



Cumbers, A. and Becker, S. (2018) Making sense of remunicipalisation: theoretical reflections on and political possibilities from Germany's Rekommunalisierung process. *Cambridge Journal of Regions, Economy and Society*, 11(3), pp. 503-517. (doi:[10.1093/cjres/rsy025](https://doi.org/10.1093/cjres/rsy025))

This is the author's final accepted version.

There may be differences between this version and the published version. You are advised to consult the publisher's version if you wish to cite from it.

<http://eprints.gla.ac.uk/172001/>

Deposited on: 19 November 2018

Enlighten – Research publications by members of the University of Glasgow
<http://eprints.gla.ac.uk>

OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge Journal of
Regions, Economy and Society

**Making Sense of Remunicipalisation: Theoretical Reflections
and Political Possibilities from Germany's
Rekommunalisierung Process in the Energy**

Journal:	<i>Cambridge Journal of Regions, Economy and Society</i>
Manuscript ID	CJRES-2018-MAN-054
Manuscript Type:	Manuscript
Keyword:	remunicipalisation, neoliberal urbanism, urban governance, alternative urban politics, public ownership
JEL Classification:	H4, R1, R5, 02

SCHOLARONE™
Manuscripts

1
2
3 **Making sense of remunicipalisation: theoretical reflections on and political**
4 **possibilities from Germany's *Rekommunalisierung* process**
5

6 **Andrew Cumbers^a and Sören Becker^b**
7
8
9

10 A University of Glasgow, Andrew.Cumbers@glasgow.ac.uk

11 B Universities of Bonn/Humboldt University, Berlin, soeren.becker@uni-bonn.de
12
13
14
15

16 **Abstract**

17 The increasingly discussed phenomenon of 'remunicipalisation' marks a global trend
18 since 2000 for cities to take formerly privatised assets, infrastructure and services
19 back into public ownership. Most prominent in basic service sectors such as water and
20 energy, it is also evident in a range of diverse utility and infrastructure areas – from
21 education, health, refuse and other areas of local government. As a reaction to the
22 problems and contradictions arising from four decades of privatisation and
23 marketization of public services, remunicipalisation represents a compelling
24 contemporary phenomenon of urban politics and governance. In this article, we
25 critically interrogate remunicipalisation in the face of ongoing and mutating processes
26 of neoliberal urbanism. Drawing upon evidence from the German
27 *Rekommunalisierung* process in the energy sector, we explore both the wider
28 conceptual significance of remunicipalisation and its progressive potential in
29 contributing to an alternative urban politics beyond neoliberalism.
30
31
32
33

34 Key words: remunicipalisation; mutating neoliberalism, urban politics, democratic
35 alternatives
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

Introduction

The concept of ‘remunicipalisation’ has emerged in recent years to mark a trend, evident since the early 2000s, for cities, localities and even sub-national regions to take formerly privatized services back into forms of local public and collective ownership. This has been a global phenomenon, with successful cases documented on every continent as well as numerous ongoing campaigns in places as diverse as Jakarta, Nagpur, Barcelona and the White Rock municipality in British Columbia (Kishimoto and Petitjean 2017). It is most prominent in basic service sectors such as water and energy, but is evident too in a range of diverse utility and infrastructure areas – from education, health, refuse and other local government services - where there is global kick-back against the problems caused by over four decades of privatization and marketization across the public sector and their growing contradictions in delivering essential services.

Theoretically, remunicipalisation can be viewed as part of the broader canvas of an unrolling and perhaps unraveling neoliberal political economy. Privatization and market-oriented restructuring have been key features of a particular hegemonic regime of global economic governance since the late 1970s, with its successive phases documented by generations of theorists (e.g. Tickell and Peck 2003, Peck et al 2009, Crouch 2011, S. Hall et al 2013, Yates and Bakker 2014, Elwood et al 2017). Politically, many progressives have seen remunicipalisation as having the potential to challenge the corporate power and rent-seeking at the heart of privatization initiatives. For some, it has the potential to strengthen beleaguered public authorities – especially during a period of neoliberal driven austerity (Blyth 2013) – but also to deepen and extend radical democracy and social empowerment (Becker et al 2015, Cumbers 2017, Angel 2017)

Thus far, while there has been a lot of activist, NGO and some academic literature detailing and mapping remunicipalisation as a process (Pigeon et al 2012, D. Hall et al 2013, Becker et al 2015, Kishimoto and Petitjean 2017, Angel 2017), there has been little coherent attempt to place remunicipalisation within its broader theoretical and political contexts. Put bluntly, how do we situate remunicipalisation within ongoing debates about the changing nature of urban politics and governance under ‘mutating’ neoliberalism (Peck et al 2009)? In particular, we seek to understand whether the widespread return to forms of local public ownership can be grasped as a foundational challenge to hegemonic neoliberalism, or whether they represent just another form or mutation of neoliberalism itself. In addressing this issue, our argument develops along three lines. First, we interrogate the contradictory structures and conjunctures of neoliberal urban governance that, we argue, have provided the seedbed and the framing for remunicipalisation processes. Second, we critically assess the local processes and imaginaries for changing organisational practices and targets of urban service provision, material (infra)structures, and spatial patterns of control in the two cities of Berlin and Hamburg. Third, we seek to critically evaluate the progressive potential of remunicipalisation for achieving more transformational societal change in challenging neoliberal governance and developing alternative and more socially empowering and democratic, sustainable institutional forms.

To achieve these aims, the article draws upon evidence from one of the most celebrated examples of remunicipalisation: the German *Rekommunalisierung* process

1
2
3 in the energy sector, where the period since 2000 has seen an impressive rolling back
4 of privatization and reclaiming of public utilities by state and civil society action, as
5 we detail below. Framing our overall argument through this lens, we emphasise
6 theoretically the uneven and variegated nature of neoliberalism as an ongoing and
7 mutating process that takes different forms in different places and times, and interacts
8 with existing and inherited institutions, power structures and balances of social forces
9 (Peck et al 2009). The rest of the article is structured into five parts. First, it outlines
10 the basic features of remunicipalisation as a global process. Second, it sets it within its
11 conceptual and political context of mutating, uneven and differentiated neoliberalism
12 and urban political agency. Third, it uses this framing to explore the ongoing
13 *Rekommunalisierung* process in Germany, identifying general tendencies, before
14 focusing in more depth upon two of the most celebrated examples of
15 remunicipalisation, in the city states of Berlin and Hamburg. Finally, the article
16 concludes by considering the implications of the German experience for the broader
17 theoretical and political implications of remunicipalisation, seeking to contribute to
18 the debate about the changing conditions of the local and urban state under
19 neoliberalism.
20
21

