“RESIST! RECLAIM! RESTRUCTURE!”: THE STRUGGLE FOR TRADE UNION ENVIRONMENTALISM AND ENERGY DEMOCRACY

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ABSTRACT

This thesis critically interrogates how trade unions and labour organisations engage with climate change, energy, and environmental issues. The thesis draws on the work of the global labour network Trade Unions for Energy Democracy (TUED) as a main case study. Utilising a qualitative, multi-method research design to "follow the network" at a critical time of its development, I explore how TUED has become recognised as an important alternative knowledge producer on climate and energy issues in and beyond the labour movement. I argue that new labour environmentalist campaigns, such as TUED, have begun to challenge the status quo of neoliberal energy governance by promoting counter-politics in the energy sector. In this context, I explore how TUED's "Resist! Reclaim! Restructure!" framework and its use of radical energy democracy and public ownership discourses has become part of a broader equivalential chain of anti-neoliberal left politics. The thesis also examines how TUED's recent regionalisation efforts have become a key movement building strategy for the network. I discuss how the emergence of a 'new' generation of imagineers, who guide regional discussions, has enabled the TUED network to have more context-specific debates in particular places related to existing strategic opportunities around local policy and politics, such as the UK Labour Party's ongoing public ownership debate. In this context, I also reflect on the spatiality of shared demands and the transfer of counter-hegemonic ideas, such as energy democracy and public ownership, between actors and organisations on the left. Finally, I highlight how this thesis contributes to a better understanding of the contested politics of climate change by introducing workers and trade unions as important actors with varying agencies and positionalities in these debates.

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AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that, except where explicit reference is made to the contributions of others, this dissertation 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.

Signature: .....

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

1199SEIU	Local 1199, Service Employees International Union (USA)
350.org	Environmental movement (International)
AFL-CIO	American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (USA)
AFSCME	American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (USA)
APHEDA	Australian People for Health, Education and Development Abroad, also called: Union Aid Abroad (Australia)
ATU	Amalgamated Transit Union (USA, Canada)
ATUC	African Trade Union Congress (Africa)
BGA	Blue Green Alliance (USA)
BMWED-IBT	Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employes Division of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters (USA)
CEO	Corporate Europe Observatory (Europe)
CGIL	Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro – Italian General Confederation of Labour (Italy)
CILAS	Centro de Investigación Laboral y Asesoria Sindical (Mexico)
CLC	Canadian Labor Congress (Canada)
COSATU	Congress of South African Trade Unions (South Africa)
CTA	Central de Trabajadores de la Argentina – Argentine Workers' Central Union (Argentina)
CUNY	City University of New York (USA)
CUPE	Canadian Union of Public Employees (Canada)
CUPW	Canadian Union of Postal Workers (Canada)
CUT	Central Única dos Trabalhadores – Unified Workers' Central (Brazil)
DC37	District Council 37 (USA)
DGB	Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund – German Trade Union Confederation (Germany)

DIE LINKE The German Left Party (Germany)
DSA Democratic Socialists of America (USA)

EPSU European Public Service Union (Europe)
ETU Electrical Trades Union of Australia (Australia)
ETUC European Trade Union Confederation (Europe)
ETUI European Trade Union Institute (Europe)
EU European Union
EU-ETS European Union Emission Trading System (Europe)

Fagforbundet see: **NUMGE**
FoE Friends of the Earth (International)
FoEE Friends of the Earth Europe (Europe)
FoES Friends of the Earth Scotland (Scotland)
FWW Food & Water Watch (USA)

Gastivist Collective Anti-Fracking Activists Collective (Europe)
GJA Greener Jobs Alliance (UK)
GJP Green Justice Philly (USA)
GLI Global Labour Institute (International)
GLI Cornell Global Labour Institute at Cornell University (USA)
GLI UK Global Labour Institute in Manchester (UK)

IBEW International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (USA, Canada, Panama, Guam, Carribean region)
IBT International Brotherhood of Teamsters, also called: **Teamsters** (USA, Canada)
IGBCE Industriegewerkschaft Bergbau, Chemie, Energie – Industrial Union Mining, Chemicals, Energy (Germany)
ILGWU (Former) International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (USA) (now: **UNITE HERE**)
IPLCE International Program for Labor, Climate and Environment at **CUNY** (USA)
ITF International Transport Workers' Federation (International)

ITUC	International Trade Union Confederation (International)
KPTU	Korean Federation of Public Service and Transportation Workers' Union (South Korea)
Labour Party	The British Labour Party (UK)
LEF	Labour Energy Forum (UK)
LN4S	Labor Network for Sustainability (USA)
Murphy Institute	Joseph S. Murphy Institute for Worker Education and Labor Studies at the **CUNY** School of Labor and Urban Studies (USA)
NALACC	North American Labor Assembly on the Climate Crisis (USA, Canada)
NNU	National Nurses United (USA)
NRDC	National Resource Defence Council (USA)
NUMGE	Norwegian Union of Municipal and General Employees, also called: **Fagforbundet** (Norway)
NYSNA	New York State Nurses Association (USA)
OIES	Oxford Institute for Energy Studies
PCS	Public and Commercial Services Union (UK)
Podemos	Left-wing party (Spain)
PSC-CUNY	Professional Staff Congress at **CUNY** (USA)
PSI	Public Services International (International)
PSIRU	Public Services International Research Unit (International)
RBF	Rockefeller Brothers Fund (USA)
RLS	Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung – Rosa Luxemburg Foundation (Germany, International)
RLS Brussels	Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung Brussels Office (Europe)
RLS-NYC	Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung New York Office (USA)

SCA	Swiss Climate Alliance (Switzerland)
SENTRO	Sentro ng mga Nagkakaisa at Progresibong Manggagawa (Philippines)
STUC	Scottish Trades Union Congress (Scotland)
Teamsters	see: **IBT**
TNI	Transnational Institute (Europe)
(The) Trades	Various construction and laborers unions (USA, Canada)
TUC	Trade Union Congress (England and Wales)
TUCA	Confederación Sindical de los Trabajadores y Trabajadoras de las Americas – Trade Union Confederation of the Americas (Americas)
TUCACC	Trade Union Campaign Against Climate Change (UK)
TUED	Trade Unions for Energy Democracy (International)
TWU	Transport Workers Union of America (USA)
UAW	The International Union, United Automobile, Aerospace and Agricultural Implement Workers of America, or: United Automobile Workers (USA, Puerto Rico, Canada)
UConn GEU	University of Connecticut Graduate Employee Union (USA)
UE	United Electrical, Radio & Machine Workers of America (USA)
UFT	United Federation of Teachers (USA)
UMW	United Mine Workers (USA, Canada)
UNI	UNI Global Union (International)
UNiA	UNiA. Le Syndicat. Die Gewerkschaft. Il Sindacato. – UNiA the union (Switzerland)
Union Aid Abroad	see: **APHEDA**
UNISON	UNISON: The public service union (UK)
UNITE HERE	General labor union (USA, Canada)
Uniterre	Via Campesina Network (France, Switzerland, Germany)
ver.di	Vereinte Dienstleistungsgewerkschaft – United Services Trade Union (Germany)

INTRODUCTION

It is July 4, 2016. I am driving to Barnsley in South Yorkshire, an old mining town in northern England, to meet Sean Sweeney, global coordinator of Trade Unions for Energy Democracy (TUED), a global labour network campaigning against climate change, as well as a few representatives of TUED's member unions who are there to attend the Global Labour Institute's International Summer School. I remember joking about this seemingly 'provincial' visit; what I knew of Barnsley was that it had just overwhelmingly voted for Brexit and the town evoked images of closed shop fronts on the High Street, socio-economic deprivation, and the sort of austerity-driven despair that plagues the north of England since the financial crisis of 2008, if not since Thatcher (see: Butler, 2019). At later stages of my research, the accumulatio of field sites ending in this perceived anti-climax –

"New York! Geneva! London! Barnsley!"

– also became a running gag among friends and colleagues. Yet when I arrived at Wentworth Castle, where the International Summer School was hosted by the Northern College (an adult residential college), I began to better appreciate the region's radical history and its strong tradition of labour and trade union politics. The political possibilities arising from these particular histories and relations of solidarity (Featherstone, 2012), both in the region and between participants, shaped my initial experiences with TUED as well as my broader understanding of the geographies of labour politics and organising as simultaneously internationalist and grounded. Looking back, it was in Barnsley where I also first realised the wider potential of TUED's work in three key ways, firstly, in the context of the (global) labour movement, secondly, for energy and environmental struggles and coalitions, and thirdly, as a strong expression of anti-neoliberal narratives and an alternative politics around energy democracy.

As the meeting in Barnsley was not organised by TUED, the member unions that were in attendance met up in the evenings after the official Summer School programme had ended. I was warmly welcomed upon arrival and promptly invited along to the pub where the TUED members discussed their unions' progress, shared recent experiences in their regional and local contexts, and planned for upcoming meetings. In this case, the discussion already revolved around the possibility of organising a regional TUED Europe event in Geneva, which was to become one of my main fieldwork events. Despite it not

formally being a TUED event, the visit to Barnsley reflected my later experiences of following the TUED network in many ways. Methodologically, full days of information gathering, strategising and mobilising were followed by long evenings chatting, socialising, and building connections. Conceptually, too, the visit to Barnsley helped me understand TUED's significance as a voice for and by the labour movement on climate change and energy debates, and as a critical part of a wider anti-neoliberal, socio-ecological, and pro-public left politics. Here were committed comrades from different sectors and regions discussing radical ideas on climate change and social justice, being incredibly well-informed and articulate about the technicalities of energy transition, and not shy to criticise the UN, prominent green movements, as well as their 'own' labour movement for a lack of real solutions. After Barnsley, I knew that I had found my case study in TUED.

Choosing Trade Unions for Energy Democracy, a labour network with 70+ member unions from 24 countries, as a case study organisation for my thesis research allows me to critically interrogate how trade unions and the labour movement engage with energy, climate change and environmental issues. TUED's analysis and movement building efforts are incredibly timely as discussions around the climate emergency have (finally) found their way into mainstream news and politics. However, while many of these discussions fall short in terms of a critical and grounded analysis of the root causes of our climate emergency, TUED offers a decidedly anti-neoliberal, socially just, and democratic approach towards resisting, reclaiming, and restructuring the global energy system and addressing the climate emergency, in opposition to the more mainstream perspectives of many in the national and international trade union leadership. TUED's analysis draws on climate science to effectively link fossil fuel extraction and use to environmental impacts, extreme weather events, and human and non-human ill health and death. The TUED analysis also powerfully links the continued use of fossil fuels to the profits of the big corporations dominating the sector, and argues that our current energy system is not fit for purpose, in term of working in the interests of workers, communities and the environment. As an alternative, TUED offers the concept of 'energy democracy', a shift in power to workers, communities and the public to lead a socially just, ecologically sustainable and democratic energy transition for all. As such, TUED effectively creates not just a core demand through 'energy democracy' but also the possibility of creating an equivalential chain, to use Laclau's (2007) term, with other actors and movements that share a critique of neoliberal governance of the energy sector, and the environment more broadly, and are aligned in their search for alternatives, including the democratisation of energy (and other

‘essential’ sectors such as water or transport) and a return to public ownership.

The aim of this thesis is thus to explore how trade unions, and labour organisations more broadly, engage with questions of energy, climate change and the environment in a critical way. I also aim to investigate how a particular trade union network, Trade Unions for Energy Democracy, contests the status quo, that is, the neoliberalisation of nature and energy and how this opposition is in turn articulated through energy democracy discourses. Through engaging with the transnational labour network TUED, and the particular type of labour environmentalist ideas and practices that the network has established, I also aim to explore the role of unions in energy democracy debates as an alternative politics on energy and climate change for the labour movement. To achieve the aims of the project, four research objectives have been formulated:

1. to situate the emergence of labour environmentalism in the context of neoliberalism,
2. to better conceptualise the TUED network’s use of energy democracy narratives to resist, reclaim and restructure the energy sector,
3. to explore the spatialities of energy democracy demands and their equivalential relations in the labour movement and beyond,
4. and to better conceive how the TUED network attempts to build movement and coalitions for energy democracy (including the role of movement imagineers in this endeavour).

By focussing on these research aims and objectives, the thesis brings together critical discussions of neoliberalism, energy democracy, trade union environmentalism, the geographies of movement building, as well as the formation of political demands and equivalential relations. The thesis thus makes several key contributions to theory and empirical research within the wider field of human geography, and more specifically to the subfield of political geography, labour studies, energy studies, and the geographies of movement building. The subject of, and approach to, this thesis has been informed by my personal socio-ecological left politics as well as previous work on energy struggles and the political possibilities of energy democracy and public ownership campaigns (Paul, 2018a). I am particularly interested in the challenges of creating socially just, democratic, and ecologically-sustainable alternatives to the profit-driven capital system at the root of the climate emergency, and have drawn inspiration for this project from groups and movements that have attempted to bring left and green ideas together such as the Rosa

Luxemburg Foundation, Platform London, as well as the case study, the Trade Unions for Energy Democracy network. As such, there are several points in this thesis where the standpoint of myself, as the researcher, and my research subjects overlap. I will make an effort to clearly signpost and explore these positional entanglements where necessary, and specifically reflect on the implications this might have for the presentation of ideas within this thesis in the methodology chapter.

Chapter Overview

The thesis consists of six chapters which are accompanied by an introduction and conclusion. Following this introduction, the thesis begins with an overview of relevant concepts and literatures for understanding the wider context of trade union engagement with climate and energy issues in chapters one and two, followed by a methodology chapter and three empirical chapters. In the first literature chapter, I discuss the neoliberalisation of nature and energy, which establishes the broader context in which the rest of this thesis is written. This allows me to begin to contextualise how trade unions in the TUED network critically engage with contemporary energy and environmental debates by positioning themselves in opposition to neoliberal energy politics, such as calls for green growth or emission trading systems. The chapter begins by examining neoliberalism as a social, economic and political system; it provides a brief overview of historical developments before exploring the main frames through which neoliberalism is currently theorised, studied and contested. In the context of contestation to, and crisis of, neoliberalism, the review then also engages with labour's opposition to processes of neoliberalisation. This is important in order to explore how trade unions in the TUED network have developed a sustained critique of neoliberal energy and environmental governance. At the end of the first section I offer a new framework, tentatively titled 'patchwork neoliberalism', to help make sense of the relational and conjunctural nature of neoliberalism. Here, the patchwork quilt functions as a simile for the variegated and complex configurations of actors, places and theory in actually-existing processes of neoliberalisation. The chapter then explores processes of the neoliberalisation of nature, introducing both theory and existing empirical research on three interrelated processes which are often associated with neoliberalism, namely privatisation and enclosure, marketisation, as well as deregulation and state roll-back. At this point, I also briefly introduce the example of privatisation in the water sector to illustrate how different processes of neoliberalisation can be at work at the same time and how resistances are

formed to oppose them. Finally, in the third section, I highlight a gap in academic research and literature on the relationship of neoliberalism and energy, which is addressed by discussing energy as a social relation, and exploring its relationship with capitalism, democracy and neoliberalism. The chapter subsequently discusses the neoliberalisation of the energy sector through the examples of fossil fuel marketisation and finance as well as the deregulation and privatisation of energy resources and systems. These discussions ultimately inform the exploration of labour's contestation to processes in of neoliberalisation more broadly, and in the energy sector more specifically.

The second literature chapter builds on this in-depth discussion of neoliberal natures and processes of neoliberalisation in the energy sector to highlight how decades of neoliberalisation and capitalist expansion have led to rising social and economic inequality as well as ecological destruction. In this context, I discuss emerging counter politics in the energy sector (and beyond), which challenge the root causes of energy crises and climate change. Building on the discussion of labour's resistance to neoliberalism in the first chapter I introduce emerging trade union environmentalist ideas and discuss how workers have reacted to broader resistances and struggles against climate change, fossil fuels and carbon-based production to date. To provide context to these developments, I situate this discussion of labour environmentalism within a broader examination of the movement's responses to changes in the global political economy since the 1970s, including the challenges of neoliberal restructuring faced by the trade union movement and its attempts of movement revival or renewal. The chapter then discusses a tentatively emerging environmental awareness in the trade union movement, however, I also stress that actually existing contestations have mainly taken place within the status quo of carbon-based production rather than as a challenge to it. The second section of this chapter moves on to discuss the terminology around energy crises and energy struggles, and I also provide an overview of existing, popular acts of contestation in the energy sector. The section highlights how different struggles, such as the Divestment movement, the resource wars in Bolivia and Ecuador, and recent remunicipalisation initiatives, link questions around energy options and resources to broader social, economic and political structures. Finally, in the third section, I discuss the coalition building potential around 'energy democracy' and explore how counter-hegemonic networks and actors frame and negotiate common demands, ideas and practices. Drawing on Laclau (2007), I discuss how emerging debates around energy democracy have begun to form equivalential chains between different actors in the wider left-green movement, including trade union networks such as TUED, as well as policy, research and activist organisations. I also reflect on the importance of ownership

claims and the sustained participation in decision-making structures for effective coalition building around energy democracy as both an imaginary and movement.

The third chapter of this thesis is concerned with the methodology of my research and introduces the philosophical framework that informs the qualitative fieldwork conducted for this thesis. In order to fulfil the aims and objectives of the research, I chose a qualitative, multi-method case study research design to follow and capture the activities of the TUED network. I begin the chapter by reflecting on methodological approaches which were utilised in related studies in labour geography and critical ethnographies, and present an innovative methodological approach to researching energy democracy coalitions, which involves drawing on critical realism and relationality. I also reflect on methodological issues such as positionality, power relations and ethics in trade union research. The second section of the chapter introduces the chosen research design and methods for the case study research. The research design includes documentary analysis of policy reports and informational output produced by the organisation, semi-structured in-depth interviews with key individuals, and a multi-sited ethnographic component involving participant observation and informal interviewing at a series of TUED events. In the third section, I explore how the research 'turned out' in practice and emphasise challenges that I encountered in the field. Here, I especially reflect on the role of charismatic individuals and the challenges of building trust and negotiating the positionality of the researcher and project. The fourth section of the chapter explains the data analysis undertaken after fieldwork, including transcribing and analysing interviews, and coding and interpreting field notes from the ethnographic component.

Chapter four is the first of three related empirical chapters that correspond broadly with the objectives formulated above. In particular, my aim in the chapter is to better conceptualise the emergence of trade union environmentalism by introducing the case study, the progressive labour environmentalist network Trade Unions for Energy Democracy (TUED), and mapping its development. Drawing on interviews and the review of grey literature, the chapter begins with an account of the emergence of TUED as a trade union network committed to a radical approach to climate change and energy democracy. In this chapter, I explore the role of key individuals and events, including TUED's global coordinator Sean Sweeney and the 2012 founding event, a roundtable organised by TUED's founding partners, the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation's New York Office (RLS-NYC) and the Global Labour Institute (GLI). The chapter then focusses on the relations between TUED and its partner organisations, RLS-NYC and GLI (previously at Cornell

University), as well as from 2015 onwards, the City University of New York's International Program for Labor, Climate and Environment (IPLCE), at which TUED currently has its institutional base. The TUED network's internal dynamics are discussed in the context of social movement literatures on bridge brokers (Hess, 2018), 'imagineers' (e.g. Routledge *et al*, 2013), and social skill (Vail & Hollands, 2013; Fligstein, 2001). Similarly, in the context of TUED's emergence and formal partnerships, I also explore the network's organisational and operational dynamics and its developing relationships with movement and policy allies from outside the trade union movement through discussing literature on equivalential chains (Laclau, 2007) as well as policy transfer literatures (e.g. Peck & Theodore, 2010). Finally, I examine TUED's reach, influence and achievements in the labour movement and beyond, and especially highlight TUED's role as an 'alternative' knowledge producer on climate and energy issues from a left, and, more specifically, a workers' perspective, exemplified through the growing engagement of trade unions and labour organisations with TUED's arguments and materials.

Building on this in-depth analysis of TUED's emergence, development and achievements, the fifth chapter is linked to the second objective of this research and aims to better understand the labour movement's use of energy democracy narratives. In this chapter, I thus focus on the evolution and development of TUED's founding narrative, "Resist! Reclaim! Restructure!", both through TUED's own analytical materials, the Working Papers, as well as during events and strategy discussions within the network. Utilising analysis from the documentary review and from interviews, the chapter begins by contextualising the emergence of TUED's narrative as part of wider perceptions of disillusionment within the trade union movement towards multi-lateral and governmental responses to climate change, a new alignment of labour on issues of energy and climate change in the United States in the context of energy mega-projects, as well as discontent with existing coalitions with environmentalist and/ or state actors on green issues. To draw out the particular narrative of energy democracy that is put forward by TUED, the chapter analyses TUED's founding statement, "Resist, Reclaim, Restructure: Unions and the Struggle for Energy Democracy" (Sweeney, 2013 [2012]), and subsequently explores how TUED has engaged with, expanded, and developed the "Resist! Reclaim! Restructure!" narrative through its working papers, which are in-depth, factual and educational materials published by the network. The chapter argues that while "Resist! Reclaim! Restructure!" remains the central narrative of the TUED network and continues to provide a unifying bracket for the unions involved, the narrative has been developed in the more recent working papers, gaining both analytical depth and critical conceptualisation of energy

democracy and public ownership. As a case study of narrative development in the Working Papers, the chapter particularly explores how the TUED network has refined its critique of the 'green economy' and green capitalist discourses over the past five years and has become an important alternative knowledge producer for the trade union movement on climate change and energy issues (Wainwright, 2018; Hulme, 2010). To illustrate this analytical development, the last section of the chapter also utilises ethnographic materials from a field visit to New York City in November 2016.

The sixth, and final, empirical chapter of this thesis aims to better conceive how trade unions attempt to build movement and coalitions through exploring TUED's recent movement building efforts towards energy democracy. The chapter draws mainly on ethnographic materials from field visits at multiple events I attended in New York state, USA, as well as in Geneva, Switzerland, and London, UK. I begin the chapter by reflecting on TUED's founding narrative and its (self-selecting) effects on finding the core group that has now grown into a larger, coherent network with a strong message. This section also discusses the movement building efforts that TUED has undergone to spread its message and grow its membership, including the choice of materials and resources produced and disseminated by TUED; the TUED video, the network's website, and the Working Papers. In the second section of this chapter, I discuss TUED's practices of staying in touch with its members and its emphasis on building trust and comradeship between the different actors within the network. TUED's efforts of relationship- and movement building include the bi-monthly Global Advisory Group calls, travelling and conferencing activities of the TUED organisers, as well as regular meetings and events of the network. In this context, I particularly discuss how the network has differently utilised two key events during my main fieldwork visit in 2017, the Long Island Conference and Pocantico Retreat, to grow their network and build their movement respectively. The third section of this chapter then turns to a key movement building strategy recently pursued by TUED: the regionalisation of the network and diversification of actors contributing to its impact. In this context, I draw on previous discussions around member unions taking more ownership of the project and the development of a network of imagineers (Routledge, 2013). Through these frames, I explore the movement dynamics of the Geneva and London Meetings in 2017 and 2018 respectively. In this section, I also explore what a strategy of diversification and regionalisation can mean for TUED and how the network engages with, and challenges, the politics of scale it faces through neoliberal energy governance.

Lastly, the conclusion summarises the findings of this thesis and highlights the four core contributions I am making to theory and practice of labour environmentalist research and political and energy geographies more widely. Utilising slogans from the climate and environmental justice movements in an acknowledgement of the political nature of this thesis, my main contributions from the conceptual review as well as from empirical findings are discussed in turn. I end the thesis by briefly reflecting on the contemporary political and policy context, and potential future research avenues on radical labour environmentalism.

CHAPTER 1
THE NEOLIBERALISATION OF NATURE AND ENERGY

Over the past three decades, neoliberalism has been established as a system of governance in the Global North and South. As such, neoliberal thought and policy have encroached on most spheres of life, including the political, economic and cultural (Hall S *et al*, 2013). Increasingly, too, neoliberal logics of growth and private profit are recognised to have had an impact on nature and environments. While 'neoliberalism' is a useful term to describe the wider ideology of the governance model to which it commonly refers, this thesis mainly works with the term 'neoliberalisation' to emphasise that "actually existing" forms of neoliberalism are often far removed from the ideal type and should be understood in their particular spatial and wider socio-political contexts (Peck & Tickell, 2002). The term neoliberalisation further draws attention to the variegated processes that are at play in different contexts, such as privatisation, deregulation, or marketisation. Over the past three decades, the social sciences (including geography) have produced a wealth of studies examining particular processes of neoliberalisation relating to the state, property, and trade. However, research which explicitly examines neoliberalism's relationship with the environment and nature in a wider sense was limited until the early 2000s (Castree, 2008a; Heynen *et al*, 2007). Since then, literature on the neoliberalisation of nature has covered processes of privatisation, deregulation and marketisation of natural resources such as water management, forestry, mining, and fishery, which in policy literature is often euphemistically referred to as market environmentalism (Bakker, 2007; Mansfield, 2007). Despite this, the impacts of neoliberalism on the energy sector remain underexplored. This chapter aims to fill this gap through contributing to an emerging debate on the relationship between neoliberalism and energy, which, in the second chapter, will be developed into an argument around emerging trade union environmentalism, energy struggle and the contested politics of climate change. This chapter thus helps to set up the case study, TUED, as a decidedly anti-neoliberal trade union initiative and provides important background on how ongoing processes of the neoliberalisation of nature and energy have shaped TUED's critique of contemporary energy governance.

This chapter explores the neoliberalisation of nature and energy by defining 'neoliberalism' and discussing how it has variously impacted nature, environments and energy systems. The first section thus attempts to make sense of the complexity involved in studying neoliberalism by sketching out its historical developments and discussing the

main theoretical approaches to neoliberalism in the social sciences. It also explores neoliberalism's relationship to crises and contestations, and proposes a framework to understand neoliberalism in conjunctural and relational terms. This (basic) introduction to neoliberalism provides the basis for a review of literature on neoliberal resource and energy governance in the second section. The neoliberalisation of nature and the environment is investigated through case studies of three interrelated processes, which are often associated with neoliberalism, namely privatisation and enclosure, marketisation, as well as deregulation and state roll-back. This discussion of specific case studies of neoliberalism and nature then opens up a space to explore the relationship between neoliberalism and energy in the third section, which examines 'energy neoliberalisation' both in terms of resources and generation as well as governance and decision-making. The chapter highlights a gap in academic research and literature on the relationship of neoliberalism and energy, which is addressed by providing an overview of energy as a social relation, and exploring its relationship with capitalism, democracy and neoliberalism. This leads to a discussion of specific processes of neoliberalisation in the energy sector, especially highlighting fossil fuel marketisation and finance as well as deregulation and privatisation of energy resources and systems. The relationship between neoliberalism and energy will again be explored in more depth in chapter two through highlighting the various resistances to and struggles against neoliberal energy governance that have taken shape in recent years.

Making Sense of Neoliberalism

There has now been over three decades of cross-disciplinary debate on the emergence, meaning and impact of neoliberalism. Meanwhile, neoliberalism (in its many forms) remains anchored in the political realities of most countries. Before beginning to sketch a brief history of neoliberalism, three characteristics should be noted. Firstly, neoliberalism, as a core political ideology, has two broad and recurring concerns – the establishment of a fundamentally free market on the one hand, and the demand for limited involvement of the state on the other. Secondly, and in terms of (messy) reality rather than abstract theory, neoliberal history has not been a straightforward endeavour; neoliberalism has been riddled with setbacks and contradictions and has always existed alongside 'others' (Hall S, 2011). These 'others' are, for example, antagonistic movements, such as the anti-globalisation movement, or contemporary ideologies, such as colonialism, racism and sexism which neoliberalism is variously embedded in and negotiates with in spatially- and historically-

specific terms, as will be explored in more depth below. Thirdly, a defining feature of neoliberalism and its history is its existence-in-process (neoliberali*sations*). The term 'neoliberalisation' was initially proposed by Peck and Tickell (2002) to describe the constituting processes of neoliberalism whilst highlighting difference and particularity. The term has also been widely used in subsequent studies, however not without contestation. While some commentators understand 'neoliberalisation' simply to be an explanatory term to the descriptive 'neoliberalism' (see: Barnett, 2005), others, such as Castree (2006), stress that (re)conceptualising the often broadly applied term 'neoliberalism' as 'neoliberalisation' allows for a plural understanding of actually existing processes. In line with Castree and Peck and Tickell's original definition, this thesis uses the term 'neoliberalisation' (as opposed to 'neoliberalism') to draw attention to the process-oriented nature of neoliberalism-in-action.

A Brief Overview of Neoliberalism

The acknowledgement of neoliberalism-in-action-as-process, or neoliberalisation, has two implications; that neoliberalism is not, has never been, and can never be a complete project, and that it has never existed on its own. Neoliberalism is always embedded in and entangled with a multitude of both complementary as well as antagonistic movements, processes, and regimes (Hall S, 2011). These *others* to neoliberalism are specific to the local, historical, and socio-cultural context in which processes of neoliberalisation take place. For example, an 'other' to Thatcherite neoliberalism would be British nationalism, an ideology which Thatcher (paradoxically, yet effectively) invoked to construct the image of the strong British state alongside her radical free market approach (Gamble, 1988), and to a degree, to re-invoke a possible regaining of former British (imperial) might through the freedom to own:

> "Let me give you my vision: a man's right to work as he will, to spend what he earns, to own property, to have the State as a servant not as master: these are the British inheritance. They are the essence of a free country and on that freedom all our other freedoms depend." (Thatcher, 1975 quoted in: Hall S, 2011: 706)

On another level, an example of an 'other' to US neoliberalism is the Occupy movement which formed in 2011 as a response to crisis capitalism, growing socio-economic inequality and austerity politics, demanding less hierarchical and more equal and basis

democratic societies. Both archaic British nationalism and the Occupy movement, while obviously differently situated in relation to neoliberalism, are examples of *others* to neoliberalism; and as others they are forms of politics that shape (and are in turn shaped by) spatially- and historically-specific processes of neoliberalisation. Attempts to study the history of neoliberalism should pay close attention to movements, processes, schools of thought and ideologies that are both complementary and antagonistic to processes of neoliberalism. In this context, and drawing attention to its quasi-hegemonic status in some literature, Peck (2013) has highlighted that neoliberalism, while at times seemingly omnipresent, always exists in 'conjuncturally-hybrid' forms alongside its others. I thus propose to adopt a relational reading of neoliberalism's history which accounts for neoliberalism's others as well as its existence-in-process. A relational neoliberal history can challenge both overly deterministic and dismissive readings of a neoliberal past (and present!). Through adopting this view of relational neoliberal histories, it follows that neither Friedrich von Hayek, Milton Friedman, the Mont Pelerin Society, nor the Chicago Boys were single-handedly responsible for devising a 'neoliberal masterplan', and that neither Thatcher's Britain, Reagan's US, nor Pinochet's Chile are the heartlands or ur-projects of neoliberalism (Dean, 2012; Hall S, 2011; Peck, 2013). Rather, as will be argued below, the development of 'neoliberalism' has been, and still is, a constant process of negotiation – between neoliberalism and the complimentary as well as antagonist movements, processes, and ideologies that exist alongside it.

Peck (2004) states that neoliberalism's historical development should best be seen as an "awkward amalgamation" of various intellectual projects, movements, and schools of thought (see also: Centeno & Cohen, 2012; Dean, 2012; Hall S, 2011). Classical liberalism, with its dual emphasis on economic freedom and political liberalism, can be identified as the ideological (yet by now highly altered) core of contemporary neoliberal thought. Stuart Hall (2011: 711) observes that neoliberalism "borrows and appropriates extensively from classical liberal ideas; but each is given a further 'market' inflexion and conceptual revamp", which has led to the inherent ambiguities and contradictions between neoliberal theory and practice. For example, while neoliberal 'ideology' puts a key emphasis on state roll-back, deregulation, and private property, neoliberal practice more often than not needs nation states to 'regulate' neoliberal processes such as privatisation which Swyngedouw (2005: 89) describes as Faustian Pacts through which the state becomes "a central actor in establishing and maintaining 'market principles'". Similarly, Purcell describes the state's role in neoliberalisation as "*aidez-faire* state intervention" (2009: 142, emphasis in original), for example through public subsidies and incentives for

private sector technology, such as is the case in most renewable energy sectors across the world. A clear difference between classical liberalism and neoliberalism are thus the respective attitudes towards the relationship between the sphere of the state/ public, and the market/ private. While classical liberalism endeavours to accomplish the 'right' balance between the two (however that might be defined) and, more importantly, ultimately acknowledges their relatedness, neoliberalism strives to abolish that balance in favour of the market, to blur and merge the spheres of private and public. The preoccupation with economic freedom over political and civic freedoms, in other words, is a defining feature of *neo*liberalism in the 20th and 21st century (Castree, 2010c; Ferguson, 2009).

The historical development of neoliberal thought, logic and practices can be roughly divided into five phases. Neoliberalism 'began' as an incoherent and intrinsically divisive philosophical movement at the fringes of economic (and political) theory in the 1930s and extending into the 1940s (Dean, 2012; Peck, 2004). This first phase includes a range of different strands of thought. Among them are Friedrich von Hayek's economic rationalism as well as the Chicago School's monetarism, which both embraced capitalist and market fundamentalist ideologies in which the state played little to no role. Equally, however, other influences included the liberal reformist ideas of the emergent German social market model, which advocated a combination of a free economy and a strong state, as well as, especially in the United States as response to a fear of the socialist within, an upsurge of neo-conservative and social-Darwinist strands of thinking (Peck, 2004). At this point, these various and often ideologically contradictory ideas were united in little but their opposition to the dominant Keynesian regime of the post 1945 period, which called for managed economic markets, reduced unemployment through aggregated demand, and strong central banks. However, the second phase in the 1950s and 60s, eventually saw an assertion of the market fundamentalist ideas of Hayek and the Chicago School in the United Kingdom and United States over the 'ordo-liberal' and more reformist social market economy approach practiced in post-war Germany (Cahill *et al*, 2012; Peck, 2004). Agreeing on some common ground in their ideological development, however inherently contradictory it remained, resulted in a first surge of confidence for the young movement. The onset of the third phase is characterised by the joint crisis of the 'common enemies'; Keynesianism and developmentalism, when Keynesian economics entered a fiscal crisis in the 1970s, and development states were hit by inflation and debt crises (Harvey, 2005). This in turn provided the window of opportunity for market fundamentalist, neoliberal experimentation and state-making in the mid-1970s and 1980s. The fourth phase sees a consolidation of neoliberal elements in social, political and economic life in the late 1980s,

which is extended through the consolidation of neoliberal logics in the cultural sphere in the (for the time being) last and fifth phase beginning in the late 1990s. The fifth phase, which continues to date, is furthermore characterised by the geographically uneven expansion of neoliberal ideas and projects, as well as neoliberalism's (almost enviable) crisis adaptability, which will be further discussed later on.

As becomes evident in much literature, neoliberal theory was subject to both internal and external contestation from the outset, and neoliberal ideas were far from coherent (Cahill *et al*, 2012; Dean, 2012). Furthermore, this incoherence was not necessarily overcome through ideological consensus, but rather through the opportunity for popular exposure that arose from the crisis of post-war Keynesianism and the development state (Harvey, 2005; Peck, 2004). In many ways, neoliberalism thus established its theoretical and practical standpoint primarily as a reaction to the economic, political and cultural logics of the Keynesian welfare state (Centeno & Cohen, 2012). However, the joint crisis of Keynesianism and developmentalism manifested itself in different ways in North America and Europe, where Keynesian economics suffered both a fiscal and legitimacy crisis from rising unemployment and slowing growth, and in the development states, where inflation and increasing borrowing from the Global North lead to a debt crisis, inflation and currency devaluation (Centano & Cohen, 2012; Peck, 2004). As a result, neoliberalism, today, is experienced differently in different places.

Theorising Neoliberalism

Theorisations of neoliberalism have come to occupy what seems like any and all positions between post-structural critique and structural-hegemonic theory (Peck, 2013). While it is far beyond the scope of this chapter to provide an exhaustive review of all theoretical explanations, the main frames through which neoliberalism is currently analysed will be sketched out over the following paragraphs. Most explanations of neoliberalism transcend rigid theoretical and analytical boundaries, yet I nevertheless initially utilise a dichotomous categorisation of neoliberalism in this section to establish the spectrum of existing debates. On the one hand, the neoliberalism-as-(hegemonic)-regime frame is mostly associated with commentators from a political-economic and structuralist background. Such macro-institutional approaches stress the extra-local nature of, and the structurally uneven power relations associated with neoliberalism, and emphasise the concepts' "more-than-the-sum-of-its-parts quality" (Peck, 2013: 141). While macro-institutional approaches highlight the

interconnectedness of neoliberal projects across the globe, they are often criticised for a certain blindness towards the differences between processes of neoliberalisation in particular places and settings as well as towards its inherently contradictory and complex nature (e.g. Larner, 2003). Addressing this critique from the other end of the structuralist-post-structuralist analytical spectrum, the Foucauldian-inspired theoretical approach that can be summarised as neoliberalism-as-particularised-governmentality, emphasises the provisional nature of, as well as the differences between particular neoliberal projects (e.g. Kingfisher & Maskovsky, 2008; Larner, 2003). Larner (2003: 512) for example suggests an exploration of neoliberalism in other domains such as "bodies, households, families, sexualities, and communities" to explore how these domains have "been reconfigured and transformed into sites of self-government under neoliberalism". Such a particularised understanding of neoliberalism usefully highlights the variegated hybrid forms of neoliberalism that exist at different scales, however, an overly particularised focus on the local easily omits existing commonalities within and between neoliberal regimes.

Drawing on both macro-institutional and (to a lesser degree) particularised approaches, Peck proposes an inside/out neoliberalism, a relational-conjunctural approach in which the "out-there and the in-here are jointly constituted" and hybrid, contradictory processes of neoliberalisation are relationally studied "amongst *other* hybrids" (2013: 144, emphasis in original). Peck (2013) maintains that neoliberalism does not have one pure form or ideal type, and instead consists of multiple, dynamic and interconnected neoliberalisations (see also: Peck & Tickell, 2002). The study of processes of neoliberalisation should thus not focus on how they relate to an imagined ideal or paradigmatic type of neoliberalism, but instead on the relations to their others across the world. As an example, Peck's argument is worth quoting at length:

> "'Inside' manifestations of neoliberal logics – a privatization program in Macedonia, say, or a conditional welfare initiative in Indonesia – are locally embedded and constitutively contextual, to be sure, but they must not be shorn of their constitutive outsides, such as the actually existing and imagined 'reform families' to which they belong, as near or distant relatives to other and earlier project, experiments, and models. This underlines the need for a continuing concern with neoliberalism's *family* misfortunes." (Peck, 2013: 152, emphasis in original)

An inside/out approach to neoliberalisation allows to explore the actually existing neoliberal projects in different places while linking the identified neoliberal logics to other

such projects across the world. Peck's (2013) approach can thus contribute to an understanding of how organisations such as TUED effectively engage with, frame, and resist particular processes neoliberalisation in a coherent way. Similarly, in the context of nature's neoliberalisation, Peck's relational-conjunctural approach can thus help to address and overcome the problem of synthesis identified by Castree (2008a; 2008b), which will be explored later on. Thinking about the conjunctural nature of neoliberalism highlights the complexity of a given situation, and equally allows to reveal possibilities for contestation and resistance (Clarke, 2014, see also: Hall S *et al*, 1978). In this vein, a recent paper by Featherstone and Karaliotas (2018) examines how spatial registers, especially that of the nation, have been articulated in the post-crisis conjuncture to explore the potential of trans-local solidarities for left politics. The authors draw on Doreen Massey's explicitly spatial analysis of conjunctural politics (see: the Kilburn Manifesto, Hall S *et al*, 2013) to argue that while 'the nation' has been prominently used in populist imaginaries to justify the politics of austerity following the financial crisis, there are also left-wing 'nationed' narratives which have an impact on the possibilities of left politics in the post-crisis conjuncture (Featherstone & Karaliotas, 2018).

In a similar vein to Peck (2013), and borrowing a concept originally developed by Philip Mirowski and Dieter Plehwe (2009), Mitchell Dean (2012) makes use of the term 'thought collective' as an analytical tool for the study of neoliberalism. While building on certain defining aspects of the governmentality approach, such as an emphasis on the contingency of neoliberalism, Dean (2012: 72) argues that understanding neoliberalism as a thought collective "allows for a multiplicity of viewpoints and different national and transnational developments, borrowings and mutations" without dismissing neoliberalism's coherence – coherent, in Dean's view, not as a macro institutional doctrine, but rather as a militant intellectual movement. Dean proposes that neoliberalism's opposition to Keynesian macroeconomics is the principle source of strength of the movement (see also: Hall S, 2011). However, he also stresses that instead of replacing the Keynesian welfare state, neoliberalism rather acts as a "more or less dominant and effective neoliberal regime of government of and by the state, in competition with other such regimes" (Dean, 2012: 80). Through his analysis, however, Dean fails to meaningfully engage with processes of contestation to neoliberalism and what they mean to broader conceptualisations of neoliberal governance, which I will again return to later in this chapter.

A recurring attribute in neoliberal history, and advantage of neoliberalism, is its relationship with crises. Being in a constant process of negotiation with its others, neoliberalism has shown an almost enviable crisis adaptability. Not only has neoliberalism come to power as a result of the joint crisis of the welfare and development states, it has since seen many crises come to pass including the financial crisis of 2008. While some hopeful (and rather naïve) commentators on the left hailed the end of neoliberalism, most were decidedly more cautious yet still followed the developments of the financial crisis with stunned astonishment (Mirowski, 2014). Kalb (2012: 320) points out that while there is both contestation of and a drop in popular legitimacy towards neoliberalism, it nevertheless "is once more the dominant, nay self-evident, policy paradigm". In an all too familiar anti-climax for the left, the recent crisis did not mark the final blow for neoliberalism. Mirowski (2014) interprets the neoliberals' response to the financial crisis as an intentional move of the neoliberal thought collective. However, Peck (2010; 2013) argues that neoliberalism did not go through the crisis unscathed either. Making the case for 'zombie neoliberalism', Peck (2010) highlights how neoliberalism has survived many crises and managed to keep its policies in place, yet its behaviour becomes more erratic. This erratic tendency can for example be seen in the increasingly relentless pursuit of austerity politics in the European Union (see also: Featherstone & Karaliotas, 2018, for the impacts of this particular example). While commentators have engaged differently with neoliberalism's relationship to crisis, the importance of engaging with and exploring the nature of this relationship as well as to draw lessons from it is paramount.

When crises such as the recent financial one happen, resistance to the 'status quo' can be heightened and take more extreme forms. In this context, Kalb (2012) reviews a range of 'popular stirrings' such as the Greek and Spanish rebellions against spiralling (youth) unemployment rates, Occupy Wallstreet and the subsequent Occupy and Blockupy initiatives across the world, the Arab Spring, and the rise of both right-wing populist rhetoric and support in the US and Europe. Kalb (2012: 318) understands these developments as a "global mass upheaval in fragments [...], and neoliberalisation processes are, in manifold ways, part of the essential backdrop". However, while these examples show elements of neoliberal resistance, it is important not to overstate the significance of all these events as revolts against, or based around, neoliberalism per se. Nevertheless, crises in their various forms force us to engage with neoliberalism's others, such as populism, colonialism, and resistance movements, which of course are not exclusive to

times of crisis but made more starkly visible by them. Paying attention to the relationship of neoliberalism and (elements of) crises also highlights the various agencies at play in instances of contestation and resistance to neoliberalism.

While neoliberalism has seen many challenges as both a political and economic system it is also increasingly contested as a cultural concept. As argued previously, resistance movements are part of neoliberalism's others. As such, they variously shape, and are in turn shaped by, neoliberal policies and regimes. Contestations of and resistances to neoliberalism have taken many forms and a wide range of actors are involved in challenging various processes of neoliberalisation across the globe. While many are identifying with the global left (see: De Sousa Santos, 2008), such as the labour and trade union movement or counter-globalisation campaigns, there are also emerging elements of an anti-neoliberal and anti-global right. In the face of growing social and economic inequality and poverty, both the left and the right critique the impacts and outcomes of neoliberal systems and policies, such as privatisation and the erosion of the welfare state, yet it goes without saying that the analyses provided, and alternatives offered, differ widely. By combining existing grievances against austerity politics in neoliberal market economies with fears over immigration and attacks on the liberalising policies of the previous decades, the right and far-right have utilised neoliberal critiques to further their populist and nationalist politics. Anti-establishment discourse against (neo)liberal democracy and European integration have brought serious gains for far-right parties and candidates, such as the French Front National whose leader Marine Le Pen was runner-up in the 2017 presidential elections, or the Alternative für Deutschland party in Germany, whose elections gains made it the first far-right government to be represented in the German parliament since the first post-war elections in 1949. Anti-establishment discourses also played a key role in the UK's 'Brexit' referendum in 2016, where the Leave campaign positioned 'the British people' against the establishment interests of the EU, "big merchant banks", and "big politics" (Jennings & Lodge, 2019, quoting Nigel Farage, Leader of the Brexit Party). Equally, anti-European sentiments mixed with anti-immigration rhetoric have become established across the EU's political landscape: recent elections have either propelled the populist right into government, for example in Italy and Austria, or strengthened its grip even further, as is the case in Hungary and Poland. While right wing populists are in no way desirable allies in the struggle against neoliberal capitalism, the fact that their discourse resonates with voters from both the middle and working class hints at a wider discontent with economic and political structures beyond the front of xenophobia and racism (though, of course, this line of argument should not deflect

from a critical debate on the (re)emergence of chauvinistic and protectionist rhetoric). This discontent and its articulation, while concerning, nevertheless also challenges neoliberalism and should be critically explored as part of political agencies that counter an often-implied neoliberal hegemony.

While neoliberal adherents are adept at turning even crises into moments of opportunity, dismissing existing contestations in the face of neoliberalism's metamorphoses is counterproductive. Firstly, there is what Peck (2010) aptly refers to as 'zombie neoliberalism', the new phase of neoliberal policy making following the financial crisis of 2008. While neoliberalism managed to re-emerge as a dominant policy regime, critical observers also note that "with each resurrection [neoliberalism's] decidedly uncoordinated gait becomes even more erratic" (Peck, 2010: 109; Peck, 2013). Secondly, and relatedly, there are various political agencies at play which challenge and contest neoliberalism in their own ways. While the right has only begun to capitalise more offensively on anti-neoliberal sentiment in recent years, on the political left the labour and trade union movements have been critics of neoliberalism for decades (Le Queux, 2005). Early neoliberal reforms such as deregulation and deindustrialisation attacked labour's bargaining power, limited options for industrial action, and moved not only jobs but whole industries overseas, thus restructuring labour relations and trade union power globally (Upchurch & Mathers, 2011). Labour has resisted these processes, beginning most prominently in the UK with the miners' strikes (see: Kelliher, 2014; 2016), but neoliberal reforms have led to a serious decline of trade union membership numbers and organisational strength over the years. Nevertheless, labour remains critical to understanding political and economic processes (Cumbers *et al* 2008; Coe & Jordhus-Lier, 2010). Since the late 1990s social movements, especially anti-globalisation and social justice campaigns have also added their voices to a neoliberal critique (Sen, 2007; De Sousa Santos, 2008). Counter-globalisation campaigns have taken multiple forms (Featherstone, 2003), more prominent examples include the World Social Forum and the Occupy Wallstreet protest that eventually led to Occupy and Blockupy initiatives springing up across the world. Increasingly, too, environmental campaigns utilise critiques of neoliberalism in shaping their narratives and demands. The climate and environmental justice movements and the divestment movement for example directly link the effects of global capital and neoliberal governance to environmental crises and the climate emergency, which will be discussed in more depth in later parts of this thesis. While the issue of anti-globalisation provides significant overlap between the labour movement and the social movement(s) identifying with a globalisation critique, a 'natural' alliance

between the movements never occurred, however, in its critique of neoliberalism the labour movement was influenced by these broader debates around neoliberalism, globalisation and questions of growth in new social movements and leftist politics. Conceptualisations of neoliberalism need to be mindful of these variegated histories of resistances that exist against processes of neoliberalisation.

Patchwork Neoliberalism

So far, I have argued that neoliberalism is a somewhat difficult term, yet one worth exploring. I have argued that neoliberalism is best studied as a process, i.e. as neoliberal*isation*, which is spatially- and historically-specific and has a relational history with its others, which includes antagonistic as well as complementary actors, movements, and ideologies. Such a relational approach to processes of neoliberalisation helps to conceptualise neoliberalism as a differentiated and spatially-specific phenomenon. I have also explored different theorisations of neoliberalism, which has been variously conceived from both structural and post-structural positions in the social sciences and have chosen to engage in more depth with Peck's (2013) inside/out neoliberalism and Dean's (2012) interpretations of neoliberalism as thought collective and politically-oriented action. Both approaches offer differentiated conceptualisations for contemporary processes of neoliberalisation, and usefully point to neoliberalism's others, both throughout history and in contemporary contexts, such as existing movements, ideologies and processes. However, neither Dean nor Peck fully appreciate the work that different counter political actors do, such as the labour movement and anti-globalisation campaigns. Without wanting to overstate individual struggles, I have addressed this by discussing neoliberalism's relationship with both crisis and contestation. I have argued that challenges to neoliberalism, however small or unsuccessful, nevertheless present a display of political agency and should thus be examined as part of analyses of neoliberalism.

My proposal is to visualise and understand neoliberalism as parts of a patchwork quilt, in order to explain how different strands of theory that I use to frame and understand neoliberalism work together. In this thought experiment, the patches of the quilt represent ideological influences such as monetarism or market fundamentalism, neoliberal reforms such as privatisation and political deregulation, and 'concrete policy tools' (Castree, 2010a) such as industrial policies to remove trade barriers or education policies to enhance 'human capital'. The thread represents the actors, governments, and regimes – or choosing

Mirowski and Plehwe's (2009) term, the thought collective – that subsequently picks-and-mixes (either freely or restrictedly due to opposition) their attachments to various 'patches', i.e. ideological components, reforms and policies. The basic idea of the patchwork quilt is inspired by Peck's (2013: 141) analysis of how neoliberal ideas have differently affected UK governments over the past couple of decades, showing through the example of the Thatcher-Brown-Blair-Cameron succession that "the strategies of each successor borrow selectively from and react selectively against those before them". To provide an example, while Thatcher might have opted for privatisation, Blair's New Labour government instead chose a mix of public-private-partnerships (PPP) – the privatisation 'patch' thus becomes trimmed around the edges and stitched up – it might have been wearing a little thin in popular opinion and support – but the old pattern is still visible underneath the newly sown-on PPP-cloth (see also: Hall S, 2011, for an enlightening analysis of successive neoliberal regimes of government in the UK context). As patchwork quilts are by nature messy and never neat, the allegory also has room for neoliberalism's *others* in the sense that resistances, antagonistic trends and competing ideologies are never far removed from the neoliberal patches in the quilt. Equally, the idea of the patchwork quilt also highlights that neoliberalism is not a globally uniform policy, so that the patchworks in France and Germany will look different to that of the United Kingdom or USA. As an example, processes of privatisation were much more pronounced in the UK than in Germany, and a patchwork quilt would thus feature a more prominent privatisation patch in the UK's quilt. Understanding neoliberalism as a patchwork quilt with differently configured individual patches that together shape a larger image can also open up a sense of political possibility for anti-neoliberal movements and coalitions. Instead of facing the desired 'system change' all at once, the contestation to and resistance of specific processes of neoliberalisation becomes more 'manageable'. To give an example, while the "there is no alternative" narrative of neoliberal institutions can seem overwhelming, a focussed campaign of, for example, a public sector trade union against the privatisation of their service or utility, which is an act of resistance to a particular patch in the larger neoliberal quilt, can in turn shape a wider politics of possibility around resisting neoliberalisation (see also: Featherstone, 2012; Beveridge *et al*, 2014). In sum, while not intended as an all-encompassing explanation, the allegory of a patchwork draws attention to neoliberalism's incoherence and existence-in-process as well as its spatial and conceptual embeddedness or existence-alongside-others.

Having explored neoliberalism through its historical development and theoretical frames, relevant and guiding questions to the study of neoliberalism and processes of

neoliberalisation are: who has benefitted and continues to benefit? who does not? what is at stake? how do we want to change the status quo? what do we oppose? what do we propose? Ferguson (2009) rightly observes that the critical Left too often organises and experiences resistance to neoliberalism as 'the antis', an outright rejection of all things neoliberal. In order to study neoliberalism and processes of neoliberalisation in a meaningful way, as McCarthy (2012) and Castree (2008a) highlight, we should aim to produce more specific articulations of what *exactly* is objectionable about the neoliberal element in a given context as well as frame responses accordingly (as opposed to a general 'anti'-attitude). Only clearer conceptualisations of what neoliberalism means in a given context and what is problematic about it can subsequently lead to stronger and more informed alternative politics and policies. However, from a progressive movement building perspective it is also imperative to consider the more generic importance of the term 'neoliberalism' as it becomes a stronger oppositional narrative and umbrella term for a range of contextually-different yet broadly related struggles. The later discussion of trade union environmentalist opposition to the neoliberal governance of the energy sector will return to these ideas.

The Neoliberalisation of Nature

The 'neoliberalisation of nature' describes the increasing influence of neoliberal logic and policy on the management of nature over the past three decades (Castree, 2010a; McCarthy & Prudham, 2004). This contemporary remaking of nature-society relations is often euphemistically referred to as 'market environmentalism'. Before discussing nature's neoliberalisation and its importance for this thesis, it is worth to briefly explore my understanding of 'nature'. Arguably one of the most complex and contested terms and concepts in geography and beyond, nature, in this thesis, is broadly defined in line with the term 'universal nature', that is "the physical world in its entirety, including human beings as both products of natural history and as present-day biological organisms" (Castree, 2017: 3; 2014), which rejects a dualistic understanding of nature as different to, and distinct from, society. 'Nature' and 'society' are understood to be co-determining concepts, and importantly, my conceptualisation of nature is indebted to social constructionism, and, in particular to Neil Smith (1984), who understood nature, including human nature, as produced through a distinctly capitalist contemporary world order. While Smith's (1984) analysis is still relevant and, as discussed below, also informs many theoretical debates around processes of the neoliberalisation of nature, Smith has often been (unfairly)

criticised for an overly deterministic understanding of the relationship between nature and capitalism (see: Loftus, 2017; cf. Whatmore, 1999). However, as Loftus (2017) points out, Donna Haraway (e.g. 2008) and others have productively engaged with Smith's writings and have produced relational approaches to socio-natures which allow for agency. Extending these ideas, Smith's production of nature thesis informs my understanding of 'nature'; not as 'only' produced by capitalist structures but also by the inherent agencies, resistances, and acts of contestation of and by *itself*, through nonhuman and human actants, and in this thesis, particularly by and through labour.

