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The Sami as an Obstacle to Development

A Discourse Analysis of the Portrayal of the Sami People in Swedish Parliamentary Debates

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Abstract

The Nordic country of Sweden portrays itself as a leader in sustainable development and human rights advocacy. However, the expansion of what is portrayed as “green” mining activities in Sami territories creates cumulative pressure on traditional livelihoods like reindeer husbandry, which raises questions about the sustainability narrative. Previous research has focused on Swedish policy documents rather than debates which reveals a research gap in how the nexus of extraction and indigenous rights is framed within the parliament. This thesis uses discourse analysis to explore how the Sami people are portrayed in parliamentary debates about mining. This case study analyzes the language used in these debates through a postcolonial lens, supported by extractivism and green colonialism. The analysis reveals two discourses, one where the Sami are portrayed as an obstacle to development showcasing the parliamentary mindset of extraction. The other discourse is illustrated by members of parliament advocating for Sami rights. Additionally, it is found that the state justifies Swedish mining by claiming that it facilitates the green transformation of Sweden and Europe. The findings contribute to the theories about green colonialism and extractivism as empirical evidence of how these concepts are manifested and naturalized in parliamentary debates.

Key Words: Parliamentary discourse, Sami Peoples, Sweden, Mining, Green Colonialism
Word Count: 9993

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Abbreviations

CDA - Critical discourse analysis

CSO - Civil society organization

FPIC - Free prior informed consent

MP - Member of parliament

RHC - Reindeer herding community

SGU- Swedish Geological Survey

Political parties:

C - The Centrist Party

M - The Moderates

MP (in *italics*) - The Environmental Party

S - The Social Democrats

SD - The Sweden Democrats

V - The Leftist Party

1 Introduction

The Nordic country of Sweden portrays itself as being at the forefront of sustainable development (Swedish Institute, 2023), green transformations such as fossil-free steel production (green steel) and being an international human rights advocate (Miljödepartementet, 2021, Human Rights Watch, 2015). After the neoliberal Swedish mineral strategy was established in 2013, a mining boom was experienced in Sami territories in northern Sweden (Haikola & Anshelm, 2016; Ojala & Nordin, 2015). A clear sign of an increased interest in Swedish mineral resources is increased prospecting expenses which quadrupled between 2002 and 2011 and reached a high of almost 800 million SEK right before the mining boom (Haikola & Anshelm, 2016). Therefore, the statistical evidence suggests that a new mining boom might be pending, prospecting expenses by mining corporations have tripled since 2016 from around 440 million SEK to over 1500 million SEK in 2022 (SGU, 2023c). The Swedish governments support these mining investments through pro-mining policies like low mineral taxation and state investments in crucial infrastructure (Ojala & Nordin, 2015). The state justifies mining by proposing it as being "green". This green-washing can be found in documents by governmental bodies like the Swedish Geological Survey (SGU), but also in the government's climate implementation plan from 2023 where it is argued that Swedish mining can contribute minerals for the green transformation of Europe (Sveriges Regering, 2023: 78). The mines are creating immense pressure on the Sami practice of reindeer husbandry by limiting access to crucial grazing pastures (Lawrence & Åhrén, 2016). The expansion of mining activities in the region adds to the pre-existing threats to reindeer husbandry of land and water resource exploitation i.e. industrial forestry, reservoir creation for hydroelectric power, military activities and tourism (Ojala & Nordin, 2015).

Despite this known pressure on a traditional Sami livelihood, the Swedish governments do not seem to have the same attitude towards human rights advocacy in the national arena. Sweden has gained critique by civil society- and intergovernmental organizations such as the UN on how they address national human rights violations, and indigenous rights violations related to land use in particular (Civil Rights Defenders, n.d; Lawrence & Åhrén, 2016). Through this discrepancy of where Sweden portrays itself as a sustainable human rights advocate internationally but promotes a mining expansion nationally even though it might violate Sami rights, an interesting puzzle emerges - how is this promotion justified and argued for in the highest decision-making body?

This thesis is a case study that will explore discourses on Sami people in parliamentary debates about mining through a discourse analysis. The overarching theoretical lens is postcolonialism which provides a critical lens when analyzing colonial attitudes and structures. The rest of the theoretical framework is informed by the extractivism and green colonialism (see section 4). The next section (2) will delve into the background by introducing the Sami people and their historical relationship with the Swedish state as well as some Swedish mining background. Section 3 is a review of the previous research done where three different types of discourses were typically found. In section 5, the methodology that informed this thesis is found. In section 6 the analysis of parliamentary debates is found before finishing with some concluding remarks in section 7.

1.1 Research aim and question

Through a postcolonial lens, the thesis aims to create an understanding of how the Sami people are portrayed in parliamentary debates about mining. The rationale behind choosing to explore parliamentary debates about is that the current literature globally is quite scarce when it comes to parliamentary/governmental discourses on indigenous peoples in extraction debates. In the Swedish context, the focus has been on grey literature like policies and regulations but not on the debates. For this reason, the second aim is to add to the existing literature on governmental discourses about indigenous peoples in relation to extractive industries (see section 3). To reach the aim, one research question was created and will be answered:

How are the Sami people portrayed in Swedish parliamentary debates about mining?

1.2 Significance

This thesis addresses a crucial gap in the current knowledge about parliamentary discourses about mining on indigenous lands. The Swedish state's justification of mining as "green" highlights a discrepancy in its sustainability narrative, which adds complexity to the narrative. The study is significant because it examines parliamentary debates about mining, an area not widely studied before, to see how the Sami are portrayed within an extractive discourse. By doing so, the thesis sheds light on the contradictions in Sweden's position on sustainability and human rights, particularly on how greenwashing can affect indigenous communities. The focus of existing literature on Swedish policy documents rather than debates further emphasizes the importance of this study in providing a more holistic understanding of governmental discourses on extractive industries and indigenous rights.

2 Background

This section starts with a short introduction to the Sami people before going into the Swedish state's relationship with them. Section 2.2 is more in-depth since the aim of this thesis is to identify discourses, therefore it is important to contextualize the state and Sami history to get a more holistic understanding of the discourses. Finally, section 2.3 is about Swedish mining.

2.1 The Sami people

One of the world's indigenous people, the Sami people, live in Fennoscandia, in the northern parts of Norway, Sweden, Finland, and on the Kola peninsula in Russia (Lundmark, 2012: 8). The Sami have an estimated population of 80,000 and about 20,000 live on Swedish geographical territory (Swedish Institute, 2019). The Sami speak different dialects depending on the region, the largest dialect being the northern Sami. The traditional livelihoods of the Sami people are hunting, fishing, and reindeer husbandry. It is estimated that 2000 Sami engage in reindeer herding today in Sweden, while a majority have other types of livelihoods (Lundmark, 2012: 8).

The traditional Sami territory is called Sápmi. The Sápmi borders are not clear-cut, different maps show different borders. The most contested border is where Sápmi ends in the south as there are archeological sites further south than illustrated on the map below (Samiskt informationscentrum, n.da). The red dots in Figure 1 illustrate where the active Swedish mines are located in Sápmi. Cumulative effects of competing land use i.e. forestry, agriculture, water-

and wind power, bioenergy projects, etc. have created immense pressure on Sami villages and Sami culture in extension (Kløcker Larsen et al., 2020).

