

If I Can't Say I Am Swedish, What Am I? Freedom within Limits of Choosing Identity

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Abstract: One in ten Swedes today is of mixed background, with parents of differing countries of origin. Despite mixed Swedes being an integral part of Swedish society, little is known about their experiences. Based on fourteen qualitative interviews with mixed Swedes who reported to be racialized as Latino, Asian, Arab, or Black, this article explores the freedom and limitations in asserting their ethnic and racial identity. Mixed Swedes' experiences show that while identification is flexible and the choice to identify as Swedish or mixed reflects their personal decision to connect with their national, cultural, and ethnic background, they cannot choose whether or how they will be racialized or racially categorized by others.

Keywords: mixed identity, multiracial identity, race, Sweden, racialization

Introduction

One in ten Swedes has a mixed background, i.e., has parents from different countries of birth or grew up with two or more cultures. According to Statistics Sweden, we are almost one million in that group, and we are becoming more numerous ... each year. But who are we, and what are our experiences?¹

In summer 2021, Nicole Gustafsson and Mysia Englund, two journalists of mixed background, conducted and published a series of interviews highlighting the voices of mixed Swedish individuals. The list at the end of the series where readers who self-identify as mixed can briefly (up to 220 characters) share their stories is growing, and now more than five hundred persons have reported their multiracial and multiethnic identity.

Sweden today is a country with racial and ethnic diversity that is comparable to the United States. Of the total population, 20 percent are foreign-born and approximately 8 percent are second-generation Swedes, with two foreign-born parents.² After the 1980s, when a growing proportion of immigrants came from outside Europe, especially MENA (Middle Eastern and North African) regions, seeking asylum in Sweden, the racial and ethnic landscape of the country began to change noticeably. This newly arising racial and ethnic diversity has brought about opportunities for partnerships across national, racial, ethnic, and religious boundaries. Based on the countries of origin of the parents, in 2020, 8 percent of the total population of ten million living in Sweden were "first-generation mixed" children of binational unions, with a Swedish-born and a foreign-born parent.³

Despite the growing number of mixed persons in Sweden, research on mixed identities is limited. This article explores mixed identity, especially focusing on those who can be defined as "first-generation

multiracial.”⁴ Based on fourteen qualitative interviews, the article examines the gap my subjects experience between their self-claimed and assigned identities and highlights the constraints they encounter in their claim to be Swedish. The analysis shows that the idea of “being Swedish” is contested and that identification as mixed is becoming more accepted among mixed Swedes; however, flexibility in identification is limited through a rigid practice of racial appraisal. Mixed Swedes’ experiences demonstrate that while identification as Swedish or mixed reflects their personal decision to connect with their cultural and ethnic background, they cannot choose whether or how they are racialized or racially categorized by others within a society structured by racial ideas.

This article contributes to the growing field of global mixed race studies. First, this study deepens our understanding of the life experiences of first-generation mixed persons, a population that is increasing not only in Sweden but also in such places as the US due to continuous international migration.⁵ First-generation mixed persons often have transnational connections to their parental country of origin and its culture, which may influence the fluidity of their identification depending on context. Second, the article explores mixed experience in Sweden, a “post-racial” society where the word “race” has been erased from public and political discourse. Mixed Swedes’ experiences of having their claims to Swedish identity questioned highlight how visual cues play a role in drawing the boundaries of who is ascribed as Swedish and how the boundaries are maintained through racialization, in other words, how race matters in Sweden.

Identifications and Categorizations in “Post-racial” Sweden

In Sweden the racially and ethnically diverse population is managed through a post-racial and color-blind ideal. In 2009, Sweden deleted the term “race” from the Discrimination Act, and in 2014 the government announced the erasure of the term from all legislation.⁶ These decisions reflect a post-racial aspiration based on a misconception that the word “race” gives legitimacy to racist beliefs stressing the biological reality of race.⁷ Instead of race (which functions as a categorization mechanism for maintaining privilege and structure for certain groups), the term “ethnicity” (which centers on a sense of belonging and inclusion) is primarily chosen by a group or individuals within a group and is predominantly used in Sweden.⁸

