

The Association of Natural Resources and Human Conflict — Natural Gas and the Peace Process in Cyprus.

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Abstract

It is rare for a discussion of natural resources to solely refer to natural resources. Rather, to speak of natural resources often involves the entanglement of the matter with issues of a very political nature. This doctoral thesis revolves around a contemporary example of the above phenomenon with reference to the context of Cyprus and the global natural gas industry. Here the question of "can natural gas be catalyst for peace?" has firmly taken root, largely as a result of a popularised association between a process to develop natural gas and the seemingly intractable political peace process on the island. Indeed, the relationship espoused has been of serious commercial and political consequence. To understand exactly how, why, and exactly what has been at issue, I critically investigate the nature of the relationship established between these two expansive processes. Through over a hundred semi-structured interviews with international diplomats, industry professionals, local politicians, journalists, and academics, triangulated with detailed archival material and ethnographic work at relevant industry conferences and public forums, I explore the view of natural resources as a contingent socio-material assemblage. I expound the idea of natural resources as ontologically-relational entities to be viewed in epistemologically processual terms. I evidence the complex ways that the axioms of time, relations of power, and the role of human emotion, have all coalesced to profoundly influence perceptions of the role, value, and nature, of natural gas.

In this thesis, I find that what natural gas is understood to be and the agency it can seemingly exercise, is intimately tied to the ebb and flow of the peace process on the island in a reciprocal manner. Fundamentally, I argue that the *issue* of natural gas is an epiphenomenon of a Gordian knot of latent passionate political disputes commonly referred to as the "Cyprus Problem". Beyond the generation of knowledge controversies regarding the future trajectory of the global natural gas industry, forecasts of supply and demand, and various development pathways, it is in relation to this complex political situation on the island from which natural gas has initially acquired meaning, significance, and power. Ultimately, the saga evidenced in this doctoral thesis is of interest to those curious of: the perennial debate vis-à-vis natural resources and human conflict, the use of quantitative and qualitative research methodologies in this intellectual space, the potential political and commercial consequences of the extractive industries, and finally to those who seek a more critical appraisal of the Cyprus peace process.

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Acronyms

AT Author Translation.
BBF Bizonal, Bicommunal, Federation.
BG British Gas Group.
CNG Compressed Natural Gas.
EEZ Exclusive Economic Zone.
ENI Eni S.p.A
EU European Union.
FLNG Floating Liquefied Natural Gas.
FM Foreign Minister.
GDP Gross Domestic Product.
IOC International Oil (and Gas) Company.
KOGAS Korea Gas Corporation.
LNG Liquefied Natural Gas.
MFA Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
MIT Massachusetts Institute of Technology.
MMBTU Million British Thermal Units.
NAVTEX Navigational Telex.
NRT Non-Representational Theory.
NGO Non-Governmental Organisation.
NOC National Oil Company.
RoC Republic of Cyprus.
STS Science and Technology Studies.
TCF Trillion Cubic Feet.
TPAO Turkish National Oil and Gas Company.
TRNC Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus.
TFSC Turkish Federated State of Cyprus.
UDI Unilateral Declaration of Independence.
UN United Nations.
UNEP United Nations Environmental Programme.
UNFICYP United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus.
USGS United States Geological Survey.

Timeline

In this thesis, I seek to account for both the flux of political life and the challenges of natural gas development across a considerably eventful expanse of time. Ergo, the subject matter is at once historical, and reference will be made to past events that have had ramifications in the future. Concurrently, the thesis is rooted in observations from a period of *in situ* fieldwork that has spanned approximately *twelve months* from August 2015 to August 2016. The chronology included in the pages that follow is adapted from Elias Hazou's "Drilling for Cyprus Gas - A Timeline" from the *Cyprus Mail.* It is designed so as to situate the thesis temporally, and to supplement

the discussion that follows.

In particular, I wish the reader to obtain a sense of the temporal expanse and key developments of the so-called "Cyprus Problem" (see Morelli 2018), the definition of which I attempt in Chapter 1. For the interested reader, I have included references to events that have occurred beyond the bounds of the project, in order to showcase how the natural gas saga and the settlement talks ultimately unfolded:

1960: Establishment of the RoC as partnership government between Turkish-Cypriots and Greek-Cypriots following independence from British colonial rule.

1963: Cessation of Turkish-Cypriot representation in RoC government, after only three years of power-sharing between the two communities.

1964: Arrival of UNFICYP amidst continued inter-communal conflict. Official recognition of the government of the RoC (then as now led solely by the Greek-Cypriots), as the only international interlocutor.

1974: Greek junta-backed, right-wing Greek-Cypriot *coup d'état* topples government of Archbishop Makarios. Events culminate in a Turkish military intervention/invasion. Turkish and Turkish Cypriot victory. Mutual population displacement of Greek-Cypriots south and Turkish-Cypriots north.

1977-1979: Establishment of High-Level Agreements between Rauf Denktaş, Archbishop Makarios, and then Spyros Kyprianou. BBF formula for future peace is agreed.

1983: TFSC declared as the TRNC, condemned as illegitimate UDI. TRNC is officially recognised as a *de jure* state only by Turkey.

2003: RoC demarcates EEZ boundary with Egypt. The delimitation is contested by Turkey.

2007: RoC demarcates EEZ boundary with Lebanon. Announces 1st Licensing Round for offshore exploration.

2008: Commencement of Talat-Christofias peace talks. Texas-based Noble Energy granted exploration licence for Block 12. Turkish naval/seismic research vessels conduct counter-measures within the RoC EEZ. Peace process unaffected.

2010: RoC demarcates EEZ boundary with Israel. Noble Energy announces the discovery of the Leviathan natural gas field in the Israeli EEZ. Mehmet Ali Talat loses election to Derviş Eroğlu.

2011: Noble Energy commences exploratory drilling in Block 12 (See Figure 4). Turkey agrees continental shelf delineation agreement with TRNC. Exploration permits issued to the TPAO by the TRNC overlap with RoC's Blocks 1, 4, 5, 6 and 7. Turkey supports TRNC's claims in RoC Blocks 1, 2, 3, 8, 9, 12, and 13, including within few kilometres from the Aphrodite gas in Block 12. Turkish seismographic vessel *Piri Reis* and two Turkish warships come into close range of Noble Energy's

platform. Noble Energy announces the discovery of Aphrodite. The reservoir lies 30 km northwest of Israel's Leviathan field and partially encroaches into Israeli EEZ.

2012: RoC announces 2nd Licensing Round. Peace process stalls as ROC assumes rotating Presidency of the EU.

2013: RoC grants exploration licenses of Blocks 2, 3, and 9, to the ENI-KOGAS consortium. RoC grants licences for the exploration of Blocks 10 and 11 to French multinational TOTAL. RoC economic crisis and bailout. Anastasiades and Eroğlu meet in May. Peace process touted to resume in October. Israeli companies Delek Drilling, and Avner Oil Exploration become partial stakeholders to the Aphrodite field. Noble Energy commences appraisal drilling of Aphrodite, results in downward revision of 5 TCF. Noble Energy discloses that some 3 billion barrels of oil may also lie in deep-water strata between RoC and Israeli offshore fields.

2014: Joint Declaration issued by TRNC/RoC leaders; settlement process resumes after 18-month interlude but remains strained most of 2014. ENI commences drilling operations at the Onasagoras well in its Block 9 concession. Turkey issues NAVTEX and despatches newly-acquired seismic research vessel *Barbaros Hayreddin Paşa* into RoC EEZ. RoC President Nicos Anastasiades retaliates by leaving peace talks with Turkish Cypriots. The peace process collapses. Noble Energy announces that it is shelving plans for a land-based LNG facility. Disappointment follows for ENI at the Onasagoras field.

2015: ENI commences exploratory drilling at the Amathusa well Block 9. Turkey renews NAVTEX. Settlement talks remain stalled. TOTAL relinquishes Block 10, remains in Blocks 10 and 11. Disappointment for ENI at Amathusa well. Turkey agrees not to renew marine advisory and to withdraw the Barbaros. In turn, the fact that Cyprus itself will not be conducting offshore drilling for several months opens a window for the resumption of reunification talks. Moderate Mustafa Akıncı elected President of TRNC. After a seven-month break, peace talks finally resume.

Fieldwork Commences, August 2015

Block 12 partners, Noble Energy, Delek and Avner, declare the Aphrodite gas field commercial. Development and Production Plan for Aphrodite submitted. ENI announces discovery of the Zohr gas field in Egyptian waters; the largest to-date gas field in the Mediterranean Sea. Rekindles interest from both ENI and TOTAL in respective RoC concessions and concessions renewed.

2016: BG Cyprus, subsidiary of British multinational oil and gas company BG Group, joins the Block 12 consortium. BG Group to be acquired by SHELL. RoC announces 3rd offshore licensing round. Capricorn Oil, Exxon Mobil, Qatar Petroleum, Statoil, bid. TOTAL envisages first exploratory well in Block 11 in April 2017 later rescheduled to July 2017. Event is perceived as 'natural' deadline for settlement negotiations. Intensified negotiations commence, pledge to find solution within 2016.

Fieldwork Ceases, August 2016

By November, Turkish-Cypriot and Greek-Cypriot leaders commence unprecedented negotiations in Mont Pèlerin, Switzerland.

2017: The EastMed pipeline is declared commercially viable and technically feasible. The concessions are granted to a consortium of ENI and Total for Block 6, ENI for Block 8, and a consortium consisting of ExxonMobil and Qatar Petroleum for Block 10. What was seen as the most advanced iteration of settlement talks and as a continuation of Mont Pèlerin talks ultimately collapse by June. Negotiations remain frozen a year later as of June 2018, remain a distant prospect. Contestation of drilling activities continues. Turkey procures a national drill ship.

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CHAPTER 1

To Investigate the Association between Natural Resources and Human Conflict.

"The political significance of materials is not a given; rather, it is a relational and a contingent achievement"

Andrew Barry (2013b, 183).

"[…] when I commenced the oil and gas venture, I knew deep in my heart that a new dimension would be added to the Cyprus Problem"

Nicos Rolandis, Former RoC Minister (2012, 7).

1.1. Preamble.

In this doctoral thesis, I critically investigate the form, nature, and extent, of an association contrived between two processes: the peace process in Cyprus, and a related process to exploit the island's natural resources. The former is a long-standing and seemingly intractable political conflict that has, as of late, been related to an emergent resource frontier (Tsing 2005; Watts 2012); that of recently-encountered offshore natural gas reserves in the Eastern Mediterranean Sea. Through a critical investigation of *how*, *why*, and exactly *what*, it was about natural gas that came to matter for the settlement talks, my project contributes to the extant literature on the association between natural resources and politics. The concerns I address will seem familiar, for it is highly likely that the reader will have

encountered explanations of how wars in the Middle East for example, have been *caused* by oil, of how the future geopolitical order will be re-engineered by the so-called energy transition (with implications for natural gas – see Grigas 2017, O'Sullivan 2018), or of how natural resources have been essential to modernity as we know it. From the very start, I find peace and natural gas (referred to also at times as hydrocarbons or energy), to denote two very broad, complex, and geographically contingent phenomena to comprehend, let alone relate, where the exact nature of any relationship espoused differs across space and time. Like for like, this vast topic has often been analysed with broad brush strokes that give the impression that the relationships contrived between them are settled and in no need of further critical reflection.

This thesis adds clarification to this intellectual space, and it does so by employing a post-structural and processual line of enquiry to determine how, why, and with what consequence, natural resources become embroiled in political disputes. For example, in Chapter 5 I explain how variables related to global oil and gas markets, the size and structure of international companies, and the regional geopolitical dimensions of the conflict, mattered only after the association between the two processes was normalised. This complicates the discussion between the processes. My discussion throughout encompasses four intimately and incontrovertibly intertwined themes distilled from the post-structural, processual approach, that of: temporality, material agency and ontology, relations of power, and a pathological foundation, in order to present a fuller resource scholarship. As a result, I explore the view that the political significance of materials such as natural resources is a relational and contingent achievement (Barry 2013b).

More so, I critically appraise the ostensibly *causal* nature of relations between natural resources and human conflict, and explore the type of peace and relations of power that are sought to be achieved in Cyprus. Within this discourse, simplicities derived from complex feedback mechanisms can be pervasive, and must themselves become the subject matter of critique, despite what may indeed be broad-brush strokes, easy relativism, and holism (Haraway 1991). To dismiss them, or to even disconnect any such abstractions from the inexorable vastness and complexity of the commercial world of oil and gas, or the intricacies of geopolitical thought, would be to commit the same intellectual sin.

Instead, the worlds of natural resource exploitation, coupled with the variety of political actors, stakeholders, meanings, infrastructures, processes, and imaginaries of a political situation (Guyer 2015), demand a clear, contextual, precise, and honest analytical approach in response, lest both author and reader be swallowed up in a vertigo of information (Appel *et al.*, 2015). The very fact that such a relation between peace and natural gas has been formulated in the first place, and subsequently epitomised in the oft-mentioned question of "can natural gas be a catalyst for peace?", is an inescapable but also thought-provoking proposition. I appropriate this formulation merely as a departure point for further enquiry. Still, a certain degree of vigilance must be maintained, lest one is blindly led by them without critical introspection (Stengers 2011b). As per Grosz (2005), the task should be to address the occurrence and the implications of the central questions themselves.

In this thesis, my concerns revolve around the competing perceptions of what natural gas is, and what it can do for the peace process, if anything

at all. Of note is the fact that in my effort to discern the exact nature of the association established between the two aforementioned processes, I will assume no prior knowledge of either. Still, it is imperative to establish that the subject matter is a contemporary exposition of how, why, and with what consequences, natural resources can become the subject of passionate political dispute, with serious ramifications for human perceptions of material agency and ontology, and the commercial future of resource development. Hence, I am conscious of the plethora of explanations offered for the relationship between natural resources and politics, which are often shrouded in various metaphysical shades, and range between full linear causality and sheer inexistence. As an ode to the significance of language as emphasised throughout the thesis, natural resources can determine the course of politics, serve as a backdrop to politics, or "authorise, allow, afford, encourage, permit, suggest, influence, render possible, forbid, and so on" (Latour 2005, 72). It is these *aetiological* relations that I seek to exemplify; to investigate the nature of causal relations apparent between the two aforementioned processes, and of how an impression of causality between two disparate walks of life may take hold. As Stengers (2011b, 15) suggests, "all are part of the problem, whether they refer to the whys of human experience or to the how's of 'objective reality'". I will evidence how the natural gas saga is characterised by a public anticipation of the linear progression of events that can themselves become the subject of passionate political dispute in the present. This important temporal disposition will prove all too characteristic for the case of Cyprus.

Ultimately, I chart how the genesis, evolution, and consequences of this association has produced a prima facie nature-society dualism, replete

with fateful insinuations of environmental or commodity determinism, that weighs heavily on perceptions of natural resource agency and ontology. I advance the view that natural resources per se, or materials, matter, or even things exist as hybrid and relational concepts, which have the potential to become reduced and simplified embodiments and materialisations of human wants and needs. In turn, the discussion contributes to the theoretical tension found between structuralism and post-structuralism. I have found it necessary for there to be a degree of "structure" spoken of, or referent frameworks, or any other term that implies a level of repeatability. But there is every reason to desist from thinking that such frameworks are also entirely inherent, unavoidable, and incontestable, which would be another way that responsibility to solve the Cyprus Problem is again diverted elsewhere.

Theoretically, I have been inspired in this work by a latent interdisciplinary effort in the social sciences and humanities to attend to the material (Tolia-Kelly 2013), together with the epistemological insights from post-structural and process philosophy as explored further in Chapter 2. At this stage, I find it important to emphasise the Cartesian dualism at play in the form of an a priori bifurcation between the matter of natural gas, alongside a vision of future peace. It is important to identify and question this bifurcation in earnest, because without doing so, I may hereafter be destined to commence "critical explanation [...] from two poles, [...] conceiving every hybrid as a mixture of two pure forms" (Latour 1993, 77). This would be a forlorn mistake to make, for as Deleuze and Guattari (1987, 47) attest, the design of a research question does more than to identify an issue; it is an act of invention that may propagate an erroneous assumption

that “injects redundancies and propagates them”. I am entirely cognisant of this concern. However, I assure the reader that I do not consider the inter-relationship espoused between the natural gas development process and the settlement negotiations, nor any related adages of geographical destinies and geopolitical roles that have arisen (see Anastasiades 2014), as a given.

In terms of disciplinary approach, the investigation is rooted in political geography. Coincidentally and consequentially, it comes at a time of both heightened interest regarding the future of natural gas, and the increased uptake of this natural resource envisioned globally (I.E.A. 2012, 2017a, 2017b, MIT 2011, OIES 2016). I do not claim to have captured the complexity of the interrelationship between the aforementioned processes in its entirety, as well as that of the oil and natural gas assemblage (Appel *et al.* 2011), if that were necessary or possible (cf. Barry 2016). However, I do assume that the case of natural gas in Cyprus is a more localised articulation of a general and popular relationship that ostensibly exists between natural resources and politics. This I hold necessitates a closer investigation of not only what has been regarded as significant from the realm of the global natural gas industry, but a more localised perspective that places the form, nature, and extent of the peace process and latent power relations of the island under critical inspection, as documented in Chapter 6.

Throughout the work, I will focus on exactly what from a material perspective it was from the world of natural gas that came to matter in a political sense. As discussed further in Chapter 2, the discussion here will speak to issues of natural resource agency and ontology. I suggest that the so-called liveliness of matter is a synonym for matter’s inherent agentic

capacity to act. When the sheer complexity of the global natural gas industry is considered, the obduracy and vitality of the industry itself becomes a generative effect that is also the sum of many parts. The tendency to fetishise the component parts of the industry, and to perceive bottom-line issues such as regional natural gas prices, or the introduction of LNG, are crudely incorporated into simplified political metaphors. This does not mean that specific components are in and of themselves trivial but may become of significance by virtue of association with a potential political or economic outcome. Hence, the underling political situation becomes of primary concern.

With these broad concerns in mind, the project begins to take shape as the investigation of a passionate political debate of a natural resource that is itself surrounded by complex global industry. Although I consider how, why, and to what extent such a geographically diverse commodity trade has featured in the story of natural gas in Cyprus, the primary angle I adopt is the consideration of how this natural resource has emerged as a matter of politics (Braun and Whatmore 2010). In other words, the idea here is to consider the idea that "references to nature and any of its collateral concepts are always politics by other means" (Castree 2014, 51). This is to be allied in the various perceptions held regarding the ontological and agentic nature of natural gas, alongside the structure and operation the vast commercial industry related to it, as explored in Chapter 5.

In light of the above, the case study approach does seem to present the most effective approach to reduce and counteract the maelstrom of information in the broad subject matter. However, to focus upon a singular case study such as that of Cyprus, and perhaps the Eastern Mediterranean,

may still leave the reader with an analysis encumbered by a range of identities and multiplicities to contend with. More so, it is only in relation to the established facts of the industry beyond the case study that a more accurate valuation of the situation in Cyprus can be had. Nevertheless, the reader is still liable to find a vast elision of abstractions used to explain observations that can include an assortment of scientific knowledge from the biological, chemical, and geological realms. As I document in Chapters 4 and 5, matters are complicated by a series of knowledge controversies about the form, structure, and operation of the related commercial industry across various scales and contingent local and international political meaning. I have felt it vital to address these concerns now so as to situate better the subject matter, context, and direction, that this thesis follows.

1.2. Chapter Aims and Structure.

There are four initial and interrelated questions identified from the discussion thus far: (1), what *exactly* it is about natural gas that has mattered for the peace process on the island? (2), how has such an association been established *discursively* in practice? (3), what are the commercial and political consequences of the association contrived? (4), and why exactly was the link between peace and natural gas established in the very first place? These questions underpin the thesis and have also inspired the research questions I have formulated in the next section. As I explain in the discussion that follows, I reflect upon the issue of natural gas as a political situation that should be considered as part of a wider whole commonly referred to as the "Cyprus Problem". I also situate my initial

observations within post-structural, processual thought. I have found this theoretical framework an effective method to showcase a material's agency and ontology as a precarious condition dependent upon relations with other entities (Law 1999).

The discussion that now follows comprises of five parts. Firstly, I outline the key research questions that guide the thesis. Secondly, I convey the prevalence of the connection between natural resources in policy-making endeavours of international organisations. Then, I introduce a broad selection of academic work on the topic. Of note is the demonstration of the use of quantitative, or to be more precise, statistical research methods, that are linked to the so-called resource curse theory. Thirdly, I use this premise to introduce the insights offered in the recent so-called material turn in human geography and related disciplines, with particular reference to the concept of relationality which I identify to be a key operational term. Finally, I outline the political situation in Cyprus, explain what the Cyprus Problem refers to, and provide a detailed overview of how the peace process on the island has been associated with the recent process to commercially develop offshore natural gas.

1.3. Research Questions.

I have formulated here a series of research trajectories that are of epistemological, ontological, and agentic natures. These encapsulate the specific concerns I have with regards to how particular political desires may establish a connection with natural gas and condition perceptions of what natural gas is, what it can do, and when it may affect the peace process.

Beyond these immediate concerns is a further level of analysis, where I seek to elucidate what the case study of Cyprus can reveal about the general relationship between the world of politics and the world of natural resources. To this end, and in light of what has been discussed thus far, the following research questions have been formulated.

Firstly, to test the principle the principle of relationality and uncover both how and why natural gas has been associated with the peace process in Cyprus. I want to ask what mechanisms are at play, and what modes of thought are enacted that have come to associate these two processes in a causal relationship through the following questions:

1. How exactly has the process to develop natural gas been associated with the peace process? What effect has discursive construction had on material agency and ontology?

2. How has the commercial and infrastructural backdrop to the global natural gas industry figured in the ebb and flow of the peace process?

Secondly, after having settled the aforementioned questions on the process to commercially develop natural gas, I will switch focus from the material in question, and inquire about the nature of the peace process instead. Here, I use the insights derived from how and why natural gas has been implicated in the Cyprus Problem to elucidate the nature of the Cyprus Problem itself. Specifically, I comment upon the structural features of the political situation, and the affective features of the processes of abstraction and objectification through the following questions:

3. What structural dispositions of the Cyprus Problem can be discerned from the association between the processes, that may condition material agency and ontology, and influence the peace process?

4. What are the affective components of the association between the two processes, and how significant overall is the emotional component of this natural resource dispute?

Finally, there are two secondary questions that bear in mind throughout. To ask questions that fixate upon essence or components or attributes can animate an aporetic dialogue where in a potentially nihilistic vein, ideas may be distilled down to singularities then associated with the intrinsic essence of an object (Deleuze 1968[2001]). The circumstance here may lead the reader back to a perception of natural resources in metaphorical terms as essentially a tool of power, merely a metaphor for money, or just a projection of fear and the potential abrogation of the otherwise comfortable status-quo. Therefore, the questions above have been geared to investigate what hybrid and relational abstractions do, how they work, and then to comment on what their ontological implications may be, rather than use them to determine absolutely what the essence of a natural resource actually is (Anderson and Tolia-Kelly 2004):

5. What does a revised connection of the mechanism between the process of resource exploitation and the process of political change, mean for latent conceptions of the resource curse attributed with the issue of natural gas?

6. Finally, to what lengths should various stakeholders to a natural resource dispute, from IOC's, NOC's, national and international diplomats, act with regards to expectation management in natural resource development?

1.4. Latent Approaches to Natural Resources and Politics.

Anthropologists and geographers in Appel *et al.* (2015, 16 — emphasis original), argue that "it is *incontestable* that the world of oil and gas is — and has been historically — associated with conflict and with the violence of imperial geopolitics". That natural resources are often embroiled in issues of a very political nature is therefore a very fertile and important area of enquiry. However, I find the complexity of the world of natural resources and geopolitics immediately apparent, where it seems insufficient to be satisfied with simple explanations of an otherwise multifaceted relationship. I see two immediate reasons for this. Firstly, both terms are incredibly polysemic. For example, it is arguably the case that anything that may satisfy human desire can be considered a resource (Zimmermann 1951). Likewise, any entity or phenomenon may be considered to be political (Latour 2005), or have the potential to be embroiled in political dispute. Further still, it may not even simply be the desire to fuel a certain activity but instead a teleological desire for a particular kind of peace, that may appropriate a newly-discovered resource into a so-called strategic asset. This, I will argue, has certainly been the case of natural gas in Cyprus.

A chorus of critical scholars have amplified their critique against the perceived relationship between natural resources and geopolitics, as I

explore further in Chapter 2. For now, Meierding (2016), for example, has underlined that oil wars are simply a myth. Likewise, Shaffer (2009) has asserted that the existence of peace pipelines, that apparently promote or instigate a state of peace and tranquillity, is a formulation yet to be observed. However, the inclination to perceive and promote some form of relationship between natural resources and politics stubbornly persists. Indeed, the connection espoused between these realms has become the subject of intense investigation across many walks of life, such as: government policy-making, assessments of political risk for the oil and gas industry, interdisciplinary academic work, grey literature, and popular non-fiction. In truth then, there is a compendium of thought from which the reader is liable to encounter a vast elision of research methodologies, political ideologies, and materials, all of which are part of the relationship established between natural resources and human conflict. As such, there is a burden of choice in deciding where exactly to draw the analytical line that delimits the empirical reach of a commercial industry. As a result, a compendium of radically different things such as politics, oil, infrastructures, and technologies, can all be made to coalesce and network around a particular natural resource, and it can all be done in a seemingly boundless manner (Barry 2016).

Paradoxically then, though an empirical investigation into a manifestation of the natural resource-politics relationship demands recourse to more exact and specific terms, this step towards specificity can also result in a greater range of abstractions. The reader is liable to be faced with multiple attributions of cause and responsibility, historical and predicted events, where a natural resource can seem to be absolutely central to the

entirety of the unfolding fabric of life (Jones 2009). For example, Daniel Yergin's (1991, 13) *The Prize*, positions oil as "central to security, prosperity, and the very nature of civilisation, [...] intimately intertwined with national strategies and global politics of power". Similarly, Mitchell's (2011) historiography charts the provocative assertion that political relations have been engineered out of flows of energy, and that democratic politics is itself carbon-based, where the process to exploit oil at the expense of coal enabled "both the possibility of twentieth-century democracy and its limits" (Mitchell 2009, 309). Such accounts are liable to be monolithic (see Auzanneau 2018), in the sense that natural resources in question become fetishised commodities; the ultimate arbiter if you will, associated with Olympian powers to determine political futures (Watts 2012), and demiurgic powers (Latour 1987) to operate independent of political context. In tandem, what is really a content-specific and malleable connection that is contrived between natural resources and politics, has become a pervasive formulation that cuts across academic disciplines and saturates into grey literature of policy-making endeavours of states and international organisations.

The UNEP (2012, 8), for example, states that "environmental factors are rarely, if ever, the sole cause of violent conflict. [...] However, it is clear that the exploitation of natural resources and related environmental stresses can become significant drivers of violence", especially if "poorly managed, distributed, or controlled in an unfair or unequal manner" (UNEP 2015, 11). In contrast, the World Bank stated that "natural resources are never the sole cause of conflict, [...] but the presence of abundant primary commodities, especially in low-income countries exacerbates the risks of conflict and, if conflict does break out, tends to prolong it and make it

harder to resolve" (2003, ix). Interestingly, the association has also been touted to work in the opposite direction, where natural resources are perceived as "peace asset[s] in peace agreements, [...] very relevant in peace-building, post-conflict recovery, and reconstruction" (European Commission JRC 2011, 6), where "high-value natural resources have the potential to promote and consolidate peace" (Lujala and Rustad 2012, 3).

Even from these brief yet high-profile examples, it can be seen that natural resources are associated with a variety of concerns that can be hard to define, such as peace, violent conflict, and post-conflict, without using context-specific aggregate measures, or limited views of peace as the absence of war. Further, it is also the case that a causal story is still one that is bound temporally; part of a distinct temporal facet I explore further in Chapter 4. With these initial frictions in mind, the next section describes a corpus of scholarship that has employed statistical analysis to investigate the supposed relationship with natural resources, with key semantic nuances and valences that may have little to do with the so-called "materiality" of a natural resource (see Watts 2012); a term I investigate further in Chapter 2.

1.5. The Quantitative Perspective.

With a philosophical basis that emanates from the earlier quantitative revolution of the humanities and social sciences, and by extension geography (Taylor 1976), the works of economists Sachs and Warner (1995), and also Collier and Hoeffler (1998), are widely considered as seminal to a burgeoning body of research that has employed various quantitative

analyses to determine the nature of the relationship between natural resources (usually in terms of abundance or scarcity), with outcomes such as: GDP growth – as traced to the so-called Dutch-disease phenomenon, related qualities of institutional strength and democratic governance, and also human conflict (Bayramov 2017, Nillesen and Bulte 2014). It is around the mid-1990s and onwards that the resource-curse result became widely embraced, yet is as of late widely contested (Wick and Bulte 2009). Evidence for the existence of a resource curse is simply far from conclusive at present, and still extraordinarily problematic (Rosser 2006).

Briefly, the extant research often adopts a neo-Malthusian and structuralist line of reasoning (Homer-Dixon 1999), typically macro or state-level orientated, and employs statistical techniques (often hypothesis-testing, and as of late prediction), in order to discern relationships between: resource abundance or scarcity, dispersion, value, and rent-seeking behaviour of governments, juxtaposed with the likelihood, intensity, and duration of conflict, GDP growth, as well as governance systems that range between autocracy, liberal and illiberal democracy (Barro 1999, Brochmann and Hensel 2012, Haber and Menaldo 2011, Humphreys 2005, Kalbhenn 2011, Klare 2002, Koubi *et al.* 2013, Le Billon 2005, 2008, Renner 2002, Ross 2001, 2015). The availability and exploitation of natural resources is regarded as a potential risk, threat, or opportunity (Le Billon 2008), largely to already-vulnerable states characterised by poor economic performance, low-levels of democratisation, and dependency on rent-seeking behaviour. As such, the failure of resource-rich states to benefit from natural resource wealth may be presented as contingent upon neo-liberal prescriptions of governmental and institutional quality, and as a measure of the so-called

strength of state (Hendrix and Noland 2014, Humphreys *et al.* 2007).

More so, a variety of resources are implicated in such work, from oil to water to minerals, and even the climate. For example, Hsiang *et al.*'s (2013) meta-analysis advocates a strong causal link between climate variation in the form of temperature and precipitation deviations, which is then connected to natural resource availability, and then finally onto individual-level violence and state-level political instability. It can already be seen that perhaps it is the mismanagement of natural resource wealth that is actually the catalytic driver of an economic or political fallout, and not the resource per se. Without critical inspection, popularised *ex-post* notions of the resource curse (Auty 1993) and paradox of the plenty (Lynn Karl 1997), erroneously fuse together the ontological essence of a natural resource with cognate assertions of the intrinsic agency of a natural resource. With this initial insight, doubt is cast as to what exactly is at stake from a material perspective. If left unchecked, a pervasive sense of commodity or resource determinism can be offered in more implicit terms, potentially across the entire commodity chain and production network of the resource in question, as well as across political institutions. My counter-argument against the implicit or explicit attribution of intrinsic essence and related perceptions of causality with post-structural, processual philosophy, is elaborated in the next section.

Generally, of the statistical approached employed, research methodologies tend to use time-series or cross-country linear regression or logistical regression analyses that compare states against themselves at different periods across time or against other states. Crucially, these approaches imply a linear causal mechanism and additive assumptions

between the incidence or exploitation of natural resources, with a variety of different definitions about what exactly constitutes conflict, violence, or war, where binary definitions of peace as the absence of war are often implied (Megoran 2011). The diverse scope of inquiry has generated considerable differences in the empirics used to draw conclusions, for there is no systematic definition of what exactly constitutes human conflict, or what is indeed political. As per Cuvelier *et al.* (2014, 349), ultimately the reader is left face-to-face with a "limited consensus on how to approach resource-related issues in conflict-affected places". Hence, it becomes difficult to conduct a clear comparison of different inter-state contexts as well as intra-state cases of political contestation, state failure, or various shades of violence that have occurred across time (Koubi *et al.* 2013), even if various common variables are strictly controlled.

In an attempt to control for unobserved heterogeneity between states or particular administrative units within states, cultural, historical, political, economic, and other geographically-contingent differences that may actually constitute important causal mechanisms (Haber and Menaldo 2011), these are reduced instead into fixed endogenous constants to be compared and contrasted, denied critical reflection, where resultant databases are often victims of rapid obsolescence. Databases must always be updated to keep up-to-date with the ever-evolving complexity of real-world scenarios. If the factual descriptions of natural resource conflicts across the world are liable to rapid obsolescence, and if it is the underlying human so-called forces that are perennial yet localised, then context inevitably becomes of utmost significance.

In recent times, newer statistical learning techniques and models from

the forecasting and machine learning literatures have also been used, including logit, lasso, random forests, and neural networks (see Blair *et al.* 2015). Yet still, there continues to be a growing acknowledgement that the quantitative-based literature is contested and controversial, with a wide range of contrasting conclusions, variable measures, research designs, and causal assumptions (including issues of reverse causality), at play (Ahmadov 2014, Brunnschweiler and Bulte 2008, Ross 2004). Wick and Bulte (2009, 152) tentatively posit that "it now appears as though the profession has been beating a dead horse", yet they still assert that it is too early to dismiss the endeavour all together; an assessment largely hinged on the mixed empirical picture, and remaining scope for other innovative methodologies to be applied in the future.

In my judgement, it is precisely the need for nuance and revision of the quantitative approach (see Wick and Bulte 2009), that in actual fact, highlights the need and efficacy of the qualitative approach. There is so much of the question at hand that is contingent upon context and demanding of a more in-depth assessment of causality than statistically significant correlations can give which raises the necessity of a qualitative assessment. Statistical modelling for resource conflicts could still be in its infancy (Torvik 2009). But even if furthered, I believe there is a philosophical limit approached. The latent difficulty is related to the problem of pointillism (Doel 1999). This is a form of analysis and interpretation that "cling[s] to the surface of what actually takes place" (*ibid.* 121), but where in actual fact, the pattern identified is only the starting point in need of further explanation. This is exactly how I have considered the events that have given the impression of causality, and I discuss this remarkable conceptual

similarity in Chapters 4 and 7. There is a well-established acknowledgement of the difficulty between the concepts of cause and effect from the perspective of the philosophy of science. A famous critique on the ambiguities of causality comes from Bertrand Russell who, with an influence of a Bergsonian approach to time, problematised the idea of *a priori* categories, and posited a view of causality (especially universal causality), as a functional relation between certain events at certain times, where the observation of a phenomenon is dependent on its contextual conditions (Russell 1913). The same cause may produce the same effect. But the antecedents involved may be so complicated that they might never recur in exactly the same way at exactly the same time.

Relatedly, an emphasis on context should not be seen as an insidious attempt to complicate an issue at the expense of analytical clarity or generalisable truths, or to delight in ambiguity and uncertainty which is portrayed as the mainstay of pluralistic relativism (Gregory and Walford 1989, Livingstone 1992). Geographers in particular will emphasise context, and may also lament static, state-centric approaches that hide the true nature of dynamic power relationships between a network of various political, institutional, and commercial entities across various scales (Bridge 2013). A key point here is that there is a pervasive propensity link otherwise more disparate phenomena into a causal story; a mode of thought I see in Cyprus' natural gas saga. The juxtaposition of events across a specific timeline, otherwise disparate events that are viewed sequentially to fit a causal story, will prove of great significance to way the natural process and peace process have been related, as advocated in the notion of eventalisation discussed further in Chapter 4.

It remains that relationships deduced from correlation can be misleading, for correlation may never be sufficient enough to extrapolate and correctly predict whether or not a conflict will actually take place (Hammond and McCullagh 1978). To repeat the popular adage, correlation is simply not enough to fully explain the causal mechanisms that may be behind what is observed, where data points that have fallen into the model may not tell the story of all possible endogenous and exogenous factors. Any resultant *ex-post* appearance of a relationship caricatured as a resource curse may be a mere statistical artefact generated from endogenous error or variable bias (Ross 2015). There is possibly an opportunity here to implicate at another stage the Bayesian view of statistics, which begins to consider the impact of subjectivity when assigning probabilities to certain events (see Navarro 2014). However, no matter how statistically significant or strong correlation can be, wholesale reliance on statistics in these scenarios can be deceitful, where the pursuit of clarity through reduction and simplification can become detached from the complexity of reality with reduced explanatory power.

What is observed may be the re-representation of surface-level symptoms generated from an assemblage of various deeper political concerns, where any non-linear feedback mechanisms may not be entirely explained by statistical models that are necessarily limited to a particular time interval (Khan *et al.* 2017). The factors that may generate natural resource-centred strife may lie beyond the interval of time natural resources were encountered, but also, given a long enough period, patterns between variables may emerge. Finally, the inclination to treat the so-called relationship between natural resources and human conflict (in various

shades of meaning attached to each term), is perhaps a vain attempt to replicate a misconstrued understanding of the scientific method, which itself can be seen as the product of an unwarranted inferiority complex derived from an erroneous disciplinary hierarchy saturated with science envy (Massey 1999).

It is largely based on these concerns that I believe the discipline of geography, as characterised by its concern with contingency and context, can offer what is a more insightful perspective on the matter. This is particularly pertinent given various *a priori* suppositions that can have a powerful efficaciousness of affectivity of its own, where the emotional perceptions they incite together with the predictions of the future they make may cause a series of anticipatory measures in their name; an affective state referred to by Weszkalnys (2014) as the 'not yet' of a resource-related disaster, discussed further in Chapter 7. Finally, particular historical events such as the sudden collapse of a peace process, or the gradual onset of conflict associated in some way with the development of natural resources, may be generated as an emergent property from a multitude of interlocking systems and forces (Squire 2014). Therefore, I continue to find an ever-pressing need to generate greater analytical clarity through a critical appreciation of context, nuance, and genealogy, that generates differing perceptions of natural resources, all of which the aforementioned reliance upon statistics may obscure. Based on these concerns, in the next section, I build further on the pertinence of context and introduces key insights from the so-called material turn as I have appropriated them for the purposes of this thesis.

1.6. From the Material-Turn.

There is a need then to situate the issue of context far more centrally in any investigation of an association between natural resources and politics, for it simply undesirable to separate a material object from its context. In this light, the particular philosophies, world-views, or perceptions held by different groups of people, such as: IOC/NOC's, journalists, diplomats, local politicians, risk consultants, local NGO's, should all receive analytical attention in order to diagnose fully the nature of natural resource discourse, in order to provide a more accurate prognosis of future developments (Perrault and Valdivia 2010). For example, in his analysis of the inter-relationship between the categories of water, power, and politics in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Selby (2003, 7) asserts that without reference to the bigger picture, the reader is confronted with accounts that may be strong on description but actually weak on explanation, for "social phenomena can only be adequately explained and understood in relation to the structured social totality of which they form a part". It is pertinent to account for the wider whole, rather than to be content with the reconstitution of connections in a linear successive manner, where the limits of observation are fixed, and totalitarian and teleological assumptions are unrecognised (Foucault 1972).

In the view above, context is not just a mere modification of an ostensibly general, pre-conceived, and *a priori*, self-evident, or even natural process (Castree 2005). Instead, the opposite view should ring true where general frameworks are to be deduced, conditional upon sufficient overlap with empirical case-study research. As such, without a detailed empirical

account of and research methodology that "follows the thing" in question (Cook *et al.* 2004), a vast elision of abstractions drawn from various academic disciplines and subdisciplines, actors and stakeholders, commercial and non-commercial realms, that may coalesce to form powerful blinders (Bridge 2009a), which can obscure, downplay, or even dismiss cultural, social, or political factors (Mouffe 2005, 2013). To my mind, the crux of the argument here is that it is from these realms that the fundamental human appraisals that define materials as resource emanates from (Rees 1989). This assertion is related to Zimmermann's (1951, 15), provocative dictum that "resources are not, they become". The important point I wish to emphasise here is that a *process* is necessary for an entity to be considered a resource and to attain agency in a relational manner. As such, it is the process that must be placed at the heart of the investigation of how and why natural gas has come to matter. Briefly, in Chapter 4, I provide credence to the suggestion that the process to exploit natural resources is "a project in making geographical and temporal experience" (Tsing 2005, 29). Specifically, I argue that the impression of causal relations between the processes is predicated upon the conceptualisation and lineage of events that are to be conceived of as singularities that have been precipitated from the continuum of time. In other words, the juxtaposition of certain events gives the impression of a causal linear relationship and this is an impression which serves as the operational paradigm in this political situation.

As such, to explore the mechanism by which natural resources and politics are conflated together as a result of an active process driven by human appraisal, is vital in order to discern exactly what it is about natural

resources that matters from a political perspective (Barad 2003). Hence, I find an opportunity here to ask questions of an ontological and epistemological nature that are utterly necessary to understand exactly how and why the objectification of a natural resource can occur in the first place. This approach will elucidate exactly why and with what consequence natural gas, or more accurately the *issue* of natural gas as I argue, that has come to be of such popular and serious concern.

To this end, I am inspired by the recent turn to the material within human geography and the social sciences. This corpus of knowledge is driven by a desire to critically challenge and to be reflexive about binary distinctions and dichotomies such as those perceived between say, human and non-human, mind and matter, social and material, discourse and materiality, and by extrapolation, natural resources and politics (Anderson and Wylie 2009, Anderson and Tolia-Kelly 2004, Barnes 2016, Barry 2005, Bakker and Bridge 2006, Ingold 2007, Moss and Dyck 2003, Richardson and Weszkalnys 2014, Rodgers 2015, Whatmore 2006). I review this burgeoning literature further in Chapter 2, with particular reference to the provocative ontological and epistemological implications generated by anthropocentrism and social constructivism on issues of material agency and ontology. But for now, the form of empiricism I pursue is enacted through a series of analytical cuts that, as I demonstrate, provide an accurate, holistic, and thought-provoking reflection upon the story of natural gas in Cyprus and the Eastern Mediterranean Sea. These are: time or temporality (Chapter 4), ontology and related knowledge controversies (Chapter 5), relations of power (Chapter 6), and the role of affect and human emotion (Chapter 7). It is from these distinct yet intimately related

springboards from which a critical and reflexive investigation of the genesis, evolution, and sustenance of the issue of natural gas can be had. More so, the discursive practices involved — both in terms of representation and performance — became hereafter necessarily the basis for the association between natural resources and politics is made over time. Therefore, and as qualified further in Chapter 3, discursive practices are very much the relevant objects of enquiry. In other words, discourse constitutes the empirical data for this doctoral thesis.

Finally, to think about the materiality of a natural resource is to consider the entity in question as "something more than mere matter: an excess, force, vitality, relationality, or difference that renders matter active, self-creative, productive, unpredictable" (Coole and Frost 2010, 7). The key word thought is *relationality.* Relationality brings to mind a broader theoretical critique against the logical positivist application of the scientific method as a complete and transparent reflection of nature's objective reality. It ties in with the more humanistic arguments against the deterministic credulity of more fundamentalist strands of structuralism (Livingstone 1992), as well as inter-subjective critiques against the notion of modernity (Latour 2004). Relationality harks back to the initial quote of the Chapter, that "[...] references to nature and any of its collateral concepts are always politics by other means" (Castree 2014, 51). The implication is that the production of scientific knowledge may not mirror the world as it is in a neutral manner. Instead, a version of an object may be discursively produced replete with various perceptions by implication multiple realties (Barry 2001, Mol 1999). In practice, "the same empirical data may arrange themselves into different patterns and have different meanings to people of

different cultures, or at different stages in the history of a particular structure" (Kirk 1963, 366). In any case, the main point here is that it is the moments of inception and the consequences of such discursive moves that I seek to bring to the forefront.

Furthermore, relationality denotes a specific ontology of matter whereby a material such as a natural resource is "humanly produced (through conceptualisation as well as activity), and that [it] therefore partakes, but without being entirely, of the human" (Biersack 2006, 14). It also follows that "the political significance of materials is not a given; rather, it is a relational and a contingent achievement" (Barry 2013, 183). Hence, I hold that the idea of relationality raises questions with regards to a tendency to think of an exclusive boundary between the natural sciences and social sciences where, if the scientific method is perceived to argue for fixed mechanisms and events that mirror nature's objective reality, the research methodology of the social sciences will seek to address the role of the human mind that has constructed mechanisms, events, and experiences, with their ontological and epistemological implications (Johnston 1989). I firmly believe that there should not be a hierarchy imposed between the word and the number; all constitute empirical data, and all should be considered, and all should be explored for their philosophical assumptions, traditions, and crucially, their limitations. Finally, the relational, anti-essentialist, and reflexive concerns espoused by authors of the material-turn as discussed later, have often been influenced by processual and post-structural philosophies, which are traditions that I draw upon.

From these propositions, what is referred to as natural resources can be thought of as an idealised and romanticised human construction; more of

a relational achievement between non-essentialised categories of society and nature (Cronon 1996, Whatmore 2002), and with therefore profound implications for the way the association between natural gas and peace in Cyprus should be thought of. In this light, an important notion I use is that of "resource materialities" (Richardson and Weszkalnys 2014), which promotes the view that natural resources are not to be considered exclusively as commodities, or money, or inert matter, or in various metaphorical terms such as a tool of political power or a lever of economic sanction (see Chapters 4 and 6). In fact, the term natural resource may refer to any number of these entities at one time. There is an onus therefore to consider natural resource as materials that denote collage of entities with social and relational connotations, which are themselves dependent on relational and spatio-temporal meanings in specific contexts (Bridge 2009b).

Therefore, natural resources should be regarded as dynamic cultural conceptions (Rees 1989), with an appreciation of the "things that already are" (Ferry and Limbert 2008, 14), alongside immersion and alteration as a result of exposure with say the political sphere. I find that the role of discourse becomes highly relevant to mention at this juncture. Discourse is not to be considered a neutral and inert material (Foucault 1972). Rather, discourse is to be seen as part and parcel of dynamic interaction and co-production with what is subsequently perceived to be material reality. This is extremely important for a more empiricist form of research that seeks to identify the various inter- subjectivities that produce particular perceptions of material ontology, agency, and emotional attachment. Therefore, I consider discourse with the utmost seriousness rather than dismissing it as merely text or speech. This would underplay the fundamental mediums

through which human knowledge is communicated. Due attention to discourse makes it possible to understand exactly it is about a natural resource that matters from a political perspective. It is through this medium that I plan to assess exactly how, why, and when materials such as natural resources are understood as political (Braun and Whatmore 2010). This is pivotal to understand how and why natural gas has been made to matter in Cyprus (see Chapter 3). What remains now is to consider deeply the context within which the thesis is situated in.

1.7. History and Politics in Cyprus.

There is a great deal of history that saturates contemporary political debates about the island of Cyprus, and I have three initial concerns about it. These are of a similar vein to the definitional issues also highlighted by Michael (2015). Firstly, it is not necessary, desirable, or possible to confer a total history of the island's political development. A significant portion of history is simply not immediately relevant to the association between the peace process, and the process to develop natural gas. Secondly, that which is deemed relevant may have been teleologically moulded around the latent characteristics of the Cyprus Problem, where a "total description draws all phenomena around a single centre", controversy, or issue (Foucault 1972, 9). This is where otherwise discontinuous events, or percipient events — "that in nature from which the mind perceives" (Whitehead, 1920, 70) — are linked in a causal succession the process of which is driven by *a priori* goal in a teleological manner. Such a predicament may simply be inescapable, and it is the case that multiple visions of future peace will play a significant

role in the story of natural gas, as I chart. To this end, my aim is to highlight a selection of historical events that are also widely considered by other authors to be central to development of the contemporary iteration of the Cyprus Problem.

I realise that the past may be written in terms of the present (Foucault 1977), but my task is not to conduct a critical investigation the epistemology of the island's historical coverage *per se*. Indeed, there can be identification of causes of the Cyprus Problem that stretch back *ad infinitum*. Instead, I would like to demonstrate the events perceived to be central to the development of the Cyprus Problem, alongside that of the political situation that has evolved around the issue of natural gas, and the relationship between the two. Hence, I find it necessary to pay acute attention to the way narratives of history have been variously appropriated and subsequently contested. It is contestation itself that seems to be most characteristic of all; a fundamental condition that permeates across time and is manifested in specific events such as those considered in Chapter 4, where history "and its continual material presence" (Barry 2005, 176), becomes of utmost significance. As Lord Hannay, the former British UN Special Representative for Cyprus, reiterates: "the historical background to any international dispute is invariably part of the dispute itself". These historical backgrounds can constitute "underlying tendencies that gather force" (Foucault 1972, 3), that then carries forward a discursive momentum or reverberation (Schieffelin 1998), which can have palpable implications for the future. More so, these historical events should not be reduced to a numerical data but point instead as inscribed within a dynamic and cross-temporal field of other controversies, conflicts, and events (Barry 2012).

Thirdly, the endeavour to define the Cyprus Problem and to describe the salient features of the political situation on the island is a delicate affair, that is if I wish to remain neutral. As a person who is both British and Turkish-Cypriot, and therefore can potentially be characterised as of two backgrounds to the political situation on the island, the spotlight shines more intensely on me lest I intentionally select through vested interest certain definitions, events, actors, stakeholders, dates, at the expense of others, or if I start an introduction at a historical point that does not go back far enough in time, or if I fail to adequately flesh out a particular event that may be placed more centrally in other accounts. Such a cursory overview may entail the inability to fully elucidate fetishised historical events as well as the other side of story, where a truncated view of history may give the erroneous impression that the salient features of the context at hand are pre-given rather than emergent. In a highly-charged political situation such as that in Cyprus, the thesis is liable to be dismissed from the offset as pro-British, pro Turkish or Turkish-Cypriot, pro-Greek or Greek-Cypriot, or pro-left or right of the political spectrum. Fatefully, the author may be pigeon-holed as a supporter of a particular type of solution or settlement.

To assuage such concerns, I could indeed go to great length and regurgitate a protracted history of political development of the island across many pages, as some authors do, with a view to cover all bases and to spread attention across every aspect of various events. This can include: the resultant demographic changes and increased significance of the Orthodox Church after the Ottoman conquest of 1571, after Venetian rule (Dodd 2010), the subsequent British occupation in 1878 and the gradual emergence of ethno-nationalism on the island, where Muslims and

Christians were re-identified as Turk or Greek (Papadakis 2006), the later cycles of inter-communal conflict between Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot communities from 1955 onwards (Kliot and Mansfield 1997), and the inter-ethnic murders that preceded the Turkish invasion (Patrick 1976). Finally, the actions of particular party leaders across the evolution of the Cyprus Problem and during the failed island-wide referendum in 2004 to solve the Cyprus Problem (Yakinthou 2009), otherwise known as the Annan Plan after the-then UN Secretary General Kofi Annan.

But as argued, the trouble is that a great deal of this history may never be directly drawn upon again. Even if I discount the centuries across which ethno-nationalism between Turkish-Cypriots and Greek-Cypriots evolved and set the stage for the contemporary conflict, and then conditioned contemporary historical perception (Asmussen 2008), there still remains a vast contemporary history to cover (Rusinow 1981). This is no less so with the issue of natural gas, where I have identified sources that make mention of offshore hydrocarbons to as far back as the 1970s (see Rolandis 2008, 2012), as seen in the extraordinary newspaper clip below.

Figure 1. *"TPAO WILL LOOK FOR PETROL IN CYPRUS – TO MEET WATER NEEDS A PIPE IS BEING LAID FROM THE SEA"*



TPAO Kıbrıs'ta petrol arayacak

SU İHTİYACI İÇİN KIBRIS'A DENİZDEN BORU DÖŞENİYOR

GİRNE'DE DE BİR AKARYAKIT İSTASYONU KURULACAK

ANKARA: Anavatan hükümeti, Kıbrıs Türk toplumunun çeşitli ihtiyaçlarını kar

vre
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şılamak amacıyla Kıbrıs'ta yatırımlara başlamıştır. Maden Tetkik Arama Enstitüsü de Kıbrıs'ta maden ve petrol aramak için ön çalışmalarını sürdürüyor. Araştırmalardan olumlu sonuç alınırsa TPAO Kıbrıs'ta petrol sondajları için gerekli girişimlerde bulunacak.

Enerji ve Tabii Kaynaklar Bakanı Cahit Kayra'nın açıklamasına göre; Türk toplumunun ve Türk Silâhlı Kuvvetlerinin ihtiyacının karşılanması için Kıbrıs'a denizden boru döşeniyor. Bu boru larla Türkiye'den Kıbrısa su taşınırken, devlet su işleri ekipleri de adada su sondajlarını yürütecektir.

Türkiye Elektrik Kurumu da Girne - Lefkoşa bölgesinin elektrik ihtiyacını karşılamak amacıyla 15 megavatlık gaz türbini yapımına başlamıştır. 1 - 2 ay içinde hizmete girmesi beklenen türbin Türk toplumu tarafından kullanılacaktır. Enerji ve Tabii Kaynaklar Bakanı Kayra açıklamasında, Girne'de bir akaryakıt istasyonu kurulacağını da bildirmiştir. Bölgenin akaryakıt ihtiyacı şu anda 26 gezici depoyla karşılanıyor. Kurulacak akaryakıt deposunun kapasitesi 30.000 ton kadar olacak. Ayrıca, 10'ar tonluk 2 sabit gömme tankla bir deniz terminali de Girne ve Lefkoşa için akaryakıt depolama işleminde kullanılacaktır.

Bu arada Taşucu'nda yeni bir liman yapılması için hazırlıklara başlanmıştır. Liman için bölgenin elektrik ve su tesisatı halen geliştirilmektedir.

Source: Halkın Sesi Newspaper (02/08/1974).

I combat these concerns simply by restricting attention to the genesis, evolution, and present-day form of the ongoing peace process on the island, together with the recent process to develop offshore natural gas. I intersperse throughout the thesis a select elucidation of particular historical events and the noticeable omission of others in order to highlight the more structural, characteristic, and salient attributes of the Cyprus Problem that have been of influence on the association between the peace process and the process to develop offshore natural gas. In light of the discussion thus far, it is imperative to explain the context with any structures, *modus operandi*'s, patterns and regularities, and contestations of the political situation in Cyprus. Here begins to emerge a number the core themes I have mentioned previously: (1) the polysemic meaning of the Cyprus Problem, (2) the balance of power-sharing between the Turkish-Cypriots and Greek-Cypriots and (3), the affective undertones of mistrust and insincerity that would thread through such concerns.

I see a fine line between explaining and explaining-away, where the

entirety of the association between the natural gas process and the peace process can be passed as merely a structural symptom of the Cyprus Problem in reductionist or totalitarian terms, in a similar manner to the resource curse. Prior perceptions of the certainties, essentialisms, rigidities, associated with structuralism are again at play, where the genealogy of such ideas is to be deconstructed through discourse analysis. Yet, as will be demonstrated in Chapter 6, it need not be the case that context or a particular definition or analytical theme should be seen from the offset in essentialist terms. Instead, the task is to identify the rationale behind the existence of such thoughts, together with their relevant implications. Finally, I am thoroughly cognisant of the concerns and sensitivities of both Turkish-Cypriot and Greek-Cypriot communities. This is a standpoint reflected in the research methodology adopted as described in Chapter 3.

1.8. To define the Cyprus Problem.

> "I am the signatory of these treaties (London and Zurich). But not even for a moment did I believe that this constituted the creation of a permanent state"
>
> (Archbishop Makarios, 1st President of the RoC, *cited in* Kaymak 2009, 233).

With the aforementioned trepidations in mind, it is fair to state that what is referred to as the Cyprus Problem is a colossal aggregate of inter-related, multi-scalar, cross-temporal, and as of yet, commonly intractable concerns that have come to implicate a myriad entities across the entire gamut of political life, as reflected in the enormous collection of scholarship attributed to it (Adamides 2015, Akçalı 2015, Constantinou 2008, Dodd

2010, Drousiotis 2008, 2009, Gürel and Cornu 2014, Hannay 2005, Kaymak 2015, Navaro-Yashin 2012, Richmond and Ker-Lindsay 2001, Rusinow 1981). I will argue that the issue of natural gas is begotten from an assemblage of symbiotic concerns, where it is the very nature of the latent relationships that determines the agency of natural gas and perceptions of its ontology. Although it is possible to tentatively organise the plethora of objects, events, actors, stakeholders, emotions, and so forth that have come to be encompassed by the issue of natural gas (as partially reflected in the now six topics of the intermittent settlement talks mentioned later), in a similar vein to the extant literature on the association between natural resources and politics, the layperson to the Cyprus Problem faces another intellectual vertigo of information, where it certainly seems that everything is political (Latour 2005).

Concomitantly, and as exemplified in Chapter 2, I have found it appropriate to apply Andrew Barry's (2012, 2013a, 2013b, 2016) notion of the "political situation" as a way to begin to describe the intersubjective relationship at hand. Briefly, a political situation refers to a "[...] series of ongoing disagreement and conflicts", that transcend the specificity of a singular knowledge controversy (2012, 235). However, the political situation itself can be understood as the force which goes on to precipitate controversies itself. Namely, the process to develop offshore natural gas is a case *par exemplar* of the forum or space within which the Cyprus Problem is abrasively played out. I will attest that the wider political situation in Cyprus is the context within which a series of ongoing disagreements, conflicts, and controversies such as that over natural gas, occur. Paradoxically then, the best point of departure from which to springboard into an introduction to

the Cyprus Problem is perhaps the extraordinary fact that the very definition of the term itself is a matter of passionate political dispute. Much as with the term peace, the Cyprus Problem is also polysemic in the sense that there are contending perceptions of what constitutes it, what caused it, and what would count as an acceptable solution (Adamides and Constantinou 2012, Papadakis 2015). A key observation of mine will be that the current peace process is perhaps predicated to maintaining a process, rather than actually moving to a solution.

The dissonance in definition goes on to form a key determining feature of the way relations of power between Turkish-Cypriots and Greek-Cypriots manifest, which in turn determines the type of future envisioned for the island's natural gas development. Inter-alia, the term can refer to: the territorial division of the island (Bryant and Papadakis 2012), a zero-sum power game critiqued for deepening partition and mistrust (Hadjipavlou and Kanol 2008), forced displacement (Loizos 1981, Mikes 1965), a constitutional crisis (Kyriakides 1968), the present-day implications for the often one-sided memorialisation of the conflict (Papadakis 2005), and ethno-nationalism as the vital factor to absolutist, exclusivist, and belligerent worldview behind the intractability of the conflict (Anastasiou 2008, Richmond 1999). The idea can be reduced even further, for the parties to the dispute often engage in reductionism such that the issue is merely a problem of illegal invasion and occupation, or just a problem of power-sharing between the Turkish-Cypriots and the Greek-Cypriots. A final related twist is that over time the political situation on the island has become comfortable, ingrained, and monotonous, to the extent that it is difficult for the interested visitor to immediately discern exactly what the

conflict is, and how it affects daily routine (Adamides 2015), where the almost frozen nature of the conflict has become normalised (Adamides and Constantinou 2012). Such is the extraordinary nature of the political situation in Cyprus.

Contested historiographies aside, I now convey some of the more core, fundamental, and recurrent attributes of the Cyprus Problem that have solidified through time, and trace the political development of the island from its independence of British rule. After independence in 1960, the RoC emerged as power-sharing state between Turkish-Cypriots and Greek-Cypriots (Bakshi 2012). Xydis (1973) describes the emergent state as a reluctant republic, for independence was a compromised agreement that ran counter to self-determination, and was therefore undesired by both the Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot communities (Asmussen 2015, Constantinou 2010). Since the later stages of the 19th Century, (1821 according to Loizos 1976), and after centuries of Ottoman and British rule, the Greek-Cypriots came to vie for *enosis* which meant the union of the island with the-newly independent state of Greece. In response, concerned over their future existence on the island, the Turkish-Cypriots vied for *taksim* as early as 1892 (Dodd 2010, Patrick 1976), which took exception to *enosis* and subsequently desired instead partition of the island between Greece and Turkey (Asmussen 2008). This is referred to as *double-enosis*. Some accounts attribute responsibility to the ensuing turmoil between the communities squarely upon the British, who are often blamed for divide-and-rule policies that pitted Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots against each other (Kyle 1984). I find this perception particularly disagreeable for it detracts responsibility and therefore accountability away from the two

communities themselves; a point that also resurfaces amidst the conferral of agency to natural gas as a catalyst for peace, as I will show. It follows that independence can also be explained-away as a realpolitik compromise as a result of multilateral negotiations between the United Kingdom, Turkey, and Greece, in the midst of Cold-War competition for influence in the Eastern Mediterranean between the U.S.A. and U.S.S.R. (Bryant 2001, Constantinou and Papadakis 2001).

The desire for *enosis* or *taksim* was never fully eradicated, but instead pragmatically curtailed, suspended, and deferred into the future. In any case, in the years that followed, Cyprus would continue to be plagued by inter-communal conflict fuelled by latent ethno-nationalistic sentiments driven by contending desires of *enosis* and *taksim*. By December 1963, power-sharing agreements between the communities broke down. A month earlier, the Greek-Cypriot President Archbishop Makarios — unperturbed by the advice of both Greece and Turkey against the move, and influenced by a lingering disposition towards *enosis* — unilaterally proposed a series of fundamental amendments to correct what the Greek-Cypriots largely saw as a suffocating constitution that gave far too much power to the numerically fewer Turkish-Cypriots. The constitution dubiously agreed to three years earlier was now regarded as subject to significant limitations and unworkable checks and balances (Constantinou 2010). The Greek-Cypriots it seemed, largely resented their denial of self-determination; a defeat exacerbated by the requirement to share power with the Turkish-Cypriots (Ker-Lindsay 2011).

