

THE WHITE SIDE OF MIGRATION: *Reflections on race, citizenship and belonging in Sweden*

Abstract

'The migrant' tends to be imagined as a non-privileged, non-white, non-western subject in search of a better future in Europe or the United States and as such is a pre-constituted subject shaped by notions of marginalization and poverty. What kinds of stories are obscured by this recurrent image of 'the migrant' and how do such categorizations hamper the analysis of privilege, belonging and white normativity within studies of migration? Why are some individuals not regarded as migrants despite their migrant status? Why are other individuals seen as migrants and thus denied their national belonging in spite of their formal status as national citizens? The article develops analytical tools on migration, belonging and citizenship, with particular attention to (a) *autochthony and belonging*, (b) *race and citizenship* and (c) *white capital*.

Keywords

Migration • whiteness • racialization • belonging • Sweden

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Introducing 'the migrant'

In Sweden, the concept of migration tends to be associated with either problems regarding numbers, costs and the sheer presence of immigrants in the country or with racism, discrimination and the economic vulnerability of migrants, refugees and 'EU-migrants'. In both cases, 'the migrant' is imagined as (and often is) a non-privileged, non-white, non-western (refugee) subject in search of a better future in 'our' country. A non-privileged migrant is someone who has often been subjectified as 'the migrant' in (western) literature, research or the media (and as such is portrayed as 'a contemporary problem') (Lundström 2014). Here, 'the migrant' tends to be imagined as the embodiment of suffering caused by economic, environmental and political exposure. As the sociologist Floya Anthias (2012: 102) observes:

[w]hen migration is the object of study this presupposes questions being framed around a notion of "a migrant" – a category formulated as an abstract category (implicitly presupposing an undifferentiated human subject) relating to the prototype of the economic migrant.

This imaginary migrant can easily stand in the way for highly skilled refugees and affect how lifestyle migrants or expatriate migrants are perceived. The migrant as a pre-constituted subject thus excludes and obscures various possible migrant subjects who do not fit this image, such as highly skilled non-western, non-white migrants or white migrants from, or within, the western world, as in the case of

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Swedish return migrants – who are in fact the single largest group of immigrants in Sweden.¹

Caroline Knowles and Douglas Harper (2009) argue that the notion of 'the migrant' is a result of the recurrent focus on *in*-migration rather than *out*-migration in Europe and the United States. Their argument can easily be applied to the Swedish discourse, in that the concept of out-migration is almost exclusively located in the 19th century emigration waves, when roughly one-fourth of the Swedish population migrated to the United States in search of a better life and escaping the poverty that prevailed in Sweden. Popular and political contemporary discourses of migration in Sweden overwhelmingly focus on immigration in terms of refugees and/or non-western migrants coming here to share 'our' economic prosperity. Similar results have been presented by scholars in the United Kingdom and the United States (Croucher 2012, Fox *et al.* 2015). However, because of the recent economic crisis in southern European countries, the discourses of migration in Greece, Portugal and Spain can, and often do, refer to the process of out-migration, for example, by the highly skilled south European middle-class in search of a better future in northern Europe or in former colonies such as Angola or Brazil.

This article reflects on the interconnections of race and migration and the parallel disconnections of whiteness and migration within the field of migration studies at large (cf. Knowles & Harper 2009). Empirically, the article builds on narratives about migration, belonging and citizenship among *white Swedish migrants* and *non-white Swedes*.² From ethnographic studies with these groups, the

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article examines the various dimensions of the racialized figure of the migrant, presenting a critical analysis of how the racialization of the migrant shapes the use of concepts within the field of migration studies. From this analysis, the article seeks to shed new light on the links between theoretical perspectives, popular and political discourses and empirical studies of migration, migration experiences and racialization processes.³

The empirical data is categorized into two clusters. The category of *white Swedish migrants* consists of a diverse spectrum of Swedish migrant women. Data includes ethnographic work and in-depth interviews with 66 Swedish migrant women in the United States, Singapore and Spain conducted between 2006 and 2010 (Lundström 2014) and 46 return Swedish migrant women living in four different cities in Sweden, conducted in 2014 and 2015. The latter group has lived abroad in a range of countries before returning. The category of *non-white Swedes* includes Swedish women of Latin American descent. The study is based on ethnographic work and in-depth interviews with 29 young Latina women in Stockholm conducted in 2004 and 2005 (Lundström 2007). In contrast to the groups of white Swedish migrants, this group had not migration experiences of their own. On the basis of a qualitative meta-analysis (Schreiber *et al.* 1997) that aggregates the essential elements and findings of these different studies, rather than presenting individual quotes from them, the aim is to add new insights to existing theoretical perspectives of migration and problematize recurrent conceptual ideas in the field of migration studies, thereby providing useful analytical tools for the study of the race–migration nexus with a focus on the Swedish case.