Due to the post-racial and color-blind racial attitudes and policies in Sweden, systematic data with self-reported or assigned information on race and ethnicity of individuals are unavailable.⁹ An individual’s country of birth, parental country of origin, and citizenship gathered by Statistics Sweden become proxy for ethnicity, and Sweden’s population is often divided into two categories in the official statistics and social analysis: those with a Swedish background and those with a foreign background. A person of “Swedish background” is defined as someone born in Sweden with one or two parents also born in Sweden, while a person of “foreign background” is defined as someone born outside of Sweden or born in Sweden with two foreign-born parents.¹⁰ Based on “the either/or logic” of a singular identity, “first-generation multiracials,” Swedish-born mixed persons with one parent born in Sweden and one outside of Sweden, or those who are “2.5 generation” and have two Swedish-born parents but with different ethnic and racial backgrounds, are incorporated into the category of Swedish background.¹¹ The lack of data on race and ethnicity makes it impossible to determine the exact numbers of persons who are mixed and

identify as multiracial or multiethnic. Moreover, parental countries of origin and citizenship may not reflect how children identify with their cultural groups and heritage.

The reality of Sweden is far from color-blind. Phenotypes and other visibilities function to maintain the norm of what it means to be Swedish, rendering Whiteness the defining power in the relational conditions of raciality.¹² Researchers illustrate how “immigrant” identities in Sweden develop through interaction and contact with the majority society, through which they become aware of not being White.¹³ As Swedes are socialized through racialization, the word “Swedish” excludes those who have an “immigrant background” and are non-White, leading to “the extension of racial meaning to a previously racially unclassified social relationship, social practice or *group*.”¹⁴ Whiteness indeed has functioned as a boundary that maintains the structural privileges and power of the majority throughout Swedish history.¹⁵

The majority of studies on mixed identities have been conducted in English-speaking countries, although there has been a significant increase in literature on mixedness across continents.¹⁶ Even with the array of research conducted, identity processes of mixed individuals are still unclear, especially in the European context. An increased presence of mixed people is celebrated as a sign of a new era “destabilizing” and “blurring” racial and ethnic boundaries.¹⁷ Indeed, growth of mixed populations should be celebrated in racially stratified societies, because mixed marriages are signs of fewer social and legal sanctions for such unions.¹⁸ However, this growth does not necessarily mean that race and racial identification have less significance. Ann Morning argues that today individuals can make racial and ethnic identity claims on various bases, such as genetic, cosmetic, emotive, or constructed.¹⁹ Nevertheless, exploration of how the mixed population’s “self-image” meets “public image” reminds us of the structural constraints that individuals experience, despite individual interactions, identifications, and affinities across racial and ethnic groups.²⁰ Individuals’ claims to identity relative to race and ethnicity are not always validated—the ability to claim one’s own ethnic identity and have that claim validated because of racialization and racial appraisals based on phenotypes.²¹

Research across different contexts highlights that those persons of mixed background experience an “identity mismatch” between their self-identification and externally assigned identification.²² Moreover, they may face discrimination and racialization in the society of their birth.²³ Mixed persons may experience an incongruence between their own racial and ethnic identification and what others perceive them to be due to racialization.²⁴

The limited research that exists on mixed persons in Sweden indicates that they may experience different kinds of discrimination and disadvantages, and that they need to maneuver within the White racial norm.²⁵ The binary of Swedish/immigrant can be understood as parallel to the Black/White binary that exists in other contexts, such as the US, which constrains the diversity identification. This binary is evident when famous figures, such as Jason Timbuktu Diakité (African American Swedish), Johannes Anyuru (Ugandan Swedish), or Jonas Hassen Khemiri (Tunisian Swedish), whose backgrounds as mixed persons are well known and who publicly share their personal experiences on racialization, are ascribed with immigrant male images.²⁶ In Sweden public advocacy and awareness equivalent to a “multiracial,” “multiethnic,” or “mixed” movement are lacking, which may limit mixed Swedes’ possibilities to identify themselves and contest the existing binary.²⁷

Methodology and Data

From August 2018 to January 2019, I conducted twenty-one semi-structured interviews with mixed Swedes. The following analysis focuses on fourteen interviewees whom I identify as multiracial mixed.²⁸ They all have at least one foreign-born parent who is not Swedish ethnically and who self-reported to belong to a racialized group, such as Latino, MENA, Black, or Asian. All interviewees self-identified as mixed when they responded to an interviewee recruitment advertisement on social media and the university network, in which being mixed was defined as having “one Swedish parent and one parent of a foreign background or [who] is not a Swedish citizen” and the place of upbringing being predominantly in Sweden. Interviews were conducted in Swedish face to face or via Facetime. The transcriptions were translated from Swedish to English, and the names that appear in this article are pseudonyms. Below is a list of the interviewees and their parental countries of origin. Racial background is specified in the analysis only if interviewees mentioned it; however, most interviewees referred to their parents and their mixed background by their parental country of origin, reflecting the administrative practice of Sweden.