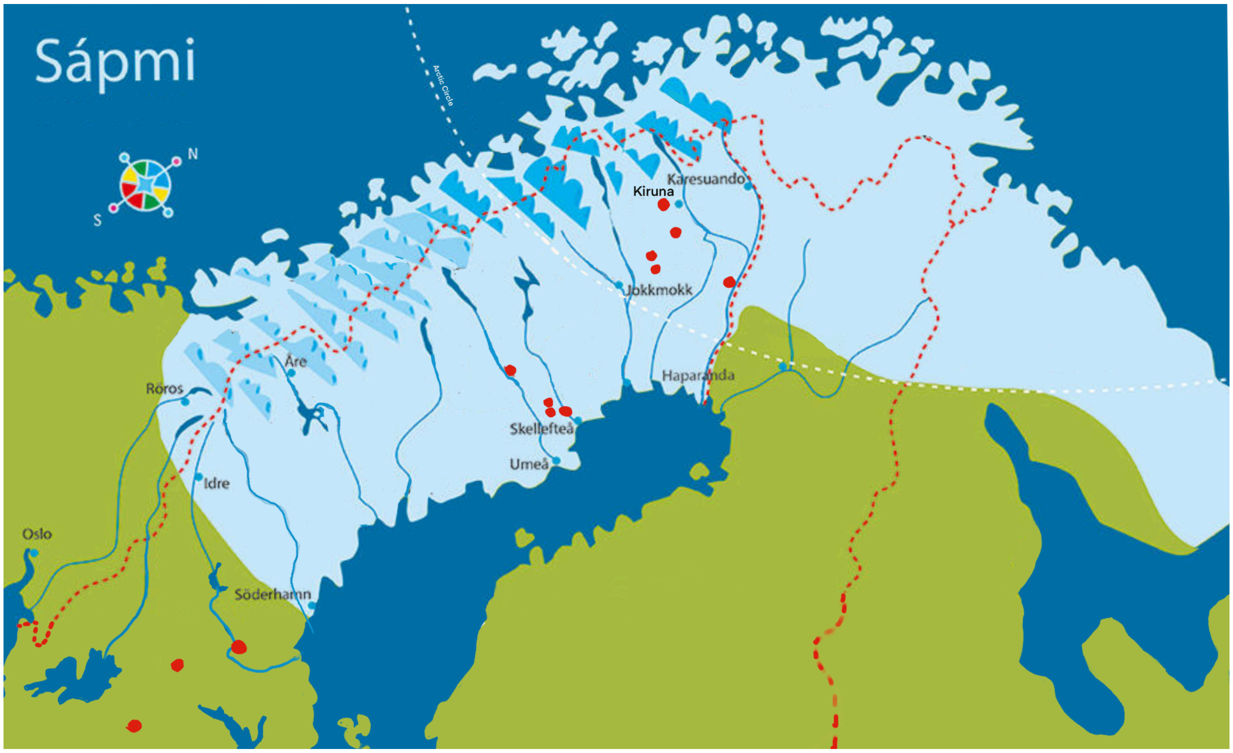

Figure 1. Sturesson, n.d in Samiskt informationscentrum (n.da) for the Nordic museum (map modified by author). Samiskt informationscentrum is a website created by the Sami parliament of Sweden, the website states that the map is a representation of their reality and the borders are not clearly defined (Samiskt informationscentrum, n.da). The other types of land uses are not a part of the map as they are not within the boundaries of this thesis.

2.2 The Sami people and the Swedish state

The Sami people and the Swedish State have a long complicated history colored by colonization, discrimination and exploitation (Lundmark, 2012). In the Middle Ages, big farmers in the coastal areas of the Bothnian Bay were allowed to tax the Sami if they paid a small fee to the crown. In the 16th century, during the Vasa kingdom, the Swedish crown became interested in taxing the Sami people directly and not through middlemen, and the Sami became obliged to pay taxes for their fishing and hunting. Some Sami paid taxes to several countries as more than one country claimed the area in which they lived (Lundmark, 2012: 20-21, 27-33; Ojala & Nordin, 2015). The borders of the Nordic kingdoms and the later nation-states have been problematic for the Sami reindeer herding communities (RHC). Bilateral reindeer pasture agreements forbid the

Sami from crossing borders to their traditional pastures. In 1889 the border between Sweden and Finland got closed for reindeer crossing, this made some Sami RHCs who were already displaced due to a closed border between Norway and Finland, move back to Norweigan territory. Today, Sweden and Norway do not have a ratified bilateral reindeer pasture agreement, as the 2009 proposal got much criticism from Swedish Sami (Samiskt informationscentrum, n.db).

The colonization of Sápmi and its people began in the 17th century when the Swedish crown wanted to conquer the northern lands for valuable resources, territories, trade routes, and taxation rights (Ojala & Nordin, 2019). According to Ojala and Nordin (2015), one of the most important drivers for this colonial expansion was the desire to exploit natural resources. The exploitation of Sápmi and its people began when silver was found in Nasafjäll in 1634. In the following two decades, Sami men were forced to transport ore to the foundry, which caused some to flee with their reindeer to Norway to escape the forced labor (Lundmark, 2012: 56-59). Early modern mining industries in Sápmi were part of a colonial discourse valuing Sami people and land as resources for the Swedish crown (Nordin, 2012). A clear example of how the Swedish crown viewed Sápmi as a colony to extract resources from, is illustrated in the quote below (Norrland is the northern part of Sweden):

> “I do not need a colony, I have Norrland” -Axel Oxstierna (1583-1654), Chancellor of the Swedish realm (Samiskt informationscentrum, n.dc; author’s translation)

The colonization of the collective Sami mind began with the Swedish crown's aspiration to Christianize the Sami people (Ojala & Nordin, 2019). The Christianization had several methods, one was by force, by fining, sentencing corporal punishment, and the death penalty to non-believers, even though the latter was not widely sentenced, and another method was through missions (Lundmark, 2012: 67-74; Ojala & Nordin, 2015). Along with the aspiration of bringing the Sami people to the “right” faith, churches were built, as well as marketplaces and schools. Ojala and Nordin (2019) argue that these locations created nodal points of Swedish colonialism in Sápmi.

In the 1700s, Swedish courts often ruled in favor of the Sami in land conflicts with Swedish settlers. In comparison, in the 1800s, the courts ruled in favor of the settlers as they were non-nomadic and cultivated land which was valued higher and more legitimate in the eyes of the courts (Lundmark, 2012: 92-95). A state justification for the land encroachments was by framing the Sami as primitive. This was in line with the new idea of cultures with higher and lower levels, where nomadic cultures were considered to be of lower levels (Lundmark, 2012: 193). In the 19th century, Sweden had a property rights reform where all land except homes, farms, and farmland belonged to the crown, this led to the Sami losing land rights all over Sápmi (Lundmark, 2012: 85, 105-108). The physical colonization of Sápmi was not through displacement by physical violence, but rather through administrative processes in which the Sami got their land expropriated by the crown which kept it or gave it to settlers (Lundmark, 2012: 96).

