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MASTERARBEIT / MASTER'S THESIS

Titel der Masterarbeit / Title of the Master's Thesis

„'This is coal, don't be afraid': globalisation and nationalisms on the coal frontier"

verfasst von / submitted by

Pia Bansagi

angestrebter akademischer Grad / in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Master (MA)

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Abstract – English

Nationalism is most frequently theorised from the perspective of states, political elites and citizenry; however, there is a growing body of literature focused on the role of corporations in reproducing and constructing nationalist discourse to sell products. While scholarship has explored the various ways in which corporations perpetuate nationalist narratives, to date, there has been little focus on the intersection between corporate nationalism and processes of globalisation. Drawing on commercial nationalism research and globalisation theory, this paper addresses this gap, arguing that nationalism should be understood as a *mechanism* by which transnational, market-based actors are able to expand their businesses and mobilise into new national spaces. These dynamics are explored through the case study of Adani Australia, which operates the controversial Carmichael thermal coal project in Queensland, Australia. Adani Australia is a subsidiary company of Indian-owned transnational mining corporation, Adani Group, which plans to extract and export Australian thermal coal to developing markets in Asia. The paper asks: to what extent does Adani Australia engage with themes of Australian nationalism? Using a software-assisted qualitative content analysis approach, the findings illustrate how, by engaging with nationalist discourse, the company is able to localise its image, while at the same time employing nationalist mythologies to reframe its extractivist model as virtuous and in the national interest. The findings point to how Adani Australia's use of nationalist discourse perpetuates deeply-held historical understandings of Australia as a prosperous resource state and premier global coal exporter. The company's rhetoric therefore represents an important socio-cultural barrier to decarbonisation in Australia. If global warming is to remain below 1.5C, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change states the world must urgently phase out coal as a source of energy.

Abstrakt – Deutsch

Nationalismus wird meist aus Sichtweise von Staaten, politischen Eliten und Bürgerschaft theoretisiert. Es existiert jedoch ein beständig wachsender Fundus an Literatur, der die Rolle von Unternehmen in der Konstruktion und Reproduktion von nationalistischen Diskursen für den Verkauf von Waren untersucht. Wenngleich ein Forschungsfokus auf den verschiedenen Arten zum Erhalt nationalistischer Narrativen durch Unternehmen liegt, wurde der Schnittstelle zwischen kommerziellem Nationalismus und Prozessen der Globalisierung wenig Aufmerksamkeit gewidmet. In dieser Arbeit wird versucht diese Lücke zu überwinden. Abgeleitet von kommerzieller Nationalismus- und Globalisierungstheorie, wird argumentiert, dass marktorientierte Akteur:innen Nationalismus als *Mechanismus* zur transnationalen Expansion ihrer Unternehmen und Mobilisierung neuer nationaler Räume instrumentalisieren. Diese Dynamiken werden anhand einer Fallstudie über Adani Australia ergründet, welche das kontroverse Kraftwerks-Steinkohleproject, Carmichael‘ in Queensland in Australien betreibt. Adani Australia ist eine Tochtergesellschaft der in Indischem Besitz befindlichen transnationalen Bergbaugesellschaft Adani Group, welche die Gewinnung und den Export Australischer Kraftwerks-Steinkohle in Asiatische Entwicklungsmärkte plant. Diese Arbeit fragt: In welchem Ausmaß greift Adani Australia Motive des australischen Nationalismus auf? Mithilfe einer Software-gestützten qualitativen Inhaltsanalyse, wurden folgende Ergebnisse veranschaulicht: Durch das Aufgreifen von nationalistischem Diskurs, kann das Unternehmen sein Image in lokalen Kontext setzen und schafft es gleichzeitig sein extraktivistisches Modell durch nationalistische Mythologien als tugendhaft und von nationalem Interesse darzustellen. Die Ergebnisse zeigen auf wie Adani Australia durch nationalistischen Diskurs, ein tiefgreifendes historisches Verständnis von Australien als reichem Ressourcen Staat und weltweit führendem Kohleexporteur aufrechterhält. Die Rhetorik des Unternehmens stellt daher eine bedeutende sozio-kulturelle Barriere für die Dekarbonisierung Australiens dar. Um die Erderwärmung unter 1.5C zu halten, muss die Welt laut Zwischenstaatlichen Gremium für Klimawandel (IPCC) dringend Kohle als Energiequelle auslaufen lassen.

Chapter 1: Introduction

"There's the story, then there's the real story, then there's the story of how the story came to be told. Then there's what you leave out of the story. Which is part of the story too."
-Margaret Atwood, MaddAdam

In 2009, Nigerian author Chimamanda Adichie (2009) spoke about the power of stories. Viewed over seven million times, her TED Talk, 'The Danger of a Single Story', outlines how one narrative can come to define a place or a people and become entangled with belonging. Adichie recalled her experience studying in the United States and the way others perceived her. Prior to living in the United States, she had not consciously identified herself as African, but rather Nigerian. However, during her time at university, Americans would often turn to Adichie for an 'African' perspective, perpetuating the 'single story of Africa' that can be found in Western discourse. Nonetheless, over time Adichie speaks about how she came to embrace aspects of this new 'African' identity for herself.

This example highlights the ability of narratives to shape understandings of the self and construct ideas about places and people. These stories have the ability to sway opinion, influence outcomes and can wield immense power. This thesis examines the process of storytelling but also examines the motivation of the storytellers themselves.

Nationalism can be understood as the collection of stories that are told about a people or a place. The sum total of these smaller stories come together to form a picture of what it means to be a member of a certain national group. The contours of the nation, such as its territory, its in-group and out-group, and its cultural character, can be understood as ideologically and discursively

constructed (Anderson 2006). Nationalism, as a form of social consciousness, emerges when the state is considered the 'natural' political unit. Expressions of nationalism may be obvious and observable, such as flag-waving or singing the national anthem, but they can also manifest in banal ways, such as idiosyncratic language or attitudes. But just because nationalism is banal does not mean it is benign (Billig 1995). Precisely because they exist at the level of the everyday, banal forms of nationalism have the power to shape understandings of the nation to the same degree, perhaps even more so, than 'hot' expressions of nationalism.

If banal nationalism is so powerful, then it is important to understand who or what is in control of the narrative. Frequently theorised from the perspective of political actors or citizenry, nationalism can be produced and perpetuated by a broad spectrum of actors to fulfil various objectives. This paper focuses on commercial actors and their role in shaping nationalist discourse in pursuit of profit.

Most importantly, this research explores the role of nationalism under conditions of globalisation. It is not only local companies that engage with discourses of nationalism to sell products. A growing area of research examines the ways that transnational actors enlist nationalist sentiment to mobilise across borders and enter into new national spaces. Engaging with nationalism allows foreign companies to adapt to the new political, economic and socio-cultural environments and expand their operations. In this sense, nationalism is considered a mechanism or instrument to facilitate transnational corporate mobility, allowing actors to garner support for political, economic and social projects. In an era characterised by neoliberalism and highly integrated global markets and supply chains, it is important to understand how transnational corporations shape and reproduce national

meaning, national identity and most importantly, impact future decision making. This research contributes to the body of literature on commercial nationalism but expands its theoretical implications and practical applications to the study of globalisation. Although commercial nationalism and spatial theories of globalisation have been the focus of discrete scholarly attention, to date there has been little investigation into the relationship between them.

The nexus of globalisation and nationalism is explored through the case study of the Carmichael thermal coal mine in Queensland, Australia. The mine is situated in Queensland's Galilee Basin, a region which has been termed the world's newest coal frontier due to the vast amounts of untouched coal deposits located there. Although only in its initial preparation phase, once the Carmichael mine is fully operational, it is set to release 79 million tonnes of carbon dioxide into the earth's atmosphere every year (Smee 2020). Moreover, Adani Australia is only the first of nine mining companies with approval to mine the Galilee Basin, consequently the Carmichael mine is the 'test case' for future coal mining projects. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) (Masson-Delmotte et al. 2018) states emphatically that coal must be phased out if global warming is to remain below 1.5C, therefore any intention to expand mining in the Galilee Basin should be a serious global concern. In addition, economic and environmental analysis suggests that the Carmichael project is not in the interest of the Australian economy as it is forecasted to disrupt existing coal mining projects and flood global markets with cheaper product, pushing down prices (Krien 2017). Of greater importance is the environmental impact of the mine, which is estimated to cause irreparable damage to Australia's fragile ecosystems, including the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage site (Environmental Justice Australia 2017). This does not take into account the

substantial economic and social costs resulting from severe weather events and other detrimental effects of climate change. In light of these concerns, the Carmichael project demonstrates little value for the Australian economy and would further stymie steps towards the phasing out of coal. It is therefore important to examine how transnational mining companies, like Adani Australia, present the case for opening new coal mines and how they engage with discourses of nationalism to portray mining as nationally beneficial. In this vein, the paper asks to what extent does Adani Australia use themes of Australian nationalism to positively frame the Carmichael project domestically, as well as justify the export of thermal coal?

The paper begins with an overview of globalisation and nationalism literature and presents relevant theory. Commercial nationalism and a spatial perspective provide the theoretical framework against which the case study of the Carmichael coal mine is analysed. These approaches are explored in Chapter 2. Chapter 3 introduces the paper's case study methodological framework and the chosen method of qualitative content analysis. To facilitate the content analysis in a rigorous and transparent way, qualitative analysis software, Atlas.ti, was used to evaluate a larger sample of textual sources than would have been possible using analogue methods. Chapter 4 provides an overview of the Carmichael coal mine case study, including a brief overview of mining in Australia and its role in shaping Australian nationalism. It also situates Adani Australia in its global context. The findings and analysis of the textual material is presented and discussed in Chapter 5.

From a theoretical standpoint, this research hopes to contribute to discussions about commercial nationalism under conditions of globality. Taking into account the urgent need to reduce carbon emissions across the world, it is especially important to examine

the ways in which mining company's exert influence beyond the realms of politics and economics. This is particularly important in the context of Australia, which since colonial times, has relied on mining profits to grow the national economy. However, it also aims to specifically illuminate harmful discourses of nationalism in the Australian context that stand in the way of meaningful action on climate change. The impacts of the Carmichael project will be felt not only in Australia but in every corner of the globe, demonstrating once again that it is important to investigate the shifting relationships between nationalism, processes of globalisation and their real-world implications.

Chapter 2: Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

This chapter introduces key thinkers, concepts and theories relevant to the chosen case study; the Carmichael coal mine. It highlights how the case fits into broader discussions about globalisation, including the role of transnational corporations in the context of resource extraction. Importantly, the paper aims to look beyond a simplistic state-focused analysis, portraying the transnational actor as 'hollowing out' or 'eroding' state powers. Instead, a spatial perspective is employed, analysing how transnational actor Adani Australia uses discourses of nationalism to discursively localise what is in effect, a global project. This chapter will briefly introduce key globalisation literature before exploring the nexus of globalisation and nationalism.

An Archaeology of Globalisation

Globalisation, as a term, has had a relatively short, contested and influential history. While the International Monetary Fund (IMF) claims that, 'at its most basic [level], there is nothing mysterious about globalization' (IMF 2002) the term is emblematic of a word that carries loaded meaning for many but clarity for few (García Canclini 2014, xxxix; James and Steger 2014, 419; Nederveen Pieterse 2013, 499).

After first emerging in the 1960s, the term gained scholarly favour in its contemporary form in the 1980s. Today, there are many disciplinary and thematic strands of global enquiry (García Canclini 2014, 23; Nederveen Pieterse 2013, 502; Olds and Kelly 2005, 3). In general, the term has come to stand for the 'expanding and intensifying social relations across world-space and world-time' (James and Steger 2014, 423), however scholars still disagree on an exact definition. Cultural scholar Garcia Canclini (2014, 23) suggests this is due to the very fragmented

nature of globalisation itself, which blurs disciplinary and conceptual boundaries. It is arguably the dual meaning of globalisation—as both a state of being, as well as outlining a set of processes—which accounts for its popularity (Olds and Kelly 2005, 3; García Canclini 2014, 20; Jessop 2005).

'How can we periodize a process that is continually obsessed with its own newness?', writes McKeown (2007). Many argue that in contrast to forty years ago, the world has more 'global' features (Darian-Smith and McCarty 2017b, 30; Nederveen Pieterse 2013, 506). However, if globalisation is a period in which there is a sense of living 'in the midst of unprecedented change' (McKeown 2007, 219), then this logic can be applied to many historical moments. Different disciplinary approaches in globalisation studies encourage readers to imagine how monumental shifts in social, economic and political relations have impacted societies over centuries (McKeown 2007, 220).

'The world has come into its own as an integrated globe, yet lacks narration', wrote Bright and Geyer in 1995 (1037). Processes of globalisation are fundamental to understanding life today. Bayly (2004, 8) suggested that as ''globalisation' becomes the most fashionable concept of the day', scholarly interest in the form and function of global connectedness has also vastly expanded (Geyer and Bright 1995, 1037; Middell 2019b). A global approach situates local and national stories within a global frame, highlighting the 'simultaneously present, interacting, intermixing' nature of the world (Geyer and Bright 1995, 1042; Middell 2019b, 1). As this paper emphasises, applying a global lens to research does not necessarily mean telling planetwide stories, but is rather an approach which seeks to illuminate the complexity which lies at the nexus of the local and the global (Middell 2019b). Viewing global social, political and economic relations as a 'polycentric world with no dominant

centre' (Pomeranz 2000, 4; Middell 2019a) is important to properly contextualising and situating research.

Nonetheless, one of the most common understandings of globalisation today correlates to the 1970s' expansion of neoliberalism (McKeown 2007, 227; Centeno et al. 2018, 318; Kotz 2002; Cooper 2001, 196). Kotz (2002, 74) writes, 'the most important features of globalisation today are greatly increased international trade [and] increased flows of capital across national boundaries'. Cooper asserts (2001, 192), "globalisation' is invoked time and time again to tell rich countries to roll back the welfare state and poor ones to reduce social expenditures—all in the name of the necessity of competition in a globalized economy'. Williamson (1997, 117) suggests that free-market policies led to 'widening wage inequalities [which] coincided with the forces of globalisation'. This common association of neoliberal capitalism with globalisation, often to the exclusion of all else, has led to a narrow public understanding of the term (García Canclini 2014, 23).

Neoliberalism is the transfer of the majority of economic power from the hands of governments to private markets, and is both an economic theory and policy stance (Centeno et al. 2018, 318; Kotz 2002, 64). Importantly, neoliberal policies did not emerge in a vacuum but were enabled through the policies of states. Under neoliberalism, businesses, banks and investors should be free to circulate their capital across national borders and taxes and welfare should be minimised (Kotz 2002, 65). While commonly conflated, neoliberalism and globalisation are separate processes, although they often support one another (Centeno et al. 2018, 325). As Stiglitz (2019) argues, neoliberal globalisation has recalibrated societies to abide by a doctrine of economic growth and competitiveness that exacerbates inequalities on a global scale.

While economic globalisation is only one feature of global connectivity, it is an important environment in which corporate actors operate. Transnational actors commonly work across vast geographies and exert political influence at different scales and in different spaces. They traverse political, geographic and social borders, knitting together regions through the movement of goods, services and people across space and time. Akira and Saunier (2009, 461) argue that neoliberal policies allow global corporations to create their own 'regimes' of power. One has only to examine examples such as Amazon to see how their global reach can be conceptualised as a dense and influential network with profound political and economic impacts. For instance, municipal governments entering 'Hunger Games' style bidding wars for the location of new warehouses, attests to Amazon's power (Woolf 2019). However, this example also highlights how global capital must also 'localise' by abiding by state laws and regulations and taking into account of the socio-cultural environment. Here lies a key tension; namely that global actors must balance transnational networks with local obligations and try to fit in with the socio-cultural, political and economic environment.

While neoliberalism is an important factor shaping globalisation, this paper does not wish to fall into the trap of referring only to the processes of globalisation that relate to economics and the economies of states. However, due to the relevance of economic globalisation to the following case study, it is important to mention them here. The reader may also question why an overview of globalisation is necessary for understanding the proposed case study. The answer is simple: an interconnected globe is the background against which economic, political and social activities take place. Something as localised as a coal mine is nested within complex global commercial, social and cultural networks. As the following case study of the Carmichael coal

mine highlights, understanding the global context is important in analyses of commercial nationalism.

Theories and Tools of Analysis

This section presents key insights into theories of spatiality and examines the value of taking a spatial perspective. Scholars argue the term globalisation 'can be used so broadly that it embraces everything and therefore nothing' (Cooper 2001, 196), presenting the world as so complex that it 'produces vertigo and uncertainty' (García Canclini 2014, XL). In light of the overwhelming nature of globalisation, Sassen writes (2014, 8) that 'the problem as I see it is one of interpretation,' for as we come up against new challenges, 'the usual tools to interpret them are out of date'. In a similar vein, philosopher Richard Rorty (1989, 9), advises to 'try to ignore the apparently futile traditional questions [about the world] by substituting the following new and possibly interesting questions'.

Spatiality and Spatial Perspectives

Space is a core heuristic to understand and describe the human experience (Middell and Naumann 2010, 17). The proliferation of new 'spaces' has been the subject of many books and papers as scholars make sense of new international, regional and global structures, affiliations and movements. There are many studies that examine different geographical and conceptual spaces, for instance: in relation to politics (Chaturvedi and Painter 2007); international corporations (Iriye 2002; Ferguson 2013); culture (Appadurai 1996; García Canclini 2014); commerce and economics (Cameron and Palan 1999; Beckert 2017; Ferguson 2013; Müller and Tworek 2015); colonialism (Akami 2017), cosmopolitan centres and cities (Goebel 2016; Sassen 1991); migration (Lee 2006); and power (Allen 2016).

