

## THEORISING RACISM: *Exploring the Swedish racial regime*

### Abstract

Sociologists Bonilla-Silva and Baiocchi (2001) assert that sociologists, protected by a myth of neutrality and objectivity, follow the understandings of racism in their analysis of inequality as relegated to a secondary status, either according to the Marxist tradition as the superstructure or within a Weberian framework as a form of status difference. The aim of the article is to put the study of racism, a fundamental principle of social organisation in modern society, at the centre of social theory. The aim is also to develop a productive dialogue with the traditions of Critical Race Theory (CRT), neo-Marxism and Black feminism; traditions that we will argue are highly relevant for the analysis of the Swedish racial regime.

### Keywords

Racial regime • migrants • racialisation • racism • Sweden

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### Introduction

In this article, we argue that there is much to wish for in the Swedish academy concerning the theoretical perspectives analysing racism particularly through viewpoints emphasising relations of power, social (in)justice and (in)equality linked to race, and racialisation. The aim is to put the concept of racism at the centre of social theory, developing a productive dialogue with the traditions of Critical Race Theory (CRT), neo-Marxism and Black feminism. We also aim to show how these theoretical traditions provide important tools for analysing the Swedish context.

This article is organised into five sections. First, research is introduced, arguing that racism as a central principle for social organisation in the West in general and Sweden in particular has been silenced or marginalised in scientific scholarship. Second, we introduce the concept of racial regime through a dialogue between neo-Marxism and CRT. In the third section, we discuss the strengths and the shortcomings of the concept of racialisation for an understanding of the ways in which race categorisations are both neglected and acted on in Sweden. Our discussion then continues in the fourth section with the contribution of Black feminism, emphasising the importance of the concept of intersectionality for an understanding of multiple inequalities within and among diverse racial regimes. In the fifth and final section, we explore through illustrations from the Swedish racial regime, how the theoretical discussions may be grasped through the concepts of exploitative and exclusionary racism.

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### Silence and negation of systemic racism

First, even while elite and popular discourses across Europe are saturated with [the] process of racialisation, there is a disavowal of the relevance and toxicity of the social relations of race as a pan[-]European phenomenon, with its corresponding displacement of its relevance to a series of elsewhere (Lewis 2013: 870).

Postcolonial-inspired scholars have explored the continuity between popular and elite forms of racism and the ways that the category of race and the phenomena of racism are marginalised in social theory (Bhambra 2014; Boatcă 2015). Why is racism frequently denied or otherwise untheorized in social science and the humanities? One answer is provided by de-colonial scholars. They speak of the forms of epistemological racism at the core of the production of Western science, a nodal point regulated by a powerful connection in which *Cogito ego conquistus* ('I conquer; therefore, I am') preceded Europe's self-representation of *Cogito ergo sum* ('I think; therefore, I am'), thus subordinating the European knowledge production to European colonialism (Dussel 2003). Sociologists Bonilla-Silva and Baiocchi (2001) explain the dismissal of racism as a principle of social organisation in sociology, showing that the discipline has followed rather than challenged what they conceptualise as 'white racial common sense'. The authors assert that sociologists (we see it encompassing social scientists in general), protected by a myth

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of neutrality and objectivity, follow understandings of racism in their analysis of inequality as relegated to a secondary status.

The resistance to explore the role of racism in the construction of the social is also highly present within Swedish Academia. The State Institute for Race Biology (1922-1972) was a powerful symbol of the role that the Swedish academy played in the establishment and development of (scientific) eugenics and racism (Broberg & Tydén 2005).<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, there were many members and sympathisers of the Nazi Party among Swedish scholars during and after the Second World War (Catomeris 2004; Oredsson 1996). Thus, it is an understatement that Swedish Academia is in some respects firmly grounded on an earlier racist and colonial ideology that was severely challenged by the atrocities of the Second World War and the anticolonial struggles. However, to the extent that this heritage is made visible, it is located in the past (racism is understood as an expression of the historical period) or belongs to specific individuals (support for Nazism is interpreted as incompatible with 'good science' and understood as an individual path). The (close) relationship between science and the production and reproduction of ideologies of racism has been seldom explored in Swedish Academia (Mattson 2001; Catomeris 2004). In line with Goldberg (2009) we argue that the analytical category of race at the core of European and Swedish colonial modernity is located in other places and narrowed to scientific racism and the *Shoah* (Holocaust). This is, for instance, visible in the principal declaration of the government authority *Forum for Living History*, 'We are working for democracy and human equality. With the lessons of the Holocaust', which erases a long European history of colonial racism.<sup>2</sup> In the academia of the Scandinavian countries in general and in Sweden, where we are located, the study of racism and race inequalities has been extremely marginal to mainstream scholarship thus far, where racialisation and the social construction of race are replaced by terms such as migrants, integration, culture and religion (Hübinette & Lundström 2014; Schough, 2008).

