Challenging Development and the North-South Divide
- A Postcolonial Analysis of the Sami People in Sweden
Abstract
This thesis examines how the Sami people, as an indigenous people in Sweden, relate to the dichotomous concept of the global North and the global South. The study builds on the framework of postcolonial theory, its connection to development studies, and its critique of the concept of the global North and the global South. Another central part of the study is the concept of identity within postcolonial theory. By exploring material from the Swedish Sami parliament and the Sami info center, the research and analysis concluded that the Sami people relate to a dual identity of being both Sami and Swedish, meaning that they identify both to the global North as well as being an indigenous people. The Sami people do also associate themselves with other indigenous groups in the South, mostly in relation to colonialism and its consequences. Thereby the North-South divide is challenged.

Keywords: the Sami people, development, postcolonialism, identity
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1. Introduction

Postcolonial thinking became a subject of heavy debate in the 1990’s and has since then been recognized as an important perspective in contemporary development studies. Postcolonialism seeks to understand the field of development and how it is theorized by raising questions about how colonial images linger on, and by acknowledging how language and representation affect everyone who is exposed to the discourse of development (see McEwan, 2009). McEwan further describes that postcolonialism “[…] is fundamentally concerned with the relationship between power and knowledge, of how past relationships of power persist into the present, and of how past inequities remain fundamental to understanding contemporary global relations” (2009:314-315). Additionally, postcolonialism criticizes development studies to be inherently Eurocentric. The field finds its roots in European cultures and tends to have a prominent western worldview, based in colonial discourses which present the North as developed and advanced, whereas the South is portrayed as backward and primitive (ibid.:120).

The existing development discourse and its distinctions between a supposedly developed North and an underdeveloped South have been criticized in postcolonial writings. In addition to the ways in which these images reflect and reproduce colonial images and power relations, it also masks similarities between the North and South (McEwan, 2009:11). An example of this could be questions regarding indigenous groups, which is often discussed in relation to the development of the global South (see for example Sköld et.al., 2015; Lundmark, 2010). Postcolonialism is a field which shares similarities with indigenous politics (McEwan, 2009:314-315). Similarly, “development” could be accused of marginalizing indigenous perspectives and to impose (post)colonial power relations on indigenous groups (Howitt & Suchet-Pearson, 2006:323). Hence, development can be regarded as both a threat and an opportunity to indigenous groups (Glennie, 2014).

The Division for Social Policy and Development - Indigenous Peoples at the UN describes indigenous peoples as “practitioners of unique cultures”. About 370 million people in 90 countries belong to an indigenous group (DSPD Indigenous Peoples, n.d.; United Nations, n.d.). Indigenous people often see themselves in a peripheral position in the society. Since they usually are based in more remote areas of countries, they are also easily forgotten by centralized powers (Glennie, 2014). All over the world, indigenous groups have fought for their rights as peoples and for the protection and recognition of their identities. Nevertheless, indigenous rights have been subject to violations. The UN states: “Indigenous peoples today, are arguably among the most disadvantaged and vulnerable groups of people in the world” (DSPD Indigenous Peoples, n.d.). Research on indigenous groups often include researching issues such as poverty and education, issues which are typically seen as important within the development field. However, the right to land and cultural survival are also crucial, but are not always given the same attention neither in relation to the global South nor the North (Glennie, 2014).

This study will try to process the postcolonial framework with its recognition of still-existing colonial power relations and its critique of the dichotomous concept of a developed North and
a presumed underdeveloped South. This will, in turn, be connected to how indigenous peoples may find themselves within this division, with a focus on Sweden and the Sami people. Indigenous groups exist in the global South but also in the global North. Even though there may be many things that divide these groups which live under different conditions, it is also possible to find similarities. The experiences of the Sami people appear to be similar to those of the indigenous peoples in the global South. For example, they have been subjected to racialized discourses and colonialism, been used as forced labor, and been denied the right to education (Lundmark, 2010).

1.1 Aim and Research Question
Considering the postcolonial critique of the North-South divide underpinning development research, this study aims to examine if and how the Sami people, as an indigenous people in the global North, may position themselves within the postcolonial critique of development. Since the aim is to understand how the Sami people in Sweden see themselves, it is of interest to analyze how the Sami people construct their own identity within this context. Hence, the main research question is followed by a set of questions with a focus on Sami identity.

1. How do the Sami people in Sweden position themselves within the postcolonial critique of the North-South divide?
   1.1. How is a Sami identity articulated in relation to Sweden (as part of the global North)?
       In what ways do they express sentiments of belonging and/or exclusion in relation to Sweden?
   1.2. How is a Sami identity articulated in relation to indigenous groups in the global South? Do they express sentiments of shared identities and experiences, or is Sami identity constructed in opposition to indigenous groups in the global South?

1.2 Delimitations
This study is based on information collected from the official website of the Swedish Sami parliament and a website which is a part of the Swedish Sami info center. The material should be central to the purpose of analyzing identities, considering why and how these sources are produced. However, the material should be studied with caution, as it may tend to portray events and incidents in a certain way. Since the sources cannot be considered as independent of each other, this material may express a less nuanced picture than other kinds of material have the possibility to do.

Moreover, interviews could have provided a deeper and more complex understanding of Sami identity compared to the more official texts which are analyzed in this thesis. However, this was not possible within the scope of this study. The research method will be more extensively discussed in the section research method.

Further, it is acknowledged that this thesis does not aspire to generalize its results. The study will refer to the “Sami people”, though it is of utmost importance to be aware that the Sami people are not a homogenous group.
1.3 Outline of the Thesis
The thesis has the following disposition: firstly, a brief introduction to the history of the Sami people in Sweden will be presented. This is followed by a discussion about who is considered to be a Sami in Sweden today. Thereafter, the Swedish Sami parliament is accounted for. After that, relevant previous research on the Sami people is presented, followed by a discussion about the Sami people’s connection to other indigenous groups. Subsequently, the theoretical framework of postcolonialism, which this thesis builds upon, is introduced. I will focus on the postcolonial critique of the division between a global North and a global South, but also develop on its conceptualization of identity. After that, a presentation of the research method and an operationalization of the research question is made. I also account for the material used and how I selected it. After this, the analysis is conducted, followed by a summary as well as the conclusions drawn from the analysis.

