure 1), which can become self-reliance in case that autonomous development is organized in a non-exploitative manner.<sup>2</sup> While the concept was originally developed in Latin America to describe the relationship of countries from the Global South with the Global North, it has also been applied to analyse uneven development in Europe, e.g. by the European Dependency School in the 1970s and 1980s (for an

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<sup>2</sup> Stöhr (1984, pp. 3–4) highlights that development can be self-determined “but at the expense of resources initially pertaining to other communities, and therefore *not self-reliant*.” He argues that this is the case with most core countries.

overview see Weissenbacher, 2018) and by other authors (Becker et al., 2015; Weissenbacher, 2019) more recently.

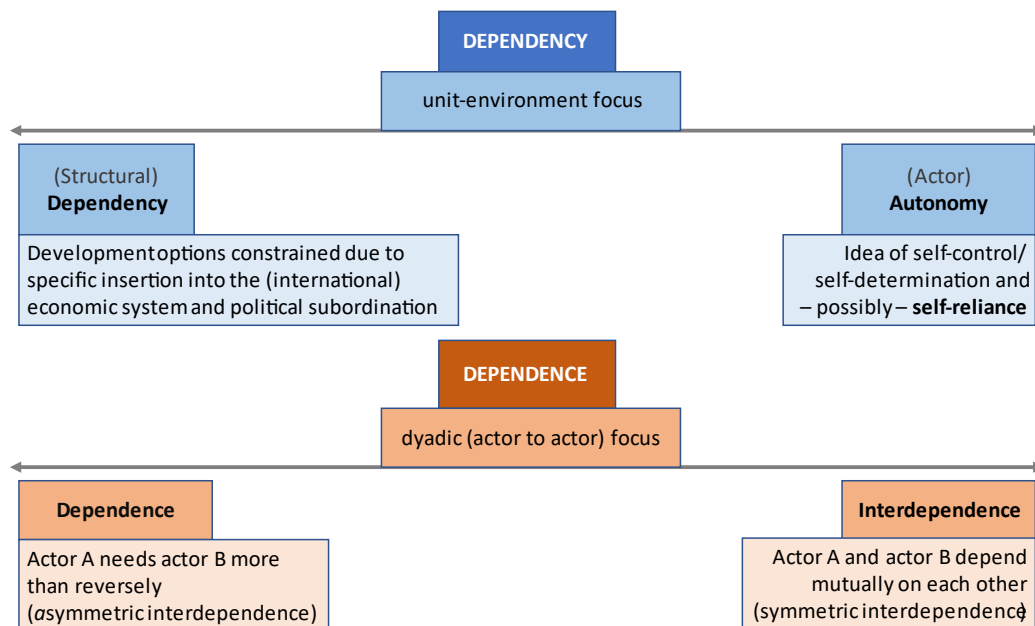


Figure 1. Dependency and Dependence according to Caporaso (1978). Source: own elaboration.

Important concerns of the NAM state leaders were the (unequal) trade relations with the industrialized countries and the low influence they had on international decision-making. They argued that the transformation of those relations was crucial and could only happen through increasing the ‘self-reliance’ of the peripheral states (Fischer, 2016). Inside the NAM, the discourse on self-reliance focused on three interrelated dimensions. First, and at the centre of the approach, they put the ideal of self-reliant, auto-centred or autonomous development, which implied drawing primarily on own resources to overcome dependency. Second, they envisioned the promotion of South-South Cooperation, that is, cooperation among the peripheral countries/regions, which they labelled ‘collective self-reliance’. Finally, they aspired to establish a New International Economic Order (NIEO) on the international scale in order to promote catch-up development (see Figure 2; Amin, 1981, p. 535; Khan, 1978; Matthies, 1978; Rist, 2008, pp. 123–139). In the NAM’s vision, the NIEO would change the economic power relations by guaranteeing the developing countries higher prices on the world market for their commodity exports (improving the terms of trade) and it would increase their political influence. However, more radical scholars argued that those changes would not be sufficient and that the developing countries should collectively struggle to modify the international division of labour (Amin, 1981, pp. 549–550; Senghaas, 1978, pp. 83, 277–283).

## 2.1 *Kujitegemea* in Tanzania

While collective self-reliance and the call for the NIEO were quite present in the political discourse at that time, the NAM approach remained vague regarding the implementation of self-reliance at the national, regional and local scale (Fischer, 2016). However, in some NAM member countries, self-reliance took a more concrete form (for an overview Rist, 2008, 123-125, 136 and Pierzyńska, 2012). A prominent example is Tanzania. In his African socialism concept termed *Ujamaa*, Julius Nyerere – first prime minister (1961-1964) and then president (1964-1985) – drew on the idea of self-reliance (*Kujitegemea*). All economic sectors should develop through reliance on the nation's own resources. Foreign support was not forbidden, but it should only be accepted if it was not linked to conditionalities. Cooperatives in trade and agricultural production were crucial in the Tanzanian model, due to the lack of a flourishing industrial sector. While some cooperatives had existed since colonial times and had actively supported the liberation movement, after independence the party leadership promoted the rapid top-down establishment of collectively farmed *Ujamaa* villages, including forced mass resettlements in the 1970s. In comparison to traditional cooperatives in the crop sector, such as the Ruvuma Development Association (RDA), the *Ujamaa* villages fell short regarding democratic and participatory decision-making. In 1976, the government even abolished all remaining cooperatives and instead introduced parastatal crop authorities. The authoritarian management of the collectively-owned farmer villages produced results far below expectations. A gap between theory and practice became obvious, which was further exacerbated by the fact that the dependence on foreign development aid resources became huge in the respective period (Collord, 2019; Rist, 2008, pp. 125–134; Schicho, 2009, pp. 182–185).

While from the late 1970s until the 1990s the self-reliance experiment was judged by many – including Nyerere himself – as a failure, the devastating impacts of structural adjustment programmes of the international financial institutions (not only in Africa), relativized the overall negative perception and led to a more nuanced debate of the Tanzanian experience since 2000 (Rist, 2008, p. 133; Schicho, 2009, p. 187). For example, Fischer (2016, p. 6) concludes that “[b]ased on a small number of principles, it [the *Ujamaa* community socialism] offered quite original ideas in the context of development debates of the time.”