However, in the margins of most disciplines, there is an emergent field, often inspired by critical social theory exploring the centrality of racism. More than ten years have passed since the government inquiry on 'Power, Integration and Structural Discrimination' produced 14 volumes and involved around 100 scholars in Sweden, as well as international contributions.<sup>3</sup> The inquiry's central challenge was the attempt to shift the agenda in social science and the humanities from studying the deviance of the immigrant and the notion of ethnicity as an experience of the other to an understanding of the diverse forms of racism as a structural phenomenon at the core of the construction of nation-states generally and Sweden in particular. Today, there is an increasing production of monographs, articles and research projects on topics such as the category of race, racism, racialisation and whiteness as mirrored in the establishment of the Uppsala 'Centre for Multidisciplinary Research on Racism' in 2016.

This emerging Swedish field of research is a central point of departure and inspiration in our argument for the need to conceptualise racism within and through a systemic frame grasped in the concept of racial regime.

## Racial regime: at the crossroads between neo-Marxism and Critical Race Theory

My title today (Race and Racism. Authors' note) will displease many people. For some, it will be too provocative; any attempt to place race and racism on the agenda, let alone at the center

of debate, is deeply unpopular. In the academy we are often told that we are being too crude and simplistic, that things are more complicated than that, that we're being essentialist and missing the real problem—of social class (Gillborn 2015: 277).

Marxist theory has a central impact on the exploration and understanding of inequalities, particularly class inequalities. However, deterministic explanations within forms of orthodox Marxism have tended to conceptualise racism as serving the interests of capital owners by dividing the working class.

Racism within this tradition is generally understood as an effect of other fundamental class relations, analysed as an ideology employed by capital in organising exploitation in the sense of divide and rule. Furthermore, similar to gender, race is conceptualised as a social status that will wither away with the development of capitalism and especially with the strengthening of the collective organisation of the working class (Nelson & Grossberg 1988). From a theoretical perspective, orthodox Marxism needs to reinvent the idea of false consciousness to explain why workers who identify as Whites, despite the taken for granted general interest towards working class collectivity, actively partake in racism. Orthodox Marxism does not allow for what Roediger (1998) calls the 'wages of whiteness', that is, the material benefit of being conceptualised as White, even as a worker.

The argument, highly present in sections of the Swedish left, that the emergence of antiracism as a social movement has marginalised the central topic of social class; reducing the antiracist struggle to what they name as 'identity politics' is an illustration of orthodox Marxist understanding of the fundamental role of class relations vis-a-vis other social relations.<sup>4</sup> The notion that identity politics destroys working class collectivity is grounded in the underlying assumption of an 'authentic' male, white and straight working class. Beyond this desire to speak about class, a (White) desire for a (White) male working class seems to emerge, resisting to acknowledge the gendered and racialised composition of the Swedish working class (Neergaard 2017) and refusing to understand that race, following cultural theorist Stuart Hall's (Solomos 2014) argument, is the way that many people experience class (Mulinari & Neergaard 2004).

Among scholars in the US, there is also a long historical tradition of exploring how class and race relate. The Marxists Oliver C. Cox (1948) and Theodore Allen (2006/1975) are two outstanding academics who produced pioneering work, giving historical and theoretical explanations of race and class as interwoven processes. Cedric Robinson's (1983) scholarly intervention and particularly the concept of racial capitalism are at the core of the efforts to bridge neo-Marxism with the analysis of racism (Melamed 2015).