Table 1. List of interviewees

Name	Age	Father	Mother	Self-identification	Ascribed identification
Adam	27	Argentinian	Swedish	Jewish Latino (Sephardi)	Swedish
Agnes	22	Latino	Swedish	Swedish, “halfie” or mixed	Swedish
Edvin	31	French	Korean adoptee	non-categorical term	non-Swedish
Elise	24	Swedish	Tanzanian	Swedish, Swedish Ethiopian	non-Swedish
Eman	26	Moroccan	Swedish	Swedish and Moroccan	Arabic
Eri	31	Japanese	Swedish	half Japanese and half Swedish	non-Swedish, non-White
Felicia	25	Cuban	Finnish	non-categorical term	Cuban
Ines	28	Argentinian	Swedish	Swedish Argentinian	Swedish
Jennifer	33	Chinese Malay	Swedish Finnish	Swedish, mixed, half Asian	Asian
Mari	26	Japanese	Swedish	half Japanese	Asian, Japanese
Mina	23	Swedish	Japanese	Swedish, Japanese Swedish	non-White
Nills	27	Japanese	Swedish	Swedish	Swedish
Sana	33	Japanese	Swedish	mixed	Asian, non-White
Tova	26	Finnish adoptee	Indian adoptee	Swedish	Indian

Analysis

As seen in the table, it is clear my interviewees self-identify in diverse ways. As Maria P. P. Root states in her “Bill of Rights for Racially Mixed Heritage,” mixed Swedes communicate their identities with flexibility and freedom, selecting terms that are both within and outside of existing racial dichotomies.²⁹ Self-identification does not match what others ascribe to them, typically based on the binaries of Swedish/immigrant, White/non-White, and other racialized terms. Below I analyze the constraints and advantages my mixed interviewees have experienced when asserting their identities.

Being Questioned

Many of the fourteen interviewees self-identify as Swedish (or partly as Swedish), because of their ethnic, cultural, and national belonging. However, they experience racialization due to their non-White phenotype and their claims to Swedish identity are constantly questioned. Elise carefully characterized herself as “racially and biologically 50-50: Swedish and Ethiopian.”

Because despite everything, it feels like it is not possible [to be accepted as Swedish]. I know that if I say so [Swedish], they [people] will say otherwise [that I am not].... At the same time, if I can't say that, what else am I?

She added, “It is quite confusing because it is such a contradiction that one sees oneself in one way, and then it is pointed out that you are not.... It gets strange to handle.”³⁰

Tova resolutely identifies as Swedish, although she constantly gets questioned. When asked how she self-identifies, she answered, “Swedish. Yes. I feel that it's quite easy to say so; meanwhile, it is hard to have to defend it so often.” But due to her physical appearance, she is always seen as Indian. She explained what her self-identification as Swedish means to her.

Swedish is my native language. I do not speak any other languages. I was born here. None of my parents speak any other languages other than Swedish, although none of them were born in Sweden. There are different definitions on the basis [of what it means to be Swedish]. Some think that one must be born in Sweden, some think that your parents must be born in Sweden, some think that one must be able to speak the language, or some say that it is just to have a passport. I feel that I can check off the majority [of these things], but not all. Some think that you must look Swedish, which I may not, but I think I look Swedish in my definition of Swedish.³¹

Similarly, Sana (Japanese Swedish) also recognizes the fixed idea of Swedish as White: “it gets much more complicated for me when I say that I am Swedish. Then I have to have a much longer conversation about it.” She described herself as “mixed” and sometimes “Japanese Swedish.” Like others, Sana views her cultural identity as Swedish in terms of language, values, and other cultural grounds. She sees this as her privilege, being “White.” At the same time, she said that despite her father and her not being close due to

her parents' divorce, she cannot deny the intergenerational transmission of culture and attachment to Japan. She also is aware of her need to navigate the racialized categories that exist in Sweden, such as "immigrant" or "adoptee":

I'm not an immigrant. I'm not [transnationally] adopted either. There are such clear identity categories that I do not belong to. What am I then? I am perhaps some kind of a White person because I still have the attributes. I have the culture.³²

Identification as Mixed

Many of my interviewees self-identify as mixed but in different ways and self-identify as Swedish through national belonging; however, their mixed identity is not validated and accepted by others as a meaningful category.³³ Despite being questioned, they continue to assert their mixed identity for different reasons.