Space, as a particular determination of the material world, emerged in the sixteenth century and was understood as calculatable and measurable (Elden 2009, xxvi). Fast forwarding to 1974, Lefevre (1991, 8) argued that 'we are thus confronted by an indefinite multitude of space, each one piled upon, or perhaps contained within, the next: geographical, economic, demographic, sociological, ecological, political, commercial, national, continental, global'. Lefevre, alongside contemporary Foucault, set out to map the spatial contours of social life, from the division of physical, mental and social space to the distance between 'ideal' spaces and 'reality' (Lefevre 1991; Elden and Crampton 2013; Warf and Arias 2009, 3). For Lefevre (1991, 26), '(social) space is a (social) product' produced through social interactions and means of control, and creates 'a sort of reality of its own'. Lefevre's contributions have informed social science and humanities approaches since (Warf and Arias 2009) and this paper continues the tradition of viewing space as socially constructed.

With human geography at its heart, analyses of space provide a conceptual framework through which to view difference in a complex world. Globalisation studies have again shifted understandings of space by examining how space can be linked not only laterally across geography, but also temporally throughout history. While spatial analyses can include sweeping, macro explorations of globalisation, critically examining space is also important at the local level. A topical example of a spatial perspective can be found during the Covid-19 pandemic. The expansion of contact tracing applications illuminates different spatial considerations, at once geographically mapping movement, contributing to state surveillance, and encroaching into personal or private 'spaces' (Soja 2009, 12). In short, taking a spatial perspective is a way of asking different questions and provides another vehicle for explaining social interaction.

Cooper's (2001, 190) concern with a focus on space is, if approached ahistorically or decontextualised, may gloss 'over the mechanisms and limitations of spatial *relationships*' [emphasis added]. A common assumption is that there is a continuum of vertically nested spatial containers, a Russian doll structure where local, national and global neatly sit. However, scholars recognise that this is insufficient to explain the complexities of the world (Darian-Smith and McCarty 2017a, 44–45). Focusing on specific spaces as containers, whether they be territorial, economic or political, masks the complex and rich relationships *between* them. Here globalisation research illuminates spatial relationships by reframing space as neither hierarchical nor bounded, but rather as 'distributed, decentralized, and deterritorialized understanding of overlapping and mutually constitutive geopolitical and conceptual sites and arenas' (Darian-Smith and McCarty 2017b, 45). A more relaxed spatial vocabulary, that looks at how different actors criss-cross spatial structures all the time, allows the researcher to analyse actors and their spatial relationships in new and interesting ways (Allen 2016, 8). A spatial perspective employs metaphoric language, in an attempt to transform theories and abstractions of globalisation into something tangible (Middell 2019a, 16; Warf and Arias 2009). 'Metaphors of movement, flow, circuitry, following people, goods, and images in motion' are some of the best ways to articulate how globalisation actually functions (Geyer and Bright 1995, 1054).

While space, and the language used to describe it, are widely researched, until recently, there were few overarching theories of space (Middell 2019a, 17). As Middell asserts, new unifying theories and methodologies are required to study global processes, with spatiality an important part (Middell 2019b, 1). Since Lefevre asked in 1974 (1991, 17), 'to what extent may

space be read or decoded?', scholars have worked towards understanding and framing spatiality more clearly.

One important step forward in this regard is the heuristic of *spatial formats* operating and interacting at a global level (Middell and Marung 2019, 4). Spatial formats can be understood as the categories of actors and processes that make up globalisation. Common spatial formats include the state, the national economy, empires, supply chains and most importantly, transnational actors (Middell and Marung 2019, 9). While different spatial formats come and go, configurations like the state are enduring and have come to represent the 'normal' order of things (Middell 2019a, 18; Jessop 2019; Middell and Naumann 2010).

Accepted stable, bounded spaces like the state are 'characterised by long-term repetition, standardization, performativity, and institutionalization', and when there is a strong collective social 'imagining' (Middell 2019a, 19). The state is perhaps the most commonly understood of these, however other spatial formats, including transnational corporate actors, are a growing and important area of globalisation research. This paper contributes to these important discussions about how and under what conditions transnational actors are able to move through, across and between different spaces, embedding themselves in various socio-cultural, political and economic contexts (Dietze and Naumann 2018)

The State

The state is one of the most widely understood spatial formats, however it is not the primary focus of this paper. The state plays a vital role in analyses of globalisation, by virtue of being the 'host' site upon which global processes take tangible form. It is for this reason that it is important to briefly outline the state's spatial relevance.

Cameron and Palan (2005, 74) assert that the state is often assumed to be a 'solid fact' based on 'the common sense of spatial experience and expectation'. However states are not primordial but created through an ensemble of global relations over time. For Jessop (2010, 44, 47), the state is a product of outside forces and its powers are conditional and relational. In this sense, the state is itself the product of globalisation.

The state as a political 'project' has been particularly successful in normalising its own spatiality through constructing the concept of a 'normal' state-society relationship. The state is so successful in this regard that the idea that the world is divided up into states is generally a widely accepted fact (Cameron and Palan 2005, 12). It is important to note though that states are very new, historically speaking. The years following the two world wars are considered periods where the state emerged as the dominant unit of political organisation and grew to successfully manage global processes to its own advantage (Jessop 2005, 22; Nederveen Pieterse 2013, 506; Geyer and Bright 1995, 1057). States have never been static or eternal. Germany came into its current form only in 1990, and more recently South Sudan in 2011. As these and many other examples demonstrate, the shape and number of states across the world is in constant flux. Nonetheless there is a strong fictional discourse that presents them as timeless and historical (Cameron and Palan 2005, 8).

Many scholars acknowledge that the state is not the sole intellectual focus when analysing globalisation. Rather, it is one of a constellation of political, economic, cultural and social actors that comprise a global system (Nederveen Pieterse 2013, 507). This paper seeks to avoid analysis that rests on 'methodological nationalism', or the idea that the state is the most important unit of analysis (Middell 2019a, 21). Instead, the state is viewed as a spatial format as well as an important 'host'

site for transnational capital. As an 'institutional home for the enactment of new policy regimes', and the politico-legal host for global projects (Sassen 2006, 14), the state is undoubtedly integral to facilitating globalisation. Understanding the state as a 'host' site where global projects may settle and thrive, is particularly informative when analysing the case study.

Transnational Corporations

Of most relevance to this paper is the role of transnational corporate actors. Transnational corporations and the commodity chains they construct are spatial formats and some of the most important actors for analysing economic globalisation (Sassen 2006, 13). Transnational actors are powerful players, but their fragmented and often de-territorialised presence can make it difficult to grasp the extent of their influence (Geyer and Bright 1995, 1054). As the previous example of Amazon highlights, transnational actors are not neatly bounded and must navigate between and among the spatial configuration of national economies, global supply chains and supranational regulations, creating their own spheres of influence (Dietze and Naumann 2018). Transnational actors have the ability to link different spatial formats together, for instance, global corporations connect the state to global markets (Dietze and Naumann 2018, 417).

Transnational actors are also strategically anchored in specific places that have their own political, economic and socio-cultural conditions (Dietze and Naumann 2018, 419). A key challenge for transnational actors with broad geographic reach, is operating effectively in different local settings, while maintaining the integrity of their entire corporate structure. This particular challenge is central to understanding the following case study and the role that nationalism plays as a mediating mechanism.

Mechanisms of Power: Nationalism

This section outlines the key literature related to nationalism studies, in particular corporate nationalism. While globalisation and nationalism are often conceptualised as opposite ends of a continuum, this paper underscores how each shapes the other.

Until the early twentieth century, scholarship about nationalism argued that it was primordial, historical and unquestionable (Greenfeld 2001). This changed when Gellner explored nationalism from the perspective of ideology, emphasising that states were not universal nor necessary, but rather 'the fruit of idle pens and gullible readers' (Breuilly 2006, xxi; Gellner 1997, 10–11). Nationalism was reframed as a historically specific form of social consciousness that emerges when the state is considered a 'natural' and historical state of affairs (Billig 1995, 19; Greenfeld 1992, 4). For political or ethnic groups or 'nations' without a state, nationalism is a key motivation in the pursuit of self-determination and the creation of new political constructions (Manela 2007). If nationalism is such an important force in the creation of the current political map (Busteed 2009, 255), then it is important to examine how and why it has been so effective.

As nationalism expert Connor (1993, 375) suggests, most states are in fact *multinational*, in the sense that within their political borders exist a number of groups claiming a particular nationhood. 'Typical' representations of nationalism in public discourse and the media are often presented in the context of social movements or 'hostile' ethnic or political groups within a state. For instance, nationalist skirmishes in West Papua depicted Indigenous Papuans waving independence flags, singing songs of freedom and engaging in guerrilla activity (Sara, Worthington, and Mambor 2020). This is viewed in public discourse as the archetype of 'hot' nationalism, as Billig (1995)

terms it. However, scholarship on nationalism goes beyond this common trope.

Nationalism, as Gellner (1983, 1) posits, is ‘a political principle, which holds that the political and national unit should be congruent’. Conner (1993, 382) suggests ‘all that is irreducibly required for the existence of a nation is that the members share an intuitive conviction of the group's separate origin and evolution’ and express this. Nationalism has been catagorised as civic or ethnic, collectivist or individualist (Greenfeld and Malczewski 2010), political or cultural, Western or Eastern (Greenfeld 2001). Engaging with a typology of nationalisms, though fruitful for broad-brush comparisons, is not the focus of this paper.

Contextualising the emergence of nationalism was a key objective of the discursive turn in the field during the 1980s and 1990s (Busteed 2009; Antonsich and Skey 2017). Anderson (2006) famously wrote about the nation as an ‘imagined political community’ which is bounded and sovereign. This idea of the nation and by extension nationalism, as constructed, opened up an expanse of scholarship dedicated to deconstructing nationalist projects (Busteed 2009; Hobsbawm 1983). For the purposes of this paper, the work of Billig (1995, 6) on banal nationalism is particularly informative. He pointed to the everyday ways the nation was ‘flagged’ through motifs, language and images that were so subtle as to go practically unnoticed (Billig 1995). To Billig, nationalism was ‘endemic’, and this paper draws on his analysis of nationalism’s banal linguistic representations (Calhoun 2017, 18).

There is much debate about the difference between *nationalism* and *patriotism*. Conner (1993, 374) argues that political loyalty and emotional attachment to one’s ‘people’ is nationalism, while loyalty and attachment to the state is patriotism. Others contend

that patriotism is a non-competitive, or positive attachment to a state, while nationalism entails a negative ideology of group superiority, to the exclusion or domination of others (Kemmelmeier and Winter David G. 2008, 863; Greenfeld 2001). A cursory internet search will unearth myriad other non-academic articles on the similarities and differences between the two terms, demonstrating a lack of scholarly agreement and lay understanding. Debates on the definition of patriotism and nationalism are complex and ongoing and out of scope here. This paper will use the term *nationalism* in a hybrid manner, to define both attachment and loyalty—and its expression—to *people* within a given collectively imagined political state, as well as to the *state* itself. This definition draws most strongly on Anderson's (2006) work on nationalism as a expression of imagined community. Given the rich scholarship on the topic, the above definition may appear simplistic, but this reflects the paper's objective to analyse nationalism generally as a *discursive tool*, rather than to provide an exposé on the topic itself.

The Nexus of Nationalism and Globalisation

There is a symbiotic relationship between nationalism and globalisation. Scholarship from the turn of the twentieth century suggested—and sometimes welcomed—an 'end' to national forms of organisation, suggesting a logic of substitution where globalisation 'hollowed out' the state (Antonsich and Skey 2017, 2–3; Aronczyk 2017, 245). Calhoun (2017, 26) contends that, too often, nationalism is viewed in isolation of the global, with globalisation pitted as nationalism's adversary. This 'fantasy', that a cosmopolitan consciousness will replace nationalism, discounts the fact that in most cases, perceived increases in nationalist sentiment are most often *in response* to globalisation processes. Current debates about nationalism in light of the global health crisis of Covid-19 is an example of this. An article

in the *Australian Financial Review* from March 2020, entitled, 'Coronavirus is Killing Globalization as We Know It', suggests the pandemic 'is a gift to nativist nationals and protectionists' (Legrain 2020). The article implies that global connectivity has energised awareness about the importance of national borders, national manufacturing, the welfare state and self-sufficiency. This and many other examples provide evidence of how nationalism and globalisation exist in relational ways, both requiring the other to distinguish itself.

As public discourse during the pandemic demonstrates, far from eroding nationalism, globalisation has placed the state, and its social and economic policy levers, in sharp relief. However, it is not only through protectionist policies that nationalism takes form. Aronczyk (2017, 248) suggests that globalisation reframes nationalism in subtle ways, through mundane deeds, language and attitudes, inspired by a particular national view. Where Billig (1995) contends that the nation is elusively 'flagged' in the everyday lives of its citizenry, Aronczyk goes further to suggest that nationalism can in fact remain 'undetected' among a populace and be known by other names. These almost imperceptible forms of nationalism are employed by elites and other actors to justify deeds which are not labelled nationalist, but are inspired by nationalistic sentiment and can lead to serious political control (Aronczyk 2017, 245,248). The banal or hidden face of nationalism in this context can take many forms, such as cultural imperialism, soft power and subtle forms of protectionism, where nationalist imaginaries are employed without ever being invoked by name (Aronczyk 2017, 254).

Commercial Nationalism

Scholars acknowledge that nationalism is being re-spatialised through processes of globalisation and cannot be viewed as the ideological or discursive tool of politicians and governments

alone. As Koch (2020, 185–86) rightly suggests, scholars and lay observers look to governments, cultural elites and citizenry as the primary producers of nationalism, and its main consumers, but nationalism is also invoked in the economic and commercial sphere. There is a small but growing literature concerning 'commercial nationalism', analysing how businesses and other non-state actors use nationalism to promote themselves and conduct business across vast geographies (Koch 2020, 185–86; Fox 2017; Castelló and Mihelj 2018; Pickel 2003). This is particularly important in the context of highly globalised commodity markets and supply chains, which leads to the mobility of corporations into different national spaces (Koch 2020, 196).

Transnational commercial activities provide valuable insights into the nexus of globalisation and nationalism. With increased global economic integration, corporations view nationalism as a legitimising element in their cross-border operations (Castelló and Mihelj 2018, 18). Prior research points to corporations using nationalist language to actively progress their objectives, not only drawing upon existing narratives but becoming central in the creation of new ones (Koch 2020, 196; James 1983; Volcic and Andrejevic 2016, 3). Fox (2017, 3–4), Volcic and Andrejevic (2016) and Harmes (2012, 60) all point to the more recent neoliberal wave of globalisation as a key motivator for the use of nationalism at the corporate level, while Koch and Perreault (2018, 612) discuss how the state is no longer nationalism's primary gatekeeper. The degree of cross-border commercialism over the past fifty years necessitates the use of commercial nationalism as a 'mediating' force that can situate products and services in a local context, that might otherwise be deemed too 'foreign' (Koch 2020, 195). This echoes Dietze and Naumann's (2018) contention that transnational actors must

mediate between different spatial contexts. Nationalism is one such mediating instrument.

The above examples point to how nationalism can be used as a *tool* or *strategy* to further the global objectives of corporations as well as political elites. Pickel (2003, 119–20) refers to this phenomenon as the *nationalising mechanism*. In this context 'mechanism' refers not to a particular expression or output of nationalism, but rather describes a general conceptual framework that captures all types of nationalist belief and practice (Pickel 2003, 122). While nationalism will look different depending on the context, Pickel (2003, 120) argues that nationalism in the context of globalisation commonly fulfils a similar function; 'to (re)legitimate (changing) economic and/or political systems; and to facilitate their political and economic integration regionally and globally'. In other words, the nationalising mechanism is there to appease the target audience, by situating political and economic projects in the national context, even if these projects are fundamentally global by nature. Though Pickel (2003) argues that traditionally, the dominant actor employing this mechanism is the state, research into the use of nationalism in corporate settings (Koch 2020; Koch and Perreault 2018) suggests that the concept of a nationalising mechanism is also applicable to transnational actors.

Research into commercial nationalism suggests that broadening the analytical scope to capture non-state actors can shed further light on the power of nationalism in economic contexts (Koch 2020, 201). It also points to the modern ways in which all types of nationalism are used as tools or mechanisms by non-state actors, at local, national and global levels, to achieve desired outcomes. Understood as a mechanism, nationalism can manifest itself in the policies of companies as well as through

the mouths of politicians (Castelló and Mihelj 2018, 18; Harmes 2012, 60). Individuals, state actors and corporations all construct and reinforce nationalism, shaping how storylines prevail over time and ensuring the continuation of dominant national imaginaries (Koch 2020, 196).

Situating the Case: Coal Nationalisms

As Andreasson (2015, 317) muses, one of the most salient questions for governments, resource companies and civil societies in resource-rich territories, is how best to exploit the state's 'earthly riches'. Territory and nature are important variables contributing to a sense of belonging, and there is a large body of literature analysing the relationship between nature, natural resources and nationalism. Childs (2015, 539) underscores how natural resources are often understood in terms of self-determination and prosperity. He argues that resources are not just seen to be 'there' but are deemed to 'belong' to a society (Childs 2015, 540). In most cases, the state assumes a stewardship role to oversee the extraction, use and trade of the resources, in principle, for the benefit of the national economy (Koch and Perreault 2018, 625). Nationalist discourses commonly accompany resource extraction activities and serve to legitimise them as a national 'right' or 'claim' of citizens of the state, entangling national identity with resource wealth (Koch and Perreault 2018, 612; Childs 2015, 540). Scholars across the spectrum have emphasised how the land and its raw materials feature strongly in nationalist debates, for example: contestations over natural heritage (Baird 2017; Meskell and Brumann 2015; Macdonald 2013); land and belonging (Welz 2015, 115; Byrne and Ween 2015; Herwitz 2012); and natural resources (Andreasson 2015; Koch and Perreault 2018; Wilson 2015; James 1983). Natural resources can include a wide range of industries, such as water, agricultural products, forests and oceans, but the most common expressions are oil, gas and coal

(Koch and Perreault 2018, 612). These resources are commonly viewed as the engines of economic growth in resource-rich states like Australia (Koch and Perreault 2018, 616).

