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The Spatial Politics of Red Clydeside: Historical Labour Geographies and Radical Connections

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Abstract

Red Clydeside was a period of increasing industrial, political and social unrest during the early twentieth century. This research draws upon an innovative combination of theoretical work from labour geography, labour history, historical geography and spatial politics to illuminate factors previously understated within this established labour history. In particular, the thesis builds upon contributions from labour geographers alongside E.P. Thompson and the broader 'history from below' tradition. These contributions facilitate a nuanced understanding of labour agency and experiences, which can be developed through the histories of Red Clydeside. By assembling materials from a variety of archives the thesis interrogates the making of connections by Clydeside's workers. These connections advance an understanding of the contrasting modalities of labour internationalisms, which juxtapose the building of translocal solidarities with racialised geographies of exclusion. This emphasis on internationalism is complimented by an account of Clydeside's working class presence that is inclusive of different political positions within the region. These perspectives consist of intersecting aspects of working class movements, including parliamentary left activism, anarchism and the suffrage movement. To develop an understanding of these diverse perspectives the thesis engages with multiple case studies. These include key labour strikes, such as the 1911 Singer strike and 1919 Forty Hours Movement, political individuals, such as Guy Aldred, Helen Crawfurd and James Maxton and longer organising processes of the labour movement. The thesis argues that these examples contributed towards an overall working class presence, which was characterised by diverse and dynamic labour practices. These histories relate closely to more recent debates regarding labour, particularly within labour geography. Overall, the thesis pushes labour geography in new directions by stressing the capabilities of working class agency to actively shape spaces and places, and builds upon this field by reasserting the importance of labour histories and a broader conceptualisation of labour experiences.

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Acknowledgements

PhD research is often described as an isolating pursuit. My experience has been entirely the opposite. I've met some remarkable people over the last three and a half years and also leant on many I've known long before. Here, I hope to thank some of you for your support

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It would seem I owe plenty of people a drink.

Author's Declaration

I declare that except where explicit reference is made to the contribution of others, that this thesis is the result of my own work and has not been submitted for any other degree at the University of Glasgow or any other institution.

Paul Griffin

Abbreviations/Acronyms

Amalgamated Society of Engineers (ASE)

Anti-parliamentary Communist Federation (APCF)

British Seafarers' Union (BSU)

British Socialist Party (BSP)

Clyde Workers' Committee (CWC)

Communist Party of Great Britain (CPGB)

Defence of the Realm Act (DORA)

Glasgow Caledonian University (GCU)

Independent Labour Party (ILP)

Industrial Workers of Great Britain (IWGB)

Industrial Workers of the World (IWW)

League Against Imperialism (LAI)

London Corresponding Society (LCS)

Miners' Federation of Great Britain (MFBG)

National Sailors' and Firemen's Union (NSFU)

No Conscription Fellowship (NCF)

Scottish Trades Union Congress (STUC)

Socialist Labour Party (SLP)

Spirit of Revolt Archive (SOR)

Trades Union Congress (TUC)

Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU)

Women's Peace Crusade (WPC)

Workers' International Relief (WIR)

Chapter 1

Labour Geographies and Usable Pasts: Revisiting Red Clydeside

1.1 Introduction

Twenty-three years ago Terry Brotherstone (1992) asked 'Does Red Clydeside really matter anymore?' In response he argued that it remains relevant and, as part of a summary of Red Clydeside literature, claimed that an emerging challenge for Scottish labour historians is to position political activists, such as notable Red Clydesider John Maclean,[1] within a broader international context. His critique identified a form of 'methodological nationalism' (see Schmidt and van der walt, 2009:160) arguably common within many forms of labour history writing whereby quite bounded forms of place-based histories are presented. Such accounts can often omit broader connections and influences. In this regard, as Brotherstone suggests, there is a need to revisit Red Clydeside with an alternative emphasis, primarily a geographical approach to labour history, and this is a central contribution of this thesis. Despite some works (see Jenkinson, 2008, Domosh, 2008, Kelly, 2013) and more recent conferences (see Scottish Labour History Society, 2013) that have begun to address Brotherstone's call, the agenda has yet to be fully explored. This thesis engages with his agenda more fully by foregrounding diverse connections, beyond the more well recognised connections experienced by figures like Maclean (who was appointed British Soviet Consul by Lenin in 1917). Instead the research engages with diversity of activists, labour organisations and worker experiences less commonly associated with broader notions of solidarity and internationalism.

The label 'Red Clydeside' has been attributed to journalists describing the increasingly socialist attitudes of workers on Clydeside (McLean, 1983). It forms a notable labour history from the early twentieth century. Activists and labour organisations from within this labour history were referred to during 2014's Scottish Independence referendum (for examples see Brown 2014, McAlpine 2013). Such usage of Clydeside's labour history

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[1] John Maclean (1879-1923) was a Scottish Socialist and prominent activist during the Red Clydeside period. His life is well documented in biographies (notably by his daughter: Nan Milton, 1973) and Scottish labour history (Young, 1992a, 2009). He is generally considered central to the Red Clydeside period and has been described as a 'one-man revolutionary party' (Damer, 1990:130). His funeral was famously followed by thousands of workers. This thesis pays less attention to his life, though, and instead focuses on activists and events that have been less well considered.

begins to reflect the importance of this historical period to popular memory and this continuing connection is further reflected in forms of cultural history across the city. Examples include The People's Palace museum at Glasgow Green, which devotes a significant portion of space to materials and information relating to this period, and an album by folk musicians Alistair Hulett and Dave Swarbrick entitled 'Red Clydeside' with songs retelling tales from this history.

This period in Glasgow and Clydeside's[2] history was largely defined by unparalleled social, political and industrial unrest. The histories of workers' struggles and organising now form an integral part of contemporary popular memory within Scotland and beyond. As will be briefly reflected on below, Red Clydeside has been historicised in contrasting ways. Three historicisations are relevant here. Firstly, there has been a notion of Red Clydeside as 'myth' or 'legend' (see McLean, 1983). This portrayal has critiqued an overly romanticised approach towards labour history, which revisionists argue has exaggerated the revolutionary potential of labour on Clydeside. Secondly, as Brotherstone's comments imply, Red Clydeside has often been addressed as a discrete period of labour militancy, largely defined through particular worker interests groups with narrow and place-based demands making a limited wider impact. These understandings have largely understated the role of broader practices of networking or making of connections. Thirdly, as noted above, Red Clydeside has more recently been readdressed with a greater emphasis on the diversity of struggles and an increasing recognition of broader connections. This thesis is situated within this third characterisation through a sustained engagement with the spatiality of labour activity. In particular, emphasis will be placed upon diverse experiences within this overall history to avoid reproducing a familiar 'myth'.

To develop this approach, the thesis engages with broader debates regarding labour history, labour geography, historical geography and spatial politics. This combination of literatures is used here develop a more nuanced conceptualisation of labour agency and experience. This innovative contribution combines four literatures that are rarely cross referenced. The conceptual framing of intersections between labour history and labour geography engages with the ways in which iconic cities, such as Glasgow, have been shaped, reshaped and are better understood through their spatial politics of labour. Thus, the thesis raises intersections between working class experiences, their material landscapes and practices of

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[2] Clydeside and Glasgow are largely used interchangeably in this thesis. Admittedly the Clydeside catchment area stretches beyond the city of Glasgow but the place-based events considered here took place largely in Glasgow and brought together the connected workplaces of the Clydeside area which includes the broader metropolitan area, through places such as Clydebank, Paisley and Motherwell, around the city.

making connections within and beyond Clydeside. This interest in the spatial politics of labour history is transferable to other notable militant or 'red' places such as Bologna (see Jaggi et al., 1977) or South Wales (see Cooke, 1985).

To contain this geographical approach the research was positioned between 1911 and 1934. This time framing differs with other interpretations of what constitutes the periodisation of Red Clydeside.[3] However, this periodisation is deemed most suitable for the research conducted and is defined around key events and the political lives of individuals. The starting point of 1911 allows for the inclusion of a major industrial dispute, the Singer strike (as discussed in Chapter 4), which was representative of a more general growth in labour militancy and activism during this period[4] and was linked to transnational currents of syndicalist organising. The end point for research was selected as 1934, as this allowed a thorough exploration of the longer trajectories of political lives and labour issues. This concluding point was also chosen as it ensured the research was distinctive from a phase of international labour activism relating to the Spanish Civil War, which fell beyond the remit of this research.

The remainder of this introductory chapter fulfils three primary functions. The following section advances the thesis contribution to labour geography. In so doing, it also aims to develop a dialogue with radical labour history, in particular the 'history from below' tradition. The subsequent section introduces Glasgow's industrial history to contextualise the period in which the thesis is set. Particular attention is given to the changing industrial composition of Clydeside to indicate the changing urban conditions during the early twentieth century. Following this, the chapter briefly engages with previous historicisations of Clydeside's labour history to frame this research within a body of existing research. The chapter then summarises three key thesis aims and identifies the different forms of labour history considered within the thesis. The introduction concludes by providing brief overviews of the thesis chapters before establishing an overall mandate.

1.2 Labour Geography, Labour History and Spatial Politics

The thesis is conceptually located within four bodies of conceptual literature, setting up a dialogue between labour geography and labour history, alongside broader contributions from historical geography and spatial politics, to revisit the archives of Red Clydeside. In particular, it is argued that a more detailed conversation between the 'history from below'

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[3] McLean (1983), for example, positions his analysis of Red Clydeside between 1914-1922.
[4] Glasgow Labour History Workshop (1996:22) claimed that between '1911-13, the annual average strike rate in Scotland ran at six times the rate of the previous decade, 1900-1910'.

tradition and labour geography can greatly enhance understandings of labour agency. A conversation between the works of scholars from these fields, such as Andrew Herod (2001) and E.P. Thompson (1968), allows a new perspective on labour histories such as Red Clydeside, revealing a plurality and geographically relational account of labour experiences. The literature review within the thesis combines these heavily linked works that have so far largely operated separately.

This combination of literatures advances the primary theoretical contribution of the thesis by arguing for more open and fluid understandings of what counts as labour agency. This has theoretical consequences for both labour geography and labour history. The thesis stresses the importance of thinking spatially about labour histories whilst also engaging with broader labour experiences. This approach remains grounded within the antagonism between capital and labour and acknowledges that labour politics act within and beyond organised trade union structures. Thus, the empirical chapters engage with significant Glasgow labour organisations whilst also considering broader and unofficial activities of workers and political activists. This approach indicates the importance of considering a broader notion of 'working class presence' (Thompson, 1968) rather than discrete examples of particular labour struggles. This more sympathetic reading of labour experiences allows the inclusion of gendered, racialised and broader political movements alongside more traditional forms of labour struggle. This challenging seeks to provide accounts that are inclusive of experiences beyond particular disputes. This is an important development for labour geography and labour history by avoiding the omissions of experiences, which are not always considered part of a labour movement. A more rounded and nuanced approach is considered within this thesis by considering the longer trajectories of multiple and intersecting struggles.

This conversation is complemented with work from historical geography and spatial politics. More recent work within historical geography has engaged with E.P. Thompson to assert the continued importance of 'protest' histories (Griffin, 2012, 2014, Navickas, 2009, 2013). These works are drawn upon within the thesis to engage with a plurality of labour practices and experiences. This historical emphasis is linked to literature that has engaged closely with spatial politics (Featherstone, 2008, 2012, Davies, 2013), facilitating a broader understanding of place-based politics and more nuanced perspectives on labour organising. In this regard, the thesis draws upon literatures that have stressed the wider geographies of place-based disputes and labour experiences. This conceptual grounding is developed further through methodological discussion regarding 'usable pasts' and assemblage theory.

These contributions provide useful theorisations for how the research engaged closely with archives that provide Clydeside's labour histories whilst also gathering materials from diverse collections.

Overall, the thesis engages with emerging debates regarding labour, agency and spatial politics. The integration here of insights from labour geography and labour history advances a spatial politics that helps to better understand the diversity of working class experiences alongside labour's own spatial strategies. The relevance of this intersection speaks to recent reviews of labour geography, which have stressed the need for a further questioning of the ways in which it positions labour and constructs working class agency (Castree, 2007, Tufts and Savage, 2009, Coe and Jordhus-Lier, 2010, Mitchell, 2011). In particular, these reviews have identified the need for further engagement with the moral complexities of labour organising (Tufts and Savage, 2009), an acknowledgement of the constraints placed upon workers (Coe and Jordhus-Lier, 2010) and a more general recognition of the diverse forms of labour practices rather than a 'catch-all' notion of agency (Castree, 2007). This thesis argues that revisiting Red Clydeside with a spatial emphasis, grounded within a plurality of working class experiences, can reveal examples of workers' politics, which connects with present day understandings of labour agency and addresses the agenda suggested.

1.3 Class Antagonism on Clydeside

Clydeside's industrial rise resulted in significant structural changes to the region and its history can be traced to the eighteenth century. These changes accelerated mass urbanisation, growing social inequalities and deprivation amongst the working classes. These harsh conditions were combined with changes to working environments alongside increasingly hostile and anti-union employer strategies. As the thesis will argue, these conditions and the suppression of radical activity were not necessarily the only triggers for political action on Clydeside, with influences evident from beyond the industrial workplaces or place-based disputes. In this section, though, particular emphasis is given to the spaces and trajectories of capital within the region to contextualise the labour politics that follow.

Glasgow's wealth was established during the eighteenth century through developing trade relations, whereby merchant links with North America and the Caribbean resulted in growing wealth in the city. This growth, primarily in the tobacco trade (see Pacione, 1995:16, Damer, 1990:25), resulted in the emergence of significant levels of disposable

capital, facilitating further industrial growth. During the early nineteenth century, Glasgow's primary industry was textiles (with cotton spinning and dyeing factories common along the Clyde), yet by the end of the century a significant shift towards heavy industry had occurred (see Table 1.1). Reasoning for these developments have been provided by several historians (Checkland, 1976, Pacione, 1995, Damer, 1990) who suggest that a combination of Glasgow's 'natural' advantages, in terms of west coast location and proximity to coal and iron resources (mines were active at locations such as Motherwell, Cambuslang and Wishaw); alongside its composition of labour,[5] with many Highland and Irish migrants contributing to a reserve army of labour, facilitated such a rapidly developing industrialisation. With growing trade networks, the river Clyde became central to the city. To support this growing functionality of the river, Port Glasgow, ten miles downriver, was established in 1700. Work to deepen the Clyde began in 1771, with further work eventually facilitating the development of shipbuilding on Clydeside in the second half of the nineteenth century.

Table 1.1: Structure of Employment (per cent) in Glasgow, 1851-1901[6]

	1851	**1901**
Textiles	46.98	27.56
Metal Manufacture	3.46	10.28
Mechanical Engineering	3.00	34.79
Instrument Engineering	0.38	3.02
Shipbuilding, Marine Engineering	0.47	3.04
Other Metals	1.08	5.07
Total	55.37	83.76

These conditions resulted in growing industrial production on Clydeside at the end of the nineteenth century. Statistics begin to illustrate the scale of industrial growth on the Clyde with Pacione (1995:63) documenting that between 1851 and 1870 Clyde shipyards were responsible for 70 per cent of iron shipping launched in Britain. Similarly, Damer traced Clydeside's industries into the twentieth century:

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[5] According to Damer (1990:55) 'about one third of Glasgow's population was of immediate or fairly recent Irish extraction' whilst in 1835, according to a Church census there were 22,234 Highlanders in Glasgow (although the actual population was likely higher).
[6] Damer (1990:32)

In the peak year of 1913 the Clyde built and launched almost three-quarters of a million tons of shipping, some 756, 973 tons, a feat never to be equalled. This represented not only one-third of British tonnage, but almost 18 per cent of world output, and was more than the production of the entire shipbuilding industry of either Germany or America. (Damer, 1990:32)

This global industrial position of Clydeside is echoed by Moss and Hume (1977:3) who detailed how Clydeside industries were responsible for more than 80 per cent of world output of sugar-crushing and refinery machinery.[7] This growth was paralleled in the steel industries whereby tonnage output grew from 50,000 tons in 1879 to 250,000 tons in 1911 (Checkland, 1976:4-5). These developments established Glasgow as the 'Second City of the Empire' (see Mackenzie, 1999) by the end of the nineteenth century. Large 'international exhibitions' took place twice at Kelvingrove Park in 1881 and 1901, which were representative of the central position of Glasgow within the Empire (see Kinchin and Kinchin, 1988). The maps of Glasgow and Clydeside (Figure 1.2, Figure 1.3) below illustrate the scale and breadth of industrial activity along the Clyde, within and beyond the boundaries of Glasgow. Figure 1.2 also identifies three key sites within central Glasgow, which will be referred to during the empirical chapters (Chapters 4, 5 and 6). Clydeside's industries were integral to local communities, which were engrained within 'specific institutional arrangements such as the tradition of families working in particular firms with recruitment and training into skilled work often regulated by birth and kinship' (Helms and Cumbers, 2006:73). As Table 1.1 indicates, though, Clydeside retained some industrial diversity during this period with textiles still prominent and other work becoming available; often these would be linked to the developing shipbuilding and engineering industries (e.g. chemical works, furniture manufacturers, carpet weaving, etc.).

This increasing industrialisation was aligned with changes to working and living conditions within the city of Glasgow. Twentieth century Clydeside emerged from this industrial growth and developed many of the problems associated with rapid industrialisation. Dudgeon (2009:58) has documented how the population in Govan alone grew from 9,000 to 95,000 between 1850 and 1909. Population growth was rapid, with Glasgow's population shifting from just over half a million after 1871 to reaching one million before 1914 (Checkland, 1976:8). Increasing housing density created infamous slum conditions (see Corporation of Glasgow, 1911, H. Savage, 2006) with 700,000 people living in three square miles in 1914 (Checkland, 1976:18) creating severe overcrowding.

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[7] Their book *Workshop of the Empire* provides a useful overview of Clydeside industrial activity.

The city's inhabitants were often forced into tenement flats where three, four or more people per room were common as documented in the 1911 census.

The nature of work itself in Glasgow was also becoming increasingly alienating with early twentieth century employers seeking to 'tighten up on work practices' (Laybourn, 1997:38). Similarly, Cronin describes how 'abundant testimony points to an intensified sense of workplace alienation, especially after the turn of the century' (Cronin, 1979:93) across Britain. These trends were replicated across the wider Clydeside region identified in the maps below. In Chapter 4, for example, a large factory strike at Clydebank is considered, which was centred upon resistance to changes to the labour process. As visible in both maps, Clydeside is clearly developed around the river with the dense urban area of Glasgow surrounded by smaller towns and villages, such as Clydebank to the west of the city. Thus, the use of interchanging scales, between Glasgow and Clydeside, is justified as labour events (strikes, meetings, demonstrations) often took place within Glasgow (in terms of labour organising) but would regularly incorporate labour disputes, workers and political groups from the surrounding regions along the Clyde (see Chapter 5 for examples of these connections).

Figure 1.2 Central Glasgow – 1910s Map (OS County Series)

Figure 1.3 Clydeside 1921-1930 Map (OS 1 inch)
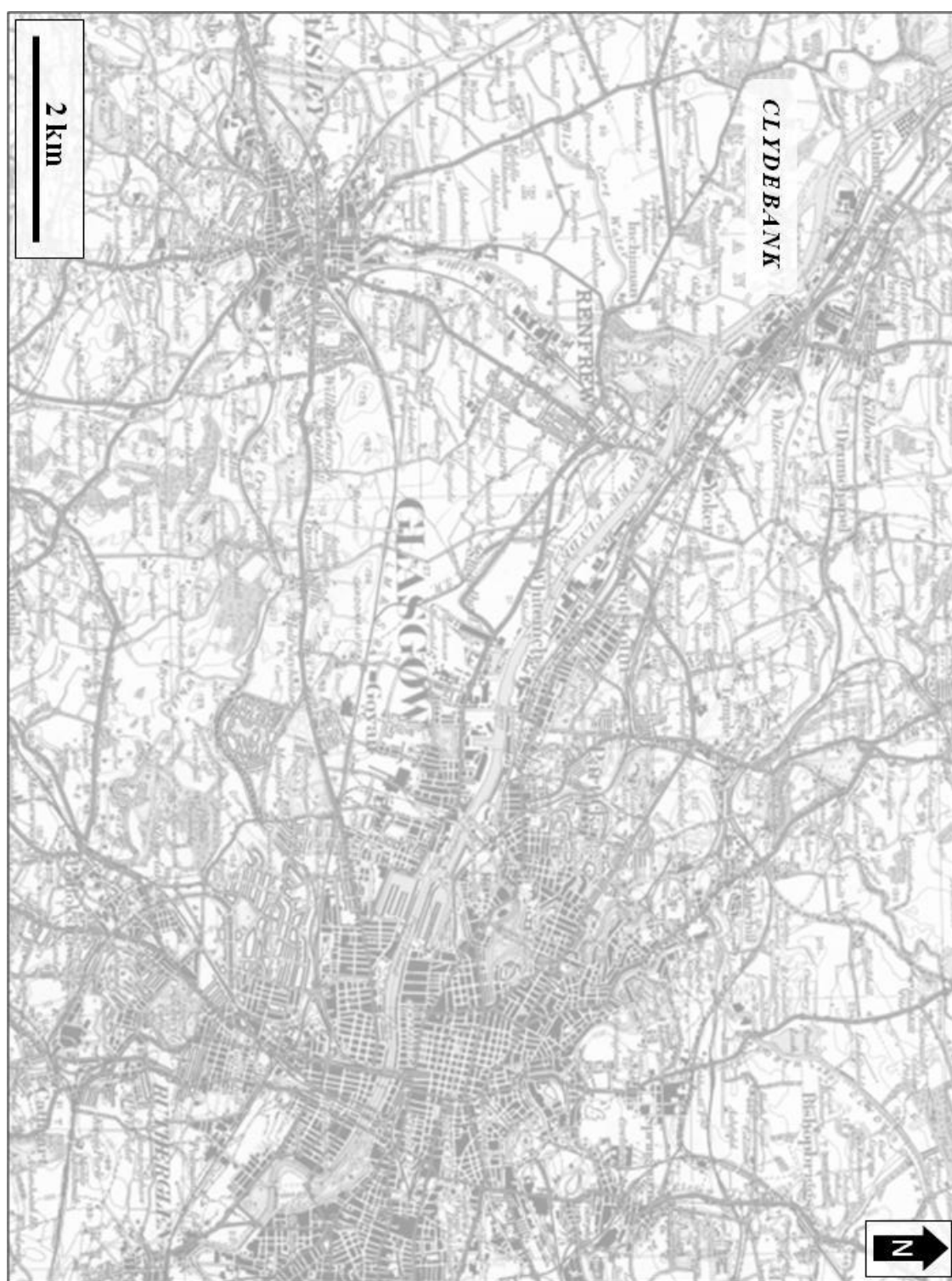
1.4 Glasgow's Labour History

The above section introduced the changing conditions associated with industrialisation on Clydeside and indicated how this impacted upon the working class. These factors contributed towards what Knox (1999) describes as a growing social distance between capital and labour. From this increasing polarisation emerged Clydeside's labour movements, which provide the focus of this thesis. The early twentieth century resistances of labour were not a new response to the material conditions of Scotland as labour struggles had been prominent throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (see Knox, 1999). This period, though, witnessed an arguably more sustained and larger scale period of labour action and organising. Earlier labour and working class political disputes included the Calton weavers, some of whom were killed by military forces during their strike at a textile factory for better wages in 1787 (see Couzin, 2006), the 1889 'going slow' strike of dock workers, also known as 'ca canny' (Brown, 1977, Dubois: 1976:45) and the increasing efforts to organise labour politically in Scotland, such as Keir Hardie's early efforts to develop parliamentary socialism in Scottish mining districts (see Knox, 1999). As such, it should be noted that disputes before Red Clydeside were prominent and reflect a longer trajectory of radical labour politics, yet it should also be recognised that during the early twentieth century, labour resistance entered a distinctive phase, seemingly more co-ordinated, organised and frequent, which was indicative of a growing class consciousness.

Many labour historians have argued that this was a key phase of working class militancy and have commented on a notable shift in labour organising during the early twentieth century. Cronin, for example, has claimed that:

> The shape of the British labour movement was basically set between 1889 and 1920. This primary mobilisation of the working class proceeded through three turbulent explosions of strike militancy and persistent and profound social turmoil.
> (Cronin, 1979:93)

This growth in militancy and organised labour was particularly prominent on Clydeside. Boyle and Hughes (1994:455) describe Glasgow as the 'most socialist city in the U.K' during the 1910s. This interpretation is supported by the work cited below, which have represented these developments in contrasting manners. Here, this work is briefly considered to contextualise the following analysis of labour activists, organisations and

disputes. Much of this work is drawn upon throughout the thesis to develop arguments made around particular case studies.

The histories of Red Clydeside include strike action, such as the Singer strike in 1911 and the Forty Hours Movement in 1919, parliamentary advances, such as the successes of the Independent Labour Party in the 1920s, and broader forms of activism beyond workplace and political parties, such as the rent strikes of 1915 or free speech movement in the 1930s. Labour historians have studied the histories of these events and related activists and organisations in contrasting ways. The major dispute within the literature has revolved around the revolutionary potential of this period. Revisionists, most notably Iain McLean (1983), have questioned the revolutionary potential of Red Clydeside, suggesting that some accounts have exaggerated its radicalism. Their critiques (see also Reid, 1985) have been directed towards accounts, which they suggest overplayed the role of working class movements, such as William Gallacher's (1936) biographical account of the period and Hinton's (1973) evaluation of the role of the Clyde Workers Committee. Such hypothetical debates around the revolutionary potential of Red Clydeside close down the possibility to revisit this period by developing a more open-ended and heterogeneous account of its diverse politics and traditions.

More useful in this respect, are those historians that have begun to reveal a diversity of labour activity and experience during this period. This more relational approach allows parliamentary successes, such as those evident in Middlemas's (1965) account of the rise in parliamentary labour representation during this research period to be considered alongside more social-political analyses of labour struggles. These works include research such as Glasgow Labour History Workshop's (1989, 1996) analyses of the 1911 Singer factory strike and Melling's (1990) more general appraisal of Red Clydeside, which stressed the importance of non-industrial disputes to foreground different forms of collective action. Melling contends that Red Clydeside requires revisiting with a more sympathetic reading of connections between workplace and non-work experiences and disputes. This understanding begins to open up the historiography of Red Clydeside to introduce new perspectives. In this regard, research such Arnot's (1999) on the role of women within Scottish trade unionism begins to address omissions within Red Clydeside histories. Her work explores the previously silenced agency of women within the trade union movement whilst illuminating more exclusionary gendered politics of labour. The importance of this developing sensitivity to connections between different forms of agency and the inclusion of previously understated experiences are central to this thesis.

As the opening comments from Brotherstone suggested, a primary emphasis of this thesis is to scrutinise the contrasting modalities of labour connections. This interest in connections and solidarities is combined with an awareness of the plurality of labour politics and activities within Red Clydeside. McKinlay has identified how more dynamic and generative accounts are essential for a reappraisal of the Red Clydeside period stressing that '[t]o search for such elusive 'roots' is to risk an appreciation of just how novel, unprecedented, and extraordinary the industrial, social and political movements of wartime Clydeside actually were' (McKinlay, 1996:104). His analysis begins to indicate the inadequacies of collapsing the multiple experiences of labour struggles emerging from Red Clydeside into a singular narrative or tradition. This interest in diverse labour positionalities and experiences also begins to illuminate questions of inclusion and exclusion within the working class.

In this regard, the thesis pursues a relational and nuanced understanding of Clydeside activists whilst maintaining the diversity of experience within the working class presence. This approach is developed from the theoretical contributions previously discussed to illuminate elements of the Red Clydeside archives that have received varying recognition. This allows an analysis that combines a rereading of the archive materials of more celebrated histories of Red Clydeside with previously silenced aspects of this labour history. Particular emphasis is placed on integrating multiple experiences that have either been understated or previously historicised separately. Thus, the thesis assembles materials from multiple archives containing Red Clydeside records. Three central empirical contributions emerge from this method.

Firstly, the thesis engages with the diverse practices of internationalism within Clydeside. These international connections forged by the Clydeside and Scottish trade union movement, political individuals and during particular struggles have not been previously emphasised within Scottish labour history. Secondly, the thesis engages with more ambiguous forms of labour internationalism by illuminating the experiences of 'otherness' (McDowell, 2015) within Clydeside. This contribution is considered primarily through the racialised experiences of migrant workers to indicate how international solidarities were often undermined by exclusionary practices of trade unions. These experiences have rarely been positioned as part of the Red Clydeside narrative. Thirdly, the thesis combines political traditions, which have previously been assumed to be disparate. This allows combinations of broader aspects of labour politics, such as the anarchist, feminist and parliamentary politics of labour to be considered relationally. These labour and protest

traditions have been given varying attention but are rarely cross-referenced. These empirical contributions combine to provide a spatial politics of Red Clydeside by foregrounding previously understated within Scottish labour history.

This emphasis on spatial politics rather than chronological reordering of labour histories provides a novel account of the labour histories of Red Clydeside. Organisations such as the Glasgow Trades Council, Scottish Trades Union Congress, ILP and notable individuals who have been given varying historical detail in the histories briefly summarised above are regularly referred to in the thesis. More broadly, the research, whilst framed empirically within Scottish labour history, is theoretically innovative in integrating perspectives within labour geography and labour history in a dynamic and relational conceptual framework. A summary of these emerging aims are provided below.

1.5 Spatial Politics of Red Clydeside: Thesis Aims

Drawing upon theoretical work within labour geography, labour history and related fields, the thesis addresses this agenda. In particular, the following chapters suggest that an approach grounded in spatial politics encourages an acknowledgement of factors previously omitted, ignored or understated. This will be particularly evident through the engagement with more relational understandings of place and a conscious seeking of labour connections within the archive. This reflects a historical and spatial understanding of Clydeside through Massey's understanding of place 'as articulated moments in networks of social relations and understandings, but where a larger proportion of those relations, experiences and understandings are constructed on a far larger scale' (Massey, 1991:28). Such sensitivity to the multiplicity of possible connections, both materially present and in the making of more transitory communications, within Red Clydeside will be stressed throughout.

The thesis will also combine seemingly disparate political positions and individual activists to illustrate the fluidity of labour politics on Clydeside. This fluidity will be linked to more recent geographical engagements with assemblage to suggest a practice based analysis of labour solidarities and internationalism. In this regard, a more emergent and generative account of labour politics will be presented, acknowledging the diverse political positions within the working class presence. This notion of 'working class presence' is developed from E.P. Thompson's (1968[8]) arguments in *The Making of the English Working Class*,

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[8] This thesis uses the text of the 1968 edition, which was slightly revised from the 1963 edition and which included a typically spirited response by Thompson to key criticisms of the book.

which stressed the diversity of labour resistances as explicitly political acts. This has implications for labour geography and history by stressing a broader conceptualisation of what counts as labour politics.

As part of this portrayal of a dynamic working class presence the thesis also aims to explore more exclusionary spatial practices of labour. This raises questions of inclusion and exclusion within the working class presence. The primary division within the thesis centres upon racialised tensions amongst seafarers, which became connected to other disputes through their longer trajectory within the trade union movement. When read translocally, through connections with similar disputes, the thesis will argue that the Clydeside experiences were connected to what Jonathan Hyslop (1999) has described as 'white labourism'. This analysis continues to apply the relational understanding of place discussed above to reveal how relationally constructed solidarities can produce more exclusionary political outcomes. Three key aims emerge from these interests in the spatial politics of labour:

1. To challenge perceptions of place-based or bound politics by excavating evidence of the making of connections and internationalism within the histories of Red Clydeside

2. To compare and contrast different forms of labour identities by foregrounding political connections between previously assumed disparate political groups and individuals

3. To foreground exclusions within the working class presence as well as the making of connections by exploring more internal divisions within labour

To address these aims the empirical chapters thread three aspects of labour history into an overall narrative. The first of these chapters considers longer trajectories of labour organising through an analysis of the histories and geographies of significant organising bodies on Clydeside. Secondly, the thesis considers a specific labour dispute through research on the Forty Hours Movement of 1919 to examine the place-based politics and the making of connections. Thirdly, the thesis narrows its focus to specific political identities and their making of connections through a comparison of three political individuals who were active during Red Clydeside. These approaches overlap at many points, through a shared interest in solidarities, political identities and diverse experiences of labour. Further detail on this approach and summaries of other more theoretical and methodological chapters are provided in the final section below.

1.6 Thesis Outline

Following this introductory chapter, **Chapter 2** engages with conceptual contributions regarding working class agency primarily through a conversation between labour geography and labour history. This conversation advances an innovative approach towards Red Clydeside, emphasising the spatial politics of labour's agency and experience. In this regard, the chapter surveys contributions from both labour geography and the 'history from below' tradition before suggesting how work from these fields can provide distinctive contributions for rethinking labour agency. These closely related fields hold many commonalities yet have so far remained largely disconnected. The chapter explores a dialogue between these fields by stressing the usefulness of labour geography's spatial approach alongside E.P. Thompson's and broader 'history from below' traditions emphasis on workers' experiences and understanding of class as process. To develop this position, the chapter also engages with broader literature that has engaged with the intersections between class, race and gender. This theorisation of labour agency is then developed through a discussion of historical methodologies in the following chapter.

Chapter 3 explores the methodological issues regarding working with archives to reconsider labour history. This chapter engages with work in historical geography to explore existing perspectives on archival research methods. The chapter analyses the research methods utilised to construct a more relational and geographical account of Red Clydeside. Recent engagements with assemblage are positioned as a useful conceptual framing for the research process undertaken and the chapter engages with literature, which has similarly suggested the merits of using assemblage as a methodological tool. The chapter draws upon recent historical geography contributions to engage with archives as places of work and collaboration to suggest an alternative understanding of archival practice. In particular, two Glasgow archives relevant to this thesis are considered through interviews. The chapter argues that the perspectives of archivists and volunteers must be included for a more rounded portrayal of archival methods, which during research have regularly involved an element of collaboration. This understanding raises the politics of archival research practices and introduces tensions regarding funding and resources for providing political left materials. The insights emerging from interviews with these groups reveal multiple factors for further critical thought regarding 'usable pasts'.

The empirical chapters provide three distinctive yet interlinked portrayals of Red Clydeside. **Chapter 4** engages with the histories and geographies of trade unionism on Clydeside to illustrate the growth of the labour movement during the early twentieth

century. In doing so, the chapter engages primarily with labour geography literature through historical case studies. The chapter makes four 'cuts' through this labour movement to emphasise the diversity of labour interests and geographical connections forged. These 'cuts' include firstly an analysis of the role of organised labour on Clydeside through an engagement with the Glasgow Trades and Labour Council, Scottish Trades Union Congress and Independent Labour Party. Secondly the chapter considers the politics of the 1911 Singer factory strike to consider working conditions and the formations of more 'unofficial' forms of labour agency present within Red Clydeside. This analysis links into the subsequent section, which considers the broader development of more translocal connections by labour organisations. The chapter then contrasts these solidarities with more exclusionary politics within the trade union movement through an analysis of developing white labourism amongst labour activists on Clydeside. The chapter suggests that these four 'cuts' through labour activities begins to indicate the multiple forms of spatial politics engaged with by workers. Such diverse labour practices and forms of internationalism are pursued further in the following two chapters.

Chapter 5 narrows its focus to a particular labour demand through a notable event in Scottish labour history, the Forty Hours Movement of 1919. The analysis links with many of the arguments made in Chapter 4 by juxtaposing more progressive makings of connections with hostilities amongst sailors of different races on Clydeside. The difference in this chapter is that these longer trajectories are considered during a particular time whereby they became central to the labour movement. To indicate the significance of these connections, the chapter contrasts the developments of the strike, which developed solidarities through communications and the publication of the *Strike Bulletin*, with a similar strike in Belfast. Following this, the chapter considers a notable race riot in the same month of the strike whereby striking trade unions and strike leaders were linked to violent and hostile scenes towards black sailors. Theoretically, the chapter engages with a reading of Ernesto Laclau's understanding of demands alongside Geoff Mann's 'politics of measure' to encourage more politicised and culturally sensitive accounts of labour agency within collective bargaining. The emerging contrasts from this approach begin to uncover more ambiguous and complex labour identities and geographies than has previously been acknowledged in the remembering of 1919. This interest in political identities and contrasting forms of connection is pursued further in the following chapter.

The final empirical chapter, **Chapter 6**, develops this emphasis on translocal connections and fluid political traditions by considering three prominent political identities from Red

Clydeside. The lives of Guy Aldred, Helen Crawfurd and James Maxton are introduced to raise the intersectionality of diverse political identities and traditions. This chapter encourages further recognition of the diverse positionalities present within Red Clydeside's labour politics whilst also indicating possibilities for a shared radical politics within different times and places. In particular, the research indicates how seemingly disparate political traditions combine and forge temporary solidarities. The chapter also reflects on the more porous and flexible political positions of activists themselves during the research period. This fluid understanding of political traditions facilitates a more sympathetic reading of what counts as labour politics by considering intersections between positionalities such as anarchism, communism, parliamentarianism, trade unionism and the suffrage movement. The chapter asserts how these seemingly diverse currents of radical activity all contributed to Clydeside's working class presence through their material and communicative practices within the region. This sympathetic reading of diverse labour traditions provides further links with spatial politics by raising contrasting modalities of labour internationalism through relationships such as friendships, correspondences and activism.

Chapter 7 provides the conclusion to the thesis. It links together arguments from the previous chapters and specifically focuses on key crossovers between the empirical chapters and the literature review. The chapter also asserts the continued relevance of Red Clydeside and the usefulness of a geographical lens for revisiting labour history. This discussion poses questions regarding the positioning of 'usable pasts' and suggests that more critical interpretations of the use of radical history is required. Alongside this emphasis on critically rethinking 'usable pasts' is an assertion that the provision of working class histories constitutes a crucial part of the contemporary working class presence, which requires continued support in increasingly precarious times. The thesis concludes by proposing four key thesis contributions regarding the broader conceptualisation of labour agency.

Overall, the thesis seeks to reassert the continued importance of labour histories such as Red Clydeside. Labour militancy and solidarity characterised Clydeside during the early twentieth century and with many centenaries approaching (2015 is the centenary of the rent strike and anti-war movement) this is a fitting time to revisit the labour histories of Glasgow and Clydeside through an alternative, in this case geographical, lens. The chapters introduced above aim to reflect connections between labour history and labour geography by stressing the creative strategies of labour alongside more critical

perspectives towards the forms of labour organising which emerged. This combination foregrounds labour's ability to contest its relationship with capital alongside a broader analysis of diverse political practices of workers and is indicative of a more ambiguous spatial politics than has previously been stressed. This emphasis reiterates understandings of labour as significant 'geographic actors' (see Castree, 2007) within and beyond political economy.

Chapter 2

Spatial Politics, Labour Geography and History from Below

2.1 Introduction

This chapter introduces and explores some of the key theoretical contributions from both labour geography and labour history. It is argued that these two fields advance an agenda for exploring the spatial politics of Red Clydeside. The labour geography field and 'history from below' tradition hold many commonalities and several implicit links, which have so far remained largely underdeveloped. Here, the chapter considers the possibilities for a conversation (see also Ellem and McGrath-Champ, 2012) between these two closely related perspectives, which have both foregrounded the agency and experiences of labour. This conversation will begin with interpretations of key work from the field of labour geography and will link and critically consider these contributions alongside those of the 'history from below' school and particularly E.P. Thompson's (1968) writing in *The Making of the English Working Class*. These contributions and the overall conversation will advance a new theoretical approach for revisiting the labour histories of Red Clydeside.

Parallels between labour geography and 'history from below' have been previously acknowledged with some suggestions made regarding the usefulness of Thompson's work and its emphasis on perspectives from below (Wills, 1996, Cumbers et al, 2010, Rutherford, 2010). The conversation has largely been limited to this, though, and here it is argued that a more detailed engagement with the overlaps and differences between both fields is useful for theorising labour agency and experience. The chapter suggests how a developed conversation between these two fields allows a more nuanced understanding of labour agency to emerge. Thus, the chapter engages with the contributions of both fields to advance a theorisation of labour agency to approach the histories of Red Clydeside. It is argued this approach pushes both labour geography and labour history forward in useful ways. Three key points are developed within this chapter from this combination of literatures and other related fields.

Firstly, the chapter will consider how a relational approach, informed by labour geography, allows the spatial nature of labour agency and experiences to emerge. This approach facilitates critical interpretations of the political importance of spatial connections within

and beyond the labour movement presence on Clydeside. An emphasis on spatial connections also begins to illuminate the operation of exclusionary practices. Theoretically, this perspective is particularly important for rethinking how labour histories are reflective of broader connections and solidarities. This contribution is reflected in the following empirical work whereby contrasting modalities of labour internationalism, contested connections and diverse political identities will be critically considered.

Secondly, the chapter proposes that Thompson's understanding of class as a process forged through particular experiences, rather than viewing class as a fixed category, is useful for assessing what counts as labour agency. Utilising examples from the *Making* and broader 'history from below' tradition, it is proposed that experience and process based representations of labour can enhance perspectives currently prominent within labour geography. In particular, the emphasis on broader working class experiences will encourage recognition of the diverse forms (for example official and non-official) of agency to emerge from the analysis of the labour history of Red Clydeside. This is a significant theoretical development as it allows the plurality of labour activists, traditions and organisations to be considered relationally and as coexisting rather than through particular organisations or disputes treated in isolation.

Thirdly, the chapter contends that this combined emphasis on spatiality and working class experience must be pursued through an analysis of antagonisms, struggles and conflicts. This commitment to analysing working class struggle will be reflected in the choice of empirical material and case studies presented in the following chapters. This emphasis on antagonism was explicitly stressed by Thompson throughout his writing and is an implicit influence within labour geography. The emphasis on antagonism will be read alongside an interest in internal labour dynamics and tensions, which have been well explored, in contrasting ways, within both labour geography and the 'history from below' tradition. This dynamic is developed further in later parts of the chapter through an engagement with literature that foregrounds the intersectionality of class, race and gender. The chapter will indicate how this intersectionality has often been understated within both labour geography and history and aims to develop the conversation initially suggested by providing multiple experiences of workers' struggles.

To explore these conceptual themes the chapter is split into four main sections. The following section frames and discusses the theoretical contributions of labour geography and indicates some of the critiques emerging from ongoing theoretical and empirical work within the field. The second section considers the closely related 'history from below'

tradition and the work of Thompson to foreground relevant contributions and limitations. The third section discusses the ways in which a conversation between the two fields opens up possibilities for a wider conceptualisation of workers' agency. This conversation will develop the key contributions introduced above and link similar research fields, which have explored the intersectionality of class, race and gender, providing particularly relevant perspectives for constructing a spatial politics of Red Clydeside. The chapter will finally conclude by establishing some of the key conceptual themes, which contribute towards a conceptualisation of workers agency, which is explored in later empirical chapters.

2.2 Labour Geography: 'Making Space for Labour'

Geography has a recent history of engaging with the agency of labour and approaches have shifted significantly on how best to represent this. A broad overview of the changing approaches towards labour is provided by Coe and Jordhus-Lier (2010) who have charted the shifts within economic geography over the last forty years. They indicate how before the 1980s human geographers largely considered labour through a spatial science approach based upon 'location theory' ontology that placed 'labour cost' as the most significant 'location factor' yet tended to avoid or downplay the actual social relations between capital and labour. This tradition was challenged by an identification of class struggle in the 1980s and 1990s by Marxist economic geographers, such as David Harvey, Jamie Peck and Doreen Massey, who recognised the significance of the relations (in often quite different ways) between capital and labour but still placed capital as the 'main shaper of economic landscapes' (Coe and Jordhus-Lier, 2010:3).

Peck (1996:4-5), for example, contended that labour markets are governed by a variety of sources, rather than being viewed simply through a perspective of free market theory as orthodox economists might suggest. His contribution is important as it facilitates a conceptualisation of economic landscapes, which is inclusive of the potential capabilities and contributions of labour. This broadly defined approach enabled geographers to include the activities of workers (through trade unions for example) as potentially shaping the spatial structures of a place or region as illustrated by Cooke (1985) through his analysis within South Wales. In his brief study, the labour process (including workforce organisation) formed a significant part, alongside the ownership of capital, institutional specificities, the productive base and the specific social relations, of the structural influences on social spatial diversity.

Similarly, Massey challenged previous economic studies, which functioned 'as though the world existed on the head of a pin – as though it were distanceless and spatially undifferentiated' (Massey, 1995:49). She posed this critique through an explicitly geographical methodology that emphasised connections, physical conditions, distance and social relations in the production of economic landscapes. Her approach in *Spatial Divisions of Labour* has proved to be extremely useful, perhaps even path-breaking, for the developing field of labour geography (as noted by Peck, 2013) as it further explored the relational and explicitly geographical nature of the capital and labour dynamic. Importantly for labour geography, Massey's account includes the social and political processes of labour organising, such as the South Wales mining communities of the 1970s, within her analysis of the geographies and spaces of capital and the divisions of labour. Her use of layering to describe the ever evolving social relations of capitalist systems provides a more sympathetic approach to include the agency of labour. As Jamie Peck indicates, Massey herself refused the 'geological' metaphor due to its implications of more inert natural properties and instead Gregory's (1989) metaphor of a card game better reflected interaction between layers and 'the multiplicity of (local) roles and the (fluid) hierarchies of social relations and production functions' (Peck, 2013:104). Thus, Massey's contribution marked an important shift beyond the capital centric accounts of economic geography, which primarily considered the importance of spatial understandings for analysing the circulation of capital, as most effectively portrayed by Harvey's (1982) *Limits to Capital*.

Overall, this second phase clearly established labour as an agent within economic landscape but perhaps failed to engage in sustained depth with the particular forms of agency or experience within the working class beyond its essential relations with capital. It also largely engaged with labour within the production process without providing a broader view of what constitutes labour identities. These approaches therefore still tended to situate capital as the primary shaper of political and economic landscapes and positioned labour as one of many factors within the overall political economy. In response, this chapter instead positions the agency and perspective of labour at the forefront of these relations. The theoretical arguments of this thesis are therefore most obviously linked to what Coe and Jordhus-Lier (2010) have described as the third phase, which challenged these dominant perspectives and moved from a geography of labour towards labour geographies (Herod, 1997, 1998, 2001).

This now well-established research subfield deliberately foregrounds the agency of labour, primarily through organised forms of working class struggle. Andrew Herod coined the phrase 'labor geography' in an effort to foreground working class agency, whereby workers are viewed as 'sentient social beings who both intentionally and unintentionally produce economic geographies through their actions' (Herod, 2001:15). His work prompted a shift beyond the 'geographies of labor' (such as those contributions briefly discussed above), which he argued neglected the contributions and agency of workers within or resisting against capitalism. This third phase will be considered below in some depth as it marks a significant and most relevant shift towards a conceptualisation of working class agency within human geography. The chapter will then attempt to situate its own contribution within some of the more recent developments within labour geography (what Coe and Jordhus-Lier have described as a fourth phase and a 'broadening out' out of interests), which have begun to open up new avenues of enquiry and debates within this field. Later on, the chapter will engage with work, which has developed labour geography's portrayal of agency by working with perspectives beyond its primarily trade union focus, which, whilst providing significant organisational analysis and useful critiques, fails to fully engage with the experiential aspects of both class consciousness and agency.

2.2.1 The Labour Geography Project

The work of economic geographers such as Peck, Massey and others (Harvey, 1982, Hudson and Sadler, 1983, Walker, 1999) developed a body of literature that identified class struggle within economic landscapes and provided an important intervention for any consideration of a working class politics. Developing this position, Herod (1998:4-5), considered a continued tendency within this geography of labour to 'have overwhelmingly conceived of labor as little more than a locational factor in their explanations of the geography of industrial landscapes'. This argument could be viewed as simplifying the relevant contributions of the likes of Harvey and Massey, but still marked a significant turning point by encouraging a greater engagement with the agency of labour. Herod's perspective encouraged accounts that emphasised 'the manipulation of space by workers and unions' as 'a potent form of social power and that power flows through spatial structures, just as it flows through social structures – indeed, that the social and the spatial are inseparable' (Herod, 1998:5). He pursues this inclusion of workers in the formation of geographic landscapes primarily through the organised labour union, which allows him to challenge previous portrayals of the capital and labour dynamic.

Herod's work explores the spatial dimensions of working class agency and this aspect is particularly noticeable in his reworking of economic globalisation debates to include the role of workers. This challenging of globalisation as too often being a capital orientated conceptual debate is a key theme in Herod's arguments and marked an important shift in economic geography:

> [W]hile the transnationalization of capital has certainly presented workers with new problems as they now frequently must negotiate with corporations whose operations are located in many different parts of the globe, I would maintain that labor's structural position is not always and necessarily the passive victim of globalization. (Herod, 2001:131-132)

There is now a mass of evidence to support this original claim (for example L. Savage, 2006, Routledge and Cumbers, 2009, Anderson, 2013), with researchers recognising that trade unions in particular having a strong transnational element to their activities. This spatial approach to analysing labour agency provides a key contribution emerging from the labour geography literature. In particular, this theoretical work is important for framing a return to Red Clydeside as it facilitates more critical interpretations of labour's ability to shape spaces, in part through the forging of connections and solidarities across varying scales.

In practice, Herod deliberately focuses on the organised spaces of unions to illustrate the spatially active elements of labour and points to large unions such as the International Federation of Chemical, Energy, and General Workers' Unions (ICEM) and the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU) to illustrate the potential global agency of labour. He engages with the relational nature of such international unions to illuminate the spatial possibilities for the agency of labour to shape economic and material conditions. For example, he illustrates the geographies of the ILGWU and their methods of negotiating a "garment manufacturing preservation zone" in New York through local government during the 1980s. The case study explores how workers countered the financialisation of the US economy, the loft conversations of the real estate market and increasing global competition to retain their workplace and their jobs. Through this approach, Herod suggests the potential in understanding the global economy through alternative perspectives beyond the corporations and agents of capital. These claims were vital for a challenging of the dominant tendencies of economic geography, which often placed labour as spatially fixed and immobile when compared with capital. In contrast, Herod (2001) began to show how labour can also stretch its activities and perspective

across an international space. This analysis, grounded in union examples, facilitates a labour geography, which portrays workers as capable of creating their own economic spaces, and therefore as 'significant geographic actors' (Castree, 2007:854), a theme that will continue throughout this thesis.

His work has encouraged and reflected a whole field of developing labour geography literature, which has utilised and expanded his approach. Don Mitchell (1996, 1998, 2011) worked parallel to Herod and also emphasised the importance of labour's spatial strategies. Mitchell asserted the importance of labour's perspective within landscape studies more generally. His work has illustrated the intersections between the Californian landscapes and the production and experiences of the agricultural migrant workers during the early twentieth century to reveal their struggles, conditions and experiences. He argues that 'landscape geographers have turned in other directions, preferring to explore a politics of representation that is seemingly quite disconnected from issues of labor' (Mitchell, 1996:4) and thus foregrounds another contribution emerging from labour geography. His continued emphasis on the importance of labour history in relation to present day understandings of landscapes and the social-spatial relations that they reveal is pertinent. In particular, it encourages a renewal of interest towards histories such as Red Clydeside, as researching these examples foregrounds the 'continuing history of struggle that has made these landscapes' (Mitchell, 1996:201). This emphasis on the relationships between labour and landscape is pursued less within this thesis, but the broader assertion of the importance of labour histories is retained. These histories also hold links to more contemporary debates within labour geography.