The RoC now stands as an exception to the full-transfer of sovereignty to decolonised states, for it was characterised by external supervision and

the Treaty of Alliance and the Treaty of Guarantee, which stipulated that Turkey, Greece, the U.K, but also the RoC itself, were bound to guarantee the independence, territorial integrity, and security of the island. The implications of these treaties are controversial to this day. Every iteration of the stalwart peace process to date has been concerned with contending visions of security arrangements that implicate all guarantor countries but also, as of late, the EU as well. Successive rounds of settlement talks have largely foundered over the issue of security, guarantees, and power-sharing mechanisms in a future solution to the conflict. To the Turkish-Cypriots, wary of their now numerically-disadvantageous position, which has been attributed to migration after the Ottoman Empire's loss of the island (Christodoulou 1992), guarded their constitutionally-derived powers as a politically-equal community on the island. More so, the Turkish-Cypriots were vehemently against the constitutional changes which they saw as a precursor to *enosis* by force.

This is indicative of the powerful role that pathology plays in the form of suspicion, animosity, fear, and lack of trust between the two sides that has come to be a hallmark of the Cyprus Problem. "Bloody Christmas" ensued in December 1963, where: the Turkish-Cypriot community bore the brunt of violence, the Greek-Cypriots obtained a monopoly of power over the government of the RoC, and UN peacekeepers were subsequently deployed in 1964, and remain so to the present day as the longest-running peacekeeping mission in existence (Asmussen 2015). The event is itself hotly contested as the "Turkish mutiny" in some circles, where the Turkish-Cypriots insidiously pressed for the collapse of the state and withdrew of their own accord. The perception is coloured retroactively by those who

which to malevolently blame the Turkish-Cypriots and Turkey for the Cyprus Problem, and in doing so, absolve themselves of any responsibility and by extension, any need to actually compromise at the contemporary settlement talks by perceiving a single antagonist. The shifting of responsibility for the political situation will be of consequence for the nature of the relationship between peace and natural gas, as highlighted in Chapter 6.

The related adage in popular Greek-Cypriot political discourse is that the "key to a solution is in Ankara", that the Turkish-Cypriots are mere "puppets of Ankara", or that 'we had no problems in the past and lived in peaceful coexistence with the Turkish-Cypriots' until Turkey or another outside power intervened (Papadakis 2015). In turn, the Turkish-Cypriots insist that they were expelled wholesale from the Government by the Greek-Cypriots in a vain fit of ethno-nationalism and an insatiable desire for *enosis* and a malevolent move to "control it all" (see Bryant 2012a). This historical event is described as one of the most controversial in the island's political history (Ker Lindsay 2011), but it is one of many twists and turns of the political situation upon which the two sides do not see eye to eye. What is incontestable is that the unilateral constitutional changes and the expulsion of Turkish-Cypriot representation go hand-in-hand with the deeper ethno-national desires of both communities. A further example testament to the sensitivity of the political situation is the question of when exactly the problem started. It is still common to find the date identified as 1963 for the Turkish-Cypriots as opposed to 1974 for the Greek-Cypriots. The latter is the year of the subsequent Turkish invasion of the island addressed in the following section: an event that constitutes an enormous catastrophe for the

Greek-Cypriots (Kızılyürek 2014), but salvation from extermination by the Turkish-Cypriots.

In terms of the contemporary effect on sovereignty and power, since 1963 the Greek-Cypriots have held a monopoly of power as the unilateral administrators of the sole internationally-recognised, *de jure* government on the island. Crucially, UN Security Council Resolution 186 refereed explicitly to the Government of Cyprus that did not, and continues to not, represent the Turkish-Cypriot community. It is on this fateful reference that international recognition of the Greek-Cypriot dominated administration of the RoC as the legal, *de jure* government is based to this day (Drousiotis 2008). The Greek-Cypriots guard their international recognition as the sole *de jure* government on the island, described as a jewel in their crown used to outmanoeuvre any attempt by the Turks and Turkish-Cypriots to secede (Hannay 2005), to reverse as far as possible the effects of the Turkish invasion, and to push through their own interpretations of a bizonal, bicommunal, federation, or in other words, peace. Undoubtedly, this is by far the strongest remaining Greek-Cypriot bargaining chip in a zero-sum power game with Turkey and the Turkish-Cypriots (Rusinow 1981). This is also a dynamic that will emerge in later discussions, particularly as it pertains to the invocation of competing energy futures and architectures as incentives for a solution to the stalemate.

1.9. Coup d'état, Invasion, and a Unilateral Declaration of Independence.

In 1968, under pressure from previous Turkish military action on the island in response to the deteriorating condition of the Turkish-Cypriots,

President Archbishop Makarios effectively dropped the pursuit of *enosis*, and ostensibly switched to what was now feasible rather than desirable (Kızılyürek 2014). He then tentatively initiated constitutional negotiations with the Turkish-Cypriots (Loizos 1988). The start of the peace process can be traced back to 1968 with the negotiations between Denktaş and Clerides in Beirut (Dodd 2010). But the same cannot be said of the right-wing Greek-Cypriot militiamen who, with the support of the military junta in Greece, conducted a *coup d'état* against Makarios' government in July 1974; an event that precipitated fierce intra-communal killing between the Greek-Cypriots. Civic allegiance to the RoC crumbled at the behest of ethno-nationalism. For Turkey, the *coup d'état* was the final straw and the apex of a continuously debilitating situation for the Turkish-Cypriots who, for the last eleven years, had lived largely in pitiful conditions and had enclaved themselves within cantons across the island for safety in response to the earlier bouts of inter-communal strife. Concerned for the fate of the Turkish-Cypriots, or perhaps simply a malevolent exploitation of a constitutional crisis for its intrinsic expansionism for those who wish to attribute all responsibility to one actor, Turkey launched a military invasion of the island after two previously aborted attempts to intervene, and after the U.K. could not be persuaded to jointly intervene (Birand 1976).

Amidst fierce battles, suicidal bravery, atrocities committed by both sides, costly intelligence blunders, the two-phase invasion by air and sea resulted in a clear Turkish victory. The "irony is that the Turks' intervention or invasion, call it what you will, has brought peace to Cyprus", writes Hughes-Wilson (2011, 90). This is a correct assessment, in the sense that deadly inter-communal hostilities have all been eradicated, save a very small

number of by-gone incidents. Nevertheless, the political conflict has raged on. By August 1974, two distinct and ethnically-homogeneous territorial zones emerged and, as civilians fled the conflict and following a population-exchange agreement, nearly all Turkish-Cypriots were eventually displaced to the northern portion of the island, and nearly all Greek-Cypriots were displaced to the south. All left behind homes and lands, and the bodies of loved ones who fell victim to the conflict on what emerged as the other side. These events really were a climax of a long process of political conflict between the two communities that evolved over decades before the formation of the RoC (Attalides 1979, Calame and Charlesworth 2009, Kliot and Mansfeld 1999).

Figure 2. *Current Territorial Divisions.*



Source: Migdalovitz (2005).

Of immense consequence is the fact that rather than establishing the existing state of affairs as stipulated under the Treaty of Guarantee, and after two rounds of failed negotiations in-between the first and second

stages of its military operation, Turkey definitively redefined the status-quo on the island rather than restoring what all had perceived as an inherently broken as constitutional order. Whilst Turkey's initial move was legally legitimate, the Treaty of Guarantee stipulated that constitutional order must be restored by the guarantor power. Based upon this legal precedent, the actions of Turkey came to be eventually seen in a negative light, and its unilateral abrogation was then condemned by the international community. However, it is undeniable that there has been a total lack of major violence since territorial division, and for some, peace already exists in Cyprus. In 1983 the Turkish-Cypriots proclaimed the formation of the TRNC. The move was regarded as an UDI by the UN, and significantly only Turkey recognises the TRNC which is otherwise considered to be a *de facto* state. The RoC controversially entered the EU in 2004, at a time when the accession process proceeded in tandem with the Annan Plan referendum (Adaoğlu 2009, Yakinthou 2009). The processes were said to be interlinked in such a manner that EU membership constituted a catalyst for peace, much in the same way that various connotations linked to the process to develop natural gas have also been touted in juxtaposition to the latest iteration of the peace process. This congruence is developed further later. After accession and in tandem with earlier UN resolutions, TRNC territory is considered to be part RoC territory, but where European Law codified in the *acquis communautaire* is suspended, pending a resolution of the Cyprus Problem.

The nature of the Turkey-TRNC relationship is open to continued debate that largely depends on *a priori* political alignment. In some cases, the Turkish-Cypriots are seen solely as the medium through which Turkish geopolitical interests are channelled. Furthermore, if the Cyprus Problem is

only regarded as a problem of invasion and occupation — a view unanimously held by the more right-wing Greek-Cypriot parties — it follows that Turkey is the only antagonist, and so any power-sharing concessions to the Turkish-Cypriots should be minimised, and the central government should retain powers far greater than any residual powers of any constituent states. The extreme end of this interpretation is a disavowal of the bizonal, bicommunal federation, and the extension of the RoC as it is, in a blanket disregard for all TRNC institutions. This complements the more right-wing Turkish-Cypriot desires for international recognition of the TRNC. Again, preconceptions about the exact nature of Ankara's role, even though the peace process is touted to be "Cypriot owned and led", serves to frustrate meaningful discussion between the Turkish-Cypriots and Greek-Cypriots (Hannay 2005).

The above is a conception that cements the divisions between the two communities, and generates a consistent degradation and denouncement by both sides against the very people and institutions that would eventually become power-sharing partners in a future federal state. It remains that Turkey does not recognise the RoC, and there are no official or direct negotiations occur between them. This is a structural disposition that constitutes another thorn in Turkey's relationship with the EU, especially after the accession of the RoC and, as will be demonstrated, for the issue of natural gas. In terms of relations of power, the Turkish-Cypriots prefer a federal solution, with the maximum amount of power devolved to the two would-be constituent states of a federal Cyprus, and want the minimum amount of power they have to be ceded to a central government dominated by Greek-Cypriots. In turn, the Greek-Cypriots would largely prefer the polar

opposite. The implications of this thematic and the natural gas development process are developed in Chapter 6. In the next section, I briefly overview the extent of the settlement negotiations and some of the events which culminated in the widely-held assertion that natural gas is a catalyst for peace.

1.10. The Peace Process and Aphrodite.

Since 1964, Cyprus has played host to an intermittent UN sponsored peacekeeping force, and formal negotiations since 1968. To date, all efforts to finalise an agreement have failed. The current goal of this process is to transform the current political architecture of Cyprus from a territorially-divided island between the RoC and TRNC (Figure 2), into an into a bizonal, bicommunal federation with political equality between the two communities of the island. The new federal Cyprus will be the combination of two constituent states but with a single international personality, and yet-to-be agreed devolutions of power and degrees of autonomy between them (Sözen and Özersay 2007). The formula of a bizonal, bicommunal federation had slowly emerged since the High-Level Agreements of 1977-1979 (Christou 2015). This is the epitome of the discursive parameters within which peace is sought. It is also the fundamental context within which the now-six fundamental sub-divisions of the negotiations, which are: EU related-matters, territorial adjustment, security and guarantees, property, governance and power-sharing, and economic issues, that peace relates back to.

Erstwhile, the TRNC is not to be recognised as an independent state,

and the very last act the Greek-Cypriots would acquiesce to is to allow the TRNC to secede. By necessity, the BBF has emerged as the only form of a compromise solution available to solve the Cyprus Problem (Kaymak *et al.* 2008), lest the status-quo on the island is irreversibly reinforced and partition is anticipated to occur all but in name (Kızılyürek 2014). However, an inconvenient truth often downplayed is that for many people the BBF is simply regarded as the second-best solution, much as in the same way the establishment of the RoC was initially received. Both sides have been unable to converge their differences on these issues. Though a solution may be considered as somewhat close in the sense that a general outline and stated commitments to the talks have periodically been made (Rusinow 1981), it is nevertheless the case that ultimately neither side to the dispute sees completely eye to eye on the exact detail of the model. More so, it is very common for all sides to accuse each other of lacking the political will to compromise for it.

I find it of particular importance that though what is at stake is referred to as a peace process, what is on offer is in actual fact more of a final package deal. Nowhere is this made clearer than in the firmly-established mantra of the talks that "nothing is agreed until everything is agreed" (Morelli 2017). This is a structural disposition of the processes that goes alongside a very poor track-record of interim confidence building measures. The result is that any convergences reached in previous rounds of negotiations between previous sets of leaders are non-binding. As I will evidence, the propensity here has had very significant consequences for the nature of the issue of natural gas. In this sense, peace can be considered as more of a static endpoint on the horizon where various designs for a future

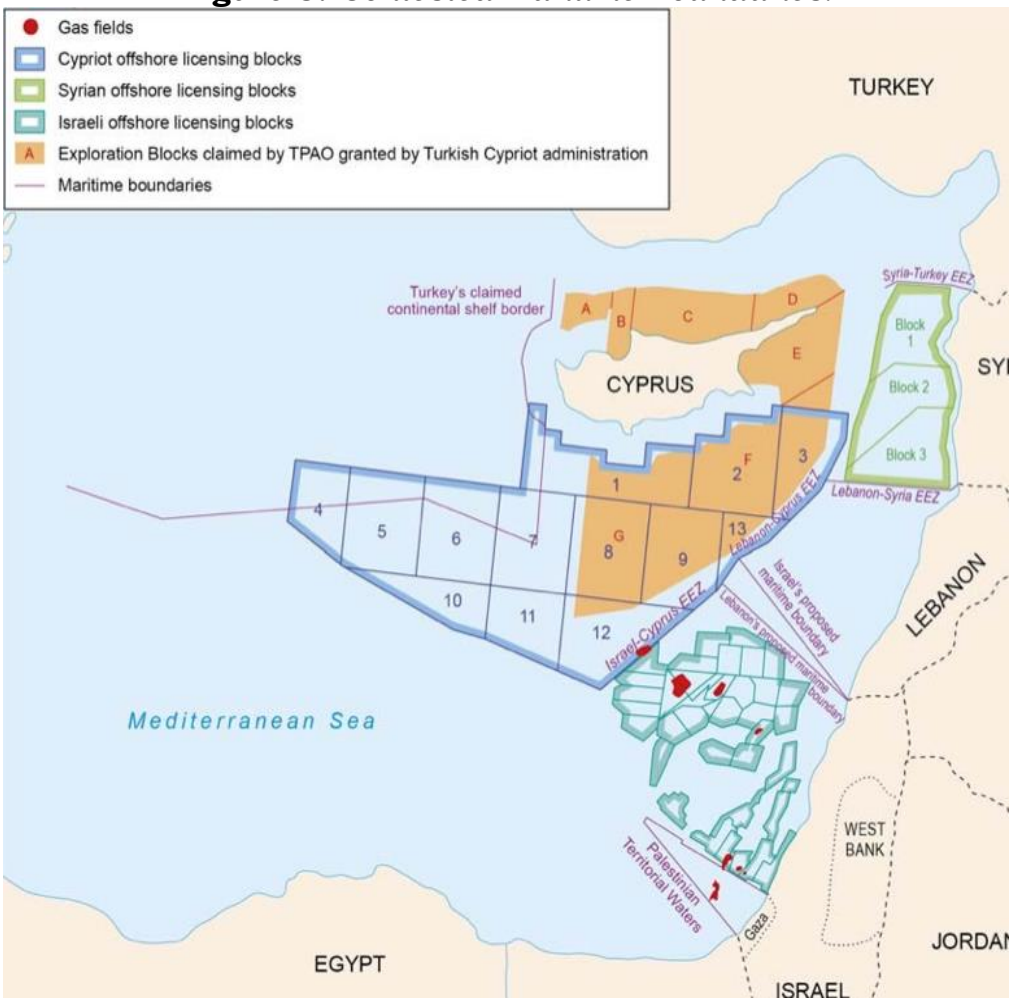
solution are sought to be crystallised on the day of settlement, albeit with various mechanisms that will deal with various collateral effects. The latter point is most notably manifest in the issue of property, and how to disseminate the ownership of homes formerly owned by the Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots that have lied either side of the divide for nearly half a century (Gürel and Özersay 2007, Williams and Gürel 2011).

A quaint summary of a previous iteration of the peace process from former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, who presided over the so-called Annan Plan referendum of 2004, was that "negotiation, in the sense of give and take, almost never occurred. Instead, the process was one of procedural wrangling, verbal gymnastics, shadow boxing, and mini-crises, with only occasional promising glimmers on the substance which did not last" (UN 2003, 23). The Annan Plan is still often described as the closest the island has ever come to a settlement, and where the possibility of EU membership was perceived as an incentive for a solution (Yakinthou 2009). As I go on to demonstrate, the very same issues of principle and implementation are still at play, and have contributed to the emergence of the issue of natural gas in the very first place. I also extend my critique to the format of the settlement negotiations themselves, in the vein of Vogel and Richmond (2015), who have also argued that the talks have become a self-sustaining process where political elites on both sides have appropriated the negotiations to reify and entrench their own positions of power, rather than as a forum to re-structure those power relations. I will argue that the twists and turns of the association between the natural gas development process and the peace process have been predicated upon a series of these aforementioned salient issues. For now, I will introduce some of the key events that have been

pivotal for the formation of the binary between peace and natural gas in popular political imagination.

In Chapter 4, I explain how the two processes have been forged together in a discursive manner across time, and expound the key events that have served to crystallise the impression of a causal relationship between the two processes. For now, it suffices to state that in late 2009, Noble Energy of Houston, Texas, encountered the Aphrodite offshore natural gas field in the south-eastern edge of the RoC's EEZ (Figure 3 and 4). The event came at a time when the political atmosphere of the island was attuned and sensitive to earlier developments related to natural gas exploration efforts such as the declaration of the EEZ's and the accrued increased interest of IOCs such as that of ExxonMobil, TOTAL, ENI, Qatar Petroleum, and B.G. Group (now part of SHELL). As detailed in Chapter 4, the discovery of Aphrodite was formulated by both Turkish-Cypriot and Greek-Cypriot political actors as a catalyst for peace. Thus, the highly contested meaning of peace became thoroughly inter-connected to the commercial world of the global natural gas industry. The now-popular and potent issue of natural gas has summarily taken its place amongst the pantheon of issues that denote what is understood as the Cyprus Problem, and stands firmly alongside what is considered as the more traditional issues I have listed previously.

Figure 3. *Contested Maritime Boundaries.*

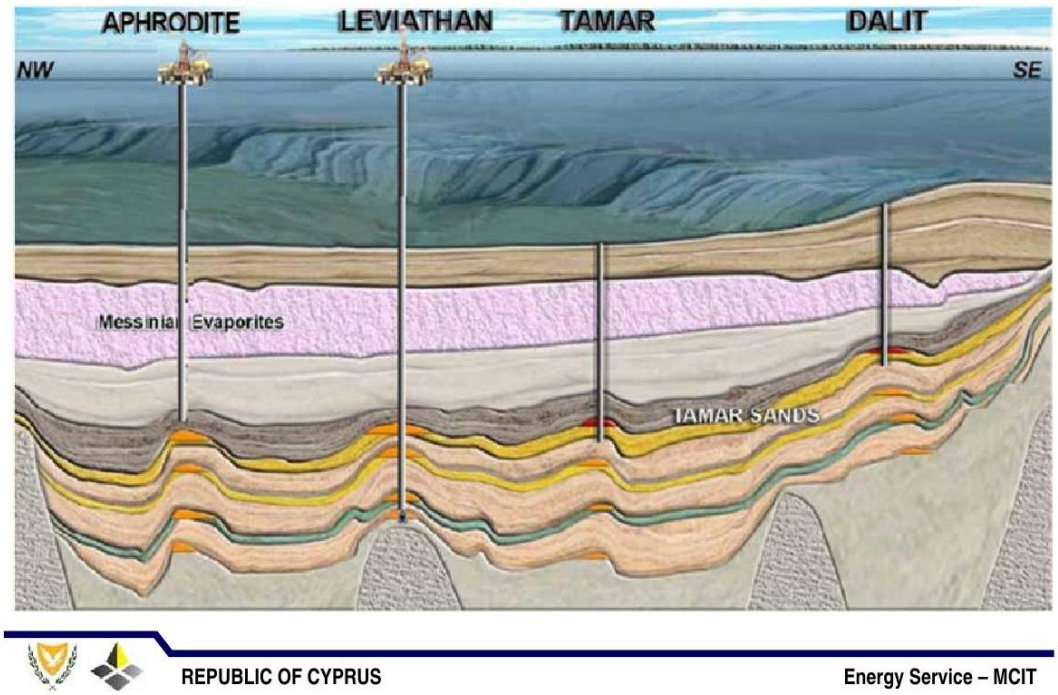


Source: Oxford Institute for Energy Studies (2012).

In retrospect, it is fair to state that the apex of the natural gas issue occurred in October 2014, only a month after I had begun this doctoral thesis. The-then President of the RoC Nicos Anastasiades, abandoned the settlement talks in protest at the announcement of a NAVTEX and the subsequent exploration activities of a Turkish seismic research vessel — the *Barbaros Hayreddin Paşa* — inside the RoC's EEZ. These actions were perceived by the RoC as a provocative violation of the government's sovereignty and maritime boundaries, to the extent that the talks were abandoned and resumed seven-months later, when the natural gas development processes was comparatively muter. In any case, the *Barbaros*

was dispatched in partnership with the TRNC leadership as a symbolic protest to what was regarded as the unilateral decisions undertaken by the RoC.

Figure 4. *Sequential Drilling of Noble Energy in Israeli & RoC Blocks.*



The Leviathan natural gas system lies 45 km east from Block 12 inside the Israeli EEZ boundary. Noble Energy drilled a series of similar geological targets. Aphrodite, the first RoC discovery, has been termed a wildcat discovery, and is largely part of the same hydrocarbon system (*PO* 20/09/11).

These events and perceptions are all rooted in the fundamental structure of the Cyprus Problem. The significance of this event and the series of similar events that preceded and succeeded it is that it has left a lasting impression with a clear association between the peace and natural gas development processes. Briefly, Pope (2014) has promoted the existence of an inextricable link between the Cyprus Problem and the development of natural gas, and former UN Secretary-General Ban-Ki Moon reified natural gas as a great incentive. But the most evocative assertion I have encountered of the strength of the association perceived between the peace

and natural gas development that deserves to be quoted in full comes from Mr. Espen Barth Eide, the UN Special Advisor who was at the helm of the UN's efforts to encourage and facilitate the settlement talks, as well as to dampen the passionate controversy that had erupted over natural gas:

> "The hydrocarbons issue has now been linked to the Cyprus Problem. Which way it has been linked is a matter for the two sides. But it cannot be unlinked, and it is now an argument, in my view a strong argument, for redoubling everyone's efforts to reach a solution" (*BRT* 02/01/15).

There is little doubt then that the issue of natural gas had become what Latour (2004) refers to as a matter of concern. But it is the process by which natural gas has been drawn into political life that I explore. Specifically, I investigate how these two processes have been linked, and explore how natural gas (along with cognate terms such as energy or hydrocarbons — see Chapter 5), have been imbued with political connotations and conferred agency, and has had its ontological status conditioned in a relational manner with the politics of Cyprus. In developments exemplified further in Chapter 4, the issue of natural gas would come to be of such great political clout that the future dates of further offshore exploration activities were regarded as natural deadlines to the peace process on the island. I hold that was what occurred in the context of Cyprus is a *case par exemplar* of the formation and operation of nature-society dualism, the conferral of agency to a natural resource to affect political life, and to the various implications seemingly commanded by the natural gas industry. But, the essential issue is that the development of offshore gas in Cyprus is still a largely nascent reality, and it is the case that

throughout fieldwork and up until the present day, no export markets have been secured, no final investment decision contracts signed, production-sharing arrangements finalised, nor has any sort of infrastructure been installed. If the above pervasive political discourse that had emerged *ex-post* by local politicians and journalists, international think-tanks and diplomats, that has attributed causality for the collapse on the negotiations upon the process to develop natural gas, what exactly did they refer to?

This question lies at the heart of this thesis and is addressed heavily in Chapter 5. As conveyed, the peace process has collapsed many times before. But the contemporary association with natural resource development is in other respects an unparalleled development. However, this obscures the real empirical question which has not been to investigate natural gas as the single object of research, for there is already a misnomer here. Natural gas should not be seen as the object of research. It is to be thought of as a socio-material assemblage; a relational and processual entity where the ontology and agency of natural gas is related to the politics of the island. Post-structural, processual thought is important for a critical evaluation of this nature-society dualism, to focus the debate on questions of material agency and ontology where natural gas is to be seen as a socio-material assemblage, and to highlight the drivers of human emotion and teleological goals. The following Chapter is now devoted to elucidating the purchase of this theoretical oeuvre.

CHAPTER 2

Theoretical Framework: Toward Natural Resources as Socio-Material Assemblages.

2.1 Preamble.

In Chapter 1, I introduced the association established between the recent process to develop offshore natural gas in Cyprus, and the ongoing political peace process. I then detailed the contextual background of the political situation on the island and highlighted some of the key events that have occurred between the two processes. I see the connection at hand epitomised in popular assertions such as: "natural gas is catalyst for peace", "natural gas caused the collapse of the negotiations", or that "natural gas can be curse or a blessing". These formulations are central to this thesis. The fact that I reiterate them is not part of misled effort to sustain interest artificially in an otherwise out-of-date, unfashionable, and by-gone topic. As demonstrated throughout, the association formulated between these two processes is not reserved to a particular time, place, or indeed a specific or exclusive set of actors or stakeholders. Therefore, any repetition the reader encounters is entirely intentional and warranted, for it is simply a faithful reflection of the discursive mechanism that has established the issue of natural gas as a matter of concern (Latour 2005), or as a hot situation (Callon 1998), or a thing that forces thought (Stengers 2005).

In Chapter 1, I also stated that the juxtaposition of these two processes indelibly raised questions of material agency and ontology, as well as

concomitant epistemological concerns. I couched this aforementioned relationship as a manifestation of the bifurcation of nature and society; a hierarchical dualism with parallels to environmental determinism where a line of causality is crudely drawn between something natural and something political. In this Chapter, I explore these trajectories and their implications further. Specifically, I argue that issues of material agency and ontology as they concern natural resources, and the *a priori* dualisms crystallised between natural gas and peace, are not intrinsic, self-evident, universal givens. Instead, perceptions of material agency and ontology should be thought of as contingent, precarious, and processual achievements that are intimately tied to the context at hand (Law 1999), and to a context often suffused with relations of power and politics from the start (Braun 2006). Finally, I commensurate a sheer enthusiasm for the burgeoning body of scholarship on the topic with the need to affirm a more singular theoretical approach. Where I have encountered theoretical insights deemed to be a digression, there are instances where I have included them to identify trajectories for future research.

2.2. Chapter Aims and Structure.

I begin with post-structuralism. My aim is to establish the key theoretical insights that can be discerned from this scholarship which shares parallels with the recent conceptual revolution known as the material turn. This is important, for the core arguments of post-structuralism can be used to better understand the process by which nature and society, and by extension, natural resources and politics, are bifurcated. A further reason to

address such core philosophical insights that inspired contemporary natural resources scholarship, is that a great deal of the critiques and counter-critiques encountered in the relevant literature are manifestations of underlying philosophical debates. This includes the friction present between structuralism and post-structuralism, or anthropocentrism and neo-vitalism. All in all, there are three theoretical principles that I make frequent recourse to: *relationality*, *multiplicity*, and *materiality*.

I see the notion of relationality as the recognition of the co-constitution, inter-dependence, and cross-over, between otherwise essential and pure binary divisions such as: mind and matter, human and non-human, society and nature, and as reflected in this thesis: natural gas and peace. In turn, multiplicity emanates from an epistemological critique of ontology and denotes the existence of multiple subjective perceptions of objective reality. With materiality, I argue that the term should be seen as distinct from matter, that it should only elicit a consideration of what is more-than-material (Whatmore 2006). This raises questions about how far matter can be known predominantly in "physical terms as a raw substrate, a bedrock reality counterpoised to the social, cultural, and textual" (Bakker and Bridge 2006, 8). Materiality should refer explicitly to the social, cultural, or political connotations that have been connected to perceptions of material reality, to avoid all hints of environmental determinism, and to acknowledge that social construction cannot be entirely by-passed.

Any post-humanist claims to absolute truths regarding the objective reality must acknowledge that the "social muslin of representations gathered into discourse (no matter how liberal and permissive the muslin may be), and that no kind of purely extra-social authority is available for arbitrating

the shape and dynamism of nature" (Smith 1998, 273). Though in retrospect I have come to avoid reference to the notion of phenomenology, I realise that my position here is the "starting point for a classical phenomenological analysis [...], where matter is understood primarily in terms of the array of our own embedded concerns, as a matter of engaged perception" (Anderson and Wylie 2009, 324).

Secondly, I account for the material turn and outline implications for natural resources. The discussion at this stage is challenging, for there is a burden of choice with regards to inter-related theoretical pathways that can be pursued, such as the notion of affect. I will save a full discussion of affect until a number of preliminary issues have been addressed. Namely, these are that of processualism and reflexivity. More so, I will also consider the concept of discourse and discursive practice and to a lesser extent, representation, all of which are connected to the discussions of anthropocentrism, social constructivism, and neo-vitalism. All of these terms are inseparable from the fundamental issues of material agency and ontology that I have placed central to this thesis. To this end, in order to counter the perception of static, binary dualisms between the concepts of natural resources and politics, and to apply the principle of relationality, I invoke the notion of the *assemblage* and to a lesser extent, A.N.T theory. It is here that I make recourse to Barry's notion of the "political situation".

Thirdly, as part of a broader commitment to operationalise processual and post-structural philosophy, I confer insights from the work of Gilles Deleuze and Michel Foucault. To critically appraise the bifurcation of nature and society, to attend to the politics of matter, and to convey it all in a processual fashion, I invoke Deleuzian concepts of the event (Chapter 4), the

distinction between the virtual and actual (Chapter 5), and Foucauldian connections between discourse and power (Chapter 6). The discussion of the latter features in Chapter 3, which is reserved for the principle of reflexivity which denotes an epistemological sensitivity with regards the situatedness of knowledge and the positionality of the researcher.

2.3. Leading unto Nature: An Overview Post-Structuralism, Structuralism, and their Discontents.

Post-structuralism is primarily an epistemological critique of ontology (Woodward *et al.* 2009). It is symptomatic of "first philosophy — of basic foundational questions of being — though more often than not, treating such foundational questions as historical issues" (Harrison 2006, 122). It emanates from a backlash to the so-called Enlightenment-era obsession with order and truth (Cloke *et al.* 1991). The disposition is begotten of a profoundly suspicious mindset about "anything that tries to pass itself off as a simple statement of fact, of anything that claims be true by virtue of being obvious, natural, or based upon common sense" (Wylie 2006, 298). In what is I think a very Nietzschean oeuvre, there can be an endless critique that focuses on anthropic and intersubjective truth in contrast to the existence of absolute or objective truth. In turn, this has inspired critiques of the taken-for-granted nature of the use of geographical knowledge (Dittmer and Gray 2010). As such, an acute introspection occurs with regards to assertions of an ontological nature. Hence, perceptions of reality can now be parsed as "historically, culturally, and materially located" (Mol 1999, 75). No-one's word is taken for it, so to speak, and the scene becomes set for all *a priori*

essentialisms, categorical dualisms, and binaries, to be challenged as the products of purification, division, and exclusion, which are themselves to be seen in terms of relations of power, politics, and teleology. This is exactly why I have found the scholarship so appropriate to the relationship between natural gas and peace.

The principle of relationality lies at the heart of post-structuralism (Murdoch 2006), "to the extent that we embrace nothing but relations and co-relations, their folding and unfolding" (Doel 1999, 147). The key implication is that perceptions of reality, together with perceptions of material agency, are relational effects produced in contextually-contingent interactions simultaneously material and social (Law and Urry 2004). It is perfectly tenable here to substitute 'social' for the term 'political'. This move then makes it possible to speak of a politics of relationality (Cresswell 2013), as well as a politics of ontology (Blaser 2013, Mol 1999). Indeed, anything touted as an *a priori* truth is not perceived as an intrinsic objective reality but a discursive formulation subjectively conditioned; hence the importance of discourse. Discourse here need not refer to an arbitrary application of exclusive or pre-defined empirical material (Müller 2008), and there are in fact three modes of discourse selected for use in this thesis as attested to in Chapter 3. Further, the principle of multiplicity denotes the existence of multiple perceptions of an object in question. As a result, the emphasis on subjective difference entails a methodological sensitivity to nuance, contingency, and context, as argued for in Chapter 1.

Personally, I find the implications of this philosophy extremely unsettling. However, it is meant to be exactly that; unsettling in the sense that it sharpens the analytical knife and expands the remit of critical

(de)construction such that the observer can discern multiple interconnections between logos, pathos, and ethos. The proposition invites attention as to how, why, with what consequences such popular identities, categories, and structures, have been constructed through the medium of discourse and discursive practice. There is also an insistence to think in processual terms that implies a status of constant becoming, where nothing essentially exists in a singular form untainted by interest or human desire. For Deleuze and Guattari (1983), human life is constituted by a series of desires which condition the ontological status of an object. What something is now becomes constituted by the unavoidable, but also multiple and oftentimes divergent, flows of desire (Colebrook 2002).

The identification of competing desires as it comes to divergent visions of future peace in Cyprus is a key factor for the nature of the natural gas saga on the island, as I will evidence. In any case, what is perceived in terms of the agency of natural resources is not an intrinsic property but the result of an emergent and precarious achievement between the human and non-human. If a small digression is permissible, I see a connection between certain principles of post-structuralism and the process philosophy of A.N. Whitehead. Whitehead invokes the notion of sense-perception with specific reference to nature (Stengers 2011), where nature becomes "that which we observe in perception through the senses" (1919 [1964, 2]). Whitehead also warns that all should not be reduced to a function of partial perception or perceptual knowledge. In this process of abstraction, the "philosophy of the thing perceived [...], should not be confused with the metaphysics of reality..." (1919 [1964, 19]). The key implication here can be discerned in the friction between neo-vitalist and social constructivist accounts of nature, as

discussed momentarily. Ultimately, post-structuralism constitutes a conceptual shift that has profoundly affected all humanities and social science disciplines. It has affected not only what geographers' study, but also how research is conducted and communicated (Murdoch 2006). I now briefly consider the theoretical oeuvre post-structuralism has defined itself against; that of structuralism. Structuralism has not been as influential to human geography as post-structuralism has been, and there does not seem to be a clean break between the two. What is of significance is that the latter is understood to denote a detached, objective, systematic, and unbiased observation of a closed and inter-related system of processes, terms, events, and objects. The paradigm is perceived to have a central organising principle around which said entities are structured around. In doing so, these entities are defined *sui generis* by virtue of their inter-relationship inside an *a priori* system or meta-narrative of generative mechanisms (Smith 2001).

In effect, structuralism seeks the background patterns or the depth that lurks beneath unique events; a depth that is then structured and formalised. The endeavour itself has been critiqued for its insistence on *a priori* truths and deterministic qualities (Murdoch 2006). Structuralism is more of an abstract and reductionist system of thought criticised for being too detached and disembodied from the human experiences or objects in question, where "the moments and elements of social practice [are kept] away from each other" (Lefebvre 1991, 366). These latter empirical moments are seen as more of an inconsequential manifestation or epiphenomena of a more significant, cross-cutting, pattern or core, instead of being placed at the centre of analysis. It remains that the seemingly closed, self-defined, disembodied structure implied by structuralism needs to be approached

with utmost weariness. This does not mean that the existence of structures, guiding principles, or frameworks, are to be eradicated upon discovery (Anderson *et al.* 2003). The point is to uncover the conditioning variables, the structures of constraint (Folbre 1994), or the discursive frameworks that shape discourse in an emergent, heterogeneous, relational, and processual manner; a view that I go on to apply to natural gas in Cyprus.

More so, the existence and operation of a discursive framework does not necessarily have to be approached in terms of politics, for "not everything is political, perhaps, but politics certainly gathers everything together [...]" (Latour 2004, 53). Instead, I adopt a view of politics as the "active mode, this process of shaping, and the fact that its character is both open and contested" (Mol 1999, 75); a "space of dissensus and contestation" (Barry 2001, 207), see also Stengers (2005). Chapter 6 deals with the problem raised by the very reference to the structure of the Cyprus Problem, and the danger of referring to everything as political. This sentimentality must be held in tension with the fact that Cyprus is infamous for its political division, where the course of the peace process readily dominates frontpage news (Adamides 2015). Thus, the political drivers behind the establishment and effect of binary dualisms between nature and society must be afforded due attention. A related concern in post-structuralism is that specific references to general principles or abstractions such as the political can themselves be forms of reductionism, if the analytical finger is pointed to simplistic motifs that are inadvertently deterministic themselves (Anderson *et al.* 2003). In other words, there can be a contradiction, where the question of material agency can be completely dislocated from the material in question, and instead portrayed wholly as an incorrigible function of

discourse (Müller 2008). The implication for the study of materials such as natural resources is that discourse and representation is apotheosised at the expense of "the 'real' material conditions within which these meanings were considered to be embedded" (Woodward *et al*. 2009, 396). It quickly becomes fatal to use words such as *merely*, or *only*, in an attempt to identify singularities from which all explanations are derived from, or to which all observations are traced back to. The critique is similar to that levied against Smith's (1984) "Production of Nature" thesis, which itself emanates from a neo-Marxist, political ecology scholarship.

Smith's work attempts to overcome the bifurcation of nature and society with the argument that nature and society are "not fixed entities, but historical outcomes, produced through their interaction" (Braun 2006, 195). The sentiment is echoed by Cronon (1996, 69-70), who advocates that "as we gaze into the mirror it [wilderness] holds up for us, we too easily imagine that what we behold is Nature, when in fact we see the reflection of our own unexamined longings and desires". To a large extent, the idea is in congruence with the general inclination of post-structuralism, which challenges all *a priori* dualisms and ontological essentialisms. It conforms to the principle of relationality, and raises questions about the human input required in the creation of certain perceptions of nature. However, the implication that there is no external element of nature, that it could potentially be perceived wholly as a function of human imperatives pitched in terms of grand abstractions such as capitalism, is itself also of concern. Indeed, far from challenging *a priori* categorisations, the dialectics of neo-Marxist approaches can instead be seen to have "raise[d] its binary logic to the level of contradiction" (Whatmore 1999, 25). In other words, the theory

merely inverts the argument made by those who espouses environmental determinism, and can itself be viewed as far too anthropocentric and social constructivist. I will further develop the implications of the aforementioned critique on the concept of natural resources as the Chapter progresses. However, I first turn attention towards the parallels between post-structuralism and the material turn.

2.3. Implications of the Material Turn.

Post-structuralist thought has spurned a "reawakening of the debate on 'the question of nature'" (Whatmore 1999, 23). Since Fitzsimmons (1989, 106), lamented the "peculiar silence on the question of social Nature […]", a call to rematerialise human geography soon took root (Jackson 2000). The concept of nature and the material is now firmly entrenched in the academic agenda (Castree and Braun 2001). As part and parcel of an explosion of scholarship referred to as the material-turn (Braun 2005), "notions of *materiality* and the *material* are abroad" (Bakker and Bridge 2006, 5). Müller (2015, 27) suggests that if language, representation, and discourse "were the pet concepts of the 1990s, assemblage, actor-networks, and materiality might well be those of the 2000s". For Whatmore (2006), the emblematic shifts in the research agenda have been from: (1) discourse to practice, considering performance rather than simply representation, (2) from meaning to affect, (3) "more-than-human" enquiries that reify the notion of co-constitution between the natural and social, (4), and from identity politics to the politics of knowledge-making practices and cognate claims of ontological nature, which may themselves fuel public controversy. I would

like to clarify that terms such as: object, material, nature, the body, and so forth, are all arbitrary distinctions of the non-human world that are obviously derived from the same material reality. Hence the terms are quite interchangeable, and so I find a great degree of applicability of the principles discerned from post-structuralism to the realm of natural resources. This is partly why there is such bourgeoning scholarship to acknowledge.

That being said, it is erroneous to state that the entirety of the corpus of scholarship of the material-turn is the direct and uniform product of post-structuralism. There have been significant influences derived from neo-Marxist and feminist scholarship (Whatmore 1999). Nevertheless, there is still a great deal of cross-over between these theoretical denominations (Gregory *et al.* 2009), and it is difficult, if not impossible, to demarcate exactly where the theoretical boundaries lie. However, what matters is that the core principles of post-structuralism: *relationality*, *multiplicity*, *reflexivity* (Cresswell 2013), have all made inroads into human geography (Murdoch 2006), in-roads that may have crossed through neo-Marxist or feminist scholarship, and into the study of natural resources. For example, Donna Haraway (1988, 584) has argued against the supposed Enlightenment-era, detached, objective, totalitarian, and unreflective knowledge practices associated with science, as "god tricks promising vision from everywhere and nowhere equally and fully". Instead, she argued that all knowledge is situated, embodied, and partial. Haraway (1991, 129), also spoke of a need to "breakout of binaries…and nature/culture modes of any kind", in order to traverse the dualisms that have been "systemic to the logics and practices of the domination of women, people of colour, nature, workers, animals – in short, domination of all constituted as others […]" (*ibid.*, 314). On nature,

Haraway (1992, 296) specifically suggests that "nature cannot pre-exist its construction". In effect, "it is something made materially and semiotically, and both simultaneously" (Castree and Braun 2001, 4). This insistence on difference and heterogeneity pushes for an awareness of the situatedness and the construction of knowledge (Haraway 1988, 1989). This relates to the emphasis I have placed on context, and pushes for a consideration of materials as ontologically unstable entities (Whatmore 2002, 2003), as explored in Chapter 5.

With related implications, Judith Butler (1993, 14) has asserted that "[…] what constitutes the fixity of the body, its contours, its movements, will be fully material, but materiality will be rethought as the effect of power, as power's *most productive effect*". The point is that relations of power, politics, and discourse, all coalesce to constitute perceptions of material reality, as I account for in Chapter 6. More so, Annemarie Mol's work is also highly applicable to the issue of ontology. If there are multiple representations of an object, process, or an event, then it follows that reality can be thought of as existent in multiple forms; an object multiple, where each discursive step "[…] stages – performs, does, enacts – a different *version* of 'the' object. Hence, it is not an object but 'more than one" (Mol 2014, 1). This does not necessarily imply that reality exists in the plural. Instead, there is an insistence that there can be multiple subjective versions of an objective reality. Further still, if discourse can be politically inflected, then relations of politics can raise questions of an ontological nature. In this light, politics is a process of contestation that shapes reality through the medium of discourse (Mol 1999).

Ultimately, I find the principles of relationality (or hybridity),

multiplicity, reflexivity, together with a marked disdain for a priori dualities, clearly evident in the scholarship as discussed thus far. The influence of post-structuralism is unsurprising, for if post-structuralism is opposed to distinct, fixed, and static entities separated into distinct ontological domains (Anderson *et al.* 2003), it finds a case *par excellence* in the bifurcation of nature and society where authors such as Whatmore (1999, 23) have sought to challenge "[…] the categorical cordon that marked off the 'non-human world' and the grounds for understanding it". Building on Smith's (1984) production of nature thesis mentioned earlier, there is a tendency to think of the concept of nature as more of a human construction that is idealised and romanticised, but is nonetheless a relational achievement between non-essentialised categories of society and nature (Whatmore 2002).

This has a direct impact on the way I consider natural gas and the natural gas industry. For the association between natural gas and peace is no longer a given. It is no-longer obvious, common sense, or self-evident. Instead, it is an association that should be seen as propagated, instigated, and promulgated largely for reasons related to the wider referent framework that is the Cyprus Problem. The interrelationship between natural gas and peace is far subtler than a simple Cartesian dualism would attest. Nature and natural resources are no longer what they seemed to be (Castree 2011), in the sense that nature is not bereft of epistemological distortion. Much like the term peace, nature is also polysemic and poly-referential. In tandem, every so-called hybrid is no longer to be considered a "mixture of two pure forms" (Latour 1993, 77). No longer fixed, separate, sacrosanct, and self-evident ontological entities, the way we speak about nature is reflective of human thought in general, or bias, desire, and prejudice. To reiterate

Cronon (1996, 69-70), “as we gaze into the mirror it [wilderness] holds up for us, we too easily imagine that what we behold is Nature, when in fact we see the reflection of our own unexamined longings and desires”. If ontology is relational, then relational materialism (Mol 2013), denotes the instances where “the material and the social intertwine and interact [...]” (Thrift 1996, 24). The usage of terms such as “socio-nature” (Swyngedouw 1999), “nature-culture” (Haraway 1997, Latour 1993), “nature regimes” (Escobar 1999), or “second nature” (Biersack 2006), all convey the fundamental processual and reciprocal relationship between the social and the natural.

But how exactly does this all concern natural resources? As a “peculiar socio-material assemblage” (Whatmore 2006, 605), the concept of natural resources certainly constitutes an “intellectually vibrant and politically significant arena for critical enquiry” (Bakker and Bridge 2006, 6). Richardson and Weszkalnys (2014) argue that the subject of natural resources offers a fruitful empirical lens to investigate what they term as resource materialities. This denotes an ontology of matter, whereby nature is “humanly produced (through conceptualisation as well as activity) and that [it] therefore partakes, but without being entirely, of the human” (Biersack 2006, 14). I find it important here to establish firmly that the assumed ‘naturalness’ of natural resources and its determination as a resource is challenged, to the extent that natural resources are no longer to be thought of as self-evident entities. Instead, in the exact same way that the concept of nature has been treated, attention is diverted to how and why natural resource come to be recognised as such in the first place. This must include focus upon how social and by extension political process, have influenced the distinction (Ferry and Limbert 2008).

The economist Erich Zimmermann is often cited to explain this point. Zimmermann was not a post-structuralist. However, imagination need not be stretched too far in order to see that the way he conceptualised about natural resources conforms with the aforementioned principles of relationality, multiplicity, and processuality. Zimmermann stated that "[natural] resources are not, they become; they are not static but expand and contract in response to human wants and human actions" (1951, 15). That natural resources are entities that *become* in response to human wants and actions conforms with the idea that natural resources as material objects do not intrinsically warrant the definition of a resource. In turn, it is human appraisal which turns neutral stuff into resources (Zimmermann 1951). He further stated that a "preoccupation with so-called natural resources at the expense of human and cultural resources precludes a clear comprehension of the true nature of resources and a full grasp of their extent" (1945, 160).

Natural resources should therefore be seen as ontologically unstable entities where the qualification of being a natural resource is an *ex-post* attribute, characteristic, or label, begotten from a combination of contingent human and non-human factors. Truly, knowledge then becomes the "mother of all resources" (Zimmermann 1951, 10). Similarly, for Bridge (2009a, 1220) "it is technology and culture that confer utility and value onto materials". In the reverse manner, Mitchell (2009, 422), states that political, economic, and social relations are engineered out of flows of energy, and that this process involves "materials and ideas, humans and non-humans, calculations and the objects of calculation, representations and forms of violence, and the present and future". It is here that a delicate balancing-act

of causality must occur, as the following section describes.

If a hierarchical relationship is imagined between natural resources and politics, the conversation can easily sway dangerously close to the language of either anthropic or environmental determinism, where oil for example, may be imbued with Olympian powers synonymous with commodity determinism (Watts 2013). Therefore, broad abstractions such as that of "energy flows" must be approached with the utmost reservation, especially if there is little or no regard for contextual nuance. The same reservation should be afforded to cases where natural resources (or cognate abstractions such as energy or hydrocarbons), are placed at the heart of analysis, where all roads seemingly lead back to natural resources. An extrapolation of this kind would be described by Deleuze as a long perversion (2001[1968]), where the scope of the explanation is defined by the implicit boundaries of pre-given problems and propositions. The point here has serious ramifications, for although I am explicitly concerned with the association between the peace process and natural gas development process, the association at hand is by no means the be all and end all of what constitutes the Cyprus Problem.

In any case, *a priori* separations of natural and social, natural resources and politics, natural gas and peace, must be addressed in the first, as this is essential to reveal "just *what* is at issue" (Whatmore 2013, 163). Concurrently, if such an endeavour is akin to whittling-down and pointing the finger to a specific, overarching thematic such as that of affect, or power, gender, and especially if this is done without contextualisation, then a contradiction arises where the argument takes the reader straight back to "simplistic motifs of determination" (Castree 2003, 178).

Paradoxically, the induction returns back to structuralism. Albeit there is a necessity for at least some level of abstraction. The intellectual buck must stop somewhere. Hence, there are four analytical cuts I will adopt in this thesis as leeway into the story of natural gas, as explained momentarily.

For Selby (2014), to view social phenomena in their totality rather than as a limited number of abstract variables, to acknowledge the variability and irreducibility of political structures, together with a reflexive awareness of the production of knowledge, offers a more politically and methodologically reliable resource-politics scholarship. In tandem, Perrault and Valdivia (2010, 697) assert that the governance of natural resources are "infused with struggles over the meanings of development, citizenship, and the nation itself". But they do not state that such meanings solely derive from the governance of natural resources in a monolithic manner. It is best to acknowledge without picking a side, that natural resources are "always informed by the historical, social, and material environments within which resource matters are constituted" (Richardson and Weszkalnys 2014, 5). But what happens after the claim that objects are ontologically unstable is made? Attention should then be shifted towards how the organisation or interaction of such social and natural factors occurs (Braun 2008). This includes a focus on the "historically and geographically contingent ways in which diverse events and materials come to be matters of public dispute" (Barry 2013a, 8). As this thesis is primarily about the association between a political process and a natural resource development process, I find it of particular significance to conceptualise the way these two processes interact from a strictly political perspective. As such, it is here that I will invoke Barry's political situation, which I have found to be a very useful way to

conceptualise the association between natural gas and peace in a processual manner. Following Castree (2011), human geography's new materialists can be split into two camps. The first are the hybrid geographers who challenge any distinct *a priori* nature-society dualisms and essentialist ontological identities (Braun 1999, Whatmore 1999).

In the discussion thus far, I have focussed on the first group. The second camp of new materialists are those who tackle the issue from the perspective of N.R.T (Thrift 2007). NRT geographers focus upon affect more than issues of representation, discourse, and discursive practices. The scholarship "emphasises human embodiment and focuses on multi-sensory forms of human practice involving emotion, sound, touch, and bodily motion" (Castree 2011, 192), as explored further in Chapter 7. Affect can be tentatively thought of as part of an extra-discursive practice (Deleuze 1972). Further, affect is about the "relational flows, fluxes or currents, in-between people and places rather than 'things' or 'objects' to be studied or measured" (Bondi 2005, 3). Before I explore the concept further, it is useful to discuss anthropocentrism and social constructivism versus neo-vitalism, and the subsequent implications on material agency and material ontology first. The Chapter will then draw to a conclusion with a brief overview of the use of certain insights from Bergson regarding the axiom of time, Deleuze on the event, and Foucault whose work is better placed in Chapter 3.

2.4. Anthropocentrism, Social Constructivism, and Neo-Vitalism.

The focus on discourse and discursive practice relates to questions of anthropocentrism and social-constructivism, both of which have gone on to

spurn the emergence of neo-vitalist or post-humanist scholarship. These areas of thought largely lament the ostensive disregard for the vitality of materials, "the active role of the non-human in public life" (Bennett 2010, 2), or the liveliness or force of nature swallowed up in the hubris of social construction. This is a failure to capture that is more-than-human (Koa 2014). The debate is emblematic of the difference between explaining and explaining-away, and an initial observation I make is that it is misplaced to say that discourse is all there is, for only the most "vulgar of constructionist accounts" (Whatmore 2006, 2), would express such a thought. Equally, "only the crudest of 'realist' accounts refuse to recognise the contingency of knowledge claims about 'real world' entities and processes" (*ibid.*).

Nevertheless, authors such as Karen Barad (2003, 801) have posited that "lately every 'thing' — even materiality — is turned into a matter of language or some other form of cultural representation", and that matter has been reduced into mere "support, location, referent, or source of sustainability for discourse" (*ibid.* 821). This is far from a frivolous and inconsequential accusation to make, for I myself have come across such a line of thought in the field so to speak, in discussion with none other than a senior political risk analyst for one of the stakeholder companies in the Aphrodite field. I was in fact warned not to "remain at the theoretical and linguistic level" (D.S 05/09/16). But I think this misses the mark, simply because the relationship between materiality and discourse, and the effect of relationality, corporeality, and co-constitution upon material agency and ontology are all seemingly by-passed, exactly because the theoretical and the linguistic are not taken seriously.

If human subjectivity is decentred, still this does not warrant the

omission of the instances of how, where, and why, such discourses have precipitated in the first place (Anderson and Wylie 2009). This thesis has been inspired by the question of how such abstract discursive claims of the power of natural resources over politics operate in the world, where such universal claims may neither be true nor false, but instead politically productive (Tsing 2005). Without making metaphysical claims, natural resources may indeed be reduced into support, location, referent, or source of sustainability for discourse (Barad 2003), not as an actor and agent (Haraway 1988), but as a metaphor such as smoke and mirrors, or political tool. Fundamentally, the problem I register here is part of the continued debate of how to register the differential properties, characteristics, agencies without assuming such powers are imbued in the materials themselves (Barry 2015). In terms of natural resources, knowledge of natural resources may become anthropomorphic to the extent that there is a reduction of "resource substance into a purely sociological problem" (Weszkalnys 2013, 273). This explains-away in the vein of crude environmental determinism, and gestures to rather considers at length the issue of the material itself (Tolia-Kelly 2013).

In more deterministic language, the point here can also warrant a consideration of material limits (Barad 1998). Hence, although "a materialist analysis of politics is one that must attend to the resistance of matter to political control" (Barry 2001, 26), there is also the danger of aggrandising genuinely indifferent non-human activity, and the possibility of "matter simply persisting in a rock-like or mineral condition" (Clark 2010, 24), where "things-in-themselves get by very well without us" (Latour 1988, 93). The related position of hyper-constructionism, whereby everything is

reduced to a matter of discourse, is simply an extreme. It useful here to refer back to Whitehead who stated that during the process of abstraction, the "philosophy of the thing perceived [...] should not be confused with the metaphysics of reality..." (1919 [1964, 19]). This does not detract at all from the significance of discourse, discursive practice, or affective insight, or reduce them to the status of trivial phenomena.

Instead, I hold that there is a reciprocal relationship from the very start between the way people perceive material agency and material ontology. The onus lies in the assessment of how this interaction works in practice. This does necessarily have to be extrapolated to the extent that the social has swallowed-up the material (Knappett 2007). In fact, social constructivism is far more tempered (Castree 1995), and contrary to popular belief, there is recognition that "it is the nature of objects which determines their cognitive possibilities for us; that, in nature, it is humanity that is contingent and knowledge, so to speak, accidental" (Bhaskar 1999, 25). It is therefore correct to oppose the off-hand dismissal of everything as social construction. But there is also a considerable amount of credence in assertion that whichever way you look at it, social construction cannot be bypassed, and there may be no other way to "access nature's materiality outside the materiality of signification" (Castree 2003, 177). Indeed, any post-human claims to absolute truth regarding the objective material reality of abstractions such as nature or natural resources, surely cannot escape the "social muslin of representations gathered into discourse (no matter how liberal and permissive the muslin may be), and that no kind of purely extra-social authority is available for arbitrating the shape and dynamism of nature" (Smith 1998, 273). Thus, if research is to consider material ontology

in a sustained or sensitive fashion instead of merely gesturing to it (Tolia-Kelly 2013), there must be the acknowledgement of the limitations of human perception, and that oftentimes for a political ontology of matter, where "perception is not the object plus something, but the object minus something, minus everything that does not interest us" (Deleuze 1991, 25).

Similarly, Mol (2012, 380) makes the powerful argument that: "matter is never 'itself' all by itself. Even when it is not being interpreted, matter is never alone. For it may well be that matter acts, but what it is able to *do* inevitably depends on adjacent matter that it may do something *with*. Action is always interaction". I find this assertion to be of great importance because it is so very central to the notion of relationality that I have applied to natural resources. For example, if "relational engagements and affordances" (Mol 2013, 380), between society and nature are forsaken, the result is that there is "no way of talking about what matter 'itself' does, other than naively echoing natural science textbooks and journal articles [...]" (*ibid.*). This is a consideration that has informed the way I have accounted for the facts of natural gas the material and the nature of the industry, as I go on to demonstrate especially in Chapter 5.

Ultimately, I find it impossible to provide a truly post-humanist account of nature (Smith 1984), the pursuit of which can spark an overemphasised pursuit to factor-in the vitality and recalcitrance of non-human life (Barua 2016). Relatedly, Ingold (2007, 3) asks, "what academic perversion leads us to speak not of materials and their properties but of the materiality of objects?". To my mind, it is here that a clearer distinction should be made between matter and materiality, because it is simply the case that the terms are often confused, conflated, and used interchangeably. Materiality should

instead be reserved as a term that specifically denotes the occasions where the concept of relationality is applied to matter, or the occasions when the effect of discourse upon perceptions of matter are discussed. This again ties with the point that discourse should not be fetishised at the expense of the ontological reality in a metaphysical sense. Instead, the concern should lie with what hybrid and relational abstractions exist, do, and how they work, rather than what we perceive its essence to be (Anderson and Tolia-Kelly 2004, 672).

A further question to ask is where then, does the productivity and resilience (Coole and Frost 2010, 7) come from, if not if not an *ex-post* or *post hoc* human rationalisation after human desire brushes up against material reality and the mangle of practice (Pickering 1995)? For instance, both Bakker (2004) and Kaup (2008) describe water and natural gas as uncooperative commodities respectively. For Kaup, natural gas is of a "particularly difficult nature" (*ibid*. 1736). For Bridge (2004, 396), "the physical properties of methane and the conditions of its occurrence do not readily comply with the commodity form". This is surely what Tsing (2005) refers to when she speaks of the friction that arises when human activity encounters the grip of the worldly encounter. If both sensibility and sensitivity to the principles of relationality and processuality thus far described are to be adopted, it becomes awkward to describe such natural resources in deterministic and essentialist language. Gisa Weszkalnys (2008, 2011, 2013) underscores this point in her account of São Tome é Príncipe, which has been gripped by a politics of anticipation and expectation with regard to potential future discoveries of commercially-viable quantities of offshore hydrocarbon reserves. The interesting parallels with

the experience of Cyprus are demonstrated later.

Weszkalnys demonstrates that the politicisation of natural resources does not necessarily hinge at all on the material qualities of a natural resource. The natural resource need not even exist in significant quantities to be of serious political repercussions. Weszkalnys writes of "oil's magic" as a metaphor to comprehend how expectations of an oil-rich future has enacted political change on the island. For it was not the presence of commercially-exploitable quantities of hydrocarbons that became a matter of political concern. On the contrary, it was the latent absence of the natural resource, despite various convictions and predictions to the contrary. In essence, oil really had been talked into existence (Weszkalnys 2011) — an assertion that upholds the emphasis I have sought to place on discourse and discursive practice. It follows that oil's magic, or what has been understood in terms of its materiality, is not an essence "concentrated in its chemical and physical constitution, but it is a potentially that unfolds through a series of material processes of transformation, appropriation, and use" (Weszkalnys 2013, 376). It is this potentially that has been behind the political furore in São Tome é Príncipe, and not the natural resource itself, all by itself.

Finally, through my emphasis on contingency, context, and situatedness, especially with regards to questions of material ontology and material agency of natural resources, and together with a consideration of issue of metrology and perceptions influenced by human wants and needs, goals, viewpoints, discursive frameworks and so on, it may now even be unnecessary to inquire about materiality at all (Anderson *et al.* 2003). This is exactly why I have not provided an overview or synopsis of the global

natural gas industry as any sort of preamble. To do so will have been misleading, for any naïve textbook regurgitation (Mol 2012), of facts about say, the geochemical composition of a particular natural gas field, or the domestic capacity for natural gas demand in the littoral states of the Eastern Mediterranean Sea, or commercial valuations of resource assets across time, may be mistakenly taken as a precedent in an environmentally deterministic manner. It is therefore best to demonstrate progressively the various factors that have come to be of significance vis-á-vis the world of natural gas development, and the politics of the Cyprus Problem. Attention should be directed to the instances where the properties of materials come to matter in practice, rather than searching for general principles that can be applied across the board. Barry's (2001, 211) remark that "what is inventive is not the novelty of artefacts and devices in themselves, but the novelty of the arrangements with other objects and activities within which artefacts and instruments are situated and might be situated in the future", clearly illustrates this point.

What remains now is to explore how seemingly mundane properties of materials such as natural resources, have been turned into issues of wider public political significance (Barry 2010); an index of sorts of wider controversies wherein which sometimes the seemingly irreducible properties of natural resources become the backbone of a more-than-human politics (Whatmore 2006), or an integral element of evolving controversies (Barry 2013a), trapped between an "ever changing and causal relationship between intelligibility and materiality" (Massey 2000, 10).

2.5. Natural Resources in the midst of a Political Situation.

I have written at length about material agency, ontology, and epistemology. I have presented the view that the ontological status of, and agentic capacity of natural resources are not to be taken as intrinsic givens, but instead as relational achievements. I have connected relationality to an expansive definition of politics as an active "space of dissensus and contestation" (Barry 2001, 207), that is responsible for that changing and causal relationship between intelligibility and materiality (Massey 2000). There is therefore a politics of relationality (Cresswell 2013), and politics of agency and ontology (Mol 1999, 2012), at play. But what happens after the idea of ontological instability of natural resources has been established? What happens after the agency of natural resources is seen as less of an intrinsic trait, and more of a relational achievement between human wants, needs, and capabilities, together with perceptions of inherent physical attributes of a natural resource? The next step is to investigate in detail the exact nature of such a reciprocal relationship, for there remains a need to account for the human work done to make an object political (Barry 2001). To this end, I extend my interest in the political ontology of natural resources by recourse to Barry's (2012, 2013a, 2013b, 2016) political situation, assemblage theory as derived from Deleuze and Guattari (1987) — authors associated with a broadly post-structural and processual philosophy — and to a lesser extent, A.N.T.