The body of research on nature's neoliberalisation has emerged out of a critical human geographical approach to environmental governance (Jonas & Bridge, 2003; Liverman, 2004), and has since produced a large number of empirical studies alongside theoretical work that engages with a wide range of phenomena, processes, and places (Castree, 2010a). The value and importance of these variegated studies lies in their spatial and scalar sensibility, spatially diverse nature (in terms of places, regions and countries studied), and their empirical contribution through grounded approaches to 'actually existing neoliberalisms' which help to "concretise, modify, and complicate broad theoretical claims about neoliberalism" (Castree, 2008a: 133; Brenner & Theodore, 2002). However, Castree (2008a; 2008b) also highlights the challenge to meaningfully synthesise variegated case studies which focus on a mix of concrete natural phenomena (such as water or wood), concrete processes (such as privatisation or enclosure), and concrete places and scales (for example water privatisation in Bolivia or in a single Toronto neighbourhood).

Theories of neoliberal natures are for the most part informed by a political economy approach. The study of neoliberal natures and neoliberal environmental governance has been mainly influenced by the writings of Karl Marx, Karl Polanyi, as well as 'eco-Marxists' such as James O'Connor and the late Neil Smith (Castree, 2008a; 2010c) whose ideas are reviewed below. While 'neoliberalism' is at the core of studies of neoliberal natures, it is understood as a historically and spatially uneven process, which should be studied empirically through its 'actually existing' forms (i.e. actually existing neoliberalis*ations*). Natural environments and biophysical resources are thus not simply subject to a general a-geographical 'neoliberalism' but to specific processes of neoliberalisation with varying spatial outcomes and impacts (Mansfield, 2004). Such specific processes include particular types of neoliberal reforms such as processes of privatisation, marketization, or deregulation, as well as concrete sets of neoliberal policy

tools such as the removal of trade barriers (Bakker, 2007; Castree, 2010a; 2010b). Researchers writing on the neoliberalisation of nature have for the most part produced grounded and empirical case studies (Brenner & Theodore, 2007; Castree, 2008a; 2008b), which have largely been critical towards the neoliberalisation of nature (Heynen *et al*, 2007).

Theorising Nature's Neoliberalisation

In a range of related review papers (2008a; 2010c), Castree outlines a possible theoretical framework to synthesise variegated studies of processes of the neoliberalisation of nature. In this context, next to the use of Marx's (1956 [1867]; Harvey, 2003) concept of 'primitive accumulation', which describes the process of privatisation of previously public, common, or collectively owned land and resources, especially also Polanyi's (1944) concept of 'fictitious commodities' has informed many case studies. Fictitious commodities are more than products, and have social, cultural, and biophysical value and/or vital functions beyond what can be measured in monetary terms and traded in markets. Fictitious commodities, by definition, thus for example include air and water as they are vital to human survival, but fictitious commodities are also spatially- and culturally-specific. For example, in Indian and Nepali Hindi and Jain communities, cattle can be understood as a fictitious commodity for its ritualistic and sacred value. Treating fictitious commodities as 'real' (or capitalist-made) priceable commodities, Polanyi argues, is a market contradiction that eventually gives rise to a 'double movement', a sort of in-build resistance to (neo)liberal economic advances and enclosures (Mansfield, 2004; McCarthy, 2004). Drawing on both Marx and Polanyi, eco-Marxist James O'Connor (1998) argues that next to Marx's 'first contradiction' there is a second, 'ecological' contradiction of capitalism. Building on the first contradiction of capitalism, which describes the 'problem' of diminished demand as capital self-expands and intensified its exploitation of labour power, O'Connor's second, ecological contradiction arises as a by-product of the crises triggered through fictitious commodities. As Castree (2008a) explains further, through pricing the 'unpriceable', such as nature and infrastructure, the environmental costs of production and distribution are passed from profiteering capitalist firms to society as well as ultimately to nature "even as, paradoxically, they rely upon the unproduced or underproduced 'conditions of production' that the biophysical world offers (for example, a sufficient quantity of ground and surface water resources, or clean air)" (Castree, 2008a: 144; see also: McCarthy, 2004). O'Connor's approach usefully united Marx's and

Polanyi's ideas and extends their frameworks to nature and the environment. Another important contribution in this context is Smith's (1984) theory of the 'production of nature', which has also theoretically informed some of the literature on nature's neoliberalisation. Also drawing on Marx, Smith (*ibid.*) first made the argument that nature is produced rather than given (Loftus, 2017). Understanding environments as fabricated rather than 'natural' allowed Smith to explore how nature has been, and continues to be, shaped through processes of capitalist production and expansion. Building on the theoretical arguments presented above, Castree (2008b: 154) concludes that processes of neoliberalisation of nature are 'environmental fixes' in capitalist systems through which rational and economic individuals and governments manage and regulate society-nature relations.

Empirical Research on Nature's Neoliberalisation

The neoliberalisation of nature manifests itself in various ways in different spatial and socio-historical contexts. As many commentators point out (e.g. Bakker, 2007; Castree, 2008a), the biophysical properties of resources directly influence the processes of neoliberalisation that are attempted or realised. The study of nature's neoliberalisation has included biophysical and mineral resources such as fish, forests, water and copper (for a review, see: Castree, 2008a). It has also focussed on a range of neoliberal logics, reforms and policy tools, such as privatisation, deregulation, marketisation, commodification, and the use of market proxies in the public sector (*ibid*). The following paragraphs reflect on a particularly prominent case of nature's neoliberalisation – the case of the water sector – which offers valuable insights for the following section on neoliberalisation in the energy sector.

The neoliberalisation of water has mostly been studied through the lens of privatisation due to its biophysical properties as a 'monopoly' resource (Bakker, 2005; 2007, 2011; Perreault, 2006; Swyngedouw, 2005). However, Karen Bakker (2005) has also drawn attention to the fact that a range of neoliberal reforms, such as commodification and commercialisation, are often simultaneously at work in privatisation processes, yet the literature often fails to differentiate sufficiently between them:

> "*privatization* entails a change of ownership, or a handover of management from the public to the private sector [while] *commercialisation* entails changes in resource

> management practices […] [and] *commodification* entails the creation of an economic good" (Bakker, 2005: 544, emphases in original)

While these processes are undoubtedly related and often interlinked, Bakker (2005; 2007) argues that it is necessary to study these reforms as distinct in order to gain a more sophisticated understanding of the neoliberal elements involved in case study research (and thus a more robust conceptualisation of neoliberalism as well as grounds for comparison and synthesis, see: Castree, 2008a). This is also an important point for neoliberalisation in the energy sector, as water and energy have shown similar trends both in terms of their neoliberalisation as well as in the kinds of contestation arising from it, which will be discussed in more depth in the next chapter.

In the context of natural and biophysical resources such as water, privatisation is understood as part of the logic of 'free market environmentalism' which promises environmental efficiency, and thus supposedly conservation, through market mechanisms such as pricing and private property rights (Bakker, 2007). However, opponents criticise the involvement of private and for-profit actors in managing a vital resource and argue for water to be recognised as a human right (see: Bakker, 2007) or otherwise campaign for water to remain a common good (e.g. Perreault, 2006). Many resources including water had been in state or municipal ownership for decades. In the 1980s, the 'state hydraulic paradigm' (Bakker, 2005; 2011) began to be challenged by increasing neoliberal regulation, and water and sanitation utilities soon became "central testing grounds for the implementation of global and national neoliberal policies" (Swyngedouw, 2005: 83). Privatisation in the water sector is now both the most prominent and most publicly contested form of neoliberal environmental governance. Cumbers (2012b) gives an overview over water privatisation attempts in the UK, and notes that an effective public campaign in 1984 initially prevented water privatisation before proposals to privatise the industry were re-introduced after general elections in 1988. However, Cumbers (*ibid*.) also notes that while water was subsequently privatised in England, privatisation was not proposed in Scotland and Northern Ireland where the political situation was more sensitive and the risk of public organising against water was feared to lead to wider resistances against Westminster. Cumbers's example shows how privatisation, much like neoliberalism in general, is always embedded in wider social, political and cultural contexts (see also: Perreault, 2006) and has to be negotiated among its others, such as, in this example, Scottish and Irish nationalist campaigns.

While privatisation processes draw on the underlying twin logics of neoliberalism, namely market rule with minimal state involvement in an encroachment of the free market on previously common and non-private spaces and property, commentators such as Swyngedouw (2005) have highlighted the seemingly paradoxical role that governments play in facilitating privatisation through providing the necessary regulation (see also: Purcell, 2009, in the context of urban planning). With reference to Bakker's research on British water supply, Swyngedouw (2005: 90) observes that instead of deregulating the water sector to allow free market rule, "privatization has resulted in a profound re-regulation of the water market and the emergence of a considerable quasi-governmental regulatory structure". These examples are not one-off developments, a related example of the Scottish energy sector will be discussed in the following section (see: Cumbers *et al*, 2013). The privatisation of the water sector is mostly an urban phenomenon, as processes of privatisation are directly tied to the profitability of the water system in question (Bakker, 2011). Next to several political and economic implications, such as limited democratic control and profit-driven corporate decision-making over water resources, processes of water privatisation also have socio-cultural consequences, especially concerning a lack of transparency and information exchange as well as diminished decision-making powers of social and civil actors. Additionally, in the Global South, processes of water privatisation by multinational corporations based in the Global North are also entangled with notions of economic imperialism, which will also be discussed in more depth in the next section.

Neoliberalisation in the Energy Sector

While the broader body of research on the neoliberalisation of nature has seen a massive upsurge since the mid-2000s, enquiries into the neoliberalisation of the energy sector and energy resources remain largely absent from most human geographical and wider social science literature. The previously reviewed bodies of work only offer limited connections to the neoliberalisation of the energy sector despite its topicality in the face of the interrelated environmental, energy and climate crises. One lone example is Perreault's (2006) study of both Bolivia's water and gas privatisation which are mainly connected over the resistances these processes evoked. In the attempt to bridge this gap, this section considers the impact of processes of neoliberalisation in the energy sector and draws attention to the varied social, political, economic, and imperial relations that shape these developments. However, before exploring how processes of neoliberalisation are studied and understood in the energy sector, the section begins with an introduction to 'energy' and

its relationship with capitalism, democracy, and neoliberal logics.

Energy and (Petro-)Capitalism

The taken-for-granted assumption that a range of activities such as a cooking food over a fire, an ox pulling a cart, and a steam engine powering a railway locomotive are all connected to the same thing – energy – has not always been as widely accepted as it is now (Lohmann, 2015). 'Energy' is a socio-historically constructed abstraction; the definition of energy as the property of a range of animate and inanimate actors to perform work, be that manual, mechanical, or hydraulic labour, can be traced to the joint development of physics (especially thermodynamics) and capitalism in the industrial West (Bridge, 2015; Huber, 2009a; Porter, 1994). Citing the work of historian Theodore Porter (1994), Lohmann (2015) connects capitalist economic developments with advances in thermodynamics, which, through their 'discovery' of joule and calorie, laid the foundation for the now taken-for-granted association of energy as labour, or work. This abstraction of energy is usefully highlighted by The Corner House (2013) which contrasts understandings of energy as **'**Big E-Energy' and 'small e-energies'. The latter includes a variety of methods to fulfil needs and ensure subsistence, such as animal-driven ploughing of fields, while the former, Big E-Energy (in form of fossil fuels) is abstracted from time and place as it can be accumulated in large quantities, transported across the world, and deployed at will – until its source is depleted. In this sense, abstract Big E-Energy is inherently scarce, and its promise of unlimited economic growth is at the same time modernity's blessing and the hoodoo of its inevitable end.

Critical and Marxist commentators often assert that without energy, and especially without fossil fuels, there would be no capitalism as we know it (Huber, 2009a; McCarthy, 2015; The Corner House, 2013; Watts, 2009b). While acknowledging that capitalist social relations have existed for thousands of years, commentators argue that the proliferation of mechanical and electrical energy from the late-18th century onwards marked the beginning of capitalism's breakthrough on a much larger scale (Huber, 2009a; McCarthy, 2015). (Big E-) Energy helped to increase production and productivity hundredfold, freed capitalism from local small e-energies restrictions (such as remote locations where, for example, only water power was sporadically available), and led to the commodification of 'work', thus creating the (urban) proletariat (Huber, 2009a; Mitchell T, 2009). However, while capitalist production has certainly been influenced by the increasing access to and growing

availability of energy, it is equally important not to uncritically accede to overly determinist notions of the relationship of (certain types of) energy and capitalism. Timothy Mitchell (2009) points out that the rise of democracy, too, is indebted to fossil fuels to a degree. Especially coal, which undoubtedly facilitated fast capitalist growth through providing new forms of mobility for production, the resulting urbanisation and concentration of industry and workers also enabled the first mass democratic and political actions in the growing industrial cities in the United Kingdom and Germany (Mitchell T, 2009). The emerging relations between capital as well as the concentration of workers in and around centres of production and a growing awareness among workers of their structural power gave rise to the first mass political actions (Mitchell T, 2009; Wright, 2001). In this context, Mitchell (2009) furthermore draws attention to the role of strikes and workers militancy especially from coal miners (and workers in the interconnected industries of railways, docks and shipping), whose power to stop the (coal) carbon flows shaped early mass politics and activism from the 1880s onwards. Energy workers' structural power position, while expressed differently within different forms of energy generation (i.e. coal, oil, renewable), also holds implications for energy workers' positions in political struggles and coalitions around energy (see also: Cumbers *et al*, 2016). Workers can thus be powerful allies, for example to communities which protest certain forms of unsustainable production and extreme methods of extraction such as hydraulic fracking. Relatedly however, low carbon transitions could diminish workers' structural power as energy flows will change shape and 'traditional' forms of structural power will be (re)negotiated, potentially influencing both labour and union agency as well as perspectives on energy transitions.

Since the second half of the 20th century, popular discourse has largely conceptualised energy as Big E-Energy, derived from fossil fuels, and, most notably since the end of the 20th Century, as 'oil' – a connotation that has paradoxically only been strengthened through the emerging peak oil debate from the 1970s onwards. Over the past four decades the looming scarcity of 'vital' resources for our modern capitalist societies' energy needs has dominated both popular and scientific debates. Bridge (2011) notes that the conflation of energy and oil was neither accidental nor coincidental, and that it is linked to the dominant role of oil in industrial societies and economies during the second half of the 20th century which has led to new forms of capitalism: petro-capitalism (Watts, 2009b). The term petro-capitalism refers to two related ideas; firstly, that petroleum is the 'fuel' of modern capitalist societies, and secondly, the specific socio-political and economic organisation of states which produce and export fossil fuels. Petro-capitalist states are

"specific sorts of capitalist economy insofar as they are not simply reliant upon oil as a source of energy but are forms of rentier economy in which oil rent (royalties, taxes, sales) are the [sic] driving the entire political economy" (Watts, 2009b: 528). At the heart of the petro-capitalist state is oil, or 'black gold', a resource that transgresses the boundary of the 'natural' (Watts, 2009a). While indisputably part of the earth, oil – in the forms that are useful to society – is necessarily a social resource and one that depends heavily on human knowledge and technology (Bridge & Le Billon, 2013; Watts, 2009a). Following on from the observation of the relationship between coal and early mass political action, Mitchell's (2009: 409) analysis of oil and democracy is less optimistic:

> "If the ability of organized workers to disrupt the networks and nodal points of a coal-based energy system shaped the kinds of mass politics that emerged, or threatened to emerge, in the first half of the twentieth century, this post-war reorganization of fossil fuel networks altered the energetics of democracy."

Having witnessed the power of coal-miners, dock workers and railwaymen over carbon flows, the emerging oil industry attempted to both constrict oil workers' rights from its very beginnings, as well as to construct a new, more flexible and less vulnerable infrastructure around oil (Mitchell T, 2009). While there have been important worker strikes and activism in the oil industry, for example in Iraq and Palestine, Mitchell (2009; see also: Prashad, 2007) observes how most strikes were either violently shut down or whole regimes in oil-producing countries changed with the help and involvement of Western stakeholders, such as British and American oil companies with local production interests.

Drawing on the work of Indian historian Vijay Prashad, whose book *The Darker Nations* (2007) powerfully documents the immense labour as well as gains and losses of Third World peoples in challenging imperial and colonial relations, the developments in the energy sector, especially around oil, can also be situated in a neo-colonial and –imperial context. One clear link here is the strategic importance of the coal maritime project for imperialist expansion and the various agencies and relations of solidarity at play between actors involved (see also chapter 3 in Featherstone, 2012). Prashad (2007) explores how existing unequal relations between formerly colonised and formerly colonial peoples remain intact and underpin contemporary processes of neoliberalisation for example in the energy sector. In this context, Prashad (*ibid*.) also places developments around oil, in both its raw and refined form, into a broader context of development

theories, export policies, (neo)colonial relations, monopolisation and cartelism, and structural inequality of access to financial markets and capital:

> "Oil, the most lucrative raw material found in the darker nations, carried great promise. As black gold, it had the ability to finance the social democratic dreams of populations that had slumbered too long in the shadow of empire. Yet the massive oil profits earned did not tickle down to the masses; the beneficiaries were the oil companies and the oligarchy." (Prashad, 2007: 176)

Prashad critically explores the rapid monopolisation, and what he terms cartelism, of and around oil through the former colonial states since the beginnings of oil exploration in the mid-19th century, and more intensely, since the 1950s. In the beginning, the oil sector was dominated by the 'Seven Sisters', a conglomerate of seven main energy companies consisting of Exxon (or Esso), Shell, BP, Gulf, Texaco, Mobil, and Socal (or Chevron) (Prashad, 2007). Prashad observes that the Seven Sisters continue to operate as a cartel to dominate and control the oil market, beginning with the extraction and supply of the raw resource, as well as the transportation, refinement and sale of oil since the mid-20th century. Centuries of exploitation and appropriation of the new nations' raw materials created an economical imbalance in which they were forced to continue to rely on the sale of raw materials and resources while importing processed products and goods. However, as raw material prices are vulnerable to market fluctuations, the new nations were forced to export vast amounts of raw materials and resources at low prices while importing expensive processed goods from the 'core' of the world economy, which held the technical and industrial advantage over the 'periphery' (*ibid.*). The core-periphery model of development economics in the 1940s determined the economic dependence of formerly colonised states on the export of raw material(s) – be that sugar, rubber or oil – for the next three decades. Not only did these practices lead to a lack of economic diversification but would, with ever decreasing prices for raw materials, also never lead to the promised industrial growth and social development – which in turn reinforced further relations of dependency on the former colonial powers.

Prashad's work (2007; 2012) also offers an imperialist dimension to political and economic analyses of neoliberalism, observing that the emerging Third World Project in the new nations both shaped, and intersected with, the development of neoliberalism. The Third World Project refers to emerging ideas and movements towards the emancipation and economic liberation of the new nations after direct colonial rule in the second half of

the 20th century. These ideas were threats to the emerging neoliberal agendas and policies in the Global North in the 1970s and 1980s. In this context, Prashad (2012) notes how the onset of neoliberal policies ended the previous North-South dialogue of development economics and foreign aid policies, instead ushering in an era of structural adjustment programmes for the economies of the new nations. Structural adjustment maintained the Third World's economic dependency on the developed nations through raw material and resource exports, while processes of neoliberalisation in the Global South attempted to counteract emerging notions of collectivity and equity in the postcolonial states through introducing a culture and language of individualism, achievement and competitiveness (Haarstad, 2009a; Prashad, 2012). In the energy sector, this development is most clearly tied to early imperialist resource – and later oil – exploitation, and the continuing dependence of oil exporting countries on the monopolised and Western-controlled oil industry.

What is often termed "the age of oil" in critical literature is thus argued to have given rise to a new set of relationships between the raw and refined resource itself and the emerging political, cultural, imperialist, economic, and financial structures that embed and surround it (Mitchell T, 2009; Prashad, 2007; 2012; Watts, 2001; 2009a). While there are varied, at times conflicting, and often violent relationships that continue to shape the oil sector as well as petro-capitalist economies, host environments, and the lives of oil workers and adjacent communities, it is important not to understand these relations as solely determined by oil. However, it should also be noted that more recently existing petro-capitalist relations have been affected by the increasing influence of neoliberal policies. These processes of neoliberalisation have been especially apparent in the oil sector, which, due to its tendency towards oligopoly, is particularly vulnerable to processes of neoliberalisation, but can also be observed in other parts of global energy governance, for example through increasing privatisation of infrastructure, as well as the marketisation and embeddedness of the energy sector in financial markets, which will be explored below.

Processes of Neoliberalisation in the Energy Sector

The neoliberalisation of the energy sector is already evident in much of the language used in academic, popular and policy-driven energy debates, which has clear market and management undertones or what Massey (2013) refers to as 'vocabularies of the economy'. These vocabularies of the economy are found in policy documents on the security and

management of energy supply, as much as they are found in popular and academic debates on peak oil, carbon capture and storage, as well as emissions trading (Bridge, 2011; Bridge & Le Billon, 2013). The Corner House (2013: 28) draws attention to the very use of the term 'resources' rather than 'commons', stating that in "commons regimes, the right to survive overshadows the exclusive individual rights to possess, exchange, and accumulate. […] Resource regimes, by contrast, allow subsistence rights only to private property owners". The governance of oil is largely undemocratic and in the hands of political and corporate elites, such as the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) or the International Energy Forum (IEF), yet Bridge and Le Billon (2013: 155) also stress that oil governance is "fragmented and incoherent, consisting mostly of a patchwork of organizations with mandates focusing on the vested interests of their members". Next to corporate stakeholder involvement, oil is furthermore increasingly 'managed' through the involvement of governments, which assist 'their' oil companies through providing military and diplomatic support to broaden the companies' access to further oil and gas reserves abroad (Bridge & Le Billon, 2013; Evans *et al*, 2013; Hamouchene, 2014). However, next to stakeholders and government support, civil society actors also increasingly get involved in oil governance, voicing criticism over environmental and human costs as well as making demands towards social and environmental justice, which has influenced popular discourse and opinion on oil since the 1990s (Bridge & Le Billon, 2013; Cumbers, 2012a).

Haarstad (2009a) stresses that it is vital to explore how *concrete* mechanisms of neoliberal policy affect the energy sector as well as labour organising within it (see also: Castree, 2008a; b). The following subsections of the chapter thus explore more specific processes of neoliberalisation, including the marketization and financialisation of fossil fuels, the privatisation of both infrastructure and natural resources, as well as processes of deregulation (whereby it is arguable if the oil industry has ever been subject to 'state' or public regulation in the Global North, apart from a few notable examples including Norway).

Fossil Fuel Marketisation and Finance

Oil is called 'black gold' for a reason – from John D. Rockefeller to the Sultan of Brunei, it has produced some of the wealthiest individuals on the planet (Bridge & Le Billon, 2013; Sweeney, 2013; Watts, 2001). An important aspect of the history of the oil industry is its considerable market concentration, which was achieved by corporate elites from the onset

of oil exploration and production. Since the beginnings of oil exploration, relatively few companies held a stake in the production, refinement and supply of the resource in both its raw and processed form (Prashad, 2007). The history of Rockefeller's Standard Oil Company is a prime example of monopolisation in the oil sector, which was later addressed through federal antitrust legislation. However, the resulting 'part'-companies are themselves big players in the global oil and energy sector today, including ExxonMobil and Chevron. Oil and other fossil fuels such as gas and coal have given rise to multi-billion dollar corporations; Bridge and Le Billion (2013) estimate the worth of the oil industry alone at three trillion dollars. Not only has Big E-Energy been extremely well marketised, it is also deeply embedded in the financial sector. As Sweeney (2013: 10) observes: "The stock exchanges of London, Sao Paulo, Moscow, Australia and Toronto all have an estimated 20-30 percent of their market capitalization connected to fossil fuels". In this context, Evans and Smith (2011) draw attention to the role of banks in the financing of the fossil fuel industry with the example of the Royal Bank of Scotland's (RBS) coal finance, which, at almost € 8 billion in 2011, was Britain's most heavily coal-financing and -investing bank. While banks usually have quite low 'internal' emissions, Evans and Smith argue that the embeddedness of emissions through the financing and investment in fossil fuels ranks banks amongst the highest polluters. The authors particularly stress and criticise the perverse circumstances in which the British public faces austerity measures and cuts across the public sector while RBS – which was recapitalised through tax monies following the financial crisis of 2008 – engages in socially, economically and ecologically harmful and unsustainable investments in the fossil fuel sector (Evans & Smith, 2011).

Similarly analysing the marketisation of fossil fuels in times of austerity post the financial crisis, Evans *et al* (2013) critically analyse the considerable financial, diplomatic and military support that oil companies receive from the British government – including subsidised loans, tax breaks, and structural tax avoidance loopholes. Large corporations also use the support and influence of their home governments to advance company profits abroad, while consistently and aggressively lobbying for reduced taxes and other subsidies in both their home and host countries. In this context, Evans *et al* (2013) flag the issue of the British (and other Western) governments' implicit 'resource colonialism' through supporting their corporations' non-transparent and exploitative practices (Prashad, 2007). With revenues and profits that top the GDPs of many countries, the wealth and market-embeddedness of oil corporations are further reasons why institutional oil (and broader fossil fuel) governance is relatively fragmented - as Bridge and Le Billion (2013) note, their wealth and size make fossil fuel corporations 'quasi-autonomous players' (see also:

Prashad, 2007). This is also illustrated by the extensive lobbying activities fossil fuel corporations engage in, especially through funding and supporting climate change denialism (e.g. Bridge & Le Billon, 2013; McCarthy, 2015). Facilitated by limited institutional oil governance, neoliberal policies such as foreign direct investment (FDI) have also played a major role in the marketisation of the energy sector especially in Latin America (Haarstad, 2009a; Prashad, 2012).

Privatisation and Deregulation

In line with broader neoliberal developments globally, the 1980s and 1990s were a time of large-scale neoliberal reform in both the public and energy sector, which was especially evident in an upsurge of policy and practice around increasing liberalisation and privatisation of energy generation and infrastructure (Bridge & Le Billon, 2013; Hall D *et al*, 2009; Halmer & Hauenschild, 2014). Next to the economically liberal climate, especially low prices and the abundance of resources paved the way for the privatisation of fossil fuel extraction and infrastructure. Privatisation in the energy sector is often tied to two overriding discourses, energy scarcity and energy access. Both discourses have been used by governments, energy corporations, as well as supranational organisations such as the World Bank as well as the European Union to both justify and intensify processes of neoliberalisation in the energy sector (Bridge, 2010; Halmer & Hauenschild, 2014; Sweeney, 2013). The discourses are heavily supported by vocabularies of the economy and common sense assumptions of the market (Massey, 2013). Especially discourses around privatisation promised better quality provision of services at diminished cost for consumers, while at the same time supposedly rescuing municipalities, regions and states from difficult financial situations (Halmer & Hauenschild, 2014). However, privatisation and deregulation of public and energy sectors across the world have a variety of reverse impacts, such as worsening service quality and access to energy (Hall D *et al*, 2009; Sweeney, 2013), loss of employment and deteriorating conditions for workers (Cumbers *et al*, 2016; Ince *et al*, 2015; Smith & Trowell, 2014), as well as diminished labour agency and trade union strength in previously politically strong and heavily unionised sectors and countries, especially, but not exclusively, in South and Latin America (Haarstad, 2009a; b).

While institutions such as the World Bank still promote liberalisation as a means to provide affordable access to energy for all and thus subscribe to a discourse of energy privatisation as access solution, Sweeney (2013) for example directly links issues such as

energy poverty, inequality of access, exorbitant price increases, declining quality or disruption of services, as well as underinvestment to large-scale privatisations in the energy sector (see also: Hall D *et al*, 2009; Halmer & Hauenschild, 2014; Cumbers & Becker, 2018). Next to job loss and decreasing wages, especially lax health and safety regulations are a concern for the trade unions whose workers risk their lives in unsafe working environments under declining conditions, which has led to injuries and death (Bridge & Le Billon, 2013; Smith & Trowell, 2014; Sweeney, 2013). These observations are in direct contrast to the environmental, social and political promises of a self-regulating market, and are in line with observations of wider processes of the neoliberalisation of nature (e.g. Bakker, 2005; Mansfield, 2004; Robertson, 2004). Similar to Swyngedouw's (2005) example of how governments facilitate privatisation through regulation, a report by Cumbers *et al* (2013) points to the market failures of existing energy policy to deliver renewable energy targets in the Scotland and the UK. The authors note that the UK government has attempted to use guaranteed prices to invest in renewable and nuclear energies through creating a new government company, thereby awkwardly hybridising a form of 'free-market renationalisation'. This results in an artificial market where "the government 'owns' most of the risk […] but the actual assets that yield profit are owned by private (and predominantly foreign) companies" (Cumbers *et al*, 2013: 13).

Conclusion

This first chapter established the broader context in which the rest of this thesis is written. Through exploring neoliberalism, and the neoliberalisation of energy in particular, I have provided the foundation for a sustained discussion of resistances to these structures and processes. This will in turn facilitate an examination of recent trade union politics towards climate change and energy, rooted in a decidedly anti-neoliberal and 'green growth' sceptical analysis. In this chapter, I have provided an overview of the governance system commonly known as neoliberalism and have sketched out how specific processes of neoliberalisation impact nature, environments and energy. Exploring neoliberalism's history as well as its theory and (messy) reality allowed me to conceptualise neoliberalisation as a conjunctural and relational process, one which operates alongside its others. These others include both processes of contestation as well as complimentary regimes and schools of thought. To make sense of the wealth of theory and research on neoliberalism and the way it has changed over time I propose to think of neoliberalism as a patchwork quilt. As such, the patches of the quilt can represent ideological influences,

reform families, and policy tools as they appear in variegated and complex configurations in actually-existing processes of neoliberalisation. The thread holding these patches of theory and practice together represents the actors, such as national governments or local policy makers, that weave together their respective quilts in spatially and socio-politically specific contexts. As patchwork quilts are messy by nature, this imaginary also leaves space for the many resistances and processes of contestation that exist within and against neoliberal regimes. I have also explored how both crises and contestation by social and labour movement actors have challenged and shaped processes of neoliberalisation. To exemplify, and drawing again on the idea of the patchwork quilt, a local campaign against privatisation could work to undo the stitching around the 'privatisation patch' by delegitimising privatisation as a socially-desirable policy tool and attempting to reclaim a service back into public ownership. This may both trigger similar processes in other spatial contexts, or 'new' processes of neoliberalisation, perhaps in form of creating a public-private partnership as opposed to a fully-public entity and thus retaining some degree of private profit interest. A related discussion on contestations of neoliberalism will be picked up again in the next chapter, where I discuss emerging trade union environmentalism and the contested politics of climate change.

Following my discussion of neoliberalism, I furthermore reviewed how neoliberalism has been studied in relation to nature and environments. Building on key literatures from the early 2000s, I explored how processes of neoliberalisation in relation to biophysical and mineral resources have shaped nature-society relations in theory and practice, and how these developments have begun to be contested and challenged. Utilising the prominent case study of water privatisation across the world, I highlighted how the privatisation of the water sector has led to complex governance structures and regulatory regimes which create inefficient, less safe, and, in some cases, deadly water supply systems contrary to the promises of increased efficiency and resource conservation of the so-called market environmentalist agenda of neoliberal policy-making. While there now exist a wealth of studies on the neoliberalisation of nature, I have highlighted a gap in the literature when it comes to theory and research on the neoliberalisation in the energy sector specifically. I have addressed this gap by providing an overview of energy as a social relation, and exploring its relationship with capitalism, democracy and neoliberalism. As part of this discussion I have stressed the particular power relations at play in the social construction of 'energy' which shape both the energy sector and the agencies of actors within it (e.g. energy workers, consumers, activists, profiteers). To establish a discussion of neoliberalisation in the energy sector in particular I have especially highlighted processes

of fossil fuel marketisation and finance as well as deregulation and privatisation of energy resources and systems. The following chapter builds on this understanding of neoliberal natures to discuss the politics of resistance that have emerged in response, especially informing an exploration of trade union environmentalist practice towards alternative energy politics.

CHAPTER 2
TRADE UNION ENVIRONMENTALISM AND THE CONTESTED POLITICS OF CLIMATE CHANGE

This chapter builds on the previous, critical discussion of neoliberalism by exploring how decades of neoliberalisation and capitalist expansion have led to rising social and economic inequality as well as ecological destruction. I highlight emerging counter politics in the energy sector and beyond which challenge the root causes of energy crises and climate change. The chapter is structed into three sections; the first section explores some of the ways in which trade union and labour organisations are participating in environmental debates and discusses how workers have reacted to broader resistances and struggles against climate change, fossil fuels and carbon-based production. In order to understand how the trade union movement is responding to the challenges of climate change and energy today, it is important to explore the movement's responses to changes in the global political economy since the 1970s. To provide this context, I briefly reflect on the challenges of neoliberal restructuring faced by the trade union movement before mapping out how the movement has attempted to revive itself through social partnerships, community unionism, and internationalisation. I then discuss examples of workers engagement with energy and resource struggles but also highlighting that these contestations have mainly taken place within the status quo of carbon-based production rather than as a challenge to it. Finally, the section also discusses a tentatively emerging environmental awareness in the trade union movement. While cautious not to generalise from the few examples of existing trade union environmentalism at hand, I explore how effective trade union environmentalist coalitions could be formed around issues of ownership and decision-making and require active participation and inclusion of affected workers.

The second section turns to broader counter politics and contestations in the energy sector. I specifically explore the terminology around 'energy crisis' and 'energy struggle' to discuss how conflict and contestation are framed in the energy sector. While conceptually related, energy crisis and energy struggle offer different frameworks to think about energy as a social relation and explore its connection to counter politics, contestation, and resistance in the energy sector. I ultimately make the case for the notion of 'energy struggle' to inform discussions of counter politics in the energy sector as it provides a novel framework to consider the socio-spatial contestation of energy. The section also

introduces popular acts of contestation in the energy sector and highlights how different struggles, such as the Divestment movement, the resource wars in Bolivia and Ecuador, and recent remunicipalisation initiatives, link questions around energy options and resources to broader social, economic and political structures and processes. The section also provides a brief analysis on how these struggles are united by mobilising energy and resources alongside socially-progressive ideas.

The third and last section explores the potential of emerging energy democracy narratives to unite various energy struggles and campaigns, including emerging labour and trade union environmentalism. This section begins with a discussion on some of the issues identified that constrain or enable successful energy democracy coalitions – firstly, the framing and articulation of demands and the active inclusion of workers' voices, and secondly, on successful negotiations around questions of ownership and decision-making. Drawing on both Laclau's (2007) theory of populist reason and policy transfer literatures, I explore how counter-hegemonic networks and actors frame and negotiate common demands, ideas and practices. The section also engages with energy democracy in more depth and analyses the movement building potential of energy democracy narratives and demands. Finally, this chapter introduces a growing body of research on energy democracy as both imaginary and emerging movement.

Towards Trade Union Environmentalism

As argued in the last chapter, workers have long experienced the negative effects of neoliberal policy and reform on their workplaces, jobs, and communities. In today's economy, the effects of decades of neoliberalism can still be felt, while the financial crisis of 2008 ushered in austerity and wide-ranging cuts to public services (Blyth, 2013). Similarly, unions in all sectors continue to struggle with an increasingly fragmented workforce, low membership numbers, and declining political power. More recently, environmental concerns are also beginning to affect workers and trade unions, both in terms of inevitable changes to workplaces and industrial sectors, as well as regarding wider questions on the sustainability of fossil fuels and the implications of environmental and climatic changes. Discussions on climate change, energy transition and environmental crises have arrived in the political mainstream, and unions, too, have started to engage with questions of energy transition management and climate change action (Snell & Fairbrother, 2010; Lipsig-Mummé, 2013; Räthzel & Uzzell, 2013). This section explores the context of

current trade union politics on climate and environment, beginning with an exploration of how trade unions have engaged with neoliberal restructuring and challenges to traditional labour politics and how this continues to affect union policy towards the climate and environment today.

Contextualising Trade Union Responses to Neoliberal Restructuring

As introduced in the last chapter, the joint crises of Keynesianism and developmentalism provided a window of opportunity for neoliberal experimentation and state-making in the mid-1970s. Since then, previously heavily industrialised countries such as the United Kingdom and the United States have been hit by neoliberal reforms, including attacks on trade unions through labour market deregulation and restrictions on union's bargaining power, which has led to sharp membership declines and lessened influence in the political sphere (Tufts, 1998; Wills, 2001). Multiple factors have contributed to this weakening of 'traditional' trade unionism, including the impact of neoliberal policy on economic restructuring towards finance, the rise of the service sector, the relocation of production, as well as more transient, diverse and informally-employed workforces as a result of increased labour market flexibility (Tufts, 1998; Wills, 2001; Jordhus-Lier *et al*, 2019). The 'traditional' trade union approach of organising a fairly homogenous workforce in its place of employment around issues particular to that workplace proved increasingly difficult and ineffective (Fine, 2005; Keenan, 2015). Next to membership challenges of retaining old as well as recruiting new members, another challenge to contemporary trade unionism is the movement's traditional hierarchical operational logic, in which communication takes place vertically between local, regional, national and supranational union bodies, which essentially mirrors the model of capitalist corporations from the mid-20th century (Keenan, 2015; Routledge & Cumbers, 2009a; Wills, 2001). While this operational model continues to be beneficial for internal union communication as well as decision-making and solidarity building, it has become rather outdated in workplace contexts and leaves little room to recruit today's increasingly flexible, contract-based, diverse and mobile workforce.

In response to the neoliberal reforms, membership decline and broader questions about unions' relevance in an increasingly gig-based economy, trade unions and labour organisations have been attempting to revive their movement in various ways. In the 1990s, the European labour movement began to embrace 'social partnership' as a strategic

response to the many challenges trade unions were facing (Le Queux, 2005). The idea of social partnerships, also referred to as 'social dialogue', is rooted in broader ideas of European integration, particularly in the context of the social dimension of the Maastricht Treaty, which aimed to expand the European project beyond its previously predominantly economic function. Social dialogue was also an important policy of the 'third way' politics of many social democratic and labour parties across Europe at the time, which aimed to achieve politics beyond conflict (Mouffe, 2005). While social partnership agreements seemed to guarantee the weakened unions a voice in negotiations with both public and private players, in embracing the idea, the labour movement needed to concede to an inherently corporate and market-competitive hegemony with little room in practice to pursue their historical aims of social and economic justice. For the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) and its affiliates, opting for social partnerships that operated within an established framework of neoliberal politics and economics also foreclosed the opportunity of establishing robust alternatives to the status quo (Le Queux, 2005). The implications of social partnerships as a union renewal strategy in the 1990s can still be felt today with European trade unions, especially, continuing to support social dialogue and social partnerships with corporations. Social partnerships are by default a (small-c) conservative option; a social partnership approach is less likely to lead to a critical engagement with the potential of more transformative system change away from neoliberal, as well as capitalist, socio-economic relations. This can be seen in the ETUC's continued support for carbon markets and related sustainable or 'green growth' agendas of the European Union despite the fact that these measures have not yielded any significant results in carbon reductions in the decade of their existence (Sweeney, 2016a). Some trade unions, notably the global labour network Trade Unions for Energy Democracy, have also critically engaged with the continued practice of social partnerships and its impacts on progressive trade union politics around climate change and energy systems (Sweeney, 2013; 2014).

Other unions also began to experiment with new forms of organising and partnership from the late 1990s onwards. This has included reflections on internationalisation and international union collaboration (see e.g. Cumbers, 2004; 2005; Moody, 1997), calls for radical movement unionism (Upchurch & Mathers, 2011), as well as refocusing union activities towards social or community unionism as an alternative union renewal strategy to social partnerships (Fine, 2005; Symon & Crawshaw, 2009; Tufts, 1998; Wills, 2001; Wills & Simms, 2004). Community unionism, simply understood, was not a new phenomenon, as unionism has long been embedded in working

class political cultures and activity (Tufts, 1998; Lynd, 1992). However, more recently, some trade unions, predominantly in Anglo-American contexts, have begun to rethink their organisational and operational logics along 'community' lines. For trade unions, this meant actively seeking to address the strict organising structures through more horizontal and less hierarchical modes of operating (Fine, 2005; Tufts, 1998; Wills, 2001). Through experimenting with community unionism, the labour movement did not only seek to recruit new, informally or otherwise precariously employed members in the community, but also hoped to expand its influence and political power in both spatial as well as 'ideological' terms. Rooted in the idea to move beyond the primarily productivist and immediately workplace-based concerns, 'community unionism', in theory, aimed to ultimately address larger issues around economic injustices such as living wage campaigns (Wills, 2001). By focussing on finding common cause between unions and a variety of initiatives organising around issues of race, religion, gender, sexuality and disability, community unionism can thus be understood as an attempt to bridge the gap between demands for recognition and redistribution in social theory and debates (see e.g. Fraser, 1997; 2000).

While the potential for unions to "foster unity on the left" clearly exists (Wills, 2001: 469; Waterman & Wills, 2001), for it to be realised, unions and the labour movement will have to critically rethink and change their organisational structures, objectives and culture (Tufts, 1998; Waterman, 2001). This organizational dilemma has been an unresolved problem for unions since the 1990s (Tufts, 1998; Wills, 2001; Waterman, 2001). The absence of contemporary literature on community unionism suggests that while successful in some cases, the ideas have not taken hold in the labour movement more broadly. A restructuring of union operational structures towards more horizontal, grassroots operational models used in social movements and other activist campaigns necessarily means some loss of power for current union 'elites' as well as potentially fuelling longstanding inter-union rivalries over members or demands which have always been obstacles to community unionist approaches (Wills & Simms, 2004). Equally, a bottom up internationalism, as proposed by Wills and Waterman (2001) goes against the prevailing logic of social partnerships, which doubtlessly suited many within the higher levels of national trade union leaderships. While there are some successful examples of labour and non-labour alliances around climate and energy, which will be discussed later on in this chapter, as well as around anti-austerity campaigning (see e.g. Griffin, 2017), the challenge community unionism poses to established union hierarchies remains a big issue, especially in the energy sector where workers (and whole unions for that matter) are facing existential threats by post-carbon transition campaigns from environmentalists and climate activists.

As will be discussed later on, this has also been expressed in inter-union and inter-sector rivalries in a new alignment of labour over energy and environmental issues (especially in the struggle over US mega energy projects such as the pipelines Keystone XL and Dakota Access).

Today, the labour movement finds itself in a similar position to the late 1990s, both in the context of facing related crises of neoliberal restructuring and continued organisational decline, as well as facing broader questions on the relevance and future of their movement, which already began to emerge in the 1990s around questions of how, and if, the movement could challenge global capital. While the key debate then centred mainly around growth in a context of neoliberal globalisation and its impacts on workers and unions (see: Le Queux, 2005), a key debate for the trade union movement today focuses on how growth and the logics of the continuing impact of neoliberal capitalism upon nature, environments and ecosystems. This, in turn, poses fundamental questions for the labour and trade union movement on the future of work, workers and unions in times of climatic change as well as in a green growth or post-carbon world. Some trade unions and labour networks, such as Trade Unions for Energy Democracy (TUED), have thus begun to engage with questions of socio-ecological justice to contribute to the debates on climate change, decarbonisation, and energy futures (see: Sweeney, 2013).

Worker Contestation in the Energy Sector

Academic analyses of labour disputes and workers mobilisations often paint a rather pessimistic picture of both labour agency and union strength, citing transnationalisation and fragmentation of industrial sectors, shrinking work forces, and a neoliberal language and rhetoric of competition as hindering conditions for effective workers mobilisation and unionisation. This generally applies to the energy sector (see: Anderson, 2009; Haarstad, 2009a; b; Smith, 2014), yet it is worth keeping in mind that neoliberalisation is not the only challenge faced by workers in global energy systems. However, internationally, some relatively recent, celebrated and largely successful labour disputes in the energy sector have taken place in Latin America, especially in the context of the Bolivian ‘guerra del gas’, the gas war of 2003, and the later nationalisation of hydrocarbons in 2006, as well as the Ecuadorian workers’ mobilisation against the privatisation of both a pipeline and oil fields in the late 1990s and early 2000s (Haarstad, 2009a; b; Perreault & Valdivia, 2010; Valdivia, 2008). Both countries have histories of neoliberal policies and reforms targeting

both energy infrastructure and natural resources (oil and gas), and both have high incomes from hydrocarbon revenues, which have historically been spent on public and social programmes. Worker mobilisations contesting neoliberal energy policies in Bolivia and Ecuador drew heavily on imaginings of the nation and collective national identities (Perreault & Validivia, 2010). In Ecuador, workers did not oppose the commodification of petroleum per se, but instead contested the neoliberal relations of production that are perceived to betray the collective national wealth through 'selling out' the countries' natural resources to foreign capital (Valdivia, 2008). However, while holding a stake in the Bolivian gas war and nationalisations, Haarstad (2009a) finds that the collective identity of the Bolivian petroleum and gas workers has been fragmented by neoliberal policies such as foreign direct investment (FDI), and that the struggles were a joint effort of workers alongside new social movements, neighbourhood initiatives, indigenous organisation and students (Perreault & Valdivia, 2010). In a related paper, Haarstad (2009b) examines the weakening of labour agency and trade unionism in Bolivia both during the period of structural adjustment and privatisation as well as, seeming paradoxically, during the (re-)nationalisation of hydrocarbons in 2006 (which has historically been a core labour demand), arguing that labour's position has been considerably marginalised in the 'new political space', which is now mainly constituted by civil society and social movement politics.

In the context of the British energy sector a recent article by Cumbers, Featherstone, MacKinnon, Ince and Strauss (2016) engages with labour agency and trade unionism in two disputes, the 2005 Gate Gourmet dispute in London Heathrow airport and the Lindsey oil refinery dispute in 2009. The authors draw on Wright's (2001) concept of structural and associational power which differentiates between workers' ability to interrupt the workings of the global economy through strikes and action (structural power), and their ability to mobilise collectively across and beyond trade union politics (associational power). Cumbers *et al* (2016) conclude that while in both cases structural and associational power were mobilised in form of successful interventions in the global economy and the forging of translocal solidarities, both disputes nevertheless 'failed' to reshape the economic, political and social conditions of labour in and beyond their respective sectors. While trade unions often continue to foreground dialogue with corporations and capital for example through the signing of Global Framework Agreements (GFAs), which are in line with unions' social partnership politics, Cumbers *et al* (2016; see also: Ince *et al*, 2015) criticize them for the outdated vertical operating structure and traditional approach, leading to ineffective and ultimately unsuccessful

action. In this context, the authors propose that labour finds "new and creative ways of supporting emergent grassroots labour networks to challenge and reshape the institutional and governance structures of neoliberal capitalism" (Cumbers *et al*, 2016: 106). This assessment is in line with labour networks such as Trade Unions for Energy Democracy, who aim to challenge neoliberal energy governance and reshape trade union politics (Sweeney, 2013).

Jeremy Anderson's (2009; 2012; 2015) analyses of transport sector workers' transnational mobilisation strategies explore the complex and uneven power geometries between labour and capital in transnational contexts, and thereby highlights the embedded nature of both capital and labour relations. While labour has acted and mobilised across multiple scales ranging from the local to the global, the most important and successful trade union gains have traditionally materialised on the national (state) level, which has, over the 20th century, also led to a "gradual consolidation of trade unions into national organisations […] and thus scale-producing institutions" (Anderson, 2009: 960). Rejecting determinist accounts of either capital's transnational mobility or labour's internationalist organisation, Anderson (2009; 2015) instead draws attention to the importance of exploring both spatial and temporal dimensions of specific struggles and stresses how multiple smaller yet disruptive actions, practices and experiments within transnational capital-labour relations can create resonant places in the long run. These resonant places can be understood as both examples of place-based and spatially specific resistances as well as a larger process of forging connections and solidarities around different contestations of neoliberalism beyond place (Anderson, 2015).

In terms of labour agency and demands, the struggle in the Lindsey oil refinery highlights that it is important to engage with the particular discourses and practices through which labour agency is constructed in different contexts (Ince *et al*, 2015; see also: Featherstone & Griffin, 2016; Coe & Jordhus-Lier, 2010). During the protests, the workers used the controversial slogan 'British jobs for British workers' to articulate their frustration over (perceived) discrimination against British workers in a largely deregulated European labour market, however, the choice of slogan also needs to be understood in the context of the exclusionist discourses which are continuously reproduced by British political figures. While not attempting to downplay the racist elements of this particular struggle, the authors (Ince *et al*, 2015) argue that engaging with the terms through which labour agency is constructed allows to embed a concrete struggle in the wider formation of relations between labour, capital and power, for example in the energy sector. This analysis is also

particularly relevant to understand workers' agencies in energy struggles today, where workers and unions are often framed as being antagonistic to climate and environmental aims (see also: Barca, 2014). While the Lindsey oil refinery dispute is an energy struggle in the broader sense, from an energy transition perspective, labour and trade union struggles around coal, oil or gas seldom contest carbon-based production, and their demands do not always align with broader popular or social movement struggles in the energy sector. Relatedly, Perreault and Valdivia (2010) argue that resource or energy struggles are almost never only about the resource in question, and that the wider context of concrete struggles needs to be considered. The examples cited here share similar themes. While all are based in the energy sector and involved in contestations broadly centred around carbon, not one of the struggles challenges carbon-based production or addresses broader questions of system change away from (petro)capitalism. In the energy sector, unions often continue to frame their struggles primarily around labour rights without challenging the existing confines of industries such as the fossil fuel sector, where jobs might bring short-term economic gain for workers but also lead to short- and long-term ill-health of workers and communities as well as the destruction of common ecosystems and resources.

Emerging Trade Union Environmentalism

Contestations of climate change and energy politics are not (yet) a common feature of trade unionism. While there is potential common ground between unions and environmental and climate activists, the previously explored challenges, such as rigid union structures, have often hindered effective coalition building with social or environmental movement actors with different organisational models, as has the obvious threat to current carbon-based jobs. Inter-union rivalries, too, have played a role, especially between workers in the energy sector and those with more 'progressive' agendas such as public and healthcare sector workers, which will be explored below with the example of the Keystone XL and Dakota Access Pipeline struggles in the US. Generally, current energy struggles that focus on a radical rethinking and reorganising of energy systems towards post-carbon and renewable energies can be divisive for the workers involved, if they feel like their concerns over livelihoods and job loss are not taken seriously by those prioritising the environment over their jobs. As will be argued, it is important that workers have an active role in these discussions and are included in ownership and decision-making processes (see e.g. Wainwright & Elliott, 1982). So far, unions from most sectors are struggling to reinvent

themselves in line with wider climate justice and post-carbon transition goals of left and green movements alongside the wider challenges they are facing around working conditions and the existing threats to union organising.

There are, however, some initiatives that have successfully brought together workers from various sectors with 'outside' campaigns, which provide useful examples to conceptualise emerging trade union environmentalism. These initiatives are usually set up around issues of ownership and decision-making power, to which I will also return in more depth in the last section of this chapter. In a booklet titled "The tragedy of the private – the potential of the public" published by the Transnational Institute and the global trade union federation Public Services International, Hilary Wainwright (2014) explores struggles in the public sector which opposed privatisation and experimented with alternative ownership and decision-making structures. Drawing on the experiences of coalition building in the water movements against processes of privatisation in Brazil, Uruguay and Bolivia, as well as in Italy and Greece, Wainwright (2014) highlights that there is much potential for trade unions and social movements or community groups to come together and form alliances (see also: Spronk, 2012). Especially the Bolivian and Ecuadorian case studies show how water workers have built strong alliances with community and faith actors, citizen groups, NGOs, and consumer initiatives in what Wainwright (2014: 16) refers to as becoming "custodians of the commons" to resist the privatisation of their water and sanitation services. While these are inspiring examples, some of these cases, especially Bolivia, have seen a reversal of progressive gains over the last few years (Andreucci, 2017; Andreucci & Radhuber, 2017). As Andreucci (2017) and Andreucci and Radhuber (2017) observe, Morales's Bolivia has taken an increasingly authoritarian turn and has not been able to realise the transformative socio-environmental and counter-neoliberal project it initially promised. Furthermore, it is important to consider the materialities that form the basis of particular struggles. In the above example, water workers' livelihoods are not threatened by anti-privatisation, counter-neoliberal or alternative/ public ownership campaigns as their work, skills, and resource will still be required. In the energy sector, any struggle about the future of work necessarily has an existentially-threatening dimension for some workers as jobs might be lost when transitioning away from fossil- and carbon-based production. In these cases, the conversations between environmentalists and trade unions need to be sensitive to the fact that any form of counter politics to the status quo has real implications for the workers involved. Highlighting issues of ownership and decision making is imperative to discussions on post-carbon transitions in which fossil-based workers need to have the opportunity to meaningfully participate and be able to share their concerns, as

well as their ideas of how alternatives can be created.

An important aspect of the emerging alliances in Brazil and Uruguay was that, ultimately, a sustained relationship, or 'deep coalition', was created through bringing together different kinds of expertise around water services and water quality which led to a shared process of building up 'counter-knowledges'. However, while interests and demands of trade unions and social movements are not necessarily exclusive, and coalitions can be powerful and successful in realising demands, effective coalition building is also highly context-dependent and often faces obstacles such as the difficulty of aligning the interests and agencies of trade unions and community groups. Drawing on the argument made earlier that energy workers' structural power, and in fact existence, may be threatened by low carbon energy transition efforts, it is important to contextualise the potentially reactionary and protectionist positionalities from energy unions towards progressive energy coalition building (see also: Wright, 2001; Ince *et al*, 2015). Here, the Lucas Plan, conceived and in the UK in the 1970s, remains a relevant example (Wainwright & Elliott, 1982). In 1976, a combine committee of shop stewards from all sites of the Lucas Aerospace company proposed an alternative corporate plan to shift production from largely military production to the development of socially useful products in response to announced job cuts. The committee had previously sent out questionnaires to the workforce, asking for suggestions of products which answered a social need and could be produced using the workers' existing knowledge and skills. In response, the committee received 150 product ideas ranging from medical equipment to transport and energy conservation (Lucas Plan, WWWa; Wainwright & Elliott, 1982). While the Lucas Plan was initially a response to job loss in the face of plant closure, the key point here is that workers were invited to participate in the debate about the future of their work and communities, and were given ownership and control over their narrative. Workers' active inclusion in the process of finding alternatives enabled them to come up with creative uses of their existing skills and knowledges. This proactive form of coalition building holds valuable lessons for trade union environmentalist alliances in the energy sector today, where open conversations and 'deep coalitions' are needed to assure current carbon workers that their jobs and existences will not be overlooked in the quest for a post-carbon world. An inclusionary approach needs to allow labour to actively become part of an environmentalist narrative that is not predetermined by the dominant, often middle-class environmental actors, or as Barca (2014: 21, emphasis in original) summarises: "Like so many other working-class communities, Taranto's [case study] workers seem to perceive the environmental discourse as something alien to their world, not because they despise it

(who is *not* an environmentalist, nowadays?), but simply because this is a choice that is not offered to them".