Race and migration in Sweden

Sweden's population structure differs from those of its Nordic neighbours. Overall, Sweden has harboured refugees and migrants from the non-western world to a degree that is comparable with other European countries and former colonial powers, such as the United Kingdom, the Netherlands and France. Nevertheless, despite decades of migration and shared European colonial privileges, Sweden still considers itself a white nation with no colonial history and where Swedishness *is* whiteness (Hübinette & Lundström 2014, Keskinen, *et al.* 2009). Even though 17 per cent of Swedes are foreign born, and almost 30 per cent of today's inhabitants have a foreign background (including immigrants and their children, adopted and mixed Swedes) (Hübinette 2012; Statistics Sweden 2016), there is a lingering national and international perception that the country is still relatively homogeneous compared to other western countries.

The influx of immigrants from non-western countries to Sweden began in the 1950s in small numbers, as this was a period dominated by intra-European labour immigration. Larger numbers of non-western migrants arrived in the second half of the 1970s and particularly in the 1980s and onwards, when refugee immigration replaced labour immigration. The politics of multiculturalism from the 1970s proclaimed Sweden as a generous and hospitable country for immigrants and refugees, although these people were perceived as 'guests' rather than nationals, meaning that the lingering notion of a white nation had not been renegotiated (Lundström & Hübinette 2014). Since the 1990s, non-western immigration increased to the extent that at present 13 per cent of the Swedish population has a non-western background (Hübinette 2012). It is from this period and onwards that the discourse of migrants as 'abusers' of the

Swedish welfare system has been accentuated. This is perhaps most famously illustrated by the notorious headline of Sweden's second largest tabloid newspaper *Expressen* dated 6 September 1993 – 'Kick them out!' ('*Kör ut dem!*').⁴

Although it could be argued that Sweden has always been a multiracial country with national minorities, it has successfully portrayed itself as a homogeneous mono-ethnic white nation – not least through its policies of forced assimilation and the racial and spatial distinction and discrimination of the Sámi during the era of state-sanctioned race science in the early 20th century, with the creation of specific census lists for Swedish Jews, Roma and Travellers.⁵

This brief history indicates that Sweden made a rather sharp shift from the overt race biology and race hygienic politics from the 1920s to official colour blindness and generous migration policies in the 1970s. But rather than creating a multiracial national identity, the exceptional antiracist policy in Sweden reconstructed a 'new' white nation that was different, yet similar to the previous formation of a homogeneous country (Hübinette & Lundström 2014). Thus, when analysing the nexus between race, migration and belonging, Sweden's contradictory history of having been the center of world leading race science *and* a country of colour-blind anti-racism with a strong white national identity alongside with a large non-western immigration and a growing non-white population is utterly important.

In today's politicized discourse, the words 'immigrants', 'foreigners' or 'non-Swedes' mainly refer to people originating from a non-western country. For example, in an interview after the racist attack in a Swedish school in the town of Trollhättan in October 2015, when a young white man brutally stabbed and murdered children and teachers of colour, the journalist from Swedish public service television (SVT) stated that not many 'Swedish' pupils attended that school. In this conceptual conflation, all the non-white bodies were perceived as 'immigrants', despite their actual citizenship or place of birth (Lundström 2007, cf. Ahmed 2000; Andreassen & Ahmed-Andresen 2014).⁶

Racializing migration

As a lived experience, migration does not reflect distinct and self-contained categories. Also, as migration processes become much more diverse – including several groups of skilled and professional people, retirement migration and hybrid tourism – the 'old dichotomies of migration studies of internal versus international, forced versus voluntary, temporary versus permanent, legal versus illegal' are blurred (King 2002: 89). In line with this argument, Michaela Benson and Nick Osbaldiston (2016: 8) suggest that including the different lives of migrants – referring in particular to affluent migrants – in migration studies 'is a deliberate and political point while also recognizing that the relative class and racial privilege of these migrants is telling of the power asymmetries at work within global migration flows'. This new mobility paradigm continues to be structured by race and postcolonial relations, which are often insinuated rather than foregrounded as central aspects of how migration routes take shape (Croucher 2012, Erel *et al.* 2016, Knowles & Harper 2009). The fact that the concept of migration is often reserved for bodies of colour, rather than white bodies (who tend to be seen as tourists, expatriates, guests, development aid workers), makes race implicit in the very conceptualization of migration (Erel *et al.* 2016).