Barry's work examines the inter-relationship between a socio-material and its wider political context in a distinctly processual, relational, and contingent manner. The situation ties-in with Haraway's (1988, 1991) notion of the situatedness of knowledge — the epistemological tool that

acknowledges partiality of perspective and plurality of knowledge, where the "realm of politics conditions what may count as *true* knowledge " (Merrifield 1995, 51). This is of course not to be taken as a form of hopeless relativism that obscures or distrusts from the outset otherwise "good matters of fact" (Latour 2003, 227). Rather, to think about a political situation as Barry has it, is to consider how "individual knowledge controversies are inscribed within a series of ongoing disagreements and conflicts about matters that transcend the specificity of the controversy" (Barry 2012, 325). Thus, the significance, potency, and the agency of a controversy is not so much determined by its specific focus.

Instead, the presumed agentic capacity of a material or natural resource should be conceived in terms of its relations to a moving field of latent controversies, conflicts and events, "including those that have occurred in the past and that might occur in the future" (*ibid*. 330). There is still a need to assess what is unique to a particular controversial event rather than to dismiss it simply as an epiphenomenon. In any case, though a singular event or even material may become the subject of political controversy, "what matters more is the existence of a political situation, which may or may not be openly articulated, but in relation to which any particular controversy makes sense to participants and within which it is understood to be embedded" (Barry 2013b, 10). This I find entirely applicable to the story of natural gas in Cyprus as a holistic framework for explanation.

More so, if material ontology and agency is to be located "neither exclusively in their biophysical properties nor in webs of socio-cultural meaning" (Richardson and Weszkalnys 2014), but generated instead

through the interaction of both, it follows that politics has a central conditioning role to play. If natural resources are touted to be matters of political concern, if a passionate public controversy or debate has arisen that has implicated natural resources, then the analyst of a political situation must examine the "existence of the multiple situations which both inform the emergence of specific knowledge controversies and contribute to their existence and transformation" (Barry 2012, 332). To acknowledge the existence of a political situation is to consider the occurrence of multiplicity of *events* anyone of which may generate its own set of dispersed and mutating relations. I apply this understanding to the way the impression of agency in Chapter 4.

The related implication is that a material artefact (Barry 2005), such as a natural resource, comes to be seen as "an evolving entity that form[s] part of a constellation of dynamic relations with other evolving entities" (*ibid*. 2013, 13). The appropriateness of the term hard is to contain, for as a long-time observer of the Cyprus Problem I find ample reason to state without a shadow of a doubt, it is the round after round of stuttering, intermittent, and ultimately failed settlement talks, the various *fait accompli's* and the legal precedents established over the years, which have collectively generated an unquestionably inter-related plethora of controversies, crises, events, and disputes. It is from this political situation that a host of material entities, only one which is the contemporary fascination with natural gas, have become embroiled into across time. Natural gas may be exclusive in terms of subject matter, but entirely non-exclusive and unsurprising in terms of political meaning. This is an argument that I exemplify throughout the thesis as I chart the inter-related axioms between the process of

eventalisation, structured power relations and contested visions of peace, resultant knowledge controversies, and emotional drivers. All of these factors are fundamental to the natural gas issue and to the mechanics of a socio-material assemblages.

To this end, I apply the political situation as a foothold into what has gone on inside this all-encompassing, gargantuan, discursive superstructure known as the Cyprus Problem. It is here that the collapse of the settlement talks in October 2014 can be taken as an event precipitated from wider failings and deeper causes (Barry 2013b). Unfortunately, my appropriation is in stark contrast to Barry's original intention; that a political situation should not denote "some underlying structure that governs the dynamics of a series of individual controversies" (*ibid.*, 11). I suspect the resistance here is begotten from a background unease when it comes to talk of any type of grand structure, for I assume that it harks back to the problems with grand abstractions associated with structuralism. The verb to govern may generate a deterministic view of agency, and not as a relational phenomenon. However, though I have pointed to the necessity for context, there is a practical problem in the sense that it may not be possible, or even necessary, to relay the entire gamut of a particular political situation in all its complexity (Barry 2016), or in contrast to Weszkalnys (2013, 271), the need to account for the "whole techno-socio-natural arrangement" within which a natural resource is spun. At the same time, it is erroneous to adopt a totalitarian view and in doing so, state that absolutely everything in Cyprus is at all times related in some way to the Cyprus Problem, just as it is meaningless to refer to everything as being political (cf. Latour 2004). More so, to acknowledge the limits of intelligibility, objectivity, or

determinism does not automatically disqualify the search for some form of order (Polkinghorne 1986), and this is a point that informs the discussion in Chapter 6. Instead, it better and more realistic to investigate how and why materials such as natural resources have come to be matters of political concern and public dispute (Barry 2013a). The argument then is not to reduce everything to politics but to highlight instead its involvement in what Latour (2004) would describe as a collective. Nonetheless, there remains a need to convey "structural frameworks that can account for the coherence and regularity", for it mirrors the actual perceptions that people hold in other to begin to explain what might otherwise remain esoteric (Descola 2013, 55).

I now briefly discuss the notion of the assemblage. As per the discussion above, it is best if the allusion to structure can be done without unfettered recourse to pure objectivism, subjectivism, and determinism. A post-structural mindset would engage in reductionism and to identify causes *ad infinitum*. In light of the above, it is desirable to speak of structure, especially if it were treated with a processual, relational, and reflexive sentimentality, and without extrapolating metaphysical claims. To this end, I find that the notion of the assemblage, together with related insights from A.N.T., are of considerable purchase in conjunction with the way I have portrayed natural resources. But due to the undesirable rigid and fixed connotations that still come with the mere mention of the word structure, it may simply be easier to use the notion of the assemblage, which seems to come with a processual and fluid linguistic flavour. Nevertheless, I find the assemblage to be a congenial way to conceptualise the association between the peace process and natural gas development

process that has expanded to incorporate natural resources as a new theatre of political conflict (cf. Watts 2004a).

The assemblage can be defined as a whole characterised by relations of exteriority (DeLanda 2006). The principle insight comes from the mention of exteriority which is in contrast with the closed system implied by structuralism, where entities are entirely defined in a *sui generis* fashion. Thus, the assemblage is another way to refer to an expansive, dynamic, and open system, replete with multiplicities that "act on semiotic flows, material flows, and social flows simultaneously" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 69). There is a need to be aware of the links between tripartite divisions between reality, representation, and subjectivity, which I believe is an inclination at the heart of what it means to think critically. Still, and without making any metaphysical claims, the *idea* of natural resources may very well be indeed a "support, location, referent, or source of sustainability for discourse" (Barad 2003, 821), as opposed to a more deterministic account. This will be provocative to the neo-vitalist. But I remain steadfast in the view that human representation is utterly inescapable, and this is a point leads back to the discussion of discourse as developed in Chapter 3.

In hindsight, to see natural resources as a particular socio-material assemblage operationalises relational thought. In doing so, it is part of the endeavour to overcome dualistic thought (Dittmer 2014). As part of a dynamic socio-material assemblage that encompasses both people and things (Whatmore 2006), agency is generated out of the multitude of interactions inside the assemblage. The concept of assemblage is heavily related to A.N.T, as developed by sociologists of science in S.T.S. such as Bruno Latour, Michel Callon, and John Law. A.N.T is perhaps less of a

markedly different theory and more as a particular sensibility to the world seen in terms of actors and networks (Law 1994, Latour 2005). The genesis of A.N.T originates in the investigation of the production of scientific knowledge and a critical appraisal of whether something scientific is an unbiased and complete reflection of objective truth. Through Latour (1983), attention was shifted to explain exactly how scientific knowledge gains prominence within society, how knowledge may circulate, and why it may command such gravitas through the alignment of human and non-human actors. The vocabulary used here can be seen as an attempt to spatialise the philosophy of relationality and processuality. A.N.T has also been influenced by Foucault's work on the interrelationship between knowledge and power (Murdoch 2006). I refer to all of these authors throughout this thesis to various degrees. But the core of the message I retain throughout, for I consider A.N.T as part and parcel of the wider attempt to overcome the bifurcation of nature and society through relational ontology and distributed agency, though inevitably there will be some conceptual nuance.

As such, there is a specific concern with regards to how knowledge may be made purposefully perceptible in the public sphere (Callon 2005, Marres 2005, 2010). Callon and Latour (1981) also speak of a process of translation, where knowledge is conditioned by a phalanx human desires and interests. Callon and Latour refer here to the translation of a material such as a natural resource, or perhaps an event or controversy, into a phenomenon of public and political concern. Here, competing interests, desires, and levels of expertise coalesce in what is also referred to as a hybrid forum (Callon *et al.* 2009). The point relates to the dissemination of public knowledge and the controversy generated in the public sphere. The

idea is similar to Deleuze and Guattari's (1983, 5) theory of desire as a vehicle that incites the formulation of conceptual binaries, by coupling continuous flows and partial objects. One cannot help but see that both sets of authors are trying to conceptualise how the complexity of life may be reduced and abstracted, and how such a process may affect what is known about a particular entity.

For the time being, the concept I retain is that A.N.T, which demands an explicit description of the operation of assemblages (Murdoch 2006). I suspect that is indicative of a clearer indication about exactly how heterogeneous controversies, events, and processes within a political situation operate, who or what is actually involved, and the relational engagements between them from which of notions of agency and perspectives of ontology emerge from. Beyond the identification of the various entities that become of significance in the context of a political situation, it is also necessary to consider, as I do in Chapter 7, the underlying emotional rationales that I find are central to the generation of passionate political disputes and the formation of socio-material assemblages.

The discussion is now ripe to tackle the notion of affect. There is a growing and accurate recognition that resource politics are indelibly "associated [with] affective dissonances and inconsistencies" (Weszkalnys 2016, 127). But affect is a difficult concept to wield. There is difficulty identifying what the term actually refers to (Anderson 2014, Gregory *et al.* 2009, Leys 2011), and it is often considered a synonym for human emotion (Cresswell 2013). What I do with affect is to show that there is a pathos to the nascent logos, that there is a complex interaction between emotion and

rationality in a very processual and relational manner, where the binary distinction between the emotional tail that wags the rational dog, engages in the form of dualistic thought that I seek to confront. That emotions matter is often an understatement for as I demonstrate in Chapter 7, emotional concerns alongside associated affective atmospheres (Anderson 2009), utterly saturate throughout the following Chapters, as it concerns: the differential and transcendent visions of future peace in Cyprus (Chapter 1), the distinctly temporal politics that have enabled the impression of causality (Chapter 4), the generation of knowledge controversies (Chapter 5), and the operation of power relations (Chapter 6).

Within human geography, there has been a great deal of interest in affect, and in Chapter 7 I will probe this notion as it applies to a critical account of resource materialities. But why mention affect instead of retaining focus on emotion or pathology? Affect is an expansive concept, "at once an actual phenomenon and a virtual force, a material effect and an immaterial disposition" (Dewsbury 2009, 20). In tandem with the textual or performative discursive practices such as reports and speeches, affect is about the intensities of and the work done by emotions through such discursive practices (Ahmed 2004). This serves to raise awareness of the incitement of felt intensity before felt intensity is rationalised, represented, and then clothed in language. NRT promotes some of the key tenets of post-structural philosophy that I have adopted such as relationality and processuality (Murdoch 2006), but also maintains a keen interest on embodied experience. Emotions can then be seen as the rationalisations of affect; the product of affect.

In the context of Cyprus, Navaro-Yashin (2012, 17), has already

accounted for the affect ostensibly "discharged by a post-war environment". But I wish to explore the affective undertones that saturate and effect specifically the nature of the natural gas. In particular, I have been drawn into the topic, for I view this corpus of scholarship as an extension, rather like assemblage theory that ties back with a relational and processual view of the world. For example, if agency is seen as a condition that is generated through relational engagements, and if ontology is also conditioned and situated with relation to political context, then affect is treated in a similar relational and processual manner, as a predilection neither inherent nor purely socially-constructed (Anderson 2006). Specifically, affect tries to emphasise the moment of qualitative difference that comes before recognised emotion, similar to the way Bergson speaks of intervals between matter and the conscious perception of matter (Bergson 1991), and again as the cerebral interval Deleuze (1991) speaks of.

I go on to challenge the sensibility here in Chapter 7. For now, it is important to note that the idea highlights the way emotions incited are clothed in hegemonic discourses which may have otherwise remained more obscure (McCormack 2008), and whereby the emotions instigated are connected particular materials such as natural resources (Deleuze 1991). In doing so, the connection between affect and materiality becomes all the more apparent. For Tolia-Kelly (2006, 213), "geometries of power and historical memory [...] drive affective flows and rhythms". From the historiography of the political dispute, both relations of power and associated pathological analogues conceptualised as affective flows, will be present.

Beyond the consideration above, I think the fundamental move is to

recognise the view held that just as flows of energy may be said to engineer political relations (cf. Mitchell 2009), so may flows of affect or the manipulation of emotional responses may be used to shape political perceptions and cognate material imaginations. This is a debate that I parse further in Chapter 7, where I discuss what can be referred to as the atmosphere of the peace process, together with the relevant implications of this disposition for the nature of the natural gas issue. In any case, it is best to speak of an affective dimension or potentiality where there is a capacity or potentially for the human body to feel affected through the pathology of emotion of a particular empirical moment (Thien 2005). The imperative is not to concentrate wholly on felt emotion. Instead, it is to say something about the encounter that has triggered the emotion in the very first place; "the virtual knot of tendencies and latencies that generate differences and divergences in what becomes actual" (Anderson 2006, 738). These moments are a leeway into the mechanisms of any established and hegemonic discursive frameworks that are tied to teleological political goals. The point is related to the notion of the event and the process of eventalisation as I discuss in Chapter 4 and also review also briefly toward the end of this Chapter. Encounters of affect can be particularly useful to exemplify the active role of the researcher in the generation of knowledge, and therefore allows for an astutely reflexive sentimentality on the process of research as I discuss further in Chapter 3 and Chapter 7.

Overall, I find it best to conceive affective encounters and constitutive of a particular emotion or feeling such as outrage, surprise, shock, hope, anticipation, confidence, as the pathologically corollaries that become an unavoidable part of what constitutes political life (Ahmed 2004, Cresswell

2013). For natural resources in particular, Weszkalnys (2014, 2015, 2016), has considered the work of anticipation and hope as affective states that contribute to the genesis, evolution, and operation of natural resource politics, and especially in the formation and operation of the resource curse theory. Weszkalnys (2016, 129) also speaks of the affective capacities of natural resources or resource affect — not in an essentialised manner, but as a gesture to the potential the subject of natural resources can often have. As I explain further in Chapter 5, "good matters of fact" (Latour 2003) that emerge vis-á-vis the global natural gas industry are really of secondary concern to the "[…] emotive interests, and deep-seated mutual distrust and fear are the most 'real' and hard to reconcile", as Rusinow (1981, 15) has I think, very pertinently identified for the context of Cyprus before; a facet often under emphasised. Therefore, I maintain that affect is not to be seen in competition with the effect of power politics, the knowledge controversies of commercial realities, or a particular appropriation of time. Instead affect is to be seen as part and parcel of all four axioms that I have previously identified. As promised, I now turn to the notion of the event, and explain the connections that I see with post-structural, process philosophy, Barry's political situation, and affect.

2.6. Deleuzian Event and the Process of Eventalisation.

I have thus far oft mentioned the principle of processuality. This really is unmistakably predicated upon the axiom of time. If natural resources are not to be perceived as intrinsic, self-evident, natural entities, but following Zimmerman (1951, 15), they are to be socio-material entities that *become*;

"they are not static but expand and contract in response to human wants and human actions" (1951, 15), inevitably such a process of becoming must occur over time. Ferry and Limbert (2008, 4), speak of "resource imaginations [that] often have a strongly temporal aspect: they frame the past, present and future in certain ways; they propose or preclude certain kinds of time reckoning; inscribe teleologies; and they are imbued with affects of time, such as nostalgia, hope, dread, and spontaneity". Teleology and latent emotions identified here are found in the pursuit of peace. For Koopman (2011), peace is a process that can be materialised in the sense that a material analogue may embody a state of peace. Further, Tsing (2005, 29) speaks of resource frontiers, where the anticipation or prospect of future natural resource exploitation occurs are projects at the "edge of space and time".

A further exposition of the importance of time is found with Klinke (2013, 677-678), who asserts that geopolitical discourse "has always been about space and time", and that the post-structural tradition holds that "time cannot be homogenous and objective but must be understood as necessarily heterogeneous, intersubjective and political" (*ibid.*). The point here is to recognise that the existence of political controversy is not necessarily predicated to a particular event, a certain material artefact, or even a certain point in time, but a cornucopia of factors. Barry's notion of the political situation itself emerged from a need to consider the notion of the event as something which should not be seen as singular, isolated, or bounded (Barry 2013a). Barry (2016, 8) further adds that contestations such as knowledge controversies inherent to political situations, involve "disagreement about the history and antecedents of a situation, its

geography, its key moments and locations, and its future implications". Such a predicament is clearly discernible in Cyprus, as the brief coverage of the history of the Cyprus Problem demonstrated in Chapter 1.

The final point I draw attention to is that in the same way that ontological pluralism does not disavow that "things-in-themselves get by very well without us" (Latour 1988, 93), there is a temporal pluralism at play with different meanings attached to events across time. I am concerned with a series of events that have eventualised or have precipitated, such as the discovery of an offshore natural gas reservoir, the collapse of the peace process, or the announcement of future offshore drilling endeavours. I argue that such events have been key to the association contrived between the natural gas development process and peace process. In tandem, they are also key to perceptions of material agency and ontology, as well as the nature of any causal relations between the two aforementioned processes, as I attested to in Chapters 4 and 7. Thrift (2000, 214) for example, has defined the event something more than a bare fact, more than something which has simply occurred, but instead as a "fleeting context and predicament which produced potential". For Thrift, the event is something begotten from networks of power. But it is also productive in the sense that there are political consequences to be had that follow-on from the event itself. In similar vein to Barry, there is a resistance to think of events as bounded singularities.

Instead, there is an insistence to think about the context from which events have precipitated from. The point here is congruent with the work of Deleuze (1993), who saw events as singularities that have been abstracted from chaotic multiplicities. I take these chaotic multiplicities to be

synonymous with the earlier notion of the assemblage, as "replete with semiotic flows, material flows, and social flows" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 63). Deleuze's take on the event is highly influenced by Henri Bergson and Whitehead (Schick 2010). It is only a few select concepts from Deleuze's rich conceptual vocabulary that I find sufficient for the argument I wish to make, the event being case and point. Wary of the implication of relationality, whereby "it can sound as though we are back to an undifferentiated world of everything being related to everything else" (Hinchcliffe 2007, 66), as found in the closed system of structuralism, the concept of a temporal continuum from which the event is derived is invoked to refute arbitrary start points in any account of what happens (Deleuze and Guattari 1987).

It is the case that a processual understanding of time denounces excessive attention on the discrete at the expense of the continuum. This attention to the discrete was readily found in the quantitatively-inclined resource-curse scholarship that I mentioned in Chapter 1, or the pointillism Doel (1999) spoke of where analysis "clings to the surface of what actually takes place" (*ibid*. 121). Each event does not have to be placed with others as a series of singular points that follow each other on a timeline within a unified temporality (Grosz 1995), as can be the case when lines of best fit imply causality. For it is easier, and even almost intuitive in my opinion, to compare two different happenstances when they have been reduced and simplified into two discrete events. Simpler, because the background history of an event and the multitude of variables that have influenced the occurrence of that event are no longer considered. This makes for a smoother, less problematic, and a seemingly more obvious relationship upon first sight, as I show in Chapter 4.

Finally, it is here that a process of eventalisation can be spoken of. This is the "procedure of causal multiplication: analysing an event according to the multiple processes that constitute it" (Foucault 1996, 277). In exactly the same way that a political controversy takes place within a "series of ongoing disagreements and conflicts about matters that transcend the specificity of the controversy" (Barry 2012, 325), to be aware of eventalisation is to situate the geopolitical event within its political context, together with events that have occurred in the past and might occur in the future. Time in this sense is a continuum that is not necessarily separated, for there may be retentions of the past or projections of the future that have spurred on the creation of an event. Indicative of the parallels I draw in Chapters 4 and 7, for Deleuze events begin from the domain of affect. In fact, Deleuze describes affect as the verbs that become events or the forces that condition human thought, which then go on to "reconfigure material reality" (Beck and Gleyzon 2016, 329). It now becomes possible to see how affect manifested as emotions can condition perceptions, as part of the human appraisal required to turn 'neutral stuff' into natural resources.

Deleuze's event is certainly part of a metaphysics that runs counter to intrinsic or natural essence, and so it is also part and parcel of the principles of contingency, situatedness, and processuality. However, there are significant peculiarities to different events which can be "turning points and points of inflection" (Deleuze 1990, 52). Yet, it is also possible to look beyond differences and to be attentive to the relations between events. As an avowed empiricist, Deleuze is committed to the primacy of the actual. As I see it, in Deleuze's complex ontology, the virtual is a continuous multiplicity that is actualised in experience. As such, an entity should not be defined as

per its actualised form, similar to the argument made by Whitehead earlier. Similarly, Alain Badiou has also written extensively on the concept of the event with complex and nuanced differences to Deleuze's particularly, as it concerns the problematic notion of causality between events (see Williams 2012).

I retain the Deleuzian concept of the event as it clearly promotes the idea of relationality between events. In Deleuzian terms, the actual is derived from the virtual and is that which is inside human experience. Hence, the actual is not a manifestation of some transcendental, disembodied law; it is an empirical virtual experience that is actualised rather like a geographical or material imagination is materialised. In terms of time and the event, the virtual is that which is ephemeral; it is a preservation of the past, whereas the actual is more limited in scope; the actual is associated with the present (Deleuze and Parnet 2007). Therefore, events are ubiquitous and can be seen to order political behaviour. It is with these issues that I use the concepts of virtual and actual to support the way in which a political ontology of natural resources may have both a virtual and an actual side. Ultimately, to think in terms of the event and the process of eventalisation advances a processual, relational, and situated, natural resource scholarship.

2.7. Conclusion.

In this Chapter, I presented my view of natural resources as socio-material assemblages. I have traced the impact of certain key principles derived from post-structuralism that have previously been applied to the study of natural resources. From these first philosophical principles, I have

gleaned concepts appropriate to explain the political situation in the context of Cyprus. Namely, I have highlighted overlaps between theories of the event and affect with the concept of the political situation. My fundamental concern has been the relationship between geographical contingency on the one hand as it relates to the fundamental issues of material agency and material ontology, together with the operation of human appraisal from a political perspective on the other. To juggle the complexity of a political situation, together with a constant sensitivity to issues of ontology, agency, and epistemology, is no easy task. The endeavour is compounded by the methodological implications of thinking in terms of contingency and complexity.

From this sensibility, it may seem that "everything is data" (Latour 2005), and that the researcher is confronted with a vertigo of information that emanates from the sheer complexity of the peace process, and the situatedness of knowledge regarding the nature of the global natural gas industry. In Chapter 3, I discuss the path that I will take in order to navigate the potential torrent of information that lies ahead. Now that I have introduced the nature of the problem at hand, and have conferred an expansive way of thinking about how the association between natural resources and politics might work, I now specify exactly how I have investigated the case study of Cyprus.

CHAPTER 3

The Analysis of a Political Situation — A Methodological Approach.

3.1. Preamble.

Thus far, I have developed a series of research questions based upon the compelling issue of natural gas as introduced in Chapter 1, and in conjunction with the relevant literature explored in Chapter 2. In this Chapter, I bring these conversations together in order to impart the subsequent methodology designed to investigate the subject matter. I demonstrate the cumulative ways the aforementioned theoretical insights have conditioned research practice, and I avoid at all costs the dull recitation of the bare facts of the research process. The way I do so is heavily influenced by the requirement for a more reflexive notion of knowledge production that entails a "greater self-consciousness about research methods" (McDowell 1992, 400), incorporates moral reflection (Philo 1991), where the primary aim is not to develop a universal method for discourse analysis which "does not exist and should not be developed" (Torfing 1999, 292). Instead, I am primarily guided by scholarly passion (Waitt 2005), pivotal for successful interpretation (Rose 2001).

Thus, I see the need to be wary of methodolatry (Gouldner 1967), of becoming "compulsively preoccupied with a method of knowing, which is exalted without serious consideration of how successful it is in producing knowledge" (Eyles 1988, 3). I am also guided by the need to account for the

instances “when and where the materiality of material culture makes a difference, rather than assuming its importance in an *a priori* manner” (Jackson 2000, 13). Hence, I employ a research sensibility that places prominence to situated of knowledge in action (Haraway 1988). I also take inspiration from Cook *et al.*’s (2004) exhortation to “follow the thing”, and similarly Mitchell’s (2009) imperative to “follow the oil”. Therefore, I bear in mind, but at the same time do not apotheosise, the physical qualities of the entities focussed on. This would be an approach that is dangerously close to resource or commodity determinism that can overshadow the rest of the oil and gas assemblage (Appel 2011), as well as the discursive work necessary to make an object political (Barry 2001). The object of research is not natural gas, but two expansive processes that have implicated natural gas. Finally, the explanation of how I as the researcher have surmounted questions of positionality, politics, and ethics (McDowell 1992), are not to be described here and forgotten but incorporated into the analysis, as seen in Chapter 7.

It follows that there is an essential imperative to exercise a systematic empirical investigation underpinned by theoretical insight, but which goes on to assist the ultimate source of analysis and interpretation; the researcher’s own judgement. This thesis is not the gathering of any and all information related to natural gas and Cyprus, but is instead a critical elaboration of experience (Eco 2015[1967]). In any case, the requirement of a systematic approach is all the more crucial when employing a relational, hybrid, post-structural sensibility to research, where a potential pitfall is that “everything is related to everything else, with no tools available for differentiating matters of importance, political or otherwise” (Hinchcliffe

2007). In this relational and processual view of the world, there is a danger that "everything is data" (Latour 2005, 133), and "everything may be allied to everything else" (Latour 1988, 163). In lieu of such an intellectual vertigo of information emblematic of the oil or natural gas assemblage (Appel *et al.* 2015, Watts 2013), in response to the shortcomings of various latent methodologies as discussed in Chapter 1, and faced with a long-established and enduring political conflict, there is a greater need to be succinct as possible about what is indeed relevant (Clark 2003). It is also the case that the research process has undergone adaptation in response to changing circumstances in the field. Hence, the evolution of the research process is a facet I will also account for. With these thoughts in mind, there are now twelve months of *in situ* fieldwork to account for in this Chapter, alongside the utilisation of archival resources to assess that which has laid outside fieldwork experience.

To this end, the Chapter is split into three sections. Firstly, I outline a number of key challenges that I have encountered throughout the process which has informed both methodology and the structure of the thesis. In particular, the discussion revolves largely around the latent difficulty of an investigation of two dynamic processes subject to continued change. Secondly, inspired by the view of natural resources as socio-material assemblages and alongside the principles of processuality, multiplicity, and relationality, I explain exactly how and why discourse constitutes the empirical backbone of the project. Finally, I devote a considerable portion of the Chapter to the specific sources of data I have used, how I have included the information in analysis, together with the ever-important practical issues of positionality and access.

3.2. To Investigate 'Moving Targets'.

Throughout the research endeavour, I have had a number of memorable interactions that have harked back to an inherent problem fundamental to the research of a complex and dynamic system. In the first instance, before I had even commenced this doctorate at Oxford, I was warned-off from the issue of natural gas and Cyprus by a prospective academic supervisor at another institution because the subject matter was a moving target, and would therefore not make for a good doctorate (J.L. Personal Communication 05/09/14). Another noteworthy instance occurred in conversation with an academic of an international relations background, where I was told that to focus on single case study was not a good idea, and that I needed to compare and contrast the relationship between natural resources and political conflict in Cyprus with other states (T.D. Personal Communication 20/07/15). Finally, in an interview with a different academic who had previously written on the natural gas issue on the island, and whom I suspect was frustrated with a disproportionate level of interest others had in the topic, I was advised that after the collapse of the negotiations in October 2014 there was now, as I arrived in August 2015, "nothing left to research", and what had happened was "just for domestic consumption" (H.K. Interview 25/04/16).

To briefly answer the latter two charges, firstly, I never was to compare and contrast the case of Cyprus. The methodology here is far too embedded in the vein of logical positivism, dualistic thought, disembodied reason, and universal laws (Mansvelt and Berg 2016), all of which I seek to contest. Secondly, though certainly unique, the case study is definitely not

singular (Castree 2005), and it is difficult, if not impossible in the subject matter at hand, to speak solely about Cyprus. There is an all-too common and erroneous misconception here that comes bundled with the mere mention of case study. Any attempt to appreciate, judge, or gauge the roll of natural gas development for the island's political future, or perhaps the commercial value and development pathways of the region's resources will necessarily have to expand into a discussion of the nature of the global natural gas industry. Likewise, other concerns that may come to the fore such as issues of international law, regional geopolitics, or the commercial strategies of the stakeholders involved such as the IOC's that acquired significance by virtue of a relation established with the local context, are still transcendent of that local context.

Finally, a further challenge is that, as explicated further in Chapter 4, the exact repetition of the fateful events of late 2014 so central to the natural gas saga did not occur ever again in exactly the same manner. But that history did not duplicate itself is not a justification for a wholesale dismissal of the investigation. As was subsequently affirmed to me, "so long as people still talk about natural gas, you will have something to write about" (W.H. Personal Interview 01/02/16). This may indeed be the crux of the issue itself. But it is the initial concern about a moving target that I find most insightful to deliberate, for it points to the difficulty associated with grappling an active and propagating political situation. It is a problem of working with what Stengers (1997) would call phenomena that continue, where the guaranteed repetition of an event may not occur, where reductionist caricatures are often challenged, and the continued proliferation of questions, issues, and controversies, so very emblematic of

the issue of natural gas and the wider political situation of the Cyprus Problem, continues unabated. It is this predicament that has inspired this section. For example, there may be an event that occurred beyond the scope of this thesis, that revolutionises entirely the thoughts and feelings invoked by mere mention of the natural gas issue; an affinity discussed further in Chapter 4 and 7. Invariably, the predicament here serves as an important reminder for the need to desist the inclusion of events beyond the time-frame of the thesis. But it is also the case that an eventuality of this kind would add further credence to the relational ontology of natural gas. Hence, there is a need to accommodate for the generation object multiples (Mol 1999), where in principle, issues of access, positionality, prejudice, teleology, technological advances and so forth (see Bridge 2009b), are the fundamental epistemological vehicles through which ontology is conditioned. This is exactly why I refer to the issue of natural gas, rather than natural gas itself, all by itself. This is also key to how I view the materiality of a natural resource.

It follows that the thesis incorporates twelve months of *in situ* fieldwork that I have felt sufficient for the purposes of this work. By this time, I had encountered a level of saturation often felt in long-term research projects which is to be taken as a good sign, for it indicates that the mechanism of the political conflict has been all but surveyed. All that may change are the details, where although there may be an "ever-growing, ever-more varies cast of characters" (Callon 1998, 260), implicated in a natural resource controversy, the fundamentals remain unchanged. Hence, issues of deadlines, timetables, and funding, became secondary, once I was confident that I had understood the key contours of the emergent natural gas issue,

and where toward the end of fieldwork, what eventualised was the ceaseless supply of additional detail inevitably propagated from an unsolved political issue. In sum, the disposition at hand requires a bespoke methodological approach that places the empirical context first, and where the continued development of political life alongside the generation of new issues with various material reference points, such as that of natural gas, and even materials as seemingly mundane and innocuous as halloumi/hellim cheese (Welz 2013), become the locus of passionate political dispute. Therefore, I do not think it is right to be overly suspicious of context (Valdivia 2015), but neither is it right to place context as superior to the more transcendental aspects of human politics and commerce. Hence, although I have described the circumstances of political life in Cyprus in terms of process, flux, multiplicity, and relationality, it is also important to bear in mind that there is still a level of stasis, that there can be referent frameworks (Berg 2009, Latour 1987), or genres (Barry 2013b), that can echo of structuralism, and where a plethora of events, political controversies, and crises, all find inspiration from, as discussed further in Chapter 6.

Though I will argue that the issue of natural gas is a contemporary epiphenomenon subsumed within a latent political situation on the island, it is still the case that the natural gas issue as and when I encountered it had already been apparent for number of years, and has continued to be a matter of concern *after* fieldwork — albeit to a lesser degree, as explained in Chapter 5. The situation at the time of writing can be related to Weszkalnys' (2016) identification of a Marxian pause; a term that signals the periods of downturn, subdued exploration and exploitation efforts, across (in this case), the global natural gas industry. Beyond this all, there are a number of

more specific concerns to address. These include: when exactly did the issue of natural gas begin? When did it supposedly end? How to judge what is relevant from the maelstrom of information in the twists and turns of the peace process on one hand, and the global natural gas industry on the other? How can one capture whether or not the intensity of the natural gas issue rose or fell, and what does this mean for material agency and ontology?

3.3. An Eventful Political Situation.

Portrayed as such, to choose from within this whirlpool of information a starting point for the story of natural gas in Cyprus is a daunting task, especially as I consider the ethical responsibility to recount the island's much-contested history as explained in Chapter 1. However, there is simply no escape from judgement amidst the ceaselessness and continuity that an ontology of becoming from post-structural, processual thought entails (Clark 2003). The imperative is to be more succinct, to choose carefully paths of enquiry, methods, and data for analysis that comes necessarily at the expense of others; a finite cut in an infinite flow (Caputo 1993). The research scope is narrowed with the affirmation that I am primarily concerned with how, why, and with what consequences, the peace process has been related to the natural gas development process, and what the latent abstraction and objectification has meant for issues of agency, ontology, and epistemology. This does not preclude the need for a general awareness of the Cyprus Problem, and an appreciation of the nature of the global natural gas industry, both of which I will expand into. At the same time, I find it

unnecessary to provide a naïve textbook regurgitation of the global natural gas industry in particular, as preamble (Mol 2012). My primary concern is to highlight the elements of phenomena that have come to matter for the two processes mentioned; to identify the distinct empirical moments of how, where, and why, discourses related to the processes have precipitated (Anderson and Wylie 2009). The idea here is to mitigate against apotheosising natural gas as the overriding feature of the Cyprus Problem, or to aggrandise the commercial significance of natural gas in Eastern Mediterranean Sea, from the offset.

Ultimately, I have chosen to begin the discussion with reference to the collapse of the settlement talks in October 2014. I take this occurrence to be a pivotal event that has shaped the way the relationship between the two processes have been understood, as demonstrated further in Chapter 4. A further justification of this choice is that the event here came at a time of extraordinarily heightened political rhetoric from all stakeholders involved, where the magnitude, efficacy, or perhaps even agency of the issue of natural gas, has arguably been most prominent. This is what the discursive material attests too. It is at this point that passionate political disputes erupted over the RoC's instigation of natural gas exploration, and where Turkey and the Turkish-Cypriots' response to a particular set of developments begotten from this very process spilled into the space of the settlement talks, and led to an unparalleled collapse. This is absolutely not the first time the peace process has ended in utter failure. However, in contrast to the advice that there was "nothing left to research", this event should be pinpointed along a historical timeline amongst "an unbroken series of well-nested elements, each of which plays the role of sign for the

previous one, and of thing for the succeeding one" Latour (1999, 56). This presents a particular kind of pattern between the relationship between the peace and natural gas development processes, where the event can be compared and contrasted with similar occurrences, as found in the archival material I examine in Chapter 4.

I draw attention here to the temporal side of the natural gas issue and the related process of eventalisation; the creation of a series of reductions or amplifications that make up an event, as discussed in Chapter 2. I find it pertinent for the purposes of this thesis to view events in an intensive manner as distinct singularities, but also in an extensive manner as emblems of a wider whole, where the analysis of a political situation must employ a methodology that captures that which transcends the specificity of an event (Barry 2012). In the section that follows, I describe exactly how and why I triangulated three forms of discourse and discursive practice: *newspaper archives*, *semi-structured interviews*, and *conference ethnographies*. But first, I must briefly address the notion of discourse and the form of data analysis I will employ, which will largely be in the vein of Foucauldian discourse analysis.

3.4. Generating Knowledge: Discourse, Access, and Positionality.

This thesis questions the multiplicity of natural gas in the context of Cyprus, as communicated through discourse and discursive practice. Discourse analysis is a phenomenally popular term with a myriad of different inflections as how to precisely practice it. This only highlights the power and success of the method. I view discourse as the medium through

which meaning is produced, identity constituted, relations established, and effects enacted (Cloke *et al.* 2004). Discourse is more than just a synonym for language. It is an active process or practice that delimits the very boundaries between object and subject, of the subject and its agency, through which I hope to yield a fuller natural resource scholarship. Performances, knowledge-making practices, enactments, gestures, whichever terminology favoured, these are all active processes that are ephemeral in an empirical sense yet can then go on to create their own reverberations across space and time (Schieffelin 1998), especially as it concerns the introduction of a controversy into the public sphere (Latour and Weibel 2005). Hence, there is no undue obsession here with the politics of representation at the expense of the productiveness of practice (Latham 2003).

Therefore, I view discourse as the inescapable conduit that is part and parcel of the work done to advance knowledge of natural resources as political. I take an expansive definition of discourse as "all the ways in which we communicate with one another, to that vast network of signs, symbols and practices which we make our world(s) meaningful" (Gregory 1994, 11), and then select three: newspaper archives (amongst other documentary or textual data), semi-structured interviews, and conference ethnographies. I have found these three mediums to be invaluable sources of knowledge of both the mainstream and public exposition of the natural gas issue and the private and critical thoughts and feelings behind it all. The triad here is also employed by Kaup (2008) in the context of natural gas extraction in Bolivia. In tandem, my selection of discourse inescapably depended on what kind of data actually exists out there (Massey 2003), as well as that which I could

negotiate access to. It is important to note that it is impossible to be present in all settings where the relevant facts are disseminated (Latour 1987). For me, this came to be the boardroom of an IOC, behind the closed doors of the settlement negotiations, or the world of offshore natural gas exploitation (see Appel 2011). This is not a ruinous situation, for as I have argued what matters is not only how knowledge is produced but the effect that certain perceptions of natural gas have had in the public and political sphere (Cook 2004). To reiterate, not all the complexity of a political situation can be captured, nor may it even be necessary (Barry 2016). So, although discourse analysis is somewhat of a craft skill developed over time (Potter 1996), my aim is to see how discursive formations work through these three mediums; a sort of topography of relations between them.

In being concerned with how the issue of natural gas played out through discourse as practice and representation, I have gradually accrued a deeper appreciation for the natural gas issue from the viewpoint of actors such as local politicians, diplomats, and so forth. What I present in the pages that follow is a sort of diagnosis of differences (Foucault 1972), where in an extraordinarily expansive field of public statements, the imperative is to interrogate how socio-material assemblages have been constituted and marked by limits, absences, objectification, essentialisation, and embellishment. The pattern in the data is to be found in the analysis of discourse where a causal story or framework may emerge. Therefore, due attention must be paid to discourse to understand what sort of knowledge claims related to ontology and agency are made, how a natural resource is portrayed, and what sort of political futures are imagined, as well as how and why causality is attributed the way it is. As argued in Chapter 2,

material agency and ontology are intimately related to discourse. Indeed, there is no "access [to] nature's materiality outside the materiality of signification" (Castree 2003, 177). This paradox centres attention to the role of discourse, but also recognises the inconvenient truth for more neo-vitalist accounts, that there is a limit to which nature can be accessed, and that human discourse is not nature's unequivocal mirror. Discourse analysis reveals how nature is perceived, how natural resources are perceived, and how natural resources are related at all to politics.

There is a vast literature on how to do discourse analysis. With a very Nietzschean inflection, Foucault offers a vast range of thought and vocabulary on the subject of discourse that fits in well with the post-structural way of research as I have understood it, and so I turn to select concepts of Foucault's of particular use. Foucault describes breakpoints in the development of discourse that may entail paradigm shifts, with "new kinds of knowledge, along with new objects to know, and new modalities of power" (1980, 22). I cannot help but think that such breakpoints are congenial to the notion of the event or rupture, where the fallout after certain development such as the collapse of the peace process in Cyprus, or the potentialities attached to the discovery of a future offshore natural gas field, constitute paradigm shifts or game-changers, as referred to by many interviewees from the industry. I see such breakpoints are part and parcel of a history of discursive formation where in a processual fashion, what is known about the ontology and agentic capability of a natural resource varies over time, is challenged or reconstituted by discursive changes. Thus, I aim to highlight the controversies, confusions, contradictions, and conflicts — as well as efforts to smooth them over through regimes of truth (Foucault 1977)

— contained within and communicated through discourse, as is the subject of Chapter 5. The point here is to mitigate against universal worldviews such as the 'resource curse', and to place importance to contingency and the situatedness of knowledge.

Foucault has used the terms archaeology and genealogy to describe how discursive formations work (Murdoch 2006). The archaeology of knowledge points towards hegemonic discourses or structures that condition interpretation and meaning, such as an existing political situation. The genealogy of knowledge adds a welcome processual tone, for it conveys the idea of how discourse makes knowledge claims over time in a piecemeal fashion, "with moments of intensity, its lapses, its extended periods of feverish agitation" (Foucault 1977), and also with particular regard to relations of power. Foucault's genealogical approach links discursive and material resources, where the materiality of a resource becomes an "effect of power, as power's most productive effect" (Butler 1993, 14). There is ample analytical room here to implicate the operation of power politics to the ontology and agency of natural gas in Cyprus, even if it cannot be a complete account of the complexity of a political situation. However, the way Foucault has written of the operation of power relations can be seen in terms of bounded spaces (Foucault 1977), where within a closed system, the skewed view that power relations are all that matter can emerge (Murdoch 2006).

To mitigate against such a monolithic view, Chapter 6 is explicitly devoted to the theme of power. However, relations of power are not the analytical backbone of the thesis. The issue of natural in Cyprus transcends concerns of power, territory, and sovereignty. Hence, relations of power

should not be automatically be used in a reductive fashion as the bottom-line explanation but should instead be seen as an emergent and relational phenomenon (Latour 2005). It follows that power is not enacted upon the subject but is instead enacted through the subject, and contributes to new and oftentimes contending relations of power; "a reciprocal incitation and struggle" (Foucault 1982, 213). I demonstrate this predicament in Chapter 5, in the form of knowledge controversies which themselves “form part of and generate their own political histories and geographies” (Barry 2012, 333). Discourse is also important here, for it can very well be the “unintended slippages in meanings, the inadvertent confusion of words, and the consequent hazards of representation” (Chowdhury 2016, 102), that are the instigators of political action and hence the generation of interest (Latour 1992). As such, it is extraordinarily dismissive to state that language used within discourse is privileged at the expense of material reality, as Coole and Frost (2010) would have it. On the contrary, it is meaning, signification, and emotion — processes of translation necessarily clothed in language, that are to be used to understand how natural resources are beholden from a political perspective, and of how alongside relations of power, the subject or object is formed and maintained thereon. Signification itself can create the possibility for phantasmatic investment, discursive re-articulation, and political action (Butler 1993, Rose 1997).

Therefore, I do not agree that the primary data for discourse analysis is speech and text, for such a disposition gives the impression that perceptions of material reality are wholly outside these entities. With a Foucauldian sentimentality to discourse analysis and added conceptual insight from post-structuralism, my approach is not the identification of

repetition or resemblance within discursive formations, such as the number of times natural gas can be a curse or a blessing, as recited on the front page of newspapers. This is more akin to content analysis which is of a different tone and style (Rose 2001). The approach I adopt rests on the principles of relationality and multiplicity, with a keen focus on the relationship between knowledge and power. It is about the development of a discursive formation of natural gas through newspaper archives, conference ethnographies, and semi-structured interviews over time, and to see what is included or excluded and the reasons why.

For Deleuze (1988), what should constitute analysis is the identification and explanation of links, alignments, and practices, that make up the socio-assemblage in the first place. This can involve the identification of networks, points, individuals, and collectives involved (Callon and Law 1997). At the same time, I do not essentialise the political situation in Cyprus primarily in strict terms such as the 'network', for it is important to "stand outside networks to see the broad spatial terrain" (Murdoch 2006, 98). However, I still hold that the assemblage and the political situation are of suitable expansiveness for the argument at hand. Specifically, I have focussed on the assemblage of natural resources as and when they occurred in public discourse, as gleaned through the interviews I conducted, the documentary evidence I analysed, and the conferences I observed. I do not provide a stenography. Instead, I have sought to identify the dominant narratives of power relations, the detail of knowledge controversies, the effect of temporal distortions, and the influence of the emotional side to such discursive practices. Furthermore, if discourse is the medium through which the political issue of natural gas is fought, then it is necessary to

compare, contrast, and investigate how these mediums work. If natural gas is a socio-material assemblage, it will be assembled and promulgated through discourse; the locus where the aforementioned analytical themes are played out, "each one entertaining an affinity with certain relations or particular points" (Deleuze 1988, 73).

The methodology is not ethnographic in the strictest of senses. Participant observation is still used, but it is done in conjunction with interviews and a rich archive of newspapers and other documentary sources including: commercial and market reports, policy reports, official press statements, and so forth. The writing style is at times novelistic and documentary-like, akin to Latour's (1992) *Aramis*. However, I maintain that description should not be apotheosised at the expense of explanation. In any case, though I have conveyed my conceptualisation of discourse, the best exposition of exactly how I have utilised these resources is to be found in the analytical Chapters of this thesis. In the last section of this Chapter, I discuss in greater detail the kind of research methodology that eventualised in practice. But before that, I address first the highly important issue of positionality.

3.5. The Positionality of the Researcher and the Researched.

Needless to say, research is a thoroughly personal process. The access negotiated to newspaper archives and the opportunities to interview participants, the monetary discounts negotiated to afford conference attendance, and the initiative taken to snowball potential further interviewees; many of the successes and failures of such endeavours really

did depend a great deal on how well I could socialise, communicate, and reach out confidently to a variety of companies and government institutions. To acknowledge positionality is to recognise that the researcher is not a distant or passive mediator who reflects upon knowledge ostensibly out there. To try and emulate a position-less objectivity; "the god-trick of seeing everything from nowhere" (Haraway 1988, 581), is often manifested in the imperative to let the data speak for itself. But this belies the bottom-line influence of meaning, signification, and situated perspectives, that colour perception. As Zimmermann contended, "nothing is more fatal to a realistic and useable understanding of resources than the failure to differentiate between the constants of natural science and the relatives of social science [...]" (1945, 160). In tandem, I have alluded to the realities of the process by which data is collected. Yet the word collected gives an inaccurate account of the practice of research, where the idea that the object of study as a pre-defined entity waiting to be discovered, is contrary to the principle of multiplicity and relationality.

It is best to speak of data that is generated in a two-way engagement (Whatmore 2003), in the vein of double hermeneutics. Here lies the issue of positionality, and again the wider concept of the situatedness of research. To generate data is to do with the interaction between the researcher and the researched, be it a piece of text upon which discourse analysis is performed, a person interviewed, or an industry conference observed. I cannot emphasise enough that none of this takes place in a vacuum, where the "coolly rational scientific observer, completely independent, free from all preconceived theories, prior philosophical, ethical and religious commitments", that then leads to a dispassionate, unbiased conclusion of

the absolute truth (Lennox 2009, 49). But neither does this negate from the recognition of "good matters of fact" (Latour 2003, 227), or detract from either the accuracy of what is reported, its usefulness, or its reflection of the Truth. Hence, to generate is not to fabricate evidence; the connotation is far too negative and is not to be seen in terms of hyper-constructivism as discussed in Chapter 2.

It is the recognition that all empirical evidence has stemmed from certain presumptions, premises, axioms, desires, and practices, all of which need not have a negative connotation. From inception to submission, research is saturated with continuous personal reflection, revision, iteration, a journey that is rarely, if ever, linear (Allen 2003). To show the "thin strands of coincidence, accident, or on what unfair forms of friendship, ownership, geographical proximity, the discoveries were based", is not an unnecessary complication (Kaplan 1990, 104). The fundamental point is to acknowledge the contingency and interplay of ideas and interests in what counts as knowledge (Crang 2003). Finally, the awareness of positionality is poignant from an analytical perspective especially as it concerns the analysis of discourse, in moving from conducting an interview, digitally recording it, transcribing it, selectively using certain quotes and anonymising it; in mapping phenomena into knowledge (Stengers 1997). At each stage something is potentially gained whilst something is certainly lost (Latour 1999). The sentimentality here demands the identification of any *a priori* inclinations that have built up over time to which explanations of what natural gas exactly refers to stem from, and to pinpoint where political spin is made.

Hence, positionality cannot be evaded and there are potential

ramifications. The best thing to do is to be transparent; an honest approach that in my experience of research has often helped to break the ice between an interviewer and interviewee rather than to cause division. Still, it is important to consider what sort of effects my identification as a young, white, British, Turkish-Cypriot, male, University of Oxford researcher, may potentially have had during the research process from thesis design, research execution, and related issues of access. In other words, it is important to recognise where my positionality could have mattered and why, especially as it concerns the interaction between pathos, ethos, and logos, in knowledge production. Though I have already heavily emphasised issues of relationality, processuality, multiplicity, and the situatedness of knowledge as a way to highlight false neutrality and to combat universality of knowledge claims (Rose 1997, Whatmore 2003), it is also paramount to be reflexive and aware of my own situatedness as well. Indeed, we "cannot *but* have impact on those whom we come into contact" (Cloke *et al.* 2000, 151 – emphasis original), and vice-versa.

However, I consciously defer the majority of concrete examples of how my positionality actually affected the fieldwork process as lived experiences as and when they occurred into the discussion of the analytical Chapters of the thesis, especially Chapters 6 and 7. My approach in this Chapter is to acknowledge the possibility of various aspects of my positionality playing a role in the research process. However, I find it best to highlight these as and when they occurred in specific situations instead of listing those lived experiences devoid of analytical context. As exemplified specifically in Chapter 7 for example, there were times where cognisance of my background did influence research practice under specific circumstances.

However, in my view it is not correct to assume from the offset an exact and definitive list of effects that my positionality will certainly have come what may, where my own impression and reasoning may not even be shared by an interviewee. Further, what I initially presumed would be a serious impediment was my background as a Turkish-Cypriot. But in retrospect, this was a potentiality that did not really become a serious barrier at all times, especially considering that my entire background never became immediately and obviously apparent, and also considering the relatively less right-wing, ethno-nationalist atmosphere that I felt currently prevailed in Cyprus. In fact, it may have been a great opportunity for a Greek-Cypriot to meet a Turkish-Cypriot and bring them on side as it were against Turkey; I discuss this in Chapter 6. I did not experience my gender to be a clear enabling or disabling feature in practice, though I again acknowledge the potential (and not the guarantee) for it to have done so, say for example in heightened fears of travelling alone in certain locations.

In more general terms, there is a good chance the entire research endeavour may never have occurred had I not already been invested in and inspired by events related to the island because of my background having grown-up and inspired by talk of the Cyprus Problem at home. More so, as a British, Turkish-Cypriot, I would have found it more straightforward to make inroads into the Turkish-Cypriot community. However, all interviewees and conference attendees I wanted to speak to themselves spoke English, so the Greek language barrier did not prove to be a huge impediment to access but it may have altered the tone and context of an interview as I exemplify later. Briefly, I have also endeavoured to balance the number and status of Greek and Turkish-Cypriot interviewees, newspapers,

as well to ensure I spoke to all of the major stakeholder companies in the natural gas development process.

Beyond potential issues of identity, the more practical issues of access, interviewee responsiveness, work schedules and so on, had the more immediate, obvious, and fateful impact, as for example I describe in my efforts to meet the UN Special Representative. To this end, having a place to stay in Cyprus proved to be an immeasurable benefit both in terms of cost and convenience when my focus rested on the actors on the island, but not of course when I had to move elsewhere around the world to follow like an investigative journalist the issue as it developed. The ESRC scholarship alongside the further fieldwork assistance made to me, gave me a chance to attend international industry conferences which proved to be a major insight into the commercial world of the extractives industry. My University affiliation may have also helped spark an initial connection with a potential interviewee, but then of course the conversation would be steered by my prior knowledge of the industry, the questions I would ask, and also the extent to which a member of ExxonMobil say was permitted to discuss specifics. That the research had a long-lead time and would materialise in a few years' time comforted some interviewees, as I again document in the analytical Chapters as and when this occurred.

In line with the methodological commitment of this thesis, I consider it important to be wary of the possibilities and to reflect critically on how my positionality and the positionality of my interviewees may have mattered in practice, which as stated I chart more specifically in the analytical Chapters of the work. The sensibility I held heightened awareness to that which I was most interested in: the existence of any prefigurative politics held by the

people I interacted with or observed, especially in the desire of a particular kind of peace and a cognate architecture of energy. What has helped is to see identity as "always constructed and stitched together imperfectly, and therefore able to join with one another, to see together without claiming to be another" (Haraway 1988, 586). This allowed me to hold my identity lightly and to be aware of when it may have "imprison[ed] field data within preconceived positions" (Ley and Mountz 2001, 236). However, it is also the case that all possible implications of research design or research dissemination may not be knowable (Rose 1997), or controllable, and to hold one's identity lightly may perhaps minimise the potential impact one's positionality can otherwise have. This is again another reason why I place emphasis on the potential for positionality to make a mark, which is not guaranteed in my opinion and experience to eventualise the same way across all situations and circumstances in a constant manner.

I also acknowledge the fact that the label of expert does not automatically absolve or eliminate a person's positionality, but rather opens further enquiry as to what effect the label of expertise may have for knowledge production (Boswell 2008, Whatmore 2009), and in power relations between interviewer and interviewee. On the former, it was particularly curious to see during my conference ethnographies how various industry professionals would offer competing assessments and predictions for the island's energy future, and thus adding to salient knowledge controversies. I consider the circulation of expert knowledge especially in the form of circulating references (Latour 1999), and the public biographies presented by industry professionals (Larner and Laurie 2010), further in Chapter 5. Again, the *a priori* belief that expert knowledge is indisputable,

that it lacks bias, positionality, and prejudice, together with the role of expert knowledge in matters of political controversy and public dispute, has been addressed thoroughly by authors such as Latour (1996, 2004), Callon (1998), and Stengers (2005). In some occasions, I felt intimidated by certain individuals due to their status or expertise. It is best to acknowledge such emotions as and when they occurred, and how if at all such an emotional disposition may have had significant impact on the data generated. Acknowledgement may even help dissipate concerns, and help to form a bond with informants.

Of further note is that at times during my interactions with industry professions I perceived a distinct sense of give and take. I recollect that some of those who I interviewed were keen to ascertain from me the answer to two particular questions that seemed very high on their agendas: “what would Turkey do?” in response to developments inside the EEZ? “What if Greek-Cypriot gas was whitewashed through Egypt and then sold to Turkey as Egyptian LNG, would they then buy it?”. These are the points where I felt a very real and abnormal test of my agency and positionality. Abnormal, for in these instances where I felt a very real weight of responsibility, lest I somehow divulged sensitive information detrimental to the cause of Turkey and the Turkish-Cypriots or somehow raise tensions in the Eastern Mediterranean. However, in retrospect I simply jumped to forgone conclusions. This still demonstrates the effect the apprehension that is tied to positionality can have. I tackled such ethical concerns with the logic that surely industrial behemoths would not take my word for it, and act solely upon it. I probably knew nothing secret.

Ultimately, what distinguishes me and this thesis is the unique access

I had to representatives from all types of stakeholders and political viewpoints, from the UN, local political parties, representatives of competitor commercial industries, and members of the Turkish MFA. As such, I could balance and weigh the intentions of these different stakeholder actors in a more acute manner. In such cases, I explained truthfully my interpretation of the natural gas issue and the motives of the actors, but also pushed for answers to my own questions. Of course, access to the daily lives of political risk managers, downstream analysts, and MFA officials, is simply not possible. This is another reason why the triangulation of research methods is desirable, as each method is a particular line of sight, and the adoption of multiple lines of sight develops a richer, substantive, and detailed corpus of knowledge (Lune and Berg 2017). With this in mind, it is now time to delve deeper into the specific forms of data and data collection methods employed, beginning with semi-structured interviews.

3.6. Into the Field: Interviews.

Interviews are conversations with a purpose (Lune and Berg 2017). The primary advantage of interviews lies in the fact that the potential exists to go beyond the written word, and to experience emotional undertones at play. The semi-structured format helps in this regard. Structure to an interview helps to guide the conversation to what has been previously identified as the key concerns, ideas, and events. This is especially useful if conversations have limited time spans. To have a semi-structured format avoids the rigidity of questionnaires. Rigidity is unfavourable, for the desire is to have the participant explain complex ideas and thought processes, and

not to box them in practically and figuratively speaking. In retrospect, the most fruitful interviews were the ones that transgressed the boundaries of the interview subject-matter wise and made connections with previously unidentified concepts. To this end, I used a list of preliminary questions as an initial prompt in all interviews. The list incorporated recent news of events, stakeholder quotes, and hypothetical or probing questions used to incite a discussion. The idea was not to get through all questions but to see where each question led; to see what conceptual linkages, meanings, and desires, were assembled together around the notion of natural gas and its related concepts of energy and hydrocarbons. In other words, I was interested in where the discussion would go naturally. As such, the format of our conversations allowed interviewees to raise issues and connections they perceived as most crucial (Valentine 2005).

It was interesting to see how quickly a discussion about natural gas would detract into the state of the negotiations or point of departure about the other side, or what seemed to be an unrelated issue that was thereon brought into relation with the Cyprus Problem. Crucially, this included the latest domestic political of stakeholder countries, or industry developments such as prices, discoveries, or issues of supply and demand. With the material generated from the interviews, an interpretive approach was applied where I sought to connect patterns, categories, and basic descriptive units (Kitchin and Tate 2000). To conduct an interview does not predispose the participant to become out of character, and to divulge what is otherwise deemed as sensitive information; this was certainly not the case with tight-lipped members of stakeholder IOC's. But that in itself is important, for it reconfirms the idea of there being a partiality of knowledge disseminated by

various actors, stakeholders, and all others involved in the dissemination of knowledge. Not all of the material from these conversations could be included in the final thesis. Some interviews were far more on topic and engaging. Other interviews with people whom I anticipated would be of interest to speak to did not go well, though it was at times insightful to see repetition and regurgitation by groups of actors. It was interesting to note how often official, repetitive, and unsurprising viewpoints were maintained despite contrary developments in the global natural gas industry, as evidenced in Chapter 5. Relatedly, the shift-away and divestment of political responsibility both from and into the issue of natural gas, is a further significant point explored in Chapter 6.

All of the implications raised thus far point to less formalised methodology in the context of a geographically-dispersed project (cf. Whatmore 1991), with an added need to embrace both intensive and extensive forms of research in order to discern a more holistic picture of the political situation. A key feature of this sensibility is the use of interviews. I conducted 106 of them. All interviewees received an information sheet detailing the subject matter, together with a consent form that gave participants full confidentiality, where participants would remain anonymous unless they expressed desire for attribution. Some interviewees simply did not want to sign anything. In that case, I made a point of having them retain the document anyway, and to have a verbal commitment to full confidentiality recorded afterwards. The initials used in this thesis do not correspond with real names. I spent between 40 and 60 minutes with most interviewees, with only a smaller proportion of repeat interviews. Most interviews were recorded either on a mobile phone or a bespoke recorder.

What is often asked here is whether or not the interviews were transcribed. Most interviews were in fact not transcribed, for I have never been in favour of the transcription of every single word of every single interview. The reasons I have are that firstly, not all of the interviews conducted were enlightening in the sense that they were either off topic or a regurgitation of information previously known to me. Again, there was such a large amount of regurgitated rhetoric that it was more compelling to focus more on the fewer interactions that did not fit the mould. Therefore, in the interest of an efficient expenditure of energy and time, with due consideration of the sheer scale and scope of the study, I have seen no need to transcribe interviews that I would never use. Ultimately, this consideration returns to the ability as the analyst and researcher to judge what is and is not of relevance.

If content analysis was followed instead, perhaps a certain pattern of data could be discerned from tick-box answers and the coding and transcription of interviews. But I was in requirement of a more interpretative approach to which semi-structured interviews were an invaluable method. I know already that natural gas has been related to peace, and I do not seek to validate a hypothesis about the occurrence or intensity of this supposition through a form of quantification. Rather, it is what drives the connection instead, the causal frameworks for want of a better phrase, I seek to tease-out, or in other words the worldview “deeper than facts he may note or propositions he may moot” (Langer 1948, 2). With a strict and immobile structure, the data generated as part of the interaction is conditioned by the questions asked by the interviewee, which is then further conditioned by previous research or the dominant questions at the time, which becomes rather useless if I seek to view the total play events from more distant, but

never fully disembodied perspective.

A further reason to desist full transcription of one of the three sources of knowledge is that in my view, the endeavour is far more suitable to content analysis rather that the kind of discourse analysis I find best-suited. A written transcript of a conversation has advantages. But together with the sheer volume of data to go through, I tended to transcribe the portions of conversations that were memorable and the empirical moments that had the most affectual impact, a feature explored further in Chapter 7. Normally after an interview, I would quickly jot the key instances that I found to be most profound to then be explored further. Nearly all conversations were recorded, and so I could replay the portions I have judged most useful. Not all interviews were conducted face-to-face, and a small portion of nineteen interviews were conducted over the phone or via Skype. This is unsurprising considering the more-than-local nature of the interest displayed in both the settlement negotiations and natural gas development process in Cyprus, and the line of profession of many interviewees.

Participants ranged from local politicians, international diplomats, various industry professionals, journalists, academics, and members of international policy institutes, a full record of time, date, place, duration, name and affiliation, of which I retain but do not include in this thesis due to issues of confidentiality. The selection of individuals was in the first instance predicated upon the identification of who exactly spoke about natural gas in Cyprus, which is largely a self-evident endeavour. Through the extensive record I collated of an immensely rich archive of newspaper articles wherein which the very public spat over the issue of natural gas played out in full view, in conjunction with reports of the natural gas

industry from institutions to name but a few such as: the *Middle East Economic Survey*, the *Oxford Institute of Energy Studies,* the *International Energy Agency*, *Peace Research Institute Oslo*, the *German Marshall Fund*, *Crisis Group International*, *Platts Natural Gas*, *MFA* announcements from the governments of Turkey, Greece, the RoC, and the TRNC, the individual assessment of freelance consultants and so forth, I accrued a list of names to consult. This is in addition to the names I already had in mind from previous research.