2. Background
2.1 History of the Sami People in Sweden
It is known that people have lived in the north of Sweden for as long as 10 000 years and there are speculations that these people were the ancestors of the Sami people. The Sami are believed to be mentioned for the first time around year 98 BCE (Samer, n.d.a). The beginning of the influence of the Swedish state within the Sami culture could be seen as long ago as 1553, when the Swedish crown started their interference with the Sami people through imposing taxes on them (Regeringskansliet & Sámediggi, 2005:10-11). Disputes over land in the area where the Sami live, both between and within states, have been seen on different occasions ever since. The Sami people originally lived in Sápmi, an area which extends over the four countries Russia, Finland, Norway and Sweden (Samer, n.d.b).

2.2 Who Is a Sami?
This question does not always have a clear answer and has been debated both within the Sami culture and by the Swedish state (Beach, 2007:2). The Sami people have been recognized as an indigenous people since 1977 (Sametinget, 2017a). The World Health Organisation (WHO) gives the following explanation to what an indigenous people could be defined as: “Indigenous populations are communities that live within, or are attached to, geographically distinct traditional habitats or ancestral territories, and who identify themselves as being part of a distinct cultural group, descended from groups present in the area before modern states were created and current borders defined. They generally maintain cultural and social identities, and social, economic, cultural and political institutions, separate from the mainstream or dominant society or culture” (WHO, 2017). As an indigenous group, the Sami people are included in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), which “[…] establishes a universal framework of minimum standards for the survival, dignity and well-being of the indigenous peoples of the world […]” (United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, n.d.).
However, the Sami people are not a homogenous group. Differences in language and culture make them heterogeneous. Though, especially within politics, an overarching Sami identity has been created which refers to a Sami culture built on Sami handicraft and reindeer husbandry (Paepke, 2016:1). The practice of reindeer husbandry has arguably been a large part of the Sami identity, even though far from every Sami engage in this. In fact, only around 10-15% of the total Sami population in Sweden are herders (Beach, 2007:5). Since the introduction of the Sami Parliament in 1993 the need to define who is a Sami grew, to be able to hold elections. Earlier, for example, the right to herd reindeer had belonged to those of Sami heritage, but a definition of “Sami heritage” was lacking (ibid.:2). This was regulated by the Reindeer Act of 1971. What could be of interest here though, is that the Swedish state did not explicitly define the Sami, but simply stated who received the rights to herd reindeer (ibid.:7-8). Nevertheless, it is argued that to identify to an ethnic or indigenous group is a decision that can only be made by the individual. Many see it as a possibility to be able to identify both as a Sami and as a Swede, while others connect the Sami identity to being alienated (Harnesk, n.d.).

2.3 The Swedish Sami Parliament

The English translation of the Sami word Sámediggi, or the Swedish word Sameting with the same meaning, is ”the Sami parliament”. The Sami parliament is both a government agency, as well as a parliament with elected members. It does not, however, exercise any actual self-determination but works as an advisory body and as an expert authority on Sámi issues (Sametinget, 2017b; Rönnqvist, 2005). This double role as both a government agency and an elected parliament with no real power to fulfill election promises produces a conflict of interests. The Sami parliament could be compelled to implement decisions from the Swedish state which are not in line with Sami interests. Because of this, different opinions have been heard about the reliability and the relevance of the Sami parliament (Rönnqvist, 2005).

3. Previous Research

The previous research which this thesis builds on connects both to studies about postcolonialism and research about the Sami people. Some postcolonial research has already been presented above, and will yet again be in focus in the theory section. Therefore, a brief completion of Sami research is presented below. This section touches on the external relevance of this thesis, the contemporary discourse about the Sami people in Sweden, but also on subjects connected to postcolonialism.

The Sami situation in Sweden has recently received more attention than earlier. One example of this is the case in which a Sami village sued the Swedish state because of rights to hunt and to fish (Fröberg, 2017). It may also be possible to see a connection between the widely-spread case of Standing Rock - a dispute about an oil pipeline which caused huge protests from Native Americans. The Sami parliament in Norway was involved in persuading a large pension fund to pull back money that could have connections to the pipeline (Fixen, 2017). Still, the contemporary research on the Sami people is often concentrated on Sami health and
culture, but also on economic perspectives of reindeer husbandry and the ethics of indigenous research (see Umeå universitet, 2008; Nordiska museet, n.d.).

However, the colonial perspective on Sápmi is also present in the existing publications on Sami issues (Umeå universitet, 2008). Among others, Vaartoe/Centre for Sami Research (CeSam), a forum for research about the Sami people and Sápmi, says the following: “[…] a long history of colonization, including colonial research, has impacted the Sami peoples and is manifested through their unequal political position in relation to the second officially recognized people of Sweden: the Swedes” (Sköld et.al., 2015:4). Arguably, this quotation points to the colonial thoughts which can be perceived in relation to the Sami people. Moreover, the historian Lennart Lundmark describes the interaction between the Sami people in Sweden and the Swedish state from the 16th century and forward. The book puts the Sami people in relation to the rest of the Swedes but also remarks on how the Swedish state can be seen to have exploited the Sami people. Lundmark concludes with the note that the Sami people, according to him, should be treated as a global concern (see Lundmark, 2010).