As previous research shows, foregrounding whiteness or other forms of privilege in migration studies has the ability to unveil how some migrants arrive with specific kinds of cultural capital which in turn facilitates their migration processes (see Fechter 2010, Hayes 2014, Lan 2011, Oliver & O'Reilly 2010, Weiss 2005) and further distinguishes the contemporary postcolonial and globalized transnational white migrant from the former colonial settler (Stasiulis & Yuval-Davis 1995). Certainly, studying whiteness is not an argument for reorienting research towards white western migrants or a reason for neglecting the racism, exploitation and discrimination experienced by non-white/non-western migrants or white 'others' (such as the Irish or Eastern Europeans) (Fox *et al.* 2015, McDowell 2009). As Stephen Castles (2010: 1566) puts it, a key problem is rather 'the tendency to see migration as quite distinct from broader social relationships and change processes'.

It is also pertinent to ask how local, national and transnational systems of power shape individual experiences of migration and the analysis of the same. Such a focus highlights the following questions: How does race and whiteness structure the image of 'the migrant' and what are its consequences for the analysis of migration? How do migrants and non-migrants fit (or not fit) into the racialized notions of national belonging and citizenship? How does whiteness function as a form of institutionalized and embodied capital within a national and transnational space?

In the next section, three analytical aspects of how racialization shapes migration from the perspective of white Swedish migrants and non-white Swedes are discussed. These include (a) *autochthony and belonging*: how migration histories are viewed depending on who they are attached to due to racial structures rather than their minority or majority status; (b) *race and citizenship*: how the construction of race makes migrant bodies fit or not fit into the presumed homogeneous nation or into the history of colonialism and empire; and (c) *white capital*: how the conceptualization of whiteness as a kind of capital can help us to understand migrants' social locations.

Autochthony and belonging

In the field of migration studies, the dichotomies of minority–majority, immigrant–local, non-citizen–citizen and outsider–insider are often central to the analysis, in a logic where the former is expected to be discriminated against (by the latter) because of its minority/immigrant/non-citizen/outsider status. However, the assumption that minorities are discriminated against is not always correct. In my studies of Swedish migrants in various parts of the world, the minority–majority paradigm cannot be accurately translated. Swedish migrants abroad live rather privileged lifestyles in gated communities or white enclaves, thus shaping a feeling of white cosmopolitanism with particular global privileges, rather than 'discriminated minorities' (Lundström 2014; cf. Hage 2000; Shome 2014). These spatial settings are shaped by the migration destination. Based on whiteness as a social structure, Swedish migrants living in western countries can pass as members of the white majority population living in suburbs reserved for the white middle- and upper-classes (Lundström 2010), while those living in Asia, Africa or Latin America are part of a transnational social structure of segregation securing their status as white upper-class 'world citizens' (cf. Hage 2000). In this way, Swedish migrants can 'naturally' retain their national identity abroad or fit into the majority population in their own right.

The power structures that frame the minority and majority status of non-whites and whites make it possible to question the claims of numerical relations. As Cohen (1977: 19) argues in his study of expatriate communities:

in contrast to most other migrant groups and minorities, the expatriates are a privileged minority; they ordinarily enjoy a high social status and often an elite one within the host-society [...].

For Cohen (1977: 19–20), the high social status of expatriate minorities is in part 'rooted in historical circumstances: in many ex-colonial countries, the white expatriates inherited a lofty elite status from their colonial predecessors'. Thus, when white migrants, expatriates or lifestyle migrants choose to self-segregate, they tend to carry on the long tradition of white colonizers and settlers, although this is not always inherited from a direct colonial relation as Cohen suggests. Consequently, comparisons between marginalized and self-segregated migrant groups are complicated, in that the former is often shaped by a lack of alternatives and discrimination, while the latter is often a choice that enables these groups to keep and increase their privileges in their particular spaces. For Swedish migrants abroad, their high status is also due to their well-paid jobs and high educational levels (even though women's roles as expatriate wives as postcolonial subjects should also be recognized as part of global capitalism), which makes it possible for them to move from one middle-class position to another and at times improve their class position (Fechter 2010).

By looking at the numerous ways in which race move 'behind' (his)stories of migration and shape the very same (his)stories, it is possible to unveil how migration discourses interpellate some bodies differently than others – beyond numerical status (cf. Althusser 1976). Whereas some migrants can blend into Western societies, others continue to be identified, (mis)read and defined by their 'different origins'. White Swedish migrants are seldom hailed by dominant public discourses of migration (whether in Sweden or abroad) and are not ideologically constituted as migrant subjects (Althusser 1976). In contrast, non-white Swedes describe how they are constantly referred to as 'immigrants' in everyday life, regardless of their citizenship or country of birth (Lundström 2007). This shows how subjective migration histories are viewed in different ways, depending on who they are attached to and how public migration discourses are attached to some bodies differently than others (Garner 2007b). White bodies can thus liberate themselves from being part of the migration discourse, while non-white bodies are locked into a (negative) migration frame regardless of their migration background and/or citizenship status.