Jennifer (Chinese Malay, Swedish Finnish) is accustomed to people asking her, "Where are you from?" and understands that she gets this question because people see her more as "Asian" than as mixed. Despite her being racialized as Asian, her identity is flexible. For her, identity is strongly tied to her own feelings and connections, and not to others' identifications of her. Asserting mixed identity means contesting the idea of Swedish identity as White identity. She self-identifies as mixed and Swedish to contest the existing binary identification in Sweden.

I usually describe myself as mixed in some way. I can sometimes say "half Asian," but then there will be a long explanation. I'm half Asian, my dad comes from there, my mother comes from there, and I was born in Sweden. I know that when I was younger, it was very important that I was born in Sweden. It was my identity. I have always felt that I am Swedish to a larger extent. Although I don't look Swedish and maybe not everyone sees me as Swedish, but I myself have felt very Swedish.³⁴

A similar kind of flexibility in self-identification is seen in Eri's story. Eri said that she is "non-White" in Sweden because she constantly is reminded that she is "not White." She thinks the easiest way for her to identify herself is "half Japanese and half Swedish." In her interview, she was clear that she does not "pick a side" or position or incline herself to either side of her parental origin.³⁵ This claim can be understood as asserting that you can be non-White and Swedish.

Contrary to Jennifer and Eri, Eman's (Moroccan Swedish) assertion of mixed identity with reference to his parental origins (Swedish mother and Moroccan father) is based on not only his attachment to Moroccan ethnicity and culture but also his experiences of being racialized. He stated that he cannot pass as Swedish and is ascribed as an "Arab."

I think it is others who help me, other people and not me, who help me to clarify, other people who emphasize the national identity more than I do myself. That is why I think of my national identity because it is obvious that this is what people think of.³⁶

Eman's words reflect how experiences of racialization and stereotypes affect and form identification choices. The binary of Swedish/not Swedish is imposed on mixed persons, constraining their claims to be Swedish *and* mixed.

Mari (Japanese Swedish) self-identifies as "half Japanese." Similar to Eman, Mari explained that it has always been important for her to point out that she is of Japanese parentage, but her identification as half Japanese also comes from her experiences of racialization, constantly being referred to as "that Japanese girl." She contests the either/or thinking, expressing her wish not to be categorized as one or the other: "Being tied to just one thing—it is a suppression which I may not be really happy about.... I want to be me. I do not want to be tied to any single category." She expressed her frustration toward how others ascribe her racialized categories, expectations, and stereotypes around the idea of being Japanese. "You just want to be [yourself]. Can't you just get away from what people identify you as?"³⁷

Mina (Japanese Swedish) self-identifies as Japanese or Japanese Swedish in situations where people are "non-White." In front of a "Swedish and White" person she does not feel comfortable saying that she is Japanese. The existing idea of Swedish as a White racial category constrains her claim to be Swedish.

It is so tense. In Sweden, it is so clear that I am Japanese because I do not fit in and because I am not White. But then, personally and absolutely I myself think I am more Swedish than Japanese.

Later she noted, "If I then say that I am *half* Japanese, then it is suddenly, 'Oh, okay, you are not a *real* Japanese—a *full* Japanese.'"³⁸ She feels constrained in claiming Swedish and Japanese identities for different reasons. She avoids self-identifying as Japanese Swedish because she feels she risks being stereotyped and racialized, and at the same time, she wants to avoid her authenticity as Japanese and her knowledge about Japan being questioned and overruled in the majority White Swedish context. She is clearly positioned in a racial hierarchy where Whiteness is at the top.

How race functions as a mechanism excluding individuals from claiming Swedish identity is also clear in Ines's experience. She passes as Swedish phenotypically and is ascribed Swedish identity, despite self-identifying as mixed, as "both Swedish and Argentinian." Once Ines's last name becomes visible, she is racialized and excluded from the idea of Swedish. She has been told, "I didn't know that you are *not* Swedish."