In the book Under the Same Sun - Parallel Issues and Mutual Challenges for San and Sami Peoples and Research, a partner project between the San people in Botswana and the Sami people is analyzed by researchers from both the Swedish Centre for Sami Research, and a researcher from the San Research Centre in Botswana (Sköld et.al., 2015). They write “Despite a multitude of geographical, cultural, political and socioeconomic contexts, they share the experience of colonization and its severe implications” (Sköld et.al., 2015:1). Further, the book is explained to provide “[…] the results of research-based investigations, in which experiences, methods and theories from different disciplines are integrated to create an improved understanding of the challenges of Indigenous research, and to present solutions for sustainable and harmonized development for Indigenous peoples in Sweden and Botswana” (Sköld et.al., 2015:193-194). The book concludes that the Sami and the San people seem to share experiences linked to their status as indigenous groups, even though they live in different parts of the world (ibid.). Of course, this inspires to further research and analyses on how Sami identities could be articulated in relation to indigenous groups in the global South.

3.1 Other Relations to the Global South?
During the colonial period in Latin America, it is possible to see how indigenous peoples were used as forced labor. The colonizers took advantage of the land and used it for cultivation, among other things (Cupples, 2013:109). Furthermore, the colonizers involved a racialized discourse, which builds on the understanding of the colonizers as superior and the natives as a people of lesser rank. This was used to legitimize the colonization and the exploitation of land and people (ibid.:141).

The Sami in Sweden were exposed to a similar treatment. During the early 17th century, the Sami people were used as forced labor in the silver mining industry. The Sami were expected to transport the ore from the mine to the coast with their reindeer (Regeringskansliet & Sámediggi, 2005:10). Moreover, the Sami have also been subjected to racialized discourses and racism. In 1922, the “State Institute for Racialized Biology” was established (Samer,
The institute’s work consisted of measuring and photographing people all over Sweden, deliberately dividing the people into two groups of races. The Sami people were seen to belong to the inferior race (ibid.). One can argue that the racism against the Sami originated here, or at least the State Institute for Racialized Biology ensured a foundation for a continuous prejudice toward the Sami people. In fact, still today the Swedish state is blamed for using a racist language when talking about the Sami people (Fröberg, 2017).

4. Theoretical Framework
4.1 A Definition of Colonialism
To fully understand postcolonialism, one should make clear what is meant when talking about the notion of colonialism. Colonialism might be comprehended in different ways. While most connect the concept of colonization to European colonization (Diamond, 1997), others have argued for a wider conceptualization. Therefore, one possible definition of colonialism is presented below.

Jürgen Osterhammel quotes Philip Curtin and interprets colonialism as the “domination of people of another culture” (2010:15). However, Osterhammel claims that the definition of colonialism must include other factors: a society which is manipulated externally, but also that the colonized society is obliged to transform and adapt to the colonizers’ interests, as well as the fact that colonizers do not acknowledge earlier cultures in the colonized society, and a demand to civilizing the “barbaric others” (ibid.). By considering this, Osterhammel lands in the following definition of colonialism:

Colonialism is a relationship of domination between an indigenous [...] majority and a minority of foreign invaders. The fundamental decisions affecting the lives of the colonized people are made and implemented by the colonial rulers in pursuit of interests that are often defined in a distant metropolis. Rejecting cultural compromises with the colonized population, the colonizers are convinced of their own superiority and of their ordained mandate to rule.
(Osterhammel, 2010:16-17).

Though, in his book, Colonialism, Osterhammel also mentions the notion of colonialism without a colony. This could be possible to see within countries, where the colonialism is not about a “mother country” and a colony which is geographically far away. Colonialism without colonies is more about a superior or dominant center of power standing against a peripheral society (Osterhammel, 2010:17). Consequently, colonialism must also be understood as a process that can happen within a society.

On the other hand, colonialism can be argued to be a global mechanism and be seen as something that still marks the world (Eriksson Baaz, 2005:34). According to Spivak, colonialism is to be linked to a global process which was initiated due to the colonies distribution of labor. In turn, this led to globally unequal power relations in which the
“Western” superiority and the colonies’ production of goods to the “West” simply were expected (Spivak, in Kapoor, 2004:629).

4.2 Postcolonial Theory

Postcolonialism is a contested concept with different ideas about what it consists of (Loftsdóttir & Jenssen, 2012:2). The term could be said to be built on several approaches which try to respond to both colonialism and decolonization (McEwan, 2009:34). Stuart Hall describes postcolonialism as an overarching concept of decolonization which is possible to apply to both former colonizing societies and societies that have been colonized (1996b:246). However, the prefix “post-“ has been widely debated. Postcolonial thinkers often argue that the “post” in postcolonialism does not indicate that colonialism has ended, nor that every element of colonialism has transformed into something new (Eriksson Baaz, 2005:34). Rather, colonialism is a notion that is still present.

Furthermore, McEwan presents different ways of analyzing postcolonialism (2009:21-25). She argues that postcolonialism may be seen as a theoretical approach within a metaphysical, ethical, and political theory. Here, postcolonialism emphasizes issues connected to race, ethnicity, gender, and identity, as well as postcolonial national identities and its challenges (ibid.:22). It is also argued that postcolonialism is “Attempting to recover the lost historical and contemporary voices of the marginalized, the oppressed and the dominated, through a radical reconstruction of history and knowledge production” (Guha, in McEwan, 2009:26) by addressing both the agency and resistance of peoples which have been subjected to colonial oppression (McEwan, 2009:26). Similarly, McEwan states “[...] postcolonialism provides a counter-story about the history of interventions in the name of ‘development’ by wealthy countries in poorer ones” (2009:9).

However, to follow McEwan’s discussion about the relation between postcolonialism and development, one may look at the many terms which have been used throughout literature which touches upon the subject of development. These descriptions could be the “Third World” or the “developed”/”developing” binary which strives to separate what may be seen as rich and poor countries (McEwan, 2009:13). It could be useful to think of the global North as well as the global South as metaphorical concepts (Dirlik, 1994:351). However, these concepts tend to imply a hierarchy between countries and to miss important distinguishing factors (ibid.). Arguably, to talk about the North-South divide does not solve these problems, since only talking about concepts of the division may reproduce a western hegemonic power and construct a North which is superior to the South (Spivak, in Kapoor, 2004:628).