In their broader discussion of the spatial contributions of workers, labour geographers have continually considered the relevance of scalar understandings for workers' agency and this is most notable in studies that attempt to navigate the local and global scales of labour agency (e.g. Castree, 2000, Holmes, 2004, Lier, 2007). Whilst conceding the inequalities of spatial mobility, labour geography has continually stressed the potential of labour to work across differing scales. One proponent of this approach has been Jeremy Anderson (2009) who has provided a more explicit insight into these debates by illustrating the 'vulnerabilities of transnational capital' and has challenged the perception of capital as global and workers as locally restricted. He develops a concept of 'labour's lines of flight', borrowing from Deleuze and Guattari, to illustrate how labour can exploit the wider spaces of capitalism translocally. His work considers the 'Driving up Standards' campaign against FirstGroup plc, a UK based transport operator, which co-ordinated action originally in

America with trade unions in Britain. The explicitly geographical approach towards these examples allows his analysis to foreground the strategic importance of spatial politics in developing organised labour movements. He argues that a relational approach facilitates a labour politics that challenges power relations across multiple sites of transnational capital rather than reactive approaches, which are often restricted to particular disputes.

Similarly, Cumbers et al. (2008:372) have considered 'union positionalities, within global production networks (GPNs)', and specifically the ICEM to uncover the actual 'embodied labour' involved within global spaces of production. They illustrate how ultimately 'as Marx revealed in his analysis of capital, labour is the source of value, not capital'. At a most basic level, this provides labour with power and political possibilities but this power must be treated with sensitivity to the internal class relations of organisation. As a useful development within labour geography, Cumbers et al. (2008) pay closer attention to the 'internal' differences and tensions within unions and highlight the possible class struggle that may incur within union politics. In this regard, trade unions can be subjected to 'the same schizoid relations of domination and resistance as any other capitalist form' (Cumbers et al., 2008:374).

A linked paper provides further insights into the uneven power relations of agency and the spatial politics of the ICEM. In this paper, Routledge et al. (2007) show the challenges faced by two 'Global Justice Networks', one of which is the ICEM, and illustrate how power functions within these international groups. Issues such as language, generational change, and accessibility to technology provide opportunities and obstacles for particular agents in particular times and spaces and create unequal power relations amongst participants. Routledge et al. (2006:851) conclude that these conflicting perspectives create a 'growing social distance' between those acting within a global network and the grassroots activists engaged within work-place struggles. The 'geographic privilege' (Hasty 2011:42) of spatial mobility is not experienced by all and provides a factor that must be considered when constructing portrayals of working class agency. These internal tensions run through different forms of working class organisation and must be raised to portray the uneven nature of agency, which although global in its possible outreach still retains more situated restrictions and political tensions. Labour geography's sensitivity to these spatial tensions amongst workers is one particular strength of the sub-field, which will again be shown later in the chapter in conversation with labour history.

The articles cited above have formed part of a larger project by Routledge and Cumbers (2009) that has formed their book *Global Justice Networks*. This work has raised the need

for more critical thought on the construction of alternative globalisations and international imaginaries. They argue that more critical interpretations of these 'global' movements allow labour geographers to recognise the possibilities and difficulties within contrasting forms of activism, which work across varying scales. Their contributions assert that within approaches that emphasise networks 'there has been a lack of detailed scrutiny about these 'movements' components parts, their operational networks and their spatial dynamics, strategies and practices' (Routledge and Cumbers, 2009:17). Thus their work, as part of the labour geography project, should be viewed as foregrounding the importance of thinking critically about the making of networks through trade unions and social movements. Importantly, they also assert that this geographically influenced approach to social movements must view 'networking as political praxis' (ibid: 24) and this sentiment will be pursued throughout the thesis. The following analysis of Red Clydeside's labour movements will similarly explore the spatial and political connections forged during particular disputes and by contrasting organisations. Such critical discussion of tensions within networks will also be integral to a revisiting of Red Clydeside, which will consider processes of inclusion and exclusion within labour's agency.

Overall, these understandings challenge misconceptions regarding labour's mobility in comparison with capital. This also links with a developing perspective for rethinking Scottish labour history (see also Scottish Labour History Society, 2013). As a now well established research field, labour geography has received considerable scrutiny in recent years and has been reviewed by those associated with the field (Tufts and Savage, 2009, Coe and Jordhus-Lier, 2010). These reviews have identified several gaps and weaknesses, including a critique of the general ambiguity about what actually constitutes workers agency (Castree, 2007). One critique that labour geography has started to address is the problematic nature of a seeming preference for workplace and trade union forms of labour activism. Thus, before considering how the 'history from below' tradition may address some of the overall critiques of labour geography, the next section will specifically consider some of the broader forms of working class agency, which are now emerging within labour geography.

2.2.2 Emerging Labour Geographies

Increasingly, labour geographers are questioning what counts as labour agency and have suggested a broadening of the labour geography research remit to include experiences beyond the workplace. One proponent of this approach has been Jane Wills (1996, 1998, 2001) who has made several contributions to labour geographies and this chapter will now

explore two examples of these as part of a section on emerging labour geographies, which have begun to develop understandings beyond the traditional trade union structure. A first shift has considered the possibilities for trade unions to forge connection with communities and has begun to bridge the social distance between the organised union and those outside of the workplace. Her work considers attempts made by American and British trade unions to 'forge links and develop shared agendas with the wider community', and as such her approach opens up the functioning space of the post-war trade union organisation towards a wider 'community unionism', challenging what she concedes was previously an area of politics 'exclusively focused on the workplace, enterprise and corporation' (Wills, 2001:466-467).

This work encourages a broader understanding of trade union politics and their role within places. The related concept of 'community unionism' is beginning to be reflected elsewhere in labour geography (e.g. Tufts, 1998, Lier and Stokke, 2006), which is increasingly concerned with the spaces and processes beyond the workplace. Wills (2001:479) concludes her contribution to the field with the assertion that 'economic development, transport, childcare, the environment, poverty, education and discrimination are all trade union issues' and are therefore labour geography issues. This marks a significant shift beyond the labour geographies initially introduced and creates further possibilities regarding the manner in which agency is worked through labour politics and labour history. These arguments are particularly relevant for this thesis and discussions around the multiple forms of labour agency will be raised again within the conversation between labour geography and labour history.

Furthermore, Wills and other geographers have begun to address the issue of representation for migrant and mobile workers in labour geography, which had previously been critiqued for favouring research on spatially fixed workers (Lier, 2007, Rogaly, 2009). Wills et al. (2009) and May et al. (2006) consider the 'migrant division of labour' within global cities and expose the spatial relations created and experienced by foreign born workers. Their analysis shows the diversity of worker identities in London and identifies notable patterns of roles adopted by different migrant workers. This research engages with the diversity of migrant workers' experiences and the inadequacy of certain statistics that abstracts migrant workers as a whole. Their research also confirms the use of racialised and nation based stereotypes with particular jobs being filled by certain nationalities. Their sensitivity to the particularities and relationality of working class

identities, through the example of migrant labour, illustrates the importance of considering the contrasting material conditions and experiences within the diverse working class.

In relation to these arguments regarding political identities, Cumbers et al., drawing upon Harry Cleaver, consider how 'many Marxists were too dismissive of the new social movements of the 1960s (e.g. black power, feminist, anti-colonial, gay rights) as being outwith the class struggle, rather than recognising the changing terrain of the struggle' (Cumbers et al., 2010:57). Cleaver himself considers the significance of the writers of the Italian New Left who encouraged a 'shifting (of) the focus from the self-development of capital to that of the working class, these authors revealed the idealism of those Marxists who treat both the form of capital and the form of working-class organization as eternally given' (Cleaver, 1979:55). These critiques reveal the diverse forms of working class agency and how efforts to represent this perspective should be shifted to include alternative labour experiences and the variety of organised and unorganised elements of workers' lives. These understandings will be developed through the relational and contested nature of political identities found within the history of Red Clydeside.

This approach, emphasising a plurality of labour experiences, also begins to address the wider point made by Holloway (2005:145) that labour 'stands as opposed to capital, but it is an internal opposition'. His intervention suggests that labour's reliance on economic capital creates internal tensions and that the agency of labour should never be considered without an acknowledgement of the economic conditions imposed on it by capital. A similar critique of the developing labour geography field has pointed to its continuing emphasis on working class agency within economic landscapes without necessarily highlighting the material conditions of struggle. Mitchell has emphasised this point and proposed that 'any labor geography must be tempered with a sober, materialist assessment of labor's geography— the world "as it really is" (Mitchell, 2011:567). His intervention contends that the agency of labour must be considered through its intersections with economic and political circumstances, which it has little to no control over. Such an approach facilitates not only an appreciation of the difficulty of building and maintaining political struggle but also indicates possible reasoning for internal differences and tensions. These tensions will be raised at different times in the thesis and will be particularly relevant to sections that illuminate moments of suppression from employers or the state and equally those conflicts, which develop within the labour movements considered.

These insights reveal possibilities and limitations within the developing labour geography field and also illustrate a growing necessity to acknowledge the various forms of agency

and the distinctions made by Katz (2004 cited in Cumbers et al. 2010) are useful to begin this process. She has proposed *resilience, reworking, and resistance* as three distinguishable forms of agency. Her suggestions begin to facilitate a reappraisal of what counts as labour agency within labour geography and links with the conversation considered later in the chapter. This categorisation provides a useful tool for analysis but is perhaps problematic as it does suggest some separation (despite the concession of overlap by Cumbers et al., 2010) between the processes involved. An emphasised connection between these processes, what Hastings (2011:161) described as 'gradations', may be more beneficial for a thorough conceptualisation of agency as the acts of resilience and reworking have often proved essential in providing support and motivation for resistance. Although not utilising Katz's terminology, the chapter will later consider the possible intersections, which can be made between the diverse forms of labour activities and will link these with contributions from the 'history from below' tradition.

Overall, the contributions cited above begin to reveal the spatialised nature of trade union activity and illustrate the complexity and diversity of working class agency. Labour geography has illustrated many strategies through which labour is capable of challenging capital over varying scales. The field has worked with geographical rigour to foreground the significance and complexity of the connections and linkages developed by workers. However, as Tufts and Savage (2009) have suggested, labour geography is now a well established field and a more critical appraisal of its limitations and strengths can be developed. Their intervention explores how labour geography has provoked challenges and constructed debates around workers' agency and specifically trade union internationalism as shown above, but has 'yet to engage in any sustained fashion with unpacking the complex identities of workers and the way in which these identities simultaneously are shaped by and shape the economic and cultural landscape' (Tufts and Savage, 2009:946). This is a significant point, which the chapter will look to address later by suggesting that the agency of labour must be considered within and beyond the trade union focus of labour geography. Furthermore, their discussion of the continued reliance of capital on 'racialized and gendered ideologies and social relations to recruit and discipline workers and to create a global low-paid labour force' (Tufts and Savage 2009:946) begins to indicate the necessity of recognising articulations of diversity or 'otherness' (McDowell, 2015) within and alongside class struggles.

Below the chapter suggests that these critiques of labour geography, alongside some of the discussion points already introduced, may be partly addressed by a reintroduction of the

'history from below' tradition. This tradition has functioned implicitly within labour geography (with some exceptions including: Wills, 1996, Rutherford, 2010 and Cumbers et al., 2010), but has been developed further elsewhere (for example Winslow, 1993, Linebaugh and Rediker, 2000). The understandings regarding working class agency, experience and political identities emerging from this tradition are perhaps better suited to providing a spatial politics of Red Clydeside than current trends towards categorisation (see Standing, 2011) and structuration theories (Coe and Jordhus-Lier, 2010). The following section will discuss this tradition in some depth to consider the strengths and some of the limitations emerging out of the tradition.

2.3 'History from Below' and Spatial Experiences of Labour

Broadly defined, the 'history from below' tradition incorporates a body of work, which has strived to excavate the histories and agency of the working class. Wills (1996:354) has suggested that the 'history from below' school encouraged understandings to include the ways in which 'workers are making their own trade union history'. This interest in working class agency undoubtedly links with the labour geographies discussed above, but the particular emphasis on broader experience and political actions, rather than simply representative bodies or leadership figures, introduces useful perspectives into discussions around labour agency. This chapter therefore echoes Wills' original call (see also Cumbers et al., 2010) for engagement with 'history from below' and argues that this contribution could be further pursued. The chapter suggests there is still much to be taken from the tradition to develop understandings of working class agency and perhaps more relevantly here, working class experience. In particular, it is argued that a critical rereading of Thompson's *The Making of the English Working Class* (hereafter *Making*) is necessary for opening up conversations between labour history and labour geography (see Featherstone and Griffin, forthcoming). This text was foundational to the 'history from below' tradition.[9] There is a requirement for more rigorous engagements with this work rather than shorter reflections that simplify its contributions to emphasising agency 'from below'. In this regard, the historical emphasis of the *Making* is perhaps better suited for further exploration of Thompson's contribution rather than other works where his perspective is also evident (e.g. *Poverty of Theory*, which reflected a more polemical stance in debate with Althuser).

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[9] Brian Palmer (1981) has argued that Thompson should be considered separately to this tradition, due to its association with a broader populist school of America history, but here it is suggested that the broader characterisation of the tradition (see Iles and Roberts, 2012) remains useful for an engagement with its associated authors and contributions.

As noted above, the *Making* was a foundational text within the 'history from below' tradition and emerged through similar frustrations to those described within the original labour geography remit. Thompson's critique of 'the mechanical theory of human consciousness' that he viewed as central to Stalinism (Thompson, 2014:44) was central to his efforts to write a history based on experiences from below. As Bryan Palmer notes, the *Making* was marked by 'unmistakable rupture it forced in the historical literature, where class formation could no longer simply be posed, by radicals and reactionaries alike, as a mechanical reflection of economic change' (Palmer, 1994:94). This rupture challenged more conservative forms of political history. The much quoted preface to the *Making* indicates this clear intention to write history on different terms with Thompson's assertion that 'the working class did not rise like the sun at an appointed time. It was present in its own making' (Thompson, 1968:9). His approach attempts to consider those histories, which are 'embodied in real people and in a real context' (Thompson, 1968:9) and more specifically addresses the lives and experiences of workers. This chapter revisits the *Making* to consider its continued usefulness for a politics of labour before considering broader feminist and post-colonial works, which have developed Thompson's initial impetus in useful ways for rethinking spatial politics.

In a similar manner to the framing of labour geography, it is important that the 'history from below' tradition is also contextualised. Samuel (1980) has framed the tradition within a broader understanding of British Marxist history and considered how the tradition developed from the former position of writing 'people's history'. Samuel (1980:38) links the contributions of the likes of E.P. Thompson, Eric Hobsbawm and George Rudé to the 'people's history' of the 1860s and 1870s, and contributors such as J.R. Green through his *Short History of the English People*, which Samuel argues provided the 'mental landscape within which a socialist outlook was formed'. Viewing 'history from below' as developing from this more liberal-radical tradition, Samuel frames the British aspect of the tradition and specifically the Communist Party Historians Group as part of a political movement linked to the tensions and developments within the Communist movement of the 1930s through to the 1970s. He explores the intricate nuances of this tradition and is supported in this account by Iles and Roberts who consider the British 'history from below' tradition to be a product of the French historians know as the Annales School:

> It is their description of an approach to subjects previously considered historically unimportant, an attempt to surpass history as simply a story of kings, great men and their wars. (Iles and Roberts, 2012:9)

This basic premise is the foundation of 'history from below' and is equally transferable to the labour geography field. Both Iles and Roberts (2012) and Samuel (1980) consider the British historian E.P. Thompson to be a key contributor within this field, with the former describing him as examining 'the complex process by which people made themselves – coming to constitute themselves as a political body – as much as they were made by the imposition of industrial capitalism' (Iles and Roberts, 2012:23). Developing this understanding, the chapter's engagement with the tradition is taken primarily through a reading of Thompson's *Making*. A more detailed engagement with this text is presented as revealing new perspectives for labour geography and revisiting Red Clydeside. In particular, the text stresses the importance of processual understandings of class and a more sympathetic reading of diverse labour experiences.

2.3.1 E.P. Thompson and The Making of the English Working Class

Thompson (1968:13) suggested that history has often ignored 'the agency of working people, the degree to which they contributed by conscious efforts, to the making of history'. His approach addresses the lives and experiences of people outside of the controlling, or 'successful' groups. Thompson reintroduces the agency of the working class to show the contributions and politics created by those people outside of the controlling elite. McClelland (1990:3) has also considered the work of Thompson to be integral to the notion that 'it is possible for people to make something for themselves other than that which history has made of them'.

Moving away from the emphasis on the workplace associated with certain strands of Marxist theory, and arguably parts of labour geography, Thompson reasserts the social relations, which create, maintain and challenge the social conditions of the working class, and looks within and beyond the workplace towards other forms of 'institutions, activities and consciousness' (McClelland 1990:3). Immediately the intentions made by Thompson in the preface to the *Making,* which Iles and Roberts (2012:23) have described as the formative statements of the 'history from below' tradition, can be seen as overlapping with those of labour geography, with an emphasis on working class agency a clear combined interest. Here, the chapter argues that the contributions emerging from this text provide several interventions for a broader conceptualisation of working class agency and developing debates within labour geography.

Thompson (1968:13) considered class to be a 'historical phenomenon' viewing it not as a 'structure' or 'category' but instead as something that 'happens'. This understanding

stresses class formation as a process rather than a fixed understanding. The opening chapter of the *Making*, for example, introduces the London Corresponding Society (LCS) and Thomas Hardy (secretary of the LCS) to show the activities of a 'popular radical' organisation, which encouraged debate and created its own politics in the eighteenth century. Describing the organisation's activities, Thompson illustrates the politics of a more organic form of collective politics:

> Above all, there is the determination to propagate opinions and to organize the converted, embodied in the leading rule: 'That the number of our Members be unlimited'.

> Today we might pass over such a rule as a commonplace: and yet it is one of the hinges upon which history turns. It signifies the end to any notion of exclusiveness, of politics as the preserve of any hereditary elite or property group. Assent to this rule meant that the L.C.S was turning its back upon the century-old identification of political with property rights. (Thompson, 1968:24)

Shifting the 'political' away from elite groups is integral to the work of Thompson who instead considers the politics created and experienced by resisting groups. He pays close attention to specific experiences within these movements and highlights factors, which would perhaps be ignored in accounts that articulate a more economically based understanding of agency. His engagement with the working class is one based upon a commitment to the study of political process and antagonism, as portrayed in his short essay *Revolution,* where he considered his own position on the problematic nature of reform and revolution debates:

> What is more important to insist upon is that it is necessary to find out the breaking-point, not by theoretical speculation alone, but in practice by unrelenting reforming pressures in many fields, which are designed to reach a revolutionary culmination. And the point of breakthrough is not a narrow political concept: it will entail a confrontation, throughout society, between two systems, two ways of life. (Thompson, 1960:8)

This emphasis on the 'unrelenting reforming pressures in many fields' is reflected in the diverse forms of labour politics presented in Thompson's work. Thompson constructs an account whereby particular organisations, working class publications, reading groups and meeting places become politically significant in their own right. This methodology allows him to consider the multiple and contrasting forms of what he describes in Part 3 of the

Making as the 'working class presence' within particular places and this notion of presence will be pursued in the following empirical chapters.

Throughout his account of workers' struggle in the *Making* Thompson refused to accept Hobsbawn's ([1952] 1998, 1959) view of machine breaking or violent worker practices as being in any way apolitical or as 'primitive rebels' and instead explicitly emphasised their political nature. In his analysis of the Luddite movement for example, Thompson considers the variety of organisational practices within the movement, including a discussion of the secret communications amongst parts of the organised workers. This approach contributes towards a more rounded portrayal of politics emerging from the movement and begins to illustrate the complexities of forming labours organisations and the significance of the practices, which co-ordinated them. In one particular extract from the analysis of the Luddite movement the reader witnesses this approach through Thompson's emphasis on the struggle being more than simply an industrial dispute measured by its success or failure. In contrast, he emphasises the multiple practices and symbols, which created a movement based upon a community and a 'working class presence'. Through this approach, there is a greater emphasis on the severity of the vast changes to working conditions and a representation of the workers response and activity as defending a 'whole way of life'.[10]

Thompson provides an account grounded within experiences, which challenges 'standard of living' debates by instead understanding class as a historical process and refusing to categorise class in an abstract manner. In the *Making*, the chapters on 'Field Labourers', 'Artisans and others', and 'The Weavers' show this sensitivity to the diversity of labour cultures and communities within particular places and times. Thompson discusses the developing sense of resistance and trade unionism in these sections but concedes that an allegiance between skilled and unskilled workers was rare before 1830. Thus, alongside the increasing possibilities for solidarity was a potential for protectionism, exclusionary politics and restrictions on political radicalism, which was encouraged by a general insecurity regarding material conditions amongst the working class. Examples of these include the artisans' protectionism of their skilled trade: 'Where a skill was involved, the artisan was as much concerned with maintaining his status as against the unskilled man as

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[10] Stuart Hall (1981a:234) questions the use of a 'whole way of life' and its application to popular culture debates due to the difficulty of collecting 'into one category all the things 'the people' do, without observing that the real analytical distinction arises, not from the list itself- an inert category of things and activities – but from the key opposition: the people/not of the people.' These questions of inclusion and exclusion are considered in later sections of this chapter.

he was in bringing pressure upon the employers' (Thompson, 1968:270). Whilst the weavers were restricted by their wider experiences and previous political loyalties: 'With no hope of legal protection the weavers turned directly towards the channel of political radicalism. But for some years after 1800 an alliance between Methodism and 'Church and King' rowdyism kept most of the weavers as political 'loyalists'' (ibid:308). Such accounts emphasise the diverse ways in which working class politics can be articulated and suggests how labour agency can have multiple outcomes and modalities, including more exclusionary or protectionist practices.

Thompson's reworking of working class history was based upon an adamant refusal of deductive theory. He positioned the working class as continually in process and in the making, and as something that can never be reduced through abstract categorisation. This understanding is useful to reconfigure notions of what counts as labour politics as it facilitates an approach that is inclusive of the different forms of agency. Thus, he provides a contribution through a clear dialectical methodology, which foregrounds the contradictory experience of labour, considering both its possibilities and limitations. As indicated above a notable contribution of the *Making* is its ability to trace the importance of working class agency in shaping history whilst also indicating an understanding of the tensions within the composition of labour.

Within this framework, emphasising the importance of experiences and thus the multiplicity of working class politics, Thompson constructs a portrayal of class that engages with certain cultural aspects of civil society and considers the interaction between people and alternative institutions beyond and including the state and workplace. This provides insights into working class agency and cultural traditions, essentially the autonomous practices and processes of the working class, rather than situating their activities as reactionary, purely economic or responsive to capital. Thus, his work can be seen as 'bringing together material conditions, cultural expression and political action into relation with each other' (Chandavarkar, 2000:63), as seen when he considers 'social discipline' as a key process within the production of the working class. Thompson illustrates the extension of disciplinary processes beyond the workplace through a series of observations and reproductions, including the increasing restrictions placed on time spent outside of work (leisure time, holidays and fairs), which begins to shed new light into working class histories. His discussion of time is extended in the essay 'Time, Work-Discipline and Industrial Capitalism' (Thompson, 1967) further illustrated how different workers experienced labour time differently. Experience and agency outside of the

workplace are thus viewed as essential to any form of solidarity and Thompson's emphasis on these more cultural elements shows a particular shift, representing an important breakaway from the reductive Marxism present within some class based analysis of radical histories.

2.3.2 Working Class Experience: Contributions and Criticisms

Raymond Williams (1973, 1977, 1989) and Jacques Ranciére (1994, 2012) have also made key contributions to the new left and 'history from below' traditions and some of their work will be considered in the conversation with labour geography and throughout the empirical chapters.[11] Williams, for example, has continually challenged cultural theorists to take seriously the experiences of the working classes within what he described as a 'structure of feeling'. Similarly, Ranciére's preface to *Proletarian Nights* describes the importance of detailing workers' own narrative and echoes Thompson's preface to the *Making* by calling for an understanding of narrative as 'a way of constructing – or of deconstructing – a world of experience' (Rancieré, 2012:x). Elsewhere Rancieré engages directly with Thompson, arguing that his discussion of the initial meeting of the LCS provides an account where '[n]othing here seems out of the ordinary. And nonetheless it is heresy, the "separation" constitutive of the modern social movement that is declared' (Rancieré, 1994:91-92). These understandings begin to indicate the important emphasis on the political aspect of struggle within the tradition while also more broadly linking with E.P. Thompson's approach towards working class experience through a process based understanding of class agency.

More critical perspectives towards the 'history from below' tradition include dissatisfaction with the bounded or place restricted representations of workers' experience provided by these accounts. E.P. Thompson in particular, has been criticised for the 'Englishness' of his work by Paul Gilroy (1993). This intervention indicates the importance of shifting the emphasis of Thompson's approach from a very particular account of working class history to include other factors of difference. Similarly, debates regarding Williams' concept of 'militant particularisms' have examined the contested nature of geographical understandings of place-based politics (Harvey, 1996, Routledge, 2003, Featherstone, 2005, Ahmed, 2012). These critiques will be addressed in the following section through a conversation between the tradition and labour geography, which facilitates more relational constructions of place-based politics. It should also be

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[11] For a review of the broader 'history from below' tradition see Iles and Roberts (2012).

acknowledged that Thompson's decision (as discussed in the preface to the *Making*) to write an English working class history without reference to Scotland exposes the potentially problematic nature of positioning the *Making* as a key text to frame efforts to construct a spatial politics of Red Clydeside. The thesis suggests, though, that the overall approach, as engaged with in this chapter, is relevant for a rewriting Scottish labour history and reflected broad spatial imaginaries than are often unrecognised (see Sarkar, 1997, Featherstone and Griffin, forthcoming).

As has already been suggested through examples from the *Making*, this chapter considers the notion of 'experience' used within Thompson's work particularly useful for a consideration of agency. Sewell considers experience to be 'central' in the work of Thompson and indicates how the *Making* considers a 'whole range of workers' subjective responses to their exploitation – not only in movements of struggle, but in their families and communities, in their leisure time activities, in their religious activities and beliefs, in their workshops and weaving-sheds, and so on' (Sewell,1990:56). Experience can therefore be attached to agency and should never be fully removed, as any attempt to do so will provide the inaccurate accounts associated with spontaneity (for more on this see Guha, 1983). Whilst advocating the use of the term, the chapter does concede certain ambiguities within Thompson's use of experience and suggests that an engagement with the contested uses of experience may prove illuminating for a further conceptualisation of agency. These ambiguities are considered below through an engagement with the strengths and weaknesses of its use.

Thompson suggests that experience is generally set within 'determined limits', presumably those related to the restrictions of an individual's labour role. His writing implies a continuing connection, and arguably a determining relationship, between production and class formation, which can perhaps be viewed as underestimating the 'disjunctures, and unevenness of working class experience' (McClelland, 1990:4). Thompson's work thus avoids some of the questions relating to a wider conceptualisation of the working class but does reveal the significance of the interaction between workers' experiences and their material conditions. Sewell has considered the concept of experience specifically within Thompson's work and suggested that:

> Between the hard facts of productive relations and the discovery of class
> consciousness lies the vast, multiple, contradictory realm of experience, not the neat
> and unidirectional process of learning-the-truth-through-struggle posited by classical
> Marxism. (Sewell, 1990:55-56)

Sewell attempts to demystify experience, arguing that Thompson uses it as mediator between social being and class-consciousness, and illustrates that experience actually encompasses both of these concepts. Sewell continues by arguing that experience requires further consideration within the work of Thompson, as its usages facilitate a portrayal of history in which its subjects:

> Are intelligent and wilful human beings, who reflect on the events they live through (that is have experiences) and are capable of acting purposefully and rationally on the basis of their experiences, within the constraints imposed and the possibilities opened up by the structures that constitute their subjectivity and their environment.
> (Sewell, 1990:66)

What is clear from these understandings of experience is that there is a continuing relationship between experiences of the working class and their economic and political environments and material spaces, which would suggest a link with geography and the critiques of labour geography's privileging of agency (Mitchell, 2011) in particular. Thompson's narratives of working class experience introduces factors within and beyond the workplace and shows a sensitivity to both the structural conditioning of working life and the capabilities of working class agency to disrupt these processes. The chapter argues later that when considered relationally with the emphasis on the spatiality of working class agency within labour geography, experience might be utilised in a different manner. This allows the diversity within the working class to emerge, whilst also exposing material conditions, forms of suppression and more exclusionary tendencies.

The significance of the emphasis on experience was also reflected through E.P. Thompson's role in India. He was elected President of the Indian History Congress in the 1970s, and the influence of his work, alongside Antonio Gramsci, is particularly evident within Indian labour history and the subaltern studies. These connections are important as despite the geographical limitations of Thompson's writing in the *Making*, his conceptualisation of rewriting working class history travelled and developed beyond the English context it was constructed within. During the early 1970s, working class struggle in India was largely 'shrouded in obscurity by the academy' (Chandavarkar, 2000:53) whereby more economic analyses were preferable and links to 'modes of production' maintained. This conflicted with the work on the agency and struggle of working class people proposed by Thompson, and contributed towards historical studies, which were 'characterized by an excessive concern either with the history of elites or with those features of Indian society which seemingly made it unique and exceptional'

(Chandavarkar, 2000:53). Thompson's (1978) notion of 'class struggle without class' provided a significant shift for Indian labour historians in the late 1970s, though, and was particularly relevant to areas where 'capitalism had manifested itself more weakly and unevenly' (Chandavarkar, 2000:54). Thus, his emphasis on understanding class through process provided an account of workers' struggle, which is ongoing and relational, acknowledging both moments of solidarity, repression and the necessary adaptation within the working class.

A related, if contested, critique of the 'history from below' tradition has been that its over emphasis on the importance of experience (Gregory, 1982, 1994) has provided accounts that are too dismissive of structural theories (see also Anderson, 1980). In particular, Gregory (1982:175) has suggested that Thompson has been able to 'conflate an image of a striking literary potency with a figure of comparable historical efficacy'. He suggests that such an approach must 'presuppose a unitary working-class landscape' and that Thompson's work articulates his own deliberate construction of working class experience which elevates the 'artisan to the status of the universal working man' (Gregory, 1994:187). Similarly strong critique has been provided by Hall (1981b) who has questioned Thompson's over emphasis on experience within the intervention he made in debate with Althuser in *The Poverty of Theory* (Thompson, 1978) as creating a false polemic between agency and theory.

The ambiguity of experience is further questioned by Chakrabarty (1989) who highlights the dilemma between the exceptionalism of Thompson's English particularity and the universalism of a Marxist master narrative of historical capitalist relations. Despite the links between Thompson and Indian labour history, he questions the *Making's* positioning of the 'free born Englishman', suggesting that it limited the possibilities for an understanding of Indian labour history whose 'heritages do not include such as a liberal baggage' (Chakrabarty, 1989:222-3). Such critiques expose the difficulty in directly transferring Thompson's understandings of working class history to other times and places. They also begin to question the positioning of labour history at the forefront of capitalist relations. In this regard, the historical emphasis on the class relation made in the *Making* arguably led to an account, which downplays tensions regarding factors within the working class presence, in particular those relating to race and gender. Joan Scott (1999), for example, has commented on the relative invisibility of women within the text as those who are present remain largely confined to domesticity. She contends that historians should not be bound by 'the analytic frame of Thompson's history' but instead seek methods that

problematise 'all the connections it so readily assumes' (Scott, 1999:87). These questions regarding inclusions and exclusions in accounts of labour agency are central to further explorations of the *Making*. Such tensions will be addressed further in the conversation section that follows but as Chakrabarty is keen to point out they also provide continuing problems for the writing of labour history (or geography) in general.

Despite these conceptual ambiguities and omissions, Thompson's overall interest in uncovering working class experience facilitates a more thorough understanding of the meaning of agency and also opens up the concept to alternative understandings. His insistence on processual understandings of labour indicates a more sympathetic approach to what counts as labour politics. Admittedly, his use of experience may provide tensions in its application, as it perhaps prioritises industrial workers and artisan experiences; yet this should not diminish the significant contribution emerging from asserting the significance of working class experience. More recently, feminist and postcolonial works have developed Thompson's perspective, in part through stressing more explicitly spatial understandings, and some of these contributions will be referred to within the following section, which proposes a conversation to connect labour geography and labour history.

2.4 Spatial Politics, Labour Geography and History from Below: A Conversation

This chapter is not the first proposal for a combined approach between the two fields as the links described by Cumbers et al. (2010), Rutherford (2010) and Wills (1996) have all utilised understandings of the 'history from below' tradition to encourage a labour geography research agenda based upon broader working class experiences and non-workplace forms of agency. Here, though, the chapter suggests that the conversation requires further expansion and development in order to explore the multiple political constructions of workers' agency. In relation to this, the chapter also engages with related studies that have represented agency in different ways. Emphasis will be given to those fields, which have considered intersections between class, race and gender as these examples provide contributions to labour agency, which have generally received less recognition in both labour history and geography, yet remain crucial for a spatial analysis of Red Clydeside.

2.4.1 Rethinking Working Class History

Selma James has considered the importance of this diversity in *Sex, Race and Class* and confirmed the complexities of working class interrelations:

It appears often that the interests of Blacks are contradicted by the interests of whites, and it is similar with men and women. To grasp the class interest when there seems not one but two, three, four, each contradicting the other, is one of the most difficult revolutionary tasks, in theory and practice, that confronts us. (James, 1973:4)

Developing the understanding of working class agency discussed above, this section will now propose that the understanding of labour as a class-based identity requires opening up to include these multiple interests. The chapter has so far illustrated two contrasting approaches to analysing working class agency and has revealed some of the possibilities of reworking radical history, as ongoing, relationally constructed and process based. Tensions are prominent within this approach, though, and these require foregrounding for a more thorough account of the potential connections and exclusionary politics. Below the chapter suggests that the conversation being proposed facilitates a more sympathetic approach to these connections and contradictions. This attention to the intersections between class, race and gender will also be made visible in the examples chosen to develop the key conversation points.

Catherine Hall considers such connections between gender, culture and class to show that during the nineteenth century working class politics developed increasingly male dominated political spaces that were exclusionary to women. She stresses how 'culture placed men and women differently and how the highlighting of these forms of sexual division can give us some access to the gendered nature of popular culture' (Hall, 1990:82). She also considers how the working class formed concepts of political representation and the making of demands for the 'artisans and small tradesmen of the reforming societies', illustrating (specifically referring to Thomas Hardy and the London Corresponding Society) how this was often a male led movement, which provided men with greater political opportunity and therefore official agency. Hall's argument provides a reconsideration of the formation of working class politics to illustrate the role of women within radical histories, through a method that views the relationship between gender and class as continually being contested and negotiated. Elsewhere, Hall (2000) has considered the complex relationships between race, ethnicity, gender and class in the formation of nations and identities, and this emphasis on intersectionality and its relationship with labour history is pursued further below.

As a further opening to this conversation it is important to recognise that the 'history from below' tradition has received considerable attention and is being applied in contrasting ways within historical geography (Featherstone, 2005, 2008, Navickas, 2009, 2012,

Griffin, 2010, 2012). This political aspect of historical geography, or what Griffin (2012) has described as 'new protest history', has largely worked separately to the more presentist and official angle of labour geography but has produced many useful contributions, which will be used throughout the thesis. These historical geographers provide examples of writing labour experiences in a similar manner to the 'history from below' tradition and facilitate critical thinking about workers as relational political identities, as well as economic factors, within landscapes. More broadly, their continual assertion of the importance of histories of struggle provides helpful framing the significance of histories such as Red Clydeside.

One historical geographer who has worked with the 'history from below' tradition and shown greater sensitivity to the spatial and temporal dimensions of working class experience and agency is Carl Griffin (2010, 2012), who has considered the nineteenth century Swing Riots,[12] in part through an engagement with Thompson. He considers these moments in British history to be a 'pivot that was partly responsible for politicizing many rural workers'. He chooses to focus on an aspect of these riots that has remained strangely 'obscure', specifically through a consideration of the use of violence. He considers cultures of violence, which although rarely actually exerted by those involved, acted as a continual undercurrent (through acts such as threatening letters and body language) to many of the Swing crowd's demands. Griffin (2010:153) also illustrates sensitivity to the geographies of the movement by exploring how the method was replicated and spread across England whilst still being essentially rooted in personal and communal experiences.

Griffin's approach considers a particular form of agency, violence, to engage with multiple accounts of working class experience and to create a more ongoing sense of agency amongst the crowds. This methodology illustrates a greater openness to what counts as labour agency and begins to move beyond the economic analyses of labour as an actor within political economy. As noted above, his work engages with Thompson to argue that a new 'protest history' is emerging, illustrating 'a willingness to revise the assumptions of landmark texts; a focus on signs and symbolism; an appreciation of the importance of gender and identity in shaping protest' (Griffin, 2012:22). This subfield within historical geography has largely considered more rural forms of protest and illuminated debates around commoning and the moral economy, revealing many possibilities, particularly methodological, for revisiting urban labour histories such as Red Clydeside. The following

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[12] Swing riots occurred during the early nineteenth century in Southern England and were largely defined by the destruction of threshing machines and political practices by agricultural workers.

section will now reflect on broader possibilities emerging from the overall conversation between labour geography and labour history.

2.4.2 Geographies of Labour History

Perhaps the most obvious and important contribution that labour geography can make to labour history relates to the benefits of a geographical perspective for the study of labour history, as suggested by Herod (1998). A spatial approach to analysing labour traditions provides a potential revision to the sometimes bounded representations provided by the 'history from below' tradition. In particular, Massey's (2005) broader understanding of space as being a product of historically constructed social relations and as facilitating multiplicity is particularly useful for reconsidering labour history. Labour history is beginning to take more relational approaches seriously with an increasingly international and more geographical analysis becoming evident (e.g. Linebaugh and Rediker, 1990, Munck, 2002, Kirk, 2003). Labour geography, though, has arguably paid closer attention to these dynamics and has theorised a clear geographical approach to labour's agency.

Featherstone (2010) for example, has worked between labour geography and labour history and has reconsidered the LCS, previously mentioned in reference to Thompson, and revealed a hidden set of connections. He uncovers exchanges between London and Sheffield, specifically between Thomas Hardy and Olaudah Equiano, ex-slave and abolitionist, to illustrate the links and connections forged through the LCS. Featherstone makes key points regarding a hidden history elided in the work of Thompson, which this chapter is keen to pursue more generally as an approach. The geographical angle into this history facilitates an uncovering of previously ignored connections within the English working class history of Thompson. Thus, Featherstone encourages an explicitly spatial reconsideration of terms such as solidarity and resistance. His arguments highlight how place-based politics would be better viewed 'as the ongoing products of the diverse routes and connections that make up subaltern spaces of politics' and that this facilitates 'a more generous and recursive account of the relationship between place and broader political imaginaries' (Featherstone, 2005:252).

In this regard, the thesis aims to provide an understanding of Glasgow and Clydeside as places that contain multiple experiences and are relationality constructed (see Massey, 2005). As previously noted, recent debates within geography regarding Raymond Williams' 'militant particularisms', which engaged with the bounded forms of place-based labour and social movements (see Harvey, 1996), have indicated the need for a more

relational construction of their politics (see Routledge, 2003, Featherstone, 2005, Ahmed, 2012). This geographical emphasis has challenged a conceptualisation of resistance as being limited by its boundedness. In contrast, Featherstone has argued for further recognition of the ways in which seemingly militant particularist forms of labour or social movements are 'not bounded but rather could be mobile and were the products of inter-relations' (Featherstone, 2005:253). This thesis is committed to a similar conceptual approach by stressing the potential for Clydeside's labour to act within and beyond the place-based disputes it encounters.

The work within labour geographies on labour internationalism has revealed the multiple possibilities for labour to utilise space, often by connecting beyond the site of particular struggles. The emergent research within this field has illustrated the strengths of a geographically influenced approach and the contributions of Waterman (2001) and Castree (2000) have discussed the contested terrain of labour internationalism. Their research has argued that it is important that the international scale is not overly privileged and that 'national internationalisms' or 'grassroots internationalism' provide alternative ways of conceptualising labour internationalisms. Their suggestions are made through examples such as Spanish and British dockers' disputes, which allows them to reveal how 'it is inaccurate to focus on the international dimensions of the dockers' dispute at the expense of local and national organizing' (Castree, 2000:290). An analysis of the varying scales of labour agency is thus encouraged and this is an aspect of labour geography that the thesis will pursue in the empirical chapters. In particular, contrasting modalities of labour internationalism will be discussed to reveal the diverse spatial practices developed by the activists of Red Clydeside.

2.4.3 Working Class Experience and Class as Process

The second contribution to emerge from the conversation is that the emphasis on class being understood as a process based upon experiences, as developed within the 'history from below' tradition, facilitates a greater openness to what counts as labour agency. This not only allows approaches to consider political 'failures' as well as 'successes' but more generally acknowledges the intersections between the 'official' and 'unofficial' activities of labour. Relatedly, Waterman and Wills (2001:306) have suggested that work within labour geography requires perspectives that move beyond the conception of a 'homogenous working class – seen as the universal emancipatory subject'. They claim that any international portrayals within labour geography should now be sensitive to the 'complexity, difference and multideterminacy' within grounded experience. Thompson's

emphasis on diversity within working class experience is therefore relevant for an analysis of Red Clydeside as it facilitates the recognition of some of the more mundane and less notable practices as well as the more prominent sites and celebrated disputes within the 'working class presence'.

Geoff Mann's (2007) analysis in *Our Daily Bread* utilises this aspect of Thompson's thought to consider the politics of the wage relation and the importance of broader cultural understandings of this fundamental part of Marxist history. His work has suggested that the wage relation acts as a cultural symbol of working class experience and that these understandings overlap in contrasting ways with economic understandings of wage related struggles. Notably, Mann draws upon Thompson to argue that:

> Class is all these other politics, culture, and subject positions. It can be purely "itself" only in orthodox "Second International" Marxian terms where all workers' interests are identical: in other words, nowhere. So to point out that these other interests – even if we could ever define them – are always there and conflicting is still not to show that class is no longer an essential political arena. (Mann, 2007:156)

His approach elsewhere in the text stresses the importance of maintaining the significance of the political element of the struggle as well as the economic. This sentiment was shared by Thompson and is powerfully utilised by Mann through a comparison between the abstraction of the wage relation made by Marx in *Capital* to that of Frederick Douglass (the freed African American slave who was to become a major abolitionist figure) on his being paid a wage. This comparison suggests that the wage is a 'social and economic relation' with 'politics [that] are historically generated and culturally charged' (Mann, 2007:2). Similarly, the chapters that follow seek to combine the organised labour experiences and specific economic disputes of Red Clydeside alongside a wider variety of sources, which reflect the broader politics of labour organising and workers' experiences within and beyond the workplace. Mann's understanding of the 'politics of measure' stressing the political and cultural elements of seemingly 'economic' disputes is considered further in Chapter 5.

Whilst both labour geography (Peck, 2013) and the 'history from below' tradition (Anderson, 1980) have both been critiqued for providing overly voluntaristic approaches

towards worker agency, it is important to acknowledge that Thompson[13] illustrated a historical rigour towards the material conditions of work and the suppression of working class activity. The critiques of experience, cited previously, can be contested as perhaps neglecting the specificities of Thompson's own theoretical contributions (see also Sarkar, 1997). In this regard, Rosaldo (1990:104-105) has considered how Thompson's approach to culture and history were based upon his key words of 'change, experience, conflict and struggle'. Thompson's work should therefore be viewed as performing far more than accounts reliant on pure empiricism and in contrast his construction of agency actually emerges from a political commitment to the study of conflict and class-based relations. His accounts of working class struggle, as described in the essay *Revolution* (Thompson, 1960), are thus continually positioned between the 'surge forward' and 'the containment'. As previously discussed, the agency of labour is therefore continually situated against the material conditions and broader conditioning imposed upon it and forms of suppression against any unrest. Furthermore, Thompson indicates how these limits or forms of conditioning are continually contested and open to renegotiation. This sensitivity to the intersections of agency and conditioning is particularly evident within Thompson's analysis of the struggles to provide a radical press in Part 3 of the *Making*. Similar reflections will be made during the analysis of Red Clydeside whereby material conditions and suppression strategies of both state and employer will be considered in relation to the case studies and activists selected.

The emphasis on the importance of factors outside the workplace, within this overall framework, provides a relevant contribution from this tradition. Rutherford (2010) has commented upon some aspects of Thompson's contributions and has engaged with the contested position of the workplace within the work of both Thompson and labour geography. He has linked Thompson's approach to a post-structuralist perspective, emphasising identity politics and experiences beyond the workplace and wage relations, and has suggested that this poses many questions for the construction of labour geography. His engagement with Thompson above suggests that the *Making*, alongside the broader 'history from below' tradition, facilitates a greater emphasis on the political aspects of workers' experiences. By combining this approach with the detailing of the economic contributions and the spatial nature of labour struggles as provided by labour geography, a more rounded and tempered account of working class agency can emerge.

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[13] Labour geography has also engaged with more structural understandings with Coe and Jordhus-Lier's (2010) paper on 'Constrained Agency' and Mitchell's (2011) review of labour geography providing notable examples.

This understanding of the importance of factors within and beyond the workplace is equally evident within related work, which has highlighted the importance of gender in reconstructing labour geography and history. Linda McDowell has made a connected contribution to labour geography by arguing that:

> The focus on women reveals the ways in which gender operates as both a normative and regulatory device in the sphere of production and the world of waged labour. Notions of appropriate work for men and women affect both the nature and distribution of jobs and opportunities between the sexes, as well as men's and women's aspirations. Accepted versions of masculinity and manliness, ideas about appropriate femininity, and about respectability at different times and in particular places influence definitions of what sorts of work tasks are appropriate to expect or allow women and men to do work in the labour market. (McDowell, 2013:10)

Her contribution signals the significance of gender in constructing notions of working class agency and includes notions of 'home, diasporic connections, memory, identity and citizenship'. This call for a gendering of labour geographies is an important one and explores the ways in which gender is always performative within particular places whilst also acting across spaces as a structural influence. Thus, McDowell's approach is not solely about writing women's history but instead foregrounds how gender relations function within the broader experiences of labour. Interestingly her approach is particularly sensitive to migrant women's experiences, which in some ways echoes some of Thompson's stress on the importance experience. This sensitivity to labour experiences and intersectionality will be pursued through the empirical chapters whereby multiple and diverse forms of labour struggles will be considered.

2.4.4 Relational Political Identities: Ambiguous Spatial Politics

The critiques relating to the problematic representation of working class experiences provided by the 'history from below' tradition reveal a further entry point into this analysis. Labour geography provides some useful theoretical contributions for a reconsideration of experience within the 'history from below' tradition. In particular, the sensitivity to the spatial dynamics of the agency of labour provides a key tool for thinking critically about the practices and experiences of the working class (see the above discussion of Routledge and Cumbers, 2009). This perspective, through its sensitivity to connections, communications, exclusions and inequalities illustrates the complexities of organising labour and also provides a significant tool for engaging with labour identities.

These approaches, emphasising the very nature of spatial relationships, have recognised some of the tensions between structure and agency and are well suited for a conversation with 'history from below' and Thompson who continually stressed the diverse experiences of workers.

One example where some of these broader understandings relating to spatial politics have been applied, although not directly linked to labour geography literature, is the intersection between relational understandings of class and race. This intersection facilitates a greater multiplicity to the experiences of the working class that influence agency and labour geographies. Gilroy for example has shown the possibilities of this approach through *The Black Atlantic*, which engages with 'the long neglected involvement of black slaves and their descendents in the radical history of our country in general and its working-class movements in particular' (Gilroy, 1993:12). He considers the Atlantic as 'one single, complex unit of analysis' forming part of a 'webbed network, between the local and the global'. This positioning of a fluid and relational Atlantic facilitates a far more transformative sense of the spatial politics of race than those that impose fixed notions and assumed politics on the basis of ethnicity and nationhood. An emphasis on the processes, experiences and interactions, which form racialised identities, rather than working through a set of class based assumptions, provides a more subtle and thorough understanding of political identities, which also contributes towards a wider understanding of class and solidarity. In this regard, the arguments explored below link to the spatial understandings of labour agency most often endorsed by labour geography.

Particularly relevant for this thesis, is that such an emphasis on race requires extending to a broader relational framework that also considers the development of a fragmented white (often male) working class, which has historically developed discriminatory and antagonistic politics against others based on race. Recognising the agency of race as integral to working class culture and spatial politics must also be used to consider the 'whiteness' of working class politics to reveal further relational linkages. Roediger considers this development to be crucial:

> Making whiteness, rather than simply white racism, the focus of study has had the effect of throwing into sharp relief the impact which the dominant racial identity in the U.S has had not only on the treatment of racial "others" but also on the ways that whites think of themselves, of power, of pleasure, and of gender...Moreover, as insofar as the new labour history has consistently stressed the role of workers as

creators of their own culture, it is particularly well positioned to understand that
white identity is not merely the product of elites or of discourses.

(Roediger, 1993:132)

Roediger pursues this transformation of 'whiteness' to reveal how white American labour
developed a 'masculinity' and a 'brotherhood' explicitly 'from below' that saw the
'exclusion of black workers as a critical trade union demand' and 'effected that exclusion
precisely through their rituals of brotherhood' (Roediger, 1993:137). Hyslop (1999) has
also considered 'white labourism' in significant depth, specifically linking Britain,
Australia and South Africa as countries where a shared imperial solidarity built upon
exclusionary politics developed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. His
method has considered the wider links and vectors, which contributed to this formation of
exclusionary working class politics in a similar manner to that proposed by Roediger. This
approach also parallels the critiques made by Gilroy originally in challenging the notion of
framing working class identity within national boundaries.

In *The Notorious Syndicalist*, Hyslop considers the Scottish Trade Unionist J.T Bain to
show a more personal account of the international connections, solidarity and politics of
white labourism. Bain, born in Dundee, Scotland, emigrated to South Africa in 1888
(having previously fought in the Boer War for the British Empire and also experienced
travels to India and South America) and was integral to the national labour disputes that
occurred at the beginning of the twentieth century. Hyslop (2004:9) describes how 'in the
late nineteenth century, all over the world, racism, social radicalism and trade unionism
became intertwined' and he considers the life of Bain to illustrate this point. Bain was
instrumental in uniting white workers, for example as a leader in the mining strikes of 1913
in The East Rand whereby white workers struck not only for improvements in their own
working conditions but also against the foreign competition who were undermining their
working opportunities. Hyslop (2004:226-7) considers the connections and contradictions
within Bain's positionality, as a socialist, trade union leader and British supporter of 'white
labourism'.