While trade unions are often primarily concerned with issues around labour rights, including employment security, contracts and wages, it is worthwhile for trade unions to also engage in wider community struggles as "[w]orkers are service users just as service users are workers" (Wainwright, 2014: 39), and their expertise as well as international contacts and networks proved important to the success of the struggles in Bolivia and Ecuador. Furthermore, the assumption that trade unionists and workers in general are only concerned with wages or contract agreements rather than with the quality of the services they produce is overly simplistic. In all of Wainwright's (2014) examples, quality of service provision was a main motivator for unions to join social movements and community struggles. In some of her older work, for example on the Lucas Plan (Wainwright & Elliott, 1982), she also shows that unions and workers can be motivated to partake in struggles for more ownership and control of their workplaces and activities if they get the opportunity to do so. However, Wainwright (2014: 39) also notes that more often than not, unions are not making the connection between their own demands and the struggles that their immediate community is involved in, even if they are aligned. She further critically observes that this does not just point to a missed opportunity for coalition building between unions and communities, but also, and perhaps more importantly, to a gap between union leadership and their own members. While cautious of endorsing simple counter positions, such as conservative leadership versus progressive rank and file, this problem of internal union culture and organisation is again related to outdated union operational logics discussed above as well as to more conservative, status quo-orientated union strategies for social dialogue and partnerships. Internal union culture and organisation can thus have a real impact on trade unions' involvement with progressive politics around the environment, energy and climate action, as well as energy democracy narratives.

In organisational terms, and despite the challenges faced from deregulation, deindustrialisation and membership decline, trade unions, their national affiliations, the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), as well as the internationally-operating Global Union Federations (GUFs), remain relatively powerful players on a global scale. The ITUC is the world's largest trade union federation, which unites workers across a range of sectors, whereas the GUFs are sector- or industry-specific union federations. In the past, the ITUC has supported (somewhat) progressive action towards climate change

and energy (Snell & Fairbrother, 2010), and has for example participated in a 400 people strong sit-in during the 21st Conference of the Parties (COP21) in Paris in December 2015 to demand climate justice, a just energy transition and environmentally sustainable jobs in a new economy (Kahle, 2016; Burrow, 2015). However, not all GUFs share the ITUC's wider climate justice policy, which in itself has not been a priority for the union organisation. Most energy related unions, that is, those representing mining, oil, gas, electricity and nuclear workers, are united in the relatively new GUF IndustriALL which was founded in 2012, following a merger of three former GUFs – the previous 'energy GUF', the International Federation for Chemical, Energy, Mine and General Workers (ICEM), as well as the International Metalworkers' Federation (IMF), and the International Textile, Garment and Leather Workers Federation (ITGLWF). The operational and organisational structure of IndustriALL follows a vertical and hierarchical operational logic, with relatively small and largely professional leadership, and mass membership of 50 million workers in 140 countries (Routledge & Cumbers, 2009b, IndustriALL, WWWa). Membership is heavily male-dominated and, through its organisational structure, biased towards the interests of the European, Nordic and North American national affiliations (Routledge & Cumbers, 2009b), making it more susceptible to social partnership agreements which were popular in northern trade unionism in the late 1990s and early 2000s (Le Queux, 2005). The previous 'energy GUF', ICEM, approached the management of worker-company relations through Global (or International) Framework Agreements (GFAs), which are voluntary agreements between unions and companies concerning labour and trade union rights (Anderson, 2015; Gibb, 2005). ICEM's first GFA was signed with the Norwegian oil company Statoil in 1998 and the practice of GFAs has since been continued by IndustriALL, which states that "organizing, networking and GFA's [sic] continue to be priorities for the sector" (IndustriALL, WWWb). However, GFAs, as a popular measure of social dialogue, are not legally binding and have been criticised by labour activists as a tool for multi-national corporations to showcase their corporate social responsibility without making a difference to the workforce, especially showing the limits of social partnerships internationally (Anderson, 2015; Cumbers *et al*, 2008).

Despite all these challenges, there are already some examples of labour and trade union organising which incorporate environmentalist and energy democratic struggles in their agendas. While labour and environmental concerns are often seen as separate, conflictive or even dichotomous, approaches towards environmental labour studies can be found in academia (see, for example: Räthzel & Uzzell, 2013; Lipsig-Mummé, 2013), as well as in recent campaigns and initiatives. In the United States, Trade Unions for Energy

Democracy (TUED) and Unions against Fracking are recent campaigns uniting labour environmentalist concerns, as are the BlueGreen Alliance and the Labor Network for Sustainability. A book by Räthzel and Uzzell (2013) titled *Trade Unions in the Green Economy* brings together analyses and experiences from these and similar campaigns in Brazil, South Africa, Taiwan, South Korea and Australia. Similarly, *Climate@Work,* edited by Lipsig-Mummé (2013), explores examples of the relationship between climate change and work in Canada. However, these works also note that the cited campaigns are not without friction and conflict. As mentioned previously, mega-energy projects such as the Keystone XL and Dakota Access pipelines have highlighted continuing frictions between workers and wider community struggles. They have, however, also shown that some unions are willing to overcome these differences and ultimately stood on the frontlines alongside their allies from indigenous communities, farmers and local citizens, environmentalists and climate activists.

The conflict over the Keystone XL mega-pipeline project, connecting the resource- and especially fossil fuel-rich Western Canadian Sedimentary Basin in Alberta, Canada, to refineries in Illinois and Texas in the United States, initially dealt a blow to an emergent labour-environmentalist movement. The debate brought out deep divisions in the US labour movement over questions of climate change and energy (Sweeney, 2016a), highlighting the split between the so-called Black-Blue Alliance, a partnership between the Oil and Gas Industry and the Building Trades, and the more environmentally-minded parts of the US labour movement, including the BlueGreen Alliance. In 2011, the Amalgamated Transit Union and Transport Workers Union were the first to oppose the pipeline project, followed by the National Union of Nurses and the New York State Nurses Association in 2013, when more than 2000 nurses marched over the Golden Gate Bridge in protest against Keystone XL. Union opposition to the pipeline was met with harsh words from the Black-Blue Alliance, insulting the protesters as ‘job killers’ who “had no right to take food from the mouths of work-deprived union members” (Sweeney, 2016a: 94, citing Terry O’Sullivan, president of Laborers’ International Union of North America). While showing that some parts of the labour movement are beginning to critically engage with climate change and the underlying systems of neoliberalism and capitalist growth agendas, this example again underlines how inter-union rivalries and rigid union hierarchies continue to constrain contestation and foster defensive political responses. Effective coalition building between unions and broader environmental politics requires transparent discussions on issues including ownership and decision-making and the active inclusion and participation of unions and workers who are directly affected by the proposed alternatives and

transitions.

Counter Politics in the Energy Sector

While the labour and trade union movements have not yet shown much agency in counter political struggles around climate change and energy transition, other groups including indigenous people, environmentalists and social movements, local citizens, churches, as well as variously configured coalitions between them, have challenged and contested neoliberal energy politics across the world. As many of these actors already involved in struggles will also be workers (and potentially unionists) in their day to day life, a key question is why their respective movements have not (yet) embraced these struggles. Before exploring potential common ground between worker movements and a broader coalition of social and environmental movement actors in the next section, this section begins by reflecting on the terminology around energy crises and energy struggle to highlight how the use of specific terminology affects movement building.

On Energy Crises and Energy Struggles

In most contexts 'energy crises' are discussed in relation to the concepts of scarcity and/ or limits, which both threaten the reproduction of capitalist social relations (Bridge, 2010; McCarthy, 2015). Scarcity plays a key role in the peak oil debate, which has gained renewed prominence in political and popular discourse since the early 2000s and relates to the impending and permanent decline in oil production (Bridge, 2010). The scarcity threat is also part of the policy-driven 'energy security' concerns in the West over the geopolitical relations to, and increasing dependence on, oil-producing nations, as well as concerns over possible disruptions in the supply of oil and gas (Bridge, 2015; CEE Bankwatch *et al*, 2011; Ma'anit, 2011; Watts, 2009a). This environmental security perspective has been influential among academics, governments and policy analysts, as well as in popular discourse, creating a deterministic (and seemingly causal) link between resource scarcity and conflict (Perreault & Valdivia, 2010). An energy crisis of limits on the other hand, concerns the environmental and climatic changes that are triggered through the use – and thus seemingly paradoxically to the scarcity debate, the abundance – of fossil fuels, most notably in the context of global warming and its effects on extreme weather, diminished drinking water supplies, and rising sea levels (McCarthy, 2015).

However, energy is not only *in* crisis in a capitalist system; through its socio-ecological costs and the structural reproduction of socio-economic inequalities, (Big E) energy can also be framed *as* crisis, creating and perpetuating geographies of deprivation, destruction, and displacement (Lohmann, 2015; McCarthy, 2015; Platform, 2013; Prashad, 2007). In this context, the geography of oil has especially been linked to massive environmental destruction, exclusion, and violence – the so-called 'resource curse' (Bridge & Le Billon, 2013; Peluso & Watts, 2001; Smith & Trowell, 2014; Watts, 2004; Worth, 2012). Watts (2001) for example considers petroleum both as ecological violence on the biophysical world, through its extraction and the impacts its consumption has, as well as a form of social violence, manifesting itself in the criminality and degeneracy largely associated with 'petro-wealth'. The literature around the resource curse is similar to the debate on environmental scarcity in the way that it connects the frequency of armed conflict and civil war to the economic dependence on export revenues in countries with large quantities of energy resources. However, in doing so, this literature mostly overlooks the complexities of social and resource conflicts in particular places (see also: Perreault & Valdivia, 2010). While activists, academics and civil society actors clearly tie violence and destruction to the oil industry in particular, the production of space of other types of energy would not necessarily be less damaging under current capitalist social relations (see also: Watts, 2004). This argument also applies to the creation of 'green jobs', which are often cited as positive results of renewable energy transitions. However, if precarious working conditions, temporary contracts and low wages remain the same in a new renewable energy sector, green jobs would not equal good jobs as long as capitalist social relations govern the (green) workplace. In this context, McCarthy (2015) explores the production of space required in a (theoretical) large-scale transition to renewable energy sources under current capitalist social relations. Such a transition would necessarily include massive rural land appropriation, or land grabs, the commodification and enclosure of previously common resources (such as wind, waves, and sunlight), as well as the continued displacement and dispossession of some of the most vulnerable peoples. One actually existing example of such a politics of mass appropriation was the mega project DESERTEC (2003-2009), which proposed to 'harness' solar power in the African desert, mostly the Sahara, to realise a large-scale renewable energy project (Hamouchene, 2015; see also: Prashad, 2007).

While proposals for a transition to renewable energy sources to replace fossil fuels are among the 'answers' to energy crises of both scarcity and limits, a mere change of the energy mix does not constitute a fix to the second dimension of energy-as-crisis (see:

McCarthy, 2015; The Corner House, 2013). Instead, both activists and academics writing from a left-green position have argued that the social relations underlying capitalism and economic growth are ultimately contributing to the framing of energy as crisis, thus tying the issue of energy to broader political and economic struggles. While renewable energies are preferable to fossil fuels for a number of reasons, a switch to large-scale renewable sources of energy without a change in the organisational and ownership structures around energy generation and infrastructure, would merely reproduce both capitalist social relations and capitalist socionatures, i.e. the commodification and exploitation of the natural environment for capitalist profit (Smith, 1984). Further to the need to overcome capitalist logics of growth, any transition to renewable energies requires a constructive engagement with issues of access, ownership and decision-making to overcome the embedded inequalities of energy. As Bridge (2015) notes, while framings of energy security aim to preserve the status quo through building on resilience, policy which is instead framed around energy access or energy poverty highlights the necessary social logics of allocation and exclusion. More generally, framings of energy both in and as crisis often reduce debates around energy to resource conflicts rather than tackle the wider socio-political and economic issues energy is entangled with.

Here, the notion of struggle, and especially energy struggle, is more useful to the conceptualisation of counter politics and contestation in the energy sector. Human geography has produced much insightful and critical theory on the relation between space, the political and contestation (see: Massey, 2005; Featherstone, 2013; Smith, 2015). However, there is little work that links debates on contestation and struggle to the energy sector. Even as conflicts have been studied in relation to energy, for example the opposition to new energy developments, the notion of struggle is still under-researched. To illustrate, 'conflict' can refer to a variety of disputes such as protest against windfarm installation in Wales (Mason & Milbourne, 2014, see also: Walker *et al*, 2010) or conflicting local discourses on open cast coal mining (Milbourne & Mason, 2017). However, the 'contestation' of, and (sometimes) resulting 'struggle' over, energy projects refers to critical, socio-political expressions and practices through which material resource conflicts are linked to broader social, political and economic questions of ownership and organisation (see: Paul, 2018a). Drawing on the German concept of *Energiekämpfe*[1], Müller (2013: 7) defines energy struggles as "social struggles over the control of, the access to, and pricing of energy [which] have always been, and increasingly are, at the core

[1] English: energy struggles

of social conflicts around distribution and ecology, modes of production and modes of life".

In a recently published paper on the entanglements of history, space and struggle in the German *Energiewende*[2] (Paul, 2018a), I argue that a sensitivity to both the rich histories of struggle and the spatial politics of contemporary energy transition projects allows for more differentiated accounts of energy transitions as dynamic, multi-actor, and more than eco-technical processes (see also: Bridge *et al*, 2013). In the paper, I (Paul, 2018a) utilise the case of the German *Energiewende* to illustrate how past energy struggles, such as the Anti-Nuclear Movement, have informed current imaginings around energy and are repeatedly invoked to organise and narrate present and future counter politics in the energy sector (Müller, 2011; Becker *et al*, 2015). As such, the notion of energy struggle has transformative potential, and challenges, rather than subscribes to, more defeatist terminology such as the more prevalent crisis framings.

Energy struggles can range from small, localised actions to large-scale resistances, most prominently the Anti-Nuclear Movement or Bolivia's gas war, both of which will be discussed in more depth in the next subsection. While mainly arising in the context of energy resources, such as oil, gas or nuclear, energy struggles are not confined to the materiality of the resource in question and also address broader social, political and economic issues, for example the ownership and organisation of energy systems, decision-making structures over energy generation and infrastructure, or the prioritisation of expert and technical knowledges (see also: Paul, 2018a; b). Conceptualising resistances, contestation and counter politics in the energy sector as 'energy struggles' thus allows more room for the various agencies at play (Becker *et al*, 2015; Paul, 2018a).

An Overview of Contestation in the Energy Sector

Over the past couple of decades, awareness of the impact and implication of energy production and consumption on the environment, climate change and human health has increased considerably. Whereas energy was traditionally an issue of environmentalist movements which variously campaigned for renewables, greater energy efficiency, or

[2] English: energy transition. This is the literal translation, however, the term *Energiewende* has a much richer meaning in German, which I explore in the Geoforum paper (Paul, 2018a).

against nuclear energies, the breadth of social movements and popular protest has moved beyond 'green politics' to include a broad spectrum of left, indigenous, democratic, labour, and peasant actors (and demands) alongside sections of civil society and the middle classes in the global North. One relatively young and recent movement engaged in fossil fuel resistance is the climate justice movement, which actively contests official climate politics through a critical interrogation of power relations, the construction of solidarities, as well as through highlighting the links between climate change and the capitalist economy and crisis. The movement articulates its concerns through a series of demands, including the use of alternative energies over continued fossil fuel extraction, a move away from imperatives of growth and consumerism (especially in the developed world), a call for food sovereignty and localised food production as opposed to large scale agriculture, recognition of the ecological debt of the global North to the peoples of the global South, and a reassertion of the rights of indigenous and forest people, as well as more participation in climate change politics overall (Chatterton, Featherstone & Routledge, 2013). The climate justice movement is a relevant example to emerging trade union environmentalism as it has (attempted to) actively include workers in past struggles, and demonstrates an awareness of, and commitment to, the complex agencies of contestations in the energy sector.

Another recent social movement that engages with energy politics and processes of neoliberalisation in the energy sector is the Divestment Movement, which started to gain prominence in 2012 (Howard, 2015). Much like earlier, similar campaigns against tobacco, the Divestment Movement encompasses a range of recent campaigns across the world which approach public institutions including universities, parliaments and local authorities, faith groups, and pension or other public funds with the demand to terminate their financial investments and shares in carbon intensive sectors (Griffin *et al*, 2015; Younger & Ratcliffe, 2014). The Divestment Movement opposes the neoliberalisation of energy in two significant ways, firstly, it counteracts the large-scale financialisation and marketisation of fossil fuels through reducing the monetary value. Secondly, it raises awareness of and creates a critical dialogue over the "moral and political viability of continually obtaining investment income from holdings of fossil fuel companies" (Ritchie & Dawlatabadi, 2014: 132), thus undermining the social, cultural and moral acceptability of continued fossil fuel extraction and consumption through active stigmatisation (Ansar *et al*, 2013; see also: Massey, 2013). The movement's double-contestation of neoliberalism, on a limited monetary or material level, as well as on a much more powerful common sense level (Hall D *et al*, 2013), makes it an interesting new development among social movements and

public protest around energy and carbon, and sets an interesting precedent for a critical engagement with the connection (and resulting delegitimisation) of neoliberalism and energy.

Internationally, Bolivia provides a valuable example of social, popular and civil society movement and mobilisation in the (fossil-based) energy sector (Haarstad, 2009a; b; Perreault, 2006; Perreault & Valdivia, 2010). As explored earlier on in this chapter, the Bolivian gas war of 2003 rejected the neoliberalisation of the country's gas resources. Opposition to the decision to export the country's gas through a Chilean port, which was made jointly by the government and foreign corporations, led to a broad coalition between indigenous peoples, neighbourhood organisations in key cities, the major labour union, left-wing activists and campesinos. The coalition movement utilised strike action, road blockages, protest marches and hunger strikes to signal their resistance, not only to Chilean exports but also increasingly to the privatisation of their natural (and, more importantly, national) resources (Perreault, 2006). In the context of both Bolivia and similar struggles in Ecuador, Perreault and Valdivia (2010) stress that resource struggles are always about more than 'just' the resource, linking hydrocarbon conflicts in Bolivia and Ecuador to anti-colonial imaginaries of the nation, citizenship and development which acted as a unifying bracket for a range of movements and actors. Equally, both examples are also linked through their respective experiences of colonialism that later led to uneven processes of neoliberalism in both countries which was mainly based on continued resource exploitation by a Western, corporate and neoliberal elite (Prashad, 2007; 2012). The recent social movements as well as trade union efforts in Latin America, especially Bolivia and Ecuador, had considerable ramifications for the political landscapes of both countries, creating new political spaces and opportunities, as well as setting the scene for the 'post-neoliberal' governments of Evo Morales and Rafael Correa in Bolivia and Ecuador respectively. In this context, Bolivia's gas war is a large-scale example of an energy struggle, in which an energy resource, in this case gas, is contested and linked to wider socio-political resistances including opposition to foreign capital and long-standing grievances over territorial conflicts with neighbouring Chile. However, as noted earlier, a few years on it becomes clear that Morales's government did not deliver on its counter-neoliberal and promised socio-environmental objectives, instead intensifying extractivism (Andreucci, 2017: Andreucci & Radhuber, 2017).

A final example of social movements and popular protest in the energy sector are remunicipalisation efforts, especially in Germany, France and the United Kingdom

(Cumbers & Becker, 2018; Hall D *et al*, 2013; Wainwright, 2014). The often negative experiences of the European-wide wave of privatisations of public services, which began in the 1980s, has increasingly led to efforts and campaigns to transfer various public services, including energy utilities, back to public control and ownership (Cumbers, 2012b; Hall D *et al*, 2013). The privatisation of public services across Europe began with the liberalisation of the telecommunication sector, which, as Halmer and Hauenschild (2014) note, has, as a lone example largely achieved the privatisation objectives of increased access and decreased consumer costs. Privatisation also spread to large infrastructural sectors, including air traffic, postal services and the energy sector, and subsequently, to regional and municipal government services which were often not able to deliver the promises of reduced cost or increased market competition, instead resulting in worsening quality provision and private monopolies. Citizen-consumers across Europe are increasingly dissatisfied with the price and quality of privatised service provision and are demanding a change of ownership back to the public through the process of remunicipalisation (Hall D *et al*, 2009; Wainwright, 2014; Kishimoto & Petitjean, 2017). Remunicipalisations can take multiple forms, for example an administrative body reassuming tasks, a start-up of municipal enterprises, an increased public share in private-public partnerships, as well as taking utilities back under full municipal ownership from private suppliers or setting up a new municipal utility (Halmer & Hauenschild, 2014). Remunicipalisation presents an interesting and unique challenge to processes of neoliberalisation in cities and regions (Cumbers & Becker, 2018). Remunicipalisation and its implications for alternative and public ownership and democratic accountability will be discussed in more depth in the next section of this chapter, which mainly reflects on the potential of energy democracy to unite the various struggles I introduced in this section. While the Divestment Movement, the resource wars in Bolivia and Ecuador, and recent global remunicipalisation initiatives all have different contexts and specific local histories, they all open up a debate on how energy options and resource are tied to broader social, economic and political structures. Energy democracy has the potential to offer a common narrative for these struggles and the multiple actors and stakeholder involved.

Coalition Building in the Energy Sector: Movement Building for Energy Democracy

While some commentators from the left-green spectrum celebrate peak oil scenarios as capitalism's natural demise once its dependence on fossil fuels can no longer be fulfilled,

most critical commentators reject an unreflexive adaptation of scarcity logics, and highlight the much more complicated relations between energy, capitalism and society (Bridge, 2011; McCarthy, 2015). In this context, possible coalition building in the energy sector needs to address and meditate the diverse and often antagonistic relations, interests and demands of and between different actors involved. However, many commentators also recognise the emergence of political possibilities for progressive coalition building and activism in the current critical momentum towards extreme and Big E-Energy (Huber, 2009a; Lohmann, 2013; 2015; McCarthy, 2015; Spronk, 2012; The Corner House, 2013). In the context of necessary and almost inevitable energy transitions, the left can and should build alliances between social movements, workers and trade unions, peasant and indigenous organisations, that creatively engage with the organisation of social life, to intervene in the enclosure of commons and to redraw the energy landscape in terms of more democratic and socially just ownership and decision-making (Huber, 2009a; Lohmann, 2015; The Corner House, 2013). As McCarthy (2015: 2499) succinctly notes, "a thorough overhaul of the energy system could and should provide multiple openings for rethinking, rather than merely reproducing, our political-economic system", which provides space for demands of multiple actors. Energy democracy narratives can for example create a platform for various radical and emancipatory demands, including demands for more public participation in decision-making processes around energy issues, new public ownership models for energy generation and infrastructure, a just transition for workers, the commitment to a complete phasing out of fossil fuels, as well as social aspects around energy access and pricing (Hess, 2018; Burke & Stephens, 2017). By drawing on the findings from the first two sections, this section looks at the opportunities and obstacles for coalition building in the energy sector, and ultimately explores energy democracy as a unifying thread for different (and potentially antagonistic) movements and interests.

Exchanging Ideas and Framing Demands

A first consideration for effective coalition building in the energy sector is the framing and articulations of demands and discourses. Building on Ernesto Laclau's (2007) analysis of populist reason, 'demands' are understood as more or less ambiguous articulations which undergo a transition from being 'simple' requests to becoming claims that unite different actors in an equivalential chain. To exemplify, social demands develop from specific grievances which result from certain pressures on a population, such as growing inequality between rich and poor in competitive capitalist societies. The grievances are first voiced in

the form of requests for assistance from marginalised parts of a population towards their government (or the institutional system), for example around better social security provision for low-income families. Laclau argues that if this 'request-demand' is then directly addressed by the government, the demand remains in its request-stage. However, if the request-demand remains unfulfilled and the need for social security intensifies, further request-demands might be articulated by the same, or equally marginalised groups of actors, such as requests towards better or more affordable housing, employment, education or health care provision. Over time, request-demands accumulate and begin to assume an equivalential relation which Laclau refers to as an 'equivalential chain' (Laclau, 2007). This chain of unsatisfied demands begins to 'look and feel' like a common claim rather than isolated requests; the transition from request-demands towards 'claim-demands' has begun. At the same time, the different actors voicing particular requests based on specific grievances have become connected and united through a common claim-demand; in this particular example the claim demand is based around the fairer distribution of wealth. As discussed previously, framing demands around strong environmental messages for energy transition and climate change adaptation might deter especially fossil-based workers from participating in labour environmentalist coalitions as they worry about their livelihoods in a post-carbon economy. However, framing demands instead around reclaiming and restructuring energy systems and stressing opportunities for worker involvement in finding alternative solutions, such as with the Lucas Plan (Wainwright & Elliott, 1982), might enable such coalitions. The Trade Unions for Energy Democracy network for example utilises a narrative centred around workers' agency in creating a post-carbon economy through calling for unions to "Resist! Reclaim! Restructure!" as part of their energy democracy agenda (e.g. Sweeney, 2013).

To further the importance of effectively framing and developing demands, the Water Movement also provides valuable insights. In struggles against the privatisation and increasing neoliberalisation of natural resource, water was variously framed as 'commons', 'human right' or 'commodity'. In a critical discussion of the effectiveness of these demands, Bakker (2007) concludes that the framing of water as a 'human right' to contest both planned and existing privatisations has serious limitations as it conflates human rights with property rights, does not foreclose the market involvement it attempts to critique, and ultimately has an anthropocentric and individualistic outlook which impedes effective coalition building. Framing natural resource struggles such as water as 'commons', on the other hand, provides activists with a rhetoric that is not only directly antagonistic to the 'commodity' status of the resource, but also allows a disruption of rigid (and artificial)

binaries, such as public/private, state/corporation, citizen/customer, and ultimately enables spatially-specific forms of collective action that challenge established ownership and decision-making structures in favour of alternative models. Similarly, Spronk (2012) draws on experiences of forming broad coalitions around water commons to propose an emancipatory energy movement building. Acknowledging the different political economies around water and fossil fuels, Spronk (2012) nevertheless argues that in both cases the struggle for commons makes for a more radical demand than the human rights framing, and at the same time opens up spaces to relate and connect with other struggles using commons and democratic frames, such as decolonisation and food sovereignty. These experiences from the water movement reinforce Laclau's (2007) arguments around creating demands which are ultimately able to create equivalential relations between actors. In the case of the water movement, demands for water 'commons' makes for such an equivalential frame. However, as Bakker (2007: 446) notes, commons frames are not unproblematic themselves and "can be exclusive and regressive, as well as inclusive and progressive" (see also: McCarthy, 2005). In the context of the emergent movement towards an alternative energy future, recent demands around the democratisation of societal relations with energy resources, generation and infrastructure, that is, energy democracy framings, have strong potential to become an equivalential frame in coalitions.

One aspect neither Laclau (2007) nor the wider literature on (populist) demands or left politics discusses in much depth is the spatialisation of demands and equivalential chains, or in other words, how demands exist, move and develop across space, and how equivalential relations, or chains, can be formed and (differently) utilised by actors in their particular spatial contexts. Here, the organisation Trade Unions for Energy Democracy provides a good example to show how demands around a more equitable, just and ecologically sustainable energy future have become part of a wider equivalential chain of actors, networks and organisations working towards energy democracy and public ownership more broadly, which will also be discussed in more depth in the relevant empirical chapters. For now, it is worth highlighting how equivalential relations have been built and developed in three key ways by TUED, firstly, within its network of unions who are utilising the TUED narrative and analysis in their particular spatial and political contexts, secondly, in TUED's immediate partnerships, that is the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation and the Global Labour Institute, and thirdly, in TUED's wider network, including policy and research organisations such as the Transnational Institute as well as labour advocacy groups.

Next to an analysis of how demands are framed, it is thus also important to consider how ideas and concepts are exchanged and mobilised in different settings and by different actors and networks. Policy transfer literature provides insight on how counter-hegemonic debates on energy democracy and public ownership have been utilised and transferred by various actors across left and green movements. Remaining an important reference point to this day, Dolowitz and Marsh's (1996) conceptual review of relevant literatures provides a basic definition of 'policy transfer' as a "process in which knowledge about policies, administrative arrangements, institutions etc. in one time and/ or place is used in the development of policies, administrative arrangements and institutions in another time and/ or place" (Dolowitz & Marsh, 1996: 344). To counteract the overtly national focus of the discipline at the time, Diane Stone (2004; 2012) proposed to consider (non-state) international actors, including individuals, networks, and/ or organisations, and to focus on the transnational transfer and advocacy networks that are established by these actors (see also: Keck & Sikkink, 1999). Drawing on literature from International Relations studies, Stone (2004) also stresses the lack of awareness to 'soft' forms of transfer happening through transnational advocacy networks, such as the spread of norms and knowledge which influence public opinion and policy agendas, as orthodox policy studies are more prone to focus on tangible transfers of codified knowledge, policy instruments, or legislative and regulatory practices. An example of 'soft' transnational policy transfer is the energy democracy movement, which is only just emerging as an academic field of its own right and has previously mainly been discussed in the 'grey' literatures of social movement organisations and networks.

More recently, geographers have begun to engage with policy transfer literatures by introducing interdisciplinary debates around assemblage, mobility and mutation (McCann & Ward, 2013; Peck & Theodore, 2010; see also: Stone, 2012). Largely critical of orthodox approaches defining policy transfers as rational and bilateral transactions (e.g. Dolowitz & Marsh, 1996; Marsh & Evans, 2012), Peck and Theodore (2010) make an argument for critical policy studies which understand processes of policy formation as both socially constructed as well as highly political and imbued with power relations. Next to emphasising changing power relations, policies themselves mutate in processes of policy reproduction: "even the 'same' policies tend to be associated with different effects in different places, by virtue of their embeddedness in, and interactions with, local economic, social and institutional environments" (Peck & Theodore, 2010: 173), which also applies and relates to the discussion of neoliberalism in the first chapter. Additionally, there is potential to think about the diverse actors who are involved in policy transfer processes. In

line with Stone (2004; 2012), geographical policy transfer literature criticises that actors are often overly categorised (cf. Dolowitz & Marsh, 1996) and little attention is paid to their own agencies and complexities as members of various expert, epistemic and practice communities (McCann & Ward, 2013; Stone, 2012; see also: Dunlop, 2009). Established policy transfer literatures also often omit or ignore those transfers of ideas and demands that work counter-hegemonically, including counter politics from both the left and right of the political spectrum.

In the context of this thesis, especially the work that organisations like TUED, the Transnational Institute, and Rosa Luxemburg Foundation do is interesting from the perspective of linking policy transfer and equivalential relations literatures and practice. The organisations often refer to each other's work while bringing in new case studies and examples on energy democracy, public ownership and global commons as well as broader left-progressive ideas which in turn facilitate new discussions within and beyond the movement. As such, Laclau's (2007) theorisation around equivalential relations is again relevant. However, understanding the spatialities of these chains of equivalence is of particular interest. In the above example, the three organisations are from three different national contexts with different fields of expertise and activism – TUED as a global network of labour organisations based in the US, TNI as a progressive research and advocacy organisation based in the Netherlands, and RLS as a left political foundation with an educational mission based in Germany but operating offices in many world regions. While their relations are decidedly more complex than this brief summary allows, it becomes clear that the spatial dimension of their work and the particular socio-spatial contexts in which they operate is at the heart of an analysis of their coalition and movement building. Interestingly, too, through energy democracy and public ownership discourses, the organisations are united in their 'counter-hegemonic' status, i.e. challenging the status quo both within their individual contexts as well as in their shared work towards more sustainable and equitable energy futures. How exactly these 'counter-hegemonic' chains of equivalence around demands such as energy democracy and public ownership are mobilised and transferred across space as well as in different policy or political contexts remains under researched and will be discussed in more depth in the empirical chapters of this thesis.

Successful negotiations around ownership, decision-making and power relations provide much potential for effective energy coalition building, a process which actively constructs energy as a social relation instead of an 'objective' or technical resource (Huber, 2009a). Here, especially experiences from recent movements, including the Water Movement as well as the Norwegian Model Municipality Experiment, provide valuable insights into alternative ownership models in the energy sector. As Wainwright (2014) and Wahl (2011) observe, the experiment by municipal sector union Fagforbundet in Norway showed great success because workers', residents' and service users' ideas and demands were followed up in the 'tripartite' operational framework of the model, which includes politicians, managers and workers' representatives. In order to generate input from residents and service users, municipal workers get time off their jobs to work as 'change guides' in their communities as well as in other departments to encourage skill and experience sharing, which importantly also signals to workers that their experience and input is valued beyond their immediate workplace. Similar potential for increased ownership, decision-making and participation can be found in remunicipalisation, or 'insourcing', campaigns, in which previously privatised services are brought back under public control as for example happening in the United Kingdom, Germany and France, as well as the United States (Hall D, 2012; Hall D *et al*, 2013; Wainwright, 2014). However, it should be noted that not all remunicipalisation campaigns are supported by unions, in fact, German campaigns such as the Berlin remunicipalisation initiative (explored below), are often opposed to public ownership. Nevertheless, a vital aspect of municipality projects, remunicipalisations and insourcing is that they not only challenge privatisation and other processes of neoliberalisation but also, and possibly more importantly, offer and experiment with *alternatives* to neoliberal, competitive and profit-driven organisational and ownership models (Wainwright, 2014; Cumbers, 2012b; Wahl, 2011). In the case of Germany, where close to 350 energy grids or utilities have been remunicipalised in the last two decades (Terzic, 2017), there has been a longstanding process of reimagining energy social relations, as also explored in my paper in Geoforum (Paul, 2018a, see also: Moss *et al*, 2014). As part of the German *Energiewende* project, a range of alternative ownership practices have been developed and realised, including newly established municipal utilities, energy cooperatives, eco-villages, and the remunicipalisation of energy infrastructure (Kunze & Becker, 2014; Becker *et al*, 2015; Moss *et al*, 2014). The emergence of alternative energy models and practices, in Germany and elsewhere, directly challenges the 'givens' of corporate energy ownership and the lack of democratic control

over and participation in energy politics by the public as well as workers in the energy systems.

A recent remunicipalisation campaign around energy and grid management in Berlin, Germany also provides a good case example, though one not without tensions as mentioned above. The campaign *Berliner Energietisch* or Berlin Energy Roundtable actively politicised energy resources, and effectively placed their contestations of processes of neoliberalisation within a locally specific setting (Becker *et al*, 2015; Beveridge *et al*, 2014). Founded in 2011, the Berlin Energy Roundtable is an alliance of 56 small and larger civil society groups, including social, cultural and environmental groups and movements, activists and political organisations, as well as church groups (Berliner Energietisch, WWWa). While representing a broad coalition, the campaign faced resistance from the city government including the social democratic party as well as relevant union bodies (Cumbers & Becker, 2018). Initial meetings of three progressive NGOs (attac Berlin, Bürgerbegehren Klimaschutz and PowerShift) were held in 2010, which gave the campaign just over two years to prepare for the referendum which took place in November 2013. While the referendum yielded an 83% vote for the proposed municipal utility project of the Berlin Energy Roundtable, the referendum was lost due to narrowly missing the approval quorum of 25% of the electorate (Berliner Energietisch, WWWb). Interestingly, the Roundtable campaign utilised an energy democracy framework and demanded more democratic control, social justice and ecological sustainability in the city's energy system which were popular demands with the Berlin electorate (Paul, 2018a). Similar to the Berlin Energy Roundtable, the organisation Trade Unions for Energy Democracy (TUED) draws attention to the necessary shift in power relations from corporations on the one hand, and to workers, communities and the broader public on the other (Sweeney, 2013; Sweeney *et al*, 2015; Wahl, 2015; 2016). To achieve this shift, TUED proposes a three-step plan to "*resist* the agenda of fossil fuel corporations, *reclaim* parts of the energy economy that have been marketized to the public sphere, *restructure* the global energy system" (Sweeney, 2013: ii, emphasis in original).

Building Movement for Energy Democracy

Energy democracy is a rather recent concept and was first shared through the grey literature of organisations such as the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation (Müller, 2011; Kunze & Becker, 2014; Weis *et al*, 2015), TUED (Sweeney, 2013; Sweeney *et al*, 2015), Platform

(2013), and the Municipal Services Project (Spronk, 2012). The actual term 'energy democracy' was first used in the context of the climate justice movement; the activist group *gegenstrom* defines it as "a concept capable of integrating energy and climate struggles [which] is grounded in the basic understanding that the decisions that shape our lives should be established jointly and without regard to the principle of profit" (cited in: Kunze & Becker, 2014: 8). However, in its roots, energy democracy has been part of socio-ecological and environmental thinking for decades, and its contemporary expression builds on the aims of varied socio-historical struggles including the anti-nuclear and pacifist movements beginning in the 1960s (Burke & Stephens, 2017; for a discussion of the German context, see: Paul, 2018a). Energy democracy, as concept, movement and imaginary, thus advocates for more socially just, democratically accountable and ecologically sustainable energy futures which break with the dominant capitalist status quo as well as with neoliberal processes of deregulation, privatisation and marketisation. As such, energy democracy also provides a counter-narrative and alternative discourse to other possible but less emancipatory energy futures (Paul, 2018a, b). These could for example include future scenarios of worsening inequality, where energy conservation is addressed through higher pricing which leads to less privileged social groups being further marginalised, or manifest in form of a 'greening' of the status quo, where an eco-technical transition to renewable energy is achieved within existing profit-driven and centralised organisational and ownership structures.

With some notable exceptions (see: Angel, 2017; Becker & Naumann, 2017), energy democracy is only just beginning to receive more attention in human geographical literature, and agendas for research and practice are still in need of concretisation and further conceptualisation (Burke & Stephens, 2017; Hess, 2018; see also: Paul, 2018a). As a concept, energy democracy has the potential to unite actors that already hold a stake on the issue of energy, carbon, and broader natural resource governance. This definition spans a wide range of actors, including workers in the energy sector, trade unions, social and green movements, indigenous communities, church groups, and, to a degree, civil society through the increasing attention that energy issues and fossil fuels receive through popular protest, such as the People's Climate March, anti-fracking campaigns and other anti-extreme extraction protests, for example against mountain top removal, Arctic drilling or Tar Sands. Energy democracy furthermore has the potential to unite a range of related struggles through its emphasis on democracy and its demands towards more inclusive participation in decision-making, thereby potentially including otherwise marginalised and disenfranchised groups of actors such as indigenous communities whose territorial and

sovereign claims have historically been ignored (e.g. Hoogeveen, 2015). While energy democracy has been identified as a suitable shared demand in Laclau's sense by actors from the left-green spectrum (Paul, 2018a) as well as in policy literatures (Burke & Stephens, 2017; Hess, 2018), for successful and broad-based energy democracy coalitions to be realised the concept is still in need of clearer conceptualisation and definition.

In this context, two recent papers by Hess (2018) and Burke and Stephens (2017) provide important insights into both the demands around, and policy development potential of, energy democracy agendas. Both papers reinforce the previous analysis that energy democracy provides a common frame for broad-based coalitions (Laclau, 2007), and needs strong demands around issues of ownership and participation for successful movement building. Research by Hess (2018) reflects on energy democracy through a multi-coalition perspective, highlighting the considerable (and often pre-emptive) 'regime resistance' from incumbent actors, such as energy utilities and providers as well as corporations along the fossil fuel supply chain and their conservative political allies, that emerging coalitions have to contend with. This is especially an issue in the United States but also Europe, where the socio-economic and socio-ecological inequalities are subtler than for example in the Global South where peoples are actively and violently displaced and ecosystems destroyed for energy extraction. Hess (2018) explores what role energy coalitions can play in overcoming regime resistances and in this context particularly examines energy democracy demands as possible 'bridges'. Reflecting on the politics of energy transition movements, he (2018) identifies two approaches to movement building: 'sunsetting' and 'sunrising'. The former is an opposition movement to specific industries and socio-technical systems (such as fossil capitalism), while the latter is more focussed on bringing about alternative systems (such as public ownership). Hess (*ibid.*) furthermore points to the issue of major division within coalitions which are not clear on the (narrower) goal of socio-technical change versus the broader goal of societal change. This can often be seen in left-green coalition attempts where more environmentally-minded actors are content with achieving narrower sociotechnical goals within existing systems of power while left actors push for broader changes to the status quo. However, the climate justice movement, as well as the energy democracy movement, has recently begun to challenge these divisions by actively linking both goals through popular slogans like "system change not climate change".

Hess's (2018) paper also introduces the concept of 'bridge brokers', which describes individuals who enable coalition building by bringing others together as well as having a "split habitus that allow[s] them to translate across coalition divisions" (Hess,

2018: 179; see also: Mayer, 2009). In this context, a similar concept used in human geographical literature offers useful insights on the actors facilitating and supporting broad-based coalitions as they for example exist in the energy democracy movement. Discussed variously as charismatic leaders (Allen, 2003; Featherstone, 2008), key activists, visionaries (Vail & Hollands, 2013), or movement imagineers (Routledge & Cumbers, 2009a), there is an acknowledgement in social science research that even democratically organised and horizontally networked groups often have key figures who conduct the necessary organisational work for a movement, network or coalition to exist, maintain itself and develop. However, as Featherstone (2008: 162) highlights, it is important not to simply treat 'charisma' as a given or innate attribute of certain individuals, but instead as a complex characteristic and relational achievement. Drawing on John Allen's (2003) *Lost Geographies of Power* and Allen's use of Weber's (1968) theory on charisma as the recognition of authority, Featherstone (2008) explores how charismatic leadership is inherently fragile and dependent on sustained relations with other movement actors in order to be effective. Similarly, Routledge and Cumbers (2009a: 65-67) highlight how imagineers are integral to the working of coalitions though translating the key concept or imaginary of the movement to its members and negotiating shared meanings (see also: della Porta *et al*, 2006, Routledge *et al*, 2013). As such, imagineers can be understood as the 'connective tissue' and hold a relational role in networks, coalitions and organisations that might be marked by difference such as TUED which unites unions from across a wide range of sectors and countries. The concept of imagineers is also important to the earlier discussion of the spatialisation and transfer of demands in equivalential chains as the process is far from abstract and instead obviously tied to particular actors 'bridging' organisations. Bringing together Routledge *et al*'s (2013) concept of imagineers to extend the idea of Hess's 'bridge brokers' in the energy democracy movement will thus also be a useful frame to study the spatialisation of demands such as energy democracy and public ownership.

Returning to the discussion of recent energy democracy literatures, recent research by Burke and Stephens (2017) critically assesses, and attempts to clarify, the core aims and policy instruments of the young energy democracy movement. The authors observe that energy democracy is well-placed to achieve "deep socio-technical change" by "explicitly linking moves to both destabilize incumbent systems and support new alternatives" (2017: 36), which the authors refer to as a process of 'creative disruption' similar to Hess's (2018) analysis of sunsetting and sunrising. Following a conceptual review of a range of energy democracy initiatives and demands, the authors identify 26 statements of intended outcome

as well as 22 policy instruments (Burke & Stephens, 2017), which they group and display within Trade Unions for Energy Democracy's framework "Resist! Reclaim! Restructure!" (see: Sweeney, 2013). I have reproduced Burke and Stephens's (2017: 38) table of intended outcomes in full in Table 2.1 below as it provides a useful overview of existing demands. In terms of policy goals, the authors identify four policy categories which are both already used in initiatives and have a potential to advance energy democracy demands further, including policies addressing regulatory context, measures of financial inclusion, economic institutions, and new energy institutions. Out of the 22 policy measures, Burke and Stephens (2017) highlight economic and new energy institutions such as renewable energy cooperatives, remunicipalisation, and green public service banks as the core instruments which correspond to all three policy goals (resist, reclaim and restructure), again stressing the importance of ownership and participation for effective coalition building as discussed previously.

As evidenced above, energy democracy has begun a transformation from a term mainly used in small to medium sized social movements and activist campaigns to a term and movement in its own right, which is increasingly recognised and discussed in wider academic as well as popular debates. This process is ongoing, and both the term 'energy democracy' and its associated demands require further conceptualisation and definition. While certain features of energy democracy are discussed across a wider range of literatures, such as its appeal to broad-based coalitions (Angel, 2017; Hess, 2018; Paul, 2018), the *specifics* of planned policy and planning impacts, such as for the restructuring of the energy sector, are yet to be refined. Nevertheless, energy democracy has become a recognised term in academic debates and has opened up a new field of research for geographers and social scientists interested in social movements, democratisation, and energy politics.

Table 2.1. Overview of the intended outcomes of the three key energy democracy demands resist, reclaim and restructure as presented by Burke and Stephens (2017: 38).

Goals of energy democracy	Intended outcomes
Resist the dominant energy agenda	• Fossil fuels remain in the ground. • Expansion of fossil fuel infrastructure and development of extreme forms of energy and extraction stops. • Land grapping for large-scale renewables ceases. • Fossil fuel subsidies end. • Privatization and marketization of energy sector halts. • Undermining the climate protection stops. • The most dependent on fossil fuels industries protected, especially labor. • Public resources shift away from fossil fuels. • Public legitimacy of the fossil fuel industry is reduced. • New social alliances are created (e.g. unions, environmental groups, municipalities).
Reclaim the energy sector	• Energy corporations democratize and localize. • Social/public control of energy production and consumption normalizes. • Part of the energy sector that have been privatized or marketized return to public control. • Principles of public interest within and democratic control over publicly-owned energy companies is restored. • New energy companies, ownership models and financial systems under social and public control develop.
Restructure the energy sector	• Energy sector moves away from the profit motive. • Energy access and assets are shared broadly and community and wealth-building is supported. • Energy systems are governed as commons. • Community power and capacity to control energy systems strengthen. • Emphasis shifts from growth to well-being, sufficiency and environmental quality. • Economic and political power is decentralized and distributed. • Capacity for energy planning increases. • Geopolitics of energy supports global cooperation and peace over competition and conflict. • Solidarity, inclusion and open, democratic participation advances. • Workers, low-income communities and communities of color hold central positions within energy systems. • An understanding of the energy sector as interdependent within the natural environment pervades.

Conclusion

This chapter has discussed how trade union and labour organisations are participating in environmental debates today and has explored how workers have reacted to broader resistances and struggles against climate change, fossil fuels and carbon-based production. I have drawn on the critical analysis of neoliberalism provided in the first chapter and have argued that in recent years the labour movement had to adjust its political strategies from contesting neoliberal globalisation and its impacts on workers, to resisting the logics of a continuing impact of neoliberal capitalism upon nature and environments, and, by extension, workplaces as well as workers' lives and wider communities. However, labour's response to these new challenges remains anchored in strategies developed in the 1990s, especially social dialogue and social partnership approaches. The commitment to social dialogue has resulted in the continuing support for regime-aligned environmental politics, such as the 'green growth' agenda of the European Union, and has thus largely foreclosed the opportunity of establishing robust alternatives to the status quo. Through examining past examples of trade union involvement in contestations in the energy sector I have unfolded the problematic relationship that the labour and trade union movements have with environmentalism; even when labour participates in 'energy struggles', its contestations seldom challenge carbon-based production and do not normally address broader questions of system change away from (petro)capitalism.

The chapter has also foregrounded a discussion of energy struggles as a useful term to the conceptualisation of counter politics and contestation in the energy sector. There is little work to date that links debates on contestation and struggle to the energy sector specifically, and I argue that the notion of struggle contributes an important awareness of the socio-spatial, historical and political contexts of contestations (Paul, 2018a). This in turn facilitates a wider discussion on both the agencies of the actors involved and on how processes of neoliberalisation are contested in the energy sector. My discussion of contestations in the energy sector further highlighted that various struggles and movements, such as the climate justice and Divestment movements as well as remunicipalisation campaigns, open up a debate on how energy options and resource are always tied to broader social, economic and political structures. In this context I also introduced energy democracy as a common narrative for many of these struggles and the multiple actors and stakeholders involved. Finally, I explored the coalition building potential of energy democracy as a new concept, movement and imaginary in the energy sector. Drawing on Laclau's (2007) theory of populist reason and policy transfer

literatures, I explored how counter-hegemonic networks and actors frame and negotiate common demands. The cited literatures do not discuss the spatialities of equivalential chains in much depth, which I highlighted with reference to the TUED network's use of energy democracy demands and which I will return to in the empirical chapters. Finally, I also reflected on the importance of both ownership claims and sustained participation in decision-making structures for effective coalition building around energy democracy.

Taken together, the two literature chapters provide the basis for a critical examination of how trade unions contest the neoliberalisation of nature and energy through engaging in emerging energy democracy debates. The review of relevant literatures has created a basis to address the aims and objectives of the thesis through empirical research. The first objective of this thesis, to situate the emergence of labour environmentalism in the context of neoliberalism, has been set up in both the first and second chapter where I have provided context on neoliberalism's (uneven) trajectory, discussed 'energy' as a social construct and power relation, as well as explored the contested relationship between labour and neoliberalism. The second objective, to better conceptualise labour's use of energy democracy narratives to resist, reclaim and restructure the energy sector, has been set up through my review of literature on labour environmentalism as well as on the contested politics of climate change in this chapter. Thirdly, the objective to explore the spatialities of energy democracy demands and their equivalential relations in the labour movement and beyond, has been set up through my discussion of Laclau's (2007) theory of populist demands and his related discussion of equivalential chains. And finally, the objective to better conceive trade union attempts to build movement and coalitions for energy democracy, has been set up through my discussion the emerging body of academic literature on the energy democracy. These conceptual discussions provide the foundation for the operationalisation of my thesis research, as outlined in the following methodology chapter, through which I will be able to discuss the reviewed literatures in the context of my empirics and research findings. In order to capture the networked nature of TUED, I have developed a research design which includes documentary analysis of the network's produced materials, qualitative, semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders in the TUED network, and an ethnographic component which allowed me to follow the network at a critical time of its development and engage in meetings, events and key discussions.

CHAPTER 3
RESEARCHING TRADE UNION ENVIRONMENTALISM

The first two chapters of this thesis have set up the conceptual and theoretical foundation to interrogate how trade unions and labour organisations engage with energy, climate change, and environmental questions. I have discussed the impact of the neoliberalisation of nature and energy on environments, workers and communities and have highlighted the contested politics around climate change as well as emerging energy democracy narratives. Building on these discussions, this third chapter offers a methodological framework to study trade union environmentalist coalitions for energy democracy through researching the global labour network Trade Unions for Energy Democracy (TUED), which has emerged as a key case study. In this chapter I introduce the research design for the case study, which draws inspiration from labour geographies and critical ethnography to allow me to follow the TUED network at a critical moment of establishing itself.

In order to capture the emergence, evolution and development of trade union environmentalist coalitions for energy democracy, my research design integrates multiple actors and sites in a sustained case study of the global labour network TUED. At the time of writing (May 2019), the network represents a cross-sectoral coalition of 71 trade union bodies from 24 countries as well as 10 allied policy, academic and advocacy organisations. As an organisation TUED unites trade unionism with professional-academic and political educational bodies through partnerships with the Murphy Institute at City University of New York's (CUNY) School of Labor and Urban Studies (formerly known as the Joseph S. Murphy Institute for Worker Education and Labor Studies), the Global Labour Institute (GLI), a not-for-profit network that promotes international solidarity through bringing together trade unions, labour organisations and wider civil society movements, and the Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung's New York Office (RLS-NYC), an internationally operating non-profit civic education institution affiliated with Germany's DIE LINKE (Left Party). While TUED is a global network of unions and labour groups, its organisational base is in New York City, USA, where Sean Sweeney, John Treat and Irene Shen work on the project alongside staff from RLS-NYC and CUNY, as well as in-kind support from other individuals (e.g. from GLI or TUED member unions) during events and meetings. The role of certain 'key' individuals for the project's success will be discussed in more depth later on in this chapter, as well as in the remainder of this thesis, by drawing on social

movement literatures around ‘imagineers’ (Routledge & Cumbers, 2009a; Routledge *et al*, 2013).

As TUED is a translocally organised network which spans multiple actors and sites, I required a research design flexible enough to follow the network as it develops in order to capture a sense of how trade union environmentalism both challenges variegated processes of neoliberalism and engages with energy democracy demands in different spaces and contexts. I thus chose a qualitative, multi-method case study research design to follow the TUED network, which includes documentary analysis of policy reports and informational materials produced by the organisation, semi-structured in-depth interviews with key individuals, and a multi-sited ethnographic component involving participant observation and informal interviewing at a series of TUED events between 2016 and early 2018 in Barnsley, UK, New York City, United States of America, Geneva, Switzerland, and London, UK.

This chapter begins with a brief overview of the theoretical background that informs fieldwork. In the first section I also introduce my philosophical framework and discuss the three methodological considerations central to this project, including a critical realist ontology, a (weak) constructivist epistemology, as well as my particular positionality as a researcher in a trade union setting. The second section introduces the chosen research design and methods for the project. The research design consists of a qualitative, multi-method case study which utilises documentary analysis, semi-structured interviews and an ethnographic component, which includes event documentation, participant observation and informal interviewing. In the third section, I discuss some of the challenges and issues encountered in the field and explore how they have in turn shaped my thinking about the research project. In this context, I also reflect in more depth on two such issues, the role of ‘imagineers’ in ‘young’ coalitions as well as a more personal reflection on the mediation of assumptions around my researcher positionality and negotiations of the researcher self during ethnographic work. Finally, I provide an overview of data analysis undertaken.

Researching Trade Union Environmentalism

In order to research and understand trade union environmentalist coalitions for energy democracy and their various entanglements with places, structures and movements,

coalitions must be understood as relational and evolving. The chosen case study, TUED, represents and unites multiple actors, sites, demands and dynamics. As such, TUED calls for an integrated, multi-method case study design which is informed by theoretical approaches from a range of disciplines, including labour and trade union studies, social movement research and activism studies. Within these larger bodies of literature, there are already some (theoretical) approaches to coalition or alliance building which prove useful to the conceptualisation of my research into energy democracy coalitions. This section particularly discusses recent calls in labour geographies to pay better attention to workers' diverse and at times antagonistic identities (Featherstone & Griffin, 2016; Ince *et al*, 2015), as well as the uses of multi-sited, critical ethnography (Davies, 2009; Chari & Donner, 2010) in developing a research design. In social science research, the research process is closely tied up with theories of the nature of social reality, knowledge and 'truth(s)'. As such, the research design and the methods deployed in practice are always embedded in a wider philosophical framework of how the world can be known, studied and represented. After providing a brief overview over the theoretical background, I will reflect on three related methodological considerations in this section. The first consideration is ontological, concerned with what exists in the world. The second consideration is epistemological, concerned with our ability to know, study and represent the world and that which happens within it. The third consideration is concerned with positionality and reflexivity, the interplay between being in, knowing, studying and representing the world and other social actors as a positioned and subjective researcher.