In addition, the discourse about “development” can be said to be inherently Eurocentric and to have its beginning in a worldview where the North-South divide is prominent. Postcolonialism could be considered as a critique of what is often seen as “development” since the postcolonial perspective aims to observe the world through a different lens and to challenge this divided worldview which sprung from the colonial era (McEwan, 2001:94). Edward Said’s concept orientalism, which he established in his book with the same name, set
a widely accepted view of the colonizers and the colonized which showed a difference between the Eurocentric constructed identities of the “west” and the “rest” (Eriksson Baaz, 2005:43). This picture of difference held a construction of the west as a superior civilization, in comparison to the rest which was characterized by backwardness and seen as the complete opposite to the west. The Other, the one representing everything that is not the west or the colonizer, is then often a subject of assigned irrationality, barbarism, and passivity, to mention a few examples (ibid.:40-43). Even the concept of the global North and the global South can be linked to this dichotomous divide between the west and the rest. The North is often described as rich and developed, whereas the South is portrayed as undeveloped and uncivilized (Swedish Secretariat for Gender Research, n.d.).

4.3 The Concept of Identity

The concept of identity is a central concept within postcolonial theory and within this study, hence the following section will discuss this further. I will briefly account for how the concept of identity is constructed within the postcolonial theory. Here I rely upon a postcolonial conceptualization of identity, in which identities are not something inherent which already exists but is constructed through discourse (Hall, 1996a).

Previous understandings of identities have revolved around the understanding that subjects are stable and consistent, which suggests an underlying “real” identity. However, identities must be seen as contextual and non-static, always constituted and re-constituted through discourses. How one positions oneself as well as how one is positioned within a discourse and context gives rise to the presupposition of multiple identities. Ergo, an identity or experience could be explained differently depending on the context and, therefore, create temporary understandings of the identity or experience (Eriksson Baaz, 2005:15). This will be analyzed in the section of the analysis. Discourses may produce identities by creating subjectivities which are possible to temporarily ascribe to (Hall, 1996a:6). However, the process of creating an identity is not one-sided. It can only take place if the subject is actively placing itself within this existing discourse and by taking part in the context of the discourse (ibid.). Yet, resisting identities which are created through dominant discourses is not easy.

Furthermore, Stuart Hall continues his discussion about the concept of identity by claiming that identity can only be built on what the identity is not. Therefore, an identity can exist only in relation to the Other or the conception of what the identity excludes (1996a:4-5). This connects further to the story about the “West” and the “rest”, or “othering” which is a central aspect of general colonial discourses with a focus on dichotomies (Eriksson Baaz, 2005:43).

5. Research Method and Operationalization

The research will continue to draw on the line of the theoretical framework of postcolonialism and the concept of identity, since this is a major part of the aim and questions of this thesis. Though, to be able to make a more thorough analysis of the material examined for this thesis and to be able to understand how a Sami identity may be conceptualized and articulated, I will
also find inspiration in tools of qualitative text analysis. I chose Norman Fairclough’s critical discourse analysis, which is presented below. Since the concept of both postcolonialism and identity is, as argued in the theory section, created discursively, one may see the relevance of using elements of critical discourse analysis to be able to examine the research question. Additionally, the critical discourse analysis aims to investigate for example national identities and power relations within a society, which goes in line with the research of this thesis.

5.1 Discourse as a Theoretical Concept
The concept of discourse is often talked about as a general idea of patterns which structure the language that is used in different social spheres (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002:1), or more simply as “[…] a particular way of talking about and understanding the world (or an aspect of the world)” (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002:1, authors’ emphasis). A discourse also has an active position in constructing the social world we live in (ibid.:7), thus it can analyze most social phenomena (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000:31). I argue that the material I use in this study is a part of a wider discourse, since it should give clear examples of how different issues and subjects are perceived from a Sami perspective. A further discussion about the material is found in the section named material.

An analysis of a discourse does not intrinsically strive to understand what is behind the discourse, nor to examine whether people mean something else than what they say. Statements cannot, with this view, be inherently right or wrong. However, the statements are possible to be subject to a more critical evaluation in a later part of the discourse analysis. This kind of analysis has its beginning in the view that the world is constantly changing through the discourses within it. So, it is therefore not possible to study an objective reality and thus the discourse itself is of interest (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002:21). This relates to the knowledge that identities always are constructed and reconstructed. Thus, an identity can only be analyzed within the context of the discourse, and not tell anything about what lies behind the identity. Accordingly, both statements and identities may vary but at the same time be as true as anything else.

Jørgensen and Phillips argue that “It is by seeing the world through a particular theory that we can distance ourselves from some of our taken-for-granted understandings and subject our material to other questions than we would be able to do from an everyday perspective” (2002:22-23). Arguably, this goes in line with the theory of postcolonialism as well as the method and theory of discourse analysis. This thesis aims to use the theory of postcolonialism to be able to see the discourse about the Sami people in Sweden through a different lens than what is often, perhaps even subconsciously, used.

5.2 Critical Discourse Analysis
The field of discourse analysis is wide, but this thesis concentrate on what is called critical discourse analysis, or CDA. This type of analysis focus on the “[…] study of the relations between discourse and social and cultural developments in different social domains” (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002:60). Nonetheless, there are some components of the CDA that are
shared between all approaches of discourse analysis (ibid.). One of these elements declares that the language in the discourse analysis should be analyzed within the social context it is located within (ibid.:62-63). Moreover, another shared component is the claim that all discourses, and the practices arising thereupon, may create and reproduce unequal power relations. These unequal power relations can be seen between social groups such as men and women, or an ethnic minority and the societal majority. Jørgensen and Phillips describe the critical discourse analysis as a tool which has the ability to look at unequal power relations like this (ibid.:63), hence this thesis sets out to use some aspects of Norman Fairclough’s framework of critical discourse analysis. The framework puts emphasis on discourse being what Jørgensen and Phillips describe as a “[...] social practice which both produces and changes knowledge, identities and social relations including power relations, and at the same time is also shaped by other social practices and structures” (2002:65).