Elsewhere, Hyslop has described 'white labourism' as understanding racism from below
whereby 'the direction which a national labour movement took cannot be understood
purely in terms of the conditions prevailing inside a single country, but must also be
viewed in its connection with the international flows of political culture' (Hyslop,
1999:399). As will be shown in the following chapters, such trajectories were prominent
within Clydeside where foreign labour was being introduced in particular areas of work.

The thesis aims to explore these more exclusionary practices to consider how these intersected with more progressive forms of international labour connections and solidarities, to foreground and consider more ambiguous political identities.

Bain was celebrated on his return to Britain at Hyde Park, London, in 1914 with a gathering approximated at a quarter of million British Socialists, Trade Unionists and labour leaders (Hyslop, 2004). Hyslop argues that these scenes of significant support represent a white labourism amongst workers and their associated leaders, and a form of solidarity functioning internationally with imperial logic. Despite a narrowing of focus onto the individual, Hyslop contributes a significant exposure of the wider international linkages that forged a 'white labourism', which intersected with more local and personal struggles. This geographical process of reconnecting radical histories relates to the arguments of labour geography and is essential and instructive for wider globalisation debates. These debates, as Featherstone (2008:8) points out, 'have been structured by a remorseless presentism' that position 'current forms of transnational political activity as a radical break with past forms of political practice'.

This example of transnational experiences and agency produced exclusionary political consequences while also indicating how worker communications were possible over a century ago, further illustrating the importance of thinking spatially about labour history. The analysis emerging from this approach begins to show the possibilities of a more open analysis of sites of solidarity, which consider the broader connections intersecting within the working class. Bain's own contradictory character is not uncommon, particularly of someone who travelled, and actually parallels the analysis of Gilroy, in describing his personal tensions between his own nationalism and radical politics:

> The southern Africa of 1914, and even more so that of the early 1890s, was divided along lines of ethnicity and race, but much less rigidly and clearly than the South Africa of the 1960s. The world of James Bain was racially charged, but the ideas of race that existed then were simply not the same as the apartheid era. There were ambiguities, complexities and blurring of racial boundaries which the more systematic racism or a later time blotted out. The personal conflicts of James Bain's life were thus part or a broader set of paradoxes. Here was a man who lived in a complex world of tensions between empire and national identity, between rootedness and migrant life, and between the dream of a universal egalitarianism and the self-interested politics of race. (Hyslop, 2004:11)

This tension, between solidarity and more exclusionary practices, is arguably common amongst many radical groups and organisations, and shows the significance of interactions and power relations within the working class. An approach adopting a 'history from below' outlook must avoid assumptions based on gender, nationality, ethnicity or locality as these can often prove to be contradictory, insufficient and inaccurate. Hyslop's sensitivity to the 'ambiguities, complexities and blurring' of politics is integral when considering the working class presence and provides a wider question for the consideration of labour history, which can silence or remove particular voices of difference. This tension pulls apart the concept of nationality in Thompson's work or the emphasis on place for Williams, as problematic in application; making a more geographical, relational and flexible methodology necessary for fully representing labour histories and identities. This approach will become particularly relevant in the empirical chapters where tensions between class and race based interests (see also Jenkinson, 2008) will be considered.

Overall, this conversation has advanced key intersections between labour histories and labour geographies. This theoretical engagement signals the importance of relational accounts of political identities and stresses the necessary engagement with the multiple experiences associated with labour struggles. This allows exclusions such as those noted above to be foregrounded. It is noteworthy that these commitments are becoming increasingly reflected within work addressing connections between labour geography and labour history. Examples of this approach includes Pearson et al.'s (2010) work on the leadership of South Asian women workers during the 1976-1978 Grunwick strike and the 2005 Gate Gourmet dispute and Kelliher's (2014) research on lesbian and gay support movements during the miners' strike between 1984-5. These works begin to foreground the complexities of labour identities and the ways in which these interact with geographically connected solidarities. Such an emphasis on spatial-political relations and diverse identities has methodological implications in terms of reconstructing a working class presence. A more thorough discussion of these methodological reflections and their relationships with archives and usable pasts is provided in the following chapter.

2.5 Conclusions: Agency, Experience and Spatial Politics

The opening sections of Herod's *Labor Geographies* and Thompson's *Making* reveal clear links between the two fields. Their introductions propose a commitment to foregrounding the agency and experience of labour within political and economic analyses. Herod calls for a revision of economic geography to include the 'manipulation of space by workers and unions', whilst Thompson highlights the importance of 'the agency of working people, the

degree to which they contributed by conscious efforts, to the making of history'. Their eventual contributions have clear parallels but also differ in many ways. This chapter has attempted to knit together these contributions to propose a conceptualisation of working class agency, which will be pursued throughout the Red Clydeside case study. To conclude, the chapter briefly considers some of the key themes to emerge from this discussion regarding agency, experience and spatial politics.

The chapter has argued that the combination of labour geography's detailed *spatial understandings* of organised labour practice alongside the closer attention to the broader *lived experience* of struggle associated with a 'history from below' sensibility facilitates further possibilities for a conceptualisation of labour agency. Labour geography has illustrated how workers are capable of functioning across space and has moved beyond the sometimes problematic place restricted or localised studies associated with a 'history from below'. However, it has not yet fully uncovered the variety and diversity of working class experiences, in particular those experiences beyond the self evident arrangements of trade unionism. This aspect of labour history is foregrounded by the 'history from below' tradition and a stronger sense of the actual processes and experiences within political antagonisms is portrayed primarily within the approach adopted by Thompson in *The Making of the English Working Class*.

These theoretical contributions facilitate a broader sense of both labour and agency within the history of Red Clydeside. In particular, for the purposes of the thesis here, this will allow a more nuanced understanding of the intersections between different experiences within the labour movement. For example, the following chapters pursue a broader sense of agency through multiple sources such as the official and unofficial forms of labour organisation, the more mundane aspects of work and the visible tensions within the working class presence. Equally, this approach allows the relational nature of political identities and experience to emerge and encourages an acknowledgement of the contrasting identities present within the working class presence. Through this engagement a more rounded spatial politics of labour history is portrayed by scrutinising the connections forged translocally by labour movements. A broader sense of labour is developed through an approach that considers the working class subject to not just be the white male worker and instead factors such as gender, race, and personal political positions are foregrounded within the final analysis. Further reflection on the importance of utilising sources to represent the many possibilities of labour agency is explored in the following methodology chapter.

Chapter 3

Archives and Usable Pasts: Providing and Working with Glasgow's Radical History

History is not the prerogative of the historian, nor even, as postmodernism contends, a historian's 'invention'. It is, rather, a social form of knowledge; the work, in any given instance, of a thousand different hands.

(Raphael Samuel, 1994:8)

I believe all these histories that are written of Scotland shouldn't be missing out the ordinary role that the working class person in Glasgow and Scotland played and a lot of the histories do miss it out so it's just a joy that the records are here.

(Interview with Carole McCallum, Glasgow Caledonian University Archivist)

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter outlined a theoretical position emerging from a conversation between labour geography and labour history. This chapter demonstrates how this engagement is operationalised by paying close attention to the spatial politics and power relations of the archive, whilst also considering how these research interests were pursued in practice. The chapter engages with ongoing discussions within historical geography regarding archival research practices and utilises this literature to develop an approach to revisiting Red Clydeside. A research methodology seeking connections within the actions and experiences of working class or subaltern histories is discussed as a means of engaging with what Featherstone (2008) has described as 'usable pasts'. By emphasising connections and spatial politics within these histories, the chapter also explores my own approach with Red Clydeside material. This discussion leads into an analysis of two archives within Glasgow, which strive to make their histories 'usable pasts'.

The chapter begins with a discussion of the position of the archive within historical geography and raises examples of developing and creative historical research practices. Secondly, the chapter considers the possibilities of understanding assemblage as methodology through more personal reflections on experiences during archival research. The second half of the chapter will consider the continued relevance of archived material for the political left, and a consideration of the ways in which specific archival spaces

within Glasgow (The Research Collection at Glasgow Caledonian University and The Spirit of Revolt Archive held at the Mitchell Library) have been constructed, maintained and utilised. The chapter argues that these collections provide alternative working spaces that are crucial for the provision of Clydeside's working class history. In particular, the importance of labour, interaction and collaboration within these archives is considered, in part as a development of how the archive is understood. This analysis will be based upon an interview and a focus group with representatives from each collection to reintroduce the archivists and volunteers who often remain invisible within writing on the archive. Through this engagement the chapters engages with wider debates regarding the possibilities and limitations for the provision of radical history. The chapter concludes by summarising my reflections on working with archives and the provision of working class history.

3.2 Archives and Historical Geography

Jacques Derrida (2002) considers archives to be a social construct, full of power relations and political implications. His work engages with the archive largely through the positionality of the archivist, suggesting that there is a conflict between 'the consequences of finitude and the radical drive to destruction':

> The limitation of the archive – the fact that the power, and often the social and political power of the archive, which consists in selecting the traces in memory, in marginalising, censoring, destroying, such and such traces through precisely a selection, a filter. (Derrida, 2002:44)

Derrida draws upon the Greek origins of the words archive, *'arkheion: initially a house, a domicile, an address, the residence of the superior magistrates, the archons, those who commanded,'* to describe the archive 'as a place from which authority emanated, a place where legal documents were stored and preserved' (Van Zyl, 2002:41). Ogborn (2003:104) continues this view with the assertion that 'what is created and what survives in these archives is a social and political process'. This more political understanding indicates how archives cannot be detached from their relations with curators or archivists. They cannot be addressed as a neutral space or addressed in an uncontested or uncritical manner. The selection processes associated with the archive are crucial and reveal the importance of power relations in constructing history. As Withers (2002:303) points out, when understood in this manner, the archive is viewed as a site of 'authority and meaning'.

The archive has consequently been approached with an acknowledgement that the resources available are often only partial and that the archival space itself is a political one, potentially with its own principles and positionalities (see Kurtz 2001, Hanlon, 2001). Guha (1983) illustrates this point in his study of peasant insurgency in colonial India by critiquing the elitist practices of the storage and subsequent analysis of the associated historical resources. Hamilton et al. (2002:7) expand this argument with their claim that 'the archive – all archive – every archive – is figured' and importantly these spaces are continually 'refigured' with 'technologies of creation, preservation and use'. These observations reveal the archive to be a place of contested order and how it must be viewed as reflecting power relations, processes and politics. Such positioning of the archive is integral to this chapter's argument, which proposes a necessary fluidity to understanding archival research methods.

This understanding has been developed and contested in recent years, particularly by historical geographers (Lorimer, 2002, 2009, Ogborn, 2003, Griffin, 2009, 2010) who have challenged the ways in which historical material is approached and represented. Some of this work will be considered below to propose methodological suggestions for practicing 'history from below'. In this regard, it is noteworthy that the archive has also been considered in less authoritarian and power related terms to those introduced by Derrida. Recent work by historical geographers has instead considered the archive as also being a place that is 'far more contingent, messy and permeable' (Cresswell, 2012:166). Griffin and Evans develop this position further by arguing for a 'historical geography of practice' suggesting how histories and archives can be approached through 'embodied historical geographies, the embodied practices that we wish to promulgate are generous in their allowing for an infinite array of worlds in which the agency of all things is allowed for in truly democratic ways' (Griffin and Evans, 2008:10). Their emphasis allows a more open construction of what counts as historical materials and facilitates an understanding of agency through multiple sources and archives. These perceptions are useful as they facilitate an appreciation of how alternative archives, and particularly working class histories, are provided in different ways to the more authoritative, often institutionalised, archive.

More specifically, in terms of research interests, this thesis aims to work within the 'history from below' tradition of striving to (re)establish voice and agency though the histories of the working class activists and Chapter 2 drew upon the work of E.P. Thompson to suggest possibilities through this approach (see also Iles and Roberts, 2012:97-132). In practice this

methodology can be particularly fragmented with traces of working class life less prominent than more institutionalised visions of history. Griffin (2008) concedes this in relation to his work on rural protest history by acknowledging the potentiality for records of protest to be lost, whilst particular voices with their own positionalities remain. Despite this possible limitation, labour and subaltern historians have managed to construct detailed research on working class histories through the use of diverse archives. One successful methodology adopted by this tradition has been to 'read against the grain' of particular archives, where documented records (such as prison records, legal cases, media reports or business records) reveal hidden experiences and power relations detailing actual lived implications for the working class. It is particularly important, though, that the archive is not restricted to the official records of the more powerful institutions and that there is recognition of a variety of archives (as are discussed below) that hold specifically working class histories. Thus, the concept of the archive should be understood as openly as possible as the potential within less formal or unofficial archive collections can hold multiple possibilities for the political left.

Raphael Samuel makes a related claim in his call for the recognition of different versions of popular history, in this instance using the importance of graphics to critique the more traditional forms of understanding archives:

> 'History from below' – the 'new wave' scholarship which dedicated itself to rescuing England's secret people from the 'enormous condescension' of posterity – stopped short of any engagement with graphics. Caught up in the cultural revolution of the 1960s it nevertheless remained wedded to quite traditional forms of writing, teaching and research. (Samuel, 1994:34)

In contrast to the previous understandings of archives initially introduced, Samuel highlights the relevance of alternative forms of historical enquiry in his chapter on 'unofficial knowledge', citing music, television and education as important factors in the formation of popular memory. He considers these histories to carry just as much significance as the 'official' archive, which he claims has been fetishsised by historians. His critique of 'history from below' is perhaps overstated, though, with E.P. Thompson, for example, being praised more recently for the ways in which 'his use of poetry, song, broadsheets made academics flinch' (Winslow, 2014:21). Samuel's more general argument regarding history remains useful, though, as he asserts that, when understood as a social form, history must acknowledge the 'motley character of its following'. Moving away from the search for truth and towards an interest in process allows for the recognition of

alternative forms of knowledge and archive. Thus, Samuel facilitates an understanding of history and the archive as potentially emerging specifically from below rather than always reflecting the powerful.

However, these collections require further critical thought as highlighted by Pandey in her consideration of subaltern history and the 'popular archive':

> These 'folk' archives and narratives are, however, notoriously difficult to date and to use. Contrary to common-sense belief, they do not give us any simple, direct access to the 'authentic' voice of history of subaltern groups. They are in this respect no different from other 'sources' for the historian: they too need to be 'read'. For they too are shot through with contradictory, naturalizing features: the constructions of the dominant and the privileged. (Pandey, 2000:284)

This provides a further angle into the understandings of archive initially introduced by critiquing the equally problematic concept of 'folk' knowledge. The alternative or 'unofficial' forms do not necessarily provide direct access to a 'history from below' and deeper questions remain regarding archives and subaltern voices. Thus, there is a need for a creative engagement with the archive, whereby sources are linked and cross-referenced to construct a historical narrative (this is discussed further in the following section on research practice).

Equally, the archive itself is often a place of conflict, contestation, and change as shown by Stoler (2009) in her work on the archives relating to the nineteenth century Dutch East Indies. She considers the lines between official and unofficial archives to be blurred and questions the formation of the 'common sense' that formed the associated colonial records. Her aim is to disrupt how the archive is understood, not necessarily as a place of authority and truth but rather as a more flexible place, continually in process:

> My interest is not in the finite boundaries of the official state archives but in their surplus production, what defines their interior ridges and porous seams, what closures are transgressed by unanticipated exposition and writerly forms.
> (Stoler, 2009:14)

In arguing her case, she also advocates creative engagements with the archive and highlights the significance of factors such as 'rumour' in shaping 'cultural knowledge' and 'common sense' histories. Her work reveals spatial links and connections within and beyond the archive, illustrating how archival records contain an assemblage of social

relations from a variety of places. Thus, instead of viewing the colonial archives as 'archives as things' she views 'archives as processes' and claims that they are 'sites of epistemological and political anxiety rather than as skewed and biased sources' (Stoler, 2009:20). Featherstone (2009) has drawn on the work of Ranajit Guha to develop this position and challenge archival research methods further by specifically asserting the capabilities of subaltern actors; through examples from court-martial records following the mutiny at the Nore in 1797, to contest and reconfigure such formations of historical narratives. This potentiality for archival records to be sites of contested production is important for refiguring understandings of archives as sites of authority. It illuminates possibilities for more creative engagements with archives, which can reveal labour experiences from below, working both along and against the grain.

Whilst acknowledging the fragmented, contested and potentially harmful nature of archival research (see Moore, 2010), it is important to recognise the many research possibilities and openings within historical collections. White (2004) argues this in his paper on 'myths and secrets of family life', which considers archives as spaces for researchers to 'rebuild' and rework their 'collections of shards'. This process can often be personal, through emotional connections between the individual and the source:

> Something connects. But what? And all I can say is that something in one's life, something in one's experiences, something ultimately undecideable to do with one's mood(s), disposition(s), dream(s), imagination, makes one like this, rather than that; decide this way rather than that way. (Jenkins 2003, cited in Robinson 2010:510)

This potential for more subjective responses towards archival resources is important, as they are inherent within the filtering and selection process. The researcher has the potential to manipulate (whether consciously or not) the information they have available and can present a particular chosen argument by selecting and omitting material in a similar manner to the archivist. Thus, positionality becomes a crucial element of archival research methods, as the researcher's own presuppositions and personality will potentially influence their response to the material consulted.

This more nuanced portrayal has allowed more creative methodologies within the archive to become prominent within historical geography (for examples see Patchett, 2008, Griffin and Evans 2008, Griffin, 2012, McGeachan et al., 2012), which has begun to pay closer attention to the processes by which the archival record is produced and 'subsequently shaped, both before its entry into the archive, and increasingly as part of the archival

record' (Hamilton et al., 2002:9). By doing so, the source is not considered through a singular narrative but rather as containing multiple histories, potential connections and contrasting interpretations. The strategic tensions regarding power and politics as introduced above have been negotiated by methodologies identifying the archive itself as a site of multiplicity. Thus, when performing archive based research practices, researchers are often adaptive to their conditions.

Gillian Rose (2000) provides a relevant feminist critique in her work on historical photography, which deconstructs the subjective nature of working with historical data. She argues that photos cannot be used as neutral evidence, highlighting 'the importance of the relationship between the image and the researcher' and drawing upon her own experiences of contrasting photography archives:

> Thus various practices of the archive—the Catalogue, the particular sort of questioning it demands, the mounting, the reproduction costs—had an effect on what the photographs looked like and on how I saw them. The photographs were given a certain referential authenticity, and a kind of blank flatness; I asked questions about their truth, and felt frustration at not being given something to know for certain beyond their objectness. To that extent, then, the grid of the archive contained both me and the photographs. (Rose, 2000:560)

These reactions and experiences are not only applicable to working with photography but are also crucial to the way a researcher reworks their chosen history and again foregrounds the fragmentary nature of historical work. Rose makes a deliberate effort to disrupt the neutrality of the archival space, arguing that whilst the archive can be a controlled space, it is also a space of particular experiences alongside slippage and fractures. This developing interest within historical geography on process, practice and politics allows a further challenging of how archives are understood as a place or site. To develop this understanding, the chapter now reflects on my own particular archival practice and suggests that an understanding of 'assemblage as methodology' is perhaps the most appropriate description for my approach.

3.3 Research Practice and Assemblage as Methodology

Historical geography has increasingly emphasised the 'make do' or 'messier' aspect of conducting archival research. Baker's (1997:231) observation that 'the dead don't answer questionnaires' reveals the fundamental dependence of the historical researcher on recorded material, which is often only what has survived over time. This reliance creates

gaps within historical research and results in an interpretative research process working with 'fragments' (McGeachan, 2010). At times, my own research was similarly fragmented but it was guided by the emphasis of spatially rethinking the histories of Red Clydeside. McGeachan (2013:78) also emphasises historical geographies of connection, by stressing the need to 'push these geographical sensibilities further and begin to attend more carefully to not only how knowledge is produced in specific places but how transactions occur between places' during her discussion of Scottish psychiatrist R.D. Laing. My own aims were similarly grounded in tracing connectives and are situated within labour geography debates as well as more recent scholarship within Scottish labour history that has developed more relational understandings of Red Clydeside. Here, I will briefly consider some of this literature before detailing how this emphasis on finding connections was reflected in my actual research practice.

As discussed in previous chapters, my primary research aim is to rethink the histories of Red Clydeside with a greater sensitivity to the spatial relationships that developed during this period. Recent work by Jenkinson (2008), Domosh (2008), Kenefick (2010) and Kelly (2013) has raised some possible avenues through which this can be pursued. Jenkinson's work has highlighted the absence of race within the writing of Red Clydeside's history, whilst Domosh has discussed the transnational business interests within Clydebank through the American Singer company. Similarly, Kenefick (2010) and Kelly (2013) have both argued that Scottish working class emigrants were disproportionate (see Kelly, 2013:69) actors in disseminating radical labour politics internationally and particularly in Australia, South Africa and North America. These developing approaches are useful for rethinking how labour history is understood and begin to address the agenda established in Chapter 2. They also foreground a diversity of experiences within Scottish labour history and encourage more relational, geographical and connected understandings of labour agency. My own research attempts to develop this work further and this emphasis requires a specific commitment methodologically to illuminating previously undervalued connections.

Table 3.1 Research Archives

Archive
University of Aberdeen Archives
Belfast Central Library - Newspaper Library
Clydebank Library
University College Cork Archives
Glasgow Caledonian University Research Collection
Glasgow Mitchell Library Archives
University of Glasgow Archives and Special Collections
London School of Economics Archives and Special Collections
Modern Record Centre (University of Warwick)
The National Archives
Public Record Office of Northern Ireland
University of Stirling Archives
University of Strathclyde Archives and Special Collections

To achieve this, my archival research actively searched for evidence of translocalism (see Freitag and von Oppen, 2010, Greiner and Sakdapolrak, 2013) within materials relating to Red Clydeside. I utilised collections across the UK and Ireland to trace these connections (see Table 3.1). One example of this tracing of connections came through the 1919 *Strike Bulletins* (see Chapter 5) and this is briefly reflected on below as an example of my research practice. The bulletins were one of the first documents I consulted during my research as they detailed the period of the 1919 Forty Hours Movement. What was striking about these sources was the prominence of international news items that were covered in each paper produced by the strike movement. From this engagement particularly interesting connections with India and Belfast emerged, whilst a tension with a coexisting

race riot during the same period of the strike was also evident through newspaper sources and Jacqueline Jenkinson's research. These presented fragments of information, which appeared noteworthy and had received relatively little attention, perhaps in preference of other locally and nationally framed histories of this period.

Following these initial insights, I pursued these connections. I utilised strike bulletins from Belfast and newspaper reports from Cork to consider possible connections and differences between the Belfast strike and the scenes in Glasgow. I considered the longer trajectory of connections between India and Scotland through trade union annual reports and records, personal memoirs and newspaper articles to consider the roles and experiences of the visiting delegates on behalf of Indian workers. Similar research was conducted in London to consider the race riots and the colonial sailors' responses (held within the National Archives) to their victimisation by British trade unions and employers in Glasgow. This research was thus shaped by an interest in translocal connections within the labour movement and pursued through a diverse collection and archives of sources, which reflected this interest. Similarly, my broader analysis of Clydeside's working class presence was continually informed by an interest in the making of connections. Thus, my reading of the relevant sources regarding three particular activists (see Chapter 6) was informed by a strong interest in their translocal connectivity (through friendships, correspondences, publications, activism, etc.). These reflections begin to indicate a more relational and geographical approach to understanding the experiences and practices of spatial politics.

In this regard, a useful way to conceptualise my own archival practice is to consider the approach as 'assemblage as methodology' (see Laws 2004, Brenner et al., 2011). Brenner et al. (2011) have called for assemblage to be understood as a methodological intervention rather than as an ontological basis. Methodology understood in this manner is more open to the unexpected and emphasises factors, which have been previously neglected. In many ways this understanding is suitable for my own approach discussed above. The methods adopted were pursued through a combination of sources that would not necessarily be considered together. This approach, informed by an interest in the making of connections, was developed through an understanding, which stresses the translocal assemblages of social movements with a particular interest in the 'exchange [of] ideas, knowledge, practices, materials, and resources across sites' (McFarlane, 2009:562). Assemblage considered as methodology allowed personal correspondences and communications, for example, to become a significant part of the spatial politics of Red Clydeside. Rather than

pursue a chronological ordering, though, my interest was on the connections developed by the movements and the working class experiences associated with these.

There are limitations to this more selective and partial approach compared to a more detailed chronological approach of writing more particular versions of labour history. Similarly, the application of this approach to revisiting Red Clydeside might reveal further limitations due to much working class experience often remaining undocumented from this period. Scottish working class history is often written through the lens of particular leadership figures and political organisations, which may have implications for accounting for connections. To counter these limitations, I have gathered sources from a variety of archives to understand the diverse perspectives around particular case studies and individuals to reconsider the history of Red Clydeside. The research has utilised oral histories, newspapers, memoirs, annual reports and business records. I have also made a conscious effort to uncover the multiple political positions within this radical history, rather than utilise solely the records of organised labour, and these diverse perspectives are most explicitly raised in Chapter 6. These sources illustrate diversity within working class articulations of the political (Featherstone, 2011). In this sense, assemblage theory is again useful as it facilitates an engagement with the spatial practices of social movements as indicated by Davies:

> [A]ssemblage allows us to understand how activists engage with both a series of spatial structures that, while seemingly giving stability to an organisation, are also constantly being produced by these actors and thus open to change. Seemingly 'local' relations are constitutive of wider networks of connection, and these spatially extensive connections in turn help to territorialise the organisation.
> (Davies, 2012:277)

The use of assemblage as methodology is best suited to the theoretical emphasis of my thesis as it facilitated recognition of a range of labour practices rather than a more bounded sense of agency. The sources utilised reveal a spatial politics developed through connections and solidarity emerging from seemingly discrete events. Thus, an understanding of historical labour geographies must be understood through 'the laborious production of an assemblage – of words and objects – within which certain associations, hence certain common projects and conditions of life become visible and sayable' (Gidwani, 2008:101). The subsequent analysis of the working class presence interrogates multiple positions taken within the working class and illuminates the actual labour involved in articulating an alternative politics within the city. Importantly, this approach

should acknowledge Featherstone's (2011:141) argument that articulation should be positioned 'as the product of multiple trajectories' as this facilitates a 'different sense of what counts in constituting the ongoing labour involved in generating connections and relationalities'.

This understanding echoes with McFarlane's (2009:562) use of assemblage whereby there is an emphasis of the more performative aspects, what he describes as 'doing, performance and events', of translocalism. A useful example of this is evident from a comment made by one of the activists considered in Chapter 6. Guy Aldred commented upon the political possibilities within the use of pamphlets:

> A pamphlet is different. At the moment it may appear to be extremely dull and of a small consequence. One may regard it as a lifeless creation. Yet its ultimate worth may be very great. It may prove to be a work of great historical significance. Headlines are not always indices to events. (Aldred, 1963: 429)

Assemblage as methodology allows a more sympathetic reading of these more uncertain and intangible forms of working class practice. Parts of the forthcoming analysis engage with documents or perspectives that were not necessarily central to the winning or losing of a dispute but rather representative of broader cultural practices of labour. In this regard, the role of the working class as audience is also important to an understanding of the fluid political traditions of Red Clydeside. Thus, practices of dissemination and correspondence become relevant, as discussed by Red Clydeside activist Harry McShane,[14] who cited the circulation of papers and pamphlets within workplaces and the use of word of mouth, as being integral to developing the gathering of 1,000s of workers during particular disputes.

This emphasis relates to Thompson's comments in Part Three of the *Making* where he discusses 'The Working Class Presence'. Particularly relevant here is his chapter on 'radical culture', which examined the many different intersecting radical figures and emphasised the breadth and diversity, but also the continuity, of a developing working class resistance. Thompson's (1963) notion of a 'working class presence' requires further critical thought though. His writing in Part three of the *Making* highlights a variety of practices and processes, which contribute to this presence. His analysis is, as Navickas (2009) has rightly identified, often tied to particular working class places and spaces (pubs, meeting rooms and public spaces). Griffin (2008:142) gives more of a transformative sense

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[14] Interview held at Gallacher Memorial Library, Glasgow Caledonian University, No date, Uncatalogued.

of the usage of space within protest movements by stressing that the 'very existence of a crowd, whether ceremonial or protesting, is not only something that briefly turns the social world upside down but also something that transforms the space it briefly inhabits'. These spaces and the physical documentation of radical politics (pamphlets, leaflets, newspapers, etc.) all contribute to an assertive 'working class presence' within landscapes. This more spatial understanding of a 'working class presence' also reveal possibilities for contestation as revealed in feminist critiques of the often male dominated spaces in Thompson's *Making* (see Hall, 1990, Scott, 1999). The following chapters similarly identify key sites and publications, such as George Square, Glasgow Green and the *Forward* and *The Commune* newspapers, which embodied the working class presence within the fabric of the city. Thus, the explicitly geographical methodology of assemblage facilitates further examinations of 'radical culture' and places particular emphasis on the importance of relational understandings of place-based politics whilst being sensitive to the possibilities for exclusions.

This engagement, alongside the ongoing geographical work on assemblage, allows recognition of the numerous tactics and strategies utilised by the working class movements of Red Clydeside. Open platforms, manifestos, pamphleteering, occupations of space, demonstrations, charity, etc. were all evident within the research period. These 'transitory tactics' (Schmidt and van der Walt, 2009:233) represented the dynamic nature of working class political activity and illustrate a creativity within the activists of Red Clydeside. Their diversity reveals the importance of what Chakrabarty has described as 'History 2s', those histories that do not belong to the 'life process of capital':

> These pasts, grouped together in my analysis as History 2, may be under the institutional domination of the logic of capital and exist in proximate relationship to it, but they also do not belong to the "life process" of capital. They enable the human bearer of labor power to enact other ways of being in the world – other than, that is, the bearer of labor power. We cannot hope to write a complete or full account of these parts. They are partly embodied in the person's bodily habits, in unselfconscious collective practices, in his or her reflexes about what it means to relate to objects in the world as a human being and together with other human beings in his given environment. Nothing in it is automatically aligned with the logic of capital. (Chakrabarty, 2000:66)

The activists, organisations and events considered in the empirical chapters provide political positions, which regularly refuse the 'life process' of capital. They represent clear

ruptures and resistances against this logic and are illustrative of the creative possibilities within labour. Thus, the research includes activities, which strived to work within and beyond the structural constraints of working class lives. This allowed the inclusion of activities not necessarily associated as being part of the labour movement. Utilising assemblage as methodology, the thesis aims to illustrate not only the diversity of working class politics, but also the clear moments of intersections between seemingly disparate traditions. These combinations include dialogues between official, unofficial, racialised, gendered and anti-parliamentary politics and reveal how labour politics were not singular or defined simply through their relationship with capital, but instead provide clear articulations of what 'other ways of being' were seen to be within the history of Red Clydeside. Thus, my usage of assemblage as methodology is one that facilitates multiple accounts of place-based politics rather than a singular rhetoric of political struggle. This diversity of labour politics was made evident within the diverse archives used within the thesis. Below, the chapter shifts its emphasis from my own research practice to the labour of archive provision.

Whilst tracing this plurality of labour histories, I have become increasingly aware of the actual work and labour involved in providing archived material. I have also been fortunate to develop strong links with particular archives and archivists who deserve further recognition than simply an acknowledgment at the beginning of the thesis. Thus, in order to further understand my methodological practice it is important to consider the ways in which this history is provided and the people through which I have encountered it. Again, assemblage theory is relevant here as it facilitates a more thorough acknowledgement of the different forms of work, which develop research practice. McFarlane and Anderson (2011a:124-125) point to this possibility by stressing that assemblage 'emphasises gathering, coherence and dispersion' and that 'this draws attention to the labour of assembling and re-assembling sociomaterial practices'. The collections considered illustrate the importance of physically assembling and reassembling labour histories, whilst also indicating the political importance of archival practice in a similar manner to Jordan and Weedon's (2000) work on a community arts and history project in Butetown, Cardiff.

The discussion will also raise the precarious nature of the provision of historical material relating to the political left. In response to these difficulties, the chapter argues that these collections are of continued political importance and that they should be viewed as part of the 'construction of new and resistant identities [as] a key dimension of a wider political struggle to transform society' (Jordan and Weedon, 2000:172). Such insecurities regarding

public history were also raised in a recent *Guardian* article on the accusations made by a Conservative MP that the Working Class Movement Library in Salford was inaccessible and a misuse of public money, actress Maxine Peake responded by stating that:

> For anyone to criticise such an amazing establishment is nothing short of disgraceful. It is just another attack on the poorer people in our society from the government. You can read things you can't get access to anywhere else there. Maybe there are things the Tories hope we don't see? The staff and volunteers are fantastic and you are made to feel welcome. To say you can't walk in and read material is an outright lie. (Howard, 2014)

This more polemical dispute is indicative of the wider importance of engaging with radical history provision. The Glasgow collections are similarly central to the provision of radical history. Highlighting their practices and the actual work of staff and volunteers is an important corrective to those who consider them to be a strain on public funding. What the cases below will explore is how the archives are potentially precarious to further funding cuts and often reliant on voluntary labour. There is, though, a clear desire to maintain and preserve these histories for the use of future generations. The second half of the chapter discusses two ways in which this is happening within Glasgow.

3.4 Glasgow Caledonian University Research Collection

The research collection at Glasgow Caledonian University (GCU) holds a variety of materials relating to the Scottish labour movement, including the Scottish Trade Union Congress (STUC) archives, a Trotsky collection, the Gallacher memorial library, and a centre for political song amongst other collections. I began my research within this archive and have since utilised this space on many occasions. Through a combination of my own experiences and a reading of the related literature, which has been introduced above, I consider the archive to be in some ways radical and political in its methods. Thus, in this section, I argue that the archive is suitable for the material it provides and that such archives are crucial for the provision of usable pasts. The wider importance of this point will be illustrated through a detailing of the increasing economic pressures faced by the archive.

It is noticeable that my experience within this collection has been significantly different to Lorimer's at the University Library at Cambridge:

In the early stages of my doctoral research I paid an exploratory visit to the University Library in Cambridge. My memories are vivid enough to remind how, with the formalities of visitor registration completed, feelings of disorientation and confusion quickly overwhelmed me … I had the distinct impression that 'the archive' was somewhere between a labyrinth and impregnable fortress. Escape was not an option. (Lorimer, 2009:251)

In contrast to accounts emphasising the official, formalised and sometimes daunting nature of archival practices, my own experience at GCU has been comfortable, productive and engaging from the very beginning. Admittedly, this archive is culturally different, both in terms of their materials and approach, to the experiences raised above. I have consulted material such as the STUC *Annual Reports*, Glasgow Trades Council *Annual Reports*, and the Gallacher memorial library (an archive that holds a variety of materials relating to the Red Clydeside period) amongst other things. Here, the chapter seeks to raise awareness of the actual labour process within the archive by considering the perspective of the archivist, providing a perspective rarely emphasised within historical geography's reflections on methods. This allows a consideration of this particular archive, its own history and approach through an interview with Carole McCallum (University Archivist and Research Collections manager – who joined the University in 1992). Below I reflect on this collection as a more grounded and deliberately accessible space for providing part of the history of Red Clydeside, which contrasts significantly with the more elitist, formal and individualised experience of Lorimer at Cambridge.

The archive is located within the university library and recorded 450 visitors and researchers between April 2010 and April 2011, who consulted 4484 items during this period. It was established in 1993, collecting around two broad themes of histories of social work and left wing politics (or what Carole described as 'collections of social justice'), alongside an institutional archive for the university. The collections are based around the two broad themes and researchers from all areas, ranging from local community historians to social work practitioners, are invited to use the material here. Carole describes the collection as developing organically with much of the material entering through 'word of mouth' or more personal connections and she is keen to encourage 'learning and teaching with primary source material'. The collection forms part of wider archival networks, with Scottish Universities Special Collections and Archives Group (SUSCAG) a particularly active body. In her interview, Carole also spoke about her own experience of developing wider international links, through an ongoing working relationship she has

developed with South African historian Verne Harris due to the Scottish Anti-Apartheid archive being held within the collection.

More specifically, Carole described the intentions of those involved with first establishing the archive as a conscious effort to make the archive different to the traditional archive. Carole stated that:

> *I didn't want people to come in and feel that they're scared or they're frightened or that it's stuffy. So we always decided, in line with the university decision in widening access, that we would widen access to archives and special collections.*

My own experience reflected this decision, and the archive feels more accessible; providing an environment whereby any researcher can engage with historical material. The approach is further evident in the room setting, which includes photos of political musicians Billy Bragg and Alistair Hulett on its walls, and is also reflected in the level of archivist interaction with the researcher. The conscious creation of this friendlier and welcoming environment is made clear from the following three interview extracts with Carole:

> *The meet and greet is slightly different because we haven't had the facilities so part of not having the best facilities has developed that friendliness.*

> *We don't just look at the list, if somebody asks something and we go away, you would say I've got more for these people and you started looking at other areas.*

> *We like to put people in contact with each other that are doing similar research and we're very open to putting people in contact with people that they can interview.*

These comments were again reflected in my own experience. Carole commented on how researchers can keep their coats and bags with them in the reading room and suggested that this contributed towards a more comfortable research setting, particularly for researchers using archives for the first time. I have regularly discussed my work with Carole and have since consulted materials beyond my initial requests (one example is an individual conscientious objector file relating to the anti-war movement considered in chapter 6). Carole also passed on contacts to other relevant researchers and helped me to connect with a network of useful contacts and other archives to consider. Although some guidelines and rules are necessary to control an environment with 'valuable' historical material, the research room is relatively relaxed and researchers will regularly talk to one another about their research. Whilst not always adhering to the traditionally 'ordered' or 'disciplined'

space perhaps associated with the archive, this collection creates an engaged environment for researchers (from undergraduates to established researchers) to undertake their research.

The archive itself is continually evolving but Carole remains integral to the collection with only a third of the collection officially catalogued, making her knowledge invaluable for the provision of material. In 2010 the original university research collections team of seven employees was reduced to just Carole due to a voluntary redundancy scheme. Carole is now the only full time employee working with the collections. This financial pressure illustrates a further politics of the archive with many working roles deemed disposable by institutions:

> *They've been cutting, they've been letting people all go with this early release scheme and they've got one person running a service that used to have seven so there's huge staffing constraints but, I think if you get, I could just sit under a table and cry, if that's the sort of person you were, but my attitude is I can only make it the best service I can for a one person service and what I spend a lot of time doing, which means that the stuff isn't getting catalogued, is trying to get project archivists in to do the cataloguing and everyone will say why can't you get volunteers but you can't get volunteers if you're only a one person, you need a 1.5, I need a half person that I can train to run a five person volunteer programme. The library are right behind me. But there's no money for staffing at the moment. So instead of being discouraged by it I just keep on going.*

The context of university cuts places the archive in a potentially vulnerable position. Whilst Carole remains positive about the collection and feels supported by the University Library, it is clear that the status of the archive is potentially precarious. In particular it is notable that during March 2014, the collection had 104 enquiries with each request processed by Carole, and each item provided and returned by her as well. As Samuel (1994) has pointed out the archive is a place of 'work' and 'labour' and this requires foregrounding for the effort and difficulties in providing and maintaining archival collections to be appreciated and valued institutionally. More broadly, this understanding asks pertinent questions regarding universities and archives status as public goods as discussed by Collini (2012). He argues, in reference to measuring funding allocations within Universities, for the importance of recognising that 'it is crucial that this social good should not be reduced to a purely economic good' (Collini, 2012:99) during a period when such resources are under increasing threats regarding economic accountability. Such

dialogues and exchanges between academy and publics were also regularly discussed by E.P. Thompson (1987) and are applicable to the provision of archives and special collections within University institutions, whereby their value is not only measurable economically.

Whilst other collections and archive projects, as considered through the next example (section 3.5), have utilised volunteers in their projects, Carole is keen to maintain the act of cataloguing and archiving as a profession:

> *I've been a lifelong trade unionist and I've got this big thing, earlier on you'd said would I have volunteers cataloguing, and my answer to that is no because if we have volunteers cataloguing we're doing professional people out of jobs.*

Staffing capacity remains a problem for Carole as she admitted to feeling concern for the future of the collection if she or Audrey Canning (a volunteer with the Gallacher Memorial Library) were to leave. There is a lot of work and labour involved in providing the collection, with preservation and conservation a continuing challenge for an individual in control of the whole collection. Cataloguing is important as it can ease accessibility and Carole felt uncomfortable with the current situation whereby she felt much of 'the archives are still very much hidden', although seemingly unofficially ordered. This concern is illustrative of the practical problems associated with provision dependent on individuals. Alongside the cataloguing concern are fears over security with the working room for researchers unsupervised and located three floors above the archivist's workspace.[15] There is an obvious fear that material could be lost or damaged, which would affect how history is represented in future years. In nearly twenty years, though, there has been no such damage, illustrating a trust between researcher and archivist.

Despite these concerns and limitations, the archive itself continues to provide an extremely useable resource for the political left. Carole is keen to emphasise the political possibilities for the political left within the archive and she speaks regularly at Scottish labour historian meetings about the collection. This relationship with the present is most regularly practiced alongside the STUC who maintain a strong connection with their archive:

> *The STUC will use me if they need something historical for speeches or like with the anniversary of the First World War coming up, then the General Secretary will be in touch and will say Carole can you have a look and let me know what you've got.*

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[15] The archive is currently making changes to its layout and the research room has more recently moved to the first floor and closer to the archivist office.

When they have events, I'll either put together an exhibition or go along and do a speech.

During the interview Carole also commented on her strong relationship with the social work charity *Children First*. This connection between past and present has broader meaning for the political left, particularly in Scotland, and Carole describes the collection as a 'resource' for the trade union movement. During her interview, Carole also reflected on a more personal link to the collections and she described how her *'Mother's a Fifer and I'll get upset here because she's no longer with us. My Mother's a Fifer and as a wee girl she knew Willie Gallacher.'* This connection is further highlighted by Carole's own personal relationship with some of the collections:

You can't help the fact that as a young woman I had a political past and was active in left wing politics so inevitably the people who come through my doors to look at collections, all of a sudden will go oh my goodness I haven't seen you for years.

These emotive aspects and the connections between archivists, depositors and researchers are crucial to providing a historical politics of the working class. In this regard, these collections are part of the formation of a more 'popular' memory and are integral to the construction of usable pasts for the political left. The following section reflects on a similar collection in Glasgow before concluding with more general reflections on the political importance of these collections.

3.5 Spirit of Revolt Archive

Whilst conducting my research I also developed a relationship with the Spirit of Revolt (SOR) archive. The archive (held at Glasgow's Mitchell Library), named after the pamphlet by anarchist Peter Kropotkin, collects, manages and preserves records from Glasgow and Clydeside's anarchist and libertarian-socialist history. It was established in August 2011 by a group of anarchists from the Clydeside area who wanted to document their own history and to create a place where their records could be stored and accessed. The archive is relevant to this thesis as it takes seriously the anarchist presence (as evident in the anti-gentrification publication *Workers City: The Real Glasgow Stands Up*[16]) within Glasgow's working class history but also due to the outreach work, which has made Red Clydeside materials relating to materials used in this thesis publically accessible. The archive is primarily a volunteer led project although recently successful funding

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[16] Workers City was published in 1990 as a response to Glasgow hosting the 1990 'City of Culture'.

applications have allowed the hiring of an archivist to catalogue the material. I became involved with this group myself and regularly attended meetings with the group and volunteered at public events where materials relating to my research were displayed. This experience relates to what DeLyser (2014) has described as 'participatory historical geography' whereby researchers become engaged with making historical research publicly available (see also Bressey, 2014, Cameron, 204). SOR's collection is equally crucial to the provision of public history and below I consider this collection through a focus group I conducted with three founding members of the group. The group interview discussed the motivations for the project and in a similar manner to the GCU collection raised the possibilities and limitations for the project and the provision of usable pasts.

The motivations behind the relatively new project varied but all members shared a commitment to providing an account of Glasgow's political history, which has been marginalised. This feeling was emphasised by one member's experience of trying to view the Guy Aldred (for more on Aldred see Chapter 6) papers at the Mitchell library:

> *I went up and asked could I look at the Guy Aldred papers and the young lady says Guy Aldred, wait a wee minute, and then she came back and she says how do you spell it? So I spelt it out to her and she disappeared and she came back with another person and they said it should be about somewhere and then he went away and she was looking about and then she went under the counter and brought out a folder, one folder and down the side it said Guy Aldred and that's what she gave me. Now that had been sitting there and she was unaware of it but it wasn't the Guy Aldred papers, I mean its 33 boxes or something, but this was the minutes of meetings and things, and at that stage that's when I started asking what was the possibilities of getting volunteers to try and sort this out but that was 2 or 3 years before the project.*

The group is still trying to gain permission to provide the Aldred papers although a more accessible box list has since been established as a result of their communications with the Mitchell Library. The experience described above reflected a shared sense within the group of a need to establish what they described as an 'anarchist presence' within Glasgow's history. After several meetings the group decided to create an archive (gathering their own materials and friends collections) and the Mitchell Library agreed to host and provide the collection within their own archive collections. It is important to note that SOR remains independent from the Mitchell and retains ownership of the material. The content of the

archive (currently 27 collections[17]) is vast and diverse with members describing the material as mostly relating to direct action or theoretical currents within the anarchist-libertarian tradition. They have material ranging from deported conscientious objectors in the Second World War through to the Hetherington Occupation in 2011 by students at the University of Glasgow.

Prior to its transfer to the library archives, much of the material was held within domestic space and discussion on this topic within the interview illustrated a political will to maintain an alternative history. As Ashmore et al. (2012:81) have highlighted, these more mundane archiving practices within domestic spaces have largely been ignored within writing on the archive. Members of SOR would keep their materials in cereal boxes, folders and filing cabinets and as Figure 3.2 shows they would hold on to vast amounts of material within their homes. This material was already organised (albeit not officially catalogued) as members commented that 'it wasn't just haphazard collection' and rather reflected a feeling that 'every idea isnt dead'. The organisation of the material was often more associated with practicalities of political organising of the time with the holder of the material in Figure 3.2 commenting that he held the material largely because of his role within the groups he was part of through organising the mail and the importance of keeping graphics for future publications due to level of technology at the time.

Interestingly, the domestic organisational practices also held hidden stories themselves. One member of the group reflected on a filing cabinet where she had held her activist material since she was 18:

> *I put the Dockers up at one point they were coming to Glasgow. I met them in the Scotia and they had nowhere to stay and somebody had brought them up during the dock strike and I put them up in my flat while I was sleeping over night in Kinning Park at the sit-in. So they had the run of the flat and when I got up in the morning they had put Dockers stickers all over the filing cabinet and left me a wee book and a t-shirt as a thank you. Its things like that, the stickers are brilliant.*

These stories reflect the emotional content of the collection in a similar manner to Carole's comments in the previous section. In their interview members of SOR reflected on how the collection also contained material from friends 'who were no longer with us'. This emotive connection is another crucial element of the archive experience (whether as user, depositor,

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[17] To view the current SOR catalogue visit: http://spiritofrevolt.info/collection/

or archivist) that should be acknowledged and is an aspect, which can be overlooked in accounts stressing order and structure.

The group's outlook is positive but they do have their capacity related limitations. The project requires a lot of voluntary labour, with only the official archivist employed on a part-time basis. There is a lot of work in providing these collections and the project is time-consuming for core members. In this regard, the group's efforts to make the material accessible online are one of the most time-consuming tasks. All material must be scanned and added to a database where it can then be attached to the website to be viewed online. This is a massive task with thousands of documents to scan and occasionally faulty equipment delaying the process. Due to the funding constraints, SOR can only employ an archivist on a part-time basis (two days per week) and are restricted by short term funding grants. The fundraising and applications again require large amounts of work for a group, which is driven primarily by voluntary workers. These factors expose the precariousness of the archive but the members commented in interview that there was some security with the material being held in the city council run Mitchell library.

Figure 3.2 SOR Domestic Archive

Despite these limitations, the group were positive and very open to the political nature of their intervention with members describing their work as a form of activism:

This to me is a form of activism because I'm not doing other things that I might want to get involved with, the ato[18]s thing or whatever has been going on, but I don't have time to do that anymore because I'm doing this but for some reason I feel driven to do this rather than these other things. I think maybe it's using my skills better or whatever. I just think it's a really important wee job that needs done.

I do think it is activism, at least I see it as that, it's a continual reminder to the people that this is a struggle that is going on and it's still here. Hearing what went on in the past and how you think you would approach it looking at this. I see it maybe as propaganda as a form of activism. You're putting information out and you're hoping it influences people. You're reminding them that there's a history of this, this isn't a new thing that's just cropped up, this has been going on since capitalism so I see it as a very very political thing. Putting out anarchist propaganda.

This commitment to providing alternative histories is reflected in the outreach work of the project and again disrupts the traditional view of historical research as an individual's task often pursued in isolation within the archive. In contrast, SOR have conducted a weeklong radical press exhibition within the Mitchell library (with exhibits from the collection and materials from my research period) and have also produced window displays in Glasgow Pubs on the 30th anniversary of the miner's strike (again using material from the collection). This outreach work also includes smaller pop-up stalls and leaflets, which are disseminated by the group and forms an important part of the project for the members as they view the archive as much more of an active resource. This portrayal of archiving and outreach as activism is useful and links with Rowbotham's (2000: xv) understanding of 'retrieval as an act of rebellion'. One member stated that 'for me that was probably the biggest thing was to have the material useful in some way' whilst another claimed that 'if it doesn't get to the ordinary people in Bridgeton, Shettleston and Castlemilk then it's failing. It's all very well a bunch of academics knowing about it and looking at it and studying it and that's not really what it's for.' Their motivations are clear and whilst there are clearly hurdles and difficulties in providing this radical history, their project should be viewed as part of a contemporary 'working class presence'. By working alongside this group, my

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[18] Anti-Atos protests have been prominent within Glasgow. For more on this see
http://gamesmonitor2014.org/category/atos/

own research has become situated within this tradition. I have presented on their archives at conferences, volunteered at events and remain keen for conversations to continue over links between research and more radical forms of archive provision.

3.6 Archives as Collaborative Spaces and Political Projects

Both archives considered above shaped my own interpretation of Red Clydeside and revealed a more collaborative experience than some archive research literature suggests. This understanding contests perceptions of archives as neutral spaces and instead encourages a more open and publically accessible role of archives. This has implications for notions of 'usable pasts' (see Featherstone, 2008) as it indicates possibilities for politicised engagements with the provision of history and how archives can be viewed as more collaborative spaces than has previously been stressed. Thus, this thesis is also situated within broader debates regarding the provision, accessibility and usage of radical history.