While the CRT has its roots in the exploration of race and the law, the tradition has expanded towards social science and the humanities. The key nodes in this field are an understanding of the category of race, particularly the construction of racial differences, as invented and recreated and an interpretation of racism as changing, flexible and particularly subtle, hidden beneath a version of what is natural, normal and right. In the words of Delgado and Stefanic:

The critical race theory (CRT) movement is a collection of activists and scholars interested in studying and transforming the relationship among race, racism, and power. The movement considers many of the same issues that conventional civil rights and ethnic studies discourses take up, but places them in a broader perspective that includes economics, history, context, group- and self-interest, and even feelings and the unconscious.

Unlike traditional civil rights, which embrace incrementalism and step-by-step progress, [the] critical race theory questions the very foundations of the liberal order, including [the] equality theory, legal reasoning, Enlightenment rationalism, and neutral principles of constitutional law (Delgado & Stefancic 2006: 2).

In Bonilla-Silva's (1997, 2015) scholarship, and more implicitly so, in the work of Omi and Winant (1994), who identify with CRT, the analytical frame of neo-Marxism in materially and structurally locating relations of power seems extremely relevant for the theoretisation of racism. Thus, when neo-Marxism refers to social formation as the actual combination of modes of production and the class structure, this inspiration has led to the growth of the concept of racial formation. A process, following Omi & Winant (1994: 61) 'by which social, economic and political forces determine the content and importance of racial categories, and by which they are in turn shaped by racial meanings'. Or as we prefer, *racial regimes*, meaning 'societies in which economic, political, social, and ideological levels are partially structured by the placement of actors in racial categories or races' (Bonilla-Silva 1997: 469). For Winant and Omi (1994: 59), race is understood as a fluid, unstable and decentred concept of social meaning, constantly being transformed by political conflict, shaping the individual psyche and furnishing an irreducible component of collective identities and social structures. While the sociological theory attests that the state in terms of class relations has paid no attention to race, Winant and Omi provide a theory that takes its point of departure in the fundamental role that the state plays in the creation and reproduction of race classifications and racism.

At the core of the racial regimes is the struggle for humanness and citizenship status.

Following political philosopher David Goldberg's (2002, 2009) works, we understand the modern state, not only as an actor implicated in racist exclusion but also as racially configured and constituted. We are further inspired by Balibar and Wallerstein's (1991) productive dialogue on contemporary forms of racism. Balibar (1991) also argues that racism is indissolubly tied to the present social structure of the nation-state, as well as to the global division of labour. Thus, social conflicts on race are about the nature of the political constitution and the reconfiguration of central-peripheral relations among and between nation-states. Thus, they are at the core of classification systems regulating citizenship and who a political subject is (Boatcă 2015). Thus, racism is the dynamic of relationally defining who may embody a political subject position, the inclusion as well as the scope of citizenship, and who are not or more often less so. The racial regime is structured by politics, especially the central role of (nation-)states with the authority of granting or revoking, as well as limiting or expanding citizenship (Boatcă 2015).

While class analysis in an ideal way may be understood as the struggle of surplus labour, whereas patriarchy is the struggle around social reproduction, we contend that *the racial regime is the societal struggle around social relations in and across nation-states, configuring humanness and citizens by the constructions of race*.

Scholars disagree regarding the state's level of autonomy, that is, to what extent the interests of people that identified themselves as white will be conflated with those of the state, challenging the state's ability to develop antiracist projects. For some scholars (e.g., Delgado 1984), the state is radically and fundamentally conflated with whiteness. In continuing to theorise the state's role and based on an analysis of the US, Bracey (2015: 553) argues that six characteristics are central, as follows: racialisation of the state, the state as a White

institutional space, instrumentalism, interest-convergence, fluid boundaries and permanent racist orientation.

On the other hand, Omi and Winant (1994) argue that the state responds to social movements and is capable of transformation; while it is *racial*, it is not inherently *racist*. We are inspired by this understanding that combines a focus on structures (racial regime, racial state) with a focus on agency that conceptualises societal organisations around race as flexible, contextual and thus open to the impact and response of both migrant organisations and antiracist interventions. Despite historical variations and differences in the racial formations, Omi and Winant's analysis provides a productive theoretical frame for analysing the Swedish racial regime and particularly the role of the (welfare) state in both migration regimes and 'integration' policies.