Thus, the racialized construction of the migrant category encompasses how the status of migration is passed on to future generations. Who continues to be a migrant or of migrant 'origin' across generations, and who does not? Who can 'blend in' to the white normativity in the next generation and who cannot? In her study of Americans of European origin, Mary Waters (2000) demonstrates that European-ness could be used as a symbolic, rather than ascribed ethnicity for coming generations of migrants, thereby accentuating a 'structured invisibility' in everyday life. Historically, white ethnic Europeans in the United States have experienced a decline in residential segregation in contrast to non-white groups (Frankenberg 1993: 6). We can assume that white Europeans and white Anglo-Saxon migrants in the Nordic countries have similar experiences, although these groups are seldom included in studies of migration in the Nordic countries (Guðjónsdóttir 2014).

Spatial belonging

Although race is intrinsically linked to issues of space and spatial relations, these relations have to be renegotiated through migration. Migrants do not simply move to another country or region, but to a particular area, neighbourhood or street – in a racial and ethnic mapping of space, in physical terms (Frankenberg 1993). In this logic, race and class can be maintained or ascribed through multiple layers of segregation, thereby highlighting the connection between migrant processes and broader social relations. Racialization and segregation thus go hand in hand but have different outcomes. In Sweden, the discourse of segregation is usually attached to non-white subjects in ways that link them to poor suburban areas and stimulates white segregation from non-white subjects and areas (Molina 2005, Pred 2000). According to Irene Molina (2005), the linguistic detachment of the 'imagined community' of Sweden and poor suburban areas mirrors how spatial boundaries are linked to ideas of belonging and non-belonging to the nation. Other researchers have likened the Swedish suburbs to an 'internal orient' and a form of 'internal colonization', thereby drawing the symbolic frontiers of national belonging (Sernhede 2002). Thus, it is not the suburban conditions *per se* that mark spatial hierarchies. Rather, it is the poor suburbs that are racialized and differentiated by class that are stigmatized and stigmatizing. This concurs with Allen Pred's (2000: 98) conclusion in his study of segregation in Sweden: '[t]he social construction of race becomes one with the physical occupation of space. The racialized becomes the segregated, and racial meanings become inscribed upon space'.⁷

Bodies that appear to be 'different' are in everyday life scrutinized along the lines of 'belonging' or 'not belonging', as in the case of non-white Swedes (Lundström 2010). According to Nira Yuval-Davis (2011), the concept of belonging refers to an emotional – or even – ontological attachment about feelings 'at home', which concerns social locations, and individual and collective identities. In order to capture the processes of marginalization, we must, therefore, turn to the constitution of white social and geographical boundaries and ways of exclusion and question the habitual practice of placing race 'elsewhere' outside white normative spaces. Here, it is crucial to identify the borders and boundaries of place and belonging, study how these boundaries are regulated and sustained and examine how someone becomes a transgressor 'out of place' and what the consequences of these aspects are.

Questioning autochthony

The structural inequalities of the different migrant minorities point to a neat problem with the use of concepts such as majority and minority to *explain* racial or class differences. Perhaps we ought to ask how notions of belonging are constructed around ideas of race rather than numbers? In the European literature on migration, there has been a long discussion about national belonging and nations as forms of 'imagined communities' and an exploration of how nationality excludes 'others' who are 'strangers' to this notion.⁸ Nira Yuval-Davis (2011) links the question of belonging to a sense of *autochthony* – the idea that 'I was here before you' – which she argues is challenged by migrants who interrupt the connection between people and territory. This statement is perhaps most overtly directed at immigrants entering the country but could equally apply to indigenous populations. In Sweden, the Sámi have been subjected to severe oppression, racialization and deterritorialization

despite their native origins: a fact that complicates the relations between belonging and autochthony, people and territory.

In her analysis of national belonging, Sara Ahmed questions the symbol of 'the stranger' as a figure that *does not fit*. Rather, she suggests that the stranger is in fact someone who *does fit* into the imagined community of the nation:

Given the way in which the recognition of strangers operates to produce who "we" are, we can see that strangers already "fit" within the "cognitive, moral or aesthetic map of the world", rather than being, as Zygmunt Bauman argues, "the people who do not fit" [...]. (Ahmed 2000: 24)

The point here is not that migrant strangers or indigenous subjects 'do not fit' but rather that they do 'fit' into different histories and contemporaries. Non-white Swedes 'fit' the boundaries of whiteness and Swedishness by being located outside the same, thereby drawing the boundaries of these categories. This argument has similarities with Homi Bhabha's (1983) analysis of the stereotyping of 'the other', which functions ambiguously, in that it constructs 'the other' as foreign and different and at the same time recognises 'the other' as familiar and visible.