Furthermore, these archives also challenge the misconception of the Salford MP who suggested that these left political archives were inaccessible, which arguably masked his clear opposition towards funding for working class histories. I argue that they in fact provide more collaborative and public spaces (on which see Geoghegan, 2014) than more traditional archives due to the deliberate attempts to make the collections accessible. Both of the interviews considered above viewed this aspect as being a key element of their work. In this regard, the interviews provide a development of recent historical geography literature, which has considered alternative understandings of archival practices. Ashmore et al. provide a relevant intervention, through their analysis of an individual's domestic archive, by raising alternative ways in which archives can develop and the more collaborative possibilities, which emerge from these:

> Taking personal collections seriously as useful spaces for research is far from new, but considering the precise practices that go on in them offers further insight into the doing of archival research. Accessing such collections requires forming of relationships with their holders and often renders this sort of archival research a sociable occasion. Although there has been detailed reflection on the individual 'researcher's relationship with source materials' in recent years, examples where the social nature of research is made explicit are still rare. (Ashmore et al., 2012:83)

Their analysis is relevant for my own research practice and specifically the collections considered above as prior to their depositing within the collections, the materials were also

often held, for varying times, in domestic space by individuals. Furthermore their discussion of the social element of archival practice is important here. I have developed strong relationships with the volunteers and staff within both collections. Both collections have contributed towards my own portrayal of Red Clydeside. These contributions have at times been through their actual archival materials but I have also shared many conversations with the volunteers and archivists, which have helped shape my work.

These reflections, emphasising the labour and the collaborative nature of alternative archives, highlight the wider political importance of the collections. The emphasis on public engagement and making political history accessible provides an important intervention. Both interviews reflected on their activities as in some ways being a political act, Carole viewed her job as professionally apolitical but raised links between the collection and her own political past whilst the Spirit of Revolt members considered their own project as a form of activism. This commitment to providing resources for the political left is vital. Jordan and Weedon make similar arguments in their essay on the links between a history and arts centre and local community in Butetown, Cardiff. They argue that this collection forms a counter narrative to the negative or official representations of Butetown, which have had material effects:

> Against this history of negative representation local people have attempted to keep alive a counter-narrative which can function as the basis for positive forms of identity and subjectivity. These resistant subjectivities are important since the forms of subjectivity that we inhabit play a crucial part in determining whether we accept or contest existing power relations. Moreover, for marginalised and oppressed groups, the construction of new and resistant identities is a key dimension of a wider political struggle to transform society. (Jordan and Weedon, 2000:172)

Such counter-narratives are important to challenge misrepresentations of the area. Similarly, the Glasgow collections are not purely historicised documents or items for nostalgic reflection, they are politically engaged resources for the (re)formation of popular memory that challenge other forms of historicisations and utilisation of pasts in politically fixed ways.

This perspective also challenges accounts of archives as historically bounded in often nostalgic forms or as being simply 'the past'. It develops an understanding beyond the 'facts' of the past and instead considers 'the whole way in which popular memories are constructed and reconstructed as part of a contemporary consciousness' (Popular Memory

Group, 1982:219). This understanding reflects E.P. Thompson's contention that the past 'needn't always be seen retrospectively, in a lament over old and dying modes which, when examined scrupulously, were never real. It may also be seen as a vast reserve of unrealised, or only partially achieved, possibilities – a past that gives us glimpses of other possibilities of human nature, other ways of behaving' (Thompson, 1994:254). This sentiment was echoed during the interviews considered above with both collections keen to encourage a greater sense of usability and engagement with present day struggles for their archives. Their collections are part of the contemporary 'working class presence' of Glasgow and are revealing new ways of remembering the city's history by providing the 'history 2s' described by Chakrabarty.

3.7 Conclusions

This chapter has engaged with archives as institutions and through more personal and collaborative archival research practices. The chapter has contrasted existing literature on these topics with my own experiences and the perspectives of those working with radical histories. The interviews reintroduce the largely understated perspective of the archivists, activists and volunteers into existing literature regarding archive research methods. The chapter has discussed the ways in which these archives 'from below' are constructed and maintained as a social and political process. This understanding acknowledges the initial discussion of the ways in which archives are ordered and structured through social practices. In many ways, the interviews also reflected a far more complex and uneven construction of the archive, which has also been reflected in historical geography's engagement with the archive. The continual struggle to provide these histories, often through a lack of resources, forces an element of 'making do' within both collections. In negotiating these contrasting approaches to providing the histories of Red Clydeside I have also described my own approach towards these archives as assemblage as methodology. This understanding acknowledges the multiple sources used within the thesis, the importance of a geographical and spatial approach to the material and the nature of the work and labour embodied within the archives considered.

Overall, the chapter has considered methodological discussions regarding the archive and has attempted to contribute to this literature through an engagement with the actual work and labour required to provide specifically working class histories. Three contributions emerge from this discussion. Firstly, the chapter has argued for more creative engagements with the archive and greater recognition of associated social practices. In particular, I have advocated a more relational and translocal approach to working with labour histories.

Secondly, I have stressed the actual work and potentially precarious funding arrangements associated with those archives. This intervention foregrounds the importance of defending working class history from further funding cuts. Thirdly, this approach has facilitated broader recognition of archival practices as being more collaborative than previously acknowledged. This contribution has considered how archives can engage with wider audiences through outreach activities whilst also highlighting the ways in which archives can be constructed as interactive environments.

Chapter 4

Clydeside's Labour Geographies and Differentiated Forms of Labour Agency

4.1 Introduction

This chapter considers the longer trajectory of trade unionism on Clydeside to provide a geographical account of labour movements during the early twentieth century. In particular, the chapter details four contrasting aspects of labour organising to indicate the diverse forms of agency adopted by Clydeside's labour movement. As the introductory chapter suggested, this was a key period of labour organising and the analysis below aims to further explore evidence of this. Statistics highlight the overall growth of the Scottish trade union movement during this period with the Scottish Trades Union Congress (STUC) representing a relatively small overall membership of 100,000 workers in 1898 before claiming a membership of over half a million in 1920. This chapter foregrounds the labour geographies that emerged from this growth and maps a longer trajectory of labour organising on Clydeside. Thus, the discussion links to the earlier literature review by providing more relational and spatial accounts of labour history and rethinking what counts as agency and experience within labour geography.

The chapter establishes key themes for the following empirical chapters and relates to labour geography's emphasis on workers' active construction of space. The combination of local and national organisations allows the chapter to explore the contrasting strategies of Clydeside's labour organisations. This approach links to Herod's (see Chapter 2) accounts of labour geographies, which have continually argued that labour can actively shape space and how space matters to work and employment. Through this engagement, the chapter relates to recent discussions regarding the spatial strategies of labour, such as notions of labour's 'spatial praxis' (Herod, 1997), 'jumping scales' (Lier, 2007:824) and 'labour's lines of flight' (Anderson, 2009). Thus, the chapter engages with the geographies of Clydeside's labour to reveal connections within the histories of workers' struggles and trade unionism.

The chapter is strategically ordered through four 'cuts' into the Red Clydeside labour movement. These cuts consider distinctive aspects of this labour history that seek to provide a more rounded portrayal of the forms of labour agency. They are ordered through

connections that are central to overall remit of the thesis. The first 'cut' provides a broader sense of the 'official' organised labour presence within Clydeside and considers the co-ordinating role of significant bodies within the region. This section provides linkages between particular labour disputes, as are referred to throughout the thesis, and the longer trajectories of organised trade unionism on Clydeside, whilst considering the multiple negotiations of labour within and outside the workplace. The second 'cut' follows from these negotiations by narrowing the focus to a particular strike within Clydeside to explore the significance of direct action within the broader labour movement. This analysis centres upon the Singer factory strike in 1911 and introduces lived experiences, working conditions and translocal influences within Clydeside. The third 'cut' develops this understanding of translocal connections by exploring linkages between Scottish labour organisations and international networks of communication. Here, the chapter considers contrasting forms of labour internationalism, ranging from financial support to communications reflecting a growing internationalism regarding notions of social justice. The final 'cut' contrasts this solidarity with more exclusionary practices within Clydeside's trade union movement. This section indicates how labour's translocal strategies can also develop more exclusionary spatial outcomes through an analysis of racialised trade union practices. These four cuts provide themes, which are pursued further in following chapters that narrow the focus to a particular event (Chapter 5) and then particular individuals (Chapter 6).

The chapter provides reflections on the evolving communicative politics within the labour movements that were active within Clydeside during the early twentieth century. This approach links with David Harvey's (2000:208) argument that 'politics is grounded in communicative abilities', suggesting that these communicative politics are constantly evolving and practiced in part through mutual aid, collaboration and cooperation. In addition to the Glasgow based (Trades Council) and national organising trade union and political bodies (STUC and Independent Labour Party) the chapter also considers the communications of an unofficial strike movement (Singer's strike 1911) and seafarer unions (British Seafarers' Union and National Sailors' and Firemen's Union), which all held significant organising roles on Clydeside. The chapter utilises organisational records, oral histories, and a variety of newspaper reports to highlight the contrasting spatial strategies and experiences of labour within Clydeside. This triangulation of sources provides a diversity of perspectives from within the labour movement. This method illuminates some less recognised practices of these related organisations to introduce new evidence of labour solidarity to the Red Clydeside narrative. As will be

explored, these practices provide contrasting forms of agency while also illustrating more exclusionary tendencies.

In this regard, the chapter introduces three key themes, which are pursued throughout by assembling the empirical materials below. Firstly, the experiences of work; long hours, deskilling and increasingly demanding productivity, were common themes throughout Clydeside's industries during the early twentieth century. The accounts of working conditions provided, particularly in the Singer strike section, provide an important context for labour agency, which is more prominent throughout the thesis. Secondly, the chapter indicates possibilities for labour to organise, resist and shape economic spaces through direct action. This understanding indicates the multiple modalities of labour organising, which begin to constitute a 'working class presence'. Thirdly, the analysis provides a broader understanding of labour imaginaries through their interactions with labour internationalism. This positioning of labour and the making of connections contrasts acts of solidarity across boundaries with more exclusionary tendencies amongst particular groups of workers. These three themes contributed towards the developing agency and politicisation of labour that was connected to the organised labour presence on Clydeside. This influence of trade unionism on Clydeside is considered further below.

4.2 The Growth of Organised Trade Unionism

Disputes such as the Singer strike (see below), the Forty Hours Movement (see Chapter 5) and the anti-war movement (see Chapter 6) contributed towards and reflected a growth in Clydeside and Scotland's organised labour during the early twentieth century. This growth can be characterised through an analysis of the longer trajectories of trade union and electoral successes during this period. This facilitates some initial reflections on the power of collective labour within Clydeside to influence social and political relations. These official organising bodies were crucial in the co-ordination of struggles relating to the many immediate issues facing the workers.

The Glasgow Trades Council (later becoming Glasgow Trades and Labour Council) was established in 1858 and provided a forum for the trade union movement within the city boundaries. Fraser (1978:6) described their main activities as 'organising', 'agitating' and 'campaigning' and aspects of these will be explored further below. A summary of its purpose was regularly provided within annual reports, which stated the following aims:

The objects of the Council are the moral and social elevation of the operative class, and the consideration of all such questions as affect the political and social interests of labour such as the organising and reorganising of workers...[T]o co-operate with similar associations and or councils throughout the Kingdom; and to promote the advancement and well being of the working classes generally by any other which may from time to time be advisable.

(Glasgow Trades Council *Annual Report*, 1916-7: p.18)

These broad aims reflected the views and activities of a large proportion of the trade union movement within Glasgow at this time (for more on the history of Scottish Trades Councils during the 19th century history see Fraser, 1978). In 1918 for example, the Glasgow Trades Council reported a membership of 214 unions and branches within the city, with 326 representative delegates. Similarly, the STUC conference held in Dunfermline in 1920, hosted 240 delegates claimed to represent over 550,000 organised members. This overall growth is detailed further in the two graphs (Figure 4.1/4.2) below.

The graphs below illustrate the overall growth within the trade union movement in Scotland during the early twentieth century. Fluctuations between 1919 and 1923 are reflective of growing unemployment following the First World War but are perhaps also representative of a more accurate data set emerging regarding organised workers during the 1920s. The overall trend, though, shows significant growth within the labour movement during the research period of this thesis and this was matched by the strength of the Glasgow Trades and Labour Council movement. Their annual reports provided less regular data regarding membership but still provided data showing how the council represented between 80,000 members in 1912 and grew to 122,920 in 1921 (including ILP, BSP and Fabian Society members).

Such evidence begins to indicate the potential leverage of the trade union movement within Clydeside and Scotland. It suggests a significant growth in organising potential for workers during the early twentieth century and, as Cumbers et al. (2014) have discussed, it reveals how 'labour must be viewed as an ever-present obstacle to processes of commodification and it is labour's ability to continually threaten accumulation processes that leads to offensive capitalist strategies (eg neoliberalism, deindustrialisation, new spatial fixes, etc)' (Cumbers et al., 2014:53). As labour geographers have stressed, these obstacles to capital accumulation are inherently spatial and the analysis below centres upon the multiple forms of labour agency within Clydeside. These acts and communications reveal labour to be a significant actor within the spatial politics of the region. The brief analysis, which follows,

considers areas in which the organised labour asserted itself within political and economic relations on Clydeside.

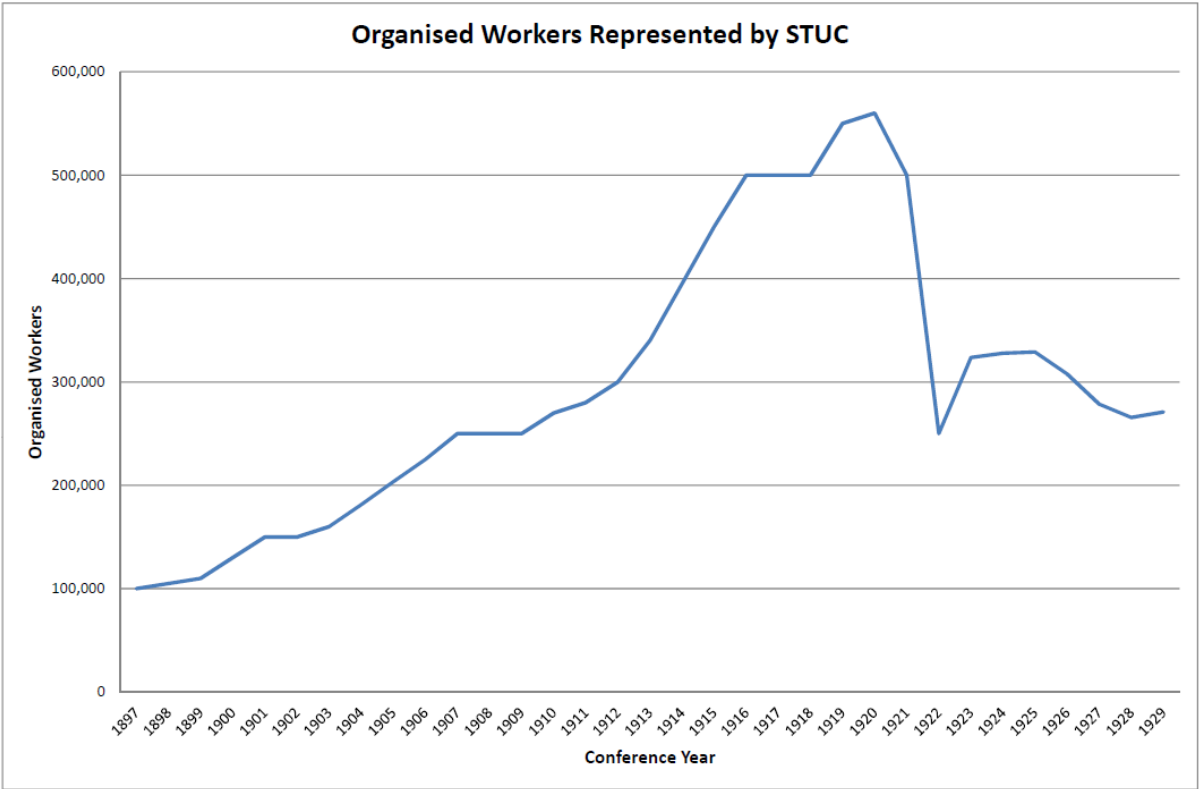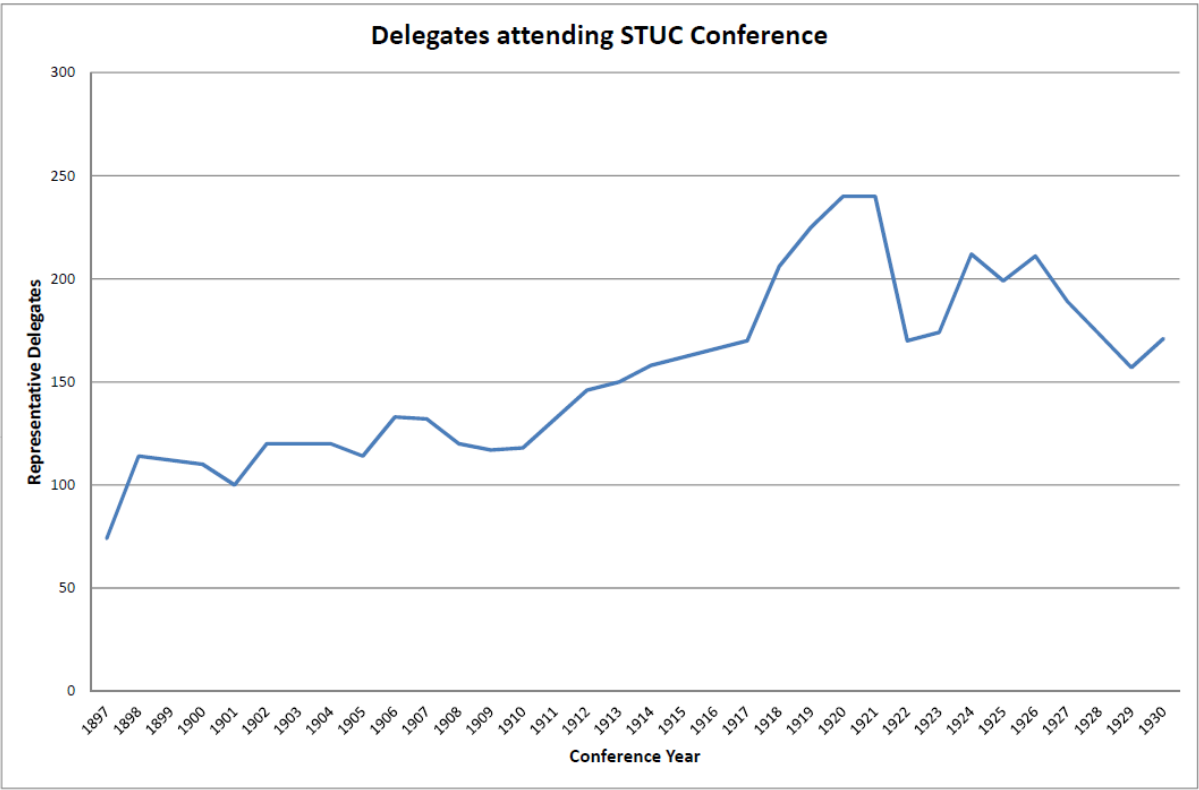Figure 4.1 Growth in Scottish Trade Unionism

Figure 4.2 Representative Delegates attending STUC

The Glasgow Trades Council represented a variety of trades within the city, including bottle makers, glaziers, dock labourers, municipal employees, steel and iron workers and sailors. This diversity reflected a developing new unionism emergent during the early twentieth century with Trades Councils increasingly including 'unskilled' trades (see Fraser, 1978:8). This increasingly diverse composition of the Trades Council was reflected in the plurality of their activities, which are evident through their annual summaries of activities and their resolutions made (which were forwarded to the Industrial committee for the agenda of the STUC). They reflected the continuing contestation of the conditions within the city and revealed the multiple struggles engaged upon by the unions. These would often centre upon housing, wages and working conditions but also engaged with broader political issues such as taxation and insurance. The example below illustrates some of the resolutions made on housing and working conditions at the conferences between 1918 and 1920:

Housing

That this Congress calls upon the Government to prohibit the demolition of habitable houses and their conversion into business premises and picture houses, etc., during the present dearth of housing accommodation.
Rent Restriction (Amendment) Act, 1919.

That this Congress demands that the restriction on landlords from evicting tenants, which is removed after July, 1920, according to the Rent Restriction (Amendment) Act, 1919, be immediately restored.
(Glasgow Trades and Labour Council, *Annual Report*, 1919-20: p.8)

Shorter Working Week

That this Conference, for the purpose of reabsorbing the sailors and soldiers into civil life, and giving greater leisure to the working classes, demands the reduction of hours by legislative enactment to a maximum of 40 hours per week, preferably 5 days a week of 8 hours each.
(Glasgow Trades and Labour Council, *Annual Report,* 1918-19: p.6-7)

The summaries above reflected the shared views of council members from a variety of trades and were linked to particular negotiations and disputes (the housing and working hours struggles are discussed in the following chapters) within Clydeside. Individual trade union negotiations, disputes and gains were also evident within the annual reports. In 1918

for example, the council summarised the advances made by particular trade unions. Advances in wages were gained in the shipbuilding, engineering, and kindred trades with the workers in these trades given awards by the Committee on Production amounting to 8/- per week, and making a total of £1 per week in advances during the First World War. Similarly dock labourers received advances of £1 4/3, and carters between £1 3/- and £1 6- per week during the period of the war.

Despite apparent progress, these negotiations and disputes often illustrated the continual struggle against the conditions within the city and were rarely celebratory in tone. Instead their resolutions reflected the reality and difficulty of organising and making advances against the employer class. The advances gained by workers within the council were therefore continually contrasted with the increasing cost of living and changes to living conditions, particularly during the war:

> [W]orkers' standard of comfort has been considerably encroached upon, both with regard to lowering the purchasing power of wages, the difficulty in obtaining even inferior qualities and quantities of the necessaries of life, and the increase in the hours of labour, described as overtime.
> (Glasgow Trades Council *Annual Report*, 1917-18: p.28-9)

It is clear that unless the gains made by workers are considered alongside the increasing difficulties imposed by capital then the representation of labour geography becomes skewed in favour of their successes. Thus, it is important to acknowledge the difficulties in generating the struggle as these factors also reflect the strategies of capital (increasing hours, increasing the cost of living, etc.) to suppress the demands of labour.

The majority of this thesis is based upon the agency and experiences of labour but it should be noted that employers on Clydeside actively discouraged and suppressed labour resistance. This agency of capital was particularly notable during research in business archives where files relating to Clydeside employers reflected efforts to coordinate an employers association to combat the apparent threats of Bolshevism. In 1919 for example, following the Forty Hours Movement (considered in Chapter 5), the employers' response was particularly organised and strong. Lord Weir,[19] owner of Weir's in Cathcart, had significant links with the British government and in response to the growth of working

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[19] Lord William George Weir (1877-1959) – Scottish Director of Munitions (1915-16), Controller of Aeronautical supplies and a member of the Air Board (1917-18), Director General of Aircraft Production, Ministry of Munitions (1918) and Chairman of Advisory Committee on Civil Aviation (1919).

class movements, initiated a counter-movement for a reform of working class politics, claiming that:

> There was great need of Anti-Bolshevik endeavour on the Banks of the Clyde and in and around Glasgow and we were asked whether we could run a campaign of meetings with the object of educating the people as to the dangers likely to ensue from the adoption of the revolutionary notions which are being freely propagated.

> We have placed these facts before a number of recognised captains of industry, like Sir William Beardmore, Sir Alexander Gracie, Colonel John Denny and others and they have viewed the proposals put forward with warm approval:

(1) To increase the number of meetings at works gates during the luncheon interval and in the public squares and elsewhere in the evenings and Sunday.
(2) To freely distribute our literature, samples of which are enclosed.
(3) To establish classes for training of the local speakers, who shall be encouraged to speak at the meetings and appeal to their own class and thus help to maintain a continuity propaganda work in Glasgow and district.

> (Letter to the Reconstruction Society, 12th September 1919[20])

The proposals received financial backing from the employers, with a total of a quarter of a million pounds expected in the first six months. This combination of employers reveals class agency and collective interests from above whilst also indicative of the strength of organising from below. Their efforts are representative of a broader effort to suppress radical working class politics and reveal the difficulties of practicing labour activism during the early twentieth century. Anti-labour activities on Clydeside suppressed and punished many forms of political activity within the labour movement (see section 4.3 for examples during the Singer strike). The violence of George Square during 'Bloody Friday' in 1919[21], where police intervened and military forces occupied parts of the city, illustrated a sense of political panic attributed to Prime Minister Lloyd George (Melling, 1990:5), which was reflective of a general sense of a need to suppress further unrest by the state (see Foster, 1990, Craig, 2011). This wider political concern was commented upon by William Churchill who, speaking in 1918, claimed that the unrest was 'prominent in the

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[20] *Labour propaganda* (1919) Glasgow University Business Archive. William Douglas Weir collection. DC 096/3/4

[21] See Chapter 5 for more on the dispute which led to these clashes.

Clyde area more than in any other district during the whole course of the war' (Foster, 1990:33).

These activities begin to reveal the prevalence of anti-labour activities on Clydeside, which have been considered in further detail by McIvor and Paterson who expose how many of those involved with labour organising were subject to a 'hostile environment, suffering discrimination, victimisation and oppression from many quarters' (McIvor and Paterson, 1992:129). These activities are positioned here to contextualise the difficulties of generating struggles within early twentieth century Clydeside. These pressures are considered further through the Singer strike case study, which utilises oral histories to document the changing nature of work on Clydeside.

Despite these difficulties, the STUC were equally active during this period and their demands often emerged from those of the Trades Councils. The STUC was founded in 1897 following as meeting of Trades Councils who had previously been prevented from attending a Trades Union Congress (TUC) meeting. Their response was to establish a national union to coordinate their meetings as there had already been belief 'that not enough attention was paid to Scottish matters' (Fraser, 1974:23). The founding of the STUC took place following a conference called for by the Falkirk Trades Council and the STUC subsequently met annually to discuss and address the issues facing the unionised workers of Scotland. Tuckett has charted the history of the first eighty years of the organisation and describes the Congress as having:

> Roots in the activists amongst the working people in Scotland's shipyards, mines, engineering and textile industries and transport in land, sea and air, the Scottish TUC was finally to become recognised as the one authoritative voice of the country in virtually every sphere. Its founders were the forward-looking Socialist men and women whose vision of social change found unity with the activists in mine, mill and shipyard who were so painfully aware of their urgent need for self-defence. Most were to the fore in Scotland's many trades councils, then almost identical with the small townships, where the mass of working people could find ready expression of their immediate problems. Here were the indispensible grass roots, having a special significance in Scotland's unique circumstances...it was because of the importance of these never broken links that the Scottish TUC first began. (Tuckett, 1986:10)

The 'roots' described here begin to illustrate the significance of the co-ordination of a union acting at the Scottish level, but working across varying scales, and relates well to the

spatial debates initially raised. The combination of councils across Scotland facilitated the collaboration of demands from particular places and therefore the STUC often reflected the demands of the Trades Council by negotiating issues such as housing and working conditions. For example, their parliamentary committee pursued the housing issues highlighted in the previous Trades Council reports:

> The Rent Agitation
>
> Your Committee co-operated with the Scottish Labour Housing Association and other working-class bodies in the agitation against the imposition of increased rents. Property owners obtained power to increase rents last year by 37 ½ per cent. and to impose additional rates upon the tenants. There is not much good of striving for increased wages if these wages are simply to be handed over to the landlord or profiteer. Great interest was manifested in the agitation, and it was felt that to bring the matter to a climax a one-day's strike should be called as a protest against the increase of rents.
>
> (STUC *Annual Report*, 1921: p.38)

This strike took place on the 23rd August 1920 and resulted in action throughout Scotland, with the strike particularly noticeable in Edinburgh and Glasgow. The example of housing struggles illustrates the increasing importance of reproductive struggles to Clydeside's trade unionism and more broadly the co-ordinating capability of the national trade union organisation. Such struggles are engaged with further in Chapter 6 where the 1915 rent strike is considered. More broadly, this combination of struggles within and beyond the workplace link with Melling's (1990) wider argument regarding Red Clydeside and the need to combine such struggles within labour history but also broader currents within labour geography, which have encouraged dialogue between 'community' struggles and 'labour' disputes (see Wills, 2001). The issue of rent increases was common across all Trades Councils in Scotland but national action was co-ordinated through the STUC. These opening examples begin to illustrate the importance and development of trade unionism within early twentieth century Glasgow and Scotland.

4.2.1 Organised Labour and Parliamentary Politics

By 1918, the Trades Council was increasingly collaborating with the local Labour Party and agreed to form a joint committee (Glasgow Trades and Labour Council). This Joint Committee would facilitate the formation of a local Labour Party in each of the parliamentary divisions in Glasgow. The Trades Council were encouraged by this change,

suggesting that 'it will achieve in the near future closer co-operation and effective organisation of all the Labour forces in Glasgow' (Glasgow Trades Council *Annual Report*, 1918: p.33). Although perhaps a predictable link, this collaboration is important as it represents the clear political and broader networking intentions of the trade union movement during this period. Such combinations of political, economic and social activities are considered further in Chapter 6 and are raised here to consider the particular disputes of labour alongside broader political developments.

The 1920 ILP[22] Conference highlighted the prominence of Glasgow and Scotland in developing these links. The summary of George Kerr's (Secretary of the Glasgow Labour Party) welcoming comments to the conference makes this centrality clear:

> He had been reading some of the early history of the Independent Labour Party and found that the first ILP Conference was held in Bradford. He wondered why, because as he read the speeches at the first Conference he found it was quite easily captured by the Scottish members, and particularly by the Glasgow members. Their first Chairman was a Scotchman – their comrade Keir Hardie. Their first Secretary was a Glasgow man, and the Secretary of the Arrangements Committee of that Conference was a Glasgow man. He mentioned that as indicating that Scotland – and Glasgow in particular – had done a very great deal to the Independent Labour Party into the prominence it now occupied in the country.
> (Independent Labour Party *Annual Report,*[23] 1920: p. 47)

These comments reflected the significant level of political activity within Glasgow in the years preceding the conference. The ILP engaged with the trade union demands and direct actions, as introduced above, and were active within Clydeside resistances such as the anti-war movement, the rent strikes and the forty-hour movement, which connected with ILP activists. Through a combination of these labour movements and the work of political leaders, the ILP had many successes on Clydeside. Smyth (2000:49) has considered these developments further and indicated how, from having only a single candidate in the whole of Scotland representing Labour in 1900, the party developed to a position of strength towards the end of the First World War. Between 1900 and 1920, the ILP grew from 75 delegates to 400 as documented at the 1920 conference, held in Glasgow. Smyth has indicated how this growth was particularly marked in Scotland where the party gained an

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[22] For more details on the ILP and its role within Clydeside see McKinlay, A. and Morris, R. (eds) (1991) *The ILP on Clydeside.*
[23] Independent Labour Party Annual Report consulted at London School of Economics Archives, ILP 12/1.

expansion from 3,000 Scottish members in 117 branches in 1917 to 9,000 members in 192 branches by September 1918. This growth was reflected in the 1922 general election where the overall labour vote returned thirty seats (Young, 2009:186).

The reasoning for this growth is debatable, with questions regarding the significance of the Irish vote in developing this support (see McLean, 1983), but attachment to the broader labour movement and trade union disputes was crucial. As many Scottish labour historians (see Melling, 1991, Morris, 1991) have noted, an ILP presence was prominent in many of the struggles associated with Red Clydeside. The constitution of the ILP (ILP *Annual Report,* 1922: p.92) overlapped with the aims of the trade unions and again emphasised the importance of disseminating knowledge of socialist principles, obtaining control of national and local governing bodies, and assisting the development of trade union organisation. This broader sense of a developing socialism is evident throughout the ILP pamphlets during this time, which regularly linked industrial disputes, such as the Forty Hours Movement in 1919, with broader discussion of socialist principles. As will be introduced through the Singer strike and forthcoming chapters, such combination of worker identities and broader political allegiances were particularly prevalent during this period. These accounts of connections should not be limited to ILP affiliation and should instead be considered as representative of the links between economic and political spheres of labour's intervention.

Overall, this section has briefly introduced the wider trends and growth of Clydeside's organised labour and illustrated how it engaged with numerous issues across social, political and economic relations during this period. Structural and 'associational' forms of workers agency are evident here (see Wright 2001, Cumbers et al. 2014) with Clydeside trade unions making political and economic gains (through electoral success, rising wages and by demanding improved working and living conditions) whilst also developing further forms of co-operation (growing communications, growing membership, distribution of materials, etc.). Wright (2001:962) describes 'associational power' as 'the various forms of power that result from the formation of collective organizations of workers'. This interpretation provides a more open understanding of labour agency. When understood in this manner, labour can be considered as capable of challenging the fluidity of capital through a series of practices, which makes it similarly capable of acting across space. The agency of labour, though, is arguably most identifiable during direct actions and one example of this potentiality is considered in further detail below.

4.3 Unofficial Action: 1911 Singer Strike

The American owned Singer sewing machine factory moved from a smaller assembly shop in Glasgow to a much larger factory in Clydebank in 1885 and became a huge employer of workers on Clydeside. At its peak the factory employed approximately 12,000 workers (for more on the history of the Singer Company and its role in Clydebank see Glasgow Labour History Workshop, 1989). Singer was one of the first multi-national manufacturing companies and operated factories in Scotland and Russia (see Domosh, 2009). The workers within the Clydebank factory were prohibited from joining an official union and instead utilised 'unofficial' methods to resist. In March and April 1911, the factory workers took strike action following the dismissal of three women from the polishing department. This example of direct action is utilised below to explore the working conditions within Clydeside and to foreground the generative nature of the non-unionised labour politics during this time.

This approach, emphasising unofficial strategies, addresses recent comments by labour geographers, such as Lier (2007) and Rogaly (2009), suggesting that the field has privileged trade union organisations as the focus of workers' agency. In the case of the Singer strike, over 10,000 unorganised workers took significant direct action against a multinational corporation. In this regard, Domosh (2009) has developed understandings of scientific management by pursuing the geographies of Taylorism to foreground contrasts between its place-based implementations. Her work indicates how the strike at Singers in Clydebank reconfigured management techniques imposed from across the Atlantic. This ability for workers to contest their conditions is introduced below to indicate an early example of labour agency within Red Clydeside. Furthermore, the history of this period reveals that their tactics, strategies and overall political position was influenced by workers and activists beyond Clydeside and Scotland. The section also begins to explore how broader socialist networks and communications beyond the workplace influenced workers on Clydeside and by doing so provides a theme, which will be developed throughout the thesis.

4.3.1 Working Conditions

The archives relating to the Clydebank factory expose much about life working in the factory and reveal practices of unofficial organising. Oral histories identify the severity of working conditions and the difficulties in organising workers during the

years preceding and following the strike. Bill Lang[24] for example, when asked about working conditions replied 'Terrible!' Bill worked in the foundry of the factory and also described how 'Singers was a non union shop'. Similarly David Bennett[25], who joined Singer after the strike in October 1911 described how:

> I would say working conditions in Singers were very, very severe. You see you weren't allowed to have a cup of tea. You started from 7 in the morning until 12 and you couldn't even eat a piece and of course…Oh no they were very severe. We had one man, a Mr Gunn who used to go into the toilets and if he found a man smoking there he would give him the sack. Aye life was very severe.

> They could just sack you on the spot. There was no question about that.

> See if you were away…say maybe you left the house at six o clock to go and get the train a quarter past 6 to get down there at quarter to 7 – you had a good bit to walk, just to get in on time. Then after half past five you maybe got home about 20 past 6. Well it was past 7 o clock before you were able to go out. So you didn't get much entertainment…And then of course you worked on a Saturday until 12.30 and then I went into Glasgow News office again on at 5 o clock and worked again until 9.

Both interviews reflected upon the unlikelihood of organising workers within the non-unionised factory. They also revealed the increasing constraints placed on workers' time and mobility, which again illustrates the difficulty in organising any political movement. Bennett describes how he 'never knew a trade union in Singer. Not in my time' and Lang claims that 'they were nae union at all'. Lang also commented on the diversity of places that people would have to travel to work with 'men from Glasgow, there were men come from Dunbartonshire, Renfrewshire, y'know all worked in Singers.' These constraints begin to illustrate some of the difficulties experienced by the workers and similarly suppressive organisational conditions were experienced in other workplaces throughout Clydeside (see McIvor and Paterson, 1992). Devlin (1996:67) has argued that intensification as a process became a common response of British employers in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, whilst Glasgow Labour History Workshop (1996) identified how this was increasingly taking place across Clydeside through strategies such as unrealistic bonus systems, favouritism, introducing

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[24] Interview conducted by Hugh McGuinness and Arthur McIvor, 29th January, 1988. Held at Clydebank Library.
[25] Interview from Sunday 18th September 1988. Held at Clydebank Library.

machinery and cuts to piece rates. These reflections begin to address Mitchell's (2011) argument that labour geography's formation of labour agency must be situated in relation to the conditions imposed upon it.

These accounts of working conditions relate to the increasing deployment of scientific management and Taylorism across manufacturing industries during the early twentieth century, and provide insights into the changing working conditions and decreasing autonomy of workers. Harry Braverman (1974) indicates how these experiences were a result of changing management techniques, which caused an increasing alienation of labour. He describes how Taylorism was aimed towards 'the maximum or "optimum" that can be obtained from a day's labour power' (Braverman, 1974:97) and how this was achieved through managerial interference to intensify the labour process. This framing of changes to workplace practices is detailed further below and is useful to situate the overall significance of the labour movement on Clydeside. It also suggests how working practices were changing during the early twentieth century and, as McLean (1983:102) notes, similar approaches were being introduced elsewhere in the region, such as Weir's in Cathcart.

4.3.2 The Strike

Following the dismissal of three women, who were on 'time pay' and according to the *Forward* newspaper were 'inspector girls' in the polishing department, the expectation was that the remaining twelve women, who were on 'piece pay', would maintain the overall productivity levels. In response to this the majority of the approximately 12,000 workers in the factory took strike action on the 21st March 1911. An unofficial strike committee, representing 37 of the 41 departments, was quickly organised and made the following manifesto. This manifesto details the workers' grievances and the general discontent regarding working conditions:

> The particular grievance at present originated in the cabinet polishing department, where there were formerly 15 girls employed on a particular operation, 12 on piece and three on time rates – the collective weekly wage of the time girls being 44/, one at 16/ and two at 14/. These time girls being withdrawn, the remaining 12 girls on piece work were being compelled to do extra work, which meant an average weekly loss of 11/ in the firm's favour. This grievance is only the culminating point in a series of grievances, which extend back over the past five years, and affect almost all departments throughout the

factory. During that time there has been a demand for an increased output and also a higher standard of quality. There are various methods adopted to get this increased output, principally that of cutting the prices of the operators. This pernicious method of cutting the prices renders the position intolerable from the workers' point of view, in so far that the more expert a worker becomes the more liable he is to have his prices interfered with.

(*The Socialist*, May 1911, p.1)

The employer strategy of striving for greater efficiency was common practice within the American owned Singer factories, which were increasingly adopting scientific management techniques to control the workforce and particularly workers' time. The intimidating Singer factory clock for example, has been described as the 'non-human symbol of time discipline' (see Newbery, 2013). The use of piece rates in the scenario above also indicates a growing precariousness regarding workers' wages, which were now monitored by productivity. Workers' abilities were continually measured by the time taken to produce and were often compared against the output of the most efficient worker:

In many of the departments foremen stand with watches in their hands timing the men and girls so that the maximum amount of labour be exacted from the operative for the minimum wage … As it takes some of the operatives a dozen of years to perfect themselves in their work it will at once be sent hat a standard fixed on the basis of the maximum skill is detrimental to the average man.

(*Forward*, 1/4/1911, p.8)

The account in *Forward* replicates the Taylorist strategies described by Braverman (1974). Workers' time was a key controlling area for management and is identified by Braverman as a measurement tool used within scientific management in pursuit of maximum production. The time constraints imposed and the separation of 41 departments within the factory illustrates the continual drive towards efficiency at the expense and detriment of the 'average' worker within the factory. Braverman (1974:136) described how the effects of this drive for efficiency resulted in a separation between 'conception' and 'execution' for workers and resulted in production units that 'operate like a hand, watched, corrected and controlled by a distant brain' (Braverman, 1974:125). Despite this increasingly alienating experience, he indicates how workers regularly opposed the increasing drive for efficiency by

critiquing their deskilling and changing conditions, as was the case at the Singer strike of 1911.

In response to the changes within their factory, workers at Singer placed particular emphasis on 'Collective Bargaining' in their manifesto and stressed that 'collective bargaining is essential to the workers maintaining the position that will enable them to negotiate on equal terms with the management' (*The Socialist*, May 1911, p.1). This statement was made in the awareness that the management currently 'repudiate this right'. The organising involved linked the use of scientific management and working conditions to the dismissal of women from the polishing department, contributing towards a large movement, which was well co-ordinated but never considered to be official as no trade union was recognised within the factory. Despite the lack of recognition, the strike committee conducted regular meetings, generated significant media attention and maintained a strike that gathered support from 37 of the 41 Singer departments and resulted in the loss of 141,000 working days for the employers.[26]

Women played a crucial role within Singer, with the strike committee's manifesto clearly positioning the female polishers at the centre of the dispute. Glasgow Labour History Workshop (1989) has discussed how (often young) women workers formed a significant proportion of the strike committee and that two women were present on negotiating delegations (7 workers in total) to Singer management. Their presence was also noted by local media reports that described how women on strike were 'specially demonstrative in their attitude towards suspected blacklegs' (*Glasgow Herald* 23rd March cited in Glasgow Labour History Workshop, 1989:45). This prominence of women labour activists was not uncommon during the Red Clydeside period and reflected a growing politicisation of women (see Breitenbach and Gordon, 1992, Arnot, 1999). Rawlinson and Robinson (1996), for example, note the prominence of organised women workers during the United Turkey Red strike at Vale of Leven in 1911. Unfortunately, though, there is little detailed record of the experiences of women workers, aside from strike leaders, but their role must be noted within this unofficial labour geography.

The strike lasted for three weeks, with significant new leaders emerging from Clydebank, in particular Jane Rae, Fanny Abbott, Arthur McManus and Tom Bell who

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[26] Source: Board of Trade Annual Reports on Strikes and Lock-Outs: Board of Trade, Labour Gazette, 1910-14

all went on to hold important roles within the labour movement.[27] The strike was praised by the *Glasgow Evening News* for its peaceful nature. Bill Lang also comments on the peaceful nature of the strike and remembers how he spent much of the strike going on long walks. The workers gained significant support and regular updates were provided in the *Forward* newspaper. Other local newspapers provided regular updates on the strike and comments from those striking. The *Glasgow Evening Times* (22/3/1911, p.4) for example, highlighted that approximately 10,000 were idle and that strikers had described the movement as 'not so much a demand…but a resistance'.

After three weeks of strike action the Singer employers (for more on the employer's response to the strike in Clydebank and also links with the Podolsk Factory in Russia see Domosh 2008) sent postcards to individual workers asking them if they would return to work. The majority accepted, although over 4,000 rejected, and a return to work was agreed. The strike committee viewed this as an undermining strategy, which targeted the strike's weakness – that it held no official recognition – and strike organisers were soon victimised by their employers. Following the resumption of work on April 10th, the strike initiators alongside 400 workers were dismissed from employment. The significance of the strike on Clydebank was notable and is still remembered today but also revealed much about the broader influences present on Clydeside as the strike began to intersect with the activities of particularly radical and transitory figures from beyond Clydeside as is discussed below.

4.3.3 Broader Connections and Organisation: Industrial Workers of Great Britain

Despite the clear time and spatial constraints placed on the workers organising, the above actions were not simply spontaneous or reactionary. They reflected the activities and labour of politically minded workers who were circulating socialist material, including *The Socialist* newspaper (10,000 copies were regularly printed), and conducting meetings with factory workers. The newspaper became a key resource in detailing struggles within the Clydebank factory whilst also providing information on the transnational activities of the Singer Company. These less official connections,

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[27] Jane Rae became secretary of the Clydebank branch of the ILP. Fanny Abbot was a founder member of the Sunday Socialist School and worked closely Glasgow Labour Party MPs. Arthur McManus was an active member within the Clyde Workers Committee and later joined and chaired the Communist Party of Great Britain. Tom Bell was a member of the Social Democratic Federation and became a leading member of the Socialist Labour Party.

imaginaries and labour geographies are equally important within labour history and have been less well recognised within accounts of Scottish labour history.

Tom Bell, a worker and activist at Singer during the strike, later reflected on the political material being circulated amongst workers:

> The dull, deadening influence of this factory, the unbridle exploitation, etc. was favourable soil for the new ideas of industrial unionism. Factory gate meetings were held, literature sold, and study classes begun. Soon contacts were extended inside and it was not long before every department had a small group. The Advocates[28] had passed the stage of mere propaganda. It had to assume responsibilities for organising workers. And this it did, changing its name to the I.W.G.B. – the Industrial Workers of Great Britain – and assuming the role of a new union. (Bell, 1941:73)

Bell commented on how membership began to increase during this period and suggests that 4,000 Singer workers (other newspapers suggested over 1,000) were members of the Industrial Workers of Great Britain (IWBG). This form of unofficially organised labour was clearly influenced by the links between the Socialist Labour Party (SLP) and the American Industrial Workers of the World (IWW). In his book, *Pioneering Days*, Bell spends considerable time reflecting on this influence. Elsewhere, in a letter to the SLP, Bell stressed that 'it is necessary that the workers should be organised on the political as well as on the industrial field'.[29] This politicisation of labour emerged from the methods raised by Bell above, such as distributing literature and running study groups, which were central to the disputes on Clydeside and emerged in diverse ways, in this case as a challenge to existing forms of trade unionism.

The IWGB was established following Bell and Arthur McManus's experiences with James Connolly[30] within the SLP. Bell had toured Scotland with Connolly before Connolly travelled to America and became connected with the IWW. This collaboration reflected the links between the SLP and the developing IWW and led to the Advocates and subsequently the IWGB to take a more radical position on labour organising:

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[28] The Advocates of Industrial Unionism started at a conference in Glasgow in 1905, under the influence of the of the launch of the first IWW at the International convention in Chicago, June 27th, 1905.

[29] See Tait and Watson Library, University of Stirling, MS 41 / TAIT Socialist Labour Party (1903-) Letter from Thomas Bell (6/6/08) to SLP

[30] James Connolly was an Irish republican and Socialist leader. Before travelling to Ireland he spent considerable time in Scotland and America and is cited by many Red Clydesiders as a key influence. He was later executed in May 1916 following his leadership role in the Easter Rising in Dublin.

THE TRADES UNIONS AID EMPLOYING CLASS TO MISLEAD THE WORKERS IN THE BELIEF THAT THE WORKING CLASS HAVE INTERESTS IN COMMON WITH THEIR EMPLOYERS

These sad conditions can be changed and the interests of the working class upheld only by an organisation formed in such a way that all its members in any one industry or in all industries, if necessary, cease work whenever a strike of lock-out is on in any department thereof, thus making *an injury to one an injury to all*. (Authors own emphasis)

(The Objectives of the Advocates of Industrial Unionism, 1905 in Bell, 1941:72)

The final line of these objectives was utilised by the Singer strikers during the 1911 dispute and the merits of industrial unionism referred to regularly. The internationalism of the IWW movement is well documented with Renshaw highlighting how the IWW influenced movements 'not only in English-speaking countries, like Canada, Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa but in Mexico and some South American states, and also in Norway and Sweden' (Renshaw, 1967:5). The international emphasis within the SLP was particularly notable within their own Socialist Labour Press publications, which distributed pamphlets across Britain on De Leonism and industrial unionism.[31] Many accounts suggest that Connolly was present during the Singer strike but the evidence of the strikes suggests that he was not involved. The overall influence of Connolly and the industrial unionism of the IWW were less direct than this but remained vital within the broader imaginary of the 'unofficial' labour movement.

Schmidt and van der Walt, who have considered the splits within the American IWW and the ways in which their ideas travelled and connected with understandings of syndicalism and anarchism, have explored these radical networks further. They include Connolly within their accounts and illustrate how he stressed 'revolutionary industrial unionism' during his time within Scotland and Ireland (Schmidt and van der Walt, 2009:163). Their analysis is important as it indicates how labour politics can be refigured to include broader spatial networks of influence. From a more geographical position, Featherstone (2013:78-83) has illustrated the inventive and multi-continental strategies of the IWW, which centred on an understanding of 'One Big Union' and less

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[31] See Tait and Watson Library, University of Stirling, MS 41 / TAIT Socialist Labour Party (1903-) for pamphlets such as *What is Socialism?*, *Closed Shop – Open shop: The Twin Opposites of Capitalism* and *Unemployment*.

around divisions regarding skill within the labour movement. He also indicates how members of the IWW regularly contested more exclusionary practices, such as racism, within the trade union movement internationally. Such appeals to a broader sense of what constitutes labour collectives were clearly effective during the Singer strike with references to industrial unionism and critiques of other trade unions made within the linked newspapers (e.g. see *The Socialist,* June, 1911). This was particularly important within a non-unionised workplace.

These multiple political influences and translocal labour connections were significant trajectories within Red Clydeside. Accounts such as Bell's (1941:59) make regular reflection on broader communications beyond workplace communities, such as his reference to the return of trade unionist Archie Crawford[32] from South Africa as a significant influence on the industrial unionism of Clydeside. McLean (1983:103) has suggested that there was limited interest towards the intellectualism of the SLP and its surrounding press during the strike. Whilst this was perhaps true in some cases, his account dismisses the emerging geographies and radical labour politics within the Singer movement. The sources considered above reveal spatial connections and influences amongst non-unionised workers and begin to illustrate the possibilities for transnational syndicalist cultures, correspondence and solidarities.

Overall, the Singer strike has been introduced to illustrate the diversity of labour activity on Clydeside. The labour history of this period should not be restricted to the official trade union historical narrative and should instead consider the multiple politics of labour activity within and beyond the workplace (as is explored further in Chapter 6). The workers at Singer never became unionised and many lost their jobs, but remaining workers did receive several concessions in the years following the strike (educational and recreational groups were established and many parts of Clydebank began to reflect a 'company town', see Domosh, 2009). The resistance during 1911 indicated broader links and influences within a seemingly localised dispute and this understanding of the ability of labour to forge relational connections is considered further below.

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[32] For more on the life of Crawford see Kenefick (2010). He was linked to contesting white labourism in South Africa during the early twentieth century and produced the publication 'Voice of Labour'. Kenefick also links Crawford's international experiences to his syndicalism.

4.4 Internationalisms and Labour Geographies

4.4.1 Forms of Trade Union Internationalism

To develop a more critical perspective on the spatial politics of this period an engagement with broader labour solidarities and communications is required. Here the chapter considers contrasting translocal influences on the labour movement within Clydeside to explore some less acknowledged connections, in a similar manner to the Singer strike connections with broader IWW networks. In this regard, the section engages with a more critical and nuanced construction of the nation and popular politics as proposed by Partha Chatterjee's (1999, 2004) engagement with Benedict Anderson's work on 'imagined communities'. Chatterjee suggests an understanding whereby popular politics are viewed as reflecting multiplicity and global connections, stressing a difficulty in differentiating between what Anderson describes as 'bound' (measurable categories of classification for governance) and 'unbound' (more imagined and narrated universals) serialities.