## 2.2 Self-Reliance as an Anti-Capitalist Project

While the leading politicians of the NAM sought to secure a bigger share of the profits of global capitalist production for the developing countries, some scholars linked to the Dependency Approach – i. a. Samir Amin, Dieter Senghaas and Johan Galtung – formulated a more radical position (Amin, 1981, pp. 534–535; for a more detailed discussion of the different positions see Fischer, 2016). The three aforementioned scholars shared the viewpoint that under capitalist conditions economic development satisfying the needs of the masses would not be possible for developing countries. Based

on a critical engagement with the Theory of Peripheral Capitalism, they denied “the prospect of a mature, autonomous, capitalism in the periphery”, because peripheral economies are “externally oriented and dependent” (Amin, 1981, p. 535). Therefore, they argued in favour of promoting self-reliant development through dissociation from the world market in order to promote the development of alternative economic structures in the peripheries. The objective was to use the in the 1970s newly gained scope for development to establish closely connected economic circuits between agriculture, capital goods and consumer goods industries<sup>3</sup>. Thereby, they aimed to create a new socioeconomic spatial structure, challenging also the existing internal imbalances between growth poles and *hinterland*<sup>4</sup> (Amin, 1981, pp. 534–557; Galtung, 1980, 1983, 1985; Senghaas, 1978, pp. 263–291).

The newly established self-reliant entities should develop horizontal relations among each other. Subregional<sup>5</sup> or regional cooperation between peripheral economies of the same development level should become a relevant driver of these anti-capitalist projects (collective self-reliance). However, all three scholars kept insisting that self-reliance did not equate to self-sufficiency or autarchy (Amin, 1981, p. 535; Galtung, 1985, p. 56; Senghaas, 1978, p. 277). According to Senghaas (1978, pp. 82, 86), “selective cooperation with the metropolises is reasonable and desirable, when it fosters a non-discriminatory division of labour”. However, he also admitted (p. 281) that the implementation of these policies would lead to a severe contraction of North-South trade.

It is crucial to highlight that the three scholars put emphasis on different dimensions of the self-reliance approach. Samir Amin constantly voiced the triple demand for national autonomy, collective self-reliance and a new world order, but thought this was only viable through the socialist break with capitalism.<sup>6</sup> Strongly influenced by the African national liberation movements, he put emphasis on the importance of national sovereignty: “A genuinely self-reliant development is necessarily that of the people (...). [A] ‘popular’ development can only be national and self-reliant” (Amin, 1981, p. 547). Senghaas and Galtung, by contrast, defended a more complex multi-scale approach.

According to Senghaas (1978, pp. 274, 282–285) and Galtung, self-reliance on the national scale was neither sufficient, nor prior or superior to local or regional self-reliance. In fact, both defended a bottom-up strategy, in which local self-reliance was key. Local economic activities should rely on local

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<sup>3</sup> Senghaas (1978, pp. 267–270) explicitly draws on List to formulate his proposal for a development strategy which integrates agriculture and manufacturing. In his view, the creation and promotion of what De Bernis termed *industrialising industries* was particularly important: iron & steel, machine construction, metalworking industry, chemical industry and energy production. These industries constitute a precondition for autonomous development.

<sup>4</sup> The French geographer François Perroux coined the theory of growth poles. Those are in many cases cities that also positively affect the economic development of their hinterland.

<sup>5</sup> „Subregional“ refers to several, but not all countries of a region, e.g. the European Southern periphery.

<sup>6</sup> Galtung (1980, p. 6), by contrast, would not call himself a socialist, but he denominated self-reliance “profoundly anti-capitalist”.



resources and be determined through local democratic decisions, but they should integrate a broader national development strategy. The reasoning behind this postulation was that self-reliant communities inside non-self-reliant nations might “not have the sufficient strength to withstand economic aggressiveness from without” (Galtung, 1985, pp. 9–10). Furthermore, only the state could manage economic circuits that transcended the local scale (Galtung, 1983, p. 111). Therefore, they did not restrict their concept to the local scale, although they assumed that “it is only at the local level that self-reliance properly speaking can unfold itself as mass action” (Galtung, 1985, p. 8). Galtung (1980, p. 20) stated:

Hence, the idea would be that just as local self-reliance has to be protected by national self-reliance and national by regional self-reliance the purpose, the raison d’être of the latter two is to provide a basis for the local self-reliance, and the raison d’être of that again is human self-reliance, the self-reliance of the individual and/or the group.

For the purpose of this paper, Johan Galtung’s elaborations on economic subsidiarity are of particular interest. According to the author, a community should source every product and service at the lowest possible scale, relying on own resources. This accounted not only for agricultural products, but also for manufactured goods. Prior to this, democratic processes should decide which goods a society really needs. Galtung suggests in this context to prioritize use value over exchange value. Consequently applied, this development strategy would lead to a re-diversification of economic structures, but also to a moderation of production and consumption patterns. Only goods that a community could not produce at the local scale should be traded inside the nation, and only what a nation could not produce on its own should be imported from the region (Galtung, 1983, pp. 5–7). Galtung stressed the ecological and social advantages of this strategy. It would reduce transportation routes and unnecessary trade; it would become easier to control production chains and the alienation at the workplace would decrease through the contraction of economic circuits (Galtung, 1980, pp. 11–12). Furthermore, his proposal would guarantee the full capacity use of local resources that capitalism usually avoids through trade (Galtung, 1980, p. 9).