## Racialisation: bridging Phenomenology and neo-Marxism

We argue that the concept of racialisation provides a sense of both process and agency that is central to identifying actors and institutions in creating classification systems based on race, as well as social movements and diverse actors challenging these classifications. In tracing the concept's genealogy, Barot and Bird (2001) argue that the critical use of the concept was developed in the Global South through Fanon's (1967) path-breaking contribution. The reintroduction and academic impact of the concept of racialisation in the Global North is ascribed to the work of sociologist Robert Miles (1993).

The phenomenological approach to race, central to Fanon's (2008/1952) work, highlights the process of racialisation – the ways that people perceive and understand race – and explore the fluidity of racial categories. Such an approach underlines the centrality of developing a hermeneutic of racialisation to address the ways that racial differences have been created and understood historically.

Fanon's (1967) contribution to the concept of racialisation is fundamental and, paradoxically, quite marginal to social science debates on the concept. On one side, he is extremely engaged and committed towards the identification of resistance strategies aiming to challenge racialisation, which he understands as a form of power and domination created and introduced by European colonialism. Fanon is ambivalent about what he understands as the historical need to racialise the struggle with responses (e.g., Black is beautiful) that while challenging the colonial system, reinforce its classification frames, such as his criticism of the concept of *negritude*. He firmly believes that the anticolonial struggle, framed through a national culture and identity, will create processes of de-racialisation, so central to his understanding of the strategies to heal the scars created by colonialism. The other side of the author's contribution is his focus on the violent process of racialisation and its consequences on the body and the psyche (Fanon 2008/1952).

What makes Fanon's work (2000/1952; 1967) so important is not only the link established between aspects of colonialism and aspects of psychology and embodiment, but also the extent to which a theorisation from the periphery successfully avoids the abstract ways in which much of sociology tackles issues of race and racism (Kane 2007). For Fanon (1967), racialisation is a process that (violently) constructs particular bodies and psyches, as well as locates gender and sexuality (not necessarily social class) at the core of how classification systems, such as erecting borders, are understood and acted on.

There is no 'fact' of blackness (or, by the same criterion, whiteness); both are a form of lived experience. According to David Macey

(1999), to mistake a lived experience for a fact is to betray Fanon's texts to such an extent as to make it almost incomprehensible. In a similar vein, however, at the same time challenging the nominalism of equating race with witchcraft or phlogiston, feminist philosopher Linda Alcoff (1999) argues that although racial classification operates on the basis of perceptual difference, what is perceived is dependent on racism as a knowledge system, thus avoiding the risk of an understanding of race that naturalize racial experiences. What these authors inspired by a phenomenological tradition, following Fanon, provide is a way to put bodies at the core of an understanding of racism.

The sociologist Robert Miles, who uses the term racialisation to connect it to inequality, labour and social class, speaks of it as a relational process, preferring to avoid the use of race as an analytical concept in favour of racialisation. He defines it as follows:

[...] in certain historical conjunctures and under specific material conditions, human beings attribute certain biological characteristics with meaning in order to differentiate, to exclude and to dominate: reproducing the idea of 'race', they create a racialised Other and simultaneously they racialise themselves (Miles 1993: 44).<sup>5</sup>

Besides avoiding the risk of reifying race, the use of racialisation has an additional benefit. As the end of the preceding quote outlines, racialisation is (and must) always (be) relational. Increasingly, the popularity and use of racialisation have resulted in the focus on the racialised others, to the detriment of studying the relation and simultaneously racialising themselves.

In writing from a Swedish vantage point, the concept of racialisation makes sense, but needs to be contextually applied. Taking neo-Marxism and CRT seriously requires systematic analyses of the Swedish racial regime. While such an account, in line with Omi & Winant (1994) is yet to be written, there are puzzle pieces that indicate a research agenda. The Swedish history of racism, we would suggest, is less linked to external colonialism compared to the classic colonial powers, although colonialism has always played a role in the Swedish racial regime, not the least by complying with colonialism (Keskinen et al. 2012), particularly by Sweden's economic interests in the slave trade (Evans & Rydén 2007). Instead, it has primarily been a racism based on internal or proximate colonial processes (towards the Sami, Tornedal Finns and Finns) and the racialisation of Jews and Roma. The racial regime in Sweden of today, is, in our opinion, characterised on the one hand by a continuation of historically rooted racism towards Jews, Roma and Sami, and, on the other hand, by a variation of racialisations of migrants and their children (Hübinette & Tigervall 2009), especially Muslims (Mulinari & Neergaard 2012) and Afro Swedes (Mångkulturellt Centrum 2014) re-invoking colonial racist discourses of the 'the Other'.