2.2.1 1900s-present

In the 19th century, researchers became interested in human skulls and their shape to investigate who the "real" indigenous peoples of Europe were. This led to the creation of the field of racial biology that followed the plundering of Sami graves to gather skulls for "research". At the time the Sami were perceived as an indigenous people with a declining population, this view changed by the turn of the 20th century. The Sami were viewed as a people who had been "intruding" the Nordic territory instead, in addition, their population was perceived to be increasing, which resulted in new policies (Lundmark, 2012: 193-207). According to Lundmark (2012: 217-240), the political discourse was "the Sami should be Sami" i.e. spend their time herding reindeer. At the beginning of the 20th century, members of parliament claimed that the "Sami race" would go extinct if they did not continue with the nomadic lifestyle and that public school would make the Sami children too comfortable to return (Lundmark, 2012: 232). In the decades after the Second World War, the racism and discrimination towards indigenous peoples were toned down, and in 1973 a new reindeer herding law came into force which had removed the racist concepts and tones of its predecessor (Lundmark, 2012: 310). In the second half of the 20th century, the state granted the Sami people more rights and self-determination e.g. the Sami villages became legal entities and the Sami parliament was established in 1993. An issue with the Sami parliament is that it has no decision-making authority over land conflicts, but rather on “soft” issues such as culture, language, and the Sami school (Lundmark, 2012: 315-320).

2.3 Swedish mining

According to the Swedish Geological Survey (SGU, n.da), Sweden has a long mining history. Evidence suggests that mining has existed on Swedish land since at least the 13th century. The Swedish metal mines have decreased in number since the early 20th century from about 250 to 12 active mines, but at the same time, the total production output doubled, which means that the mines increased their productivity tremendously (SGU, 2022a; SGU, n.da). Today, with a 93 percent share, Sweden is the largest iron ore producer in the EU (SGU, 2023a). 9 out of the 12 active mines are located in northern Sweden. All three ore regions Norrbotten, Skelleftefältet, and Bergslagen are located on or near the traditional Sami territory, Sápmi (SGU, 2022a; Samiskt informationcentrum, n.d.a; Raitio, Allard & Lawrence, 2020). Norrbotten and Skelleftefältet are located within Sápmi, while the region Bergslagen is located outside of the southern border.

The governmental authority SGU and the trade association SweMin state that mining is crucial for today's modern society as the mined products can be found everywhere in our daily lives, from our cell phones and jewelry to electric vehicles, wind turbines, and solar panels (SGU, 2022b; SweMin, 2023). Both SGU and SweMin frame mining as being important for the Swedish and European “green transformation” (SGU, n.db; SweMin, n.d). In the governmental climate implementation plan from 2023, similar framings of mining as sustainable or “green” can be found where it is stated that the Swedish mining industry can decrease EU dependence on third parties for mined products and contribute raw materials to the digital and green transformation (Sveriges Regering, 2023: 78). Raw materials are and will continue to be important for the green transformation in Europe, the use of metals has increased exponentially with new technologies. On average, a person in Europe uses 15 tonnes of iron and 600 kilograms of copper during their lifetime. In theory, metals can be recycled an infinite number of times without losing their qualities, however, the technique has not been invented to do this for all elements yet (SGU, 2022b).

As aforementioned, Sweden experienced a boom in mining around 2013. However, it did not happen without protests from Sami- and environmentalist groups aimed at the Swedish state and the mining corporations. At the core of the protests are questions of land- and indigenous rights (Ojala & Nordin, 2015). Sami RHCs have weak and insecure potential to influence the relevant processes in mineral extraction permitting processes (Raitio, Allard & Lawrence, 2020). In 2020 the state did not have any legal obligation to consult the Samis as in line with free prior informed consent (FPIC) which was found to be a regulatory gap between international and Swedish law. Additionally, there is no appropriate possibility to appeal to a court, which impinges on Sami's access to justice in these processes (Raitio, Allard & Lawrence, 2020). After international critique on the absence of a free prior informed consent (FPIC) framework in Sweden, new legislation about the state´s duty to consult the Sami in matters that concern them came into effect in 2022 with an extended inclusion, since March 2024, to also include the municipal and regional offices (Sveriges Riksdag, 2022:66). However, civil society organizations have criticized the state for not fully incorporating FPIC in the national legislation as in line with international law (Amnesty Sverige, 2019; Civil Rights Defenders, 2022). An important criticism is that the law does not fully reflect the principles of FPIC which can make the implementation of the legislation more difficult as the wording in the bill is weaker than the international equivalent. Civil Rights Defenders (2022) lists other possible problems with the legislation and a second failure raised is the lack of resources and access to justice. The reason for this is that the state has not budgeted extra resources for Sami representatives to be able to participate in a meaningful and equal way like their government counterparts. Another problem with access to justice is that there is no established right for the Sami people to appeal faulty government decisions. This is also a general problem in Sweden regarding Sami rights violations (Civil Rights Defenders, 2022).

3 Previous research

This section will provide an overview of previous research on governmental/parliamentary discourses on extractive industries in relation to indigenous communities. The sampled research only includes case studies on countries with an indigenous minority population. This section is thematically divided into three themes, research on neoliberal extractivism, colonialism, and indigenous themes.

3.1 Research on neoliberal extractivism

The most prevalent discourse found in the previous research was a neoliberal extractivist discourse (Gjelde-Bennett, 2021; Riofrancos, 2017; Lovón Cueva, 2020). However, the theme was conceptualized differently such as economic growth (Noga & Wolbring, 2014), economic development (Woronov, 2017; Lovón Cueva, 2020), wealth creation (Gerster, 2013), extractivism, neoliberalism (Riofrancos, 2017; Lovón Cueva, 2020) and colonialism (Acuña, 2015). Regardless of whether the government was placed on the left or the right end of the political spectrum, the governments researched prioritized the promotion of extractive industries.

Case studies in Canada and Australia found a governmental discourse of economic growth, that was positive towards extractive industries (Noga & Wolbring, 2014; Woronov, 2017). In Australia, Woronov (2017) found an extractive discourse when the ruling party accused "radical environmental activists" of using "lawfare" to stall the opening of a mine. The accusations were based on the notion that Australia's most crucial political goal was supposedly economic development driven by natural resource exports. This governmental view of natural resource extraction being a driver of the economy was also found in Peruvian and Ecuadorian contexts (Lovón Cueva, 2020; Riofrancos, 2017). In a case study of Peru, two presidents´ messages on economic growth were analyzed. Lovón Cueva (2020) found that both the centrist- and liberal presidents promoted the myth of extraction being the driver of the economy. In the Ecuadorian context, Riofrancos (2017) divides the political landscape of the recent decades into two different periods of natural resource governance. The first period was characterized by deregulation and privatization, while the second period was characterized by reassertion of the state through nationalization and expropriation. Riofrancos (2017) divided the second period into two distinct discursive fields, radical resource nationalism and extractivismo. The concept of radical resource nationalism was introduced by Riofranco (2017) and is characterized by state reaffirmation through several measures e.g. the nationalization of the oil and gas sector to use revenues for community welfare.