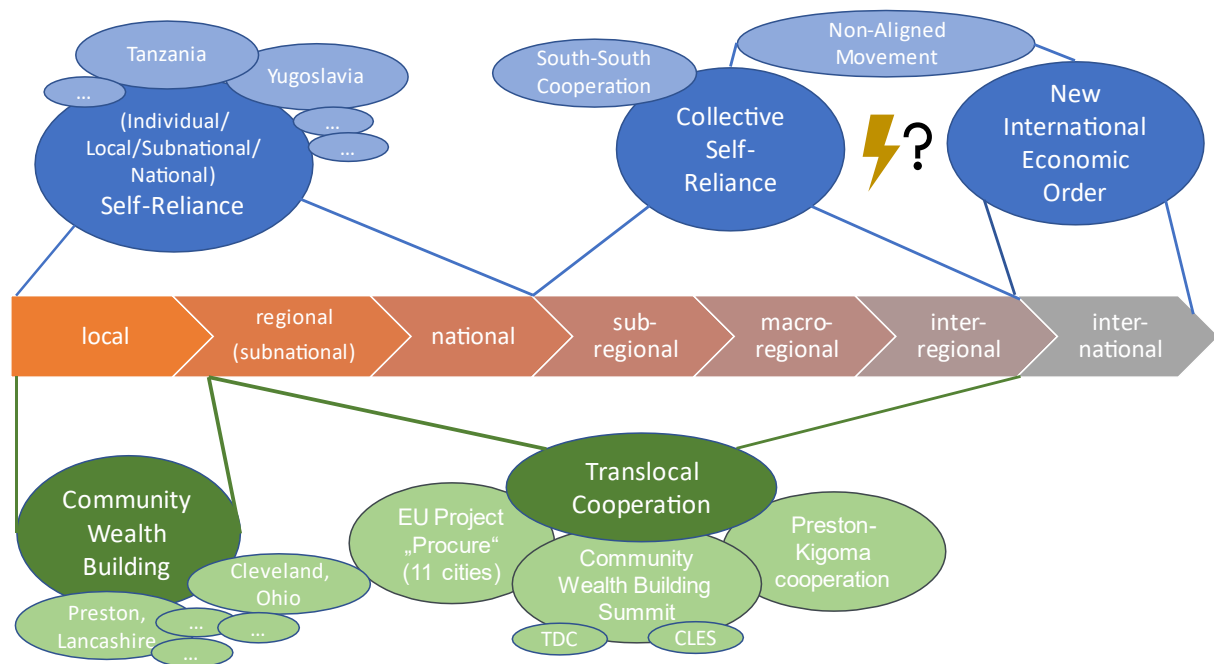


Figure 2. Main components of Self-Reliance and Community Wealth Building at different scales.  
Source: own elaboration.

Galtung did not have objections against self-reliance in the Global North. As “[s]elf-reliance cannot be at the expense of the self-reliance of others” (Galtung, 1980, p. 4), he did not see a problem in progressive movements in the Global North striving for self-reliance; on the contrary, he appreciated this idea; on the one hand, because regional self-reliance in the core countries would force the periphery to become even more self-reliant; on the other, because he expected that it would have positive effects internally (Galtung, 1980, p. 15, 1983, p. 120):

[S]elf-reliance in the Center, particularly when practised at the local level, also gives the overdeveloped, capitalist West a chance to regain so much of what has been lost in recent times: a sense of mastery of local destiny, mobilization of local creativity, less dependence on professionals, less clientelization generally speaking, new technologies (...) with smaller economic circuits that are more aligned with middle-range ecological cycles [and] mass participation (...). Some lowering of purely material standard of living is a very low price to pay for that. (Galtung, 1980, p. 16)

Galtung (1980, p. 1) points out that the “idea of local self-reliance in the sense of the small community relying on its own forces, is as old as humanity itself”. Thus, it is a recurring idea, which the Third World developmentalism from the 1960s to the 1980s revitalized. However, with the acceleration of globalisation and the enforcement of neoliberal restructuring through the Washington Consensus, the concept of self-reliance temporarily disappeared from the scene. Yet, some of the ideas discussed above had a revival in the wake of the alter- or anti-globalisation movement during the 1990s and early

2000s (in the Global North and South), in which the World Social Forum and its regional and national offshoots played a crucial role (Bailey, 2019, pp. 372–373). For example, Walden Bello (2009) argued for deglobalisation through economic subsidiarity, the orientation of production towards the domestic market and the protection of local economies. Finally, after the global financial and economic crisis 2007/2008, in peripheral communities of the Global North surged community wealth building as a development strategy promoting self-reliance. In the following, I will demonstrate that CWB has much in common with what Johan Galtung envisioned as local self-reliance for the Global North. Therefore, I will argue that CWB could learn from engaging with the theoretical assumptions of the earlier self-reliance debate. However, I will also point to major differences between the two approaches.

### 3. Community Wealth Building

Although community wealth building (CWB) has just been present in the European media landscape for the past two to three years (Albrecht, 2019; Chakraborty, 2019), the history of the approach goes back to the aftermath of the global economic and financial crisis of 2007ff. In Cleveland, Ohio (USA), more than ten years ago, different community institutions came together, i.e. the city government, the Cleveland Foundation, university hospitals, and the think-and-do tank ‘The Democracy Collaborative’ (The Democracy Collaborative [TDC], 2019), and formed the Greater University Circle Initiative (GUCI) (Sutton, 2019, p. 10). At that point in time, the

“very prosperous centre of the city, [was] surrounded completely by neighbourhoods of disinvestment, plight – mainly African-American. Low-income communities with high rates of incarceration, high rates of poverty, poor health outcomes. (...) And so, these institutions came together and they said: “I don’t understand how we – as the centre of prosperity – are so surrounded by this and how it’s so disconnected”. So, that’s when we [the TDC] came in to really analyse the economic flows of those institutions. And the result was that for the most part almost all of the economic outputs of those institutions were going to large multinational corporations that had nothing to do with the surrounding areas; either through employment, or supply chains, or production or anything of that nature. So, what we did with those institutions was help to analyse how they could redirect their spending, their hiring, their investment to different, locally rooted, what we call community wealth building institutions (Interview 1, 2.4.2019, Paragraph 13).

Similarly, Preston, a city of 190,000 inhabitants in North West England, was hit hard by the crisis, and longed for change. On the one hand, the central government’s after-crisis austerity policy towards communities affected Preston, which belongs to the 20% poorest communities of England, very negatively (Albrecht, 2019). On the other hand, due to the crisis, a big multinational developer withdrew from the project to redevelop the city centre. Thus, people from the Preston City Council started to reconsider their strategy. “So, the Preston Model came out of how to respond to the

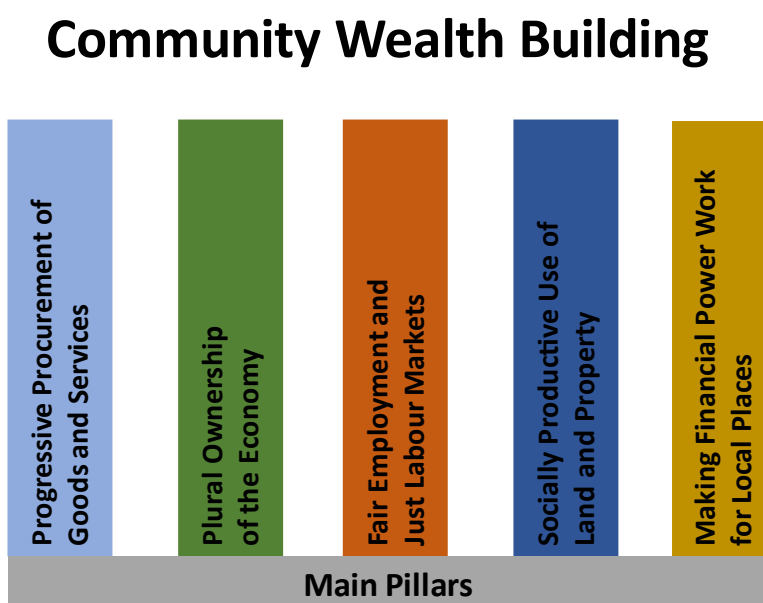
economic crash and the fact that it had led to this disinvestment in our city centre” (Interview 3, 28.8.2019, Paragraph 2). In 2013, Neil McInroy – the director of the Manchester-based think-and-do-tank Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES) –, and Matthew Brown, an elected local councillor of Preston came together. McInroy suggested that Preston could react to the crisis by channelling the money of several local institutions into projects favouring the city’s development. By that time, only 5% of the €835.5m local spending power remained in Preston (Sheffield, 2019).