I have a Swedish first name, and then I have a double last name—an Argentinian and a Swedish surname. And it is really about drawing a boundary directly when I meet people in a context where my name is directly [visible] as soon as I introduce myself. I am very quickly reminded of my background and my parentage and where I come from, why my name is my name, and I get a lot of comments about it. Then there are many who get confused and say, 'Oh when I saw you, I thought you were Swedish.'"

People do not accept her as being "completely Swedish" once her name is revealed: "[My name] comes up directly, and then I am not given a chance to say how people should treat me before they realize that I have Latin American ancestry."³⁹

Racial Passing

Racial passing can be a strategic choice to gain privileges of the majority, but for the mixed Swedes who were interviewed, passing was neither their choice nor something they had control over. Passing as Swedish was addressed as a practice of others ascribing them with a Swedish identity, contrary to how they self-identified. This might be more appropriately referred to as “Swedish-passing” in the same way “White-passing” or “White-assumed” differs from passing for White. The latter is by choice; the former is not. And, in this case, White-passing and Swedish-passing may, in fact, be thought of as synonymous given that the Swedish body is always assumed as and synonymous with White.⁴⁰ For a couple of interviewees this meant that they felt misrecognized, which resonates with previous studies in other contexts.⁴¹

Nills (Japanese Swedish) explained that his self-image is “White” and “Swedish” due to his upbringing in Swedish White suburbia. He also believes and assumes that others see him as Swedish, that he can pass as Swedish, because he is never asked where he is from. If asked what he is, “half Japanese” would be a perfect answer, he noted, because “my Japanese part is, at best, half” due to the limited connections to Japan (his parents divorced when he was young) and understanding of culture and language.⁴² For Nills, being ascribed as Swedish does not cause any racial dissonance or major feelings of misrecognition; he himself feels at best “half Japanese” and has never experienced being questioned about his Swedish identity.

However, for Adam and Agnes, passing entails a disconnect between their personal and ascribed identifications. Adam (Argentinian Swedish) strongly self-identifies as Sephardi, Jewish, and Latino, and not as Swedish even though he is Swedish-passing (or “White-assumed”), that is, able to pass as a Swede. He noted that people think that it is “obvious” he is a Swede, which can be assumed that phenotypically he is ascribed as White. People are surprised to find out he is of a mixed background. He shared how he embodies the history of discrimination in Latin America based on Judaism and the oddness he feels about being excluded from the category “Latino” in Sweden. When asked how he wants to be seen by others, he articulated clearly:

I want, firstly, to be seen as Sephardi and as Latino. They are the two identities that exist simultaneously.... Swedish has been something that—I have never fought to be seen as Swedish, but I have always struggled not to be seen as Swedish.⁴³

While Adam’s identification is based on how he feels, Agnes’s (Latino Swedish) is more influenced by what others see her as, which she views as a constraint in claiming her Latina identity. Agnes feels that she does not have the power to say she is a Latina for different reasons despite her Latino name, transnational ties, cultural proximity, and language ability. Agnes can pass as Swedish, and she believes this makes her identification as Latina complicated: “Appearance-wise, I’m very White-passing, and that is exactly what has led me to have a complex feeling.”⁴⁴ Her Latina identity is not validated by others, given that she can pass as White and Swedish, and she often finds herself in a predominantly White middle-class environment. She believes that not coming from “the hood” (*orten*) has affected how she can act and

identify herself as Latina. In her perspective, her middle-class status, which reflects White Swedishness, invalidates her Latina identity.

Being Transcendent

Edvin (French Korean adoptee Swedish) and Felicia (Cuban Finnish) self-identify completely outside of racial, ethnic, and national terms. Their identification resonates with studies that show superordinate identity as “human” or a “world citizen,” challenging the validity of racial structures.⁴⁵ They experience constant racialization and impossibility of passing as “Swedish.” Edvin avoids any national, ethnic, and racial reference and only claims that he is from the West Coast of Sweden. Because of constant racialization, he understands the category “Swedish” as being White, which he is not, and the ways this limits his identification as Swedish.