Chatterjee contends that these serialities continually intersect through particularities, which produces solutions that are 'always strategic, contextual, historically specific, and inevitably, provisional' (Chatterjee, 2004:22). Such an approach, which stresses the lived experience of nationalism, reveals possibilities for exclusions, as 'politics here does not mean the same thing to all people' (Chatterjee, 1999:132). This understanding can also be applied to labour movements whereby questions of universality and particularity are central within their making. For this chapter, Chatterjee's emphasis on the provisional nature of such 'imagined communities' allows the broader influences associated with labour internationalism to be considered alongside particular disputes. This perspective also allows a more nuanced reading of what counts as labour internationalism through its attention to the more provisional nature of the making of connections. Thus, the chapter engages with aspects of the Clydeside labour movement that addressed international labour issues in a variety of ways.

Trade union internationalism has received considerable discussion in recent years with important contributions emerging from labour geographers (Castree, 2000, Waterman and Wills, 2001, Cumbers et al., 2008, etc.). This work has revealed the contrasting spatial strategies of labour in negotiating demands internationally whilst also debating the need for labour to upscale (Anderson, 2009) particular disputes. This 'cut' focuses on four aspects of international solidarity present within the history of Red Clydeside. Firstly, internationalism is briefly considered through basic forms of the making of financial

support across varying distances. Secondly, the section briefly discusses links between Clydeside and Ireland to explore a complexity within the Clydeside working class presence. Thirdly, the section highlights two international influenced demonstrations within Glasgow to illustrate the broader support and engagement with internationalisms amongst workers. Finally, the section considers the role of broader communications and challenges to imperialism through an analysis of developing intersections between Scottish and Indian labour activists. These activities are not viewed as developing separately to the demands explored above or elsewhere but instead as contributing to the overall aims of the labour movement.

4.4.2 Financial Assistance

The STUC annual reports highlight a broader internationalism through communications made by their members. In 1916, William Hughes, the Prime Minister of Australia, visited the STUC, whilst American, South African, French and Canadian delegates also visited in the first two decades of the twentieth century. Furthermore, the establishment and distribution of *International Notes* (produced by the International Federation of Trade Unions) amongst the trade unions of Scotland was produced as an attempt to increase the international awareness of the workers (in 1926 - 17 councils purchased 623 copies). Such international communication and distribution of related documents facilitated a practical engagement from the STUC with issues beyond their own national boundaries:

German Trade Union Fund

The Management Committee of the International Federation of Trade Unions advised us in November that "The conditions in Germany are become worse and worse. The German people, and especially the German workers, are suffering terrible privations.

We considered the circumstances demanded immediate action and the following appeal was issued throughout Scotland. At the same time we subscribed twenty-five pounds from the funds at our disposal to the International Federation's Fund and undertook to bear expenses incurred by the issue of the appeal.
(STUC *Annual Report*, 1924: p.46)

In response £282 9/7 was subscribed from the Congress, which illustrated continued solidarity with the German trade unions throughout later annual meetings. These relationships forged between workers across varying scales begin to illustrate a broader

solidarity that is rarely commented upon within Scottish labour history. This regularly resulted in a showing of support for particular struggles or the raising of funds to assist working class struggle beyond the STUC's national context. Such connections begin to re-imagine and unsettle nationalised visions of Scottish working class history and reveals international solidarities. Similar links were also developed with the workers of Ireland through the STUC whereby delegates would form connections amongst the workers of each country and begin to highlight and raise shared issues.

4.4.3 Working Class Composition and Irish Workers

Financial assistance was the most tangible modality of internationalism within the trade union records, as seen again in 1914, where the Glasgow Trades Council discussed and forwarded their position on Ireland and the Dublin strikes and lock-out. As is detailed below, the financial assistance was also part of wider solidarity with Irish labour:

> That this meeting of the Glasgow Trades' Council protests most empathetically against what appears on the face of it, the most lawless and unwarranted attacks upon peaceful citizens at Dublin, on Sunday 31st August, and at St. Austell, Cornwall, on Monday 1st September, by the police and calls upon the Chief Secretary for Ireland and the Home Secretary for Great Britain to immediately institute a Committee shall include representatives of the Trades Union movement.

> This resolution was forwarded to the Prime Minister, Home Secretary, Lord Aberdeen (Viceroy of Ireland) and Mr.A.Birrell, and the Labour Party.
> (Glasgow Trades Council *Annual Report*, 1914: p.23)

The Dublin strike was a fierce confrontation between capital and labour (for more on this dispute see O'Connor, 2011) and the Glasgow Trades Council expressed political loyalty and made financial donations to their fellow workers in Ireland. Acts like this reflected solidarity from Glasgow activists to the Irish workers and foregrounded a wider perspective of the working class within Glasgow. Financial support was provided from the STUC during the dispute, with the Kirkcaldy conference in 1914 donating a total of £867 18 10 to the strike movement through the Dublin strike fund.

This solidarity with Irish workers was perhaps unsurprising given the large number of Irish migrant workers and labour activists moving to Glasgow during the nineteenth and early twentieth century. The Irish experience and broader links between Irish and Clydeside radicalism has been well considered within Scottish labour history (Wood, 1978, 1980,

Young, 1992b) and is introduced here to nuance understandings of the working class presence during this period. The Irish working population on Clydeside and their role within the labour movement has been of much debate within Scottish labour history. Smith (1983) has considered their impact upon labour politics on Clydeside in comparison to the Liverpool labour movement and suggested that sectarianism was far less prevalent during the early twentieth century in Glasgow and that this encouraged stronger links between Irish workers and the established labour movement.

This claim correlates with the trade union records consulted during archival research where religious sectarianism was strikingly absent. Despite this absence of tension within trade union documentation, it should be noted that Irish migrant workers were regularly subjected to exclusionary practices by employers. Labour historians have detailed the harsh working and living conditions experienced by Irish migrants (see Foster et al., 2011) who occupied primarily unskilled or 'at best semi skilled roles' within the labour market (see Smyth, 2000:129). Sectarianism was also prevalent within job recruitment practices with employers often questioning potential employees what school they had attended to identify religious backgrounds before deciding on who to employ (see H. Savage, 2006, Dudgeon, 2009). These practices were not limited to employers, though, with more skilled workers, in particular foremen who were allowed to fire and hire workers, allowing religious affiliation to be used to police the boundaries of skill (see Knox, 1999:166). Trade unions would rarely challenge these practices with Knox indicating links how branches of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers (ASE) members would meet in Orange Halls, which meant that the chances of Catholics receiving engineering apprenticeships were highly unlikely (see also McShane, 1978). Although grounded in workplace divisions, Knox also suggests that these divisions would often result in tensions regarding more social and cultural matters such as sporting rivalries and leisure activities.

Political discussion regarding Irish nationalism, Catholicism and Clydeside's labour movement were particularly prominent during the inter-war years, as recognised by Wood (1980) in his discussion of the Irish Catholic and Clydeside labour leader John Wheatley, and disagreements over this relationship were common. Wheatley, for example, was highly critical of the Glasgow based labour paper *Forward's* support for the partition of Ireland in 1921. Despite these disagreements, religious sectarianism was not a visible force within the official records of the labour movement although, as already noted, more recreational hostilities (religious celebrations were sometimes triggers for violence, see Wood, 1978:69) would occur within the working class presence. This trend was broken during the

1930s where extreme forms of Protestantism (Gallacher, 1985) became more of a political force and sectarianism became prominent within traditionally working class parts of the city.

In terms of working class housing patterns within Clydeside, there was notable segregation amongst the more rural mining communities (such as Airdrie and Coatbridge) between Catholics and Protestants. It is notable, though, that the inner city areas of Glasgow (such as Govan and Kinning Park) were marked by their mix of both catholic and protestant Irish immigrants (see Foster et al., 2011). Inner city sectarianism is generally considered to be less prevalent in Glasgow during the early twentieth century than in Belfast or Liverpool. Thus, this research takes seriously the inequalities in living standards experienced by the Irish migrants and acknowledges the possibilities for tensions amongst workers, but suggests that more exclusionary or sectarian political practices were more prevalent within the decades following 1934. Thus, the following chapters discuss connections and solidarities between Clydeside's and Ireland's labour movements and activists rather than focusing on sectarian divides.

4.4.4 International Demonstrations

International connections are also visible within Clydeside labour demonstrations. In May 1917 for example, over 200 Russian sailors, from a warship lying in the Clyde, participated in a march of over 25,000 Glasgow citizens at Glasgow Green. The demonstration, organised by the Glasgow Trades Council, the Glasgow Labour Party, and the ILP, formed part of a broader movement against the First World War (discussed further in Chapter 6) and demanded that the Government 'take effective means to deal with the Food Problem by taking over all supplies and setting up local committees to be responsible for the equitable distribution of food' (*Forward*, 2/6/1917, p. 3). The Trades Council continually campaigned on the 'food problem' as part of a wider struggle against the 'cost of living' during the war and highlighted in their annual reports how food prices had increased by 106% between 1914 and 1917.[33] The May demonstration also protested against the granting of the freedom of the city to Lloyd George (Prime Minister of the United Kingdom) and wage increases to the higher paid town council officials. During the demonstration the Russian sailors were presented with a red flag and they presented a memorial steamer to the Clydesiders in return. One of the Russian sailors also spoke at one of the platforms at Glasgow Green alongside Emanuel Shinwell (Chairman of the Trades

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[33] Glasgow Trades Council *Annual Report*, 1917, p.35

Council). These periodic international connections within Clydeside combined with the specific activities of the organising labour bodies and introduce a previously downplayed diversity to the direct actions during this period.

In this regard, the Trades Council illustrated a similarly strong international engagement with direct action relating to the contested position of migrant labour in South Africa in 1904. This demonstration introduces the complexities of labour internationalisms and the tensions uncovered through more relational understandings of labour politics:

> Chinese cheap labour has been introduced into South Africa under conditions which are neither more nor less slavery. It will be remembered that the pretext of the present Government for going to war with the Transvaal Government was to secure to the Uitlanders there the franchise, so that they could have a say in the administration of their country. When the war had been in progress for some time the Government declared their intention of retaining the country, and in justification of this action on their part they held out the bait that it would open out an immense field for British labour, and give employment to large numbers of our own workmen. Yet, after having sacrificed 25,000 lives, and expended £250,000,000 of British money, the net result is the introduction of cheap Chinese slave labour. In view of this action on the part of the Government the Council decided to make a vigorous protest. For this purpose a Committee was appointed to arrange for a public demonstration. This was held on Saturday, 18th June, 1904 and comprised Trades Councils, Trades Unions, Co-operative societies, ILP, Social Democratic Federation, Clarion Scouts, Clarion Cycling club, and Ward Committees.
> (Glasgow Trades Council *Annual Report*, 1904: p.18)

Kirk (2003:183) has also considered the situation in the Transvaal and illustrated how 60,000 Chinese workers had been contracted to the mines. He has analysed how British labour had strong concerns over the employment of 'slave labour' and argues that this challenge towards the British Government was based upon an approach, which was more concerned with the 'cheapness of their labour power' rather than their race. Similar concerns were clearly at the forefront of the minds of organised labour on Clydeside but tensions regarding race and class remained.

The *Glasgow Herald* (20/6/1904, p.8) for example, highlighted the contrasting position within the movement, with one placard stating 'Slavery abolished in British Empire 1833, reinstituted 1904'. Another placard, though, emphasised links to those who had

fought in the Boer War, with one former soldier holding a placard, which said 'We have dyed the veldt red; they are now painting it yellow.' This reference to the painting of South Africa yellow introduces racialised discourses within Clydeside's labour movements. This tension has been summarised by Johns (1998:252) as being 'between space and class' and introduces some 'mixed messages' into the internationalism of Red Clydeside. Such ambiguity between class interests and spatial connections are explored in more detail in a later section of this chapter but more importantly here they begin to illustrate the complexity of the intersections between race, class and the formations of a more internationally connected labour movement.

The demonstration itself moved across the city of Glasgow and concluded in Glasgow Green to pass the following resolution unanimously:

> That we citizens of Glasgow and District, in meeting assembled on Glasgow Green, while recognising no distinction of race, creed, or colour in the labour movement, hereby enter our protest against the importation of forced, fettered and cheap labour into South Africa; such importation being a violation of the principles of Trade Unionism, upon which the Labour movement, and the social and economic progress of all countries is based.
>
> (Glasgow Trades Council *Annual Report*, 1904: p.18)

This is one of the first pieces of evidence of organised Clydeside labour engaging with a contentious and developing issue relating to international labour migration flows. Their protestations against the employment of Chinese labour illustrated a strong working class solidarity formed on a rights based position. Their demands suggested a nationalistic right to work within South Africa, which is undermined by the introduction of cheaper foreign alternatives. The organised labour position, alongside other key political groups present on Clydeside, challenged the Government and protested against their policy of employing cheap imported labour (a key capitalist strategy). This significant protest against the importation of foreign labour proved a key political debate within the union structures over the next two decades as will be explored later in the chapter through the seafarers' unions. These trade union interventions suggested possibilities for a more progressive labour internationalism but also imply many possible tensions regarding protectionist positions.

4.4.5 Scottish Workers and Connections with India

One of the most notable connections to emerge from the trade union archives was discussion regarding the conditions and experiences of Indian workers. These

communications begin to indicate labour's ability to develop communications across varying scales whilst are indicating a less well recognised relationship constructed by Scottish workers. The STUC annual reports provide the first example of this developing relationship between seemingly distanced workers in India and Scotland. As early as the 1909 annual conference in Dunfermline, Mr John F. Sime (Jute and Flax Workers Union, Dundee) moved the following:

> That this congress is of the opinion that the draft Indian Factory Labour Commission, 1908, is utterly inadequate to deal with the admitted evils existing in Indian Textile Factories, and that it be an instruction to the Parliamentary Committee to draw up amendments to the proposed act, with a view to reducing the number of hours of labour and embodying the suggestions submitted by T M'Nair, in his minority report.
> (STUC *Annual Report*, 1909: p.64)

This identification of workers' conditions in India and a specific demand for change illustrates connections between labour movements of Scotland and India. The trade union discussion provided above was then implemented in the following year. In 1910, the STUC announced that amendments from the discussion 'have been completed and embodied in a memorandum and forwarded to the Secretary of State for the home department, the Secretary of State for India, the Labour Party and Mr James O'Grady, MP'. This national level of communication is the first identifiable instance of connections with India through the forming of demands for the workers of the country. These links and connections are present later within Clydeside when the 1919 Strike Bulletin (discussed in Chapter 5) provides updates from a similar strike of the mill workers in Bombay at the same time.

The first official delegate representing India to visit the STUC occurred at the 1922 conference in Edinburgh. Dr K S Bhat, representing the All-India Trades Union Congress through its agency in Britain, the Workers Welfare League of India, spoke about the problems facing the international union and workers movements:

> Indian workers are today at the throat of the Scottish workers through the manipulation of one set of workmen against another...Don't fight yourselves. If you have been made to suffer through your fellow worker, do retaliate when his turn comes to be hit. We are fighting to organise the Indian workers so as to come absolutely in line with you.
> (STUC *Annual Report*, 1922: p.83)

The warnings from Dr Bhat, identifying the possible conflict that will arise from international competition between Scotland and India, provided the Scottish delegates with a new issue to discuss. He specifically engaged with the transfer of work from Dundee to India and exposed the problems facing the distanced workers and introduced a new spatiality of labour politics for the union representatives to consider. The fraternal delegate in 1923/24 was Shapurji Saklatvala, anti-imperialist and a Communist MP, who again emphasised this warning by highlighting that 'there were enough dividends in India, South Africa and China to make Capitalists independent of British Labour'.

Saklatvala was a key figure within British Asian and left politics (Visram, 2002:304). He arrived in England in 1905 and was a strong campaigner to improve Indian labour conditions. He worked across different political parties, including the ILP, Communist Party and Labour Party, and this led to connections with Red Clydeside activists (as will be discussed in Chapter 6). During his time in Britain he developed strong connections with Indian workers primarily through the Workers Welfare League of India. In 1924, Saklatvala also sent a letter to the Glasgow *Forward* where he stated his position on Indian labour and provided a strong corrective to previous reports in the newspaper. A Scottish socialist correspondent had previously argued that 'Indian labour is dumb, ignorant apathetic, in no way concerned with politics' and 'if India obtained Self-Government it would merely mean the exploitation of the Indian workers by Indian Capitalists instead of British'. Saklatvala's response was to challenge this representation of the distanced workers:

The British Exploitation of India

The Oppression of the Indian Worker

The fight in India is essentially and undoubtedly a fight of the workers and peasants against British Capitalists. There is not much fight between British Capitalists and Indian Capitalists. The Indian Capitalist is a *protégé* (and a henchman) of the British Capitalist.
(*Forward*, 15/3/1924, p.5)

His letter continues by detailing the ownership of Indian workplaces and the experiences and conditions of the Indian workers. This letter was part of a growing series of articles reporting on the position of Indian labour and peasants within the Glasgow *Forward*. These updates and Saklatvala's work, alongside Indian representative visits to the STUC, provided important information for the working class of Glasgow in positioning

themselves internationally. Saklatvala's arguments challenged false interpretations of the labour and conditions in British colonial India and encouraged international solidarity between the workers. In his letter he was also critical of the European labour movement:

> The European Trade Unionists and Socialists who went out by the hundreds every year during the last 50 years have done nothing whatsoever to create a conscious working class movement or organisation. Indian political agitators are political agitators of the kind and quality to be found in any other country.
> (*Forward*, 15/3/1924, p.5)

Saklatvala positions Indian labour as explicitly political here and as part of a broader labour movement, challenging common misjudgements of colonial labour as being apolitical and unorganised. These works also illustrate a diverse and contested politicisation of foreign labour alongside the presence of Indian working class politics within Clydeside and Scotland.

These arguments link to Chakrabarty's (2000:15) analysis of the early history of Bengal's Jute industry, which he suggests 'cannot be read separately from that of the industry at Dundee'. He goes on to detail the role Scottish entrepreneurialism within India primarily through the large influx of Dundonian jute supervisors, managers and engineers (known as the 'Dundee school') who travelled to work in Bengal. He also considers how the industrial rivalry between the regions caused fluctuation in each other's markets, with the Bengal industry prospering for a period during the early twentieth century whilst the Dundee industry increasingly had to specialise production. Cox (2013) has also considered these connections and shown how the vulnerability and marginality of labour within the industry was often similar within Bengal and Dundee. He considers labour connections between Scotland and India and refers to a visit of Dundee trade unionist John Sime and Labour MP Thomas Johnston to Bengal between late 1925 and early 1926 (see Cox, 2013:126). He reveals how labour activists grappled the complexities of imperialism and how the outcomes of these engagements led to disagreements within Scotland. Johnston for example, was a prominent activist within the Labour party regarding colonial labour, in particular regarding the use of sweated conditions, but he also pledged support to the 'Imperial Preference' and linked policies to maintaining, rather than threatening, the British Empire (see Cox, 2013:141-151). This political ambiguity regarding international issues was common during the early twentieth century and is considered further in the following section and chapters. These geographies of connection produced through complex solidarities around labour, race and nationality will be explored further in the

following section on white labourism. This section will raise the spatial relations through which labour can develop more exclusionary forms of politics.

4.5 Scottish Trade Unionism and White Labourism

International labour connections must be considered alongside more exclusionary practices within Clydeside, and as previously suggested the politics of race allows one method of exploring these possibilities. The importance of this perspective regarding labour has been considered by Herod who suggested, in a specific engagement with labour history, that:

> [S]imply assuming that workers coming together across space is an example of heroic proletarianism is, I want to argue, misguided because it fails to take into account the spatial contexts within which decisions to engage in such solidarity actions are made. (Herod, 2003:122)

The need for a more critical interpretation of the ways in which labour constructs space and an acknowledgement of the intersections with other factors such as class and gender was raised in Chapter 2. This position is developed by Paul Gilroy (1987:30) who contends 'social movements centred on the experience of subordination as well as exploitation includes class but are not reducible to it'. Relationships and tensions between the politics of race and class provide another entry point for a more interconnected radical history. This intersection also facilitates a greater multiplicity to the experiences of the working class, which influence understandings of agency and labour geographies. Roediger has illuminated a silencing of race within labour history and has shown 'how often the struggles of labor were about race and class and how thoroughly racism shaped and narrowed the conceptions of class' (Roediger, 1994:22-3). As hinted at previously, this chapter argues that race was similarly controversial within the union structure of Clydeside, particularly within seafaring unions who regularly assumed more 'pluralised political identities' (Davies, 2013:13). The material emerging from within these unions reveal internal contradictions within the labour movement at a time when international class based solidarity was been articulated.

In January 1919, a violent riot occurred between white and black sailors in the Broomielaw area of Glasgow (considered in detail in Chapter 5). These scenes were the culmination of significant tensions amongst sailors within central Glasgow and also reflected similar scenes across the United Kingdom in Cardiff and Liverpool. The trade unions involved within this period fostered and communicated a temporary and spatially connected solidarity developed upon a shared whiteness and protectionism amongst the seafarers.

These tensions reflected definite concerns regarding employment injustices amongst the associated unions regarding the defence of previously achieved wage guarantees. The reactionary practices, though, mobilised and articulated nationalisms and exclusionary politics, which reflected broader tensions amongst maritime workers.

The use of migrant labour was an emotive issue amongst Glasgow based workers and national union leaders. Workers' jobs, livelihoods, and a shared experience of gaining increases in wages were seemingly being undermined by 'alien' rivals. An NSFU draft publication highlighted the economic difference between the two labour forces:

> The wages paid to Chinamen, engaged in ports in the United Kingdom are £3.10 per month as against £5.10 for white men. The shipowners say the food of the Britisher costs 1/6d per day, whereas the food of the Asiatic costs only eightpence or ninepence per day.[34]

The tensions have explicit economic underpinnings and the Chinese workers were clearly being used by employers to reduce their labour costs (for more on this see Tabili, 1994). This developed a competitive set of economic relations amongst the workers and this circumstance must be read alongside the more ideological articulations of race. Stuart Hall has explored this intersectionality by stressing how race, economic relations and racism are complex structures, which are specific to particular political circumstances:

> [O]ne is then obliged to agree that race relations are directly linked with economic processes...The problem here is not whether economic structures are relevant to racial divisions but how the two are theoretically connected. Can the economic level provide an adequate and sufficient level of explanation of the racial features of the social formations? (Hall, 1996: 19-20)

His understanding indicates how not all racisms are the same and in contrast encourages an engagement with the particularity of racialised tensions. The consequently emotive nature of the workers' grievances provides a tension for analysis and a problem of interpretation, which should not be overlooked. The struggles amongst the seamen of Glasgow and across Britain should not be framed as simply racist, but instead considered dialectically between the emotions raised above and the political and economic hostilities and grievances explored below. This understanding also begins to situate Glasgow's relationship with migrant workers within a wider context, whereby similar racialised discourses were

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[34] Modern Records Centre, University of Warwick, National Union of Seamen Archives, MSS.175/3/14/1-2

articulated by seafaring organisers in places such as Cardiff and Liverpool and reflected broader international currents of white labourism (see Featherstone, 2012).

The National Sailors' and Firemen's Union (NSFU) positioned themselves explicitly against the employment of Asiatic and Chinese workers from approximately the beginning of the twentieth century. Their annual reports, publications and statements from significant union leaders reveal the position of the union regarding labour competition in the national docks. Although taken from a national perspective, these documents provide an important, and 'official', context for the often localised sites of tension amongst seafarers. A manuscript draft produced by the NSFU (1913) on the 'Chinese invasion of Great Britain'[35] reveals some of these concerns and antagonisms:

> GET READY FOR THE FIGHT.
>
> Thousands of dock workers are being robbed of their employment in consequence of ships arriving in our ports having Chinese and other Asiatics on boards, who do the work on the ships, in our docks and ports, which would otherwise be done by shore workers, such as riggers, engine room hands, boiler cleaners and many other sections of labour.

The geographical distribution of the publications, which followed this draft, is not traceable but the draft itself provides insights into the position of the seafarers' official union during the early twentieth century. The strong feeling of contempt within the union is clear and this frames the Chinese workers as a serious threat to the employment of the British workers. The specific articulations and explicit political framing of this grievance are revealing and expose a 'white labourism' (Hyslop, 1999) amongst the maritime unions.

Roediger's insights into the relationship between class and race in the American context are helpful to develop this understanding:

> Racism and class are utterly 'at home with contrariety'… Its status as an ideological construct (though one reinforced by material facts like violence, job competition, and segregation) therefore in no way disqualifies it ... from being a 'tragic flaw' in the history of the south and the nation. (Roediger, 1994:26)

Similarly in the Glasgow context, the politics of race and class interests continually intersected within these workplace disputes, but this does not excuse the deliberate

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[35] Modern Records Centre, University of Warwick, National Union of Seamen Archives, MSS.175/3/14/1-2

mobilisation of nationalist protectionism and hostile exclusionary protests. The economic conditions must be considered alongside the ideological trajectories functioning within the organised unions and below the chapter suggests that race was a key social construct within the associated union politics. McDowell's (2013) understanding of whiteness as being performative within different contexts is also useful here as it engages with the ways in which race is articulated. In this regard, it is important to consider how the specific unions addressed and mobilised these employment issues whilst simultaneously building translocal solidarities.

Despite forming a new union under the leadership of Clydesider Emanuel Shinwell, which split from the NSFU in 1911, the British Seafarers' Union were equally outspoken over the use of Asiatic and Chinese labour. So called 'alien' labour was a contentious issue within the STUC annual meetings during the early twentieth century, with both mining and seafarers unions appealing for the removal of foreign labour competition in their workplace:

Alien Labour on Ships

Mr E. Shinwell moved:

That in view of the danger to life and ships caused by the ever increasing employment of Asiatic and Chinese labour on British vessels, this Trades Congress calls upon the Board of Trade to immediately take steps to minimise this grave evil. The resolution was agreed unanimously. (STUC *Annual Report*, 1912: p.75)

These arguments are made regularly at the annual conferences of the STUC and the recorded shouts of 'agreed' (such shouts are rarely made visible within the annual reports) illustrate the significant support towards addressing the issue of foreign labour competition. The related discussions are often framed through health and safety concerns within the associated workplaces, however, some of the language used by Shinwell suggests a more protectionist stance on the rights of 'British' workers. Not until 1924 is there the first suggestion of official solidarity with the Asiatic and Chinese sailors (often receiving only one third of their British counterparts), when it is proposed that the STUC should demand equal pay for all workers as stated in the international standard of wages act of 1915. These insights highlight the contrasting strategies used by the different associated unions, and show the contentious nature over how demands for equality within the seafarers' unions are framed.

In Glasgow, the *Forward* newspaper reported these concerns in a more explicitly racialised manner. J.O'Connor Kessack and R.F. Bell published a series of articles in 1911 that detailed the grievances and demands of British seamen. Both of these figures were significant labour organisers within the NSFU and their articles illustrate the ideological nature of their concerns, with different sections of their articles entitled 'The Chow Invasion', 'The Cheap Asiatic' and 'The Asiatic Peril' detailing their views:

> I do not hate Asiatics; but quite frankly and candidly I don't want to see them coming here on British ships. I would excuse them. So long as they are on these ships, they are a danger to British seamen. Their standard of living, such as it is, is imperilled. The Asiatic is not being employed because he is more efficient. He is not half so efficient as the white man. He is not being employed because he can stand the heat of tropical seas. Where a white man would faint, the Asiatic would be a long time dead. (Kessack, 'Seamen's Grievances', *Forward,* 8/4/1911, p.1)

> The Asiatic in times of danger is a miserable cur. He may suit the convenience of an officer, whose boots he would lick, and perform the menial duties without demur, but he has to be kept in his place by fear and authority. When occasion arises he can be the most arrant villain, sneaking and bloodthirsty, with an utter disregard to all that is lawful and authoritative. His colour, religion, and all that belongs to him, is associated with all that is alien to us. (Bell, 'Seamen's Demands', *Forward*, 13/5/1911, p.8)

Bell was secretary of the Glasgow branch of the NSFU and his article reveals some of the more overtly racist views within the Glasgow seafaring unions at the time. These views had effects with a 'colour bar' regularly adopted by shipping companies during this period (see Jenkinson, 2008). Hyslop (1999) has framed these solidarities as constructing a 'white labourism' whereby imperial logic provided transnational solidarities, and consequently exclusionary policies towards non-white labour, amongst particular workers. His arguments illustrate how it is essential that the economic context of these disputes is provided but not considered as the only reasoning for these hostilities. The comments above illustrate the clearly hostile views from senior union officials. These documents provide evidence of the performative aspects of whiteness and racism raised previously. Whilst by no means representative of the Scottish labour movement on the whole, and later chapters will discuss activists who opposed such views, the articles above illustrate elements of white labourism within the seafaring unions on Clydeside. These perspectives are important as they allow the inclusion of different voices within the labour movement.

Whilst the section has primarily foregrounded the hostility of the white British seafarers it is also important to consider the strategies and agency of the Chinese workers within these contested workplaces. Their presence is far harder to trace within the trade union archives yet examples of their strategies within Britain are noticeable. It is vital that non-white workers are not positioned simply as victims and without their own forms of agency, as it is clear that they illustrated resilience and managed to circumvent authority. One example of this is their negotiation of language tests before boarding ships:

> The language test – Merchant Shipping Act of 1906:
>
> British subjects were exempted from this language test: therefore all Chinamen hailing from Hong Kong and Singapore escaped examination under the Act. This led to a number of men from all of parts of China claiming to be born in Hong Kong and Singapore in order to escape the language test.[36]

In Cardiff for example 84% of Chinese sailors claimed to be from Hong Kong or Singapore and it would be expected that similar responses would be made in Glasgow. Manipulations of tests such as these posed a direct challenge to authority of both the ship-owners and the trade unions considered here (unions had previously applied pressure for a language test), whilst providing an example of the agency of the Chinese within these contentious maritime work spaces. Actions and co-ordinated decisions such as those to counter the language test illustrates the significance of 'unofficial' action amongst workers and also highlights the uneven contestation over employment.

Overall, the analysis above has begun to apply McDowell's (2013) understanding of whiteness as not being a fixed category within labour geography but instead as performative within particular times and places. The purpose of the detail above therefore is to foreground the complex and diverse experiences of internationalism within labour movements and iconic places of resistance. When reading the Glasgow based trade union position on foreign labour it is equally important to consider both the economic and the ideological framing of these tensions and internal contradictions. As Hall highlights these sites of contestation require consideration beyond the binaries of either social or economic formations thought. He argues that:

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[36] Modern Records Centre, University of Warwick, National Union of Seamen Archives, MSS.175/3/14/1-2

The question is not whether men-in-general make perceptual distinctions between groups with different racial or ethnic characteristics, but rather, what are the specific conditions which make this form of distinction socially pertinent, historically active. (Hall, 1996:52)

These economic grievances, regarding the undercutting of seafarers' wages, were articulated alongside a clearly hostile rhetoric towards Asiatic and Chinese labour. These tensions reflect an animosity amongst seafarers of different races, which created clear intersections between the economic conditions of seafarers and their racial and ideological politics. Featherstone (2012:98) considers this solidarity to be largely based on racism and exclusion within British seafaring unions and as reflecting 'different ways of envisioning a politics of labour'.

4.6 Conclusions: Spatial and Social Tensions of Labour Agency

The four 'cuts' presented above have combined contrasting positions and practices from within the Clydeside labour movement during the early twentieth century. These examples have been specifically positioned in this chapter to engage with the complex labour geography within Red Clydeside and to reveal the capabilities and limitations of labour agency during this period. The 'cuts' indicate the diverse modalities of labour agency within Red Clydeside and this understanding will be pursued further in the following chapters. This diversity can be missed by a labour geography that limits labour agency to a strategic use of space to manipulate capitalist relations. In contrast, this chapter has shown multiple forms of labour activity, from more communicative linkages to direct actions, as illustrative of the breadth of labour activities. By presenting four contrasting 'cuts' of labour geography the chapter has responded to Tuft and Savage's (2009:946) assertion that labour geography should now seek to 'pursue the role workers play in shaping cultural landscapes which are implicated in but beyond material questions'. This chapter has therefore combined the material demands of labour with broader, and sometimes more 'associational', practices of solidarity. These material and associational combinations revealed strengths within the labour movement but exposed more exclusionary tendencies. This approach, emphasising multiple understandings of labour politics, speaks to the earlier discussion of Chatterjee and his understanding of serialities, such as class identities, as being forged through more situated, strategic, temporary and provisional practices.

The chapter has also raised the difficulty in generating struggles against the often harsh material conditions and employer's strategies on Clydeside. The significance of this framing has been highlighted within recent labour geography discussion (see Cumbers et al. 2008, Mitchell, 2011) as being an important corrective to work that overly emphasises the agency of labour without critically considering the restrictions on this agency and the different forms it can take (Castree, 2007). Despite these difficulties, the chapter has considered the ways in which workers directly contested their structural conditions whilst developing broader politicised forms of labour organising and solidarity. The chapter argues that this intersection between two overlapping elements of struggle provides an important space for analysis. Thus, the broader political influences cited above introduce multiple influences into labour disputes. This reveals the diversity of topics discussed within the trade union movement during the early twentieth century. These practices complicate understandings of workers' agency but also illustrate the diverse set of political interests pursued by labour and the contrasting methods of achieving these. This emphasis on the diverse modalities of labour activism is pursued further in the following chapter, which engages with a particular strike during 1919, whereby Clydeside workers demanded a shorter working week.

Chapter 5

The 1919 Forty Hours Movement: Labour Struggles, Internationalisms and the Formation of Demands

During the war, from press and platform, it was impressed upon the workers that if they only fought and worked, gave up their union rules, privileges, etc. and won the war, they would see the dawn of a new era. The experience gained in the trenches and workshops had wiped out all class distinctions, and the last had been seen of unemployment, long hours of toil, low wages, and all the misery resulting there from – so ran the fairy tale.
(Morton, 1919:1)

5.1. Introduction

This chapter considers one of the most notable direct actions to emerge from the history of Red Clydeside. The Forty Hours Movement began in late January 1919 as a direct action by Clydeside's workers to reduce their working hours and to reabsorb the unemployed and demobilised soldiers into the workforce following the First World War. Estimates suggest that between 30,000 (McKay, 1993) and 60,000 (Foster, 1990) striking workers gathered on what became remembered as 'Bloody Friday' in Central Glasgow. The event is often characterised by the iconic imagery of the raising of the red flag in George Square and has quite rightly been celebrated as a key moment in the development of Clydeside's 'working class presence' (see Damer, 1990, Craig, 2012). It resulted in clashes between striking workers with police and concluded with a British military occupation of parts of the city. The strike has been described as a 'political strike which directly sought to affect the balance of power between capital and labour and place pressure on the government' (Foster, 1990:41). This chapter will expand on this understanding by arguing that the quantitative demand of a forty hours working week was linked to a broader political movement, which created solidarities and exclusions. The analysis seeks to reveal the labour geographies, which emerged from the strike through multiple forms of correspondence, cooperation and experiences.

The chapter utilises this particular event, in contrast to the other two empirical chapters, which consider longer trajectories of labour movements, to explore the spatial politics that emerge from a notable phase within Red Clydeside. In particular, the archival research

engages with a specific place-based political event and suggests possibilities for more relational and geographical (see Featherstone, 2005, 2008, 2012) understandings of labour history. More specifically, the chapter considers theoretical work on demands to open up understandings of Red Clydeside and specifically the Forty Hours movement. Ernesto Laclau's (2005a, 2005b) work on populism and Geoff Mann's (2007) contribution regarding the 'politics of measure' are argued to be particular helpful for theorising the political nature of labour demands and as allowing the inclusion of intersecting experiences and grievances that relate closely to the singular demand. This has particular resonance for reconsidering Red Clydeside and one of its most celebrated strikes. Below, it is suggested that the perspectives of Mann and Laclau open up the strike to include multiple perspectives and labour practices.

This approach considers the place-based politics of a strike within Clydeside to be representative of connections beyond its boundaries. Developing this understanding, the chapter proposes to critically explore the translocal connections and political imaginaries that emerged during the demand for a forty hours week. The specific formations and articulations of the demand to shorten hours provide insights into the fragmented labour geography of the movement. By exploring these connections relating to the demand, the chapter engages with theoretical literature regarding the contrasting formations of demands to indicate the usefulness of a more rounded engagement with the politics relating to particular disputes.

In terms of what follows, the first section of the chapter provides the context for the strike and introduces some of the key organisations and individuals within the movement. As part of this section, the chapter also engages with literature regarding populism and demands to introduce the theoretical approach to this particular labour dispute. Secondly, the chapter scrutinises the co-ordination and spatial imaginaries of the strike primarily through an engagement with the *Strike Bulletin*. This analysis centres upon the formation of connections by the strike movement and a comparison with the Belfast strike to contrast the strategies of the labour movements. Thirdly, the chapter considers the Broomielaw Riot, as briefly referred to in Chapter 4, to further highlight the ambiguous political identities and racialised tensions that emerged from parts of the strike movement. The chapter concludes by assessing what this spatial analysis contributes towards broader debates on place-based politics and labour geography.

5.2 Demanding a Shorter Week: Context and Theory

5.2.1 Context: Unemployment and Negotiations for a Shorter Working Week

Following the First World War, unemployment as a result of demobilisation created huge problems within industrial cities in the United Kingdom. Scotland, and particularly Glasgow, was hit hard by this, with the Manifesto of the Joint Strike Committee[37] claiming that 'over a hundred thousand workers in Scotland have been dismissed from civil employment'. The *Forward* (5/4/1919) newspaper reported on the increasing unemployment levels specifically in Glasgow in March 1919 following the strike:

> Number of fresh cases for unemployment at the week ending 21st March:
>
> 2557 Men, 1871 Women = 4428
>
> Total discharged from forces requiring out of work donations:
>
> 8053 Men, 19 Women
>
> Total discharged from civil employment requiring out of work donations:
>
> 8639 Men, 30,787 Women
>
> Total unemployed: 47,498

Anticipating such dramatic local impacts, a Strike Committee composed of trade union representatives, and chaired by Emanuel Shinwell,[38] decided to actively encourage workers to take action for a shorter working week in late January 1919. Glasgow workers co-ordinated a strike for a shorter working week of forty hours, with no reduction in pay, in order for employers to absorb the unemployed and returning soldiers.

The strike itself was labelled 'unofficial'[39], partly due to the inability of the strike committee to gain the immediate support of the Parliamentary Committee of the STUC. Several meetings had already taken place within the STUC to discuss the issue of hours in late 1918 and early 1919 without resolution. Working hours at this time were fifty-four, with the working day starting at 6am and finishing at 5.30pm, and workers required to work until midday on Saturdays. There was a shared sense amongst trade unions of a need to reduce working hours but there was also obvious disagreement within the movement over the quantity of the demand. The 'Ways and Means Committee' of the Clyde Workers'

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[37] Papers of Herbert E R Highton, University of Glasgow Archives, UGD 102/3/14
[38] Emanuel Shinwell (1885-1986) was a leader of the Strike Committee, Secretary of the British Seafarers' Union and President of the Glasgow Trades Council in 1919. He was a key figure during the Red Clydeside period dend went on to join the Labour party, becoming Minister for Fuel and Power (1945-7), Secretary for State of War (1947-1950) and Minster of Defence (1950-51).
[39] Although Morton (1919) notes that several trade unions continued to pay strike pay at varying rates.

Committee (CWC) proposed a thirty-hour week whilst the national engineer trade union, the Amalgamated Society of Engineers (ASE), had already begun national negotiations for a forty-seven hour week. Scottish members of the ASE were disappointed with this decision though and district letters sent to the A.S.E. Secretary, Harry Hopkins, illustrated this frustration:

> That we, the members of Dennistoun Branch, decide to vote against the proposal 47 week as we consider it to be an insult and demand that the working hours shall be so reduced as to absorb all unemployed while maintaining the present Rate of Wages.[40]

The Clydeside disillusionment with the negotiations of the national union was clear. Their complaints reflected a growing frustration against a labour aristocracy, particularly following the First World War whereby many concessions were made by the trade union movement to assist the war effort (although resistance on Clydeside was prominent, see Chapter 6). The Munitions Act, for example, had prevented official strike action during the war and made it difficult for workers to move workplaces due to the requirement of leaving certificates from a previous employer.

Due to these tensions and disagreements, largely because of a seventeen-hour difference between highest and lowest demands for shorter hours, the STUC expressed caution over the timing of the strike and were unable to pledge their official support for the strikers planned start date of January 27th. This caution amongst members towards direct action was reflected in their annual reports following the strike. One member, Bailie A.R. Turner (Municipal Employee's association), expressed his unhappiness with the situation stressing that:

> There had been neither brains nor method behind the 40 hours strike, which was simply the result of a small minority bullying the whole movement into action. The larger unions were never consulted as to the strike and, because they did not join in, they came in for a good deal of abuse.
> (STUC *Annual Report* 1918-1919: p.68-69)

Despite many members joining the movement, other parts of the STUC considered the direct action 'hasty and unwise', paralleling the views of Mr Bailie. As Tuckett (1986) also documents in her analysis of the STUC, there was clear efforts from parts of the national union to constrain more radical actions. She highlights how STUC parliamentary

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[40] University of Glasgow Archives, Highton Papers, UGD 102/4/8

committee member Hugh Lyon attempted to resign from his position within the Joint Strike Committee following the decision for strike action. Strike Committee member, D.S. Morton commented on a frustration with the STUC in his pamphlet on the strike, stating that 'the Scottish Trade Union Congress were pledged to a 40-hour week, but up to this point their efforts in that direction had been but the passing of pious resolutions' (Morton, 1919:4). Despite clear reservations from parts of the trade union movement, the strike movement still managed to develop a wider support, and did so with some support from the STUC, who officially suggested a conference to resolve the issue on 9th February. The Strike Committee also received direct support from other sections of the STUC with George Buchanan (Glasgow Trades and Labour Council) arguing that 'when a fight was declared, he only had one side, and that was the side of the working class' (STUC *Annual Report* 1918-1919: p.73).

Negotiating their internal disagreements, a conference of shop stewards and council members decided to take independent action with support from the Glasgow Labour and Trades Council, also chaired by Emanuel Shinwell. The CWC was particularly prominent within these negotiations due to their organising role within the engineering industries (for more on the CWC's role, see Gallacher, 1936, 1966 and Hinton, 1973). The Glasgow Trades and Labour Council annual reports summarised how:

> After a very full discussion, it was decided to declare a general stoppage of work by the 27th January to enforce a reduction of hours…Thousands of workmen are being demobilised from the Army and Navy every day. Over 100,000 workers have been dismissed from Civil employment. They are now looking for jobs. There are no jobs for them. There is only one remedy. Reduce the number of hours.
> (Glasgow Trades and Labour Council *Annual Report* 1918-1919, p.19-20)

The strike movement did not use their official bodies to co-ordinate the strike and instead employed other methods and strategies to gather support. This decision allowed a more flexible approach than one that may have become contested within the STUC, Trades Council or CWC. Within the Labour Party, this decision was viewed as undermining the wider labour movement's motives; with Labour Party representatives questioning:

> Why for instance, if Glasgow wants a 40 hours week, have they not sent to
> Parliament members to vote for it? You ask for Parliament members to vote for it?
> You ask for legislation and then it is supported by the argument of strike.
> (STUC *Annual Report*, 1918-1919:30)

The parliamentary route was not pursued by the strike movement. This decision reflected a frustration towards parliamentary politics, which had just returned a Liberal-Conservative coalition government in the 1918 election and at this stage showed little prospect of an alternative Labour government. This parliamentary frustration combined with growing unemployment and dissatisfaction over wages and living conditions during the war prompted direct action from within the city. Thus, instead of pursuing a parliamentary vote and in contrast to the ASE negotiations, the demand for a shorter working week of forty hours was connected to the growing unemployment within the city and representative of a broader working class movement within Scotland.

This primary demand of this Strike Committee is immediately evident within the *Strike Bulletin*, edited by Pat Dollan:

> The 40 hour movement is making history. This is because it is the greatest effort made by the rank and file. For the first time the workers have become their own leaders. When the workers lead, and unity is maintained, victory is certain. There is one objective in the strike which is: to secure 40 hours' weeks for all workers. Everything else is irrelevant. The strikers are not fighting for themselves alone: they are fighting for every man, woman and child in the ranks of Scottish democracy.
> (*Strike Bulletin*, 31/1/19)

The evocative and emotive call to Scottish workers begins to delve inside a labour movement that gained extremely strong support. John Foster (1990) has analysed the economic influence of the Scottish working class during 1914-1920 and as part of wider research has shown that 1 ¼ million working days were lost in the West of Scotland due to the strike of January 1919. According to his records, the Forty Hours Movement had the largest industrial impact across the West of Scotland during this period. The bulletins were described as 'the organ of the 40 hours movement' and were produced on behalf of the Strike Committee who contributed towards content within each bulletin. Strike leader Shinwell claims to have fled to the Strike Committee offices to oversee the *Strike Bulletin* following 'Bloody Friday' before his arrest (Shinwell, 1955:63). He destroyed many other documents relating to the movement to prevent further police investigation. As a result, the remaining labour newspapers are highly useful for gaining an impression of the politics of the strike movement and experiences of workers at this time.

There is also evidence of populist language within the demand for a shorter working week, with the *Strike Bulletin* claiming in the extract above that '[t]he strikers are not fighting for

themselves alone; they are fighting for every man, woman and child'. The strike movement developed beyond the disputes of individual unions and in contrast formed a broader working class movement as explored below. While the support for the movement was high and did encompass a broader demographic beyond the workplace, the manipulation of the outward representations of the strike didn't continue with the impression that 'everything else is irrelevant', and instead presented contrasting connections amongst the organisations and individuals involved. This chapter argues that the demand for a shorter working week can be revisited as a 'signifier' for a much more complex labour politics during January and February 1919. The politics emerging from the demand for a shorter working week indicates a broader labour geography within a particular dispute. In this regard, it is theoretically helpful to engage with Laclau's understanding of the formation of populist demands and Mann's 'politics of measure' to frame an approach to the demand for a shorter working week.

5.2.2 Rethinking Labour Demands

Harry Cleaver interprets the demand for a shorter working week as being representative of a broader political working class movement. Through his reading of Marx's *Capital*, he proposes that the demand for shorter hours:

> [M]oves beyond the particular demands of a narrowly defined group of workers and becomes a demand of the whole class and thus political … the individual struggle at each factory or industry can no longer be considered an isolated 'purely economic' struggle and must be grasped as part of the whole, as a political struggle for power. (Cleaver, 1979:45)

His contribution foregrounds the political nature of working class movements and suggests that these provide opportunities for autonomous working class agency despite the restrictions placed on labour by capital (see also Cumbers et al., 2010). Cleaver's understanding indicates how Clydeside's demand for reduced industrial working hours can be linked beyond economic concerns to a wider political movement, which held possibilities and contradictions. This approach suggests a more political construction of demand making, which is developed further below through an engagement with Ernesto Laclau and Geoff Mann.

Ernesto Laclau (2005a, 2005b) utilised the demand as the 'guiding thread' for his analysis of populism and linked his approach to an understanding of collective political identities. He suggests that all collective identities involve populist elements and stresses that this

does not always result in populist politics. Here, the chapter contends that his conceptual contribution facilitates a more open account of the demand for a shorter working week. His arguments encourage a change of emphasis from understanding 'movements or ideologies as units of analysis, to political practices' (Laclau, 2005a:33) and proposes that this facilitates an understanding that:

> [M]eans that each individual demand is constitutively split: on one hand it is its own particularised self; on the other it points through equivalential links, to the totality of the other demands. Returning to our image: each demand is, actually, the tip of the iceberg, because although it only shows itself in its own particularity, it presents its own manifest claim as only one among a larger set of social claims.
> (Laclau, 2005a:37)

Laclau illustrates how a single collective demand, such as a labour demand for a shorter working week, can be viewed as reflecting a plurality of related demands and positions. This approach allows less visible grievances or political practices to become significant within analysis. His understanding explores the conceptual distance between 'political will' and 'communitarian space' to contrast collective demand making with associated lived experiences (Laclau, 2005a: 34). This encourages an engagement with smaller units of analysis within a collective interest rather than scrutinising a collective demand for a shorter working week through the larger organisational structures of labour. Thus, this chapter engages with a diversity of labour experiences and practices during the period of the strike. This approach takes seriously diverse 'political practices' as 'units of analysis' to consider labour experiences related to the demand for a shorter working week, paralleling Cleaver's argument regarding demands for shorter hours as being more than just an economic dispute. In particular, the chapter foregrounds the experience of migrant workers within Clydeside prior to the strike whilst also arguing that the demand for forty hours was constructed alongside the making of broader international connections, and how this differed to a similar demand in Belfast. Thus, utilising the forty hours demand as a starting point for analysis, the chapter engages with Laclau to indicate the relevance of diverse labour positions and practices during early 1919 on Clydeside.

When approached in this manner, Clydeside's demand for a shorter working week can be seen as a signifier for a much more nuanced labour politics. In this regard, Laclau's intervention is useful for rethinking approaches to labour demands within labour geography. This chapter suggests that labour demands can be viewed as developing from what Laclau (2005b:72) described as an 'equivalential chain'. These understandings

indicates how singular demands can be considered as simplifying a political space but are actually representative of multiple demands and frustrations, encouraging further engagements with related practices, experiences and grievances. Laclau's reading of populism suggests how these multiple grievances can provide both moments of solidarity and tension, what he describes as a tension between 'equivalence and difference' (Laclau, 2005a: 70). For example, the following discussion of Clydeside's Forty Hours Movement indicates how the singular demand for a shorter working week developed through broader strategies of solidarity but was also connected to more exclusionary practices associated with white labourism.

By emphasising a plurality of experiences relating to particular demands, Laclau's approach also suggests possibilities for singular demands to become connected with other struggles and related politics. Thus, the following analysis is not centred simply on Clydeside's demand for shorter hours itself but rather explores working class grievances and political practices, which were connected to this demand, such as the forming of translocal solidarities and more internal labour disputes regarding migrant workers in the docks of Glasgow. This understanding of demand making can be worked through labour struggles alongside the continuing emphasis on the spatial aspect of labour agency as encouraged within labour geography (see Chapter 2).

Before pursuing this approach, it is worth noting that Laclau's understanding of populism has received rigorous critique, in part centring on the geographies of his theory. Critics have suggested that Laclau's method substitutes a class based understanding of politics for a populist position (Žižek, 2005) and have viewed his approach as being problematic due to its nation centred framing (Featherstone, 2008). Thus, geographers have proposed the necessity for a more situated account of populist political praxis. Hart (2013:310), for example, foregrounds the importance of a spatial and historical analysis of populism, grounded in conflict and praxis, through a reading of Laclau alongside Gramsci. Despite these relevant critiques, this chapter suggests that the theoretical contributions considered above remain valuable and argues that when read in combination with the work of Geoff Mann, who provides a more grounded account of specifically working class demands, the approach is useful to reconsider the Forty Hours Movement.