White migrants also 'fit' into certain spaces, especially those carved out by colonial and imperial structures and current transnational power relations. In this context, whiteness works as a global privilege with a particular historical legacy that is mobile and possible to re-install in 'new' postcolonial settings (Leonard 2013), often accompanied by the use of underprivileged migrants' work. Thus, asymmetric relations between the minority and the majority population work in different ways. White minority settlement can in fact provide a space for new and re-configured extensions of whiteness, whereas non-white minorities, including the 'second generation', tend to lose their former privileged class positions and suffer formal education devaluation (Lundström, 2007). In this way, migrants do not only cross national borders but also move between different sets of social classification systems that are tied to local, national and transnational hierarchies (Kusow 2006). Migrants who settle down in foreign settings can convert the desirable kinds of capital that they carry, such as whiteness, into a wide range of privileges in a local exchange, regardless of their minority status or 'who was there first'. Catherine Dauvergne (2009: 347) concludes that 'for those who are in positions of privilege, globalizing trends enhance and increase that privilege: for those who are excluded, globalization is increasing their exclusion'.

Race and citizenship

Who is perceived as a migrant and how are the meanings of this discursive category shaped by contextual and interconnected processes of race and migration in contemporary Sweden? I have so far argued that the dominant racialized story of migration as 'a problem' fills the concept of the migrant with pre-constituted meanings, thus obscuring theoretical and empirical dimensions of race and privilege in migration. This image masks the possibility of migrants or asylum seekers as highly educated, skilled individuals and valuable resources for the Swedish society, and re-constructs the notion of the dependent migrant, which is similar to the idea of receivers of development aid being subjects without resources.

Although the Swedish migrant women I interviewed had migrant experiences, such as having to negotiate losses of social

networks, diasporic identities, regulations, bureaucracy, insecurity and feelings of loneliness and displacement, they did not easily identify with the conceptual framework of 'the migrant', because of its negative connotations. Rather, their narratives demonstrated the numerous ways in which the category of the migrant discursively targets or excludes certain subjects or characteristics and habitually includes features such as illegality, discrimination, poverty and disintegration (Castles 2010). In contrast, despite their lack of individual migration experiences, the Swedish young women of Latin American descent said that they were frequently regarded as 'immigrants', despite having been born in Sweden and that this was most clearly articulated in the question: *'where are you from?'*

This sharp discursive division between 'Swedes' and 'immigrants' reflects the idea of a white 'origin' (that is racially distinct from local 'indigenoussness') and a non-white 'foreignness' that manifestly demonstrates a reluctance to rearticulate a Swedish national identity along the lines of changing demographic patterns. Despite an increasingly multiracial population, whiteness constitutes an outspoken but 'crucial component in a more general shared image of national belonging', thus constructing the idea of a 'deep Swedishness' (Mattsson & Pettersson 2007: 240). In this logic, claiming Swedishness as a person of colour illustrates the illegitimacy of being 'at home' in the white Swedish nation. As it is assumed that white Swedes are the only ones who can really be 'at home' in Sweden and that anyone who comes from outside illegitimately aspires to inhabit that home and share its intrinsic privileges (Hübinette & Lundström 2014); this national space is often seen as being uninhabitable for non-white bodies. Ahmed (2007: 162) argues that being 'at home' is at the core of privileged national identities:

The discourse of "stranger danger" reminds us that danger is often posited as originating from what is outside the community, or as coming from outsiders, those people who are not "at home", and who themselves have come from "somewhere elsewhere" (where the "where" of this "elsewhere" always makes a difference). The politics of mobility, of who gets to move with ease across the lines that divide spaces, can be re-described as the politics of who gets to be at home, who gets to inhabit spaces, as spaces that are inhabitable for some bodies and not others, insofar as they extend the surfaces of some bodies and not others.

In fact, migrating white Swedes can actually 'extend the surfaces' of their bodies and simultaneously keep their national identity intact. In this sense, migration can expand a person's national identity to encompass a more cosmopolitan version of Swedishness, for example, as someone who has experienced more, learned something new and is more well-travelled and cosmopolitan. In this regard, White Swedish migrants can perceive themselves as 'citizens of the world', a view that is reinforced by the politics of mobility that is reflected in visa agreements, taxation reliefs or the freedom of mobility that Swedish and EU citizens enjoy. Thus, even though many researchers have argued for a broadening of the concept of the cosmopolitan, from the global elites to working-class migrants (Featherstone 2002), the cosmopolitan view still seems to be reserved for white bodies (Hage 2000, Shome 2014).