The intersection of resource extraction and nationalism is particularly interesting when situated in a global context. Natural resources, specifically coal, are frequently entangled within global supply chains, as extraction, transport and processing are often overseen by transnational companies. Demand for the resources is most commonly driven by states. At the same time, coal mining occurs in specific places, which in turn have their own political and economic contexts that are distinctly local. In this way the linkages between the global and the local in relation to coal mining are easily identified.

In addition to the politics and economics of coal mining, the negative environmental, health and societal impacts of coal are well documented at the local and global levels. Much scholarly attention has been paid to the poor health outcomes that mining communities experience as a result of direct exposure to localised pollution and particulate matter (Cortes-Remirez et al. 2018; Castleden et al. 2011), the regional and global externalities of burning coal in terms of air and water quality and of course environmental degradation (Goswami 2015). Lastly, the negative impact that coal and other fossil fuels have on global health and the environment are almost universally acknowledged (Masson-Delmotte et al. 2018). In this vein, the Union of Concerned Scientists, a professional advocacy body wrote in 2008:

‘Burning coal, oil, and natural gas has serious and long-standing negative impacts on public health, local communities and ecosystems, and the global climate. Yet the majority of fossil fuel impacts are far removed from the fuels and electricity we

purchase, hidden within public and private health expenditures, military budgets, emergency relief funds, and the degradation of sensitive ecosystems.' (The Union of Concerned Scientists 2008)

The history of coal is truly global and intricately linked with ideas of human development, progress and prosperity. As Price (2018, 31) outlines in his photographic project *Coal Cultures*, 'the study of coal, then, is a way of exploring the past and predicting something of the future. Coal is a global commodity, and there is no part of the world that remains uninfluenced by it.' A history of coal is therefore also a history of humanity. The physical structure of coal literally embodies the first wave of plant life on planet earth, during the Carboniferous period 300 million years ago, when 'enormous swampy forests of bizarre trees and gigantic ferns' littered the landscape and in which primitive life forms first emerged (Freese 2016; Feulner 2017). While coal represents the wonder of life on earth, equally enthralling is what happens when it emerges from the subterranean into the spotlight of human activity. It is argued that when humans began using coal for energy, their relationship to nature changed (Freese 2016, 7; Thorscheim 2006, 9).

Coal has been used by humans for thousands of years (Price 2018, 29; Thorscheim 2006, 2; Freese 2016, 22). However, the industrial revolution, power by coal-fired steam engines in Britain remains one of the most iconic references for its consumption (Thorscheim 2006; Freese 2016, 43). Coal was central to the success of the British Empire and European industrialisation (Pomeranz 2000) and coal-powered technology vastly increased human productivity, releasing millions from manual labour and hunger (Hylland Eriksen 2014; Seow 2014, 1). However, coal mining has a certain stigma of being dirty and dangerous as dark, choking and damp coal mines sent miners

into an early grave. (Freese 2016, 48–49). Describing coal and coal mining as ‘dirty’ persists into the twenty-first century in the context of energy and the climate crisis.

Despite the stigma, coal is still closely associated with wealth and prosperity. As Hylland Eriksen (2014) suggests, coal and modernity are tightly bound in the public imaginary of many resource-rich regions. Jasanoff and Kim (2009) discuss how technological developments—like mining—form a certain national social imaginary tied to ideas of development, progress and prosperity. Seow (2014) explores how early twentieth century coal mining in Fashun, Manchuria, grew to be the centre of Chinese and Japanese discussions about modernity and economic development. Moore (2013) examines how resources, including coal, formed part of a modern technological national imaginary in war-time Japan. A contemporary study from Poland (Kuchler and Bridge 2018) emphasises how the political mobilisation of coal, framed as a key factor in national development, creates a distinct social imaginary that fuses together coal, modernity and prosperity. Finally, Lahiri-Dutt (2014) explores in a similar way, how coal is considered vital to national wellbeing and modernist values in India. These vignettes demonstrate there is an ongoing ‘modern addiction to coal’ that is intimately bound to (often nationalist) ideas of progress and modernity (Hylland Eriksen 2014).

Private resource companies also present coal as the panacea of economic and social development. For instance, the world’s largest mining companies discursively link coal with ideas of human ‘progress’, with British multinational Glencore (2020) suggesting they ‘responsibly source the commodities that advance everyday life’, and Anglo-Australian company BHP (2020) seeking to ‘bring people and resources together to build a better world’. The World Coal Association (n.d.) advocates

coal as vital to building 'modern and sustainable societies'. In the Australian context, in 2015 the Minerals Council of Australia [MCA] (an influential mining peak body) launched a television campaign describing coal as the 'amazing little black rock' and promoted its 'endless possibilities' to create light and jobs for Australia (Hudson 2015).

Australia's historical and contemporary reliance on coal and other minerals is well documented, and numerous studies have been conducted into the contemporary social meaning of coal in Australia; in relation to coal mining communities (Della Bosca and Gillespie 2018; Christison 2003), the coal industry and lobbying (Crough and Wheelwrite 1983; Pearse, McKnight, and Burton 2013) and the relationship between the state and coal corporations (Baer 2016; Cleary 2012). In addition there is much work dedicated to the communities and social movements that have supported or contested Australia's historical relationship to coal (see Knox 2013; McLean 2013). This paper hopes to contribute further to this body of work.

Summary of Framework and Theory

The research presented in the coming chapters aims to combine theoretical approaches from the fields of global studies and nationalism. While commercial nationalism and spatial approaches to globalisation have been explored separately, to this researchers knowledge, there has been no attempt to combine these theories and apply them to a single case. Taking into account that commercial nationalism is a relatively new field of enquiry, it is hoped that this paper can contribute to better understandings of how global market-based actors shape nationalism, by applying these concepts to the case study of the Carmichael coal mine. Considering that commercial nationalism was borne out of the necessity for transnational corporations to situate themselves in the national context, combining a study of

commercial nationalism with a spatial perspective is a logical fit and a fruitful application of interdisciplinary research. Lastly, the case study presents a particularly important example of how corporate nationalism can impact not just the national economy and society, but also planetary health.

This paper also hopes to contribute to research about the culture of coal in Australia. To date, there has been limited engagement with the discursive practices of coal actors in the Australian context and none which examine the role of nationalism discourse. The case study will therefore contribute to identifying barriers to decarbonisation.

Chapter 3: Research Question, Scope and Methodology

This chapter introduces the research question and scope of the case study and situates the research within a broader global setting. The chapter discusses data collection and content analysis using the qualitative computer-based analysis tool, Atlas.ti.

Research Question

This paper explores the intersection between nationalism and theories of globalisation as it applies to the case study of the Carmichael coal mine. It asks:

How does transnational mining company Adani Australia use Australian nationalism, in the context of the Queensland Carmichael coal mine, to integrate into the local context, while also preserving the company's image as a global corporation.

Of particular interest is how Adani Australia instrumentalises nationalism as a way to frame the company as local while presenting the Carmichael project as in the national interest.

Case Study Methodology: the Carmichael Coal Mine, Queensland, Australia.

This paper employs a case study methodology, focusing on the Carmichael coal mine, located in Australia's coal and mineral-rich Galilee Basin in the state of Queensland. Importantly, the Carmichael coal mine has become a symbol of the political divide between economic conservatives, who warn of the dangers to the economy were Australia to pivot away from fossil fuels, and the majority of the Australian public who want tougher government action on climate change (Sengupta, Williams, and Chandrasekhar 2019; The Australia Institute 2018). The Carmichael coal mine is the first mine approved in the Galilee

Basin, with another eight larger coal mining projects to begin in the future, pending approvals. In this sense, the Carmichael mine is an important exemplary case, or the 'canary in the coal mine' for the future of coal extraction in the region and on the continent (West 2020).

A case study methodology was chosen based on its targeted, bounded, yet flexible approach. As Darian-Smith and McCarty (2017b, 182) argue, the case study method is appropriate for analysing complex interactions that overlap multiple disciplinary areas, to capture and analyse data in a holistic, historically-situated and multiperspectival manner. A case study approach relies on multiple forms of evidence and is not characterised by the methods used, but by the focus on a particular bounded subject of analysis (Darian-Smith and McCarty 2017b, 180). Furthermore, as Yin (2017) suggests, a case study approach can employ multiple theoretical perspectives and has the potential to contribute to extending or challenging theories. In short, the goal is to understand the 'case' in terms of what it is, how it works and its contextual environment.

Aims

This approach explores how Adani Australia informs public understanding of the Carmichael mine (Darian-Smith and McCarty 2017b). The Carmichael coal mine was chosen as a case study due to the project's divisive nature and its connection to themes of Australian nationalism. Debates about whether the project should be allowed to proceed have fractured public discourse about energy and climate policies in the country and created an 'us vs. them' attitude along left/right political lines (Colvin 2020). Adani Australia's mine can therefore be interpreted as a proxy for broader debates about the role of coal mining in Australia. In this sense, an analysis of nationalist

discourse in relation to the Carmichael project could inform broader discussions about the coal mining industry at the national level.

There is a clear benefit for policy makers, social movements, the media and the broader public to better understand how Adani Australia seeks to influence and shape public perceptions of coal mining. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) states that to limit global warming to below 1.5C above pre-industrial levels, the use of coal must be rapidly and completely phased out (Masson-Delmotte et al. 2018) and the majority of Australians support this (The Australia Institute 2018). In light of this, it is important to better understand how Adani Australia's project has been able to proceed and the ways the company presents the project as in the national interest.

At the same time, the Carmichael project is also nested within complex global markets and will have important implications for planetary health. The study illuminates some of the strategies that global polluters use to expand their operations into new markets—providing insights into ways to combat them. Finally, it is hoped that this paper contributes to expanding the theoretical frameworks of commercial nationalism and spatialisation (Yin 2017).

This research takes place in a unique global moment. The economic and social crisis resulting from the 2020 Coronavirus pandemic should be viewed as a momentous opportunity to usher in a green recovery in Australia and around the world. By investigating the discursive strategies of coal and other fossil fuel actors and their influence on policy and public opinion not just in Australia, but around the world, scholars and the public can better interpret corporate rhetoric and engage in positive discussions about the future.

Data Collection and Methods

Given the constraints caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, this analysis relies on publicly available documents and is limited to desktop research. The study investigates how Adani Australia engages with themes of Australian nationalism in relation to the Carmichael coal mine and how this may influence public discourse.

The material corpus comprises 95 individual pieces of text, including publicly available media statements, interviews given by high-ranking Adani Australia employees and Adani Australia social media posts. Chosen texts were all published over a two-year period from July 2018 until July 2020. This timeframe includes the period when the Carmichael mine was awaiting government approvals and Adani Australia was actively lobbying to speed up the process and garner support for the project through frequent public statements and local advertising.

Data was gathered through Internet search engines, social media, official websites and digital archives. The corpus was collated and stored in qualitative analysis software Atlas.ti. The material that was chosen included textual sources that referenced the Carmichael project directly. As this paper focuses on the role of Adani Australia's involvement in the Carmichael project, it is out of scope for this paper to address material which involves civil society, environmental or other social movement groups. Nor will it engage with material produced by governments.

The paper uses the method of qualitative content analysis with the assistance of qualitative analysis computer software, Atlas.ti. The paper draws on Mayring's (2014) approach to content analysis which relies on digital software to assist with coding and data exploration. Computer software was chosen so that a greater sample size could be analysed than would be possible

using only analogue, paper-based methods. The source material was systematically processed a number of times to identify the most common themes present in the data of relevance to the research framework. As this paper takes an exploratory approach, there were no preformulated coding categories. The coding process was therefore undertaken inductively, building the categories at the same time as reading the source material (Mayring 2014). Passages of text were chosen based on their frequency or because they displayed clear semantic relevance. In subsequent readings, coding categories were refined and then grouped according to theme. Once coding was complete, the data was analysed again using Atlas.ti software, to explore coding co-occurrences, most common categories and themes, and trends across time. These themes were then interpreted in the context of the research question and applicable theory and are presented in the analysis section in Chapter 5.

Final Notes on Other Invested Parties

It must be acknowledged that the Carmichael coal mine is a controversial and divisive topic in Australia, especially in light of the 2019 catastrophic bushfire season, growing alarm about the effects of climate change and foreign influence on the political system. The establishment of the first coal mine in the Galilee Basin has had a polarising effect on public debate (Colvin 2020). Environmental groups, Indigenous nations, conservationists, protectionists and the local mining communities themselves have been campaigning for and against the mine since it was first announced in 2010. This is to highlight that there are myriad vested interests in how the project progresses that cannot be covered in this paper but are nonetheless important to acknowledge. It is hoped that this paper will contribute to the conversation.

Lastly, this paper is informed by a global studies approach which places globalisation at the centre of research (Nederveen Pieterse 2013, 500, 511) and takes a transdisciplinary perspective (Darian-Smith and McCarty 2017a, 1; Middell and Marung 2019, 1). This approach acknowledges the traditionally Western and male bias in academia and in light of this, pointedly tries to draw on diverse scholarship in an effort to break through historically entrenched epistemologies (McKeown 2007, 224; Akira and Saunier 2009, 459; Cooper 2001, 194).

Chapter 4: The Carmichael Coal Mine, Queensland, Australia: Introduction and Background

This chapter introduces the case study, the Carmichael coal mine, and discusses its contextual background. An overview of Adani Australia, its role in the Australian context and its position as a transnational corporation are then provided.

The Galilee Basin, Queensland, Australia.

The Carmichael coal mine is located roughly in the centre of the Australian state of Queensland, in what is known as the Galilee Basin. Termed Australia's new coal frontier (Beresford 2018, 9), the Galilee Basin is one of the largest untapped coal reserves in the world, extending over 247,000 square kilometres—roughly the same size as the United Kingdom—and contains an estimated 7,750 million tonnes of coal (Steffen 2015).

The Galilee Basin has historically remained unmined due to its remote location far from the coast and the investment infrastructure required to operate and transport the coal (Brett 2020). However, the steep increase in thermal coal prices during Australia's 2000s mining boom (~2002-2012) encouraged mining corporations to look for new, lucrative reserves. Once operational, the Carmichael coal mine will yield an estimated 60 million tonnes of coal per year, in what is described as a 'mega mine' (Department of State Development Tourism and Innovation 2020). In addition to Carmichael, there are an additional eight mining proposals currently pending, which together would make the Galilee Basin the second largest fossil fuel expansion in the world after Western China (Voorhar and Myllyvirta 2013, 40). As such, the legal and regulatory process, as well as the public response to the Carmichael mine, will be a test case for all projects scheduled to begin in the Galilee Basin in the future.

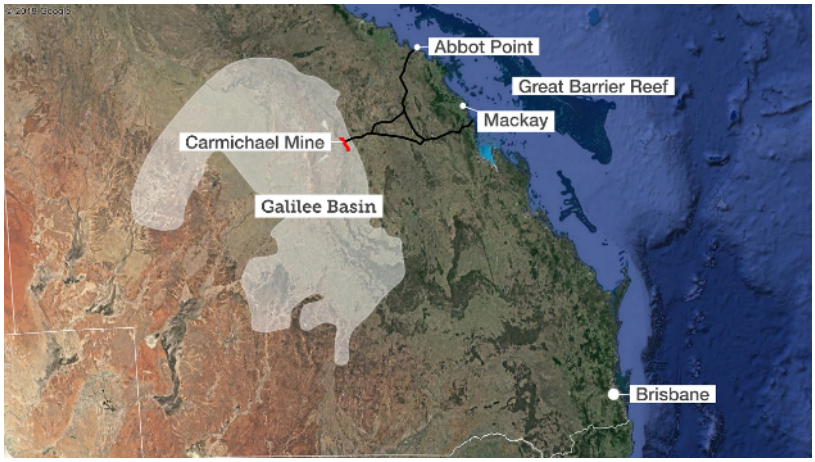

Figure 1: Map of the Galilee Basin, Queensland, Australia (Singh, Jamieson & Kainth, 2019, SBS Punjabi)

Australia is a country reliant on global trade, its top five exports being iron ore, coal, natural gas, international education and tourism. Since the mid-1980s, Australia has been the biggest global exporter of coal until Indonesia assumed the title in the 2010's (Brett 2020). Since federation in 1901, the Australian export economy has to a large extent remained focused on primary commodities in the form of minerals and agricultural products (The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, n.d.). Due to Australia's small population, corporations look to international markets to grow their business and national and state economies heavily rely on exports to pay for manufactured imports. There are key economic risks in 'having an export profile so skewed' to the resources sector (Brett 2020) and Australia's reliance on a small group of primary export commodities also means that these products assume great importance in political debate, coal being one of the most controversial (Brett 2020).

Australia mines three types of coal: brown coal, the most polluting of the three, is currently being phased out of use domestically and is not exported (Brett 2020); coking coal (also known as metallurgical coal) has a higher energy content, lower moisture and is used for making steel; and finally black thermal

coal used to generate electricity. Demand for coking coal will likely remain steady well into the future due to continuing industrialisation in Asia (Cunningham, Van Uffelen, and Chambers 2019). The future of thermal coal looks less bright. While global prices for both coking coal and thermal coal have declined in the last decade, it is thermal coal that has seen the most significant price drop as a result of the growing renewable energy industry and concerns about climate change and human health (Cleary 2015).

Adani Australia and the Carmichael mine

Between 2005 and 2011, the price of thermal coal on global markets rose from $US50 to $US130 per tonne (Quiggin 2017, 3). As a result, mining companies swarmed the Galilee Basin to access the known mega reserves of thermal coal and sell it on to eager developing markets, primarily in China and India. One of the companies looking to expand into the region was owned by 'rags to riches' Indian billionaire, Gautam Adani (Beresford 2018, 9, 27). By 2011, Gautam Adani's corporation, Adani Group was one of the first mining companies to successfully secure a lease from the Queensland Government when it purchased the Carmichael mine site (Beresford 2018, 131). The Carmichael purchase was based on the explicit hope that global thermal coal prices would remain buoyant well into the future (Quiggin 2017). Aside from a brief peak in 2018, Australian thermal coal prices have suffered steep drops over the last decade, with predictions of a permanent decline due to shifts in energy policies in key Asian markets, such as China, towards clean energy sources (Buckley and Nicholas 2018b; Office of the Chief Economist 2020b).