Labour Geographies and Critical Ethnography

Labour studies, especially in human geography, have built on earlier critical and radical endeavours to bring into focus workers' agencies and actions in geographies of the economy, capitalism, and production (Herod, 1998; 2001). Over the last decades, labour geographers have been committed to exploring the spatialities of workers' struggles through portraying "labour as an active maker of social space" (Lier, 2007: 821). Reflections within the sub-discipline have also led to calls to broaden conceptualisations of the labour movement beyond its 'traditional' institutions, such as trade unions, and the official voices within them (Lier, 2007; Tufts & Savage, 2009). Expanding labour geographical analyses beyond organised labour is especially relevant in the context of the discussed developments towards community or social movement unionism as well as regarding the increasingly transnational and translocal outlook of both neoliberal

capitalism and the organisational practices within the labour movement in response to it (Wills, 2001; Wills & Simms, 2004). Calls have also been made to better appreciate, emphasise and unpack workers' diverse, complex and at times antagonistic identities when engaging with labour struggles, as identities are not necessarily aligned or, in fact, 'progressive' (Featherstone & Griffin, 2016; Ince *et al*, 2015; Tufts & Savage, 2009). In this context, Featherstone and Griffin (2016: 389) also argue for an engagement with power relations, which helps to recognise "whose agency and experience is foregrounded in labour struggle and on what terms" (for a recent discussion of conceptualising agency in labour geography, see also: Strauss, 2018). The study of TUED, as a diverse network of actors from the labour and trade union movements, requires a labour geographical approach which is attentive to workers' variegated and potentially conflicting agencies as well as the processes of connection (and disconnection) that emerge between actors and spaces.

I also draw theoretical inspiration from the field of critical ethnography. As a methodological response to earlier, often more functional and static ethnographic approaches within social movement studies, critical ethnography offers an alternative to the study of translocal and networked forms of social movements and activist practices (Davies, 2009). Instead of promoting the traditional ethnographic approach of prolonged immersion into a community or place, critical ethnography advocates a relational understanding of multiple sites, practices, and actors to emphasise processes of both connection and disconnection, or disruption (Davies, 2009). Critical ethnography requires a continuous engagement with the contradictions and complexities of the situation at hand (Chari & Donner, 2010). This practice of continuous critical and reflexive engagement with the 'object' of study goes beyond "witnessing events", practices or phenomena as is commonplace in 'traditional' ethnographic approaches, "to actively question the reproduction of social inequality" (Bourgois, 2006, cited in Chari & Donner, 2010: 77). A critical ethnographic approach furthermore seeks to not just describe events, ideas or injustices but also transcend existing inequalities through emancipatory ethnographic work and research practice (Chari & Donner, 2010), in line with a political commitment to research. Beyond 'merely' documenting the network's work, my research with TUED aims to facilitate discussions beyond academia as well, and can contribute to existing policy and activist work on energy democracy, public ownership, anti-neoliberal campaigns, and the democratisation of the economy.

While traditional ethnographic approaches have their merits, they are not

necessarily well equipped to follow the workings of contemporary (social or trade union) movement activity, often lacking an appreciation for the relational nature of activism as well as the processes that link scales and other spatial containers in complicated ways. Equally, there is a tendency in social movement research to categorise movements as either horizontal, such as non-hierarchical models of organising, for example used in the Occupy protests (e.g. Halvorsen, 2012), or vertical, such as formal trade union organising that still follows fairly clear cut hierarchies and protocols (Routledge & Cumbers, 2009). While these distinctions can be helpful to interrogate formal power relations, many forms of activism and organising informally transcend such dualisms.

To address a lack of relationality, Davies (2009: 20) argues for "an ethnography that avoids macro- and micro-thinking about contemporary politics, instead aiming for an analysis that attempts to grapple with the networks and systems of power that operate across contemporary society". Following Featherstone's definition of relationality as the "productive geographies of connection forged through political activity" (2010: 88), a critical ethnographic approach utilises the concept of relationality to explore the processes that generate both connection and disconnection through the negotiation of diverse political demands and trajectories between interconnected spaces and sites. I thus propose a critical ethnographic approach towards the coalition- and movement-building practised by TUED, which can offer valuable insights into the processes of connection and disruption of organising, and can uncover the complex and dynamic relations between actors and places. This critical ethnography needs to take into account the varied and complex identities of workers and the at times antagonistic identities and agencies in the labour and trade union movement more broadly, and within the diverse TUED coalition more specifically (Strauss, 2019; Lier, 2007).

Critical Realism and Relationality

Understanding and theorising what exists in the world and how we can know the world has been variously attempted across natural and social science disciplines. Geography, too, has seen passionate debates over philosophical and methodological approaches to knowledge and representation, which was especially evident in the paradigmatic shifts within disciplinary geography in the 20th century (Livingstone, 1992). One such shift was based on a critique of overly positivist approaches that had dominated knowledge-making in geography (and other social sciences) since the 1950s. Beginning in the 1970s, the so-

called ‘critical turn’ challenged the strict empiricism of earlier paradigms (Barnes, 2009) and instead advocated for a stronger commitment to social theory, social justice, social change, and emancipatory praxis. The impacts of critical thought within human geography have been significant and have influenced this research project. Beginning with a renewed commitment to dissent in radical and Marxist geographies, the critical turn also facilitated geography’s humanistic turn and opened up the discipline to feminist, postcolonial, queer, and poststructuralist theories and methodologies which are now deeply rooted in geographical research practice (Blomley, 2009; Livingstone, 1992). A framework that has attempted to bridge the extremes of positivism and interpretivism in the social sciences, yet has also clearly distanced itself from the supposedly value-neutral and theory-free observations inherent to positivist approaches, is critical realism (Aitken & Valentine, 2014; Hoggart, Lees & Davies, 2002).

At a basic level, critical realism contends that the world exists independent of our knowledge and meaning-making of it (Kitchin & Tate, 2000). To illustrate this point, sociologist Andrew Sayer (2000) gives the simple example of the flat Earth model and argues, that while the growing acceptance of the spherical model in popular discourse certainly altered people’s perceptions of the(ir) world, the perceptive shift of living on a globe rather than a flat plane was not actually accompanied by a change of the shape of the world itself (which continues to exist independent of our experiences of it). While the study of *social* worlds is undeniably more complicated, critical realists nevertheless argue that knowledge and meaning-making by social scientists ‘construes’ rather than constructs the world (Aitken & Valentine, 2014; Sayer, 2000). Social worlds are necessarily (socially) constructed and thus, by definition, exist through different types of (past and present) knowledges and experiences. However, critical realism distinguishes between the world, which can never fully be known, and our experiences of it. In this context, critical realism distinguishes between “the real, the actual and the empirical” (Sayer, 2000: 11). The ‘real’ denotes all that exists, including both natural and social objects, structures and generative mechanisms, the ‘actual’ refers to what happens when the ‘real’ realises its potential, and the ‘empirical’ describes what we experience of the ‘real’ and the ‘actual’ (Bassett & Gregory, 2009). Crucially, Sayer’s (2000: 12) theoretical distinction of the real, actual and empirical accentuates “the possibility that powers may exist unexercised, and hence that what has happened or been known to have happened does not exhaust what could happen or have happened”. Critical realism thus encourages social explanations which appreciate the unknown and offers ontological depth beyond ‘observable’ patterns and variables.

Critical realist ontologies allow for the world to be understood holistically, which means that the social and the natural are understood as interlinked rather than dichotomous while permitting a combination of a material dimension of the social *alongside* a hermeneutic, interpretative understanding of social phenomena. As Hoggart *et al* (2002: 21) observe: "This is the attraction of critical realism. Especially for those for whom positivism is anathema, realism offers an interpretative vehicle that does not assume 'reality' is unique to each individual". Critical realism highlights the inherent messiness of social worlds and the resulting relationality of actors, institutions, practices and space, as "the past and other places (now absent) are present in the here and now" (Sayer, 2000: 16, quoting Stones, 1996; see also: Massey, 2005). To research the case study TUED, an acknowledgement of relationality alongside an emphasis on the inherent complexity and plurality of social realities is fundamental. Any acknowledgement of the plurality of realities is, however, based on the assumption that while experiences and identities can be multiple and complex, they are not necessarily epistemologically superior to structures and generative mechanisms that might exist beyond social actors' felt experiences (Sayer, 2000). While critical realists maintain that there is only one reality that can never fully be known, they also allow the possibility of multiple interpretations of this reality through social actors within social worlds, a 'weak' social constructivist epistemology (Hoggart *et al*, 2002; Sayer, 2000). This 'weaker' realistic constructivism in which both discourse and reality have an interactive relationship, offers an epistemological approach that unites the powerful role of social interests and agencies in shaping discourses while recognising the "constraining role of objective material realities" (Bassett & Gregory, 2009: 623). For the case study TUED, this means that individual actors' agencies, realities and experiences with energy democracy will be understood in the context of broader, structural limitations such as constraining national and supranational legislation on climate change action or rigid organisational structures in the trade union movement which can foreclose progressive politics on environmental issues.

Positionality, Power Relations and Ethics in Trade Union Research

This thesis is written from the assumption that all research is political and suffused with power relations between a variety of actors, including the researcher, participants, gatekeepers, the case study organisations, the researchers' funding body, the university and broader research community, and the wider public (Hoggart *et al*, 2002; Rose, 1997). Beyond that, some research, especially in the social sciences, has a more explicitly critical

or radical political outlook and is committed to questions of social justice and social change as well as emancipatory research practice. Both labour geographies and social movement or activism studies tend to have critically reflexive methodologies, and thus, a certain 'performative potential' (Herod, 2001; Lier, 2007). The performative potential of research refers to issues that critical and radical research addresses and challenges, including the uncovering of structural inequalities, making silenced voices heard, or providing conceptual frameworks and comprehensive resources to activists, which can later contribute to the implementation of policies or laws. This performative potential of critically reflexive and radical research can also challenge broader fatalistic discourses, examples relating to my research are for example around the decline of the labour movement or the post-political condition (see for example: Chatterton *et al*, 2013; Lier, 2007; Cumbers *et al*, 2008) as well as the construction of the inevitability of 'larger-than-life' processes such as capitalism or climate change. However, it is in the interest of transparency and openness that the researcher discloses their political, situated and ethical entanglements to their participants, readership and the wider public (Herbert, 2000). Additionally, alongside calls for more openly critical, anti-colonial and anti-racist research practices, various authors from within and beyond geography have more recently called for a reflexivity that goes beyond the positionality of the researcher to critically reflect on wider social and political structures and a commitment to *changing* and not just describing the status quo (Chari & Donner, 2010).

Some aspects of the position of the project and researcher are more easily disclosed than others, and are either publicly available, such as the university affiliation of the researcher (in my case, the University of Glasgow, Scotland), or clearly definable, such as the funding status of the project. This project is fully funded through an Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) studentship via the "Environment, Climate Change and Energy" pathway of the ESRC's Doctoral Training Centre in Scotland, the Scottish Graduate School of Social Science. The pathway has a clear interdisciplinary outlook which is part of the ESRC's broader research agenda alongside the more recent commitment to, and importance of, ESRC-funded research having 'impact' beyond the academy (Bryman, 2012). Other, relatively straight-forward and definable aspects of my position as a researcher include a declaration of facts about my person, for example, that I am a young, white, highly educated, female researcher and a German national having lived in Scotland and studied at esteemed British higher education institutions for almost a decade. Moreover, my academic and personal history show a clear left-leaning political affiliation, and both sympathy and solidarity with trade union, social and environmental

justice activism. In the multi-sited political research context of TUED I have been mediating different inside and outside roles, as a young female in the male-dominated academic field of energy politics as well as in a (still) masculinist trade union culture, as a German, with roots in Scotland, researching abroad in the United States of America and Switzerland, as a 'leftie' within left circles and labour politics.

However, some aspects of positionality and resulting power relations are not as easily listed or disclosed, as both the researcher's (and the project's) identity are plural, partial, and unstable (Crang, 2002; Haraway, 1991). In situated research practice, most researchers necessarily need to negotiate or alter their positionality at one point or another. These instabilities of position, while not intended as fraudulent or deceptive, might happen during negotiations of access with gatekeepers, or negotiations of sameness (and difference) with participants in interview or ethnographic settings (Bryman, 2012; Valentine, 2002). During my research with TUED, such negotiations of the 'researcher self' have taken place at various points during the project, including during negotiations of access, as well as during fieldwork in interview and ethnographic settings. Access negotiations with gatekeepers are political processes in which a mediation of assumptions around the researchers' self, their intent with the research, the nature of their project, as well as a potential "research bargain" takes place (Bryman, 2012). With the aim to 'give back' to TUED and as a form of appreciation for the access given to me, I offered to undertake research for TUED as appropriate and needed, and also offered assistance during periods of ethnographic immersion. This mainly included more 'mundane' organisational or administrative tasks such as welcoming and signing up participants or producing participant information materials for meetings. The material I produced for the Geneva Meeting can be found in Appendix A.

Social interactions with participants during interviews or ethnographic work are obviously subject to similar forms of negotiation of the researcher's and project's identities. In an interview setting, a researcher could for example be mediating assumptions of sameness through emphasising the political background and intent of the project to establish rapport with participants, while minimising mentions of their academic status to overcome difference. Next to the researcher, the project itself can be subject to 'instabilities'; Crang (2003) for example stresses the multitude of versions in which a research project can exist, including different versions given to funders, the university, an ethics committee, research participants and gatekeepers, as well as friends and colleagues. While a complete disclosure of the researcher's (and the project's) positionality is

impossible, a deliberative process of reflection and (re)negotiation within reflexive and situated research practice is vital to assure ethically and morally sound social science research (Chari & Donner, 2010; Hoggart *et al*, 2002: 204).

In this context, it should also be noted that some of the points of view I hold as a 'subjective researcher' are shared by my 'research subjects', in form of TUED, RLS-NYC and particular individuals, and vice versa. This for example includes a shared analysis based in the critique of neoliberal governance and its implications for the current climate crisis, and shared political sympathies for energy democracy and the public ownership of energy systems. However, while I believe that such sympathies should be declared to produce well-positioned and transparent work, as a researcher, I have similarly ensured that I maintain the critical distance necessary to produce an independent piece of academic research. Most importantly this has been undertaken by referencing wider debates in peer-reviewed academic literatures in relation to the materials produced by my case study organisations (also referred to as 'grey' literatures) and thus situating the discussed content within established academic discourses. I have furthermore made an effort in this chapter to highlight and explain how and why I have for example volunteered for the TUED network (in an effort to "give back" to research participants), as well as why I rely on direct quotes from TUED personnel mainly, rather than member union participants, which is related to wider questions of research ethics and consent. Finally, my critical analytical engagement with the content and style of direct quotations and ethnographic observations should eliminate potential 'self-reporting bias'.

The research project was designed in line with the British Economic and Social Research Council's Framework for Research Ethics and has been reviewed by the University of Glasgow's College of Science and Engineering Research Committee[3]. The interviews, which are of a political rather than sensitive or personal nature, help to gain in-depth insights into participants' experiences of energy democracy coalition building through questions around their activist engagement as well as overall involvement with energy politics. All participants were over the age of 18 and were provided with an information sheet written in plain language and a consent form prior to the interview to ensure informed consent (see Appendix B and Appendix C). Participants were also given time and opportunity to ask questions and have been given the contact details of the researcher, doctoral supervisors and ethics contact for further questions and queries. It was

[3] Date passed: 22/08/2016. Documents are available on request.

made clear to all participants that participation is entirely voluntary and can be withdrawn at any point during the research project. Even though this research project commenced before the implementation of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and UK Data Protection Act, which were formally enacted in May 2018, the project also complies with the principles set out by both pieces of legislation. Personal identifiable data that has been collected was subject to the consent given by participants and has been safely stored on password protected computers to which only I, the researcher, have access. All collected personal data will be securely destroyed at the end of the project.

Research Design and Methods

The research design of a project describes the framework within which theory, philosophy, methods and ultimately data come together coherently (Bryman, 2012; Hoggart *et al*, 2002). The previous section has already introduced the underlying theoretical and philosophical considerations of this research project, which utilises a multi-sited case study research design to investigate labour environmentalist coalition building around energy democracy demands. From a theoretical standpoint, similar cases of coalition and alliance building exploring geographical approaches to both labour and social movement studies have been reviewed. Furthermore, I have introduced critical realism as the philosophical framework in which the case study research is embedded. Both the theoretical context and philosophical framework influence the choice of research design and methods. As a meta-theory, critical realism does not prescribe specific methods or research practices and lends itself to both quantitative and qualitative enquiry (Sayer, 2000). The chosen qualitative case study research design aims to reach an in-depth understanding of how labour environmentalist energy democracy coalitions emerge and are maintained in the context of wider socio-political structures and generative mechanisms, which is facilitated by a critical realist ontology and (weak) constructionist epistemology.

I have chosen a qualitative, multi-method case study research design through which I hope to capture and emphasise the relationality and plurality of actors and agencies within the TUED coalition and through its partnership with the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation (RLS-NYC) and the Murphy Institute at CUNY. My chosen research methods, documentary analysis, interviews and an ethnographic component, are equally qualitative and intensive in nature, seeking out “substantial relations of connection” while “situat[ing] practices within wider contexts” (Sayer, 2000: 21-22). The research methods are inspired

by similar research on alliance or coalition building in both the labour movement literature (Lier & Stokke, 2006; Keenan, 2015; Wills, 2001), and the critical social movement and activism studies reviewed above (Davies & Featherstone, 2013). My use of methods is also inspired by similar projects in labour geography. In her account of two community unionism projects in the UK in the early 2000s, Wills (2001) for example utilised interviews with the project organisers, ethnographic research during meetings, and a questionnaire survey with activists. Similarly, Keenan's (2015) research into solidarity unionism as practiced by the North American branch of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) utilised a review of union literature alongside interviews with union organisers. My research builds on both of these approaches, uniting a review of materials produced by TUED with both an ethnographic component and in-depth semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders. A detailed overview of the use of the chosen methods can be found in the remainder of this section.

Moving from research design to operationalisation can sometimes be tricky and often requires a reassessment of the chosen design and methods. In this case, the operationalisation of my research proved fairly straightforward, Table 3.1 provides an overview of fieldwork activities and indicates which research methods were utilised in the field. I managed to gain access to the Trade Unions for Energy Democracy network in early 2016 and was able to build and sustain a research relationship with the organisation and key individuals in it. I first contacted Sean Sweeney, TUED's global coordinator, via email which was followed up by a conversation on Skype. Sean was interested in my work and invited me to an upcoming event in Barnsley, UK, run by the Global Labour Institute Manchester (GLI Manchester), one of TUED's project partners. The GLI Manchester event in Barnsley provided a scoping exercise for my project, which allowed me to meet Sean and other TUED network actors in person and to gain first insights into the workings of the coalition. The research design was ultimately also influenced by the type of access I managed to gain through Sean's interest in my project as well as the acceptance of the TUED unions during events and meetings. While I initially planned to do more interviews, I soon realised that the TUED network only has limited opportunities to meet in person to connect with each other and build movement towards energy democracy (see: chapter 6). Appreciating the access provided and the trust given to me, I did not want to co-opt the precious time the network actors have together by requesting interviews with them individually. While my use of methods remained the same, the 'weighting' of interviews (less than expected) and ethnographic work (more than expected) was thus also shaped by my improved understanding of the TUED networks operational logics and movement

needs. I ultimately 'only' conducted interviews with TUED coordinators, which were held outside of TUED movement meetings and events, and were thus not taking up important inter-personal networking opportunities for the unions in the network.

Following the scoping exercise in Barnsley, UK, in June 2016, I began a desk-based documentary analysis of informational materials, reports and newsletters produced and circulated by the TUED network, which was continued and updated as new reports and materials were published throughout the period of field work. On invitation from Trade Unions for Energy Democracy, I subsequently conducted fieldwork with the network in multiple locations between November 2016 and February 2018. These fieldwork activities consisted of a week-long pilot visit to New York City, USA in November 2016, observing the Climate Leadership Immersion event, which was followed by an intensive six week-long main field visit to New York City in March and April 2017. During this time, I conducted semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders and observed a further two events, the Long Island Conference and the Pocantico Retreat. Additionally, I also conducted two shorter field trips to attend, observe and document events in Geneva, Switzerland, in June 2017, as well as in London, UK, in February 2018. It should be noted that Table 3.1 utilises short titles for the events attended (e.g. "Long Island Conference" instead of "Advancing Progressive Labor's Agenda on Energy and Climate Change: A Discussion on Union Strategy and Policy in a Time of Resistance") to avoid overly lengthy sentences. These shorter titles were also used by participants, both in interviews as well as during and after the events, and will also be utilised throughout the empirical chapters. Table 3.2 provides a more detailed summary of events which were part of the ethnographic component, including the full title, date, place, and main organisers of events attended, observed and documented over the course of the project.

Table 3.1. Overview of fieldwork activities[4], in chronological order, and research methods deployed.

Place	*Type*	*Kind*	*Activities*[3]	*Research Methods*
Barnsley, UK	Scoping Exercise	Event	Summer School	Event Documentation
Glasgow, UK	Fieldwork	Desk-based research	Review of TUED Materials	Documentary Analysis
New York City, USA	Fieldwork	Pilot visit	Climate Leadership Immersion	Event Documentation, Participant Observation, Informal Interviews
		Main visit	Stakeholder Interviews	Semi-Structured Interviews
			Long Island Conference	Event Documentation, Participant Observation, Informal Interviews
			Pocantico Retreat	Event Documentation, Participant Observation, Informal Interviews
Geneva, Switzerland	Fieldwork	Event	Geneva Meeting	Event Documentation, Participant Observation, Informal Interviews
London, UK	Fieldwork	Event	London Meeting	Event Documentation, Participant Observation, Informal Interviews

[4] See: Table 3.2

Table 3.2. Detailed summary of events attended as part of the ethnographic component.

Name	*Full Title*	*Date*	*Place*	*Organisers*
Summer School	Global Labour Institute's International Summer School	4 – 8 July 2016	Northern College for Residential and Community Adult Education, Wentworth Castle, Barnsley, UK	Global Labour Institute (GLI)
Climate Leadership Immersion	Climate Leadership Immersion for Union Officers and Staff	30 November – 1 December 2016	City University of New York in New York City, USA	International Program for Labor, Climate and Environment (IPLCE) at City University of New York (CUNY)
Long Island Conference	Advancing Progressive Labor's Agenda on Energy and Climate Change: A Discussion on Union Strategy and Policy in a Time of Resistance	3 – 4 April 2017	Educational and Cultural Center of Local 3, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers in Cutchogue, Long Island, USA	TUED
Pocantico Retreat	TUED at 5 Years: Achievements, Priorities and New Directions: Strategic Retreat and Discussion	5 – 7 April 2017	Pocantico Center of the Rockefeller Brothers Fund in Tarrytown, New York, USA	TUED
Geneva Meeting	Reclaiming Power: The Struggle for Europe's Energy Future	14 – 15 June 2017	Université Ouvrière de Genève in Geneva, Switzerland	TUED Europe
London Meeting	Reclaiming the Power Sector to Public Ownership: Questions of Strategy and Implementation	14 February 2018	UNISON offices in London, UK	TUED

Documentary Analysis

In the social sciences, content-based documentary analysis is used for a variety of sources including historical and contemporary personal documents such as letters, journals and photographs, as well as 'official' documents, for example produced by organisations or the state. Additionally, media outputs in form of newspapers or magazines are often studied (Bryman, 2012; May, 2011). Documents can exist in actual or virtual (i.e. web-based) format. As for my research, an analysis of official documents and materials is usually undertaken to gain a better understanding of how a respective organisation represents and communicates its politics, ideas and ideologies to both its members and the 'outside world' (May, 2011). Documentary analysis for the proposed case study research thus includes official documents derived from TUED and RLS, which have been produced on, or related to, the topic of energy democracy and the existing coalition. My approach to documentary analysis consists of three interrelated stages or processes, including the systematic search, coordinated and comprehensive collection (or archiving), and subsequent review of resources and materials produced by the organisations. 'Materials' are broadly defined for the purpose of this project, and range from formal, publicly available or printed materials to more informal means of communication such as emails, subscription newsletters and bulletin news. Materials studied for TUED and RLS include websites, reports, newsletters, meeting minutes as well as 'promotional' video and audio content.

The process of gathering documents and materials was fairly straightforward, as most documents are available online and can be obtained freely and openly, i.e. they do not require a subscriptions or passwords. While online and freely accessible content removes financial barriers such as postage costs or travel to archives, the 'durability' of virtual documents can pose problems. Durability, in this context, refers to the (expected) time of the documents' existence. One issue with accessing materials and documents virtually over the internet is that websites, documents and newsletter often disappear, or links and URLs are faulty or insufficiently updated. This might be an issue for some of the documents discussed in this thesis, however, most of the materials, including the TUED Working Papers, are available via multiple alternative sources, such as different websites (from TUED as well as RLS), as well as in hardcopies as RLS publications. Hardcopies of RLS publications can be picked up at RLS offices or requested to be posted.

As part of the desk-based fieldwork, I began my documentary analysis with the TUED website and promotional materials, including visual and audio content, to gain a

better understanding of the network and its emergence, as will be discussed in more depth in the next chapter. The materials analysed as part of the documentary analysis varied in character, length, authorship as well as readership. The largest part of documentary analysis was ultimately taken up by the TUED Working Papers, which are reports that the network publishes regularly with assistance from RLS. The Working Papers are important for the TUED network and the wider policy discussions on energy democracy and public ownership along TUED's equivalential chain of partner organisations, such as the Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung, the Global Labour Institute and the Transnational Institute. The active and engaged way in which the Working Papers are used in the network will be introduced and discussed in more depth in the empirical chapters, especially chapter five. Other materials that were analysed were obtained during ethnographic fieldwork with the TUED network and include event documentation and related materials, some of which can be found in the appendices of the thesis (see e.g.: Appendices D, E, F, G).

Qualitative Interviews

Unstructured or semi-structured interviewing remains one of the most popular and widely employed methods in qualitative social science research (Bryman, 2012; Hoggart *et al*, 2002). Interviews are well suited to explore more complicated relationships or events and are often chosen to foreground participants' experiences rather than merely relying on the observations of the researcher (Crang, 2003; Hoggart *et al*, 2002). The structure of interviews can take many forms and interviewing can range from a structured, questionnaire style to semi-structured, theme-guided conversations and to unstructured, informal conversational encounters. Compared to unstructured interviews, which resemble conversations around more loosely defined research interests, semi-structured interviews are based on a list of predefined questions or fairly specific topic areas, called interview guides, which typically emerge from the review of relevant literature and the research aims and objectives (Bryman, 2012; Burgess, 1984). However, while predefined, interview guides in semi-structured interviews nevertheless give participants and researchers the flexibility to explore related and complimentary themes as well as further pursue issues that are important to the participant (Bryman, 2012). For the TUED case study, an 'advantage' of semi-structured interviews compared to unstructured interviews is that the interview guide provides some structure and grounds for comparison of how different social actors central to the coalition envision, realise and experience energy democracy coalition building. However, in ethnographic components unstructured, informal

interviews can also be advantageous, as they can alert researchers to questions, issues or themes that were not previously part of the research, provide a natural way of triangulating findings, and allow the researcher to engage in more depth with the events and interactions observed.

The project utilised two types of interviews, semi-structured 'expert' interviews as a main method as well as informal, unstructured interviews as part of the ethnographic component, which will be discussed in more depth in the next section. The two-part interview approach is informed by recent calls in labour geographies to extend representation in labour politics beyond the accounts of union officials, as it risks "ignoring nuances, tensions, connections and possibilities within labour agency" (Featherstone & Griffin, 2016: 385). While my use of semi-structured 'expert' interviews as a main method still emphasises the voices of more prominent actors within the coalition (though not union bosses), the informal interviews conducted during ethnographic fieldwork and event observation were intended to triangulate the knowledge gained in expert-style interviews and enquire into the workings of the coalition beyond the dominant narrative and from the viewpoint of coalition members. Both types of interviews addressed participants' experiences with energy, energy struggles and energy democracy as well as enquired into participants' experiences of coalition building around energy in practice. The in-depth nature of qualitative interviews allows an enquiry into the workings of the coalition from individuals' points of view, foregrounding the complex identities, agencies and actions of social actors (Crang, 2003; Hoggart *et al*, 2002).

As discussed above, I soon realised that the translocally-organised TUED network only has limited opportunities to meet in person and did not want to co-opt these important movement-building spaces, in form of events and meeting, by requesting individual interviews with TUED network actors. I thus 'only' conducted semi-structured interviews with six key stakeholders, five of whom are directly linked to TUED or RLS as coordinators or organisers of the network and one further actor from the vicinity of the TUED project who has long-standing experience of working with labour environmentalist projects. Sometimes called 'expert' interviews, semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders were chosen as a main research method to supplement and triangulate information available from documents, materials and policy reports. The six semi-structured interviews offered an in-depth understanding of how the project, partnerships and coalition emerged, evolved and develop. Interview participants were recruited with the help of a 'gate keeper', in this case the global coordinator for TUED, Sean Sweeney.

Sean's role was fundamental in assuring access to the events observed as part of the ethnographic component as well and gave legitimacy to my presence as a researcher throughout the project, which I will reflect on in more depth in the next section. All interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed, and qualitatively analysed as will be explained in more depth in the next section. Interviews were in-depth in nature and lasted, on average, one and a half hours. All interviews were conducted during the main fieldwork visit in New York City between March and April 2017 (see also: Table 3.1), and were conducted outside of the official TUED events and meetings so as to not disrupt the opportunities for unions to connect and mobilise.

The Ethnographic Component: Following the Network

Traditionally associated with the discipline of anthropology as well as the Chicago School of sociology, ethnographic research methods have increasingly found their way into other social science research, including human geography (Crang, 2002; Herbert, 2000). While more traditional anthropological approaches to ethnography and especially participant observation were characterised by critical distance, ethnography has become more interactionist and situated through the influences of the Chicago School as well as humanist geographies of the 1960s (Hoggart *et al*, 2002). However, even today, ethnography is often criticised for paying insufficient attention to the agency of social actors, which has led to increasing experimentation with participatory or action research designs in geography and beyond. In this context, Nigel Thrift (2000) famously called for researchers to be 'observant participants' rather than 'participant observers', an acknowledgement of the need for a more critical approach to ethnographic study which emphasises the agency and relationality of social actors. Critical ethnography is used to explore the taken for granted notions and processes that might not come up in an interview and aims to understand how particular social worlds are made meaningful by their members (Herbert, 2000). As Ley (1988; quoted in Herbert, 2000: 551) puts it, ethnographic research "'is concerned to make sense of the actions and intentions of people as knowledgeable agents; indeed, more properly it attempts to make sense of their making sense of the events and opportunities confronting them in everyday life'". In his call for ethnographic study in human geography, Herbert (2000) outlines three principles for sound ethnographic research which is always necessarily embodied and, in my case, also politically engaged: forthrightness, reflexivity, and modesty. Forthrightness refers to the importance to make visible the political nature of ones research to participants and the

public alike, reflexivity, or positionality, refers to an appreciation of the situatedness of the researcher and their knowledge production (as was explored above), while modesty is connected to claims of representation, reminding the researcher that any kind of research outcome can only ever be marginal and situated rather than absolute and objective (Herbert, 2000).

The ethnographic component utilised as part of the case study was designed to capture the multi-sited and multi-actor nature of TUED by "following the network" and to understand the practicalities of trade union environmentalist coalition building. My research profited from an ethnographic component in two important ways. Firstly, field impressions and participant observation at meetings, events, and during 'everyday' organisational practices were well suited to supplement findings from the documentary analysis and semi-structured interviews. An emphasis on "[d]oing rather than saying […] enables an insightful examination of any discrepancies between thoughts and deeds" (Herbert, 2000: 522, citing Eyles, 1988) and thus provided a good opportunity for a reflexive triangulation of research findings. To this end, field notes collected in a field journal, for example in form of impressions and snippets of conversation, were an invaluable part of the ethnographic component. While integral to participant observation, field notes have also accompanied all other stages of the research process and themselves became a document of continuous reflexive engagement with the research questions.

Secondly, in-depth event observation and 'mini' case studies of specific events such as the yearly Pocantico Retreat, the Long Island Conference and the meetings in Geneva and London (see Tables 3.1 and 3.2, above), allowed for more intensive immersions into the workings of the organisations-in-coalition, and facilitated a lived, relational understanding of the dynamics of coalition building in practice (Lier & Stokke, 2006). This type of 'micro-ethnography' (Bryman, 2012) encourages a deeper understanding of the meaning-making of actors within the coalition and explores processes of connection and disruption in coalition building through the observation of actions that might otherwise remain unexplained in interviews. In line with Thrift (2000), all ethnographic fieldwork conducted for this project included a degree of participation in the events I was observing. This was mainly realised through helping out with the planning or running of events as appropriate and necessary, taking part in group activities and discussions, and through conversations as well as informal, unplanned and unstructured interviews with organisers and participants, which I recorded in the form of fieldnotes. As discussed above, these were a way to negotiate the realisation of my research interests alongside recognising that

more in-depth, semi-structured interviews would take up valuable time for the movement actors to connect and mobilise.

In practical terms, my approach to ethnographic fieldwork was the least structured, which is partly due to the 'fluid' nature of ethnography (compared to pre-scheduled interviews or static documentary analysis), and partly due to the particular experience of ethnographic fieldwork with the TUED network as I also fulfilled 'other' participating roles (e.g. greeting participants), as described above (see also: Thrift, 2000). Ethnographic fieldwork was the most intense of my methods and required high degrees of organisation and attention throughout, from planning my travel and accommodation for events, preparing documents (see: Appendix A), participating in meetings, collecting additional materials, adequately record the events, conversations and relations through field notes, and finally to debriefing at home. As a full record of conversations is neither necessary nor desirable, I focussed instead on recording (in note-form) the essence of conversations or presentations in the field, and only noted down direct quotes when they stood out. I also noted down the less tangible forms of communication, such as the atmosphere in the room or participants' non-verbal reactions to debates and arguments. Finally, after the events had ended, I sat down with existing notes and other collected materials to 'debrief', which included clarifying, annotating and extending the written notes from memory, which will also be explained in the data analysis section.

Research in Practice: Reflections, Challenges, and Issues

As indicated above, the move from research design to operationalisation was largely successful in terms of the design and methods chosen prior to fieldwork. However, it is nevertheless worth highlighting some of the challenges and issues encountered, both anticipated and not, and to reflect on how these have in turn informed and shaped the project. The following reflections correspond with the methodology as a whole, as the research process prompted me to consider and review issues relating to aspects of theory, research design, research methods, and the practicalities of research. Through conducting my fieldwork, I (re)considered the role of charismatic individuals, which has led to a wider theoretical engagement with 'imagineers' for movement and coalition building in the conceptual and empirical chapters (Routledge & Cumbers, 2009a; Featherstone, 2008; also: Allen, 2003). This will be discussed in more depth below.

I have also had the chance to reflect back on my chosen research design, as I realised that some components, such as the documentary analysis, which was initially mainly supposed to provide background information, became increasingly important as a key resource and instrument through which to conceptualise the TUED network and its work. This becomes especially apparent in the empirical chapters as it has shaped my understanding of the broader imaginary and narrative of TUED. In terms of methods, a 'learning-by-doing' experience for the ethnographic component gave me a more in-depth, practice-based understanding and appreciation of ethnographic work as both method of triangulation as well as an intensive engagement with participants' realities and experiences. As with most fieldwork, I also encountered some practical issues relating to access and gaining trust, and the challenge of positionality-in-practice, or in other words, of separating the role of researcher, ally, activist, and human, especially as part of more intensive ethnographic work. The following subsections reflect on two of these issues in more depth, exploring the role of 'imagineers' for the workings of coalitions, and engaging with the difficulties of mediating and negotiating the role of researcher during different stages of conducting ethnographic work.

The Role of Imagineers

In a previous discussion of 'imagineers' (Routledge *et al*, 2013) I stressed that certain movement actors, also sometimes referred to as charismatic leaders (Featherstone, 2008; Allen, 2003) or bridge brokers (Hess, 2018), are integral to the working of coalitions though translating the key concept or imaginary of a movement to its members and negotiating shared meanings (see also: della Porta *et al*, 2006, Routledge & Cumbers, 2009a). I argued that imagineers can be understood as the 'connective tissue' and hold a relational role in networks, coalitions and organisations that might be marked by difference. This applies to TUED, as the network unites unions from across a wide range of sectors as well as countries and socio-political contexts. Within TUED, the individual who quickly emerged as a key actor and would fit the description of 'charismatic leader' is Sean Sweeney, global coordinator of TUED and founding member of the network. However, while Sean can be described as charismatic, the term 'imagineer' is better suited to Sean's role in the movement, though Featherstone's (2008: 162) argument around charisma as a relational achievement nevertheless applies. For Sean, this relational achievement spans a couple of decades and builds on his background of being a trade unionist, research student of left politics, labour movement scholar in the US, to an emerging environmental

awareness and first attempts at bringing environmental issues into the labour movement.

In this context, Hess's (2018) discussion of the importance of 'bridge brokers', who are individuals with a split habitus in two movements, is also relevant. As will be discussed in the next chapter, following decades of building both contacts and trust with unionists and labour and (to a lesser degree) environmentalist movement actors globally, Sean was able to organise the first labour environmentalist conference out of which the TUED network eventually constituted itself. However, Sean's 'bridge brokering' activities soon grew beyond 'merely' making connections between actors and he is now recognised as a leading 'imagineer' on energy democracy and public ownership in the TUED network and beyond (Routledge *et al*, 2013). In this context, Vail and Hollands's (2013) paper on 'cultural radicals' is also relevant. The paper follows Martin Murray, founder the Amber Film and Photography Collective, an egalitarian art and film collective in Northern England, who Vail and Hollands (2013) refer to as a 'visionary'. With the example of Martin and the Amber Collective, the authors explore forms of 'social skill', i.e. the ability of individuals to induce collective and collaborative action in social and radical movements (Vail & Hollands, 2013; see also: Fligstein, 2001). While obviously deeply contextual, 'social skill' is a useful term to reflect on Sean's role in TUED's counter-hegemonic movement building – from bridge broker to imagineer with social skills. As the movement is made up of other key individuals, many of whom can (now) be understood as imagineers in their own right (which will again be discussed in more depth in the empirical chapters) and with whom Sean has close working relation, Sean's role is thus both a conceptual and relational one in the network.

Positionality in Practice

While all fieldwork is necessarily governed by power relations, they are most obvious in fieldwork encounters that involve participants such as the semi-structured interviews and the ethnographic component. Positionality in practice begins with gaining access to the organisation, research participants and events, and includes the process and difficulty of gaining trust as an outsider in a union setting. Again, Sean Sweeney's role as the 'gatekeeper' was instrumental to gaining access to the network, its members and events. Drawing on the above section, Sean's role as a movement imagineer for TUED also importantly facilitated how I gained trust from other members of the network as Sean's trust in my project and presence as a researcher seemed to give my work legitimacy, even

as an ‘outsider’ to the trade union movement.

One of the main challenges I encountered while negotiating the role of researcher was, as expected, during ethnographic fieldwork, particularly during events which usually lasted for a couple of days such as the Long Island Conference and Pocantico Retreat. Both events lasted two and a half days with two overnight stays each and consisted of conference-style programmes during the day and more loosely defined sessions, socialising, as well as shared meals in the evenings. The observation and documentation of these events proved to be a highly valuable research experience, but while I could prepare myself for mediating my role as a researcher during the official parts of the events, negotiating my role as a researcher, movement ally and political person became more complex during evenings and socialising when participants would often share their personal views on the coalition or their work (as opposed to their view as a representative of a trade union or labour organisation), provided commentary on wider political developments, or shared personal stories about their families, friends and communities. These evenings and social encounters are important for the coherence of the network as they help build ‘thicker’ connection and trust between actors and allow for deeper conversation and interaction. As a researcher, however, I felt an unease of ‘using’ these spaces to further my research and, while aware of the inherent subjectivity of experience, attempted to prioritise ‘abstracted’ observations of these social times rather than analysing the particular situation as I did during the day-part of the meetings and events. However, experiencing these less formal spaces also helped me to better appreciate academic debates on the diverse and at times antagonistic agencies of ‘workers’ (which, ultimately, is also only one aspect of their identities) and how these shape and impact political organising on an inter-personal level (see e.g. Ince *et al*, 2015: Featherstone & Griffin, 2016).

Data Analysis

Unlike the approach of the ‘scientific method’, in which data collection and analysis are two separate phases of a research project, the analysis of materials and the data that was collected as part of this research, was more complexly interwoven in the research process and often informed further stages of data collection. This was especially the case with documentary analysis, but a generative approach also applies to some of the earlier ethnographic work as well as the interviews so that there was a degree of triangulation not just in methods used but also in the analysis of data. As the desk-based analysis of

documentary materials produced by TUED and RLS largely pre-dated the field-based research undertaken, the findings from the documentary analysis informed both the interview guides utilised in the semi-structured stakeholder interviews as well as the observations during the event documentation and ethnographic component. However, as more documents became available (either in form of newly published Working Papers, or as event documentation and informational materials during fieldwork), the documentary analysis was not confined to the 'preparatory' stages prior to fieldwork but became an ongoing source of analysis and discussion. The analysis of documents and materials followed an interpretative framework that was itself influenced by the review of literature and research during the first year of the PhD project, which has resulted in the conceptual reviews provided in the first and second chapter of this thesis. The documents were initially read, categorised and partially coded based on the review of literatures. During later stages of fieldwork and data analysis, I also often returned to the documents, especially the Working Papers, to re-engage with the content of both the standalone documents as well as their narrative arch as a collection and the development of arguments across the published materials.

The analysis of semi-structured interviews followed a fairly traditional approach for the social sciences (Bryman, 2012). Interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed, sent back to the interviewee to check, clarify or amend as needed, and subsequently coded and interpreted. The multiple stages and levels of engagement with the data – conducting the interviews, listening back, typing them out, reading and re-reading, coding, and interpreting – were a lengthy but invaluable process of becoming familiar with the text (Crang, 2002; Hoggart *et al*, 2002). During the analysis of the semi-structured interviews, and during the writing process that followed, I made the decision to use the interview participants' first names when referring to them in text after introducing them formally with their full name and position. This decision is based on my experience of fieldworking with the TUED network, where first names were commonly and widely used during meetings and events. The use of first names in this thesis thus feels more authentic in the process of writing about TUED. It also signals the participatory nature of relationships within the network as well as the comradeship and trust between members that facilitates TUEDs work, which will be discussed in more depth in the sixth chapter of this thesis.

Finally, much like the approach to ethnographic fieldwork described above, the analysis of ethnographic materials, text and data was the least structured compared to the analysis of documents and interviews. In line with my previously described integrated and

generative processes of triangulation I utilised the interpretative framework from the documentary analysis as well as the codes from interviews to first sort and categorise ethnographic data on a basic level. As noted above, I had annotated, clarified and extended (where necessary) fieldnotes immediately after the events. When it was time to analyse field data, I began by reading and re-reading these field notes and materials before writing up examples and linking them to arguments and discussions in the emerging empirical chapters. This process was multi-directional as I often returned to the 'loosely' coded and categorised ethnographic material during the process of writing and forming arguments.

Ultimately, the triangulated and combined analysis of materials and qualitative data collected during fieldwork has resulted in three empirical chapters. While some chapters draw more heavily on findings from documentary analysis (chapter five), quotes from semi-structured interviews (chapter four) or ethnographic materials (chapter six), the three empirical chapters are equally informed by findings from all methods and the knowledge and arguments derived cannot (and should not) be neatly divided. The empirical chapters resulting from data analysis broadly correspond with the four objectives identified, exploring the emergence of labour environmentalism in the context of neoliberalism, understanding labour's use of energy democracy narratives, and investigating how trade unions attempt to build movement and coalitions for energy democracy.

Conclusion

Social worlds are necessarily messy, dynamic, and contain a multitude of relations between actors, practices and places which need to be taken into account in progressive and politically-motivated social science research. The chosen case study, TUED, presents a translocally-organised network which operates within and beyond the labour movement through its partnerships with RLS and the Murphy Institute at CUNY. My approach seeks to bring together approaches from labour geography and social movement studies which allow me to effectively capture the multiple relations and generative processes within, between and beyond the multi-actor and multi-sited network (e.g. Lier, 2007: Ince *et al*, 2015). Next to the challenge of following a translocally organised network, actors within the coalition have multiple social, and at times antagonistic, identities which can result in complex relations of solidarity as well as possible challenges to coalition building (Featherstone, 2012). These particularities of the chosen case study have led me to design a qualitative multi-method case study research design which aims to capture and understand

how TUED's multi-actor and multi-sited coalitions attempts to build movement for energy democracy.

The resulting research project utilised documentary analysis of published materials, semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders of the network, and an ethnographic component consisting of event documentation, participant observation and informal interviews. In this chapter, I have explained how I approached and operationalised my chosen methods, and how I analysed the data gathered in a process of generative triangulation. Having previously reflected on issues around ethics and positionality of the researcher alongside relevant methodological and theoretical literatures (e.g. Crang, 2002; Valentine, 2002), I also reflected on the practicalities of research and explored and discussed my experiences in the field. In this context, I particularly discussed positionality in practice and the challenges of mediating the role of researcher versus political ally during periods of ethnographic research. I also explored the role of imagineers and highlighted how my fieldwork with TUED had led to a different understanding and appreciation of imagineers for (social) movement building and network dynamics (see e.g. Routledge *et al*, 2013).

CHAPTER 4
TRADE UNIONS FOR ENERGY DEMOCRACY: THE HISTORY AND CONTEXT OF THE NETWORK

While labour environmentalist ideas have a long history (Barca, 2014), and red-green thinkers, initiatives, and organisations have been doing important work since at least the mid-20th century, red-green arguments have never become mainstream in either the labour or the environmental movements. In their introduction to *Trade Unions in the Green Economy* (2013), David Uzzell and Nora Räthzel observe that both movements tend to construct nature as labour's 'Other' (see also: Barca, 2014). While the labour movement has engaged with nature in the past, especially through health and safety regulations, including taking strong stances against ground, water, and air pollution, nature in itself was never seen as an ally to workers (Uzzell & Räthzel, 2013: 2). This conceptual, ideological, and political separation of nature and labour has a long history and is rooted in the commodification of nature through capitalist value creation (Castree, 2010a; 2010b; Smith, 2008). However, with rising awareness around environmental and climate issues globally, and the increasing activism of the climate and environmental justice movements in the mid- to late 2000s, parts of the labour and trade union movement have (again) come to understand climate change and energy questions as deeply related to social justice, labour, and the production of life (Uzzell & Räthzel, 2013; Martín Murillo, 2013). Additionally, recent challenges against and within the labour movement itself, including anti-union legislation, dwindling membership numbers, and internal disagreements over wider societal issues beyond the workplace have prompted trade unions and labour organisations to reassess their strategies and priorities on a variety of issues including climate change.

This chapter introduces a recent example of a progressive labour environmentalist initiative, the global labour network "Trade Unions for Energy Democracy" (TUED). The chapter maps the evolution of TUED by introducing the network and reflecting on its context and history. TUED's emergence is contextualised within wider labour and climate politics of the early to mid-2000s, situating labour-environmentalist ideas in general, and TUED's emergence in particular, within the context of an initial global momentum for green growth. Soon after, however, the financial crisis of 2008 put a halt to green investments and exposed business-as-usual approaches to environmental and climate politics as insufficient. The chapter then turns to TUED's launch event and founding narrative, its relationships with its partner organisations, the Global Labour Institute, the

Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung, and the City University of New York who are introduced below, and the organisational and operational dynamics of the network. Finally, the chapter reflects on TUED's reach, influence and achievements over the past five years of its existence, especially highlighting the importance of the network as an alternative knowledge producer on climate and energy issues for the labour movement through exploring how unions in the network have variously utilised TUED materials and analysis from their own policy development to statements on current affairs.

The Evolution of Trade Unions for Energy Democracy

The labour network "Trade Unions for Energy Democracy" (TUED) is a global, multi-sector trade union initiative campaigning for the democratic control and ownership of energy resources, infrastructure and options as well as promoting an independent and internationalist trade union approach to energy transitions. The current composition of TUED and the unions taking part in the project will be addressed in more depth later on in this chapter. Launched in early 2013, TUED emerged out of a trade union roundtable event, which was held in New York City, USA, at the New York City District Council of Carpenters from 10-12 October 2012. The roundtable, titled "Energy Emergency: Developing Trade Union Strategies for a Global Transition", was guided by the discussion document "Resist! Reclaim! Restructure! Unions and the Struggle for Energy Democracy", which was prepared by Sean Sweeney (2012). Sean has been involved in TUED from the start, first initiating the roundtable meeting alongside his colleagues at the Global Labour Institute at Cornell University, and is now acting as TUED's global coordinator. The "Resist! Reclaim! Restructure!" narrative, which will be discussed in more depth in the next chapter, continues to inform TUED's work and provides a unifying bracket for the participating unions. The following sections set out the evolution of TUED to date, highlighting key individuals, partnerships, and events to eventually explore TUED's emergence, organisational structure, and achievements.

Key Individuals and Events

While TUED's organisational structure is fairly loose, and the agenda and direction of the project are decided by the unions in the network, the work of committed individuals is critical for the project's success. It is useful to highlight the personal backgrounds and

work of some key individuals and organisations in order to understand the context, thinking and politics out of which TUED emerged and through which it continues to operate. One such key individual is Sean, TUED's global coordinator, and director of the International Program for Labor, Climate and Environment (IPLCE) at the Murphy Institute at the City University of New York, where TUED currently has its institutional base. IPLCE was set up as a research and education hub for union policy development and alliance-building around energy and climate issues. Sean has a long history with the international labour movement, having been a youth officer and activist in the British Labour Party as well as having been involved in trade union politics and labour-union activism for almost four decades. His labour activism was initially firmly rooted in traditional British left politics, but he became increasingly aware of international trade union issues through his own experiences with globalisation and neoliberal capitalism in British factory contexts. This prompted Sean to complete a PhD on the changing ideological configurations within the international labour movement and its politics, before moving to the United States for work. Based in New York in the early 2000s, Sean first started engaging with environmental issues as part of his labour politics, even though he admits that these initial years of engagement with climate change and environmental issues were fairly uncritical:

> "So this is 2006. 2006 was also the launch of the Blue Green Alliance. And then you have the Al Gore movie, An Inconvenient Truth, which had a big effect on people, including me. It brought my attention to climate change that I had not really paid too much to. […] We [the Global Labor Institute at Cornell] organised what is *still* the largest labour and climate conference I think ever organised in the world, it was ten years ago next month, so May 7th [2007] in New York, the North American Labor Assembly on the Climate Crisis, I still have the poster in my apartment, it's nice! That was a year's work, but it was really then – that gave impetus the blue-green narrative. Which at the time I was pretty uncritical off, I thought, 'yeah, green jobs, why not?'." (Interview quote from Sean Sweeney, Global Coordinator of TUED, New York City, April 2017)

This initial engagement with climate change and energy, and the broader context of an emerging environmental awareness in wider society and left movements, led Sean to eventually become what Hess (2018) describes as a 'bridge broker', a person with ties to two disparate movements or narratives. As mentioned, more broadly, there was also a growing cultural and political awareness around issues of climate change and the

environment.

This ‘new’ awareness manifested itself in different ways. Firstly, there was an emergence of ‘climate justice’ discourses in international climate politics in the early 2000s, most notably during the COP13 in Bali in 2007. Climate justice discourses soon spread and were also significant during COP15 in Copenhagen in 2009, where climate justice (ultimately unsuccessfully) dominated the social movement mobilisations around the climate conference (Chatterton *et al*, 2013). Climate justice narratives also influenced the emerging energy democracy debates, as the term itself originated from the climate justice movement (Becker & Naumann, 2017). Secondly, there was a growing manifestation of blue-green narratives in the US and beyond, which brought together ‘blue’-collar workers and ‘green’ environmentalists in a new narrative for a green economy that aimed to move beyond the entrenched “jobs versus the environment” discourse (Vachon & Brecher, 2016). In this context, labour-environmentalist organisations such as the Blue Green Alliance (BGA) and the Labor Network for Sustainability (LN4S) were set up in the US, and some parts of the labour movement began to engage more seriously with climate change as a trade union policy issue (Snell & Fairbrother, 2010). Launched in 2006 by the United Steelworkers and the Sierra Club, the BGA is a strategic partnership of some of the largest labour unions and most influential environmental organisations in the US with the aim “to solve today’s environmental challenges in ways that create and maintain quality jobs and build a stronger, fairer economy” (Blue Green Alliance, WWWa), promoting clean jobs, clean infrastructure, and fair trade. Another earlier but still noteworthy example here is the “Teamsters and Turtles” alliance between unionists and environmental activists at the 1999 Seattle World Trade Organization Protest, which was a pivotal moment for global anti-neoliberalisation protests (see e.g. Berg, 2003; Mitchell D, 2009; St. Clair, 1999). LN4S, too, was set up to confront the “jobs versus environment” narrative by promoting long term sustainability through environmental protection, economic fairness, and social justice (Labor Network for Sustainability, WWWa).

Within this broader context of growing environmental awareness, Sean was involved in setting up the Global Labour Institute at Cornell University, which subsequently organised the first big conference on labour and climate change. The conference, held 7-8 May 2007, was titled “North American Labor Assembly on the Climate Crisis” (NALACC) and saw participation from unions across the world as well as some representatives from the UN and big environmental organisations such as the Sierra Club. While the Sierra Club has a difficult history towards environmental justice

campaigns, often ignoring urban communities in favour of 'unspoilt nature', as well as lacking class analysis (see e.g. Di Chiro, 1996), this initial coming together of unions and large, mainstream environmental organisations was a big step for both an emerging labour environmentalist narrative and coalition building at the time. Utilising Laclau's (2007) term, this can also be understood as a first attempt to align demands around 'new' equivalential relations and seek out new alliances. However, as will become apparent, TUED's now existing equivalential chains are based around more decidedly anti-neoliberal demands and have little in common with the more mainstream green politics of the mid-2000s.