Now onto some more Sweden-specific research. Gjelde-Bennett (2021) analyzes the struggle of indigenous land claims within the neoliberal paradigm with a focus on the Gállok mine in Sweden and brings the issues of self-determination within nation-states to the forefront. In the context of indigenous peoples, self-determination involves an expectation that the decision-making power shifts from the state to the indigenous communities (Tennberg, Broderstad & Hernes, 2021: 8). In a neoliberal international system, the nation-state is the actor with ultimate power and therefore fulfilling self-determination for indigenous communities is seen as a threat to the nation's sovereignty (Gjelde-Bennett, 2021). The threat of true self-determination is not limited to Swedish context, the Australian definition of indigenous self-determination limits it to areas where political options of self-government by the indigenous communities is not applicable (Banerjee, 2000). Evidence suggests that the Swedish government prioritizes economic growth by mining over other values, this is similar to the Canadian and the Australian governments' position (Gjelde-Bennett, 2021). A study on the regulatory gap between mining permitting practices and Sami rights illustrates that mining has been a political priority while Sami rights issues have had a low political priority (Raitio, Allard & Lawrence, 2020). A discrepancy in the legal frameworks between Sweden and its Nordic counterparts is clear in the legal area of Sami consultation where Norway and Finland have prioritized the introduction of comprehensive consultation laws. Norway has had consultation laws for nearly two decades, and Finland for over two decades (Allard, 2018). As aforementioned, Sweden just implemented a law about the duty to consult the Sami, this delay compared to the other Nordic countries highlights a temporal gap in the Swedish legal framework. The gap between international and Swedish national law, as well as within the Swedish legal system, leads to the neglect of Sami perspectives in favor of mining activities (Raitio, Allard & Lawrence, 2020: 12)

3.2 Research on colonial discourses

To understand the potential manifestation of colonial discourse in the data, we have to delve into what has been found about colonial state discourses previously. Additionally, concepts and arguments by other scholars can further help the analytic discussions in sections 6 and 7. Colonial discourses was mostly found within governments in the global north (Banerjee, 2000; Preston, 2017). The cases were the colonial discourse in Australia and white settler colonialism in Canada and its extraction connection. The Australian state has been unsuccessful in acknowledging the continuation of colonialism in the present, through e.g. land rights, even though they have recognized some past injustices (Banerjee, 2000). Banerjee (2000) is for this reason hesitant to the usage of the term postcolonialism as it indicates that it is something of the past. Furthermore, concepts such as “progress”, “modernity” and “development” are symbols of the “post” colonial nationalistic plan and frequently act as an extension of the colonial control systems (Banerjee, 2000). Van Teijlingen and Fernández-Salvador (2021) suggest that the implementation of buen vivir (see section 3.3) in Ecuador resulted in the state recolonizing indigenous and marginalized communities in the name of modernization. Lovón Cueva (2020) stated while discussing the current governmental discourse in Peru, that even though indigenous communities are the main group affected by conservation and extractive industries, they are often excluded or violated in development speeches.

In the case of Canada, Preston (2017) finds a governmental discourse that attempts to whitewash the depiction of the Canadian nation, which therefore deletes the perceived presence of indigenous peoples. Additionally, the white settler state of Canada has deep-rooted ties with the oil and gas industry, as they aid with economic growth by generating tax revenues for the state. Simultaneously, the huge oil extraction projects with pipelines across the region occasionally break and leak toxic oil into the ground, in addition, they disrupt animal migration patterns and ancestral traplines that provide food for indigenous nations (Preston, 2017). Both authors hold a similar position when analyzing relationships between indigenous communities and the state. Banerjee (2000) is positioned in “the fraught space riven by an ongoing colonial desire to exploit the land, its resources and peoples, and the anti-colonial opposition to colonizing institutions and practices" and suggests the concept of recolonization can be used to explain the relationship (Perera & Pugliese, 1998: 72 in Banerjee, 2000: 9). Preston (2017: 366) introduces racial extractivism as a concept that “positions race and colonialism as central to extractivist projects under neoliberalism and underpins how these epistemologies are written into the economic structure and social relations of production and consumption”. The authors’ positions highlight the tension created by extractivism between indigenous communities and their states. Moreover, the tension uncovers a discrepancy between indigenous views on natural resources and the neoliberal extractivist view.

3.3 Indigenous discourses

This section is not intended to discuss indigenous communities' discourses, but rather examples and analyses of when those indigenous discourses on extractive industries have been adopted partly or fully into the governmental discourse. In the literature review for this thesis, indigenous discourses were only found in literature about the global south and Latin America in particular (van Teijlingen & Fernández-Salvador, 2021; Riofrancos, 2017; Lovón Cueva, 2020). One occurrence when indigenous discourses influenced the governmental discourse was in the Wirkuta/Catorce region in Mexico. When the government intervened, there was an ongoing conflict between the indigenous Huichol and a mining corporation about to reopen a mine on sacred and ancestral land (Boni, Garibay & McCall, 2015). The federal government decided to meet the Huichol people's demand to prohibit mining by proposing conservation in which mining was illegal since it violated sacred and traditional indigenous land (Boni, Garibay & McCall, 2015). The available research about indigenous influences on governmental discourses is sparse, except for the buen vivir movement in Ecuador. The concept of buen vivir is the opposition to the traditional development model and is a translation of the Kichwa expression *sumak kawsay* which signifies a holistic perception of humans living in harmony with nature (Caria & Domínguez, 2016: Riofrancos, 2017; van Teijlingen & Fernández-Salvador, 2021). The buen vivir movement has its roots in the years before the extractivismo period began around 2009. It originated from indigenous and environmental activists and their opposition to oil extraction in the Amazon during the neoliberal period in Ecuador. In 2008 buen vivir was incorporated in the Ecuadorian Consitution (Caria & Domínguez, 2016). In 2009 during the early extractivismo period, some members of parliament used many terms from the extractivismo/buen vivir discourse while criticizing natural resource extraction which was unusual at the time. In the same year, indigenous discourses could be found in the governmental development plan from 2009 where a critique of the traditional extractive model was occurring. Bureaucrats interviewed by Riofrancos (2017) had adopted the same indigenous critique on extraction. Several authors found a disparity between how buen vivir is treated in the Ecuadorian constitution and how it was implemented through policies and development strategies (van Teijlingen & Fernández-Salvador, 2021; Caria & Domínguez, 2016). The implementation has not been vastly different from the traditional extractivist model except that the indigenous peoples living close to the extractivist arenas were promised new government services and infrastructure that in practice often were not delivered. Furthermore, buen vivir has been used by the Corres government to foster positive opinions towards more extractivism (van Teijlingen & Fernández-Salvador, 2021). The main difference between indigenous and neoliberal extractivist discourse is the ecocentric view of nature having intrinsic value versus the anthropocentric view of nature having instrumental value (Acuña, 2015).