Norman Fairclough divides discourses into three dimensions: the discursive practice, the text, and the social practice (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002:68). However, the text is what is in focus in this thesis. When studying the text, a detailed analysis which goes into the linguistic characteristics of the content is used. This can be accomplished through analyzing metaphors, wording, and grammar, but also by considering how identities are created in the language as well as by examining the construction of social relations (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002:67, 83). To do this, Jørgensen and Phillips demonstrate two concepts, namely transitivity, and modality. A focal point in this study is the tools of transitivity, the possibility to link subjects to both objects and processes. The authors describe it as follows “[…] insight can be gained […] by analysis of the ways in which people, through positioning themselves and being positioned by others, construct, negotiate and challenge different accounts which represent different understandings of the world, including different attributions of responsibility for actions and events” (2002:152-153). Hallgren and Johansson draw upon Fairclough’s work about discourse analysis to describe how groups or individuals are expressed as agents in the analyzed material. In other words, what groups are presented in the text and how are they positioned as objects or subjects? It is also possible to look at what kind of attributes the groups are assigned (2007:11-12).

Although, Fairclough’s framework and the approach of critical discourse analysis, in general, can be criticized for being too vague when it comes to defining the discursive and the non-discursive and the differences between the two (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002:89). CDA’s have also been criticized for having an uncertain recognition of processes which lead to group formation, but also that the understanding of subject and agency may be weak (ibid.).

5.3 Operationalization
This study will be realized with the influence of Norman Fairclough’s method of critical discourse analysis (CDA), but with a focus on the concepts of identity and postcolonialism. The dimension of the text and the transitivity will be the center of attention, applied through questions such as “is the Sami people described as objects or subjects?” and “what kind of attributes are ascribed to the groups?”.
Furthermore, to be able to answer the rather extensive research questions of this thesis, a set of complementing questions have been directed to the examined material. The questions serve as a complement to the main research questions, to break them down and make them more comprehensible. They are derived from the theoretical framework of postcolonialism and the concept of identity, which arguably colors the Sami people in Sweden today.

1.1. How are Sami identities articulated in relation to Sweden? Do they identify themselves as Swedish, and in that case in what ways? In what ways do they not identify themselves as Swedish, or rather, in what ways do Sweden emerge as the Other – through which a Sami identity is constructed?

1.2. How are Sami identities articulated in relation to indigenous groups in the global South? In what ways do the Sami people identify themselves as an indigenous people? What other indigenous peoples do they account for as having similar experiences as, and in what ways are the experiences similar? Do certain indigenous groups appear as Others, with whom they do not share similar experiences with?

6. Material

The analysis strives to study how the Sami people position themselves within the postcolonial critique of development, rather than studying how they may be positioned by others. Therefore, the chosen material comes from the official website of the Swedish Sami Parliament and a website which is a part of the Sami info center which is a mission from the Swedish government to the Sami Parliament of Sweden to spread knowledge about the Sami people (www.samer.se). Both websites are constructed with menus under which it is possible to find information about for example the Sami politics, the environment, the Sami culture and language, as well as Sami history and Sami education. The websites are built to present information from a Sami perspective on the above-mentioned issues, among others. The texts which are found under the different topics on the websites are concise. Considering that the texts are written from a Sami perspective, they touch upon issues such as identity, colonialism, racism, and other indigenous groups, which are connected to the main research question and the operationalization. Texts which look at issues which are not considered to relate to the aim of this study, for example statistics over the Sami electoral register, have not been included.

What could be perceived as a problem with the chosen material, is that it is presented in Swedish. I would not argue that it makes the thesis less credible since I, the author of this thesis, speak Swedish as my mother tongue. However, a problem arises when the material is to be presented. It is not possible for someone that does not speak Swedish to read the quotations and understand them. I have tried to get around this problem by translating them as well as by discussing the meanings of the quotations. Though, sometimes I have inserted the Swedish words which I find substantially necessary for the understanding of the discourse.

Furthermore, it could be argued that the analyzed material only gives one picture of what it could be like to identify as a Sami in Sweden and that it is produced to specifically point at
differences and at what distinguish the Sami people from the rest of the Swedes. Both websites that are used do also have a connection to the Swedish Sami parliament. On the other hand, this could also be used to argue that the material would show how the Sami people must not identify as only Sami and how they, as a people, could be positioned within a context of development.

7. Analysis
The following section will demonstrate the results of the analysis, which was conducted on the material presented above. Note that all quotations have been translated and italicized by me. The original quotations are attached as footnotes since I find it essential that the reader can easily see them in its original language and to be able to follow my interpretation and translation. However, in some cases, I have included the Swedish words (in brackets and not italicized) from the original quotation to highlight charged words.

When analyzing the material, three themes emerged that will structure the following analysis. The themes relate to the operationalization, in which specific questions were posed to be able to study the more overarching research question: how do the Sami people in Sweden position themselves within the postcolonial critique of the North-South divide?

7.1 Both Sami and Swedish
This theme discusses how a Sami identity is articulated in relation to Sweden, as well as how the Sami people may identify themselves as Swedish. The findings here show dual identities, which is in line with how the concept of identity was presented in the theory-section.