Just because they say “Swedish,” that I am not Swedish, I have never seen myself as Swedish. In other contexts, when I have become closer to these people, then they say, “I see you as Swedish.” And it’s like that, see me [as Swedish], what?⁴⁶

Felicia has internalized racialization and acted on the stereotypes attributed to her as a “Cuban” when she was younger to make it “easier for everybody.” She was never treated as Swedish but always as Cuban, “brown” and “not White.” Today she self-identifies as “global” and maintains a distance between her self-identification and racial ascription simply as constructed: “Sure, you can put me in a box, but you will never understand who I am.”

It was all the time, “Where are you from?” Then I started with a new strategy, and I say “Finland.” “Okay,” they say, but they can’t digest it. There must be something more. Cuba! It’s a relief. Yes, there! Of course! Okay, I understand [why people see it that way], but I see myself as part of the world, and I am myself. I am [me]. You do not need to put me into boxes.⁴⁷

Conclusions

In this article, based on fourteen interviews, I explore mixed Swedes’ self-identification and experiences in claiming their identities. The article focuses on those who can be identified as “first-generation multiracial” who reported to be racialized as Latino, Arab, Black, or Asian. Their stories show how they express and negotiate their identities within and outside of the dichotomous identification of Swedish/immigrant and White/non-White. There is an emergence of more flexible and neither/nor identification reflected in “both/and” terms or identification as “mixed.” Self-identification as Swedish shows that mixed Swedes personally identify as Swedish in terms of nationality and cultural belonging in Sweden, which resonates with previous studies.⁴⁸ The interviewees’ experiences suggest that the choice to identify as Swedish or mixed is not a fixed and objective state of identity but rather fluid and contextual.⁴⁹ As I have argued elsewhere, mixed Swedes’ identifications are beyond the traditional either/or thinking

based on the prevailing idea of ancestry and Whiteness. The choices invoke different associations and expectations that are associated with identification, which may have consequences for one's actions and associations with others.⁵⁰ Therefore, mixed Swedes identify differently depending on context and time period.

However, the practice of ascription in the binary way of thinking remains strong in Sweden as in other contexts where racial categorization and hierarchy is maintained.⁵¹ The fourteen interviewees' stories clearly illustrate that although they may claim identities that are outside of the racialized binary, other people's appraisals remain fixed with the either/or binary logic based on racialization. Their experiences confirm previous studies on how Whiteness defines who can and cannot be called Swedish.⁵² Feelings of alienation and misrecognition echo studies on mixed identity in different contexts.⁵³ Those who are White-assumed are ascribed a Swedish identity despite their personal identification as mixed, which leads to feelings of misrecognition.

As Wendy D. Roth claims, if classification norms remain relatively fixed, the disparity between self-identification and identification by others will increase.⁵⁴ Different responses can be seen in how the interviewees counter their experiences of being questioned about their claims to identities and feeling a gap in their self-identification and reflected appraisal, as suggested in previous studies.⁵⁵ Assertion of identification as mixed is one of the ways some of the interviewees contested the dichotomized identification and transcended racial, ethnic, and national identification.⁵⁶ At the same time, claiming to be Swedish can be understood not as catering to the dichotomized either/or logic based on Whiteness but as actively redefining and challenging the boundary of what it means to be Swedish, a rejection of the idea of Swedish as a White racial category. As Rogers Brubaker argues, when identifying with selected parental categories shifts to simply identifying as "multiracial" or "mixed" without a core identification with any ethno-racial categories, it destabilizes the practice of categorizing the population.⁵⁷ This calls for attention in observing how flexibility in identification may or may not lead to the redrawing of boundaries of Swedishness.

As I have argued elsewhere, mixed Swedes' experiences call for a need to further address the meaning of Whiteness, race, and the racialization process in Sweden.⁵⁸ Mixed persons occupy positions that challenge the dichotomy of "Swedish" and "immigrant" and thus provide valuable insights into the process of racial appraisals and identification in Sweden. Mixed Swedes cannot always choose whether or how they will be racialized or racially categorized by others. While the White Swedish majority society maintains a color-blind and post-racial approach, the interviewees are race conscious. They addressed how they were positioned in the racialized hierarchy, referring to their skin color, phenotype, and racial belonging. They know that race matters because they experience racialization and exclusion. The interviewees' experiences reflect the process of how racial hierarchy is maintained through racialization and the ascriptions of identity based on their phenotype, policing, and socialization into what it means to be identified as Swedish.

Notes

¹ Gustafsson and Englund, "Mix." All translations by author.