The Carmichael coal mine, as well as the nearby seaport of Abbot Point Terminal, is operated by Adani Australia. Adani Group, the parent company, comprises six publicly traded

companies, covering transport and logistics, energy, infrastructure, agriculture and other areas, and is headquartered in the state of Gujarat, India (Adani n.d.). The Carmichael mine, as well as the port, are both important nodes in the company's Indian Ocean 'pit to plug' coal supply chain, which includes coal mines, logistics and transport, ports and electricity generation (Peter Ker 2020; Pathak 2016). Abbot Point is located on the edge of Australia's World Heritage-listed Great Barrier Reef and coal from the Carmichael mine will transit through the reef on its way to India, raising concerns about the future of one of the country's most loved natural landmarks (Smee and Safi 2018).

Gautam Adani is an adept businessperson who over the course of thirty years has grown his modest commodity trading business into a highly diversified transnational corporation with global aspirations. Personal drive, clever networking and influential friends, such as Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, have reportedly helped to expand the Adani empire within India and abroad. In addition, taking on significant risk, public and private finance, government patronage and an opaque corporate structure have contributed to the growth of the company (Beresford 2018, 30). At the same time, Adani Group has been plagued with persistent accusations of corruption, failure to comply with environmental laws and standards in India and foreign jurisdictions, a general lack of transparency, and tax evasion (Environmental Justice Australia 2017). Furthermore, the company has a poor track record with Indigenous groups in India over the last decade, with the latest accusations of displacement due to Adani mining activity reported in July 2020 (Dasgupta 2020). In Australia too, the Wangan and Jagalingou Aboriginal nations have been locked in a bitter dispute over the Carmichael coal mine, which would destroy sacred sites and extinguish Aboriginal rights to the land, giving Adani Australia freehold licence over much of the region (Beresford 2018, 223).

As of September 2020, Adani has received final government approvals and has begun preliminary works at the Carmichael site. These approvals have been mired in controversy, including the approvals of a groundwater plan (Linnenluecke 2019). This is especially significant considering the spate of droughts that have decimated regional Queensland communities (Environmental Justice Australia 2019, 13). A report into the likely effects of pumping groundwater for mining in the Galilee Basin found that it had the potential to cause 'permanent and unacceptable' damage to ground and surface water resources and threaten ecosystems (Steffen, Alexander, and Hughes 2018). A report released in September 2020 by Swiss Re (2020), the world's second largest reinsurer, stated Australia was one of the country's in the world most at-risk of ecosystem collapse, due to a loss of biodiversity. The report estimated that over half of global GDP is reliant on well-functioning natural ecosystems, which enable agricultural production and provide the clean air and water vital to human wellbeing. The findings emphasise that projects such as Carmichael, which destroy native vegetation and disrupt ecological processes, have costly and perhaps deadly consequences for humans.

Adani Australia has also already breached environmental regulations at the site, by drilling bore holes without permission (Environmental Justice Australia 2019). This coupled with documented substantial environmental breaches at Adani Group sites in India (Environmental Justice Australia 2017) raises questions about the trustworthiness of the company to comply with regulations going forward. Nonetheless, work began on the site in June 2019, and Adani Australia has signed over $1 billion in construction contracts. At the time of writing the company is clearing the site by removing native vegetation to begin excavation (Adani Australia n.d.).

There is general consensus among economists that due to a reduction in the global price and demand for thermal coal, the Carmichael coal mine project will likely operate at a loss. This is compounded by the fact that commercial banks, both Australian and global, have so far refused to lend to the project due to concerns about repayments and the reputational risk of being involved with such a politically toxic project (Quiggin 2017; Beresford 2018, 282). Gautam Adani (Rajest and Kotoky) reiterated in 2019 that 'if the project wasn't viable, we wouldn't have pursued it', announcing that the Adani family would fund a scaled-down version of the Carmichael project with private funds (Quiggin 2019). The project's financial woes and independent analysis point to Carmichael being an incredibly risky investment. With this in mind, it is unclear why Adani Australia wants to pursue the project. A key hypothesis is that any losses generated through the mine will ultimately be borne by the end consumer (Buckley and Nicholas 2018a).

The Fate of Carmichael Coal

Coal from the Carmichael mine is destined for export. Adani Group's 'pit to plug' strategy means that the company can transport thermal coal directly from the Carmichael mine to Adani power stations in India to generate electricity (Pathak 2016). The majority of Carmichael coal will likely be shipped to the Adani-owned and operated Godda thermal coal power station, currently under construction in the state of Jharkhand, India (Smee and Safi 2018). Remaining coal will be sold to developing markets in Asia. The Godda power station is situated in one of India's newest Special Economic Zones (SEZ) which grants Adani Group various tax exemptions and faster clearances, saving the company approximately 3.2 billion rupees per annum, equivalent to roughly sixty million Australian dollars (Chandrasekhar 2019). From the Godda power station, 75 per cent of the power generated by Carmichael coal is scheduled to

be sold to Bangladesh in a deal struck in 2015. Local laws stipulate that power generated in the state of Jharkhand must be made available to local residents, suggesting the remaining 25 per cent will be sold to the local grid. However, it is unclear if power generated in a SEZ must comply with these regulations. A best-case scenario would grant residents of Jharkhand 25 per cent of the power generated by the Godda station while baring 100 per cent of the social, economic and environmental costs (Chandrasekhar 2019).

In a 2018 report, the Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis, (IEEFA) (Buckley and Nicholas 2018a, 4) an energy research organisation, described the 2015 Adani Group agreement with Bangladesh as 'too expensive, too late and too risky'. The report suggested the deal would entirely benefit Adani Group while at the same time deepening poverty in Bangladesh through expensive power. Through the deal, the Bangladeshi government has agreed to pay full import and grid transmission costs on top of the wholesale price of coal-fired electricity. The IEEFA (Buckley and Nicholas 2018a, 1) estimates that as a result, Godda-generated power will be among the most expensive in Bangladesh, at a point in time when renewables and natural gas are already cheaper alternatives. Most importantly, the report also argues the deal is a way to 'prop up' the Australian Carmichael coal project, which has already accumulated significant debt (Long 2019; Quiggin 2019), by forwarding on the forecasted losses to the Bangladeshi consumer (Buckley and Nicholas 2018a). This triangular supply chain, will keep three countries 'hooked on coal for decades' and contribute to catastrophic greenhouse gas emissions (Sengupta, Williams, and Chandrasekhar 2019).

Finally, Indian Prime Minister Modi announced in 2020 that that Indian power companies must prioritise domestic coal over

imported. This presents a risk to the Carmichael project and Adani Group's 'pit to plug' global supply chain (Office of the Chief Economist 2020a, 53; Modi 2020). This would mean Adani Australia would be required to sell 100 per cent of Carmichael coal to Asian markets, in a Covid-19 environment where demand for thermal coal has dropped sharply, along with prices. Australia's Chief Economist estimated in June 2020 that a significant percentage of coal mining activity was operating at a loss and would continue to well into 2021 (Office of the Chief Economist 2020a). Together this suggests there is a significant risk of the site becoming a stranded asset (Macdonald-Smith 2018; Manning 2020).

Adani Australia and Traditional Owners

The Carmichael coal mine is located on the traditional lands of the Wangan and Jagalingou people; comprised of twelve family groups that are the descendants of the clans that governed the land at the time of British colonialism (Wangan & Jagalingou Family Council n.d.). As custodians of central-western Queensland, the Wangan and Jagalingou have a responsibility to protect the environment, sacred sites, history and totems of the region (Wangan & Jagalingou Family Council n.d.). In Australia, Traditional Owners can apply for native title rights[1] to their ancestral lands. Among other things, native title allows Traditional Owners to negotiate what activities take place on their lands, such as mining. Nonetheless, the process is 'skewed in favour of non-Indigenous parties; there is no right to veto the activity' and native title is predicated on legal and social norms

[1] Native title is formal recognition that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have rights to land and waters according to their traditional customs and laws. Native title is recognised under Australian law and allows Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups to live on their lands, access lands for ceremonial purposes, visit and protect sacred sites, hunt, fish and collect medicine and engage in cultural practices (Kimberly Land Council 2020).

that favour the ‘conqueror’. It has been termed a ‘tool of the colonising state’ (Galloway 2020, 15).

In practice, under native title, mining companies are required to enter into Indigenous Land Use Agreements (ILUA) with Traditional Owners which stipulate how the mine will coexist with Indigenous practices and culture. An ILUA was negotiated between Adani Australia and the Wangan and Jagalingou people in 2016, however the process has been mired in controversy, with accusations that the mining company coerced votes to secure the ILUA. Of the twelve Indigenous parties, seven support the ILUA and five oppose it, reportedly causing internal discord (Doherty 2019). Since then, the five opposing Wangan and Jagalingou representative groups have been protesting against Adani Australia’s mine and contesting the validity of the ILUA (Carey 2019). Finally, in August 2019, the Queensland State government extinguished Wangan and Jagalingou native title at the Carmichael site, granting Adani Australia exclusive freehold title and forcibly removing community members from their traditional lands. This is a devastating blow to the Wangan and Jagalingou people who lost the right to say ‘no’ to the Carmichael site and to Indigenous groups across the country. This example highlights some of the issues inherent in native title law which stymie efforts to reconcile colonialising practices in Australia.

As of August 2020, Indigenous groups are continuing to protest at the Carmichael site in an effort to re-establish tribal control of their homeland (Law 2020c). Adani Australia’s treatment of Traditional Owners in Australia appears to reflect a worrying pattern of behaviour across a number of Adani Group’s operations. There are various reports of coercive treatment of villagers, Indigenous and other minority groups in India that find parallels with the company’s conduct in Australia and raise

important questions about the company's social responsibility (Dasgupta 2020; Dasgupta and Law 2020; Environmental Justice Australia 2019). These instances coupled with Adani Group's poor environmental track record across its non-mining operations should raise enormous red flags about the company's ability to conduct itself lawfully and honestly going forward. Examples of Adani Group controversies outside of its mining portfolio include its palm oil plantations in Indonesia and Malaysia, which has led to deforestation and threatens endangered species like orangutans (Law 2020b) and a port construction project in Yangon, Myanmar where the company has been accused of cooperating with the Myanmar military which is responsible for genocidal acts against Rohingyas (Law 2020a).

This is to demonstrate that beyond the realm of economics, Adani Group's past behaviour suggests that any new commercial activity, such as the Carmichael project, should be the subject of intense scrutiny by government, civil society and the broader public.

Australia's Mining History and Coal Culture

Mining and trade of precious minerals has existed in Australia for over 40,000 years. Aboriginal nations mined Ochre pigment, used for ceremonies and art, and flint for making all kinds of tools. There are 416 recorded Indigenous mine sites in Eastern Australia alone, with more being identified all the time, highlighting how mining has always been an important aspect of the economy and culture of the continent (Mining Association of Australia 2007).

Mining continued to be important following colonisation (1788) as Australian gold and coal were exported to neighbouring British colonies. This made the colonies of New South Wales

and Victoria rich and paved the way for future mining projects across the country (McLean 2013; Baer 2016, 195). As Knox (2013, xiii) argues, mining has been central to life in Australia for thousands of years and 'is, in a metaphoric sense, woven into the national DNA' for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.

Under settler colonialism, governments both state and federal, progressive and conservative, have subsidised the cost of private enterprise mining. Australia's four mining booms of the mid-1800s, 1960s, 1980s and the 2000s brought waves of new migrants and wealth to the country, growing cities and towns. The location of infrastructure and urban development in Australia can frequently be traced back to mining. Trainlines, ports and other services emerged concurrently with increased mining activity to get the coal to market (Brett 2020). Mining has contributed significantly to state-building and profoundly shaped the country's economy, society and geography (Knox 2013, 75). Though the mining industry had historically propelled the economy forward, Australian mining projects have always been intricately embedded and reliant on fluctuating global markets and foreign capital. From as early as the 1860s onwards the Australian mining sector has largely depended on overseas investment to establish mines and global demand to make them profitable—a trend still evident to this day (Knox 2013, 161). Since the 1960s in particular, the mining industry increasingly orientated itself with the world economy rather than the domestic market (Crough and Wheelwrite 1983, 18). While this made Australian mining globally competitive, high foreign ownership rates coupled with a weak taxation and royalties system resulted in an industry not designed for the benefit of Australian people, who were too often 'deprived of the fruits of the development process' (Crough and Wheelwrite 1983, 40). As economists Crough and Wheelwright wrote in 1983 (23), to speak about the

mining industry in terms of national development in a world of international capitalism is to ‘propagate myths’.

In particular, coal has been an important part of this story. It was discovered shortly after colonial settlement in 1791, with convicts tasked with mining it in Tasmania and New South Wales. Since this period, the majority of Australian coal has been destined primarily for export. Extractivism, or the large-scale mining of natural resources for export overseas, has historical links to colonialism and the expansion of the world economy (Acosta 2017, 4). Prior to Australian federation in 1901, the British government exported coal all around the empire’s Indian and South Atlantic colonies (Baer 2016, 195–96). In this sense, coal mining and extractivism in Australia has always been firmly embedded in the global system of trade.

It has been historically a key driver of economic growth in Australia. After the Second World War, a government Commission surveyed the country’s coal reserves and recommended expanding the coal industry to fuel the post-war recovery (Baer 2016, 196). During the 1950s and 1960s the coal industry grew rapidly, relying to a great extent on demand from industrialising Japan. Seeing coal as an important element in future growth, there was bipartisan support, both state and federal, for the subsidisation and exploitation of coal and support for coal exports (Baer 2016, 197). This resulted in Australia becoming a global coal giant, and from the 1970s until 2011, Australia was the world’s biggest coal exporter (Baer 2016, 197). But a decrease in demand from Asia, as well as declining domestic demand, has led to subdued investment in coal projects over the last decades (Cunningham, Van Uffelen, and Chambers 2019). While coal is still the main source of electricity generation across the globe, its share is declining, down from 41 per cent in 2007 to 38 per cent in 2018. This decline is driven by

increased demand for cleaner energy (Cunningham, Van Uffelen, and Chambers 2019).

Despite prices for thermal coal remaining relatively high, fueled by China and India, the future of Australian coal is uncertain. Many destination countries, including China, South Korea and Japan are transitioning to renewables. China's September 2020 announcement of plans to become carbon neutral by 2060 is particularly important for Australian mineral exports, as China is Australia's largest trading partner (Normile 2020). In addition, movements in global markets, point to a more rapid shift away from coal than previously forecasted, with mining giant BHP announcing in May 2019 that the company would transition its portfolio away from coal to other resources such as the copper and nickel used for electric cars (Smee 2019a; Australian Associated Press 2019). While Australia will likely remain a global coal exporter over the short term, the Reserve Bank of Australia forecasts this will be from existing mines, with little appetite for new investment (Cunningham, Van Uffelen, and Chambers 2019). In 2019, another coal proposal in the Galilee Basin, adjacent to the Carmichael mine, was abandoned by company China Stone, due to doubts about long term profitability (Buckley 2019). This further compounds the advice from economists suggesting other coal projects in the Galilee Basin 'just don't stack up' financially (Smee 2019a). In light of this, Adani Australia's continued investment into the Carmichael mine appears ill-timed.

Mining, Energy and Politics

A report from 2011 found that 83 per cent of the mining industry in Australia was foreign-owned (Aulby 2017). However it is not necessarily the degree of foreign investment on its own that poses a problem, but rather that the Australian community does not receive an appropriate return on its non-renewable resources,

while baring the environmental and social costs (Henry 2008). A 2008 report to the Australian Treasurer (Henry) outlined how despite abundant resources and high demand for exports, during the 2000s resource boom, community returns on mining assets were actually declining as a share of total resource profits.

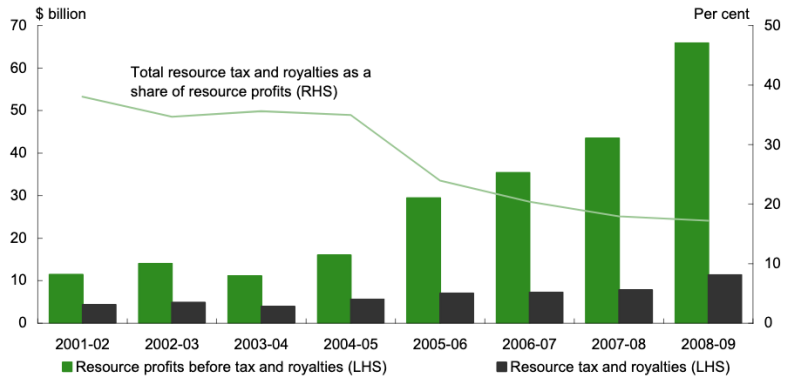

Figure 2: Graph of the percentage of tax and mining royalties as a proportion of total profits (Henry 2008)

The review called for an overview of Australia's complex mining tax and royalty system in which mining companies pay federal company taxes as well as royalties to individual state governments. It was proposed that a uniform 40 per cent tax on resources should be implemented to simplify the system and deliver greater value to the Australian people (Henry 2008, 48). Following the review, the then-Labor government, sought to implement national resource tax reform, which would have replaced the royalty system that charged a fixed amount per volume of minerals produced, to a system that put a tax on profits (Brett 2020). However, due to successful industry mobilisation against the proposal it was unable to pass parliament and led to bitter partisanship and polarisation in Australian politics. No other effective policy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions has achieved bipartisan agreement since then, resulting in experts expecting Australia will be unable to meet its Paris Agreement targets without carrying over Kyoto credits (Brett 2020).