While there was growing momentum and optimism for environmental activism and the reconfiguration of the political economy towards green ideas in the late 2000s, the financial crisis of 2008 brought a halt to green investment and government commitments to clean infrastructure and jobs, leading to the growing realisation that the previous green economy narratives had been a case of market-driven business-as-usual covered by a thin coat of green paint (McCarthy, 2015). Specifically in the US context, the political conflict over the Keystone XL mega-pipeline project dealt a serious blow to an emergent labour-environmentalist movement, as has already been discussed in some depth in the second chapter. These developments resulted in the realisation within more progressive parts of the (US) labour movement that the clean jobs and green growth narratives, so far rather uncritically supported, would not result in serious changes to the status quo. This challenged the unions to develop alternatives to the capitalist business-as-usual discourse and gave rise to new narratives for progressive labour environmentalism based on democratic accountability, social justice, and ecological sustainability. The development of alternative labour environmentalist narratives, and especially TUED's "Resist! Reclaim! Restructure!" framework will be discussed in more depth in following chapters. Alongside the search for new narratives, the critique of a business-as-usual approach also led to the organisation of the 2012 roundtable event in New York City, organised by the Global Labour Institute, Sean Sweeney, and the Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung's New York Office, which ultimately formed the basis of Trade Unions for Energy Democracy's emergence.

The 2012 Roundtable and Emerging Partnerships

The 2012 roundtable event "Energy Emergency: Developing Trade Union Strategies for a Global Transition" was held at the New York District Council of Carpenters from 10-12

October 2012 and attended by trade union representatives from across the world. The attendees had been invited based on their record of previous engagements with progressive climate change policies and Sean's international work and outreach (see: Hess, 2018). At the roundtable events, the union representatives were joined by the Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung's New York Office (RLS-NYC) and the Global Labour Institute (GLI) at Cornell University: two organisations that had provided financial and in-kind support to the project from its very beginnings. The organisations and their relationships with TUED are introduced in more depth below. The partnerships and connections with and between RLS-NYC, GLI, and TUED's unions and coordinators continue to be imperative for the organisational and financial structure, political reach, and credibility of the fairly young network. These partnerships and relations can also be understood as an example of chains of equivalence (Laclau, 2007) around a set of shared demands, especially the democratisation of the energy sector, and alternative politics, such as public ownership and deprivatisation.

The Global Labour Institute and Cornell University's School of Industrial and Labor Relations

The Global Labour Institute is a not-for-profit network with partners in Manchester, UK, Geneva, Switzerland, Cornell University, USA, and Moscow, Russia. The Institute promotes international solidarity through bringing together trade unions, labour organisations and wider civil society movements. The GLI understands itself as a service organisation for the labour movement, and describes its work as guided by the values and principles of democratic socialism (Global Labour Institute, WWWa). First established in 1997 in Geneva, the GLI is chaired by Dan Gallin, a former general secretary of the IUF, the International Federation of Food, Agriculture, Hotel and Catering and Tobacco Workers' unions, and a renowned and longstanding figure in the international trade union movement for over 60 years. Gallin has published widely since the late 1950s, covering a variety of topics including the Algerian revolution, the French Left, and Scandinavian social democracy as well as organising strategies, the domestic workers movement, and the informal sector (e.g. Gallin, 2014; LabourStart, WWWa).

The US-based Cornell Global Labour Institute was set up as part of Cornell University in the School of Industrial and Labor Relations (ILR) in 2007. Established in 1945, the IRL School has a long history at Cornell, following the realisation after the Great

Depression and World War II that a new kind of school was needed as "a place where people could become skilled at dealing with the volatile issues of the changing American workplace" (DigitalCommons, WWWa). Cornell's robust intellectual tradition and its commitment to the democratic spirit as a state school made it an ideal place for worker education and workplace research. Over the following six decades, the research of IRL at Cornell focussed on some of the most important issues in the workplace such as job protection, productivity, computerisation, worker participation, and expanding and declining labour markets (DigitalCommons, WWWa; ILR School, WWWa). As IRL remains the United States' only higher education institution that offers under- and postgraduate degree programmes in labour relations with a large and distinguished faculty, as well as being home to the critical journal *International Labor Relations Review*, IRL presented the ideal home for the US-branch of the Global Labour Institute.

When TUED was launched in early 2013 it became GLI Cornell's flagship project. However, a conflict between Sean and the university over research findings regarding the controversial Keystone XL mega-pipeline project eventually prompted Sean, and by extension TUED, to move the network's coordinating base away from Cornell in 2015. In conversations about the move Sean explained that his position at Cornell had been fairly precarious in terms of funding, and that, as is the case with many academic positions, his and his co-workers' posts required him to secure funding from external organisations. On one occasion, Sean secured funding from an environmental group which asked him to produce a report on the Keystone XL pipeline, especially focussing on the pipeline's finances and job promises. The report titled "Pipe Dreams? Jobs Gained, Jobs Lost by the Construction of Keystone XL" (Sweeney & Skinner, 2012) exposed some of the figures around Keystone XL as false, especially concerning the number of jobs that would be created and the promised economic growth and levels of foreign investment. A few years later, the New York Times unearthed Sean's report, which then went viral, and, while initially defending Sean's academic freedom, Cornell University was increasingly under attack by pro-pipeline groups. As Cornell is part-funded by unions (some of which support Keystone XL as explored in the second chapter of this thesis), Sean began to be side-lined by the university and decided to move the project elsewhere before the relation between himself, TUED and Cornell would deteriorate further. Following TUED's move to CUNY, the 'remaining' Global Labour Institute at Cornell is now part of "The Worker Institute" at Cornell and has, apart from personal contact between staff, little in common with the TUED project and its aims.

Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung – New York Office

The Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung (RLS) is a German state-subsidised party political foundation which was founded in Berlin in 1990. Ideologically, RLS sees itself as part of the intellectual movement for democratic socialism and understands itself as a political education organisation and forum for critical thought, as well as a think-tank for progressive social analysis and political alternatives. Since 1992, RLS has been an officially affiliated trust of the German left party, DIE LINKE, a left-wing, democratic socialist party resulting from the merger of the former Party of Democratic Socialism and the Electoral Alternative for Labour and Social Justice (DIE LINKE, WWWa). With a registered membership of around 62,000 DIE LINKE is the fifth-largest political party in Germany (Steffen, 2017) and is currently represented at all political levels within Germany, as well as in the European Parliament. DIE LINKE received 9,2% of the vote in the most recent parliamentary elections in autumn 2017, which makes the party the fifth largest in a six-party German parliament.

RLS has set up 17 foreign, regional offices as part of its international work to date, including a New York office in 2012 (Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung, WWWa). The Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung's New York Office (RLS-NYC) works with North American (US and Canadian) progressives in universities, unions, social movements, progressive institutions, and think-tanks (Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung New York Office, WWWa). RLS participated in the 2012 roundtable event and soon decided that their fairly young New York office would be involved with TUED as a recognised partner organisation, which also supports TUED financially through grant funding. Reflecting on their partnership, Stefanie Ehmsen, (then) co-director of RLS-NYC, notes: "We were really overwhelmed by how people – how unions – were interested in the topic, but TUED didn't come with a structure. So the structure sort of had to be established, the *partnership* had to be established with Sean" (Interview quote from Stefanie Ehmsen, (then) Co-Director of RLS-NYC, New York City, March 2017). The development of a working relationship has not been free of tensions over the years, as RLS-NYC also represents, and is accountable to, its 'mother'-organisation Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung and, by extension, the German government, which funds the political foundation. While RLS-NYC is involved in all aspects of TUED, it especially takes care of the 'public face' of the project, maintaining the website (<http://unionsforenergydemocracy.org/>), as well as editing and formatting publications to give them a distinctive TUED look and thus providing the necessary institutional

continuity and credibility for the project. This institutional continuity was especially important during TUED's institutional transition from Cornell University to the City University of New York in 2015.

City University of New York and the Murphy Institute

As noted above, TUED moved its coordinating base from Cornell University to the City University of New York (CUNY) in 2015, following the conflict around Sean's Keystone XL report (Sweeney & Skinner, 2012). TUED's 'institutional arm', the "International Program for Labor, Climate, and Environment" (IPLCE) is based within the Murphy Institute as part of the CUNY School of Labor and Urban Studies. IPLCE, too, is fully partnered with the Global Labor Institute and aspires to be a hub for education, research, policy development and alliance-building for US and international unions who are working on energy, climate change, and ecological and social sustainability (City University of New York, WWWa). While IPLCE is mainly a research programme for unions on energy and climate issues, it also organises training events for union members and staff. CUNY, and especially the Murphy Institute have been highly supportive of TUED, providing offices for the TUED team, as well as conference and training space for events. CUNY and IPLCE have been co-organising events such as the Climate Leadership Immersions for Union Officers and Staff, which are designed to educate union staff on climate and environmental issues and promote progressive labour environmentalist politics.

Organisational and Operational Dynamics

Over the past five years, TUED has established a well-connected and expanding network of like-minded unions. At the time of writing (May 2019), the network represents a cross-sectoral coalition of 71 trade union bodies from 24 countries as well as 10 allied policy, academic and advocacy organisations. A full list of unions participating in TUED, including their jurisdiction or region can be found in Table 4.1 below. As a cross-sectoral and translocally-organised network, TUED faces some obvious obstacles in terms of organisation and operationalisation. However, the network has an established framework through which it operates, which consists of three core components. Firstly, TUED holds annual strategy meetings, the so-called TUED Retreats where strategy discussions take place. Secondly, TUED hosts bi-monthly web-calls, called Global Advisory Group calls,

during which unions are updated on recent developments and finances, and new member unions are introduced. Thirdly, TUED also has a bulletin, as well as a 'recent news' section on its website, where short updates, information and resources are shared. The bulletin is received by over 2,500 union officials, activists and allies across the world (TUED YouTube, 2017). This established organisational framework of web calls, meetings, and written news updates and materials has helped to keep the unions in the network connected and up to date, despite the spatial distance between its members, whilst upholding TUED's commitment to collective decision-making and operationalisation. TUED does not have a constitution, votes, or a hierarchy of decision-making and understands itself first and foremost as a network "built around a body of ideas" which are "continuing to grow and be updated" (Interview quote from Sean Sweeney, Global Coordinator of TUED, New York City, April 2017).

Table 4.1. List of 71 unions participating in TUED as of May 2019.

Union	*Full Name*	*Jurisdiction/Region*
EI	Education International	Global Union Federation
ITF	International Transport Workers Federation	Global Union Federation
IUF	International Union of Food Workers	Global Union Federation
PSI	Public Services International	Global Union Federation
CSA-TUCA	Trade Union Confederation of the Americas	Americas
EPSU	European Public Services Union	Europe
ETF	European Transport Workers Federation	Europe
NTF	Nordic Transport Workers Federation	Europe
CTA	Central de Trabajadores de la Argentina	Argentina
NUW	National Union of Workers	Australia
NTEU	National Tertiary Education Union	Australia
VTHC	Victoria Trades Hall Council	Australia
ETA	Electrical Trades Union	Australia
UnionsACT	UnionsACT (Australian Capital District)	Australia
ELA	Basque Workers' Solidarity	Basque Country
CUT	Central Única dos Trabalhadores	Brazil
BCGEU	British Columbia Government and Service Employees' Union	Canada
CLC	Canadian Labour Congress	Canada
CUPW	Canadian Union of Postal Workers	Canada
CUPE	Canadian Union of Public Employees	Canada
FTQ	Fédération des travailleurs et travailleuses du Québec	Canada
NUPGE	National Union of Public and General Employees	Canada
UNIFOR	UNIFOR	Canada
CUT	Central Union of Workers	Colombia
SIMTRAEMCALI	SIMTRAEMCALI	Colombia

continued overleaf

EYATH	Water Workers Union	Greece
NTUI	New Trade Union Initiative	India
CGIL	Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro	Italy
TGWU	Transport and General Workers Union	Malawi
SME	Electrical Workers Union	Mexico
GEFONT	General Federation of Nepalese Trade Unions	Nepal
UNI-Nepal	UNI-Nepal	Nepal
FIRST	First Union	New Zealand
PSA	New Zealand Public Service Association	New Zealand
Unite	Unite Union	New Zealand
NUMGE	National Union of Municipal and Government Employees	Norway
EL & IT	Norwegian Union of Electricians and IT Workers	Norway
FENTAP	FENTAP	Peru
SENTRO	Alliance for Progressive Labour/SENTRO	Philippines
NUMSA	National Unions of Metalworkers of South Africa	South Africa
SAFTU	South African Federation of Trade Unions	South Africa
KPTU	Korean Federation of Public Services and Transport Workers Unions	South Korea
STWU	Swedish Transport Workers Union	Sweden
UNiA	UNiA	Switzerland
OWTU	Oilfield Workers Trade Union	Trinidad and Tobago
ATGWU	Amalgamated Transport and General Workers' Union	Uganda
FBU	Fire Brigades Union	UK
GMB	GMB	UK
NEU-NUT	National Education Union – National Union of Teachers	UK
PCS	Public and Commercial Services Union	UK
TSSA	Transport Salaried Staffs' Association	UK
UNISON	UNISON	UK

continued overleaf

Unite	Unite the Union	UK
UCU	University and College Union	UK
32BJ SEIU	32BJ Service Employees International Union	USA
Local 3 IBEW (New York)	Local 3 of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers	USA
Local 11 IBEW (Los Angeles)	Local 11 of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers	USA
1199 SEIU	Local 1199 Service Employees International Union, Healthcare Workers East	USA
NEA	National Education Association	USA
NNU	National Nurses United	USA
NYSNA	New York State Nurses Association	
Penn-Fed BMWED-IBT	Pennsylvania Federation of the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees Division of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters	USA
PSC-AFT	Professional Staff Congress, American Federation of Teachers (New York)	USA
RWU	Railroad Workers United	USA
UE	United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America	USA
Unite HERE	Unite HERE	USA
GEU-UAW, Local 6950	University of Connecticut Graduate Employee Union – United Automobile Workers, Local 6950	USA
GSOC-UAW, Local 2110	Union of Graduate Employees at New York University – United Automobile Workers, Local 2110	USA
DC57	District Council 57 (California)	USA
SEIU Local 1021	Service Employees International Union, Local 1021	USA
ATU	Amalgamated Transit Union	USA/ Canada

While the TUED project was initially very reliant on, and thus fairly synonymous with the work of Sean, the unions within TUED have increasingly begun to take ownership over their shared project. While Sean's work, and that of other key individuals at IPLCE and beyond, continues to be instrumental, the operational logic behind TUED has always been to provide resources, analysis and education for unions on the severity of the climate crisis. In this context, John Treat, who joined Sean at TUED in 2016 and now works for the project full-time as a Special Initiatives Coordinator at IPLCE, states:

> "It's clear now that TUED doesn't mean Sean, and people around Sean – and that's the only way it's remotely viable or credible or doable - or even appropriate (laughs) […] I think TUED *should* and *will* evolve to suit what's needed by the movement, it depends entirely on the constituencies that consolidate around it. How much time and energy they put into it. I see leadership very much as a *visionary* service function, if I can put it that way. You have to be trying to see where things need to be going, you have to be self-critical, you have to be careful not to fall in love with your own fantasy version – but you've also then always gotta be keeping an eye on whether people are behind you (laughs). I think it was Tony Cliff[5] who said, 'if you think you're the vanguard and you look too far ahead of people, you're not the vanguard – you're a lunatic lost in the woods' (laughs) you know?" (Interview quote from John Treat, Special Initiatives Coordinator at IPLCE, New York City, April 2017)

As can be seen from John's quote above, there is a level of critical engagement with 'leadership' within TUED and, more specifically within its core coordinating group which consists of Sean, John, Irene as well as (at the time) Stefanie and James at RLS-NYC. On the one hand, by quoting Cliff, a key figure in mid to late 20th Century British socialist and left politics, John embeds TUED's thinking around 'leadership' in a particular type of left culture that is distinct to the 'mainstream' hierarchical organising practices in trade union politics. On the other hand, and picking up on earlier discussions, John's quote hints at debates in political geographies and movement building studies around 'imagineers' (Routledge *et al*, 2013) and charismatic individuals (Allen, 2003; Featherstone, 2008), especially concerning Sean's role in the TUED network as first bridge broker (Hess, 2018) and then imagineer. It is not just Sean who holds a 'leadership' position in the movement.

[5] Tony Cliff (1917-2000), born Yigael Gluckstein, was a prominent Trotskyist and key figure in the British Socialist Workers Party as well as the British socialist left from the 1950s until his death.

However, while both the teams at TUED (Sean, John and Irene) and RLS (then Stefanie and James) as well as the representatives of individual unions function as bridge brokers for the TUED network, not all individuals are also 'imagineers' in the sense discussed in this thesis, which will again be picked up in the final empirical chapter. From conversations with Sean, it is clear that he is aware of his role and actively tries to counteract his prominent position in the movement – not through obscuring his work and effort but by encouraging others to develop the TUED narrative, lead events and contribute to strategy and planning (Ethnographic notes from the main field visit, April 2017). This again links back to Vail and Hollands (2013) discussion of social skill. Increasingly, Sean thus utilises his social skill of inducing collaboration for radical action (see also: Fligstein, 2001) to encourage both bridge broker and imagineering activities within the TUED network. The resulting 'network of imagineers' will also be discussed in the context of the increasing regionalisation of the TUED network in chapter six.

Relationships with Movement Allies

From its very beginnings, TUED actively involved key allies in labour environmentalist circles in its work, which is reflected in the official partnerships with RLS-NYC, GLI and CUNY, who continue to support TUED's agenda ideologically, organisationally and financially (see also: Laclau, 2007). Next to formal partners and supporters, TUED also regularly invites movement allies to its meetings, Retreats, and Global Advisory Group calls. These allies include other labour environmentalist networks like the Labour Network for Sustainability (LN4S), climate and environmental justice groups like 350.org, environmentalist groups like the National Resource Defence Council (NRDC) and the Sierra Club, like-minded advocacy groups like the Transnational Institute (TNI), an international research institute based in the Netherlands, and allied individuals and groups from the climate science community such as author and climate activist Naomi Klein, Climate Justice Alliance activist Ananda Tan, and climate scientist Robert Howarth at Cornell University. The impetus to build alliances outwith trade union circles also stems from ongoing debates within the wider labour movement on the need to link up with social movements and allies to regain strength, influence and relevance on the one hand, but also continue to show solidarity on a broader scale:

> "There are important partners [in TUED] […] who are very aware that the labour movement needs to link itself up to other movements. […] They will always tell you,

> "we need to move beyond the typical union agenda in order to become more significant". And then I think, in their respective regions unions sort of do that […], in Latin America, for a long time, unions had a strong say in national politics. I don't think the US is the best example, but some unions are – like the New York State Nurses, they have been crucial also in the fight for Standing Rock and against the pipelines [Keystone XL & Dakota Access]." (Interview quote from Stefanie Ehmsen, (then) Co-Director of RLS-NYC, New York City, March 2017)

The realisation and acknowledgment of having to move labour's politics beyond the immediate concerns of the workplace to regain relevance in political spaces is not a new concept for the labour movement. Campaigns and initiatives for social movement and community unionism came to prominence in the late 1990s and early 2000s after unionists and researchers on the left realised the detrimental impacts of economic restructuring, deindustrialisation, competitive pressure, and neoliberal labour reforms on the workforces of countries of the Global North (e.g. Fine, 2005; Moody, 1997; Tufts, 1998; Wills, 2001; Wills & Simms, 2004). As discussed in the second chapter of this thesis, community unionism was seen as a way to revive a rapidly declining union movement and encourage union membership from an increasingly diverse, disenfranchised and precarious workforce by opening up the union through new membership models and options as well as working together with social movement allies. However, while TUED's approach could be compared to community unionist ideas from the past (e.g. Wills, 2001; cf. Snell & Fairbrother, 2010), it is different in at least two important ways. Firstly, TUED understands union renewal as necessary beyond a core protection of existing (and arguably vested) interests, such as membership numbers or political influence, and attempts to address broader social justice issues (such as the protection of vulnerable communities from climate change and extreme energy agendas) as well as (re)conceptualise the role of in a world of climate change and a climate emergency that threatens civilisation as we know it. Secondly, while deliberate efforts are made to build and maintain coalitions and alliances with like-minded groups and individuals outside the labour movement, TUED has always understood itself first and foremost as a voice from and for the labour movement on issues of climate, energy and the environment:

> "I think TUED has always quite explicitly been an initiative that brings together labour organisations... so there are – I mean, Dean Hubbard from the Sierra Club is kind of a regular interlocutor and has come to several meetings, [...] 350.org has been

> connected... – I mean, *yes* (laughs) connections have been built up... but just the way TUED has been structured so far, they have kind of been the *interlocutors* rather than the participants as well." (Interview quote from James Hare, (then) Project Manager for TUED at RLS-NYC, New York City, March 2017)

While mediating relationships and negotiating discourses between participating unions and allies could have presented a challenge to a fairly young project, TUED has always been committed to produce a distinct trade union narrative on issues of climate change, energy and the environment which pays attention to questions of equality, justice and democracy as much as ecological and environmental sustainability. However, while the *narrative* produced by TUED is intended from and for the labour movement, the broader network created by and through TUED is not exclusive to labour organisations and welcomes the involvement of, and cooperation with allies in social movement, activism and advocacy circles. In this sense, again, TUED has successfully developed and maintained equivalential relations around its distinct energy democracy narrative, both within its diverse union network, as well as outwith it, with left political organisations (Laclau, 2007).

Reach, Influence, and Achievements

> "You know, this has been largely a kind of sailing a ship in unchartered water – if you're not sinking you are doing ok. I mean, this is a real accomplishment these days, staying afloat. And staying afloat and having some impact is good – and it's encouraging that key union people around the world identify with the project and want to take some actions on their own." (Interview quote from Sean Sweeney, Global Coordinator of TUED, New York City, April 2017)

Over the past five years, TUED has not just managed to 'stay afloat', as Sean remarks in the above quote, but has become established as a project with a strong member base and a robust operational framework for its global network. At the time of writing, 71 trade union bodies and 10 allied organisations are part of TUED. A full list of the participating union organisations can be found above (Table 4.1), while the two tables below detail the types (e.g. global or regional federations, national centres and allied organisation) as well as sector, jurisdiction and countries of TUED member organisations (see: Tables 4.2 and 4.3) (TUED, WWWa). As can be seen in Table 4.3, TUED covers almost all sectors but sees

most participation from public sector, transport, and healthcare unions. While all continents are represented geographically, TUED participation is much stronger in the English-speaking world as well as in the Global North and the Americas, and TUED coordinators still identify language as one of the highest barriers of entry to the project. While all TUED working papers have been translated into Spanish, the lack of resources and staff capacities does not allow for reports and materials to be translated into more languages to date. Some unions, notably CGIL, the Italian General Confederation of Labour, and KPTU, the South Korean Federation of Public Services and Transport Workers' Unions, have made translations of (some of) the TUED working papers into Italian and Korean respectively. However, it should also be noted that both of these unions are national federations and thus have more resources and staff compared to smaller TUED member unions, meaning that union-level translations present the exception rather than the rule. One exception to the bi-lingual (Spanish-English) language issue is the "TUED video", a short, 5 minute introductory video to both TUED and the "Resist! Reclaim! Restructure!" framework, which was co-produced with the Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung New York Office. Published in early 2015, it has been translated into French, Spanish, German, and Arabic by RLS-NYC. On RLS-NYC's YouTube channel alone the video has over 22,000 views at time of writing (all languages combined) (RLS-NYC YouTube, WWWa).

Table 4.2. Detailed overview of trade union bodies and allied organisations participating in TUED.

Type	*Amount*	*Sectors & Jurisdiction*
Global Union Federations	4	• Education International (EI) • International Transport Workers Federation (ITF) • International Union of Food Workers (IUF) • Public Services International (PSI)
Regional Federations	3	• European Public Services Union (EPSU) • European Transport Workers Federation (ETUC) • Trade Union Confederation of the Americas (CSA-TUCA)
National Union Centres	8	Argentina, Brazil, Canada, India, Italy, Nepal, Philippines, South Korea
Unions	56	*See Table 4.3 for details*
Allied Organisations	10	• Australian People for Health, Education and Development Abroad • Centre for Labour and Social Studies, Nepal • Earthworker Cooperative, Australia • Global Labour Institute Geneva, Switzerland-EU • Global Labour Institute Manchester, UK • Labor Network for Sustainability, USA • Public Services International Research Unit, PSIRU-South Africa • Southern Initiative on Globalisation and Trade Union Rights, Global South • Trade Unions Against Climate Change, UK • Worker Institute at Cornell University, USA

Table 4.3. List overview of TUED unions' sectors and countries (by region).

Member Unions' Sectors	*Member Unions' Countries (by Region)*
• Education • University/ College/ Professional • Public Sector/ Municipal/ Government • Healthcare/ Nursing • Emergency Response/ Fire Brigades • Post • Water • Property Services • Service Industry/ Retail/ Food • Transportation/ Railroads/ Infrastructure • Electrical/ IT/ Radio • Metalwork • Oilfield	• Africa: Malawi (1), South Africa (1), Uganda (1) • Americas: Argentina (1), Brazil (1), Canada (4), Peru (1), Trinidad & Tobago (1), United States of America (15) • Asia-Pacific: Australia (5), Nepal (2), New Zealand (2), Philippines (1), South Korea (1) • Europe: Greece (1), Italy (1), Norway (2), Switzerland (1), United Kingdom (7)

Within TUED, there has also recently been a development from the member unions towards taking more ownership over the project and identifying more strongly with its aims and objectives. Irene Shen, who began volunteering with TUED in 2016 and now works for TUED part-time as an Outreach Coordinator at IPLCE, where she for example organises the Global Advisory Group web calls, reflects on the changes she has observed in the network since first getting engaged. Especially highlighting the ways in which unions have started taking ownership over TUED, Irene notes how unions have begun to more strongly identify with the project rather than to see it as just one of many initiatives they are involved in:

> "And that is something that has evolved, like, before – and I guess I was around for a little bit of this – but before it was more like 'oh TUED should do this and TUED should do that' rather than 'I am taking ownership over this! I am going to do this piece and run with it'. And you know, they are like 'I am TUED' rather than 'TUED is this other entity that I just happen to be part of'. So I think that shift is definitely a reflection of its evolution and that it became a lot more established... established *and relevant*." (Interview quote from Irene Shen, Outreach Coordinator at IPLCE, New York City, April 2017)

This strengthened sense of ownership observed by Irene can also be seen in the rise of financial contributions coming directly from the unions. In 2016, 16 unions made financial contributions to TUED, allowing the initiative to reach its $100,000 target from union contributions for the year (TUED, WWWb). While encouraged from the start, financial contributions were never mandatory, nor a necessary part of TUED membership. Most of TUED's finances were and are covered by grant funding, for example from the Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung. However, union contributions have grown steadily over the past five years, which is an indicator that unions are taking more ownership over the project and are increasingly committed to the project long-term. John reflects:

> "I mean we've already gone from basically having to ask everybody [for contributions] all the time, to now – it just happens. Like 'oh yeah by the way, we are going to contribute again, can you send me an invoice'. So it's – I mean it's hard to qualify exactly but it does feel like there has been a kind of coming together of focus and energy and functionality." (Interview quote from John Treat, Special Initiatives Coordinator at IPLCE, New York City, April 2017)

TUED as Alternative Knowledge Producer

Having consolidated a core member group and having seen continuous growth in numbers over the past five years (at the time of writing), TUED is well placed to reflect on its achievements to date. As an organisation, the overall aim of TUED is to advance union awareness of the severity of climate change and the incapability of the current market-based approaches put forward by governments, the industry and organised labour to address the climate and environmental crises (TUED, WWWb). TUED's approach to achieving this aim is to educate unions on climate and environmental issues, and by building union capacities to address climate change as a trade union policy. The main obstacle to achieving effective and progressive trade union politics on climate change and energy are the capacities of unions to employ staff and develop expertise and strategies on these issues:

> "[Something] we still confront in TUED – you go to a union, or let's say a global union federation of 30 million people and you start talking about energy and they say 'well, we're not really in energy'. And you say 'well, we *are* in energy in the sense that we are in energy'. And they say 'well, we don't really have anybody on staff to deal with it. We have nobody, no expertise'. So we confront these capacity issues. I think what TUED has done in some respects – it has given unions the capacity, for free. So they are going to get well-researched, left analysis from a trade union position. Maybe a bit too left for some of them to really feel comfortable with, but you know, they get it, they've got the facts there. So it's actually adding to the capacity of the movement without asking the institutions themselves to say, 'oh we are going to hire someone to deal with that'." (Interview quote from Sean Sweeney, Global Coordinator of TUED, New York City, April 2017)

The importance of TUED as a producer of knowledge and expertise for the labour movement on environmental issues is critical. The recognition that especially climate change and energy transition remain highly technocratic, complex and expert-driven topic areas (see e.g.: Hulme, 2010), and thus difficult and expensive to access for unions, has been a driving motivator for the group's work (Interviews with Stefanie Ehmsen, James Hare, Sean Sweeney & John Treat, New York City, March and April 2017). The power that comes from unions' ability to contribute to the climate change and energy transition debates at local, regional, national, and multilateral levels is critical to yield meaningful

outcomes for workers and communities. Reflecting on the struggle to create well-paid and secure union jobs as part of local sustainability projects, such as energy retrofitting of large buildings in New York City, Jon Forster from the public sector union District Council 37 (DC37) observes that, often, the opportunity for good, green jobs is lost before a project has even started because unions are not fully taking part in the relevant discussions and debates during key decision-making moments:

> "Again, that work – a lot of that work needs to be done by public employees, a lot of that work needs to be done by DC37 employees, but it requires somebody politically to get on this. There is a great saying out there, really came from Eddie Bautista [New York City Environmental Justice Alliance] originally, as far as I know […] it's "If you're not at the table, you're probably on the menu". And that is our problem – that we are *not* at the table. And as a result, a lot of these projects are being privatised from the beginning and we are *not* going to get the jobs that we should be on this stuff." (Interview quote from Jon Forster, former DC37 Executive Vice-President and Founder of the DC37 Climate Justice Committee, New York City, March 2017)

Unions "not being at the table", and subsequently, not being part of the decision-making process (see also the discussion on the Lucas Plan: Wainwright & Elliott, 1982), ultimately comes down to a lack of knowledge and expertise, as well as a resulting lack of strategy, to engage with topics of climate change and energy. A significant contribution of TUED is thus to educate unions 'for free'; to provide the union movement with resources and materials to engage in climate and energy debates at various scales in a meaningful and knowledgeable way and to enable unions to create and shape their own strategies and policies around climate and energy issues. TUED materials, especially the high-quality working papers, give unions a confidence boost when entering the expert-dominated, technocratic debates around energy transitions and climate change mitigation in their cities or regions. Highly factual and well-researched, the TUED working papers are furthermore written from a left perspective and carry the core message of social and community justice and energy democracy at heart (see quote from Sean Sweeney, previous page). Through committed research, analysis and education, TUED has become a recognised expert on climate and environmental issues in the labour environmentalist movement. TUED's "Resist! Reclaim! Restructure!" narrative can thus also be read as resisting the dominant knowledge producers on climate change, reclaiming climate and energy as social justice issues, and restructuring knowledge- and meaning-making around these issues.

Over the past years, its affiliated unions have drawn on TUED's published materials for their own policy development on a variety of issues from energy resources, to generation, to multilateral climate governance. One example is a recent report published by the British TUED-affiliated Public and Commercial Services Union (PCS). The report, titled "Just Transition and Energy Democracy: a civil service trade union perspective" (Mason, 2017), sets out why climate change is a trade union issue, and especially considers the potential of democratising UK energy policy in terms of climate change action. The report directly draws on TUED's "Resist! Reclaim! Restructure!" framework to explore the possibilities for energy democracy through public ownership of energy in Britain (Mason, 2017: 21-26). Citing evidence from TUED's educational materials, especially the fourth working paper "Power to the People: Toward Democratic Control of Electricity Generation" (Sweeney, Benton-Connell & Skinner, 2015), as well as existing examples of municipal energy and initiatives for remunicipalisation in Britain, such as Robin Hood Energy in Nottingham, White Rose Energy in Leeds, Bristol Energy and Switched on London, Mason (2017) demonstrates that public control over energy is not just a viable alternative to the current corporate system of energy ownership in the UK but is also vital to create a fairer energy future for all. Promoting worker-public partnerships, public ownership, statutory rights for workplace environmental reps, and strong trade union involvement in climate change politics, PCS have effectively drawn on TUED's resources to put forward a strong proposal for just transition policies for public sector unions (Mason, 2017: 36).

Another example from the UK is a recent composite resolution passed by the British Trades Union Congress (TUC) to support the Labour Party Manifesto on public ownership of energy. The recent 2017 General Election Manifesto, *For the Many, Not the Few* (Labour Manifesto, 2017), points to the failures of electricity privatisation in Britain, the continued problem of energy and fuel poverty, as well as the need to honour both the UK's and multilateral climate commitments. In order to address these challenges, the Manifesto commits to "take energy back into public ownership to deliver renewable energy, affordability for consumers, and democratic control" (2017: 20), as well as to create "publicly owned, locally accountable energy companies and co-operatives to rival existing private energy suppliers" (*ibid.*). The TUC's Annual Conference from 10-13 September 2017 saw a composite resolution moved by the Bakers, Food and Allied Workers Union (BFAWU), acknowledging the severity of climate change, the need for a strong role of the public sector in transition as well as calling for the energy sector to be returned to public ownership and democratic control (TUC, 2017: 9). The resolution titled

"C04 Climate change – Motion 10" was seconded by the Communication Workers Union (CWU), supported with friendly amendments by the Fire Brigades Union (FBU), the train driver's union ASLEF, and Transport Salaried Staffs' Association (TSSA), and received support from the Public and Commercial Services Union (PCS) and others on the day of the vote. The resolution was eventually passed unanimously by hundreds of delegates (TUED Bulletin 64, 2017). While BFAWU is not part of the TUED network, FBU, TSSA and PCS are all represented in TUED, and the work and research of one of TUED's close movement allies, the Transnational Institute based in the Netherlands, is recognised within the resolution's text (TUC, 2017: 9). Resolutions such as this one at national trade union level show that labour environmentalist ideas, and especially energy democracy, have become more prominent in the broader labour movement, and that initiatives like TUED can, and do, add to the debate by providing strong narrative and analysis for energy democracy, just transition and public ownership.

Participating unions have also approached TUED coordinators about current affairs and developments, and TUED has in turn been able to provide advice and guidance on specific issues, such as statements on fracking, or the international climate convention for its member unions (Interview with Sean Sweeney, Global Coordinator of TUED, New York City, April 2017). TUED's seventh working paper, "An Illness to One is the Concern of All" (Shah & Sweeney, 2016), which argues that a global health emergency is rapidly unfolding and explores the health impacts of fossil fuels on workers in all sectors, for example strengthened the US-based National Nurses Union's (NNU) position for a ban on fracking (NNU, WWWa; TUED, WWWb; see also: Kurth, 2017). NNU's statement, which was authored and signed by Deborah Burger, Registered Nurse and NNU's Co-President, cites evidence and arguments against fracking provided by TUED in their working papers, and calls for union support of the Bernie Sanders campaign (Nichols, 2015):

> "As a nurse, I see the debilitating effects of illness and injury every day. I see patients struggling with asthma, heart disease, and cancer. I know the role climate change plays in these illnesses. And I know that the way to protect workers, communities, and the environment is to ban fracking – exactly as only one candidate states unequivocably [sic], Bernie Sanders. This isn't just a political issue. This is a life or death issue" (NNU, WWWa; see also: CommonDreams, WWWa).

These developments also indicate the wider recognition of TUED as a critical network within the labour environmentalist movement and beyond; in the above example, NNU

draws on TUED materials to lend support to the Bernie Sanders campaign (Sanders, 2016) and, by extension, embeds TUED ideas and analysis in wider leftist US national politics. Another example is a TUED statement that was generated in light of the Standing Rock protests against the Dakota Access Pipeline in 2016 and was signed by some of the US's most progressive unions on climate and energy issues, including healthcare workers from 1199 Service Employees International Union, National Nurses United and the New York State Nurses Association, transport and infrastructure workers from the Amalgamated Transit Union and the Brotherhood of Maintenance and Way Employees Division, Pennsylvania Federation–Teamsters, as well as the National Domestic Workers Alliance and the United Electrical Workers (Interview with Irene Shen, Outreach Coordinator at IPLCE, New York City, April 2017; TUED, WWWc). The statement titled "Unions Congratulate the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe on Denial of Authorization for the Dakota Access Pipeline", published on 9 December 2016, reflects on the victory of the protest in (intermittently) halting the construction of DAPL, the importance of building progressive alliances, and the power of solidarity. A shortened version of the statement can be found in Figure 4.1, below.

The development of TUED as an important knowledge producer for the labour movement on energy, climate and environmental issues also links back to a previous discussion around how (populist) demands and counter-hegemonic ideas become mobilised and transferred between actors (Laclau, 2007; Peck & Theodore, 2010). As highlighted in chapter two, while Laclau's (2007) arguments around populist demands and chains of equivalence help better frame and understand the TUED network's use and development of a strong energy democracy framework, neither Laclau nor the wider literature on left politics discusses how such demands and equivalential relations exist, move and develop across space. Here, recent developments within the TUED network can contribute to a better understanding of the spatialisation of energy democracy demands in particular. The examples cited above, for example the use of TUED's analysis and materials in individual union reports (Mason, 2017), as part of new policy of national union federations (TUC, 2017), as well as in political statements (e.g. in support of Standing Rock, see: Figure 4.1), are all expressions of how TUED's message has spread across space and has been taken up by actors in different contexts.

Unions Congratulate the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe on Denial of Authorization for the Dakota Access Pipeline

> This is a historic victory, and an organizing victory that every union member can identify with, against one of the most powerful economic and political forces in the world: the fossil fuel industry and its many allies inside and outside government. […] Trade unionists have stood shoulder to shoulder with the First Nation water protectors, environmental and community supporters, and many allies who have mobilized and rallied for months against huge odds. Our unions will continue to join with opponents of the Dakota Pipeline along other routes and fight to halt similar projects that transport dirty crude oil that jeopardize public health and contribute to the climate crisis. We also stand in solidarity with the construction workers who build our country's infrastructure, and also with the workers in coal, oil and gas, many of whom have lost their jobs due to the collapse in global prices. In accordance with the Paris Climate Agreement, we call for a "just transition" for workers whose jobs and livelihoods may be threatened by the move away from fossil fuels. […] Together we can demand the development of sustainable energy production and resource initiatives that unequivocally provide good, safe union jobs while salvaging the health and well-being of the earth's population. Our future depends on our willingness to engage and organize among progressive forces and social movements in order to effectively meet the challenges ahead.

Figure 4.1. Excerpt from TUED Statement to Standing Rock, 9 December 2016 (source: TUED, WWWc).

Conclusion

This first empirical chapter has introduced the case study Trade Unions for Energy Democracy in more depth by exploring and explaining the network's emergence and evolution from its formation in 2012 to the present day, beginning with a brief overview of the wider labour environmentalist and climate justice movements across the world in the lead up to the 2012 roundtable that established TUED. To capture the particular context and nature of TUED, I have introduced TUED's key events as well as individuals at TUED as well as the staff at TUED's partner organisation, the Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung's New York Office. In this context, I have also introduced TUED's official partners and institutional bases, most prominently RLS-NYC, as well as initially Cornell University, and more recently the City University of New York, and have drawn out the relations and (dis)connections between these varied actors and organisations in order to better understand and conceptualise the nature of the TUED network as it exists today. In the context of key individuals in the network, I have specifically discussed Sean, TUED's global coordinator, and his role as a bridge broker (Hess, 2018) and movement imagineer (Routledge *et al*, 2013), and how these roles are managed, and discussed in the network.

Following this characterisation of actors, partners and relationships, I provided an overview of TUED's operational and organisational dynamics by introducing the unions and labour organisations who are currently part of the project, and by exploring the (equivalential) relationships that TUED builds and maintains with its so-called movement allies, which are composed of like-minded research and advocacy groups, fellow labour environmentalist networks, as well as climate justice organisations (see: Laclau, 2007). I have given an overview of how unions and movement allies participate in the TUED project through meetings, web calls and special conferences or events. Despite the spatial challenges that arise from organising a cross-sectoral and translocally-based network, I have shown that TUED has developed an operational framework that both keeps its members informed on current events and enables them to steer the project's directions. I have furthermore highlighted how the organisers see an increase in unions "taking ownership" over the project, and, importantly, that member unions are beginning to understand TUED as an extension of their union activity and not just 'another' campaign they have signed up to.

Finally, and building on the last point, I also explored TUED's reach, influence and achievements over the relatively short time of its existence. In this context, I have

conceptualised TUED as an important alternative knowledge producer for the labour movement on energy, climate and environmental issues. Providing well-written, well-researched, and high-quality materials, reports and information about energy and climate change issues (which are not accessible to most people due to their overly technical and expert-driven nature), allows TUED's member unions to engage in debates at union level as well as policy levels and in their existing advocacy work. As has been amply highlighted by participants during fieldwork, being informed and knowledgeable are the first steps for unions to develop strategy, policy and influence around climate issues and represent their members fairly in political debates. TUED's influence and its role as a recognised (alternative) knowledge producer for the labour movement is also evidenced by how its materials are used by unions to position themselves in relation to current events. There are various examples of union engagement with TUED narrative and analysis, be it in form of policy development as in the case of PCS or using TUED's analysis as a lens to understand and reflect on current events such as Standing Rock, which are indicative of the timeliness and increasing solidification of TUED's ideas in progressive parts of the labour and trade union movement. Finally, I have discussed what the spatial spread of these varied engagements with TUED's narrative and analysis can add to existing discussions around the transfer of (populist) demands, counter-hegemonic ideas, and left politics more broadly (Laclau, 2007; Peck & Theodore, 2010).

CHAPTER 5
THE NARRATIVE DEVELOPMENT OF TRADE UNIONS FOR ENEGY DEMOCRACY

Building on the previous chapter's contextualisation of the TUED network and its work to date, this chapter explores the emergence of TUED's narrative and its development from the network's origins in early 2013. The chapter begins by positioning this emergent narrative within three wider developments at the time. Firstly, and as discussed previously, there were strong perceptions of disillusionment within the trade union movement towards both multi-lateral and national governmental responses to climate change. Secondly, there was a new alignment of labour on issues of energy and climate change in the United States, especially in the context of energy mega-projects, and thirdly, there was discontent with existing coalitions with environmentalist and/ or state actors on green issues (e.g. the Blue Green Alliance). The emergence of both TUED as a network and its distinct energy democracy narrative is thus conceptualised as a response to this wider crisis of narrative towards climate change in the trade union movement.

To draw out the particular narrative of energy democracy that is put forward by TUED, the chapter then analyses TUED's founding statement, "Resist, Reclaim, Restructure: Unions and the Struggle for Energy Democracy" (Sweeney, 2013 [2012]), and subsequently explores how TUED has engaged with, expanded, and developed the "Resist! Reclaim! Restructure!" narrative through its working papers. The TUED Working Papers are in-depth, factual and educational materials published by the network, which have become important policy documents for participating unions as well as wider socio-ecological movements and actors. In this chapter I draw mostly on Working Papers to analyse and discuss TUED's narrative and framing. As part of this process, I also discuss how events and strategic discussions within the network shape TUED's narrative development, which will again be picked up in more depth in the next chapter.

Addressing the Crisis of Narrative in Trade Union Responses to Climate Change

As laid out in the last chapter, the context of TUED's emergence in the early 2010s coincided with a growing awareness among more progressive parts of the trade union and

labour movement that the previous narratives of green growth and clean jobs would not deliver a sufficient and just energy transition. Especially popular from the mid-2000s onwards, narratives on green growth and green capitalism in general had been widely adopted in both multi-lateral discussion at the United Nations level, and consequently in most national government discourses on climate change and energy transition. In line with unions' commitment of social dialogue, this green growth discourse had also been fairly uncritically supported by trade unions in the global North to this point (Sweeney, 2014). As previously argued, the financial crisis of 2008 dampened green growth enthusiasm, and both financial investments and government commitments to green jobs and infrastructure were halting. Against this backdrop, unions' disillusionment with the status quo occurred in multiple, related contexts. Three examples of labour's growing disillusionment are discussed in more depth below including unions' discontent with multi-lateral and international labour politics, the emergence of contentious energy debates for example in the United States around energy mega-projects, as well as existing 'unsuccessful' coalitions with environmentalists and/ or state actors.

Lacking Alternatives

Since its beginning in Rio in 1992, organised labour has been part of the multi-lateral governance of climate change and sustainable development at the United Nations level. While recognised as a stakeholder, for the initial years the role of organised labour as part of the United Nations' Agenda 21 was mainly limited to occupational health and safety as well as workplace action (Rosemberg, 2013). In the following years, trade unions became more active players in both the sustainable development debates as well as in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). As Annabella Rosemberg (2013) highlights, the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), founded in 2006, was heavily influenced by new debates which were taking place in the labour movement around environmental issues. These for example included the Assembly of Labour and Environment, which had taken place in Kenya earlier in 2006, and the emerging environmental thinking that was incorporated in ITUC's mandate. In 2008, ITUC was involved in the Green Jobs Initiative alongside United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the International Labour Organization (ILO), and the International Organisation of Employers (IOE). The involvement of UNEP was a big step forward for those in organised labour that had tried to incorporate a stronger environmental message in their movement, and UNEP also provided the SustainLabour Foundation with resources to train

trade unionists on issues of just transition and green jobs (Sweeney, 2014).The Initiative's report, titled "Green Jobs: Towards Decent Work in a Sustainable, Low-Carbon World" (Green Jobs Initiative, 2008; see also: Snell & Fairbrother, 2010) identifies existing green jobs in different sectors and promotes emerging trade union policies towards just transition as a concept offering new opportunities for those affected by climate change-related job loss. Published just ahead of the effects of the financial crisis and slowing investments in green job and clean infrastructure programmes (Sweeney, 2013), the report is optimistic towards future green employment. Based on the Green Jobs Initiative report (2008), ITUC's statement for the UNFCCC's 15th Conference of the Parties (COP15) in Copenhagen in 2009 linked climate change to questions of solidarity, equality and justice, and strongly advocating for a just transition (ITUC, 2009; Rosemberg, 2013).

However, while attempting to modify the status quo in favour of social justice and sustainability (Rosemberg, 2013; Sweeney, 2014), the statement ultimately continues to be committed to the dominant green economy discourse: "we call for a 'just transition' as a means for smoothing the shift towards a more sustainable society and restoring hope in the capacity of a 'green economy' to sustain jobs and livelihoods for all" (ITUC, 2009: 5; see also: Coats, 2011). The lack of commitments, diminished emission goals, and lowered targets at both COP15 and in the resulting Copenhagen Accord proved to be a disappointment for the global environmental and climate justice activist communities as well as many of the more vulnerable countries. Between COP15 and the on-setting economic crisis and resulting halting investments in the previously hailed green economy, many unions and labour organisations became increasingly critical of the feasibility of a green capitalist project and its neoliberal policies consisting of international emission trading schemes, joint implementation and the Clean Development Mechanism (Sweeney, 2013). Realising that sufficient progress had not been made, some union actors began to acknowledge that the green growth agenda could not deliver the necessary changes and actions on climate change in a meaningful way (Sweeney, 2014).

The perception of a serious lack of action on a global stage was intensified by a lack of alternatives coming from the labour movement itself, which added to the feeling from some unions of an underrepresentation of their interests in multi-lateral and governmental energy and climate politics (Interviews with Stefanie Ehmsen and James Hare, March 2017). However, despite the experiences at COP15 and slowing investments, ITUC remained committed to its green investment policies, and the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) continued to work towards realising its policy of 'Green New Deal'

(Rosemberg, 2013; Sweeney, 2014)[6]. The emergence of TUED and its particular narrative can thus be understood as a response to this gap of an alternative narrative to green growth in both national and international trade union structures, and highlights the importance of the TUED network as a trade union movement-specific knowledge and narrative producer on climate change and environmental issues and strategy:

> "You don't have those debates anywhere in the international trade union movement right now. You know, there are independent journalists and writers on the outside who are arguing about what unions should do or shouldn't do – but inside the union structures there is very little debate, at all, among the bureaucracies and leaders." (Interview quote from Sean Sweeney, Global Coordinator of TUED, New York City, April 2017)

The joint experience of having a limited voice in the multi-lateral debates and little to no coherent narrative on energy and climate change coming from their own movement, led some unions to rethink their position and, in turn, develop their own strategies on climate change. One of the first trade union movement bodies developing a system-focussed solution to interrelated socio-ecological challenges was the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF), the global union federation for transport sector workers (ITF, 2010; Sweeney, 2013). A (2010) report by the ITF's Climate Change Working Group for example links the sector's contribution to emissions and climate change to the political challenge of making meaningful changes to transport. The report offers a "Reduce – Shift – Improve" framework as a solution towards a sustainable, low-carbon mobility concept, and embeds the framework in existing ITF policy in order to advance ITF's long-term strategic goals (ITF, 2010). Another example is the Alliance for Progressive Labor (APL) in the Philippines, who, in 2012, linked interrelated crises of food, energy, finance and climate to the global capitalist system, and jointly called for an end to privatisation and marketisation (APL, WWWa). APL criticises and strongly rejects the green economy approach at international and multi-lateral governance levels and calls for a democratisation of the economy and the de-privatisation of essential services including health, housing, education, water and social protection, as well as decisive action for low-

[6] This refers to the 'Green New Deal' as pursued by moderate 'green growth' advocates in the mid- to late 2000s, e.g. Barack Obama's green investment policies before the financial crisis, as well as the European Union's green growth and green development tools in form of Emission Trading Markets, Clean Development Mechanism, and Joint Implementation. The 'new' Green New Deal, as notably advocated for by the Democratic US Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez beginning in 2018 refers to a different set of decidedly more radical environmental policies.

carbon, equitable climate systems (APL, WWWa).

Energy as a Divisive Issue: The US Labour Movement and Mega-Pipeline Disputes

Especially in the United States, energy has become a divisive issue in the union movement forcing (some) unions to take positions on a range of energy projects, and more broadly on climate change and energy transition policies. As noted in previous chapters, the US union movement faced internal conflicts over the support of energy projects, especially the mega-pipeline project Keystone XL in 2011 (Sweeney, 2016b; Paul, 2018b). As discussed previously, union positions on Keystone XL, and later on the Dakota Access pipeline in 2016, varied widely and brought out deep divisions in the US labour movement. These energy struggles in the United States are related to the previous point about a disillusionment with the predominant narrative of green growth at both multi-lateral and government levels. As unions were beginning to question the politics behind market-driven agendas for green jobs and infrastructure, their opposition to extreme energy and mega-pipeline projects grew more pronounced.

This crisis of the green growth narrative led to a new alignment of labour on energy and climate issues, with US unions taking strong positions on both sides of the black-blue and green divide (Paul, 2018b). However, another dimension of this new alignment of US unions on energy and climate issues in the context of the mega-pipeline disputes is that it also led to a split *within* the Blue Green Alliance, a strategic partnership of some of the largest labour unions and most influential environmental organisations in the US, when some unions in the alliance were struggling to position themselves for or against Keystone XL. This lack of support from unions that 'should have' taken up a clear position against an increasing lock-in of fossil fuels through mega-pipelines led to further disillusionment of those that had opposed and protested the projects. While the background for individual union's abstentions was certainly more complex, the lack of a strong alternative discourse on energy and climate change was again an overarching theme.

In this context, I seek to develop the thesis's engagement with Laclau's focus on the emergence of demands (Laclau, 2007). Events like the mega-pipeline disputes (around Keystone XL and later Dakota Access Pipeline) can sharply throw into focus the lack of effective shared demands and equivalential relations in a movement, in this case the labour

movement. This realisation can then instigate a more radical political message among those that feel that their voices are underrepresented on both sides. In the case of Keystone XL, the unfolding events led to a clearer and more pronounced anti-pipeline message among some unions whose demands aligned with environmental, climate justice, and indigenous actors as well as local famers and communities (e.g. NNU's and NYSNA's nurses on the frontlines of the pipeline struggles). However, the experiences of Keystone XL also led to a more pronounced anti-environmental position in other parts of the labour movement; the Building Trades, for example, continue to lobby for the expansion of fossil fuel infrastructure and extreme energy in the US and Canada and have aligned their demands with the Trump administration (Scheiber, 2017) and the fossil fuel industries. Instead of a unified message around energy, climate and environment, the trade union movement, in the US in this case, has thus formed two (if not multiple) equivalential chains that have very little in common (Laclau, 2007).

Discontent with Existing Environmentalist Coalitions

Against this backdrop, it also became clear to some unions that their existing efforts of coalition and alliance building with environmentalists or government actors on climate and energy policy were often dominated by non-union voices, while unions often only enjoyed token participation in those projects without much impact. As the failure to take a position from some of the Blue Green Alliance unions on Keystone XL had shown, even when unions were participating in partnerships and coalitions with green actors a lack of narrative and strategy prevented them from having a distinct voice in these fora. This experience was not just felt in strategic alliances but also in particular projects in which labour unions and organisation were involved. One such project is New York Renews (NYRenews) based in New York State, USA, which calls for "good jobs and climate justice with 100% clean renewable energy – we stand together, we win together" (NYRenews, WWWa). NYRenews is a 130-organisation strong, broad-based coalition of labour unions, community groups, environmental organisations, faith communities and environmental justice advocates from grassroots, state, and national levels (NYRenews, WWWb), which provides a fairly progressive plan for the energy future of New York State. However, as Irene Shen, TUED's outreach coordinator and long-term activist in both the environmental and labour movement, observes:

> "I just think there are a lot of generalised ideas but no actual content that is going to push or really advance the effort [speaking about New York Renews]. And the things that they are calling for are *not* actually going to break the temperature down to what it needs to be […] So there are alliances but I don't know what that means, you know, when all you can push for is weak policies and reforms that have no content on how to achieve what you actually want to achieve so – I think a lot needs to be done about labour and environment and one of the problems with the environment is that there is a lack of class analysis. People's politics are not rooted in an understanding of capitalism […] And I say this because this is partly where I come out of, you know, I come out of identity politics – and identity politics are not grounded in class analysis and that affects how we strategize about thinking about what we are aiming for, you know. And I think that is a big problem in the environmental movement, [it] is dominated by Big Greens and often *not* dominated by environmental justice […] With the lack of a grounding in class analysis, when that's – when the system of capitalism is really tied into why we have the climate crisis, I don't think that we can move very far forward. And I think that's a big problem in the environmental movement." (Interview with Irene Shen, Outreach Coordinator at IPLCE, New York City, April 2017)

Through introducing a critical political economy angle and the need for class-based analysis, Irene touches on an important point of debate for both labour's involvement in, and potential contribution to, environmental struggles in which other voices and agendas, such as mainstream environmentalism, continue to dominate (cf. Wills, 2001). In a related point, labour has often felt like a 'token' participant rather than a key player in existing coalitions (Interviews with Irene Shen, Jon Forster, John Treat, March and April 2017). In this context, Jon Forster, former DC37 Executive Vice-President and Founder of the DC37 Climate Justice Committee, for example comments on how coalition partners are very keen to make use of the union movements' resources without an awareness of the structures and processes behind how resources are distributed and decided upon in the labour movement:

> "I think that [labour] is able to organise and mobilise and involve members and people on a level that most organisations are not, and that we have more resources than most organisations, and *is* something that we can add to the coalition. It is funny, however, that as soon as we, you know *endorse* something, it's like "Oh, good, can you give us space, can you print out ten thousand fliers, can you get several buses" - it's like, "Well guys, *yes* we have resources – and we realise that we

have more resources than you do – but we are also involved in so many different things that it's not like, you know, now this has somehow catapulted to our number one issue" (Interview quote from Jon Forster, former DC37 Executive Vice-President and Founder of the DC37 Climate Justice Committee, New York City, March 2017)

Jon's quote highlights several interesting tensions, both around the difference of movement building between trade unions and social or environmental movement actors, as well as in terms of the potential (and even possibility) for unions to realise their narratives for energy democracy in established coalitions with green agendas without appearing as a "labour add on". Both of these points can be linked back to earlier discussions around union renewal in the beginning of the 2000s (e.g. Fine, 2005; Wills, 2001; Tufts, 1998) and speak to the limits of the then much-discussed social movement or community unionism.