In both cases, the cities have been declining for longer, partly driven by broader deindustrialisation. For several decades, they have figured as peripheral communities in their respective countries. Moreover, social inequality and deprivation characterized the cities. In this context, the strategy of CWB broadly seeks to create new wealth locally and to recapture wealth that is flowing out of the place (Interview 4, 23.10.2019, Paragraph 135). Instead of relying on redistributive policies, CWB favours “predistribution” (Leibowitz & McInroy, 2019), that is, to act before uneven development creates and aggravates social inequality. As pointed out by Calafati et al. (2017), at the centre of CWB “stands a recognition that places already have rivers of wealth at their disposal, due to the financial, physical and social assets of local institutions and people. The work and skill is in analysing this wealth, and harnessing it for deeper economic, social and environmental benefit”.

The term ‘community wealth building’ was originally used by The Democracy Collaborative (2019) and was only later adopted by CLES and the UK protagonists of CWB (Interview 4, 23.10.2019, Paragraph 135). However, while the two think-and-do tanks cooperate, all interviewees have insisted that CWB is no ‘one size fits it all’ strategy. In each case, the think tanks develop the concrete measures in dialogue with the respective communities and their institutions. The traditions and legacies behind CWB also deviate from each other in the USA and in the UK. Interviewee 4 pointed out that CWB in Europe “is built upon the re-imagination of the European social contract that we all have to some extent. It’s built on European socialist traditions, it’s built on a welfarist tradition, it’s built on our union tradition, it’s built upon a sense that we are not a land of the free, we are a land of social democracies and that is a very different heritage to an American one.” (Interview 4, 23.10.2019, Paragraph 135). While also referring to British welfarism, interviewee 2 adds the information that “in terms of the heritage of the ideas that informed community wealth building in the UK, I’d say it was 40 – 50% the experience from the US. And then, actually, a lot of learning from what’s happened particularly in Southern Europe – in Italy and in Spain and the Basque Country, in co-ops, and a different view of the commons and all of that sort of thing” (Interview 2, 27.8.2019, Paragraph 8). Yet, I argue that the CWB ‘movement’ in both countries can be interpreted as an attempt to promote local self-reliance in peripheral communities of core countries. While the interviewees described how the communities felt that in the past their destiny was determined elsewhere – as diagnosed and criticized by the

Dependency Approach –, this perception has changed: “I think we're taking back control in a positive way now, which is really good.” (Interview 3, 28.8.2019, Paragraph 45).

Although the think tanks that have developed CWB do not refer to earlier debates on self-reliance, some parallels are obvious. The peripheral communities where CWB first emerged showed clear features of structural dependency as described above (see Section 2 and Figure 1). The response to increasingly rely on own resources was also the same, as well as the perception that by this means they could recover the control over the local faith that had been lost before. As it was the case for self-reliance, CWB is not one predetermined strategy but a loose framework that the think-and-do tanks help to adapt to the concrete local circumstances. Currently, there exist five main pillars of CWB (see Figure 3) according to which I will structure the following subsections. Subsequently, I will show how the different CWB communities and the associated actors are connected amongst each other and what they reason about ‘going to scale’.



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Figure 3. The five pillars of community wealth building. Source: own elaboration based on CLES, 2019a, pp. 8–9.

### 3.1 Strengthening the local economy

As mentioned above, community wealth building (CWB) is not one congruent set of measures. Currently, CLES helps to implement elements of the CWB in over 30 areas in the UK (Interview 2, 27.8.2019, Paragraph 37) and TDC has engaged in more than 30 US cities (Kelly & McKinley, 2015; Interview 1, 2.4.2019, Paragraph 31). As the situation in every place is different, the point of departure for the local strategies is not always the same. In the UK, the city of Preston has currently the most articulated strategy around CWB (Interview 1, 2.4.2019, Paragraph 35). While the core concept of CWB

rests on five pillars (see Figure 1), the prioritised pillar(s) varies/vary according to the local context. However, the locally-rooted, so-called ‘anchor institutions’ play a role in each pillar.

### *Progressive procurement of goods and services*

The central protagonists in the CWB approach are anchor institutions, which are big – usually public – institutions with a relevant spending power, for example, universities, schools, hospitals, fire or police departments, cultural foundations, city administrations, community councils etc. If CLES or TDC starts to work with a place, they first identify the relevant anchor institutions and do an analysis with them in order to identify their spending patterns (how much do they procure locally, how much from far away?). Afterwards, they support them in redirecting their procurement towards local businesses – preferentially small and medium enterprises (SMEs) – and socially oriented enterprises from the region (Jackson, 2016). As suggested by the self-reliance approach, they rely on local resources – where feasible –, and seek to shorten the supply chains for ecological and social reasons.

Progressive procurement is about bringing economic activity where it produces the highest social return without reducing the productivity of the economy. In short, it is about increasing the social efficiency of economic activity. (...) [It] is not just about increasing the extent to which anchor institutions spend in a defined local geographical area; it is also about shifting the behaviour of supply chain organisations (regardless of where they are based) so that they contribute to wider economic, social and environmental challenges. (Calafati et al., 2017)

Thus, the objectives of CWB are broader than just regionalising the supply of the anchor institutions, as the experience of the city of Preston teaches us. When they demolished and rebuilt the market hall, they wanted to give local businesses a chance:

So, when our market was being demolished, that contract was worth about £1.53 million and obviously we could then really try and encourage local businesses to be successful. But there's other things you can do, like break contracts down into lots, which we've done for feeding school kids; again, that was a two million Pound contract. And the larger corporations weren't interested in bidding for them. So, they went to local farmers and local businesses (Interview 3, 28.8.2019, Paragraph 36 - 37)

Previously, 70% of vegetables of Lancashire had gone to other regions, while vegetables had to be imported. After the reorganisation of the supply chains, family businesses now deliver vegetables, meat, and yogurt to Preston's schools (Albrecht, 2019).