I would then employ a mixture of methods to gratefully spend time with a participant such as: cold emailing or telephoning, the snowball sampling method by word of mouth, and networking at conferences and public forums through the exchange of business cards I had prepared in advance. Specifically, the process of referral carried a certain air of gravitas that aided and abetted the process of conducting interviews with more high-profile interviews, such as: members of TOTAL, ExxonMobil, ENI., B.G. Gas, Noble Energy, and various governmental ministers across the board. Further, what I have found thankfully to be of extraordinary use was to befriend journalists who had already followed the issue of natural gas for years before I arrived on the scene. They had already built a vast understanding of the range of the ever-growing, ever-more varies cast of characters" (Callon 1998, 260), involved in this hybrid forum (Callon *et al.* (2009[2001]). Thus, there was no sense in competing with such individuals, but it is mutually beneficial to share contacts and leads and to discuss in conversations that would become interviews, the developments of the day. This did not involve the divulgement of otherwise confidential information as instructed in the consent forms I had signed. Ultimately, I amassed a very

large network of contacts, some of whom I have maintained regular dialogue with about the political situation as it developed. Interviews would sometimes become informal conversations with repeat participants, around 35 of which I have continued to communicate with to various degrees. Importantly, semi-structured interviews became less structured and were guided largely by the onset of particular event, as chronicled in Chapter 4. I will return to this point again, for I have found it to be an inclination of the research process whereby there is indeed a very palpable sense of being hooked on controversy and the drama of the situation, which I think aggrandises the issue of natural gas, and has led to both its discursive proliferation and the impression of agentic capacity to change political destiny.

A related point I emphasis vis-á-vis positionality is that the necessity to be sociable and a good conversationalist, the ability to steer the topic of discussion, to discern what sort of tone do adopt, are absolutely key to the process of research. I display this in action in the discussion of Chapter 7. But it is the case that these are more subconscious dispositions rather than pre-meditative, cold, calculated, and rehearsed mechanisms that really do not capture fully the spirit of the endeavour. Hence, I see no need to further theorise it but to merely to note it for the sake of contingency, how the research process is a thoroughly personal affair from the bottom-up that comes both to practice on the job as it were, and where an intimate familiarity with the issue at hand develops. The objective and intention has never been to coldly and cynically extract information, and I have tried my best to convey this to my participants in order to build a good and transparent rapport with them.

Though I conducted a significant number of interviews with many key actors, it was not an easy process. There have been some shortfalls that try as I might, could not be helped. For example, over the course of three years I repeatedly tried and failed to secure an interview with the-then UN Special Advisor to Cyprus — Espen Barth Eide; someone whom I habitually cited as a key actor that embodied the UN's viewpoint in Cyprus. Though I did introduce myself in person to Mr. Barth Eide at the side-lines of a public forum, conversed with his personal assistant, and even managed to get a question of mine indirectly answered by him on a radio interview (on the topic of natural resources), no matter how hard I tried I never managed to set-up a face-to-face interview. The same result was had with the Turkish-Cypriot and Greek-Cypriot leaders Mustafa Akıncı and Nicos Anastasiades, although I was satisfied to meet Özdil Nami (the Turkish-Cypriot Chief Negotiator), and Nikos Christodoulides (RoC Government Spokesperson), both of whom be considered part of the higher echelons of political establishment. Under the circumstances of the subject matter, it is fair to state that I had to expend a great deal of effort in order to gain access to what are two very guarded walks of life: high-level politics and international diplomacy, together with a newly-emergent hydrocarbons industry where market intelligence is of utmost commercial value.

The cumulative effect a life-long exposure to the Cyprus Problem places me in a unique discerning position that may be seen as sceptical to peace but also erroneously as one-sided. That is simply not the case. I emphasise that the method of triangulation I have adopted presents a very rich, vast, and detailed cacophony of data that obviously encapsulates simply all political viewpoints and proclamations about the natural gas

industry. It would be counter-productive to the stated aim to expound a view of natural gas as a relational and multiple socio-material assemblage, if I censored it all based on a prior political agenda.

Figure 5. Immersion in the spectacle of an industry conference. FLAME, Hotel Okura, Amsterdam (May 2016).



Source: Author.

As the reader will have already discerned from my account of the history of the Cyprus Problem in Chapter 1, I am highly critical of all partial perceptions and historiographies. There would be no end to political conflict without such. Further, armed as I am with a reflexive sensibility to the axioms of temporality, agency, ontology, power, and affect, this again allows for a more critical and reflexive account throughout. Finally, that I did not rely solely on the interview is advantageous, for I could compare and contrast what was revealed and formulated here with what was crystallised in a newspaper article or report, and the performative proceedings of a

conference. Therefore, the ability exists to juggle multiple ways knowledge is communicated but to also see how information may be both embellished in a phantasmatic manner or insidiously reduced.

3.7. Conference Ethnographies.

The observation of conferences as a research method was inspired by Kama's (2013, 106) use of conference ethnographies as a type of multi-sited ethnography, which is about "witnessing how the multiple resource is fused together and mobilised under a coordinated agenda". The method is similar to that of participant observation as the process involves the observation of the generation of discourse. Participant observation has no formal or systematic rule (Laurier 2010). Rather, I treated the data ascertained from this methodology with exactly the same sensibility as that for any other form of discourse to be analysed, be it from exposure to an interview, a newspaper article, industry report, or an off-the-record discussion. Nevertheless, the initial rationale behind my desire to attend such conferences was a sobering attempt to get to the bottom of the matter. During fieldwork, I had been exposed to a vast spectrum of conjecture, speculation, and disagreement about the global natural gas industry from the political sphere. I acted on the apprehension I felt with regards to my initial ignorance about the nature of the global natural gas industry, which inhibited my ability to critically reflect on what has been disseminated about it by trying to absorb as much knowledge as I could about the industry.

That I had already spent a considerable time researching the political situation in Cyprus made participant observation all the more fruitful, for I

was familiar with parameters of disagreement. Hence, in a presumptuous manner, I thought that I could ascertain the unfettered reality of the commercial situation. As evidenced in Chapter 5, conference ethnography proved to be an invaluable and eye-opening experience, wherein which a multitude of different actors and stakeholders would conglomerate, where IOC's would sponsor conferences to attract investor attention through embellished or reductive accounts, where politicians would present the official cherry-picked perception and where passionate disputes that can otherwise be labelled as performative ensued. Indeed, I began to hold this view as fieldwork progressed, for I was able to see the repetition of the same factual frictions and contested rationales.

Therefore, I consider conference ethnographies to be a window into the "intricate weavings of situated people, artefacts, codes, and living things and the maintenance of particular tapestries and connection across the world" (Whatmore and Thorne 1997, 288). As stated, public forums and industry conferences were not a space of unanimous and relieving consensus, but crucially another (albeit mostly nuanced) theatre of conflict emblematic of Callon's (1998, 260) hot situations, where "everything becomes controversial, […], indicating the absence of a stabilised knowledge base". The counter condition is that of cold situations, where interests are stabilised, responsibilities acknowledged and accepted and agreement swiftly achieved. There is further congruence here with Barry's (2013b) exposition of the way information is made public with the stated goal of multiple disagreement, conflict, and opposition, enacted prefiguratively as a form of expectation management and the assuagement of controversy. I display in Chapter 7 the affective environments of certainty and uncertainty

were intimated related to the kind of front actors wished to portray about both the peace process and the future of the natural gas industry; the interplay of this ontological choreography (Haraway 1997), so central to the materialisation of the political (Whatmore 2014), and the sustenance of political controversy (Whatmore 2009). It is these affinities that I seek to explain in relation to the polysemic goal of peace in Cyprus.

Ethnographic findings are characterised not as realities extracted from the field but intersubjective truths "negotiated out of the warmth and friction of an unfolding, iterative process" (Cloke *et al.* 2004, 170). I observed debates, controversies, and presentations, across 21 different settings including paid industry conferences and free public forums (Table 1). I attended the discussion of panels relevant to my subject matter and geographical region if it was a large industry conference, recorded the proceedings where possible and permissible, and made copious notes in a fieldwork journal as the performances ensued. I had often read partial proceedings of conferences in newspapers. But never would the entire transcript of what was said be reported. I often got the sense that the most sensational or sobering accounts were heavily marketed or placed as the key-note speech of a conference, or as the headline of an article. Further, most conference organisers would only sometimes make transcripts available to download online, and oftentimes the most high-profile industry speakers would not make their material available. Similarly, as with the use of interviews and with newspaper archives (described later), I was often armed with an agenda of prior developments from which I could then draw parallels between the mediums. I could follow how snippets of information from said events might disseminate into the public sphere, see what was

omitted or embellished, and then critically judge what was included in newspaper reports and why. The experience helped me to fashion a more critical view of what was being made public vis-á-vis the issue of natural gas. This is an example of the mutually-supportive role the method of triangulation can have.

With conference ethnographies, what I also gained was a more immediate demonstration of the sense of the purpose, positionality, and quality of the speakers and experts themselves; whether they were hesitant, forthcoming, or infuriated about a particular development. I was particularly interested in the affective undertones of their presentations which could not be captured by print media; whether one would present a more apprehensive or confident outlook about the future is something which I again expand upon in Chapter 5. The practice snowballed as I sought to follow the gas (neé Mitchell 2009), and I attended forums and industry conferences both fully public and closed-door, Chatham House style, in a variety of international locations; a sign of how very controversial the issue of natural gas had become. My choice of conferences was primarily based on programme agendas that specifically incorporated offshore natural gas reserves on the Eastern Mediterranean. A few of the conferences I attended had a more regional focus, whereas the larger conferences such as FLAME offered more global and complex perspectives. I judged whether or not to attend a conference or panel based on the seniority or relevance of a speaker. But there were also a number of instances where I saw the same industry professional present at all conferences I attended, or in other words seemed to be on the conference circuit. In this situation, it was interesting to see how discourse changed over time from conference to conference based

on the continual developments and volatility of the industry as a whole. Thereon, in some scenarios I was able to see how actors or observers could be hooked or plugged-in on any and all developments across the global natural gas industry across the value chain, and to speculate thereafter the ramifications on Cyprus. I suspect that the conference organisers themselves would welcome and further promote the interest in the political situation themselves by selling the idea of a particular development, and then hosting a conference to parse and speculate over it. I have been duly aware of this concern. Hence, I attended various conferences in an interspersed manner in tandem with issues of time, money, security, travel, and personal developments.

Furthermore, and in all honestly, I must also state that it was rather a relief to have interspersed periods of time away from the island, where the sheer focus of media, political, and international attention on the issue of natural gas could prove overwhelming and desensitising; a point which I raise again in Chapter 7. The ability to have more detailed conversations about the industry at times lowered the barriers in accessing members of the industry, and allowed for more corridor talk behind the scenes and the demands of interview or conference settings. It was a breath of fresh air to visit the headquarters of ENI, Rome or ExxonMobil, Leatherhead, and to situate what information emanated about Eastern Mediterranean natural gas and Cyprus in a more expansive spatial perspective. I did my utmost to maximise time abroad by conducting interviews with individuals otherwise not present in Cyprus. Turkey is a key stakeholder in the Cyprus Problem, but I did not extend my fieldwork to this country as much as I would have liked. Though I spoke to a myriad of Turkish government officials especially

in London and Nicosia, I did not conduct fieldwork there though I wished for it. Unfortunately, my fieldwork occurred time of acute security concerns in the country as the carnage in Syria raged on and spilled across the border, alongside the latter thankfully failed coup attempt. Before this all, I did visit the country to participate at an energy-themed workshop at Boğaziçi University in Istanbul and then to conduct two interviews in Izmir in late June 2016. I had just missed the attack at Istanbul Atatürk Airport by ISIS terrorists by two days. Understandably, I had to curtail further plans there.

Table 1. ***List of Conferences & Public Forums Attended.***

PRIO Annual Lecture: East Mediterranean Hydrocarbons *(November 2013).*
Third Annual Hyperion Lecture: Developing a Petroleum Industry in Cyprus *(September 2015).*
Global Oil and Gas: Black Sea and the Eastern Mediterranean *(September 2015).*
PRIO Global Energy Debates and the East Mediterranean *(November 2015).*
2nd London Oil and Gas Forum *(November 2015).*
European Commission in Cyprus: Energy Union Event *(November 2015).*
Social Cohesion and Reconciliation (SCORE) Index for Cyprus *(November 2015).*
Young People Shape Cyprus: The Future of a Unified Cyprus *(November 2015).*
SEESOX Seminar: 'Cyprus: Prospects for Reunification, Peace with Turkey and Regional Stability' *(December 2015).*
CEFTUS Westminster Debate: 'Cyprus, the EU and the Eastern Mediterranean' *(December 2015).*
German Marshall Fund Conference: Eastern Mediterranean Energy Outlook *(January 2016).*
Investing in the SE Mediterranean Energy Sector in an $30 Oil Price Environment *(January 2016).*

LSE Public Lecture: Cyprus and New Security Issues in the Eastern Mediterranean (*February 2016).*
7th Eastern Mediterranean Oil and Gas Forum *(March 2016).* Espen Barth Eide Speech (March 2016).
The Hydrocarbons Issue and Resumed Negotiations *(March 2016*).
Joint Presentation on Eastern Mediterranean Hydrocarbons *(April 2016).* AKEL Leader Conference *(April 2016).*
International Conference on Energy Security and Geopolitics in the Eastern Mediterranean *(May 2016).*
FLAME: Europe's Leading Natural Gas and LNG Conference *(May 2016).*
IRN Mediterranean Oil and Gas Summit *(May 2016).*
Geopolitical Developments and Change in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East - University of Nicosia (*June 2016).*
Cyprus-UK Business Forum *(November 2016).*

3.8. Newspaper Archives.

Arguably, the absolute zenith of the issue of natural gas occurred only a month into the start of my doctorate in October 2014. This is a provocative statement I discuss further in Chapter 4. Nevertheless, the point is that I was resigned to track the fallout of the event remotely and solely through news media. Out of necessity, it is at this early stage that my interest in newspaper archives began and subsequently grew as I sought to collate and keep track of the political situation as it unfolded. I began to archive Turkish-Cypriot and Greek-Cypriot newspapers online and then from

various institutions I subsequently gained access to. It is through this medium that my exposure to the history of issue of natural gas is grounded. This was supplanted with other forms of documentary evidence as previously identified. With such archival material, I could chart, connect, and notice patterns across a broad expanse of time, between the peace and natural gas development processes. It is through such textual data that I began to access the association between the two processes.

Unsurprisingly, there are mixed blessings when it comes to newspaper archives. The attitudes of dominant culture tend to be reflected in the language of news stories, and this is exactly what I was after: the battle of perceptions intimately tied to issues of agency, ontology, the productive nature of knowledge controversies, the formation of events that allude to the impression of causality, all of which I go on to document. Newspaper coverage is a useful source of information that can include relay key statements, formulations, meanings, anticipations and so forth, of many of actors involved in the dispute. Hence, I find it absurd to lay the possible accusation here of a "mesmerised attention to texts and images" (Thrift 2000, 381), for this belies a non-recognition of the power of discourse to condition perceptions of reality, and does not appreciate from the offset the depth of information that can be gleaned. The limitations I have borne in mind include: the stenographic and impetuous forms of news, the boundaries of what can be made public, and the embellishment, hand-wringing or sensationalism, all of which connect back to the political prejudice of newspaper establishments.

Stenography is a phenomenon that I have taken particular issue with. On the one hand, it is immensely useful to have a potentially detailed

textual account of the nuances of a debate, controversy, or crisis. At the same time, there can be a level of saturation or lethargy when the newspaper is used as a platform or mouth-piece for a particular actor's perception. As I soon describe, this is very obviously and unapologetically the case in Cyprus. Again, the use of triangulation helps to identify such occurrences, and the balance I have struck within the range of newspapers has given what I hold as a very detailed account of the spectrum of opinions. It is these issues of what is included and excluded that Foucault would have referred to as the regime of truth, which can go on to fuel passionate public controversy. All in all, it is simply a myth to hold that newspaper journalism provides access to the full, unfettered, objective truth, for it falls under the banner and therein limitations of discourse. With this transcendent point in mind, it is no longer necessary to linger at the level of abstractions and instead, the best demonstration of the difficulties I encountered, and the resultant solutions is found in the four analytical Chapters that follow.

Cyprus, as it turns out, has very high concentration of newspapers and periodical titles per capita (Vassiliadou 2007). In the RoC, there are eight daily newspapers, seven in Greek and one in English; the latter being the *Cyprus Mail* which has served as my first port of call for Greek-Cypriot coverage. In the TRNC, Turkish-Cypriot newspaper titles per capita is said to rank as one of the highest in the world (*ibid.*). There are eight different Turkish-Cypriot daily newspapers. The newspapers of the island exhibit close ties with certain political parties and ideologies, particularly as it concerns the Cyprus Problem. It is the case that the twists and turns of the political situation on the island constitute nigh-on the vast majority of political coverage in newspaper and television media (Christophoru *et al.*

2010). A related impression is to be found in Hannay (2005), who asserts the view that the Cyprus media is most definitely part of the Cyprus Problem and certainly not part of a solution. The point made here is I think intimately related to the politically productive capacity of knowledge controversies or leaks about the peace process. The nature of the settlement talks themselves is a point I will consider in further detail in Chapter 6.

Before then, it requires no excessive stretch of the imagination to envisage how news of a particular event may quickly become a matter of wide-scale public awareness, to appease the so-called new 'god' that is public opinion (Callon *et al.* 2009). As such, I portray the natural gas issue as a political phenomenon that is not only played out between national governments and IOC's hundreds of kilometres offshore, but also plastered across the front-pages of numerous newspapers onshore; a predicament particularly unwelcome for those who want to pacify public uproar and a God-send for those who wish to stoke tensions and shift the locus of controversy. This is perhaps the art of politics (*ibid.*). Briefly, from a methodological perspective, the object of study is clearly not just natural gas itself, all by itself Mol (2012). From a relational point of view, perceptions of natural gas' agency and ontology will be conditioned through discourses and discursive practices. A political debate may not even concern the material reality of natural gas. Instead, the battle is fought between the connotations raised by it. Şahin (2011) has argued that diversity in content of Turkish-Cypriot newspapers is limited because of the fact that media organisations are reliant upon an official news agency called *Türk Ajansi Kıbrıs* (TAK — Turkish Agency Cyprus). The Greek-Cypriots also have their own central press agency, the Cyprus News Agency (CNA). I do not go far into the

intricacies of news media organisational structure in Cyprus.

My pushback against Şahin here is that I find it very difficult to imagine how on such a small island any news-worthy developments would not in the end be noticed by all newspaper organisations. Hence, the regurgitation of information is very much to be expected and even welcomed, for it means that not all newspapers have to be consulted. Further, that there may be a common-set of information base does not mean the news is reported in exactly the same way. It is exactly the differences in reportage across and between Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot newspapers that interest me. With regards to Turkish-Cypriot newspapers, I have chosen to focus predominantly on a single centrist newspaper with the highest circulation in the TRNC; *Kıbrıs* ('Cyprus' – KB). But why three Greek-Cypriots newspapers and only one Turkish-Cypriot newspaper? Unlike others, *Kıbrıs* is not an obviously through-and-through mouthpiece of a far-left wing or more right-wing Turkish-Cypriot political parties — positions held by *Afrika* and *Dialog* newspapers respectively. Together with the virtue of being the highest-circulation newspaper, *Kıbrıs* is a good place to establish the most balanced and widely-relayed Turkish-Cypriot viewpoint on the natural gas issue. Secondly, it is not the case that I have exclusively relied upon *Kıbrıs*. The triangulation of semi-structured interviews and conference ethnographies aside, wherever a reference was found to: natural gas, energy, or hydrocarbons made in any other Turkish-Cypriot or Greek-Cypriot newspaper report cited by *Kıbrıs*, I diligently consulted the primary source — an inclination that often led to the second-largest Turkish-Cypriot daily; *Havadis* (HV).

As mentioned, newspaper coverage on the island is highly

stenographic in form with a seemingly-insatiable demand for all Cyprus Problem related news. In the grand scheme of things, I am far more interested in the coverage of which politician, international diplomat, IOC executive said than a brief comparison of the headlines. Therefore, although classed as secondary and as a non-official source, newspaper archives were a primary source of information to me, with official positions on both the natural gas and peace processes (Clark 2005). It made sense that I could confidently rely on *Kıbrıs* as my first, and often foremost, port of call. For the Greek-Cypriot viewpoint, I consulted the *Cyprus Mail* (CM), *Politis* (PO), and *Phileleftheros* (PH). *Politis* can be characterised as more left of centre, whereas *Phileleftheros* has been perceived as the government mouthpiece which means that if often carries a more official and less compromising and conciliatory stance on the Cyprus Problem. These are of course generalisations that do not hold in all circumstances, but they are nonetheless useful to bear in mind.

I began with *Kıbrıs* and then found myself at the TRNC Parliamentary Archives in North Nicosia, where printed stacks of every month of every Turkish-Cypriot newspaper was collected and slowly being bounded into books (Figure 6). I cannot recall the start-date of the first archives, but I recount records of newspapers as far back as the 1970's, well within the temporal range I was concerned with. I would first turn to the events of October 2014, and then juxtapose the reportage of the collapse of the negotiations together with similar events I had pre-identified through secondary resources. There was no possibility or need to read all of these sources of information. What I would do is find coverage of a particular event or theme and then sift through forwards and backwards in time to

until the story had largely abated, in the sense that no new developments occurred. At the start, I used to photograph relevant pages and collate them on my computer. The process was laborious. It so happened that I asked if there were any electronic copies available, and I was then directed to the offices of *Kıbrıs* itself from which I managed to secure PDF's of previous editions then transferred onto hard-disk. To keep updated records of new editions, I was gratefully given free access to *Pressreader.com*; a website where relevant PDF's were archived online.

An overarching point of difficulty that I had to surmount is that I usually had a daily end-to-end string of PDF's to search relevant keywords. For example, with the *Cyprus Mail* I had files broken down into years with each yearly folder broken down into months, each month into its days, and then with each day I had around forty separate files with each page of the newspaper added to the folder. This was not the case with the other three newspapers that were collated together for each day, but that was the extent of collation. I would then read through, add annotations, lift quotes, and build an understanding of a particular event. No coding scheme was used as might be the case in content analysis; I simply saw no use for it. In hindsight, I had the idea to explore whether or not all the PDF files could be joined together into what would be a gargantuan file. Unfortunately, this idea was had quite late into the write-up stage. In any case, by the end I had the following editions:

Table 2. *Newspaper Archives Consulted.*

KIBRIS (Cyprus, Turkish-Cypriot Daily)	*Cyprus Mail* (Greek-Cypriot Daily)	*Politis* (Citizen, Greek-Cypriot Daily)	*Philelefθeros* (Liberty, Greek-Cypriot Daily)
2007	-	-	2007
2008	-	-	2008
2009	2009	2009	2009
2010	2010	2010	2010
2011	2011	2011	2011
2012	2012	2012	2012
2013	2013	2013	2013
2014	2014	2014	2014
2015	2015	2015	2015
2016*	2016*	2016**	2016*

*Until February Inclusive. **Until April Inclusive.

I also had access to the following newspaper and industry materials online, in case I needed to cross-reference from other newspapers or to complete records:

Cyprus News Agency (Greek-Cypriot Daily)	May 1996 >
Politis	July 2006 >
KIBRIS	May 2007 >
Sigmalive (Greek-Cypriot Daily)	Nov 2013 >
AFRIKA (Turkish-Cypriot Daily)	2014 >
MEES (Middle East Economic Survey)	All archive material gratefully made Available.

As per above, the newspaper archives I had on file started in 2007. This was the year that the companies themselves began to digitise their collections, and so this is not an indication of the temporal span of this thesis. In fact, I have referred to events that occurred as far back as 2003, which when the RoC and Egypt signed an EEZ delimitation agreement. This is not to say that I have accounted fully for all developments since this date; this is only one such event that I have compared and contrasted with similar future events so as to demonstrate the historical extent of the natural gas issue. Such a reach into the past helps to put linear causality into crisis (Zourabichvili 2012); an argument I develop in Chapter 4. For Greek-Cypriot newspapers, I consulted the *Cyprus Mail* first due to my language barrier. My Greek is of everyday conversational level, and I could not quickly and effectively read and understand the entirety of *Politis* or *Philelefthero*s article. In anticipation of this problem, I did earnestly attend Greek language courses at the University of Oxford Language Centre soon after the commencement of the DPhil. However, my status as a complete beginner, coupled with the need to leave for fieldwork soon after, and compounded further by falling class interest that ultimately led to the cancellation of classes, meant that I was simply unable to take my Greek up to the level I wanted. After I secured access to the digital archives of all the newspapers, I simply used *Google Translate* and then asked for the help of someone close to me. If neither of these options were available, then the language barrier would have been an insurmountable problem for me.

To browse newspapers gave a sense of the political dramas and controversies of the day unrelated to natural gas, and I felt this to be a great counterweight to what I will argue as an inordinate focus upon one

particular subject matter or one element of the Cyprus Problem. I was able to ascertain the ebb and flow of the controversy merely by being able to see when the issue of natural dropped on and off the news. I was able to discern how other materials were implicated with the more fundamental issues of the Cyprus Problem, as outlined in Chapter 1. It was interesting to see how weighted the natural gas issue was throughout time, and to contrast reporting of the same event across newspapers of different language and political affiliation. Related to the issue of positionality, the fact is that I was highly attentive to any mention of natural gas and related concepts thereof. A dog-whistle effect gradually built-up within me, and though this was my own personal experience, I am confident that it was not abnormal to the various actors and stakeholders I encountered in the journey. As explained in Chapter 7, the most emblematic example of this disposition was a time when I found myself almost hoping that the peace process would be significantly impacted by a new development in the natural gas process to validate the previously cemented association between the two.

History, however, would not repeat itself in exactly the same way. Instead, I observed what Weszkalnys (2015) has described as a Marxian pause where, in the absence of significant and commercially-viable discoveries of natural resources gestures, speculations, and feelings of anticipation pointed to the potential of further discoveries and developments (Tsing 2005). It is these gestures that have sustained the commercial and political interest in Cyprus' offshore natural gas, and such a state of affairs inevitably had a repercussion on the peace process, as described in Chapter 5. It is worth noting that Chapter 4 makes heavy use of newspaper archives. As will be seen, Chapter 4 is distinctly temporal in approach. It is devoted to

addressing the series of past events that have been crucial (as I argue), to the genesis, evolution, and sustenance of the association between the processes. A lot of this history simply falls out of the period of time I was on active fieldwork, so it should not be a surprise that I have relied for the most part, but not exclusively, upon newspaper archives for that history. This is not to say that references to any past events have not come in my interviews or conference ethnographies. On the contrary, in the context at hand there is an ever-present influence of historical events from which contemporary political views referenced, even as far back as the establishment of the RoC in 1960.

Figure 6. Navigating through newspaper archives TRNC Parliament Library March 2016.



Source: Author.

Where appropriate, I have charted the cross-temporal connections

established in the political discourses and discursive practices to demonstrate the appropriation of time. Such is the temporal expanse within which the significant events I wish to address have occurred — 2003 to 2016 — that I felt it utterly necessary to pay due attention these historical developments in a dedicated Chapter. This I think makes applicable to use newspaper archives in a disproportionate fashion as and when the purposes of argument demanded. Thereon, I could specify exactly how this history has been variously used from various other analytical angles, such as affect, power, and knowledge controversies, and demonstrate a dynamic web of connections (Whatmore 2006) between perceptions of natural gas and perceptions of peace. Finally, for the purpose of demonstrating the process of eventalisation, and how this disposition may have aided and abetted the association between the peace and natural gas development processes, a focus upon historical development is essential. This is not merely a descriptive approach but an explanatory one as demonstrated in the analytical Chapters of this thesis that now follow.

3.9. Conclusion.

In this Chapter, I have explained how I developed and enacted the process of research. In a study that conveys a view of natural resources in a relational, multiple, and processual manner, it befits to speak of research itself as a process. From inception to fieldwork to write-up, I have sought an alliance between the philosophical and methodological approach of this thesis, with recourse to the important issues of access, positionality, and the very personal contingencies involved. I hope that the cumulative effect of the

last three Chapters has given a clear sense of the reflexive sensibility drilled into the core of the work. Ultimately, I seek to challenge the implicit environmental determinism, reductionism, objectification, and self-fulling prophecies that traverse issues of material ontology, epistemology, and the agentic capacity of materials, as I see raised by the assertion that natural gas is a catalyst for peace.

The reader will see that I selectively evidence data, knowledge, information. The thesis is absolutely not the aggregation of cherry-picked factoids shoehorned into a preconceived theoretical framework in a haphazard fashion, where the only commendable point is the vast quantity of data collected. On the contrary, I have investigated the assertion that natural gas is a catalyst for peace through a scrupulous, empirically-driven, theoretically-guided, critical analysis. The reader is guaranteed to encounter a word-for-word quote by a certain politician, a journalist, or someone who works in some capacity for say ExxonMobil, from the vast trove of material I have gathered. This surely nullifies any negative connotation to the term cherry-pick; I must be selective in order to form a relevant and logical argument. If there is any preconceived theoretical model that I hold, it is held in productive tension with what the research has encountered to challenge all inherent assumptions. To this end, I start the analysis in Chapter 4, where the association between the peace and natural gas development processes is discussed from a distinctly temporal perspective.

CHAPTER 4

The Association between Natural Gas and Peace — A Temporal Perspective.

"There is striking agreement on the future, and almost no agreement on the present"

E. Barth Eide, UN Special Advisor (*CM* 07/11/14).

4.1. Preamble.

Chapter 4 approaches the association between the peace and natural gas development processes from a temporal perspective. This is a disposition few have brought together vis-á-vis natural resource scholarship in recent times (Ferry and Limbert 2008), but attention to this perspective is on the rise (see Kama and Weszkalnys 2017). My aim is to pushback against the impression that the issue of natural gas is entirely extraordinary and to challenge the causal framework between the processes. There is an abundance of noteworthy developments of this political situation that has placed natural gas centre-stage from which issues of material agency, ontology, and epistemology, can be parsed. Yet it is also the case that the passage of time and narratives of it should be considered as part of an effort to factor-in context and contingency. This Chapter adopts a post-structural sentimentality to time in order to put latent assertions of causality into crisis (Zourabichvili 2012). I am inspired further by the words of Former

United Nations Special Representative to Cyprus, Lord Hannay (2005, 1), that: “the historical background to any international dispute is invariably a part of the dispute itself and understanding that background and its implications for the present [...], is essential to the search for a solution. Nowhere are these propositions truer than in Cyprus”.

The idea is to draw parallels with similar events, circumstances, and perceptions that have occurred. The effect of this approach is to demonstrate that clear-cut distinctions between past, present, and future, no longer hold. Hence, there is peculiar manner within which the flow of time is appropriated alongside the establishment of a socio-material assemblage which, as I argue, is intimately related to contentious visions of future peace that saturate the Cyprus Problem. Likewise, my intention is to demonstrate how issues of context and contingency have implications for the attribution of agency to the issue of natural gas and have served to promulgate the idea that materials play a critical part in political life (Barry 2013b). The task is complicated by these two indeterminate, intermittent, contested, and evolving processes that seemingly run parallel, but have never quite been in full synchronisation (Pope 2014). To combat this, I turn theories of the event and eventalisation to explain how a causal framework has been applied between these processes. To reiterate, events are occurrences which temporally stretch beyond their moment of actualisation, like “vibrations with an infinity of harmonics or submultiples, [...] participating in the becoming of another event and the subject of its own becoming” (Deleuze 1993, 77-78). In turn, eventalisation is the “procedure of causal multiplication: the analysis of an event according to the multiple processes that constitute it” (Foucault 1996, 277). The rediscovery of

"connections, encounters, supports, blockages, plays of forces, and so on" (Foucault 1981 [1991, 76]), are in fact behind what are initially discerned as a series of events linked in a unified temporality with each other, not only gives the impression of environmental determinism oftentimes inferred about natural resources, but serves to upend that very linear and successive causal framework implied.

To echo Deleuze (1968 [2001], 188), these questions "are those of the accident, the event, the multiplicity — of difference — as opposed that of essence […]". My endeavour is to explain how and why the association between the peace and natural gas development processes revolved around an assemblage of events that have hallmarked the causal story that has emerged, which has gone on to become ingrained over time in the public and political consciousness with serious consequences. In any case, the vocabulary used in this Chapter is firmly rooted in the principle of relationality, and an overlap will emerge between the analytical themes of: time, agency, ontology, affect, and power. Thus, Chapter 4 should serve as a precursor to the investigation that will follow, but is otherwise firmly rooted around inter-related concerns of temporality and agency, as I now discuss.

4.2. The Flow of Time: Chapter Structure.

Chapter 4 revolves around a series of events central to the saga of natural gas. I begin with the collapse of the settlement talks in October 2014, which I have taken to be the zenith of the issue. The event here actualised at a time of heightened political tension concurrently with a relatively active period of offshore exploration activities. I use this event to

establish the intricate association contrived between this array of "materials and ideas, humans and non-humans, calculations and the objects of calculation, representations and forms of violence, and the present and the future" (Mitchell 2009, 422). Secondly, I showcase the similarities and differences with natural gas events that have occurred in the past in juxtaposition with the ebb and flow of the peace process. The aim is to give a sense of how these processes have interacted over time which will not be entirely uniform in manner but susceptible to a series of contingencies as it concerns both the global natural gas industry, and the course of the settlement negotiations on the island.

The events incorporated are as follows: the RoC's EEZ declarations, the RoC's 1st and 3rd licensing rounds, various IOC drilling endeavours and the tit-for-tat actions of Turkey and the TRNC. I have omitted other events (see Kahveci Özgür 2017), in order to guarantee that attention is spared only for the most telling, significant, and consequential developments as I have judged them to be. My analysis references occurrences that stretch back in time through archival data. The more contemporary developments that I have observed during fieldwork are incorporated through interview and conference empirics. Hence, the final point I make derives from the way in which the history of the natural gas issue has been understood in the present. I freely admit that there has been a vast, popular, well-documented, but also daunting volume of empirical data to comprehend. I have been compelled to be selective and to begin my analysis with events that have been most significant for the association between natural gas and peace, beginning with the collapse of the talks.

4.3. Negotiations Collapse — October 2014.

That a crisis was about to unfold in the Eastern Mediterranean Sea was foretold, which immediately gives an impression of resource determinism. However, upon closer inspection, there were distinct political developments that drove the crisis and the subsequent collapse of the peace process to occur in a synchronised fashion. Another UN Special Advisor on Cyprus to the Secretary General had recently been appointed in August 2014, following the departure of the previous holder of the post Alexander Downer who bowed out amidst controversy and a stuttering peace process in April. Barth Eide arrived on the island in September to oversee the resumption of the inter-communal negotiations on the island which were at the time were spearheaded by the leaders of the RoC and TRNC Nicos Anastasiades and Derviş Eroğlu respectively.

Of significance is that at this stage of the peace process, the frequent and intensive reunification efforts that ostensibly characterised the negotiations of 2008-2012 were largely a thing of the past (Morelli 2014). Incredulously, a distinguishing feature of the peace process under the purview of Anastasiades and Eroğlu was a very fundamental disagreement about how to actually restart the settlement talks in the first place. In February 2014, after months of wrangling on the wording of the so-called 'Joint Declaration' (CM 11/02/2014) — a document deemed absolutely necessary by the Greek-Cypriots and utterly unnecessary by the Turkish-Cypriots — was finally released, no less in part due to the intervention of the-then U.S. Vice President Joe Biden. Biden himself became the most senior U.S. official to visit Cyprus in over 50 years, and asserted at one point

that the RoC is "poised to become a key player in the Eastern Mediterranean [...], transforming the Eastern Mediterranean into a new global hub for natural gas markets" (W.H. 22/05/14). The Joint Declaration outlined a renewed commitment to the faltering process, reasserted the general parameters within which peace was to be achieved (the bizonal, bicommunal, federation), as well as underscoring the paradoxical and fateful condition that nothing is agreed until everything is agreed, a premise addressed further in Chapter 6.

Thereon, next to zero progress was recorded for the rest of the year, which also marked the 40th anniversary of Turkish intervention on the island and the 10th anniversary of the Greek-Cypriot rejection of the Annan Plan. These annual commemorations denote a time of heightened political division across the island replete with calls for peace on the island, blame-games, and partial historical narratives (Papadakis 2003). In July, the-then TRNC Foreign Minister declared that the peace talks were not only finished but had also backtracked on convergences reached by previous sets of leaders (Morelli 2014, 2). By the time Barth Eide arrived, the negotiations had largely been an abortive process, as can be discerned in Figure 7 below.

Fatefully, that very same month the multinational oil and gas company ENI, in conjunction with KOGAS, manoeuvred the Saipem 10000 ultra deep-water drillship into Block 9 of the RoC's EEZ to drill a number of exploratory wells. The consortium held concessions from the RoC in Blocks 2,3, and 9, and the Saipem was envisioned to stay in the area between 12 and 18 months (Figure 8). However, the process was cut short in what was deemed by the Greek-Cypriots as the greatest crisis on the island since the Turkish invasion of 1974 (*KB* 09/10/14). The unfolding eventualities related

to the RoC's natural gas development processes up this point in time had been consistently met with alarm and contestation by the TRNC and Turkey.

Figure 7. *The Peace Process by September 2014.*

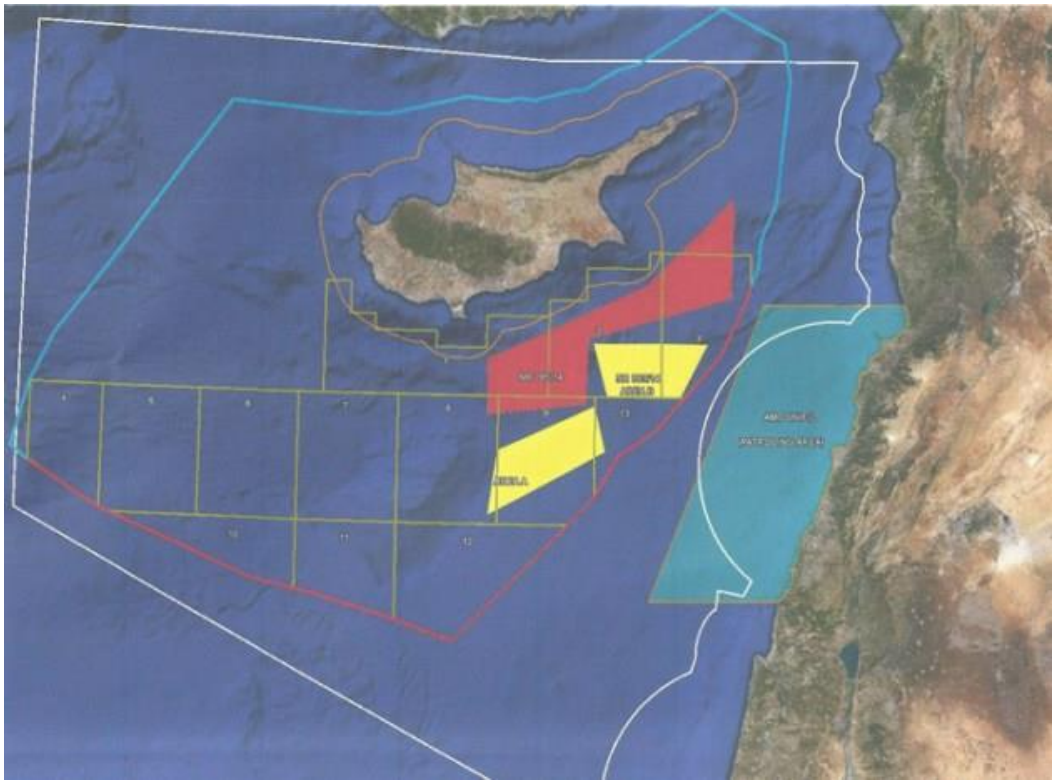


"Cyprus - Peace" (*KB* 14/09/14).

In May, the Turkish-Cypriot negotiator Kudret Özersay ominously forewarned that hydrocarbons could be "a kind of obstacle" to the talks (*CM* 28/05/14). On its part, the Turkish MFA condemned the Greek-Cypriots' for their reckless approach to the peace process, and the RoC's simultaneous and unilateral activities over natural resources (*TR MFA* 04/10/14). Erstwhile, the idea was natural gas could be a catalyst for peace continued to be a staple feature of both RoC, TRNC, and Turkish official discourse. Prior the collapse of the talks, RoC Foreign Minister Kasoulides stated that "natural gas could be catalyst for peace, and could be a tool to finance future costs of a settlement" (*PH* 07/09/14), the latter part of the statement drawing ire from Greek-Cypriots who see Turkey as the sole antagonist of

the Cyprus Problem, and therefore the entity that should cover the so-called cost of a solution (see Mullen *et al.* 2014). In any case, the degree of animosity toward both the peace process and natural gas processes definitely increased as the time for offshore drilling drew closer. This need not imply that natural resources are political only at certain moments (Bakker and Bridge 2008), especially at the time of a heightened controversy. Instead, without resource to a form of essentialism, what I argue is that there is a potentiality or a dispensation for a resource to be mired in a political controversy with both commercial and epistemological consequences.

Figure 8. TPAO's NAVTEX (Block Red), ENI-KOGAS (Block Yellow).



TPAO's NAVTEX at the time overlapped with a number of RoC EEZ Licensing Blocks (yellow grid). Outer red boundaries show EEZ boundaries with Egypt and Israel, outer blue shows RoC claimed boundary with Turkey (*CM* 18/10/14).

The event that has characterised the issue of natural gas in Cyprus began with the announcement of a NAVTEX by Turkey in October 2014, with coordinates of an area that overlapped with EEZ Blocks 1,2,3,8, and 9. ENI-KOGAS was set to drill in the last. The TRNC Foreign Minister asserted that in unison with Turkey and as a response to the RoC's unilateral endeavours, a newly-acquired seismic research vessel of TPAO — the *Barbaros Hayreddin Paşa* — shadowed by warships, would conduct surveys in the same block as ENI, with a view to conduct their own drilling activities in the future. This would be potential roadmap of continued escalation. The NAVTEX was deemed to be the culmination of what the RoC saw as: verbal threats and rhetoric, harassment of vessels, unlawful seismic surveys, and blackmail (*CM* 21/10/14). Indeed, after the exploration activities for the coming year was first announced in June 2013, the exchange of barbs significantly increased between the two sides (Morelli 2018). Importantly, this was not the first NAVTEX announcement by Turkey, nor was it the first foray of a Turkish research vessel into the RoC EEZ.

Turkey had previously issued a NAVTEX in 2011 and 2013. With the former, an ageing seismic research vessel — the *Piri Reis* — traversed Blocks 10,11, and 12 of the RoC's EEZ around the same time the RoC had commissioned Noble Energy to drill its first appraisal well. The-then RoC President Christofias did not threaten to break off the peace talks, and publicly downplayed the NAVTEX alongside his Turkish-Cypriot counterpart Talat (*CM* 21/10/14). But this particular NAVTEX proved to be the last straw. Anastasiades suspended his participation from the talks, for "the Turkish actions left no other option to the Republic of Cyprus" (*CM* 07/10/14), in what was seen as the most serious violation of the EEZ to

date (*PH* 06/10/14). Interestingly, the collapse of the negotiations was also foretold by Anastasiades himself. In February 2014, Anastasiades declared that he would leave the negotiations if Turkey ever violated the RoC's EEZ, and went on to assert that the RoC would never return to the negotiating table "[…] so long as Turkey does not practically recognise the sovereign rights of the Cyprus Republic" (*CM* 30/11/14). At play here is a fundamental aspect of the Cyprus Problem: Turkey has refused to recognise the RoC since 1974 in an unyielding manner that for one Greek-Cypriot journalist has given the impression that it is "more likely for the sun to rise in the west than for Turkey to 'practically' recognise the sovereign rights of the Cyprus Republic" (*CM* 30/11/14).

In the end, it transpired that this very public spat and spectacular defeat for the peace process would eventually subdue, and the cycle would restart. With heavy behind-the-scenes shuttle diplomacy in conjunction with the U.S. embassy in Nicosia, and after two disappointing drilling results amidst a downturn in the global natural gas industry: the Saipem left Cyprus citing scheduled maintenance, the *Barbaros* docked in the TRNC, and Turkey's (second) NAVTEX was not renewed after April 2015. Significantly, the negotiations resumed only after the NAVTEX expired. Amidst it all, former TRNC President Talat conjectured that "if the negotiations on the Cyprus Problem were going well then Turkey would not have sent warships" (*PH* 14/10/14). From April 2015 onwards, general elections in the TRNC saw the more peaceable Mustafa Akıncı take the helm. After such an unprecedented blow to the talks, a new-found sense of optimism began to emerge. For example, U.K. Foreign Secretary Hammond stated: "I do not think we have seen, certainly not in my political lifetime,

the stars as optimistically aligned as they are now for Cyprus" (*CM* 02/06/15). Crucially, of further note is the fact that the talks commenced at a time where no scheduled exploration and exploitation activities were in sight, and the downturn in the global natural gas industry continued (Morelli 2015) — a point I return to later and again in Chapter 5.

After the collapse, Barth Eide explained that:

> "The hydrocarbon crisis is in essence an illustration of the deep disagreements that lie behind the whole understanding of what the Cyprus Problem is. A lot of these issues are issues because of the division and will actually evaporate once a solution is found, because they are expressions of the division" (*CM* 08/04/15).

Metaphorically, the peace process became a lamb sacrificed at the behest of an increasingly acrimonious and passionate political dispute connected to natural gas on the surface, but with deeper and more perennial political disputes. By this time, the association between the two processes had become so entrenched that the UN Special Advisor himself professed that:

> "The hydrocarbons issue has now been linked to the Cyprus Problem. Which way it has been linked is a matter for the two sides. But it cannot be unlinked, and it is now an argument, in my view a strong argument, for redoubling everyone's efforts to reach a solution" (*BRT* 02/01/15).

Hence, and perhaps fatefully, the political significance of natural gas became utterly contingent upon any crossovers between the two processes. In a sign for things to come, essentially the political significance of the natural resource became a relational and contingent achievement (Barry 2013b). Never again was the peace process to be suspended or to fail in a

manner so unequivocally associated with the terms: energy, natural gas, and hydrocarbons. To date, never has there been the exact same potent mixture of: peace process, Turkish NAVTEX, warship, and research vessel, and offshore drilling; all of which became focal events imbricated into the relationship between the two processes. Erstwhile, natural gas continued to be promoted as a catalyst for peace, despite such a spectacular development to the contrary. There is definitely more to the saga than the events described above, from which I discern four further lines of enquiry:

- The mixture of actors at play in this political situation: states, oil and gas companies, the UN, in a territorial dispute saturated with issues of sovereign power.
- The ebb and flow of the peace process in conjunction with the idea that natural gas, hydrocarbons, and natural resources, can somehow catalyse the peace process.
- An affective dimension acquiesced alongside the development of the natural gas controversy, where affect is related to the agentic capacity of natural gas.
- A history of similar events with repercussions for the way the future of the two processes eventualised.

Inevitably, there is going to be a lot of inter-connection, feedback, and contingency along the lines of affect, power, peace, and time. But at this juncture I follow Deleuze and Guattari (1994, 110), who argue that "what history grasps of the event is its effectuation in states of affairs or in lived experience, but the vent in its becoming, in its specific consistency, in its self-positing concept, escapes history". Thus, I now turn to that history of events to demonstrate how the passage of time has been appropriated as part of the association between natural gas and peace, and then explain the

consequences for material agency and the destiny of the peace process.

4.4. The Value of Aphrodite in Trillion Cubic Feet (TCF) and Peace.

Three years prior to the scenario above, in December 2011 Noble Energy conducted appraisal drilling of a natural gas field named Aphrodite — first encountered in September 2009. Both a countdown to and the results of the appraisal work became front-page news in Cyprus where the Greek-Cypriot daily *Politis* declared that the RoC was now "on the energy map" (*PO* 29/09/11). Earlier in 2008, Noble — the relatively smaller independent exploration and production company headquartered in Texas — was the sole proprietor (in conjunction with Delek of Israel), of an exploration licence in the RoC's 1st EEZ licensing round (Giamouridis 2012). Since then, Noble's pioneer activities in what was then a resource frontier (Weszkalnys 2016), has gradually garnished the interest of larger multinational behemoths such as Exxon Mobil and SHELL (Ratner 2016). Exploration success had brought the basins of the Eastern Mediterranean into the spotlight as a world-class gas province (Al-Balushi 2014). Noble had earlier declared that Cyprus was on the verge of a natural gas revolution that could turn the island into a "major European energy hub", and that natural gas would be onshore by 2014 and an LNG facility in operation by 2019 (*CM* 24/06/11).

Noble announced an estimated figure of 5-8 tcf. of natural gas; a figure that would saturate political rhetoric to come. A further example is the so-called game-changer logic that so often follows successive discoveries in the Eastern Mediterranean (see Leigh 2014), where every new discovery

seems to reinvigorate the agentic capacity of the resource to cause change. From this multitude of political appraisals that occurred after the announcement, the-then RoC President Christofias is noteworthy. Prior to this moment in time, no certain figure had been established in the government and public consciousness. But Christofias now had a definite figure to refer to. After the historic announcement of the magnitude of the Aphrodite field, Christofias declared publicly that:

> "The gas is a catalyst for peace and cooperation. I leave once again the door open to the Turkish-Cypriots to enjoy and automatically benefit from the prospects offered. Peace and cooperation is not served by confederal or partitionist desires but only by the reunification of our country, which will enable the Turkish-Cypriots to benefit from the wealth that nature gave in our homeland" (*PO* 29/11/12).

The above quote is entirely indicative of the encounter value (Haraway 2008) that this discovery would have and, as I attest, would continue to have despite commercial and political challenges to the contrary. What is also startling is that what Christofias said utterly pales in comparison to the Christofias of old who before the euphoria that followed appraisal drilling had made a far more sombre assessment. In fact, days before the figure was determined he stated that Turkey and the Turkish-Cypriots were clamouring needlessly over gas exploration, bearing in mind the amount of time needed in the future to analyse and determine with greater confidence an accurate measure of the quality and quantity of the deposit (*CM* 20/09/11). But all that would change. After the announcement, that the RoC *had* offshore natural gas and it *was* a tool for peace became an example of an indeterminate potential made readily apparent (Weszkalnys 2016).

Presumptions became precedents, and thereon the question of how natural gas could be a catalyst for peace rarely critiqued the formation of this essentialism and resource determinism at hand.

Rather, what would become a staple feature of the political controversy would be various formulas, scenarios, and projections that sought to connect the achievement of peace in terms of natural gas supply, demand, quantity, and industry infrastructure. In fact, the results of drilling activities would come to be tied in a determinate fashion to the fate of the peace process to the extent that the negotiations would come to flourish at times when exploration and exploitation activities ceased. The trouble here is that the potency or in other words agentic capacity of the issue of natural gas entailed what Le Billon (2013, 283) has documented elsewhere vis-á-vis natural resource development, which conveys both a "sense of (re)empowerment and opportunity, but also dependence and vulnerability", that implicated the dynamics of both the processes. For example, an EU report of that time stated that "discovered gas reserves are too limited in size to overcome the region's profound geopolitical rifts" (2017, 47). I document such predicaments throughout the thesis, but also the cases where this logical and linear relationship was contested or disregarded.

More so, I take-up the very knowledge controversies that erupted after multiple interpretations of natural gas and its future were problematised in the "grip of worldly encounter" (Tsing 2005, 1), in Chapter 5, where progressive informational enrichment (Barry 2005) would ultimately fail to nullify the discursive association achieved between the processes. The point here is that abstract perceptions of natural gas and its agency would be predicated upon: auxiliary matters related to the industry out of political

control, ignorant and anachronistic views on the energy world and double-edged connections to the peace process. Crang (2003, 128) explains that "materials are structured by our questions, our methods, by our respondents, by external forces, [...] to make them work for us, we have to reconfigure them, [...] to make them say new things". This is all part and parcel of the theory of the event: the invocation of a constant (Cyprus is now on the energy map), followed by the infusion of Aphrodite with an essential trait (natural gas *is* a catalyst for peace). Of the statement above, there is a preference to reference an abstract and inalienable idealisation of the future rather than a sombre awareness of messy contingencies (Shapin and Shaffer 1985), of both processes. The worrying and perhaps myopic fact is that the fate of the negotiations was tied to whatsoever benefits of natural gas exploitation envisaged to take years to come into fruition, and at the time of writing, has still not come to fruition, if it is the revenues generated from exploitation under consideration. Despite any of the RoC's overtures, the Turkish-Cypriots would not automatically benefit from the exploitation envisioned for any potential benefits that would derive from Aphrodite were imbricated not only with the reunification of the island but a certain imagination of future peace that conformed with a particular set of power relations between the communities.

Significantly, a particular kind of solution, a particular kind of future, a particular kind of peace or regime of living was at stake (Lakoff and Collier 2004). For a former U.S. Ambassador to the RoC, "it very quickly became associated with more traditional issues or points of controversy in the Cyprus dispute, [...] a feverish public debate. [...] I think they may have wanted to drive for a different kind of solution" (Interview, 08/12/15). In any

case it is fair to say that natural gas had in reality a complex present (Mol 2002), and complex future.

Figure 9 (L). "I can be a catalyst: Cyprus, Economy" (*PO* 29/11/11).
Figure 10 (R). "Gold mine in the Mediterranean. Reserves of $7 trillion calculated in the area of Cyprus" (*PO* 21/09/11).



Figure 11. "Crisis Time: The Greek-Cypriot administration, despite Turkey's warnings, has officially begun natural gas drilling activities" (*KB* 19/09/11).



This is perhaps why there have been calls to disassociate natural gas from peace, particularly as it would concern the RoC Economy Minister Lakkotrypis as set out in Chapter 5. But even on the very day of Christofias' speech, a government spokesperson countered that "the issue of hydrocarbon deposits does not concern and has nothing to do with the negotiations to solve the Cyprus problem" (*CM* 28/09/11). The dissonance and division here highlights how contentious the issue was between Turkish-Cypriots and Greek-Cypriots, but also amongst themselves. What is amiss here is also a critical reflection of why such a connection should be made with tools, catalysts, and weapons in the first place, together with the meaning of peace harboured by either side. As an industry consultant in attendance of an Atlantic Council meeting on the subject I attended, stated that "there are no peace pipelines, and no-one in the industry is taking into account the *meaning* of peace" (B.S. 15/01/16 – emphasis added). Only after a settlement was found would the Turkish-Cypriot community in the future, and not the TRNC now, share in what was quickly projected to be the spoils touted fantastically as: 210 years of electricity production, the equivalent of one billion barrels of oil, at least $10 billion to be raised to the state (*CM* 29/12/11). What would prove problematic to the RoC political elite about this grandiose vision is the counter-proposal that the most commercially-viable option for export would in fact seem to be none other than the state of Turkey itself (Ellinas *et al.* 2016), as explored further in Chapter 5.

The emphasis on the potential spoils inevitably filtered through to the public sphere where "the reports of natural gas deposits quickly acquired many qualities, above all an apparent ability to free Cyprus from the

country's special law of gravity: the five-decade-old Cyprus Problem" (Pope 2014, 90). The causal connection established in word and practice between the two processes is by now repetitious to the reader. But the empirical detail here points to the mechanism of the causal framework and the bifurcated division between peace and natural gas achieved and sustained by it. As explicated in Chapter 6, both the latent power relations and the envisioned future dynamic of these power relations in the event of a solution between the TRNC and RoC, determined the policy mechanisms on offer with regards to how monetary benefits derived from natural gas exploitation should be disseminated in the future. In particular, the Turkish-Cypriot demand to engage with the Greek-Cypriots in activities that would constitute the co-management and joint decision-making about natural gas was met with resounding indignation by the latter. The very same paradox identified by Hocknell (1998) and later Akçalı and Antonsich (2009) — to solve the Cyprus Problem first, then cooperation can take place — is again clearly at play.

As it concerns natural resources, the analogous argument is that energy relations follow peaceable political relations, and not the other way around (Shaffer 2009, Tsafos 2016). Beyond the contrast and contradiction between latent and future power relations, the point is that a future material imagination had already been established from the moment the Aphrodite field was quantified, and that this new dynamic would become another layer of contention as manifested in knowledge controversies regarding industry realities. In other words, an embellished assessment about the possible benefits of resource development in the future was inserted into the present as immediate fact. Hence, the value of natural gas as a catalyst for peace

would in part be immutably conceived in terms of trillion cubic feet and trillions of dollars. The agentic capacity of natural gas in the abstract would be determined by the contingent commercial value of the RoC's natural gas that changed over time, betwixt an increased knowledge of hydrocarbon systems accrued over time in this deep-water area and fluctuating market. This is the problem of investigating a moving target: the mix of conjecture, speculation, essentialism, and the temporal extension of events that go on to have repercussions in the future. What would transcend these contingencies would be the effect of discourse enacted to gain "mastery of its chance events, [and] evade[s] its ponderous, formidable materiality" (Foucault 1981, 52). The discourse at hand contained a complex appropriation of time, as discussed below.

4.5. Material Embodiment of Past and Future?

As demonstrated with comparison to the events of late 2014, the association that had been contrived between natural gas and peace was definitely not new. The imbrication between these two terms runs further back in time and has actively been maintained and promulgated since. But what is of further interest is that Christofias would refer to the rudiments of the appraisal drilling and include only that from which political gain could be made. For example, his speech upon discovery would only touch upon the depth drilled into the seabed, the water depth, and the area covered by Aphrodite. By contrast, Noble Energy went into far greater detail in its announcement: 310 feet of net natural gas pay in multiple high-quality Miocene sand intervals (MEES, January 2012, 55-01). No political purchase

could be gleaned at this time from high-quality Miocene sand intervals. However, as demonstrated in Chapter 5, references to geological terminology would gradually become implicated in the RoC's official political parlance as a process of informational enrichment of the regions geology occurred resulting from increased commercial interest accrued in the area amidst the stratification of successive discoveries (Barry 2005).

The importance of future discoveries and updated outlooks for natural gas development would not only garnish an extraordinary level of attention domestically, but the latent logic of anticipation and the assumed impact developments would have would even come to be internalise by establishments connected to the island such the EU, as part of its future *Energy Union* policy (E.P 2017). This tentative relation to the proposed Energy Union would be yet another future vision capitalised upon by RoC officials; a clear sign of how not only distinctions between past, present, and future are blurred, but also spatial divisions between local, regional, and global, are intentionally traversed.

But not only were the rewards of the natural gas development process put down to simple matter of time, the way in which natural gas was described, its agentic capacity explained, and its future potentiality outlined is also a case of partial perception which is "not the object plus something, but the object minus something, minus everything that does not interest us" (Deleuze 1991, 25), with the rest simply being the "'noise' that accompanies scientific activities" (Stengers 1997, 83). Hence, there is a clear sense of abstraction, reduction and in some respects, addition, as it concerns the imbrication of natural gas with the settlement talks. This has a great bearing on material ontology. But the point is that there is an overlap

between retentions of the past, demands of the present, and projections of the future which also condition perceptions of material ontology. A related point of contention that underlies why this connection became so very controversial is largely predicated upon not only the scope or capacity supposedly vested in natural gas, but in the problematic vision of the future that the event became gestured towards (Stengers 2000). This revolved around a distinct politics of anticipation hand-in-hand with various projections of energy networks and architectures which held Cyprus as a central node, as discussed in Chapter 5.

A very significant implication for the peace process emerges here. The RoC President clearly speaks here of peace as an endpoint in time. This runs counter to the countless efforts to manage the natural gas development process in a way that would benefit the peace process in an incremental and confidence-building fashion. Indeed, successive political leaders, international diplomats, and industry analysts, have nigh-on tended to regard the idea of peace as a static endpoint on the horizon. Nowhere is this sensibility of the peace process made clearer that the firmly-established mantra that nothing is agreed until everything is agreed, where any so-called past convergences become little more than anachronous unofficial understandings that are afforded competing levels of weight in the present. For example, in a leaked 77-page document that covered the convergences reached between 2008-2012, there is but one entry that cites natural resources, including water resources under the heading of Federal Division of Competences. And yet, the most hypocritical aspect of the Cyprus Problem is the selective citation of previous convergences as and when it suits the political agenda of the day. The RoC may selectively dismiss

previous convergences as null and void (CM *2/3/*2018), but would then hold up the past convergences reached on natural resources as not only a binding agreement for the future federal state, but an agreement with ramifications in the present as documented further in Chapter 6.

This is but one reason why the issue of natural gas would never come to be a part of the formal negotiations; it would be an external relation to the peace process, one that by virtue of its position within the wider assemblage of the Cyprus Problem and the global natural gas industry, would continue to be a source of controversy and friction. Former UN Special Advisor Downer sought to de-link any connection whatsoever with the negotiations. The convergence reached in previous iterations of the talks reflected that natural resources would be a federal competency of a future united Cyprus. The most recent advisor Barth Eide sought to assuage the feverish public controversy that has erupted after Aphrodite's appraisal drilling and the collapse of the negotiations by again appealing to it: “the two sides agree. It takes two minutes to discuss it because they already did. It shall be a federal capacity, it belongs to all Cypriots through the state, they all agree. So paradoxically, it would be the easiest question at the negotiating table if it was there” (*CM* 28/11/14).

Eide argued that the issue was in fact solved many years ago in the sense that in a post-settlement scenario, the future of natural gas and all other natural resources was predefined: it would simply be a federal competency of the new republic. Eide stated that "*empirically* there is not much actively going on right now, [...] it is already solved in the light of a future settlement” (UN WEB TV, 22/06/15 – emphasis added) — and it is exactly the empirical existence of the natural resource that has become a

key issue. The agency of the political situation that invoked natural gas was maintained in juxtaposition to a future settlement, which makes the peace process the variable that determines the agency of natural gas. Though empirically there was a subdued state of activity, it was the apprehension of the consequences of future activity that further bolstered the causal relationship between the two processes. Relatedly, another layer of contestation is that although there may be some agreement as to what sort of peace is envisioned for the future, there is very serious and oftentimes ignored dissonance in the way in which that target is sought after in the present. Further, it can also be demonstrated that the joint vision of peace supposedly harboured by both sides is actually the bare minimum that the negotiations demand when it comes to the detail of an agreement. There remains a large dissonance between the two sides that has filtered through to the issue of natural gas.