22 **The global remunicipalisation wave**

23
24 Remunicipalisation has emerged as the term to describe a global trend for local
25 authorities, city councils and in some cases regional governments to take back assets,
26 infrastructure and services subject to processes of privatisation. As a phenomenon it
27 can be traced back to the mid-1990s, but most observers recognise a decisive shift
28 towards it in the period since 2000, with the most authoritative research by the
29 London-based Public Service International Research Unit (PSIRU) and the
30 Amsterdam-based Transnational Institute (TNI) cataloguing a rising trend from in the
31 water sector, from two cases in 2000 to 210 - on every continent except Australasia -
32 by 2015. More broadly, TNI's database has identified 821 cases across 45 countries
33 which, although dominated by water (271) and energy (304) sectors, also includes
34 waste, transport, local government services and health care (Kishimoto and Petitjean
35 2017).
36
37

38
39 The standard definition of 'remunicipalisation' is of the transfer of previously
40 privatised services back into forms of local public ownership and control. Here we use
41 a slightly broader definition to also encompass new forms of public enterprise that
42 have been created at the local level. Our definition also encompasses a broader sense
43 of public ownership (Cumbers 2012) to include the diverse and hybrids forms of non-
44 private collective ownership that have emerged at the local level in recent years, but
45 critically must involve significant state involvement. It should also be recognised that
46 remunicipalisation can take different forms, including the re-purchase of municipal
47 assets, increasing public shares in public-private partnerships, the return of
48 operational services to public control and the establishment of new hybrids that might
49 also include public-private partnerships (Becker et al 2015).
50

51
52 The overall emphasis then is on the diverse range of ways that political agency is
53 being exercised to roll-back private ownership and extend public ownership and
54 control at the local, sub-national scale. Using a broader lens allows us to capture
55 important interactions between civil society and local state actors in new hybrid forms
56 of ownership (e.g. involving cooperative elements and local municipalities). We also
57
58
59
60

1
2
3 use here the broad geographical scope of Hall et al (2013, p. 194) as encompassing
4 the ‘wide range of public authorities, including municipal governments in towns and
5 rural areas but also regional or intermediate authorities and inter-municipal groups or
6 associations’ involved in remunicipalisation.¹
7

8 As an urban political phenomenon, it emerged dramatically in Bolivia with the so-
9 called ‘water wars’ – the protest and resistance movements that developed around the
10 privatisation of water services in a series of contracts made by the national
11 government to largely foreign corporate interests in the cities of La Paz and
12 Cochabamba in 1999 (Lobina and Hall 2007). The subsequent cancellation of
13 contracts and return to the public sector was replicated in many cities throughout
14 South America (Lobina and Hall 2007). Elsewhere, similar local movements against
15 privatisation began in France and Germany, again initially in the water sector before
16 spreading to energy (see below). There has also been an impressive, though little
17 reported, backlash against privatisation of water in the US, where 58 cities have taken
18 water services contracts back into public ownership (Cumbers 2016). Even in the UK
19 - where privatisation and the broader neoliberal project has arguably had the most
20 profound effects (Cumbers 2012, ch. 4) - there are the stirrings of a remunicipalisation
21 process, marked by the growing number of local governments setting up their own
22 public energy companies and where a 2011 study recorded a recent trend in which 80
23 out of 140 local authorities had taken formerly privatised contracts back under public
24 control across a range of different sectors (Hall 2012).
25
26

27 Remunicipalisation often involves innovation in ownership structures and levels of
28 public participation. Two pertinent examples are, first, the public water company in
29 Greater Buenos Aires Province, ABSA, established after the collapse of Enron in
30 2001. Here, ownership is shared between the local government and a workers
31 cooperative, 5 de Septiembre, which has provided valuable specialist sectoral
32 knowledge and expertise. Second, the Mittelgrunden offshore wind farm off the coast
33 of Copenhagen was created as a hybrid enterprise with 50/50 shareholding between
34 the city council and a residents’ co-operative with 10,000 members (Cumbers 2017).
35 Such innovations indicate the potential for remunicipalisation to involve new forms of
36 democratic and participatory urban governance, beyond a more pragmatic reaction to
37 privatisation and the worst excesses of neoliberalism, in restoring public ownership
38 and local state control.
39
40

41 **Locating remunicipalisation within the broader canvas of uneven, differentiated** 42 **and mutating neoliberalism** 43 44

45 For some, remunicipalisation, as a response to the ‘market failings’ of privatisation,
46 represents part of a broader shift away from market-centric forms of governance
47 towards the rediscovery of the importance of state regulation (Hall et al 2013).
48 Indeed, several key features of remunicipalisation are noteworthy for spanning the
49 diverse social and spatial contexts involved and for highlighting the fault-lines of
50 privatised service provision (Kishimoto and Petitjean 2017). First, a common theme is
51 the failings of privatised solutions to deliver on their promise of providing more
52
53

54 ¹ In this sense, remunicipalisation is to be distinguished from nation-scale levels of re-nationalization.
55 This has significant effects in the political processes behind remunicipalisation, as the regulatory and
56 the remunicipalising body are not identical. This can become problematic when higher level
57 institutions or regulations rule out remunicipalisations in legal or political processes.
58
59
60

1
2
3 efficient and cheaper basic and essential services to users and consumers than public
4 models. Experience over time shows that rarely are the promised improvements in
5 performance or in investment delivered (Hall et al 2009). Rising and often life-
6 threatening or debilitating increases (from the perspective of the poorest citizens) in
7 price, allied to failures to modernise, upgrade or construct basic utility infrastructure,
8 have spawned a public backlash and growing resistance to privatisation across broad
9 sections of the community.
10

11
12 Second, this resistance has in many places, though taking diverse forms, spawned new
13 transversal social movements (Routledge et al 2018) that bring together coalitions of
14 different social actors to both challenge privatisation and the deeper politics of
15 neoliberalism, as well as articulating the return to forms of public and common
16 ownership. Third, city authorities and local governments are using remunicipalisation
17 as a route to secure control over key resources and assets to regain control of key
18 policy levers and revenues in the context of climate change and austerity. However,
19 we refrain from using simplistic notions such as a Polanyian-style pendulum swing
20 between private and public ownership (Stewart 2009), or a premature call to herald
21 remunicipalisation as an element in the shift towards a post-neoliberal governance
22 regime (see useful summary in Yates and Bakker 2014). Instead we pose the question
23 of whether the return to local public forms of ownership can be part of a broader
24 challenge to the current hegemony of neoliberal capitalism or just another dynamic
25 mutation of neoliberalism itself. In this regard, we would emphasise
26 remunicipalisation as a particular, and contradictory, moment in the unfolding
27 political economy of neoliberalism (Peck et al 2009).
28
29

30
31 Three aspects flow from this procedural notion of remunicipalisation contextualised
32 within a mutating neoliberalism. The first is to differentiate between the neoliberal
33 political project of restoring dominant class power and interests over the economy
34 from ‘actually existing neoliberalisms’ (Brenner and Theodore 2002, Peck et al 2009,
35 51). This implies that the ideological core of neoliberalism as a utopian hegemonic
36 project of creating market-centred institutions, actors and governance, as well as a
37 ‘trans-national rule regime’ (Peck et al 2009) that can discipline and shape social and
38 economic life becomes grounded and inevitably modified in different local contexts.
39 More abstract neoliberal ideals take particular conjunctural forms when they come
40 into contact with uneven ongoing processes of political-economic restructuring in
41 diverse spatial settings. As Peck et al put it:
42