The Sami parliament has created a definition of the Sami people. This definition regulates who has the right to vote, for example. However, a part of this definition tells that you must identify as a Sami yourself, to be considered a Sami. The question about who should have the right to identify as a Sami or not is stated at the end of the text, to make the reader reflect on this matter. Furthermore, the text lifts the issue of wanting to identify to more than one identity (dubbla identiteter) and establishes that it is possible to identify as both a Sami and as a Swede (både same och svensk):

“On the other hand, you can also have dual identities: For example, you can be both Sami and Swedish and change between cultural codes in different contexts” (Samer, n.d.).¹

However, there is still a distinction between the Sami people and the Swedes. It is described that it is possible to belong both to the Sami people and the Swedes, but the words “[…] and change between cultural codes in different contexts” indicates that it is possible to have a twofold identity, but not at the same time. This could relate to identity as a contextual phenomenon. A discourse has the possibility to create a social space for one identity, and the

¹ “Å andra sidan kan man även ha dubbla identiteter: Till exempel kan man vara både same och svensk och växla kulturella koder i olika sammanhang” (Samer, n.d.).
language can express this identity as it is perceived in a fixed moment in time. However, a further discussion about how one may ascribe to more than one identity is not the purpose of this thesis and may belong to another field of study.

Still, the Sami info center portrays a woman with the headline “standing in two cultures” which describes the life with a twofold identity as both a Sami and a Swede. It is stated that:

“[...] there has never been any conflict in being Sami - and to live far from Sápmi” (Fingal, 2011).²

Here, the readers are told that the interviewed woman does not find it conflictual (aldrig funnits någon konflikt) to identify as a Sami while not living in Sápmi. To not live in traditional Sami areas may show a deeper integration into the “Swedish” culture rather than the Sami culture. However, the use of the word “conflict” is interesting in this text. It could be read as there perhaps should be a conflict, or that this should-be conflict is more of a prejudice. However, the interviewed woman seems to express that there are not enough differences between the Sami people and the Swedes for it to be impossible to be a part of Sweden as a Sami, showing a possibility for a dual identity as both Swedish and Sami.

7.2 Yet, Marginalized by Sweden

As the previous paragraph suggests, the Sami people also express marginalization and exclusion from the Swedish society, which in turn reflects an identity in which Sweden becomes the Other.

The following quotation shows how the material portrays how the Sami people were subjects of colonialism. Undoubtedly, seen in the definition of colonialism presented by Osterhammel, colonialism is a process with a negative connotation when talking about it from the colonized perspective. The text illustrates that the Sami people have been displaced “since then”, which indicates that they see this colonization as a continuous process.

“The colonization process which began in the 17th century, when the public chancellor Axel Oxenstierna saw Norrland as a potential Swedish colony, drove the Sami towards the north and west. Since then, the Sami people have always been forced out, and they have lost both fields and resources. Today, the struggle has reached the mountains in the north of Sweden” (Samer, n.d.e).³

From the same text comes another quotation:

² “[…] har det aldrig funnits någon konflikt i att vara same - och bo långt från Sápmi” (Fingal, 2011).
³ ”Den kolonisationsprocess som startade på 1600-talet när rikskansler Axel Oxenstierna såg Norrland som en potentiell svensk koloni drev samerna norrut och västerut. Under resans gång har samerna hela tiden fått retirera och mist både marker och resursunderlag. Idag har kampen nått fjällvälden” (Samer, n.d.e).
“Swedish kings wanted to mine silver, and later iron ore, in Sami land. The forests in the Sami areas became more and more sought after. [...] The Swedes also needed hydropower, which could be produced in the Sami rivers, in the building of the nation, etc” (Samer, n.d.e). 4

This shows how the Sami people understand colonization and the extraction of natural resources. Here, one can see a clear distinction between the Sami people and the Swedes through the statement that “them, the Swedes” are building a nation. The Sami people distance themselves from this with the separation of “the Swedes” and “the Sami”.

“At the end of the 19th century, the Sami people (lapparna) were regarded as a people of lower status (lägre stående), who could not take care of themselves” (Samer, n.d.e). 5

The quotation above marks against the elderly word for the Sami people, ”lappar”, which is a word connected to racism (Benaissa, 2015). The sentence connects the word “lappar” with “a people of lower status which could not take care of themselves”. The attributes ascribed to the Sami people here are related to segregation and subordination.

“The Sami people and the Swedes have a joint past (gemensamt förflutet) which we have not reconciled with (försonats). However, the big problem (stora problemet) is that the Swedes generally know very little about the Sami people and Sami conditions. It is a problem for both the Swedish government and the Sami parliament” (Samer, n.d.e). 6

Here we see an acknowledgment of a joint past, shared between the Swedes and the Sami people. However, the use of the word “reconcile” is of interest here, since it indicates a problematic history. It may point towards the history of colonization and thus point at the sentiments of exclusion which is connected to the process of colonization. Furthermore, the paragraph lifts a current problem, the perception of bad knowledge of the Sami people.

Another way in which marginalization and exclusion of the Sami people are expressed is through a racialized discourse. The Sami people have, as stated earlier in this thesis, been subjects of racism in Sweden. The following text deal with this from a Sami-perspective.

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4 “Svenska kungar ville bryta silver och senare järnmalm i lappmarkerna. Skogarna i Sameland blev mer och mer eftertraktade. […] Svenskarna behövde också vattenkraften i de samiska älvarna i sitt nationsbygge, osv” (Samer, n.d.e).
5 “I slutet av 1800-talet betraktades samerna (lapparna) som lägre stående människor som inte kunde ta hand om sig själva” (Samer, n.d.e).
“In the middle of the 19th century, more and more people started to react (reagera) to the fact that the Sami people were treated badly (behandlades illa)” (Samer, n.d.f).  

This sentence puts the Sami people in a victimized position vis-à-vis the Swedish state, which is, in this paragraph, the absent actor which had the power to treat the Sami people badly. Moreover, the text continues to describe the way the Sami people were perceived as inferior during the 19th century and how the biological racism came to take a part in the Swedish Sami politics:

“At this time, it was said that the Sami people were born (födda) with certain ‘racial features’ (rasegenskaper) which made them inferior (underlägsna) to the rest of the population (befolkning)” (Samer, n.d.f).