In this sense, we argue that the Swedish racial regime is characterised by many parallel micro-processes of racialisation that produce the 'migrant other' through use of derogatory naming as 'svartskalle' (black-skull) or 'blatte' (wog). Thus, a central feature of racialisation processes is linked to or at least work through migration although skin colour and other phenotypical traits, as well as certain perceived cultural marks, target specific subgroups of the racialised others.

While studies on racism are increasing in Sweden, and attempts are being made (such as in this article) to adjust or to develop theoretical models for capturing systemic racism, much research remains to be done. The racialisation of Finnish, Turkish and Yugoslav migrants in the 1960s and the 1970s, including what seems at least

partial de-racialised as the 'migrant other' and re-racialised as White, is an important task for future research. It directly addresses central issues concerning racialisation as a fluid social construct, unstable and with competing meanings that are parallel in time and place.

We argue for the concept of racial regime to grasp the macro-structural inscription of the category of race. In doing so, we suggest the centrality of understanding the modern state as powerfully configured through race. In this context, we see the concept of racialisation as important with its focus on process and agency central to the changing historical context in which race is created as one of the fundamental forms of human inequality.

## Intersectionality and black feminism

Feminist scholarship has identified the specific role of women's bodies as symbolic boundaries of ethnic and national belonging as well as the specific role that cultural understanding of gender and sexuality play in the creation of the category of migrant women in the West (Mohanty 2003; Razack 2004; Keskinen 2012; Andreassen 2013).

We argue that taking racial regimes and racism seriously requires an intersectional approach. Gillborn (2015) asserts that for all the emphasis of the CRT on the central role of racism, CRT scholars tend to fail to explore how racial inequities are shaped by processes that also reflect and are influenced by other dimensions of identity and social structure. According to Gillborn (2015), this issue is where the notion of intersectionality is crucial.

The political and analytical contribution through the concept of intersectionality (Crenshaw 1989) mirrors the efforts of a broad group of feminist scholars to inscribe race within gender studies. These efforts are expressed in the path breaking works of black feminist Patricia Hill Collins (1990); Chicano feminist Anzaldúa (2012/1987) and scholars with migrant background in Britain, such as Nira Yuval Davis and Floya Anthias (1992).

The concept of intersectionality within this genealogy grasps the efforts of feminist scholars to explore the connections between gender and imperialism/colonialism as systems regulated through race, providing an understanding of the ways through which relations of gender, race, class and sexuality generate complex matrices of domination (Collins 1990). Thus, it is about the simultaneous dynamics of power and an effort to explore the interconnections of different system of oppression and exploitation. An intersectional analysis not only conceptualises gender as inextricable from other social conditions of power, but also understands the hierarchies of class, race and achievement as substantially gendered.

While intersectionality has increasingly become institutionalised in gender studies, its origin among Black feminists and women of colour is increasingly becoming erased (Lewis 2013). Tomlinson (2013: 254) argues that this occurs through strategies of colonisation that 'suppress the availability of conceptual tools that will allow people to recognize, analyse, and debate what might count as structural racisms and how racial differences can be negotiated effectively'. Central to these strategies of exclusion are narratives of the development and success of the discipline of gender studies that locate Black feminism – often defined as political and experiential – in the past, which has currently been transcended through a more sophisticated and complex analysis (Hemmings 2005).

Our reading of the tradition of Black, Indigenous and Chicano feminism emphasises the ways through which the heterogeneity of social locations and gendered bodies are conceptualised and acted upon within these (more phenomenological inspired) traditions.

While intersectionality can be explored through different approaches, as argued by McCall (2005), our understanding underlines the double critical aspect of intersectionality, both as a methodological intervention, and as theoretical contribution in exploring complexity in power relations. This understanding maintains a direct link to the approach developed by Black feminists. It provides both a systemic understanding of power relations and an exploration, through terms such as embodied intersectionality (Mirza 2013) and translocational positionality (Anthias 2008) of how the lived experience of gendered racism is internalised and challenged through the body as a field of both oppression and resistance (Sandoval 2000; Wane et al. 2013).