43 the hegemonic process of neoliberalization is both systemic and contextually
44 embedded — it entails a worldwide reorganization of regulatory
45 arrangements; yet it can only be reproduced and advanced through historically
46 and geographically specific politico-institutional formations, strategies and
47 struggles (Peck et al., 2013, p.1093)
48

49
50 The second is that neoliberalism is a mutating project over time and space. Faced with
51 its own contradictions and unrealisable objectives, it must respond by changing form
52 and developing new justifications. This often involves, as with the UK experience of
53 privatisation, adding new forms of state regulation and intervention to allow ‘markets’
54 to function in areas traditionally considered as natural monopolies. Spatially, there is a
55 difference between an abstract neoliberalism as an idealised core around the primacy
56 of property rights, markets and competition (Peck 2010), and ‘actually existing
57
58
59
60

1
2
3 neoliberalisms'. In the latter, (Brenner and Theodore 2002), abstract ideals collide
4 with the inevitably socially regulated and variegated set of political and economic
5 governance processes in different places and at different geographical scales, from the
6 local (urban) up to the national and the supra-national (e.g. EU) (Brenner et al. 2010).
7 Nevertheless, as an instrument for retaining elite corporate power, it continues to
8 underpin a powerful set of anti-state and pro-market narratives that render premature
9 any assessment of its demise in the wake of the financial crisis (Peck 2012, Peck and
10 Whiteside 2016). This is particularly evident in the way neoliberalism has been recast
11 around an austerity agenda since 2010, further bringing neoliberalism's contradictions
12 into even sharper focus, as much of North America and Europe following the
13 financial crisis have fallen victim to a revitalised neoliberal political project to shrink
14 the state. In this respect, new multi-scalar disciplinary infrastructure is being
15 operationalized (particularly around government budget deficits in the context of
16 monetary union and Euro-zone governance) by the troika of the EU, IMF and
17 European Central Bank on peripheral European economies, (Blyth 2013, Mirowski
18 2013).
19
20

21 This brings us to our third point, that the urban scale is pivotal to neoliberalism's
22 mutations and trajectories. Most evidently, the rescaling of responsibilities and
23 pressures to the local level for economic development agendas and associated projects
24 of urban entrepreneurialism and competitiveness are increasingly central to neoliberal
25 state governance. Relatedly, it is also at the local and regional scales where new urban
26 crises have been set in train from the fallout from the financial crisis and political
27 responses to protect financial interests at the expense of social welfare provision
28 (Peck 2012). The centrality of land markets, property speculation and the urban built
29 environment to the crisis are self-evident meaning that the urban is both the site where
30 deregulated trans-local financial flows have wreaked economic and social havoc, but
31 also the places where these flows are both in part generated by particular state and
32 business actors but also where political response subsequently emerge. Austerity has
33 in turn occasioned and motivated a growing number of resistance movements at the
34 urban level, including Occupy, the Right to the City and the Indignados, to name but a
35 few (Mayer 2013, Harvey 2012). Moreover, as the scale of everyday life, both the
36 urban, and more generally, the local scale, are critical sites for neoliberalism where
37 welfare state retrenchment, new economic development initiatives and public policies
38 are enacted and where resistance movements mobilise and organise. As Peck et al put
39 it:
40
41
42

43 Cities, in other words, are not merely at the 'receiving end' of
44 neoliberalization processes, imposed unilaterally from above. Even in a
45 context in which few cities are able to exert controlling influence over the
46 trajectory of regulatory change, processes of neoliberalization continue to be
47 actively constituted (and contested) across a planetary system of urban(izing)
48 regions (Peck et al, 2013, p.1093).
49

50 Similarly, Jessop (2002) has noted the different pathways taken by urban governments
51 in reacting to neoliberal policy prescriptions, with the mere adoption of privatisation
52 and marketisation as only one option beside more networked models sustaining state
53 activity and influence. Our focus here on the German remunicipalisation process
54 allows us therefore to 'stretch and interrogate registers of difference' (Peck 2013,
55 p.1546) in the way that broader processes of neoliberal urban governance interact
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3 with ongoing local trajectories of governance that cut across national and urban
4 scales.

5
6 **Germany's *Rekommunalisierung* wave amidst mutating, differentiated and**
7 **stuttering neoliberalism**
8

9 Like most other large developed economies in the global north, German cities have
10 been exposed to broader neoliberal discourses and practices since the 1990s.
11 Experiencing its own 'third way' politics of accommodation with the market and
12 globalisation on the one hand, with the growing influence of the EU Single Market
13 Project and competitiveness agenda on the other, Germany, somewhat later and in a
14 more modified form than the UK under Thatcher, underwent its own wave of
15 privatisations in water, energy, communication, postal and other essential services
16 (Bartle 2002). As with the centre left throughout the world, German social democrats
17 also adopted the discourse of private sector innovation and efficiency, and took on a
18 corresponding privatisation agenda (see Cumbers 2012, ch.4). Hence, it was mainly
19 under a Social-Democrat and Green Government after 1998 that a workfare-oriented
20 reform package was issued to transform social services and work regulation at the
21 same time.
22
23

24 In contrast to the UK and some other more liberal market variants of capitalism,
25 which embraced of a wholesale selling-off of state assets to the private sector,
26 German privatisation can be viewed as a more partial process, reflecting its
27 continuing trajectory as both a more co-ordinated market economy (Hall and Soskice
28 2001) and its own variant of ordo-neoliberalism, where preventing monopoly control
29 over markets rather than the assumed benefits of private versus public ownership is a
30 dominant underpinning rationale (Peck 2010). Additionally, Germany's decentralised
31 governance structure and continuing traditions of a more social and regulated variant
32 of capitalism has meant that it has been difficult for neoliberalism to achieve the
33 immediate kind of system capture that is more evident in the UK. Beside the massive
34 privatisation programme after re-unification in former East Germany (Roesler 1994)
35 and some large national privatisations (such as Deutsche Telekom), much of the
36 privatisation was at the regional and municipal level. Studies on the water sector have
37 shown how, even without privatisation, public service provision was reordered by a
38 widespread commercialisation, with still-public utilities working towards aims of
39 economic efficiency and profit-generation (Wissen and Naumann 2006). Figuratively,
40 neoliberalism in Germany had to engage in a 'march through the institutions' of the
41 complex and multi-layered structures of the federal state (Gramsci 1971), meaning it
42 would need to trickle down through a nested institutional scaffolding, providing the
43 ground for hegemonic battles on multiple scales, producing its own variegated form
44 of neoliberalism in Germany (Belina 2013).
45
46
47