The energy debate has dominated federal elections since then, and combined with the lobbying efforts of the mining industry against higher taxation, contributed to the downfall of four prime ministers in a decade (Eccelston and Hortle 2016; West 2017; Brett 2020). The core argument of the mining industry was that if mining underpinned the economy, policies to reduce carbon emissions would have dire implications for the country's future prosperity (Brett 2020). From the 1990s onwards, climate change scepticism and the mining industry became increasingly entangled, with the powerful mining lobby acting in its own interest by stymieing political debate about carbon emissions reductions (Brett 2020). As a result of lobbying efforts, multiple attempts at resource tax reform were ineffective, and mining companies retained the lower tax and royalty rates they had historically enjoyed (Brett 2020).

In addition, mining companies in Australia are considered one of the country's most adept tax avoiders (Ritter 2018, 39). A 2020 report from the Australasian Centre for Corporate Responsibility (Gocher 2020), which collated the company tax paid by the ten largest mining companies between 2013-2017, found that the average marginal tax rate across 33 mining companies was roughly 18 per cent. Glencore mining subsidiaries paid a marginal tax rate of just 11.2 per cent on profits of $5.2 billion during this same period. Australia's official company tax rate sits at 30 per cent.

Taken as a whole, despite record profits, the Australian mining industry delivers only a very small return for Australians. This also fails to account for the environmental, social and health-related costs borne by the Australian people, all well documented but out of scope for this paper (see Cleary 2015; Steffen, Alexander, and Hughes 2018; Ritter 2018; Knox 2013; Beresford 2018). The data presented here about the current state

of mining in Australia demonstrates that the system benefits corporations over the average Australian.

In light of the effects of climate change, in particular the 2019 Australian bushfire season that devastated the east coast of the country, it can be questioned why successive Australian governments have and still enable the extraction of highly polluting fossil fuels. While experts point to the country's potential to be a world leader and exporter of clean energy (Finkel et al. 2017), Australians are still beholden to coal interests, with 60 per cent of electricity generated via coal-fired power stations (Cunningham, Van Uffelen, and Chambers 2019). As of 2020, Australia's reliance on coal for domestic power generation and industry means per capita emissions are one of the highest in the world, second only to oil rich gulf state Saudi Arabia (Brett 2020, 9).

With so many question marks next to coal mining, why is it that the industry remains central to political and economic debates about the future prosperity of Australia? Brett (2020) argues that it may be correlated with Australia's weak history of industrialisation. Australia's comparative advantage in mineral resources has meant it has enjoyed strong periods of growth, however that has come at a cost to competing sectors, like manufacturing (Gregory 2012, 172). While favourable in boom times, Australia's economy is particularly vulnerable to shifts in global markets. For instance, at the peak of the mining boom in 2011, Australians enjoyed the biggest increase in terms of trade in the country's history, leading to sharp rises in living standards (Gregory 2012). However, as new suppliers entered the market and demand eased, Australia's terms of trade declined, and with it, real average wages (Krugman, Obstfeld, and Melitz 2018, 157; Gruen 2017).

As living standards decline (albeit from a high base) the climate crisis is also changing the way Australians live. (Un)natural disasters do not only impact on the health and wellbeing of people but are costly events that take place ever more frequently. Climate change fundamentally alters the way Australians live right now and into the future (Brett 2020). From a global perspective too, opening up the Galilee Basin is catastrophic. The IPCC (Masson-Delmotte et al. 2018) calls for urgent and rapid divestment from coal in order to meet emissions targets, prevent the irreversible loss of fragile eco-systems and mitigate the devastating social impacts of climate change. For this reason, Australia's support of coal mining and other non-renewable resources is a fundamental concern for people all over the world. In this sense, the Carmichael mine is globally significant.

It is against this background that the Carmichael mine is situated. This evidence points to the conclusion that, similarly to other mining projects in Australia, the Carmichael mine will likely deliver more value to Adani Australia than it will to the Australian people or the people and communities in India and Bangladesh that will ultimately consume the energy produced from the coal. The mine has become the ideological centerpiece of a fierce debate concerning climate change and the mining industry's influence on Australian politics. The culture of coal may hold some answers for why the Carmichael project is so salient.

Adani Australia's Political Environment

In Australia, state governments own the mineral and fossil fuel resources. Companies are given the rights to extract, sell and profit from them in exchange for paying a 'royalty'. Royalties are not taxes but are payments to the state for resources it owns (Swann and Campbell 2019, 7). States are therefore responsible for most of the regulatory approval of individual mining projects

(Cleary 2015). For the state of Queensland, where the Carmichael coal mine is located, the royalty rate for both thermal and coking coal mining is priced progressively. Coal that is valued at $100 or less per tonne attracts a 7 per cent royalty rate, from $100 to $150 per tonne it attracts a 12.5 per cent royalty, and beyond $150 per tonne it attracts a 15 per cent royalty. Thermal coal prices have hovered between $70-$130 between 2017-2019 meaning that royalty rates are on the lower end of the scale. The Queensland royalty rate is on average 17 per cent lower than neighbouring state New South Wales, making it one of the lowest in the country. Additionally, the Queensland government has committed to a royalties 'freeze' until October 2024 and instead of raising royalty rates, is asking mining companies to make voluntary payments to a total of $70 million. This amount covers only 5 per cent of the natural disaster costs of floods, droughts and bushfires borne by the Queensland government in 2019 alone (Swann and Campbell 2019).

The Queensland government's low royalty rate is designed to attract investment. In 2015, royalties from all coal mining accounted for more than 80 per cent of total mining royalties in Queensland (Cleary 2015). However, when this is broken down into coking and thermal coal the outlook is very different. In 2018, 87 per cent of royalties came from coking coal extraction, with only 13 per cent generated by thermal coal mining. This is due to coking coal's high market value—in 2018 it was three times that of thermal coal—which attracts a higher royalty rate (Buckley and Nicholas 2019). As Queensland is the world's leading supplier of coking coal for steel manufacture (Buckley and Nicholas 2019, 3), supporting the coking industry through a royalties freeze may be an effort to encourage the expansion of a high-value industry that brings substantial wealth to the state. The same cannot be said for supporting the expansion of the Galilee Basin's thermal coal reserves.

In addition to low royalty rates, Adani Australia has negotiated an initial deferral of royalty payments with the Queensland state government for the first seven years of the mine. Notwithstanding Adani Australia's opaque corporate structure that lends itself to potential future tax avoidance (Long 2019), Queenslanders will lose an estimated $600-$700 million Australian dollars under the royalty deferral arrangement (Buckley 2019).

Lastly, Adani Australia is also required to pay its water license to the Queensland government, as the company will utilise groundwater; estimated at roughly 13 Olympic sized swimming pools per day during peak capacity (Linnenluecke 2019). The company must pay this license before work commences. The $18.5 million payment was originally due in mid-2018, but Adani Australia has requested a delay until mid-2021, calling into question if the company has finance available (Smee 2019b).

The Promise of Jobs

While mining accounts for 15 per cent of GDP (Goodell 2019), it requires relatively few people to keep the industry operating, only approximately 1.9 per cent of the total Australian workforce (Brett 2020). In 2019, there were an estimated 21,000 thermal coal mining jobs across the whole country (RMIT Fact Check 2019). Despite these low figures, jobs in coal mining play an important political role.

The Queensland Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy, Anthony Lynham announced that between 2018 and 2019 thermal and coking coal mining jobs in Queensland increased by almost 20 per cent to around 30,000. The minister stated, 'this is about local jobs for the regions' citing

Queensland's success in fostering mining exploration and development (Lynham 2019).

The region of Central Queensland where the Carmichael mine is located has suffered from rising unemployment over the past decade, growing from 4.4 in 2011 to 8.7 in 2016 or roughly 9,300 unemployed people (The Australian Bureau of Statistics 2020). Creating new jobs in this region has been a core objective of successive state governments, especially in the electorate of Burdekin–a swing seat–where the Carmichael mine is located (ABC News 2017). In addition, securing the votes of the fly-in-fly-out mining workers based in the North Queensland towns of Townsville (where the company has its head office) and Rockhampton (Krien 2017)), it is important for the election of the Queensland state government, as both electorates have been historically marginal (Browne 2017). In short, seeing to be supporting mining industry jobs in regional Queensland is key to the state government's electoral success.

One of the official reasons the Queensland government has supported the Adani Carmichael project has been the prospect of new jobs. Since the first proposals were submitted, Adani Australia has argued publicly that 'thousands of direct and indirect jobs' will be created for regional Queenslanders (Adani Australia n.d.). The initial claim in 2013 was 10,000 positions would be created, however models released by the company and external analysts point to a much lower figure of 1,464 new jobs over the life of the mine (Campbell 2015; Brett 2020). In a Queensland court in 2015 Adani Australia's in-house economist admitted that 'It's not many jobs. We can agree on that' (cited in Brett 2020). There is still no clarity over just how many jobs the mine will offer regional Queenslanders.

Adani Australia has also outlined that the new mine will be highly automated, requiring few people per tonne of coal produced. With everything 'autonomous from mine to port', the Carmichael project will rely on efficient and reliable automated equipment to power the mine (Goodbody 2015). Were full automation to go ahead, not only would fewer jobs be required but more would likely be located in capital cities, not in regional areas as promised. A University of Queensland study found that automation reduces pit roles by 50 per cent with the mining workforce reduced by 30-40 per cent overall (Murray, Browne, and Campbell 2018).

Lastly, jobs at the Carmichael mine are expected to come at the expense of other roles in manufacturing and agriculture and displace skilled mining professionals from other mines across the country (Krien 2017). Some economists argue that with global demand for thermal coal declining, large new mines such as Carmichael will merely shift thermal coal operations, effectively moving employment from one mining region to another, rather than creating new positions. Opening up the Galilee Basin to thermal coal is forecasted to reduce overall employment in the sector (Murray, Browne, and Campbell 2018). Lastly, were Carmichael and other thermal coal projects to proceed as planned in the Galilee Basin, the increased volume of coal produced would further push down global thermal coal prices, resulting in many smaller existing mines becoming unviable, leading to even further job losses (Murray, Browne, and Campbell 2018, 20). In short, mining jobs across Queensland and the country would likely be better off were the Galilee Basin to remain untapped (Long 2017).

Value to Australia

Aside from electoral gains, the economic reasoning for going forward with the project from the perspective of government is

unclear. While political donations (K. Gregory 2016) and coal lobbying efforts (Beresford 2018, 149) are a key factor to understanding the government's position, the risks the Carmichael projects pose to existing coal mines in the state and across the country appear to be greater than any forecasted gains.

Despite evidence calling into question the viability and benefit of the project for Australians, successive governments have supported Adani Australia's proposal (Beresford 2018). Rhetoric has focused on providing local jobs to the regions and improving the lives of local people, however the project relies on broader factors outside of government control, like the fluctuations of the global market. As Knox points out (2013, 321), the energy transition taking place globally means that 'everything is insecure' and 'even the largest, most efficient and permanent-looking mining operations' lack power over their own futures. Despite the deal with Bangladesh, there is no guarantee that low-grade thermal coal from Carmichael will be profitable in the short term, making the expansion of the Galilee Basin a risk not only for Adani Group, but also for Australians if the mine became a stranded asset.

Australia's historical reliance on resources, especially coal mining has left a legacy of strong relationships between the coal industry and Australian politics (Baer 2016). Since the 1950s, this coal industry/political nexus has grown in importance granting coal interests unprecedented access to the political process (Brett 2020). Over the last decade, the industry has launched targeted and well-funded attacks on politicians who aim to reform national or state energy policy. As well as stifling investment in clean power, failed energy policies have been responsible for removing four Australian prime ministers from office. Termed 'the lost decade', since 2007, debates about the future of coal and fossil fuels in Australia have led to chronic

political instability and inaction on climate change (Crowe 2019; Wood 2020).

Moreover, coal has also become a political weapon. In 2017, Australia's current prime minister (then treasurer) Scott Morrison infamously brandished a chunk of coal in Australia's lower house of Parliament, telling Australian's, 'don't be afraid, don't be scared' (cited in Murphy 2017). This widely-disparaged political stunt is emblematic of the power of coal and the coal lobby within Australian politics (Murphy 2017). A Greenpeace (2019) investigative report into the political and personal networks of the coal industry in Australia, illuminated a dense web of formal and informal lobbyist and politicians who benefit from access to government. In some instances the relationship between key bureaucrats and mining lobbyists was so close that industry has reportedly contributed to the writing of government policies that have direct impact on and influence over their own company's operations (Brett 2020). This not only highlights that coal interests wield immense influence in Australian politics, but additionally demonstrates how coal is portrayed as intrinsic to Australian life and prosperity through the discourse of state representatives.

Coal cultures are apparent in the rhetoric of politicians on all sides (Australian Conservation Foundation 2020). The conservative Abbot government (2013-2015) transformed the narrative of coal into a moral imperative (Beresford 2018, 175) and from 2013 onwards, senior government ministers have argued that Australian 'coal was good for humanity' because it sustains economic growth, produces prosperity and is the world's current principle energy source (ABC News 2014).

The Future of the Carmichael Mine in 2020

This overview and context of the Carmichael project outlines that the country's obsession with coal is historical, political and cultural, but it is also a carefully curated narrative. As Brett (2020) contends, beginning in the 1970s, miners and the mining industry have sought to convince the public that mining is critical to Australia's development and prosperity to secure the industry's future. This included all kinds of advertising and media campaigns so that children 'will grow up with a sound knowledge and understanding of the mining industry' (cited in Brett 2020). Over the decades coal interests have campaigned against Indigenous land rights, environmental causes, farming communities, and many more groups opposing mining expansion.

Linnenluecke (2019) argues that markets will lead the transition to a low carbon economy, in spite of the efforts of Australian politicians and industry leaders and this transition is already taking place. Economists argue (Linnenluecke et al. 2019) that jurisdictions with strong environmental regulations and investment into research and development have higher levels of clean technology innovation. However, Australia's abundance of fossil fuels and a lack of investment since prime minister Abbot's election in 2013 has resulted in the country lagging behind in the promotion of new renewable industries which would generate longer-term employment outcomes than new mines such as Carmichael (Brett 2020).

While markets may ultimately pivot the economy towards clean energy, the Covid-19 pandemic may provide a new opportunity for Australia's mining industry to put forward coal as a way to lift the country out of recession. Echoing globalisation scholarship, Szumer (2020) argues that Covid-19 has demonstrated the ongoing power of the state and its governments

as managers of global capital flows, including investment in industries with long-term job prospects, such as clean energy. Unfortunately, amid the pandemic governments across Australia have quietly turned to the fossil fuel industry to power the Australian economy out of its first recession since 1991. This will likely be a miscalculation, as data from the International Energy Agency shows that global production is increasing at the same time as consumption plateaus (Office of the Chief Economist 2020a; International Energy Agency 2020).

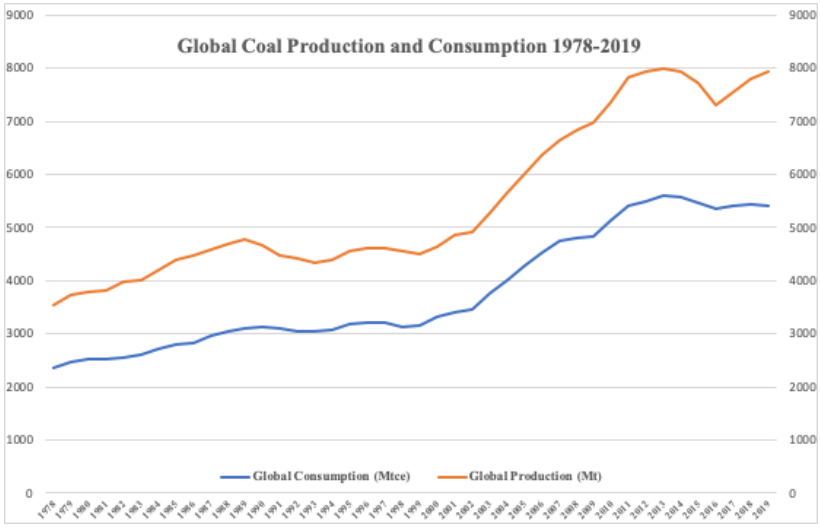

Figure 3: Global Production and Consumption of Coal (International Energy Agency Data 2020)

While selling thermal coal to turn the lights on in Asia has in part led to Australia's record 27-year period of economic growth, the next 27 years will require a swift transition away from coal if the country is to mitigate the ecological, social and economic destruction wrought by events such as the 2019-20 bushfire season (Meyer 2020). But unlike the post-war recovery of the mid twentieth century, the country has viable alternatives, including renewable energy, as leading climate and energy policy experts have long argued (Szumer 2020; Paul Ker, Wiggins, and Macdonald-Smith 2020; Brett 2020).

Like others from the mining industry, Adani Australia argues that the Carmichael project will be pivotal to Australia's recovery, stating in July 2020 that mining 'will cushion our country from the worst of the economic impact of the coronavirus pandemic' (Dow 2020). The company aims to position itself as key to crisis recovery, despite the Carmichael project offering little in way of benefit. But Adani Australia appears to have found a relatively friendly host country in Australia' (Rajest and Kotoky 2019) where coal culture is king.

Rebuilding the economy in the wake of Covid-19 may be a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to reset the energy mix, begin effective discussions about the future of fossil fuels and invest in jobs for the future. Fiscal stimulus could focus on green energy and jobs to grow the economy, or governments could lean on their old crutch of the coal mining industry and other polluters, and invest in obsolete technologies (Morton 2020). If Australia is to pivot to cleaner technologies, coal cultures in Australia must change.

The following qualitative content analysis hopes to contribute to this shift.

Chapter 5: Data Analysis and Discussion

Part I: Localisation

While local companies will draw on themes of nationalism to sell products, less is known about how foreign corporations instrumentalise local cultural symbols and language to achieve their strategic objectives (Koch 2020, 201). By exploring nationalism as a *mechanism*, this analysis explores how transnational corporations practice mobility across spatial boundaries (for instance the state, transnational spaces, global supply chains), and embed themselves in different socio-cultural contexts across multiple world regions. This paper argues nationalism is key to successfully navigating the diverse political, social and economic terrain that comes with being a transnational actor, offering a way to build connectedness across corporate networks (Dietze and Naumann 2018, 415). Nationalism has the power to operate at the everyday, unconscious level and wield significant influence over expressions of national identity.