An intersectional exploration demonstrates how Swedish narratives of modernity and gender equality are based on the concealment of the migrant women from Southern Europe. These women were in fact pioneers in transgressing gendered patterns through full-time employment and higher labour market participation and were more prevalent in the male bastions of industrial work in a gender-segregated labour market (de los Reyes 2006; Knocke 1991, 2006). Intersectionality provides a frame to analyse the diverse impacts of social policies and the welfare state among different groups of women. According to several studies, the 'women-friendly welfare state' is regulated by a racial regime that ranges from a hierarchy of selection regarding rights and benefits (Ålund 1991; Barzoo 2017) to reported racist experiences. Sawyer (2002) and Wikström (2007) apply intersectionality to study the complex ways racialisation creates hierarchies that regulate state institutions' interpretation of what a 'good family' is, which often pathologise and criminalise migrant families and neglect the strength and resilience of migrant mothers and transnational families. Furthermore, research demonstrates how (colonial) and (racist) desires regulate sexuality in both intimate relations and public discourse (Habel 2002; Farahani 2013).

In a study of women activists of the Sweden Democrats (Mulinari & Neergaard 2014; 2017), we introduced the concept of care racism, inspired by an intersectional analysis of the position of women (who see themselves as Whites) in a complex web of inequalities, where a central quality of care is the defence of family and kin supposedly threatened by migration. Care in this frame implies the exclusion, and expulsion of the migrant other. In reflecting on how racism and racialisation intersect with gender, the concept of care racism may be used to name the way that gender as a symbol and an identity enters racist agendas, as in the case of the Sweden Democrats, through positioning women as carers of the (White/Swedish) family and the (White) Swedish nation. Care racism naturalises racist violence as a natural human drift of 'caring for one's own'. While the language of love is quite present in racist agendas, as Ahmed (2004) asserts, the focus on care grasps the specificity of the Swedish experience of the 'people's home'.

Thus, an intersectional analysis also focuses on the ambivalent position of women, identified as belonging to the nation. It is embodied in right-wing xenophobic discourses, as both symbols of the nation and objects of protection but also as threats to the nation, as illustrated by the attacks against Swedish women who are identified as feminists, for instance in solidarity with refugees (Sveland 2013).

## Two modes: exclusionary and exploitative racism

In this last section of the article, we build on the discussion of neo-Marxism, CRT and black feminism in delineating the Swedish *racial regime* through the concepts of exclusionary and exploitative racism.

It is quite easy to find quotes from extreme-right parties demonstrating aspects of exclusionary racism and from right-wing parties demonstrating both exclusionary and exploitative modes, especially the latter (Mulinari & Neergaard 2014; 2015). However, to emphasise the systemic aspect of racism argued above, we provide an example of quotes from high-end social democratic representatives.

We need a growing service sector. Not least, I'm thinking of those who come here as refugees and who can make bread, sew, care for children and clean. They should be able to find an outlet for their skills and in addition get paid for it (Jens Orback, authors' translation).<sup>6</sup>

The preceding interview quote is by a newly appointed Social Democratic minister of gender equality and integration. It was an argument in a debate between on the one side the minister, representing the Social Democratic Government and on the other the right-wing parties and the employers' associations on how to stimulate a low-wage sector, with the Social Democrats arguing against tax subsidies. However, there was a general agreement concerning the skills and the normal position of refugees in the labour market – in low-paid service work. We consider this a mainstream, even a systemic example of what we call exploitative racism, operating by producing a usable (exploitable) racialised labour force through discursive and institutional practices. Exploitative is often directly or indirectly racism framed in the historical tradition of colonialism and slave-trade that creates classification systems through which specific bodies are coded with specific characteristics. In addition, exploitative racism is linked to those with the power *to exploit*, and thus, to the 'elite' political parties formulating policies that make workers vulnerable to exploitation, on one side, and employers using the precarious labour market positions of workers, on the other side. Exploitative racism operates through the process of racialisation that legitimises the capitalist production of profit. Exploitative racism may be perceived as a practice ideologically framed in the win-win-win policies of managed migration (Fekete 2001; Lentin & Titley 2011) that regulate access to citizenship. It is basically shaped by the idea of gaining access to cheap labour through processes of racialisation and curtailed citizenship rights that affect both skilled and less skilled labour. The preceding excerpt is from an interview with the Social Democratic Party secretary, defending the dramatic change in the Swedish refugee policy:

This is a government that is willing to actually ensure that Sweden survives, where we develop the Swedish model, where we are open to the outside world, where people can seek asylum in Sweden or in other EU countries, but where we also protect and develop the Swedish welfare into the future (Interview with Carin Jämtin on 5 March 2016).