Before CWB started, only 5% of the £750m local spending power remained in Preston, and only 39% in Lancashire. Thus, £450m were flowing out of the region, and mostly went to big transnational companies (TNCs) in Greater London South East. Through the redirection of its spending power, Preston nearly tripled the amount spent in the city from £38m in 2013 to £111m in 2017 (Centre for Local Economic Strategies [CLES] & Preston City Council, 2019). The repatriated money came mostly from large multinational companies in London, so it did not negatively affect neighbouring cities or counties“ (Interview 1, 2.4.2019, Paragraph 73). However, the effect might not be that big for other places:

“One of the reasons why Preston was able to repatriate so much money is because so much had been spent outside. (...) That’s not necessarily the case in other UK cities. They did not necessarily outsource as much as Preston had done.” (Interview 1, 2.4.2019, Paragraph 27).

Critics have accused Preston of practising ‘municipal’ or ‘local’ protectionism. However, the Preston City Council insists that their approach fully complies with EU and UK procurement law.<sup>7</sup> They apply – based on the UK’s Social Value Act (2012) – a weighting system for the assignment of contracts, which includes other criteria apart of the price, such as “quality, commitment to apprenticeships, attitudes to skills and training, local labour recruitment, approach to sub-contractors and length of supply chains” (Preston City Council, 2019). Due to these proceedings, the market is regulated differently, in a manner that it becomes “more competitive, not less, as they enable access to more local SMEs and not just to few big corporations” (Calafati et al., 2017). This strengthens a more balanced developed of the national economy. Furthermore, the Preston City Council (2019) emphasizes that it has not used the new regulations to favour inferior contractors, but that it selected those which could compete on “price, performance and quality”.

### *Plural ownership of the economy*

While the pluralisation of ownership is also strengthened through the support of smaller businesses vis-à-vis TNCs, a special focus of CWB lies on cooperatives and social enterprises. The latter resulted from the conclusion that in order to spend differently, you sometimes need to create new economic actors that can supply you. They have proven effective for reducing poverty, democratising capital and redistributing wealth (Gordon Nembhard, 2014, p. 103). As pointed out by Gordon Nembhard (2014, p. 106), “democratically owned and community-based enterprises bring economic and wealth benefits to their owner-members that spill over to the communities (...)” Importantly, they are creating

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<sup>7</sup> That said, the Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES) (2019b) has also analysed which options for progressive procurement open up in a post-Brexit UK.

community-based instead of individual assets. Cooperatives are usually owned by their members and satisfy a need (e.g. affordable housing or healthy food), which often arises from market failures (Gordon Nembhard, 2014, pp. 106–107). Furthermore, cooperatives can be a crucial factor for community development, as they “have a vested interest in and are more likely to promote community growth than conventional commercial companies, because most cooperatives are owned and controlled by local residents” (Gordon Nembhard, 2014, p. 111).

The starting point for CWB in Cleveland, Ohio, was the creation of cooperatives for the anchor institutions from the health sector. However, “that work in Cleveland was based originally on studies of the Mondragon cooperatives in Spain” (Interview 1, 2.4.2019, Paragraph 9). In 2009, the already-mentioned GUCI established top-down the Evergreen Cooperatives holding that should create for-profit green industry cooperatives, which focused on closing provision gaps in supply chains. Four years later, the first three enterprises had been launched: the Evergreen Cooperative Laundry (a large-scale laundry serving hospitals), Evergreen Energy solutions (renewable energy), and Green City Growers (a pesticide-free greenhouse) (Sutton, 2019, p. 10). Nevertheless, it is important to underline that the process was not as smooth as it might seem:

The first cooperative was an industrial scale laundry to provide laundry services to the hospitals, mainly. And, that started from scratch. It was a very, very difficult thing to do. (...) It was a capital-intensive project to get that off the ground, because it's 'all green' – reuses waste, water and all that kind of stuff. So, it was a hugely capital-intensive project to do. It took at least seven years to get it up and running. It was very complicated. (Interview 1, 2.4.2019, Paragraph 14)

While cooperatives might encounter difficulties in the creation process, they can serve to root CWB in the community. This is why the Preston city council, which had initially started with progressive procurement, has more recently launched a programme to create worker-owned cooperative businesses. The Open Society Foundation provided large part of the funds for the kick-off of ten newly-created enterprises owned and run by the workers. However, after the kick-start the cooperatives will have to maintain themselves. While they are encouraged to cooperate with each other, this is not obligatory (Chakraborty, 2019). The cooperative network is run out of the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan) (Interview 1, 2.4.2019, Paragraph 87). The inspiration for the scheme comes – as in Cleveland – from the Mondragon Corporation Cooperative in the Spanish Basque Country. The authorities of Preston see it as a way to give the whole process a more bottom-up direction:

I think it started top-down [in Preston], but the idea was [that] it is from the grass roots onwards. So, it's really getting the institutions to think about how they operate and how they contribute to the place they are part of. (...) You know, worker-owned business are



rooted here and linked to local farms and things like that (Interview 3, 28.8.2019, Paragraph 14).

The first cooperative, which opened in February 2019, is 'The Larder', a café that is run as a cooperative. It sells food made from local ingredients and teaches people from poorer areas of the city how to prepare healthy meals (Sheffield, 2019). Thus, it was conceived as a 'gap cooperative' (Interview 1), but "[i]t is also a social enterprise (...) and we're hoping to have another ten in the next two years. So, as you can see it's quite successful and it sources from local suppliers as well. And it's in the council building as well." (Interview 3, 28.8.2019, Paragraph 12).

However, it is important to underline that – while cooperatives are often less exploitative than other relations of production – “they hardly break with the imperatives of the competitive accumulation of capital” (Wigger & Buch-Hansen, 2013, p. 623). Thus, cooperatives can be a promising component of a local development strategy, but the establishment of cooperatives is not sufficient (Alperovitz & Hanna, 2013). This was also emphasized by a CLES employee:

And I think we would say that somebody setting up a co-op is not community wealth building, it's somebody setting up a co-op and it's a crucial part of community wealth building, but the most important thing... amongst any other part of community wealth building is the intentional desire to reorganize the economy for economic justice in a place. And, unless that is something which the state understands and pursues, you just won't have the power and traction to actually transform the economy, because the headwinds that are pushing against this approach are so significant that one co-op will never... – well, it might flourish –, but it will never be the seed of a transformation in an economy, because that is so dominated by big global corporates that extract money out of that economy. (Interview 2, 27.8.2019, Paragraph 14)

#### *Fair employment and just labour markets*

The third pillar – the creation of fair employment and just labour markets – is the response to a profound critique of how community growth has been organized predominantly and what this meant for employment opportunities:

The model, the paradigm is still absolutely clear: a big investment which creates low-paid work – that's better than nothing. And, actually, that's not the option. It's not that or nothing. That's the number one thing about community wealth building. We've come to this idea that the economy is synonymous with the behaviour of these big global corporates and it absolutely isn't. So, we are still catching up with the fact that in-work

poverty is the biggest growth area of poverty in the UK. That hasn't percolated through public policy making. (Interview 2, 27.8.2019, Paragraph 39)

The CWB approach tackles this problem at least in a threefold manner. First, it encourages the anchor institutions to pay their employees the real living wage, which is higher than the mandatory living wage (because it considers costs for rent or food), and to employ people from lower income areas (Leibowitz & McInroy, 2019). For example, it was almost entirely local firms paying the real living wage to their workers that realized the already mentioned £4m market refurbishment in Preston (Chakraborty, 2019). Second, (local) suppliers are also screened in detail with respect to the offered working conditions. They have to permit the unionisation of their employees, and they receive extra points in the bidding process if they train local apprentices. Third, the creation of cooperatives also plays a crucial role in this, based on the assumptions that "[m]any of the worker-owned cooperatives, in particular, increase industry standards in wages and benefits, as well as provide job ladder opportunities, skill development, job security, and general control over income and work rules" (Gordon Nembhard, 2014, p. 108). In Preston, the idea to expand cooperatives also resulted from the wish to provide better-paid jobs for the local people (Interview 3, 28.8.2019, Paragraph 8).

An interviewee from CLES commented that "the workforce is what is often like the least glamorous of the community wealth building bits" (Interview 2, 27.8.2019, Paragraph 37), but that she considered it highly important. Particularly to shift the hiring policy towards deprived areas would be crucial. As a positive example, she named Oldham, in which the city council paid attention to the issue and the number of employees from deprived areas went up from 3-4 to more than 20. According to her, this would also be a good starting point for the anchor institutions in Birmingham because the city is also characterized by a huge low pay sector (Interview 2, 27.8.2019, Paragraph 37). Calafati et al. (2017) summarize the reasoning behind this: "Shifting the geography of spend is about bringing jobs to where they are needed most. Its rationale is socio-spatial as well as economic. The value of an additional unit of jobs is higher in a deprived area than it is in a non-deprived area."

#### *Socially productive use of land and property*

The fourth pillar of CWB aims at using the land and property owned by the anchor institutions in a socially productive way. This includes that they "should be owned, managed and developed by the local communities" (Leibowitz & McInroy, 2019). Different boroughs of London – currently, Islington, Hackney, Camden and Newham (Centre for Local Economic Strategies [CLES], 2019a; McInroy, 2019) – have put emphasis on this pillar, because the rents are very high and "procurement, (...) particularly [in] the local municipalities in London, it's quite progressive anyway. So that one's not so important. It's more about land and property that's more important there, in London" (Interview 4, 23.10.2019,

Paragraph 12). The challenges there are related to land and property speculation which result in a lack of affordable housing and work space (Interview 2, 27.8.2019, Paragraph 37).

The approach to the use of land and assets can take different forms: In Newham, the municipality owns more than a third of the land in that borough and has started to provide it for the construction of affordable housing, based on local labour force. “[T]hey have land which they can either sell to developers to build that or they develop it themselves or they partner with people who they think are the right kind of people to build it with” (Interview 2, 27.8.2019, Paragraph 37). In Islington, by contrast, the focus was rather on planning and creating affordable work space, the latter by forcing developers to do so:

Islington has used some of the existing planning law to force the developer to build some affordable work space in some of those buildings. So, it's not just for high end, it's for the local organisations. And they managed to get, I think, 10 percent affordable work space, (...) And that's the maximum that they can do within existing law. So, there's a whole range of stuff that would need to change that you could deal with the problem of rent tourism and speculation in that part of London. (Interview 4, 23.10.2019, Paragraph 118)

Thus, the first steps have been taken, but the legal framework currently clearly restricts the available options in this field.

#### *Making financial power work for local places*

In the course of implementing CWB, it has crystallized that it is crucial how the council uses its financial assets to stimulate the local economy. Thus, ‘making financial power work for the people’ has been adopted as the fifth principle recently (Interview 2, 27.8.2019, Paragraph 37). An important incentive for this addition to the pillars was how Preston started to use the pension fund of the city employees. They wanted to stop investing it purely on the financial markets and promote community wealth with it instead. Thus, “they’ve used that to redevelop a local bus depot, they used that to redevelop some council housing and student housing in the city. So, they are using the pension funds more directly” (Interview 1, 2.4.2019, Paragraph 27).

The most recent project is to create a new people’s bank for the northwest, reserving a proportion of its lending for small businesses of the region and led as cooperative (Chakraborty, 2019). It will also be capitalized with money from the already mentioned pension fund (Interview 1, 2.4.2019, Paragraph 27). However, an important aim is also to reduce the local dependence on big global banks:

That will actually create new money. Because small businesses are especially prone to deposit with the existing global banks and then that money ends up in a tax haven somewhere; it leaks out of the community; this will create new wealth and create new

businesses. (...) So, it's really exciting to be honest and the improvements are there to see already. I mean this city centre was – for twenty, twenty-five years – badly in need of investment. (Interview 3, 28.8.2019, Paragraph 19)

Hence, if it is practised consequently, CWB can contribute to the definancialisation of the local economy.

As pointed out in Section 2, there has never existed a blueprint for local self-reliance. Therefore, all of the aforementioned activities can be considered elements of a self-reliant development strategy – adapted to the conditions of Northern peripheries –, as long as they do not go at the expense of others.

### 3.2 Horizontal Cooperation

There exist several initiatives to coordinate the translocal cooperation of CWB communities (see Figure 2). The actors practising different blends of CWB in the UK are linked among each other via CLES. The institution organizes yearly Community Wealth Building Summits since 2018. The aim is to establish relationships between the CWB-practising communities and to allow for the exchange of experiences. Furthermore, CLES is in narrow contact with the governments of Wales and of Scotland, which have included CWB into their policy priorities. “Wales has just announced that it’s going to be embedding community wealth building across all of the local authorities in Wales” (Interview 2, 27.8.2019, Paragraph 18). CWB has become a part of the foundational economy strategy there. “[I]n Scotland, though, you’ve got an inclusive economy agenda in Scotland and community wealth building is a much bigger part of it in Scotland [than in Wales]” (Interview 4, 23.10.2019, Paragraph 87). Lastly, CLES and TDC have both advised the Labour Party when they set up their CWB unit (Interview 1, 12.4.2019; Interview 2, 27.8.2019, Paragraph 29). In case that Labour would have won the elections in December 2019, it had planned to establish a separate government unit for CWB (Interview 4, 23.10.2019, Paragraph 113). This did not materialize due to the election defeat, which meant that the CWB agenda could not be strengthened on the national scale.