A benign example is the story of Australian condiment spread, Vegemite. Made from the yeast left over from brewing beer and modelled after salty British spread Marmite, Vegemite was first developed in Australia during World War I. Although very similar to British Marmite, Vegemite went through a powerful branding process (National Museum of Australia n.d.). When first introduced in Australia in the 1920s by manufacturer Kraft, Vegemite was not particularly popular. However, a 'breakthrough' advertising campaign during the 1950s was so successful that Vegemite was 'incorporated into the culture itself', to become an important national symbol (National Museum of Australia n.d.). Today, Vegemite remains an iconic part of Australian food culture and is celebrated as an marker of what makes Australians unique (Contois 2016). Vegemite's role

as a touchstone for 'Australianness' demonstrates the power of corporations to shape identity discourses in the pursuit of profit. The globalisation of supply chains and the expansion of transnational corporations into new markets provides rich opportunity to analyse the ways in which nationalism is instrumentalised by foreign entities. Important dynamics between nationalism and the global economy are illuminated, exploring how corporate actors perpetuate established nationalist discourses and produce new ones (Koch 2020).

The following analysis explores how Adani Australia, as a subsidiary of a transnational company with a clear global agenda, reproduces expressions of Australian nationalism as a *mechanism* to embed the company's operations into the local context, while also justifying the export of Australian coal (Pickel 2003). The analysis draws attention to the way that nationalism is instrumentalised by transnational corporations like Adani Group, assisting them to expand operations, while also remaining attached and embedded in multiple social arenas (Koch 2020). The paper also explores the power of seemingly banal expressions of the nation, which are frequently overlooked in the social sciences (Aronczyk 2017, 243).

The following content analysis surveys media statements, social media posts and a small selection of interviews made publicly available by Adani Australia over a two-year period from July 2018 until July 2020. The analysis is divided into two parts. Part I explores how the company *localises* its commercial activities in regional Queensland through the use of colloquialisms and the discourse of fairness. Part II examines how the company presents its role in the global economy, Australia's position as a major fossil fuel exporting country and the meaning of coal in an age of energy transition.

As Gautam Adani declared during an interview in July 2019, 'we entered Australia with two overarching goals; contributing to energy security in India and creating job opportunities for the locals' (Rajest and Kotoky 2019). To what extent the company has achieved this goal will be examined in the following pages.

'*Localisation' and Local Opportunities'*

The most significant theme appearing across the majority of textual sources is *localisation*. The data demonstrates that Adani Australia aims to 'nationalise' the company's operations, presenting it as an inherent part of the local Australian economic, social and political landscape. The data underlines how Adani Australia diverts attention away from its relationship to parent company, Adani Group, and presents itself as embodying local Australian characteristics and values. In short, the company discursively embeds itself into the local economic, political and social fabric of regional Queensland.

One key aspect of the company's aim of *localisation* is the focus on bringing economic prosperity to the resource regions of Queensland by providing much-needed employment opportunities. Strikingly, Adani Australia references jobs and employment in 82 per cent of sources. Moreover, 90 per cent of the documents analysed refer to ways the Carmichael mine generates indirect employment for regional Australians, for example through contracts with local businesses or partnership arrangements. This builds on the existing political and public discourse about the importance of mining jobs to regional Queensland and demonstrates that the Carmichael project presents value to local people, by discursively linking coal mining to economic wellbeing (Childs 2015; Koch and Perreault 2018).

Employment is without a doubt the justification for the Carmichael project and the most obvious articulation of Adani Australia's local significance (Beresford 2018, 357). A statement from November 2018 reads:

'The Carmichael Project will ***deliver more than 1,500 direct jobs*** *on the mine and rail projects during the initial ramp-up and construction phase, and* ***will support thousands more indirect jobs****, all of which will benefit regional Queensland communities*.'

Considering the company is not actually selling any product to Australians—all the thermal coal will be exported—it is necessary to promote the virtues and value of the company as an employer. It is unsurprising then that employment is used as the chief marketing strategy, selectively framing the Carmichael project primarily as a catalyst for the creation of jobs (Koch and Perreault 2018, 194). By linking the Carmichael project to promises of employment and local prosperity, Adani Australia draws on a particular national mythology which holds that coal mining is a key driver of Australian state-building and creates wealth, jobs and prosperity (Hylland Eriksen 2014; Knox 2013). The socio-cultural association between coal mining and wealth (hereafter referred to as the *mining/prosperity discourse*) forms part of Australia's historical self-characterisation and plays an important, ongoing role in articulations of Australian nationalism (Aronczyk 2017, 41).

As McLean argues (2013, 5), natural resources and mining have been central to Australia's success as a settler colonial economy; a somewhat rare example of a state that escaped the 'resource curse' and maintained high living standards and strong institutions alongside bountiful natural resources. In this sense, mining and the positive economic benefits that derive from it,

are ‘woven into the national DNA’ (Knox 2013, xiii). While mining is a foundational element of the country’s history, the mining/prosperity discourse has a somewhat ‘shadow role’ in Australian cultural life. Mining takes place in far flung regions of the country, out of view of the majority of Australians who live in major cities. Narratives about mining command far less attention than other examples in the national mythology, such as bushrangers, soldiers or sportspeople. Despite Australia’s abundance of natural resources, its mining history and its status as one of the world’s biggest mineral exporters, mining plays a curiously subtle but important role in shaping Australian identity. The mining/prosperity discourse is an example of banal nationalism at play (Aronczyk 2017; Fox 2017).

As Knox (2013, xiv) reminds, although mining has played a critical role in state-building, in terms of its contribution to shaping national identity, the industry is viewed with ambivalence by the majority of Australians. The industry’s greatest and most publicly celebrated legacy is that it made Australia rich. In this sense, the mining/prosperity discourse operates at a subtle, perhaps unconscious level, but is nonetheless a critical theme of Australian nationalism. In this sense, Adani Australia’s focus on the Carmichael project’s ability to bring wealth and prosperity draws on a deep-seated nationalist mythology, but a mythology that operates on a subconscious level.

Adani Australia instrumentalises the mining/prosperity discourse, linking the Carmichael project to notions of wealth (James 1983, 89). The mining/prosperity discourse, expressed through the promise of jobs, acts as a cultural code that is ritualised again and again through the company’s public statements, and signals to Australians that Adani Australia understands its local context. Engaging with this narrative

anchors the company, transforming it from a foreign-owned transnational, to a local fixture. For example, a statement from August 2019 emphasises this by using the pronoun 'we' to demonstrate it is no longer an 'outsider' but a valuable corporate citizen, firmly entrenched 'here' and contributing positively to Australia's economy (James 1983, 94):

*'Together **we** are proud to be a part of **Australia's world-class coal industry** that last year directly employed more than 50,000 people, and a further 120,000 indirect jobs across the country.'*

Statements like these present the company as a natural part of Australia's coal mining community and the coal mining sector. Adani Australia not only nods to the past but signals how the Carmichael project is vital for state-building into the future. As James (1983, 96) contends, the 'future' is a common theme in the advertising and media strategies of extractive companies, and Adani Australia is no exception. The company simultaneously celebrates and constructs a future Australia that is underpinned by the state-building efforts of commercial actors guided by a mining/prosperity philosophy. In this vein, the company website claims:

*'The Carmichael Project **will** generate billions of dollars in mining taxes and royalties for government **in its first 30 years** of operations. This money will help **build new schools, hospitals and roads for Queensland**.'*

Here, the excerpt emphasises on one hand, the future timeline of the project, namely 30-plus years, while on the other hand, points out the company's role in direct state-building activities, like building 'new schools, hospitals and roads'. Considering that roads, schools and hospitals fall under the purview of government, in statements like these, Adani Australia aims to

directly link mining to tangible prosperous outcomes, conjuring up an image of mining taxes deposited into the bank accounts of primary schools. The company removes reference to the actual implementors of roads and schools; namely elected officials. As such, it provides 'proof' of how the mining/prosperity nexus operates in reality (Koch and Perreault 2018, 201).

The source material demonstrates how Adani Australia uses the mining/prosperity discourse as a mechanism to signal the company's Australian characteristics and to *localise* the Carmichael project. By emphasising its value as a local employer and a tax-payer, Adani Australia 'proves' the mining/prosperity discourse correct by demonstrating how the company materially contributes to state-building. By drawing attention to the contribution the company makes to the everyday architecture of life, like roads, schools and hospitals, Adani Australia subtly reiterates the role that mining plays in Australian life. As Fox (2017, 27) maintains, there is power in these banal, ordinary gestures of nationalism, precisely because they are familiar, even if they are not registered as such.

The Power of Language: Colloquialisms in Context

While Adani Australia may engage with subtle or banal nationalisms like the mining/prosperity discourses to effectively localise the company and demonstrate value, it also employs more overt tactics. One direct linguistic strategy the company uses to 'Australianise' its operations is colloquial language. A 2016 study (Kidd et al.) into the effects of colloquial Australian English on social acceptance found that when individuals used typical Australian slang terms in the presence of other Australian English speakers, social bonds, closeness and likeability were enhanced. These findings point to how vernacular language, as a marker of social identity, has an important role to play in demonstrating belonging and enhancing trust between parties.

By choosing to use particular slang words and phrases that may only be understood by particular groups, the speaker/author assumes that the listener/reader shares common attributes, likely indicating an alignment of principles. In short, Adani Australia's use of colloquial language is likely an attempt to convey to its target audience (supporters of coal mining) that the company embodies similar values and opinions as them, enhancing trust and understanding (Kidd et al. 2016, 716). In light of this, the following examples of vernacular language by Adani Australia in its public statements are noteworthy and highly relevant for an investigation into how nationalism is instrumentalised.

The Fair Go Principle

The primary colloquialism used by Adani Australia throughout the source material is the phrase 'fair go'. Former Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd wrote that Australians should unapologetically embrace the idea of the 'fair go for all' as central to Australian national identity (2019). In a recent study on the Australian character (Plage et al. 2016), fairness, openness and egalitarianism were identified as fundamental values that characterise Australian national identity. However, egalitarian sentiment has historically been deeply engrained in the discourse of Australian nationalism, and references to fairness are strongly linked to a particular Australian distinctiveness (Plage et al. 2016, 323). Together, these values are colloquially known as the *principle of the fair go*.

The fair go can be used colloquially in many different contexts and enabling the fair go is not only a virtuous nationalist principle, but a familiar slang term. Australia is commonly referred to as the 'land of the fair go' where citizens receive fair and equal treatment (Bolton 2003; ANU School of Literature Languages and Linguistics, n.d.). Australians expect to be granted a fair go, meaning they should be given a reasonable

chance to succeed in their endeavours and lead a happy and prosperous life. The concept of the fair go principle is considered one of the most important themes of Australian national identity and one which creates an imagined community of fair-minded individuals (Koch 2020, 185).

Feminist scholars argue that the fair go represents a specifically masculine understanding of Australian culture, which has historically excluded the lived experience of women and gender diverse groups (Wickes, Smith, and Phillips 2006). Despite this, a 2006 study on Australian identity (Wickes, Smith, and Phillips) found that gender had only weak influence on ideas about Australian belonging, suggesting that while scholars identify the fair go and egalitarianism as historically masculine, it may not be viewed this way by the public. Appeals to the fair go, and by extension, fairness, are likely to have similar gender outcomes. While there are clearly ongoing and important debates in Australia concerning the lived reality of the fair go principle[2], especially in relation to Indigenous Australians and minority groups, it is clear that the term has significant nationalist associations (Gwynn 2012). Adani Australia draws on the language of the fair go principle as a key discursive strategy to demonstrate alignment with Australian values and once again emphasise the company's localised character (Plage et al. 2016, 320).

Analysis of the source material reveals that Adani Australia frequently employs the term in its media statements, for example in February 2019 the company outlined:

[2] This paper does not suggest that Australian society is inherently fair and acknowledges important historical and ongoing inequalities when it comes to wealth distribution, race, gender and cultural identity.

*'We just want a **fair go** so we can get on with delivering thousands of jobs for regional Queensland.'*

One month later the company argued:

*'We will continue to correct false claims and do everything we can to ensure the **Carmichael Project gets a fair go**, along with the people of regional Queensland who desperately want and need the jobs and economic contribution it will provide.'*

Engaging with the colloquial language of the fair go demonstrates authenticity and ingratiates the company and the Carmichael project into the socio-cultural context of regional Queensland (Kidd et al. 2016). The term the fair go should also be understood as a typical example of how the nation is flagged in everyday language. This type of nationalism is continuous, embedded casually but nonetheless reinforces powerful national symbolism (Fox 2017, 27).

During the first 12 months of data collection, from July 2018 until July 2019, the company most frequently used the term fair go. This period corresponds to when the company was awaiting final outstanding regulatory approvals from the Queensland state government. The delays were a result of government officials seeking additional information and expert advice on the Carmichael project, especially with regards to its environmental impact. The delays in approving the project meant that initial mining works did not begin until July 2019. Over the course of this waiting period, the company persistently accused the Queensland state government of dishonestly delaying the approval process, claiming that Adani Australia was being denied a fair go. An advertising campaign (Cheik-Hussein 2019) was launched across the state of Queensland in early 2019:

Figure 4: Adani Australia 2019 Advertising Campaign 'Fair Go'(AdNews)

The campaign presented the Queensland state government as the antithesis of the fair go, effectively 'un-Australian', and accused it of standing in the way of the economic growth of regional communities. Adani Australia argues that unfair 'barriers' were put in place by the Queensland state government, signalling that regulatory and legal structures are merely impediments to economic growth. At the same time, independent scrutiny into Adani Australia's corporate processes and policies is framed as unreasonable. In this sense, the company presents itself as a champion of fairness and the fair go principle.

The company's use of the phrase the fair go illuminates how nationalism expressed directly in language is instrumentalised by corporations to further their strategic objectives (Volcic and Andrejevic 2016, 6). In essence, the company accuses the Queensland state government of erecting barriers to global capital against the best interests of its own citizens and underscores the primacy of neoliberal capitalism in supporting economic growth and prosperity. At the same time, the company redefines the fair go principle as not just an entitlement that individuals can enjoy, but also one that can be claimed by corporations, including foreign ones.

Shifting the Goal Posts

The data reveals a second important colloquialism frequently used in the public language of Adani Australia; namely, the

phrase *moving* or *shifting the goal posts*. In January 2019, the company reflected that:

'We're disappointed that the Queensland Government ***has shifted the goal posts*** *on what's required to start the Carmichael Project.'*

In May 2019, the company repeated that:

'They [Queensland state government] refuse to hear the concerns of people wanting them to back the Queensland mining industry, back regional communities, and stop ***shifting the goal posts****.'*

The idiom of shifting the goal posts refers to changing the parameters or the rules, making it difficult to achieve the desired outcome. It originates from sport, where it describes a perceived unfairness if the goals are physically moved after a game has begun (The Phrase Finder n.d.). While not a uniquely Australian expression, it does draw on the interrelationship between sport and Australian national identity. Saad (2011, 3) argues that sport has played a historically significant role in Australian culture, with team sport particularly important for instilling the values of mateship and loyalty. Australia's sporting tradition has been described as a 'wonderfully potent expression of the nation's soul' (Horton 2000, 66) and was historically important in creating a community identity during colonial times. Wickham (2013) contends that Australian's love of sport offers a sense of belonging and shared identity that transcends class, religion and politics. However, the colonial and masculine history of sport in Australia suggest this interpretation of national identity lacks a gender lens (Toffoletti and Palmer 2019, 5). Research indicates that Australian men are more likely to indicate a strong interest in sport and consider it important to their national identity

(Wickes, Smith, and Phillips 2006, 304). Considering this, the phrase shifting the goal posts likely appeals more to a male audience (Wickes, Smith, and Phillips 2006).

While sport has been considered historically influential in shaping (masculine) Australian culture, a recent study suggests the relevance of sport as a marker of national identity may be waning in younger generations (Tranter and Donoghue 2014). Interestingly, the notion that Australia is a sporting country appears to resonate more with older, conservative Australians, particularly those with Anglophone heritage (Tranter and Donoghue 2014, 248). Taken together, it can be assumed that sporting analogies, like 'shifting the goal posts', on average, resonate with older, white conservative men.

Interestingly, recent election data points to the state of Queensland as the most conservative part of the country, with the most conservative voters located outside urban centres (Hanrahan, Gourlay, and Liddy 2019). In the region of Central Queensland where the Carmichael mine is located, including the regional cities of Rockhampton and Gladstone, 80 per cent of all residents were born in Australia and approximately 75 per cent had Anglo-Celtic ancestry (The Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016). This suggests Adani Australia is targeting a particularly white, conservative demographic for which traditional expressions of Australian identity, such as old-fashioned sporting analogies, may particularly resonate. Moreover, the mining industry is notoriously male-dominated, with women representing only 17 per cent of the workforce in 2017 (Minerals Council of Australia 2018). By using the term shifting the goal posts, Adani Australia is reproducing a particular nationalist discourse that targets the regional Queensland demographic of conservative, white, Australian men (Kidd et al. 2016).

As the phrase shifting the goal posts is always used in a negative context, describing an unreasonable and underhanded situation, it has strong associations with the fair go principle. For instance, as part of Adani Australia's 2019 advertising campaign (Cheik-Hussein 2019), the company ran the following banner in Queensland's regional city of Townsville:

Figure 5: Adani Australia 2019 Advertising Campaign 'Goal Posts'(AdNews)

By engaging with the discourse of fairness and conservative sporting analogies, the company presents itself as an authentic part of a specific demographic of the Australian community. The company is once again drawing on nationalist colloquial language to appear authentically embedded in the local context (Billig 1995, 98). Adani Australia steers its language to align with the specific brand of Australian nationalism that will have the most impact on communities linked to the Carmichael project.