4 Theoretical framework

The overarching theoretical perspective informing this thesis is Postcolonial thinking which provides a critical lens when analyzing the data and extractivist mindsets. The two additional theoretical frameworks chosen for this thesis are related and can be understood as two sides of the same coin. On the one hand, extractivism which is a mindset that can explain actors' motivations and justifications for promoting extractive industries and that is entangled with both capitalism and colonialism. On the other hand, green colonialism that can provide critical explanations for land encroachments and the justification of them.

As aforementioned (see section 2.3), the mining industry and the government frame mining as a necessity for green transformation and sustainable development. To explain the green justification of mining along with the weak institutions regarding indigenous rights, mining, human rights, etc., there is a need for a theory or a concept that explains these phenomena (Lawrence & Åhrén, 2016; Raitio, Allard & Lawrence, 2020). Therefore, it is important to have a theoretical framework that can explain the privatization of common land for “green” mining projects.

4.1 Extractivism

The rationale behind choosing extractivism for the framework is that previous research has found extractivist discourses in governments and the Swedish political prioritization of mining over Sami rights suggests that such a mindset might be present in this data as well. For this reason, this framework is important to be able to identify such mindsets present in the data. Extractivism is a mindset or a way of thinking about the environment. It is conceptualized as “a particular way of thinking and the properties and practices organized towards the goal of maximizing benefit through extraction, which brings in its wake violence and destruction" (Durante, Kröger & LaFleur, 2021: 20). The extractive era has its roots about 500 years ago in colonial times as it was a central mechanism and mindset used when legitimizing and consolidating Western colonial dominance in the Americas. In present days, extractivism has experienced an expansion and intensification by becoming more extensive, violent, and global in pace and scale (Durante, Kröger & LaFleur, 2021: 25-28). Extractivism is surrounded by and causes a spectrum of violence. From dramatic and direct types of violence such as severe suppression of environmental activists to slow/hidden types of violence such as structural violence produced by the economics- and governance of extraction (Shapiro & Mcneish, 2021). Shapiro and McNeish (2021: 2) state that new types of extractive violence are concealed in the discourse of "green development" and "green building". This makes the concept more applicable to this thesis since several actors justify Swedish mining by including it in the "green transformation" discourse. The extractivist logic is at the nexus of colonialism and capitalism where it can not be separated from one or the other (Durante, Kröger & LaFleur, 2021: 21).

4.2 Green colonialism

The critical lens through which this thesis has been created is postcolonial thinking. This section starts with a short introduction to postcolonial ways of thinking before delving into the concept of green colonialism which is informed by postcolonialism. According to Young (2020: 1), postcolonialism depicts perspectives critical of colonialism and/or colonial attitudes. It should not be understood as a single theory but rather as a way of thinking about the world. Like feminism, postcolonial theory is not inspired by one single creator, but rather by several people in different places trying to explain phenomena (Young, 2020: 8-9; Sabaratnam, 2020: 161-163). A postcolonial approach can contribute to a critical understanding of the structures, practices, and attitudes that support Western supremacy as being "unequal, racist and dehumanizing" (Sabaratnam, 2020: 163). The structures support Western supremacy by raising Western states and peoples as being more important and historically significant than the non-west. To further address and explain instances of green colonialism, the concept of modernity from decolonial theory can be used. In decolonial theory, modernity/modernization is seen as a philosophical and political project that is grounded on coloniality i.e a "racialized, hierarchical binary that empowers people and ideas seen as ‘modern’ over those seen as ‘non-modern’” (Sabaratnam, 2020: 167-168).

Using a postcolonial perspective and the concept of green colonialism can provide a clearer framework for explaining the discourses and nuances in the data. Green colonialism is closely linked to the concept of green grabbing. Green grabbing refers to the appropriation of land and resources for environmental objectives i.e. protection, conservation, and green projects (Fairhead, Leach & Scoones, 2012). Green colonialism is conceptualized here as the colonization of common land through privatization for projects conceptualized as being “green”. Additionally, it is used to explain development policies that promote expanding practices such as resource extraction and infrastructural development, which essentially rely on increased energy consumption (Sandström, 2024). This expropriation or colonization may operate against the interests of local people, by making their lives unsustainable by depriving them of their source of livelihood (Young, 2020: 136). In the context of Sápmi, land expropriation and appropriation for extractive purposes are partially justified through the language of sustainability with concepts of sustainable economic development, sustainable growth and green transformation, etc (Frandy, 2021; SGU, n.db). Extractive projects disrupt traditional subsistence activities to extract energy, minerals, and wealth, primarily benefiting the non-Sami people (Fairhead, Leach & Scoones, 2012). The green transformation proposed by Sweden is seen by the Sami as a form of green colonialism due to the chain reactions that land expropriations can have on a core of their way of life, namely reindeer husbandry by essentially making it unsustainable (Sandström, 2024).

It is argued that Swedish colonialism is not only a past phenomenon but is continuing in the present through extractive industries (Lawrence & Åhrén, 2016). Meanwhile, an argument by Swedish politicians and mining representatives is that reindeer herding takes place on around 50 % of Swedish territory, while mining takes place on less than 0.05 % of the land (Lawrence & Åhrén, 2016; Weihed & Ahl, 2012). However, Lawrence and Åhrén (2016) argue that the above comparison does not consider the actual herding cycle as the animals graze in different pastures depending on the seasons. This implies that each RHC must have access to adequate winter, spring, summer, and autumn pastures and undisturbed migration routes as well as resting areas in between. This is crucial for the survival of reindeer and by extension the survival of reindeer herding as a livelihood. Even though a mine ‘only’ occupies a small portion of a RHC’s grazing lands it can have adverse effects (Lawrence & Åhrén, 2016). Research illustrates that the disturbance zones due to mining are between 2 and 14 km depending on the topography and the type of mine. This can result in traditional grazing pastures becoming useless due to the reindeer avoiding them (Lawrence & Larsen, 2014: 35,49).

Democratic processes often exclude indigenous perspectives and costly legal battles become the last resort for the Sami (Sandström, 2024), but the new law on consulting the Sami on matters that affect them might, in the best case, change this. An example of this exclusion and green colonialism is the Gállok mine project in Sweden which was granted an exploitation concession by the government in 2022. The concession has been appealed by the Sami village, whose land the proposed mine would be located on, to the Supreme Administrative Court which will deliver the verdict during the spring of 2024 (Svt Nyheter, 2024).

5 Methodology

5.1 Research design

This section provides an introduction and explanation of the methodology and research design chosen for this thesis. As aforementioned, this thesis is a single case study with the qualitative approach of discourse analysis. In addition, it is informed by a critical postcolonial lens and extractivism. A case study implies an in-depth examination of the case in its context to achieve a holistic understanding (Punch, 2013: 234). This thesis is based on primary data acquired from the Swedish parliament’s web archive. The decisions in the research design were made in order to fulfill the aim and be able to answer the research question sufficently.