The city of Preston has developed its own ties with respect to CWB in Europe and beyond. For example, it has a contract with the Mondragon Cooperatives Corporation in the Basque Country, Spain, in order to get advice on coop development (Interview 4, 23.10.2019, Paragraph 147). Currently, they are working together on how to integrate trade unions into the cooperative model (Interview 1, 2.4.2019, Paragraph 81). Furthermore, Preston was the lead of the EU project “Procure. Creating a Good Local Economy” which connected 11 European cities, i.a. from Spain, Poland, Italy, Hungary and Romania, and helps them to change their procurement strategies (Jackson, 2016). The city council is also in contact with Barcelona, because “the Catalan Government are getting interested in the procurement side of things as well” (Interview 3, 28.8.2019, Paragraph 45). Thus, Preston’s network corresponds to

Galtung (1985, p. 10) advice that “the local community which wants to be self-reliant should be able to find suitable trained partners within the country, or if not within the country, at least within the region.” Beyond Europe, Preston closely cooperates with TDC and its posterchild Cleveland (Interview 1, 2.4.2019, Paragraph 47).

The most unconventional partnership of Preston is the one with the village of Kigoma in Tanzania. As pointed out in Subsection 2.1, this country adhered to the principles of self-reliance in the 1960s and 1970s. Nearly four decades later, the political leaders of Kigoma read about Preston’s experience and contacted the city council. Since then, they are in a constant exchange. Interestingly, the reason why Kigoma’s politicians considered Preston’s approach so fascinating was that they considered it to be very similar to their own tradition of self-reliance. Thus, Kigoma has started to cooperate with Preston and currently the village tries to find a way to culturally adapt CWB to the East African reality. Therefore, it will mostly rely on progressive procurement and the support of cooperatives (Collord, 2019). However, ideally, the inspiration should work the other way round, too, particularly when it comes to critically reflect the role of peripheral communities in the Global North in the global division of labour (for instance regarding indirect benefits from the exploitation of the Global South).

Indeed, the Preston-Kigoma cooperation has also raised more fundamental questions for the actors and think tanks pursuing CWB, for instance, how could you build community wealth globally? What would this mean for the current (globalized) trade relations? “[W]hat would it look like, for example, for the US or for the UK or something to support and advance a community wealth building strategy in Tanzania or... And what does that look like in a postcolonial frame, with an eye towards reparations and things of that nature, to advance that kind of work?” (Interview 1, 2.4.2019, Paragraph 97). Collord (2019) sees the most promising options in 1) peer-to-peer and movement-to-movement support (=horizontal relations among peripheral communities in the Global North and the Global South) and 2) scaling up the self-reliance experience. The latter would mean to struggle for national policy changes in the respective countries and for the revision of the UK overseas development policy (from a UK perspective). However, these suggestions remain still very vague and fall far behind the complex considerations around the concepts of dependency and unequal terms of trade of the past century.

There exist some obvious limits of cooperation in its current form. At present, the exchange between the cities is limited to the transfer of practices and ideas, while earlier self-reliance concepts advocated for a new trade policy strengthening the ties among peripheral units. However, the self-reliance approach suggested that peripheral communities should also establish (horizontal) trade relations among each other to decrease the economic power of the core countries in order to change the international economic order.

### 3.3 The Challenge of Upscaling

Communities are vulnerable to external influences which clearly restrict their policy options. They cannot influence the nation's trade or industrial policy as long as they are not very well organized and establish close connections with political parties. Furthermore, their tax revenue and the nationally-defined internal mechanisms of distribution determine to a great extent how much financial power they actually have. Thus, while CWB is a good starting point for change, the question arises how the local scale connects to higher scales in the imaginary of the people involved with CWB. One vision is this:

Community wealth building is where the next system begins. So, you are starting with the local, you are working with what's possible in the now, and then you are also constantly reinforcing it with... you know, a supportive ecosystem of policy and theory and research to push it to the next level. (Interview 1, 2.4.2019, Paragraph 46).

Still, interviewee 1 pointed also to the restrictions that were connected with upscaling CWB: "All of these initiatives are really exciting, but we need to get to scale" (Interview 1, 2.4.2019, Paragraph 93). In the opinion of interviewee 1, it would be important to dedicate more attention to trade policy and to reflect what 'community wealth building' could look like as an international development strategy – not least in order to counter the rise of economic nationalism in the USA and in the EU. The turnaround of neoliberal economies like the UK and the US would have global impact: "If we can shift those economies in a dramatic way, we can start to see a global shift entirely" (Interview 1, 2.4.2019, Paragraph 47).

When the concept of self-reliance gained popularity from the 1960s on in the broader context of Third Worldism, it was from the start linked to South-South cooperation (and, thus, to higher scales). Local and national self-reliance necessarily would require establishing new links among the peripheral countries (collective self-reliance) and changing the prevailing economic exchange relations and the political institutions at the international scale (see Table 1). Indeed, this was one of the major reasons for the creation of the Non-Aligned Movement. All local and national self-reliance experiences back then were inserted in this broader context even if collective self-reliance never was implemented as it was foreseen. Considering that CWB originated in peripheral communities in the Global North, it is not surprising that the unequal insertion into the global economic system was not the foremost concern. The strength of the CWB approach lies exactly in its local roots and the development of theory along with practical experience. However, as the observed development obstacles in many cases are linked to higher scales (national, macroregional or global), it might be worth to dedicate more attention to the dynamics evolving at other scales to make the current achievements sustainable.

Currently, CWB is (still) a niche approach, practised in some (mostly) peripheral communities in a few Northern countries and it is disputed how much transformation the economic system actually needs. As the protagonists of the self-reliance approach debated whether capitalism could be reformed or should be overcome, the protagonists of CWB discuss whether neoliberal policies or capitalism *per se* are the problem. The majority of the CWB actors aspires to (re)establish a capitalism ‘with a humane face’, not ruled by big global corporations (Interview 4, 23.10.2019, Paragraph 76), “[w]hereas others, perhaps more of an ideological socialist [stance] would seek more of a complete transformation of the economy” (Interview 4, 23.10.2019, Paragraph 59). The following statements demonstrate the diversity of opinions:

From our perspective ... we need a new political economic system entirely. (...) So yeah, I mean the goal is a move away from capitalism and to oppose capitalist future, but working with what we have and what's already there. (Interview 1, 2.4.2019, Paragraph 43 - 44)

I think it's about neoliberalism first and foremost. (...) [I]n practice terms, we're not anti-capitalist. We're not the centre for local economic socialism. What we're saying now is: "Not just capitalism!". Yeah, that's a really important principle. (Interview 2, 27.8.2019, Paragraph 33)

My own view is: we need to move beyond capitalism gradually to a democratic economy. (Interview 3, 28.8.2019, Paragraph 24 - 25)

Thus, the central protagonists agree that we need a new economic order, but their visions of what it should look like diverge.