In this wider context of disillusionment, a new narrative on climate and energy politics grounded in trade union values of social, economic, and community justice and a class-based analysis was needed. TUED identified and attempts to fill this narrative gap in the labour movement on energy and climate issues, resulting from the disillusionment with green growth narratives, multilateral climate politics, the lack of response from the international labour movement as well as the inability of the US labour movement to stand united in the face of social and environmental struggles over energy and climate policy more widely. The lack of both discourse and strategy at international labour levels towards real solutions for the environmental and climate crises eventually resulted in the 2012 roundtable that preceded TUED's foundation. TUED's founding narrative which was discussed and agreed on at the event, the "Resist! Reclaim! Restructure!" framework, thus aims to produce and develop a distinct, fact-based narrative for energy democracy from a labour perspective:

"I think a lot of TUED's success is because it stepped into a vacuum – there was really no coherent narrative coming out of the international trade union movement on climate change and energy issues. […] I think TUED recognised that there is no inevitability of a major and adequate international agreement. So what's needed is actually to present this strong, clear narrative, strong, clear analysis coming out of labour to present that and I think the unions that have come on to TUED, you know, buy into that." (Interview quote from James Hare, (then) Project Manager for TUED at RLS-NYC, New York City, March 2017)

The “Resist! Reclaim! Restructure!” narrative is novel, and, as highlighted in interviews and conversations at events, ‘filled a vacuum’ of trade union environmentalism, which has since attracted a lot of unions to TUED’s work. Laclau’s (2007) analysis of unfulfilled requests developing into demands again sheds light on how TUED was able to create a shared demand around energy democracy among certain unions and movement allies in the context discussed above. The following sections of this chapter examine TUED’s founding narrative and energy democracy framework in more depth, and explore its development through published materials, such as the TUED working papers, as well as during events and workshops held by TUED.

An Alternative Narrative for the Trade Union Movement

Emerging from this wider context of disillusionment with multi-lateral governance responses to climate change and the lack of a distinct and coherent labour movement narrative on climate and energy issues, the TUED network was founded on a narrative that strongly criticises green growth and ecological modernisation discourses, clearly rejects further privatisation of energy systems, and fundamentally questions capitalist solutions to the climate crisis. Instead, TUED advocates for energy democracy through a decidedly anti-neoliberal politics from workers and the trade union movement towards energy systems and climate politics. As a direct challenge to the lack of a progressive labour environmentalist narrative as well as to the persistent discourse of green capitalist solutions to the climate crisis (see Castree, 2010b; 2010c; McCarthy, 2015), the “Resist! Reclaim! Restructure!” framework continues to inform TUED’s work to this day and has become a unifying demand for the unions engaged in the project (also: Laclau, 2007). The framing statement with the same name, “Resist, Reclaim, Restructure: Unions and the Struggle for Energy Democracy” (Sweeney, 2013) was published by TUED, RLS-NYC and the GLI at Cornell University, following the roundtable event in New York City in 2012, and marked the foundation of the project. At its core, the paper promotes energy democracy as a solution to the climate crisis from a trade union and workers perspective, and to advance wider social and environmental justice. The paper provides a thorough critique of green growth discourses and approaches used in multilateral climate policies, for example by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) as well as by many national governments and presents evidence of the scale and depth of environmental and socio-economic crises as a result of continued fossil fuel extraction.

The paper begins with an analysis of the current conjuncture of fossil fuel extractivism and consumption on the one hand, and climatic and environmental changes and crises on the other hand, which are described as an "energy emergency of global proportions" (Sweeney, 2013: 5). The paper's analysis focusses on three related strands of this crisis, firstly, a state of energy emergency being evident in 'extreme energy' agendas by fossil fuel corporations, which use their wealth and political influence to push for ever more risky and polluting methods of extraction including tar oil, surface mining, natural gas and hydraulic fracking, thereby harming environments, communities and workers alike. Secondly, an energy emergency related to the unequal access to, and consumption of, energy on a global scale. Thirdly, an energy emergency related to the concentrated wealth and power of fossil fuel companies, who are delaying transition efforts towards renewable energies as well as resisting economic and environmental regulations. The paper also critically highlights the insufficiency of contemporary energy transition efforts to address the energy emergency and interrelated crises, noting that renewables are not growing fast enough to make a real difference in the short or long term and linking underinvestment, disruption in service, rising prices, job loss and deteriorating working conditions to neoliberal policies of privatisation and deregulation in the energy sector (Sweeney, 2013: 17).

The alternative to a deepening energy emergency and a solution to various aspects of the climate crisis proposed by TUED is the "Resist! Reclaim! Restructure!" narrative, which doubles as a strategic framework for action in the paper as well as for the TUED network more broadly. The "Resist! Reclaim! Restructure!" framework is set out to give unions concrete tools to advance different aspects of energy democracy in their own strategic planning and action. While 'energy democracy' has various definitions ranging from decentralised visions of energy generation and supply to publicly-managed energy utilities, at their core, calls for energy democracy are about the democratisation of energy systems in order to create fairer and more sustainable energy futures for all. To achieve a democratic energy system, TUED frames energy democracy through their "Resist! Reclaim! Restructure!" narrative, which calls for:

> "the need to *resist* the dominant agenda of the large energy corporations and their allies; the need to *reclaim* to the public sphere parts of the energy economy that have been privatized or marketized; and the need to *restructure* the global energy system in order to massively scale up renewable and low-carbon energy, aggressively implement energy conservation, ensure job-creation and local wealth creation, and

assert community and democratic control over the energy sector" (Sweeney, 2013: 31, emphasis in original).

The three parts, *resist*, *reclaim* and *restructure*, address different aspects of energy democracy and can be pursued collectively, selectively, or individually depending on unions' needs, capacities and abilities. TUED's in-depth conceptualisation of energy democracy through the "Resist! Reclaim! Restructure!" framework and agenda is a powerful analytical and strategic tool for the labour environmentalist movement and an example of applications of energy democracy 'in practice'. Furthermore, the radical potential of the framework, which allows for a rethinking, challenging and changing of the underlying systems of capitalism and neoliberal governance, importantly contrasts with the existing and more previously explored, more moderate social democratic trade union approaches to social partnerships and green jobs.

Resist!

TUED's "Resist!" agenda opposes the harmful interests of fossil fuel capitalism in the present, which makes profits on the back of workers, communities and the environment through continuing fossil fuel extraction, extreme energy agendas, ongoing commodification of the energy system, and the manipulation of multilateral governance attempts to stop climate change through lobbying at COPs and at national and regional governance levels. For TUED, the "Resist!" agenda can take multiple forms: direct, policy, and workplace resistance. Direct resistance to particularly harmful projects is an important way to raise public awareness and educate workers and communities about the detrimental impacts of contemporary energy systems. The opposition from some nursing unions to the Dakota Access pipeline project as part of the wider Standing Rock protest are a recent example of important direct resistance and effective coalition building with allied movements, in this case indigenous communities, ranchers and farmers, and environmentalists among others.

However, TUED also acknowledges that while fossil fuel projects such as the Keystone XL or Dakota Access pipelines should be resisted, there can also be damaging renewable energy developments that unions should speak out against, such as large-scale renewable energy projects for wind, solar or hydropower which would harm environments and eco-systems and disregard the needs of local and indigenous communities for profit.

Examples include the now-shelved plans by DESERTEC to build huge solar farms in Saharan Africa (Hamouchene, 2015), as well as large-scale wind farms in the Mexican region Oaxaca (Sweeney, 2013). Beyond direct resistance of particular projects, TUED also stresses that in order to effectively "Resist!", the trade union movement needs to also resist at other levels, such as the policy level and the workplace. In terms of policy, unions can for example resist further privatisation of energy systems and attempt to obstruct trade in extreme energy projects by resisting policy that is designed to lock in more carbon over the next couple of decades. TUED is aware that this will require some unions to turn down some jobs in the short term, however, TUED argues that these jobs are not the decent, good and just jobs that they aim to create in democratic future energy systems: "We need jobs, but not the ones based on increasing our reliance on Tar Sands oil" (Sweeney, 2013: 34, citing Joint Statement by Amalgamated Transit Union and Transport Workers Union in opposition to the Keystone XL pipeline; see also: Snell & Fairbrother, 2010).

It should be noted, however, that TUED also aims for a just transition for existing energy workers. While demands around 'just transition' have now spread to non-union environmental movements, for example Friends of the Earth (FoEE, WWWa), there is still contestation from unions around the inclusivity of these demands, especially towards energy workers. To illustrate, the Scottish parliament recently launched a Just Transition Commission (JTC) following demands from the Just Transition Partnership, a coalition between the Scottish Trades Union Congress (STUC), Friends of the Earth Scotland (FoES) and some individual unions. The launch was welcomed by many and hailed as a success for unions and workers, but has also attracted criticism. The union GMB Scotland (which among others represents workers in the nuclear and fossil fuel sectors) have recently called the JTC "a good intentions committee [which] ignores the very real energy needs of Scotland now" (Bell, 2019). Interestingly, both GMB and many of the unions forming the Just Transition Partnership are part of the TUED network. TUED itself does not 'prescribe' a just transition blueprint but provides its members with the resources to advocate for their workers and sectors on an individual level. Another way for unions to participate in the "Resist!" agenda is through resistance at the workplace level, where unions can for example influence company investment decisions around new products or support energy conservation initiatives.

Reclaim!

TUED's "Reclaim!" agenda focusses on designing a just transition based on the principles of democracy, social justice, and ecological sustainability in order to take back ownership over the energy system. TUED's proposals to reclaim the energy system come in three parts, firstly, reclaiming privatised parts of the energy sector into public hands, secondly, restoring currently public energy operations to 'truly' serving the community, and thirdly, "reasserting the right to develop a new socially owned and fully unionized, renewables-based energy system" (Sweeney, 2013: 38). Concretely, TUED draws on experiences of the anti-privatisation movement and especially reviews the successes of reversals of water and sanitation privatisations and the advancement of public ownership in these sectors through the work of the Public Services International Research Unit (PSIRU). PSIRU as well as activists in the so-called 'Water War' in Cochabamba, Bolivia, in 2000 and elsewhere have developed Public-Public Partnerships (PUPs) as alternatives to both privatisation and Public-Private Partnerships (P3s), which also have potential for renewable energy and new forms of energy ownership. Another form of public ownership that TUED presents as part of its "Reclaim!" agenda is the remunicipalisation of energy infrastructure and generation (i.e. grids and municipal utilities) with the example of Germany. However, while public or state ownership is on the rise in some countries and contexts, TUED also stresses that it is important to continuously push for *democratic* control within these public ownership structures in order to create truly accountable, socially just and community responsive energy systems (Sweeney, 2013).

Restructure!

Finally, TUED's "Restructure!" agenda addresses the broader vision of energy democracy and economic democracy struggles leading to an internationalist vision based on cooperation and sharing, with values grounded in solidarity, sufficiency, and sustainability (Sweeney, 2013). Through including "Restructure!", TUED recognises that a truly democratic and sustainable energy system will not bear much resemblance to the system we currently experience and will thus need a fair degree of creative rethinking and alternative practice. A democratic energy future will furthermore require the restructuring of not just the energy sector but will also lead to major changes in transport, agriculture, waste management, and construction to name but a few. Reflecting on the changes needed to realise a truly democratic, socially just and ecologically sustainable energy future,

TUED considers the potential of renewable sources of power and the possibilities of reorganising energy systems in centralised and decentralised ways. Inviting unions to envision new ways of producing and organising energy in society, TUED for example also proposes for unions to rethink their interventions in, and control over, global supply chains in order to ensure regional job creation and social benefits through new renewable energy supplies in both centralised and decentralised energy systems (Sweeney, 2013).

Framing Trade Union Narratives for Energy Democracy

Through "Resist! Reclaim! Restructure!" TUED develops a distinct and coherent trade unionist narrative towards energy democracy. While attempting to provide an overarching narrative for unions in all sectors to pursue energy democracy demands through the "Resist! Reclaim! Restructure!" framework, TUED also acknowledges that unions in different sectors, regions and states have differing needs and capacities towards energy transitions (Sweeney, 2013). Its understanding of energy democracy builds on the UNFCCC's framework of 'common but differentiated responsibility' (CBDR), which is utilised to stress the need for energy democracy to acknowledge and attempt to overcome global inequalities: "*Energy democracy* must strive to express the concerns and interests of the working class in countries within an internationalist framework that aims to transcend economic nationalism" (Sweeney, 2013: 30, emphasis in original). Nevertheless, TUED calls on all unions in all sectors and regions to rethink their approach to energy and climate issues and become involved in shaping a more democratic energy future:

> "The entire trade union movement must acknowledge that the effort to change the energy system is a *shared responsibility* and not just the responsibility of the energy unions or unions representing carbon-intensive sectors like industry, transport and agriculture" (Sweeney, 2013: 31, emphasis in original)

TUED's energy democracy narrative is decisively anti-privatisation and anti-neoliberal, and offers public and social ownership and democratic control over energy systems as an alternative strategy for the trade union movement (Sweeney, 2013; 2014). Throughout their Working Papers, the network thoroughly criticises green capitalist and ecological modernisation discourses, and exposes the green growth discourse at multi-lateral governance levels as false solutions (Sweeney, 2013; 2014; 2016a; Sweeney & Treat, 2017a) as will be discussed in more depth in following sections. The previously discussed

development of energy democracy as a demand in Laclau's (2007) sense, and as an effective equivalential relation, was possible because TUED has successfully defined itself again the dominant 'green growth' narratives of existing environmental politics as well as labour circles, and has furthermore aligned its alternative narrative and vision around energy democracy and public ownership with like-minded actors, networks and organisations.

TUED's particular energy democracy narrative and set of demands, the "Resist! Reclaim! Restructure!" framework, has thus created the basis for equivalential relations between actors based around energy democracy demands. In the case of TUED, a range of actors are linked by the chain of equivalence around energy democracy and public ownership as alternative politics as well as a chain of equivalence in opposition to green growth narratives in the energy sector. These actors include the different unions who are part of the network but are based in different sectors as well as spatial contexts, the organisations who hold official partnership with TUED, that is RLS, GLI and CUNY, as well as organisations in left politics and environmental movements who draw on and collaborate with TUED, including policy and research organisations such as TNI and ETUI, as well as environmental groups such as 350.org or LN4S.

The TUED Working Papers: Content, Reach and Readership

> "I think what we started off with, the *analysis*, I think it is extremely important to have it, and there is probably even room to grow still... to show people alternatives. And I think this is extremely needed, not only now – under Trump, that's especially important here in the US – but worldwide. […] [We do] not just say "climate change is happening" but there is already the knowledge out there to do things differently. […] I think this is where TUED can – and where it already does play and important role because it *does* show that there is this link between labour and climate and it is possible, it is *doable*." (Interview quote from Stefanie Ehmsen, (then) Co-Director of RLS-NYC, New York City, March 2017)

Since the publication of "Resist! Reclaim! Restructure!" (Sweeney, 2013), TUED has become one of the foremost knowledge producers on climate and energy issues from a trade union perspective through producing in-depth analysis of key issues in their published working papers. There are eleven working papers to date (see Table 5.1 below),

(Mathews, Barria & Roy, 2016; Shah & Sweeney, 2016; Sweeney, 2014; 2015a; 2015b; 2016a; Sweeney, Benton-Connell & Skinner, 2015; Sweeney & Skinner, 2014; Sweeney & Treat, 2017a; 2017b; 2018), which are all informed by the "Resist! Reclaim! Restructure!" narrative and cover a wide range of topics across energy and climate politics. The analyses put forward through the working papers focus on structural as well as material issues such as climate change policies, carbon markets, and transition politics, as well as discussions of the implications of fossil fuel extraction for example in form of shale gas, hydraulic fracking and carbon capture and storage technologies. Their aim is to provide unions with facts and in-depth materials to develop well-informed positions on issues of resource extraction and energy generation as well as ownership, and decision-making structures.

As can be seen in Table 5.1, the papers are published two to three times a year and are authored by TUED's global coordinator Sean Sweeney, who has been involved in writing all the papers with the exception of Working Paper 8, which was proposed and written by India's New Trade Union Initiative (NTUI) and is thus the first TUED working paper to be contributed by a participating member union from the global South. Drawing on arguments put forward in the last section of the previous chapter, this is an important development for TUED as member unions become actively involved and are beginning to identify with the project more strongly. However, as will be discussed more in the next chapter, download figures from RLS-NYC also show that Working Paper 8 is the least read paper, perhaps hinting at how important Sean's analysis in particular is for the unions who read them, again relating to previous discussions around the importance of both 'bridge brokers' (Hess, 2018) and 'imagineers' (e.g. Routledge *et al*, 2013) in fairly young movements. This discussion will again be picked up in the next chapter. The three most recent papers, Working Papers 9, 10 and 11, have been co-authored by John Treat, who joined TUED in 2016 to support Sean's growing workload, and is Special Initiatives Coordinator at the International Program for Labor, Environment and Climate (IPLCE) at the City University of New York. While the papers are authored by Sean, and increasingly also John, TUED's partner the Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung's New York Office (RLS-NYC) is responsible for the editing and formatting of the working papers as well as providing it with a distinct 'TUED look', which lends credibility to the project (see Figure 5.1 below).

Table 5.1. Publication details of the TUED Working Papers.

	Title	*Date*	*Author(s)*
1	Global Shale Gas and the Anti-Fracking Movement: Developing Union Perspectives and Approaches	2014	Sean Sweeney & Lara Skinner
2	Climate Change and the Great Inaction: New Trade Union Perspectives	2014	Sean Sweeney
3	Energy Democracy in Greece: SYRIZA's Program and the Transition to Renewable Power	2015	Sean Sweeney
4	Power to the People: Toward Democratic Control of Electricity Generation	2015	Sean Sweeney, Kylie Benton-Connell & Lara Skinner
5	The Hard Facts about Coal: Why Trade Unions Should Re-evaluate their Support for Carbon Capture and Storage	2015	Sean Sweeney
6	Carbon Markets After Paris: Trading in Trouble	2016	Sean Sweeney
7	An Illness to One is the Concern of All: The Health Impacts of Rising Fossil Fuel Use	2016	Svati Shah & Sean Sweeney
8	Up from Development: A Framework for Energy Transition in India	2016	Rohan Mathews, Susana Barria & Ashim Roy
9	Energy Transition: Are We Winning?	2017	Sean Sweeney & John Treat
10	Preparing a Public Pathway: Confronting the Investment Crisis in Renewable Energy	2017	Sean Sweeney & John Treat
11	Trade Unions and Just Transition: The Search for a Transformative Politics	2018	Sean Sweeney & John Treat

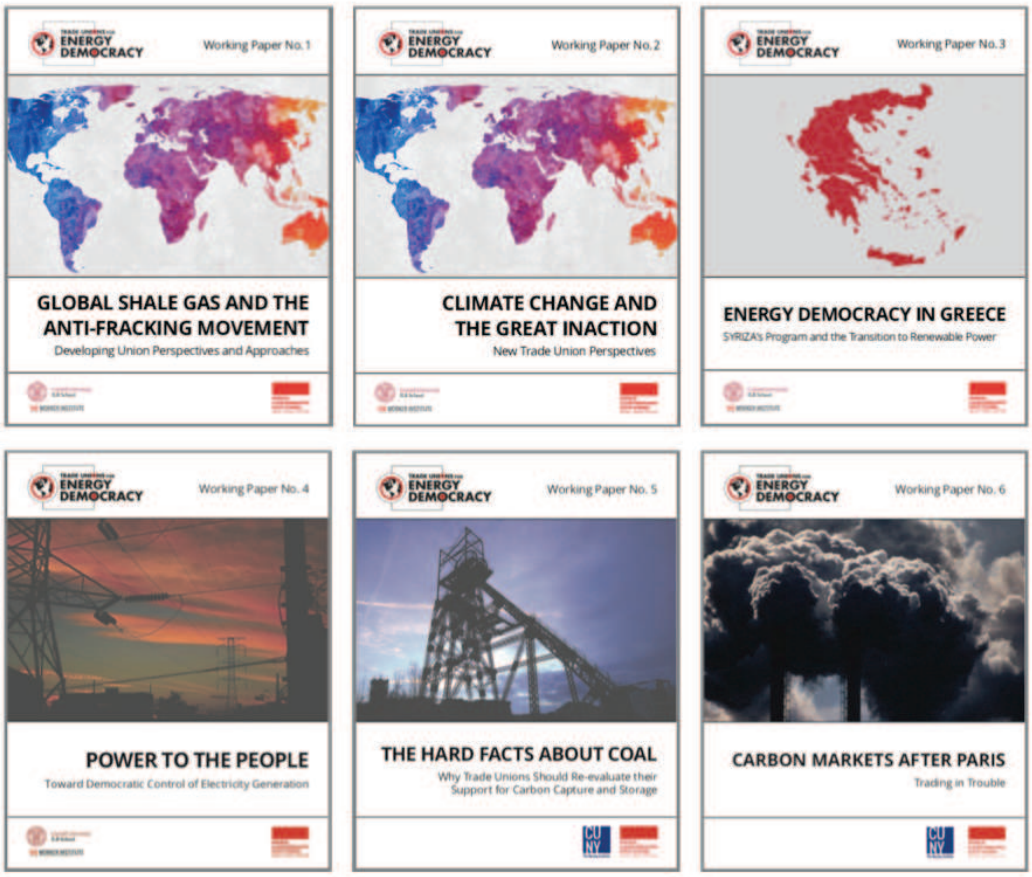

Figure 5.1. The "TUED look": The Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung provides staff hours and resources for editing and formatting as well as creating a distinct public face for TUED's materials and outputs.

Upon publication the working papers are available on the TUED website, alongside a summary of their contents. The papers are usually announced and advertised in the TUED newsletter, the 'TUED Bulletin', which is sent out via email to anyone signed up to the mailing list. New working papers are usually also introduced and summarised during TUED's Global Advisory Group (GAG) calls, bi-monthly web-calls with TUED unions where new developments are discussed. Due to the nature of their topics, the working papers are also fairly technical and often extensive in length in order to introduce and discuss all aspects of a chosen topic. TUED's coordinators and partners are aware that the material, while presenting an invaluable resource to unions and itself being a key outcome of the project, is not accessible to all audiences and will most likely only be read by a few key union officers who are specifically working on environmental and climate change topics in their unions. The TUED project coordinators at RLS-NYC both acknowledge that the immediate reach of the working papers is limited, yet stress the importance of investing in high-quality analysis and materials overall:

> "Yeah, I think the analysis of TUED is primarily coming from the working papers, which are excellent and fill this gap of important resources, but they do have a relatively limited audience of people who, you know, are... are going to have the capacity and *time* to read them and this is going to be senior staffers of union and things like that. It might not even be elected leaders that have the time to engage with the forty page report on carbon trading or something like that." (Interview quote from James Hare, (then) Project Manager for TUED at RLS-NYC, New York City, March 2017)

> "It is somehow natural that the working papers do not reach such a broad audience because of the nature of how they are written *but* they are of course very important for those who *do* read them because it gives them the background to argue with – so that's not an either-or, that's both equally important and it helps shaping the credibility of the project." (Interview quote from Stefanie Ehmsen, (then) Co-Director of RLS-NYC, New York City, March 2017)

However, while download figures and 'immediate' readership might be low, TUED's narrative and analysis is already becoming more influential and more strongly anchored in union, and as argued below, wider social movement contexts, and have been key to forming equivalential relations between TUED and its movement allies (see: Laclau,

2007). As shown in the last chapter, TUED's narrative is increasingly used among unions, such as a recent report by the public sector union Public and Commercial Services union (PCS) (Mason, 2017), which draws directly on published TUED materials. The previous chapter also explored how TUED's narrative and analysis was increasingly utilised in wider trade union and left political contexts, evident in TUED unions' involvement in passing a British Trade Union Congress (TUC) motion to support the British Labour Party's Manifesto on public ownership of energy (Labour Manifesto, 2017; TUC, 2017). While being able to demonstrate some impact in union and wider leftist discourses, TUED's coordinators were also happy to report that the analysis was increasingly picked up by movement and policy allies, most notably the Transnational Institute (TNI), an international research institute based in Amsterdam, The Netherlands, with a commitment to building a just, democratic and sustainable world (TNI, WWWa):

> "With TNI, it's because they are into the energy democracy space now, they are really into it, and they have actually looked at TUED as paving the way – I didn't realise until I talked to Daniel [Daniel Chavez, TNI fellow] how much they had actually used the analysis." (Interview quote from Sean Sweeney, Global Coordinator of TUED, New York City, April 2017)

The expanding reach of the materials and their narrative and analysis is also important for TUED's wider coalition and movement building efforts, as John Treat highlights below. While TUED understand itself to be a network of unions and labour organisations primarily (Interviews with James Hare, Sean Sweeney & John Treat, March and April 2017), the presence and involvement of policy and movement allies was always welcome at events and TUED recognises the need to build alliances outwith the labour movement (Sweeney, 2013; 2014). However, as John reflects below, having strong analysis and narrative in published materials is important to identify the 'right kind' of allies. Below, John reflects on alliance-building efforts with the international environmentalist organisation 350.org, (also referred to as 350):

> "I think the pressing questions right now are still around the analysis. And in part because that's how we will kind of be able to identify the right allies outside of the labour movement – both inside, but maybe more importantly outside – like this conversation we are having with 350 right now. I mean that kind of stuff is really big because those bridges have to be built on some point, but they gotta be built with the

right people, around the right analysis and we've gotta have a strong enough analysis so that you don't have to worry about getting pulled in the wrong direction by a big institutional barge that's headed down a particular route – that isn't the right route (laughs) You've gotta be – I mean 350 is *huge* compared to us and we actually have to pull them in a different direction. And the only way you do that is by being right and having the evidence that you're right (laughs) so that's a long roundabout answer to your question..." (Interview quote from John Treat, Special Initiatives Coordinator at IPLCE, New York City, April 2017)

Narrative Development through Working Papers and Events

While "Resist! Reclaim! Restructure!" remains the central narrative of the TUED network and, as such, continues to provide a unifying bracket for the unions involved, the network's main arguments have been developed in the more recent working papers, gaining more analytical depth on the false solutions of multi-lateral governance and green economy discourses as well as more conceptual strength around their call for public ownership. This section discusses the development of TUED's energy economy narrative and the network's critique of green growth. To exemplify how its narrative has evolved over the years, TUED's critique of green economy discourses and the inevitability of transition is explored through their working papers, drawing on Working Papers 6 (Sweeney, 2016a, "Carbon Markets After Paris: Trading in Trouble") and 9 (Sweeney & Treat, 2017a, "Energy Transition: Are We Winning?") in particular. This analysis of TUED's narrative development across the working papers is supported by ethnographic material from field visits, which provides insight into member unions debates and discussions on the green economy, energy trends, and the inevitability of transition.

Questioning the Inevitability of Transition

While TUED's emergence is clearly related to trade unions' discontent with the lack of both analysis and narrative on climate change and energy transition from within the labour movement, TUED's critiques of contemporary transition efforts have become more refined over the past five years. Moving from a more general rejection of the green economy in Working Paper 2 to more specific criticisms of policies such as carbon trading and an in-depth analysis of energy trends in Working Papers 6 and 9 respectively, TUED has

critically engaged with questions around energy policy, energy transition, and the green economy. In the second Working Paper, "Climate Change and the Great Inaction: New Trade Union Perspectives" (Sweeney, 2014), TUED for example criticises green economy discourses and clearly distances itself from labour movement positions and partnerships, such as the Green Jobs Initiative composed of UNEP, ILO, IOE and ITUC, which endorse a green growth agenda. Rejecting the green growth position of the Green Jobs Initiative, TUED argues that if trade unions are actually committed to the scientific findings of the IPCC and want to see real changes towards emission reductions another approach to energy transition is necessary:

> "The full implications of a science-based agenda calls for a *different set of solutions* that go beyond the green economy framework as understood by UNEP and the ILO. […] It is time to reject the illusion that a new phase of green capitalist accumulation is what is either likely or required." (Sweeney, 2014: 12, emphasis in original)

TUED furthermore points out that the concept of ecological modernisation, which relies on scarcity and/or environmental concerns to dictate market behaviour, is intrinsically flawed. Despite fossil fuels, such as oil and gas, running out, fossil fuel companies remain among the most profitable corporations on the planet and find ever more extreme ways to extract fossil fuels, for example in the Canadian Tar Sands or through deep-sea drilling in the Arctic. It seems that rather than encourage ecological modernisation and sustainability, the scarcity of fossil fuels and the environmental costs of the damage induced by their extraction, generation and use advance ecological destruction instead (Sweeney, 2014).

Building on this earlier, more general opposition to discourses of green growth and ecological modernisation, TUED's later working papers more specifically deconstruct policy elements of the UN's green capitalist policies, which continue to be supported by international labour bodies, such as ITUC and ILO (as discussed previously). In this context, Working Paper 6, "Carbon Markets After Paris: Trading in Trouble" (Sweeney, 2016a), shows the failures and shortcomings of emission trading schemes as primary policy tools of a green economy, while Working Paper 9, "Energy Transition: Are We Winning?" (Sweeney & Treat, 2017a), takes an in-depth look at past, current and future energy trends by critically reviewing major reports and studies, and further rejects narratives of green growth and the inevitability of transition as false optimism. Working Paper 6 (Sweeney, 2016a) provides an overview of carbon markets, assesses the future of emission trading in the context of the 2015 Paris Agreement, and problematises the heavy

reliance on market mechanisms in the agreement itself. The paper also addresses some of the existing debates within the European trade union movement on carbon trading in the context of the underperformance of the European Union Emission Trading System (EU ETS). While acknowledging that the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) has attempted to reform the carbon market in the past through proposing structural changes such as the introduction of a carbon tax for imported goods from non-carbon priced countries to combat 'carbon leakage' (describing the effect of the relocation of carbon-intensive industries to regions where the carbon prices are lower or non-existent), TUED criticises that ETUC remains supportive of the EU ETS overall (see e.g.: ETUC, 2013; ETUC, 2015). The paper concludes by urging unions in all sectors to reject the neoliberal logics of emission trading markets. TUED stresses that the failure of carbon markets to meet emission reduction targets given by scientists from the IPCC is a sign that neoliberal policy tools, such as trading carbon credits and 'incentivising' green growth, are not sufficient to affect a large-scale transition to a renewable and sustainable energy system. Instead, TUED pushes for "a fundamental shift […] toward direct government-led interventions aimed at democratizing and reorienting the main economic and financial institutions [and to] manage the energy transition in ways that are democratic, equitable and ultimately effective" (Sweeney, 2016a: 16-17).

Based on the critique of carbon markets and emission trading as policy tools in Working Paper 6, Working Paper 9 deconstructs and discusses energy trends and examines how they have been utilised to further the green economy agenda. TUED critically explores how recent trends such as falling coal consumption, falling fossil fuel investments, rising renewable energy deployment and slowing global energy demand have prompted exclamations of optimism towards the inevitability of a large-scale low-carbon energy transition from proponents of green growth. Through analysing the studies, on which the above trends are based, TUED shows that while the trends are not 'wrong', they are significantly taken out of context by green growth enthusiasts such as leading economist Nicholas Stern, former US presidential candidate and environmentalist Al Gore as well as some major environmentalist organisations such as Greenpeace, who have variously declared that the end of fossil fuels is near and a transition to a renewable, low-carbon energy future inevitable (see: The Climate Group, 2015; Lapowsky, 2016; Naidoo, 2015). TUED stresses the dangers of the misplaced optimism of a "we are winning" message and highlights how a misrepresentation of recent energy trends by green growth actors becomes both politically disarming and ultimately ineffectual for those trying to truly move beyond fossil fuels. Instead of joining the optimistic choir and continue with a

green growth business-as-usual despite its various failures, TUED thus proposes to focus on a programmatic shift and radical restructuring of the energy system by promoting public ownership and democratic control as a 'real solution' to reduce energy demand, phase out fossil fuels and increase renewable deployment (Sweeney & Treat, 2017a).

Taken together, the two working papers provide unions in the network with a wealth of facts and figures to make well-informed decisions on energy and climate policy, and to combat the notion that growth can be effectively decoupled from emissions. The question of growth is central to the future of energy systems and the types of ownership and control that unions demand for them. According to Anabella Rosemberg (2013), (then) policy officer at the ITUC, the ITUC sees two options for future demands around economic growth – green growth or no growth. As an organisation, the ITUC is sceptical of post and no growth narratives and continues to push for green economy demands alongside their 'just transition' efforts. While accepting that green growth demands are often lacking social responsibility, the ITUC nevertheless supports green growth for their environmental policy base:

> "If 'green growth' advocates are not always 'socially responsive', there still is an inherent benefit in taking part in a 'green economy' debate. By doing so, we can hope to define what kind of 'green economy' we want by making sure that social justice and job potential aspects are addressed" (Rosemberg, 2013: 23)

The TUED network acknowledges that both 'just transition' and the push for green jobs in the new economy are important demands, however, TUED also notes that these ideas rely on the inherent inevitability of an energy transition. In other words, pushing for a just transition is only a good strategy if the transition is actually happening. Working Papers 6 and 9 importantly deconstruct some of the assumptions around the inevitability of transition and question the effectiveness of current, neoliberal policy tools such as carbon trading and off-setting. This in-depth, critical analysis of energy policy and the unpacking of energy trends provides unions in the TUED network with the knowledge and facts to propose an alternative to green growth policies. The failure of neoliberal energy markets, as shown particularly strongly in Working Papers 6 and 9, strengthens TUED's calls for public ownership and control over the energy system. Through questioning the inevitability of transition, TUED further challenges the current, profit-driven ownership system, which drives the continued extraction of fossil fuels and extreme energy agendas (Sweeney & Treat, 2017a). By advocating for public and social ownership, TUED essentially proposes

a ‘third’ option next to ITUC’s “green versus no growth” dichotomy. Drawing on trade union history in economic democracy, mutualism, and worker cooperatives, TUED proposes a transitional and transformative approach to system change and a new ownership structure which, when managed by the public and publicly-accountable agencies, can reduce energy demand, sensibly scale-up renewables, and phase out fossil fuels responsibly, that is, with a consideration for fossil fuel workers, communities and regions (Sweeney & Treat, 2017a).

TUED’s narrative development, from a more general critique of the green economy in the framing statement (Sweeney, 2013) and the earlier working papers to a more specific critique of green growth policies such as carbon trading as well as a thorough unpacking of recent energy trends, is also indicative of an internal learning curve within the TUED network. As discussed in the last chapter, TUED has become an important alternative knowledge producer on climate and energy issues for the labour movement over the past years, and is now recognised within and beyond the union movement for producing factual, critical, and highly informative reports and working papers on climate change and environmental issues. TUED’s learning curve in the production of its materials goes hand in hand with the discussions and debates that take place when the network meets up in its yearly strategy meetings as well as during web calls and at events, an argument which will be central to the next chapter. The main events during which the network discussed findings from Working Paper 9 and preliminary findings from the (then) upcoming Working Paper 10, “Preparing a Public Pathway: Confronting the Investment Crisis in Renewable Energy” (Sweeney & Treat, 2017b), were a 2-day conference on Long Island as well as a 2-day strategic meeting, called the Pocantico Retreat, in upstate New York in April 2017 during my main fieldworking period. Both of these events will be introduced in more depth in the following chapter of this thesis, where the significance of the meetings for the movement building efforts of the TUED network will be explored. However, to show an example of narrative building and development during meetings, the remainder of this chapter discusses the example of the TUED and IPLCE “Leadership Immersion” event held in New York City during my first research visit.

Climate Science and Capitalist Critique at the TUED & IPLCE Climate Leadership Immersion

While the next chapter explores TUED’s networking dynamics and movement building

efforts at their meetings in more depth, at this point it is useful to highlight some of the reactions from US-based unions to Working Paper 9, "Energy Transition: Are We Winning?" (Sweeney & Treat, 2017a) to illustrate how unions in different positions are engaging with TUEDs narrative. Preliminary findings of Working Paper 9 were already presented during an event titled "Climate Leadership Immersion for Union Officers and Staff", which is run biannually by TUED's institutional arm, the International Program for Labor, Climate and Environment (IPLCE) at the City University of New York (CUNY) and facilitated by TUED staff with financial and in-kind support from CUNY. I attended the second Climate Leadership Immersion event in 2016 during the field visit to New York City, USA. The Immersion took place on November 30th and December 1st, 2016 and was held in the TUED/IPLCE offices in CUNY's Murphy Institute on 25 West 43rd Street in Midtown Manhattan. The Immersion was attended by 12 US-based unions who had altogether sent over 20 union officers and staff. Participation was mixed across sectors, including communication workers, nurses and health care professionals, transport workers, and public sector and civil service employees. Climate Leadership Immersions are attended by both TUED participating and non-participating unions. For the unions not participating in TUED, the Immersions offer an opportunity to train their officers and staff on climate and transition issues, familiarise themselves with TUED's work when considering to join the TUED network, or simply learn more about climate change and energy issues from a labour movement perspective. At the Winter 2016 Immersion, seven out of the 12 unions attending were already part of the TUED network (see Tables 5.2 and 5.3 for an overview of attending unions and their constituencies). The five unions not (yet) in the TUED network were Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance (APALA), Civil Service Employees Association (CSEA & CSEA LCLAA), Communication Workers of America (CWA Local 1102), District Council 37/ American Federation of State, Country and Municipal Employees (DC 37 AFSCME), and Transport Workers Union (TWU Local 100).

Table 5.2. Participation of TUED unions in the Climate Leadership Immersion, 30 November - 1 December 2016, at the City University of New York, USA.

	Union Name		*Representing*
TUED Member Unions	1199SEIU	1199 Service Employees International Union United Healthcare Workers East	Medical Professionals (Nurses, Lab Workers, Clerks, Dietary Workers, Pharmacists, Social Workers)
	BMWED-IBT	Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employes Division of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters	Maintenance of Way and Railroad Workers, Teamsters (Truck Drivers)
	GEU-UAW Local 6950	University of Connecticut (UConn) Graduate Employee Union, United Auto Workers	Graduate, Teaching, and Research Assistants at UConn
	NYSNA	New York State Nurses Association	Registered Nurses
	PSC AFT	Professional Staff Congress, American Federation of Teachers	Higher Education and Professional Teaching Staff
	UE	United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America	(Mainly) Manufacturing, Metalwork, Plastics, Warehouse, and Distribution Workers
	UNITE HERE	Merger of Union of Needletrades, Industrial, and Textile Employees (UNITE) and Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees Union (HERE)	Hotel, Gaming, Food Service, Textile, Laundry & Manufacturing, Airport, and Transportation Workers

Table 5.3. Participation of non-TUED unions in the Climate Leadership Immersion, 30 November - 1 December 2016, at the City University of New York, USA.

	Union Name		*Representing*
Non-TUED Unions	APALA	Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance	Asian American and Pacific Islander Workers
	CSEA AFSCME	Civil Service Employees Association, American Federation of State, Country and Municipal Employees	State and Local Government, School District, and Child Care Workers
	CWA	Communication Workers of America	Telecommunication, Information Technology, Airline, News Media, Broadcast & Cable Television, Law Enforcement Workers
	DC37/AFSCME	District Council 37/ American Federation of State, Country and Municipal Employees	Public Employees (Care, Maintenance, Public Services, Judicial, Administrative)
	TWU	Transport Workers Union	Airline, Railroad, Transit, University, Utility, Service and Gaming Workers

The 2-day Climate Leadership Immersions are designed to introduce union officers and staff to critical questions around energy transitions, climate change and environmental challenges. The 2016 Immersion that I attended began with a session titled "Climate Science Today", which summarised the main findings of the scientific community around climate and environmental change, explained evidence, impacts and projections, and gave union participants the opportunity to ask questions throughout. The session was presented by guest speaker Robert Howarth, who is David R. Atkinson Professor of Ecology and Environmental Biology at Cornell University. The TUED network makes an effort to invite climate scientists as well as social and policy movement allies to their meetings and events, including the Climate Leadership Immersions. The rationale behind inviting scientists like Howarth and linking trade union perspectives on climate change to the wider scientific, policy, and environmental justice communities, was discussed in a briefing session I attended with the Immersion organisers prior the event. TUED staff argued that by inviting experts, as well as individuals and organisations who are already working on climate issues from a social justice perspective, unionists get a sense that they do not have to face the climate crisis alone (Observational notes, Climate Leadership Immersion, December 2016). The organisers are aware that the science and arguments with which unionists are confronted during the Climate Leadership Immersions can seem highly technical, overwhelmingly negative, or even insurmountable for a movement that has, to date, little engagement with climate change and environmental issues (see also: Hulme, 2010). Bringing people like Howarth in, and actively building alliances with like-minded organisations, such as 350.org and the Transnational Institute, can build confidence, and ultimately strengthen the unions' positions. During the Immersion, the worry of many participating unionists was that they cannot make convincing arguments for climate action in the face of scepticism or 'denial science', however, knowing that there are sympathetic climate scientists like Howarth, who can provide them and their members with resources and explanations, was encouraging to many. Furthermore, through building and maintaining contacts with renowned climate scientists like Howarth, the TUED network and its organisers, as well as their host for the Climate Leadership Immersion, CUNY, clearly signal an interest to appeal to science. This appeal to science in turn shapes TUED's legitimacy as an 'alternative' knowledge producer for the labour movement as discussed in the last chapter, through consciously linking climate science to the experiences of unionists and workers in both their workplaces and day to day lives (Wainwright, 2018; Hulme, 2010).

A subsequent session, presented by John Treat of TUED, linked the scientific information from the first session to the financial structures governing the global energy economy. Based on preliminary findings of Working Paper 9 ("Energy Transitions: Are We Winning?", Sweeney & Treat, 2017a), the second session examined energy trends and unpacked claims around emission reductions, renewable energy deployment and energy demand. The unionists' distrust of neoliberal policy and capitalist profit-thinking helped many to understand and share the critique of green growth and the green economy which is put forward by TUED through its working papers and John Treat's analysis during the session. There was a sense in the room that the labour movement, with its class analysis and longstanding critique of capitalist power relations, has an important voice to add to the fight against climate change and the green growth discourses that govern climate policy at the global level (Observational notes, Climate Leadership Immersion, December 2016). The labour movement's inherent suspicion of capitalist growth narratives, which many felt that predominantly environmental narratives lack, was strategically mobilised by the organisers to highlight the need for an independent trade union approach to climate issues that does not rely on the interests the oil and gas lobby or environmental organisations that prioritise the environment over social justice.

Attending the Immersion event was part of my research visit with TUED in November 2016, and my initial notes from the meeting centre around the importance of engaging workers' "realities and experiences" as well as exploring their "terms of engagement" (Observational notes, Climate Leadership Immersion, December 2016). This was partly based on the way the topics and issues were discussed and how narratives were framed by and through TUED, but also on the reactions from unionists that followed in the discussions. To illustrate, workers from the TUED union Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employes Division of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters (BMWED-IBT), who had come up from Philadelphia and all worked in majority menial labour sectors, shared their experience of their recent struggle as part of a coalition called "Green Justice Philly" (GJP; Green Justice Philly, WWWa), which opposed the building of additional fossil fuel infrastructure to transport Canadian and US oil and gas through Philadelphia's port. Speaking on their motivations to join the campaign the BMWED workers drew on concerns around community and family health, based on their union's workers' health records and the impact on families and communities in Philadelphia as well as along the supply line. This connection to environmental justice concerns that include and go beyond the BMWED workers' workplace also links back to earlier discussions around the Lucas Plan and worker-led re-assessments and re-alignment of the 'social usefulness' of their

work and skill sets (Wainwright & Elliott, 1982). Equally, representatives from the non-TUED union Transport Workers Union (TWU), which represents New York City transport workers among others, shared that during the damage assessment works following Hurricane Sandy in 2012 even their oldest and most experienced workers were shocked at the levels of flooding in the NYC subway tunnels and began critically engaging with the extreme weather events they witnessed and the implications this has for their workplaces and communities. On one level, these experience-based anecdotes, or tacit knowledges (Wainwright, 2018) help individual workers connect their realities to more abstract climate science (see also: Hulme, 2010) and are thus important testimonies for labour environmentalist narratives and movement efforts. On a higher level, through sharing, these testimonies also provide experience-based examples for workers who might not have first-hand experiences of energy and climate emergencies but who trust and respect their comrades' assessments and utilise it to mobilise in their own workplaces and communities (see also literatures on grassroots leadership in trade union renewal debates, e.g. Moody, 1997; Waterman, 2001).

Conclusion

In this chapter, I introduced TUED's founding narrative, "Resist! Reclaim! Restructure!", which presented a novel, 'vacuum-filling' framing of energy democracy and radical trade union environmentalism to the labour movement. I have explained how the narrative emerged out of a particular and strongly perceived gap in some parts of the labour movement on energy and climate issues. The chapter explores how, amidst growing disillusionment with green growth narratives and multilateral climate politics, the lack of response from the international labour movement as well as the inability of the US labour movement to stand united in the face of social and environmental struggles over energy and climate policy, TUED successfully offered the "Resist! Reclaim! Restructure!" framework which appeals to progressive parts of the labour movement by its sound analysis and alternatives offered. Following this contextualisation, I introduced TUED's first Working Paper, the network's framing statement, which promotes energy democracy as a solution to the climate crisis from a trade union and workers perspective, and discussed its three strategic aspects, resist, reclaim, and restructure, in turn. Subsequently, I introduced the TUED Working Papers in more depth and reflected on their content, reach and readership, highlighting the papers' importance for the network as a way to shape, strengthen, and spread the TUED narrative.

The chapter argues that while "Resist! Reclaim! Restructure!" remains the central narrative of the TUED network and continues to provide a unifying bracket for the unions involved, the core narrative has been developed in the more recent working papers, gaining both analytical depth and critical conceptualisation of energy democracy and a critique of green growth as explored in the third section of this chapter. I have shown that TUED developed a sustained critique of contemporary transition efforts, both at multi-lateral governance levels as well as within the trade union and labour movement, by critically questioned the inevitability of transition efforts. TUED's critique, not just of 'green' growth but also of green jobs as well as just transition narratives, which are commonly seen as progressive in both the labour and environmental movements, fundamentally challenges neoliberal and/or status quo-aligned narratives on energy, climate and environment.

The development and strengthening of TUED's narrative can also be seen during TUED meetings, such as the Leadership Immersion discussed above. The science-based approach that TUED takes in its Working Papers, which are factual and show evidence of extensive reading, could also be observed in the Immersion as the organisers had invited climate scientist Robert Howarth as a guest speaker. This appeal to science is interesting as it serves two purposes; firstly, as discussed above, Howarth is introduced as an ally to unions who can help them shape their analysis and prepare arguments to for example counter climate change deniers. Secondly, by appealing to science, TUED aims to gain legitimacy and seriousness as an alternative knowledge producer for the trade union movement. The TUED network presents an interesting node for the intersection of different knowledges, as scientific knowledges are effectively combined with tacit knowledges shared by workers and unionists during events as was discussed in the last section. Equally, a development of TUED's narrative can also be seen around recent political developments towards for example public ownership, especially in the United Kingdom, to which TUED and its narrative on the democratisation of energy have contributed. Here, applying Laclau's (2007) arguments of how demands are articulated and become part of equivalential relations helps to explore how TUED's political narratives have developed. For example, TUED has been holding events with British unions and organising meetings with Shadow ministers of the British Labour Party over the past two years. Recent developments coming out of these meetings include a commitment to public ownership of energy in the Labour Party's Manifesto, "For the Many Not the Few"; as well as a vote by the British Trade Union Congress to unanimously support the Labour

Manifesto on public energy ownership. TUED's movement building efforts will also be the subject of the next, and final, empirical chapter.

CHAPTER 6
MOVEMENT BUILDING FOR ENERGY DEMOCRACY: A TRADE UNION PERSPECTIVE

Having explored the emergence, evolution, as well as narrative development of Trade Unions for Energy Democracy, this third, and last, empirical chapter critically reflects on the network's movement building dynamics. To provide a holistic picture, I begin by re-engaging with TUED's founding narrative, which was originally introduced in chapter four and explored in more depth in chapter five. In order to develop these arguments further for this chapter, I reflect on the impact of choosing the "Resist! Reclaim! Restructure!" narrative on TUED's movement building efforts in the first section. The section also explores TUED's efforts to 'spread the word' and growing the network's membership, and in this context, introduces and reflects on the choice of materials and resources produced and disseminated by TUED, including the TUED video, the network's website, and the working papers. The second section of this chapter then advances these discussions to examine how the network builds movement and connects its members. This section explores TUED's different practices of staying in touch with its member unions which includes the Global Advisory Group calls, travelling and conferencing activities of the TUED organisers, as well as the annual meetings of the network to discuss strategy or regional issues in person. In this context, I also discuss how the network has differently utilised two key events in 2017, the Long Island Conference and Pocantico Retreat, to grow their network and build their movement respectively. The section also discusses the importance of 'social' time during events to build connections, trust and comradeship.

Finally, the third section of this chapter turns to the process of regionalisation as a key movement building strategy for the TUED network. I draw on previous discussions around member unions taking more ownership of the project and the development of a network of imagineers (Routledge *et al*, 2013) to explore the movement dynamics of the Geneva and London Meetings in 2017 and 2018 respectively. I also highlight that regionalisation has so far been accompanied by a diversification of actors, meaning that both the Geneva Meeting, but mainly the London Meeting, involved a range of 'new' allies and political parties. In this section, I thus explore what a strategy of diversification and regionalisation can mean for TUED. Overall, in this chapter I explore how the TUED network has differently utilised its events, conferences and retreats to fulfil different aims and objective and to challenge neoliberal politics of scale in the energy sector.

From Narrative Development to Movement Building

Establishing a Core Group around "Resist! Reclaim! Restructure!"

While the "Resist! Reclaim! Restructure!" narrative that came out of the roundtable event now unites participating unions within the project and lends direction to TUED's work, it also proved to be a self-selecting tool, both during the roundtable and before TUED's launch in 2013. James Hare, (then) project manager for TUED at the Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung's New York Office (RLS-NYC) stresses:

> "Sean had been doing work for years cultivating this community and he brought in many people but then it also set a wide net. Seventy-something people came? From 18 countries... I mean it was almost as broad as the project is now, but not as specific. And it wasn't – not everyone fit the project who came to that discussion. So I mean there was this self-selecting basically – the people who bought into the "Resist, Reclaim, Restructure" analysis that was introduced at that meeting signed up for TUED and continued and that is the original, sort of, *core group.* And I think *from there* you then have a certain linear growth but […] - there was initially a very broad net cast out and... there was some self-selection there." (Interview quote from James Hare, (then) Project Manager for TUED at RLS-NYC, New York City, March 2017)

Instead of opting for larger numbers and a potentially more mainstream message, the TUED coordinators and unions that eventually signed up to the project decided to prioritise a more radical message, which resulted in some self-selecting during and after the founding event in New York City in late 2012. However, the core group that shares an ideological commitment to the project, which manifested itself from the initial meeting in 2013, has remained in place over the years and has since grown into a well-connected network of unions. With this core group in place, TUED has managed to grow further as a network through word of mouth as well as by spreading their message via their produced resources and materials, such as the network's website, video and working papers, which will be explored in more depth later on. In terms of movement building dynamics, the self-selection around a more radical message offers both possibilities and challenges. While small in the beginning, and still not representative of the union movement as a whole, TUED has always been a diverse network and representative of a variety of sectors and constituencies. TUED also represents organisations from different levels of the trade union

movement, including regional and national union centres and global union federations (GUFs) alongside individual unions, which potentially gives the network more weight in the labour movement as a whole. However, the more 'radical' message chosen by the TUED network inevitably alienates more mainstream parts of the labour and trade union movement, for example unions that are comfortable in pursuing a more moderate environmental agenda centred around green growth and green jobs as discussed in more depth in the last chapter (e.g. Rosemberg, 2013).

TUED's preference for a more radical message and a stronger core group is also reflected in the initiative's approach to managing current and future network dynamics. In the below quote, TUED's global coordinator, Sean, reflects on the opportunities offered by constructive conflict and honest debate and discussion, as opposed to unity for unity's sake, especially when unity comes at the expense of critical ideas and action (see also: Mouffe, 2005; Le Queux, 2005; Chatterton *et al*, 2013):

> "There are always going to be people who don't want to – they want to avoid conflict […] and there are those that feel like conflict is absolutely necessary. And we had this debate when I was at Cornell over the Keystone pipeline, colleagues said to me 'why are you advocating premature polarisation?', I said 'how do you know when polarisation is premature? Maybe it's too late'. […] There is nothing wrong with a bit of conflict, now and again, over big issues – and to look the other way in the name of some kind of unity is, ahem, it's – it's not what we need. It's not going to do the job. So I've always felt that the more we openly and sharply debate things, as long as we know what we're trying to do, that would be better." (Interview quote from Sean Sweeney, Global Coordinator of TUED, New York City, April 2017)

It is evident that the TUED network wants to be taken seriously as a transformative political force with strong ideas that can lead to real change. To achieve this, the network has opted for an initially smaller but ideologically closer group and an activist strategy built around a more radical and coherent core message, or demand (Laclau, 2007). In the quote above, as well as in conversations with TUED organisers, it becomes clear that TUED does not see itself as 'just another green initiative'. The unions in the network are not connected by the smallest common denominator, which the coordinators fear leads to an avoidance of critical issues but are instead encouraged to take ownership over the project and advocate for real change. In the context of the wider labour movement, which to many feels like a sleeping giant, this approach of bringing together a strong, core group

of engaged unions to lead by example on the democratisation of the energy sector holds a lot of political potential. Here, the previous discussion on energy democracy as a core demand which holds the potential to create, maintain and develop equivalential relations, both within and beyond the labour movement is again relevant (Laclau, 2007). TUED's analysis enables unions to become educated around energy and climate issues in order to develop their own positions and strategies towards a democratic energy system. The Working Papers, specifically, help 'transfer' these counter-hegemonic ideas across the world, and their knowledge can be adapted and used by unions in various sectors and regions (Peck & Theodore, 2010). This proactive approach to a more radical trade union environmentalism sets TUED and its member unions apart from the mainstream of green initiatives in the labour movement to date.