The privileged (non-)citizen

Race and citizenship are in many ways intertwined and interconnected through transnational migration. Citizenship and non-citizenship are

both crucial when shaping the politics of mobility and belonging. For white Swedish migrants, Swedish (and EU) citizenship constitutes a premium 'knapsack' when moving across the world's borders, because of the favourable visa policies (Lundström, 2014). It is also a backup system that allows access to a strong welfare state and a safe future – not only in the country in which they reside but as a transnational capital of utmost importance. As Aihwa Ong (1999: 6) puts it, 'in the era of globalization, individuals as well as governments develop a flexible notion of citizenship and sovereignty as strategies to accumulate capital and power'.

For non-western migrants and migrant workers, the lack of citizenship status in the host country serves as an additional axis of inequality and exploitation, in that they are legally excluded from citizens' rights. For others, like the Swedish migrant women interviewed in the United States, Singapore and Spain, the lack of formal citizenship in the country of residence is a choice that can paradoxically provide them with some kind of (trans)national capital, in that they can always return to Sweden when life gets tough (Lundström 2014). This inequity is reinforced by the global division of labour, where manufacturing or domestic work is increasingly performed by foreign migrants from poorer countries in the homes of local citizens or (non-citizen) expat migrants around the world. Thus, as Bridget Anderson (2010: 63) argues, not all non-citizens are equally excluded, but the two exclusionary frameworks of citizenship/foreigner and public/private work together. While white expatriates with transnational contracts (in the public space) have the option to migrate 'outside' the logics of citizenship/foreigner, other migrants, such as domestic workers (in the private space), are regulated and controlled by the same logics.

White capital

The underlying argument in this article is that racializing processes play a pivotal role in migrants' experiences and for the understanding of migration per se. This section discusses the specific ways in which whiteness can be used as a form of capital for migrants who are perceived as white in their social location. Whiteness is not an essential position but a contextual and transnational construction that is embedded into local and global racial systems. Swedish and Nordic whiteness has a particular position here, which further intersects with class formation and national identity (Oliver & O'Reilly 2010, Painter 2010). However, in order to make whiteness work as a form of capital, it has to be transferred and converted into other forms of capital and be possible to institutionalize across space (Leonard 2013).

Research has shown how western migrants arrive with particular forms of privilege in terms of class, nationality, profession and whiteness and that these open up new ways of producing and re-producing cultural capital (Erel *et al.* 2016, Fechter 2010, Hayes 2014, Leonard 2013, Oliver & O'Reilly 2010, Weiss 2005). In terms of cultural capital, Steve Garner (2007a: 59) argues that whiteness involves 'a belief that one is part of a tradition of dominance including Empire, knowledge of norms and behaviour patterns that will produce intended outcomes in particular situations'. Such a conviction certainly shapes Swedish migrants' notions of mobility rights, orientations and opportunities. In the wake of a globalized history of race and European colonialism (Painter 2010), Swedes abroad can easily connect to the history of the Empire, and in particular the British Empire, as is shown in their choice of travel destinations, venues and socializing patterns (Lundström 2013).

This identification with Britons mirrors Ramón Grosfoguel's (2003) map of whiteness during 'the second modernity' of 1650–1945. During this period, Europe's 'heart' moved away from Spain and Portugal to the northern parts of Europe and further to the United States. As a result of this shift, the previously white southern Europe was partly excluded from the discursive field of whiteness. Instead, 'Hispanics' were constructed as part of the inferior others excluded from the superior 'white' "European" "races" (Grosfoguel 2003: 45) – a tendency that is currently reinforced by the economic crisis in southern Europe. In their position as migrants, white Swedes, like Britons, feel able to maintain their language and traditions abroad: patterns that are often used to criticise the so-called 'non-integrated immigrants' in popular and political discourses in Sweden (Lundström 2014, cf. Lan 2011, Oliver & O'Reilly 2010).

The concept of white capital is used here as an embodied (in terms of skin colour or hair texture) and institutionalized (in terms of visa policies or citizenship rights) form of cultural capital that can be converted into other forms of capital across social space (thus distinguishing capital from resources), depending on how they are valued in a particular context (Lundström 2014, Bourdieu 1986). As Beverley Skeggs (1997: 9) formulates it:

Gender, class and race are not capitals as such, rather they provide the relations in which capitals come to be organized and valued. Masculinity and Whiteness, for instance, are valued (and normalized) forms of capital. Our social locations influence our movement and relation to other social positions and hence our ability to capitalize further on the assets we already have.