	<b>Self-Reliance</b> <i>Non-Aligned Movement</i>	<b>Self-Reliance</b> <i>Dependency scholars</i>	<b>Self-Reliance</b> <i>Tanzania (1960s and 1970s)</i>	<b>Community Wealth Building</b>
<b>Central objective(s)</b>	Improve terms of trade for developing countries in the global economy/ change the relative international	Establish a new international division of labour (in some cases: a new economic system) and develop autonomously	Promote self-reliant development through self-sufficiency of the <i>Ujamaa</i> villages	Strengthen local economies through different means (e. g. progressive public procurement); impede wealth extraction, create

	political and economic power (cf. NIEO)			community wealth ('predistribution')
<b>Horizontal cooperation</b>	Objective of collective self-reliance, understood as increased South-South cooperation (maintaining the relations with the Global North)	Collective self-reliance; increased South-South cooperation and significant reduction of exchange with Global North	Involvement in Non-Aligned Movement and Group of 77 within UNCTAD (thereby adhered to the concept of collective self-reliance)	Summits, projects and cooperation to link up the CWB communities and to allow the exchange of ideas and practices
<b>Dissociation from the world market</b>	No; exchange with developed and developing countries, although certain preference for the latter	Yes; advocating for partial/selective or complete delinking/decoupling, self-sufficiency in food and (eventually) recoupling on more equal terms	No; self-sufficiency in food and economic subsidiarity as objectives but foreign aid and trade not excluded	No; not a proclaimed goal but some of the pillars could be interpreted as 'selective delinking' because they seek to substitute external flows by domestic/local activities.
<b>Main actors of change</b>	Political leaders of the "Third World" countries	Theoretically, social struggles from below; involvement of the people in political decision-making	President Nyerere; cooperatives; authoritarian top-down implementation	Community-based political leaders, think tanks, anchor institutions (can be cooperatives)



Table 1. Main elements of different concepts of self-reliance and of community wealth building.  
Source: own elaboration.

## 4. Conclusion

The global financial and economic crisis led peripheral communities in the Global North such as Cleveland and Preston to question their outward-oriented and unsustainable local development model. They encountered themselves in a situation of structural dependency, requiring external actors, goods and financial flows to complete their economic circuits. This state of economic subordination also limited independent political decision-making. As the significantly older concept of self-reliance suggests, they started to strengthen the local economies through community wealth building (CWB) in order to increase the reliance on own resources and to better control and regulate inward and outward flows of trade and investments (see Table 1). The major objective has been to create socially, ecologically and economically sustainable development and to meet the basic needs of the people. They have recognized – as did dependency scholars and Tanzanian politicians – that the local scale is crucial for auto-centred development but that transformations at higher scales are indispensable to bolster local self-reliance. Finally, in the framework of CWB as in the context of self-reliance, the protagonists debated whether it was enough to change the terms of exchange among peripheral and core units or whether a more fundamental change of the economic structures was indispensable. Furthermore, they disagreed on whether such transformations should happen gradually or revolutionary and whether reforms of the economic system were sufficient (the majority) or a break with the capitalist system was inevitable to establish a new division of labour (the minority). Similarly, today the debate revolves around the question whether neoliberalism or capitalism *per se* is the problem. Finally, in both periods it was contested whether (selective) delinking/decoupling was essential and – if so – how extreme it should be in order to bring the desired results.

However, the two approaches also show major differences. The first and most obvious is that they surged in significantly different contexts. The debates on self-reliance from the 1960s onwards took place in a global setting where the developing countries were gaining economic weight and political confidence. Thus, any local and national self-reliance experiment of those days was in some way or another inserted into a broader Third World movement, with the Non-Aligned Movement being one of the institutional expressions thereof. Simply due to this, back then also self-reliance practised at lower scales had some internationalist, South-South orientation. Community wealth building, by contrast, originated in peripheral communities of the Global North in the aftermath of the global financial and economic crisis 2007/2008. Its basic theoretical assumptions were developed in practice, struggling against the effects of the crisis and of neoliberal degradation. Hence, the focus on the local scale has been far more intense in the case of CWB.

Second, the concepts of CWB and of self-reliance both claim that horizontal cooperation should be established among equal partners. However, the cooperation among the CWB communities refers mostly to the exchange of ideas and practices and therefore falls far behind older self-reliance approaches that envisioned an increase of South-South trade and mutual investments. Still, also in the framework of the Non-Aligned Movement this vision has never largely materialized, so it could be argued that the more pragmatic CWB approach is more effective, particularly in the initial stage of building the right local conditions for subsequently promoting changes on the national scale. Third, the main actors behind the approaches diverge, which is also a result of different social and institutional structures prevailing in the Global North and the Global South. While – mostly public – anchor institutions and their spending are key for CWB, self-reliance in the Global South could not entrust public structures or institutions with the same task because they were in many cases financially and institutionally too weak and often dependent on external financial resources. Fourth, while collective self-reliance proclaimed that no (peripheral) community/country/region should develop at expense of another, CWB has only clearly formulated this goal with respect to other peripheral communities in the UK but not with respect to global North-South relations. Finally, this is also the most important point where CWB could benefit from engaging with the historical self-reliance debate.

The theoretical assumptions regarding the roots and causes of dependency as well as the possible ways of moving towards a more auto-centred (self-reliant) development have been controversially debated inside the Non-Aligned Movement and beyond. A critical engagement with those debates might allow the CWB communities to critically reflect their own role in the global division of labour and to develop a position with respect to how global trade relations and the underlying production structures would need to be modified in order to significantly decrease structural dependency of peripheral communities in the Global South and the Global North. This would be a cornerstone for extending horizontal cooperation between actors adhering to principles of (local) self-reliance around the world.

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**Interviews:**

Interview 1, Representative of The Democracy Collaborative, Brussels, 12.4.2019.

Interview 2, Associate Director of the Centre for Local Economic Strategies, Manchester, 27.8.2019

Interview 3, Member of the Preston City Council, Preston, 28.10.2019.

Interview 4, Two Representatives of the Centre for Local Economic Strategies, St. Pölten, 23.10.2019.