48 On a local level, common themes driving the privatisation agenda were a combination
49 of deteriorating public finances, pressing public debt, and the shift towards a more
50 disciplinarian and less expansive fiscal regime at the national level (Streeck 2014).
51 Even though privatisations were often framed as part of a larger programme and
52 response to crises and alleged inefficiency (Schipper 2014), two points can be made
53 about the more partial and co-ordinated nature of German privatisation. First, that it
54 has tended to be introduced within a regulatory framework that works on the basis of
55 time-limited concessions while continuously assuring a certain degree of local state
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3 involvement. Due to, second, basic services still being termed as a municipal
4 responsibility, privatisations require private actors to effectively act as partners to
5 local state actors rather than a hostile attack on the state itself as a vehicle for service
6 delivery.
7

8 While neoliberal ‘market failure’ and local policy pragmatism are undoubtedly key
9 influences behind remunicipalisation, the process has mobilised new grassroots and
10 citizens’ movements for an alternative politics against a technocratic neoliberal urban
11 managerialism (Swyngedouw 2009). Although German cities have not, as yet,
12 suffered the post-crisis disciplinary effects of austerity urbanism of some of their US
13 counterparts or the effects of extreme financialisation leading to public service failure
14 in the context of debt-fuelled rent extraction vehicles in the UK context (e.g. Peck and
15 Whiteside 2016, Peck 2017; Bakker 2011, Allen and Pryke 2013), they have
16 nonetheless been exposed to similar pressures to continue to privatize and marketise
17 urban assets and services (Schipper 2014). The opportunity to reclaim vital revenue-
18 generating assets can therefore be seen in part as a pragmatic piece of local public
19 policy management that does not fundamentally challenge the broader neoliberal
20 policy regime. Indeed, there are cases of remunicipalisations where the German
21 national government’s dedicated commitment to European Union competition
22 directives have resulted in the forced sale of some privatized utilities back to local
23 state ownership to reduce oligopolistic market positions in some sectors (Author
24 interviews).
25
26

27
28 Remunicipalisation in the German energy sector has taken different forms, mainly
29 either turning back previous privatisations or forming new local utilities where a
30 regional supplier (often private) was active before.² In some of the larger cities,
31 notably Berlin and Hamburg, but also Bremen and Stuttgart, there have been citizen-
32 organized campaigns leading to referenda to take utilities back into public ownership,
33 with a successful campaign and referendum against privatization in Leipzig.
34 Elsewhere in smaller towns and rural regions, even in some of the more traditionally
35 conservative regions, there has been a wave of both remunicipalisations and the
36 setting up of new public companies in the energy sector, often with innovative hybrid
37 forms of organization (Wagner and Berlo 2017). Key to these campaigns were
38 environmental groups mobilizing broader community initiatives, typified by the now
39 celebrated example of Wolfhagen, a small town of around 14,000 people in the state
40 of Hessen, that successfully regained ownership of its electricity grid from Eon in
41 2006 (Bauriedl 2016, Cumbers 2016). A final aspect to highlight has been the
42 growing number of trans-urban and trans-local initiatives of cities and towns coming
43 in new forms of regional public ownership such as Hochsauerland Energie GmbH,
44 created in 2009 and involving four smaller towns in North Rhine-Westphalia, and the
45 Regionalwerk Bodensee, created in 2008 by seven municipalities along Germany’s
46 southern border with Switzerland (Cumbers 2016). Overall, these processes highlight
47 a broader rescaling of political governance towards the local level in terms of
48 ownership structures, and the overall responsibility for climate and energy policy.
49
50

51 **Forging a democratic politics of urban alternatives? The prospects and tensions** 52 **in Berlin and Hamburg remunicipalisation campaigns** 53

54
55
56 ² Therefore we are both encountering municipalisations and remunicipalisations here. However, the
57 empirical processes and our analytical framing justify treating them under a common moniker.
58
59

1
2
3 In developing a critical sense of the prospects for a more democratic local and urban
4 politics, the remunicipalisation campaigns and their aftermath in Berlin and Hamburg
5 merit closer inspection.³ Both cities have long histories, stretching back to the late
6 1800s, of local public energy suppliers, the Berliner Städtische Electricitätswerke
7 Aktiengesellschaft (BEWAG) and Hamburgische Electricitätswerke (HEW). Both
8 were also privatization through the same company, Swedish state-owned utility
9 Vattenfall, as an expression of the dominant notion that corporate operators could
10 engage more effectively with increased competition in liberalised energy markets
11 around the turn of the millennium (Becker et al 2016). Such privatisations fit all too
12 well with the idea that public services should be commercialised, while creating some
13 ad-hoc income for indebted local states. Against this, the existence of radical left and
14 green oppositional movements articulating alternative social and ecological visions as
15 part of broader ‘right to the city’ movements is another shared feature in both cities
16 (Mayer 2013, Beveridge and Naumann 2016). These have taken shape in campaigns
17 around social housing, land occupation and defence of public services (Vogelpohl and
18 Bucholz 2017, Novy and Colomb 2013), a successful remunicipalisation campaign in
19 the water sector in Berlin (Beveridge et al 2014), and a long history (stretching back
20 to the 1960s) of anti-nuclear and anti-fossil fuels campaigning in Hamburg.
21
22

23 Within this context, both cities have witnessed the formation of grassroots campaigns
24 to take formerly privatized energy sectors back into public ownership and control, in
25 opposition not just to the established centre right and centre left parties the Christian
26 Democrats and Social Democrats, but also against a wider coalition involving
27 business associations and energy trade unions, which were keen to protect their own
28 collective bargaining agreements with Vattenfall, providing better wages and
29 conditions than the public sector (Becker et al 2015). Working within what are two
30 city states, somewhat unique to the German federal system (Bremen being the other
31 example), grassroots initiatives benefit from having the legislative capacity to hold
32 referenda to overturn parliamentary legislation and impose changes or overturn
33 decisions made by political elites. The two remunicipalisation campaigns were
34 effective in mobilizing broad alliances of citizens to contest privatization and partition
35 for such referenda.
36
37

38 ***Berlin’s campaign for a radical energy democracy***

39 In Berlin, two organisations were created to advocate for slightly different forms of
40 remunicipalisation: the Berliner Energietisch (Berlin Energy Roundtable) and the
41 BürgerEnergie Berlin (Citizen Energy Berlin - CEB) (Becker et al 2015). The
42 Energietisch, which had a broad cross-section of greens and leftists, including
43 members Die Linke and Bündnis 90/Die Grünen political parties plus various NGOs
44 and a tenants association of over 100,000 (Authors’ interviews), argued for a fully
45 owned public energy company with a radical democratic composition of its governing
46 board (seven directly elected citizen representatives; six worker representatives and
47 two appointees from city council), codified information duties, as well as a
48
49