In summary, both the colloquial phrases *fair go* and *shifting the goal posts* refer to particular expressions of nationalism that appeal to the company's target audience of regional Queensland, thus furthering the company's commercial interests (Koch 2020). Using slang terminology enables Adani Australia to achieve three important objectives: (1) to reproduce language that will display authenticity and establish trust; (2) reference Australian values like fairness to demonstrate the company's

local alignment; and (3) emphasise 'unfair' treatment towards the company to appeal to audiences on an emotional level.

If nationalism is understood as a mechanism or instrument, then the use of colloquialisms are concrete examples of how Adani Australia employs the nationalising mechanism to localise the company.

Localisation in Practice

The results of Part I point to the different strategies Adani Australia uses to localise its operations, from engaging with the nationalist mining/prosperity discourse and the company's use of colloquial language. Analysis of the source material highlights how the company positions itself as an important economic actor in the local economy, with the ability to positively impact the lives of regional communities. It also demonstrates how specific language can signal understanding of a culture and highlight authenticity.

The analysis also clearly outlines how corporations produce and reproduce nationalist content in order to 'sell' either the company itself or the product. In this case, Adani Australia draws on nationalism to localise, with the objective of making audiences forget that it is a transnational corporation. In this sense, nationalist sentiment is instrumentalised by Adani Australia to facilitate the company's expansion into the Australian thermal coal industry.

While Part I has shown the ways in which the company localises, ultimately it is beholden to the forces of global commodity markets and decision-making in Gujarati boardrooms. Part II of the analysis explores how Adani Australia balances its competing priorities at the local, national and global levels. It examines how Adani Australia maintains its localised image at

the same time as it introduces the company's role in the global economy, and how within narratives of globality evidence of banal nationalism can be found.

Part II: Carmichael Coal as a Global Resource

Thus far, the data analysis has underscored how Adani Australia uses overt and subtle applications of nationalism as a mechanism to integrate a foreign company into the local context of regional Queensland. In order to foster trust and support in the company's new host location, Adani Australia focuses on the role that the company plays as an employer, capable of boosting economic growth and supporting greater prosperity. The most common themes in the data presented in Part I are therefore about the company's role, rather than the commodity itself. However, while Adani Australia aims to position itself as localised, the company is undoubtedly entangled in the dynamics of global capital.

Part II of the analysis gives a detailed account of how Adani Australia speaks about its position in the context of global markets and supply chains. Thermal coal mined from the Carmichael project is destined for export to India and developing economies in Southeast Asia. Moreover, Indian-generated power will likely be sold to Bangladesh following a controversial deal between Adani Group and the Bangladeshi government. As Adani Group outlines, the Carmichael project is the first node in a 'pit to plug' network that criss-crosses the Indian Ocean and may eventually turn the lights on in India and Bangladesh. But the same coal will never power the homes of the regional Queenslanders who contribute to its extraction. In this way, the coal reserves lying untouched in the Galilee Basin are globally significant (Ritter 2018, 15).

The following pages examine how the company presents its position in the global economy and the strategies it uses to garner support for the export of Carmichael coal. Coal is rhetorically 'globalised' and presented as a panacea for improving the living standards in the Global South while at the same time the

company engages in discourses of protectionism. It must therefore balance its rhetoric about the value of the Carmichael project to Australians with the reality that Carmichael coal is a global resource.

Coal and Global Capitalism: Australia's Opportunity

When analysing Adani Australia's portrayal of the company's global embeddedness, the data reveals that the most important theme is confidence in the future *market for thermal coal*. As previously outlined, while energy analysts point to an overall decline in global demand, the outlook for Australian thermal coal—up until the pandemic—remained optimistic. In 2019 the Reserve Bank of Australia (Cunningham, Van Uffelen, and Chambers 2019) forecasted that demand for Australia's thermal coal was expected to remain strong well into the future, despite declining demand from Australia's key trading partner, China. The future of Australia's thermal coal exports are nonetheless thrown into uncertainty due to the impacts of Covid-19, the most recent sign of global thermal coal divestment being China's announcment to become carbon neutral by 2060 (Normile 2020).

Data collected prior to January 2020 (pre-pandemic) reveals how Adani Australia sought to highlight the ongoing and profitable opportunities for thermal coal. The company stated in June 2019:

'The International Energy Agency and other respected independent analysts such as Commodity Insights are ***forecasting an increase in demand*** *for seaborne thermal coal, particularly from India and South East Asia,* ***which Carmichael is well-placed to meet.'***

An interesting observation in the company's language about global opportunities is that they are frequently presented not as an opportunity for Adani Australia, but rather an opportunity for

the broader Australian public. In this sense, the company highlights that it is *Carmichael,* not Adani Australia, that *is well-placed* to meet global demand. This discursively omits the company's role as a transnational corporation, with the most to lose and to gain from the project's success.

As well as highlighting opportunity, Adani Australia cautioned that should support for Carmichael wane, it is local people who will suffer the consequences as other producers step in and increase their market share (Buckley 2019). In this sense, the company employs the language of protectionism, emphasising the vulnerability of Australian thermal coal in the context of global markets. The company uses the narrative of protectionism to reinforcing the national imaginary without actually invoking it by name and allows the company to be seen to be 'speaking on behalf of' Australians (Aronczyk 2017, 254). To that end, the company warned in March 2019 that:

'South Africa, Indonesia, the USA and Russia are already supplying coal to developing nations like India ***at the expense of Queensland jobs*** *and investment.'*

These excerpts imply that Australians have ownership of the risks and opportunities, rather than the company itself. It is up to local people to reap the rewards of the project or lose out on the promised benefits. The Carmichael project is thereby cast as *belonging* to the people, *for* Australians, rather than for commercial profit. In so doing, Adani Australia is engaging with a premise common to all forms of resource nationalism; namely, emphasising that the benefits of resource extraction should be enjoyed (almost exclusively) by the citizens of the territory from which the resources are extracted (Koch and Perreault 2018, 612).

Resource nationalism is commonly employed by states or civil society actors *opposing* foreign involvement in domestic mineral extraction, however in this case, the reverse is true. Adani Australia employs discourses of resource nationalism to justify its Australian activities; drawing attention to market competition. The company draws on the language of resource nationalism and protectionism, linking Australia's share of global thermal coal markets to Australian prosperity and wealth. For instance, a statement from March 2019 outlines:

'The fact is that if Queensland coal is not supplied to countries in Asia where demand for it is growing, ***it will be supplied from elsewhere****. Demand from these developing economies is simply not going to stop as a consequence of preventing the opening of the Galilee Basin.'*

Again, it is *Queensland coal* rather than *Adani coal* that profits from global markets. By omitting references to its own role, the company frames the mine as an opportunity for Queenslanders, and by extension, Australians exclusively. The data shows how Adani Australia constructs a typical narrative of resource nationalism, arguing that the citizen should be the ultimate beneficiary of the state's natural resources. This is an ideological tool Adani Australia employs to distract from the company's role as a for-profit corporation with the most to gain, or lose, from the Carmichael project.

Engaging with narratives of resource nationalism, however, places Adani Australia in a difficult position. The Carmichael project is an extractivist model—100 per cent of Carmichael coal is exported, unprocessed—so the company must walk a fine line between promoting the project as an opportunity for Australians, while at the same time justifying the export of coal offshore.

They achieve this by framing Australian coal as a global resource.

The Globalisation of Australian Coal

Carmichael coal is globally significant, not only for its role in Adani's Group's regional energy supply chain, but for what it represents. As the forerunner in the Galilee Basin, Adani Australia's Carmichael mine sets a dangerous precedent, because if the project is commercially successful, it will pave the way for further expansion into the Galilee Basin. Allowing the exploitation of the world's newest coal frontier will have catastrophic impacts on planetary health.

The above excerpts introduced the key markets for Australian thermal coal in South and Southeast Asia. India, where Adani Australia intends to make the most profit from Carmichael thermal coal, is a large and growing consumer, although there are question marks concerning India's future energy mix in a post-pandemic economy (Cunningham, Van Uffelen, and Chambers 2019, 30). Considering Adani Australia's close relationship to India, as a subsidiary arm of an Indian-owned transnational, with intentions to supply the Indian market, it is clear that India is an important actor. With this in mind, it is unsurprising that Adani Australia references India most commonly in the data when referring to markets. For instance, the company wrote in March 2019 that:

'By opening the Galilee Basin we can continue to be a part of that [positive coal] story. Coal from the Carmichael Mine will be sold to India ***where around 280 million people do not have access to electricity****.'*

While India is an important economic player, it is what India represents that is important; namely, that it is seen as a

'developing' economy. Likewise, the other key markets of Southeast Asia, South Asia and to a lesser extent China, represent key developing countries with a thirst for cheap, plentiful thermal coal (Office of the Chief Economist 2020a). The company's focus on the role of coal as a global development mechanism is a key theme in the data. A February 2020 statement stresses this:

'The fact is ***there is demand from Asia for coal to provide energy to help lift people out of poverty*** *in places like India so they can enjoy* ***the kind of lifestyle we in Australia take for granted****.'*

This draws on the well-established discourse that coal brings prosperity and wealth (Hylland Eriksen 2014). Australians are encouraged to view their coal as an important mechanism to 'lift people out of poverty' across the globe and address global inequalities so that developing economies can enjoy a similar 'first world' lifestyle. The company discursively frames Australian coal as a development instrument that contributes to equalising global living standards. Through its use of the 'we' pronoun, Adani Australia, speaking on behalf of Australians (Billig 1995, 98), encourages them to feel pride. Through these types of statements, the company champions the Australian 'lifestyle', engaging once again with the language of subliminal everyday nationalism.

'Turning on the lights' and alleviating poverty in the Global South gives the Carmichael project broader meaning. It also legitimises coal-based economic partnerships with developing economies, advocating for Australians to share their coal, and by extension, their prosperity (Talukdar 2018, 137). The argument that coal can 'help the poor' is a common trope among coal producers the world over and Adani Australia is in this sense no

exception (Beresford 2018, 175; Talukdar 2018). However, what is interesting, is how the company links the developmental argument with concepts of fairness. There is an inherent emotional appeal in these excerpts that is reminiscent of the fair go principle applied to the global scale. By highlighting how coal can provide the Global South with the kind of lifestyle that Australians 'take for granted', the company is appealing to Australians' notions of fairness and a sense of national pride. Adani Australia presents the Carmichael project as a way for Australians to proudly share their national values and wealth with poorer neighbours. Using the development lens to frame the Carmichael project as a driver of global prosperity rather than a corporate rent-seeking activity, Adani Australia is able to shift the conversation away from economics and corporate revenue and focus it instead on coal's role as a global resource, separating Carmichael coal from its corporate context.

The data analysis highlights how Adani Australia addresses the role of global thermal coal markets as an opportunity for Australians to grow wealthier and to share this wealth with their poorer counterparts in the Global South. By supporting the Carmichael project, Australians can offer a fair go to developing economies and a fair go for themselves while doing so. It is presented as a win-win for Australians. In comparison to the analysis presented in Part I that highlighted the company's Australian credentials, when addressing the topic of thermal coal itself, Adani Australia presents it as a virtuous global mechanism for development. By hiding 'neoliberal coal behind the Indian poor' (Talukdar 2018, 139) Adani Australia puts forward a moral case.

Virtuous Thermal Coal

Australian thermal coal is presented as inherently *virtuous* in terms of its development potential, but also its environmental

credentials. The data highlights how Adani Australia reframes Australian coal as a sustainable and clean energy source and by doing so, creates a nationalist narrative about Australian thermal coal that is palatable, even respectable, and validates Australia as a fossil fuel exporter (Aronczyk 2017, 46).

As discussed in the literature review, the argument that coal is a driver of economic prosperity and is 'good for humanity' has a long history and can be found in the statements of governments and private corporations across the world, including in Australia (Beresford 2018, 174). While Adani Australia is not unique in this regard, the company's strategy to advocate for Australian coal as a 'sustainable', 'virtuous' driver of economic prosperity is noteworthy. For instance, the company outlined in March 2019 that any delays in developing the Galilee Basin,

*'would not only disadvantage Queenslanders economically**, but would also adversely impact the environment as a consequence of poorer quality coals being sourced to feed the growing demand for energy** coal in countries like India, Vietnam and Bangladesh.'*

Further to this, in March 2019, the company retweeted the following:

*'If Adani does not provide Queensland's **relatively clean coal to India**, it could come from Indonesia where the coal has over 28% higher greenhouse gas emissions.'*

These statements emphasise that not only should Australians altruistically support the economic development of the Global South, but it is in fact their moral imperative to do so. As 'poorer quality coals' would adversely impact the environment, Australians are asked to consider the environmental impact that

would result were the Carmichael project not progress. Cynically, statements such as these imply that Australians as individuals have the responsibility of reducing the polluting effects of coal-fired power generation. Adani Australia implies Australians have the power to improve the situation of the poor in the Global South by supplying them with marginally less-polluting coal-fired energy. The responsibility for reducing emissions is placed in the hands of individuals. Moreover, while Australian coal may indeed be 'relatively' higher quality than Indonesian coal (Office of the Chief Economist 2020a, 60), experts agree that Galilee Basin coal has a higher than average ash content, making it some of the lowest quality, and most polluting thermal coal in Australia (Quiggin 2017, 7). With this knowledge, the company's clean coal argument is disingenuous.

Nonetheless, the company glorifies Carmichael coal as clean, constructing the image of Australian thermal coal as virtuous and a product which Australians can and should be proud of. In these excerpts, Adani Australia is not merely drawing on existing nationalist narratives, but can be seen to be actively shaping new ones (Koch 2020, 196). Adani Australia contributes to processes of identity-making by representing Australian thermal coal as virtuous in terms of sustainability as well as its development potential, thus providing Australians with an agreeable image of themselves as premier global thermal coal exporters. In this sense, the company is curating new, more pleasing narratives. To that end, in March 2019 the company celebrated that:

'Queenslanders ***can be proud of our record to export energy safely and sustainably****. Studies show that providing affordable energy* ***and educating women*** *are the two key factors to transforming the lives of the poorest and most disadvantaged people on earth.'*

Unsubstantiated arguments such as these appeal once again to altruism and frame Carmichael coal as virtuous. The company encourages Australians to consider how their support of the Carmichael project can spread the principles of the fair go well beyond Australia's shores, to those who have been denied access to basic services, such as affordable energy. However, appeals to supporting women in places like India are particularly cynical. For years there have been well-documented reports of Adani Group's poor record in India, with allegations of environmental mismanagement and illegal land clearing, which has led to the displacement of entire communities (Talukdar 2018). Considering that women and children are most-severely affected by internal displacement as well as the effects of climate change (Arora-Jonsson 2011), the claim that Adani Group supports the wellbeing of Indian women is particularly jarring (Environmental Justice Australia 2017; Lahiri-Dutt 2014).

In this sense, the moral argument for energy affordability and women's empowerment is a hypocritical and an intellectually dishonest attempt to link the Carmichael project to broader ideas of benevolent humanitarianism. While the project may provide Australians with employment opportunities, there is little evidence to suggest that Australians will be directly improving energy affordability for vulnerable people in the Global South (Environmental Justice Australia 2017). In this sense, the argument that Australian coal is positively impacting the lives of communities in the Global South is the least persuasive theme in the data.

The theme of virtuous coal constructs a discourse that allows Australians to celebrate and embrace their coal mining industry. Adani Australia is enlisting the historically significant nationalist mining/prosperity discourse, while also expanding and reframing it for an era of energy transition. By presenting

Carmichael coal as virtuous, sustainable and meaningful in the global context, the company allows Australians to feel pride in coal-fired power.

The Sustainable Energy Mix of the Future

Supporting the thermal coal industry in an era of energy transition requires clever branding. Although demand for coal-fired energy remains steady in parts of Asia, the majority of Australians are anxious to transition away from coal domestically (The Australia Institute 2018). Appealing to these contradictory dynamics is central to Adani Australia's success with the Carmichael project. In light of this, a third important theme in the company's engagement with globality is the concept of sustainability. Similarly, to Adani Australia's claim that Australian coal is virtuous, the company keenly demonstrates that coal will be a key part of a global *sustainable energy mix* going forward. A statement from August 2019 summarises:

'Our business is at the forefront of ***addressing the challenge of rising energy demand in Asia while reducing emissions intensity*** *and we are playing our part in delivering a reliable and secure global energy mix to help* ***create more equitable standards of living between the developed and the developing world****.* ***Coal is critical*** *to this mix as it provides affordable, reliable baseload power.'*

The company's website outlines Australia's contribution to a sustainable future in these words:

'Adani Australia is ***providing energy solutions and driving sustainabilit****y across the Asia-Pacific region. Part of the Adani Group, we* ***recognise the challenge of the world's changing***

***climate**. As the global population grows, we need more energy and resources, while managing emissions.*

*Adani Australia **is delivering a sustainable energy mix**. This will help to meet the increasing energy demand, while it delivers better quality of life for people in developing nations. We have solar farms and a coal mine, as well as the infrastructure to support those resources.'*

Climate change is presented by Adani Australia as a *challenge* which requires a sustainable energy mix that includes coal. It is true that in addition to the Carmichael project, the company has also invested in a renewable energy project, the Rugby Run solar farm, also in Queensland. In fact, Adani Group already invests in large scale renewable energy projects in India. Renewable energy is a profitable area, exemplified through the share price of the company's renewable power subsidiary Adani Green Energy, which almost doubled in value during the first half of 2020 (India Economic Times Markets 2020; Sarkar 2020). In June 2020, Adani Green Energy won a national contract to invest US$6 billion into building new solar capacity in India (Sarkar 2020).

Company founder Gautam Adani recently claimed that 'in today's world, climate adaptation cannot be considered independent of economic development priorities and both job creation as well as decarbonisation must be simultaneous objectives'(cited in Sarkar 2020). This appears at odds with the rhetoric of his subsidiary Adani Australia, which proudly supports economic development in the Global South through the use of carbon intensive technologies. In addition, the company's focus on employment as the key rationale for why the Carmichael thermal coal project should go ahead seems to contradict any notion that 'job creation and decarbonisation' are

occurring simultaneously. In an era where mining companies in particular face increased pressure to decarbonise, impacting revenue and threatening assets, company's such as Adani Australia must tread carefully. Rhetoric about the value of coal must be balanced with an acknowledgement of the challenges of a changing climate and the role coal plays in producing carbon emissions. As coal represents the first and most logical casualty along the global path to decarbonisation, Adani Australia must strike a delicate balance in its language about the Carmichael project (Delevingne et al. 2020).