Spreading the Word: The Video, the Website, and the Working Papers

The TUED network has seen solid growth over the past five years and has established itself as an international trade union initiative. The network has grown to include over 70 unions and has established a recurring presence at events such as the international climate conferences, the COPs, in Paris, Bonn and Katowice (TUED, WWWd; TUED Bulletin 67, 2017; TUED Bulletin 81, 2018) as well as advised in relevant policy discussions, for example in the context of the UK Labour Party's recent policy development towards public ownership or the intensifying debates around public utilities and social ownership over renewables in South Africa (see: TUED Bulletin 75, 2018 and TUED Bulletin 78, 2018 respectively). When reflecting on the growth of the network, the TUED coordinators often refer to the role their materials and resources have played in spreading the word about energy democracy and TUED's cause in the trade union movement and beyond. Materials and resources include the working papers, introduced in more depth in the last empirical chapter, as well as their video and website. Especially the TUED video, published in early 2015, has proven instrumental to attracting interest and enquiries as well as new member unions and movement allies, and has provided existing members with an important resource to utilise in their own educational activities around energy democracy and energy transition politics. The TUED video is a short, five minute long introductory video to both TUED as a trade union network and the "Resist! Reclaim! Restructure!" framework. The video was co-produced by TUED and the Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung New York Office and received financial support from the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development. Made by the artist collective "Meerkat Media", a cooperatively owned and

managed production company, the video has been translated into French, Spanish, German, and Arabic by RLS-NYC. On RLS-NYC's YouTube channel alone the video has over 22,000 views at time of writing (all languages combined) (RLS-NYC YouTube, WWWa).

Titled "This is what energy democracy looks like", the animated video provides a condensed version of TUED's founding document "Resist, Reclaim, Restructure: Unions and the Struggle for Energy Democracy" (Sweeney, 2013 [2012]), which aims to communicate TUED's cause in a concise and engaging format to varyingly informed publics. The video begins with an overview of TUED's critique of the current energy system by contextualising the continued extraction and use of fossil fuels alongside what TUED terms an "energy emergency of global proportions" - rising temperatures, the increasing likelihood and intensity of extreme weather events, and diminishing freshwater supply. The video also uses projections of emissions and global warming to emphasise the need for a transition to clean and renewable energy systems and highlights that emission reductions through energy conservation and the large-scale adaption of renewable power can offer a solution for the global energy emergency. However, TUED also problematises the slow growth of renewable energy, and directly links the insufficient uptake of potential clean power to the profit-making interests of the fossil fuel industry:

> "The current energy system is not focussed on meeting the needs of workers, communities, or the environment. It's about maximising the profits of big corporations. In 2012, fossil fuel producing companies and utilities represented 19 of the world's 50 leading corporations. In the US alone, the top five oil companies amassed almost 1 trillion dollars in profits over the last decade. These are the same corporations that force workers into unsafe conditions, break unions and seek to roll back democratic and human rights. The bottom line is that profit-driven approaches are not working." (Extract from the TUED video "This is what energy democracy looks like". Source: RLS-NYC YouTube, WWWa)

The message is straightforward; the climate crisis is not about "jobs *versus* the environment" (see also: Vachon & Brecher, 2016), instead it is about "workers, communities and the environment *versus* capital". Instead of convincing trade unions to endorse an environmental agenda of a transition to a cleaner and more renewable energy system, TUED effectively casts profit-making fossil fuel corporations as the common enemy to both workers and the environment (Räthzel & Uzzell, 2013). Exposing the role of fossil fuel corporations in environmental and community ill-health as well as for their

anti-union sentiments, the TUED video argues for a shift of power from private profit back to workers, communities and the public. Alongside this shift of power, TUED envisions a "planned and orderly transition" to a renewable energy system and emphasises that "workers presently in fossil fuels would be protected, and millions of new jobs would be created" (Extract from the TUED video "This is what energy democracy looks like". Source: RLS-NYC YouTube, WWWa). The video sends a strong message of social ownership and democratic control and takes care to emphasise that TUED is a *union* initiative on environmental issues instead of a purely environmental campaign. In the same vein, TUED's solution to the climate crisis is decisively social democratic: "Energy democracy offers a public sector approach to an energy transition grounded in the belief that people and communities should have the right to control their energy future" (Extract from the TUED video "This is what energy democracy looks like". Source: RLS-NYC YouTube, WWWa).

The process of making the video was challenging but worthwhile for the TUED coordinators at both IPLCE and RLS-NYC (Interviews with Sean Sweeney, Stefanie Ehmsen, and James Hare, New York City, March and April 2017). Over a year in the making, there had been many discussions around how to conceptualise and realise the video in order to best convey the "Resist! Reclaim! Restructure!" analysis and introduce the aims of the TUED project. Next to the challenge of condensing a 54-page document into a five-minute video, the process of making the video was also complicated by making it accessible to a variety of audiences and publics. TUED eventually opted for straightforward language and the use of minimal but effective supporting statistics that were also displayed on screen. Interestingly, a related discussion came up during later stages of fieldwork at events where (mainly US) unions reported that they had to find innovative ways to communicate climate change and an energy emergency as their members and the broader public remained hesitant to engage with overly technical explanations (see also: Hulme, 2010). At the Pocantico Retreat, the representative for the New York State Nurses Association (NYSNA), one of TUED's most involved and vocal unions, presented their "Lunchtime Education Programme", a slideshow and talk shown at a free lunch to get members involved in campaigns. NYSNA's slideshow, which they had adapted according to member feedback, consisted mainly of visuals and is accompanied by a talk that focusses on members' lived experiences of energy and climate injustices (compare the example of BMWED and TWU in chapter four) (see: Paul, 2018b). This prioritisation of practical, or 'tacit knowledges' (Wainwright, 2018), holds transformative potential for TUED's movement building as it allows workers to meaningfully engage with

and participate in climate change debates that otherwise often seem overtly technical and exclusionary (Hulme, 2010).

Another factor in the discussion around the making of the video was that the TUED project coordinators at RLS-NYC are always conscious of the management of the 'TUED brand', the distinctive look of materials and publication as well as the website, which is a concern that Sean and John on the IPLCE side might not fully share. Ultimately, however, the video has received very good feedback from the member unions, who have been using it in their own educational work and has furthermore proven to be a conversation starter with new unions and social movement allies (Interviews with Stephanie Ehmsen, Sean Sweeney, and James Hare, March and April 2017). While TUED plans to make a second video, the process of coming to terms with a topic is not as straightforward as the first video, which was based on the founding narrative and analysis. Another issue presenting a challenge in many different parts of the TUED project is the question of resources, especially time and money, to create more materials and outputs.

The TUED website (<http://unionsforenergydemocracy.org/>) also plays a big role in growing the network by attracting new member unions as well as policy and movement allies. The website also acts as the network's main 'media strategy' as TUED has no social media presence aside from a small YouTube channel, which was created in February 2018 but only counts 19 subscribers at the time of writing. The media strategy is thus still mainly based on the website as well as regular email newsletter, the TUED Bulletin. The look, design and style of the website is especially important to the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation, which became clear in interviews with TUED's project coordinators at the Foundation. RLS-NYC sees the website as instrumental in shaping the credibility of the project. The Foundation is majorly responsible for the upkeep and management of the website as well as the 'distinctive look' of published TUED materials. The website exists in English and Spanish. The homepage features the TUED logo and pictures from past TUED events, as shown in Figure 6.1 below. The picture gallery includes a photo of a panel discussion at COP21 in Paris featuring British Labour Party leader Jeremy Corbyn and Canadian author and climate activist Naomi Klein alongside representatives of some of TUED's most involved members unions (PCS, NYSNA and SENTRO) as well as the movement ally, Transnational Institute (TUED, WWWd). Featuring their international allies, who are recognisable to large parts of the left and social democratic political world, on the frontpage of their website is also an excellent visualisation of how equivalential chains are created and maintained between movements and political actors (Laclau, 2007).

Further down the homepage, TUED provides quick links to the latest developments under the headline “recent updates and resources”, which is followed by a button that allows individuals to sign up for its E-Bulletin to receive news and developments directly to their email inbox. The Bulletin is received by over 2,500 union officials, activists and allies across the world (TUED Annual Report, 2018). Finally, at the bottom of the homepage TUED have included a gallery of member union logos as well as an image of their partner organisations (RLS-NYC and CUNY) and their respective logos (see Figure 6.2). Apart from the homepage, the website has four main sections titled: About, Resources, News, and Unions Against Fracking. The “About” section introduces the initiative, provides an overview over the network and participating unions and explains TUEDs history. The “News” section collates all recent developments and the current issues of the TUED Bulletin, which is a newsletter service to both member unions and interested individuals who have signed up to the mailing list. Under “Resources”, TUED provides the published working papers, the TUED video, the TUED Bulletin archive, as well as any other resources such as news and events. Finally, the section on “Unions Against Fracking” links to a website of the same name (<http://unionsagainstfracking.org/>), which is a separate project to TUED but managed by the TUED coordinators and with participation of some, but not all, of TUED’s member unions.

Figure 6.1. Screenshot showing the TUED website's homepage and navigation pane.

Figure 6.2. Image showing the names and logos of TUED's partner organisations.

Finally, TUED's message is also spread through the working papers, which the coordinators see as one of the most important outputs of the network. Publishing the highly factual and well-researched Working Papers has made TUED an important alternative knowledge producer on climate and energy issues for the labour movement (see: Hulme, 2010). Written from a left perspective, the working papers provide the wider labour and trade union movements with resources and materials to engage in climate and energy debates at various scales in a meaningful way (Wainwright, 2018; Wainwright & Elliott, 1982), as well as to create and shape their own strategies and policies around climate and energy issues. As described in the last chapter, the working papers, usually authored by Sean, are published on TUED's website once they have been edited by the RLS-NYC office who provide the publications with a recognisable and distinctive TUED look. The website also provides a summary of each working paper. The papers are usually announced and advertised in the TUED newsletter, the 'TUED Bulletin', which is sent out via email to everyone who is signed up to the mailing list. New working papers are also introduced and summarised during TUED's Global Advisory Group (GAG) calls, bi-monthly web-calls with TUED unions, where new developments are discussed. However, while every effort is made for them to be accessible, due to the nature of their topics, the TUED Working Papers are fairly technical, detailed and lengthy.

The TUED project coordinators at RLS-NYC acknowledge that the immediate reach of the working papers is limited, as the working papers are likely to be read mostly by key union officers and staff rather than rank and file. While no attempt was made to track the dissemination of materials across different websites (RLS-NYC, TUED, CUNY, and those of individual member unions), there are some download figures from the TUED website which confirm that readership is in the hundreds rather than thousands. In April 2017, the framing document ("Resist! Reclaim! Restructure!"; Sweeney, 2013) was the most-read resource on the website and had been downloaded 497 times in English and 10 times in Spanish, while Working Paper 8 ("Up from Development: A Framework for Energy Transition in India"; Mathews, Barria & Roy, 2016), which is also the only paper not authored by Sean, had the smallest number of downloads, counting just 10. However, despite the low download figures for the working papers (but bearing in mind that these are just from the TUED website and do not include downloads from other sources), both Stefanie and James at RLS-NYC stress the importance of investing in high-quality analysis and materials overall for the credibility of the TUED project. Following requests from the member unions, the idea is to create more 'bite-sized' versions of a lot of the more in-depth material and analysis in the working papers which can also be more easily distributed via

their existing media channels: “there is a continuing desire for [educational] materials [like the video] that can enable this TUED message to get through. Not just to rank and file in the trade unions but also, for instance, leaders who are... *busy* (laughs)” (Interview quote from James Hare, (then) project manager for TUED at RLS-NYC, New York City, March 2017).

Building Movement through Connection, Trust and Comradeship

While the network could certainly be more strategic in their press and media usage, TUED has so far relied heavily on conveying their message ‘in person’, which is both based on the importance of trust in the trade union movement as well as linking back to the origins of the network, which were an ‘in person’ roundtable in New York City in 2012. This is obviously challenging for a global network with limited financial resources, however, the TUED coordinators are aware that personal connections and the resulting relations of trust are still highly valued in the labour and trade union movements (as in many social movement contexts, see: Tarrow & McAdam, 2005; Nicholls, 2007). As introduced in chapter four, TUED utilises a range of methods to stay in touch with members – and for members to stay in touch with each other – on a face-to-face basis. The network operates through annual strategy meetings, the so-called TUED Retreats where strategy discussions take place, as well as bi-monthly web-calls, called Global Advisory Group calls, during which unions are updated on recent developments and the project’s finances, and new member unions are introduced. Additionally, the TUED coordinators also travel to speak at conferences and events, catch up with member unions, and recruit new members for the network. This section reflects on TUED’s different practices of staying in touch with its member unions and building trust before discussing how the network has differently utilised two key events in 2017, the Long Island Conference and Pocantico Retreat, to grow their network and build their movement respectively.

To keep its members informed about current events and developments across the world, TUED holds bi-monthly web-calls which are called Global Advisory Group (GAG) calls. The calls are usually scheduled for 10am Eastern US time and conducted via an online conference software tool; the link to access the call is circulated to people who previously indicated their attendance via email. Despite the difficult time difference especially for Australian, (South) East Asian and Pacific members, the number of participants at TUED’s Global Advisory Group calls continues to grow (TUED Annual

Report, 2018). At the time of writing, the most recent call in February 2019 included 65 participants from 17 countries, representing 37 unions, federations or allies. The February call discussed the potential for reclaiming and reforming utilities under the Green New Deal recently proposed by the US Democrats (see e.g. Holden and Gambino, 2019), which is a good example of how TUED attempts to link their GAGs to current events. Like all Global Advisory Group calls, it also provided updates on TUED's activities and finances as well as an international report on recent developments in particular regions or unions, which included updates from the Philippines, South Korea, Australia, Norway, the UK, and South Africa. The February 2019 call also indicated that partnerships with policy allies and movement-based NGOs are growing and strengthening as representatives from the NGO Food & Water Watch (FWW), the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA), the advocacy and research organisation The Democracy Collaborative, and the Sunrise Movement presented and situated their work in and through TUED's energy democracy framework. This emerging and strengthening relationship between TUED and its movement allies will be discussed in more depth in the last section of this chapter.

The TUED coordinators, especially Sean, also regularly travel to speak both to member unions and potential new members, as well as present TUED's ideas internationally at conferences and events, including the COPs. In 2017, Sean for example spent time in South Africa engaging with the launch of the new union federation, the South African Federation of Trade Unions (SAFTU), which has a strong commitment to social ownership and energy democracy (TUED, WWWe; TUED Bulletin 57, 2017; see also: TUED Bulletin 78, 2018), as well as in the Asia-Pacific region where TUED and UnionAid Abroad are working to build up the energy democracy narrative (TUED Bulletin 62, 2017). Internationally, TUED has also been a recurring presence at the climate conferences, the COPs, from COP21 in Paris, to COP23 in Bonn and most recently at COP24 in Katowice. In this context, TUED's annual report for 2018 notes that

> "TUED's discussion paper, 'When "Green" Doesn't "Grow": Facing Up to the Failure of For-Profit Climate Policy', prepared for the December 2018 UN climate talks in Katowice, Poland (COP24), made a clear impact in the trade union discussions both at the COP and subsequently" (TUED Annual Report, 2018; see also: TUED Discussion Paper, 2018).

While travelling is a time- and resource-intensive practice, the resulting ties and connections are much deeper than could otherwise be achieved (for related literature on

social ties and the geographies of social movements, see: Nicholls, 2007; 2009). However, the presence of Sean abroad also reinforces the role that key individuals play in the network, which, as discussed in the fourth chapter, is a dynamic that the TUED network actually wants to move away from as the coordinators are encouraging unions to take more ownership over the project (see especially interview quotes from John Treat, p.133 and Irene Shen, p.133 in chapter four). Generally, however, the network is still dependent on the work and commitment of key individuals, both for TUED's growth in which union officials act almost like TUED ambassadors in their personal and professional networks, as well as to organise and run events such as TUED Europe to be discussed in the next section. This development is typical for fairly small and young networks and has been documented in relevant literatures (see e.g.: Featherstone, 2008; Routledge & Cumbers, 2009a; McDonald, 2002).

Finally, the network also regularly meets in person in order to discuss the strategic and political development of TUED during the yearly TUED Retreats as well as more recently also in 'smaller' groups as part of regional discussions. In 2017, the first regional discussions took place in Geneva (TUED Europe) and Buenos Aires (TUED South America). The Geneva Meeting will be discussed in more depth in the next section. As introduced in the methodology chapter, the ethnographic component of my fieldwork was designed to capture the multi-sited and multi-actor nature of TUED by "following the network" and to understand the practicalities of trade union environmentalist coalition building. In this context, my in-depth event observation and 'mini' case studies of specific events allowed for a more intensive immersion into the workings of TUED as I attended a series of TUED events between November 2016 and February 2018 (for an overview, see Tables 3.1 and 3.2 in chapter three). My main fieldwork visit to New York City in March and April of 2017 coincided with two key TUED events of that year, the annual TUED Retreat, which, for the first time, was combined with a conference on energy democracy for US and Canadian unions. Table 6.1, below, provides an in-depth overview of both events, including the full title, dates and location, official organisers, attendance, TUED membership, and sponsors. While the annual TUED Retreats are usually smaller in size to allow about 30 key TUED actors from across the world to have focussed strategy discussions, the TUED coordinators felt that there was sufficient momentum across the US and Canada to hold a 'wider' conference as well, which was meant to help advance and strengthen their energy democracy narrative in the region. The Conference was held immediately prior to the Retreat, so that international Retreat participants could attend both the Conference and Retreat in one trip and thus gain a better understanding of the current

situation in the US and Canada.

Table 6.1. In-depth event overview of the Long Island Conference and Pocantico Retreat, 2017.

Event Name	*Full Title*	*Date*	*Location*	*Organisers*
Long Island Conference	Advancing Progressive Labor's Agenda on Energy and Climate Change: A Discussion on Union Strategy and Policy in a Time of Resistance	3 – 4 April 2017	Educational and Cultural Center of Local 3, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers in Cutchogue, Long Island, USA	Trade Unions for Energy Democracy (TUED)
Pocantico Retreat	TUED at 5 Years: Achievements, Priorities and New Directions: Strategic Retreat and Discussion	5 – 7 April 2017	Pocantico Center of the Rockefeller Brothers Fund in Tarrytown, New York, USA	TUED

Event Name	*Attendance*	*Membership*	*Allies*	*Sponsors*
Long Island Conference	50 participants: 33 unions (15 from US & Canada) 11 movement allies (8 from US & Canada) 6 convenors	31 TUED members 2 non-members	• 350.org • National Resources Defence Council • Moving Beyond Oil Campaign • Transnational Institute • Sierra Club • Centro de Investigacion Laboral y Asesoria Sindical • Labour Network for Sustainability • Blue Green Alliance	• IBEW (location) • RLS-NYC
Pocantico Retreat	30 participants: 21 unions (international) 4 movement allies (international) 5 convenors	All unions TUED members	• Transnational Institute • Centro de Investigacion Laboral y Asesoria Sindical • Labour Network for Sustainability	• Rockefeller Brothers Fund (location) • RLS-NYC

The Long Island Conference: Embedding the Narrative

On April 3rd and 4th, 2018, TUED organised a conference titled "Advancing Progressive Labor's Agenda on Energy and Climate Change: A Discussion on Union Strategy and Policy in a Time of Resistance". The conference was held at the Educational and Cultural Center run by Local 3 of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW), in Cutchogue on Long Island, USA. 50 people attended the conference, out of which 33 were union participants, 11 represented movement allies, and 6 were convenors from TUED, CUNY, and RLS-NYC. The goal of the conference was to consolidate TUED's presence in the US as well as Canada, "by way of engaging in a robust and rigorous international discussion" (Email to participants from Sean Sweeney, 20 March 2018). This aim was supported by the composition of attendees; of the 33 unions that participated, 15 are based in the United States, and likewise, out of the 11 movement allies taking part, 8 organisations are US-based. The other participants were international and came from the UK, Canada, Australia, South Africa, Nepal, South Korea, the Philippines, Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, Norway, and Italy, with most of the international participants also being there in their main capacity as participants of the following TUED Retreat.

The Long Island Conference aimed to achieve three objectives centred around analysis, alternatives and action to establish an energy democracy narrative in North America. In terms of analysis, the aim was to arrive at a shared understanding of energy trends and economics, the political struggle over energy options and pathways, as well as on the crisis of the green growth approach. In this context, TUED then aimed to consider alternative trade union politics that featured principles of social, economic, and racial justice, internationalism, and an awareness of planetary limits. Finally, TUED aimed to explore how unions in all sectors can generate ideas to build effective alliances for climate action (see also: TUED event materials in Appendix D). The Long Island Conference was fairly structured and organised around 5 roundtable-style sessions, the goals of which were to 'brief' the attending unions on questions they faced in their attempts of building movement for energy democracy, public ownership or just transition. The titles of the roundtable discussions are indicative of this:

1. We're Divided, Now What? Global resistance to 'extractivism' is rising, but union divisions appear to be deepening. What is happening and what can we do about it?
2. Green Gone Wrong? Making the case for a union-led policy re-think in the face of rising fossil fuel use, pollution and emissions

3. Can the Force be With Us? What kind of labor-environmental-social justice alliances do we need to effectively resist the 'energy superpower' agenda of Trump and Trudeau?
4. Reclaiming Energy: Can unions campaign for public renewable power in the US and internationally?
5. Can We Do It? What are the realistic capacity building scenarios that can help us speak and act on energy and climate change as an independent, movement-building force? Are there ways to achieve this goal without putting further stress on union resources?

Unlike the Pocantico Retreat, which was much more focussed on developing the broader vision and strategy of the TUED network as discussed below, the Long Island Conference was designed to contribute to an emerging, critical debate around energy and climate change in the North American labour and environmental movements at the time. Having identified this as a window of opportunity, TUED utilised the Long Island Conference to strengthen its energy democracy narrative among its US and Canadian members by drawing on recently produced analysis in Working Papers 9 and 10 (Sweeney & Treat, 2017a; b) as well as on the experiences of some of its most involved member unions from across the world, who were attending both the Conference and the subsequent Retreat. The Long Island Conference was also designed to reinforce TUED's narrative and analysis in light of contemporary developments in North America, including US president Trump's and Canada's prime minister Trudeau's increasingly extractivist policies and extreme energy agendas (Healy *et al*, 2019; Gilbert & Zalik, 2018; Schneider & Peeples, 2018). The Conference was thus a way for TUED to brief its attending US and Canadian unions on contemporary energy politics and to provide them with the relevant analysis and narrative to engage effectively and meaningfully in both policy and wider political debates. Through bringing in international TUED member unions, the Conference also provided US and Canadian unions with support, experiences, and already existing alternatives from their comrades from across the world. Finally, by inviting a range of movement allies (see Table 6.1), the TUED organisers also attempted to facilitate and strengthen constructive coalitions and/or partnerships between North American unions and environmental movement actors.

The Pocantico Retreat: A Network of Imagineers

Following the Long Island Conference, TUED held its annual Retreat, which is the main strategic review and planning meeting of the network. The Retreat took place at the Rockefeller Brothers Fund's Pocantico Center in Tarrytown, New York, USA, from 5-7 April 2018. Titled "TUED at 5 Years: Achievements, Priorities and New Directions: Strategic Retreat and Discussion", the Retreat aimed to evaluate the network's progress to date and decide on vision and strategy for the coming years. 30 people were invited to attend the Pocantico Retreat; 21 participants from TUED's most involved unions, 4 participants from organisations representing movement allies, and 5 convenors representing RLS-NYC and TUED. Table 6.2, below, provides an overview of the union and movement allies in attendance, including their constituency.

Almost all of the participants for the Retreat had already been to the Long Island Conference, which was important for movement building dynamics in two ways. Firstly, the participants had already been able to (re)connect at the Conference so that the Retreat felt like a much more familiar and intimate meeting. While this was partly also due to a smaller group setting, the group was also in a better position to have honest debates based on what was discussed during the Conference. Secondly, by building on the Long Island Conference's more general critical discussion of green growth, the three parts of the Retreat were much more focussed on TUED's programmatic work and political message as the groundwork had been laid at the conference. The Retreat's three parts can be summarised as follows: taking stock, creating vision and devising strategy (see: Appendix E for the event materials of the TUED Retreat). At five years, the Pocantico Retreat also offered a unique opportunity for the TUED network to reflect on its emergence, analysis, and strategy. The Retreat began with a survey of TUED's activities in the member unions' respective political contexts to establish a status quo of TUED's activities as a common starting point for discussion and to reinforce the idea that labour environmentalist strategy for energy democracy and public ownership shows potential globally. In this context, the first part of the Pocantico Retreat saw contributions from representatives of Norwegian union NUMGE, UK unions PCS and UNISON and the UK-based TUCACC discussing the (then) upcoming launch of TUED Europe, the "Geneva Meeting", as well as the developments around Jeremy Corbyn, the UK Labour Party and TUED's role in a meeting with Alan Whitehead, shadow minister for energy, earlier that year in March 2017 (TUED Bulletin 56, 2017). Representatives from ETU and Union Aid Abroad then discussed

recent developments in Australia and explored opportunities to actively shape energy debates and labour politics there. In a more specific discussion on the particular political context of growing right-wing populism, contributors discussed recent developments in the Americas and the varied but connected challenges both trade unionists and environmentalists face. Representatives from NNU and NYSNA discussed the context of the USA, and representatives from CILAS, CTA, CUT and TUCA shared recent developments in Mexico, Argentina, and Brazil. Finally, recent developments in the Asia Pacific region, focussing mainly on the Philippines and South Korea were discussed by representatives from SENTRO and KPTU. When comparing the broad spectrum of speakers in this first part of the Pocantico Retreat to the list of participating unions and movement allies portrayed in Table 6.2 it becomes clear that TUED very much draws on its members to shape debates through their experiences and analysis in their local or regional contexts rather than structuring the discussion in a more top-down manner. This will also be discussed in more detail below.

The second and third parts of the Pocantico Retreat focussed on moving energy democracy debates forward to explore the future of the TUED network. Part 2 of the Retreat began with a reflective discussion on energy democracy as a concept, exploring the role of states, communities and citizens, which was followed by an analysis of recent energy trends, (lack of) investments, questions of ownership as well as implications of these trends for workers and communities. This was the most structured part of the meeting but also the shortest intervention and was important to establish a shared understanding for the upcoming strategic and programmatic discussions. Subsequently, the third part of the Pocantico Retreat engaged with building vision and strategy for the future of the TUED network, reflecting both on the significance and potential of TUED, and discussing further coalition and movement building. The unstructured, open discussion – in the sense that there were no planned contributions – was supported by a document titled “Working together for a shared vision for TUED”, which was circulated to participants in advance (see also: TUED event materials in Appendix E). The document offered an overview over TUED’s achievements and highlighted three key roles of the network as producing “high-impact research and analysis”, providing “activist education”, and contributing to “convening and movement building”. Figure 6.3, below, shows an excerpt of the circulated document.

Table 6.2. Participation of unions and movement allies participation at the Pocantico Retreat, 5-7 April 2017, in Tarrytown, New York, USA.

	Name		*Constituency*
Unions	1199SEIU	1199 Service Employees International Union United Healthcare Workers East	USA
	CGIL	Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro	Italy
	CTA	Central de Trabajadores de la Argentina	Argentina
	CUPE	Canadian Union of Public Employees	Canada
	CUT	Central Única dos Trabalhadores	Brazil
	ETU	Electrical Trades Union of Australia	Australia
	GLI	Global Labour Institute	Europe
	IBEW	International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers	USA
	KPTU	Korean Public Service and Transport Workers' Union	South Korea
	NNU	National Nurses United	USA
	NUMGE	Norwegian Union of Municipal and General Employees	Norway
	NUMSA	National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa	South Africa
	NYSNA	New York State Nurses Association	USA
	PCS	Public and Commercial Services Union	UK
	SENTRO	Sentro ng mga Nagkakaisa at Progresibong Manggagawa (Alliance for Progressive Labour)	Philippines
	TUCA	Trade Union Confederation of the Americas	South America
	TUCACC	Trade Union Campaign Against Climate Change	UK
	UNI	Union Network International Global Union	Nepal
	Union Aid Abroad	Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA	Australia
	UNISON	UNISON – the public service union	UK
	UNITE HERE	Merger of Union of Needletrades, Industrial, and Textile Employees (UNITE) and Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees Union (HERE)	USA
Movement Allies	TNI	Transnational Institute	Netherlands
	CILAS	Centro de Investigación Laboral y Asesoría Sindical	Mexico
	LNS	Labor Network for Sustainability	USA

Working together for a shared vision for TUED

Rationale:
TUED, established now for five years, has made an extraordinary global impact, dominating the union discourse on climate and energy, mainstreaming the notion of energy democracy, and building new union/social/environmental alliances.

And yet we can and must do more. We need a shared vision that can be actively promoted amongst unions everywhere, with priority issues and campaigns articulated for the coming years, driving a deeper commitment from unions and foundations for funding and TUED activism.

TUED purpose to date:
"Trade Unions for Energy Democracy (TUED) is a global network of unions and close allies that support democratic control and social ownership of energy resources, infrastructure and options. The TUED initiative aims to further develop and consolidate the rising opposition to the 'extreme energy' agenda and 'carbon lock in', within the framework of a 'just transition'."

TUED's key roles:
(1) **high-impact research and analysis** that can inform public debates, policy advocacy and movement building; (2) **activist education**, including especially identification and cultivation of new activists; and, (3) **convening and movement building**.

Examples of these roles include:
1/ **high-impact research and analysis** - publication of numerous research analyses since 2012; provision of expert advice on country-level energy policy through publication and engagement in forums
2/ **activist education -** three intensive 'climate immersion' education program of 3-5 days for union officials and activists in North America, opportunistic union climate education;
3/ **convening and movement building** - convening education, information & impact forums at COP meetings; convening of annual global meetings to plan movement-building with TUED members; creating & assisting numerous opportunities to engage at regional level in North America and Europe, Latin America and Africa in particular.

Figure 6.3. Excerpt from the discussion document "TUED at 5 years", which was supplied during the Pocantico Retreat, 5-7 April 2017, in Tarrytown, New York, USA.

Compared to the Long Island Conference, which aimed to grow and strengthen the network by briefing unions on the existing TUED message and analysis and by providing opportunities for networking, the Pocantico Retreat was more focussed on strategy development and 'deeper' movement building. The TUED actors in attendance were able to hold much more critical debates and discussions at the Pocantico Retreat. This is due partly because the participants were part of a smaller, more familiar and more focussed group, which is based both on to their previous convergence at the conference as well as their networking over the past five years. On the other hand, the potential for critical debates and deeper movement building was more pronounced at the Pocantico Retreat as it consisted of representatives from TUED's most involved and engaged unions and allies who, over the past five year, began to take ownership over the direction of the project and shaped its development in key ways within their unions and constituencies. As highlighted above, the TUED unions who presented in the first part of the Pocantico Retreat were able to critically discuss the political, economic and legal barriers to implementing a democratically controlled energy system in their particular contexts and all showed an awareness of potential openings for energy democracy and public ownership (Observational notes, Pocantico Retreat, April 2017). The work and achievements of TUED's Australian participants provides a good example of such independent 'imagineering' activities (see e.g.: Routledge *et al*, 2013). In contributions at the Retreat, representatives from both the Electrical Trades Union of Australia (ETU) and the global justice organisations Union Aid Abroad reflected on developments in Queensland, where the local Labor government had launched its own publicly owned and renewable power generated company (see also: TUED Bulletin 78, 2018). In this context, ETU's representative also highlighted how his union was working towards getting more progressive governments elected as well as develop sound relationships with like-minded parties so that, when in power, ETU and other unions are consulted and included in the decision making around energy and climate issues.

Similarly, in the discussions during the third part of the Retreat, participants contributed freely and without relying on TUED coordinators to provide analysis or much direction to the debate. The level of debate at the Pocantico Retreat showed that movement building efforts, including the development of narrative, analysis and strategy, had been taken up by most actors who had become 'imagineers' for the TUED network in their own right and within the context of their unions' sectors and constituencies (Observational notes, Pocantico Retreat, April 2017; see also: Routledge and Cumbers, 2009a; Routledge *et al*, 2013). This move towards a strong group of individuals who can independently

translate TUED's narrative and analysis into their local and regional contexts as well as their existing coalitions and alliances has huge implications for what continues to be a relatively small movement and network. The resulting devolution of narrative strengthens TUED's message locally while the 'new imagineers' are all strongly committed to the main analysis of TUED to continue to be recognised as part of the wider narrative that gives the network its credibility.

From a movement building perspective, the most striking observation of the Pocantico Retreat was to experience how this 'network of imagineers' debated and shaped an energy democracy framework for the trade union and labour movements (Routledge *et al*, 2013; for a related discussion of charismatic leaders, see: Featherstone, 2008). An example of this is a fruitful discussion which took place in a session on energy democracy and a "programmatic shift" (Observational notes, Pocantico Retreat, April 2017). The discussion explored existing and potential alternatives to 'green growth' and promoted a successful extension of this debate to include and mobilise the wider international labour movement (see also: TUED event materials, Appendix E). A comrade from SENTRO in the Philippines and a comrade from the Trade Union Confederation of the Americas (TUCA) provided much appreciated insights into how these debates relate to serious, existing struggles faced by unions in countries and regions where conflicts exist and might impact on effective political organising. Both the Philippines and many South and Latin American countries experienced social and political conflicts at the time (and continue to do so). The comrades' perspectives were examples of careful analysis of wider political factors and a clear synthesis of existing contexts and TUED's potential strategy for their respective unions, thus portraying the characteristics of movement 'imagineering' (Routledge *et al*, 2013). Here, these 'imagineering abilities' are evident in taking ownership and leadership on an issue or, in this case, region, mobilising others, and independently formulating ideas relevant to a wider spatial and socio-political context while keeping in mind the wider ambition and strategy of the TUED network.

However, while the participants of the Pocantico Retreat can be understood as a fairly coherent network of imagineers, the process of debating and shaping an alternative energy future was not without friction. As argued before, the Pocantico Retreat was focussed on strategy and vision for the TUED network and the ideas that were shared were much bolder than what had been articulated at, for example, the Long Island Conference. The willingness of participants to engage in tougher debates and even disagreements, for example around certain technologies or resources (such as questions, concerns and

arguments around nuclear energy options), can be explained through the trust, connection and comradeship they shared (see: Tarrow & McAdam, 2005, for a discussion of 'relational diffusion' of social movements through trust and relational ties between movement actors). Comradeship in the TUED network often facilitates a productive and constructive engagement with existing tensions and friction. This is ultimately based on the knowledge that while there might be disagreement about the specificities of transition, the TUED members' shared criticism of the existing system as well as their core vision for the future are aligned. The trust and connection shared by the participants of the Pocantico Retreat, which was built up over the past five years as part of the TUED network (and in some cases much longer as part of other coalitions) created a unique space for honest debate and constructive criticism (Observational notes, Pocantico Retreat, April 2017). A relevant example here was a recurring debate between unions from the global South and North. Especially comrades from South and Latin American unions and labour organisations often sought the floor to advocate for more radical climate as well as political action, which was usually received with caution and sometimes calls for moderation by unions based in the global North, especially participating unions from Europe (Observational notes, Pocantico Retreat, April 2017). However, based on the existing connections, unions knew and respected each other's positions in these exchanges, and while not always agreeing for a certain strategy to be the best way forward for the network as a whole, the unions would express solidarity with their comrades in their respective struggles (Featherstone, 2012).

In order to nurture this environment of solidarity, comradeship and trust, the TUED coordinators had always made provisions for 'socialising' time as part of the event schedule at all meetings that I attended as part of my fieldwork. Scheduled sessions would usually run throughout the day with coffee breaks and a shared lunch. However, there was always an unspoken understanding that the event or meeting did not end with the last session. At single day events, the group usually moved on to a local pub, while at meetings with overnight stays, there was a loose schedule for the evening, which was planned but not scripted, and emphasised the importance of spending time together 'outside' of formal union roles, or as participants often said, "without our union hats on" (Observational notes, Pocantico Retreat and Long Island Conference, April 2017). These shared evenings, while informal and outside of the official schedule, were equally important for the movement building efforts as they allowed participants to get to know each other as people with interests, families and political views outside of their union roles which ultimately contributes to the trust and feelings of connection and comradeship within the TUED

network. At the Pocantico Retreat, the evenings were spent in informal discussions, singing, playing music, sharing stories, and drinking tequila that some of the South American participants had brought along for their allies. These times of socialising were the most challenging for my ethnographic research practice, as noted in the methodology chapter (chapter three), as negotiating the researcher self was hardest during evenings and social encounters. As I felt unease of 'using' these spaces, that I had kindly been invited to share, to further my research, I decided to utilise somewhat abstracted versions of events as these informal moments are nevertheless very important for the coherence of the network. These 'unscripted' moments (to the degree that social situations ever can be) help to build 'thicker' connection and trust between actors and facilitate stronger social and relational bonds. To give an example of how I have attempted to abstract these situations but still utilise their significance for wider movement building dynamics: One of my observational notes from the evening described above is written on a napkin and reads "solidarity jukebox" (see: Figure 6.4). This note is in reference to a participant's self-reflexive and humorous observation regarding the (inevitable) singing of traditional left-wing and socialist songs. During the evening, Eugène Pottier's 'The Internationale', Joe Hills 'There is Power in a Union', Ralph Chaplin's 'Solidarity Forever' were sung and played together in an expression of both self-referential humour and labour tradition. These traditional trade union 'anthems' were utilised by participants to create a shared internationalist trade union identity during the Pocantico Retreat (see also: Crossan *et al*, 2016).

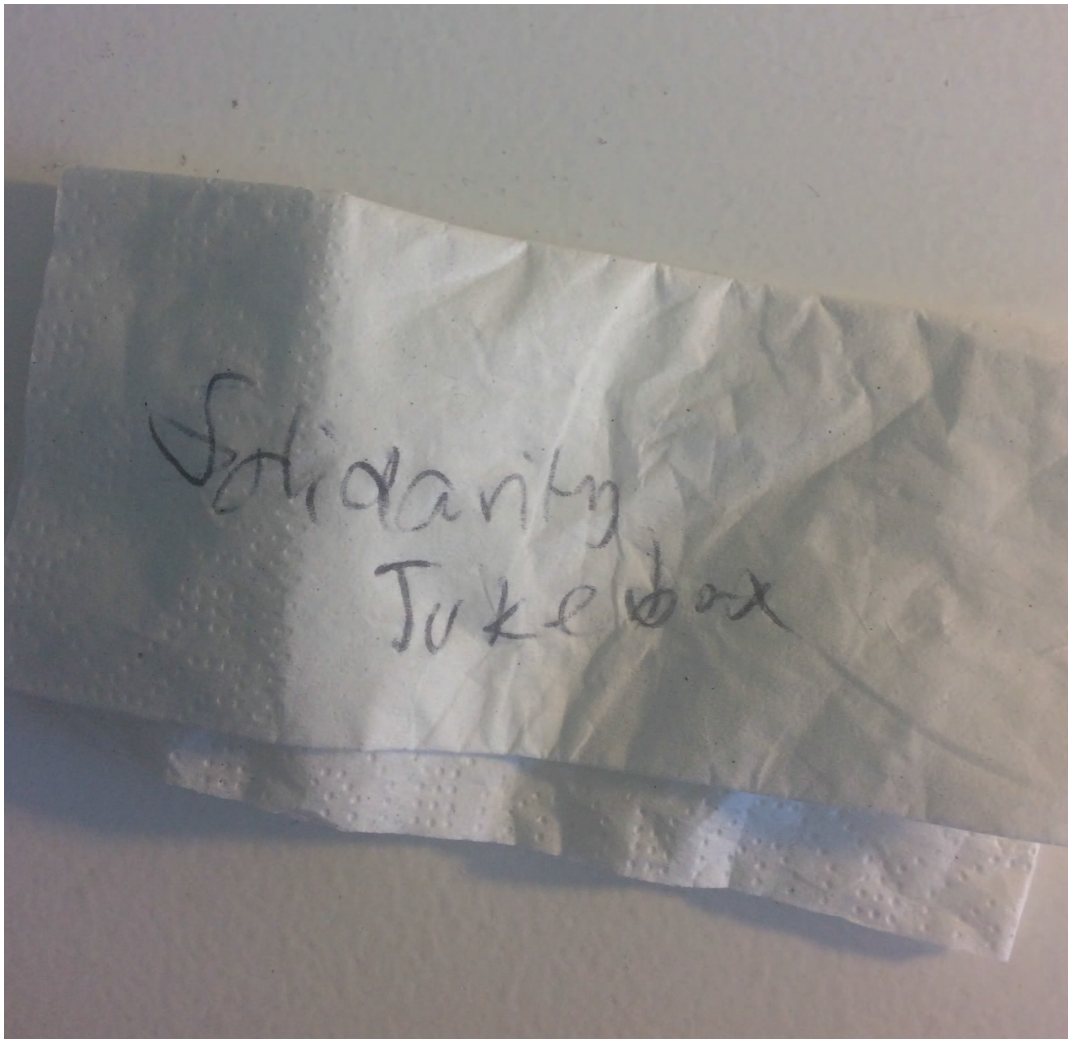

Figure 6.4. Photograph of an ethnographic note reading “solidarity jukebox”, taken during the Pocantico Retreat 5-7 April 2017, in Tarrytown, New York, USA.

Growing the Network: Regionalisation as a Key Movement Building Strategy

> "So what's needed is actually to present this strong, clear narrative, strong, clear analysis coming out of labour and I think the unions that have come on to TUED, you know, *buy* into that. And I think the next challenge is […] to move this analysis and narrative into actually being able to push policy in different arenas. And there is probably more possibility of doing that on more regional levels. Umm yeah, I think *that* is the challenge – I think TUED could go on in the fashion it has been going for a while longer but that's... that's not what the participants really want. I think there is really a desire to take it to the next level" (Interview quote from James Hare, (then) Project Manager for TUED at RLS-NYC, New York City, March 2017)

During my fieldwork, one of the main points of discussion among the TUED coordinators at IPLCE, CUNY and RLS-NYC, as well as among the unions within the network itself, especially during the Pocantico Retreat, was the idea of a 'regionalisation' of the TUED initiative, that is, engaging in more regionally-focussed discussions and planning around advancing public and democratic energy system ownership. TUED's first 'official' regional event took place in Geneva, Switzerland in June 2017, and a second event for South and Latin America followed in September 2017 in Buenos Aires (TUED Bulletin 65, 2017). During the TUED Retreat, unions and allies from the Asia Pacific region had also expressed strong support for more focussed regional debates (Observational notes, Pocantico Retreat, April 2017). As part of my fieldwork, I attended TUED's Geneva Meeting, a 2-day working meeting of unions and "close allies in the energy democracy movement" in June 2017 (see also: TUED event materials in Appendix F). The meeting was hosted by TUED coordinators and received financial and in-kind support from the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation's Europe Office, which is based in Brussels, as well as the Swiss, Geneva-based union UNiA. Next to the more 'formal' regional events held in Geneva and Buenos Aires in 2017, TUED also regularly convened and/ or engaged in other meetings and events such as organising around the COPs as well as supporting member unions in relevant political and policy discussions in their local contexts. As part of my fieldwork, I also attended an event in London, UK, where TUED held a one-day meeting in the UNISON offices in February 2018. The London Meeting described as a 'one-day TUED working meeting of unions and policy allies' (see also: TUED event materials in Appendix G). Table 6.3, below, provides an in-depth overview of both the Geneva Meeting and the London Meeting, including the full title, date(s) and location, official organisers, attendance, TUED membership, and sponsors of the events.

Table 6.3. In-depth event overview of the Geneva and London Meetings, 2017 and 2018 respectively.

Event Name	*Full Title*	*Date*	*Location*	*Organisers*
Geneva Meeting	Reclaiming Power: The Struggle for Europe's Energy Future	14 – 15 June 2017	Université Ouvrière de Genève in Geneva, Switzerland	TUED Europe
London Meeting	Reclaiming the Power Sector to Public Ownership: Questions of Strategy and Implementation	14 February 2018	UNISON offices in London, UK	TUED

Event Name	*Attendance*	*Membership*	*Allies*	*Sponsors*
Geneva Meeting	43 participants: 25 unions 15 movement allies 3 convenors	17 TUED members 8 non-members	• Global Labour Institute • Public Services International Research Unit • European Trade Union Institute • Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung Europe (Brussels) • Transnational Institute • University of Lausanne • Uniterre – Via Campesina • Ethos Foundation • Multiwatch Basel • Swiss Climate Alliance • Greener Jobs Alliance	• UNiA • Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung Europe (Brussels)
London Meeting	34 participants: 16 unions (13 UK) 18 movement allies	15 TUED members 1 non-member	[see Table 6.4 for a detailed overview of participation of movement allies at the London Meeting]	• UNISON

Both interviews and informal conversations with project coordinators at TUED, IPLCE and RLS-NYC showed that the move towards more specific regional discussions was important to all actors involved. 'Regions', in TUED's case, correspond broadly with world regions (i.e. Asia-Pacific, Latin America or Europe), however, can also designate a smaller scale, so that the London Meeting was also understood as a regional discussion for the UK alongside some (predominantly Western) European partners. While TUED is based in the US due to its organisational structure and local affiliations with RLS-NYC and CUNY, its coordinators have continuously stressed that TUED is an international project which should be reflected in the debates within the network. Another motivation behind a regionalisation of the network is that, as the movement grows, differences will become more pronounced. Instead of opting for a potentially vaguer overall approach in the wider network, TUED coordinators hope that the process of regionalisation can mitigate possible disagreements about specific policy approaches, for example between unions of the global North and South (see e.g. Kerswell, 2006; Cotton & Gumbrell-McCormick, 2012) as also often evident at UN level:

> "If you go to the UN climate negotiations for example, there is a natural split between unions from the South and unions from the North […] So there is this big challenge for TUED to sort of navigate the difference but at the same time not becoming too *vague*. So one step that we have been discussing for a while now is, does it make sense to have more regional discussions. That unions within a certain region meet and become more specific of how to target their own region, which also means their governments and transnational agencies" (Interview quote from Stefanie Ehmsen, (then) Co-Director of RLS-NYC, New York City, March 2017)

While very much in favour of regionalisation, TUED coordinators were also aware of the challenges that regional discussions bring to the network. The main challenge, as with most activist groups, is that of capacities, both in terms of 'human' and financial resources. TUED coordinators at all institutions (RLS-NYC, CUNY and IPLCE) critically acknowledged the high-levels of already existing in-kind support they receive from some individual actors in the network and were weary of off-loading more tasks on them (Routledge & Cumbers, 2009a; Featherstone, 2008). As discussed in previous chapters, the network already relies on unions to undertake some activities such as translations of the working papers into Italian and Korean by the Italian General Confederation of Labour (CGIL), and the South Korean Federation of Public Services and Transport Workers' Unions (KPTU) respectively. These activities are in no way mandated but very much

appreciated by the TUED coordinators and the wider network as the Working Papers are currently only published in English and Spanish due to financial and organisational constraints. As a trade union network, TUED is also aware that ideally, such tasks and activities should be undertaken by people who are paid for them or who can fulfil these tasks as part of their wider job description (such as union officials). As shown in the quote from Stefanie at RLS-NYC below, TUED coordinators are aware of the breadth and scale of the work that is required to keep a network such as TUED alive:

> "We need *capacities.* We need capacities of people who are doing stuff. So we are here, we have paid jobs and we do this – not in our free time, but *as part* of our jobs. That is the luxury that a lot of people don't have. Then you need people *in the unions* who can do this as well, not just in their free time but – so – it means it needs to be established as one of the union's purposes, or tasks, so that they can do that. […] And we have a lot of great ideas, you know, on what could be done, but the question that remains at the end is always: who is doing it?" (Interview quote from Stefanie Ehmsen, (then) Co-Director of RLS-NYC, New York City, March 2017)

Stefanie's quote also picks up on an earlier discussion around unions increasingly taking ownership over the project in chapter four. In interviews with the coordinators and during ethnographic and observational work, it became clear that TUED is a joint effort and needs to be carried by the unions who form the network as any other option would ultimately lack legitimacy in the labour movement and beyond. Furthermore, as coordinators at all institutions as well as unionists agree, the regionalisation of TUED cannot and should not happen in a top-down process, and that any attempt at regional organisation and discussion relies on committed unions and individuals who will continue and nurture the debates in their local and regional contexts. During my fieldwork in the US in early 2017 I was part of a preparatory discussion for the upcoming TUED Europe meeting in Geneva in June of the same year. The planning meeting took place during a break between sessions at the Pocantico Retreat, which further exemplifies how TUED makes the most of rare moments of coming together in person as experience has shown that planning works best when everyone is in the same place. Experiencing this planning process for the Geneva Meeting was illuminating as I could see first-hand how decisions were made around who best to invite and what kind of programme to promote in order to send the 'right' message and avoid alienating key European actors (see: Tufts, 2004; for a related example of inter-union movement 'turf wars' around Toronto's bid to host the 2008

Olympics). This included a discussion on dealing with 'antagonistic' unions, i.e. those that do not want to be in the same room together, as well as considering how certain messages, for example around nuclear power, might alienate unions with considerable representation in these sectors such as the French General Confederation of Labour (CGT), or the British union and TUED member, GMB. The planning meeting for Geneva also highlighted how 'formal' the labour and trade union movement continues to be in its organising efforts (Routledge & Cumbers, 2009b). The small group of initial organisers, consisting of representatives from the Italian General Confederation of Labour (CGIL), Norwegian Union for General Employees (Fagforbundet), the UK-based Greener Jobs Alliance, and TUED Europe's main organiser, who then worked for the International Trade Union Confederation in Geneva, spent some time considering and discussing the potential ramifications that their upcoming meeting could have in a wider trade union context. For example, one point of sustained discussion was how to manage the relationship with ETUC, the European Trade Union Confederation, without it seeming that TUED was "stepping on ETUC's toes" in terms of European labour environmentalist strategy, as ETUC has its own programme and polices on energy transition (though ETUC's policies were nowhere near as radical as TUED's analysis around energy democracy, just transition and public ownership, see: Rosemberg, 2013). The group eventually agreed to transparently communicate the details of the upcoming Geneva meeting to ETUC as well as to extend a formal invitation to be part of the events and its organisation in any way ETUC sees fit. To this end, organisers shared ideas about who best to approach in ETUC and exchanged the names of 'friendly' contacts they had in the organisation. This example also highlights that the vertical hierarchies in trade union organisational structures are still adhered to within the movement and how important formality and respect between unions and federations are for movement building and mobilising efforts (Observational notes, Pocantico Retreat, April 2017; Routledge & Cumbers, 2009b).

At the Geneva Meeting itself, a new dynamic of the network and movement could be observed. While Sean and John had come over from the US to support the Europe-based organisers, their role was much more advisory compared to how I had previously encountered them at the Climate Leadership Immersion, Long Island Conference, and Pocantico Retreat (Observational notes, Geneva Meeting, June 2017). In Geneva, a new 'generation of imagineers' were taking ownership over a TUED message for Europe (Routledge & Cumbers, 2009a). While the meeting represented a joint effort from all participants and everyone was given time and opportunity to speak and contribute during the two days, the main opportunities to add to the narrative and shape the discussion as part

of the programme were taken up by representatives from TUED's most engaged, trusted and long-term member unions who had strong analysis and sound programmes for change, including the representatives from NUMGE, PCS, Eyath Water and Greener Jobs Alliance. The move towards regional discussions, like the ones that took place in Geneva as well as Buenos Aires in 2017, and later in London in early 2018, also increasingly helps to 'mitigate' the role that Sean plays within the network. As was discussed both in the last section as well as in previous chapters, Sean acts as an imagineer for the network, based both on his instrumental role in setting up the TUED network and the outreach and networking role Sean has held as Global Coordinator since. However, as the Pocantico Retreat showed, the TUED network has over time developed into a network of imagineers, who independently translate TUED's core narrative and analysis into their local and regional contexts as well as their existing coalitions and alliances. This type of 'devolution' of the TUED narrative through multiple (trusted) actors has important implications for a small network and shows potential to both contribute to movement building and filling a capacity gap in regional TUED debates. Regionalisation also strengthens TUED's policy transfer efforts (see e.g. Peck & Theodore, 2010) as the main narrative of TUED will be taken up and concretised in the regional contexts and around certain temporal opportunities. The next section builds on these ideas to reflect on the role that social movements and policy allies play in regional discussions such as the Geneva and London Meetings, which, much like the Long Island Conference and Pocantico Retreat, fulfilled different aims and objectives in these different places and settings.

Regionalisation and the Diversification of Actors

Both the Geneva and London Meetings had higher levels of attendance from non-union actors than the US-based meetings discussed in the last section of this chapter. As can be noted in Table 6.3, above, and Table 6.4, below, participation from social movements and allies came both from the vicinity of the labour and trade union movements, such as Greener Jobs Alliance, PSIRU, ETUI and RLS Europe, but also more widely from relevant European activist groups. The London Meeting aimed to continue discussions around how unions and their allies can work with the UK Labour Party in the context of its 2017 Manifesto pledge to return the power sector (among others) to public ownership (see also: Labour Manifesto, 2017). As such, it actively built on previous meetings and discussions within the TUED network, such as the Geneva Meeting in June 2017, as well as on the wider context of public ownership discussions in the UK (Cumbers, 2012b; see also: Hall

S *et al*, 2013). This includes two key developments; firstly, the British Trade Union Congress (TUC) resolution on supporting the Labour Party's Manifesto commitment on energy and climate protection (which was also discussed in chapters four and five), which was passed by the TUC in 2017. And secondly, a previous TUED meeting with the Shadow Secretary for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, Rebecca Long-Bailey, which was held in November 2017. The London Meeting was organised by TUED to address the overall question of how the next Labour Government could sustain and strengthen popular support for reclaiming the power sector to public ownership. On the day, the discussion focussed on the practicalities of implementing Labour's Manifesto commitments in a future government, how unions and the UK Labour Party can promote similar developments in the wider European trade union and labour movements, and how unions and left actors can be supported in dealing with internal and external controversies and differences with regard to the energy mix including questions around technology, generation and distribution (Observational notes, London Meeting, February 2018; Event Materials in Appendix G).

Table 6.4. Participation of movement allies in the London Meeting organised by TUED, 14 February 2018, London, UK.