50
51 ³ These insights are derived from empirical work undertaken by the authors between 2014 and 2017,
52 mainly through qualitative interviews and participant observations. Cumbers has conducted 20
53 interviews across Germany, with local politicians, activists and officials involved in municipal energy
54 and remunicipalisation campaigns, including those in Berlin and Hamburg. Becker’s empirical work
55 focussed on 17 interviews with different actors (civil society, business, industry) involved in the
56 campaigns for and against remunicipalisation, 3 focus groups and 4 participant observations in both
57 cities.
58
59

1
2
3 commitment to strong ecological and social objectives (Becker et al. 2017). The CEB,
4 which was a citizen movement that required individuals to register by paying a fee,
5 envisaged a more cooperative model (with a 49% shareholding) held by those with
6 the ability to buy shares which would be open to non-Berliners, prompting the retort
7 from an Energietisch activist that ‘wealthy people from Bavaria can benefit rather
8 than the poor of Berlin’ (Interview). Nevertheless, CEB was also supportive of the
9 Energietisch’s proposals (Authors’ interviews), which were taken forward in the
10 referendum.
11

12 It is worth reflecting on the varying positionalities of the political and business
13 establishment (see Becker et al 2015 for fuller details). The CDU and Chamber of
14 Commerce set their face against remunicipalisation completely, arguing that it would
15 be disruptive, costly and would weaken parliamentary legitimacy, while the SPD was
16 more supportive in principal but less keen on a more radical democratic model. Both
17 parties opposed the Energietisch proposal in the subsequent referendum. The trade
18 unions offered lukewarm support at best: the public sector union, Verdi, was
19 supportive providing that existing employees’ conditions were maintained, while the
20 main energy trade union, IGBCE remained resolutely opposed (Becker et al 2015).
21
22

23 The Energietisch proposal for remunicipalisation easily cleared its first hurdle,
24 registering 220,000 signatures, well in excess of the 173,000 signatures minimum, to
25 hold a vote. However, it failed to gain enough support to come into effect; although
26 the Referendum in November 2013 secured an 83% vote in favour, it fell 21,000 votes
27 short of the required number. At the time of writing (May 2018) the issue of
28 remunicipalisation remains unresolved, as the decision regarding who is to be
29 awarded the concession for the city’s energy grids is still pending. Besides Vattenfall,
30 one candidate is the new public enterprise, Berlin Energie, formed by the SDP as a
31 traditional more ‘top-down’ utility in response to the political momentum generated
32 by the Energietisch campaign. This continuous state of uncertainty clearly indicates
33 the contested nature of institutionalising alternatives to neoliberal urban governance.
34
35

36 ***Reclaiming ‘our energy’ in Hamburg***

37 In contrast to Berlin, the Hamburg referendum campaign was successful in its
38 immediate aims of reversing privatization. It resulted in a vote in favour of
39 remunicipalising the energy grid by the narrow margin of 50.9 % in September 2013
40 (Becker et al. 2016). In some ways, Hamburg’s mobilization was even more
41 remarkable than Berlin, given the dominant Social Democrats’ outright hostility, as
42 opposed to more studied ambivalence in the former. Once again, it was largely a
43 citizens’ campaign ‘Unser Hamburg – Unser Netz’ (Our Hamburg - Our Grid), built
44 around the aim of a new public utility to operate the city’s energy grids in tackling
45 climate change by producing energy from renewable sources but also incorporating
46 social justice and democratic control.
47
48

49 Hamburg’s relative success can be put down to two key factors. First, in 2009 a
50 Conservative-Green coalition government established an exemplary public utility
51 called Hamburg Energie (HE), founded to build up renewable energy generation
52 facilities and to sell the electricity produced. HE arose from a political decision within
53 local government circles, with the Green Party using its new power in government to
54 counteract the irreversible approval of a 1.7-GW, coal-fired power plant that they had
55 campaigning against beforehand. The utility was founded as an autonomous
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3 subsidiary of the local public water company. Importantly, HE was given a clear
4 mission statement including commitments to the ‘provision of energy for the general
5 public and public institutions’, the sale of ‘climate-friendly electricity (non-nuclear
6 and coal-free)’ and a requirement that the enterprise ‘plan, erect and run municipal
7 infrastructures’. In the years since its establishment, the utility has grown its
8 electricity supply business to more than 100,000 customers and is now operating at a
9 small profit. Envisaged as the vehicle to shift Hamburg toward a 100 % renewable
10 electricity and heat supply, HE has begun to invest in its own power sources,
11 including six wind farms within the city’s boundaries and 10 megawatts of solar
12 photovoltaic capacity. Critically, HE provided an example of how a public energy
13 company could operate both profitably and effectively in driving a renewable energy
14 agenda; although in doing so, it also works to a model of commercialised service
15 provision, operating within a liberalised energy market rather than under a more
16 radical structure.
17
18

19 The breadth of the alliance for remunicipalisation of the energy grid across civil
20 society was a second critical factor in the campaign’s success. The coalition included
21 social and environmental movements and NGOs such as Friends of the Earth
22 (BUND), parts of the Lutheran Church and the Customer Advice Centre, and many
23 smaller groups. This coalition formed as it became clear that the Social-Democrat
24 government was not willing to put remunicipalisation on the agenda as the
25 concessions were running out, so a broad popular coalition was created to push the
26 government in that direction. As in Berlin, the referendum was chosen as a strategy to
27 legally bind the government to remunicipalise the energy grids (electricity, district
28 heating, gas) and to form a utility that would meet social, ecological and democratic
29 demands. While normally attempts to convince local politicians would have mostly
30 included lobbying efforts, the referendum preparations implied a dynamic of
31 coalition-building, public mobilisation and antagonism to achieve a necessary degree
32 of attention. In this way, the campaign generated an alternative urban politics with a
33 concrete proposition to alter state praxis. When it came to the referendum itself, as a
34 campaign organiser said in an interview, the strategy was to ‘convince 50 per cent +
35 x’, involving questions on how ‘to strike the right tone’ to appeal to a majority of
36 voters. Despite this, the process towards the referendum was characterised by a sharp
37 antagonism between the civil society campaign and an equally broad coalition uniting
38 the defendants of the status quo, centring their argument on the high investment
39 needed to repurchase the energy grids, and a more subtle notion of defending
40 Hamburg as an industrial location with good working relationships between the local
41 state and private investors.
42
43
44