Furthermore, the text treats the issue of how the Sami people, as a consequence of racism, see themselves as excluded from development. It describes that Swedish authorities (myndigheterna) did not consider the Sami people as capable of all types of work. This is shown in the following quotation:

“At that time, the government invested considerable amounts of money to inhabit the northern parts of Sweden with so-called ‘krontorpare’. But the Sami received almost none of this support. Although many of them had already built successful new buildings, the authorities did not consider the Sami people as capable of such work” (Samer, n.d.f).

“Now a new era began, where the problems of reindeer husbandry and the Sami culture were caused by modern Sweden's intrusion (intrång) with large forestry, hydropower developments, mines, roads, railways and eventually large-scale tourism. Much of this benefited the Sami, but the space for their way of life and their culture became ever smaller” (Samer, n.d.f).

Arguably, forestry, hydropower, roads and railroads are considered to be connected to what many think of when discussing “development”. However, this text points at the feeling of being excluded from development, since the processes described may have hurt the Sami culture more than it contributed to its continuation and preservation.

7 “Vid mitten av 1800-talet började allt fler reagera mot att samerna behandlades illa” (Samer, n.d.f).
8 “Under de sista decennierna av 1800-talet kom den biologiska rasismen in i svensk samepolitik. Nu började man påstå att samerna var födda med vissa ’rasegenskaper’ som gjorde att de var underlägsna den övriga befolkningen” (Samer, n.d.f).
9 “Vid den tiden satsade staten avsevärd belopp på att befolka Norrlands inland med kronotorpare. Men samerna fick nästan inget av detta stöd. Trots att många av dem redan hade tagit upp framgångsrika nybyggen ansåg inte myndigheterna att samer klarade av sådant arbete” (Samer, n.d.f).
10 “Nu började en ny tid där problemen för renskötseln och samekulturen orsakades av det moderna Sveriges intrång med storskogsbruk, vattenkraftsutbyggnader, gruvor, vägar, järnvägar och så småningom storskalig turism. Mycket av detta fick även samerna nytta av, men utrymmet för deras livsform och deras kultur blev allt mindre” (Samer, n.d.f).
To continue, Sami education is an issue which has caused the Sami people to become marginalized. Education seems to occupy a central role in the construction of Sami identity, which is shown through the following discussion:

“From the late 1940s to modern times, the task of the school has been to educate the Sami people to become good Swedish citizens with the Swedish culture as a model” (Samer, n.d.g). ¹¹

This quotation states that the Sami education, since the 1940’s and onwards, has been to discipline (fostra) the Sami to become well behaved Swedish citizens (goda svenska medborgare) with the Swedish culture as the ideal (förebild). The word “discipline” could be seen as a word with a negative connotation, more connected to a relationship between parents and children. Consequently, the Sami people are here positioned as objects which are excluded from the process of their own education.

“The history of the Sami school is a story about how a foreign culture conquers thoughts, social, and cultural values and rules by implementing their own standards” (Samer, n.d.g). ¹²

The Sami info center talks about the issue of education with a charged wording. They describe the history of Sami education as something affected by a foreign (främmande) culture which conquers (erövrar) thoughts and rule (härskar) by the imposing of new standards. Though the invading actor is not shown explicitly in the text, this invading foreign culture is undoubtedly the Swedish state. In this quotation, the state is assigned attributes of being authoritarian and absolute, implying that the Sami people were excluded without the possibility to stand up against this absolute actor.

7.3 Bridging the North-South Divide: Identification with Other Indigenous Peoples

This theme deals with questions such as “how are Sami identities articulated in relation to indigenous groups in the global South?” and “in what ways do the Sami people identify themselves as an indigenous people?”.

The process of colonization becomes especially visible in a part of the text which describes colonialism in Sápmi in relation to other indigenous groups around the world. However, this quotation mentions a brutality associated with groups that have been in a superior position to the indigenous peoples. The text acknowledges a collective past of the indigenous groups, but also makes a distinction between the Sami people and others regarding this brutality.

¹¹ “Från slutet av 1940-talet fram till i modern tid har sameskolans uppgift varit att fostra samer till goda svenska medborgare med svensk kultur som förebild” (Samer, n.d.g).
¹² “Samernas skolhistoria är en berättelse om hur en främmande kultur erövrar tankar, sociala och kulturella värden och härskar genom att införa egna normer” (Samer, n.d.g).
However, the text mentions only indigenous groups which live within countries that are a part of the global North, just as the Sami people:

“This is a part of our collective (gemensamma) colonial past (koloniala förflutna). Many other indigenous groups have also experienced this but under much more brutal (brutala) circumstances. Not many of the original Indian population exists on the American continent. This could be blamed (skyllas) on the genocide (folkmord) conducted by the Europeans. In Russia, some fifty indigenous peoples have disappeared (försunnit) since the beginning of the 1900’s. In Australia, the white immigrants (inflyttade vita) shot aborigines for Sunday fun. The colonization of Sápmi has largely (till stora delar) occurred without violence (skett utan våld), but with administrative methods” (Samer, n.d.e). 13

Furthermore, to touch upon the question of “what other indigenous peoples do they account for as having similar experiences as, and in what ways are the experiences similar?”, one may look at the connection between the Sami people and the United Nations. The Sami Parliament describes the UN’s work with indigenous peoples all over the world. Simply the fact that this is a text found on the Sami parliament’s website could imply a connection between the Sami people and other indigenous groups in the global South because of the Sami parliament’s role. The text state the more charged “[...] belongs to an indigenous people who are almost always in a minority (minoritet) in a country whose borders (gränser) they have not decided (man inte själv bestämt)” (Sametinget, 2017c). 14 It is possible to see elements of how the actors are described as passive actors which have not been able to take part in the process of drawing borders which further points at a shared feeling between indigenous groups.