While part of the quote emphasises openness and the right to seek asylum, the first and the last parts argue that the survival of Sweden and Swedish welfare is threatened by refugees. In today's Sweden, this is the dominant politics by the Social Democratic and Green Party government, by three right-wing opposition parties demanding more restrictions, and in an even more radical version, by the Sweden Democrats. Within the parliament, it is only contested by the neo-Liberal Centre Party to some extent and more fully by the Left Party (Mulinari & Neergaard 2017; Ålund et al. 2017).

We regard it as an example of what we call exclusionary racism, emphasising the threat of the 'other'. Using racialising stereotypes

in constructing the 'other' as a threat to normative order and to social cohesion, the rhetoric of cultural collisions is employed and connected to policies of stopping immigration (and repatriation) (Fekete 2009). Exclusionary racism is linked to a period of social transformation, but it is not reducible to an economic crisis. In its extreme form, exclusionary racism may take the form of annihilation; however, the dominant form focuses on separation and exclusion, as in the culturally racist form of the Sweden Democrats (Mulinari & Neergaard 2012; 2017). Here, it is ideologically framed by ethnopluralism based on 'ethnic autonomy', practices of separation, stemming immigration and expulsion strategies.

In Sweden, exclusionary racism often takes its point of departure in a classification system based on the category of race and emphasises the threat of the 'other' gender culture (the criminalisation of migrants as dangerous and violent men), as well as locates patriarchy in the others' cultures. In contrast, exploitative racism has a completely different intersection of gender and racism; the focus is on the construction of (cheap) labour through racialisation. While racialisation is used with respect to both men and women, it is also gendered in the construction of exploitable labour, as the quote from Orback above demonstrated (see also Larsson 2015). In the Swedish context, the discursive strategy has mainly been used to construct migrant women as comprising a cheap labour force, both in care work in the private sector and in the expansion of the sex industry.

While exploitative racism has been the hegemonic form of gendered racism, intersecting with neoliberal capitalist exploitation (Anderson 2000; Lutz 2011), we have recently observed how it has increasingly been challenged, while partially merging with exclusionary racism. Neoconservative policies, the threat of demographic reproduction and the migrant woman as incompatible with Swedish culture, have increasingly come to compete with the exploitative and useful woman as the 'other' (Mulinari & Neergaard 2016; 2017).

Exploitative and exclusionary racism should be viewed as two different organisational modes that coexist in different constellations and hierarchies forging a specific race regime. While it would be too simplistic to identify a definitive link between class position and forms of racism, we would contend that the champions of exploitative racism are generally in a more privileged class position, whereas the advocates of exclusionary racism often belong to a more subordinated or peripheral class position. However, and this is important, the mediation of these positions through political discourses or in concrete policies needs political alliances that transcend dualistic class divisions.

While exploitative racism – as in the labour migration legislation – has dominated Sweden's racial regime for some time, we have recently witnessed increasing policies of exclusionary racism in the rapid and dramatic restructuring of Swedish refugee policies and the increasing policing of the racialised others (Mulinari & Neergaard 2016; Neergaard 2017).

In situating the state as central in our understanding of racial regimes and racist states (Mulinari & Neergaard 2017), we perceive our concepts of exclusionary and exploitative racism as two modalities in state practices, although embedded in the broader social fabric as well. In this sense, exclusionary racism focuses on internal (through segregating practices) and especially external border management (who are let in). In contrast, exploitative racism involves those practices that facilitate the subordination of racialised groups; thus, it devalues them, fostering exploitable relations. While colonialism and imperialism may be considered global practices of

exploitative racism, we have focused more on how these practices produce cheaper labour, as in the case of labour migration and refugee migration legislation, as well as through the internal workings of welfare and labour market legislation (Neergaard 2017).