Mann's work can be read alongside Laclau as he pays particular attention to the ways in which demands are operationalised through close readings of working class experience. As previously discussed in Chapter 2, he argues that the wage relation should be recognised as a 'social and economic relation' with 'politics [that] are historically generated and

culturally charged' (Mann, 2007:2). This approach emphasises that 'the politics of measure as it unfolds … does not mean that quantitative concerns are irrelevant; it only means … bringing them back into the sphere of the political' (Mann, 2007: 96). In similar terms, this chapter takes seriously the economic basis of the demand of the shorter working week but argues that the negotiation over working hours, as Mann argues in terms of the wage relation, should be considered in qualitative terms as well as quantitative assessments, and through broader political and cultural understandings of working class experience. This understanding links with Cleaver's political construction of workers' struggle and Laclau's understanding of demands through its emphasis on the plurality of working class experiences.

Mann has applied these more nuanced understandings of labour struggles within geography and linked these to his work on workers' relationships with the wage. This work is particularly pertinent for asking new questions of Clydeside's labour history as it scrutinises the intersections between class, gender and racialised experiences. Mann's understanding of the 'politics of measure' is developed by an analysis whereby negotiations of wage disputes are viewed as including multiple, diverse and coexisting political motivations. These motivations can include an economic motive of disrupting value creation but also link with broader cultural influences. These multiple motives reveal more ambiguous labour politics than can be assumed. One example he considers reveals the ways in which workers of particular races assumed certain roles due to the intersecting practices of both employers and workers. He focuses on the politics of skill and highlights how factors such as hate strikes, unions refusing memberships to particular races and a more general white supremacy reinforced the position of African-American labour as being 'unskilled' (Mann, 2007:101). He also pays attention to the structural restraints on working class lives to argue that it is unsurprising that workers take such contradictory positions towards the wage and by doing so foregrounds the problem of pre-determining workers' 'interests'. Through this approach, Mann links his work to Laclau (Mann, 2007:153) and also E.P. Thompson by arguing for further recognition of difference within the construction of class interests. This understanding maintains the importance of class interests by beginning to reveal the grounded processes through which working class demands and movements are operationalised. His method is particularly useful for exploring questions of inclusion and exclusion within labour practices, as identified in Chapter 4, and considered further below through Glasgow's race riot in early 1919.

The importance of this more qualitative understanding, emphasising multiplicity within particular struggles, can be aligned with contributions from labour geography (for examples see Herod, 1995, Castree, 2000, Waterman, 2001, 2001, Cumbers, 2004, Cumbers et al., 2008) that have continually interrogated the way labour movements act across different geographical scales. Their contributions have illustrated how labour internationalisms can foster solidarity but also reveal the limitations of such strategies. Within this approach, labour geography's notion of internationalism has often centred upon a strategic countering of capital's spatial mobility through a manipulation of scales of struggle, such as Anderson's (2009) understanding of 'labour's lines of flight' and the 'Driving up Standards' campaign. In this study, Anderson illustrates the complexities and possibilities of American and British transport unions' efforts to co-ordinate translocal strategies. Such research has been helpful for countering capital centric portrayals of political economy and globalisation.

Complementing this strategic emphasis, this chapter utilises the theoretical work of Laclau and Mann to explore aspects of broader political imaginaries and actions on Clydeside. Their contributions provide a more generative sense of labour demands and class interests than understandings, which address these aspects of struggle discretely. The experiences foregrounded below have not previously been positioned as central to the remembering of the Forty Hours Movement. Here it is suggested that Laclau and Mann allow a rereading of this labour history that aligns with the previous approaches encouraged in chapter 2 regarding labour geography and labour history. In particular, their emphasis on broader grievances and workers' politics allow emphasis on the importance of experiences of 'otherness' (McDowell, 2015) and perspectives not previously positioned as central to the remembering of 1919 on Clydeside.

More specifically, this approach illuminates labour relations that were connected to the Forty Hours Movement but were not necessarily responsible for the winning or losing of demands. Instead, these labour geographies reflected cultural connections, aggregating grievances and solidarity-building processes that complicate the place-based labour politics of this period. This critical interpretation of the role of connections is considered through an analysis of the formation of translocal solidarities by the Clydeside labour movement during the 1919 dispute. Comparisons with the Belfast strike and Broomielaw riot illustrates how contrasting international imaginaries and internal grievances intersected within the making of the demand for a shorter working week.

Demands for shorter working hours are relevant here, as they have historically developed significant support within the working class. The global history of hours movements is well-rehearsed within labour studies with Marx's analysis of the working day in *Capital* (Marx, 1990: Chapter 10) providing a starting point for many analyses. The American working day, for example, has been considered by Roediger and Foner (1989, vii) who explore the potential for hours movements to 'foster unity' and how they can hold the 'capacity to evoke both political and trade union struggles'. Clydeside's struggle for a forty hour week was no different and revealed a complexity of labour positions and imaginaries. Thus, the demand for a shortening of working hours includes a populist element as it led to large scale support on Clydeside, translating across and beyond skill and workplace. Due to this more general nature, the demand can also be explored through multiple political positions and practices relating to the singular demand as encouraged by Laclau's work on populism.

The archival sources considered below (including local and national newspapers, trade union reports and oral histories) provide contrasting portrayals of the Forty Hours Movement. This contrast was marked by the differences between documents attempting to outwardly represent and connect the strike and other sources, which exposed internal politics and conflicts, which were continually negotiated by the movement. This chapter will utilise these differences as a method of providing its own representation of the Forty Hours Movement through an application of more flexible understandings of demands, as discussed through an engagement with Laclau and Mann above. These representations and connections shaped, moulded and occasionally undermined the Forty Hours Movement, yet have often been downplayed and left unquestioned within the debates regarding the history of Clydeside in 1919. To begin this analysis, the following section discusses the documentation of the Clydeside strike and compares and contrasts this source with material relating to the Belfast strike for a shorter working week during the same month.

5.3 The Strike Bulletin: Spatial Connections

5.3.1 The Strike Spreads

Due to its scale, the strike formed an integral part of the history of Red Clydeside. A key member of the Glasgow Strike Committee, D.S. Morton (1919) described the movement as a 'first attempt at a general strike' whereby new forms of organising emerged:

This new form of strike, involving industries of the most varied description, as far apart from as flour-milling and shipbuilding, developed new strike tactics; for

example, mass picketing, daily mass meetings, information bureau, official press, and the establishing of regular lines of communication, showing a vast improvement from the strikes of the past, in which strikers were led and lectured by well-paid trade union officials whose connection with the workshop had become memory.

(Morton, 1919:1)

These developing strike tactics were integral to the wider developments of the movement and reflected increasingly wider imaginaries of workers beyond the particular sites of the strike. As Morton also noted, a major tool used by the Strike Committee during the movement was the *Strike Bulletin*. The strike's newspaper was widely distributed, reaching a peak daily publication of 20,000 across the Clydeside area and making an overall profit of £193 (McKay, 1993:100). The bulletin's primary purpose was to be used as a tactical tool to instruct and inform the workers on the developments relating to the movement. The paper was distributed at district committee meetings and further sold by striking workers throughout Clydeside (as commented upon by Harry McShane, 1978:105). The paper is analysed below as a method of scrutinising the spatial politics of the movement.

The *Strike Bulletin* played a crucial role in co-ordinating a movement spreading across Clydeside and Scotland by providing updates on the developing strike movement. These local developments remained crucial in the bulletins and the papers were used strategically to provide information for the workers:

Clyde District

All the men have come on strike in the following places:-

Fairfield Shipyard Engine Department, Cowlairs Railway Workshop, St. Rollox Railway Workshop, Glasgow Corporation Wall Street Gas Department, Napier and Miller's Shipyard at Old Kilpatrick, Babcock and Wilcox, Renfrew.
(*Strike Bulletin*, 30/1/19)

These updates are featured in all the bulletins and provide an insight into the formation of a connected working class movement across Clydeside and Scotland. In early February for example, the *Forward* (1/2/1919) newspaper reported that miners had come out on strike in Fifeshire and Lanarkshire. *The Call* (6/2/1919) estimated that about 100,000 workers were out on strike and reported that the strike had spread to parts of Edinburgh, Motherwell, Aberdeen, and Dundee. District committees were established and encouraged to communicate any information to the Strike Committee, thus developing a sense of

connection between local workers with others from across Scotland and beyond. These district committees were supported by an information bureau in the centre of Glasgow, which allowed messengers to meet to share information.

The significance of these connections and the nature of the overall strike movement has proved a controversial topic within Scottish labour history with McLean (1983:118-9) suggesting that the strike was limited by its composition of skilled engineering workers. In contrast, the interpretation presented below supports Foster's (1990) view that the strike incorporated a diverse working class support beyond workplace based disputes. The strike was primarily led by the large number of engineers of the Clyde[41] but oral histories and newspaper reports illustrate how the movement incorporated other workers. The *Strike Bulletin* reflected this broader composition through documentation of the spread of the movement while an oral history account also indicates wider support for the strike. Tommy Graham[42] was present during 'Bloody Friday' and described the composition of support:

> You see it was a logical argument. The leadership wanted to reduce the working hours to allow the soldiers being demobilised to get a job. Well what more logical can any argument be than that. Ex soldiers were in right away. See the young and us. Them that were there wasn't at the war, the women (…) that might have lost brothers or relatives at the war. Of course they went in with it. Yes so the hours should be reduced.

He highlights the 'young', 'ex-soldiers' and 'women' as those supporting the strike and present during the gathering at George Square. This expression of support arguably indicated a developing diversity beneath the movement. The wider support for the movement begins to reflect Cleaver and Mann's work by indicating a shift towards a greater political meaning of the strike rather than just a purely industrially motivated dispute. Graham was a demobilised soldier himself and his account represents the demand for the incorporation of returning workers into the workforce and illustrates the diversity of support for the movement for shorter working hours. The *Strike Bulletin* also detailed this diversity of those connected to the strike describing how, for example sailors, miners and Singer factory workers had also joined the strike movement.

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[41] 70,000 workers were employed in shipbuilding, 40,000 in iron and steel, and 170,000 in other branches of engineering, metal work and chemicals according to Foster (1990:34).
[42] Oral History held at The Research Collection, Glasgow Caledonian University. Interview conducted by John Foster 1977.
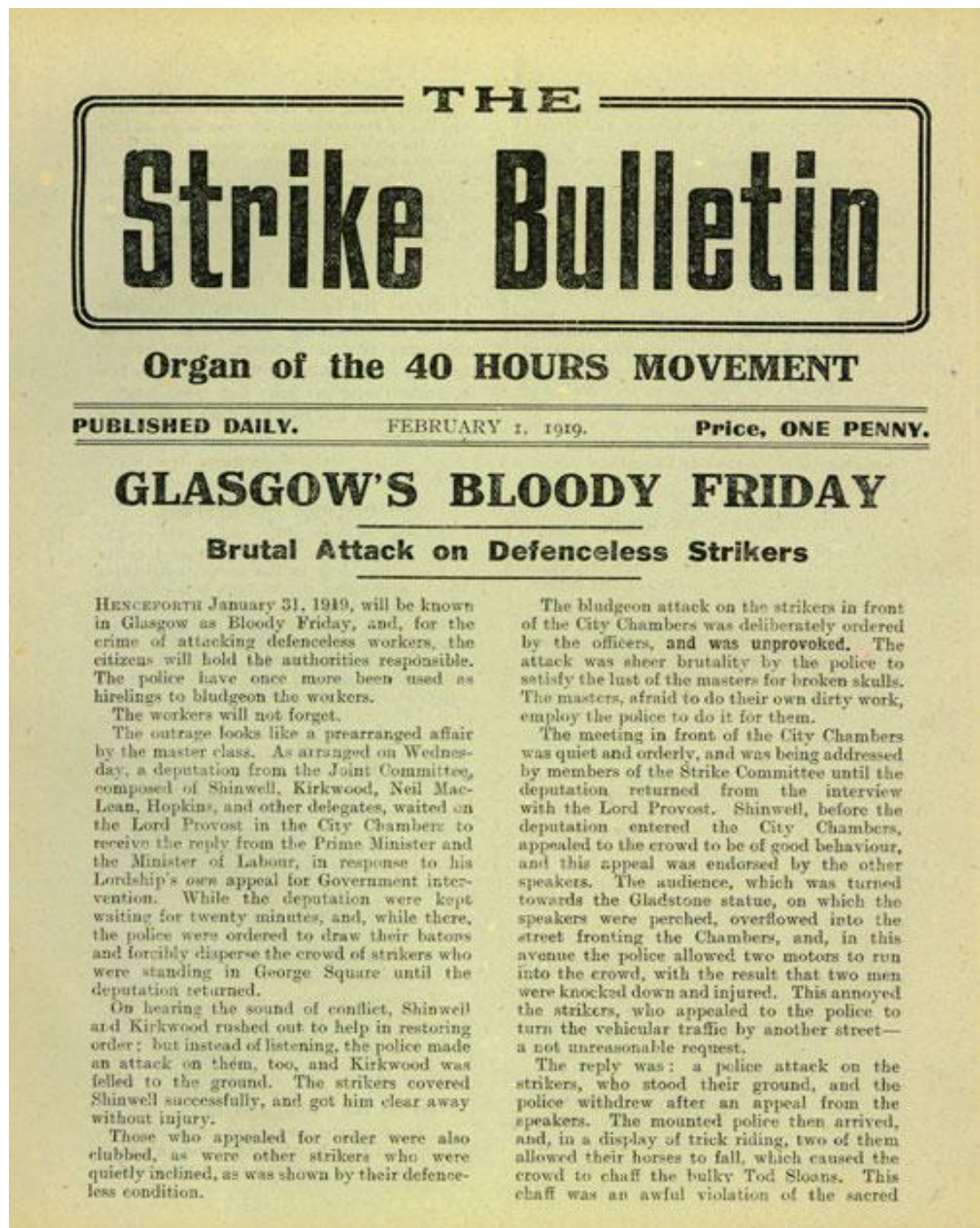
As well as this diversity, the bulletins present a noticeable geography to the movement, with local and wider updates presented on a daily basis. A developing sense of labour connections, deliberately acting across varying scales, is arguably evident within each bulletin and is displayed most commonly on a local and national scale, although connections beyond Scotland are also evident as will be considered. The geography of the strike movement is evident in the identification of areas and organisations, which expressed support for the strike:

The Strike Spreads

The strike is extending. The movement has become national and nearly every industrial centre in the country is on strike, to enforce the demand for the 40 hours. The Barrow men down tools today and the London men come into the arena tomorrow. Sheffield and Birmingham are in full preparation for action, and a general strike is about to be declared in Ireland. The Scottish workers have united the ranks in a spirit that no force can break. (*Strike Bulletin*, 5/2/19)

The Strike Committee appeared very conscious of the need to spread their demands in order to build solidarity and make a further political impact. They presented their geographical progress, both locally and nationally, within every paper of the strike. These reports were representative of a spatially aware strike movement that, at least outwardly, seemed intent on transcending local conditions to forge broader struggles. In this regard, London was given increasing significance within the bulletins, particularly in the latter stages of the strike, illustrating a clear realisation that for the strike to be successful the capital of the British state would need to be paralysed.

Alongside their organisational role, the bulletins extended their updates to show broader linkages, through references made to workers' movements on an international scale:

Bombay's 150,000

The workers in the Government dock-yards and mills in Bombay (India), are on strike for better conditions, and in a march-out the strikers came into conflict with the troops, with the result that two of the men were killed and three injured. The strikers number 150,000, and are giving a great lead to the downtrodden of India to secure better wages and conditions. A victory in Scotland will help our comrades in India, who are with us heart and soul. (*Strike Bulletin*, 31/1/19)

The workers of India are mentioned twice within the bulletins and the inclusion of these international connections illustrates a wider form of solidarity expressed by those involved with the strike. The second reference to India links the scenes of Clydeside's 'Bloody Friday' to similar scenes in India. 'In India Too' was a headline within the *Strike Bulletin* on February 2nd, which detailed how Indian workers had gained a 20% increase in wages. These references were more than simply propaganda and reflected a developing connection during the early twentieth century by the labour movement on Clydeside (as discussed in Chapter 4). The bulletins represented the articulation and envisioning of the strike's politics and the international references provide revealing insights into the spatial imaginaries of the labour movement.

The Bombay mill strikes in 1919, as Kumar (1971) considers, held some similarities with events on Clydeside. Kumar highlights the spontaneous nature of the strike, which was partly due to a lack of an identifiable leadership particularly in terms of a trade union movement:

> The Strike of 1919 was unique in several respects. It quite literally paralysed the entire textile industry of Bombay: an industry which comprised 83 industrial units, and which employed a work force of 140,000 men. Yet the most extraordinary feature of this strike was not the unanimous response it evoked from the textile workers; the most extraordinary feature of this strike was its complete spontaneity, since working class organisations and trade unions were conspicuous by their absence in Bombay in 1919. (Kumar, 1971:3)

The experiences described by Kumar are not too dissimilar to those on Clydeside with a lack of official support from the trade union movement and a seemingly spontaneous working class agency a common feature in both cases of militancy. The resulting expression of wider international solidarity between industrial workplace disputes illustrates the explicitly spatial tactics of the Glasgow Strike Committee and the conscious attempts to create a wider awareness of similar struggles beyond their own case of militancy. Such solidarities and political imaginaries provide alternative articulations of the relationship between Scottish workers and the British Empire and introduce new forms of translocal solidarities (as also discussed in Chapter 4). These developing connections begin to disrupt 'economic' or 'industrial' understandings of the demand and reveal a plurality of labour politics connected to the demand for a shorter working week.

This linking of workplace grievances is significant and relates to the previous discussion of Laclau's understanding of demands and Mann's 'politics of measure' whereby diverse workers' practices are linked to demand making. In this regard, this chapter positions the internationalism of the Strike Committee as being inherently political and as integral to demand making. This aspect of a much celebrated strike in 1919 has been previously been understated by accounts which focus on direct confrontations between workers and the state or employers during the strike. The *Strike Bulletin* reflected a diversity of interests and linked Clydeside's demand for a shorter working week with similar struggles internationally. Mentioning India, exhibited a form of internationalism rarely seen previously within Clydeside's workplaces and an explicit anti-colonialism within those striking, with the reference to the 'comrades in India' representative of a new solidarity between the distanced workplaces. This relationship would continue in the following decades after the strike of 1919 and the communications considered, with the Workers' Exhibition held in Glasgow in 1938 contesting the Empire Exhibition by including details of colonial working and living conditions (see Britton, 2010). The solidarity regarding particular workplace grievances, as well as the overall sentiment of international social justice, was part of the demand for a shorter working week. Such connections between workers have tended to be less well recognised within Scottish labour history.

Other international linkages appear in the Clydeside *Strike Bulletin* more sporadically, with references made to America and Spain also found within the bulletins, again illustrating a wider sense of connection and awareness amongst the strike movement during 1919:

> Spanish Flu
>
> A telegram from Seville states 'The strike is now almost general, and as the compositors joined the rank of the strikers 24 hours ago, no newspaper has appeared today'…All over Spain, it appears, a great strike movement is now in being for a shorter working week. (*Strike Bulletin*, 9/2/19)
>
> Strikes in America
>
> Only a week ago the Textile Workers in New York won a shorter working week without any loss in pay, by the general strike, and in Seattle at present time 65,000 men are on strike for reduced hours. (*Strike Bulletin*, 9/2/19)

The updates within the *Strike Bulletin* clearly stretch across varying distances and reflected communications and connections amongst workers beyond their industrial workplaces.

This documentation created an awareness of workers beyond their own sites of resistance and provided recognition of wider issues beyond the Strike Committee's own priorities. This documentation of the strike reflects labour connections during the early twentieth century and indicates what Featherstone (2005:252) has described as 'a more generous and recursive account of the relationship between place and broader political imaginaries'. This documenting of connections can thus be viewed as representative of a growing textual network experienced by workers during the early twentieth century. Such practices are again illustrative of a broader internationalist culture of labour on Clydeside during the early twentieth century. Mann's understandings of workers' politics also indicates the significance of this by illustrating how demands are not limited by quantifiable goals, but are representative of multiple practices and positions (Mann, 2007: 50). This combination of quantifiable demands and qualitative practices is central to Mann's theoretical contribution and helpful for rethinking labour histories.

In this regard, the connections reflected the international perspectives and experiences of the strike leaders and Red Clydeside activists. This position was likely influenced by developing networks of socialist communications during the early twentieth century. Such connections also reflected more syndicalist and international currents within Clydeside during the twentieth century, as referred to in Chapter 4 and considered further by Hinton (1973). William Gallacher (1936, 1966), for example, writes in his memoirs about his travels to America before the war and visit to Russia in 1921. While arguably the most notable Red Clydeside international connection was experienced by John Maclean who was appointed 'Soviet Consul' for England and Scotland by Lenin (1969:201) in 1918. Maclean was not in Glasgow during the strike but his influence amongst the working class of the city during the period is undoubted and is commented upon by both Gallacher and Harry McShane (1978) in their reflections on the strike movement. The international connections within Clydeside are discussed further in the political identities chapter (Chapter 6). The strike also gained recognition from international journalists, notably Crystal Eastman, who documented the forty hours strike in the American *Liberator* magazine in October 1919. Evidence such as this suggests that the movement clearly had an impact beyond its immediate locale. These connections became particularly useful within the fundraising efforts to provide legal support for the strike leaders[43] arrested during 'Bloody Friday'. Significant funds were gathered within Glasgow but the largest

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[43] Emanuel Shinwell, William Gallacher, David Kirkwood, Harry Hopkins, George Edbury and several others were detained in Duke Street prison. Shinwell (5 months) and Gallacher (3 months) were both found guilty of charge for incitement to riot and sent to prison following a court case.

amount was collected from beyond Glasgow with £569[44] donated from districts outside of Glasgow. This financial support provides evidence of the importance of connections discussed and illustrated the relative significance of the Clydeside strike.

The material considered above has been linked to the 'equivalential chain' of the demand for a shorter working week. The evidence of translocalism reflects grievances beyond the immediate dispute, illustrating diversity within the imaginaries of labour during this period. The *Strike Bulletin* indicated developments of Clydeside's strike movement alongside expressions of solidarity with Indian labour, reflecting broader international influences and experiences of labour leaders on Clydeside. Further connections are considered in the following section, which considers the connections and differences between Glasgow and Belfast. These textual expressions of solidarity were not necessarily replicated in direct action but provide a more nuanced political construction of the demand for a shorter working week. In this regard, a broader understanding of labour internationalism can also be pursued within labour geography. Rather than situating labour internationalism as a strategic tool for use in direct actions to counter the mobility of capital, or directly reshaping investment patterns as pursued by Herod (1995), translocal connections can also be considered as part of a broader building of political and cultural solidarities. This interest in broader working class cultural practices connects with labour geography's view of struggle whereby labour imaginaries and broader contexts are integral to place-based disputes.

These emerging solidarities indicate the politicised construction of demands for a shorter working week, paralleling with Cleaver's indication that resistance regarding working time should be viewed as a heavily political act and as a confrontation to capital. The broader solidarities and connections discussed above reflect this political construction and indicate how seemingly local actions are connected to wider spatial senses of class solidarity. This aspect of workers' struggles differed significantly with nineteenth century' labour disputes in Scotland, which Knox has describe as largely 'sectional, or, at the very best, occupationally-based' involving 'only a minority of workers, class interests were subordinated to the concerns of the locality and the immediate working group' (Knox, 1999:119). The broader class interests established in 1919 are representative of Laclau's understanding of demands as containing multiple interests and also representative of a spatially connected labour dispute. Laclau's nuanced account of singular demands as

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[44] Clyde Defence Fund. Glasgow Trades Council Collection, Glasgow City Archives. Available from: http://sites.scran.ac.uk/redclyde/redclyde/rc055.htm

simplifying multiple grievances and practices allows the inclusion of such strategies and politicised labour practices as being integral to demand making. Alongside these developing solidarities, though, were more ambiguous aspects of labour agency, which also created more exclusionary spatial outcomes, as will be discussed later.

Van der Linden (2008:260) has written about labour connections and internationalism in similar terms. He describes how labour internationalisms can emerge from multiple motivations, ranging from short term strategic connections to a more indirect and normative involvement. The connections discussed here were both strategic and part of a broader political solidarity building process. Thus, this more open understanding of connections and demand making, as proposed by Laclau, is applicable to the Glasgow Strike Committee in 1919, which was clearly conscious of a broader working class political movement that acted across a variety of scales. The significance of this is further highlighted through a comparison with Belfast, which also experienced a strike for a shorter working week during January and February 1919.

5.3.2 Contrasting Demands: Belfast's 44 Hour Strike

The documentation of international labour struggles by Clydeside based workers illustrated translocal political imaginaries of striking workers in Glasgow. The spatial strategy of the Strike Committee revealed their deliberate attempts to create a wider awareness of labour struggles beyond their own case of militancy. This approach, stressing connections and international solidarity, differed with the documentation of the Belfast strike for a shorter working week. The Glasgow and Belfast strikes occurred at the same time and both used similar strategies and tactics in enforcing their demands for a shorter working week. Despite differences over the demand itself, with Belfast striking for a forty-four hour week, the two cities were eager to remain apprised to each others' activities.

Activities in Belfast, with a similar industrial basis in shipbuilding, were those that paralleled most with Glasgow, with the two militant cities appearing to be in formal contact (see Slowe, 1993). The *Strike Bulletin* regularly indicated strong links with Belfast workers during the strike:

Belfast's Message:

The Joint Committee got the following wire from the Belfast Strike Committee:- "Carry On, Boys." We will carry on and show there are no better fighters in the industrial world than the men of Scotland. (*Strike Bulletin*, 5/2/19)

On reflection Belfast was the most similar radical city connected to Glasgow in 1919, with the *Daily Record* reporting on 24th January that the Irish city 'had a tramless day. Street lamps and house supply of gas was cut off during the day', an act that Glasgow itself never managed. There is a limited literature on the Belfast strike but O'Connor and Parkill consider this time in Belfast's history and highlight the strikes overall significance:

> The biggest conflict of the period was the unofficial strike of 30,000 engineering and shipbuilding workers for a forty-four-hour week on 25 January 1919. The dispute extended municipal employees, leaving Belfast without gas or electricity for three weeks. (O'Connor and Parkill, 2002:7)

The Belfast strike emerged from similar grievances to those in Glasgow, with a frustration towards ASE negotiations and demands for improved working conditions following the war common features. In Belfast, the strike was most prominent amongst shipbuilders and engineers but also extended to electricians and municipal workers within the city, creating a similar general stoppage of work.

Morgan (1991) has considered the strike in Belfast further and discussed the relative particularity of the dispute. The strike emerged in Belfast following turbulent times in Ireland and was framed within a context of much tension amongst labour organisers and workers (see also O'Connor, 2011). Morgan has contextualised the strike as preceding the 1921 partition of Ireland, and indicated how the Belfast Strike Committee disassociated itself with more political elements in Ireland and instead focused on industrial goals. He indicates how Catholics were integrated in the strike but did not 'identify trade unionism with republicanism' (Morgan, 1991:233). This separation of broader politics from industrial issues was particularly evident when Belfast's Strike Committee refused to approach national executives of the ILP or TUC due to possible implications of nationalism. As a result of these tensions, Morgan suggests that the movement was keen to deny any association with Bolshevism and was cautious about more radical politics associated with the Irish Transport and General Workers Union through its links to Larkinism. He argues that the strikers illustrated class consciousness but that this was 'circumscribed by survivals of craft exclusiveness, and a strong conception of respectability' framed within a context that was highly 'parochrial' whereby 'Belfast trade unionists … ignored the rest of Ireland, while also cut off from the British movement' (Morgan, 1991:240). Due to this context, the strike emerged from unique circumstances and thus articulated their demands differently to Clydeside. The research below indicates

solidarities between Glasgow and Belfast before considering differences between their place-based articulations of demands for a shorter working week.

Mr Thom and Mr Quinlan, representing the Clydeside Strike Committee, travelled to Belfast in late January to update their workers whilst Mr H.C. Glass, representing the Glasgow branch of the ASE also visited Belfast during the strike as reported in the *Belfast Strike Bulletin* and *Workers Bulletin*[45] (30/1/19 and 13/2/19). This link provided a form of solidarity between activists within the industrial cities and illustrates the wider spatial awareness of the Clydeside Strike Committee. The visits are documented in the Belfast strike newspaper:

> Mr Thom stated emphatically that there was no organised body of workers in Scotland which at any time was prepared to accept the 47 hours offer as a settlement of the question.

> The time has come, said Mr Thom when the workers must stand together on what is after all only a very moderate demand. He did not wish to dictate to the Belfast men on what hours they should stick out for. The Clyde men were standing out for 40 and they were prepared to back the Belfast men on whatever their demand was, whether it was 44 or 40. (*Belfast Strike Bulletin*, 30/1/19)

In Belfast, updates on the situation on the Clyde were discussed by their own strike leaders and reported regularly in local newspapers (*Northern Whig* and *Belfast Newsletter*). Their strike paper also pledged support to Clydeside with Glasgow's *Strike Bulletin* extracts also a regular feature. Despite this solidarity, the Belfast Strike Committee undertook a different approach within their publications, emphasising the 'industrial' element of their struggle rather than a broader 'political' movement.

The Belfast strike bulletins make little reference to any struggle beyond the Belfast and Glasgow connection. Their focus centred upon securing the industrial aspect of the demand itself. This perspective is most evident towards at the conclusion of the Belfast strike. Mr Charles McKay, Chairman of the Belfast strike committee, stated that:

> There was none of the frothy talk of the usual agitator type, who take advantage of strikes to push their own ideas rather than help in securing the particular end which the men set out to gain by ceasing work. This was noticeable all through the agitation up to the final stage.

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[45] The publication changed title during the strike.

The men held to the idea of a 44-hours as a simple, plain demand, without working out any theories such as were associated with the shorter hours movement on the Clyde and elsewhere…If the Clyde and other centres had displayed the same solidarity, made the same stand as we in Belfast made, we should now have been working the 44 hours. I am glad that to the end our solidarity was maintained, and have every hope if we can stick to the purely industrial aspect we shall remedy many injustices which the worker still suffers in Belfast.

(*Belfast Newsletter*, 20/2/1919, p.5)

The Belfast strike concluded due to increasing pressures from workers demanding resolutions alongside continuing negotiations with state and employers. The position at the end of the Belfast strike differed significantly with Glasgow. They were critical of the Clydeside strike movement and emphasised the importance of the 'purely industrial aspect' of their demand. McKay's critical interpretation of the 'frothy talk of the usual agitator type' signals the industrial nature of the Belfast dispute and is seemingly a critique of movements elsewhere. This supported a concern expressed previously, in reference to the Glasgow disagreement over the hours to strike for, that there would be no 'shilly-shallying' on the Belfast demand. McKay had also earlier remarked that the scenes of 'Bloody Friday' provided a 'warning to the men of the folly of unconsidered action. They in Belfast were determined they would be an object lesson to the world how a strike should be conducted' (*Belfast Strike Bulletin*, 5/2/1919). These comments, from within the Belfast strike movement, begin to illustrate the relative significance of the contrasting articulations of internationalism within the Clydeside movement.

The Belfast strike paper also claimed the primary reason the workers were returning to work was due to 'collapse of the movement in the Cross-Channel centres' (*The Workers Bulletin*, 19/2/1919). In contrast to the demand on Clydeside, the Belfast strike was insistent on maintaining the particularity of their demand. They pledged solidarity with the Clydeside strike and demanded the release of Glasgow prisoners following 'Bloody Friday' but also reported scepticism with the methods and politics used in Scotland. This contrast, between the two strike movements, illustrates the importance of the broader strategy and political motives of the Clydeside Strike Committee. This is not to say that broader motivations were not found within the working class movement of the Belfast demand (*The Voice of Labour* for example provides international reports and a more political portrayal of the strike in the following months) but rather to emphasise the openly

political nature of the Strike Committee on Clydeside. In Glasgow, Morton commented on this aspect of Clydeside's strike stating that through the strike:

> The workers realised their position as a subject class, awakening them that class-consciousness which will make them capable of performing their historic mission in society, namely, the complete overthrow of the capitalist system, thereby enabling the workers to take control of the huge instruments of wealth production, and to operate them in the interests of the whole of humanity. (Morton, 1919:16)

Although his perception may not have come to full fruition, his point did receive support, with one trade union member responding to claims that the Glasgow Strike Committee was 'an unofficial body acting in an irresponsible way' by arguing that:

> If they were to look at strikes from immediate results, they would find practically nothing but failures in the histories of the Craft Unions from Mr Walker's gigantic Union of Steel Smelters to Bailie Whiteheads miserable little craft organisation. The Glasgow strike had not failed. (STUC *Annual Report*, 1919: p.73)

Evidence of this longer trajectory of the impact of the movement were reflected in successful demands for pay increases as illustrated through the negotiations of the Municipal Employee's Association who had requested an 11/ pay increase and were initially refused before the strike but were then successful two weeks after the strike. The impact of the strike is also evident in the previous chapter, which reflected growth in the Scottish labour movement with STUC membership and Glasgow Trades and Labour Council reaching peak memberships following the strike of 1919. This broader class solidarity of the Clydeside strike differed with the industrial and demand focused approach in Belfast.

This difference between place-based demands again indicates the usefulness of both Laclau and Mann's understandings of populism and workers' politics. It illustrates how demands for shorter working hours can be articulated differently depending on the grievances, which comprise the 'equivalential chain', and indicates how workers' interests are very difficult to predetermine. Thus, despite differences over the quantity of hours, there is a movement for shorter hours that is articulated very differently. This is representative of contrasting grievances, which can lead to tensions within the movement. These possibilities for differences between demands are central to the reading of the work of Laclau and Mann alongside each other.

The identification of difference between articulations of demands between Glasgow and Belfast is supported by Morgan's analysis of the strike in Belfast, which suggested that the Belfast workers were largely 'unreceptive to Clydeside revolutionary socialists' and that the Belfast strike had 'limited industrial goals' (Morgan, 1991:229). His work also considers how William Gallacher (Glasgow strike leader and future Communist Party of Great Britain MP) received a hostile Belfast reception previously when he refused to pledge loyalty to the King (as also commented upon by Gallacher, 1966:109). The combination of industrial and political elements within the making of a demand was not necessarily unique or novel[46] but here it is important to acknowledge the importance of broader spatial imaginaries and articulations of the Clydeside workers, which contributed to their more political construction of the movement. This aspect of the Forty Hours Movement has received relatively little attention within Scottish labour history.

In this regard, Mann has similarly indicated how these more political, qualitative and cultural aspects of labour struggles can often be downplayed:

> [O]ur assessment of the more or less exploitative nature of the wage relation and our normative judgements of the "justice" of a cultural politics of the wage can lead us to miss workers' persistent struggles to identify and invigorate a politics in an arena that is supposed to be strictly "economic." (Mann, 2006: 25)

Mann suggests that the qualitative aspects of the wage can never be separated from the quantitative and economic basis of struggle. Here the chapter argues that the demand for a shorter working week was part of a broader internationally influenced movement. Thus, in contrast to Belfast, the Strike Committee on Clydeside approached their demand with clear political motives that encapsulated other parts of the Red Clydeside period. This chapter argues that international solidarities and the making of connections were integral to the invigoration of workers' politics on Clydeside in 1919. To pursue this more qualitative understanding of working class experience further, the chapter now considers the possibilities for more exclusionary spatial practices within the movement through an analysis of the race riot during the same month as the Forty Hours Movement.

5.4 Labour Grievances and The Broomielaw Race Riot

A further grievance connected to the demand for a shorter working week was also evident within Glasgow's docks. Jacqueline Jenkinson's work on the riot of 1919 provides an

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[46] E.P. Thompson (1968) placed strong emphasis upon the political elements of workers struggles as evident in his work on the Luddite movement in the 19th century and discussed further in Chapter 2.

alternative insight into working class experience on Clydeside during the same month as the strike. Her work has revealed the hostilities between white Glasgow based sailors and foreign labour competition. This contribution uncovers a narrative previously silenced within the histories of Red Clydeside examining how during early 1919 'trade union leaders endeavoured to involve white British sailors in the general strike called in Clydeside by tying ongoing white sailors' protests against the 'unfair' competition posed by overseas labour to the 40-hours strike action' (Jenkinson, 2008:31). This is an important perspective as it highlights how labour communications and connections can foster more exclusionary spatial politics. This chapter develops Jenkinson's contribution further, as her work is perhaps limited by its isolation of the riot as a more discrete labour experience. Her work does not engage with the more progressive or solidarity building internationalisms although she does acknowledge the connections with race riots across Britain during this period. Here, the chapter contrasts the solidarities evident above with the more exclusionary practices within Clydeside. These seemingly contradictory forms of labour solidarity are considered relationally by this chapter to consider the more ambiguous nature of the political identities and labour connections emerging from Glasgow's working class movements.

Newspaper reports described riots, which occurred at Broomielaw just a week before the strike movement commenced:

Big Turmoil at Harbour

White and Black seamen in conflict…Man shot: Other two stabbed…There had been some chaff between the parties and this led to ultimately a challenge being issued by one of the blacks who expressed his willingness to "take on" any of the opposing faction. (*Daily Record*, 24/1/19, p.9)

The Glasgow *Evening Times* (24/1/1919, p. 2) reported on the composition of those involved with these scenes, highlighting that it was 'a large and hostile crowd of British seamen and white sailors of other nationalities' who followed the coloured men to their lodging-house. As indicated previously (Chapter 2), Hyslop (1999) has considered the development of an international 'white labourism' in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and has traced the flows, often colonial, which formed such alliances. Newspaper references in their description of the riots on Clydeside to the 'white sailors of other nationalities' identifies a form of solidarity amongst white workers not solely built around nationality. The strike movement and the riots are primarily linked through the

British Seafarers' Union (BSU) who joined the Forty Hours Movement and were also chaired by Strike Committee leader Shinwell.

Hyslop mentions Glasgow in his own work, and shows how significant representatives of the city's workers and others across Britain pledged support to white South African workers in 1914 demanding 'the exclusion of Black and Asian workers from skilled jobs' (Hyslop, 1999:416). Hyslop makes a key contribution by disrupting national and local approaches to labour history and challenges bounded understandings of agency. As previously discussed, he argues that 'the labour movements based on this imperial working class produced and disseminated a common ideology of White Labourism' (Hyslop, 1999:399). The introduction of this transnational ideology illustrates new forms of solidarity and agency, and disrupts singular understandings of labour activity, providing links between internationally connected labour politics. Kenefick (2010) has challenged Hyslop's linking of Scottish workers to white labourism and has discussed individuals who contested such ideologies overseas. His intervention is important and argues that individuals such as Archie Crawford and 'others vociferously argued the cause of internationalism and ''colour-blind'' socialism, and an end to race discrimination in South Africa' (Kenefick, 2010:60) must be considered alongside the tensions and violence previously considered. In contrast to Kenefick, this chapter suggests that these tensions were still prominent within Britain, and specifically Clydeside's docks. These insights introduce contested forms of spatial politics within Clydeside, as the BSU, considered an important addition to the strike in the *Strike Bulletins*, had clearly hostile feelings towards specifically non-white labour competition for jobs.

While trade union records provide an insight into the ambiguous white working class position during 1919, the experiences of black sailors during this period reveal a contrasting perspective to read alongside the archives of organised white labour. As Bressey (2006) has identified the black presence within the archive has often been far less visible and regularly poses problems in uncovering actual experiences. The Red Clydeside archives are equally difficult in tracing this presence and the majority of the accounts of the period do not acknowledge the riots or racialised tensions. One remaining perspective within the Glasgow context are letters from the 'Delegates of Coloured Seamen in Glasgow' (the letter was signed Cornelius Johnson, C. Redmond, A. Horton, J. Carpentier) who made their own grievances clear, whilst also stating their response to suggestions that they should be repatriated, in a letter to the colonial office in May 1919:

We are not willing to surrender our rights for Spaniards, Swedes, Greeks and Chinese since we are all British born subjects and can prove of being in Britain and sailing on British ships long before the war.

We will be loyal and allow ourselves to be deported when the Government of Britain enact a law also that white men who are filling the places of coloured men in Africa and the West Indies are deported to their own native shore.[47]

This account of the situation in Glasgow supports the portrayal provided by newspaper reports following the riots. They highlight the problems associated with a 'colour bar', which prevented their employment on British ships, and indicate how white labour appeared to be given preference internationally without seafaring union complaint. Their concern also parallels the longer trajectory of an anti-Asiatic and Chinese labour position of the British unions (as discussed in Chapter 4), which again illustrated the marginal and vulnerable position of Chinese maritime labour within British docks at this time.

According to Jenkinson (1985), about 30 black sailors were arrested following the riots, all were from Sierra Leone and therefore British subjects. This distinction again links to a 'white labourism' whereby workers' solidarity was not necessarily built around nationality but instead their notion of Britishness was defined by whiteness. The colonial link to 'British subjects of colour on the move' (see also Putnam, 2014) made little difference in Glasgow's docks where racialised tension became violent days before the strike. Hyslop's understanding of white labourism was also evident within the letters to the colonial office from delegates who reported an exclusionary politics based upon colonial relations and their race:

This question about the coloured men is growing more acute every day simply because the rights of these men are being ignored and they are counted as insignificant units of the empire. There are cases taking place in Glasgow in which coloured men have been molested and been ill treated by the police. It is not for one moment entertained by any of us that we are infallible, but the European have always take the man by the colour and diseased the merits. Nature have endowed us with a

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[47] TNA, CO 323/813 Letter from 'delegates of coloured seamen in Glasgow' to Colonial Office, 7th May 1919

colour to suit certain climatic conditions under which we had to inhabit, but our intellectual and moral capacities is not the same colour as our faces portrayed.[48]

Their accounts of their experiences during 1919 begin to reveal the multiple forms of racism prevalent within Clydeside's docks. The delegates were also clearly conscious of a developing hostility towards them within workplaces across Britain and Europe. Another letter from the 'Board of Health' in Edinburgh to the colonial office provided further context for the black seamen's grievances in January 1920:

> I wish to draw your attention to a very serious problem that has arisen in connection with coloured men in Glasgow. During the War a considerable number of such men were employed by the Government both on land and see. For many of them such employment is now no longer available, partly on account of the scarcity of shipping, partly on account of the action of the Shipping Federations and Trade Unions who are opposed to the employment of coloured men as long as white men are unemployed.

> There are now over 100 unemployed coloured men in Glasgow, and two-thirds of them are destitute.[49]

The intersecting strategies of employers and trade unions are cited here as the primary causes of unemployment amongst black seafarers. These letters indicate how black workers experienced a politics of exclusion through the state (police harassment is referred to above), employer (through the colour bar on ships) and, as explored further below and previously raised, the trade union movement in Scotland. These experiences are illustrative of the complex composition of labour within Red Clydeside and begin to reveal the multiple experiences of solidarity and exclusion during this period. This diversity disrupts understandings of labour's agency as being fixed, bounded or stable and instead indicates the importance of relational understandings of place-based politics.

To understand these tensions further the temporality of the scenes should also be framed within the 'intense emotion of patriotism' in Britain following First World War success as commented upon by Brockway (1942:47) in his reflections on the challenging role of the Independent Labour Party in protesting against the war. As discussed in the previous

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[48] TNA, CO 323/813 Letter from 'delegates of coloured seamen in Glasgow' to Colonial Office, 7th May 1919
[49] TNA, CO 323/843 Letter from The Secretary, The Board of Health, Edinburgh 9th January 1920

chapter, the seafaring unions held racist views with regards to Chinese and Asiatic labour during the early twentieth century. The trade union linked with the 1919 riots was the BSU, who officially joined the Forty Hours Movement on January 31st 1919 (according to the *Strike Bulletin*). This union was powerful, and was given support in its demands regarding Asiatic and Chinese labour competition by the Glasgow Trades and Labour Council, which in a six point bill stated:

> Mr E. Shinwell moved the following:
>
> That this congress direct the attention of Government to the employment of cheap Asiatic and Chinese labour on British vessels detrimental to the interests of British seamen … He was not opposed to Asiatics as such, but they were simply employed because they were cheaper ... Asiatics should only be employed at the same rate of pay as British sailors, or should be enabled to find employment in their own countries.
>
> Amid shouts of "agreed", the resolution was carried.
> (STUC *Annual Report*, 1920: p.91)

Such shouting was rarely recorded within the STUC annual reports. The union attempts to maintain workers' jobs within their mercantile workplace created a form of exclusionary politics with clashes about who held the right to work. This inclusion of the arguments against Asiatic and Chinese workers in the trade union reports shows the fragmented solidarity based upon whiteness developed around an exclusionary ideology forged trans-locally. Shinwell himself, although not directly involved with these riots, was not adverse to violence as one biographer, Slowe (1993), has noted.[50] As explored in Chapter 4, this was an issue pursued by Shinwell in 1912 and was a regular discussion point at both Trades Council and STUC annual conferences. This view was likely shared in January 1919, with strike leader and BSU chair Shinwell reflecting that 'evidently some Chinese sailors had also arrived in Glasgow at the same time, and the black men got the benefit of any ill-feeling directed against the Chinese' (cited in Jenkinson, 2008:42).

The Glasgow-based tensions and concern amongst the seafaring unions regarding foreign labour are reflected in *The British Seafarer* (see Figure 5.2), 'official organ of the BSU',

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[50] 'There was a good deal of interest in the effectiveness of the way he (Shinwell) dealt with blacklegs. He only occasionally had them beaten up, like the dockers (although when he did, the job was usually thorough and he often joined in personally) but he had gone beyond simply trying to take their names as he had been doing before: he now had them trailed to their homes.' (Slowe 1993:30)
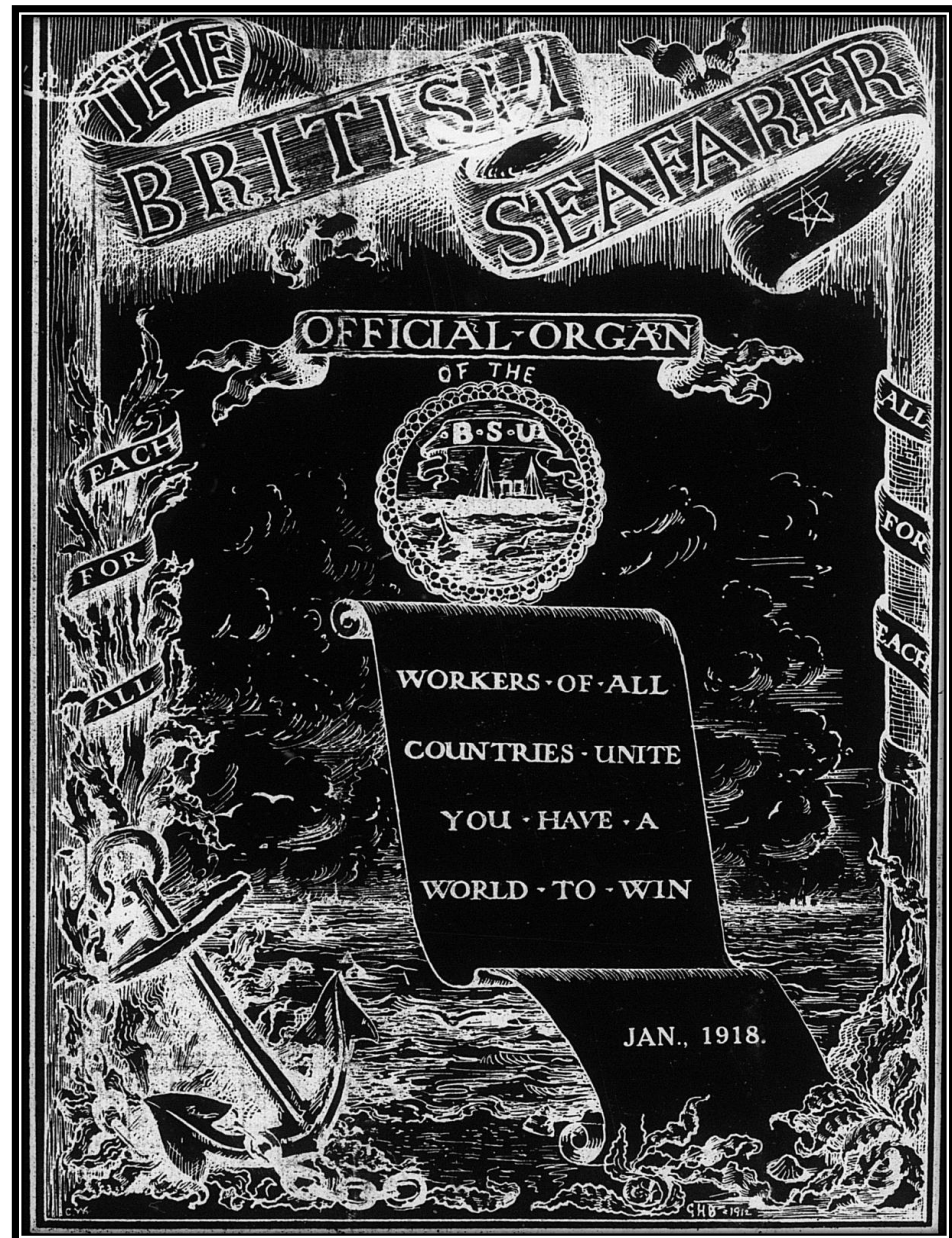
which reported on key events and developments. Glasgow is prominent in many of the bulletins and the scenes in 1919 are given significant coverage. Local Clydeside based concerns and tensions are further highlighted within these publications:

> There is a very strong feeling here with regard to the continued employment of Chinamen aboard ship, and trouble may break out at any moment. It is pitiful to see hundreds of men hanging around the shipping office without jobs and Chinamen coming along and signing on without any difficulty. A large number of men are being demobilised from the Army and Navy and are coming back looking for employment as sailors and firemen. They are not likely to stand idly by watching Chinamen stepping aboard British ships whilst they themselves walk the streets. It is absolutely certain that unless the Government steps in and regulates employment of Chinese labour, the men will take the matter into their own hands.
>
> (*British Seafarer*, March, 1919)

The reference to the demobilisation of soldiers links these tensions to the wider aim of the forty hours Strike Committee and illustrates the nature of the concerns following the war. Newspapers in Belfast reported that due to the BSU joining the strike for a shorter working week 'the question of Chinese labour, which strong feeling exists at the harbour, has been introduced into the matter' (*Northern Whig*, 29/1/1919: p.3). This connection between race and class links to Laclau's understanding of demands as being representative of multiple grievances and illustrates the complexity of collective decision making when considered through the perspectives of constituent parts. Here, the chapter has narrowed its focus within the overall strike movement to a smaller union with significant labour leaders to explore the complexities relating to the forty hours demand. Thus, BSU negotiations regarding their working hours, as part of the broader movement, and their hostilities towards foreign labour competition must be viewed as connected. This method allows more ambiguous forms of labour politics to emerge within analysis, by taking seriously exclusionary forms of labour agency and their connections to labour struggles as proposed within Mann's 'politics of measure'.

Figure 5.2 *British Seafarer* (1918) Official Organ of the British Seafarer Union

THE BRITISH SEAFARER

OFFICIAL·ORGAN
OF THE
B·S·U

EACH
FOR
ALL

ALL
FOR
EACH

WORKERS·OF·ALL
COUNTRIES·UNITE
YOU·HAVE·A
WORLD·TO·WIN

JAN., 1918.