The *Cyprus Mail* had it thus: "decisions to start exploiting or prospecting for natural resources whose ownership is still under dispute is a slap in the face of the UN-facilitated talks, [...] the readiness to start drilling unilaterally is yet more evidence that while the two players may be talking about reunification, they are in fact planning for separate *futures*" (28/09/11 – emphasis added). The same argument is found years later at the time of appraisal drilling, and points further to the affective element of the dispute discussed in Chapter 7: "the simple statement that the Turkish-Cypriots will begin to benefit when the Cyprus Problem is solved is not enough and may even create the suspicion of us stalling to usurp their share. [...] Any other approach would cast shadows of partition" (*CM* 18/09/14). Concurrently, a core point of the political situation becomes the

structural disposition of the settlement negotiations on the island, which has had immense ramifications for the nature of the relationship between the processes, the discussion of which can only be effectively outlined with consideration of the complex power relations that interlace the various actors on the island (Chapter 6).

What the above discussion demonstrates is that the causal association that has been envisioned between these two unfolding procedures is predicated upon two predefined end-points, two singularities, two determinate visions that involve as the quote suggests, separate futures. In other words, the way in which events have unfolded between these two processes has been conditioned through the embodiment and enaction of future visions in the present. This is the essence of prefigurative politics: the adoption of a future archetypical goal within an on-going political practice (Boggs 1977). For Barry (2016), the idea of a political crisis suggests that history has been perceived in a linear fashion in the same way in a time-series regression model, that a crisis is a generative event defined as a problem and, having been identified, a concomitant solution is inferred. This goes hand-in-hand with the succession of events across a unified temporality (Grosz 1995), that supports the issue of natural gas and the theory of the event. In contrast, there have been attempts by geographers to portray peace as an on-going discursive process, practice, and discourse (Megoran 2011), where the idea of peace can be differentially materialised (Williams and McConnell 2011).

But what has happened in Cyprus is that pre-defined visions of peace have gone hand-in-hand with essentialisms attributed to natural gas. The essential traits ostensibly had by the material of natural gas or the natural

gas issue — both of which are referred to in the latent political rhetoric without due care — constitute a system of representation which "freezes the flow of experience" (Harvey 1989, 206). This is another way of saying that the process of eventalisation charts a particular kind of future to be followed and closes off creative possibilities and creates repetitive cycles of habit (Watson 1998). The Turkish-Cypriots would continue to implore the Greek-Cypriots to freeze natural gas exploration and exploitation efforts for the sake of the negotiations (*CM* 25/02/18). Again, the issue itself has agency. But this is also an *ex-post* attribution similar to those which I discuss toward the end of the Chapter.

Tsing (2005, 33), describes the effect of a similar instance commodity speculation on time: that the apparent immanent onset of natural resource wealth makes it such that "time moves so quickly that results precede their causes". The boundaries then between past present and future become far less clear, and political action on the issue of natural gas in Cyprus taken in the present, was determined by the type of natural resource future envisioned; multiple claimed futures that saw natural gas and peace intermeshed in divergent ways (Ferry 2016). In this case, neither peace nor natural gas in the abstract has really been considered in processual terms, in stark contrast with the demands of post-structuralism. The result is that it becomes easier to envisage natural gas as an abstract and blunt singularity such as a catalyst, tool, curse or blessing.

I am reminded of a statement here by an industry consultant at the first international energy-themed conference that took place in the TRNC as the issue of natural gas gained traction, that the "first rule of peace pipelines is, don't call them peace pipelines" (J.R. 05/05/15, Morphou

Conference). Here, the prefigurative and teleological dimension to the issue of natural gas in Cyprus encapsulated in determinate visions of peace strike at the heart of what the Cyprus Problem actually is has consequences from an ontological and agentic perspective. However, any event taken into consideration should be considered amidst the “middle of a field of effects, which does not mean that is the cause of such effects” (Barry 2002, 278). Because there is a field of effects as highlighted by the genealogy of the association between the peace and natural gas, a simple causal relationship that implicates only a single event is no longer tenable.

This is in part due to the fact that the vast multiplicity of factors that coalesced at that moment of time will never be exactly replicated again, that in a complex system, linear causality is problematised before the "irreducible hiatus of heterogeneities” (Watson 1998, 101). It is the history of engrained animosities, concerns, and constraints practiced by the parties to the political dispute that adds an air of determinacy, as encapsulated in Anastasiades’ forewarning that he would leave the negotiations. It remains that throughout the natural gas saga, there was still a “troubling and exhilarating feeling that things could be different” (Latour 2005, 89). A statist political ideology on the one hand and a dynamic commercial process are hard to reconcile, but as I allude to throughout, it is the indeterminate qualities of the natural gas industry that would be invoked to overcome the more consistent political dogmas in force.

4.6. Crisis Time: Turkey and the TRNC's Material Imagination.

Counter to the sensationalism exemplified above, the official response

to the discovery on the part of TRNC President Eroğlu was delayed. The archives of *Kıbrıs* that week display a piecemeal smattering of remarks of Turkish and Turkish-Cypriot officials. A former TRNC negotiator would later recall to me in an interview: "can I tell you something, openly? We were a little late to the game" (A.E. 07/06/15). However, though rebuttals to the major events that have characterised the RoC's endeavour to develop offshore natural gas diligently occurred, the scale and scope of Turkey and the TRNC's responses would go on to increase as the processes to develop offshore natural gas progressed, to the extent that Turkey would procure its own offshore drilling platform and modernise its seismic research vessel fleet.

The point here is that the stakes attributed to the issue of natural gas unsurprisingly increased in accordance with developments in the natural gas industry, be it economic upturns, advances in technology, or the increase capacity of the stakeholders involved to act. In stark contrast to the premonition offered at the time by the RoC leadership, the TRNC and Turkey began to engage in the precursor to the knowledge controversies, as described further in Chapter 5. Briefly, the TRNC Minister of Energy adopted a diametrically opposite and unremarkable view that Aphrodite would only meet "three years of [Turkey's] natural gas demand, […] it doesn't mean anything relative to the European Union, and with such small reserves it is impossible to arrive at an effective point in terms of global energy" (*KB* 29/12/11). Hence, an object multiple (Mol 2012) emerged, and part of the reason why natural gas has become a matter of concern is the lack of a common bottom-line so emblematic of the Cyprus Problem and in general terms, so common to a political controversy (Callon *et al.* 2009).

Based on political desire, there is every incentive to increase uncertainty, foster disagreement, encourage opposition. Equally, however, it is also necessary to consider how knowledge can be made public to encourage the opposite effect (Barry 2013b). As demonstrated in Chapter 5, both embellished and diminished accounts of the status of the natural gas industry and the peace process were common. What is of interest is that the reaction of the Turkish-Cypriots and Turkey would vary, which concurs with the idea that knowledge of the relationship between the processes can be said to belong to a situated order of results, events, effects (Foucault 2000). However, what is also interesting to note is that the condemnation of the RoC's unilateral activities would in fact lighten in tone. The explanation for this stems from the health of the peace process itself, as discussed in light of the 3rd licensing round at the end of this Chapter. The predicament demonstrates that the negotiations have been used as the proxy by which to measure the political potency of the issue of natural gas, but not always concurrently. What is surprising is that despite the conferral of agency to the process, it has only been when the negotiations have been in difficult that recourse is made to the issue. The explanation is that at times when the negotiations progress well there is every reason for those who wish for its success, to diminish the issue in light of public consciousness.

The former head of the European Commission in the RoC explained it thus to me: “when the news of Aphrodite came it was in the news almost daily. […] I don’t agree with that at all, it did not cause [the collapse of the negotiations], if you were a believer in a non-solution then you just look at the natural gas issue as an additional issue for why you shouldn’t have it” (20/11/15). Here again the course of the settlement talks

became imbricated with the resource development process. Interestingly, behind the dualism between natural gas and peace is another dualism: that between people who were pro-solution and those who were anti-solution, those who understood the status-quo as peace, and those who vied for change. In any case, that the issue of natural gas had largely proven to be detrimental in effect to the talks was thoroughly reified. For example, by this stage it had come to be conventional for the TRNC and Turkey to adopt countermeasures as a counter-weight to the RoC's unilateral endeavours: "with each step you take we will take we will have opposing steps" (Eroğlu, *KB* 17/02/11). From the view of the Turkish MFA: "they [the RoC] are not willing to share a common future with the Turkish-Cypriots, and not ready yet for a comprehensive settlement" (15/02/12). The issue was now used either to defame those as anti-solution or to spite those deemed as gunning for the other side, or who deviated from the hegemonic view of either state: "any proposal to discuss the issue of hydrocarbons prior to a settlement cannot be accepted, [...] natural gas is the greatest incentive for Turkey to work towards a settlement of the Cyprus issue: any other formula would constitute a disincentive and the optimal scenario for those who are pushing for a Plan B" (*CM* 18/11/14).

Finally, the Plan B mentioned above refers to partition in the first instance, to any form of solution that differs from the RoC view and also points towards the lack of trust and sincerity than has oftentimes plagued the talks; an important dimension discussed further in Chapter 7. What is of paramount importance is also the fact that the Turkish-Cypriots demanded to be a part of the natural gas development process now without waiting for a solution. The RoC would reject such a proposal outright. Even

Eide's overtures to form a committee that would run in parallel to the peace process and decide on the future of natural gas in a joint fashion between the sides would be deemed unacceptable (CM 24/11/14). None of this came to fruition; this is a paradox I explicate further in the last section of this Chapter.

The conventionality of these discursive measures simultaneously emanates from issues of power, contested visions for the future, and the impact of it all on the negotiations. Crucially, that the issue had by now firmly established agency in relation to the Cyprus Problem and was no longer contested at the fundamental level made it so that the association between the two processes became normalised, taken-for-granted, and a given. This was indeed an ominous precedent for the way the political dispute was to unfold in the future. In Deleuzian language, I see such a development as similar to an event that has been "imprisoned forever in its actualisation" (Deleuze 1969, 161), in the sense that once apprehended as a causal factor, future action would be based upon the self-evident impact the natural gas issue was believed to have. The association at hand would be extrapolated into the future and, as shall be seen, at the time of general elections after the collapse of the negotiations in late 2014, the issue of natural gas would be firmly cemented in the public consciousness as an election winner such had the political purchase of the issue been inflated, as demonstrated in Figure 12.

4.7. The 1st Licensing Round.

I compare and contrast here the circumstances of the 1st and 3rd

licensing round due to a major level of discrepancy between them. I do this primarily to confer to the reader a greater awareness of how the association between the peace and natural gas development processes developed over time. What will be of significance is that a pattern of escalation can be discerned from the 1st round to the encounter with Aphrodite, onwards to the appraisal of Aphrodite, and then finally to the zenith of the political situation. What is different about the 3rd licensing round is that the events that unfolded do not fit the established pattern and are therefore worthy of attention. The 3rd licensing round marks the time I was present on the island and hence I can vouch for an *in-situ* experience of being an analyst of the political situation, and how this may impact on conclusions subsequently drawn.

Earlier in 2007, the RoC has signed an EEZ delimitation agreement with Lebanon following a similar agreement reached with Egypt in 2003, commissioned seismic surveys, and conducted its 1st licensing round; an eventful year for the process. Protest from Turkey and the TRNC duly followed. TRNC President Talat sent letters to the UN, Lebanon, and Egypt — again a far-cry from the latter seismic research vessels, warships, and drilling platforms, and invoke again the future of the peace process: "[…] recent developments have shown the urgency of a final comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus issue, […] all parties concerned, should strive for enhancing prospects for a final and comprehensive settlement" (TRNC Presidential Office 02/02/07). Both TRNC and RoC officials have been guilty of associating natural gas and peace, though not always concurrently. Interestingly, a RoC government spokesperson remarked at the time that "we will not be hauled into a public debate over an issue which solely

concerns the lawful government of the Republic of Cyprus, and in which neither Turkey nor the illegal regime has any say" (*CM* 01/02/07).

Figure 12. Natural Gas in TRNC general elections (April 2015).



(L) "The correct answers to problems: hydrocarbons reserves must be used for the joint benefit of Turkish-Cypriots and Greek-Cypriots". (R) "My aim: to display the authority of the Turkish-Cypriot community at the negotiation table" (*KB* 08/04/15 - AT).

With firm conviction regarding the future of the association between the processes, the RoC government remarked that "a solution of the Cyprus Problem does not depend on drilling for oil or gas but from the good will of the involved parties. This is what the Turkish side needs to prove instead of resorting to its favourite methods of threats and blackmail" (*ibid.*). This would be a far cry from his successor eight years later: "this is not a slogan: energy is an incentive for the solution of the Cyprus Problem" (*YD* 12/01/15). The acrimony between the RoC, Turkey, and TRNC, had not changed then, and the mutual blame-game so emblematic of zero-sum

power games would persist to this day. But a change in approach is evident as the controversy progressed and recourse to the apparent agency of natural gas increased. It is extremely hard to identify a single or finite number of causes for the shift that would occur amidst nearly a decade's worth of development in both processes; there is an irreducibly multitude of causes empiricism uncovers that co-functions with an assemblage (Deleuze and Parnet 1987). What can be said is that both informational enrichment, further discoveries, and the seemingly intractable nature of the Cyprus Problem must have converged.

What also changed was the confidence about the presence and magnitude of offshore natural gas volumes. Initial results from the first surveys commissioned by the RoC with the company PGS/Beicip-Franlab tentatively revealed that "we are pretty sure of the presence of active petroleum systems in existence in this area. The main conclusion of our study is that gas and condensates are to be expected" (*CM* 6/02/07). For matters of material ontology, evidence for the so-called geopolitical significance and agency of natural resources, or even petrol as it was referred to in *Kıbrıs* (16/02/07), however inaccurate were still in principle sowed very early on before the collapse of the negotiations. At the time, with mixed references to oil, hydrocarbons, and natural gas also, *Politis* similarly focussed on Turkey's objection to the licensing round, with references to the inflammatory statements by Turkey but *not* the Turkish-Cypriots: "Ankara raises its voice to raise a crisis in Cyprus because this way it thinks Cyprus will be forced to forgo exploration" (*PO* 18/02/07). Amidst it all, the RoC's staunch and sensitive invocation of its upper-hand as the sole *de jure* state on the island would be maintained throughout, as a former RoC minister

predicted: “I have no doubt we shall continue harping on the same tune” (Rolandis, *DL* 09/03/08), which again points to the transcendent effect of political narrative. But the point I wish to draw-out is not the ontological inconsistency just yet but the varied invocation of time.

The hegemonic political rhetoric that both the RoC and TRNC displayed towards the topic of natural gas displays both inconsistency and multiplicity. One such example of this is the restraint initially shown by the RoC to make natural gas a matter of public dispute, and by those who in due-course would realise the controversy needed to be diffused. Significantly for the temporal view of the political situation: “the *timeframe* for solving the Cyprus issue depends exclusively on the Turkish side, […] oil extraction and exploitation will take a long time, so there is ample and capable time for solving the Cyprus question” (*CM* 27/02/07 – emphasis added). This is exactly the sort of temporal indeterminacy characteristic of RoC discourse before appraisal drilling results came in, as described at the start of the Chapter. Oddly, it seems that those who wish not to inflate the agentic capacity of the natural gas issue and who do not want to make it a matter of public concern, do not invoke the temporal immediacy of resource onset as they seek to push the issue away from political limelight.

Provocatively, the Turkish-Cypriots would officially demand immediate inclusion into the natural gas development process prior to a solution, and would subsequently label the RoC’s unsurprising rejection as a failed litmus test for future cooperation. An interview with a member of the Turkish Embassy in Nicosia confirmed this long-standing view: “it wasn’t even on the table, we could have discussed it. They wanted to proceed unilaterally” (Interview 03/03/15). This is yet another example of the relationality

achieved between the processes. Due to the long-standing and intractable nature of the conflict, not only was the idea of a catalyst for peace worryingly required, but perhaps it is also down to the fact that in a comfortable conflict (Ker-Lindsay 2014), it is no surprise that the fate of the negotiations may not be paramount at all times; a point I discuss further in Chapter 6. Open to conjecture is whether or not the overture by the Turkish-Cypriots was mere political gambit in an environment where pervasive disagreements prevailed about the core dimensions of the Cyprus Problem that have failed to be assailed after decades of negotiations.

A similar proposal to diffuse the conflict was levied in 2014 by Barth Eide, and was summarily rejected. Though a speculative question for now, there is an important point here to be made of affect where emotions of anticipation and expectation largely sustained the controversy, as discussed further in Chapter 7. The emotional side of this all is that the Turkish-Cypriot demand, though sincere as it may have been, was nevertheless perceived as a potential sabotage attempt of the natural gas development process; a sinister ploy to "relegate a nation's sovereign rights down to a bi-communal issue" (RoC Spokesperson *CM* 27/09/11). In an interview, a former U.S. Ambassador to the RoC described these events as:

> "A great deal of posturing and partially informed speculation in the political realm not only among political parties and journalists and so forth, but even by the authorities on both sides. […] The sides were very interested in what was going to happen now, how to manage this issue jointly ahead of an agreement. […] so, it was this issue of timing which became essentially the chief impediment to reaching an agreement to discuss the issue" (Interview 08/12/15).

Here again the issue of timing can be identified as a clear part of the

political controversy. The question to ask is whether or not the parties to the dispute would assail their differences, even if the natural gas issue were somehow made part of the formal UN sponsored peace talks. But in sum, there was evidently a number of different timeframes and projections into the future which demonstrates the complexity of the political situation on the island vis-á-vis the natural gas issue.

4.7.1 The 3rd Licensing Round.

I have given evidence for the knock-on effect acquiesced during exploration efforts. But there is a clear invocation of reverse causality, that the peace process instead was the catalyst to natural gas and not the other way around. At a later stage, the scheduled drilling by TOTAL in July 2017 which was perceived by many political leaders including the seasoned Turkish-Cypriot politician Özersay (*KB* 05/10/17), and other commentators, as a natural deadline to the talks. In contrast, the UN professed that the peace process was "the best medicine against an upcoming crisis" (*CM* 30/05/17). This may seem contradictory. But there is logic to both formulations. Poignantly, the natural gas issue had been inflated in public and political consciousness to the extent that it was impossible to ignore. The next best thing was to state that the peace process had to come first, which paradoxically drew the ire of the Greek-Cypriots who received the statement through the lens of sovereign rights. Yet "if this goal [solution] is kept in mind, I don't see a reason for a crisis to be born. If used appropriately, this factor may positively help dynamics", argued Council of Europe member Rene van der Linden, (*KB* 23/02/07); this was the ideal.

The reality would prove different, where sensitivities of the peace process were largely ignored in order to press ahead with the exploration and exploitation of natural resources. The imperatives of the peace process were not the be-all and end-all. The best example of this all is the political atmosphere that surrounded the 3rd licensing round.

At the time before this licensing round in March 2016, the nature of the association between the two processes entailed a surprising shift against the grain. When TRNC President Akıncı began negotiations with his Greek-Cypriot counterpart in May 2015, no drilling events had been scheduled for that year, and a new-found optimism (or promise-disappointment cycle – Mason 2015), was established as part of the ebb and flow of the negotiations (Morelli 2018). In fact, no natural gas related development during this distinct period made a negative impact to the course of the peace process, which left me as a researcher in the field somewhat impatient, as described in Chapter 7. Only around the time of the 3rd licensing round would the rhetoric between peace and natural gas intensify after this unique lull. It seems indeed that there emerged a grace-period which only demonstrates how mutually-imbricated the destinies of the processes had become.

This is not to say that the peace process would lead to success if it the natural gas development process was somehow suspended — the plethora of political situations with other material referent points in the history of the Cyprus Problem puts that argument to rest. Briefly, this included the notion of a water pipeline that had been envisaged between Turkey and Cyprus which materialised in late 2015. This development was labelled by the Turkish-Cypriots and Turkey as peace water (Hoffman 2017); a liquid inducement that mirrored the Greek-Cypriots gaseous one (Bryant 2015). In

tandem, the political risk consultancy firm Eurasia Group (2016) had adjusted the likelihood for the island's successful reunification to "60 per cent" at this juncture, as a testament to the relative abatement of the controversy.

Unfortunately, external developments would take a toll. The announcement of the new licensing round by the RoC followed off the back of successive offshore discoveries that had recently occurred in the Eastern Mediterranean, no less so than the largest offshore field in the entire Mediterranean Sea; Zohr, encountered in the Egyptian EEZ (Chapter 5). Industrial goliaths such as Exxon Mobil, Qatar Petroleum, Statoil, alongside ENI and TOTAL, would all compete for select blocks; a far-cry from the results of the 1st licensing round of 2007. Further to his point, it has recently been announced that the investment thus far by ENI in Cyprus was to the tune of €700 million (*CM* 25/04/18). Needless to say, following the now established, complex, and varied association between the two processes no less so than relations of power as discussed in Chapter 6, Turkey and the TRNC viewed the new developments with unease:

"It will be recalled in this context that in previous years, such activities have led to the failure of efforts aiming towards a comprehensive settlement. We remind once again that Turkey will take all necessary measures to protect its interests in the Eastern Mediterranean, as well as the rights of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus" (TR MFA, *CM* 24/03/17).

This did not of course force the RoC to desist from what it perceived as a matter of sovereign rights; a condition arguably of far more concern to the Greek-Cypriots than the settlement talks. Around this time that I was

present at a speech given by the UN Special Advisor at a public forum in Nicosia (Stelios Philanthropic Foundation 06/05/16). I accompanied a journalist who subsequently asked Barth Eide exactly what the consequences of the upcoming licensing round would be and beyond that, the widely-publicised and scheduled exploratory drilling by TOTAL in July 2017. Both of these eventualities came to be regarded by some actors and observers as a natural deadline to the negotiations, which in turn prompted calls for an accelerated peace process. Ironically, this would become the closest the issue of natural gas would ever come to act as a catalyst for peace. During the public forum, Barth Eide deflected the question and asserted that focus should be diverted instead to the negotiations. I observed as the journalist pressed further in private, and the response was that so long as drilling did not occur, the controversy would not be brought to the boil as it had done so two years before. It was as if the scale of political controversy and fallout had already been established, that by this stage of the development processes the various actions by the RoC and the TRNC in conjunction with Turkey were expected and only in-between developments in the global natural gas industry would a conducive environment for negotiations emerge.

In effect, the act of drilling came to have the greatest capacity for political strife; the precursor of a hot incident (*CM* 01/06/17). The political events of old had again been associated with anticipations and expectations of possible futures (Barry 2016). This time, it was not the magnitude of a potential discovery as before but a scheduled licensing round that generated public disagreement — a point which further detracts from the crude suggestion that it is natural resources as materials themselves that instigate

political strife. The referent points for substances of speculation (Weszkalnys 2015) changed, the tangible scaffolding (Tsing 2005) of an entrenched political situation became not a question of volumes of natural gas, supply and demand forecasts, oil-indexed prices, but future developments. Further, this is an example of how thinking in terms of events situates all in the space it has opened (Stengers 2000).

Akıncı was inevitably drawn-in and warned that: "the energy issue is not a heading of the negotiations but it's a topic affecting the negotiations, because it is known what happened in the past regarding this topic. […] We must avoid actions that can turn this issue into a source of contention in the present" (*KB* 25/05/16). Akıncı as the TRNC President would have felt compelled to make some sort of protest, and although Anastasiades on his part would be compelled to go ahead with the licensing round, there was a peculiar decrease in rhetoric. In an interview, a former U.S. Ambassador to the RoC explained the situation thus:

> "These two leaders are now much more seriously engaged with each other in order to craft a compromise agreement for Cyprus solution, and they don't want extraneous or sort of secondary factors that could become contentious and undermine the overall settlement process underway. That does occur in the background of very little commercial interest in exploiting this potential in the Cyprus EEZ, so there's no push coming from an external sort of driver to deal with so under these circumstances they have set it aside (08/12/15).

Ultimately, Akıncı toned down the political rhetoric much to the rancour of his political opponents, and tried to disassociate the peace and natural gas development processes from each other: "I do not think these steps will reach an extent where they impede our conference or our solution efforts" (*KB* 29/12/16). Crucially, the leaders had agreed for a solution to be

found by the end of 2016; a deadline set in lieu of upcoming drilling. Structurally, the previous correlation of events created the illusion of causation, but here a break in that causal framework can be observed because the peace process had made hard-won progress in light of a tentative deadline for a solution, the latter of which has been curiously amiss in the negotiations to date. Briefly, time-frames and deadlines are incredulously seen as suffocating (Sözen 2011), as discussed further in Chapter 6.

At this unique time, there was simply less reason to make natural gas matter and re-invoke known antagonisms. As the former TRNC Foreign Minister told me: "everything depends on the momentum and the climate of the negotiation process" (E.Ç 29/03/15). This is true to some extent. But what is amiss is that there is a firmly-established reciprocal relationship between the peace and natural gas development processes, that the momentum and climate of the negotiations depended in part on a lack of natural gas related activity. In turn, the relatively more serious engagement between Akıncı and Anastasiades at this time created the motivation for both sincere and disingenuous reasons (Chapter 6), to reduce the potency of natural gas related developments. Alas, neither leader would entirely desist from natural gas related rhetoric in its entirety and fatefully, the oft-heard potential benefits of a solution to the gas development process would continue to be stressed into the future most of the time.

4.8. Slow-Down Thinking: The Issue of Natural Gas in Retrospect.

The proposition that natural gas is or can be a catalyst for peace is a

red herring. It can only be answered retrospectively *ex-post*; an attribution after fact (Stengers 2011a). Yet, the belief that natural gas development has agency has shown itself to be self-sustaining and self-justifying, and it is the belief in the ability of the process to develop natural gas that is the source of political controversy. In my own research experience, I recollect distinct feelings of frustration about the fact that events which precipitated the collapse of the negotiations in November 2014 did not occur again. To reinforce the intensity of the association that had been contrived, I assumed what was a compromised outlook rooted in logical positivism; an outlook that weighed all new developments from a predisposed perspective and one the was extraordinarily hard to suspend, given the way events had unfolded but also given the sheer weight of attention given to the issue of natural gas at the time. Though certainly a dominant way to look at the political situation, to reduce every new development down into an issue of material semiotics, networks, and assemblages, or in other words, to see everything through the lens of the Cyprus Problem was in fact counterproductive.

In truth, I almost wanted a similar event to occur so that I could back up the presumptions link between the two processes; that it was not an extreme event but a recurrent pattern. In hindsight, I had adopted a causal and structural framework with an acuteness towards an ever more complex assemblage of connections between global oil prices, regional gas prices, supply and demand projections of littorals states, the static maritime boundaries, and of the age-old lines of dispute that make up the Cyprus Problem. That things could be different was certainly implied by the partial and contingent nature of knowledge from the perspective of the political situation on the island. But that natural resources were abstracted and

connected with specific visions of peace both afforded and reneged an agentic capacity to them, a paradox of sorts that did not allow for a politics that could actually make a difference (Massey 2005). What was also needed was a case of slow-down thinking (Stengers 2011a). This entailed an analysis that is slow to jump to conclusions and over-simplified explanations.

But neither does this mean that what has been observed should be explained-away. What I have found also important to bear in mind throughout the brief genealogy above and in light of the sensitivity to perceptions of past and projections of the future, is that despite the influence of ingrained attitudes and outlooks that characterise the Cyprus Problem and the contingent way natural gas has been drawn into it all, how the material will be perceived is thoroughly processual. This may seem nonsensical in the sense that there has always been a heavy discursive effort to establish a relationship between peace and natural gas. But though the material at hand has been promoted as a catalyst or tool for peace by all actors, there are times when those political actors themselves actually acknowledge the contingency of it all. Klinke (2013, 679) writes that "it is especially at the end of a story that produces the point from which the events can be understood in their totality […]". The best example I can provide for this is from an interview with a RoC official:

(Author) — I submit the thesis sometime in 2018, so there's a long time ahead.

(E.E. 11/12/15) — We can have another talk as well then. By that time, Insha'Allah we will have a solution…and you will have nothing to write about! Well, you have plenty to write about…but you will put a different spin on it of course as a catalyst for a solution. If we don't have a solution you will say it was the energy that fucked it up!

I do not think I have come across a more revealing account of how the issue of natural gas can act as an object multiple. Yet in tension with such a dynamic perspective is the effect of the long-standing political conflict on the island that had led to assertions such as that by former RoC Minister Nicos Rolandis (2012, 7), a pioneer figure in the story of natural gas development, who recounted that "very frankly, when I commenced the oil and gas venture, I knew deep in my heart that a new dimension would be added to the Cyprus Problem". In many respects Rolandis was correct, for the fundamental tenets of the political situation had not changed at all. But there is still a reluctance here to put knowledge at risk, and it is oftentimes that such matter-of-fact, self-evident, and to some degree presumptions statements added to the potency of the political situation. Although an assemblage of materials, technologies and teleologies have hallmarked the association between the peace and natural gas development processes, both the agency and ontology of matter in effect hinged upon which temporal stage the dispute is observed from. The ideas of multiplicity, processuality, and relationality are in full swing here, and if perceptions of natural gas are contingent then it is better to consider "what matter does rather than what it's essence is" (Anderson and Tolia-Kelly, 672).

Hence, it is the effect that natural gas has purportedly had in relation to the wider assemblage it has been made to be a part of, that gives an acquiesced impression of agency. But beyond that, it is clear that the association between the process engendered time-frames that added further complexity to the Cyprus Problem. Very early on in the saga, a U.S. State Department Spokesperson counselled that "[…] ultimately, what needs to happen is the two parties should get back to the root causes of the dispute"

(CM 03/02/07). That has remained true throughout. But was has eventualised points to the art of politics may involve the establishment and long-term maintenance of multiple political situations, as presented above.

4.9. Conclusion.

In this Chapter, my discussion has revolved around issues of agency, causality, and time. I have charted the genesis and evolution of the association between the peace and natural gas processes. I have demonstrated how the potency of this association has been predicated upon a series of inter-linked events. I have argued that the weight of causality should not be borne by any singular event, nor should any single be taken as an arbitrary start-point of analysis. Agency in this light is to be seen as a relational and processual achievement, generated and performed through discourse (Law 1999). Of this process, eventalisation highlighted a series of events strewn across a unified temporality (Grosz 1995), that has fostered the association between the two processes. “It was in events such as these that the post-war relationship between oil and democracy was engineered”, writes Mitchell (2009, 411) in a similar vein to the point I make. Further, I have demonstrated how events contain retentions and projections of other spaces and times (Barry 2016). Thereon, I have argued that perceptions of material agency and ontology have been conditioned by this fact, as events denote perceptions of essence. Whether or not natural gas could be a catalyst for peace is a question open to continuous investment, opinion, conjecture, and debate, all of which serve to increase the scope of the event. Such continuous investment aids the establishment of natural gas as a

powerful object and as such the process of conferring agency to the material. Clearly then, discourse produced the effect that it named. Material agency has stemmed from the "possibilities opened up to it" (Butler 1993, 23), which itself involved retentions of the past and projections of the future (Kama and Weszkalnys 2017). Finally, the establishment of external variables such as: oil and gas prices, the scale of the IOC's involved, the magnitude of discoveries, whether or not drilling took place, and the increased capacity of the actors involved to project power, would be invoked as indeterminate and self-sustaining circular discussion with a determinate impact on the peace process. Hence, the issue of natural gas is kept alive through these precarious relations.

Finally, the idea that natural gas could be a catalyst for peace is by this stage clearly a self-refuting prophecy. But what lies beneath this layer of controversy is the axioms of the Cyprus Problem proper. As alluded to, the form and structure of power relations along with the affective consequences derived from years of division, have made it so that the issue has been detrimental to the settlement talks. Significantly, despite the genealogical background to the events covered in this Chapter, it does not *explain-away* the agentic capacity of the natural gas process. There still remains a potency to the issue which has been bolstered by both premonitions for the future of the resource and a quick, surface-level explanation for the series of events outlined throughout. After having presented evidence against the self-evident nature of this issue, I turn in Chapter 5 to the ontology of the material itself and investigate how and why, and with what consequences an object multiple emerged and the multiple processes that have constituted it.

CHAPTER 5

Commercial Controversies, Imagined Networks, and Circulating Referents.

"If economics ruled, we wouldn't even be discussing it!"
(T.T., Academic, Public Forum Speech, University of Nicosia (16/06/16).

"Energy is the strongest motive that will lead to a comprehensive solution of the Cyprus Problem without winners or losers, and meet the expectations of the Cypriot people, Greek and Turkish Cypriots for the creation of a modern European state"

(President Anastasiades, *CM* 02/02/15).

5.1 Preamble and Chapter Structure: What Exactly is at Issue?

In the length and breadth of empirical data I have addressed thus far in this thesis, I have argued that an accumulative effect has been generated: the apparent agency of the issue of natural gas vis-á-vis the settlement talks. Fundamentally, it can be said that discourse produced the effect it named (Butler 1993). I have evidenced the ways in which select matters of fact have become incorporated from what is best thought of as a socio-material assemblage enacted in popular political discourse. Illustrative of this idea is the sheer euphoria that followed the results of appraisal drilling of the Aphrodite field in late 2011 where, through political rhetoric, a discursive association was formed between the polysemic notion of peace and select retentions of fact. These were promissory values and

indeterminate proxies taken as concrete fact. Namely, this included a deterministic assessment of the quantity of natural gas within the Aphrodite field and of the untold sums of monetary wealth that would supposedly fill RoC state coffers. This tangible discursive scaffolding was "grasped in practice" (Thrift 2000, 217), helping to cement and raise the potency of the reciprocal relationship between the processes.

In this Chapter, I dig deeper into the issue of material ontology and investigate what exactly was meant by the term natural gas. I take forward the aforementioned issues of indeterminacy, the select retention of fact, and the power of discursive construction, into a more nuanced investigation of material ontology. I foray into cognate issues of commercial reality and contested energy networks. However, rather than attempt and summarily fail to incorporate the entirety of the oil and gas assemblage (see Appel *et al.* 2015), I use specific points of commercial controversy as a springboard into a discussion of the ontology of natural gas, just as I moulded the previous Chapter's discussion around a particular set of historical eventualities. These will constitute the outlines of commercial disputes that have become incorporated within the public sphere, and not an in-depth econometric analysis of commercial viability which is beyond the remit of this thesis (see Zweifel *et al.* 2017). In any case, the latter is not the bottom-line mover in the natural gas saga, as epitomised in the opening quote provided above.

Chapter 5 is structured thus: *firstly*, I discuss the question of an LNG terminal for the RoC against the backdrop or the apparatus of the natural gas industry (Watts 2012); a subject that has become a perennial source of conjecture, debate, and controversy (although to varying degrees by the multitude of different actors across time). I argue that commercial

uncertainty contributed to the agentic capacity of the natural gas process and for the emergence of a resource curse (see Weszkalnys 2014). *Secondly*, I explain how and why the RoC and TRNC sought to situate themselves amidst a future network or architecture of energy in the Eastern Mediterranean; a spatial reference to the previous temporal-based discussion. I make room here for a brief investigation into the use of USGS reports as circulating yet ultimately speculative discursive referents (Latour 1999). *Finally*, I address some of the concerns derived from the association between natural resources and politics as identified in Chapter 1. I conclude the Chapter with support for the power of language and discursive construction (Barad 2003).

Necessarily, I have had to be selective in the processes. This is because not everything about the nature of the global natural gas industry in its contingent complexity can be judged to be an obvious matter of political concern. Yet, the inconsistencies, distortions, contradictions, embellishments, and aggrandised accounts of both commercial and political value, remain of vital importance for they give an ontological account of what mattered for the political side of the story. To this end, I have chosen to focus upon the following facets that I have discerned to be the things that have forced thought (Stengers 2005), as made obvious in the gamut of political rhetoric connected to them: the future of LNG in Cyprus, the discovery of the largest offshore natural gas field in the Mediterranean Sea (the Zohr field), the tendency to reduce the complexity and indeterminacy of the global natural gas industry, and the improper citation of USGS results to prove the self-evident and inevitable energy future. Other key developments such as BG Group's acquisition of a stake in the Aphrodite

field could also have been incorporated. Briefly, this specific development is one that has strengthened the hope that the island's natural gas was destined for the now-idle LNG terminals in Egypt. This is another simple caricature in need of further analysis. However, for the sake of the aims of this Chapter and due to limitations of space, the examples I have chosen will suffice for the argument I wish to make.

Beyond the bespoke commercial challenges of these envisioned projects, what I have found to be my primary source of inspiration has been the very unmissable inconsistency with regards to natural gas *per se*. In other words, alongside contending commercial calculations of where, how, and when the island's natural gas would be developed, terms such as: energy, hydrocarbons, petrol, and oil, have all been used in the course of the saga. A very early headline highlighted this issue of ontological inconsistency: "[RoC] government moves to exploit oil bonanza" (*CM* 24/08/01). This immediately challenges neo-vitalist explanations of the relationship between natural resources and politics to the extent that I attest that there is something more-than-material rather than more-than-human (Whatmore 2006) at stake. For example, where does material productivity and resilience (Coole and Frost 2010, 7) come from if not after the fallout or friction when human desire brushes up against commercial or material reality? Perhaps the terms were considered synonymous with each other, something which I certainly suspect local politicians, journalists, and international diplomats of doing, simply because the physical specificities of the material itself were not of immediate political purchase. However, that the political controversy of natural may have been at times detached from commercial reality does not mean that the case study at hand is merely a

sociological phenomenon (Weszkalnys 2013). To dismiss an investigation of material ontology based on apparent ignorance or inconsistency, would renege on an opportunity to understand how natural resources featured in the wider political situation. It would be tantamount to severing the connection established between epistemology and ontology. Further, it is also the case that industry consultants, political risk managers, commodity analysts of whom I interviewed, had a mélange of interpretations of both the commercial side to the future of the island's natural gas and the island's political situation. Ultimately, there has been an effect on material ontology, commercial reality, and the course of the settlement talks. This includes: tit-for-tat exploration and drilling efforts, NAVTEX declarations, an arms-race of exploration activity, on-shore reprisal drilling in the TRNC subsequently dismissed as political posturing, the announcement of head-on commercial competition, and the projection of certain types of energy architectures. I first turn to a central and persistent material proposition of the process to develop natural gas that had become a part of popular political rhetoric: the $6-8 billion single-train LNG terminal.

5.2. A Matter of Time: LNG in the RoC.

There is a very telling remark to be found in a Turkish-Cypriot newspaper soon after the collapse of the negotiations in late 2014, amidst what would become a relative though non-existential downturn in the global natural gas industry: "those who do not want a solution to the Cyprus Problem are hiding behind gas. What has happened has happened to the negotiating table, […] we have gripped onto *an endless fight about non-*

existent gas" (HV 22/01/15 – emphasis added). Despite whatever it was that analysts of the political situation were expecting to materialise (such as the LNG facility), the fact remains that the association between the processes is based upon the future expectation of natural resource wealth and the power geometries that will seemingly be etched into stone thereafter (see Lakes 2016). Importantly, these were taken to be factors that would either potentially or certainly dictate the course of the settlement negotiations. Since Former RoC Minister of Commerce, Industry, and Tourism Nicos Rolandis received representatives of US oil majors in his office with the news of possible large hydrocarbon reserves offshore Cyprus (Rolandis 2012), the promise of a LNG terminal is but one of the many potential configurations of natural resource infrastructure posited over the years, but one that is central to visions of boundaries, potentialities, and the political character of the RoC.

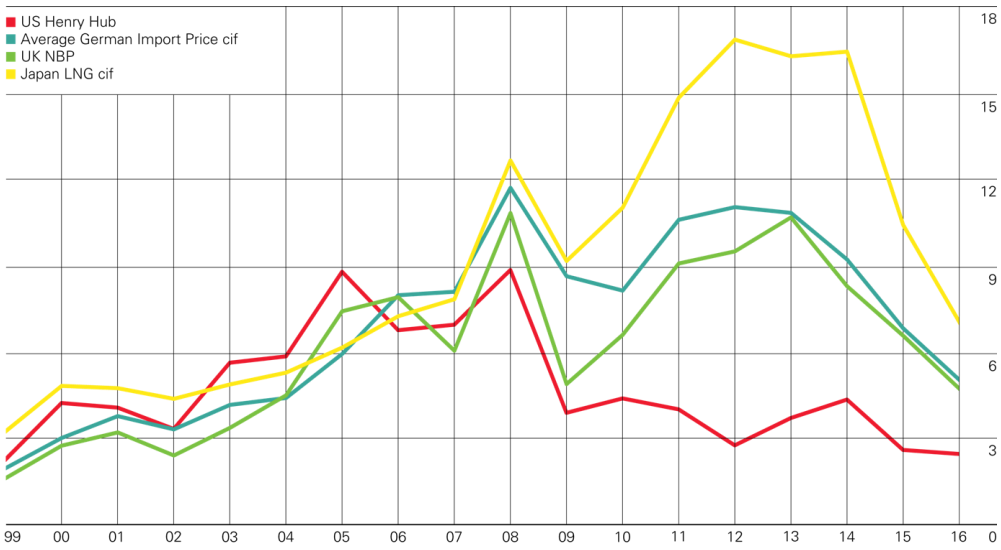
The answer to why LNG exactly came to be preferred by the RoC cannot be made without the analysis of analogous power relations. Ekstrom (2013) describes LNG as a mere political manoeuvre pushed forward due to political tensions. The advocation of LNG has been part of a future envisioned for the island and its energy mix that has had significant reverberations across RoC-Turkey and EU-Turkey relations. There have been very pronounced commercial consequences incited by the endeavour, such as the cessation of ENI's involvement in a project in Turkey ostensibly for its engagement with the Greek-Cypriots — though there surely is far more nuance to that development. But the point I make is that the notion of a future LNG terminal on the southern coast of the island near the city of Limassol in the RoC hardly waned, despite the gradual accretion of

informational enrichment (Barry 2005, 2013b). It might be suspected that economic or commercial reality would serve to dampen the controversy in a manner epitomised in the statement at the start of this Chapter: “if economics ruled, we wouldn’t even be discussing it!" (T.T.16/06/16). As argued by the authors of a MIT (2013) report commissioned by the RoC to investigate LNG prospects, economics alone will not dictate development pathway selection and monetisation options, but would instead provide context and guidance within which multiple non-economic considerations must also be accounted for. In any case, the LNG controversy presents an opportunity to investigate an unequivocal connection between temporality and ontology. The connection reveals how the pursuit of energy futures is saturated with ardent political desire on behalf of the RoC government, a desire that transcends inconvenient truths for the prospect of LNG as exemplified momentarily.

In 2011, a joint proposal was tabled by Noble Energy and Delek Group (of Israel), with the ultimate intention to construct the LNG terminal in Cyprus; a proposal which the RoC was seemingly late to capitalise upon. To this effect, in June 2012 the RoC signed a MOU with stakeholder companies envisioning a FID by 2016 and LNG exports by 2020. At the time, the CEO of Delek professed that “what had seemed a fantasy has today become a reality” (*CM* 27/06/13). This was all but one of series of MOU’s enacted by the RoC described as milestones that would eventually but certainly lead to development. In June 2013, Lakkotrypis asserted “the decision is final. The terminal will be built, the timeframes are tight, but we have not missed them” (*CM* 10/07/16). The idea of timeframes points towards the plethora of potential temporal mismatches between a discovery of natural gas and time

horizons along the value chain from commercial and government decisions (see Stern 2017, Watts 2012). Concurrently, the Vasilikos Master Plan was unveiled by the RoC and then updated as circumstances developed (RoC 2013, 2015); where a detailed plan emerged of the LNG facility that was to be built on land the RoC government had appropriated in anticipation and conducted environmental assessments for. Crucially, in October 2014, the appraisal drilling discussed in Chapter 4 resulted in a downward revision of the estimated range of natural gas in the island's sole discovery to date to 3.6 - 6 tcf with a gross mean of 4.5 tcf, alongside what is believed to be nine million barrels of condensate (Wood Mackenzie 2018). Soon after, an additional site Noble intended to drill later in 2014 was abandoned for initial assessments concluded that the site was expected to hold no more than 1.0 tcf. In essence, at this time the commercial outlook simply did not justify the construction of a LNG facility (*CM* 15/04/14).

Figure 13. Yearly Average Natural Gas Hub Prices (with contracted pipeline + LNG Imports) $/MMBtu.



Source: BP Statistical Review (2017).

Warnings had already been made before regarding the prospect of LNG, even before the fall in oil-indexed natural gas prices (Figure 13). To investigate further, I travelled to Boston to interview one of the co-authors of the said 2013 MIT report commissioned with regards to LNG feasibility on the island. In an interview, the author made a far-more sombre assessment of the commercial feasibility of the project and explained that "the reality in Cyprus was naïve to commercial realities. [...] I have a sense our nuanced approach wasn't suiting anybody" (S.T. 08/01/16). As I looked back into the newspaper archives to get a handle on the developments, what I was told in the interview seemed to be in stark contrast with the way in which the MIT report was subsequently portrayed in print media: "experts agree that a LNG plant is the best option for Cyprus" (*CM* 23/11/13). The significant downward revision of the estimated reserves of natural gas for Aphrodite meant to many informed observers that construction of a LNG terminal was no longer commercially feasible. Noble Energy would itself eventually concede publicly that LNG was no longer its priority (*KB* 6/10/14). The virtual and passive surface upon which political calculation was made (as described in Chapter 4), now encountered commercial reality.

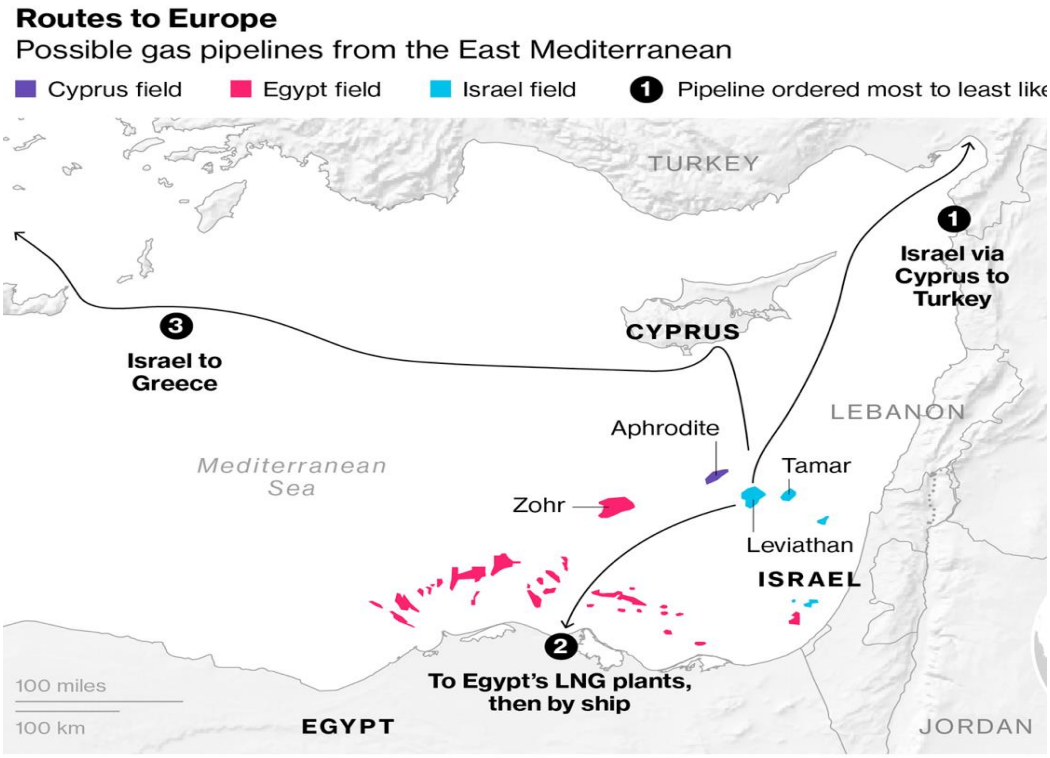
In further developments to this effect, in September 2014, TOTAL informed the RoC of its failure to identify drilling targets and its intention to renege on its contract early; an announcement which only became public knowledge in January 2015. Furthermore, around the time of the collapse of the negotiations in late 2014, two drilling ventures by ENI in December and March 2015 were also unsuccessful, whilst in tandem tensions increased as Turkey enacted responsive measures. Simply put, for the RoC it was the case the now standalone and potentially commercially stranded discovery

was simply too small to warrant standalone development in the prevailing economic climate, and the RoC would now have to find a different sort of arrangement with littoral states such as Egypt and Israel for Aphrodite to be developed; “the problem you have is not that you’ve found natural gas but that you’ve found the wrong amount!” (J.R. Morphou Conference 05/05/15). This sets up another point of discussion where the combination of potential cooperation and their analogous energy infrastructures were peddled as a solution to the RoC’s natural gas development problem, but at the same time would become a way to engineer new relations of power as further discussed in Chapter 6.

A further erroneous impression given here is that the issue is one of mere endowment of resource; a facet with implications for the way in which the resource curse theory operates. But the point I draw attention to is that from at least the time of the discovery of Aphrodite in December 2011 to the subsequent concession by Noble Energy itself that a LNG facility was no longer in fact commercially viable, the related organs of the RoC state (the newly-created CHC, Ministry of Energy, Commerce, and Tourism, and the Presidential Office), professed unanimously both the feasibility and desire for an LNG facility. True to form, for Lakkotrypis natural resource endowment was simply a matter of time: “all [development] options are on the table, the first factor is what discoveries we are going to have which will be confirmed in the immediate future” (*CM* 27/07/16). It follows that the agentic capacity of natural gas still depended on potential quantities of the resource, which in turn depended on a favourable commercial environment for exploration efforts. This implies that the ebb and flow of market dynamics became the arena within which the future of the island's natural

gas and its agentic capacity vis-á-vis the peace process was now displaced.

Figure 14. "Huge Gas Finds Can Keep Europe Warm If the Arguing Stops".



Bloomberg (06/02/17).

However, this did not mean that the imbrication of natural gas and peace ebbed away in its entirety, for various actors still peddled a concrete association between the two with little or no regard for commercial reality. For Lakkotrypis, beyond the supposed urgency of the peace process was a need to disassociate the two realms as far as possible. He himself stated that: "categorically, no. We have made it clear that this issue [natural gas development] and the Cyprus talks are a completely separate matter" (*CM* 05/11/14). There is every incentive here to separate the two processes from each other in order to attract investment and reduce political risk by way of

disentanglement from the unresolved Cyprus Problem on the way to frictionless profit (Appel 2012), and to attract the necessary investment (Giamouridis and Tsafos 2015).

But the tune here would also change, and the same Minister would later profess that the decision to award ExxonMobil and Qatar Petroleum exploration licenses had in fact a political dimension (*CM* 27/07/16). An oscillation was inherent between the dualism as a hybrid mixture and as two pure and unrelated forms (Latour 1993). What these opposing formulations show is that pending the actualisation of any final investment decision or energy infrastructure on the island, the degree to which the two processes were associated with each other varied across time. The non-linearity here is apparent in the various weights that particular events had on the peace process, as I charted in Chapter 4. From the domestic political scene, there were some RoC opposition parties (DIKO, EDEK, SYPOL) who displayed hard-line and uncompromising attitudes towards the Cyprus Problem who also peddled LNG rhetoric in the most unwaveringly manner, together with the even-more phantasmatic "East-Med" pipeline project (Figure 14). This route is still promulgated today and would perhaps again be denounced by Akıncı as "not a route to peace" and by others as a pipe dream. But the interesting discursive move here is that hopes for such a pipeline were bolstered by mere mention in a list of non-binding Projects of Common Interest compiled by the EU (2016). That the projects listed were not set in stone in the sense they did not have final investment approval, that they were merely potential projects, was often conveniently lost in translation.

The situation portrayed above is in stark contrast with those who

sought to use a crude idea of energy dependency to seal Turkey and the RoC in a seemingly unbreakable bond where alongside the solution to the Cyprus Problem:

"Cyprus [would then] become an energy hub for the whole of the Eastern Mediterranean, and all the countries in the region will benefit from the fact that Cyprus offers the easiest and cheapest way to export natural gas via pipeline starting in Larnaca, passing through Turkey, and ending in Europe" (Former RoC President Vassiliou *cited in* Kızılyürek 2014, 129).

Supportive of this idea is that the very exclusion of Turkey from the emergent architecture of energy in the region desired especially by those toward the more nationalist and far-right end of the RoC political spectrum, would prompt an opposing Turkish response. In doing so, this would merely sustain the controversy over LNG. As a former Shell representative explained to me: "there are people who do not want a solution, and they will try by hook or by crook to persuade people that it is dangerous. That's the game you know. It's not about reality it's about perception" (L.A. Interview 15/09/15). There is an affective atmosphere that can be felt here too, one that damped the hopes vested in Aphrodite and LNG and one that diminished the sheen of the island's supposedly inevitable natural gas future that seemed to lay just around the corner. "They were desperate to do it", explained another industry consultant:

"The starting point for the island should be gasifying the island. LNG; not only have you not got the resources [in the RoC], but what you've got to do is stop using expensive diesel and start using your gas. I thought I dropped my trousers! The room fell silent. […] Gasifying the island not only makes commercial sense but would lock the two communities in an unbreakable bond" (J.S. Interview, 22/12/15).

That the unruly turn of the natural gas assemblage at this time demonstrated a dissonance with political objective was not to be a knock-down development. This is because the indeterminacy of the island's natural gas future came to be appropriated in such a way so as to serve rather than diminish the political purchase attached to natural gas and its associated discussion points. In this case, indeterminacy as it concerns the commercial twists and turns of the natural gas industry in evolution (see Dahl 2015), would bolster not only a crude notion of the resource curse but the agentic capacity of the natural gas issue vis-á-vis the settlement talks (Weszkalnys 2011) — congruous with Appel *et al.*'s (2015, 9) assertion that indeterminacy of the oil industry becomes an "opening for productive discursive play". The shift from initial certainty to the truth of unpredictability of reserve estimation is also documented elsewhere by Limbert (2015) in the case of Oman.

Rather than the resource itself then, the agentic capacity of the resource and the sustenance of the natural gas issue would be found elsewhere, displaced and found in unstable developments of: price elasticity, gas-to-oil price indexation (see Batten *et al.* 2017), and macroeconomic predictions of global and regional supply and demand for natural gas especially in regions such as Egypt, Turkey, and the EU. It is these facets of the natural gas industry that became the tangible scaffolding for the political significance of natural gas; the sites of phantasmatic investment (Butler 1993). It is this maelstrom of entities and flows that have become central to the question of what exactly was at issue, which I now explore further.

5.3. An Issue of Price? The Complexity of the Global Natural Gas Industry from the Perspective of Cyprus.

A key factor that has stymied the prospect of a LNG facility and by extension the fulfilment of the RoC's concomitant political desires has been the fall of oil prices in the summer of 2014, from around $115 at the time of writing, to a figure that has hovered around the $35 mark. But the complexity of the industry goes much further. I attended a number of industry conferences in order to get a better handle on industry dynamics, to grow my network of informants, and to immerse myself at least partially in the natural gas industry from a different vantage point. What I found became a central argument of this Chapter; in line with the selective embellishment and distortion of matters of fact, it is important to situate the natural gas saga in Cyprus in the context of the complexity of the natural gas industry. There are many moving and non-linear parts I gradually became aware of and interestingly only as I ventured away from the debate on the island.

The feeling of there being other factors at stake was most palpable during the ethnographic observations I undertook of the largest natural gas conference in Europe; the FLAME conference in Amsterdam, May 2016. These aforementioned factors included: cyclical supply and demand dynamics, access to capital, downturn and upsurge of oil and natural prices, and structural issues such as maturing markets, emerging markets, the use of alternative resources such as coal or renewables, the costs of which have markedly fallen (MIT 2011, Stern 2017), other forms natural gas exploitation technology such as CNG or FLNG, and exogenous shock factors

that may affect price (see Economou *et al.* 2017). As argued in Chapter 4, the reference to price and quantity was in fact counter-productive to the curtailment of the political controversy, and equated to little more than to shift the site of decision and responsibility elsewhere so that from a situated perspective it is but an uncontrollable development and fact (Mol 1999). As became somewhat common, though at the beginning of this Chapter it was asserted that "if economics ruled, we wouldn't even be discussing it", the same speaker at the last public forum I attended at the University of Nicosia (16/06/16) contradicted his premise even though he forewarned of the creation of irrational expectations. The exchange here is indicative of the way that reference to quantity of natural gas as determinant of the future was never fully shaken-off despite the known politicisation of the matter:

Journalist: If they discover something, would that change the situation?

Greek-Cypriot Speaker: Of course.

Journalist: And how would that be?

Greek-Cypriot Speaker: If it's going to be motivator it's going to be decided on the size, and geologists argue that Zohr was a tree at the end of the forest and the forest is within the Cypriot EEZ. If that analysis is corroborated by actual drilling, then of course it will change everything but for that we must wait; I would be the last one to create irrational expectations.

The predilection on natural gas prices and the estimated magnitude of offshore discoveries must be juxtaposed with the recent structural and cyclical trends in the industry. These can be easily identified. But what is most difficult is to predict exactly the way natural gas markets will then eventualise in the future. Perhaps it is "only as we go forward we will truly see how much is structural versus cyclical" (Andrew Walker, Flame

Conference 09/05/16), where the variegated demand and supply capacities materialise. The industry forms a dynamic whole with many moving parts, where "all these different factors over will play themselves out over time" (BP Representative, Energy Stream Conference (26/10/15). A low-price environment is perceived as a precursor of future upturn as demand for cheaper natural gas should then increase. As a long-lead development business, low prices may also reduce capital expenditure. But an upside could be that "a newly capitalised and efficient gas industry could emerge" (Kathleen Eisbrenner, Flame Conference, 10/06/16). Though prediction, forecasting, and foresight are integral to the practices of commercial entities, it seemed that there were many different actors exclusively pursuing their own projects without common long-term agreement regarding the future competitiveness of the industry as a whole. The continued association of the peace and natural gas development processes must then be juxtaposed against such a dynamic commercial backdrop, and also in terms of the 'not yet' of a natural gas future (Weszkalnys 2014), which in effect leads to a politics of anticipation. As discussed in Chapter 4, the politics of anticipation manifested itself in the form of the so-called natural deadlines for the peace process, whereas for Appel *et al.* (2015, 9) "future events themselves structured by chance and contingency provide for the intrusion of seemingly non-human forces". This is a clear reification of the notion of eventalisation and the inference of the agency of natural gas.

It follows that despite the downward estimate of Aphrodite amidst a downturn in natural gas prices, the stakeholder companies alongside the RoC Energy Ministry declared that the find was in fact commercial. The next event in line was to be the Development and Production Plan. But this new

gesture (Weszkalnys 2015), would also be contingent upon a buyer would be secured to import the natural gas; an arrangement which would then be used to source the incredible amount of investment needed for the project itself (*CM* 07/06/15). Of paramount importance is that all of this came at a time when the price of RoC's natural gas was asserted to be uncompetitive when it came to European gas prices, especially when increased LNG supplies were predicted to come online from the USA; an eventuality to be subsequently met with cheaper pipeline gas provided by Russia to Eastern Europe and beyond (Charles Ellinas, Athens Conference 24/09/15).

At the time of writing, it is still possible to find allusions to LNG as high on the RoC government's wish-list, despite the fact that prospects for the facility seem to be evermore distant as denoted by developments both between Egypt and Israel and the lack of major discoveries inside the RoC's EEZ. However, these eventualities would still be subject to change, and the plethora of variables that dictate the commercial viability of a final investment decision could simultaneously work to promote and disparage the prospects of LNG — a distinction influenced by the contending political visions about the way peace in Cyprus should be achieved. As RoC Minister Lakkotrypis remarked: "the quantities are not the challenge; the amounts are there. The challenge is in the timing" (*CM* 4/10/13). I cannot help but think of the way Watts (2012) couches his discussion of politics and the oil assemblage as two frontiers, one offshore the other onshore that have dynamic yet sometimes contradictory trajectories. As another interviewee explained: "they clung onto LNG far longer than they should have. What they should have done is monetise it straight away, but they hung on to find enough to warrant an LNG plant. By the time they found out there wasn't

enough gas prices collapsed […]. The most attractive option left seemed to be Egypt, but even that might not be viable now" (F.M. Interview, 24/08/15). Again there begins to emerge a very strong connection with the theme of temporality as addressed in the previous Chapter, where both the island's energy future and peace are seen as endpoints on the horizon and as events linked along a timeline influenced by preceding events where, be it LNG, FLNG, or the conjunction of the RoC's confirmed finds with the exploitation of nearby finds in the Egyptian EEZ, the onset of natural gas and its political consequences became in effect a matter of time. Yet what had eventualised was a pessimistic state of affairs for the RoC, and such progressive informational enrichment (Barry 2005) to the contrary should have dampened political hopes for a LNG terminal; the knowledge controversy should have been abated by increased commercial intelligence to the contrary.

Yet the political spirit was never to be dampened. This signals the transcendence and dissonance between the RoC's official natural gas discourse and commercial reality to the disappointment of those who thought that commercial reality would rule out the issue of natural gas as a source of political controversy. As a former EU Commission representative to the RoC explained to me: "everybody thought there was going to be a hell of a lot of money coming the day after. […] There should be less room for speculation now in the political sphere" (Interview 20/10/15). In the same vein, at the *Global Oil and Gas Conference* I attended in Athens a month prior, a former industry consult shared the view that: "any delays in the development of Aphrodite and exploration drilling are perhaps a blessing in disguise as these take a bone of contention out of the limelight and enable

the negotiations to take place smoothly" (C.E., Athens 24/09/15). What is evident here is how normalised the association had become over time, and that a reciprocal relationship was in operation between them. Here on, the story of LNG becomes one of discursive construction (Kaup 2008), unperturbed by commercial reality and despite the earlier assurances that a LNG facility would be in operation by 2020. LNG is still envisioned to become a reality, albeit now deferred again to 2023 (Taliotis *et al.* 2017).