45 While the Referendum process itself involved the contestation of private ownership
46 through remunicipalisation, the aftermath is indicative of the tensions and
47 contradiction of implementing alternatives to urban neoliberalism. The success of the
48 referendum in Hamburg by no means signified the end of the process. Rather, it
49 marked the start of a new phase of energy and remunicipalisation politics. In short, the
50 SDP government that had previously opposed remunicipalisation outright suddenly
51 found itself in charge of implementing the reform. Despite this paradox, it had to
52 implement the remunicipalisation, negotiating contracts and options with the
53 incumbent concessionaires. By the end of 2014, the electricity grid was repurchased
54 for €495.5 million (including the 2011 purchase of 25.1 %), and an option for
55 acquiring the gas distribution network for roughly €355.4 million by 2018 (which will
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3 likely become effective during 2017). The main initiators behind the referendum were
4 included as consultants to the meetings of the Parliamentary Committee on
5 environmental issues. Furthermore, a Network Advisory Council was set up in 2016
6 where these groups were also given representation. The referendum result now plays
7 an important role as a point of reference in discussions about the future of the urban
8 district heating system. Beyond ownership change and the technological shift, it
9 remains unclear to what extent a social justice orientation and democratic composition
10 of the new public companies will be, but the referendum itself has clearly been
11 socially empowering for the coalition of actors behind it.
12

13 ***Reflections on the two remunicipalisation processes***

14 Taken together, the two remunicipalisation processes display some striking
15 similarities, despite different outcomes, in terms of the limitations to
16 remunicipalisation in neoliberal urban contexts. Lacking effective access to the core
17 areas of decision making within established state actors and mainstream political
18 parties, the decision to prepare and hold a referendum can be interpreted as a strategic
19 calculation by grassroots movements seeking to push local government actors in a
20 more participatory and democratic direction, and to contest established relations with
21 privatised energy providers. This constellation mirrors the development in other
22 policy fields where social movements have become active, for example around water
23 issues in Berlin (Beveridge et al 2014), against the privatisation of hospitals in
24 Hamburg (Mosebach 2010), and more generally about the right to the city in
25 processes of urban regeneration (Novy and Colomb 2013). In this sense, there was a
26 generative dynamic (Featherstone 2012) unfolding through which social movement
27 actors have used possibilities and openings defined by the given ensemble of partly
28 neoliberalised structures.
29
30

31
32 Against the more positive accounts of these strategic achievements, however, the
33 processes in both cities also hint at the limitations of the remunicipalisation trend. It
34 seemed easier to legitimize municipal ownership as a means to push forward
35 renewable energies than to fundamentally rethink the assumed relation between
36 commercialized and high-quality service provision for a more democratic and socially
37 just city politics. Notably, the remunicipalised utilities in Hamburg are all designed as
38 enterprises under private law. More radical claims towards socially oriented tariffs for
39 lower income groups and more direct democracy on the board of the new enterprise
40 have been sidelined. Whether the new institutional vehicles for greater citizen
41 participation will prove effective in the long run is a moot point. Remunicipalisation
42 might align state ownership with ecological modernisation agendas in the process of a
43 post-carbon transition, but whether it will deliver a just transition (Routledge et al
44 2018) is another matter.
45
46

47 **Conclusions**

48 At its most basic level of understanding urban governance, the German
49 *Rekommunalisierung* process is an important reminder of the mundane (but critical)
50 role of infrastructure and public service provision to urban development and politics.
51 Grids of energy and water in particular are essential to human well-being, subsistence
52 and social reproduction but also natural monopolies that can provide secure and long
53 term revenues for those able to exercise ownership and control of them. Against this
54 backdrop, the failure of privatised forms of infrastructure and service delivery in the
55 German energy sector and subsequent protests by citizens have resulted in the
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3 rediscovery of the merits of municipal public ownership. Across a diverse range of
4 cities and towns, the country's decentralised polity has provided local political actors
5 (both within and outside the state) with the political capacity to regain control of
6 revenue bearing assets against a broader multi-scalar politics of austerity and fiscal
7 retrenchment (Blyth 2013).
8

9
10 Conceptually, the broader process of global remunicipalisation is a reminder about the
11 limits of market-driven and privatising logics in reproducing the basic social
12 reproductive functions of cities for what used to be termed 'collective consumption'
13 in capital accumulation processes (Castells 1972, Saunders 1986). Failing
14 infrastructure, dwindling assets and weakened service provision are forcing the state
15 to come back in – though taking very different forms according to existing and
16 inherited socio-political relations and institutional configurations. In a sense, here,
17 there is an obvious tension and a broader ontological set of questions about the
18 intersections between globalising processes and discourses – in this case
19 neoliberalism - and the ongoing necessities of local place-based urban politics or
20 'spaces of dependence' (Cox 1998). This itself challenges the competitiveness logics
21 of marketization and pure commercial values, with attempts to mobilise collectively
22 in many places, pushing broader social and public values back into the urban
23 governance terrain.
24

25
26 Paradoxically, remunicipalisation could be interpreted as yet another phase in
27 neoliberal mutation (Peck 2013), as the limits and overreach of marketised forms
28 become increasingly evident, producing new urban crises of collective consumption.
29 Interpreted against the backdrop of longer term logics of capital accumulation, many
30 remunicipalisations, both in Germany and more globally (Kishimoto and Petitjean
31 2017), are driven either by pragmatic cost considerations by local public officials or
32 the withdrawal of private entities. This would imply that now, at a time when there is
33 a need for substantial investment – for example to meet the massive bill in adapting
34 energy infrastructure to tackling climate change - costs are socialised, whereas in the
35 more profitable past, rent-seeking gains could flow to private – or state – shareholders
36 of commercially operating utilities.
37

38
39 However, this seems a little too reductionist and over-determined, devoid of the kind
40 of political agency that is evident in the mobilisations around remunicipalisation. As
41 the late Stuart Hall noted, although intended as a 'permanent revolution' (Hall 2017,
42 p. 334), neoliberalism can never be truly complete because it is subject to resistance
43 from those excluded and exploited, as well as counter social movements, and comes
44 up against practical limits and contradictions. Reflecting the roots of a new left
45 perspective, shared with Raymond Williams and others, Hall reminds us that 'history
46 is never closed', so that hegemony is a process that needs to be: 'constantly ...
47 worked on, maintained, renewed, revised' (Hall 2017). Recognising this is also
48 important politically for being alert to the possibilities offered by 'cracks' (Holloway
49 2010) in the neoliberal carapace. Remunicipalisation, at this point in its evolution,
50 represents one such crack.
51

52
53 To conclude from the two cases presented here, remunicipalisations are important as
54 expressions of alternative political imaginaries and thinking about the city, speaking
55 to debates about engagements and possibilities between the state and social and
56 political movements for transformational and socially empowering politics (Wright
57
58
59
60

1
2
3 2010, Harvey 2012, Cumbers 2015). Although it has sometimes been argued – even
4 by the authors of this article - that remunicipalisation holds the potential to become an
5 expression of a broader urban commons directed against ongoing commodification of
6 the city (Becker et al. 2017, Cumbers 2016, Harvey 2012), a consideration of its
7 implementation through the German experience suggests a more nuanced initial
8 stocktake here. Even where grassroots mobilisations around remunicipalisation have
9 won significant victories – in Hamburg and, to a lesser extent, Berlin – the strength of
10 established political actors and their ability to use the state apparatus to frustrate a
11 radical alternative urban politics remains high.
12