The text continues to emphasize shared perceptions of colonization. This is seen in one of the criterions for an indigenous people which is exemplified below:

“[...] has a historical continuity with communities in the territory which was later invaded or colonized by others” (Sametinget, 2017c). 15

In this quotation, the words “was invaded -” (invaderades) and “was colonized by others” are used in a passive manner and illustrate once again a perceived identity as colonized and invaded in relation to these “others”.

14 “[...] tillhör ett ursprungsfolk som nästan alltid är i minoritet i ett land vars gränser man själv inte bestämt” (Sametinget, 2017c).
15 “[...] har en historisk kontinuitet med samhällen i det territorium som senare invaderades eller koloniserades av andra” (Sametinget, 2017c).
Furthermore, it would be interesting to focus on the word “indigenous peoples” (ursprungsfolk) which is used in a plural form in the text, as demonstrated here: “Since the UN was created, indigenous peoples have fought for the right to representation in the UN system” (Sametinget, 2017c). The plural use of the term “indigenous peoples” implies that no distinction is made between the indigenous peoples included in the UN system. That is, no distinction is made by explicitly saying “the indigenous peoples in the North” or “the indigenous peoples in the South”, rather, all indigenous peoples are counted for as the same.

Another “interlocking”, or at least lack of differentiation between different indigenous peoples, is shown when the text describes how the UN in the 1970’s started to investigate if and how indigenous peoples were subjected to infringements. Here, too, is the plural form of “indigenous populations” used.

The Sami Information Centre presents a short paragraph under the section called “international cooperation” which summarizes that there are many indigenous peoples all around the world whose histories share many similarities. “The Sami people are active members of most global forums and international organizations which are struggling to improve the situation for ourselves and others” (Samer, n.d.h.). This sentence describes that the Sami people actively engage in organizations which works towards an improvement “[…] for us and for others”. This put the Sami people in a general position of belonging to a context of indigenous populations.

The emphasis of a relationship is continuously found in the examined material. Particularly, the issue of the right to land is prominent. “Urfolk världen över delar erfarenheter av hur kolonisatörernas markövertagande lett till att deras egna marker krympt” (Samer, n.d.h.) describes how colonisers (kolonisatörernas) have taken over land (markövertagande) and that indigenous peoples all over the world shares experiences (delar erfarenheter) of the shrinking access to land which they consider to be theirs.

8. Summary and Conclusions
The purpose of this study is to examine if and how the Sami people in Sweden, as an indigenous people in the global North, may position themselves within the postcolonial critique of development. Due to rising attention to both indigenous and Sami issues, and since the previous research on this area seemed to be somewhat lacking, this thesis aimed to explore this field further. With a focus on the postcolonial conception of identity and with the help from elements of critical discourse analysis, the study aimed to find an answer to the research

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16 “Sedan FN kom till har ursprungsfolk kämpat för rätten till representation i FN-systemet” (Sametinget, 2017c).
17 “Samerna är aktiva medlemmar i flertalet globala forum och internationella organisationer som kämpar för att förbättra situationen för oss själva och andra” (Samer, n.d.h.).
question: how do the Sami people in Sweden position themselves within the postcolonial critique of the North-South divide?

The results of the research were divided into three themes. The first theme discusses how a Swedish Sami identity may be dual, both Sami and Swede. However, even though identities can be multiple and contextual, as shown in the theory-section, the texts point to the distinctions which are made between the Sami people and the Swedes. While the material reflects an identity as Swedish, there is also another aspect of identity where Sweden emerge as the Other. However, in line with critical discourse analysis, and the fact that identities constantly are constructed and reconstructed, this study does not strive to see what is behind the identity but to look at what is stated in the analyzed material.

The second theme concludes that even though the Sami identity may be twofold, it still holds aspects of being marginalized and excluded with Sweden emerging as the Other. This marginalization is mostly connected to colonialism and extraction of natural resources on what is perceived to be Sami land. Moreover, the Sami people are subjects of racialized discourses, which is especially expressed in regard to history. Notable, the material which has been used does not discuss many contemporary problems, but focuses instead on history. This could be because of the material’s purpose, to inform and to educate. Or this could point at an emerging discourse which perhaps would tell another story about the situation today. Though, this would be the subject of further studies within this research area.

Lastly, the third theme shows a Sami identity that clearly cut across the North-South divide. How do the Sami people articulate themselves in relation to this? Colonialism and its consequences are the main undergoing issue in this theme. The analyzed texts show how colonialism has affected indigenous peoples and how this could be seen as the main bridge of what connects them. Though, the Sami people also distance themselves from this by recognizing that other groups may have been subjects to more violent colonialism than the Sami people.

Another issue to counter is the difficulties with being intersubjective in the analysis. This means that the study, even though extensive attempts not to, partly is dependent on the researcher and the researchers own interpretations of the material. However, this is debatable as a weakness of qualitative text analysis in general. But, by inserting the original quotations as footnotes in the analysis and by the use of brackets when exceptionally charged words and phrases were used, this has been attempted to be tackled.

This study has an exploratory ambition with the intent to later be able to look for explanations and to carry out further studies on this subject. Thus, this study does not have ambitions to generalize its results. However, it seeks to contribute to a new understanding of how a Swedish Sami identity is framed within postcolonial theory and the division of the world into a global South and a global North.
Recall what was said in the introduction of this study: the existing development discourse and its distinctions between a supposedly developed North and an underdeveloped South reflect and reproduce colonial images and power relations, and masks similarities between the North and South (McEwan, 2009:11). This study challenges the North-South divide by looking at how an indigenous people in the global North see themselves within this division. To summarize, the research and analysis conclude that the Sami people relate to a dual identity of being both Sami and Swedish, meaning they identify both to the global North as well as being an indigenous people. Much focus is on the unbalanced power relationship between the Sami people and Sweden, in line with postcolonial theory. However, due to the analyzed material’s focus on history, one can only assume that the power imbalances are still present today. The Sami people do also relate to other indigenous groups in the South, mostly in relation to colonialism and its consequences.
9. References


9.1 Primary Sources