That the RoC would export LNG and become a regional energy hub would position itself as an essential node of regional energy network (that specifically excluded Turkey), are still popular formulations, albeit in a somewhat more sombre fashion in comparison to the earlier stages of the natural gas saga. Later, I discuss how the discovery of Zohr natural gas field in the Egyptian EEZ was interpreted in a tactful way that capitalised upon what the discovery ostensibly meant for the future of Cyprus' own discoveries. But a final point I wish to make here on the prospect of LNG is that the resolute insistence on the project suggested either a face-saving formula for its proponents or a selective perception that disentangled itself from the volatility of natural gas as a commodity. In effect, the practice of speculation — though commercially productive (Tsing 2005) — proved to be a source of unwelcome sustenance for those who wanted to rid the natural gas issue from the political sphere.

As a board member of the CHC explained to me: "the majority of politicians will try to look at every new development as an opportunity to gain advantage vis-á-vis their rivals. We should not be surprised if politicians in Cyprus and Turkey are using the potential gas resources of Cyprus to promote their own specific objectives" (M.E. Interview 03/11/15).

The point here is that resolute insistence on LNG would transcend what was to be reflected on as minor setbacks; economics did not rule in so far as public life of natural gas was concerned. Instead, there is a deferral at play amidst the rhetoric which ties in with what Appel (2011, 265), has described as an inevitable future that makes "hydrocarbons' materiality come to matter most". In the case of Cyprus, it seems that the material incidence of the island's discoveries gradually came to matter less than the inherent volatility within the industry, from which the potentiality for natural gas development would find a new lease of life. What I do now is to examine exactly why the prospect of LNG was so very dear to the RoC.

5.4. Competing Architectures of Energy and the Materialisation of Peace.

"[…] Politicians love to see lines on a map"
(B.A Gazprom Representative, Flame Conference, 09/06/16)

The situation in Cyprus remains that of first oil (Weszkalnys 2016), where to use Deleuzian language: there is a virtual scenario at play; a potential that may or may not pass into an actual state (Woodward *et al.* 2009). The central questions at stake included when the offshore fields would be exploited, what markets would soak-up the supply, what extractive technology would largely be used in the process, and not the more mundane facts such as the fact that the Aphrodite field is a biogenic gas accumulation that resulted from a preservation window associated with a rapid unloading and loading cycle in the Messinian Salinity Crisis *ca.* 5.96 million years ago (Al-Balushi *et al.* 2017). There is a very interesting discussion to be had here

about the ever-growing but also inconsistent series of material entities that became part of the controversy from the perspective of Cyprus: the Aphrodite field, the Zohr field of Egypt, Leviathan and Tamar fields of Israel, as well as natural gas transportation technologies such as CNG, LNG, FLNG, pipelines to Europe, LNG terminals in Egypt, and so on. In this section, I ask: what exactly were these nodes in the energy network meant to do? What providence would such developments in the natural gas industry beyond Cyprus seemingly have for the island and its infamous problem?

Barry (2001, 212) suggests that "what is inventive is not the novelty of artefacts and devices in themselves, but the novelty of the arrangements with other objects and activities within which artefacts and instruments are situated and might be situated in the future". In tandem, Watts (2009, 11) writes that "the oil and gas industry is a cartographers' wet-dream: a landscape of lines, axes, nodes, points, blocks and flows". It has already been established that the gradual accruement of knowledge as the political controversy exposed the limited understanding of the natural gas industry from the local and situated perspective, where only a curated list of recently-discovered natural gas fields were espoused. These cartographic endeavours are often taken to be reductive or simplistic accounts of the reality of the natural gas industry. Understandably there is an inherent limitation involved in the practice of map-making. It is also the case that cartographic representations become synonymous with abstract inter-state power geometries, or the power geometry of time-space compressions (see Massey 1991), and thereon become the subject of intense political discussion as Barry (2013b) and Shaffer (2009) have discussed in terms of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline. The point I raise here is that the association

between the peace and natural gas development process had not only a temporal, but also a spatial dimension.

An illustration of this comes from an interviewee who mapped for me in a back-of-the- envelope fashion the spatial analogue of the so-called catalyst for peace: “I actually need to draw you a picture […], this is where the catalyst for peace is. After we’ve gotten the agreement with Turkey, putting a pipeline straight all the way up here because our best customer is Europe” (A.L 16/12/15). This would certainly concur with the way Turkey and the Turkish-Cypriots wanted the island's natural gas to be developed, and the idea constitutes a point of departure toward the notion of energy dependence that ostensibly locks states into more peaceable terms with each other; a logic encompassed within the long shadow of Malthusian scarcity (Watts 2012). Similarly, an ENI official explained to me: "we speak of an East Med hub as a supply hub for the region and it’s an opportunity for cooperation for the countries of the region, and then to become also a source of supply for Europe. But if you use an LNG you can go anywhere. […] I think the first incentive for Cyprus is to put in production its own gas before exporting other gas” (Interview, ENI HQ, Rome 30/05/16).

In contrast to static representations of future natural gas wealth, it is useful to juxtapose geometries of potential energy flows with the inherent dynamism of the natural gas industry alongside the fact that at present, the commercial exploitation of the island’s natural gas discovered is but a distant ontological reality; no export market(s) have been secured — be it Egypt or Europe or Asia — no infrastructure (savour the occasional presence of offshore drilling and surveying ships) have been semi-permanently installed, no final investment decisions have been made. The production

decisions of other IOC's inevitably go on to affect price (Kheiravar *et al.* 2018), and the inter-firm competition is but another factor to account for where a spate of seemingly inactive periods of commercial activity may not only be dictated by price but also a strategic pause in lieu of market development; "this was a very common feature of the industry. Typically, it's first come first serve so being the first you can have some advantage" (ENI HQ, Interview 30/05/16). This points towards various forms of a potential energy architectures or counter-topographies (see Katz 2001) between supply and demand, potential competition between firms, and the apparent relations of power that can be engineered from energy flows (cf. Mitchell 2009), all of which could seemingly eventualise in the Eastern Mediterranean Sea, and all of which were associated with political agendas imbued with the idea of peace as now discussed.

The Turkish and Turkish-Cypriot rhetoric was characterised by assuredness that Turkey represented the most commercially viable route for natural gas in the Eastern Mediterranean, where Turkey was the most "advantageous geography" (Turkish Energy Minister, KB 27/09/14), and that inevitably "the Turkish option will be necessary for Israel and Cyprus" *KB* 27/12/14). Akıncı of the TRNC associated the notion of peace and a settlement of the Cyprus Problem to a specific form of energy infrastructure: "imagine Cyprus like this: on the one hand an energy corridor over Cyprus and Turkey to Europe [...]. This may seem like a dream now, but we must have this dream and expend effort to realise this dream" (*DY* 14/10/15). Similarly, Turkish Foreign Minister Davutoglu explained that: "whatever gas comes out from around Cyprus, Turkey is the easiest place to transport it to and where it will be most used. Turkey is also the easiest way for this gas to

reach international market. Therefore, no one should use energy as a weapon. 'If I use energy to impose the kind of peace I want', this will destroy the negotiations" (*KB* 25/12/15). This is a clear example of how peace as a political goal acquires a material analogue and which also pertains to the idea of peace being not "simply about the control of territory, but even more about the control of resources and their circulation" (Koopman 2011, 111).

Akıncı himself supported the idea of a pipeline to Turkey, but also raised the stakes for his own electorate as well: "if we do not solve the Cyprus Problem, if it cannot be solved, we are likely to remain outside of the energy question, both Turkish-Cypriots and Greek Cypriots" (*CM* 01/07/16). The possibility of such a pipeline to Turkey for the Greek-Cypriots was not beyond the realm of the possible: "they'd actually be happy to sell gas to Turkey. It's just this political situation messing everything up!" (G.L. Interview 29/09/15) — though it is widely recognised that this project development pathway is ruled out without peace in Cyprus (MIT 2013). This demonstrates the paradox of non-cooperation between the TRNC, RoC, and Turkey, as alluded to further in Chapter 6. Unsurprisingly, the commercial realities of the Turkish natural gas market were not a frictionless account as political discourse professed it to be, and they faced the same pitfalls as RoC political discourse portrayed both Egypt and the EU as potential supply destinations. In essence, crude balances of supply and demand were to be used by both sides to project different natural gas futures that were saturated with 'frictionless-ness' (Appel 2011). But a nuanced analysis of LNG supply and demand paints a far more fractious picture contrary to much of the conventional and general wisdom that has been apparent in so far as I have been able to detail, for natural gas is not a global commodity in

the same vein as oil is and is therefore more susceptible to local and regional factors.

On this point, the apparent growth of the Turkish market was never a given and depended much on a coalescence of factors endemic to Turkey and the wider natural gas industry. For one observer of the Turkish natural gas market, the first port of call to explain the potentiality of the island's natural gas being set to Turkey lay exogenously in the supply and demand dynamics: "first port of call: supply and demand!" (A.S. Interview 09/03/16). In retrospect, although Turkey has seen a decline in gas consumption in the field of electricity generation, by other proxy measures such as residential and industrial use, the picture of forecasted declining demand of natural gas is no longer easily maintainable. It is subject to further scrutiny such as gas import prices and volatility thereof (Austvik and Rzayeva 2016). Rather than using either the existence of natural gas or the imminent prospect of further discoveries, or the possible sprawling of regional energy networks, a key facet of Turkish and Turkish-Cypriot rhetoric was to gesture to the non-existence of natural gas and at times, to advocate an alternative architecture of energy:

> “I would just not worry about this find [Aphrodite] because number one, it’s deep water and its high cost, prices are going down, remember the oil prices started going down in June 2014. We’re in November and they went from 110 bucks to 60 bucks, […] this is not economic, this is not commercial, so everybody is fighting about nothing and we still have assertions about LNG in Cyprus” (M.M, Interview 09/12/15).

In the context of both material agency and ontology, “part of the world makes itself differentially intelligible to another part of the world through

local causal structures, boundaries, and properties are stabilised and destabilised" (Barad 2003, 817). The sensitivity to locality is an even more pertinent vis-á-vis the evolving natural gas industry, which cannot really be termed a global commodity but a more regional and rigid establishment (Tsafos 2018). Using differentiation as a point of departure, I now contrast the Turkish and Turkish-Cypriot view with that of the RoC's spatial analogues for the island's natural gas future, and then discuss further the concealed complexity of the natural gas industry.

5.5. "Everyone wants to be an Energy Hub!" — Constructive Ambiguity in the Industry.

Alongside grandiose visions of an East-Med pipeline, as a key node within the regions envisioned energy infrastructure the LNG terminal was to be a material conduit that would fulfil the RoC's to be integrated into a wider energy network; as a "fundamental and necessary infrastructure [...] for the export of Cypriot natural gas to the European and global markets" (Lakkotrypis *CM* 27/06/13). Newspaper archives, interview material, conference and public forum presentations were time and time again been littered with the subject of LNG, but specifically noted the future ability of the RoC to supply what was pictured as a ceaseless demand for flexible LNG supply globally. This would allow the RoC to bypass the assumed inflexibility of a pipeline to Turkey — though of course inflexibility not only concerns the type of infrastructure to be built, but there is a degree of limitation and inflexibility as to potential destinations for supply, where long-term contracts pose a barrier for new volumes of LNG brought onto the

market by the RoC to immediately displace higher-cost supply (MIT 2013).

The reason why this piece of infrastructure was so pivotal is that it would enable the transformation of the island into another oft-mentioned and inter-related phrase that I repeatedly encountered; that of Cyprus as a "regional energy hub" (Shammas 2013). "Everybody wants to be a hub!" remarked an industry consultant to me during an informal conversation in-between panel discussion at 2nd London Oil & Gas Industry Conference I subsequently attended to try and build commercial awareness (T.D. 26/10/15). Fırat (2016) has discussed elsewhere how material infrastructures are synonymous with a political ethos of materialised power, where to become an energy hub means to be more relevant. In the public life of such rhetoric in Cyprus, I have found no evidence whatsoever to suggest that proponents of the island as some sort of gas hub went into detail about whether the island would become a trading, transit, or transition hub (Heather 2012). Different hubs across the world have their own bespoke and competing pricing mechanisms, supply and demand challenges, storage capacities, spot prices and legacy contracts, as well as regulatory practices (Hulshof *et al.* 2016).

But the potency of the idea of being a hub came from the connection to the idea of an abstracted political choke point in energy transmission for the Greek-Cypriots: "they frequently assert that they have a special place as a hub and that kind of critical, you may even call it a chokepoint for the transmission of energy to Europe" (Former U.S Ambassador, Interview 08/12/15). The political clout to be derived from them depended on traditional discourses of energy dependence and related projections of resource scarcity, that have so heavily featured in discussions of the history

of oil (see Mitchell 2011), and one that has been erringly transplanted into discussions of natural gas. Shaffer (2013) has shown that gas trade between states does not mean interdependence, and that most gas supply relationships do not display the sort of two-way interdependence necessary peace pipeline logic. It was this potentiality then, the control and power the RoC would supposedly have as a key route for the natural gas to Europe in what must have been envisioned as significant proportions, as well as a more enhanced relationship with other states begotten from these links, that featured in simple political grandstanding with an element of spite against Turkey. "Without any doubt" a Greek-Cypriot academic told me, "this was an opportunity to raise the strategic profile of Cyprus in the region and the EU, it was a strategic asset" (C.C. 24/08/15).

All of this came at a time of heightened optimism in the industry that my period of fieldwork overlapped with. Institutions such as the IEA (2017a) described an LNG-driven natural gas revolution and a few years before, a Golden Age of Gas (2012). The revolution denoted the expected increase in availability of LNG supply and diversification of supply sources that challenge traditional industry business models, namely that of long-term, take or pay contracts associated with pipeline gas. Shorter-term contracts and spot market transactions were to rise having already increased from 2 per cent to 30 per cent of total LNG flows between 2000-2015 (Pirrong 2017). But the so-called LNG revolution is not a seamless transition and one that the RoC official government discourse could so easily appropriate. From upstream discovery, to liquefaction, to transportation, regasification, to market and end-use prices, there are numerous commercial, political, and technological challenges to overcome as the LNG industry confronts an

established non-liquefied industry.

The general perception of the natural gas industry that RoC officials saw the clout of the RoC as a political entity enhanced by an inclusion in the so-called natural gas revolution. That gas consumption worldwide has grown 25 per cent since 2007 (Bridge and Bradshaw 2017), can certainly be true. But this would only be part of the picture and would give the false impression that natural gas consumption has increased in a seamless fashion and will continue to do so continuously, where foreign policy objectives may move against modelled geopolitical assumptions that point toward energy market coalitions (see Fang *et al.* 2012). I have already stated the downturn in natural gas prices. But it may also be the case that the so-called LNG glut envisaged to occur may be offset by incited growth in demand, that a low-price environment may create further demand that would dictate the need for further supply. It is not a simple one-way linear relationship. Thus, how the story of natural gas price would unfold was not predictable.

This indeterminacy at hand would be capitalised by RoC officials who attempted to put a positive spin on a commercial situation in a revitalised and optimistic discursive script (Bakker 2002). The RoC's grandiose material imagination of becoming an energy hub though LNG may have suffered a setback, yet this pause allowed for a reorientation of speculation. Domestic demand across both sides of the divide would never be enough to warrant the independent development of Aphrodite (MIT 2013), nor would the commercial conditions emerge for RoC natural gas to be sent to Egypt whose voracious demand for natural gas became increasingly likely to be met by the successive onshore and offshore discoveries it had made such as the

Zohr field, though there are other competing dynamics that may in fact make it more attractive to re-export via Egypt than supply the Egyptian market itself (see Tsafos 2015). But it remains that the potentiality of the RoC's natural gas future found a new thoroughfare based not only on the inherent indeterminacy within the industry but with the contentious view to sell natural gas to Egypt.

In March 2015, a MOU was signed with Egypt's state-run EGAS for a feasibility study exploring the construction of a pipeline carrying Aphrodite gas to Egypt (MEES 18/09/15). Egyptian Minister Ismail mused: "Cairo can import as much gas as Cyprus can sell" (PH 26/11/14). I overheard the same profession at the side-lines of the Energy Stream Conference in Nicosia in March 2016; a representative of the Egyptian Ministry of Petroleum in a post-speech conversation retorted that there was without a doubt room for "all the gas" of Israel and the RoC. RoC official discourse gestured to the possibility of the development of Aphrodite by referring to factors that could not be predicted with certainty to occur, yet maintained the potential of future natural gas development and the emergence of regional energy networks: "[…] a liquefaction terminal in Cyprus is not feasible now. In this context, all options toward regional cooperation are being explored" (*CM* 10/07/16). The domestic market of Egypt was perceived and relayed in political discourse as an ever-growing, power-hungry market: "the gas found in Cyprus on its own may not warrant the building of a massive infrastructure such as an onshore LNG plant, but the region collectively may well have the potential for the building and maintaining of such an infrastructure. […] Now it might be possible to do this through Cyprus" (Gürel *et al.* 2013, 50). This again set-up what became another game-

changing development: the discovery of Zohr inside the Egyptian EEZ as I now discuss.

5.6. Zohr: The Game Changer and the Egyptian Market — "Watch this Space!".

> "It's a very dynamic market and a very dynamic industry, […] there is a possibility the Egyptian market will be satisfied and so a surplus will exist that should find its way to Europe. […] Cyprus has a role to play; watch this space"
>
> (Toula Onoufriou, CHC President, 7th Mediterranean Oil & Gas Industry Forum, March 2016, Nicosia).

The RoC's material imaginations confronted with what was seen as a death-knell for some and an opportunity for others. In August 2015, ENI reported a game-changing discovery in Egyptian waters: the 30 tcf. super-giant Zohr field, which became the largest discovery to date within the entire Mediterranean Sea. For many spectators, the meaning of this discovery for Cyprus was that any plans to sell natural gas to Egypt was now dead in the water (*CM* 31/09/15). RoC opposition parties berated heavily the incumbent government for missing an earlier window of opportunity to exploit the RoC's natural gas (*PH* 01/09/15), particularly at a time when contractual obligations plagued lingered-on in connection with the supply of natural gas to Egypt's two now-idle LNG terminals. Former head of the CHC and now industry consultant Charles Ellinas explained that: "the discovery of Zohr has given Egypt a massive boost but has turned the East Med plans upside down…all the possibilities are changing" (*CM* 31/09/15).

Though the door for some speakers on the supply of RoC gas to Egypt was now firmly shut, others maintained the possibility but later conceded to

a sheer lack of any urgency with Cyprus' discovery (J.S. Interview, 22/12/15), as Zohr stole the limelight of regional observers. For Egypt, the Zohr discovery was envisioned as something that would pave the way for the country to be self-sufficient with regards to its energy needs and enable the country to become an LNG exporter by 2021. Export plans by the RoC and Israel to Egypt were always commercially difficult (Ellinas *et al.* 2016), and now they seemed no longer commercially feasible. Yet, irrespective of commercial difficulties the RoC maintained optimism in the public sphere by embellishing Cyprus' discoveries in the context of an imagined wider natural gas network. Lakkotrypis created an upside to the discovery of Zohr for Cyprus. The rhetoric changed from the possibility of supplying Egypt to the reinvigorated potential that further discoveries lay within the RoC's EEZ since the Zohr is adjacent to Block 12 (Figure 15), where TOTAL had previously failed to find a suitable drilling target: "it is a highly significant development. ENI's first [drilling] results within Egypt's Exclusive Economic Zone serve to upgrade, in an energy context, the Eastern Mediterranean, which can now play an ever-bigger role as an alternative energy corridor to Europe and beyond" (CM 02/09/15).

The presumption was that the Zohr discovery would have "geological, geopolitical and commercial ramifications" (*CM* 31/08/15). Thus, hopes for more gas discoveries on the Cypriot side were reified as now rather than Miocene-era sand deposits, the knowledge introduced into the public sphere was that the carbonate formations of Zohr were to be found inside the RoC EEZ (*CM*, 11/06/17). In an interview with a member of the RoC Ministry of Energy, again it was the discovery of Zohr that played a major role and introduced into discourse the idea of the carbonate play that was seen to

also extend into the RoC EEZ. This form of informational enrichment went hand-in-hand with reinvigorated interest palpable in natural gas talk (Z.G. Interview 22/04/16). In contrast to my interview with a representative of ENI (the Italian company who made the Zohr discovery and held a stake in the RoC EEZ), talk of energy hubs and regional cooperation was mainstay. Yet the role the RoC had to play in ENI's grand designs was diminutive compared with RoC official discourse:

> "We have discovered only 20 per cent of the gas that is possible. There's more to come in terms of discoveries, and at that point, if you have more gas you can sustain more investments. In the short-term, the Egypt route the cheapest because of the infrastructure already available. [...] The whole region can absorb an interesting quota of all this gas, so of course the first destination of the gas is the region, and then we can have the opportunity to export it (Interview, ENI HQ, Rome 30/05/16).

Figure 15. *Proximity between Zohr and Aphrodite.*

[The map presented here cannot be made freely available due to copyright concerns].

Source: Wood Mackenzie (2018).

Further to such predictions of supply and demand, in the last address of the 7th Mediterranean Oil and Gas Forum in March 2016, around about the time of the announcement of the 3rd Licensing Round which was a direct result of the RoC's new-found optimism following the discovery of Zohr, there would be a contending spectrum of views on this new development. A representative of TOTAL (the Head of LNG supply) who was close to retirement, was the final speaker. He asserted frankly that the priority for Cyprus should be to focus upon its own domestic market before chasing grand designs of international exports; an opinion I have mentioned before. I was fortunate enough to meet the same speaker again at the FLAME conference in Amsterdam, May 2016. In a conversation over lunch, he said that he would not be speaking about Cyprus in his address; he had been told that he "talked too much". Unfettered optimism certainly seemed to be the affective tone valued in the industry, especially in the conference setting as I discuss further in Chapter 7. Indeed, optimism was an enforced mantra of the natural gas industry, lest one may miss unforeseen developments and fail to capitalise on potential opportunities.

During the March 2016 conference, the head of the CHC span the yarn that Zohr increased rather than decreased the commercial prospects of Aphrodite and the RoC's EEZ; as expected from the head of the national hydrocarbons company. Onoufriou repeated that the Egyptian market is still the RoC's preference, even though the acknowledgement was made that Zohr would be fast-tracked for the Egyptian internal market's burgeoning needs. It is here that a leap of imagination took place. How would Egypt's domestic needs change over time? When would Zohr come online? Would there still be a deficit that could be plugged with RoC and Israeli gas, or

should the focus remain on exporting RoC and Israeli gas from Egypt's two idle LNG facilities Idku and Damietta? Onoufriou would only reveal that the CHC was "working in that direction" and continued to promote such things as the RoC being the only EU state in the region. A member of the RoC Energy Ministry later explained the inactive status of the Egyptian LNG terminals as a positive sign that pointed towards burgeoning demand in the country. This made the idea of RoC supplies to Egypt seem all the more realistic (Interview 22/04/16), despite calls of the "same tired old bullshit" as a journalist remarked beside me.

During the 2nd London Oil & Gas Forum in November 2015, the same individual advocated that:

> "Although there are new fields now in Egypt including the discovery of Zohr, but at the same time there is still a lot of shortage of energy as Egypt is a very big market and it's expanding. A deficit is expected till 2020 and beyond, the deficit is managed currently through LNG imports and new discoveries will assist to cover mainly the domestic demand. But the Egyptian internal consumption continues to grow. It seems the more gas you give to the market the more it needs gas".

The natural gas controversy then, if predicated solely upon market dynamics shows an inherent dynamism that is interpreted differently by various actors much in the same way as the concept of peace is also polysemic. The assemblage of feedback mechanisms and the analytical models used by various actors in this vast industry present a vertigo of information to deal with. But what I have done thus far in this Chapter is to give a comprehensive overview of how some of the main points of controversy associated with the natural gas development processes have been lived. There is no automatic reason why any such development should

have ramifications for the peace process, but the main point is that speculation, projection, and indeterminacy, meant that the issue of natural gas would always have a source of sustenance come what may. It follows that the future of Cyprus' natural gas is best understood in critical and nuanced investigations of future projections of natural gas supply and demand, and related fundamental measures in target market states, in what has been presented as a delayed yet inevitable fashion.

5.7. Circulating Referents in Fieldwork: The Discursive Construction of Natural Gas and LNG in Action.

Time and again, what I have encountered of the discursive mechanism by which the peace and natural gas processes have been associated has been a series of development plans, premonitions, techno-scientific feasibility studies, all a plethora of maps that detail lines, nodes, points, blocks, and flows, of an imagined architecture of energy. These are not only reductive and static representations of political desire, but the spatial embodiments of a common denominator that presents a united front between issues of affect, power, knowledge, and the supposed agency of natural resources. This includes mediation between empirical proxies such as: profit expectation, national interest, and what is made public of scientific matters of fact such as basin geology (Weszkalnys 2014). These are the technical devices through which resources "and their capacity for their control are achieved" (Bridge 2014, 120). I have stated before that discourse produces the effect it names (Butler 1993). But what Butler also highlights is that the detail of discursive practice is often littered reiterative and

citation endeavours that regulates the way in which material ontology is understood.

One such circulating reference was a 2010 USGS report that often came up across the spectrum of discursive material that I repeatedly encountered across various conference presentations, public forums, and newspapers articles. In fact, I had first heard of the report in October 2013 at a conference convened by PRIO and located in the buffer zone in Nicosia. At the time, an ex-industry consultant asserted then that "a 2010 USGS report estimates the reserves in the Levant Basin Province of the Eastern Mediterranean at 122 tcf. These are not defined as 'reserves' because they haven't been 'discovered' or 'proven'. Cyprus's actual reserves are at present zero despite the recent drilling of an appraisal well at the Aphrodite field" (Gürel *et al.* 2013, 49). The speaker would later explain in an interview that "there are people who do not want a solution, and they will try by hook or by crook to persuade people that it is dangerous. That's the game you know. It's not about reality it's about perception" (A.L. 15/09/15). I again encountered the report in January 2015, when I attended the *Eastern Mediterranean Energy Outlook for 2016* at the GMF in Washington D.C. Though it was posited that the Aphrodite field was significant for the region itself and a game-changer in terms of supply, the tone changed when it came to Cyprus' export plans.

To gesture to a potential of future natural gas quantities went hand-in-hand with the indeterminacy of knowledge regarding the material. This is an important part of the discursive mechanism by which the association between the two processes was maintained. Weszkalnys' (2015) research in Saõ Tomé and Príncipe is particularly relevant to Cyprus. In the absence of

discoveries of the magnitude that would warrant context-specific commercial development, to sustain the not-yet of future natural resource exploitation (a sort of ontology in the process of materialising), Weszkalnys (2015) describes gestures as the instances where nothing is being produced or acted but rather something is being endured and supported. In Cyprus, despite the material absence of any natural resources in the present, the resource is brought into reality as a: "protracted and precarious achievement based on a speculative epistemology and reliant on specific technical, legal, and commercial practices, [...] instruments that aim to facilitate petroleum production – such as contracts, exploration zones, and test wells [...], that gesture to resource potentiality without compelling a predetermined outcome" (*ibid.* 612). The gestures summoning the impending materialisation of a LNG facility took the form of a series of development proposals, MOU's, licensing rounds, and a series of trilateral government-level meetings between the RoC, Egypt, Israel, and Greece. The Cairo Declaration (November 2014), Nicosia Declaration (April 2015), Athens Declaration (December 2015) all included the statement that: "hydrocarbon reserves in the Eastern Mediterranean can serve as a catalyst for regional cooperation", closely followed by a political position on the Cyprus Problem.

These practices constitute the "tangible scaffolding to the drama that attracts investment to what is largely a speculative endeavour" (Weszkalnys 2015, 624). The point here is that precarious certainties carved out of uncertainty (Samimian-Darash 2013), have furthered political controversy. This hides the indeterminate and speculative nature of governmental, financial, and techno-scientific practices that operate behind-the-scenes. The report in question had been used in such a way as to imply a definitive

volume of hydrocarbons that simply awaited drilling. However, there are important distinctions between estimated and proved reserves; a point of detail that has often gone amiss in public political discourse. Proven reserves are still estimations of hydrocarbons inferred to exist with reasonable certainty (probability of recovery 90 per cent or greater), and further, are recoverable under existing economic and operating conditions (EIA 2016, Limbert 2015). This is but one source of uncertainty amidst the various field variables involved in the process, particularly as it concerns a resource frontier such as the Eastern Mediterranean (Watts 2012).

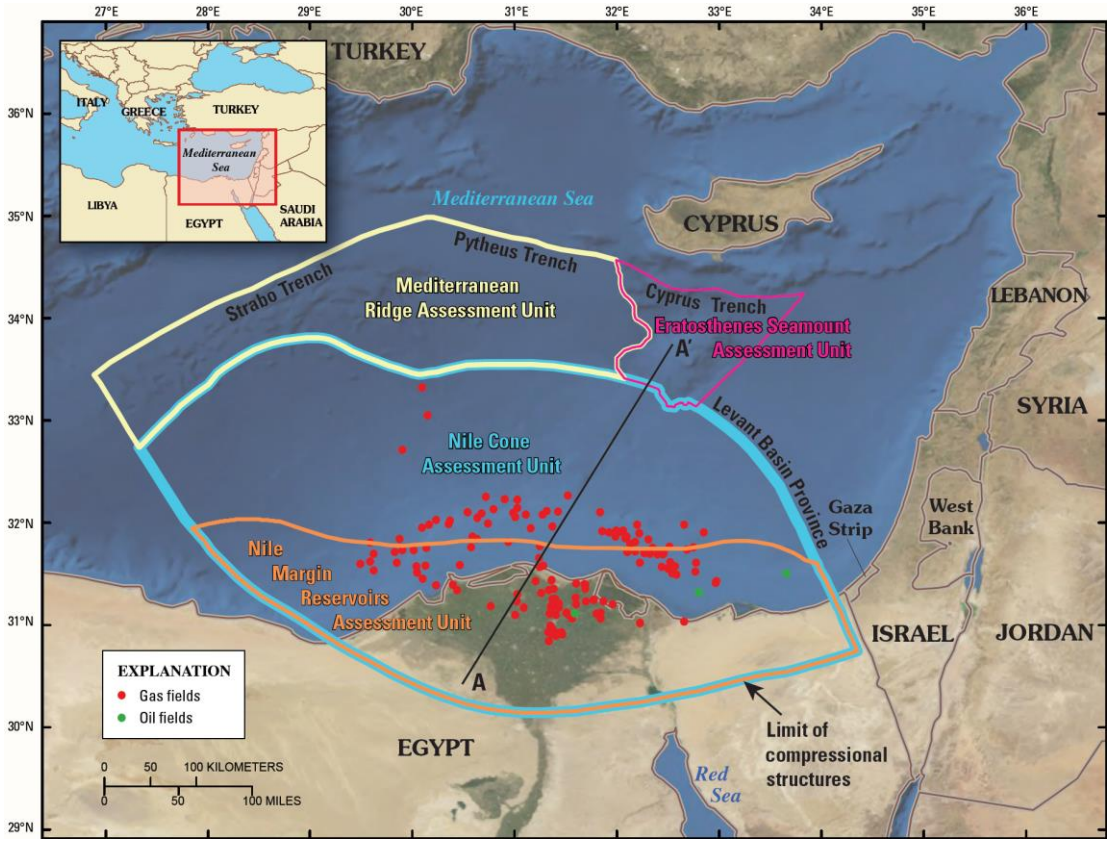
Estimated reserves merely point out to base-line geological formulations regarding quantities of natural gas, minus factors of existing technology or economic conditions. There is "a science of course to estimating hydrocarbon resource in plays and recovery rates and so on, but it's all moot, you need to drill the wells and find the structures. […] What matters is not that there's oil and gas out there, but there's oil and gas that can be commercialised, and there are many places in the world waiting for those elements to come together" (S.T. Interview, MIT. Boston 08/01/16). The USGS report makes no attempt to estimate economically recoverable quantities of resources, but instead estimates quantities of technically recoverable resources. It focuses on what is estimated to exist, with a methodology that collates previous reports, proxy data, and commercial data, within a large chunk of Cartesian space in the Eastern Mediterranean (Figures 16 & 17). More so, the fact that the USGS assessment areas partially overlapped with the RoC's EEZ blocks, though not fully. Of note is the fact that the report and figures below also feature in the EU Commission (2017) report mentioned earlier.

The final experience I will recount is an interview with a former member of the RoC Electricity Regulatory Authority (23/11/15), where it was explained to me that FLNG would instead be the most suitable energy infrastructure for Cyprus in the current economic climate, and that he would go on to promote this form of energy infrastructure for the island in an upcoming industry-related conference. Our conversation was abruptly interrupted by what turned out to be an incredible telephone exchange, one that speaks volumes for the length RoC officials went to in order to maintain the hegemonic position of the government. A member of the CHC called the interviewee and reiterated the position of the government on LNG, to which my informant sought to quell the situation with the explanation that he would only speak of FLNG as a possible solution and not as the most viable one — which very much backtracked on what had been said to me moments ago. It was clear then that the discursive construction of the island's natural gas future would vary and that at times the RoC's natural gas future would materialise in multiple forms (Mol 1999).

5.7. The Power of Language: Material Recalcitrance versus Matters of Language?

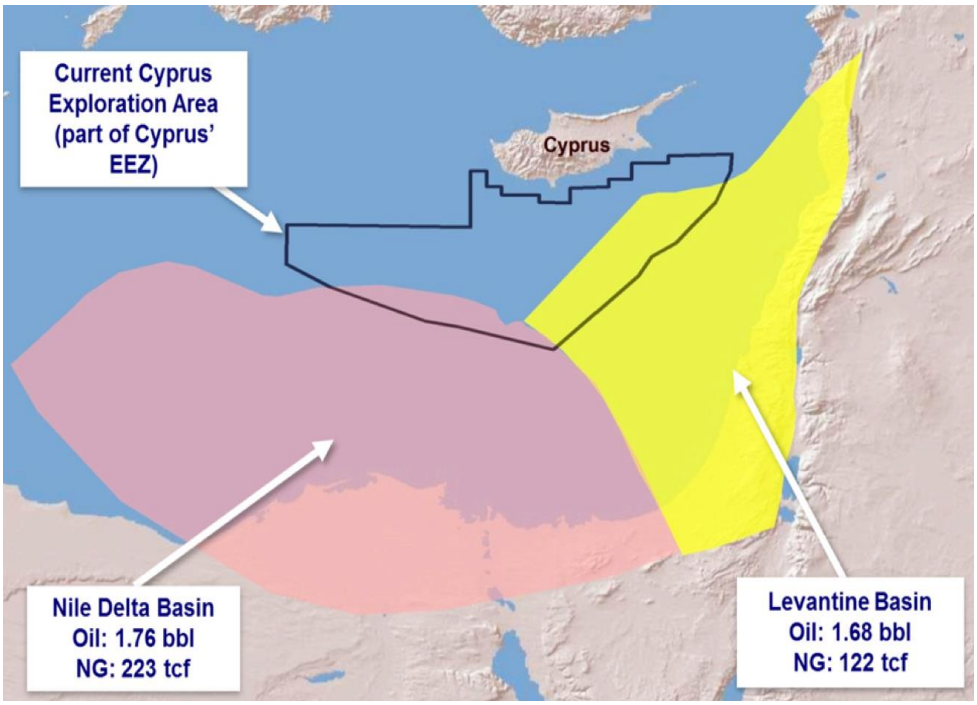
I have found it impossible to forget an assertion levied to me by an international lawyer stationed with UNFICYP who I interviewed. She explained that: "it's not about natural gas, it's everything else it means" (S.H. Interview 04/06/16). This point relates to the earlier inconsistency of terms that have come up during the course of the natural gas saga in Cyprus, but it is also by no means a discrepancy endemic to the island.

Figure 16. Assessment Regions of the USGS 2010 Report.



https://pubs.usgs.gov/fs/2010/3027/pdf/FS10-3027.pdf

Figure 17. Licence Block/Assessment Unit.



http://conservativepapers.com/news/2013/11/06/cyprus-joins-the-middle-east/

The point here also ties in with the very central disposition I have against material or environmental determinism subsumed under the notion of the resource curse. In this regard, I concur with Weszkalnys (2011, 2013, 2014), that the resource curse comes in complex and nuanced articulations intimately related to a politics of anticipation, posturing, anxiety, all of which add to the idea of a non-essential and socio-material resource affect. The potentially of natural gas as a curse or blessing; as a catalyst for peace for those wish to signal and to draw attention to their ostensibly unyielding commitment to peace (a certain kind of peace nevertheless), is discursively constructed. For the Greek-Cypriots, this I have demonstrated to come in the form of a LNG terminal, an offshore FLNG solution, or indeed any solution for that matter that avoids the supply of the Turkish domestic market or the transit of the RoC's gas through Turkish territory. The analogy used by some RoC officials is that of the Russia-Ukraine experience, where the idea is that Russia 'turns off the taps' to draw political concessions.

Therefore, beyond the potential of future natural gas wealth or the future division of federal powers between Turkish-Cypriot and Greek-Cypriot, a complex and nuanced form of the resource curse is apparent that goes beyond the UN sponsored negotiations on the island. This finds its place in the arteries of the global natural gas industry, in latent and planned infrastructures that go far beyond the context of Cyprus, and in future projections of an end-point energy architecture which again come replete with an unmissable temporal politics. As a Vice-President of TOTAL declared at the 7th Mediterranean Oil & Gas Industry Forum in Nicosia, March 2016: "it's not just about the gas, it's about markets. Find the markets and

everything else will follow". It is by virtue of a pipeline's relation to a wider conglomeration of infrastructure from which it is said to deserve its intrinsic power. The politics of the Cyprus Problem are therefore displaced beyond the island and are to be found articulated through spatial metaphors of energy hubs, in the language of energy security, and in partial and simplified accounts of how the natural gas industry actually operates. As argued in Chapter 4 and in this Chapter, the displacement enacted carries material agency to external factors seemingly under the control of the TRNC, RoC, and Turkey, where the indeterminacy of the industry was used to contribute to the efficacy of the material (Weszkalnys 2014).

This serves to move the discussion beyond a textbook regurgitation of material matters of fact in so far as they are known, and points towards the principle of relationality. The biological, chemical, physical, properties known of materials matter, argue Bakker and Bridge (2006, 21), "because of the way its heterogeneity differentially enables, contains and or disrupts the social practices through which resource regulation is achieved". Similarly, the authors of the MIT (2011, 3) report on *The Future of Natural Gas* assert that "inflexible pipeline infrastructure gives strong political and economic power to those countries that control pipelines". In both cases, there lies the danger of lapsing into a veiled form of environmental determinism. But that so-called power is also not self-evident; it is more of a potential that can be actualised in the future. These variables should not be seen as the be-all and end-all causal mechanisms that can predict the future without fault.

There are a myriad of variables with various feedback mechanisms between them that all have to aggregate together for development to proceed. This includes the size, scope, and facility of an IOC, as an informant at the

Egyptian Embassy in Nicosia said to of Noble Energy: "[…] they're not even the biggest twenty; when it comes to serious steps they have come to find someone else to do the job" (A.B. Interview 30/11/15). Without the fortuitous properties of a natural gas to be combusted and then propel the generation of electricity or heating, of course it would not be a resource and of course it would not be part of the discussion. But it remains that the "preoccupation with so-called natural resources at the expense of human and cultural resources precludes a clear comprehension of the true nature of resources and a full grasp of their extent" (Zimmermann 1945, 160). Although it may pass the philosophical principle of Occam's razor that the simpler explanation is better, the flexibility seemingly offered by LNG that seemingly overhauls political risk is a far too simplistic assertion for a very complex set of circumstances as highlighted in this Chapter.

In one case, the inter-related formulation between geopolitics and commercial realities becomes evident when juxtaposed with the explanation that a former TRNC Foreign Minister had with the period of natural gas détente that had seemingly occurred after the election of Mustafa Akıncı in the TRNC in April 2015: "everything depends on the momentum and the climate of the negotiation process" (E.Ç 29/03/16). The statement here echoes that of which I was previously told by a RoC official: "everything is related to everything else Serkan, nothing is compartmentalised" (E.E. 11/12/15). But the détente between Akıncı and Anastasiades was not to last, and it is naïve to think that the natural gas development process of the RoC would be stopped in its entirely for the sake of negotiations that have hardly borne fruit over decades of negotiations.

Rather, I think it is the case that a serendipitous lull in exploration

and exploitation activity promulgated by market dynamics beyond Cyprus, paved the way for the enablement of a relatively more peaceable and amenable spate of negotiations between the Turkish-Cypriots and Greek-Cypriots (which would again end in failure). More than anything, such an eventuality speaks volumes for the potency of the process to develop natural gas to be made the subject of political controversy, and to be made into a source of friction. Thus, it is clear that the process to develop offshore natural gas was made to have through discursive means an effect on the course of the peace process. Likewise, the course of the peace process would come to have some effect on the process to develop natural gas. However, there would be no wholesale and prolonged curtailment of either entity. If anything, the interest in offshore exploration and the need to find a political solution both increased across time — propelled by a series of discoveries such as Aphrodite, Zohr, and a further field for the RoC that was encountered at the time of writing — Calypso. This gives credence to the fact that economic decisions come before and ultimately supersede issues of political risk for the IOC. To trace a line of linear causality and use verbs such as to enable or constrain, to describe natural gas as a difficult commodity; these are not self-evident virtues that determine political futures (Watts 2004b), but *ex-post* attributions that are borne from the changing and dynamic relations materials face in line with human wants, needs, and desires. Natural gas has mattered by virtue of relationality to the Cyprus Problem. Hence, it is that dynamic inter-relationship between human and resource that should be the bottom line, and not the material by itself.

Finally, there is clearly an affective side to the process as investigated further in Chapter 7. Turkish Foreign Minister Çavuşoğlu once described

the peace process as a sensitive process, that "both sides must act responsibly. For example, the Greek-Cypriot side should not act as the sole owner of the island especially with regards to natural gas. The Turkish-Cypriot side has different views" (Y.D. 31/08/16). But the idea is that it is not the lively behaviour of objects themselves that can be considered the bottom-line cause for political dispute. That is far too much of a quick, simplistic, and reductive answer to a complex and non-linear question that can gloss over the latent inconsistency of terminology. This in turn creates doubt as to the centrality of natural gas in strictly material terms, bolstered by the fact that political rhetoric was quite impervious to informational enrichment but as shall be seen in Chapter 7, also extremely liable to the significant effects of affective enrichments.

5.8. Conclusion.

In this Chapter, I have sketched-out the fundamentals of the commercial disputes that went hand-in-hand with the political controversy. Through a detailed investigation of a specific controversy related to future natural gas infrastructure, and alongside the use of circulating referents that were used to support energy projections, I have shown how the exploitation of natural gas was discursively constructed. All of these potential scenarios were part of the competing knowledge claims and controversies between TRNC, Turkey, and the RoC. To gesture to the existence of natural gas by what became premature declarations of commerciality, or with the production of a development plan, or a technical feasibility study of a project, the future of these projections became all the

more promising and all the more stable from an ontological perspective. What can be gleaned from the existence of knowledge controversies as part of a political situation is that the reader is faced with issues of the imaginary, the symbolic, and the reality of natural resource development (Watts 2004a), alongside the complexity of their cognate industries. A similar account can be found in Perrault and Valdivia's (2010, 698) account in the context of Ecuador and Bolivia, where re-making the nation involved the possibility of "imagining new capital-state-population relations". A conclusion drawn here is that the clash of determinate and indeterminate projections of energy futures fuelled by political interest sustained the issue of natural gas on the island, and therefore also maintained its alleged agentic capacity to impact the course of the negotiations.

The idea that things could be different, that more gas could be found, that the myriad of moving targets, interrelated yet geographically contingent processes, networks, assemblages of infrastructure within the global natural gas industry could align themselves with political desire propelled the issue of natural gas. In such a scenario, assessments, predictions, probabilities of the future, oftentimes morphed into brute and deterministic fact. It is only so far that the analyst of a political situation can go in order to pinpoint causal mechanisms as it concerns issues of demand and supply, or the course of the settlement talks on the island. Hence, beyond issues of current and projected commercial reality that either enabled or disabled the genesis and evolution of the political controversy, another piece of the puzzle is that of both current and projected power relations between the RoC, TRNC, and Turkey, which emerges through the patchwork quilt of maritime boundary delimitations, overlapping EEZ's and NAVTEX announcements.

Now that the nature of the association between the two processes from the commercial perspective have been established, the scene is set for a critical exploration of how and why relations of power featured in the issue of natural gas — the most sensational example of which I have encountered is that:

> "With the discovery of natural gas, Cyprus is in a position of power from which it can reassert its rights over the whole island and redefine the Cyprus Problem negotiations, [...] they (the Turkish-Cypriots) will secure a heavenly lifestyle that Turkey can under no circumstances offer them" (CM 08/08/12).

Indeed, what will be seen in the rest of this thesis is that there is a clear structural and emotional element to the political situation of natural gas that results in knowledge controversies (as discussed in this Chapter), relations of power in Chapter 6, and a pathological dimension in Chapter 7, all of which coalesce to determine the nature of the association between the two processes.

CHAPTER 6.

Power and Natural Resources in the Spectre of Peace.

"[…] The entire Cyprus Problem is essentially about power-sharing"

Former U.S Ambassador to the RoC, Interview (08/12/15).

"You need to step back and see that most southern Cypriots feel that they've been invaded by an alien army from the north, from Turkey, and so the whole issue of who manages the natural gas is an important national issue"

(Former SHELL Consultant, Interview 15/09/15).

6.1. Preamble and Chapter Structure.

In this Chapter, I take leave from Perrault and Valdivia's (2010, 691) assertion that "resource struggles are never only or primarily about resources". A rich confluence of issues tied to relations of power can already be gleaned in the fractious history of the island's politics as emphasised in Chapter 1. This idea is corroborated by the quote provided above and comes from an interview I return to later. The idea is that resource struggles — taken as political controversies that can concern natural resources — can be an inflection point infused with bouts over "the meanings of development, citizenship, and the nation itself" (*ibid*. 697). As previously described, political futures are said to be engineered out of energy governance (Mitchell

2009), commodities such as oil are attached to national interest (Bridge and Billon 2013), and fiscal reliance on natural resource exploitation is said to help to create and perpetuate particular forms of governance (Haber and Menaldo 2011). Whatever terminology used, it is reasonable to state in a non-totalising manner that issues of power are often pronounced, captivating, and commanding facets in the dynamics of a natural resource dispute.

In this Chapter, I want to demonstrate the pervasive centralisation of power relations and the prevalence of "hard, territorial dimensions" (Newman 2003, 133), that are found both in the saga of natural gas and in the wider political situation of the Cyprus Problem. From Chapter 5, it was seen that there exists a distinct spatial but also a pervasive territorial aspect to this recent passionate political dispute — one that is related to both contemporary and future relations of power. These fault lines often manifest themselves in terms related to state sovereignty and international law, as I will exemplify in this Chapter. The paradox I identify is that although the exploitation of natural resources is often argued to be a gateway to a new political future, it can also be the case that despite such aggrandised potentiality, latent power relations may be the very factors that inhibit the development of natural resources in the first place, as Torres-Spelliscy (2014) has documented for Western Sahara, and as I will do for Cyprus. Before then, it is beneficial to discuss the concept of power further so that I am able to situate the resultant discussion better, and to also give an indication of the argument to come.

Without assigning any prior ontological status, the operation of power in the political realm can be seen as a potential that threads through what

Foucault (1978[2000, 208]) describes "as a sort of complex composed of men and things"; composites that specifically for Foucault included natural resources, but also the "[…] customs, habits, ways of acting and thinking and so on…". Without due empirical explication, what is left after this assertion is a collection of abstractions that sound far too generic and distant. I hold that to speak of power purely in the abstract is akin to cold-hearted reductionism or objectivism (Descola 2013). This explains-away the nature of the association between natural resources and politics and detracts from the endeavour to assess lived practice, which leaves the operation of power relations either unscrutinised or over-emphasised.

The approach is identical to that which confers agency to natural resources in an *a priori* and presumptuous fashion. Following Arendt (1998[1956, 200]), I find it useful for the purposes of this Chapter and in line with the broader oeuvre within which this thesis is placed to think of power as a potential that can be observed in its actualisation, and not as an *a priori* "unchangeable, measurable, and reliable entity". This will be yet another example of the inter-subjective nature that various perceptions of the natural gas debate can have. Although it has been presented in that manner, it is simply deficient to think of the problem is such exclusive terms, as former RoC Minister Rolandis explained:

> "Our own side did not adopt the proposal [two-track process to discuss natural gas with the Turkish-Cypriots]. It relied on our sovereign rights. This position may be theoretically correct, but Turkey has violated our sovereign rights for 43 years and nobody cares to help. […] Oil and gas is not simply a matter of sovereignty" (*CM* 31/03/17).

Briefly, the proposition here invites consideration about the various

other issues that the material in question has been tied to, and from which both political meaning and consequence are both ascertained. Hence, there arises an opportunity to assess the operation of the state and the flow of power relations within that structure across different scales (Bridge 2009a). Throughout this thesis, I have pointed to extant relations of power between the primary actors to this dispute without which there can be no serious explanation of what the Cyprus Problem is. The necessity of such a discussion has been imparted upon me by the fact that there has hardly been an interview I have conducted, conference or public forum I have attended, or newspaper article I have read, that has not in some way related to: the power-dynamics between the primary state actors to the Cyprus Problem, issues of state sovereignty, territory, and *de jure* and *de facto* states. It is these issues which aggregate to form the political situation that has invoked natural gas. If a relational outlook is carried forward, it is these issues from which perceptions of material agency and ontology are ultimately related to.

As to the operation of these dispositions and their effects, I have alluded to the paradox of the peace process; an incapacitation related to power where on the one hand cooperation between Turkish-Cypriot and Greek-Cypriot is encouraged with a view to achieve peace. Yet on the other hand, this is met with the intractable insistence that the Cyprus Problem must be solved first before said cooperation can actualise. Further, I have written of how the very meaning of peace is undergirded by relations of power that are foreseen to take effect under the system of a bizonal, bicommunal federation; the purported future Cyprus. Finally, I have identified potential material manifestations of power geometries as it has

concerned the use of natural gas infrastructure, the notion of political risk as it has concerned the process to develop offshore natural gas, and how actors along the way have sought to entangle and disentangle the two processes from each other for political ends. Therefore, the issue of natural gas becomes more than an ephemeral centre-piece of governmentality and maintenance of state power, as Coronil (1997) has discussed for oil in Venezuela. But there remains the sense that the issue of natural gas seems to be more of an epiphenomenon of a wider assemblage — an added theatre of conflict (Watts 2004a), that has become the focal point for a broader struggle (Perrault and Valdivia 2010). Journalist George Mikes recognised as much back as 1965, a year after the UN peacekeeping mission was deployed to the island: "the Cyprus Problem is really buried under its own side-issues" (1965, 90). What is observed from the discussion above is that the situation resembles a transcendent and intractable political conflict that has met a complex industry in perennial change. Across the sites, events, and circumstances that characterise a political situation (Barry 2010), there emerges an inescapable need to pay closer attention to the notion and structure of relations, for they have featured so intimately in the way the peace and natural gas processes have mutually unfolded. Therefore, I remain interested in the order, structure, or space, within which power and politics operate in terms of the nature and operation of sovereignty by the RoC and TRNC (Figure 18).

Firstly, I discuss the structure of the peace process in order and demonstrate how structural lock-in and path-dependency has affected the way the peace and natural gas processes have interacted. Here the word structure invites concerns while operating with a post-structural and

processual philosophy, as noted in Chapter 2. I reconcile structure and the so-called agency of matter both as relational effects with reference to the "the activity or process of organisation, the ordering of things through dialectical relations of mutual interdependence" (Cheah 2010, 87). Secondly, I assess the concept of peace and connect this disposition to the format of the peace process, which I argue has by necessity given rise to the perception of natural gas as an incentive or catalyst. Throughout, I vouch that power is intimately related with material agency and ontology in light of a teleological pursuit of amorphous peace.

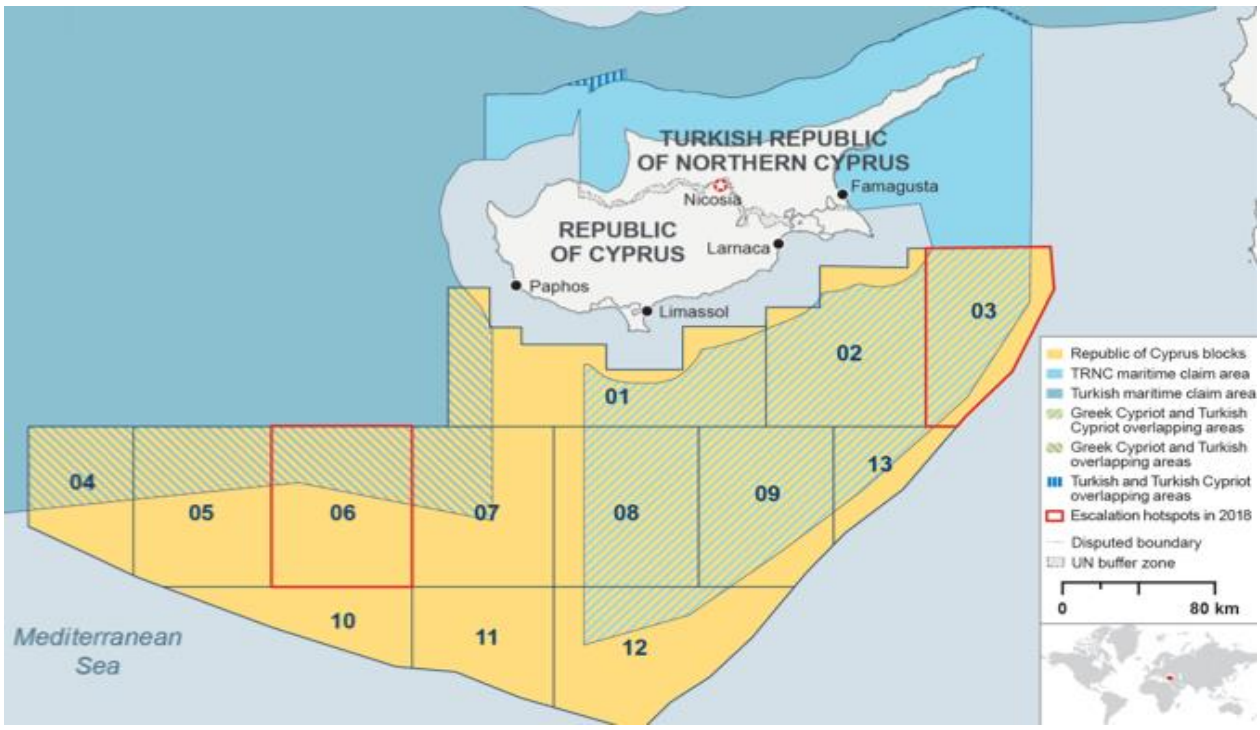
Thirdly, I assert that recourse to a form of environmental determinism as it concerns the relationship between natural resources and politics, detracts responsibility and diverts attention away from what really must be done to be rid of the Cyprus Problem. Finally, I do not proceed in chronological order of events as I have done so in Chapters 4 and 5, for there is no need to repeat the sequence which the reader will be familiar with. Instead, the Chapter is intensive rather than extensive, and explicates further the issues of structure and power that have been already been identified. I begin now with a fieldwork vignette that cemented my interest in power.

6.2. Toward Issues of State Sovereignty — Lock-Out between the TRNC and RoC.

Towards the end of my fieldwork, at the side-lines of the largest natural gas conference in Europe (FLAME, Amsterdam May 2016), I struck-

up a conversation with the head of a global political risk consultancy. The conference organisers organised a "Gas Industry War Game" — a mock-up role-play scenario that saw teams of conference attendees' group together to discuss corporate strategy. I followed-up with the individual and explained the natural gas issue in Cyprus as I had come to understand it. We discussed the fact that the TRNC and RoC do not engage with each other in any substantial capacity beyond the intermittent UN sponsored negotiations. The immediate comment in response that has stuck in mind since was: "yep! they're structurally locked-in" (J.H. Interview 12/05/16). As alluded to above, the immediate theoretical problem here is that recourse to structure is at first sight difficult to reconcile with processual, post-structural thought.

Figure 18. Competing and Overlapping Maritime Boundary Jurisdiction Claims and Research Blocks.



Source: https://ihsmarkit.com/country-industry-forecasting.html?ID=10659123035

Yet I find it difficult if not impossible, to not point to at least a set or group of power relations that have influenced the genesis and evolution of the natural gas issue and that saturates the Cyprus Problem. To this end, I have used Barry's (2005) political situation as synonymous with the wider contextual superstructure or assemblage in question. But my appropriation is mistaken, for in stark contrast Barry explicitly states that a political situation is not to be seen as "some underlying structure that governs the dynamics of a series of individual controversies" (*ibid.*, 11). I am certain that this resistance is borne from a reluctance to explain observation in terms of abstracted structures, assemblages, planes, or various other styles of structuration (Bennett 2010). The concern is that to define or label a system of power relations is seen to reduce the complexity of the system and is akin to deriving and premising all explanation in an *a priori* manner (Stengers 2011). Still, the issue of natural gas has been explained by key stakeholders themselves as an epiphenomenon of the Cyprus Problem where:

> "The hydrocarbon crisis is in essence an illustration of the deep disagreements that lie behind the whole understanding of what the Cyprus Problem is. [...] A lot of these issues are issues because of the division and will actually evaporate once a solution is found, because they are expressions of the division" (Espen Barth Eide, *CM* 08/04/15).

However, to derive all explanation solely from the viewpoint of structured power relations is a constricted endeavour, especially in light of the kind of research methodology I have employed where potentially "everything is data" (Latour 2005, 133). There may be an over-emphasis then on internal political power relations and their structure, and an under-

emphasis on external factors such as the condition of the global natural gas industry or natural gas price. Further, the word *govern* entails the allusion of an illicit causal mechanism akin to the popular resource curse theory. In reality, the nature of causal relationships is far more malleable, processual, and contingent. It is here that the traditions of structuralism and post-structuralism are in competition. Structuralism is charged with a disembodied outlook on the world and post-structuralism is often perceived as its antithesis. This is a question of terminology, for the existence of structures, guiding principles, frameworks, or simply ethos cannot be by-passed (Anderson *et al.* 2003), and so the word structure or governance requires further elucidation. Nevertheless, it is still of interest to highlight the "pleasant games of genesis and system, synchrony and development, relation and cause, structure and history" (Foucault 1972, 204), for these pleasant games are decisive rather than frivolous. Far from an *a priori* and monolithic explanation, I find it pertinent to state that the Cyprus Problem is a political situation begotten from relations of power that exhibits a systematic pattern or structure which conditions the form, nature, and extent of the natural gas issue. The word structure offers considerable and pertinent explanatory purchase, as I now evidence.

Throughout the natural gas saga, the Turkish-Cypriots' vehemently protested against Greek-Cypriot unilateral action, which in turn cast further doubt as to the future of the peace process: "as for the negotiations, I guess that's a mix of things that's also the TC's [Turkish-Cypriots] being supremely pissed-off that those in the RoC are disconnected from the political negotiations so much that they would actually think about drilling" (S.H. Interview 04/06/16). Why exactly the TRNC would be upset at the

developments is explained momentarily. Again, the issue of time as discussed in Chapter 4 is present here too. Briefly, the most apt articulation of this point I came across is a portion of an interview I conducted with a former US Ambassador to Nicosia that deserves to be quoted at length:

> "[…] the sides were very invested in what was going to happen now. The Turkish side for example, and I'll use that to encompass both the TC [Turkish-Cypriot] side and Turkey, were keen on finding some way to manage this issue jointly ahead of a settlement agreement. Sometimes they described it as a litmus test for how issues would be handled post settlement. Sometimes they said that they would be robbed if the management of this would await a settlement, because too much wealth would have been disposed of in the meantime. This issue of timing which became essentially the chief impediment to reaching an agreement to discuss this issue" (Interview 08/12/15).

I find a world of meaning inherent in the explanation above where issues of temporality, the meaning of peace, the work of emotion, and the relation of these tropes to natural gas, are all inter-woven. There is a rich and diverse mix of features denoting the four axioms I have identified that aggregate together to generate what has been regarded as the potency, efficacy, or agency of the issue of natural gas. As in Chapter 5, this produced effect must be juxtaposed with the realities of the natural gas industry in so far as they can confidently be known in order to reveal political inflation. But in this case, the same interviewee remarked that the entire Cyprus Problem and the issue of natural gas with it was "essentially about power-sharing" (*ibid.*). The logic is to emphasise both the complexity of context, but then to simplify the issue down into a single determinant. To offer such a bottom-line explanation does not automatically nullify or make trivial other components of the political issue that can be observed.

However, the remark here provides an invitation to think about how certain characteristics such as the temporal, affective, and the epistemological are related, and the resultant ontological claims made. The inclination to offer such a single explanation that underlies and encompasses the mélange of features the issue of natural gas encapsulates is a popular tendency and must be inspected further. But the result is that the discussion leads back to the idea of lock-out and *pro-forma* politics. The TRNC and RoC are effectively locked-out of meaningful cooperation in the present, where idealised peaceful engagements between them are deferred into future. The longer the lock-out drags on, the more entrenched and comfortable the situation becomes and the less of an immediate or existential need for a solution. Indeed, those who are against the status-quo in Cyprus perennially lament that the longer the political situation remains unchanged the further the island drifts to partition (ICG 2008; 2014).