At an individual level, whiteness as cultural capital is perhaps best captured in the concept of *habitus*, which includes bodily comportment and speaking as distinctive markers. Unlike other forms of cultural capital, *habitus* is an integral part of the person and can, therefore, not be transmitted by gifts, purchases or exchanges (Skeggs 2004). In this sense, whiteness is a form of *habitus*: a second nature that defines what bodies do, how practices are repeated and what bodies *can do* (Ahmed 2007).

Trans/national white capital

Bodies that qualify as white *can* usually move and cross borders with ease. Privileges of whiteness connected to institutions, passports or bodies are, therefore, contingent forms of capital for migrants who are socially classified as white. However, not all whiteness is recognized as white capital. For example, Chilean, Argentinian or Iranian whiteness is rarely identified and/or convertible as capital in Sweden (cf. Farahani 2012; Lundström 2007). Here, whiteness as cultural capital is intertwined with global histories and post-colonial racial structures, which means that some kinds of white capital are local or intersect with ideas about national belonging and other transnational and transferable forms of capital.

A pivotal dimension of white capital is the ability to institutionalize it beyond the embodied forms of white *habitus*. Thus, as Anja Weiss (2005) puts it, we should really ask what 'quality of space' migrants have access to when they arrive in a new country. White Swedish migrants abroad are, to a large extent, able to convert their white capital into local resources and re-install themselves in privileged social spaces, either by adapting to contextual forms of (white) segregation or by shaping new ones. These spaces may be local in the sense that they are inhabited in a particular country or region.

They also interact with the transnational logics of designated spaces, for example, in the case of expatriates in Singapore or lifestyle migrants in Spain, who are able to maintain their social and spatial privileges by moving to private condominiums or ensuring the racial composition of residential areas. To paraphrase Ahmed (2006), whiteness 'orientates' white Swedish migrant bodies in certain ways. Swedish communities abroad take shape around 'institutionalized forms of whiteness', where 'likeness' is a way of bringing (often white, western) individuals together and keeping others (often non-white and non-western, but sometimes local) at a distance (Lundström 2013).

Thus, at the same time, as being sensitive to the fragmented and contextualized constructions of contemporary whiteness, we should also be alert to the forms of global white privilege that are the vestiges of the postcolonial era. When white Anglo-Saxons migrate to Sweden with valued forms of capital, they tend to easily become a part of white Swedishness, through social relations or working life. This is in contrast to non-western migrants, whose lives are shaped by sharp racial segregation, unemployment and discrimination, despite their former capital or existing networks. For returning Swedish migrants, it goes without saying that they are primarily Swedes and not immigrants. Accordingly, while the idea of whiteness as a homogeneous entity can, and should, be destabilized, some forms of white capital continue to be transferrable across transnational spaces.

Concluding remarks on the race–migration nexus in Sweden

By integrating white Swedish migrants and non-white Swedes into a qualitative meta-analysis of contemporary migration processes, new dimensions open up that challenge the idea of the migrant as a monolithic figure or 'a problem'. Studying how racializing processes work in migration problematizes the figure of 'the migrant' as a coherent racially marked subject. Migration processes involve more experiences, positions and relations than those usually accounted for in the paradigm of the (low-skilled) economic migrant moving from a non-western country in search of a better future in Europe or the United States (cf. Croucher 2012). The interrelation between different white migrants and non-white non-migrant groups deepens the insights into these migration complexities. This article has foregrounded three analytical dimensions with implications for the theoretical understanding of racialization and migration in Sweden: *autochthony and belonging, race and citizenship and white capital*. Despite decades of multiculturalism, it is suggested here that the construction of national belonging in Sweden cannot be distinguished from that of whiteness, neither historically nor contemporarily. National ideas of whiteness and belonging seem to be both tied to and separated from those of autochthony and citizenship. Whereas national belonging excludes migrants based on ideas of autochthony, the same imaginary national belonging does not include the Sámi or non-white citizens. Consequently, although race is subordinate to culture in the Swedish colour-blind discourse, whiteness remains at the core of the Swedish national identity, more so perhaps than the idea of 'who was here first'. This grants race primacy in the formation of Swedish national identity, though nationalist discourses emphasize that 'we were here first'. This implies that the intimate link between Swedishness and whiteness needs to be called into question in order to create new forms of national belonging (Hübinette & Lundström 2014).