13
14 In this sense, to interrogate remunicipalisation more fully – in terms of a substantive
15 challenge to neoliberal urbanism - it must be assessed according to whether it
16 represents a more decisive shift in the organisation of public services away from
17 market logics towards more democratic and socially oriented values. From our case-
18 studies we can derive core criteria and questions to assess this matter for future
19 research. What kinds of legal configuration are required for local public companies to
20 ensure they escape market and competitive logics to pursue alternative non-profit
21 driven values and goals? How do remunicipalisations establish sustainable longer
22 lasting forms of direct democracy against the tendency towards the re-establishment
23 of more elite representative structures? Finally, what balance should be struck in
24 delivering democratic multi-stakeholder models between existing parties and
25 organised labour and industrial interests, or citizens and social movements? In these
26 terms, our cases suggest strong evidence that neoliberalism is being contested, but it is
27 too early to conclude that remunicipalisation processes have produced real-world
28 alternatives.
29
30

31 Nevertheless, such mobilisations are critical and ‘generative’ (Featherstone 2012) in
32 the sense that ‘social movement/political activity can reconstitute the terrain of
33 contestation and political identities’ (Davies and Featherstone 2016, 241). This has
34 happened in two ways through remunicipalisation. First, in putting the question of the
35 ‘public’ and alternative social and ecological values back squarely into the politics of
36 urban governance and policy, however this might play out in the long run. Second, in
37 constructing new alliances and coalitions for a different kind of urban politics that
38 helps in itself to create new resources and subjects for forging these alternative urban
39 values. This has implications for progressive urban and spatial politics more broadly,
40 suggestive of the diverse possibilities for creating a post-neoliberal order. The terrain
41 of possibilities will be uneven, but there may be greater potential for episodes and
42 moments of a more progressive localism, which can act as the catalyst for broader
43 social transformation in those urban spaces where neoliberal ideology has only gained
44 a tentative hold. While being cautious and remaining critical about the motivations
45 behind German remunicipalisation, initiatives such as those developed in Hamburg
46 and Berlin, and the urban politics and mobilizations that generated them are essential
47 to contesting and overthrowing dominant forms of neoliberal urbanism.
48
49

50 **Acknowledgements**

51 The research behind this article benefited from the financial support of the Carnegie
52 Trust and the DAAD (Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst).
53
54
55

56 **References**

57
58
59
60

1
2
3
4 Allen, J. and M. Pryke (2013) Financialising household water: Thames Water, MEIF,
5 and 'ring-fenced' politics. *Cambridge Journal of Regions Economy and Society* 6,
6 419-439.

7
8 Angel, J. (2017) Towards an energy politics in-against-and-beyond the state: Berlin's
9 struggle for energy democracy. *Antipode* 49:3, 557-576.

10
11 Bakker, K. (2011) *Privatizing Water: Governance Failure and the World's Urban*
12 *Water Crisis*. Ithaca, Cornell U.P.

13
14 Bartle, I. (2002) When institutions no longer matter: reform of telecommunications
15 and electricity in Germany, France and Britain. *Journal of Public Policy* 22:1, 1-27.

16
17 Bauriedl, S (2016) Modes of local governance for a decentralized energy transition.
18 *Geographische Zeitschrift* 104:2, 72-91.

19
20 Becker, S. Beveridge, R. and M. Naumann (2015) Remunicipalization in German
21 cities: contesting neo-liberalism and reimagining urban governance? *Space and*
22 *Polity*, 19:1, 76-90,

23
24 Becker, S., T. Blanchet and C. Kunze (2016) Social movements and urban energy
25 policy: assessing contexts, agency and outcomes of remunicipalisation processes in
26 Hamburg and Berlin. *Utilities Policy* 41, 228-236.

27
28 Becker, S., Moss, T., Naumann, M. (2017): Between coproduction and commons:
29 understanding initiatives to reclaim urban energy provision in Hamburg and Berlin.
30 *Urban Research and Practice* 10:1, 63-85.

31
32 Belina, B. (2013): Germany in times of crisis: passive revolution, struggle over
33 hegemony and new nationalism, *Geografiska Annaler B* 95:3, 275-285.

34
35 Beveridge, R. and M. Naumann (2016) Another urban infrastructure is possible:
36 contesting energy and water network in Berlin, in Coutard, o. and J. Rutherford (eds)
37 *Beyond the Networked City: infrastructure Reconfiguration and Urban change in*
38 *North and South*. London, Routledge, 138-158.

39
40 Beveridge, R., Hüesker, F., and M. Naumann (2014): From post-politics to a politics
41 of possibility? Unravelling the privatization of the Berlin Water Company. *Geoforum*
42 51, 66-74.

43
44 Blyth, M. (2013) *Austerity: The History of a Dangerous Idea*. Oxford, Oxford
45 University Press.

46
47 Brenner, N. and N. Theodore (2002) Cities and the geographies of "actually existing
48 neoliberalism" *Antipode* 34:3, 349-379.

49
50 Brenner, N., Peck, J. and N. Theodore (2010) Variegated neoliberalization:
51 geographies, modalities, pathways. *Global Networks* 10:2, 182-222.

- 1
2
3
4 Bruff, I. (2014) The Rise of Authoritarian Neoliberalism. *Rethinking Marxism*,
5 26:1, 113-129.
6
7 Castells, M. (1972) *The Urban Question*. London, Edward Arnold.
8
9 Cox, K.R. (1998) Spaces of dependence, spaces of engagement and the politics of
10 scale, or: looking for local politics. *Political Geography* 17, 1, pp. 1-23.
11
12 Crouch, C. (2011) *The Strange Non-death of Neoliberalism*. Cambridge, Polity Press.
13
14 Cumbers, A. (2012) *Reclaiming Public Ownership: Making space for economic*
15 *democracy* London, Zed.
16
17 Cumbers, A. (2015) 'Constructing a global commons in, against and beyond the state'
18 *Space and Polity* 19, 1, 62-75.
19
20
21 Cumbers, A. (2016) Remunicipalization, the Low-Carbon Transition, and Energy
22 Democracy. In Worldwatch Institute: *State of the World Report 2016*, Worldwatch,
23 Washington DC.
24
25 Cumbers, A. (2017) The Danish low carbon transition and the prospects for the
26 democratic economy, in North, P. and M. Scott Cato (eds) *Towards Just and*
27 *Sustainable Economies: the Social and Solidarity Economy North and South*, Bristol
28 Policy Press.
29
30
31 Elwood, S., Bond, P., Martinez Novo, C. and S. Radcliff (2017) Learning from
32 postneoliberalisms. *Progress in Human Geography* 41:5, 676-695.
33
34 Davies, A. D. and Featherstone, D. (2016) Networking resistances: the contested
35 spatialities of transnational social movement organising. In B. Miller (ed) *Spaces of*
36 *Contention: Spatialities and Social Movements*. London, Routledge, pp. 239-260.
37
38 Featherstone, D. (2012) *Solidarity: Hidden Histories and Geographies of*
39 *Internationalism*. London, Zed.
40
41 Gramsci, A. (1971) *Prison Notebooks*, New York, International Publishers.
42
43 Hall, D. (2012) *Re-municipalising in Europe*. PSIRU, Greenwich. Available at:
44 <http://www.psiru.org/reports/re-municipalisation-europe.html>. last accessed August
45 2018.
46
47
48 Hall, D. Thomas, S. and Corral, V. (2009) *Global Experience with Electricity*
49 *Liberalisation*. Greenwich, PSIRU,
50
51 Hall, D. Lobina, E. and P. Terhorst (2013) Re-municipalisation in the early twenty-
52 first century: water in France and energy in Germany. *International Review of Applied*
53 *Economics* 27:2, 193-214.
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3 Hall, S. (2017) *Selected Political Writings: the Great Moving Right Show*. Lawrence
4 and Wishart, London.