## Conclusions

We would like to suggest that the traditions presented in the article have an epistemological frame within critical theory, particularly the identification of the tensions between doing science and the field of the political, and between the production of knowledge and the creation of alternative societal visions and practices. We also suggest that it is their shared commitment to the forms of knowledge production embedded in notions of social justice that opens the possibility of bridging, and up to a certain point, assembling these traditions.

One of our central arguments is that the analytical concepts of racialisation and exclusionary and exploitative racism within an overarching frame of the racial regime are further strengthened in a critical dialogue with Black feminists' concept of intersectionality. It allows for more nuanced and historically contextual interpretations of racism that intersects with class and gender oppression. We also argue that an understanding of racialisation (and de-racialisation) processes as dynamic and fluid, changing across space and over time is vital to be able to capture the creation and changes of boundaries among different groups and categories.

We understand racial regime as the interplay between social structures and everyday life, through which the meanings of race and racial categories are created, negotiated and challenged. Within this tradition, we recognise the Swedish racial regime as continuously bridging exploitative and exclusionary racism by systematically providing classification systems based on the categories of race, which are highly diversified (time, space, assumed religious background, skin colour and phenotypical characteristics) and transformed through political struggles, among other factors.

We have argued for the strength of a 'racial regime' approach, since it provides a point of departure that captures racialisation and the content of identities within racial categories as unstable and politically contested; thus, it is a theory of human agency. It also combines discursive elements with structural institutional ones in the understanding of the conflicts and struggles about the meaning of race; thus, it is a theory of social transformation. We invite scholars to combine a racial regime perspective with an intersectional approach as a way of taking racism seriously, without a priori deciding on the salience of intersecting relations of oppression. While we lack the space to pursue the theorising of antiracist struggles, we do think that our perspective allows capturing not only oppression in various forms, but also the possibilities of resistance.

In conclusion, as invoked by the use of intersectionality, we would like to witness further research that departs from the understanding that racial regimes, as capitalism and patriarchy, are both systemic and reproduced through the lived experience of race. This will contribute to scholarships of hope, because it is only when racial regimes are acknowledged and forms of liberal European universalism that deny difference and inequalities are challenged that it becomes possible to develop scholarship that take as a fundamental point of departure the need to abolish the existent racial regime.

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## Notes

1. Even earlier, one of the first racial categorisations of humans was developed by the Swedish biologist Carl von Linnæus in 1735 (Schough 2008).

2. Vi arbetar för demokrati och alla människors lika värde. Med lärdomar från Förintelse. <http://www.levandehistoria.se/> (accessed Feb. 6, 2017)
3. 'Utredningen om makt, integration och strukturell diskriminering', see SOU 2005: 41 - 2; SOU 2005: 41 - 1; SOU 2005: 69; SOU 2005: 112; SOU 2006: 21; SOU 2006: 30; SOU 2006: 37; SOU 2006: 40; SOU 2006: 52; SOU 2006: 53; SOU 2006: 59; SOU 2006: 60; SOU 2006: 73; SOU 2006: 78; SOU 2006: 79. Available from: <https://www.riksdagen.se/sv/Dokument-Lagar/U tredningar/?sort=rel&sortorder=desc&a=s&avd=dokument&fac ets=2&sok=%22Utredningen+om+makt,+integration+och+stru ktirell+diskriminering%22&tempbet=&motkat=&rm=&parti=&d oktyp=sou,ds,dir,komm,rir,rfr,urf&subtyp=&datum=&from=&tom =&debattdagfrom=&debattdagtom=&org=&nr=&bet=&talare=>
4. See, among others, the debates in Swedish media. Available from: <http://story.aftonbladet.se/politiskt korrekt> and <http://www.dn.se/kultur-noje/kulturredebatt/judith-kiros-identitetspolitik-och-vanster-politik-ar-inga-motpoler/> [Last accessed 12.11.2016].
5. Building on Fanon's use in writing, "For not only must the black man be black; he must be black in relation to the white man [...] his inferiority comes into being through the other" (1967: 110).
6. Mats Carlbohm, »Ministerdebutant i blåsväder. 'Bildade kvinnor har vantolkat mig om kvinnoväldet', säger Jens Orback», DN 041023

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