5.1.1 The case

The “case” in a case study can be almost anything e.g. an individual, a role, a community, an event, a decision, a policy, etc (Punch, 2013: 232-236). The case here is Swedish parliamentary debates about mining and seeks to give insights into discourses on the Sami in Swedish parliamentary debates about mining. The parliamentary debates take place in Stockholm in the parliament house which is open to the public (Sveriges Riksdag, 2023). The Swedish parliament contains 349 members elected by the people. They serve for 4 year periods with the current running between 2022 and 2026 (Sveriges Riksdag, n.d). Parliamentary debates are debates about different matters and proposals which the parliament will decide on. The debates have specific rules depending on the type of debate. In proposal debates, there is a fixed order of speakers, a member of parliament (MP) from the biggest party that agrees with the proposition starts. Then it switches to the biggest party that has reserved itself against the proposition. If there are no reservations against the proposal, the size of the party determines the order of speakers. The MPs who have signed up for the debate are allowed to answer and do quick replies to other MPs speeches (Sveriges Riksdag, 2024).

5.2 Data collection

The data is transcribed from Swedish parliamentary debates about mining that mention the Sami people or reindeer herding. This data was chosen to be able to answer the research question. The debates are found in the Swedish Parliament video archive and are in Swedish, there is a transcription available that will be used. The transcription is in Swedish which is my native language, I therefore feel confident that I will be able to translate it to English sufficiently after three years of university studies in English.

The sampled empirical data are Swedish parliamentary debates about mining, with a temporal limit of January 1, 2022. The first sampling criterion was that the debate should appear in the parliament’s web archive when filtered for “gruva” or “råvara” (mine and raw material). The second criterion is that through document search with “cmd+f” mines or mining should be mentioned at least once by two different MPs. The last criterion was that the words related to the Sami should be mentioned at least once e.g. “rennäring” and “same”. The sampled population is 14 debates. At first, I tried to sample with a temporal limit of this parliamentary term from 11/9/2022 but only 5 debates could be sampled. I then extended the limit to include all of 2022 which resulted in the current sample. With the extended sample, there is a new aspect to analyze as there was a government exchange. In the previous office term, the government consisted of the Social Democratic party. In the current term, the government consists of the Moderates, Christian Democrats, and the Liberals with support from the Sweden Democrats.

5.3 Data analysis

To analyze the data sampled for this thesis discourse analysis was used. Discourse analysis focuses on how and what language is used for and in what social context it is utilized, not so much in terms of words and sentences (Punch, 2013: 370-371). The analysis is inspired by critical discourse analysis (CDA), which views discursive practice as crucial in shaping social structures (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002:71-75). This guided my analysis of how language in debates reflects and creates social realities like power relations. CDA's focus on social context helped me analyze the language used, and recognizing that discourse functions ideologically allowed me to uncover how these debates might maintain unequal power relations, particularly concerning the Sami people (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002:71-75).

The data was closely read and analyzed through coding or labeling parts of the text to later be able to identify and contextualize the relevant discourses present (Dunn & Neumann, 2016: 103). An important aspect of discourse analysis is the textual mechanism of presumption i.e. the background knowledge that is regarded as true. Discourses construct understandings about the presence of objects, subjects, and their relationships. Additionally, discourses are possibly their strongest when such understandings are accepted as given facts, thereby shaping naturalized knowledge. Through a discourse analysis, the “natural facts” can be uncovered. This knowledge production is made visible while opening space for alternative knowledge construction that was not visible in the mainstream discourse (Dunn & Neumann, 2016: 110-111).

The analysis started with creating excepts of the sampled debate where the Sami were mentioned as well as any answers and replies to the original speech to be coded. The analysis was then carried out in an inductive manner by first reading the sampled debates one time while taking notes. The second read-through was more thorough and included the coding of relevant sentences and context. Codes were generated inductively, some examples of codes are “Sami rights advocacy” and “opposing land interests”. After coding the debates, they were lifted to a higher level of abstraction by piecing together matching codes into discourses. Furthermore, the coded excerpts were read several times until I was satisfied with their codes.

5.3.1 Limitations

In terms of generalizability, it is difficult to generalize a single case study as the outcomes are context-dependent. For this reason, this thesis does not claim any generalizability (Robson & McCartan, 2016: 20). Despite this, the study should still be deemed as valuable when examining this specific case and it might be able to inform other studies with similar aims and context as this study.

6 Analysis

The section below aims to analyze and discuss what discourses regarding the Sami people were found in parliamentary debates about mining through the theoretical framework in order to answer the research question *How are the Sami people portrayed in Swedish parliamentary debates about mining?* The section is divided into two subsections, each aims to analyze the discourses found in the data. The dominant discourse found was the Sami as an obstacle to development followed by the contrasting Sami advocacy discourse.

6.1 Sami as an obstacle to development discourse

The most dominant discourse found in parliamentary debates about mining is a discourse that represents the Sami people as being opposed to extractive land uses and thereby obstructing state development through extraction. In the 14 debates sampled, this discourse was found 27 times. Land conflicts between stakeholders wanting to establish extractive activities such as mining, wind turbines, and infrastructure developments and stakeholders concerned about Sami rights, -self-determination, and land use are mentioned and discussed in several debates. The portrayal of the land conflicts between Sami and other stakeholders are often conveyed in a negative tone. The conflicts are sometimes used as an argument as to why Sami rights should not be strengthened as it would further hinder state development interests. The underlying meaning of the argument is that the Sami are stalling and hindering development, especially the reindeer herding Sami as their animals need to have access to large areas of land for the husbandry to be viable (Lawrence & Åhrén, 2016). In the argument, state development through extractive land use is juxtaposed to traditional livelihoods like reindeer husbandry. This is a method in which the state can use concepts such as development to extend colonial control systems and by extension justify natural resource extraction since the state good is perceived as being more important than preserving indigenous culture. As raised by previous research, the usage of such concepts is a symbol of a “post”colonial nationalistic plan (Banerjee, 2000). Development in this context can also be described as modernization, particularly when the development is referring to facilitating the green transformation which is often how the state and the MPs are justifying mining. The fact that state modernization is used to justify the extraction of indigenous land demonstrates how coloniality still can be found in present-day parliamentary debates. Development in this context should not only be seen as the extension of colonial control systems but also as a political project that empowers “modern” ideas and peoples while the racialized “others”, in this context the Sami people, remain in the margin of the political arena (Sabaratnam, 2020: 167-168). This is illustrated below where a Swedish Democratic(SD) MP uses land conflicts as an argument as to why Sami rights should be weakened since they obstruct state development interests.