5
6 Hall S, Massey D and Rustin M (2013) After neoliberalism: analyzing the present.
7 *Soundings* 53: 8–22.

8
9 Harvey D. (2004) The new imperialism: accumulation by dispossession. *Socialist*
10 *Register* 40, 63-87.

11
12 Harvey, D. (2005) *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*. Oxford, Oxford University Press.

13
14 Harvey, D. (2012). *Rebel Cities: From the Right to the City to the Urban Revolution*.
15 London, Verso.

16
17 Holloway, J. (2010) *Crack Capitalism*. London, Pluto.

18
19 Jessop, B. (2002) Liberalism, neoliberalism, and urban governance: a state-theoretical
20 perspective. *Antipode* 34:3, 452-472.

21
22 Kishimoto, S. and O. Petitjean (eds)(2017) *Reclaiming Public Services: How Cities*
23 *and Citizens are Turning Back Privatisation*. Paris and Amsterdam, Transnational
24 Institute.

25
26 Lobina, E. and Hall, P. (2007) *Water, Privatisation and Restructuring I Latin*
27 *America*. Greenwich, Public Services International Research Unit.

28
29 Massey, D. (2004) Geographies of responsibility. *Geografiska Annaler B* 86:1, 5-18.

30
31 Mayer, M. (2013) First worl urban activism: beyond austerity urbanism and creative
32 city politics. *City* 17:1, 5-19.

33
34 Mirowski, P. (2013) *Never Let a Serious Crisis Go to Waste: How Neoliberalism*
35 *Survived The Financial Meltdown*. London, Verso.

36
37 Mosebach, K. (2010): Commercializing German hospital care? Effects of New Public
38 Management and Managed Care under neoliberal conditions. *German Policy Studies*
39 6:3, 65–98.

40
41 Novy, J. and C. Colomb (2013): Struggling for the right to the (creative) city in Berlin
42 and Hamburg: new urban social movements, new ‘spaces of hope’? *International*
43 *Journal for Urban Regional Research* 37:5, 1816–1838.

44
45 Peck, J. (2010) *Constructions of Neoliberal Reason*. Oxford, Oxford University Press.

46
47 Peck, J. (2012) Austerity urbanism: American cities under extreme economy. *City*
48 626-655.

- 1
2
3 Peck, J. (2013) 'For Polanyian economic geographies' *Environment and Planning A*
4 45(7), 1545-1568
5
- 6 Peck, J. (2017) Transatlantic city, part 1: conjunctural urbanism. *Urban Studies* 54:1,
7 4-30.
8
- 9 Peck, J. Theodore, N. and Brenner, N. (2009) Neoliberal urbanism: models, moments,
10 mutations, *SAIS Review of International Affairs*, 29, 49-66.
11
- 12 Peck J, Theodore, N. and Brenner, N. (2010) Postneoliberalism and its malcontents.
13 *Antipode* 41: 94–116.
14
- 15 Peck, J. Theodore, N. and Brenner, N. (2013) Neoliberal urbanism redux?
16 *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 37 (3): 1091-99.
17
18
- 19 Peck, J. and H. Whiteside (2016) Financializing Detroit. *Economic Geography* 92:3,
20 35-68
21
- 22 Pigeon, M., McDonald, D.A., Hoedeman, O. and S. Kishimoto (2012)
23 *Remunicipalisation: Putting Water Back into Public Hands*. Amsterdam, CEO and
24 TNI.
25
- 26 Roesler, J. (1994) Privatisation in Eastern Germany: experience with the Treuhand.
27 *Europe-Asia Studies* 46:3, 505-517.
28
29
- 30 Routledge, P. Cumbers, A. and Derrickson, K. (2018) States of just transition:
31 realising climate justice through and against the state. *Geoforum* 88, 78-86.
32
- 33 Saunders, P. (1986) *Social Theory and the Urban Question*. London, Routledge.
34
- 35 Schipper, S. (2014): The Financial Crisis and the Hegemony of Urban Neoliberalism:
36 Lessons from Frankfurt am Main. *International Journal for Urban Regional Research*
37 38:1, 236-255.
38
- 39 Smith, N. (2008) *Uneven Development: Nature, Capital and the Production of Space*,
40 Athens, GA: The University of Georgia Press.
41
42
- 43 Stewart, S. (2009): Relaxing the shackles: the invisible pendulum. *Journal of*
44 *International Development* 21:6, 765-771.
45
- 46 Streeck, W. (2014): The politics of Public Debt: Neoliberalism, Capitalist
47 Development, and Restructuring of the State. *German Economic Review*
48 <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/pdf/10.1111/geer.12032>
49
- 50 Swyngedouw, E. (2009) The antinomies of the postpolitical city: in search of a
51 democratic politics of environmental production. *International Journal of Urban and*
52 *Regional Research* 33:3, 601-20.
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3 Tickell A. and Peck J. (2003) Making global rules: globalization or neoliberalization?,
4 in Peck J. and Yeung, H. W-C. (eds) *Remaking the Global Economy: Economic-
5 Geographical Perspectives*, pp. 163–181. Sage, London.
6

7 Vogelpegel and Bucholz (2017) Breaking with neoliberalism by restricting the
8 housing market: novel urban policies and the case of Hamburg. *International Journal
9 of Urban and Regional Research* 41, 266-281.
10

11
12 Wagner, O, Berlo, K. (2017) Remunicipalisation and foundation of municipal utilities
13 in the German energy sector: details about newly established enterprises. *Journal of
14 Sustainable Development of Energy, Water and Environment Systems* 5:3, 396-407.
15

16
17 Wissen, M., Naumann, M. (2006): A new logic of infrastructure supply: the
18 commercialisation of water and the transformation of urban governance in Germany.
19 *Social Justice* 33:3, 20–37.
20

21 Yates, J.S. and K. Bakker (2014) Debating the ‘post-neoliberal turn’ in Latin
22 America. *Progress in Human Geography* 38, 1, 62-90.
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60