The specific tensions considered here must also be considered alongside similar events and hostilities across Britain in 1919 with race riots also occurring in Liverpool and Cardiff. The riots of Broomielaw were not alone, and instead reflected a wider developing set of 'anti-black' rioting spreading across Britain at the time. These scenes are briefly commented on below to contextualise the violence in Glasgow and to illustrate the spatiality of the longer trajectories of hostile labour politics towards foreign labour competition. Peter Fryer (2010:301-303) considers this broader context in his book *Staying Power* and indicates how 'an anti-black reign of terror raged in Liverpool' for three days in

May 1919 after violence between Scandinavians and West Indians. He also documents similar scenes in Cardiff where 'three men were killed and dozens injured'. The events in Liverpool emphasise the argument made by Hyslop (1999) with the involvement of Scandinavians in these disputes suggesting a wider identity of 'whiteness' rather than one formed with national boundaries. More generally, the scenes across the UK illustrate the relational nature of the tensions within the labour movement. The exclusionary politics evident here should not be explained, or even excused, through accounts suggesting ignorance or an isolated politics, but rather acknowledged as formed through a series of broader connections within and beyond place-based disputes and particular labour organisations as Hyslop's discussion of white labourism reveals.

Violence between workers of different races during the early twentieth century was not limited to British docks. Tony Martin (1974) has highlighted how sailor disputes were equally prominent in the Caribbean. His work links to the response of the 'delegates of coloured seamen' by illustrating the broader spatiality of grievances amongst workers. He analyses the history of a workers strike in Trinidad in December 1919 and illustrates how violence occurred between black residents and white sailors during a peace demonstration in July that year. He considers how several British sailors from the H.M.S. Dartmouth 'were wantonly and severely assaulted, as were several other European members of the community' and 'very lewd and disparaging remarks were freely made about the white race and about their women folk' (Martin, 1974:318). Martin links these scenes to the spread of knowledge about the British riots (specifically those in Cardiff) between white and black sailors in 1919. Featherstone (2012:93) discusses these links further by contextualising the violence through the involvement of black soldiers returning from the British West Indies Regiment who had mutinied in Taranto, Italy, in December 1918 'in protest at their degrading and humiliating treatment at the hands of white offices'. These accounts begin to provide an impression of the international dimensions of the colonial and racialised tensions, which were regularly attached to labour disputes during the early twentieth century. These complex social and economic relations require framing within an approach that acknowledges the geographies of connection and concedes that 'solidarities are not necessarily unproblematic' (Featherstone, 2012:21). This understanding is pursued further in the conclusions to this chapter.

5.5 Conclusions

The Clydeside strike concluded without reaching an agreement on the 12th February. Following the violence of 'Bloody Friday' and arrests of strike leaders, workers began to

return to their workplaces. Despite this, the Forty Hours Movement had a significant impact on Clydeside with the *Strike Bulletins* reflecting a broader politics and geography of the movement. This more political understanding of the movement can be linked with the longer trajectory of growth within the Scottish labour movement as raised previously (see Chapter 4). In this regard, the specific role of the strike has been acknowledged by Foster who argued that it was an integral part of the 'transformation of attitudes between 1918 and 1920' represented by the election successes for the Independent Labour Party during this period (Foster, 1990:58). Similarly, Young (2009:186) has highlighted how the general election of 1922, the first following the strike, provided significant parliamentary gains for the labour movement in Scotland with thirty labour seats being won by Scottish Labour in comparison with just seven in the previous election in 1918. This electoral shift begins to illustrate the temporality of working class activism, which was connected to the demand for a shorter working week.

The previously neglected internationalism and diversity of coverage within the *Strike Bulletins* reflected a broader political engagement of the workers, which underpinned the labour movement on Clydeside. To explore this further, the chapter has presented multiple experiences of Clydeside's demand for a forty-hour working week. The plurality of experiences has been selected to engage with Laclau's broader understanding of the making of demands through aggregating grievances and Mann's qualitative and cultural construction of the wage through a 'politics of measure'. The chapter has argued that, in contrasting ways, these approaches facilitate a broader understanding of demand making and working class agency than approaches that emphasise the particularity of labour demands. This approach encourages the acknowledgement, and comparison, of the tensions and possibilities within demand making. These conceptual understandings of populism and labour politics facilitate a broader notion of what sort of experiences is considered significant relating to workers' demands. This more nuanced understanding reveals multiple and competing grievances in a manner that applies the agenda suggested in Chapter 2 regarding labour agency and experience.

Through this approach, the primary juxtaposition presented is between the geographies of solidarity emerging from the movement compared with the white labourism within the race riots. This tension has not been previously explored and reveals the broader spatiality of demand making alongside an internal tension and exclusionary political practices amongst workers. The conceptual discussions around demands facilitates a more rounded account of labour politics to include more progressive and exclusionary workers' practices operating

within the singular demand for a shorter working week. The wider discussion of the movement suggests a politicised understanding of demands for shorter hours to illustrate the role of the demand as a signifier for a complex spatial politics. This understanding analyses the geographies of a movement by deconstructing a demand from its particularity to analyse its wider spatial and temporal role.

It is important to stress that the Forty Hours Movement should not be defined by its conclusion. The strike had a longer impact on Clydeside beyond the immediate winning or losing of the demand. The increased negotiating power of labour, alongside the electoral successes raised previously, illustrates the broader politics relating to the demand. The strength of organised labour was also accompanied with tensions and problems within the movement, though, and this chapter has argued that these complexities should not be silenced. This chapter has compared and contrasted evidence that illustrates forms of labour solidarity and strategy, such as the diverse coverage of labour matters within the *Strike Bulletin*, alongside more exclusionary political practices, such as the race riot at Broomielaw. When understood in this more open and nuanced manner, and as part of a broader labour politics during the early twentieth century, the demand for a shorter working week can be viewed as a signifier for an ambiguous labour politics functioning across many political issues with diverse impacts. This emphasis on multiplicity within place-based politics is pursued further in the following chapter, which considers political activists and diverse political positions within Clydeside's working class presence.

Chapter 6

Clydeside's Working Class Presence: Political Identities and International Connections

'*An individual does not create a movement of thousands: this must be the product of a community*'. E.P. Thompson (1960:25)

6.1 Introduction

In a recent analysis of the political contributions and links between anarchism and syndicalism, Schmidt and van der Walt (2009:14) claimed that anarchism specifically 'emerged within and was an integral part of modern socialist and working-class movements'. Their book *Black Flame* makes an important intervention by challenging bounded accounts of anarchism through an analysis of some of the broader spatial and temporal connections between working class movements with anarchist and syndicalist sympathies. This work also discusses the prominence of Glasgow movements in developing these connections, linking with Hinton's (1973) analysis of the shop steward movement. They argue that:

> In Scotland, the SLP[51] exerted its greatest influence through the Shop Stewards and Workers' Committee Movement, a key example of the rank and file version of syndicalism that emerged in 1915. "The ultimate aim of the Clyde Workers' Committee," wrote Willie Gallacher (1881-1965), its chair and De Leonist, in January 1916, "is to weld these [existing] unions into one powerful organisation that will place the workers in complete control of the industry.
> (Schmidt and van der Walt, 2009:165)

Their analysis confronts accounts that 'deny a connection' between the two traditions and also those that 'suggest an opposition' between anarchism and syndicalism. In contrast, left political identities and traditions, such as anarchism and syndicalism, are positioned as being more temporal, fluid and spatially connected. This approach provides an innovative perspective towards the history of Red Clydeside that hasn't been previously emphasised. The anarchist history of Glasgow has often been read in separation and opposition to the

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[51] The Socialist Labour Party was found in 1902 and was active until 1923. Although relatively small, compared with the larger political groupings on Clydeside, it was politically active within Scotland during the early twentieth century and played a key role in several industrial disputes (for example see 1911 Singer Strike material, Chapter 4).

official parliamentary activities of organised labour, despite clear intersections between their politics and demands. Similarly the women's suffrage movement and housing struggles have rarely been considered alongside the connected anti-war and broader political movements despite the involvement of the same women in both movements.

This chapter seeks to draw out these connections by analysing three political activists within Clydeside and considering their political networks and activities. It aims to provide an insight into Clydeside's 'working class presence' (see E.P. Thompson, 1968) by exploring the multiplicity of practices and political positions during this period. Thompson took seriously the diversity of political practices within his notion of a 'working class presence' by including reading groups, meeting places, smaller political groups and multiple working class publications within his analysis. The inclusion of these diverse political practices is closely linked with the assemblage literature discussed in Chapter 3; as such the chapter will draw on some useful insights regarding assemblage to develop its understanding of Clydeside's working class presence. It is argued that assemblage facilitates a more sympathetic reading of the different modalities of labour activism that are raised below whilst also maintaining what McFarlane and Anderson (2011b:162) describe as 'unity across difference'.

This interest in broader working class culture, rather than simply writing historical accounts through the perspective of representative bodies, is pursued below. Thus, the principal argument held here is that the politics of Red Clydeside and the networks of activists were not quite as disparate, or easily categorised, as some accounts have suggested (see McLean, 1983). O'Morgan (1975:45), for example, has argued that, when held in comparison to Keir Hardie; 'the latter generation of Glasgow socialists after 1917 conceived their socialism firmly within a Celtic context'. In contrast, this chapter is positioned within more recent work relating to Scottish labour history (such as Domosh, 2008, Young, 2009, Kenefick, 2010), which has begun to develop a broader sense of political activism and forms of internationalism. The emphasis on political lives, through more personal documents (memoirs, diaries, letters, etc.), also attempts to address recent calls for an 'analytical space for individual as well as collective action' (Coe and Jordhus-Lier, 2010:7) within labour geography.

The chapter begins with introductions to the three individuals and a justification for the foregrounding of their lives within the history of Red Clydeside. Following this, the chapter explores some of their overlapping contributions to the radical politics of Red Clydeside, firstly and most prominently through the anti-war movement. The third section

considers some of the contrasting articulations of labour politics developed by each individual and the diverse forms of working class solidarities they contributed to. The chapter then raises the contrasting modalities and practices of internationalism developed by the individuals within and beyond Clydeside. After this, these connections, solidarities and forms of direct action are positioned alongside a specific moment of difference and disagreement within the working class presence. This confrontation is illustrative of tensions within the working class presence regarding political affiliations, which is more subtly present throughout the chapter. The chapter concludes by considering the implications of this approach for revisiting the 'working class presence' of Red Clydeside and broader debates within labour geography and labour history.

6.2 Political Trajectories: Class, Gender and Left Activism

6.2.1 Guy Aldred, Helen Crawfurd and James Maxton

Arguably the most prominent examples of Red Clydeside's working class presence and spirit of radicalism can be found through the work of numerous propagandists and political leaders during this period. Guy Aldred, Helen Crawfurd and James Maxton are just three of many individuals who made significant contributions to the working class politics of Clydeside and beyond. The intellectual rationale for the inclusion of these three particular individuals is due to the diverse positionalities they contribute to the working class presence. Utilising assemblage as methodology (see Brenner et al., 2011:231, also Chapter 3), the chapter explores practices, relations and connections beyond the 'self-evident arrangement' (Allen, 2012:156). Individual memoirs of the Red Clydeside period are fairly common and widely available (Gallagher, 1936, Bell, 1941, Shinwell, 1955) but are rarely cross referenced with other Clydeside lives and have been occasionally dismissed as overly 'romanticised' (see Duncan and McIvor, 1992:4). In contrast, this chapter aims to consider three seemingly disparate political identities to survey the broader sense of radicalism within Clydeside between 1911 and 1934.

This approach links to Joan Scott's (1999:87) critique of E.P. Thompson's gendering and rationalism in *The Making of the English Working Class* by refusing to remain 'within the analytic frame of Thompson's history' and instead problematises 'all the connections it so readily assumes.' In this regard, the chapter provides a more nuanced portrayal of the activities and activists within Clydeside's diverse working class presence. The inclusion of Guy Aldred and Helen Crawfurd introduces two lives that have often been less prominent or only given passing reference in historical accounts of the Red Clydeside period.

Crawfurd's memoirs remain unpublished whilst Aldred has been the subject of significant work by J.T. Caldwell (1978, 1988a, see also Jones, 2004) but is often only briefly mentioned, if at all, within many labour histories of this period. Maxton's life has been the subject of several biographies and is relatively well documented, with several accounts of his life already available (McAllister, 1935, McNairn, 1955, Knox, 1984, Brown, 1986), but has perhaps been less well considered through intersections with other political lives.

The diversity of working class politics presented can be summarised as highlighting relationships between anti-parliamentarianism (Aldred), the suffrage and communist movement (Crawfurd) and parliamentary left activism through the ILP (Maxton). This characterisation of each political position further highlights the importance of scrutinising the intersections between their lives. All three individuals took their politics seriously and devoted the majority of their lives to their campaigns. Each activist spent periods of their lives in prison because of their political beliefs and their unique campaigning should not be diluted through an over emphasis on relational accounts of radical history. Their lives also introduce diverse forms of internationalism, which have often been less well recognised within Red Clydeside's narrative. At times therefore, this chapter narrows its focus to a particular contribution through the lens of one individual, whilst elsewhere a shared radical politics (including other activists and political groups) is explored. Below, the chapter briefly introduces these individuals before considering intersections between their lives.

6.2.2 Guy Aldred (1886-1963)

Guy Alfred Aldred was born in Clerkenwell London on the 5th November 1886 and spent most of his youth in London. By the age of 15, Aldred was printing his own leaflets and distributing them across the city. After a brief spell on Fleet Street as a journalist, he established himself as a public speaker and radical publisher. He first visited Glasgow in 1912, following an invite from the 'Clarion Scouts', and spoke at the Pavillion Theatre.

During his visit, he also spoke at the Renfrew Street Hall of the SLP and at a meeting of the Glasgow Anarchists. This relationship with the anarchist groups of Glasgow would develop in later years. In 1919, following his release from prison and several trips to Scotland during the war, he moved to Glasgow and began his sustained political work in the city, whilst also travelling around the country. Aldred is most commonly associated with the anarchist movement and his anti-parliamentary spirit and beliefs are evident in most of his publications (as is explored below). Thus, his writing and public speaking appearances would regularly clash with the parliamentarians of the ILP and the Communist Party of Great Britain. Although this chapter focuses on his work before 1934, his political work continued throughout the Second World War and his international outlook was reflected in his political writings and engagement with the Spanish Civil War. Politically active until his death in 1963, Guy Aldred fell ill during a public speech and died one week later on the 16th October.

6.2.3 Helen Crawfurd (1877-1954)

Helen Jack (who became Crawfurd after marrying Reverend Alexander Crawfurd in 1898) was born in the Glasgow working class district of the Gorbals on the 9th November 1877. Her father was a master baker and due to his business commitments the family moved to Ipswich during Crawfurd's early childhood years. Her family placed significant emphasis on education and in her memoirs she acknowledged that her upbringing was fairly politically and religiously conservative, but politically interesting with particular emphasis on international issues. Crawfurd returned to Glasgow with her family in 1894 and joined the Women's Social and Political Union in 1910. Her involvement in the suffrage movement is commented upon below, as is her key role in the rent strikes and anti-war movement. After spending several years in the ILP, alongside James Maxton amongst others, Crawfurd joined the Communist Party of Great Britain and soon became involved with Workers International Relief. In her role, as secretary of the British branch, she became integral to international relief efforts for workers across Europe. Beyond the focus

of this research, Crawfurd was also heavily involved with the Workers exhibition in 1938, which contested the Empire exhibition in the city (Britton, 2010). Towards the end of her life, though, she began to move away from politics and conceded that 'the life of the socialist propagandist is no easy one'. Helen Crawfurd died on the 18th of April 1954.

6.2.4 James Maxton (1885-1946)

James Maxton was born in Pollokshaws, Glasgow, on the 22nd June 1885. He was the eldest son of James Maxton, a schoolteacher. His mother was also a schoolteacher before she left her job to look after her children. After graduating from the University of Glasgow, Maxton became a teacher himself and joined the relevant union bodies for Scottish teachers. More significantly though, he joined the ILP in 1904, at the age of 19 and soon became heavily involved within this organisation. Maxton became one of the most notable figures in the ILP, winning the parliamentary seat of Bridgeton in 1922 and going on to become National Chairman of the party between 1926-31 and 1934-9. Throughout his period in the House of Commons, Maxton was highly respected and renowned for his public speaking ability. He also maintained a strong internationalism throughout his political engagements and spoke at many international labour conferences, including Vienna in 1931, which is considered below. His political engagement continued beyond the framing of this research and this is well detailed in the biographies cited above. He was also involved with the Workers' Exhibition in 1938 alongside Crawfurd. James Maxton died on the 23rd July 1946 at his home in Largs.

6.3 Contesting the War and Fighting the Class Struggle

This section explores the most prominent example of intersections between these lives by considering the anti-war movement on Clydeside during the First World War. In his autobiographical account, *Inside the Left,* Fenner Brockway (1942:53) commented that

Glasgow's relative success (in comparison to the London ILP) in challenging the First World War was due to its dual focus on the class struggle and peace movement. He argues that 'they were speaking a different language … [w]e concentrated on peace. They concentrated on the class struggle'. This relationship between the anti-war movement and class politics manifested itself in multiple ways. The movement had a presence in the city from the beginning of the war and in August 1914 a Peace Demonstration, organised by the ILP, the BSP and the Glasgow Branch of the Peace Society was held at Glasgow Green where 5,000 people attended (*Forward*, 1/8/1914). From this point onwards, the anti-war movement was active within the city and the individuals introduced above were all linked to it.

In his diary entries, from 1915-16, James Maxton commented upon the fever of the anti-war movement on Clydeside:

> At Christmas 1915, the spirit of rebellion both against the continuance of the War, and against working and living conditions was so strong that Mr Lloyd George accompanied by Mr Arthur Henderson paid a special visit to Glasgow to try to pacify workers.

> The Clyde Workers' Committee was in full swing by this time and no munitions factory of any importance was without its shop stewards who spent their Saturday afternoons each week in conference discussing grievances that had arisen during the previous week and planning their campaigns to remedy them during the coming ensuing week. (Maxton Diaries, Mitchell Library, TD 956/6/15)

His initial comments reflected Brockway's analysis of the strength of the anti-war movement on Clydeside and indicate the connections made between the movement and the broader class struggle, particularly that of the Clyde Workers' Committee (CWC). His diaries also document the response of the shop stewards to the visit of Lloyd George (Minister of Munitions at the time) on Christmas Day in 1915. The scenes at the meeting on Christmas Day are well documented – described by the *Forward* (1/1/1916) newspaper as 'wild scenes' where 'Mr Lloyd George was received with loud and continued booing and hissing' – and illustrated the growing frustration towards the effects of the war on Clydeside. The meeting was arranged to negotiate an agreement on changes to wages and working conditions. Unskilled labourers, often women, had been brought in to munitions factories and were viewed by the established engineering unions as a threat to the position of skilled labour. Thus, the class movement on Clydeside was not always entirely united

against war, as the disputes of CWC were often over industrial conditions. This tension was exposed by Guy Aldred who critiqued munitions workers as for 'every bullet you make to kill a German soldier is aimed at the heart of your conscript son' (Aldred cited in Caldwell, 1988a:117). These tensions begin to signal the importance of foregrounding the plurality of political positions within the 'working class presence'.

Craig (2011:126) has considered this event, in relation to the labour dispute involving the CWC, and documented how large numbers of delegates gathered and sang 'The Red Flag', providing a hostile reception for Lloyd George. Such gatherings of workers were frequent in Glasgow during the war and often reflected the strong shared experience of anti-war activity throughout Clydeside. Beyond these more economic struggles of the CWC though (well considered by Hinton, 1970:40), which contributed to a radical spirit during the war yet rarely directly confronted it, Maxton, Crawfurd and Aldred articulated a wider political contestation against the war. As part of the ILP, Maxton was involved in developing the 'No Conscription Campaign' as part of the 'No Conscription Fellowship' (NCF) before he was arrested in March 1916 and charged under the Defence of the Realm Act (DORA). Through this work within the ILP and as Scottish representative for the NCF (see Knox, 1984:22), Maxton developed national connections with anti-war and anti-conscription campaigners such as Brockway. His arrest came after a public speech in Glasgow where he encouraged workers to 'to take action and that action is to strike and down tools at once' (in Brown, 1986:58). In Glasgow, John Maclean stressed that it was important to 'get jail politically' (Harry McShane Interview[52]), rather than as a conscientious objector on pacifist grounds, and this broader political message appeared important to all three activists considered here.

Before his arrest, Maxton articulated the anti-war message at many public meetings and these scenes are where he first came into contact with Guy Aldred. Although he still lived in London during the First World War, Aldred also articulated a strong anti-war argument in many of his London based publications, primarily in *The Spur*, before his own arrest in 1916 as a conscientious objector. Their anti-war efforts came together in January 1916, whilst Aldred was in Glasgow, and they both spoke at a large public meeting on Glasgow Green encouraging the anti-war movement. This shared platform allowed both, alongside

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[52] Held at Gallacher Memorial Library, Glasgow Caledonian University, No date, Uncatalogued.

others including John Maclean[53] and Harry Hopkins,[54] to spread their message. In 1935, Maxton reflected upon the sharing of a platform with Aldred and Maclean, commenting that:

> I never have been in the same Party as either Maclean or Aldred, although frequently appearing on platforms with them when particular fights on special issues made such alliances the obviously right course to take.

> When a common platform was agreed upon to secure unity of working class outlook on a particular issue, one could go on to the platform with full confidence that they would deal with that issue, and struggle to get a united workers' mind on the subject. (Maxton cited in Aldred, 1944:107)

The Glasgow platforms were a key part of the labour movement in the city and are commented on further below. This shared 'working class outlook' described by Maxton was central to Clydeside's labour movement. These temporary moments of collaboration point to the importance of understanding the politics of Clydeside through assemblage theory as it allows greater recognition of more transitory connections. In this regard, Davies (2013:26) has argued that 'assemblage sees socio-spatial activity as a series of ongoing and always 'emergent' processes'. He places particular emphasis on the importance of considering how these groups can 'cohere together' and this possibility for the combination of contrasting political positions provides a key argument of this chapter. In particular moments, such as the anti-war movement, different political groups, traditions and activists were able to combine and articulate a shared political message.

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[53] As noted in Chapter 1, John Maclean (1879-1923) was a Scottish Socialist and prominent activist during the Red Clydeside period. His life is well documented in biographies (notably by his daughter: Nan Milton, 1973) and Scottish labour history (Young, 2009).
[54] Harry Hopkins was secretary of the ASE and was also heavily involved in the co-ordination of the Forty Hours Movement in 1919.

Figure 6.1 Platform Speakers (1910s)

Prior to his own imprisonment under DORA, Aldred wrote a short article entitled 'Meditation' that was published in *The Spur*. This article was translated by French anarchist Emile Armand into French and published in his paper, "Par dela la Melee" in February 1917. The article was written the day before Aldred's court appearance and was later reproduced in other French anti-militarist papers and circulated in leaflet form by French anti-war campaigners. Such assemblages of political action and correspondence made Glasgow and its associated networks a key site within the anti-war movement. These connections begin to illustrate a combination of political activists and international communications within and beyond the working class presence of Clydeside. The explicitly political nature of the material is noteworthy as commented upon by Schmidt and van der Walt who describe how '(a)narchist and syndicalist opposition did not derive so much from pacifism – an opposition to violence in any form – but from a class analysis' (Schmidt and van der Walt, 2009:211) Such politicised and contested analysis was particularly prominent on Clydeside and was consistently articulated by the three individuals considered in this chapter.

Due to the political pressure emanating from Glasgow in 1916, the *Forward* newspaper, which had regularly posted 'Socialist War Points' and anti-war propaganda, was suppressed by the British Government. The paper was suspended for a month and only resumed publication after agreeing to publish nothing to cause 'disaffection with the

Munitions of War Act or with the policy of the dilution of labour'.[55] Harry McShane[56] has described how much of the dissemination of radical news on Clydeside was 'quite unorthodox' and primarily made through word of mouth in the shipyards and other workplaces during the war. The suppression of these newspapers was a major setback for the left on Clydeside, and was also indicative of the level of threat perceived by the British political establishment, illustrating the importance of Glasgow in articulating the anti-war message. Newspapers were routinely passed around workers and in an interview about *The Worker* newspaper, which was also suppressed in 1916, McShane described how 'everybody helped' in disseminating a radical politics. The anti-war meetings and the suppression of the *Forward* also intersected with the activities of Helen Crawfurd who was heavily involved in contesting the war. In her unpublished memoirs she describes her 'profound hatred of war with all its ghastly cruelty and waste' (Crawfurd *Memoirs,*[57] p.133).

During 1914, Crawfurd wrote 'Our Suffrage Column' for the *Forward* newspaper in which she highlighted the need for a working class solidarity to confront the capitalist war. In the extract below she connects the women's suffrage movement to the challenging of the capitalist notion of international war:

> We women, who are looking for the dawning of that day when wars shall cease, believe that with liberty for women that day draws nearer. Today one thinks of the forcible feeding that the educational authorities perform upon the youth of this country, filling their minds with what the Capitalists call "patriotism". War is glorified and international hatreds developed and encouraged. Submission and discipline encouraged, even if that submission means submission to injustice. (*Forward*, 22/2/1914, p.6)

This gendering of the challenge towards class relations was a crucial part of the working class presence and contested more masculine articulations of the labour movement. Her anti-war stance eventually ended her previous political loyalty to the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU), who she described as supporting the war, as she joined the anti-war ILP alongside Maxton. Such porous political groupings and fluid political identities were a common feature of this period.

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[55] ILP Annual Report, 1916:14. London School of Economics, ILP 12/1/3
[56] Harry McShane Interview Held at the Gallacher Memorial Library, Glasgow Caledonian University, No date, Uncatalogued.
[57] A copy of these memoirs was consulted at the Gallacher Memorial Library, Glasgow Caledonian University. The original is held at the Marx Memorial Library. There is no definitive date of writing.

Following the start of the war, Crawfurd became increasingly connected to events in Ireland and influenced by the Irish radical figure James Connolly, with whom she was in contact with during her many visits to Belfast to speak on behalf of the ILP. In her memoirs she reflects on Connolly's description of how 'Ireland will not have the conscription. Let the law say what it likes. We have no intentions of shedding our blood abroad for our masters' (Crawfurd *Memoirs*, p.117). As a member of the ILP, and on behalf of Tom Johnston (editor of *Forward*), she would convey messages on her travels to Belfast. She met Connolly in Liberty Hall, and would speak at many public meetings in the city. She described Connolly as 'courtesy itself' and the atmosphere in Belfast before the Easter Rising as 'electric'. During her time in Ireland she also developed important connections with radical Irish women including Constance Markiewitz, Maud Gonne, and Charlotte Despard. This connection with Irish radical women is explored further below but the early link with Connolly and Irish politics was clearly influential in developing Crawfurd's anti-war position and left political trajectory. These less formal communications, particularly when held in comparison with the official delegations of the trade union movement (see Chapter 4), were equally important in spreading political messages and generating translocal solidarity.

In Glasgow, Crawfurd channelled her anti-war efforts through the Women's Peace Crusade (WPC), as secretary, alongside other Glasgow based women (including Mary Barbour, Agnes Dollan and Ethel Kaye[58]). These women had a significant presence within the city and held regular open-air meetings around Clydeside and produced leaflets, pamphlets and badges that were distributed throughout Scotland. Such activities were representative of the strong female position within the working class presence of Clydeside. Reflecting on her involvement with this movement Crawfurd also stressed the importance of the street corner as a political meeting place (Crawfurd *Memoirs*, p.155). The street corner strategy was common within Glasgow and is also commented upon by Aldred in *The Commune*. Both Crawfurd and Aldred placed particular emphasis on the importance of these meetings in articulating a working class and feminist politics. Aldred claimed that 'the APCF is concentrating on making a Socialist proletariat' and 'that is why we prefer the street-corners to the comfortable atmosphere at St Stephens' (*The Commune*, March 1923, p.26).

This positioning of politics on the streets provides further evidence of a working class presence beyond the workplace in the broader urban realm. The politics of the streets were representative of broader connections between women's struggles and labour politics, and

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[58] For more on these women and their role in the 1915 Rent Strikes see Melling (1983).

had wider effects. In July 1917, the WPC organised a demonstration of 5,000 people, which Couzin (2006:n.p.) has described as a 'mass demonstration in Glasgow; from two sides of the city processions wound their way through the city accompanied by bands and banners'. On their arrival to Glasgow Green they then 'merged into one massive colourful demonstration of some 14,000 people'. These demonstrations engaged with urban landscapes and, as Navickas (2009:93) has highlighted in relation to popular protests in Yorkshire and Lancashire, such places 'contributed to this extraordinary atmosphere as both venue and as symbol'. Glasgow Green, for example, became a key site for the working class presence as a place of many demonstrations and its accessibility eventually became contested, particularly by Guy Aldred, as is explored later in the chapter.

Many WPC women were also part of the rent strikes of 1915-16 (for example Mary Barbour and Agnes Dollan). This connection further illustrates Brockway's initial point about Glasgow's combined efforts to contest war and continue existing forms of class struggle. Maxton was also linked to the rent strikes (see Brown, 1986) through his involvement within the ILP, who negotiated much of the struggle politically, but as Melling (1983) indicates the rent strikes were primarily a women led movement. The rent strikes are often referred to as the most successful campaign to emerge from the Red Clydeside period. The campaigners, primarily women within Glasgow Women's Housing Association, (including Mary Barbour and Agnes Dollan), forced a rent restriction act returning rent to pre-war rates. Crawfurd's own role within these events is also acknowledged by Melling, and is perhaps most notable in the scenes during an eviction hearing at a Glasgow court:

> Mrs Crawfurd said that this fight was essentially a women's fight. All who were taking part in the demonstration were showing their solidarity. There were not asking for mercy, not for charity; they were asking for justice. When the Government brought in the moratorium at the beginning of the war they could have made it illegal for factors to increase rents and for bondholders to raise the interest on their bonds. (*Glasgow Herald*, 15/11/1915, p.11)

The opening line of this quote speaks to Smyth's (1992) assertion that the gendered aspect of the struggle should not be subsumed with a broader labour history. The strike was led by women and reflected issues largely experienced by women. However, the gathering of campaigners outside the court hearing was illustrative of a broader solidarity amongst the working class in Glasgow on the issue of rent. During this hearing, members of the CWC also attended as part of sympathetic striking in support of the rent strike. These

relationships between workers and those involved with the rent strikes were largely maintained during the war and overlapped with the industrial demands indicated above. Their campaigns, publications and actions all contributed towards resistances during the war and illustrated a multiplicity and diversity within related demands. These combinations further illustrate the importance of utilising assemblage as methodology as they illustrate clear connections and solidarities between different political movements. The importance of actors such as Crawfurd, Maxton and Aldred in maintaining and developing these movements is also evident.

Such political antagonisms should be considered in relation to the position of the broader European Socialist left during the First World War. Eley (2002:125) has highlighted how the political left became particularly weak during this period as 'recognizing the International's powerlessness, socialists rapidly moved into actively supporting the war'. This often resulted in 'national defencism' and a radicalisation of labour often based on terms that supported the war effort. As also identified by Eley, though, Glasgow provided a significant contrast to this position with a radical political economy perspective, which was firmly opposed to the war and explicitly anti-imperist. Thus, this left political position maintained a critique of militarism throughout the war, which was grounded within international notions of social justice. Partial reasoning for this was due to changes within the workplaces and living conditions of Glasgow but as has been considered here, the opposition was also as part of a broader movement that linked war resistance to a criticism of 'capitalism and the state' (Schmidt and van der Walt (2009:215).

These opening examples illustrate intersections between radical figures on Clydeside and the combination of class and anti-war struggle provides the most explicit example of Brockway's claims regarding the strength of Clydeside's anti-war movement. This movement clearly combined class interests (or economic demands) with wider political demands and discussion. This combination of economic and political struggles was integral to radical Clydeside's spirit and provides a helpful example of the application of assemblage in this chapter, by relating how diverse political positions contributed towards a wider whole (McFarlane and Anderson, 2011a). As Brockway has claimed, the strength of the anti-war war movement on Clydeside was seemingly more prominent than elsewhere in Britain and its strength emerged through its combination of diverse political positions. These anti-war efforts presented above illustrates a shared sense of workers' internationalism through the resistance against a common capitalist enemy but, as is

explored further below, the spatial politics of activists and networks were not always as coherent.

6.4 The Making of Radical Cultures

Whilst highlighting this sense of a more relational and shared radical spirit within Clydeside, it should be noted that more specific and at times fractured struggles and campaigns were continually active within Clydeside. Aldred, Crawfurd and Maxton were heavily involved in particular struggles and here the chapter will briefly consider their more distinctive political engagements and the broader connections developed through these. Guy Aldred's presence within the city, for example, was mostly found within his publications and public speaking appearances. His anti-parliamentary communism continually intersected with Glasgow based struggles and provided a consistent challenge to dominant rhetoric emerging from the major labour organisations. In *The Commune* Aldred provided a twelve point definition of anti-parliamentarianism for the workers, in direct comparison with parliamentarianism.

Figure 6.2 The Parliamentarian/Anti Parliamentarian adapted from *The Commune*, March 1924

The Parliamentarian	The Anti-Parliamentarian
1. Parley and Respect for Established Institutions whilst misery abounds.	1. Agitation towards Social Revolution with no respect for oppressive and parasite institutions.
2. Workers' Interest subservient to capitalist expediency.	2. Development of class conscious understanding. Undermining capitalist interests.
3. Bourgeois Democracy: permanent democracy	3. Working class administration
4. Parliament – controlled by High Finance	4. The Soviet – or Industrial Council, directly controlled by the wealth-producers.
5. Nationalisation of some industries, yielding profits to State investors and loan sharks.	5. Socialisation of all industry.
6. Palliation through Industrial Organisation and bargaining. Political administration of Capitalism by workers.	6. Spontaneous Social Revolution. No industrial bargaining. No political administration of Capitalism.
7. Patriotism: involving army, navy, and air force.	7. Anti-Patriotism: complete refusal to assist militarism or navalism of any kind.
8. Pacifism: privileged conscientious objection and peace by negotiation.	8. No peace by negotiation. Incessant war against all Capitalist Governments. Refusal to bear arms on class-conscious grounds.
9. League of Governments.	9. League of Workers.

10. Bourgeois conventions and hypocrisies respected. Policeman dwelling within one's own mind.	10. No policeman dwelling within one's own mind. Property conventions repudiated.
11. Power left to the bourgeoisie.	11. All Power to the Workers.
12. Capitalism	12. Communism

There is a lot to unpack in these statements, but the overall arguments reveal a clear articulation of anti-parliamentary communism, which often remains silenced within Glasgow's labour history. These publications also indicate the significance of the anarchist tradition within Aldred's thought and he would also regularly cite Michael Bakunin (publishing several of his essays in *The Spur*) as a significant influence. Elsewhere *The Commune* (February 1923) described Communism as 'far from being antagonistic to anarchism' it 'thus forms the necessary foundation of the latter, its ever lasting basis.' Aldred's critique of the 'policeman dwelling within one's own mind' and his commitment to 'working class administration' and a 'league of workers' articulated a clear antagonism directed towards the established parliamentary groups of organised labour. These comments relate to Aldred's broader critique of reformism within the labour movement and his commitment to a revolutionary workers' movement.

Developing this anti-parliamentary position in *The Commune,* and later *The Council,* Aldred would continually challenge labour and socialist political groups. The ILP and James Maxton are included in these critiques, with Aldred retrospectively describing Maxton as 'not yet in Parliament, but ever hopeful, and most anxious to fall foul of no one' (*The Council*, October 1931, p.3). This challenging of the dominant political groups within Clydeside, with one particular clash with the ILP considered further below, provided a key contribution to the working class presence. The trajectory of anti-parliamentarianism must not be ignored within histories of Red Clydeside as it often articulated disillusionment towards organised labour and a frustration emanating from the working class movement, particularly in the 1920s. Although statistically difficult to measure in terms of membership, the anarchist movement was clearly influential within the broader working class movement as is explored through examples below.

Despite this clear and deliberate antagonism, Aldred did develop links with fractions of the labour movement on specific disputes (the anti-war movement being one). In 1919, on his return from prison, Aldred made many appearances for the ILP and other left political

groups. The amount of dates attended and the variety and specificity of the topics covered is particularly noteworthy:

> On his release from prison, Guy Aldred delivered his first lecture at the Watson Street Hall, Glasgow. This was on Sunday, February 2nd, 1919, and the subject, which traced the history of proletarian struggle, was "Crises: Past, Present, and to be." The following evening he received a public welcome at St.Mungo Hall, his subject being: "The Present Struggle of Liberty." Both these addresses defended the Bolshevik upheaval. After this we find Aldred speaking for the Bridgeton ILP, the Anderston ILP, the Blantyre ILP, the Dumbarton ILP, Clydebank ILP, Partick ILP, and the Clapham ILP; for the Walthamstow BSP, the Anderston BSP, for the Herald League in North and South London; for the Ealing Labour Party, and also the Clapham Labour Party; for the Hands Off Russia Committee in various parts of the country; for Fife Socialist League in Kirkaldy and neighbouring districts; for various Communist Groups established by the activity of the Glasgow Communist Group, such as Aberdeen Communist Group, the Edinburgh and Rosyth Communist Group; and the SLP in South Shields, Shettlestone, Dumbarton, and Croydon. The subjects dealt with were the following: "Our duty to Russia"; "British Labour and Soviet Russia"; "As to Politics: a Challenge to Parliamentary Bolsheviks"; "The War on Russia"; "Bolshevism, Anarchy and Parliament"; "Why I am a Bolshevik," etc.
>
> (*Communism in Britain, 1917-21*, Author Unknown. In Aldred, 1935:81)

These talks illustrate Aldred's clear interconnectedness with the organised labour movement and the working class of Glasgow, Scotland and the United Kingdom. The geography of these meetings illustrates Aldred's relationships with particular political groups but also provides evidence of the variety to his political thought. Although not formally associated with any of the organisations referred to above, Aldred pursued a persistent engagement with a working class audience. This engagement is evident through his standing for election in multiple constituencies within Clydeside on the basis that he would follow the Sinn Fein tactic of abstentionism were he to become elected. Furthermore, his commitment to a defence of Bolshevism contributed towards an articulation of internationalism within the city that is considered further below. The lectures and speeches given by Aldred, based upon a presumably limited knowledge of actual events in Russia but solidarity with working class revolutionaries, provided an important challenge to mainstream media representations of Bolshevism and contributed

towards the showing of support through broader trends within the British labour movement such as the 'Hands Off Russia' campaign (see Couzin, 2006).

Another intersecting campaign centred upon Aldred's consistent championing of the importance of public space as part of a free speech movement and this provides perhaps the most prominent example of direct action and connections between Aldred and other political groups within Glasgow. Glasgow Green was a key site for public speakers to articulate their politics and as a means of controlling public protests Glasgow Corporation decided to deny access in 1922. Prior police permission, via permit, was now required to use this space for demonstrations. In response to this, Aldred started a fierce campaign to reclaim the public space. In 1924, Aldred wrote an open letter defending the right of public speaking on Glasgow Green and supporting those who were arrested for not having a permit to the Lord Provost, Magistrates and Council of the City of Glasgow (Letter published in Caldwell, 1988a:209).

Originally dismissed by Labour and Communist parties as a needless and unimportant campaign – William Gallacher described the movement as a 'stunt pure and simple' (in Caldwell, 1978:233) - it was not until the 1930s that the movement gathered political support. Aldred's own emphasis on the importance of public space and the free speech movement is likely to have drawn upon his sustained engagement with the politics of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW):

> On its part, the Glasgow Communist Group established the principle of the open platform. It introduced George Hardy of Seattle, and at that time a member of the IWW to Scotland. It also brought Charles B. Roberts, who was nosing around as a kind of unsatisfactory Soviet missionary, from the U.S.A., acting in conjunction with the Workers' Social Federation. It had Willie Gallacher and James Maxton on its platform. (Aldred, 1935:81)

IWW member George Hardy visited Britain in 1919 and it is likely that Aldred would have been familiar with the IWW free speech movement in America earlier in that decade (see Renshaw, 1967 and Shanks, 1973). Hardy (1956:125) himself commented that the Clydeside struggles were 'a living example of the revolutionary mood you met everywhere among workers in the first few years after the war'. In his memoirs Aldred also reflected on seeing American syndicalist Daniel De Leon make a public speech in London. Thus, Aldred's own commitment to such causes was likely influenced by wider political trajectories. These wider trajectories are also commented on by Mitchell (2002:79) who

considers early twentieth century struggles by the IWW regarding public space in America as integral to the contestation over the 'production and control of space'. His analysis scrutinises the connections between free speech movements and the broader circulation of capital, indicating the intentionally disruptive nature of movements regarding public space. As such these movements were far more than 'a stunt pure and simple' and actually became connected to a broader critique of capitalism. On Clydeside, it was also notable that on the occasion cited above, these scenes also included a public speaking appearance by James Maxton. This principle of the 'open platform' reveals intersections between contrasting political identities (with ILP, CWC and IWW speakers present on this occasion) and illustrates the diversity of political positions provided for the working class as audiences.

Harry McShane (1978:173), who was responsible for Communist Party co-operation with the Glasgow Green campaign, describes Aldred as being the first to take up the fight for free speech in the city. Following significant demonstrations (for more on this see Caldwell, 1988a), much labour by Aldred, and several arrests (including Aldred himself), the free speech movement culminated in the collaboration of Aldred alongside Maxton and other ILP members. They spoke at a meeting following the setting aside of 'The Old Bandstand' for public meetings on the green. This was largely viewed as a success for the movement but Aldred felt it should have only been the beginning of a wider campaign. In this instance, it is clear that the landscape came to the 'foreground' (Navickas, 2009:94) of working class politics and particular places were sites of contestation. These landscapes were central to the working class political movements and the significance of open platforms further illustrates this relationship. The specific resistance of Aldred and the free speech movement most explicitly signalled this importance of public space for political activity and foregrounded the importance of particular landscapes in developing a working class presence.

Figure 6.3 Maxton the Firebrand Socialist, ca. 1925

Maxton was also a regular speaker at public meetings in public spaces. Pictured above giving a speech in Glasgow in the 1920s, Maxton was renowned for his distinctive presence and ability to articulate working class politics. The *Glasgow Herald* described Maxton as 'one of the ablest speakers and lecturers in the Labour Movement' (in Brown, 1986:12). Although explicitly criticised by Aldred for doing so, Maxton pursued election success on behalf of the ILP in the Bridgeton constituency. His appearance in Westminster with other 'Red Clydesiders' was largely viewed as representative of the increasing significance of labour politics in Glasgow. Alongside other Labour and ILP Members of Parliament (including John Wheatley, Emanuel Shinwell and David Kirkwood), Maxton travelled to London in November 1922 as a Member of Parliament with the support of much of Glasgow's working class. Before they travelled to London, a large gathering of workers took place at St. Enoch station and Maxton claimed that people 'will see the atmosphere of the Clyde getting the better of the House of Commons.' (in Brown, 1986: 13).

This Red Clydeside presence within Westminster has been well documented, but Maxton's work was far from restricted to the parliamentary sphere. Below, the chapter considers just one related aspect of his work, specifically his involvement in developing the Cook-Maxton Manifesto, which illustrated his commitment to socialist policies and challenged the reformism of the Labour party. In 1925, Maxton published the pamphlet 'Twenty Points for Socialism' where he made several critiques of the Labour Party and provided

alternative strategies, which he believed would constitute a more vigorous socialist campaign. These included a strong critique of capitalism and specific demands for a 'living income' and an increase in taxation. Developing this position, Maxton produced a manifesto with miners' leader Arthur James Cook (for more on Cook's life see Davies, 1987) who he was extremely impressed with during the miners' strike of 1926. Cook was a trade unionist and leader of the Miner's Federation of Great Britain (MFBG) who co-ordinated the general strike in 1926. By 1928, Cook had become particularly frustrated by the TUC and specifically its actions at the culmination of the strike. His frustration with the labour movement was similar to Maxton's and in one of his publications he described how due to 'failure of the leadership of the TUC to pursue courageously the line they had reluctantly adopted – there was a noticeable tendency on the part of these same leaders to take up a conciliatory attitude towards capitalism' (in Davies, 1987:148).

Combining their frustration with the labour movement, Maxton and Cook toured the United Kingdom with their 'Cook-Maxton Manifesto' in 1928. The manifesto developed some of Maxton's early ideas and Cook's critique of British trade unionism. This collaboration followed a Westminster meeting between Cook, Maxton and other Clydesiders (including William Gallacher and John Wheatley) where the leadership of the ILP combined with the leadership of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain (MFGB). Cook decided to co-operate in the campaign and, as Davies (1987:151) has argued, he 'undoubtedly welcomed the support of Clydesiders at a time when he was becoming increasingly isolated within the MFGB and TUC.' Their manifesto was targeted at both trade union and Labour Party members and received some early support:

> We judge that Maxton and Cook believe what they say, and it is what we have repeatedly said on this front page. Capitalism, i.e. the private ownership of the tools of production, of the methods of transportation, of the financial machinery for exchanging goods, together with private ownership of land, we hold to be the cause of poverty and servitude and of war. Until socialism, i.e. collective ownership and control, is substituted for capitalism we cannot have liberty, prosperity, nor peace in industry nor between nations. (*Labour's Northern Voice*, 6/7/28, p.1)

The above article continues by claiming that this outlook is the 'bedrock of our faith' in building a working class party. Overall the response to the campaign was mixed despite the manifesto articulating a renewed sense of working class resistance. The *Forward* newspaper was not convinced and ran an article entitled 'Socialism or Confusionism?'

questioning the substance of their contribution. In response, Maxton justified the manifesto by arguing that:

> The Labour Movement is practically dead. We are trying to bring it back to life. That's all. In the old days there was a goal to reach and we felt that every meeting, every pamphlet, every vote contorted and every seat won was a tangible and positive step nearer the goal. Today nobody believes that anything makes a difference. (*Glasgow Evening Standard*, 13/10/1928)

Here Maxton cites the same methods, pamphlets and meetings that were also emphasised by Aldred and Crawfurd, as being integral to articulating working class politics. This commitment towards a working class movement was not always replicated on the open platform, though, with Davies (1987:151) highlighting that Cook's 'typewritten dissertation on Marxism' and Maxton's speech on the need for a 'Labour government mandated to introduce large socialist measures' were not particularly well received by the working class audience. After an unsuccessful appearance from Cook in St. Andrew's Hall, Glasgow and significant criticism from large parts of the ILP, the pair decided not to pursue the manifesto further. The work of Maxton and Cook in developing the ideas illustrates the efforts made to articulate a challenge to labour politics within Westminster. It also captured much of the spirit of the miners' strike and was highly critical of the Trades Union Congress. The lack of success for the campaign should not render the campaign irrelevant but instead illustrate the boundaries and hurdles, which restricted contributions towards a parliamentary socialist politics even for significant individuals such as Maxton and Cook.

Their collaboration also illustrates connections between diverse political activists and traditions during the early twentieth century. These links and connections were assembled, dismantled and held the possibilities for being reassembled again rather than being viewed as simply networked and then maintained or broken. These more temporary and sometimes unsuccessful forms of political relationship are vital within labour history and should thus be acknowledged as such. Assemblage theory allows a more sympathetic reading of 'roads not taken' as it facilitates a reading of temporary connections and indicates how labour struggles may follow pathways that falter. McFarlane (2009:562) indicates this point by stressing how assemblage accounts for a spatial politics whereby 'elements are drawn together at a particular conjuncture only to disperse or realign'. A further intersecting logic within Red Clydeside was the articulations of the suffrage movement and this factor is considered below through a consideration of Helen Crawfurd's early political engagement.

Crawfurd's initial political activism came as part of the suffrage movement. In 1912, alongside other Glasgow women, she travelled to London where she was arrested after breaking the window of the Minister of Education with a demand attached for the enfranchisement of women (Crawfurd *Memoirs*, p.89-90). Following this action she spent several days in prison (a common experience for those in the suffrage movement) alongside the other Glasgow women. On her return to Glasgow she helped organise the visit of suffragette Emmeline Pankhurst in 1914, who was released from prison on hunger strike, and violent scenes followed between police and the women (Crawfurd estimated around 3,000) attending. Pankhurst was arrested and women picketed the St.Andrews Prison in Glasgow all night. Following her own release, Crawfurd broke more windows (this time at the local Army office) and was sentenced to a month in Duke St Prison. Again women picketed the prison demanding her release and Crawfurd was released on the 'cat and mouse act'[59] before being re-arrested. Her treatment in prison was considered particularly shocking, and following a further re-arrest in Perth, whilst again released on the 'cat and mouse act', the *Forward* (18/7/1914) newspaper detailed her poor treatment within Perth Prison, described as a 'place of torture', where she experienced forcible feeding.

On this occasion, Crawfurd was incarcerated after a public speech in Perth where she defended an attempt by suffragettes to blow up Burns Cottage in Alloway. The militancy of the Scottish suffrage movement is notable and provides further evidence of the importance of women within the radical presence on Red Clydeside and Scotland. Previous commentaries have described women as missing from Scottish history and have particularly targeted scholarship of the Red Clydeside period. For example, Breitenbach (1997:n.p.) has argued that the 'valorisation of particular types and forms of political or trade union action, which may be regarded as typically masculine, has its counterpoint in the devaluation and negative stereotyping of women's forms of organisation and action.' The support of the *Forward* newspaper, though, which published 'Our Suffrage Column' during the period when *The Suffragette* newspaper was suppressed, and collaborative work such as the activities discussed within the anti-war movement, illustrated connections and solidarity between the suffrage movement and the labour movement. Such connections are important for destabilising assumptions regarding the suffrage movement as largely being an upper or middle-class led movement (see Neale, 1967). In contrast, the inclusion of

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[59] 'Home Secretary McKenna in March 1913 introduced the Prisoners' Temporary Discharge for Ill-Health Act - aptly nick-named the Cat and Mouse Act, as by its provisions a prisoner could be released and rearrested almost indefinitely.' (Ward, 1982:29)

Crawfurd's life foregrounds intersections between working class struggle (also evident through women such as Jessie Stephens, see Canning, 2004a) and broader suffragette trajectories (for more on these specific connections see Bartley, 1999, Liddington and Norris, 2000, Ugolini, 2000). These connections alongside the actions of women in the suffragette, anti-war and housing struggles begin to illustrate the political contributions of women within Red Clydeside.

Overall, these activities indicate the importance of considering Clydeside's political identities through a diverse mix of labour practices, suggesting linkages with previous discussions of assemblage as methodology and Thompson's notion of working class presence. Their impacts are less certain and their coherence immeasurable, but their politics remains important nonetheless. For example, Aldred's speaking appearances should be viewed as contributing towards the broader assemblage of left political activism and as developing the anti-parliamentarian position. Similarly, Maxton's interactions with Cook, and Crawfurd's commitment to gender politics continually intersected with the overall labour movement. These diverse positionalities are illustrative of a dynamic working class presence. This understanding links to Gidwani's reading of the *Grundrisse* by Marx, which proposes that 'labor politics does not have to take the archetypical forms of labor union and labor party in order to stake out opposition to capital' (Gidwani, 2008:198). In contrast, his understanding provides a dynamic and subtle account of labour politics, which is transferable to Red Clydeside. Aldred, Crawfurd and Maxton's political engagements were similarly creative in their opposition to capital. The inclusion of these relationships begins to unpack the inadequacies of bounded or unitary representations of labour politics and instead foregrounds the importance of intersections between different political positions within Red Clydeside.