> *... cherish our national minorities’ uniqueness and right to preserve and develop their culture. But unique rights designed like they are today slows down development and creates conflict.* (Josef Fransson, SD, debate B)

I would categorize the discourse as part of the larger state discourse of extraction (see section 3.1) that other authors have found in other cases (Gjelde-Bennett,2021; Riofrancos, 2017; and Lovón Cueva, 2020). Extractivist discourses in the sampled parliamentary debates take some different manifestations, one is by opposing increased Sami rights and inclusion with expressions such as “it stalls the development and creates conflict” (“it” being the current Sami rights), “... a new consultation procedure must be appropriate, fulfill its purpose and create added value without impairing and complicating other important respects” and “the consultation duty risks becoming too extensive and lead to increased administration, costs and extended processing times”. The above examples illustrate a concern that increased Sami inclusion or -rights will impair the establishment of new (extractive) projects. This is due to that if the Sami people or Sami villages have stronger rights or an increased influence over decision-making, they can stall or stop projects that they find destructive to their livelihoods. As put forward by Kløcker Larsen et al (2020), many of the negative cumulative effects of competing land use on reindeer husbandry are due to extractive projects like forestry, mining, hydroelectric power plants, and wind power plants. For this reason, the parliamentary opposition to increased Sami rights can be explained by the reasoning that increased rights will lead to fewer executive projects that can bring wealth to the state through taxation. The Swedish parliament seems to prioritizes economic growth through extraction over other sectors and interests, this is similar to the prioritization of both the Canadian and the Australian governments (Gjelde-Bennett, 2021).

The second and most common manifestation of an extractivist mindset in the data is arguments about opposing land interests and land conflicts, often with a negative tone that implies that the conflicts hinder or stall development. In these arguments, reindeer husbandry is being portrayed as being particularly obstructing to development as exemplified by one Swedish democratic MP and one Social democratic (S) MP below:

> *When reindeer husbandry stakeholders can stall or stop alternative industries on half of Sweden's surface we have a problem. ... Even though only a few hundred people are living on reindeer husbandry, it displaces mountain- and hunting tourism, mining, housing construction, infrastructure investments and much else ...* (Josef Fransson, SD, debate B)

> *... stakeholders will want to assert their right and opportunity to question the mine… we think that in some strategic questions it is necessary for the government to make the decision. Otherwise in area after area with strategic minerals we risk getting stuck in extremely long conflicts between opposing interests…* (Isak From, S, debate E)

The Sami as an obstacle discourse fits within the larger extractivist discourse by how the parliament members argue for extraction without much opposition, it is reasonable to assume that this discourse has been naturalized in the parliament which is why only a few MPs partially question it. In several debates, MPs state that reindeer herding is a national interest but then argue that Sami's rights should not infringe on other interests. The last excerpt is a critique of how the government has valued national interests differently at different times, it also illustrates how the government seems to favor mining over other interests, not only in debates but also in decision-making.

> *…it is of utmost importance to cherish the Sami people's right to self-determination, but the state has a wider responsibility for every citizen in the country. These two interests must be balanced and weighted against each other.* (Mikael Strandman, SD, debate G)

> *When the government decided on the processing concession in Kallak the national interest in reindeer herding and the national interest in valuable minerals were pointed out as real interests. In the later assessment… iron ore was obviously important, while reindeer husbandry only was [a] real [interest]. (*Maria Gardfjell, *MP*, debate H)

The third manifestation of an extractivist discourse is through the presence of a green justification of Swedish mining which implies that the specific MP or the party justifies mining by claiming it is "green". This justification is common in the data with claims like "the work towards completing the climate goal and decreasing dependence on other countries starts in the mine" and "the green transformation probably implies that some new mines will need to be opened…". The data suggests that mining is justified by it facilitating the "green transformation" of Sweden and Europe as well as a method through which Sweden can reach their climate goals. The excerpt below exemplifies how arguments that justify mining by claiming it is green are constructed. The Social Democratic MP puts the mining sector above indigenous land uses and suggests land appropriation to be a solution for the cumulative effects on the Sami. At the same time, the MP justifies mining by arguing that mining is facilitating climate transformation. This is an example of how green colonialism is materialized in parliamentary debates, by favoring state development interests over Sami livelihoods and suggesting that other sectors will have to give way for mining. Furthermore, the excerpt is an example of an extractivist mindset where other sectors in society will have to yield in favor of extraction.

> *If forestry, wind power, and roads have already affected the Sami village to the extent that the minerals, which are unmovable, must give way, the mineral law has not worked. … you might have to give an infringement compensation to the Sami village or other*

> *operations. ... We are now in a position that is not optimal for the climate transformation.* (Isak From, S, debate E)

> *... in some strategic questions it is necessary for the government to make the decision. Otherwise in area after area with strategic minerals we risk getting stuck in extremely long conflicts between opposing interests, sometimes without end.* (Isak From, S, debate E)

However, the above position and discourse are partially challenged by other members of parliament, mostly by the Environmental Party (*MP*). In this case, however, it was challenged by a liberal member of parliament who questioned if the Social Democrats believe that one can "just dive in" when establishing new mines that are important for development without considering the Sami villages to which they answered with an argument that is interpreted as consolidating the party's position of mining being prioritized over other sectors:

> *We think that society must take a larger responsibility and put down its foot in some issues: these minerals or lime or stone are important for Swedish and European self-sufficiency, and if we are committed to the climate transformation we need to allow some mining in Sweden….* (Isak From, S, debate E)

6.2 A Sami advocacy discourse

This section discusses and analyzes the contrasting discourse of advocacy of Sami rights and interests found in the data. The Sami people are portrayed in this discourse as an entity to protect, especially regarding the issues with opposing land uses and the cumulative effect it can have on reindeer husbandry and by extension on Sami culture. I argue that the Sami advocacy discourse partially infantilizes the Sami by portraying them as an entity to protect and by expressing concern about their future. This illustrates the presence of colonial structures in Sweden's highest decision-making body. This infantilization can be a reason as to why increased self-determination in decision-making processes is not proposed.

The mainstream extractive discourse is partly challenged in the Sami advocacy discourse but never fully. An explanation for this is that the idea of mining being green and important for Swedish development has been naturalized in parliament as the status quo and is therefore never questioned. There are two parts to this discourse, one which is concerned with Sami advocacy and another which aims to promote Sami rights and inclusion. The two parts are often occurring right after each other in the speeches and are present in the data about the same number of times. The advocacy part is mostly concerned with defending the current Sami rights while the Sami inclusion part is concerned with promoting increased rights or proposes solutions to current Sami issues. The advocacy part of the Sami advocacy discourse occurs when the debate topic is on Sami rights in general or Sami land rights in particular. A common way the argument is constructed is by first justifying mining as being important and then advocating for Sami rights. The following excerpts are examples of how Sami advocacy arguments are constructed in the debates:

> With that being said, mining must be done in an environmentally friendly way with a lot of respect for Sami rights. (Magdalena Andersson, S, debate C)

> Some additional mines can absolutely become environmentally and socially sustainable. … some mines that can not be operated environmentally and socially sustainable … Many big conflicts of interest can arise. Land conflict and negative consequences for the environment, Sami rights and locals have been discussed [concerning conflicts of interest]. (Elin Söderberg, *MP*, debate E)

> Furthermore, the mining sector has, despite big efforts for the transformation, negative impact on the environment, reindeer husbandry … We can not get away from that. (Lorena Delgado Varas, V, debate E)

The excerpts illustrate a discourse that is mostly found on the left side of the Swedish political landscape (V, S and *MP)*, but above all, in the Environmental Party's (*MP*) speeches. The two excerpts above contain influences of an extractivist mindset and also advocacy for Sami rights. Based on what we have learned previously, see sections 3 and 4, the presence of these two discourses simultaneously can be seen as contradictory since an extractivist mindset is about favoring extraction over almost everything else. However, I believe that this presence shows the complexity of the discourses and how an extractivist mindset is so naturalized in Swedish parties from the left to the right that it is even present when concerns about extraction are raised.