The same argument is to be found in efforts to promote the decarbonisation of the natural gas industry by counter-acting and phasing out infrastructural developments in other sectors. In this scenario, lock-out effectively nullifies the prospect of the very cooperation that is needed to mute the emergence of political controversies such as, but not limited to, natural gas. The most prominent feature of this disposition is that equanimity between the TRNC and RoC is vehemently opposed by the latter and chased ceaselessly by the former. The Turkish-Cypriots are either the pawn of Turkey, the illegal regime, or simply the Turkish-Cypriot community; never the seceding entity of the TRNC (Hannay 2005). As a former RoC spokesperson reasoned, “topics such as natural resources, energy, water can be regarded as solved in the negotiations. Turkey is here

not to protect the rights of the Turkish-Cypriots but to protect its own interests" (Christodoulides, *Yeni Düzen* 12/01/15). The RoC acts unilaterally because it is under no obligation to cooperate with the Turkish-Cypriots, even though a joint future is envisaged with them and even though the Turkish-Cypriots are viewed as citizens of the RoC based upon the 1960 Constitution. The TRNC is the anathema. Perhaps the situation may have been different if the precursor entity to the TRNC such the "Turkish Federated State of Cyprus" was still in existence — though this is far too open to political speculation to be of use.

However, the exact same paradox can be applied to the Turkish-Cypriots who can be accused of acting unilaterally themselves: "they say we have to be as separate as possible and then you are presented with a joint-action plan" (C.C. Interview 24/08/15). This is a contradiction perhaps not so readily recognised by the Turkish-Cypriots, that on the one hand the TRNC behaves as an independent state yet on the other seeks entitlements based upon the founding of the RoC. In practice, this contradiction fails to have much of a restraining effect on whichever TRNC government is in power, for it is backed-up in the first instance by the historical injustices perceived to have befallen the Turkish-Cypriots in the partnership state and is again overshadowed by the type of peace envisioned by two sides — a point I return to later. In any case, the kind of joint action envisioned by the Turkish-Cypriots is met with counter-claims related to sovereignty and legitimacy by the Greek-Cypriots, and the continued unilateral actions by both sides regardless of the impact on the peace process.

For example, after the collapse of the negotiations in late 2014, when the Turkish NAVTEX and seismic research vessel forays occurred as covered

in Chapter 4, RoC President Anastasiades refused to return to the peace process "as long as the sovereignty of the Republic of Cyprus is not respected". This for the Turkish-Cypriots was "a precondition that is impossible for the Turkish Cypriot side to comply with, for reasons that are the basis of the Cyprus problem itself" (FM Özdil Nami, *TRNC MFA* 09/03/15). These diametrically opposed statements emanate from the latent structural lock-out which itself has a reciprocal relationship with the enmity and mistrust found in the issue of natural gas, has conditioned the course of events throughout at the expense of a federal future, and stifled interim confidence-building measures (see Michael 2015). On the aforementioned event, an international lawyer stationed with UNFICYP said to me that "anybody in the RoC that seems surprised at what happened in 2014 was not paying attention" (S.H. 04/06/16), because such a vehement public outcry would surely be expected more from a wholly unexpected turn of events.

Yet such a position would ignore the specificity of the issue, for the development above did mark a significant escalation from that which has occurred before. Does this mean that the controversy over natural gas was inevitable or inescapable, and is the destiny of the peace process forever at the mercy of such continued controversies? The question here is pivotal in terms of the nature of the association between the two processes, and whether or not it is acceptable to speak in terms of linear causality. The answer returns to a mixture of the contested history of the island's politics, relations of power between a *de jure* and *de facto* state, contested visions of peace, and the format of the negotiations themselves which I now trace.

6.3. The Structural Bifurcation of Natural Gas and Peace.

In Chapter 1, I addressed the idea of seeing natural resources as part of a binary. Without a critique of *a priori* distinction, an investigation into the bifurcation of nature and society (or natural resources and politics), is destined to occur "from two poles, [...] conceiving every hybrid as a mixture of two pure forms" (Latour 1993, 77). This is exactly the same line of reasoning maintained by the TRNC and is part of the reason why the Turkish-Cypriots formed the TRNC in the first place in 1983. If there are two states on the island be it one *de jure* and the other *de facto*, the logic is that there is still a binary from which the two bifurcated states start off from a balanced and equal footing, and to then come into an agreement in the middle (Denktaş 2004). This is what Turkish-Cypriots (particularly as peddled those on the centre and centre-right) mean when they speak of the realities on the ground. It is also part of the fear promoted by most Greek-Cypriot politicians that the longer it takes to achieve a settlement, the more entrenched the division becomes where the distance between TRNC and RoC increases. Undoubtedly, the Greek-Cypriots are entrenched in legal formalism (Jackson and Rosberg 1982), and jealously guard their international recognition as the sole *de jure* government on the island. International recognition has been described as the jewel in the Greek-Cypriot crown used to outmanoeuvre any attempt by the Turks and Turkish-Cypriots to secede (Hannay 2005), to wield as a weapon and reverse as far as possible the effects of the Turkish invasion, and to push through their own interpretation of a bizonal, bicommunal, federation, or in other words, peace. More so, it has been described as the strongest remaining

Greek-Cypriot bargaining chip in a zero-sum power game with Turkey and the Turkish-Cypriots (Rusinow 1981). From the perspective of the Turkish-Cypriots, this is a form of lawfare (Hughes-Wilson 2011), where the Greek-Cypriots defeated militarily have instead taken their continued enmity and aggression toward the Turkish-Cypriots into the courtrooms. As Former TRNC President Eroğlu advocated, "[…] it is clear their intention is not to achieve a solution. Their intent is to use the internationally recognised RoC to punish us and Turkey" (*PH* 17/10/14). There is a systematic attempt to delegitimise the TRNC and its institutions for fear, however unfounded, of implicit recognition through the back door, and to make the status-quo hurt for the TRNC (Constantinou 2008, Yakinthou 2009).

Admittedly, the Greek-Cypriots have been very successful in the legal battle. But this is primarily owed to the recognition of the government of the RoC as the sole legal government on the island since 1964 (Drousiotis 2008). This is also a state of affairs contested from the offset by the Turkish-Cypriots. What this framework means for the Turkish-Cypriots is that their future interlocutors have weaponised international law to enforce their own vision of peace for the island and by extension, their own plans for natural gas exploitation without a say for the Turkish-Cypriots. This is the fundamental political deadlock behind the resource imaginary at stake. I find that this approach remains unchanged, and was also demonstrated early on in the natural gas saga around the time of the 1st Licensing Round:

"A solution of the Cyprus Problem does not depend on drilling for oil or gas but from the good will of the involved parties. This is what the Turkish side needs to prove instead of resorting to its favourite methods of threats and blackmail. We will not be hauled into a public debate over an issue which solely concerns the lawful government of the Republic of Cyprus and in which neither Turkey nor the illegal regime has any say" (RoC Government

Spokesperson, *CM* 01/02/07).

A problem "does not exist, apart from its solutions" writes Deleuze (1994, 163), and the problem described above identifies a clear antagonist as well as the formula for a solution. Nevertheless, there was to be an extraordinarily public debate over the issue despite the fact that neither Turkey nor the illegal regime [TRNC] has any say on behalf of the RoC. The incentive created for the Turkish-Cypriots is to abandon the TRNC and more so, decouple themselves from Turkey and acquiesce to the way the Greek-Cypriots desire the RoC to function. It is the Turkish-Cypriot community that has a right to any wealth generated from the natural gas and not the TRNC (C.C. Interview 24/08/15). Progress towards a solution is only facilitated by the talks. But at the same time, the process is clearly frustrated by events outside of the forum where both sides act unilaterally. Again, this means that the sides are effectively locked-out of meaningful cooperation; they cannot enact in the present the change they wish to purportedly see in the future, which is itself fundamentally contested.

In 2011, around the time of appraisal drilling of the Aphrodite field and amidst the increased level of international attention on the island, a report by the ICG concluded that readiness to start drilling unilaterally is further evidence that "while two of the key players may be talking about reunification, they are in fact planning for separate futures" (*ICG* 23/09/11, 2). It is these separate futures that underscore the dissonance between the two sides to the dispute, which conditions how the Cyprus Problem is understood and how official interaction should be encouraged or restricted in the present. As demonstrated in the case of the natural gas issue, both

sides can act without a single regard for the other's concerns and therefore continue to generate concerns, controversies, and *fait accompli's* that become the subject of passionate political disagreement. These points of concern are hardly deliberated within the space of the formal negotiations. In any case, there emerges at this juncture many inter-related trajectories to take that fundamentally concern power: the notion of unilateralism, the exact relationship of Turkey to the Cyprus Problem, the specific capacities of *de jure* and *de facto* states, contested visions of peace, and the format of the talks themselves, the former which I now discuss.

6.4. Contemporary Unilateralism versus Future Federalism.

Unilateralism is a charge levied upon the RoC by the Turkish-Cypriots (largely by the centre and right-wing political parties, and not the left-wing), as well as being the chief view of Turkey. The term is invoked in response to the series of events that have characterised the natural gas development process. The contention contains an affective dimension, where to act unilaterally is perceived as a lack of sincerity for a solution and a spiteful and deceitful pursuit of *fait accompli's* to be used against the TRNC in the peace process. For example, upcoming acts of drilling were understood by the Turkish MFA as a unilateral pursuit that did not "heed the Turkish-Cypriots' sincere proposals for cooperation" (*KB* 05/10/17). Unilateralism is understood through the metaphor of a litmus test where "unilateralism is enemy of federalism" (E.O. Former TRNC Negotiator, Interview 18/05/15). Briefly, the idea of the litmus test was floated in the form of a joint fund to be set up with an escrow account for the Turkish-Cypriot community. The

fund never became a reality, again for the same reasons most inter-communal cooperation is blocked. For some Greek-Cypriots, a fund may have created: "an ever-increasing financial incentive to seek understand and a solution, [...] such an action would defuse the crisis with Turkey without any retreat on our [RoC] part, and prove its [Turkey] real motives are not the economic interests of Turkish-Cypriots but its own geopolitical expansionism" (*CM* 2/11/14). It could also be said that the TRNC acts unilaterally, in full knowledge that the RoC does have the right to act as such due to its status as the internationally recognised *de jure* state; "we are saying we have equal rights under the 1960 Republic, but we also act unilaterally as our own state!" (E.Ç *TRNC MFA* Interview, 29/03/16). It is therefore hypocritical if the TRNC attests to be an independent state on the one hand and demands representation in the affairs of another independent state on the other.

This apparent contradiction can be traced back to 1964, to UN Security Council Resolution 186 which paved the way for the creation of UNFICYP. The text of this resolution explicitly referred to the *Government of Cyprus*. It is on the power of this reference, the Turkish-Cypriots argue, that international recognition of the Greek-Cypriot dominated administration of the RoC as the legal government on the island is based on to this very day (see Drousiotis 2008). The trouble is that the *Government of Cyprus* is an entity from which the Turkish-Cypriots were ejected wholesale from in 1963, a year prior to what is perceived as a fateful and erroneous UN resolution. The semantics of the issue is worth further consideration. As per the 1960 Constitution of the RoC, it is not the TRNC but the Turkish-Cypriot community as part of the RoC that has any sort of claim to governance and

the management of natural resources found to the south. Yet, the Turkish-Cypriots invoke their rights enshrined in this entity by virtue of both previous agreements and the supposed joint commitment to future power-sharing model of peace. Clearly then, retentions of the past and projections of the future saturate the Cyprus Problem, be it in discussions of natural gas or peace. The earliest reference I found of the cross-over here came in 2001, when the-then Turkish-Cypriot leader Rauf Denktaş demanded a stake in oil discussions initiated between the RoC and Syria in 1998. In this scenario, natural gas from Syria was to supply RoC domestic demand via subsea pipeline.

But it really does seem that the natural resource *per se* was of no real importance. Instead, Denktaş was more concerned that the Greek-Cypriots would create a *fait accompli* which would then be dictated to the already excluded and powerless Turkish-Cypriots. It would have been an affront to the TRNC's long-standing demand for political equality, and would have entrenched the power discrepancy between the TRNC and RoC, the latter of which remains the sovereign authority across the island. Denktaş pressed that "the administration in the south, whatever it calls itself, does not have the right to sign a delineation agreement unilaterally", and that both the TRNC and Turkey should not be by-passed. He then predicted that the move would become "a new source of crisis in the region" (*CM* 11/08/01). What has eventualised in the decade or more has entirely validated Denktaş's prediction. With each step taken towards materialisation in conjunction with the now increased stakes in terms of projected future wealth or geopolitical alignments and the progress of the negotiations, the more attention the natural gas development process has attracted. The collateral effect has

been the inflation of natural gas' material agency. Against this backdrop, there have been actors on all sides that are content with the status-quo which has further increased the stakes of the dispute: "there are people who do not want a solution, and they will try by hook or by crook to persuade people that it is dangerous. That's the game you know. It's not about reality. It's about perception" (Former SHELL Consultant, A.L. 15/09/15). This is a position that fuels non-cooperation. But the root of this stance is still found in issues of sovereignty, territory, and power. The RoC does indeed have the right to proceed unilaterally. But what effect does the charge that the Greek-Cypriots act unilaterally have on the nature of the association between the two processes?

Throughout the natural gas saga, the contestation of Turkey and the Turkish-Cypriots regarding RoC actions has always been met by the affirmation of the internationally-recognised status of the RoC. It is as one interviewee put it, "sovereignty to the point of paranoia. I mean how have they survived all these years? By insisting their sovereignty though their very active Ministry of Foreign Affairs. I mean that's all they do in there! You have an entire ministry focussed on RoC only: 'this is all we've got so we're not going to let go of it'" (F.M. 24/08/15). But this resolute grip on sovereign status has done little for the cause of a mutual and amicable solution that entails compromises on both sides, where assertions of RoC sovereignty induces similar responses by the TRNC. On the initial EEZ agreement between the RoC and Israel, Denktaş maintained that "the south is playing the game of asserting their sovereignty, […] We and Turkey gave the required response, we must not backtrack from this" (*KB* 05/09/07). This by and large seems to be the approach in place today whatever Turkish-

Cypriot government in power. Hence, the legal lens of the dispute between Turkey, the RoC, and the TRNC, allows for no laxation of entrenched zero-sum positions. More so, this seems to be a strategy of international law with an affective prefiguration, as explained in this following interview excerpt:

> "There are dozens in their (RoC) FM (Foreign Ministry) that spend time scouring the world looking for any perceived recognition of the TC's (Turkish-Cypriots) whether it is a university level or…, […] in a frozen conflict that is not a surprise. The strategy is that "if you haven't reserved some objection to it and so that's everyone really weary and nervous to give away too much, even if, unfortunately the down side of it means wrecking perfectly good negotiations between the two communities…its well-known legal strategy I mean the minute, the one time you don't object it will be used against you in the future (S.H. 04/06/16).

This is not simply a structure of power relations but the operation of legal positions tinged with apprehension of future consequences. Herein lies the belief that sovereignty may be somehow acquiesced by the Turkish-Cypriots. This is the problem of tacit sovereignty as highlighted by McConnell (2009), which adds to the stasis. The notion of tacit sovereignty places emphasis on the relations of power that exist in practice based on implicit assumptions or understandings, perhaps never even openly declared or identified. The latter is certainly not the case with the TRNC as it seeks to operate as a fully recognised state. However, and in order to discourage secessionist movements, recognition or non-recognition of a state is often regarded as a bottom-line argument that is afforded the most clout.
It is this interplay between a *de jure* and *de facto* state coupled with the divergent political futures they represent, that has hindered progress in previous iterations of negotiations and peace-building efforts (Hocknell

1998), whichever side the situation is assessed from. For example, the first time the island came anywhere close to a settlement was the negotiations of 1999-2003. This bout of talks was summarised by former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan as where "negotiation, in the sense of give and take, almost never occurred. Instead, the process was one of procedural wrangling, verbal gymnastics, shadow boxing, and mini-crises, with only occasional promising glimmers on the substance which did not last" (2003, 23). The underlying ethos at play here is that the sanctity of state sovereignty is upheld at all costs (Richmond 1999), and this is most likely due to the apprehension and fear felt by either side that it may lead to the reduced purchase of the claims made by either side. The status-quo is either too comfortable to risk, or there is no shared vision of peace and thus no appetite for mutual compromise. There is much to be said here about the consequences of the latent pre-emption here. But the key point is that the operation of such anticipatory logic is evident in discursive statements that invoke the future, but which then go on to condition the present (Anderson 2010). There is surely a limit after which legal posturing may be counter-productive. But the idea remains that if the RoC did not consistently object to Turkey as an occupier and violator of its maritime boundaries, if Turkey did not consistently object to the RoC's violation of its continental shelf, and if the TRNC did not consistently object to RoC unilateralism, the practice would have negative repercussions for political goals in the future.

For it is the fear of setting a legal precedent however unsubstantiated and unreasonable that blocks Turkish-Cypriot and Greek-Cypriot cooperation, which in a counterproductive fashion goes on to increase the animosity, enmity, and zero-sum revanchist politics that has led to the

political situation evident today in the natural gas saga and across other issues of contention. Indeed, struggles over territory comprise of struggles over power and space. But they are also struggles meaning (Elden 2013), and the lamentable state of affairs here directly relates to the meaning and nature of the Cyprus Problem, as Barth Eide explained: this is the "game both sides are locked into" (*CyBC* 27/11/14). It is this ethos that has led to what in retrospect seems a very inevitable set of circumstances. Further, the structural lock-out at play is itself an emergent phenomenon that can be traced back to the contested meanings attributed to the Cyprus Problem; a point I first raised in Chapter 1, and that I now explore in greater detail.

6.7. Amorphous Peace.

If a natural resource is an abstraction contingent upon cultural appraisal (Zimmermann 1951), then a natural resource will not be a fixed and pre-defined objective reality but an entity established teleologically in light of a particular goal. If the goal of the settlement talks is to achieve peace, then it follows that natural gas will be perceived in light of this goal, which in turn defines exactly what natural gas is and what it is capable of. In other words, the materiality of natural resources will be structured by the questions, propositions, and cultural appraisals at hand (Crang 2003), where "[…] what constitutes the fixity of the body, its contours, its movements, will be fully material, but materiality will be rethought as the effect of power, as power's most productive effect" (Butler 1993, 14). For Barry (2001, 207), the role of politics is "not to generally produce dissensus and controversy, but to contain it and channel it in particular directions".

This eventuality becomes particularly apparent in the view of natural gas as an incentive or bargaining chip to be used in the negotiations, with respect to the formal discussion-points of the negotiations: governance, security, property, territory, EU matters, and the economy. In effect, the materiality of natural gas is conditioned by relations to both future balances of power but also in relation to the balance to be struck between these other categories in negotiation. As Derrida (1981, xiii) argues, discursive construction can function "against its own explicit [metaphysical] assertions, […] by inscribing a systematic 'other message' behind or through what it being said". As stated, that other message is often peace. But the conundrum here is that the sides do not actually agree on what the Cyprus Problem is, nor what its solution should be (Ker-Lindsay 2015). The agreed formula for a solution is the bizonal, bicommunal, federation (Faustmann 2013). But this is where the consensus largely ends (Asmussen 2008).

More so, that current relations of power could potentially be revised, that things could be different paves the way for the natural gas issue to be part of that change and for natural gas to become an actant (Latour 2005): "once the island unites under a bi-communal federation, the Turkish-Cypriots will also benefit, […] as long as partition continues, Turkish-Cypriots will be deprived of Cyprus' wealth" (RoC Minister Marcoullis, *CM* 18/09/11). Hence, the ambiguity and uncertainty latent in the future of the natural gas industry is matched with a comparable degree of ambiguity and uncertainty with regards to the political future of the island. Part of the dynamism then of the natural resource in question stems from the inherently political, contested nature of the resource imaginary (Bridge 2009a), which again is the contested vision of peace. At a time of high

tension in late 2014, when the talks had collapsed and Turkey subsequently sent a seismic research vessel across certain portions of the RoC's EEZ, Barth Eide acknowledged that:

> "[…] there is a legal argument and a political argument, and this actually illustrates the deep problem of the Cyprus Problem. It's essentially contested what the Cyprus Problem is. Is it a hijacked state, or is part of the country is occupied? And we know that we will never get full agreement on that" (*CM* 08/08/15).

Though paradoxically a solution is close in the sense of its general outline and stated commitments to the talks across time (Rusinow 1981), and exemplified by various assortments of draft deals produced in great detail (Yakinthou 2009), neither side still sees completely eye to eye on the exact detail of the model. The bizonal, bicommunal, federation remains in the abstract with no finalised list of convergences from the decades of negotiations. This openness and in some instances constructive ambiguity without mutual definitions has afforded the peace process a life-span of several decades only to fall short as soon as the processes encroaches upon the red lines of either side. Further, both sides accuse each other of lacking the political will to compromise for it. In terms of power, contested peace emanates from the Turkish-Cypriots suspicion that peace for Greek-Cypriots is the right to control it all (Bryant 2012a). The Turkish-Cypriots are apprehensive that the Greek-Cypriot demands of freedom of movement, settlement, and property ownership, coupled with strategic territorial demands would mean that in the future a bi-zonal, bi-communal system would in time amalgamate into a heterogeneous zone (Sözen and Özersay

2007). In turn, the Greek-Cypriots accuse the latter of an insidious, behind-the-scenes push for partition.

As such, natural gas the material and the development process became a referent point for sovereignty disputes. However, RoC discourse also sought to deflect attention towards the settlement negotiations too, calling upon Turkey to, "rather than threatening the Government of the Republic of Cyprus, direct the leader of the Turkish-Cypriot community to show good will in the talks for finding a solution to the Cyprus Problem" (Christofias, *CM* 17/02/12). A federal state with weaker central government powers and stronger devolved powers in the two constituent states would amount to a legal partition of the island, or at least remove a fail-safe way for the Greek-Cypriots to keep the Turkish-Cypriots in check. Conversely, the Turkish-Cypriots argue that they should retain as much power as possible lest the they are dominated once again by the other side which has a consistent history of unease at the thought of political equality with the Turkish-Cypriots. A reluctance to share power in a way that assuages the historical suspicions that each side harbours is the key problem. There is therefore a zero-sum power game at play, one that is underlined by a dichotomy of 'us' versus 'them'. This deepens partition and mistrust (Hadjipavlou and Kanol 2008), and proliferates further from the latent reluctance that has been present since the formation of the RoC itself (Xydis 1973).

The zero-sum power game translates natural gas from something that already is (Ferry and Limbert 2008), into a tool used to push for an idealised set of future power relations. This is simply the fundamental framework at play that informs so much of the conflict. Emblematic of contested visions of

peace and power relations is the speech I referred to in Chapter 4, after the appraisal drilling of the Aphrodite field. It continued that "the gas is a tool for peace and cooperation. […] Peace and cooperation is not served by confederal or partitionist desires but only by the reunification of our country, which will enable the Turkish-Cypriots to benefit from the wealth that nature gave in our homeland" (RoC President Christofias, *PO* 29/11/12). The idea is that the contested vision of peace coupled with the structural lock-out between the TRNC and RoC is the source of a long perversion (Deleuze 2001 [1968]), behind political connotations attached to natural gas. Here, context-specific and cross-temporal ideas of peace have gone on to imbue natural gas with agency to alter the course of the negotiations. But how exactly did this dissonance in definition coupled with the structure of power relations between *de jure* and *de facto* state, invoke natural gas? What exactly is natural gas meant to do?

According to Blaser (2009, 2013), to focus on differences of perspective is to focus on the epistemological side of the debate at the expense of the ontological. Therefore, to focus on perspectives of real-world facts out there does not consider the construction of those facts themselves. But the problem need not be set up in a binary way. Instead, there could be political perspectives that come into conflict with each other, for the very reason that there is no mutually-agreeable objective reality to measure the legitimacy of knowledge claims or political rhetoric. Thus, perspectives are highly determinant. The interactions between knowledge that comes into the local context and the way that knowledge is translated, spun, and disseminated, is a window into the nature of pre-existing political fault lines where matters of concern become matters of fact (Latour 1988). In the

context of Cyprus, to reword Barad (2003, 821), perceptions of natural gas do indeed become "a support, location, referent, or source of sustainability for discourse" at the expense of what can be known about the realities of the industry and the properties of the material. As demonstrated in Chapter 5, friction occurred when boundary-making discursive practices (Barad 2003), brushed up against the on-going dynamics of the global natural gas industry, where the difference between perception and fact became starkly evident but where perception shaped materiality together with a distinct affective quality.

Therefore, what is produced is a version of materiality; an effect with boundaries, properties and meanings composed through a set of interacting components that cannot be separated (Anderson 2014, Barad 2007). In relation to the peace process itself, it might be the case that the parties to the dispute knew that natural gas could not be really a catalyst for peace, but sought to play a zero-sum power game so characteristic of the settlement talks thus far. Could flows of energy, supplies of natural gas, or increased government revenues, really constitute such a powerful incentive that would overturn decades of political stalemate? How could this possibly be the case when the talks are predicated upon the premise that nothing is agreed until everything is agreed, and where the two processes operate in vastly different temporal scopes? Yet still, the perils of the existing status-quo and the desire for a particular solution instigated the need for an incentive. More so, perhaps the major reason for the efficacy and magnitude of the natural gas issue, as opposed to other similar issues with different material referent points such as halloumi cheese, mobile telephone networks, or the freshwater transferred to the TRNC via subsea pipeline, is

that the issue of natural gas taps into a wider network or assemblage of actors that include states, IOCs, international agencies, all of which share concerns over energy, and all of which can be brought on-side to the political conflict in Cyprus. Ultimately, natural gas has agentic capacity by virtue of its wider relations to the island's political situation, as well as the global natural gas industry.

6.5. A Natural Deadline: Nothing is Agreed Until Everything is Agreed.

This understanding must be juxtaposed with the fact that any convergence reached in previous rounds of negotiations between previous sets of leaders are non-binding and therefore liable to be dismissed post-election or in retaliation for unilateral action. For example, a new ruling party may persuade the public that the opposition were too generous in their previous convergences, that a stalwart approach is needed instead, or that they would engineer a better deal in the future. As mentioned previously, the negotiations of 2008-2012 did produce a specific convergence on "natural resources — including water resources " (UN 2013, 12). Upon first glance, there seemed to be agreement that natural resources as an all-encompassing term would constitute a federal competency where any newly-established federal government would exercise legislative and executive power over all relevant materials.

It is on this reference that UN Special Advisor Barth Eide attempted to contain the natural gas crisis that erupted shortly after his appointment to the post: "interestingly, if we have a settlement, the hydrocarbons issue is already solved. We don't need to negotiate, it's done. It's a federal capacity.

Natural resources reside with the federal, and it should be in everybody's interest; this is a convergence that existed prior to both Akıncı and Anastasiades, which they have confirmed" (*CM* 28/01/16). This begs the question of why natural gas was not discussed in the very first place, if indeed "paradoxically it would be the easiest question at the negotiating table if it were there?" (Barth Eide *CyBC* 27/11/14). But as alluded to before, the answer is that is neither side is bound to any convergence or prior agreement other than that of the general and perhaps productively vague model of a solution that has steadily emerged since the High-Level Agreements of 1977-1979. Vague, because though the initial outline of a solution was easy enough to accept, the exact details of the model and the series of convergences that have been agreed to date are never locked-in but continuously reopened to debate. The rejection of the federal model leaves room only for the type of solution envisioned by the far-right of each community; the emergence of the TRNC as a recognised independent state or the collapse of all Turkish-Cypriot institutions and the centralisation of power in a predominantly Greek-Cypriot society (see Papadakis 2015). The BBF is the minimum, set in stone as opposed to the series of convergences to date that referred to natural resources in the most fleeting way before the issue of natural gas emerged.

It is this clause that is problematic. Both sides will act unilaterally, both sides will protest that the other side acts unilaterally, and both-sides have their so-called red-lines. There is hardly room for compromise. With specific reference to the natural gas issue, for the RoC it was the explicit case along the lines that "any proposal to discuss the issue of hydrocarbons *prior to* a settlement cannot be accepted, […] *following* a settlement of the

Cyprus issue the Turkish Cypriots will enjoy the benefits arising from these natural resources" (CM 18/11/14 – emphasis added). Again, the temporal mismatch that is begotten from structural lock-out emerges here; the re-articulation of the same problem highlighted in Akçalı and Antonsich (2009). There are two facets to be discerned here: one is the proposal to afford the Turkish-Cypriots agency in the natural gas development process and the other of revenue management. On the latter, there is a danger here of viewing the issue of natural gas as of mere revenue management. Though this bodes well for anti-materialist or neo-vitalist arguments in the sense that it is not just natural gas the material but natural gas the economic commodity at stake, the potential revenue to be generated by the exploitation of natural gas in Cyprus is highly conjectural and still unsubstantiated. Even if whatever is subsumed under the clause of natural resources has been caricatured as a federal capacity, there is a plethora of other issues related to the federal division of powers that have had no binding consensus and therefore still remain open to debate.

This is another concern begotten from the structure, the recurring patterns, and regularities of the Cyprus Problem, which has that natural gas can only become a catalyst for peace if and only if there is a settlement. Hannay (2015) reiterated that the discovery of substantial natural gas resources could prove to be a positive economic factor that would entice the two communities to compromise, if the gas could be exported via pipeline to Turkey, and thereon to a wider European market, but only following a political settlement of the Cyprus Problem. But how could the natural gas factor prove to be any sort of positive influence if it is to be considered only after the solution to the Cyprus Problem? If natural gas was to have any sort

of positive influence on the course of the negotiations then surely joint action or management had to be taken when the negotiations occurred, or as part of the formal talks. Secondly, did the political controversy lead to demands that were excessive in the sense that exploration and exploitation efforts could not be stopped, or was this simply a convenient excuse?

In any case, a static picture was portrayed instead whereby the natural resource was there ready for the taking, closely followed by the influx of monetary wealth that would change the fortunes of the two communities. In many ways, a classic example of a resource scramble or grab took place (c.f. Bridge 2013); "the hunt is on for gas wealth, launching a new dawn for energy exploration and possible regional crisis" (*CM* 20/09/11). The question incites the inverse relationship too, which has been capitalised upon by various actors and international agencies such as the UN and policy think-tanks; a discourse which has had the effect of inflating and propagating the agency of the natural gas issue vis-á-vis the negotiations: "if the Cyprus Problem is not solved, then hydrocarbons could, in fact, be a curse" (Barth Eide *CyBC* 27/11/14). These questions have many answers, one of which leads to the notion of incentives which is explored in detail later. But it is important to note that a variety of inter-related concerns resulted in the emergence of this impasse: the comfortable nature of the status-quo and lack of belief in a solution after decades of failure, the zero-sum power game derived from contested visions of peace, the exclusion of TRNC-RoC cooperation and the external role of Turkey. More simply, the convergence achieved fell victim to the prevailing mantra of the talks.

The distinction here reflects a relational approach to material agency

where natural resources become imbued with the capacity to affect politics as a result of the webs of relations within which materials are located (Law 2007). Any joint discussion regarding the efforts to develop natural gas was in the end systematically blocked by the RoC. The controversy over natural gas was always kept at a distance from the purview of the negotiations. From this perspective, the natural gas issue became an externalised issue that metastasised and ran amok, never becoming part of the negotiations proper. However, the situation proved impossible to ignore and the controversy inevitably altered the atmosphere of the talks. Barth Eide himself asserted that:

> "The hydrocarbons issue has now been linked to the Cyprus Problem. Which way it has been linked is a matter for the two sides, but it cannot be unlinked. Now it is an argument, in my view a strong argument, for redoubling everyone's efforts to reach a solution" (*CM* 02/01/2015).

The liveliness of the natural gas issue is related to the liveliness of the peace process. The closer the two sides are to a settlement, the greater the stakes, the higher the international attention and the stronger the resolve of both those who seek to scupper the process on the island by referring to natural gas, and those on the island who seek to support the peace process by again paradoxically referring to natural gas. Thus, there was a vested interest to bring this natural resource and the problem it brought with it to the forefront of the political agenda. To exclude Turkey and the Turkish-Cypriots was a political exercise that helped constitute natural gas as a political object. Through exclusion, a boundary was created around natural gas which defined it. But this begs a further question: what exactly was

there to discuss with the TRNC? The answer is that behind questions and predictions of particular energy routes, quantities, and premonitions of wealth to be generated, the political significance of the issue is derived from its status as metaphor for the fundamental issues of the Cyprus Problem connected intimately with the more affective capacities the dispute could generate; that of feelings of mistrust, insincerity, fear, anxiety and so forth. This is further explored in Chapter 7. The related critique of the negotiations comes from Vogel and Richmond (2015), who contend that the talks have become a self-sustaining process where political elites on both sides have appropriated the negotiations to reify and entrench their own positions of power, rather than as a forum to re-structure those power relations.

On this premise, even if the leaderships were to discuss the natural gas issue in the forum of the negotiations it may simply have amounted to shifting the problem elsewhere. The TRNC as a *de facto* state may overcompensate for its non-recognition in the international arena by demonstrating a more uncompromising stance in the negotiations. Similarly, the RoC carries into the forum the well-documented attitude as the sole *de jure* recognised government. The structure of the Cyprus Problem negotiations hinders the incorporation of exterior developments that may play a helpful or positive role in the eyes of both sides, because of the very fact that the two sides do not see eye to eye on what peace should actually look like in the first place. But there is another conditioning variable so far unaddressed: the role of Turkey in the Cyprus Problem. Why then maintain a peace process that has clearly failed, where all parties clamber to declare an appetite for negotiations but have no real desire to enter into give-and-take negotiations? Partly again due to the contested perceptions of the

Cyprus Problem, where a Greek-Cypriot politician is likely to consider the idea that there is nothing to give and everything to take in a situation of occupation. Equally, a Turkish-Cypriot politician is likely to think that a solution on offer is not an improvement on the status-quo. The answer allegedly given to Akıncı before his election by the-then UN Special Representative provokes serious thought: "because the show must go on" (*CM* 13/07/14).

6.7. Between Turkey and the RoC.

The subject of natural gas allows for the affirmation of the existing fault-lines that have characterised the talks, and the only thing that has changed is that a new material referent point has been found with its own unique nature and industry as detailed in Chapter 5. In interviews with both members of ENI and ExxonMobil, I was asked the same question of: "what would Turkey do, if…", in the event of a particular scenario such as the supply of Turkey with Greek-Cypriot LNG, it were whitewashed first in an Egyptian terminal for example. This is a question of the balance between commercial and political risk, but also showcases the simple fact that it is only Turkey that has the capacity to champion the Turkish-Cypriot cause. The task is to follow through arguments and counter-arguments peddled by stakeholder actors to their logical end in order to try to ascertain the way future developments might unfold. The historical overview in Chapter 4 shows that the act of exploratory or appraisal drilling for offshore natural gas had come to be the act that drew the most political ire from Turkey and the TRNC. For the most part, the role of Turkey for the Greek-Cypriots is

clear: the antagonist and cause of the Cyprus Problem and the main obstacle in-front of a solution.

The fundamental implication of the perception above is that the Cyprus Problem ceases to be a problem of power-sharing between the two communities on the island. Instead, it now becomes a problem of invasion and occupation. This is incredibly important, for the formulation of the problem will surely condition the kind of solution or the form of peace sought. A related paradigm is that the Turkish-Cypriots are not the masters of their fate; at worst mere puppets controlled by the puppet-master Turkey. The fact that the RoC would never postpone or include the Turkish-Cypriots as the TRNC in the natural gas development processes prior to a solution can also be viewed in cynical terms as a predilection capitalised upon by Turkey, who uses the disjuncture to forward its own interests through the Turkish-Cypriots. It follows that such a state of mind identifies the Turkish-Cypriots as at best fellow citizens of the RoC and future patterns in a federal state, or as pawns helplessly encumbered by Turkey to assert power in the Eastern Mediterranean Sea. As one interviewee remarked coyly and unreservedly, “oh sure, we’re pawns; but it is what it is, the welfare of the Turkish-Cypriots is tied to Turkey whether people like it or not” (M.M. Interview 09/12/15). It remains that Turkey is the only state that recognises the TRNC. Turkish and Turkish-Cypriot interests have for the most part been historically aligned. Thus, the issue is not one of invasion and occupation. Instead, the natural gas issue is the symptom of the more fundamental concern of power-sharing between the two communities: “we are not occupiers in North Cyprus. We are there based on the representations of the TRNC. Until a solution, we will continue to stand by

the Turkish-Cypriot people and their leadership" (*HV* 22/01/15). It is evident then that there is a great deal at stake that has almost been deferred to the solution of the Cyprus Problem: the evolution of particular architectures of energy networks, a consensus on the history of the conflict, the equitable distribution of power between the two communities on the island, as well as Turkey's accession process to the EU. To carry forward a relational mindset on material agency and ontology, the more the peace process is inflated and the more that is tied to the fate of the negotiations, the greater the influence conferred to the ongoing process to develop natural gas.

As highlighted in Chapter 1, the nature of the Turkey-TRNC relationship is subject to political alignment. However, the fundamental structural disposition is that Turkey does not recognise the RoC which further channels any contestation between the two into the realm of the negotiations. The cynical ancillary is that the Turkish-Cypriots are inevitably seen as the medium through which Turkish geopolitical interests are channelled. Furthermore, as a problem of invasion and occupation — a view unanimously held by the more right-wing Greek-Cypriot parties — it follows that any power-sharing concessions to the Turkish-Cypriots are to be minimised, and that the central government should retain powers far greater than any residual powers of any constituent states. The extreme end of this interpretation is a disavowal of the bizonal, bicommunal federation. This complements the more right-wing Turkish-Cypriot desires for international recognition of the TRNC as it is.

Again, contested preconceptions about the exact nature of Ankara's role (even though the peace process is touted to be "Cypriot owned and led"),

serves to frustrate meaningful discussion between the Turkish-Cypriots and Greek-Cypriots (Hannay 2015). This preconception cements the divisions between the two communities and generates a consistent degradation and denouncement by both sides against the very people and institutions that would eventually become power-sharing partners in a future federal state. Finally, it is important to note that the natural gas issue overlapped for a short period with a particularly favourable alignment of leaders: Mustafa Akıncı and Nicos Anastasiades. Although the talks failed, that these two leaders seemed to espouse a greater conviction to solve the Cyprus Problem helped ferment a more favourable political atmosphere, which in turn allowed the idea of natural gas to be a catalyst for peace to be seen in a more favourable light as discussed further in Chapter 7.

6.8. Waiting for Incentives and Catalysts.

In earlier iterations of the negotiations, Rusinow (1981, 2) recognised that a solution was unlikely because "key individuals on each side appear to believe that developments on the other side or abroad will in time strengthen their own bargaining position" — a disposition further strengthened by "a subtle form of abdication of responsibility by all the parties" (*ibid.*), see also Hadjipavlou (2007). This approach has not changed since, and has led to the association of natural gas with the notion of the incentive. However, any reference to natural gas, hydrocarbons, or energy as an incentive for a solution to the Cyprus Problem is first and foremost a reflection of how very comfortable the status quo on the island really is (Adamides 2015). This is exactly the same line of reasoning relayed to me in an interview with a RoC

Government Spokesperson; “if we need an incentive for a solution then we’re in trouble!” (C.N. 29/03/16). Secondly, to equate natural gas as an incentive, or to state that "the discovery of important hydrocarbon reserves in the Eastern Mediterranean can serve as a catalyst for peace, stability and cooperation in the region" (President Anastasiades and Prime Minister Tsipras, *PH* 28/01/16), surely does nothing more than confer vulnerability and dependence and responsibility for the future of the peace process on factors that are largely outside of the political decision-makers control, such as but not limited to, regional natural gas prices in turn linked to global oil prices.

For the RoC, the "discovery of hydrocarbons created a new dynamic that replaces existing monopolies and creates political dependencies" (*PH* 22/02/14). But such a state of affairs that would ostensibly be an incentive for Turkey was countered to me by a former advisor to the TRNC Presidency thus: "Turkey couldn’t care less that they could get Cyprus gas or not. You know they’re going to get Kurdish gas soon and they’re going to get Iranian gas and more Iranian gas if they want. They don’t need it so actually the GC’s [Greek-Cypriots] need Turkey more than Turkey needs them because Turkey’s market is a high price market and it would make sense to sell into that high price market (M.M. Interview 21/05/16). Thirdly, it is precisely this state of vulnerability that gives off a sense of agency to the material realm and adds to the popular yet problematic perception that natural resources generally determine the political futures. There is also the odd explanation that the RoC President Anastasiades did not want the settlement talks to be hijacked or overshadowed by the natural gas issue if it was included formally in the negotiations (C.C. Interview, 24/08/15).

This is firstly a sign of simply how popular the controversy had become, and secondly another way to brandish commitment to the peace process at the expense of the opposing-side's ostensibly devoid commitment, alongside the well-documented inclination to portray the other side as sole spoiler. Finally, it is not only natural gas and the natural gas industry that has been woven into the incentive argument. A glance at the history of the Cyprus Problem shows that the prospect of EU membership was also labelled a catalyst and was also seen a necessary impetus to cajole the two sides into a solution (Dodd 2010). Membership of the EU was not held as conditional on a successful unification referendum held in 2004, in which the Greek-Cypriots voted no and the Turkish-Cypriots yes. Therefore, the idea of the process being a catalyst for peace was hollow. This is exactly why the fate of the island's natural gas exploration is kept as far apart as possible by certain ministers of the RoC government, particularly that of the Energy Minister Lakkotrypis (see Chapter 5). Nevertheless, though the two processes were still associated by other actors, the key difference with the natural gas development process was that it was excluded from the formal negotiations, and any participation or wealth to be distributed to the Turkish-Cypriots was made conditional on a solution even if the large-scale commercial exploitation of the resource seemed increasingly deferred to the future. The TRNC would still be bereft of any benefits that would proceed the actualisation of a specific form of infrastructural development such as the financing and servicing of a project.

But as stated, the lack of dialogue, be it a structural disposition coupled with anxiety, apprehension, and fear of negative consequences in terms of apotheosised state sovereignty logic, simply embittered the sides

against each other. As one Turkish-Cypriot NGO member explained: “if each community undertakes such mega projects on their own and does not think of doing mutual projects, this does nothing but cement the division on the island” (Besim, *cited in* Hazou 2012, 93). A Former U.S. Ambassador confirmed the existence of a desire by key decision makers for “some critical new factors to be brought to bear in order to seal a Cyprus settlement deal” (Interview, 08/12/15). This is exactly the same formulation I encountered in an interview with a representative of Exxon Mobil; any potential future cooperation over natural gas between the two communities was only ever something that could potentially push the two sides over the line (Interview, Exxon Mobil, 22/5/16).

For the Greek-Cypriots, a situation whereby Turkey could be excluded from an unfolding and lucrative energy network unless it agreed to recognise the RoC was the cornerstone of the catalyst for peace approach. Turkey’s probable but yet-to-be demonstrated appetite for such an arrangement was explained by reference to the country’s energy mix. In effect, a certain scale of analysis was adopted; Turkey as a regional player, Turkey as a transit country for pipeline natural gas, and Turkey as a political entity was reduced to a rational economic agent. That Turkey may have signalled interest in diversifying its energy portfolio was translated very differently by the RoC; that Turkey *needs* natural gas from the Eastern Mediterranean where the RoC had already seemingly placed itself and the Cyprus Problem along with it as a key obstacle. As the following interview excerpt demonstrates: “what is different right now? Energy! Because they know they cannot have it, Serkan, the gas cannot go to Turkey without passing through Cyprus’ EEZ. As long as the problem goes unsolved Cyprus [RoC] is

not going to give its consent" (RoC High Commission Interview, 11/12/15). This is the line set by Anastasiades earlier: [...] natural gas is the greatest incentive for Turkey to work towards a settlement of the Cyprus issue: any other formula would constitute a disincentive and the optimal scenario for those who are pushing for a Plan B" (CM 18/11/14).

The antagonist in this narrative is solely Turkey, and the Plan B refers to the supposed Janus-faced politics the other side pursues as described above. More so, the line of thought is connected to the reluctance to deal with the Turkish-Cypriots on a level-basis for reasons related to tacit sovereignty (McConnell 2009). Thus, there is an awkward balancing-act that the Greek-Cypriots find themselves having to perform. The Cyprus Problem is defined as an issue of invasion and occupation, but the solution to the Cyprus Problem lies in a negotiated settlement with the Turkish-Cypriots. The petro-nationalism (Watts 2012), on display does not see Greek-Cypriot or Turkish-Cypriot but instead plays into the guise of single Cypriot identity, which is all the more important for a centralised state rather than a more decentralised that the Turkish-Cypriots seek. Turkey is of course a major stakeholder, but it has become a major stakeholder over time and to some degree as the non-recognition of the TRNC means that Turkey is largely the main bastion of support. The power the RoC would seemingly attain through implication and association to a global natural resource network was at stake and therefore not the material itself. The argument has resonances with Bennett's (2004, 351) assertion that in assemblages, "objects appear more vividly as things, that is, as entities not entirely reducible to contexts in which human subjects set them, never entirely exhausted by their semiotics". The existence of the natural gas issue inter-alia other issues,

crises, and controversies of various magnitudes that have been generated over the years may indeed be described as an assemblage, most obviously because of the sheer number of issues that have been attached to the issue of natural gas, alongside the very pressing emotions that it incites.

However, in the case of Cyprus, references to natural gas and cognate energy infrastructures were objectified and reduced into political incentives where material things became objects and not the other way around. This is the implication for the natural gas as incentive argument in terms of material ontology. The transformation of the current system of power relations between a *de jure* and *de facto* state into one unitary federal state with considerable devolution of powers, is a future ideal to be found in material imaginations but also reflected in energy governance. Further, the thought that natural gas as an incentive that could break political deadlock furthers the impression that political, economic, or social relations as contexts through which relations of power operate could be engineered out of the flows of energy, which involve "materials and ideals, humans and non-humans, calculations and the objects of calculation, representations and forms of violence, and the present and the future" (Mitchell 2009, 422). But Mitchell's use of the verb engineer gives the wrong impression; if energy flows are established first then the politics are to apparently follow. The opposite is in play in Cyprus. The structural lock-out between certain actors incentivised the adoption of a particular architecture of energy. The necessary political environment was not there to induce a particular system of energy flows that would ostensibly be beneficial to peace as alluded to often in the abstract. There may indeed be an imperative for non-cooperation to keep Turkey out of the picture for more commercial reasons.

More importantly, how exactly natural gas would be a catalyst for peace if the topic was not up for bi-communal discussion, if the natural gas issue was not part of the negotiations? This might have nullified the protests of the Turkish-Cypriots and sufficed to calm the new God of public opinion (cf. Callon *et al.* 2001). This might have sufficed for Akıncı's administration, as consideration surely would have been shown to the fact that the RoC might not have possessed the power to halt the endeavours of IOC's such as ENI, TOTAL, and Noble Energy, at a moment's whim. Then again, what exactly would the negotiation teams of either side discuss about natural gas? The question here reverts back to the so-called convergence agreed between Talat and Christofias across 2008-2012. But I have already identified the limited nature of these convergences. Could it be that the now public controversy had metastasised to the extent that it would detract from the more traditional and fundamental issues of the Cyprus Problem? It might have been the case that any agreement of cooperation achieved regarding the natural gas issue would have set an unacceptable precedent, as well as being contrary to the mantra of the negotiations where nothing is agreed until everything is agreed. How could the two sides agree on any wealth-sharing mechanism when, apart from the fees paid to the RoC government by the IOC's for the exploration licenses, any natural gas deposits discovered thus far still in the exploration phase?

What mattered politically was the stalwart impression of the RoC as incessantly pursuant of a unilateral agenda hinged on an insidious effort to exclude the Turkish-Cypriots from any wealth generated in the future, but more so Turkey from the formation of a new architecture of energy in the Eastern Mediterranean Sea. Therefore, the cynical view point so very

popular in Cyprus is that the Turkish-Cypriots wanted to urgently include the natural gas issue in the negotiations in order to nullify the strategic advantage now developed by the Greek-Cypriots (C.C. Interview 24/08/15). This feeds into the zero-sum paradigm prevalent. It remains that both sides shared one thing in common: a belief in the power of energy or natural resources to affect the existing political chess board in predictable ways. It is here that a universal concept emerges, that which has saturated the popular association between natural resources and human conflict.

6.9. Conclusion.

The story of natural gas in Cyprus is an example of how a resource may be "talked into existence" (Weszkalnys 2011, 351). It has been in effect a case of putting the cart before the horse so to speak, where the agency of the material in question or the industry in question is not an *a priori* characteristic but something developed *a posteriori*. An effect attributed to the natural resource has fed back into the conclusion that the resource exists in the present or will exist in the very near future, that Cyprus is in effect on the precipice of a natural gas future if only the two sides could put apart their differences and focus on the shared goal. The trouble is the two sides have never been able to put aside these differences, neither on the goal of the Cyprus Problem, nor the goal of untold wealth from natural gas exploitation. As described in Chapters 4 and 5, the materiality of natural gas and cognate energy infrastructures was in effect shaped for a particular purpose across a particular instance of time. A further layer of complexity I have elucidated is the situation between *de jure* and *de facto* state, together

with the gridlocked discrepancies of power between them governs perceptions of natural gas's materiality, but more importantly, underlies exactly why this material actually mattered politically.

This is why the idea of the natural gas issue being a symptom of an underlying cause is so appropriate. Whatever natural gas is and can do is ultimately understood in the context of the Cyprus Problem. I have reasserted the idea that perceptions of natural resource agency and ontology go hand-in-hand, but that both are inescapably tied to contested visions of peace and congenital habits of power. To venture into the relationship between local context and the environment devoid of power relationships; to move beyond as if to leave behind traditional, geopolitical accounts of zero-sum territorial games (cf. Bridge and Le Billion 2013), would constitute only part of the nexus between natural resources and political conflict. Similarly, to explain the story of natural gas in Cyprus solely in terms of power and to reduce the relationship between natural gas and peace as merely the product of political struggle from the offset (Huber and McCarthy 2017), can hide what discourse and discursive practice may not capture. *Merely* is a fatal word here, for although power may be an integral part of the story, to automatically resort to relations of power as a universal explanation may blunt the vivacity of the interactions between the human and non-human (Stengers 1997) where relations of power can become a monolithic, static, extrapolation from a pre-set theme bereft of empirical depth (Foucault 1972), or a long perversion (Deleuze 2001[1968]).

These are all concerns that I have borne in mind in this Chapter as I have sketched-out how relations of power have generated, sustained, and shaped the interaction between the peace and natural gas development

processes. This has not been an exercise of reductionism into a *mere* sociological problem (Weszkalnys 2013) that detracts from the due attention materiality *should* receive (Tolia-Kelly 2013), and tantamount to a failure to capture what exactly is more-than-human (Koa 2014). There are many demands here to fit-in a sustained empirical approach to knowledge of the material itself. But there is also a need to adopt a suppler mindset such that an explanation of what has been observed is not completely dependent in an inductive fashion on a particular theory, the emblematic example being the resource-curse. The relations of power and structure here do not "simplify the complex" that is the Cyprus Problem (Guattari 1995, 61). The way out of this debacle is to note that although the conceptual import of materiality is key, if a relational or hybrid account is pressed forward then necessarily there must be a political concern related to a material concern, which may inform each other and condition each other: you cannot step out of a model all together. If the Cyprus Problem is taken as a catch-all superstructure from which the natural gas issue is an epiphenomenon another dualism emerges. In a processual and relational manner, these flows of power are nevertheless emergent phenomena begotten from the interaction between pre-existing variables such as: the nature of *de jure* and *de facto* state states amongst the international state system, contested visions for future peace, the format of the settlement talks, and the nature of interactions between states, IOC's, and international organisations such as the UN. In other words, there is an interplay in this assemblage between "semiotic flows, material flows, and social flows simultaneously" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987,63). The implicit premise is that the whatever is referred to as the Cyprus Problem would also be a reduction. This is not the picture I have

sought to portray. More so, a decades-long intractable peace process highlights both a comfortable status-quo but also a divergent understanding of peace. As Papadakis (2015) suggests, both sides may be locked-in to a process the ultimate aim of which may not be entirely desirable. Without confronting this inconvenient truth, the negotiations continue.

CHAPTER 7.

Resource Affects: The Unsung Role of Human Emotion.

"Everything depends on the momentum and climate of the negotiation process. […] We play it safe. We don't leave anything to trust"

(D.H. Former TRNC Minister of Foreign Affairs, Interview 29/03/16).

"The traditional issues which used to be on the table for decades such as the withdrawal of Turkish troops, the constitution, the territory, the settlers, the properties etc., would not be sufficient anymore. The taste and smell of oil and gas and the hundreds of billions of dollars they may represent one day would be felt very strongly all over Cyprus, and probably in Greece and Turkey as well"

(N. Rolandis 19/11/12).

7.1. How and Why Affect Matters: Preamble and Chapter Structure.

I begin this final Chapter with the reiteration that the four analytical axioms I have divided this thesis into: temporality, agency and ontology, power, and affect understood through emotion, are so intimately and incontrovertibly intertwined with each other that to discuss them autonomously without consilience, though perhaps possible, would nevertheless quickly become an untenable position. Indeed, in the same way as the discussion of temporality and power connected material agency with material ontology, there is an unmissable pathological analogue that I have alluded to throughout. Speculation, anticipation, desire, hope,

grandstanding, comfort, fear, and spite; these are just some of the key emotive states that otherwise may be referred to as affective properties (Navaro-Yashin 2012) — or more commonly, simply the emotions generated — that I have identified in this thesis, albeit most predominantly in the story of speculation and indeterminacy in Chapter 5. Navaro-Yashin (2012, 17) has previously explored the affect "discharged by a post-war environment" in the context of Cyprus. In a similar manner, I explore here the subtle, necessarily contingent, experiential encounters related to affect in the ongoing political situation on the island as it has concerned the issue of natural gas.

Ultimately, human emotion and rationality are intertwined in complex ways (Connolly 2002). To say that emotions matter is a point of departure into a potentially deeper exploration of the role pathology has played in the emergence, sustenance, and consequences of a very complex and passionate political dispute. Investigation here will add an invaluable depth to the discussion, and will further the view of natural resources through a relational ontology as well as the inseparable role of emotion. These are the gamut of moods, emotions, feelings, memories, and meanings (Merriman and Jones 2017), that saturate discourse and are articulated in the form of knowledge controversies, visions of peace, distortions of time, and the very fuel that powers discursive practices. In this Chapter, I will recount select affective moments to demonstrate how the issue of natural gas worked on an affectual level in practice, and using at times my own positionality. In effect, I seek to augment what the taste and smell of oil and gas (Rolandis 2012), might have actually entailed.

Unsurprisingly, the emotional exchanges at hand will display issues of

sovereignty, power, partial accounts of history, knowledge controversies, and contested visions of the future, where an ontological accord exists between "interest in the propensities, affordances, and affectiveness of more-than-human phenomena" (Whatmore 2014, 83). Empirically, I treat the emotions raised in experiences that I have found as characteristic of the political situation vis-á-via natural gas — again, primarily as I have encountered them from my own situated, contingent, and unique perspective. Such felt emotions encountered during research afforded an enhanced relational understanding of the political significance of natural resources and the construction of socio-material assemblages.

Beyond the above parameters, the reader is warned that I do not consider any additional major events that make-up the story of natural gas other than that which have already been discussed thus far. I have no more to add with regards to the coverage of the contents of the natural gas industry, and the power relations that characterise the Cyprus Problem remain stubbornly the same. I disappoint the reader who expects a general public opinion survey of the bottom-line emotional insights of actors, groups, and organisations vis-á-vis the natural gas issue, the value of which is open to debate. Interestingly, a historical psychological ethnography of the two communities found in Tenzel and Gerst (1972) bears interesting similarities to the situation today. However, what I do is consider the emotional drivers behind a set of noteworthy developments and eventualities during fieldwork to emphasise the relational, multiple, and processual mechanism by which logos, pathos, and ethos overlap. These questions necessitate the adoption of a more ethnographic and emotionally-sensitive awareness to the way knowledge is generated in order to get to the heart of

the matter. I turn in the first instance to authors such as the anthropologists Ferry and Limbert (2008) and Weszkalnys (2016), who have made key contributions between theories of affect and the subject of natural resources. Weszkalnys' (2016, 127) use of the term "resource affect" is a welcome intervention that aims to raise awareness about the "increasingly prominent, if somewhat nameless, role affect has played" in debates related to natural resource development, where a natural resource is not just a commodity but something entangled in the affective fabric of political life.

Finally, a specific thought I draw attention to is the habit of seeing an "interval between sense and sense-making" (Whatmore 2006, 604). I will argue this to be relatively minor to an argument developed previously in Chapter 3, where I stated that the sort of Enlightenment-era and modern binary between the cerebral and visceral, between the "coolly rational scientific observer, completely independent, free from all preconceived theories, prior philosophical, ethical and religious commitments, that leads to a dispassionate, unbiased conclusion of the absolute truth" (Lennox 2009, 49), is a myth. It is also a dangerous misconception that can only offer a truncated view of the agency of natural resources. It is from this point onwards that the scene is set to explore the role of affect in the natural gas saga. I turn now to a series of affective encounters I experienced during industry conferences and public forums evidenced previously in this thesis, alongside previously unseen noteworthy interview material.

7.2. Affective Undertones of Controversy: Experiences from Conferences and Interviews.

Conference ethnographies offer a window not only into the culture of the natural gas industry, but the setting provides an opportunity to observe how knowledge and consensus is established and communicated in practice. This is not the mere narration of experience, but points to how the issue of natural gas has been lived, the emotions incited, the knowledge controversies created, the inclusion and exclusion of certain actors and points of view. Towards the end of my fieldwork experience after the negotiations recommenced, and after no serious fallout resulted from the announcement of the 3rd Licensing Round inside the RoC's EEZ, it is admittedly the case that I had steadily become accustomed to and uninspired by the litany of arguments and counter-arguments associated not only with the peace process and the traditional sticking-points of the Cyprus Problem, but the almost laundry-list of factors or variables that speakers on the future of the island's natural gas spoke of, in exactly the way Mason (2015) describes in his fieldwork in Alaska.

I have already accounted for the particulars of this phenomenon in Chapter 5. But the point I raise here is that after a certain level of exposure to the continued debates and circular discussions fuelled by new developments in the Eastern Mediterranean, oftentimes I perceived nothing of noteworthy surprise at what has been said; "the same tired old bullshit" as a journalist friend who covered the natural gas issue had mused during a presentation at 7th Mediterranean Oil & Gas Forum held at the Hilton, Nicosia, March 2016. The effect is that I felt a sense of apathy that made the more sensational and aggrandised claims I encountered all the more memorable and alluring, and this is an emotional state that I think is ripe for the spread of knowledge controversies as evidenced in Chapter 5, and

emblematic of the stasis of the negotiations as discussed in Chapter 6, but also a disposition susceptible to a simple and emotionally-charged answer to a complex question.

My guard against such easy relativism and lazy holism (Haraway 1991) was my lifetime of exposure to the Cyprus Problem, where I accrued a constant suspicion that the discursive performance invoked vis-à-vis natural gas was instead the re-articulation of existing intractable political differences. My scepticism made grandiose predictions of what would and would not occur both in the industry and the peace process all the more startling. In the end, I held that there would never be a definitive or entirely persuasive bottom-line argument that would eliminate speculation and settle the controversy once and for all. In other words, though "good matters of fact" (Latour 2003, 227), might have been made public to an extent, what was commonly understood about the nature of the natural gas industry or the intentions of the stakeholders to the Cyprus Problem was simply not the entire set of drivers and determinants of the political situation. I have made this point in Chapter 5, where the kind of informational enrichment (Barry 2005), accrued about the industry did not automatically lead to the nullification of political controversy. In fact, it may even be the case that such enrichment provides further discursive arenas or intellectual spaces to which a pre-existent controversy can relate to, metastasise into, and detract from, the fundamental essence of the political dispute by shifting political decision and responsibility elsewhere (Mol 1999). I argue that it is the work of affect that has added to the form, nature, and extent of the political situation, and that knowledge controversies may indeed be considered as another form of pointillism that "cling[s] to the surface of what actually

takes place" (Doel 1999, 121).

For there were moments — and it is pertinent to call them affective moments — where the potential for passionate political dispute actualised and became firmly ingrained in memory; be it an awkward question raised by an audience member, the unaddressed elephant in the room, or an incendiary remark glossed over by an industry speaker with a rehearsed laundry-list of structural and cyclical factors that gestured to generalities of the global natural gas industry. As Kennedy and Vining (2007, 27) advocate, "without emotional input, none of us would pay attention to what is going on". Therefore, an answer to why natural gas matters in Cyprus is precisely to do with the emotions accompanied with the wider political situation on the island. Indicative of this is a passionate exchange between a Greek-Cypriot audience member and a Greek-Cypriot industry speaker that occurred at a public forum convened at the University of Nicosia in June 2016, very near the end of my fieldwork. I have previously used this experience in Chapter 4 to highlight how said conference speaker had equated the capacity or agency of natural gas to be a catalyst for peace upon the size of natural gas discoveries. In this memorable event, the speaker had also dared to float the idea of selling Cyprus's natural gas to Turkey based on the logic that geographical proximity might make Turkey the most commercially desirable option for supply of gas, and potentially onwards to Europe. The audience member was vehemently against the idea, an extract of reasoning being as follows:

Greek-Cypriot Member of the Public: "Cyprus has every right to cooperate with Israel, Egypt, and Greece, and build a pipeline from Israel to Crete and

all the way to Italy" [the so-called 'East-Med pipeline largely accepted as the most commercially distant option for the island's natural gas].

Speaker: "It's very expensive".

Greek-Cypriot Member of the Public: "Expensive or not expensive!" (markedly more assertive, the crowd sniggers).

Speaker: "Are you going to pay for it?" (speaker asks sarcastically, crowd laughs).