Notwithstanding, autochthony and belonging are not static categories. Rather, it is reasonable to assume that Swedish whiteness (and its inherent politics of belonging) will broaden and recruit new subjects in an attempt to maintain its hegemonic position in the ever increasing multiracial Sweden – in line with the development in the United States (Twine & Steinbugler 2006; Bonilla-Silva 2003). In response to the growing non-white population in Sweden, 'new' – previously non-white/non-Swedish – groups, such as Italians, Greeks, Poles, Bosnians and some mixed-race groups, will, in this scenario, be included in the expanding boundaries of Swedish whiteness after a few generations, just as different European ethnic groups in the United States became homogeneously white through the 1950s suburbanization (Lipsitz 2006). This is already true for descendants of migrants from the Baltic countries and Finland, who have been integrated into Swedish whiteness. The implication of this argument is that the Swedish national self-identification with whiteness can persist.

Further, the article shows that citizenship and national belonging do not always overlap. For white Swedes, nationality, national belonging and citizenship apparently do overlap in the sense that they are perceived as Swedes without having to refer to their Swedish citizenship. For non-white Swedes, Swedish citizenship does not automatically include a sense of national belonging or a manifest Swedishness. In order to claim their Swedishness, they have to refer to their place of birth and/or citizenship as a kind of 'proof', because their citizenship is not embodied according to the notion of a 'deep Swedishness'. White migrants/non-Swedish citizens are located in between this logic, in that they can physically appear as Swedish citizens on the basis of their white bodies regardless of their actual citizenship status.

As a juridical resource, citizenship can undoubtedly enhance a person's status and global privileges. Certainly, for western migrants, borders, admission and asylum policies are structured in favourable ways, which means that citizenship has become even more pertinent when travelling or accessing welfare services. However, in everyday life, race can blur the status of citizenship. For example, non-white citizens are regularly targets for everyday racism and national ID controls. In this process, there is a link between migration and racialization in Sweden and in the European Union, since anti-immigration policies also target non-white locals in particular ways, regardless of their citizenship status (cf. Garner 2007b).

With regard to white capital, it is possible to assume that immigrants who qualify as white, such as those from Anglo-Saxon countries, can use their white capital as transnational capital, whether or not they are 'assimilated' or respected Britons or Americans. Their descendants will unquestionably be part of white Swedishness. This logic calls into question a static interrelation between race and citizenship. In other words, it questions how and whether they intersect and/or overlap. A plausible hypothesis is that white non-Swedish citizens or first-generation white migrants experience less racism than non-white Swedish citizens, who were actually 'here first'.

In contemporary stories of migration and mobility, privileges coupled with whiteness seem to be naturalized. It is assumed that there will be opportunities and a lack of discrimination, and as long as migrants' whiteness is not called into question, social and geographical mobility seems to be achievable. In these movements, the transnational asymmetries between nations set the boundaries for the extension of whiteness. Migrating subjects are thus located in transnational relations and contextual intersectional social processes resulting from exchanges of capital and global power

relations that produce, and at times accentuate, the differences between them. Questions pertaining to *who*, *with whom*, *where to* and *where from* are vital for these processes and mainly favour white Western migrants.

Consequently, an important analytical dimension for migration studies concerns the question of *what migration stories are expected to explain*. What are the 'effects' of migration when separated from other social and racial processes? Do individual histories of migration alone account for post-migration experiences of discrimination, racism or poverty? If the conceptual boundaries of 'the migrant' are already predefined, how are the different experiences among migrants to be construed? In order to excavate such analyses, studies of migration need to examine the interrelations between racial discriminating patterns and white privilege more closely.

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Endnotes

1. These numbers have changed during the current refugee situation because of the war in Syria, see http://www.scb.se/sv/_Hitta-statistik/Artiklar/Kriget-i-Syrien-medforde-rekordstor-invandring/. Retrieved on 21 January 2016.
2. The categories 'white' and 'non-white' are used as an analytical distinction to reflect the ways in which these groups are located within national and transnational racial structures.
3. The first study is presented in Lundström 2014. The second study is financed by the Swedish Research Council (Dnr 421-2013-900). Interviews were conducted by sociologist Lena Sohl. All the informants are members of an international network for Swedish women, *Swedish Women's Educational Association* (SWEA) and cannot be seen as representative of all Swedish migrants. The study of Swedish women of Latin American descent is presented in Lundström 2007.
4. A series of articles was launched starting with the headline 'KICK THEM OUT! This is what Swedish people think about immigrants and refugees'. On the following day, *Expressen* changed the headline to 'TAKE CARE OF THEM'.
5. Until the 1950s, the Travellers were probably the most racialized minority in Sweden.

6. SVT was later condemned for consolidating prejudices by the Swedish Broadcast Commission.
7. The concept of the suburb in Sweden is interconnected with the racialization of groups, corresponding to *la banlieue* in France or the inner city in the United States.
8. Ahmed 2000: Anderson 1991.

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