6.5 Contrasting Modalities of Internationalism

This section pays closer attention to the contrasting forms of internationalism adopted and experienced by Aldred, Crawfurd and Maxton. Labour geography has been particularly strong at analysing the international labour movement (as considered in Chapter 2) and Waterman and Wills (2001:306) have argued that efforts to portray labour internationalisms within labour geography should now seek to illustrate greater sensitivity to the 'complexity, difference and multideterminacy' within grounded experience of internationalism. Historical geographies of political activism begin to facilitate such an analysis with the emphasis below being on the contrasting modalities of internationalism.

Here, the chapter aims to rethink how internationalism is constructed by raising different forms of political connections across translocal boundaries.

Stephen Legg's (2009) understanding of assemblage and internationalist politics assists this exploration by stressing the importance of a practice-based analysis of internationalisms and the makings of scale. He proposes that assemblage encourage a conceptual 'move from structures to relationships, from temporal stability to uncertain periods of emergence and heterogeneous multiplicities, resisting the siren call of final or stable states, which are the foundations of classical social theory' (Legg, 2009:238). Legg suggests this approach allows an understanding of networking and internationalism as being 'real/narrated/collective' whilst also exploring 'contestation within networks', revealing the geographical complexity of internationalist organisations and seemingly more situated campaign groups. Such tensions and possibilities are considered below through an analysis that engages with contrasting modalities of internationalism to indicate how it functioned at contrasting levels within Clydeside's working class presence.

In terms of the activists considered here, these modalities, including charitable connections, international correspondences and radical publishing networks, provide forms of internationalism, which have often been less well recognised within Scottish labour history. This contribution is linked to broader literature regarding spatial practices of internationalism, such as Linebaugh and Rediker's (2000:7) work on maritime connections, which has stressed the importance of uncovering 'connections that have, over the centuries, usually been denied, ignored, or simply not seen, but nonetheless profoundly shaped the history of the world in which we all of us live and die'. Aldred, Crawfurd and Maxton were all recognisable political figures beyond Glasgow and they developed many friendships and solidarities beyond the struggles of the city. This section emphasises the different forms of connection experienced by the three activists, beginning with Crawfurd's experience within the WIR.

6.5.1 Workers' International Relief

Helen Crawfurd attended the second conference of the Communist International (alongside fellow Red Clydesiders William Gallacher and John Clarke[60]) in 1921 and during her stay she organised an interview with Lenin. In her memoirs, she summarises the interview:

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[60] John Clarke was a member of the Socialist Labour Party and later the CPGB and he documented his visit to Moscow in his book *Pen Pictures of Russia Under the "red Terror"*.

The three things which we spoke of were the importance of women being brought into the struggle, my appreciation of the first Workers' Republics attitude to the oppressed colonial workers, and the value and importance of the work of organization industrially and on an international scale. (Crawfurd *Memoirs*, p.210)

Crawfurd was conscious that 'invitations had been sent only to those elements who had retained their international socialist outlook during the War' and that there was an emphasis on gathering those willing to 'co-operate in the establishing of an International organization for action' (Crawfurd *Memoirs*, p.190). The presence of Clydeside activists within the conference is also notable and is illustrative of the translocal influences and travels of the political figures on Clydeside. The emphasis on the co-operation and inclusion of workers in developing forms of direct action appealed to Crawfurd and was soon embodied in her involvement with Workers' International Relief (WIR).

Following the founding of the Communist International in 1920, the Comintern 'sponsored a series of 'fronts'' (O'Connor, 2004:7) including WIR (1921-35). This organisation was established primarily in response to the famine in the Volga provinces of Russia, but held more general objectives of distributing support to workers' struggles across international boundaries. It held committees across Europe and also in America and Japan (see Canning, 2004b). Crawfurd became secretary of the British Branch of the WIR in 1921. This role was one of her most challenging and involved regular travel around Europe, with the head office of WIR in Berlin, and communication with diverse working class organisations. Their intentions were very clear and aimed to specifically challenge notions of international solidarity:

It is the duty of workers to help workers. It admits neither creed nor colour bar and gives help to workers of all shades of political opinion. Help without distinction, help without discrimination. (WIR cited in Canning, 2004b)

This sentiment appealed to Crawfurd and reflected the international outlook she had held from an early age. In her memoirs she describes how the WIR reflected her international positionality and facilitated assistance to workers who were struggling in their own conditions. The organisation refused to be categorised as charity (see Figure 6.4) and Crawfurd viewed it as fulfilling a unique role within international workers relations:

It was nothing new for workers to send help or relief to each other. In mining disasters, in earthquakes and famines, money had been collected and help rendered, but it had been sporadic and uncoordinated. The promoters of the Workers'

International Relief sought to build up an organization which would be available for workers' relief on an international scale, and would not be a makeshift sporadic type. (Crawfurd *Memoirs*, p.243)

While secretary, Crawfurd also edited the *Bulletin of the Workers International Relief* (English Edition), which detailed the work of the WIR and the poor conditions of workers internationally. In one example the paper describes the plight of the German worker in 1924:

THE FATE OF THE GERMAN WORKERS WILL DECIDE THE FATE OF THE WORLD'S WORKERS.

More than 5,000,000 unemployed workers and their families are existing upon the government dole.

The average wage of the full time male worker is 5d. per hour. He must work a week of 60 hours for 25ss. And prices are higher than in England.
(Extracts taken from *Workers' International Relief Bulletin*, May 1924)

In response, the WIR sent a deputation to the TUC (including Crawfurd) that argued for the co-ordination of relief efforts to be conducted for 'workers by workers'. They expressed concern about 'Government agencies discriminating against strikers and lock out victims'. In total £920 was raised by the British Committee of the WIR, with significant contributions from 141 trade unions and 32 co-operative councils. In addition, boots and tinned food was also sent to Germany. Similar distribution of support was made towards Russia and significantly Ireland, which O'Connor (2004) has considered where James Larkin was involved with the WIR before he clashed and separated with the organisation.

Crawfurd's involvement with the WIR also included supporting the General Strike in 1926 where they supplied food and other resources for the miners. In her memoirs, she describes her experience of the General Strike and the ways in which local actions and international relief came together to support the strike:

The miners still held out, in spite of the fact that they had been left to struggle on alone. In the coal fields, soup kitchens were opened; funds were collected by charitable elements in the Labour Movement. Little Miners Lamps were sold on the streets. The Russian miners sent relief in the form of a gift of about a million pounds.

The Workers' Internal Relief organisation in Germany and other countries sent thousands of pounds. (Crawfurd *Memoirs*, p.281)

The construction of 'relief on an international scale' described by Crawfurd emerged specifically through workers collaboration (albeit with Comintern support) and established the aim of encouraging collective workers decision making. This form of financial assistance to international struggles may be deemed simply as charitable, but in actuality it represented a challenge towards organised labour and explicitly demanded workers participation in political organisations. More recently British trade union notions of internationalism have been similarly criticised by Cumbers for their co-ordination of international connections. He describes their efforts as noteworthy but largely both 'uneven and disparate in focus' (Cumbers, 2004:841). As early as 1921, though, there was debate regarding the terms under which international working class solidarity is constructed. This sentiment is reflected by the W.I.R who described their work as 'Not Charity but Workers International Self Help'.

Figure 6.4 Workers' International Relief providing support for the striking miners at Lochore in Fife, 1926

6.5.2 Travels and International Conferences

In 1911, James Maxton travelled across Europe alongside his socialist friends George Dallas and James Houston in an attempt to understand the broader labour movement beyond Clydeside and the United Kingdom. His diaries document this trip and are illustrative of a willingness to engage with politics beyond Clydeside. His entries are in short bullet point form yet still illustrate his reflections on his 'ramble around Amsterdam' where seamen were on strike and describes how there had been 'riots on the streets' with 'numbers wounded' and 'soldiers drafted from other towns than Amsterdam'.[61] He compared the conditions of the teachers in Amsterdam with his own experience in Scotland and also communicated with several socialist organisations during his visit. Whilst in Brussels, he participated in a large workers' demonstration (although the purpose of this demonstration is unclear, he participated alongside socialist and labour organisers). During his conversations with labour and socialist leaders they discussed methods within the movement and highlighted the importance of propaganda, open air meetings and the distribution of literature. There is no easy method of assessing the definitive influence of such a trip on Maxton but his diary entries show a clear theme to his trip. This was much more than a holiday for Maxton and illustrated a clear desire to learn about the European labour movement and represents something which he would continually engage with.

This interest in international labour issues continued throughout his leadership of the ILP and was reflected in his appearances at international labour conferences. In 1931, for example, he attended the international labour conference in Vienna and responded to criticism that the ILP could not respond to 'dangers of fascism' as it was not a significant issue in the Great Britain:

> My first answer to that is this, that on that basis an International is quite impossible. My second answer to Dauer, is that when Keir Hardie, our ILP leader, twenty years ago proposed at this Congress drastic steps to meet the war danger, the same argument was used against him. "You're safe. You have no conscription. It is wrong for you to propose steps which are perfectly safe for you, who have no conscription, but are dangerous for those countries which have". Well, the war came in Britain and we got conscription, and we had to face exactly the same type of difficulties and dangers as our Continental comrades, and the spokesman of this Independent Labour

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[61] Maxton Travel Diary, Mitchell Library, TD 956/6/22

Party who have appeared on this platform never shifted the issue when it was dangerous.

We were asked to discuss the German situation here. I want to ask Bauer, or Breithscheod, or Blum, how can you discuss the German situation without discussing the general situation? (Maxton Papers, Mitchell Library, TD 956/6/5)

This articulation of a shared anti-fascism was clearly important to Maxton. He continued this work throughout the 1930s and spoke in Parliament defending the Spanish republicans in the civil war. He went against previous pacifist beliefs to support the Spanish volunteers but was unable to contribute on medical grounds. This commitment to internationalism and anti-fascism drew support from Guy Aldred who, in a short pamphlet of letters in 1934, pledged co-operation, and even requested membership, with the ILP, in part due to the threats of fascism:

What we need to-day is a Socialist movement. We must have one powerful proletarian army and nation, whether Parliamentary or anti-Parliamentary in its immediate approach. (Aldred, 1934: Letter 4)

This request prompted several letters between Aldred and the ILP and resulted in Aldred speaking at an ILP meeting. His topic was 'the deeds and memory of Marinus Van der Lubbe, proletarian, direct actionist and revolutionist, against the slanders of parliamentary "Socialists" and "Communists"'. This partial unity and interaction again reiterates Maxton's earlier statement that when unity was required within the working class, the political groups were able to come together (in particular moments) under a shared agenda. Jonathan Hyslop has also positioned Maxton as a key figure in reworking the relationship between the British labour movement and imperialism; he suggests that in 'the 1920s and 1930s, the Independent Labour Party under Maxton was far more consistent and committed in its anti-imperialism than either mainstream Labourites or Communists' (Hyslop, 1999:403).

Maxton's attendance and participation within international labour relations were not always as neatly organised or framed though. He became part of the League against Imperialism (LAI) in 1926 and chaired the organisation between 1927-1929 (despite the resignation of fellow ILP members due to the communist allegiances of the league). The LAI was established with the intention of gathering a 'coalition of global fighters for freedom and justice' (Pennybacker, 2009:68). Maxton himself described the importance of the league in a Foreword to their publication the *The Anti-Imperialist Review:*

The LAI is providing for the first time, an organisation within which the peoples of the oppressing and oppressed nations can meet on common ground and pursue in common the task of emancipation. It has established contact with every part of the world, and is amassing exact information about the conditions of the workers everywhere, which it will make available for the education of all the peoples. It will aid the fight for freedom in all parts of the world.

('Foreword' *The Anti-Imperialist Review*, 1928 1: 1, 2.)

Maxton's view of the 'common ground' for the 'oppressing' and the 'oppressed' nations was not shared by all, though, and perhaps reflected internal power relations within the league. He received scrutiny from fellow members due to his position on particular struggles within the organisation and his allegiance to the ILP. He came under increasing pressure from Communist member Sharpurji Saklatvala[62] in particular, who criticised his position within the LAI:

Several active members of the British Independent Labour Party are assiduous in acting as decoy birds, misleading Indian politicians into the belief that there is still hope in this section of the British Labour Party, and that they respect India's self determination, when one hundred and twelve of their own members are really and truly responsible for the most treacherous anti-Indian decisions of the Labour Party in Parliament.

(Saklatvala, 1928 in Squires, 1990:173)

Maxton and Saklatvala would regularly share platforms within the organisation, which was advocating labour-communist co-operation. However, internal tensions and elements of sectarianism clearly remained and the quote above illustrates Saklatvala's critique of the Labour Party's position on India that also exposes an implicit attack on Maxton. Saklatvala had previously submitted a proposal for the Labour party to act on the position of India, including a demand for the release of Indian trade union prisoners, but he was removed from the party soon after that and he viewed the Labour party during the 1920s as being entirely ineffective in challenging colonialism. Elsewhere and beyond the research scope of this chapter, radical Trotskyist CLR James also criticised Maxton (see interview with James, 1986) for his refusal to support military working class action in Abyssinia on pacifist grounds. A more positive appraisal of some of these international connections is reflected later in the chapter through Maxton's political friendships. Similarly, his

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[62] Previously considered in Chapter 4

involvement with Crawfurd in the anti-empire exhibition in 1938 (see Britton, 2010) provides further evidence of the strong internationalism evident within Clydeside.

6.5.3 Radical Publishing, Friendships and Correspondence

This connectivity of Clydeside's working class presence was further evident within the multiple forms of radical press within the region. Guy Aldred was a prolific publisher and his Glasgow papers often included correspondence with figures from across the international left. This correspondence was published through letters and reproduced articles in his newspapers and reflected some of the international connections and friendships made by Aldred. Aldred held many international connections and had particularly strong links with India (see Ramnath, 2011) due to his decision to publish the *Indian Sociologist* in 1909. Aldred published the paper due to his belief in free speech and he describes the context of the publication below:

> In 1909 the question of Indian Independence became an outstanding feature of political thought in London. Shyamji Krishnavarma. As editor of the *Indian Sociologist,* had brought it to the fore. Then came the assassination of Sir Curzon Wylie by Dhingra and my arrest for printing and publishing the *Indian Sociologist*, after the Attorney General and *The Times* had said that no one would print the paper. I came forward and printed it, as a matter of principle. (Aldred, 1957:399)

Aldred was arrested following the publication and charged under the Newspaper Libel Act of 1871. Although this occurred whilst he was in London, Aldred's friend and subsequent biographer JT Caldwell (1988a:213) has argued that Aldred maintained 'a continuing correspondence' with Indian radicals beyond this engagement. He suggests that Aldred was one of the only radicals that Indians trusted as he 'was the only Englishman to go to prison for India'. Ramnath (2011) supports this claim and suggests that Aldred was integral to the development of an international network of radicals who published the paper. After Aldred's arrest, printing of the *International Sociologist* moved to Paris and these international linkages within South Asian anarchism are considered further by Ramnath in her book. Aldred's Glasgow based newspapers also engaged with Indian political issues and in one issue the paper questions Saklatvala's business interests in India – by discussing particular problems in one factory his brother managed.

Through his publications, Aldred established Bakunin House and the Strickland Press within Clydeside and was a prolific publisher. He edited several papers, including *The*

Commune and *The Council,* maintaining strong links with other international radicals. In his autobiography he comments on this aspect of his work:

> From Glasgow my work reached all over the world more thoroughly and more completely than it had done from London and even to some English cities. But it became more and more Scottish and then, as regards direct personal contact, completely Glasgow. As postal propaganda, my activity reached all over the world as it had never done before. (Aldred, 1957:429)

Equally, Aldred was eager to publish material from beyond Glasgow in his own publications. These links, connections and political friendships reveal a political influence of Red Clydeside beyond its local context. They also reveal relationships that stretch across and between varying boundaries and political organisations to develop international forms of working class solidarity.

In another example from his Glasgow-based newspapers (*The Commune*, June 1923:17) it is links and correspondence with the Socialist Party of Victoria, Melbourne that emerge. A letter comments on the 'mental apathy set up among the working class as the result of the war' and the difficulties in generating interest in revolutionary propaganda. These international letters and exchanges became a regular feature within Aldred's publications and reflected Aldred's links and connections. The Australian connection is particularly interesting as Aldred was very critical of the Scottish Left (the *Forward* newspaper published an article by Thomas Johnston which advocated Australian Socialism) for considering 'Queensland Socialism' to be a successful model. In *The Commune*, Aldred challenges this interpretation by critiquing two particular statements from the Queensland State Labor platform published in the Brisbane *Worker* newspaper:

> The cultivation of an Australian sentiment: the maintenance of a White Australia and the development in Australia of an enlightened and self reliant community.

> Protection of State against slanders of newspapers and politicians.
> (*The Commune*, September 1923:34)

Aldred describes these planks as 'absolute menaces to working class progress' and that the 'other planks, such as the abolition of titled honors, whilst sound as sentiment, need stating only because the Labor Party intends to function under capitalism'. In contrast to the arguments of the Australian Labour party, Aldred claims that '(t)he revolution will abolish titled honors. Why legislate about it'. This exchanging of correspondence and publishing

of international material was not necessarily common practice within British left-wing publishers. This has already been shown with the Belfast comparison (see Chapter 5) where their official strike bulletin concentrated primarily on local industrial developments. Thus, Aldred's publications not only reflected a set of personal networks beyond Clydeside, but also played a key role in introducing critical engagements with international perspectives for his audiences. This articulation of internationalism coexisted with different articulations of race within Clydeside's trade union movement, as discussed in previous chapters.

Equally, news of developments within Red Clydeside travelled beyond Scotland as already shown through the wider documentation of the Forty Hours Movement. Crawfurd details a conversation in her memoirs with Crystal Eastman, editor of the American radical magazine *Liberator,* and her experience within the anti-war movement is highlighted in this publication alongside the analysis of the Forty Hours Movement already considered:

> In 1917 Helen Crawfurd of the Women's International League conducted an out-and-out peace crusade, with processions, banners, street-meetings and all, after the fashion of suffrage days – and no one dared interfere with her. In fact there were 4,000 shop-stewards organized to protect peace meetings.
> (*Liberator,* October 1919:28)

The article links these experiences to the 1915 rent strike and suggests a wider importance and general interest in the scenes on Clydeside. Crawfurd reflected on the important nature of such meetings with international figures and viewed her role within international conferences as an 'investigator to find out for myself the actual position.' The significance of these experiences, friendships and linkages, some of which were more temporary than others, is considered further below.

As has already been indicated, James Maxton was a hugely influential labour politician internationally, with the letters received during his significant illness in 1926 and after his death in 1946 reflecting his connections across Europe and beyond. One letter from Jamie and Hein Van Wijk, Haarlem, reflected on a summer school visit to Caerleon in 1934 and praised Maxton's internationalism, describing him as representing 'the best traditions of international socialism' recognising him for his voice against the First World War.[63] Another letter received from Mexico detailed a previous meeting in Paris where the collective was attempting to save a party of Spanish revolutionists and praised 'the

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[63] Maxton Letters, Mitchell Library, TD 956/5/96

precious aid' Maxton gave to the cause. Similar letters were received from America, France and Germany.

Perhaps one of the most notable links was found between Maxton and Pan-African journalist and political organiser George Padmore. Pennybacker (2009: 68) has reflected on this relationship and described how they met during the second conference of the LAI in Frankfurt. She considers Maxton to be one of Padmore's 'white allies' and how Maxton challenged (unsuccessfully) the House of Commons to rescind a ban on the *Negro Worker* newspaper in the colonies. Padmore's tribute to Maxton during his funeral further reflects the importance of this translocal relationship:

> Maxton's memory will ever be cherished by Africans and peoples of African descent
> as the Wilberforce of his generation.
> (James Maxton Papers, Mitchell Library, TD 956/11/11)

These interactions and collaborations illustrate a challenge to some of the tensions explored in the previous chapter. They reveal solidarity between Glasgow political activists and African political figures, which have previously been understated. Helen Crawfurd was also linked to colonial struggles and regularly shared speaking platforms with Saklatvala. In her memoirs she commented on the British worker as being 'insular in outlook' and she considered the African and Asiatic workers to be often 'excluded' from socialist propaganda. These perspectives challenged the more bounded or restricted notions of Red Clydeside and again illustrate the importance of (re)assembling the spatial connections of the period.

Similarly, Crawfurd attended many international conferences and in her memoirs she reflects on many of the friendships developed during her travels. She describes Irish suffragette and radical Charlotte Despard's home near Dublin, Roebuck House, as a 'centre for many people destined to play an important part in Irish history' (Crawfurd *Memoirs*, p.122). Her relationship with Despard was clearly important and was maintained during the Suffrage movement and throughout the Women's Peace Crusade. They continued to meet and communicate with each other and spent time together as part of WIR. They travelled to Russia together as part of the relief efforts and visited children's homes and crèches. In 1930, they attended an International Trade Union Conference together and were particularly impressed by the recording technology at the conference that allowed easy translation of the speakers into British, French, German, Russian, Chinese and Indian. These experiences overlapped with many of Crawfurd's activities already considered

above and illustrate the connecting of these experiences with similar political activists elsewhere.

Guy Aldred's links and connections were continually referenced within his publications as has been acknowledged in various places above. He described his preference for the 'postal mission' in his memoirs, and in doing so also foregrounds the value of international correspondences. Below he describes the inherent possibility for exchanges of political material:

> It possessed the charm of penetration into unknown territory. There was a touch of mystery about such activity. One could not see what would result from the mere putting of a pamphlet, duly stamped, into a post box, and thus sending it by unknown hands to an unknown person. It was like performing a miracle. (Aldred, 1957:429)

The uncertainty of outcome should not undermine the importance of such political correspondence and articulations. As discussed further in Chapter 3, working class presence understood through assemblage provides a more sympathetic approach to include these forms of political action and as McFarlane (2011:654) contends 'assemblage implies a greater conceptual openness to the unexpected outcomes of disparate intentions and activities'. It is difficult to trace and map Aldred's political networks or the outcomes of such work but the importance of the articulation and labour towards developing alternative political positions remains an important part of the labour history. Such friendships have been foregrounded here and positioned alongside the broader international connections discussed above, to respond to Brotherstone's (see Chapter 1) call for an analysis of Red Clydeside within an international context.

The methodology of assembling working class spatial politics facilitates an innovative framing of the political activists considered. This positioning of a more relationally constructed and internationally influenced working class presence allows recognition of the moments of shared politics, alongside clear differences and contradictions, to reimagine the place-based politics of Red Clydeside. The use of this methodological framing allowed the research to explore Davies's (2012:277) emphasis on 'the actors that hold assemblages together' whilst also raising 'the processes of connection and disconnection that they are involved in'. Overall, this discussion of connections has explored multiple forms of internationalism emerging from Red Clydeside's archives (communicative, charitable, direct action, propagandist) but not one act is as neatly categorised as a form of internationalism. Instead, there is an inherent tension in each form, a sense of connectivity

but equally a sense of limitation. Their achievements are mostly illustrated above as they indicate possibilities within internationalisms but equally Aldred's internationalism was perhaps limited to his own connections and his relatively small audience, Crawfurd's internationalism was largely practiced through organised communist avenues and privileged routes (the privilege of internationalism), while Maxton utilised his political position to spread a message in a manner, which was perhaps less accessible and agreeable to other political activists. These tensions, although not always foregrounded above, are implicit in each example and the overlapping comparison of contrasting forms of connection begins to reveal these differences.

6.6 Clashes, Disagreements and Changes

Alongside these strong friendships and networks of activists, the three individuals were involved in disputes and disagreements relating to each other and the broader working class movement. Below, the chapter analyses one particular moment of disagreement within Red Clydeside, with a specific emphasis placed on the intersections between the three figures that have been foreground throughout this chapter. As has been emphasised throughout the thesis, relationality and fluidity should not only emphasise moments of connections and unity but must also acknowledge clear moments of disagreement and tension. Crawfurd, for example, began her political engagement with the WSPU before moving to the ILP and then joining the Communist Party of Great Britain in 1921. Each time she changed for specific reasons but still maintained a strong commitment to socialist and feminist projects and the broader networks she had developed. Similarly, Aldred was continually changing the guise of his politics, whether it was the title of his publication or his political party. His commitment to anti-parliamentary communism, though, was never questioned. In contrast, Maxton remained loyal to the ILP throughout his political career but fought many disputes internally, specifically with the Labour Party as has been illustrated through the Cook-Maxton manifesto. As well as reflecting personal circumstance, these more fluid political identities were often responsive to deeper structural changes with factors such as the First World War heavily influential.

Here, however, the chapter will consider one altercation within Clydeside to illustrate internal divisions within the working class presence. The dispute came between the ILP (who both Maxton and Crawfurd were associated with) and Guy Aldred's anti-parliamentarians and was documented both in the *Forward* newspaper and Aldred's edited publication. It reflected political and strategic tensions within the left on Clydeside and was initially documented in *Forward* in September 1923:

At Alexander Park Gate, on Sunday night there was a collision between the speakers of the ILP and of the Anti-Parliamentary Federation. It was the culmination of trouble that had been brewing for some weeks past. The Anti-Parliamentary speaker, Guy Aldred, each week had vilified the whole organised Labour Movement. Mud-slinging at all the prominent Labour men had been his trump card. On Sunday last, he met his Waterloo. (Forward, 22/9/1923, n.p.)

The extract above reveals the tension between the anti-parliamentary movement and the ILP and illustrates a moment of clear antagonism within Glasgow's working class. The incident occurred after ILP speaker M'Lure accused Aldred of attracting a large crowd away from the ILP to listen to his own platform. Mr M'Lure responded with a strong verbal critique of Aldred and by the end of his speech he claimed to have an audience of 1,000 people. Aldred was accused of trying 'to rush' the meeting and the following minutes were 'very lively' with the crowd threatening the anti-parliamentarians with violence. Aldred was eventually given ten minutes to speak to the audience.

The *Forward* article continues by criticising Aldred's character in a personal attack on his avoidance of conscription, describing him as being a 'stickler for theory and practice' and as sheltering 'himself behind capitalist legality'. The meeting apparently closed with 'Aldred standing remote and sombre like a statue in George Square'. Aldred disputed this account in a reply, published in *The Commune* and *Forward*:

1. – On no occasion have I "vilified" or engaged in "mud-slinging." I have criticised. This is the sort of charge reactionaries, have, in the past, brought against "Forward" for its trenchant "War Points."

2. – The audience at Alexandra Park has favoured always my meetings. M'Lure secured his audience by Anti-Socialist tactics, and his meeting was throughout similar to an Anti-socialist one. The audience at no time threatened me with violence. The hostility was shown to M'Lure all the time. (*The Commune*, October 1923:47)

The defence continued and in *The Commune* M'Lure was accused of arranging a gang of men to attend the scene. Aldred claimed that 'the only people who did not know about this intended hooliganism were the members of the APCF' and that M'Lure had 'pre-arranged the hooliganism to stop the APCF' with these intentions being discussed days before the event. Such tensions and difficulties must be read alongside the more progressive connection making previously discussed. This clash also highlights the political tensions within the working class movement and the difficulty in generating and maintaining a

working class audience. The use of public space was integral to nearly all of the political engagements considered above and this space was rarely a neutral one. Whether through active suppression by anti-labour organisations or through their own internal disputes, the working class presence in Glasgow was rarely entirely united but instead took diverse positions, which connected in particular times and struggles to reveal temporary unities within Red Clydeside. This particular example is raised here as an example of some of these tensions, which indicate the highly charged political spaces of Red Clydeside. Thus, as Caldwell (1988b) has argued, it would be naive to suggest that political relations amongst working class activists were always part of a broader solidarity, and in contrast, it remains vital to recognise the multiple and contested labour positions within the working class.

6.7 Conclusions: Assembling a Working Class Presence

The aim of this chapter has been to challenge accounts of labour that limit its composition to particular moments of struggle or categorised identities. The chapter has provided an analysis of three diverse, yet interconnected, political figures and traditions. Conceptually, the use of assemblage as methodology (see Chapter 3) is perhaps most evident in this chapter and this has allowed a reworking of more bounded or discrete representations of labour history. In this regard, political demands, gains and defeats on behalf of the working class are viewed as representative of the spatially and temporally connected labour of political activists and organisations rather than as isolated groupings or individual campaigns. The chapter has emphasised how spatial connections can be formed between different groups and how internal disagreements and contestations are also integral to an analysis of the spatial politics of Red Clydeside. This method facilitates an understanding of the actions of the working class through the longer process of developing a political class struggle through multiple cultural practices.

The activities considered incorporated multiple forms of political activism and these were not as distanced or separate as may first be believed. They often shared the same meeting halls, publications and working class audience. The relevant archives and publications reveal clear linkages and themes within their political contributions, such as their shared emphasis on the importance of socialist internationalism, their willingness to engage with other left political groups and most obviously their continued commitment to a working class politics. The sense of solidarity and unity emerging from the histories of Red Clydeside cannot displace the diversity of groups and specificity of political articulations. In attempting to shed light on this political diversity this chapter has explored how the

(broadly defined) suffrage, labour, and anti-parliamentary movements all had a strong intersecting presence within Clydeside. The analysis has developed the arguments of previous chapters and has again showed the coexisting articulations of political demands and modalities of working class action. The chapter suggests that such relations between places, actions and activists are what constitute Thompson's notion of a broader 'working class presence'. These relations require foregrounding and cross referencing in order to develop political understandings of a labour history from below. The analysis above has considered three activists whose lives have traditionally been viewed as contributing towards fairly disparate political traditions within Red Clydeside. The chapter has illustrated, though, that the intersections between their lives were integral to the spatialities of a radical Red Clydeside presence. This understanding of a working class presence allows a more nuanced understanding of the fluid boundaries between political groupings and reveals a more relational representation of Red Clydeside.

Chapter 7

Conclusion

7.1 Introduction

This thesis, situated within a conversation between labour geography and labour history, has considered the spatial politics of Red Clydeside to illuminate and critically engage with particular aspects of an established labour history. Many of these perspectives have been previously silenced or understated within Scottish labour history. The emerging research has indicated a plurality of labour politics and explored the complexities and ambiguities of labour organising. The examples chosen also speak to broader debates regarding labour histories, labour geographies and spatial politics. As has been evident throughout, the historical practices of Clydeside's labour reiterate previous interpretations of labour as capable of shaping its own circumstances; both spatially (from a labour geography perspective) and historically (from a 'history from below' perspective), yet also revealed more ambiguous politics within these practices. The research has contributed an account of the multiple political positions within Clydeside's working class to indicate the more fluid and porous nature of labour and political identities. More broadly, this diverse spatial politics of labour activism begins to illustrate the strengths of a geographical lens to labour histories.

The events and individuals referred to in the previous chapters all contributed towards the history now remembered as Red Clydeside. There are many others significant individuals and events that could not be mentioned within this thesis due to space. The histories chosen were selected strategically to develop broader debates regarding labour, agency and spatial politics. The depth of labour activities presented are linked to a notion of what E.P. Thompson described as a 'working class presence' whereby multiple and diverse working class practices contribute towards a more general sense of place-based identities around solidarities. In this regard, the labour histories referred to were sometimes heavily connected and occasionally more disparate but their radicalisms all contributed towards a distinctive labour identity and working class presence on Clydeside. The thesis has also stressed throughout how place-based politics are developed around particular sites and places whilst also reflecting broader connections and geographies.

This concluding chapter begins with a summary of the key contributions of the thesis, which directly address the main thesis aims. This section will particularly focus on linkages between the theoretical literature discussed in Chapter 2 and the empirical research. The subsequent section will engage with the concept of 'usable pasts', as referred to in Chapter 3, to indicate the continued importance of histories such as Red Clydeside and the ways in which these histories are made accessible. This discussion also raises some methodological points regarding the provision of radical history. The final section will suggest some direct links between the labour histories discussed and more contemporary debates regarding labour politics.

7.2 Thesis Contributions

The research combined archival materials from a variety of collections to provide a new, specifically geographically, perspective on the histories of Red Clydeside. This approach has been advanced as being best suited to address Brotherstone's (1992) Red Clydeside agenda for engagements with internationalism as commented on in the introduction (see page 1). The following analysis has raised forms of translocal connections within Clydeside's working class presence. The thesis illuminated factors previously downplayed, such as the internationalism of the labour movement and experiences of migrant workers. These more understated aspects of Red Clydeside were combined with a return to some celebrated aspects of Red Clydeside that have previously been historicised quite separately. In contrast, this thesis specifically engaged with the intersectionality of disputes, traditions and political individuals, such as the work of Aldred, Crawfurd and Maxton. This methodology develops the ways in which Red Clydeside is remembered and addresses the thesis aims established in Chapter 1. In this regard three key empirical contributions emerge regarding the spatial politics of Red Clydeside.

The first key argument and contribution of the thesis has been to 'challenge perceptions of place-based or bound politics by excavating evidence of the making of connections and internationalism within the histories of Red Clydeside'. The methodology, of (re)connecting labour activists and traditions, was explicitly stressed within Chapter 3, whereby a research practice understood as assemblage was proposed to engage with a spatial politics of Red Clydeside. This was explored through an analysis that revealed both outward connections made by Clydeside workers and more internal international influences, whether through communications or direct actions. In Chapter 4, for example, the thesis considered how Scottish trade unionists forged connections with Indian workers through visiting delegates who challenged Scottish misconceptions regarding colonial

labour competition. This connection introduces new understandings of Scottish labour's relationship with colonialism as considered further by Britton (2010) who has engaged with Clydeside workers' resistances against the Empire Exhibition in 1938 and Cox (2013) who pays close attention to jute industry connections (both from employer and worker perspectives) between Dundee and Bengal. Further evidence of direct actions within Glasgow and the raising of supportive funds indicated how early twentieth century labour politics were situated within a broader international context.

These activities were integral to the broader working class presence on Clydeside. Their relationships are not easily mapped, though, and notions of 'local' or 'global' networks seem insufficient scalar descriptors for their complex spatial politics. The thesis has stressed an understanding of a working class presence through assemblages, indicating different forms of internationalisms within the working class politics of this period. Such connections have previously been neglected in preference for more bounded accounts of labour history, which now require revisiting to reveal the extent of radical influences within histories such as Red Clydeside. These forms of outward looking labour activities are representative of workers' 'spatial visions' (Herod, 2001:34) and link most obviously with aspects of labour geography, which have primarily stressed labour as a significant geographic actor. As Herod (2001) and labour geographers have continually stressed, the activities considered within the thesis assert labour's activeness within economic, social and political landscapes to reveal their multiple relationships with these landscapes. This spatial understanding of labour politics also links to recent developments within labour history (Linebaugh and Rediker, 2000) that have similarly stressed more translocal approaches.

Chapter 5 developed this understanding further by indicating the connectivity of the forty hours demand. The analysis engaged with the conscious efforts of the strike movement to continually situate their struggle within a broader international workers' politics whilst also attempting to develop strategic solidarities for resistance. These articulations of broader international politics, primarily within the *Strike Bulletin*, indicated forms of what Wright (2001) has described as 'associational' forms of solidarity to compliment the economic and structural demand for shortening working hours. These sometimes less tangible connections were part of a growing solidarity across labour organisations and were informed by individuals such as Aldred, Crawfurd and Maxton who were discussed in Chapter 6. As the analysis of the third aim will indicate, though, these notions of international solidarity were often juxtaposed with tensions closer to home. Thus, labour

geography's emphasis on labour as a geographic actor, alongside a 'history from below' sensibility to diverse labour experiences, facilitates recognition of the multiple forms of agency, which can remain marginalised within labour history. When read in this manner, the archive material consulted reveals contrasting experiences of Red Clydeside whilst also portraying the broader spatial imaginaries or contested labour geographies created by the working class during this period. These themes are addressed further in responses to the remaining research aims.

A second important contribution of the thesis has been to compare and contrast 'different forms of labour identities, by foregrounding political connections between previously assumed disparate political groups and individuals'. This more open understanding of what counts as labour and working class politics destabilised established narratives of Red Clydeside to include the intersectionality of positions such as gendered, anarchist and parliamentary forms of left politics. More generally, it also allowed seemingly disparate acts such as the free speech movement, workers' publications, charitable organisations and smaller meeting groups to be considered as part of the working class presence. Overall, this methodology refuses to accept political and labour traditions as being bounded and instead suggests that their intersections are constitutive of a working class presence.

By comparing these traditions, the thesis also revealed the diverse practices of labour agency and internationalism. This was pursued in Chapter 4 whereby four 'cuts' of labour geographies were presented to engage with the diverse practices and experiences of labour. The 1911 Singer strike for example, indicated international influences on workers in Clydebank, which informed their strike against increasingly alienating working conditions. Whilst other sections within this chapter contrasted the role of trade unions organising locally with broader international connections, through visiting delegates, the raising of funds, and racialised tensions amongst particular workers. These examples indicated a multiplicity of agency forms, all with different intentions and outcomes, which begins to address Castree's (2007) critique of a 'catch-all' understanding of agency within labour geography. Situating the analysis around contrasting 'cuts' of labour agency allows the development of a more nuanced account of labour activities. More broadly, the inclusion of such contested practices within labour organisations again speaks to a challenging of what counts as labour politics.

A further example of this interest in diverse labour experiences is evident during the analysis of the Forty Hours Movement, which utilised understandings of demand making to foreground the geographies emerging from one of Clydeside's defining moments.

Arguments from Cleaver, Laclau and Mann all indicate how labour demands, in particular those for shorter working hours, are explicitly political acts. This understanding indicated how demands reflected broader cultural experiences and practices as well as economic grievances. Thus, the demand for shorter hours on Clydeside was scrutinised from multiple perspectives. Most obviously the demand was constructed on behalf of the Strike Committee, but its politics incorporated a complex mix of labour positions and perspectives. The demand for a shorter working week was aimed towards the reemployment of returning soldiers and gathered wide ranging support. However, it also became connected to multiple forms of labour politics, such as the broader international thought of strike leaders and more exclusionary practices of associated unions. As noted above, the Singer strike of 1911 also centred on industrial demands, which reflected a much broader labour politics. These political articulations of labour demands within Red Clydeside were infused with multiple grievances, reflecting an international political Marxism as experienced primarily by particular labour leaders and evident in workers' publications. Thus, labour demands were representative of translocal influences and experiences, which could also reveal more ambiguous positionalities.

These translocal influences were again evident in Chapter 6. This chapter explored how the (broadly defined) suffrage, labour, and anti-parliamentary movements all had a strong intersecting presence within Clydeside. This presence was particularly notably during disputes, such as the anti-war movement, which brought together seemingly disparate political groups. By foregrounding their intersections, differences and divergences the chapter indicated a more relational and diverse understanding of labour politics. Such accounts indicate the subtleties and dynamism of labour agency as indicated by Gidwani (2008). Further reflections on the importance of taking this plurality of experiences seriously is considered through the final contribution that pursues the ambiguity of labour politics by considering more exclusionary spatial practices.

The final critical contribution of the thesis has been to 'foreground exclusions within the working class presence as well as the making of connections, by exploring more internal divisions within labour'. This was explored through the examples of racialised tensions amongst seafarers, which became connected to other disputes through their longer trajectory within the trade union movement. When read translocally, through connections with similar disputes, the thesis argued that the Clydeside experiences were connected to what Jonathan Hyslop has described as 'white labourism'. This analysis continues to apply Massey's (1991) understanding of place to reveal how relationally constructed solidarities

can produce more exclusionary political outcomes. These tensions were most prominent in Chapter 4, which mapped a longer trajectory of white labourism before Chapter 5 considered how these tensions fed into racialised violence during a riot in Glasgow's docks in 1919.

In this regard, a geographical approach towards labour history became particularly useful to uncover tensions and contradictions within labour histories such as Red Clydeside. The hostilities considered represent an example of the complex and sometimes hostile interconnections between the politics of race and class. The thesis has illustrated how these tensions were reflective of longer trajectories of communication and revealed the ambivalent nature of labour identities and their subsequent demands. Highlighting such ambivalence is an important element of the thesis, which goes beyond overplaying celebratory or critical readings of these labour activities and instead considers their inherent tensions. The thesis has also provided fragments of evidence regarding the agency of the excluded workers. This evidence related to those responding to the hostilities of 1919 and a brief reference to the strategies of Chinese workers.

These exclusionary practices revealed a more ambiguous labour politics on Clydeside than is regularly assumed and also speaks to more recent debates regarding race and employment. Stuart Hall and Alan O'Shea (2014), for example, in a contribution to *The Kilburn Manifesto*, stressed how commonsense understandings of fairness and notions of a right to work have become legitimising factors for more discriminatory positions. Thus, it is important to revisit previous altercations, which have seemingly emerged over a right to work but similarly result in exclusionary and hostile forms of labour politics. Examining the intersectionality between these notions of fairness, economic conditions and ideology remains a key challenge for labour historians and geographers (see also Ince et al., 2015) and the pursuit of a more socially progressive politics.

This juxtaposition of forms of labour solidarity with such racialised tensions is also an important addition to how labour agency is theorised. International correspondence, clear articulations of international social justice and developing translocal connections were occasional undermined by more exclusionary labour practices towards foreign competition. These tensions were framed within economic conditions but also reflected racialised ideological currents. The thesis has also illustrated how these Clydeside articulations of race and class were part of a broader spatial politics regarding whiteness during the early twentieth century (see Roediger, 1994, Hyslop, 1999). Thus, the multiple grievances relating to labour demands discussed in the second substantive thesis contribution become

integral to the understandings of agency developed by labour historians and geographers. This emphasis on diverse experiences is linked to E.P. Thompson's processual understanding of class and is pursued through a methodology that explores specific connections and links between related place-based events, as encouraged by labour geographers. This approach is particularly important for excavating the more complex moralities and identities of workers that labour geographers have recently called for (Castree, 2007, Tufts and Savage, 2009). As such, the histories presented reiterate the continued importance of histories such as Red Clydeside as usable pasts.

7.3 Red Clydeside: A Usable Past?

Popular memory and cultural significance have been considered suitable means of justification to suggest the continued relevance of Red Clydeside. The thesis has stressed, though, that histories such as Red Clydeside and the related radical archive provision remains an important part of articulating an alternative politics. Chapter 3 identified, following interviews with archivists and volunteers from Clydeside archives, how such archives relating to Red Clydeside are facing increasing pressures and insecurities. These archives are integral for the continued creation of usable pasts and should be acknowledged as such. Further research that integrates the work and labour of archive provision would illuminate the need to protect these institutions whilst also supporting similarly minded voluntary funded groups (for example Spirit of Revolt).

Thus, the thesis suggests that the provision of radical usable pasts provides an essential part of the contemporary 'working class presence'. These two concepts are integral to the 'history from below' tradition and have been implicit throughout the arguments of this thesis, yet more critical thought, particularly around sources of funding and questions of material relevance, may perhaps be helpful. Here, it is suggested that this relationship between history provision and more recent forms of working class struggle is an area that can be pursued further. In this regard, the thesis supports more recent participatory approaches (DeLyser, 2014) towards historical geography as this begins to stress the more active and collaborative nature of historical work. Complimenting this emphasis, the thesis also suggests that there is a need for the acknowledgment of already existing archival practices by supporting those archives, such as the Research Collection at Glasgow Caledonian University, by acknowledging their labour process. This aspect would perhaps benefit from further engagement with similarly political archives within and beyond Clydeside.

More broadly, in terms of the subjects of this research, the events, activists and organisations discussed were all integral to asserting Clydeside's working class presence. This presence had effects through actions reducing working hours, enforcing housing legislation and political representation. Between 1920 and 1939, for example, 50,277 council houses were built in Glasgow, which was proportionally more than any other city (Damer, 1990:173). This was partly a consequence of earlier rent strikes and The Wheatley Act of 1924, named after Red Clydesider John Wheatley, which increased Government subsidies to assist the payment of rent. Within workplaces, the period was defined by an increasingly organised, largely through trade unions, working class as indicated in Chapter 4. This provided workers with a position of strength and bargaining power and more gradual gains in terms of working conditions. Working hours were reduced, albeit not to the forty hours demand, following the 1919 strike for example. Such growth in trade union representation was paralleled politically, with Red Clydeside returning Labour MPs to Westminster. Red Clydesiders, such as Maxton, Shinwell and Gallacher would also go on to take significantly roles within the political left.

The overall importance of these histories, alongside the assertive working class presence discussed throughout this thesis, can inform the politics of the present. This political aspect of radical history must be retained within broader notions of what is considered historical. Harry Cleaver (1979) pointed to the significance of this by arguing for recognition of the political aspect of workers' struggles over seemingly economic domains, such as working hours, whilst Geoff Mann's (2007) account of the wage relation made similar claims. Reemphasising the political nature of struggles over working conditions, housing conditions, and broader labour issues is extremely useful for reinvigorating present day politics.

In this regard, labour activists and resistances emerging from Red Clydeside have been evoked in more recent political struggles. Emphasis has been placed on the struggles and efforts of Red Clydesiders across numerous causes. When placed against the harsh material conditions of the times, movements such as the Singer strike, anti-war demonstrations and Forty Hours Movement should be viewed as hopeful histories, illustrating the abilities for the working class to organise assertively and force political change across multiple domains. This sentiment of the continued relevance of Red Clydeside is captured best in Hulett and Swarbrick's (2002) song Red Clydesiders:

Jimmy Maxton, James McDougall, Barbour, Gallacher and McShane,

Agnes Dollan, Helen Crawford, up at the heid great John Maclean,

These are some o' the Red Clydesiders, hundreds more I'd wish tae nane,

A monument I'd raise forever, these are the flower of Scotland's fame,

[...]

Rags and Tags for common folk, silk for money lenders,

The old church pew, the white and blue,

The kilt and the Young Pretender keep us sweirt,

But what mak's them feart is wor pride in the Red Clydesiders.

During the 1971-72 Upper Clyde Shipbuilders dispute for example, memories of early twentieth century struggles were clearly prominent (see Foster and Woolfson, 1986), whilst Gibbs (forthcoming) has indicated strong linkages between Red Clydeside struggles and the Scottish anti-poll tax campaigns between 1988-1990. Images of Red Clydesiders are also still common during trade union and anti-war demonstrations. This active role of history further illustrates the need to return to labour histories through a more critical lens to ensure a fuller understanding of events is uncovered and utilised in future struggles.

7.4 Reasserting Histories from Below

Overall, the thesis has argued for the continued relevance of labour histories by returning to the archives of Red Clydeside with an alternative emphasis. These histories are particularly relevant to more present day debates regarding labour and agency. In this regard, the thesis has established a research agenda regarding labour, spatial politics and agency. This agenda relates closely to recent debates regarding the theorisation of agency (see Castree, 2007, Coe and Jordhus-Lier, 2010) within labour geography. In particular, the productive and more developed conversations between labour geography and 'history from below' illustrated clear overlaps between the two perspectives and possibilities for each to contribute to the other. Four final theoretical reflections regarding labour geography, labour history and understandings of spatial politics follow from this.

Firstly, the thesis has encouraged more processual accounts of labour experiences based upon Thompson's understanding of class and the importance of antagonisms. It has argued that this perspective challenges recent efforts to categorise labour experiences, such as Guy

Standing's (2011) precariat.[64] This emphasis on diverse labour experiences also opens up questions of what counts as labour politics to include practices not always characterised as part of the labour movement. This echoes more recent work within labour geography, which has broadened the research remit to include the agency and experiences of migrant workers (Rogaly, 2009) and links between workplace and community (e.g. Wills, 2001). In this thesis, for example, the inclusion of gendered, racialised and anarchist struggles illustrated a dynamic working class presence within Red Clydeside. This more rounded and nuanced account of what is considered to count as labour agency is a central contribution of the thesis.

Secondly, the thesis has signalled the importance of taking labour and working class history seriously. A key argument of the thesis has to been to address labour geography's largely contemporary focus by indicating links between labour geography and labour histories. This aspect also highlights how there is room for further engagement with other areas of protest studies, particularly within historical geography. The reengagement with E.P. Thompson's work presented here has revealed many possibilities for conversations between labour geography and labour history. In this regard, labour geography can work closer together with recent work in historical geography that has worked creatively with protest histories. These works have revealed contrasting experiences of struggle, largely in rural areas, to identify factors such as the use of symbols, the significance of specific spaces, places and property and the diversity of protest practices (for examples see Griffin, 2012, 2014, McDonagh, 2013, Navickas, 2009, 2010, Robertson, 2012). Most relevantly here, these works point to wider accounts of protest politics as being inclusionary of multiple experiences and practices. This attentiveness to the diversity of a working class presence and labour practices through histories of struggle can assist labour geography in asserting a broader understanding of labour practices.

Thirdly, the thesis has indicated the usefulness in engaging with difference within labour histories and more broadly accounts of spatial politics. This foregrounding of multiple perspectives as constitutive of a working class presence indicates the importance of taking seriously 'otherness' within labour geography (McDowell, 2015). The inclusion of more marginal or silenced voices is crucial and this thesis has suggested that conversations between labour geography and labour history are complimented by more recent feminist and post-colonial critiques. In this regard, Anna Chen (2013) recently commented that 'people of colour have been part of the fabric of British society for centuries, but you won't

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[64] See Shildrick et al (2012) for a more sympathetic reading of contrasting poverty experiences.

find many in official histories' either from the right or the left. Her intervention asserts the continued importance of pursuing histories, such as Red Clydeside, with greater recognition of the experiences and agency of people of colour. The emerging tensions and hostilities should not be viewed as undermining the continued significance of Red Clydeside, but rather be viewed as introducing integral perspectives and challenges for revisiting its history. This attentiveness to multiple experiences and more ambiguous forms of labour activism is a further theoretical contribution of the thesis for rethinking what is accounted for within both labour history and labour geography.

Finally, the thesis has engaged with diverse modalities of internationalism. This understanding nuances the ways in which internationalism is utilised within labour history and geography. It is important that attention is given to the contrasting practices of labour internationalism and the different outcomes that emerge from each. In this regard, the geographical imaginaries of workers become particular relevant for understanding the spatial politics of labour histories. Thus, forms of charitable, communicative and direct actions regarding international labour issues can all be viewed as contributing towards a spatial politics of Clydeside. This more sensitive appraisal of the different forms of labour internationalism, rather than a catch-all notion, is a key theoretical contribution of the thesis that illustrates the multiple and diverse modalities of translocal labour connections. This allows the inclusion of connections such as friendships, trade union communications and a broader sense of international socialism as evident within workers' publications. This approach is informed by labour geography's interest in the forming of connections and networks alongside a broader notion of labour politics endorsed most prominently within 'history from below'. The existence of such tensions within the broader working class presence is indicative of the usefulness of more relational understandings of place-based histories.

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