Name	*Acronym*	*Description*	*Jurisdiction*
Labour Energy Forum		Think tank, pressure group	UK
Greener Jobs Alliance		Trade union initiative	UK
Public Services International Research Unit	PSIRU	Trade union research group	International
European Trade Union Institute	ETUI	Trade union research and training centre	Europe
Oxford Institute for Energy Studies		University institute	UK
Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung Europe/Brussels	RLS Europe	Foundation, non-profit	Germany/ Europe
Transnational Institute	TNI	Research and advocacy organisation	Netherlands/ International
Corporate Europe Observatory	CEO	Research and campaign group	European
Die Linke		Political party	Germany
Podemos		Political party	Spain
Red Pepper		Left political magazine	UK
The Gastivist Collective		Network of grassroots groups	Europe
Friends of the Earth Scotland	FoES	Environmental NGO	Scotland
Friends of the Earth Europe	FoEE	Environmental NGO	Europe

The London Meeting stood out from the other meetings and events I had attended as part of my fieldwork in two important ways. Firstly, the meeting had the by far highest number of non-union participants, more non-union than union participants, and the highest number of 'new' allies and social movements (see Table 6.4). Secondly, the London Meeting was the most focussed in terms of discussing 'actually achievable' alternative politics as it managed to productively link TUED's narrative and analysis with the party political policies of the British Labour Party at a critical time. Taken together, these two observations may seem counter-intuitive at first and might even appear to conflict the arguments made in the last section around trust, connection and cohesion as integral to successful movement building. While there is an argument to be made about the ability of a more 'homogenous' or familiar group to achieve a productive and focussed discussion, a more heterogenous group of actors who share an overall goal can have more wide-reaching movement building effects. As I argue below, the TUED coordinators attempted to diversify their regional movement building efforts through casting a wider net of actors, both in Geneva, to establish a new European discourse on trade union environmentalism, but even more obviously so in London, where the network discussed public ownership as a specific policy issue. The meetings, especially the London Meeting, also show that the TUED network made good use of a strategic opportunity during a moment of political possibility. By joining discussions around public ownership with key actors as they emerged in the UK TUED put its member on the map of actors working towards this policy change, or in Jon Forster's words from chapter four (p.135), TUED managed to put its members at the table rather than "on the menu".

The London Meeting provided an opportunity for TUED's UK-based member unions to discuss their individual and shared role in emerging public ownership debates. The attending unions were able to critically discuss their approaches to certain policies, such as competitive bidding, and to pose questions on specific issues that relate to their members and/ or sectors, such as fracking or gas. All attending unions were given the opportunity to contribute to the discussion in what was a largely 'unscripted' meeting with limited formal presentations by TUED coordinators. Representatives from the UK-based unions GMB, Public and Commercial Services (PCS), UNISON, and Unite were joined by comrades and colleagues from Fagforbundet (NUMGE) in Norway and CGIL in Italy, whose unions had experience in navigating some of the discussions the UK-based unions were facing. The first part of the meeting very much centred around the 'nitty gritty' of energy transition and public ownership of energy systems. Representatives from GMB, Unite and UNISON highlighted that many of their members currently are in

"environmentally questionable" jobs in gas or nuclear industries, and in this context problematised transition discourses that do not explicitly include the retention of good union jobs and pensions (Observational notes, London Meeting, February 2018). In this context, most attending unions also stressed the importance of alternative ownership debates as key to a just energy transition strategy for workers in all sectors, but especially those who are working in the energy sector and are facing more immediate challenges to their jobs and livelihoods. A representative of the hosting union, UNISON, embraced discussions around energy democracy and public ownership but also stressed the challenge of, and need to, protecting decent unionised jobs with good pensions that many unions fought for in the Big Six energy companies in a case of potential future nationalisation or public management (Observational notes from the London Meeting, February 2018). Just transition was a shared concern among the participating unions and there was a common understanding that unions needed to put forward a much stronger message around the importance of a fair energy future for all (Routledge *et al*, 2018; Heffron & McCauley, 2018; Hess, 2018). In this context, Unite's representative also stressed the need to have more open and honest debates about the costs of public ownership and advocated for a strong commitment to foregrounding transparency in order to retain public support: "We need to develop detail and communicate effectively around public ownership. We shouldn't take public support for granted – people will lose faith if our discussion around costs and prices of the transition isn't transparent" (Quote from the representative of Unite. Observational notes, London Meeting, February 2018).

Following this critical and honest discussion about the questions they still need to address internally and as a movement, the unions all agreed on the importance of developing strong, critical and informed positions on key issues in order to be able to meaningfully participate in public ownership and energy transition debates. The representative from PCS summarised the challenge well by calling on "UK-based unions to have discussions on all practical issues we discussed today, ranging from gas and fracking to technologies such as CCS [carbon capture and storage] and hydrogen, and [to] start to define public ownership within our unions and, most importantly, with our base" (Quote from the representative of PCS. Observational notes, London Meeting, February 2018) (see also: Waterman, 2001; Moody, 1997). The level of discussion during the London Meeting showed that while there were still many unanswered questions around key issues such as transition technology, the unions were beginning to move beyond a shared imaginary to engage critically with the more complex practicalities of public ownership as a key demand (Laclau, 2007). Giving unions this space to network and

connect across union 'boundaries' facilitates future collaborations on energy issues between unions in similar sectors in a more focussed way than the existing structures of the TUC, as their closest affiliate organisation in Britain, can provide. Instead of 'merely' being able to obtain the name and contact details of their official counterpart in another union, the union representatives attending the London Meeting were able to discuss and share their unions' specific policy directions, ideas and challenges in a trusted environment and through a shared agenda. Through bringing like-minded unions together around energy democracy and public ownership demands, the TUED network thus facilitates the emergence of new equivalential relations between representatives in these unions, and by extension, within the union movement.

The networking and movement building opportunities of the London Meeting also extend beyond potential trade union coalitions and provided UK unions with 'new' allies and contacts in social movement and policy circles (for related literatures on broad-based coalitions in existing energy democracy campaigns, see e.g. Angel, 2017; Paul, 2018a; Hess, 2018). While the London Meeting would have already been a critical event with the view to concretise the public ownership policies of UK unions, opening up the meeting to social movement and policy allies from the UK and Europe to observe the level of debate was an important movement building effort and again creates and reinforces emerging equivalential relations between TUED and the wider left movements around energy democracy demands (Laclau, 2007). Through diversifying the discussion and including actors with valuable policy experience such as TNI or the Oxford Institute for Energy Studies, as well as from the European left parties, such as Podemos and Die Linke, TUED managed to put its UK-based member unions on the map of actors discussing 'real' and achievable left policy and politics in Europe. Inviting left actors in particular also reinforced the importance of the UK-based debates at that time, as the British Labour Party remains one of the few social democratic parties in Europe that did not suffer historic losses in recent elections and actually managed to produce progressive oppositional politics and discourses. In this wider narrative building context, TUED successfully identified a window of opportunity to actively portray unions as important contributors in public ownership debates as they emerge and evolve and as central actors to progressive politics in the UK and Europe. As Sean stressed at the end of the meeting: "If we don't put forward an alternative vision for the UK, and by extension Europe, with our allies in Friends of the Earth and on the Left, then we are missing an opportunity" (Quote from Sean Sweeney, Global Coordinator of the TUED network. Observational notes, London Meeting, February 2018).

Conclusion

> "[Unions] would be the ones forming a new alliance – it wouldn't be TUED, TUED could be the kind of *catalyst* – you know, we get people in a room, we organise the debate, we invite the speakers. But in the end of the day, I think, it's the unions [who] have to have those bilateral relationships." (Interview quote from Sean Sweeney, Global Coordinator of TUED, New York City, April 2017)

In this last empirical chapter, I have reflected on the movement building strategies of the Trade Unions for Energy Democracy network and have highlighted that each TUED meeting I have attended has a strategic aim which differs slightly between each place, setting and policy context. To provide context for the movement building argument, I began this chapter by discussing the impact of choosing the "Resist! Reclaim! Restructure!" narrative on TUED's movement building efforts. In the first section, I highlighted how the adaption of the narrative became a 'self-selecting' tool for a more radical core group of unions which has since grown into a committed network. Relatedly, I also explored TUED's efforts to 'spread the word' in order to grow the network's membership, and in this context have reflected on the choice of materials and resources produced and disseminated by TUED. This includes the TUED video, TUED's communication choices, the network's website, and the TUED Working Papers.

In the second section of this chapter I discussed TUED's practices of staying in touch with its member unions, including the Global Advisory Group calls, travelling and conferencing activities of the TUED organisers, and the annual meetings of the network to discuss strategy or regional issues in person. I particularly focussed on two key events in 2017, the Long Island Conference and Pocantico Retreat, and explored how TUED differently utilised these events to embed their narrative and analysis in North America, and build their global movement into a network of imagineers respectively. In this section I also discussed the importance of socialising to build trust and comradeship, and how this, in turn, has strengthened the TUED network in the face of tensions and friction.

In the third section, I have highlight how TUED has recently found itself in a position to begin regional discussions based on the developments within its network, including how unions have increasingly taken ownership over their movement and how a 'network of imagineers' is beginning to appear. This network of imagineers is both willing and able to take the narrative and analysis of Trade Unions for Energy Democracy into

their regional and local contexts. In this section, I also discussed how the regional discussions in Geneva and London were examples of a diversification of actors and see more participation from ‘new’ allies and political parties. I argued that the TUED coordinators strategically cast a wider net of actors to establish a new European discourse on trade union environmentalism through the Geneva Meeting. This was even more evident during the London, where the network discussed public ownership as a specific, and actually-achievable policy issue with key stakeholders on the political and policy stage.

CONCLUSION

When I talk about my research with friends, family, fellow academics, or strangers, it goes without saying that I get many different reactions and comments. Some share their thoughts on recent activist campaigns such as Extinction Rebellion, some want to discuss the time frames and technicalities of energy transitions, some share their recent efforts to reduce single use plastics, and most are surprised to hear that trade unions are engaging progressively with environmental issues at all. One thing that all of these rather varied conversations have in common is that pretty much everyone remarks on the timeliness and relevance of my research in our current context of climate change debates, which seem to occupy any and all positions from Trump's withdrawal from the Paris Agreement to "Fridays for Future" protests led by pupils across the world who are fighting for the survival of our shared planet. They are right – over the past three years of researching and writing this thesis, climate change, energy, and the environment have, fortunately, become a fixed part of our everyday news cycle and popular political discourse. Unfortunately, however, the debates we are having all too often lack a critical analysis of the underlying causes of, and actually existing alternatives to, our energy and climate crises.

This thesis has contributed to critical analyses of the climate and energy emergencies we are facing, by interrogating how trade unions and labour organisations have recently engaged in these debates by critiquing 'green growth' and associated processes of neoliberal environmental governance, as well as utilising energy democracy discourses to frame alternatives to the status quo of for-profit energy systems. I have specifically drawn on the work of the Trade Unions for Energy Democracy (TUED) network, the main case study of my thesis, to show how the labour and trade union movements have contributed a particularly strong energy democracy narrative to contemporary climate and energy debates. The TUED network's "Resist! Reclaim! Restructure!" framework is novel in three key ways; firstly, it poses a robust challenge to profit-driven energy governance, secondly, it strongly advocates for the return of energy systems into public ownership, and thirdly, it creates a strong alternative vision of a democratic energy future in the hands of workers, communities and the public.

I have grounded my analysis of the TUED network's narrative and analysis in a wider conceptualisation of neoliberalism, and more specifically the neoliberalisation of nature and the energy sector, as well as a review of both existing and emerging counter-

politics in the energy sector, including labour environmentalist campaigns and the energy democracy movement. Informed by this context, I then utilised an integrated, qualitative, and multi-method research design, which aimed to "follow the network" at a critical time of its growth and development. The findings from my research were recorded and discussed in the three empirical chapters of this thesis. In brief, the fourth chapter discussed the emergence of the TUED network in the context of wider labour environmentalist developments of the late-2000s and traced the development of the TUED network from its beginnings to the 70+ member strong union movement and alternative knowledge producer on climate change it represents today. Chapter five built on this context and explored the evolution of TUED energy democracy narrative, the "Resist! Reclaim! Restructure!" framework, which has become a strong demand for energy democracy which is increasingly shared as part of a broader equivalential chain of anti-neoliberal left politics. The sixth chapter investigated the movement building efforts and dynamics of the TUED network, exploring how TUED utilises different meetings for different goals, and also highlighted how regionalisation has become a key movement building strategy for the network. The three empirical chapters thus broadly corresponded with the objectives established in the introduction, which are:

1. to situate the emergence of labour environmentalism in the context of neoliberalism,
2. to better conceptualise the TUED network's use of energy democracy narratives to resist, reclaim and restructure the energy sector,
3. to explore the spatialities of energy democracy demands and their equivalential relations in the labour movement and beyond,
4. and to better conceive how the TUED network attempts to build movement and coalitions for energy democracy (including the role of movement imagineers in this endeavour).

The remainder of this concluding chapter summarises the four core contributions of my research across three sections and links them back to the research objectives above. To structure this discussion, I have borrowed slogans from climate justice and energy democracy campaigns with which I aim to acknowledge the active ways in which the arguments I am making in this thesis are also debated and mobilised in contemporary political campaigns, and to highlight that this research does not exist in an academic vacuum. The discussion of the core contributions of my research are roughly divided into

the following sections. In the first section, “System Change not Climate Change”, I discuss contributions that mainly come out of my review of concepts and literatures from chapters one and two. More specifically, I highlight how this thesis has contributed to thinking together the context and impact of neoliberalism, especially the neoliberalisation of the energy sector, and emerging labour environmentalism as well as wider mobilisation for and around energy democracy demands. The first contribution of the thesis is to contextualise labour environmentalist narratives and movement building within and against neoliberal political economies, as set out in the first research objective. As part of this discussion I also introduce the term ‘patchwork neoliberalism’, that I have coined, to better understand the variegated and conjunctural processes commonly described as ‘neoliberal’. The second core contribution, also discussed in the first section, is concerned with better understanding the contested politics of climate change and the actors and agencies engaged in contemporary climate and energy politics.

Following this discussion, the section “No Jobs on a Dead Planet” explores contributions that come out of the empirical findings from my research with the TUED network as presented in chapters four, five, and six. The second section highlights how the thesis is contributing to a further two core discussions. Firstly, the thesis contributes to a better conceptualisation of the distinctive narrative and demands that TUED puts forward, and in this context, as well as by drawing on Laclau (2007), the thesis contributes a discussion of the spatialities of TUED’s energy democracy demands and the emerging equivalential relations within and beyond the labour movement. This third core contribution of the thesis relates to research objectives two and three. Secondly, and building on the discussion of the third contribution, the thesis contributes to better understanding how the TUED network engages in movement building with the help of ‘imagineers’ and mobilises different spatial and policy contexts for energy democracy, as set up in the fourth research objective. Finally, the third section, “There Is No Planet B”, briefly reflects on the wider contemporary political developments and implications of my research for politics and policy, as well as on the potential for new avenues of research on radical labour environmentalism.

System Change not Climate Change

In line with the long-standing climate justice movement slogan “system change not climate change”, one of the core contributions of this thesis has been to contextualise the

emergence of labour environmentalist discourses through the framework of neoliberalism both as the system of governance at the 'root' of the climate and energy emergencies we are facing today, as well as the dominant political and economic discourse across most of the world. This first contribution is linked to the first research objective of the thesis, which has been approached through a sustained review of literatures on neoliberalism, and more specifically the neoliberalisation of nature and the energy sector. Understanding neoliberalism and its impact on and relationship with nature and energy was an important starting point for the wider context of this thesis as decades of neoliberal expansion and policy have impacted workers, communities and environments alike. However, neoliberalism has not simply been conceptualised as a straightforward, underlying cause to trade union environmentalist agendas. Instead, drawing on Peck & Tickell (2002) and Hall (S 2011), I have argued that neoliberalism itself is an often contradictory, hybrid and highly-contextual set of processes, better described by the term 'neoliberalisation', which emphasises both its existence-in-process and its relations to other regimes and processes. To visualise my engagement with the term, I have also contributed the term "patchwork neoliberalism", which proposes to understand neoliberalism as a patchwork quilt made up of varying ideological influences, context-dependent practical constraints, and variegated and amendable policies and reforms. Building on these arguments, the remainder of chapter one focussed on processes of neoliberalisation of nature and in the energy sector. By drawing on critical and eco-Marxist commentators (e.g. Castree, 2010a; McCarthy, 2015) to explore processes of neoliberalisation of nature in more depth, the first chapter has highlighted that the neoliberalisation of the energy sector, in particular, remains under researched. The chapter also addressed this by critically interrogating how 'energy' has been studied and by drawing on Mitchell (2009) and Prashad (2012), among others, to explore energy as a social construct and set of power relations with distinct social, economic, political and imperial impacts which has shaped and structured the agencies of energy actors and the energy sector itself. Ultimately, the first contribution of the thesis, contextualising labour environmentalism in and through the wider system of neoliberalism, was also supported through findings from my fieldwork with the TUED network, which highlighted how TUED unions position themselves against growth narratives and reject further commodification of the environment and energy sector in favour of public and community ownership. Ultimately, this thesis contributes to a better understanding of how the global energy economy shapes, and is shaped by, contemporary labour environmentalist resistances to the status quo.

The second core contribution of this thesis relates to a better conceptualisation of

the contested politics of climate change, especially from a workers' and trade union perspective. The second chapter built on the arguments put forward in the previous paragraph and explored the existing and emerging counter politics in the energy sector to the processes discussed above. The chapter demonstrated how both neoliberalism, as a system of governance, as well as particular processes of privatisation shape trade unions' responses to the neoliberalisation of the energy sector. I showed how trade unions have been 'locked in' to social dialogue and regime-aligned climate politics, including green growth narratives. This has largely foreclosed the opportunity of establishing robust alternatives to the status quo and contesting the nature of carbon-based capitalism as a root cause of the climate emergency. I highlighted the importance of unions actively contesting and challenging the status quo rather than simply seeking to align with mild reformist tendencies. This argument again relates to the first core contribution of the thesis and contextualises the emergence of labour environmentalism not just within a neoliberal governance system but as a way of transcending it. Another contribution is thus that labour faces a new set of questions around trade union renewal beyond earlier concerns regarding its ability to reinvent itself as a social actor in the face of globalisation and de-industrialisation (see: Fine, 2005; Wills, 2001). Today, a key debate for the trade union movement focuses on how logics of growth and neoliberal capitalism, including fossil fuel capitalism, impact upon nature, environments and ecosystems as well as the workers and communities sustained by them. This, in turn, poses fundamental questions for the labour and trade union movement on the future of work, workers and unions in times of climatic change as well as in a green growth or post-carbon world. However, I also pointed out that some trade unions and labour networks, such as the unions and labour groups that are part of the TUED network, have begun to engage with questions of socio-ecological justice to contribute to the debates on climate change, decarbonisation, and energy futures. In order to show how trade unions have begun to contest climate change and the system driving it, I have drawn on the concepts of energy struggle (e.g. Becker *et al*, 2015; Paul, 2018a) as well as energy democracy (Hess, 2018) to conceptualise wider counter-politics and contestation in the energy sector. The thesis importantly shows that unions and labour organisations, led by TUED, have begun to both challenge 'green growth' and to advocate for public ownership and the democratisation of the energy sector, thus uniting a critique of the status quo with 'actually existing' political alternatives (Wainwright, 2018; Massey, 2013). The thesis thus contributes and expands discussions on the contested politics of climate change by introducing workers and trade unions as important participants with varying agencies and positionalities in these debates.

This thesis also makes important contributions to the wider fields of political and energy geographies as well as labour environmentalist theory and practice through its empirical findings. The third contribution of the thesis is thus related to the theoretical and empirical discussion around the emergence and spatialities of demands, especially energy democracy and public ownership, and their potential for building equivalential relations within and beyond the labour movement. Building on this, the fourth contribution the thesis makes relates to the movement building dynamics of the TUED network. I have presented an intensive critical review of TUED's published materials, specifically TUED's high-quality reports, the Working Papers, as well as the narratives and analysis put forward in interviews with key stakeholders and during events in order to exemplify how TUED has built and developed a strong energy democracy narrative through its "Resist! Reclaim! Restructure!" framework. As highlighted in the empirical chapters, this framework has the potential to act not just as a shared demand and equivalential relation for various actors from the wider left-green movement, but my research also offers interesting insights into the spatialities of such demands and the counter-hegemonic transfer of ideas that is taking places in and through the TUED network.

Drawing on Laclau's (2007) theory of populist demands, I provided a review of literature in chapter two discussing the potential for labour environmentalist coalitions, such as the TUED network, to be framed around shared demands, such as energy democracy. In this context, I also specifically discussed the importance of a shared critique, in this case opposition to neoliberal governance of the energy sector, as well as shared alternative politics, around public ownership and democratic decision making, for the establishment of strong demands and equivalential relations (Laclau, 2007). Through this review and my empirical findings, I explored how demands exist, move and develop across space, and how equivalential relations, or chains, can be formed and (differently) utilised by actors in their particular spatial contexts. Here, TUED as a case study provided an excellent example and I showed how demands around a more equitable, just and ecologically sustainable energy future have become part of a wider equivalential chain of actors, networks and organisations working towards energy democracy and public ownership more broadly, including a range of social, policy, and environmental movement actors such as the Transnational Institute, Platform London, 350.org, and the Labor Network for Sustainability. The thesis has thus contributed to a better understanding of the formation of the key TUED demands, "Resist! Reclaim! Restructure!", and has shown how

this particular energy democracy narrative has developed into an equivalential relations in three key ways. Firstly, the demand has been developed within TUED's network of unions who are utilising the TUED narrative and analysis in their particular spatial and political contexts. Secondly, energy democracy has been a shared demand in TUED's immediate partnerships and has strengthened the network's relations with its partners, i.e. the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation and the Global Labour Institute. And thirdly, through its "Resist! Reclaim! Restructure!" framework and energy democracy narrative, TUED has been able to build equivalential relations with its wider network, including policy and research organisations, social and environmental movements, and labour advocacy groups.

The fourth contribution of this thesis relates to TUED movement building efforts and the importance of 'imagineers' for the network's growth and development. By first drawing on an emerging body of academic and activist literature on the energy democracy movement (e.g. Hess, 2018; Burke & Stephens, 2017) and subsequently presenting how TUED has built movement for energy democracy in practice, the thesis has advanced the understanding of the spread and growth of energy democracy ideas and the movement building dynamics of TUED's networked and multi-sited energy democracy coalition. As such, this thesis has also made important contributions to existing empirical research on trade union environmentalism by critically exploring the role of unions in the emerging energy democracy movement. In this context, the thesis also contributes a novel approach to studying a translocal organisation by "following the network", which means that I was observing, as well as participating, in different events and meetings for a sustained period of time. Through following the network and embedding TUED's work in wider socio-political and spatial contexts I was able to gain a better appreciation of the spatial and temporal workings of the TUED network. This intensive immersion in TUED work has allowed me to engage with the network's movement dynamics, and I have been able to critically explore the importance of 'imagineers' for the TUED network (e.g. Routledge, 2013). While important for the growth and development of the network, I have discussed that the reliance on particular imagineers can also 'lock in' a movement or risk overstretching their time and resources. Here, I specifically highlighted how imagineers have been instrumental for the young movement and how the network is drawing on a 'new generation' of imagineers to lead its regionalisation efforts. My discussion on the role of imagineers for TUED and similar coalitions importantly contributes to the understanding how 'counter-hegemonic' ideas, such as energy democracy and public ownership, are mobilised and transferred across space as well as how they are taken up in different policy or political contexts.

The title for this last section is especially apt, as now, more than ever, our society grapples with the current and future impacts of the climate emergency we are facing (Carrington, 2019). However, instead of focussing on the often shocking developments that dominate the news, from floods to droughts to superstorms, this thesis aimed to contribute to 'actually existing alternatives' to the status quo. Both politics and policy have recently offered such alternatives; Swedish school pupil Greta Thunberg has managed to mobilise previously apathetic world leaders to (re)engage in climate debates, US representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez has been instrumental in establishing a new discourse around the 'Green New Deal', a proposed stimulus package to address climate concerns alongside economic inequality, and the UK Labour Party has recently published a consultation on democratic public ownership of transportation, communication, banking, energy and water (Hanna & Cumbers, 2019) to strengthen its policy commitment to reintroduce public ownership in key sectors. At the same time, organisations such as the Transnational Institute and Platform, among many others, research and publish towards public ownership, public services and democratic participation (e.g. Kishimoto & Petitjean, 2017; see also: McDonald & Swyngedouw, 2019).

My research with, and about, the TUED network overlaps with many of these recent trends, and TUED itself is highly involved in researching, advocating and mobilising for energy democracy and public ownership while adding a distinct workers' voice and perspective to these debates. TUED and its work hold potential for continued research on radical labour environmentalism, and more research could (and should!) be conducted with TUED's individual unions across a range of sectors to gain a better understanding of workers' agencies and positionalities on climate and energy politics. Another area of further research could focus on how TUED's relations with its movement allies and partner organisations play out in the future. As energy democracy remains a relatively 'young' and recent demand, it will also be interesting to see how TUED's more concrete demands around public ownership of the energy system play out in practice and if the discussed equivalential relations with other counter-hegemonic actors and demands remain intact and effective.

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APPENDIX A

LOGISTICS

TRADE UNIONS FOR ENERGY DEMOCRACY EUROPE Geneva, Switzerland – June 14th & 15th

Location

The TUED Europe Meeting will take place at the Université Ouvrière de Genève (UOG) in Geneva. The venue is located a short, 5 minute walk from the central train station Geneva Gare Cornavin, or just Cornavin.

Address

Place des Grottes 3 1201 Genève
T +41 22 733 50 60 F +41 22 733 35 19 https://www.uog.ch

From the Airport

Take the **train** to Cornavin (runs every 12-20 minutes), which takes 8 minutes. The train station at the airport is accessible via a 5 minute walk through the shopping area at the terminal (follow signage).

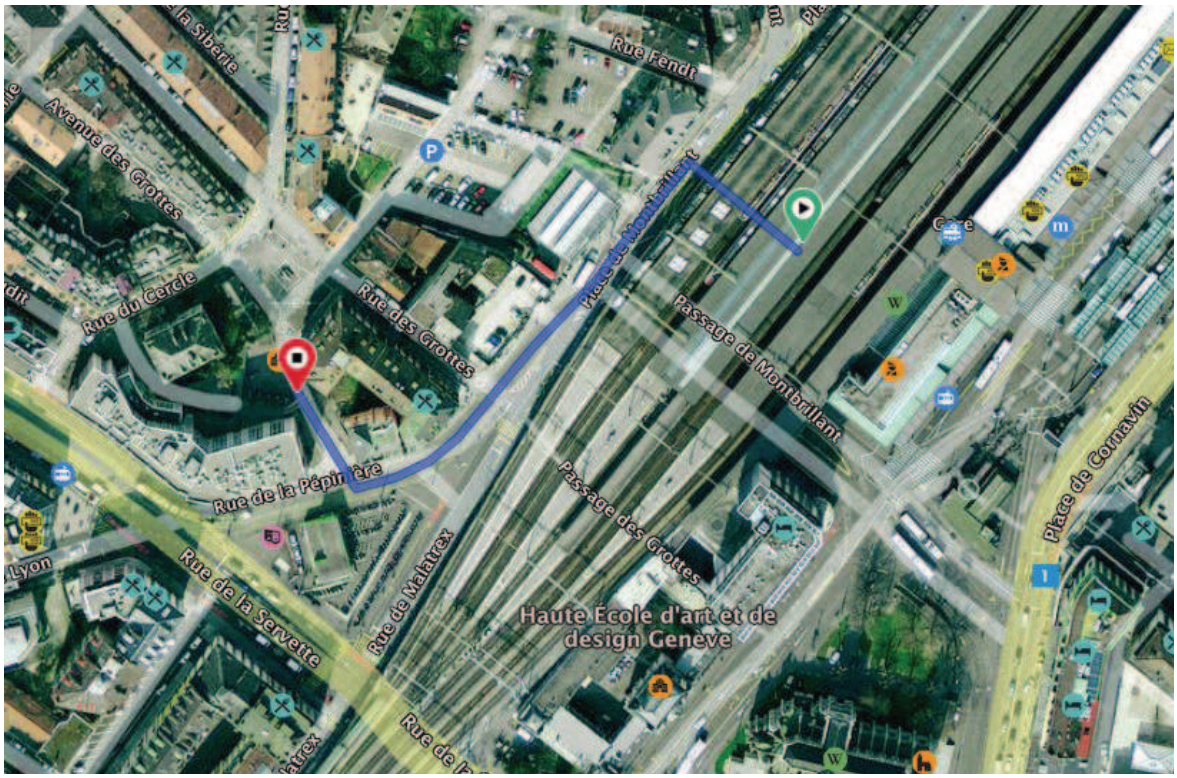
Alternatively, take the **bus number 5** to Cornavin (runs every 30 minutes), which takes about 20 minutes. The bus stops directly in front of the airport terminal.

Tickets

All public transport tickets cost 3 CHF and are valid for 1 hour (for bus, tram, train, and boat).

Upon arrival at the airport, a machine in the baggage claim hall supplies you with one **free** Unireso public transport ticket (valid for 80 minutes from the time of printing).

TRADE UNIONS FOR ENERGY DEMOCRACY EUROPE Geneva, Switzerland – June 14th & 15th



From the Central Train Station (Cornavin)

The venue is easily accessible from Cornavin by foot, the walk takes about 5 minutes. In the station, take the exit (sortie) to Place de Montbrillant and take a left along Place de Montbrillant (which becomes Rue de la Pépinière). Then, take a right into Rue des Quatre Saisons until you reach Place des Grottes. The venue, indicated in red on the map, is 3 Place des Grottes, on your left (it's a bit hidden!).

TRADE UNIONS FOR ENERGY DEMOCRACY EUROPE Geneva, Switzerland – June 14th & 15th

Evening Reception at UNIA

There will be a reception at UNIA at 6pm on June 14th. The address is: Chemin du Surinam 5, 1203 Geneva.

UNIA is a 15 minute walk from the venue at UOG. From UOG, walk along Rue des Quatre Saisons and onto Rue de la Pépinière. Crossing Rue de la Servette, follow Rue de Lyon (keeping right on Rue de Lyon when at the fork). Chemin Surinam is on your right.

APPENDIX B

Information Sheet

My name is Franziska Christina Paul and I am currently working on a research project exploring coalition building in the energy sector, particularly around recent calls for energy democracy. I would like to invite you to take part in this research project, which is conducted as part of a postgraduate study programme at the University of Glasgow in Scotland, United Kingdom. If you consider taking part please read the following information carefully and feel free to ask any questions about the research. My contact details can be found below.

Participating in the Project
Participation in the research project involves taking part in a semi-structured interview with me, Franziska, which will last 30 minutes to an hour. Interviews are carried out to gain a more in-depth understanding of how energy democracy coalitions are formed, organised, and mobilised. Questions asked in the interviews will concern your experience with energy politics either in the workplace or through activist engagement (or both), as well as your experiences of coalition building around energy democracy 'in practice'.

Consent, Anonymity and Data Collection
Taking part in this research project is entirely voluntary. If you decide to take part, you have the right to withdraw at any time, before, during or after the interview, and without giving a reason. If you decide to withdraw, all information collected about you and your views will be safely destroyed and not used in the analysis or final publication.
If you give your consent, the interview will be audio recorded to assure the accuracy of information and facilitate analysis. You can choose for your interview not to be recorded, in which case written notes of the conversation will be taken instead.
The interview is part of a university study which means that data, information and quotes collected in the interview may be used when writing about and discussing this research. It is your decision whether you wish to use your real name or a pseudonym in the study.
This project has been reviewed by the Research Ethics Committee of my College. If you have questions concerning the official ethical procedures please contact the University of Glasgow Ethics Committee through Professor Hester Parr at hester.parr@glasgow.ac.uk .

School of Geographical and Earth Sciences, University of Glasgow, G12 8QQ, Glasgow, UK
Mobile number: +44 (0)7902 361030 (UK); +49 (0)162 4026818 (Germany)
Email address: f.paul.1@research.gla.ac.uk

APPENDIX C

Consent Form

Name of Researcher: Franziska Christina Paul
Name of Funder: Economic and Social Research Council, United Kingdom

Please read the statement below carefully and sign your initials in the boxes if you agree to consent to the statement.

Please initial box

1. I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet for the above project and have had the opportunity to ask questions. ☐
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason. ☐
3. I consent/ do not consent (*delete as appropriate*) to having this interview audio recorded. ☐
4. I agree to take part in the above research project. ☐

Name of Participant	Date	Signature
Name of Researcher	Date	Signature

To be signed and dated in presence of the participant. This form will now be kept in a secure location and accessed only by the researcher.

School of Geographical and Earth Sciences, University of Glasgow, G12 8QQ, Glasgow, UK
Mobile number: +44 (0)7902 361030 (UK); +49 (0)162 4026818 (Germany)
Email address: f.paul.1@research.gla.ac.uk

APPENDIX D

TRADE UNIONS FOR ENERGY DEMOCRACY

Advancing Progressive Labor's Agenda on Energy and Climate Change

A Discussion on Union Strategy and Policy in a Time of Resistance

April 3rd and 4th, 2017
Local 3 IBEW Educational & Cultural Center, Cutchogue, Long Island

Program

Welcome and introductory lunch begin 12:00 noon on Monday, April 3rd. Formal meeting sessions will end at 5:15 p.m. on Tuesday, April 4th followed by a reception and dinner.

Goals of the Meeting

1. **1) Analysis:** In order to guide and focus union policy and actions, we will aim to arrive at a shared understanding of the dramatic changes taking place in terms of energy trends and economics; the nature of political struggles over energy options and pathways (including the "energy superpower" scenario of Trump) and the extent of the crisis facing the "green growth" approach.
2. **2) Alternatives:** Consider the main features of a practical trade union energy politics shaped by principles social, economic, racial justice, internationalism and an awareness of planetary limits.
3. **3) Action:** Explore how unions in all sectors, while facing unprecedented and existential challenges in many parts of the world, can generate the ideas and capacity to drive grassroots action and build effective alliances in a way that can contribute to trade union renewal in the US and internationally

The meeting has been organized into 5 roundtable style sessions, with each session beginning with opening statements designed to stimulate a constructive exchange among participants.

Monday, April 3rd

13:00-14:45 Session 1

We're Divided, Now What? *Global resistance to "extractivism" is rising, but union divisions appear to be deepening. Why is this happening and what can we do about it?*

A deep divide has opened up in the US labor movement around energy and environmental issues. It came to a head in 2011 over Keystone XL pipeline, and escalated further in 2016 around the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL) and the struggle led by the

Standing Rock Sioux. In January 2017, a number of key unions embraced the Trump Administration's "energy superpower" agenda—which involves the escalation of fracking, and the export-focused development of coal, oil, and liquefied natural gas (LNG). As the March 28th Executive Order scrapping the EPA's Clean Power Plan makes clear, this agenda will be accompanied by a dramatic rollback of environmental regulations and climate commitments.

But the US is not unique. Labor movement divisions have surfaced within and between unions in numerous other countries, among them Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, and the UK. In Europe, some unions have pushed back against carbon pricing, while others have called for governments to show more ambition in reducing emissions as a means of creating jobs.

The goal of the session will be to try to make sense of these tensions and to discuss how we might develop a progressive trade union narrative to overcome them, one based on solidarity, internationalism, and the extension of democratic control over energy resources, infrastructure and options.

Facilitators:

Michael Yee (Local 3, IBEW) and Kate Lee (Union Aid Abroad—Australia)

Perspectives:

Karl Cloete (National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa, NUMSA) Allison Roche (UNISON, UK)
Bruno Dobrusin (CTA, Argentina)
Corey Lanham (National Nurses United)

Bruce Hamilton (Amalgamated Transit Union, US)

14:45 -15:15: Break

15:15-17:30: Session 2

Green Gone Wrong? *Making the case for a union-led policy re-think in the face of rising fossil fuel use, pollution and emissions.*

A progressive union agenda on energy, environment and climate protection must be anchored in a solid facts-based analysis. This requires separating myths from realities and developing an independent approach.

This session will begin with a TUED presentation, *Is the World Really Moving Away from Fossil Fuels?* The presentation will show that the "green growth" framework that has informed trade union (and NGO) policy for more than a decade is in deep trouble in the US and internationally. Market-based approaches have neither delivered a meaningful reversal in emissions levels, nor driven the deployment of renewable energy at anything like the levels required to bring about an energy transition.

The goal of this session is to present and discuss TUED's analysis and its implications for a union policy and activism in the US and globally. Can unions lead a policy shift towards a "public goods" and needs-based approach to energy transition?

Facilitator: Josua Mata (Sentro, Philippines)

Perspectives:

Samantha Mason (Public and Commercial Services Union, UK) Mike Williams (Blue Green Alliance, US)
Michael Renner (Worldwatch Institute, US)
Simona Fabiani (CGIL-Italy)

Luz Gonzalez (CUT-Brazil)

17:30 Adjourn for drinks and dinner

Tuesday April 4th

9:00-12:15 Session 3 (Break TBD)

Can the Force be With Us? *What Kind of Labor-Environment-Social Justice Alliances do we need to effectively resist the "Energy Superpower" agenda of Trump and Trudeau?*

Labor-environmental alliances are no longer new. In the US, the Blue Green Alliance (BGA) just celebrated its tenth anniversary. In Canada, the BGA has also been a significant voice in the public discourse around climate change and energy transition. Internationally, union-environmental partnerships have proliferated.

But in both the US and Canada, energy politics is currently dominated by "resource nationalism," which today expresses itself in the "energy superpower" politics of the Trump Administration. The Trump and Trudeau Administrations are acutely aware that the vast majority of countries in the world have no fossil fuel reserves or potential, and are thus dependent on imports of coal, oil and gas for their electricity, transport, industry, heating and cooling systems, and also agriculture. For the US and Canada, the opposite is true. Both have plentiful supplies of fossil-based fuel—but much of it is locked in shale rock (thus fracking) or in the Alberta "Tar Sands." With energy demand falling in both countries (mainly due to deindustrialization) fossil fuel companies have pursued a lucrative "export carbon" strategy—effectively exporting pollution and emissions to energy-hungry industrial competitors like China and India. Some unions in the US and Canada see this agenda as good for jobs; good for the respective economies of both countries, and important geo-politically in terms of reducing the power of OPEC and export-focused gas superpowers like Russia.

This session will consider how unions and their allies in the environmental and social / racial justice movements can respond to the "energy superpower" agenda. Does this response require a rethink of the goals and strategies of existing labor-environmental alliances at the local, regional and national levels?

Facilitators:

Paula Finn (Murphy Institute, CUNY) and Kenny Bruno (Moving Beyond Oil Campaign)

Perspectives:

David Coles (UNIFOR Canada)
May Boeve (350.org)
Michael Guerrero (Labor Network for Sustainability) Dean Hubbard (Sierra Club Labor Programs)

12:15-13:15: Lunch

13:15-15:15: Session 4

***Reclaiming Energy**: Can Unions Campaign for Public Renewable Power in the US and Internationally?*

Have the shortcomings of market-based approaches opened the door to a radically different approach to energy transition? Rising union and public support for "energy democracy" and "climate jobs" campaigns, and the willingness to fight privatization, have drawn attention to the need and potential opportunity to expand public and social control of energy systems. A growing number of cities around the world—more than 100 in Germany alone—have reclaimed their grids from private energy companies and established city-level public energy companies to control costs and drive renewable energy. This has led to demands to reclaim transmission systems, and discussions about expanding public ownership over generation of renewables. In Barcelona, the recently elected left government has established a municipal authority that has partnered with one of the world's largest solar cooperatives.

Efforts to reclaim significant parts of the energy system to the public sphere have also taken place at national levels. Under Jeremy Corbyn's leadership, the UK Labour Party has called for returning energy to the public by creating municipal-level public companies. Syriza in Greece and Podemos in Spain have made similar commitments to energy democracy. In Uruguay, the left *Frente Amplio* government has been a driving force behind a rapid transition to renewable energy. And in Canada, public renewable power has been the focus of both the *Leap Manifesto* and the union-led postal banking campaign.

This session will explore the possibility of progressive unions developing campaigns for public renewable power (PRP) as an alternative to market-focused approaches that effectively amount to "back door" privatizations (through "power purchase agreements"). PRP's potential to meet climate goals, improve health and create jobs could become a key pillar in a progressive labor agenda that is global in scope.

Facilitators: Perspectives:

Wol-san Liem (Korean Federation of Public and Transportation Workers) and Maite Llanos, (TUED Europe)

Perspectives:

Lance McCallum (Electrical Trades Union, Australia) Daniel Chavez (Transnational Institute, Netherlands) Christopher Erikson (Local 3, IBEW)
Graham Cox (CUPE, Canada)

15:15-15:30: Break

15:30-17:00: Session 5

Can We Do It? *What are the realistic capacity building scenarios that can help us speak and act on energy and climate change as an independent, movement- building force? Are there ways to achieve this goal without putting further stress on union resources?*

Progressive labor's ability to meaningfully influence energy and climate policy is currently limited. Resolutions and statements have their place, but most unions— fighting on many fronts—simply do not have the capacity to consistently work in a space that is, by definition, global in scope, technically challenging, and dominated by major corporate players and well resourced NGOs. Despite this, union members, staff and leaders have, with limited resources, created or participated in local and national networks and initiatives that have made a significant impact.

Drawing on the international experience, this final session will consider what specific steps can be taken in order to raise the profile and presence of progressive labor in local, national and global spaces.

Facilitator:

Philip Pearson (former policy officer, TUC-UK) and Peter Knowlton (United Electrical Workers, US)

Perspectives:

Josua Mata (Sentro, Philippines)
Kate Lee (Union Aid Abroad-Australia) Jerry Fishbein (1199SEIU, US)
Maida Rosenstein (UAW Local 2110)

17:00-17:15: Recap, Next Steps and Adjourn

About

Trade Unions for Energy Democracy *(TUED) is a global, multi-sector initiative to advance democratic direction and control of energy in a way that promotes solutions to the*

climate crisis, energy poverty, the degradation of both land and people, and that responds to the attacks on workers' rights and protections.

*TUED is a project of the **International Program on Labor, Climate and Environment** (IPLCE), based at CUNY's **Joseph S. Murphy Institute**. Launched in early 2015, IPLCE aims to make a major contribution to the struggles for climate justice, energy democracy, and a "just transition" within labor, environmental and community contexts.*

IPLCE and TUED would like to express their sincere thanks to Local 3 IBEW and the staff of the Educational & Cultural Center for their generous hospitality and assistance in convening this important event.

http://unionsforenergydemocracy.org/

TUED is a global community of unions in partnership with:

CUNY The Murphy Institute

ROSA LUXEMBURG STIFTUNG NEW YORK OFFICE

APPENDIX E

TRADE UNIONS FOR ENERGY DEMOCRACY

TUED at 5 Years: Achievements, Priorities and New Directions

Strategic Retreat and Discussion

April 5-7, 2017
The Pocantico Center — Tarrytown, New York

Day 1: Wednesday, April 5th

12:00-12:45	Lunch

13:00-14:45 **Welcome and introductions; review of agenda; goals of the meeting**

- ***Summary of the status of TUED; reiteration of its main goals; assessment of impact***
  Lead: Sean Sweeney (Murphy Institute / TUED)

14:45-15:00	Break

Part One: Setting the Stage

15:00-17:00 **Political Context, Areas of Engagement: A Global Survey of TUED's activities**

- ***The Trade Union and Political Context of the launch of "TUED Europe"***
  Perspectives: Maite Llanos (TUED), Asbjorn Wahl, (NUMGE, Norway) and Simona Fabiani (CGIL, Italy)
  Facilitation: John Treat (Murphy Institute / TUED)

- ***Corbyn, the Labour Party, and TUED's Role in the UK following the 2-day London meeting***
  Perspectives: Sam Mason (PCS), Allison Roche (UNISON)
  Facilitation: Philip Pearson (TUED)

- ***Developments in Queensland, NSW and South Australia; Opportunities to Shape the Energy Debates in the ACTU and the ALP***
  Perspectives: Lance McCallum (ETU) and Kate Lee (Union Aid Abroad – APHEDA)
  Facilitation: Josua Mata (Sentro)

17:00-19:30	Break and Dinner

19:30-21:30 **Evening Discussion (Hayloft)**

- *The New Trade Union Federation in South Africa and Developing NUMSA's Programmatic Commitment to Social Ownership of Renewable Energy*
  Contribution: Karl Cloete (NUMSA)

Day 2, Thursday, April 6th

Part One: Setting the Stage (cont.)

09:00-11:00 **Political Context, Areas of Engagement: A Global Survey of TUED's activities (cont.)**

- *Resisting the Right in the Americas and Key Asia Pacific Countries: Does Energy Democracy Have a Role to Play?*
  Perspective on Health Unions on the Front Line: Fernando Losada (NNU), Judy Gonzalez (NYSNA), Maria Castaneda (1199)
  Perspective on Unions and the Social Movements and Rebuilding the Mexican Left: Hector de la Cuevo (CILAS)
  Perspectives on Argentina, Brazil, Philippines and Korea: Josua Mata (Sentro), Wol San Liem (KPTU), Bruno Dobrusin (CTA), Luz Gonzalez (CUT)
  Facilitation: Daniel Angelim (TUCA), Irene Shen (TUED)

11:00-11:15 Break

Part Two: Do we know (yet) what energy democracy looks like?

11:15-12:30 **Opening Contribution**

- *Energy Democracy: Reflecting on the Role of States, Communities, Citizens*
  Perspective: Daniel Chavez (TNI)
  Response: Graham Cox (CUPE)

12:30-13:15 Lunch

13:15-15:15 **Presentation on the forthcoming TUED Working Paper**

- *Beyond Broke: Why the Energy Transition is Starved of Money, and What Can Be Done About It*
  Presentation: Sean Sweeney and John Treat (Murphy Institute / TUED)
  Responses: Michael Leon Guerrero (LNS) and Michael Yee (Local 3 IBEW)
  Facilitation: James Hare (RLS-New York)

15:15-15:45 Break

15:45-17:00 **Energy Democracy and "Programmatic Shift"**

- *Alternatives to "Green Growth": Moving the Debate in the International Labor Movement*
  Perspectives: Josua Mata (Sentro) and Daniel Angelim (TUCA)

Facilitation: Maite Llanos (TUED)

17:00-19:30	Drinks and Dinner

Part Three: TUED 2.0: What is our vision and strategy?

19:30-21:00 **Evening Discussion**

- ***Thoughts and Reflections on the Significance and Potential of TUED***
  Perspective: Kate Lee (Union Aid Abroad – APHEDA)
  Response: Fernando Losada (NNU)
  Facilitation: Stefanie Ehmsen (RLS-New York)

Day 3: Friday, April 7th

Part Three: TUED 2.0: What is our vision and strategy? (cont.)

09:00-11:30 **Discussion**

- ***Open discussion of discussion document by Kate Lee and Maite Llanos: "Working together for a shared vision for TUED"***
  Facilitation: TBC

11:30-12:00 **Recap of main decisions and next steps**

12:00-12:15	Close of retreat, lunch and departure

APPENDIX F

TRADE UNIONS FOR ENERGY DEMOCRACY

Reclaiming Power: The Struggle for Europe's Energy Future

A 2-day working meeting of unions and close allies in the energy democracy movement

June 14-15, 2017
Université Ouvrière de Genève (Workers University of Geneva)
Place des Grottes 3, 1201 Genève

Programme

Because this is a "working" meeting, named speakers will provide succinct contributions to stimulate discussion and debate. Facilitators will work to ensure broad participation.

Day One: June 14

9.45-10.30 Welcome and Introductions

Rémy Pagani, Mayor of Geneva

Dan Gallin, Global Labour Institute, Geneva

Representative from UNIA, Switzerland

10.30-12.00 Session 1: Context: Trade Unions in a Changing Europe

Moderator: Clara Paillard, PCS-UK

Contributions:

- *The Crisis of Social Europe and the Changing Left*
  Martin Schirdewan, Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung, Brussels
- *Fighting for Democracy in Europe: New Movements and Tendencies*
  Asbjorn Wahl, NUMGE, Norway and the International Transport Workers *Federation (ITF)*
- *After the Energy Referendum*
  Union Syndicale Suisse (speaker to be confirmed)
- *Where now for UK energy after the election?*
  Samantha Mason, Public and Commercial Services Union, UK

Facilitated Discussion

12.00-13.00 Lunch

13.00-15.00 Session 2: Targets, Markets and Public Alternatives: What is the State of Energy Policy in Europe Today and the Potential For Change?

Moderator: TBC

Contributions:

- *Unions and Energy Transition: Identifying Key Questions and Challenges*
  Sean Sweeney, TUED
- *Addressing Climate Change in a Time of Austerity: What Could a Just Transition Look Like?*
  Bela Galgoczi, European Trade Union Institute (ETUI)
- *Challenges to Public Approaches to Renewable Energy*
  Yuliya Yurchenko, Public Services International Research Unit (PSIRU)

Facilitated Discussion

15.00-15.30 Break

15.30-17.30 Session 3: Issues, Actions, and Campaigns (Part 1)

Moderator: Umberto Bandiera, UNIA (Switzerland)

Contributions:

- *Divestment in Europe: Holding Banks Accountable*
  Christian Lutti
- *Fighting Privatization and Reclaiming Water*
  Georgios Archontopoulos, Eyath Water Union (Thessaloniki, Greece) and Guillaume Durivaux, EPSU
- *France: The Climate Jobs Campaign*
  Julien Rivoire, FSU
- *Italy: Building Alliances*
  Simona Fabiani, CGIL

Facilitated Discussion

17.30 Adjourn (reconvene at UNIA for evening reception)

18.00 Reception at UNIA, Chemin du Surinam 5

Day Two: June 15

09.30-11.00 Session 4: Issues, Actions, and Campaigns (Part 2)

Moderator and opening comments: Phillip Pearson, Greener Jobs Alliance—UK

Contributions:

- *Netherlands: Perspectives from FNV's Climate Group*
  Patrick van Klink, FNV
- *Fracking in the UK: The Debate Inside the Energy Unions*
  Paul McCarthy, GMB
  John Storey, UNITE

- *Food Sovereignty and Energy Transition in Europe*
  Valentina Maïga Hemmeler, Uniterre – Via Campesina

Facilitated Discussion

11.00-11.15 Break

11.15-12.45 Session 5: TUED's Analysis and Organizational Approach: What Are the Lessons of the First 5 Years?

Moderator: TBC

This session will review TUED's development since 2012, including: impacts of the "Resist, Reclaim, Restructure" framework for energy democracy on trade union debates and policies; TUED's organizational and geographical reach; and, current opportunities and challenges.

Facilitated Discussion

12.45-13.45 Lunch

13.45-15.30 Session 6: Where to from Here?

Moderator: TBC

This concluding session will attempt to reach agreement on whether or not there is a shared commitment to move forward with building "TUED-Europe." If there is a willingness to proceed, then what are the next steps and interim goals? How can the political, intellectual, organizational and financial resources be generated in order to meet these goals? How can it be coordinated?

15.30 Adjourn

APPENDIX G

TRADE UNIONS FOR ENERGY DEMOCRACY

Reclaiming the Power Sector to Public Ownership: Questions of Strategy and Implementation

A one-day TUED working meeting of unions and policy allies

Wednesday, February 14th, 2018
10:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

UNISON, 130 Euston Road, London (click on map for directions) REGISTER HERE

The working meeting will continue the discussion on how unions and close allies can work with the Labour Party with regard to its Manifesto commitment on returning the power sector to public ownership. We will also consider what Labour Party policy might mean for EU policy and debates among trade unions and the parties of the left.

Questions Addressed:

The February 14th meeting in London will be organized around questions that were raised in recent discussions (see below), specifically:

1. How can the next Labour Government sustain and strengthen popular support for reclaiming the power sector to public ownership?

2. How should the next Labour Government implement its Manifesto commitment and what is (or should be) the policy with regard to a) the "Big Six" and b) the renewables sector?

3. How can UK unions and the Labour Party promote the need for a shift in energy and climate policy in the European trade union movement and the parties of the left?

4. In the context of both UK and the existing EU, how can unions and their allies be better equipped to deal with controversies and differences with regard to the energy mix and related technologies?

The meeting will also provide an opportunity to talk about developing the work of TUED both in the UK and the broader European context.

TUED work in the UK and Europe – A Recent History

February 14th will be the latest in a series of meetings organized by TUED in the UK and Europe. Below is a summary of the meetings and links to more information.

Following a one-day meeting on **February 28, 2017** hosted by the ITF, several UK unions participating in TUED met with Labour MP Alan Whitehead in parliament: UNITE, UNISON, GMB, PCS, UCU and TSSA all participated. Representatives of allied organizations, namely, Platform, the Campaign Against Climate Change—Trade Union Group, and the Greener Jobs Alliance, also took part. As a result of the meeting, TUED unions submitted a memo to Alan titled **Statement on the Labour Party's Election Commitment on Public Ownership of Energy and Trade Union Policy.**

On **June 12th and 13th, 2017,** TUED convened a two-day working meeting of unions and close allies in the energy democracy movement in **Geneva**, under the title, **"Reclaiming Power: The Struggle for Europe's Energy Future."** Union participants from different sectors came from the Basque region, Croatia, France, Galicia, Greece, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Switzerland, and the UK. Regional trade union bodies ETF and EPSU were also represented.

Following the TUC Congress resolution on supporting the Labour Party's manifesto commitment on energy and climate protection, On **November 1st, 2017**, TUED unions and allies met with Shadow Secretary for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) Rebecca Long-Bailey. With input from UNISON, UNITE, PCS and GMB, a memo was submitted to inform the discussion. The Shadow Secretary said she welcomed TUED's input and her office would develop a Terms of Reference for ongoing collaborations between TUED and her team. In early January, the Shadow Secretary's office sent the terms of reference via email.

At the November 1st meeting, issues were raised about the scope of public ownership; the future of the "Big Six" and its workers, and how to address pressing issues about the energy mix in the power sector but also in the broader economy (including transport-related energy, the needs of industry, and the role of gas for domestic and industrial use); and the potential impact of EPO on the EU approach to energy and climate targets. (These questions will be further explored during the meeting on February 14th)

TUED strategy roundtable, COP 23, Bonn 1

Most recently, on **November 10th,** 2017, during COP 23 in **Bonn**, TUED organized a strategy roundtable with union participants came from Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Dominican Republic, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Philippines, UK and USA. A report of the meeting is here. A list of attendees is here. The meeting consisted of reports from TUED unions in different countries and regions, as well as discussion on the recent TUED working paper *Preparing a Public Pathway: Confronting the Investment Crisis in Renewable Energy*.