Greek-Cypriot Member of the Public: "Okay, I get the point, even if it's expensive the point I'm trying to make, whether it is feasible or not, I will restate my point, the terminal is feasible, whether we do it or not, the point is that nations do not apply their national interest having to be bullied by their neighbours".

He continued:

"[…] Who has the confidence to deal with the Turks and pass pipelines either for Turkish needs or European needs? To my way of thinking, both economically and politically, this bizonal bicommunal federation is not on. Cyprus should start from zero-point as one nation, one people, the Turkish and Greek Cypriots are citizens of Cyprus, the energy resources belong to the Republic of Cyprus and Turkey is the one who should pay for the invasion and occupation of Cyprus, and not the Cypriots through their energy resources. […] Turkey should allow the Turkish-Cypriots to negotiate in free terms, not with their guns on their heads as it is now".

A number of poignant implications are by raised by this brief exchange from which a world of meaning can be inferred from. To hear the view that agency of the Turkish-Cypriots summarily dismissed as a mere pawn of Turkey was not in fact a source of discomfort from my own perspective as a Turkish-Cypriot, solely because the explanation touted

above was a position that I had heard multiple times before over the course of fieldwork (as described in Chapter 6), and had become accustomed and desensitised to. Hence, I was not moved enough from an emotional perspective so as to interject the speech or challenge the speaker. Instead, I certainly recall a distinct feeling of heightened curiosity with regards to the direction the discussion would turn, and how the reasoning offered would then be received by the audience. Clearly, the member of public was markedly passionate about the future of the island's natural gas development policy, and spoke in a manner that commanded the full attention of the audience. In turn, there was an unmistakable sense of caution, suspicion, and mistrust, and in general the emotions here have often been part of the problem behind broader confidence-building measures sought for the settlement talks. I considered this moment to be a poignant demonstration of how perceptions from the analytical scale of the everyday are often scaled-up to state-level geopolitical calculations. It is these emotions that I think are ultimately articulated in the perception of natural gas development as a tool, economic lever, or incentive, that can be used to penalise Turkey and the Turkish Cypriots and to push for a particular system of governance and peace as outlined in Chapters 4 and 6.

In such instances, it is unfair to caricature an emotional outburst of interest as if it provides the only real account of what is generally thought and felt about the issue of natural gas (see Pile 2010). However, as I subsequently discovered, the sheer magnitude of his convictions clearly emanated from past predilections harboured vis-á-vis the historical development of the Cyprus Problem. My own exposure to the recital of the conflict from the Turkish-Cypriot perspective inspired a curiosity and

passion for the issue that must have been part of the reason that compelled me to inquire further about the past of the audience member (see Leonard 2013). I did not enquire further into a second similar incident that I describe momentarily, and interestingly this I felt was largely as a result of an affective atmosphere of sheer taboo that seemed to pervade the auditorium. It follows that I spoke with the convenor of the public forum after the event concluded, and the explanation I received from the convenor in an almost apologetic and remorseful tone was that he knew personally the audience member in question who in his past had been a Greek-Cypriot soldier during the Turkish invasion, that he had been taken prisoner during the conflict and then transferred to a prisoner of war camp in Turkey until hostilities ceased.

It became thereafter entirely unsurprising that a sense of shame, grudge, or fear, would prevail with the audience member that must have gone on to shape his political view, and crucially found further expression in a particular architecture of energy or material imagination. Relatedly, the idea that the revenues generated by natural gas development could potentially be used to fund the so-called costs of a solution to the Cyprus Problem (another hotly contested issue), would be unreasonable to many Greek-Cypriots, but utterly unthinkable and offensive for the person in question. Such a predilection actualised en-masse in the public ire drawn at RoC Foreign Minister Kasoulides, who once dared to publicly float the idea that the proceeds from natural as exploitation could somehow be used to fund the expenses predicted to accrue after a solution (*PL* 16/06/16). Clearly then, the policy of natural resource management is conditioned somewhat upon the emotions incited domestically whereby actions that may

calmed the controversy for side could have equally stirred animosity on the other. This is an indication of just how far the two sides are from a solution that entails mutual compromise. From a methodological perspective, what is of further significance is the fact that I have extrapolated from the event and predicted the audience member's reaction to other relevant issues connected to natural gas. The impression here is emblematic of the way the emotional reactions to issues of the negotiations come to be regarded as the so-called red-lines of the settlement talks; an aspect of the work of affect that I build up to in the next section. Is this an example of a disengagement of the ordered flow of experience into its singularities as Colebrook (2002) might suggest? It is far easier to envisage feelings of revenge, reservation, and heightened curiosity as singularities from an abstracted perspective and simply as particular moments where time and consciousness have met. But I question the use of such a view to describe the flow of experience, and question further what reasonable alternative there is to understand such eventualities under such singularities. I will return to this point later when I re-introduce the notion of eventalisation and reify as per Klinke (2013), the assertion that the material facts upon which geopolitical narratives are constructed rely upon temporally structured chronologies which give the impression of causality.

7.3. Architectures of Energy in Public.

Relatedly, if what matter does is of greater importance than what matter is (Anderson and Tolia-Kelly 2004, 672), then the commercial feasibility of natural gas as well as cognate envisioned energy

infrastructures such as the LNG terminal or East Med pipeline — all referred to by the above audience member with intimate familiarity — are of political significance, precisely because they touch an emotional nerve. In other words, what is incited here is a set of emotions that saturate throughout the wider assemblage or complex that is the Cyprus Problem. Although I would not refer to such latent hopes, expectations, and the like, as objects themselves (Weszkalnys 2011), and similarly objects of knowledge (Anderson 2014), it is still important to distinguish that it may be the emotions at stake rather than natural gas itself, all by itself (Mol 2012). This fits in with what Adams *et al.* (2009), identify as an affective state of anticipation whereby a person is oriented toward a desired model of the future that I see as a contested system of governance of a potentially unified island.

Hence, it is appropriate to conceptualise an affective field that may invoke various material referent points. Contested visions of peace, phantasmatic energy infrastructures, issues of price and magnitude, sovereignty, international law, identity politics, and ethnicity, have evidently saturated both the issue of natural gas and the wider Cyprus Problem and are the first port of call when it comes to the investigation of the relationship between ontology and epistemology (McCormack 2003). In tandem, it is the feelings of mistrust and suspicion featured in the way the peace process is run and the way the formal negotiations take place. The point exemplified in Chapter 5 is that a clear emotional aversion to Turkey created a need to by-pass the country through a particular form of natural gas development.

This is not a standalone factor. But it remains useful because it shows how resource affect can work in practice. The prospect of a pipeline to

Turkey was for some the material embodiment of a catalyst for peace and for others a veritably awkward subject, in the same way that official cooperation between the TRNC and RoC can be scorned as an anathema. The turn of events here ties back to a very distinct sense of taboo, awkwardness, and reservation, that I felt with during another exchange between audience and speaker during the first public forum I attended; an event at the University of Cyprus entitled: *Developing a Petroleum Industry in Cyprus* in September 2015. The portion of the speech I focus upon begins with a description of the initial challenges that faced the development of Aphrodite:

Industry Speaker: Gas is a long journey, it will take decades. Today the situation in Europe is not very favourable due to decline in gas consumption. Indigenous production will decrease, […] one day in the future there will be room for gas coming from the Levantine Basin. With gas, you have many options. […] at the end of the day somebody must invest.

Greek-Cypriot Audience Member: What about a pipeline, a pipeline to Europe?

Speaker: […] normally the easiest way to reach Europe would be through Turkey (silence from audience).

Greek-Cypriot Audience Member: no, no, no! (shakes head).

There was a palpable silence that preceded the assertion by the audience member whose tone was tinged with combativeness. This could have been the delay, gap, or interval (Deleuze 1991), between prehension and apprehension, which is what the epistemological critique of affect encourages us to see. My felt emotion thereon may be viewed in a reductive

way as “sociolinguistic fixing of the quality of an experience” (Massumi 2002, 88); an act that may obscure “the stuff that goes on beneath, beyond, even parallel to signification” (O’Sullivan 2001, 126). But my description is in fact an accurate, careful, and thoughtful reflection, of what I felt and what I am certain that the audience must have also felt based on the pin-drop silence that followed and the tone of the speaker’s careful and diplomatic response. As such, alongside the inherent epistemological critique above I retain an element of scepticism because the so-called lag or gap between felt emotion and representation could simply the common inability to find the right words at the right time. Hence, I retain a less radical position and harbour more of a humanist view of human agency, will, and consciousness as opposed to say Thrift (2007). Briefly, the impasse here also is relatable to the distinction between Deleuze’s virtual and the actual (Zourabichvili 2012), where the moment of representation and signification is the process where the virtual is actualised and a choice is made between the various multiplicities of meaning and signification.

The Nietzschean undertone to post-structural thought is evident here, where that which is in perception is to remain ever-doubtful for it is begotten from the “approximation on the basis of a meagre sum of observations; it is ‘in flux’, as something in a state of becoming” (Nietzsche 1967, 330). The inclination to think in processual terms is clearly maintained in the literature I have subsequently deployed, especially as it has concerned the identification of events, where “isolated pieces” (Nietzsche 1974, 173), are deduced from a continuum to give the impression of linear cause and effect. However, I am confident that my ostensibly meagre observations were accurate, for the speaker himself in his response was

evidently aware of the gravity of the situation amongst his audience. He repeated in a calm manner the oft-cited fact that prevailing low regional gas prices in Europe made the commercial viability of RoC gas sales there a difficult proposition at this moment in time, leaving the possibility open to future change. This was done in a placatory, appreciative, and respectful tone. Further to this point, and in what seemed to be a compromise the speaker gave further leeway in a conciliatory manner by asserting that the project was at least technically feasible, which seemed to have pleased the audience and signalled the end of the question.

However, the assertion of feasibility of commercial projects often gives way to undue expectations as has largely remained with the case in the so-called East-Med pipeline, despite gestures to the contrary. It remains that the possibility and the potentiality of an alternative energy architecture that would bypass the anathema of a pipeline to Turkey satisfied the audience member. In conjunction with the discussion in Chapter 5, it is clear that in this scenario natural gas as an object alongside its relation to the peace process, had been abstracted but also simplified to "facilitate our purposes and projects, even while limiting and localising them" (Grosz 2001, 167), as demonstrated by the minimal impact discussions of commercial reality seemed to make. This makes the formation of a nature-society dualism in the form of peace and natural gas far less problematic, and far more amenable to the public.

The only way the discursive may be exceeded here (cf. Anderson 2014), is by the recognition that I have invariably based my account from what I have absorbed in my own situated perspective, but both the audience and speaker's reaction corroborated the accuracy of the account. The

implication is that affect should not be regarded as an external force, for the same changes were incited physiologically across multiple individuals (cf. Clough 2007). Though at once individual, affect is also collective across multiple bodily capacities (Anderson 2014). Hence, to speak of affect in the abstract seems all the more flawed, and I retain a degree of scepticism as to that which lies outside human perception. For what I have evidenced so far suggests that which is more-than-material becomes the locus of political strife. This predilection then goes on to incorporate select retentions of material fact when necessary, as evidenced in Chapter 4.

To the question then of whether or not the aforementioned outburst can be deemed an excess of affect (Weszkalnys 2016), the answer inevitably ties back to the type of peace envisioned on the island as the first audience member made all too clear, where a political solution was to be found in the abandonment of a bizonal, bicommunal, federation. Hence, there may be an excess of affect for those who see no other alternative formula. At the same time, the entirety of the Greek-Cypriot population's thoughts, feelings, and vocations, cannot be caricatured by inference from one individual's passionate outburst. As stated, it is neither necessary nor in the realm of the possible to capture and relay to the reader the entire unfolding of a political situation (cf. Barry 2016), or the oil or natural gas assemblage (Appel *et al.* 2015, Watts 2013) for that matter. However, it is equally erroneous to dismiss an individual's emotion, intuition, and volition, as it if had emerged from some sort of vacuum.

Ahmed (2004), for example, has described how emotions are part and parcel of the formation of collective identities. Personal narratives of the Cyprus conflict have been documented as utterly inseparable from the way

people view the conflict and the form of a future solution (Hadjipavlou-Trigeorgis 1998, Zemblyas and Karahasan 2006). As shown, there are clear ramifications regarding the ontological status of natural gas (as a catalyst, tool for power, a resource on the temporal horizon), the way energy infrastructure should be developed, together with a naïve account of the operation of the industry itself. A neo-vitalist account in the vein of Bennett (2004) may suggest that affect unexhausted by semiotics can be equated with materiality, and underpins the liveliness of matter. In my view, that which is more-than-material is the essence of the affectual component, and it is the felt emotion thereon that bestows agency to natural resources in a relational manner. This is inescapably encapsulated in semiotics, though of course not in a hyper social-constructivist manner. No doubt material vitalism exists and is perhaps "ordinarily hidden or covered, rendered unrecognisable" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 411), especially through the use of metaphors such as the catalyst for peace, curse or blessing. The central problem is that inescapably the only way to relay such felt intensities to the reader is through language (Castree 1995), which as a form of signification is said to rely primarily on the metaphor to structure beliefs, perceptions, and actions (Lakoff and Johnsen 2003).

But it is still nevertheless useful to speak of an affective atmosphere that may be generated which, during the second public forum as documented above, I admittedly felt such that I became reluctant to draw attention to myself owing to my positionality as a Turkish-Cypriot, and to challenge what I perceived as the hegemonic political view of the Greek-Cypriots in an auditorium full of Greek-Cypriots. Thus, the thought of interjection seemed disagreeable. This I hold is indicative of the way a

researcher's own identity and positionality can come to be of consequence in the interaction with the field. What is of further interest is that my ethnicity was not of course self-evident, but more precisely I wondered if I would have been seen as supportive of the other side if I had critiqued and challenged the audience member which no-one else seemed willing to do. Indeed, this potential need to keep a low profile recurred throughout fieldwork. Together with a further interview scenario which I discuss momentarily, during the 7th Mediterranean Oil and Gas Forum held at the Hilton, Nicosia, March 2016, an interesting exchange occurred between a member of the UK High Commission in Nicosia and a board member of the CHC, both of whom I had previously met and networked with.

It was in a period of recess before the commencement of the keynote speech where most delegates gathered together and conversed with each other. In a serendipitous manner, I recognised the aforementioned characters and looked over toward them amidst the crowd and overheard part of their conversation. The British diplomat asked if there were any Turkish-Cypriots present at the event to which the board member I had just introduced myself to moments earlier scanned the room, found me, and then summarily pointed towards me. Immediately, I turned my gaze away in an effort to not let on that I had accidentally followed part of their conversation. Strangely, I decided to keep a lower profile for a while, after having felt identified as the token Turkish-Cypriot in the room. However, this affectual moment did eventually wear off and it certainly did not stop me from continuing to network though I did not approach that member of the CHC again. This may simply have been a moment of heightened attention and awareness more than anything else, where I drifted towards to

planning scenarios in my mind as to how I would navigate a situation whereby I might have been seen as a non-transparent agent of some sort. Indeed, it is possible that my background could have had an effect thereafter in a manner unbeknownst to me, though I did not experience any further awkward moments so to speak. In retrospect, I may have again jumped to a conclusion about the effect of my positionality, but what mattered was that it occurred and had a palpable effect on behaviour.

More importantly, I take the first two scenarios I have described as part and parcel of the "cultural appraisals about utility and value" that Bridge (2009a, 2) speaks of, where to view natural gas as a mere object no longer holds, for it has been altered through subjectivity and has therefore become a socio-material assemblage (Latour 1999). Finally, both of these occurrences are but instances that nonetheless still give credence to Marres's (2010, 201) suggestion that a publics' position in a political controversy is marked by a special combination of being both an insider and outsider; a clear case of situated knowledge. Beyond the sense of taboo and indignation, from a methodological perspective it is clearly the case that I have included these select events, precisely because I have retained in memory most distinctively these more indeterminate affective moments or events and their accompanied emotions, as opposed to say weary repetitions of the fundamentals of the natural gas industry, as evidenced in a 209-page collation of natural gas related news I collated in addition to interviews, documentary archives, and conference ethnographies, but never returned to. Therefore, if affect is said to be "never reducible to the personal quality of emotion" (McCormack 2003, 501), then I consider that particular premise of affect as a limitation. For it is the very emotions that I have felt as a

researcher that have crystallised these events within my conceptual framework to understand the nature of the political situation on the island. As mentioned in Chapter 3, the sheer strength of the juxtaposition created between natural gas and peace was such that I had felt disappointed that further developments in the sphere of natural gas did not have the same causal ramifications on the peace process as in October 2014. Indeed, the mechanism behind the nature of the association between the processes as disclosed thus far has certainly been far more complex than linear positivism would suggest. This is all still in congruence with a relational assertion of Bennett's (2004, 354), whereby "a thing has power by virtue of its operating in conjunction with other things". Instead of the existence of a material 'thing' *per se*, what was really at stake was the projection and objectification of political desires themselves allied with particular sets of emotions. Coupled with various political discourses I have evidenced throughout this thesis, natural gas talk — to appropriate Watts' (2013) oil talk — has become unquestionably an exemplar site of governable emotional investment. Thus, I do not agree that the shift in onus to affect necessarily equates to the distinction between what things mean and what things do (see Whatmore 2006). Instead, I maintain that what things mean, the connotations are imbued, and the issues instigated with the term natural gas, come together in a relational manner to determine to a significant degree the agency of matter. Finally, what has transpired across these events are but further examples of the simultaneous operation of the not yet stage of natural resource development (Weszkalnys 2014).

Ultimately, this telling account of personal experience should not be denounced as anecdotal. For it is exactly the sort of contextual knowledge

needed to explain the ostensibly irrational hopes and anticipations of a natural gas future in an era of falling natural gas prices as explained in Chapter 5, and thereon to assuage against an assessment of the political situation in terms of commodity determinism. It is equally erroneous to argue that "each object – each issue – generates a different pattern of emotions and disruptions, of disagreements and agreements" (Latour 2005, 5). This generation misses a processual pathway, one highlighted by the theory of affect. This line of reasoning can imply the generation of emotions by an object itself without acknowledgement of the personal affective field or atmosphere (or simply context), that object has been placed within and is perceived in relation to from the individual-level and upwards. The idea is to think of the moment whereby you feel something, but you cannot yet put it into words, you do not yet know how to feel about something, but you sense something is amiss. It is almost a heightened sensibility and sensitivity before whatever is sensed is expressed and communicated in language.

7.4. Affective Atmospheres of the Peace Process.

In this section, I provide insights into the work of emotions related to the formal negotiation process. The assertion by a Turkish-Cypriot Foreign Minister in an interview that "everything depends on the momentum and climate of the negotiation process" — is in parallel with Bennett's (2004, xii), explanation that "if a set of moral principles is actually to be lived out, the right mood or landscape of affect has to be in place". In conjunction, the "vicious circle of mutual suspicion and fear" (Rusinow 1981, 18), is also part and parcel of the structural lock-out and deadlock of the negotiations as

highlighted in Chapter 6. Much as in the initial establishment of the 1960 Republic, the creation of a bi-zonal, bi-communal settlement is still considered to be a solution that is far from the actual intentions and aspirations of the two communities, yet actions are still undertaken to ensure the BBF is the only available option. As the aforementioned Minister continued to explain: "we're never going to be recognised, [...] but even talking to other people is a source of paranoia for them [RoC], because they think if we do get some sort of higher status that would make us less inclined to reunify with them" (29/03/16). It follows that each side seeks to engineer a solution that blocks for all time any possibility of *enosis* or *taksim*, the contemporary by-words for Greek-Cypriot domination and Turkish-Cypriot secession.

Perrault and Valdivia (2010) have written of how a petroleum economy can engender powerful mobilisations against social injustice, and Watts (2004a, 2004b) has documented how oil control is used as a means to heighten attention to marginalised and disempowered groups in the Niger Delta. What is seen in the case of Cyprus is that the excitement and anticipation felt at the onset of natural resource wealth and the capacity to engage in natural resource exploration and exploitation efforts, clearly helped to embolden the well-known traditional disputes of the Cyprus Problem instead of being an incentive to reunify. As mentioned previously in Chapters 4 and 6, there have been actors who sought to downplay altogether what has proved to be such a toxic issue to the settlement talks, and usually these would be people of a leftist political inflection as opposed to nationalists. Yet, even in an interview with the left-of-centre Communal Democracy Party (TDP) in the TRNC, the idea that natural gas should be

piped through Turkey and that the issue should be discussed as part of the negotiations was still maintained based upon the sincere belief that natural gas could still potentially be a catalyst for peace (O.Z. Interview, 16/09/15). This was the same reaction I had from a member of the TRNC Foreign Ministry who had been portrayed by other international diplomats I had interviewed as a conciliatory negotiator focussed solely on the negotiations, rather than the crises that had evolved vis-á-vis natural gas. In interview, she was resolutely insistent that the TRNC would engage in tit-for-tat reprisals, which would never bode well for the negotiations (N.O 21/09/15). Amidst such a retaliatory pro-forma atmosphere, the settlement talks were further compounded by what seemed to become an opportunity for the vindication of the past, which again highlights the ever-present historical roots of the dispute. The need for vindication did not end with the individual I have just described. But the desire for it informed the upper echelons of policy-making, as evidenced in none other than that of the RoC lead negotiator for the Cyprus Problem Andreas Mavroyiannis.

At a public forum that hosted both Barth Eide and Negotiator Mavroyiannis, the latter explained: “now can be ignore the past? No. We cannot ignore it because there is a sense in many people that they need a feeling of vindication. […] If you do not give just satisfaction, people will not be ready to take this big jump into the unknown” (Stelios Philanthropic Foundation, Nicosia, 06/05/16). As consequence of this search for vindication, to define a peace settlement based on the past it tries to correct rather than to describe that unknown the two communities are expected to jump into, allows the trauma of the past to condition the very vision of peace. Even if as the-then RoC Government Spokesperson advocated for a

"specific environment" for the negotiations to resume after the collapse of late 2014, it is difficult to envisage just how far a negotiation process with the influence of external developments such as that in the natural gas development process or historical injustices would really go. Inadvertently, I found the same sense of vindication elsewhere in an interview with a member of the RoC Ministry of Energy (E.V. 22/04/16).

I enquired of the personal history of my informant out of politeness and curiosity so as to create what I thought would be a conducive personal atmosphere for the interview. I found out that her parents had been displaced from the city of Kyrenia during the war (now in the TRNC), and that her great-grandparents had themselves been displaced from the south of Turkey during the Greco-Turkish War early in the 20th Century. I immediately took this as an awkward start and decided to alter the format of the interview in response. The methodological demand conjoined with the necessity to learn to be affected (see Whatmore 2006), is synonymous with the need to provide an honest reflection of sensory registers. In all honesty then, the emotion that I felt here was one of trepidation, for I became acutely aware of the distribution of affect and power between researcher and researched in this interview, and the sensitive nature of the topic (Whatmore 2003). This is of course related to my positionality again, and how I perceived myself then and there as perhaps the target of her frustration.

Besides the troublesome political perceptions evident that will by now seem all too familiar to the reader, what I instead found perceptive about this interview in particular was another example of how the research process proceeded at the behest of a particular mood or atmosphere. In response and with a view to mitigate any potential issues, the questions I

subsequently asked about the role of Turkey were interspersed throughout the interview instead. One of the questions I had was related to the collapse of the negotiations in late 2014, when the Turkish research vessel *Barbaros Hayreddin Paşa* was dispatched. In Chapter 4, I recounted that in 2011 another research vessel was again sent into the RoC EEZ by Turkey, and that this was an event which had no repercussions on the settlement talks as it had seemingly caused before. I enquired about the difference between the events and the respondent explained the dissonance thus:

> "It had to do with the stage of the negotiations. […] we were at the point of trying really hard to solve the problem and make compromises and you had all that rhetoric from Turkey that they would support a solution and the Cypriots are free to do what they want to do. They presented it as a bi-communal problem which it is not, it is a problem of invasion and war. At that point in time, when the Cypriots were trying hard to solve the problem you had Turkey sending the Barbaros and invading the Exclusive Economic Zone of Cyprus […]".

I was in no mood to further challenge and debate this member of the RoC Ministry of Energy on the role of Turkey and the balance of power with the TRNC, as I had the distinct sense that the respondent became more combative with what seemed as better rehearsed, animated, and lengthier responses to my questions on the topic. The approach I adopted was not out of fear, but the acknowledgement of futility that I foresaw in the endeavour if I proceeded in both an instinctive and reflective manner. The promotion of a holistically Cypriot identify rather than a Turkish-Cypriot identity is indeed part and parcel of a growing stratagem to break bonds between Turkey and the Turkish-Cypriots, and to manoeuvre the latter against the former so that the conduit through which Turkey is seen to act in Cyprus is abolished. It is

not a methodology I personally would find easy to accept. This is a wishful inclination that I have often felt of late in discussions with many Greek-Cypriot informants, and the effectiveness of this policy to upset the general equilibrium between Turkey and the TRNC is questionable. However, the additional bifurcation at play here that I draw attention to is that between the conciliatory versus the intransigent; those with the will for a solution and those without, which I have addressed in Chapter 6. There are varying interpretations of what sort of actions would constitute the violation of a state's sovereign rights, which in fact differ between the EEZ and the territorial waters beyond twelve nautical miles from its land territory. Though I found it an unnecessary use of the word invasion, "for you cannot invade an area that you have sovereign rights and not [full] sovereignty" (C.C. Interview 24/08/15), the specific use of language and tone here demonstrates a very unforgiving impression of Turkey and the TRNC's actions, intentions, and motives, and also vice-versa between the RoC and the Turkish-Cypriots. The invasion of the EEZ remark for me was very telling for Barth Eide himself questioned how much of a violation of the RoC EEZ has actually occurred then, because the EEZ is "not sovereign territory, anybody can basically do anything there but for taking out the resources. But that's a very technical issue" (*CM* 08/04/15). Much like the suggestion that wealth generated from hydrocarbon exploitation could be used to fund a possible solution, so did this remark again draw ire and criticism from the Greek-Cypriot public.

The relevant theoretical question here is whether or not language should be considered politics by other means (Haraway 1991). Perhaps the point can be taken further to suggest that it is from the subjectivities

through language that political controversy itself emerges (see Rorty 1991). I have raised these kinds of questions toward the end of Chapter 5, where I argued that the use of language is utterly vital for the connections forged between material agency and ontology, temporality, power, and affect, and unfortunately also often underplayed. What is also implicitly evident in the response above gives further credence to the subtle form of abdication of responsibility that parties to the Cyprus Problem can display, as highlighted by Rusinow (1981). As such, RoC President Anastasiades himself concluded with regards to the specific event mentioned by the interviewee to the effect that "the Turkish actions and their timing cause serious concern. In the middle of a process that aims for reunification, it undermines the process and adds doubts as to their commitment to it" (*PH* 22/10/14). What is of interest here is an example of the almost perennial critique carried forward with regards to the commitment to the peace process that is levied by both sides against each other, whenever there seems to be a distasteful event or development — an inclination also documented in Chapter 4. Consequently, the settlement negotiations have become over time another space through which revenge and punishment are to be extracted.

Consider also the unabashed optimism the interviewee felt needed during presentations at industry conferences that spoke of the prospects of the island's natural gas future: "it would defeat the purpose of having conferences if you had people who were pessimistic because they have to look ahead" (RoC Ministry of Energy Interview, 22/04/16). This I think is a very revealing and insightful position that helps to explain a lot of the dissonance between the realities of the natural gas industry, and the way Cyprus's natural gas future was understood as charted in Chapters 4 and 5.

Needless to say, I was convinced that I would not be able to change the mind of the said interviewee. Yet at the same time, what interested me most was the fact that it was precisely this sort of entrenched political view that urgently needed to be addressed first. It is these "affective dissonances and inconsistencies" (Weszkalnys 2016, 127), that are as Rusinow (1981) also recognised, the most difficult and hard to reconcile. The remark here served to seal a particular impression I came to have of the respondent, and so I decided not to pursue any further a sustained discussion on the role of Turkey interspersed or otherwise, similar to my experiences of public forums in the RoC. I recall further the sombre and almost ridiculing remark made by an international lawyer stationed with UNFICYP that "anybody in the RoC that seemed surprised at what happened in 2014 was not paying attention" (S.H. 04/06/16). The intractable and in many respects predictable nature of the dispute over the decades, alongside the well-known red lines of the parties to the dispute, does little it seems to quell wholesale the emergence of new passionate emotional responses.

The vindication sought for the lived past may manifest in emotional undertones that promote states of elation, expectation, and even euphoria, such as that which manifested after the election of Mustafa Akıncı and Nicos Anastasiades by those discontent with the political status-quo, and who found blame for the track record of the process in the willingness of the leaders themselves. To fully understand natural resource conflicts, Turner (2004, 866) argues that the materiality which underlies all social life must be seen in tandem with the moral claims that implicate natural resource use. The trouble in Cyprus is that there is no common account of history that equally weights the various injustices suffered by both communities, as

discussed in Chapter 1. Specifically, it is these emotional undertones that feed into the formation of the red-lines harboured by each side with regards to the six fundamental branches of the Cyprus Problem, particularly that of the proposed rotating presidency and security arrangements between the two future constituent states of the island. As a member of the TRNC negotiating team explained, "the *feeling* is this; we're already done with the honeymoon period. They got redlines, we got our redlines and next month is going to be very interesting to see whether you know those red lines can be bridged. If not, forget it" (M.M. 25/10/15 – emphasis added).

As mentioned, the catalyst for peace argument still ultimately depended on the idea of energy dependencies, alongside any particular development pathways. But the very crux of that presupposition is nullified out of fear. This is further reification of the relationship that exists between time, affect, and the vision of peace sought by the parties to the dispute that goes on to degenerates the very momentum and climate needed for a solution. This I find underlies a clear link between affect, the role and meaning of natural gas, and political futures. Fundamentally, I suspect that although emotions of apprehension, fear, and mistrust, stem from very different opinions of what peace in Cyprus should look like, this pathological dissonance is not addressed head-on through CBM's for example, as discussed in Chapter 6. Instead, the task is shifted elsewhere and precipitates in crude terms of commodity or environmental determinism as with the association between natural gas and peace. Thus, the emotional dissonance remains unaddressed from an internal perspective. Therefore, the final question to ask is if the necessary affective atmosphere can be generated despite the counter-balancing effects that impede the quest for a

settlement. This would require a sincere, honest, and respectful approach both to the history of the island and to the various future aspirations that exist which may or may not be compatible. The specific question I now turn to is whether or not affect can be engineered in much the same way that politics are ostensibly engineered out of energy flows? (Mitchell 2009).

7.5. The Engineering of Affect.

I found a statement to this very effect in an interview with a Turkish-Cypriot academic who had previously advised various TRNC negotiation teams. She was told by her superiors that "everything the Turkish side has achieved in the decades of negotiations has come through brinkmanship" (K.E. Interview 24/08/15). Beyond the argument that emotions matter, it also said that the "political manipulation of emotion/affect" (Sharp 2009, 78) is key. However, it is erroneous I think to see this statement in overly cynical and reductive terms which then begets the sort of mindset that concludes that everything the Turkish-Cypriots have ever argued has been a feigned and insidious attempt to engineer a particular solution through emotional manipulation. This kind of mindset can be found in Callon *et al.*'s (2009, 4) take on the productiveness of political controversy: "why not bring them out [disagreements, conflicts, and oppositions], encourage them, and multiply them". The trouble with such a line of reasoning is that the same lens can also be equally applied to the Greek-Cypriots. More importantly, it does not adequately account for the very real pain, trauma, and suffering that has been lived throughout the history of the Cyprus Problem, and further presumes that such an emotional state of affairs that can be entirely

engineered or directed (Closs Stephens 2016). As the informant added, "people don't always talk with that kind of language"; which I take to mean that kind heavily emotion-laden discourse.

Indeed, I cannot agree that the use of emotional vocabularies expresses affects that are engineered in an insincere and cynical manner (Thien 2005). But I also cannot disagree that emotional vocabularies such as that associated with the earlier vignette of the public forum speech turn the discussion towards the establishment of a particular kind of solution to the Cyprus Problem, and a particular energy regime with it. It could also be argued that the recognition of Turkish-Cypriot responsibility in the efficacy of the issue of natural gas is exactly the kind of step needed to foster the mutual cooperation envisaged of the future within the present, but there are still of course various emotional responses to such an eventuality that prevents such steps from being taken. The kind of conciliatory, concession-making, empathetic, and graceful approach necessary for a solution is to be contrasted with a political situation that has a clear antagonist and protagonist and is saturated by a binary, zero-sum game rationale that promotes the maximalist desires of both parties to the dispute. This is all self-evidently an ill-conducive affective atmosphere for a solution. As Barth Eide himself later stated after the negotiations once again collapsed, “the climate, the tone, the way people spoke about each other and to each other didn’t sound like people that were about to unify their homeland” (*CM* 22/06/17).

However, it is also unsympathetic, easy, and I think counter-productive to state the need for a paradigm shift for a so-called “rational view of the future” and to exhort “crabbed visions of the future dictated by

more emotional memories of the past" (Hannay 2005, 245). Again, the emotional-side of the political dispute is perhaps the most real, pressing, and fundamental aspect of the Cyprus Problem that manifests in the contending issue of security and guarantees on the island, long-since recognised as a traditional sticking-point. Hence, there is a need to push back against "reducing the concrete fact of perceptive experience to the abstraction of a space" (Stengers 2011b, 146). Perhaps the line between a humanist and cynical interpretation would subjectively depend on political position. But that the potential for affect to push one set of power relations over the other leads ultimately to the conclusion that there is an affective potential to the issue of natural gas. Then again, it may simply be the case that all materials could obtain an affective capacity in the exact same manner that all materials can be made political (Latour 2004). Despite this apparent conundrum, I have found it useful to refer to this statement as it helps to demonstrate the fact that the suffering of the past is one key factor among many other factors (such as negotiation strategies), all of which coalesce to generate a complex and passionate political situation. It is then the case that a particular political trajectory or future is subsequently charted and followed within which a material referent point may be chosen from the "swarm of vitalities at play" (Bennett 2004, 32).

It is not enough and perhaps even counterproductive to cultivate an atmosphere of expectation of future natural resource wealth in the event of a solution to the much larger historical canvas that is the Cyprus Problem, if the necessary atmosphere to reach a solution is not cultivated beforehand. As Former Secretary General Annan noted, "both sides have done little over the years to prepare their respective publics for the compromises that a

settlement would involve" (UN 2003, 30). Whether entirely warranted or purposefully misleading, the incitation of collective affective atmospheres is a key part of consensus-building and identity politics in a context where competing ethno-nationalisms have long reigned (Papadakis 2005). This does not bode well at all for any kind of interim cooperation between the TRNC and RoC, let alone in the heightened natural gas issue. Hence, a negative feedback loop is formed where, in exactly the same manner whereby select portions of history that mattered most in line with political demands are promoted (Hatay and Papadakis 2012), the suffering of the past is embroiled in present political disputes about the future; a temporality of the wound as Bryant (2012b) has documented. Herein the discussion on the role of affect comes full circle as I attest to one last experience.

If the peace process itself is encumbered by a series of structural issues and affective undertones that often torpedo the necessary conciliatory atmosphere, then the very assertion of natural gas as a catalyst for peace is given rise to. Indeed, a moment of fieldwork I will never forget is when a prolific RoC Government spokesperson explained to me in an interview that "if we need an incentive for a solution, then we're in trouble" (C.N. 29/03/16). For years this idea of an incentive had been promoted in a dogmatic fashion by the RoC Government, including by this particular individual who had previously advanced that "this is something we believe, and it is not a slogan: energy is an incentive for the solution of the Cyprus Problem" (see Chapter 4). Yet in this instance, for the very first time I encountered a high-profile former member of the RoC government who held a degree of scepticism about this perception encapsulated in the metaphor

of a catalyst; a degree of scepticism that I am sure would not be revealed in public. It is possible to consider the moment after the aforementioned statement as an affective moment, for there was a pause in the interview as the full weight and ramification of the comment sank in. To offer a solution of the Cyprus Problem in terms of possible arrangements of future energy flows is at once a speculative but also narrow and myopic answer to a complex problem that also avoids the spirit of the peace process. It is the future predictions made about the possible effect of the natural gas issue that has imbued both the material itself (as a socio-material assemblage), with the agency that gives the impression of causality. To then squeeze-in a naïve biological, chemical, physical, geological, account of matter detracts from the fact that it is the future of the island that is the fundamental quarrel. Rather than to seek determinants for the island's political future, it may be best to ask the question of why a catalyst for peace is needed in the very first place. Hence, the more affect is considered, the more it becomes apparent that the task is to foster a conducive affective atmosphere for a political solution rather than to find a causal unknown that caused the collapse of previous iterations of the peace process, which are then erroneously extrapolated as events to be avoided in the future.

7.6. Conclusion.

In this Chapter, I have used the notion of affect as an epistemological critique that pushes back against any inherent or self-evident emotional reactions that might be uncritically incited by natural gas talk. I have sought to trace how and why the issue raises the emotions that it does.

Deeply entrenched after years of stalemate and distrust, to avoid the influence of affect, whether downplayed or exalted, would detract from a full understanding of the form and extent of the political situation. The latent emotional situation here can be described as a structure of feeling or an affective atmosphere (Anderson 2014). But the key point conveyed is that in the context of Cyprus, there exists a very palpable perception of a certain political mood, be it a lack of trust, insincerity, or wishful thinking, that is not ephemeral, transient, or short-lived, but is instead perpetual, enduring, and ingrained. It must be acknowledged that there is a perennial and inseparable pathological feature of the vast and dynamic assemblage that is referred to as the Cyprus Problem.

It is in these empirical moments wherein which emotions are displayed in both explicit and nuanced manners. These are then of consequence to a relational understanding of how and why natural resources become political, and how and why they command the level of attention that they have done. For it is the emotions that are carried forward. It is the affective resonances (Weszkalnys 2016) or moody forcefields (Closs-Stephens 2016), that generate the kind of affective atmosphere that is spoken of in theory, which can then be politically productive in practice and shape perceptions of socio-material assemblages such as natural resources. This I think is why it is awkward to speak of affect as an abstract and detachable standalone concept which then inevitably leads to affect as synonymous with emotion, and where ultimately it seems illogical to try and communicate through language what is ostensible pre-discursive. As Butler (1993) suggests, the extra-discursive is formed by the very discourse which it seeks to emancipate itself from. The

way Thrift (2007) has described the limitations of human consciousness is disturbing. But although I submit to the argument that there are limits to anthropocentric representation (Thrift 1999), it is also the case that representation is utterly inescapable, and I fully support the assertion that there is no other way to "access nature's materiality outside the materiality of signification" (Castree 2003, 177). Therefore, my argument has been that the latent emotions observed should not be reduced as merely surface-level expressions, for it is these emotions themselves that are materialised and find surface-level expression in the natural gas issue.

This is of course not unique to the context at hand. But I find it necessary to highlight it, for it often does not get the attention it really deserves. Rusinow (1981, 15) recognised this predicament early on, and made the compelling remark that "[…] emotive interests, and deep-seated mutual distrust and fear are the most 'real' and hard to reconcile". Such a provocative statement leads straight back to the deeply ontological questions asked of the natural gas issue; what is it that is in fact most real, immediate, or pressing about all that has transpired from the perspective of an affected individual or community on the island? Is it something hundreds of kilometres offshore, thousands of kilometres undersea, at stake, or is it simply the pathos incited onshore by reference to the natural resource alongside its prophesied agency? What does it mean for instance, to speak of the atmosphere of the peace process? Ultimately, affective states and their felt emotions are not romanticised or melodramatic accounts, though they may be incited and maintained for effect in the same way discourse and narrative is also promoted. This reaffirms the principle of relationality and processuality in the sense that there are no self-evident emotions that the

issue of natural gas should naturally incite. To transform the natural gas issue into a locus of emotional investment, controversy, agreement and disagreement, is predicated upon latent emotions that are already incited by the Cyprus Problem. Indeed, these affinities underscore and play a fundamental yet neglected part of what drives the ebb and flow of the peace process, and the association between the global natural gas industry and peace.

CHAPTER 8

To Summarise a Process that Continues.

In this doctoral thesis, I have critically investigated the form, nature, and extent of a contemporary association established between two processes: the peace process in Cyprus and a related process to exploit the island's recently-encountered offshore natural gas deposits. This is the central and popular nature-society dualism that I have unpacked. I have done so predominantly from a state-centric perspective, precisely because the fundamental proposition at hand is levied at the level of the state. Needless to say, the formulation that natural gas is or could potentially be a catalyst for peace has spurned a great deal of attention across various domains that include: academia, international diplomacy, and assorted actors across the global natural gas industry. Further, the question of whether natural gas can be a catalyst for peace is a proposition that has generated visions of various different architectures of energy for the Eastern Mediterranean Sea, alongside commercial controversies explicated in Chapter 5, and likewise various power-sharing agreements envisioned for the future as addressed in Chapter 6. In this fascinating mixture of power geometries, affective tropes, temporalities, and knowledge controversies, all of which I have drawn attention to, I would still say it is an association manufactured through discursive means and that the agency of natural gas is not self-evident. This is the first key conclusion I draw.

For one of the fundamental arguments I have pressed forward is that the *issue* of natural gas, together with the inherent dualism promoted with

the notion of peace, is a contingent, precarious, and necessarily discursive achievement and not a given, natural, or universal appraisal. This is highlighted in the first key quote I provide in Chapter 1. It is the issues that the referent material has been tied to rather than the material itself, that has largely propelled this political crisis, and has given what is the impression of causality and material agency. This is not the mere reversal of environmental determinism to social determinism (Braun 2008). Instead, I have advocated for a more complex and nuanced form of causal relations, one that focuses on ontological multiplicity and relativity, the material and the imaginative (Tsing 2005), and highlights the discursive mechanisms by way in which the association at hand has been achieved and maintained over time.

Beyond an emphasis on context, I have employed insights from post-structural, process philosophy to highlight the dynamic process of how peace and natural gas have been associated over time. The discursive mechanisms I have identified by which this relational achievement has been established ran along four key inter-related analytical axioms: time, power, affect, and ontological dissonance, that I am sure encapsulate the length and breadth of the natural gas saga. I have not sought to reduce the question of resource substance into a "purely sociological problem" (Weszkalnys 2013, 8). I have demonstrated that what really mattered, what was decisive, what gave the impression of causality between the world of natural resources and human conflict was really that which can be regarded as more-than-material. I have only reflected the reality of the situation in a way that does not succumb to an otherwise unwarranted effort to factor-in the material (Barua 2016). There have certainly been watershed moments

that have coloured various impressions of the natural gas saga, as I have highlighted in the series of events charted in Chapter 4, or the affective moments in Chapter 7. However, I have also demonstrated the cross-cutting and inter-linked nature of political situation at play. Loaded with an astutely temporal politics rooted in unaddressed injustices of the past, a lack of a common account of history, and combined with divergent models of peace, the political stakes vis-á-vis the Cyprus Problem have become all too prolific in this passionate controversy. Clearly, there have been both political and commercial consequences, be it the abrupt collapse of the negotiations or the tit-for-tat exploration and exploitation activities that have continued beyond the time frame covered in this thesis. It is these eventualities that I have investigated through approximately twelve months of geographically dispersed fieldwork that have incorporated the triangulation of historical newspaper archives, over a hundred *in situ* semi-structured interviews, and a series of public forums and industry conferences around the globe. As stated, my primary motivation has been to demonstrate the contingencies and processes behind the association between natural gas and peace, lest the dualism implicit is taken as a given.

Thus, the second conclusion I draw is that this contemporary controversy should be viewed as an epiphenomenon of the Cyprus Problem. This a significant proposition to make, for issues of natural resource governance (Watts 2004a, Bakker and Bridge 2008), competing assemblages of natural gas infrastructure (Bouzarovski *et al.* 2015), and the knowledge controversies inherent in this political situation (Barry 2005), have come to matter precisely because of the association peddled with the destiny of the peace process. I do not seek to downplay the significance of the current state

of affairs. But I still hold that context must be accounted for especially if the exact same issues of catalysts, incentives, and future power relations, have been tied to other material referents in the past. This need not necessarily diminish the specificity of the controversy itself, but allows I think more for a sombre assessment of the purchase of commodity or environmental determinism. I have adopted a style of prose and a research methodology that has placed issues of context, contingency, and the empirics of the political situation at the forefront but in conjunction with the underlying political contest. This I have argued for in Chapters 1 and 2. Where appropriate, I have demonstrated the relational and contingent means rather than an essentialist account by which materials such as natural resources have become over time of political significance (Barry 2013b), and have acquired again over time the impression of agency.

Relatedly, I have operated on the basis that there is no need for either presumptuous aggrandisement or negation of resource materiality. Instead, the correct approach is to follow empirically the instances where it has been referred in order to situate the controversy over the material as an element of a wider political whole. As emphasised throughout, because it is not possible to transcend the use of language there is a very real possibility for discourse and discursive practice related to natural gas to produce the effect that it names (Butler 1993). This is extraordinarily significant for the question of what exactly has been at issue, and how far we should seek explanation from a neo-vital, or post-humanist account. That the issue of natural gas is an epiphenomenon of the Cyprus Problem makes it all the more significant and no less trivial, and that the *belief* of a causal relationship existed between the processes has had a very serious and

consequential ramification from the commercial and political point of view. In other words, if it is believed to be so then *in effect* it is so.

Throughout the thesis, I reverted to a variety of metaphors to explain this contingent relationship between the issue of natural gas and the wider assemblage of controversies and systems it is a part of, be it smoke or mirrors, an epiphenomenon, or a theatre of conflict. Through this framework, I have sought to show how impressions of the agency and ontology of natural resources can be achieved teleologically in relation to a political goal. This is the third key conclusion I draw. As explained in Chapter 6 and 7, the issue of natural gas was a politically productive controversy appropriated to push for a particular kind of peace and relations of power. Therefore, the bifurcation of nature and society was teleologically motivated. Even now at the time of writing, the issue of natural gas is still very much alive, adaptive, and responsive to changes both in the material and commercial reality of the global natural gas industry and public opinion on the island. In other words, the case of Cyprus is emblematic of a very resilient political situation, one that manipulates a degree of inherent unpredictability of the natural gas industry as I have explained in detail in Chapter 5.

As such, a further layer of meaning is incited by the issue of natural gas, one that relates to the form, extent, and structure any future peace agreement might look like. The concern I have lies not only with the creation of another theatre of conflict — one that is vested with multiple connotations vested with contested material imaginations — but the placement of agency and responsibility squarely into the realm of an external variable such as the global natural gas industry. This I have argued is tantamount to shifting

the “site of the decision elsewhere: to move it along. So, they displace the decisive moment to places where, seen from here, it seems no decision, but a fact” (Mol 1999, 79). Ultimately, the fourth key conclusion I forward is that what has transpired has been utterly counter-productive to all those who understand the need for a mutually-acceptable solution to this intractable political conflict. This includes the frozen nature of the conflict but also the present-day structural lock-out promulgated by both sides which ultimately forbids meaningful cooperation. This I have discussed in Chapter 6.

Again, the natural gas issue matters because it is the contemporary manifestation of a latent conflict. However, as discussed in Chapters 6 and 7, what has occurred bears a pathological ancillary in the form of a litmus test or yardstick for the state of play between the two communities. There is a very serious emotional dimension at play here whereby the idea of cooperation between the two communities touted in response to this contemporary political crisis, has been loaded as a test of sincerity and commitment for a particular kind of solution. This is perhaps the fifth key contribution I make. As such, the impasse and exaltation over the encounter with offshore natural gas is related intimately to the emotions that historically prevail on the island, which in turn is central to the cross-over between pathos, ethos, and logos as exemplified throughout the natural gas saga. As examined in Chapter 7, there have been very significant and palpable feelings of retribution, mistrust, and suspicion, that inform high-levels of decision-making. Beyond these central inferences, I now briefly summarise the main arguments of each empirical Chapter with specific mention of the theoretical purchase the context of Cyprus offers.

Chapter 4 has been fundamental to the latter discussions that have

proceeded from it. I have sought to get a handle on the history of the natural gas issue in order to demonstrate how recent allegations of linear causality between the two processes in question have been contingent and discursive achievements. This is part and parcel of the effort to understand agency as a relational and processual achievement (Ingold 2000, 2007). The Chapter addressed the first research question vis-á-vis material agency and ontology. I explored the way which two seemingly unrelated processes can be interrelated through the process of eventalisation that has been pivotal for the impression of linear causality between the processes, and for the resultant affective atmospheres of anticipation and pre-emptive action. Perhaps we are forced to explain the emergence of a particular phenomenon as emergent from a nebula that is chaotic, dynamic, and ever-becoming, because we cannot physically chart the entire lineage. I have certainly felt the limitations of what can be conveyed myself, for the investigation at hand has been made all the more difficult with the gargantuan amount of material or data that exists both in terms of a global commodity industry and a decades-old political conflict at the very centre of political life.

But it still stands that the effect was desired, and that there has been overlap between a pragmatic way of looking at the world that has been extrapolated into the realm of ontology. If in practice the settlement talks collapsed due to passionate political disputes that were brought to boil, where the sheer magnitude of contention, significance, and public awareness was made to increase as the level of activity in the process to develop offshore natural gas increased, then a leap from experimental facts into matters of fact occurred where *a priori* experience dictated the nature of reality; that leap from experimental facts to matters of fact. In any case, the

Chapter is testament to the sheer usefulness and thought-provoking temporal sensibility that I have deployed throughout the thesis. As characteristic of political situations in general (Barry 2016), a further key judgement of this thesis is that retentions of the past and projections of the future have been endemic to both the issue of natural gas, the wider Cyprus Problem, and the connection between the related axioms of natural resource agency, knowledge controversies, and envisioned relations of power.

Since the very first EEZ delimitation agreements, over the next two decades, controversy over the subsequent encounter of offshore natural gas, arguments over possible wealth management strategies, and contentious delimitation of maritime zones, would become new sources of political contestation to the extent that the peace process directly suffered. In any case, the perceived onset of a hydrocarbons industry in the near-future coupled with existing political concerns, would constitute unsurprisingly a volatile mix. I have periodically advocated that retentions of the past and projections of the future would be inconsequential if power-sharing mechanisms had been mutually-agreed, if the correct affective atmosphere free from apprehension, fear, and mistrust, were eliminated, and if it was known absolutely how much natural gas there will ever be offshore Cyprus, where it would go, what the benefits would be, and how it would be shared. All of these uncertain and dynamic factors interlink in a manner that promotes and justifies the significance afforded to natural gas as a matter of politics.

Chapter 5 addressed my second research question where as part of the effort to attend to the material, I have sought to identify exactly what has been of issue, what has been of controversy vis-á-vis natural gas, and to

posit a teleological process of abstraction and objectification, as identified in Chapter 4. I have advanced the view that a particular purpose and one connected to a particular political end has conditioned how natural gas is perceived. This generated fascinating inter-related questions of ontological, epistemological, and agentic nature. I have taken heed of pitfalls of echoing naïve accounts of material reality (Mol 2012), which may be little more than factoring-in the material as a form of new empiricism without engaging with issues of ontology, and a further attempt to obscure the fundamental political issue at stake. Where might the "productivity and resilience" (Coole and Frost 2013, 7) come from, if not from a retrospective human rationalisation after human desire brushes up against material reality? I have certainly been opposed to the hyper constructionist position that caricatures everything as only social construction. But I also stand with Smith's (1998, 273) assertion that social construction cannot be bypassed and that any post-human claims to absolute truths regarding the objective readily fall victim to the "social muslin of representations gathered into discourse (no matter how liberal and permissive the muslin may be), and that no kind of purely extra-social authority is available for arbitrating the shape and dynamism of nature".

I have demonstrated the significant prevalence of friction and dissonance between what people want natural gas to denote and what natural gas and the natural gas industry actually entail, in so far as those truths are obtainable. Despite informational enrichment to the contrary (Barry 2005), the political discourse about natural gas continued unabated. The many inconvenient truths that emerged did not dampen grandiose material imaginations. Instead, a politics of anticipation emerged where

game-changing developments were merely displaced to the future, and the association between natural gas and peace remained fundamentally in place. Fantasy and object became the thing in question (Navaro-Yashin 2012); the materiality of the resource in question. As such, the knowledge, understanding, and conviction that the RoC would become an energy hub and would then become an LNG exporter and ostensibly strengthen their negotiating hand vis-a-vis the Turks and Turkish-Cypriots at the negotiating table, were simply instances of putting the horse before the cart. Exulted in the imagined glory of the RoC as a future energy hub, an air of confidence permeated throughout the RoC Foreign Ministry, CHC, and the Presidential Palace. The picture painted was that of the ever-antagonist Turkey finally pushed into a corner in desperate need of Eastern Mediterranean gas, the gatekeeper of whom was the RoC. For Turkey, the polar opposite perception reigned. For the Turks, it is not the Greek-Cypriot Administration of Southern Cyprus who would do Turkey a favour but it is they who would do the Greek-Cypriots the favour if they allowed gas to supply the Turkish market and beyond.

There is of course a lot more empirical detail covered in Chapter 5 with regards to the contested perceptions held about the future of natural gas. But the fundamental point is that latent knowledge controversies prevalent alongside the linear causality envisioned to exist between the two processes (and hence dictate political futures), is one I have shown to be built upon precarious certainties have carved out of uncertainties (Samimian-Darash 2013). In terms of the association between the two processes, the implication is that a linear causal mechanism was built upon an industry characterised by non-linear lifecycles (Watts 2015), was still a popular belief

and political assumption that altered political futures. There was indeed a lag in the acceptance of commercial reality for reasons that relate to the affective momentum the issue of natural gas had accumulated, and a concomitant reluctance to lose face and abandon material imaginations. This I believe is the same logical positivist approach as found in the more statistically-inclined scholarship that has assessed the natural resources and human conflict relationship' as discussed in Chapters 1 and 2.

A further contribution of this thesis is the demonstration that in order to combat and counteract the resourcefulness of Greek-Cypriot material imaginations, Turkish and Turkish-Cypriot counter-logic highlighted the complexity of both the peace process and the natural gas industry. This has been the polar opposite of the Greek-Cypriot mantra which has been to reduce and simplify so as to operationalise and be able to act upon and with natural gas for their desired political purposes. Perhaps both accounts of complexity and simplicity were equally exaggerated. As Barnett (1993, 348) suggests, "processes of reference and representation are able to achieve certain effects only by remaining blind to their conditions of possibility". Equally, perhaps the possibility of what natural resources could do was also exaggerated. Needless to say, the Turkish-Cypriots and Turkey duly maintained that the most commercially advantageous destination for both Israeli and Greek-Cypriot gas was to the ostensibly natural gas hungry market of Turkey, rather than the that of Egypt or the European Union as advocated by the Greek-Cypriots. I have tied this phenomenon to Deleuze's notions of virtual and the actual in order to emphasise that which has been objectified and abstracted; the simplification of a more complex reality has been relayed through discourse in the context of the politics of Cyprus that

has charted a particular trajectory for political life.

Chapter 6 advanced further the idea of the Cyprus Problem as a complex cultural whole; a polysemic reference point that involves a series of material referent points such as that of natural gas but more so the commercial process of natural gas development, the outcomes of which have been tied to political futures. With engagement with the notion of structure and the latent power relations on the island, I advanced the third research question of the thesis. I continued in the tradition of natural resource scholarship to enquire in terms of resource management at the scale of the state (Bakker and Bridge 2008). However, what set the discussion apart is that I forayed further into the structural dimensions of the conflict, the teleology of peace, the appropriation and continued effect of history, and the consequence of this all for material agency. As such, I explored the relational qualities of the natural gas issue alongside the principle of multiplicity, whereby the entity in question can exist in different versions (Barad 2007), but also object multiples (Mol 2014). This is where each perception is fashioned from the material world for each specific event or circumstance within a political situation. Furthermore, the concept of power was placed firmly at the heart of the Chapter. I investigated the work of discourse and discursive practice as they concerned the inflection of power relations to the unfolding of the controversy over natural gas on the island (Foucault 1977).

Moreover, I maintained that abstract power need not be considered the be-all and end-all bottom line of the issue. A further verdict reached here is that it is far more accurate and appropriate to speak of the issue of natural gas as detached from the material referent point of the industry and the

physical properties of the material. Instead, the controversy is explained by the idea that natural gas became synonymous with: the incentive, the tool, the bargaining chip, the catalyst for peace, as made necessary by the current state of play of the Cyprus Problem. Hence, I have identified a very distinct teleological politics at play. The question herein raised was why exactly was the process to develop natural gas associated with the peace process in the very first place? What kind of future peace, what kind of settlement to the Cyprus Problem was held alongside imaginations of energy networks, natural gas extraction and transportation technologies, and partnerships with particular IOCs?

The answer to whether natural gas can be a catalyst for peace is a red herring and can only be answered retrospectively. In Chapter 6, I inquired further into latent political situation on the island to explain exactly why the encounter with offshore natural gas became automatically bound-up with the on-going but intermittent settlement talks. On the peace process itself, the mere idea that an incentive is needed speaks volumes with regards to intractability of the entire political situation. It speaks of despair but also of comfort in the status quo. There is a projection of possible future worlds, of a particular kind of peace, of a particular kind of solution to the Cyprus Problem that markedly engaged in the very end-point way of thinking that also characterised the way the achievement of peace on the island has been envisioned. A close relationship is to be found between the advocation of a particular form of peace and an inclination to make public a partial absorption of those knowledges and the affective responses they generate, alongside a partial appreciation of the history of the Cyprus Problem and the accountability that goes alongside it. As explored further in Chapter 7,

natural gas refers not only to the material itself, not to a material essence, but to an operational function such as a tool, incentive, catalyst, curse, or blessing.

Finally, as argued in **Chapter 7**, the sheer sense of determinacy, certainty, and blunt confidence conveyed by certain actors such as industry speakers and politicians, the hostile tone espoused by audience members come the time for question and answer, and the particular feel and tone of the interviews I conducted, set the affective atmosphere for the knowledge that was generated and the discursive connections that were created. Emotional outlook is simply an inseparable part of how people have spoken about natural gas. What can be regarded as the affective undertones and registers of the peace process have conditioned the knowledge generated. The effect is easier to see in cases where people are obviously overcome with emotion such as in the outbursts and highly-charged exchanges I have documented. However, the role of emotion is not limited to such scenarios and operates instead at a more nuanced level, be it in the cool level-headed and assured predictions of natural gas futures or the purposeful incitement of doubt, apprehension, and anxiety. As such, affective atmospheres are another layer of the palimpsest of relationality that leads to the construction of knowledge about nature. This is part of the mechanism that leads to the abstraction and objectification of natural resources done with a political goal in mind. Hence, the association between natural gas and peace, between natural resources and politics has been an extraordinarily successful form of dualistic thought and boundary-work (Gieryn 2008).

Whether as a yardstick of trust and sincerity between opposing political camps, an economic commodity, a mirror of power relations, a material

imagination of energy networks, or a reflection of desires for different interpretations of peace, these questions and their answers demonstrate a clear logic of social-natural hybridisation at work. It is in these empirical moments wherein which emotions of great consequence have been found. It is the emotions or affective resonances (Weszkalnys 2016) that are carried forward. I have by necessity conveyed what has been abstracted and actualised from the realm of affective potentiality (or pure intensity that Deleuze's notion of the virtual points to), through the use of language. Still, it is the emotions themselves that generate the affective atmosphere spoken of in theory, which is then politically productive in practice as it shapes perceptions of socio-material assemblages. This is how natural resources should be considered for a full resource scholarship.

In the end, frankly, I hold that it has become all too easy for decision-makers, policy-makers, and public spectators, to seek a solution to the Cyprus Problem by recourse to or invocation of an external factor such as the assemblage constituted by the global natural gas industry. This is either a manoeuvre to detract attention away from the political compromises necessary to bridge the fundamental differences that the two communities have (to anesthetise or detract attention thereof), or a crude attempt incentivise what really should not require an incentive: peace. To tie the fate of the settlement talks to a natural resource development process has been myopic and detrimental endeavour to the peace process. It seems that the natural gas saga, for all its expansive referent points, controversies, actors, and apparent causal powers, is instead little more than an iconographic figurehead of the well-known political ailments on the island. Under the circumstances, it really does seem that the show will continue to go on.

Further Research.

There are a number of further research avenues that can be undertaken in light of this work which, however, do depend largely on issues of access. Firstly, the empirical depth of this thesis can be furthered if there was a closer elucidation of the methodologies used by oil and gas companies, consultancies, and related research institutions, themselves in order to see how say the forecasting of energy supply and demand worked. A closer inspection of the methodology here would further highlight the inherent volatility and to a certain extent unpredictability inherent within the industry. This would demonstrate the host of variables within energy markets that must be weighed via econometric and statistical tools to give a more accurate account of what an IOC, NOC, or a stakeholder government could know, and the degree to which they could be certain. This would then shed further light on the phenomenon of knowledge controversies as covered in Chapter 5.

Secondly, I believe that the thesis has sought to give due emphasis, weight, and proportionality to the way in which the issue of natural gas can have a bearing on the destiny of the peace process, or any political process for that matter. A key insight gleaned in Chapter 6 involved the structural constraints of the settlement talks. But there is a more fundamental issue at hand that compounds the problem; that of a comfortable and peaceful status-quo. In the first instance, a critical appraisal of the settlement talks can be furthered; one that does not place the responsibility for a solution into the realm of external incentives but instead has the sensibility to recognise the real reasons of the impasse and to operationalise a peace

process that considers the realities on the ground.

Further, the context of Cyprus as covered in this thesis can add to work that sees peace as a process than can be materialised (see Koopman 2011), where visions of peace becomes not "simply about the control of territory, but even more about the control of resources and their circulation" (*ibid*. 111, see also Zeitoun 2008). The same sensibility can be applied to other resources in the Cyprus conflict (see Navaro-Yashin 2012), or perhaps in a different context. Importantly, the case against environmental determinism I have made with post-structural, processual philosophy could be carried forward into other context and material and would help "to look deeply into different disciplines to find our explanatory capabilities" (Zeitoun 2008, 20).

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