Throughout the source material, the company mentions the issue of climate change in only a handful of cases, preferring to use the term *sustainability* to refer to the company's energy portfolio. For example, a statement back in December 2018 affirmed that:

*'**We [Adani Australia] believe providing a sustainable energy mix** to meet increasing energy demand **will play a critical role in improving the quality of life in** developing nations and sustaining it in the developed world, which is why Adani **invests in both thermal and renewable energy generation**.'*

In this excerpt, the company reframes coal as being sustainable when combined with renewables. As outlined in previous chapters, the Carmichael project will have myriad negative environmental, socio-cultural and economic impacts for Australians directly, as well as devastating short-, medium- and long-term consequences for the planet (Beresford 2018, 9). A 'sustainable' thermal coal model is one that phases out production and use, rather than expanding an industry already in decline. Nonetheless, as a mining corporation, Adani Australia's strategy to rebrand thermal coal through the lens of sustainability can be understood in a similar way to the company's portrayal

of coal as virtuous; namely, that it provides Australians with a palatable rationale for the country's ongoing addiction to consuming and exporting fossil fuels.

Combining a highly polluting technology with a clean technology does not create a 'sustainable energy mix', only a mix. Just as the broader coal industry is keen to throw off its 'dirty' label and rebrand its product as 'clean' (Conniff 2008; Della Bosca and Gillespie 2018, 735), Adani Australia's decision to refer to its Australian investments as sustainable is a branding decision. The data underscores how the company tries to shift the parameters of what is understood as sustainable. In a statement from March 2019, the company argued that coal had an important part to play in the context of decarbonisation:

'Adani believes ***providing a sustainable energy mix is the best way*** *to supply growing demand for energy in Asia while we transition to a* ***lower carbon future****.'*

The company's attempts to frame Carmichael coal as environmentally sustainable fall flat, due to the fact that coal is one of the worst contributors to climate change (Masson-Delmotte et al. 2018). However, Adani Australia's reference to a 'sustainable energy mix' may speak to anxieties about the global energy transition and what this means for Australia's mining communities. Research into the energy transition debate in Australia points to the ongoing power of coal as a marker of identity in mining regions (Della Bosca and Gillespie 2018). The mining/prosperity discourse which underscored much of Australia's economic growth during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries is declining in influence, replaced with increased anxiety about the impacts of climate change.

Nonetheless, for communities that have historically relied on the extractive industries, like regional Queensland, processes of decarbonisation pose a significant threat to established ways of life. The increasingly contested and toxic debate concerning the future of coal in Australia has been interpreted by many in these regions as a clear debate about 'jobs versus the environment' (Della Bosca and Gillespie 2018, 735). As Part I of the analysis highlights, Adani Australia has capitalised on these anxieties in its public statements by placing jobs at the centre of the company's rationale for the Carmichael project. Community concerns about what the energy transition means for their livelihoods and identities are valid and important as employment in the coal industry represents not just an income, but also continuity of identity, community cohesion and sense of place. Overlooking the historical and contemporary role that coal plays in notions of belonging is considered a key barrier to processes of decarbonisation in Australia (Della Bosca and Gillespie 2018, 736).

Consequently, references to coal's sustainability and the sustainable energy mix speaks not just to environmental concerns but also to important fears regional mining communities have about their own futures. Through its language, Adani Australia tries to alleviate some of the anxieties associated with decarbonisation, by affirming that the Carmichael coal has an important part to play going forward. For instance, the company's website states:

'Welcome to the ***age of sustainable global energy****. For Adani Australia,* ***it all starts right here in regional Queensland****.'*

Through its language, the company constructs an imagined future in which coal will continue to play an important role in driving prosperity around the world (Della Bosca and Gillespie

2018, 436) reassuring Australian mining communities of their ongoing existence. Even if domestically, public opinion about coal is shifting (The Australia Institute 2018), Adani Australia underscores that opportunity lies in the growing economies of Asia, which will sustain regional Queensland, and coal communities across the country. In this sense, it is the sustainability of the domestic coal industry to which Adani Australia refers. Employing the term 'sustainable' represents continuity and balance. Through its public statements, Adani Australia reassures its target base that in combination with other, cleaner technologies, coal will continue to have relevance globally along with the mining communities that extract it.

Addressing community anxieties concerning decarbonisation is certainly important, as research on the Australian experience suggests (Della Bosca and Gillespie 2018). Presenting energy transition in purely environmental or economic terms overlooks the important socio-cultural context of coal. As this paper has outlined, coal is so much more than a commodity or energy source; it knits together communities, features in discourses of belonging, is vital to historical and contemporary understandings of national prosperity, and is intimately linked to human progress (Hylland Eriksen 2014).

Part II of the analysis has outlined the ways in which Adani Australia situates itself within the context of global markets and demand for thermal coal. In general, the company presents global thermal coal demand as an opportunity for Australians using the language of protectionism. It underscores the exceptionalism of Australian coal and the positive impact it could have on living standards in the Global South. Carmichael coal is presented as virtuous and something to be proud of. Finally, the company demonstrates how mining communities can look to the global energy market to sustain local ways of life,

emphasising coal's place in the energy mix of the future. Throughout its statements, the company consciously champions the Carmichael project as embodying the principles of fairness and a positive venture for Australians and the Global South alike. In general, the company nurtures the mining/prosperity discourse that has underpinned Australia's history for so long, in some cases expanding it to fit new global contexts. The source material shows that the company is adept at drawing on existing nationalist narratives and values to achieve its corporate objectives.

Discussion and Hope for the Future

As Koch (2020, 201) insists, 'companies are rarely taken seriously as producers of nationalism'; however, this paper has explored the ways in which Adani Australia draws on important nationalist themes to achieve strategic objectives. It argued that nationalism is employed as a mechanism—a tool used to garner support and transform the company's 'foreign' image to appear more localised.

This is nationalism on corporate terms. Adani Group is a vast and expanding corporation, in terms of its geographical reach and diversity of investments. The company operates in multiple social arenas and across different spatial boundaries, all while building new commercial networks as it remains embedded in established ones (Dietze and Naumann 2018, 419). The company's expansion into Australia has placed it in a complex and delicate situation. It must maintain a balance between corporate responsibilities and interests across multiple national, transnational and global spaces. For instance, balancing its role as a growing regional energy supplier, with its image as a local employer. Nationalism reduces tensions that may arise as the company shifts between the boundaries of the national and the global (Dietze and Naumann 2018) and by being sensitive to

local concerns, local socio-cultural factors and local discourses, the company moves across and between different spatial scales and carves out its own spatial network (James 1983, 67). Nationalism as a tool assists the company to establish itself in the Australian market and navigate the new socio-cultural and political terrain of doing business there (Dietze and Naumann 2018, 420).

In a broader sense, the analysis has illuminated expressions of nationalism in an era of global neoliberal capitalism, identifying ways that corporate producers of nationalism can celebrate and define a nation, while at the same time contributing very little material value (Koch 2020, 186). It is clear that nationalism and globalisation exist in a symbiotic way, and converge and emerge in the discursive strategies of transnational market actors (Koch 2020, 195). As Billig (1995, 98) asserts, at the most simple level, when an actor purports to act or speak in the interests of the nation, it will necessarily invoke and embody it. The data demonstrates the ways in which Adani Australia claims to speak on behalf of, and in solidarity with, Australians, thus presenting the Carmichael project as nationally valuable. The company purposefully blurs the lines between what is profitable for the company and what is in the national interest.

Adani Australia not only instrumentalises established and accepted nationalist discourses but recasts these same narratives in different contexts (Billig 1995, 98; Koch 2020, 195). For instance, the company's focus on coal as a development mechanism and its rhetoric about sharing Australia's high living standards appears to be a subtle gesture to principles of fairness and the discourse of the fair go. The fair go principle is therefore expanded into a global context and Australians are encouraged to view the export of thermal coal as an expression of their own goodwill rather than the outcome of market processes.

Themes and imagery of Australian nationalism are drawn on subtly, appearing as banal manifestations in language. Australian slang terminology or small nods to national values may seem trivial or inconsequential, however, as Billig (1995) argues emphatically, it is precisely these understated, unnoticed and banal forms of 'everyday' nationalism that are particularly powerful and enduring. The use of colloquialisms and references to Australian values such as fairness and egalitarianism serve to 'nationalise' Adani's Australian operations and frame them as locally embedded and endogenous. By doing so, the company hopes to build brand loyalty and garner local support in order to be commercially successful. Nationalism also appeases potential concerns that a 'foreign' corporation is exploiting natural resources, by framing the corporation's actions as being in the national interest. It is interesting to note that although this paper has focussed on nationalism, throughout the source material there is no mention of nationalism as a concept. However, as the findings suggest, it is not necessary to engage in the flag-waving type of 'hot' nationalism to have an effect. By speaking as a part of, and on behalf of the nation, Adani Australia constructs and reifies an imagined Australian community and presents itself as a natural part (Ardizzoni 2016, 138).

It is beyond the scope of this paper to analyse to what extent Adani Australia's nationalist language has actually influenced Australian audiences. However, the analysis does emphasise that many of the company's strategies only indirectly or subtly reference nationalism and may in effect, go unnoticed. The language Adani Australia uses is 'ordinary' and unassuming and therefore slips beneath surface consciousness. Its power lies in the ability to remain undetectable, while at the same time leveraging nationalism to corporate advantage (Aronczyk 2017, 244). It for this reason that the phenomenon of banal nationalist discourse warrants investigation.

It has not been the objective of this paper to suggest that Adani Australia's nationalist storyline is any more 'true' or 'false' than any other. If nationalism is indeed understood as an ideological construction, perpetuated through banal speech and action (Billig 1995), then nationalism in all its forms should be taken seriously as a way to exert power and influence. Corporations, even foreign ones, are constantly reshaping and reframing the narrative of Australianness, constructing ideas about who 'we' really are.

This paper has argued that the mining/prosperity discourse has underpinned understandings of what it means to be Australian. Taking into account that the vast majority of mines in Australia, like Carmichael, are foreign owned, it raises important questions about the power of these corporations to influence the national narrative. For instance, to what extent has the mining/prosperity discourse been shaped and perpetuated by foreign commercial interests and what are the implications if national mythology is constructed and instrumentalised by market-based actors seeking profits and taking them offshore? If the mining/prosperity discourse is an important socio-cultural barrier to decarbonisation in Australia, then interrogating just how this narrative is instrumentalised by mining corporations will provide important insights into deconstructing it. It is no longer an option for Australians or the world to let coal mining interests set the agenda for the future.

With that in mind, Australia is at an important juncture. The pandemic presents a once-in-a-generation opportunity to reset expectations about energy policy. One potentially fruitful avenue is hydrogen energy, which when produced using renewable sources like wind and solar, is carbon neutral (Australian Renewable Energy Agency 2020). Hydrogen can be stored as a gas or a liquid, meaning it can be readily transported

via existing gas pipelines, or via trucks and ships. Researchers argue that with adequate investment, Australia could be one of the world's leading exporters of green hydrogen energy which could power homes, businesses and even produce green steel (steel produced through renewable sources) (Longden et al. 2020). Investment in hydrogen energy would boost jobs domestically, contribute to global emissions reductions and provide environmental sustainability for Australia and the world. Importantly, modelling suggests that by 2050, green hydrogen could produce 200 per cent of the country's electricity needs, meaning it would allow Australia to maintain its status as a premier global energy exporter—this time with true clean energy credentials (Hamilton, Burdon, and Wang 2020). To that end, in August 2020, the Australian National University (Longden et al. 2020) estimated that if the capital costs of wind and solar continued to trend downward as estimated, then Australia would be well-placed to develop a low-cost, high volume green hydrogen industry.

While there are many unknowns, proposals like green hydrogen present a hopeful picture of a possible clean energy future for Australia's export-oriented economy. With public support for change, Australia can shift its national prosperity discourse towards energy sustainability as the driver of wellbeing, presenting itself as an innovative, safe, thriving and ecologically minded state. To ensure the health of its unique and wonderful ecosystems, its biodiversity and the wellbeing of Australian people, transition to a clean energy future is essential. Were Australia to pivot to clean energy, it would also contribute to global efforts to restore planetary health. With the science and the economics aligned it is time to reshape the narrative.

Chapter 6: Concluding Remarks

This paper has argued that Adani Australia uses nationalism as a mechanism to mediate between the company's local and global activities. By employing discourses of nationalism in its public statements, the company localises and embeds itself into the socio-cultural and economic environment of regional Queensland. At the same time, protectionist themes are used by Adani Australia as a way to justify the export of Australian thermal coal to developing markets. When transnational corporations such as Adani Australia engage with nationalism to sell products, they contribute to, and reshape, discourses of national belonging. For this reason, it is important to identify and analyse narratives of corporate nationalism.

To return once again to the question posed, this investigation has explored *how Adani Australia uses Australian nationalism, in the context of the Carmichael coal mine, to integrate into the local context of regional Queensland, while at the same time preserving the company's image as a transnational corporation*. The analysis shows how the company reproduces the national discourse of mining and prosperity in the context of Carmichael and ingratiates the company's image through the use of colloquial phrases. This language, as well as signalling the company's Australian 'character', alludes to the nationalist themes of fairness and egalitarianism.

Adani Australia also emphasises the global significance of Carmichael coal, framing it as an opportunity for Australian's to grow wealthier, perpetuating the mining/prosperity mythology in the context of global markets. Australian thermal coal is rendered a development tool and a virtuous source of energy for the Global South—a way for Australians to share their nationalist principles. Through the company's language,

Carmichael coal is rationalised as environmentally and socially agreeable, even a source of national pride. The narrative transforms Carmichael coal into something positive and socially meaningful.

To return to this paper's theoretical foundations, the findings align with the work of Pickel (2003) and Aronczyk (2017) who argue that nationalism can be viewed as a mechanism or instrument. The findings are also consistent with Koch's (2020) argument that it is not only local corporations, but importantly, foreign ones, including transnationals, that are key actors in (re)producing nationalist discourse for the purposes of profit-making. Understood as a mechanism, the paper articulates how transnational companies use nationalism to mobilise across, between and within multiple spatial configurations. In this case, Indian-based conglomerate Adani Group is able to enter and operate in the Australia market by deliberately engaging and presenting itself in an Australia register.

On a broader level, the data reveals that there is not only economic, but also political and social currency in using nationalism in a commercial setting. Even in its subtle, everyday forms, Adani Australia's nationalist representations facilitate the mobility of a foreign transnational into a new environment. By engaging with nationalist discourses that often operate at the level of the subconscious, Adani Australia's engagement with nationalist principles may go unnoticed or discounted as merely private sector advertising jargon. However, the entanglement of commercial advertising and branding strategies with nationalism draws attention to the way that global, market-based actors have the power to shape stories (Volcic and Andrejevic 2016, 3).

Scholarship into commercial nationalism is limited but growing. Combined with globalisation approaches, much can be gained

from interrogating how global companies articulate value and meaning across the spectrum of their operations and how this may shape understandings of belonging and national identity. Viewing nationalism as an ideological and discursive mechanism offers a rich and novel approach to examining processes of globalisation.

A key limitation has been the unique circumstances under which this paper was written. Covid-19 not only made it difficult to access material but rendered many earlier predictions and models about the future of the global thermal coal market obsolete. This meant that pre-pandemic articles and data sources came with many caveats. The pandemic may also have contributed to important policy changes for Australia's key markets. China's decision to become carbon neutral by 2060 (Normile 2020), and reports from October 2020 (Walker 2020) that Chinese officials are already deferring shipments of Australian coal due to deteriorating trade relations are evidence of the pace of change. Of most relevance was an announcement in May 2020 by Indian Prime Minister Modi, strongly encouraging Indian power companies to purchase domestic coal over imported (Modi 2020). These policy changes already point to significant shifts in global coal markets that threaten Australia's exports.

Writing a thesis over the course of 2020 meant consistently checking for updated reporting and real-time information, but in this period of constant flux, there is the risk that information is quickly out of date. In addition, the scope of this paper was necessarily limited, due to access issues and time constraints. Future work could take a comparative approach and incorporate content analysis from the perspective of political actors as well. Likewise, exploring to what extent nationalism is employed in other areas of the Adani Group's commercial network, for

instance in India or Indonesia, would provide a more fulsome picture of how nationalism is instrumentalised in different ways across the corporation. Considering that Adani Group's mission statement is: ''Nation Building' driven by 'Growth with Goodness'', this line of reasoning appears fruitful, as it appears that nationalism likely features across the company's operations. In addition, prior research (Lahiri-Dutt 2014) into the pervasive and significant culture of coal in India strongly suggests that further investigation of Adani Group's use of nationalism in the Indian context would be revealing.

As discussed, Covid-19 will likely hasten the transition away from coal mining and coal-fired energy in Australia and around the world. Moving away from coal will necessarily mean renegotiating the mining/prosperity discourse in Australia, likely reshaping it to reflect the realities of climate change. Australia is a mineral rich continent, and mining will continue to be important to the national economy. However, thermal coal does not have to be part of this story. As this paper has outlined, thermal coal mining in particular has limited benefit for Australians compared to the extreme environmental and socio-political costs.

It is hoped that the findings from this paper can contribute to understanding better how mining companies, in particular large transnationals, engage with nationalist tropes and themes to garner support for their extractivist activities. The stories that are told about a place are important regardless of who or what is leading the discussion. For Australia, the culture of coal must necessarily change if the country is to effectively decarbonise. The core issue is not that Adani Australia contributes to the nationalist debate, but rather that the discourses it spreads arrest progress towards a cleaner energy future.

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