The second part of the Sami advocacy discourse is about the promotion of increased Sami rights and inclusion. The most common code for this part of the discourse is about wanting to strengthen Sami inclusion, but this is due to debate D being about the possible introduction of the law about consulting Sami on matters of importance, where most of the parties mentioned Sami inclusion positively. The concerns raised in that debate were administrative, but also about the possible effects on other stakeholders' interests if the Sami get increased influence over decision-making as exemplified by one Centrist (C) and one Moderate (M) MP:

> If the government is serious about strengthening Sami rights, they must realize the complexity of the issue and adopt an … inviting attitude towards all interests affected. (Linda Modig, C, debate D)

> The Sami rights should be cherished, at the same time other interests must be respected and considered (Karin Enström, M, debate D)

The next aspect of the promotion of Sami rights and inclusion is the occurring pattern of proposing a compensation or royalty scheme to the Sami for natural resource extraction taking place in Sápmi. The critique is only occurring a few times in the data but the arguments relate the colonial history of land encroachment in Sápmi for natural resource extraction to compensation today. The Environmental Party and the Leftist Party were the only parties who criticized the colonial history and argued for a royalty scheme.

> Throughout history the Swedish state has claimed natural resources in Sápmi. These resources have built and continue to build Swedish wealth (Camilla Hansén, MP, debate F)

> … state-owned companies that derive their income from Sápmi … should … finance the management and development of Sami social life, language and culture. We have a historical debt to the Sami communities. (Lorena Delgado Varas, V, debate E)

Lastly, an odd aspect of the Sami advocacy discourse is that in almost all cases, no other members of parliament counterargued or agreed with the points made about advocacy or increased rights. If they answered, they ignored the advocacy parts of the original speech. It is reasonable to assume that the other members of parliament want to be passive in questions about increased Sami rights and self-determination since if they were adopted it could threaten state sovereignty (Gjelde-Bennett, 2021). Another reason why a majority of the MPs stay passive could be related to colonial structures where non-Western people like indigenous peoples are less important than the Western majority which leads to them not being seen as a significant part of society, and for this reason not “worth” discussing in parliament (Sabaratnam, 2020: 163-164). Additionally, talking about the small majority of Sami people can cost more than what is earned for the MPs, especially those from northern Sweden as it is where the conflicts over land are taking place. Taking an active stance on Sami rights could upset voters who disagree with increased Sami rights since it could be disadvantageous to those with opposing land interests. Taking an active stance could even make the party lose mandates in the next election if enough voters disagree with a stance taken by the party. According to a Centrist member of parliament, the precedent “Girjasdomen” on small game hunting rights is “a consequence of the passiveness of the state for not investigating Sami rights questions for the past hundred years” (Linda Modig, C, debate G). The precedent is perceived as being potentially disruptive to competing land use in the future, depending on how far the precedent about hunting can be stretched.

7 Conclusion

In sum, two contrasting discourses were found in the data. The first discourse portrays the Sami as an obstacle to development, the discourse is argued to be a part of a larger extractive discourse found in previous research. The Sami as an obstacle discourse to development contains some different manifestations. The first manifestation is the opposition to increased Sami rights and inclusion with the argument that the rights stall new development projects facilitating the “green transformation”. In the arguments, traditional livelihoods are juxtaposed with state development and modernization and reveal a political project that favors Western “modern” types of livelihoods. The use of modernization and development to justify the extraction of indigenous lands reveals the presence of coloniality in the parliament. Another manifestation of the discourse are arguments that claim that conflicts over land use is stalling development. Reindeer herding is seen as particularly obstructing due to the need for large land areas to be viable. I argue that an extractive discourse, where extraction is favored over other sectors, has been naturalized in parliament and is therefore not questioned or challenged. The last manifestation of an extractive discourse in the parliament is the common argument that mining is needed for the green transformation of Sweden and Europe. This argument is a symbol of how green colonialism becomes justified in the parliament since “green” mining is important for Sweden and Europe to be able to reach their climate goals and become more sustainable.

The second discourse found in the data is the Sami advocacy discourse. This discourse portrays the Sami as a group to be concerned about and to take care of. It is mostly the left side of the political spectrum that illustrates this contrasting discourse. The discourse contains two parts, the first part is about Sami advocacy where the arguments are about defending current Sami rights, furthermore, a concern about land use conflicts and cumulative effects on Sami lives is expressed. An interesting finding in this discourse is that the green justification of mining is often followed by a concern for what effects extraction can have on Sami's lives and culture. I argue that such arguments are further evidence of an extractive mindset being naturalized in the Swedish parliament and therefore not even questioned when concern about it are raised. The second part of the Sami advocacy discourse is concerned with the promotion of Sami rights and inclusion. When arguments were made about increased Sami inclusion it was followed by a caution that increased rights should not impinge on other state interests like property rights and mining. Once again the evidence suggests that other sectors and stakeholders are valued higher than the Sami. For the promotion of Sami rights, colonial aspects were raised a few times, especially when some MPs proposed a royalty scheme for the Sami because the extraction taking place in Sápmi has generated great wealth for the Swedish state. Lastly, an odd aspect of the Sami advocacy discourse is that there are great silences present in the data where other MPs do not answer the speeches at all or ignores the parts of Sami advocacy. I propose that this may be related to colonial structures where the racialized people in the margin are seen as less important, and in this case not worth arguing about in the parliament. Another possible reason for the parliamentary passiveness is due to the fear of losing mandates in the next election from the non-Sami majority who are cautious of their property rights.

This thesis can hopefully contribute to the research field of governmental/parliamentary discourses on indigenous people and more specifically, on discourses in the nexus of indigenous rights and extraction of natural resources. Furthermore, the thesis can contribute to the theories about green colonialism and extractivism as an empirical example of how these theories and concepts are manifested and naturalized in parliamentary debates.

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9 Appendix

Sampled data		
Debate	Name	Date
A	Mineralpolitik	15/2/2024
B	Utgiftsområde 19 regional utveckling	14/12/2023
C	Partiledardebatt	18/1/2023
D	Granskningsbetänkande	14/6/2022
E	Mineralpolitik	29/3/2023
F	2021 års redogörelse för bolag med statlig ägande	19/1/2022
G	En konsltationsordning i frgåor som berör det samiska folk	26/1/2022
H	Mineralpolitik	24/5/2022
I	Statlig kredit till inlandsbanan	20/12/2023
J	Granskning av statsrådens tjänsteutövning och regeringsärendenas handläggning	19/1/2022
K	Beslut om kallak	11/1/2022
L	Sverige som gruvnation	1/3/2022
M	Regional utveckling	23/2/2022
N	SGU i Malå	15/3/2022