² This number includes those who were born in Sweden to two foreign-born parents from the same country of origin (5 percent) or to two foreign-born parents from differing countries of origin (3 percent). “Antal personer med utländsk eller svensk bakgrund (fin indelning) efter region, ålder och kön, År 2002–2020,” SCB (Statistics Sweden), accessed January 15, 2022,

http://www.statistikdatabasen.scb.se/pxweb/sv/ssd/START__BE__BE0101__BE0101Q/UtlSvBakgFin/.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Daniel et al., “Emerging Paradigms,” 7; Daniel, “Black and White Identity,” 121–39.

⁵ See, for example, Childs, Lyons, and Jones, “Migrating Mixedness,” 782–801.

⁶ “Ras ska bort ur svensk lagstiftning,” *Dagens Nyheter*, July 31, 2014, <https://www.dn.se/nyheter/politik/ras-ska-bort-ur-svensk-lagstiftning/>.

⁷ McEachrane, “There’s a White Elephant in the Room,” 87–119; McEachrane, “Universal Human Rights,” 471–93.

⁸ Omi and Winant, *Racial Formation in the United States*; Smedley and Smedley, “Race as Biology Is Fiction,” 16–26; Lentin, *Why Race Still Matters*.

⁹ Osanami Törngren, “Talking Color-Blind,” 137–62; Hübinette and Lundström, *Vit melankoli*; Goldberg, *Are We All Postracial Yet?*

¹⁰ “Om statistiken—Integration och demografi,” Statistikmyndigheten, accessed January 26, 2022, <https://www.scb.se/hitta-statistik/temaomraden/statistik-om-integration/regeringsuppdraget-registerdata-for-integration/sa-har-ar-statistiken-om-integration-uppyggd/om-statistiken--integration-och-demografi/#:~:text=Till%20personer%20med%20utl%C3%A4ndsk%20bakgrund,antas%20%C3%B6r%C3%A4lder%20var%20utrikes%20%C3%B6dd.>

¹¹ On “either/or logic,” see Brubaker, *Trans*, 92–112; Lou and Lolande, “Signs of Transcendence?,” 85–95. On “first-generation multiracials,” see Daniel et al., “Emerging Paradigms,” 11. On “2.5-generation,” see Ramakrishan, “Second-Generation Immigrants?,” 380–99.

¹² Goldberg, *Are We Postracial Yet?*

¹³ See, for example, Kalonaityte, Kwesa, and Tedros, *Att färgas av Sverige*; Khosravi, “Displaced Masculinity,” 591–609; Lundström, *Svenska Latinas*.

¹⁴ Omi and Winant, *Racial Formation in the United States*, 111, emphasis added.

¹⁵ Hübinette and Lundström, *Vit melankoli*.

¹⁶ See, for example, Childs, “Critical Mixed Race,” 379–81; Edwards et al., *International Perspectives*; King-O’Riain, *Global Mixed Race*; Osanami Törngren, Irastorza, and Rodríguez-García, “Understanding Multiethnic and Multiracial Experiences Globally,” 763–81; Rocha et al., “Mixing Race, Nation, and Ethnicity,” 289–93.

¹⁷ Hollinger, “Obama,” 1033–37; Alba, *Blurring the Color Line*.

¹⁸ See Osanami Törngren and Irastorza, “Melting Pot or Salad Bowl?” (in this issue of the journal) for an overview of mixed marriages and families in Sweden.

¹⁹ Morning, “Kaleidoscope,” 1058.

²⁰ Song and Aspinall, “Is Racial Mismatch a Problem?,” 730–53.

²¹ Waters, *Ethnic Options*; Song, *Choosing Ethnic Identity*.

²² See, for example, DaCosta, *Making Multiracials*; Masuoka, *Multiracial Identity*; Aspinall and Song, *Mixed Race Identities*; Roth, “Unsettled Identities?,” 1093–112; Morning and Saperstein, “Generational Locus of Multiraciality,” 57–68.

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- ²³ See, for example, Aspinall and Song, *Mixed Race Identities*; Franco, Katz, and O'Brien, "Forbidden Identities," 96–109; Osanami Törngren, Irastorza, and Rodríguez-García, "Understanding Multiethnic and Multiracial Experiences Globally," 763–81; Tutwiler, *Mixed-Race Youth and Schooling*.
- ²⁴ Roth, "Unsettled Identities?," 1093–112; Morning, "Kaleidoscope," 1055–73.
- ²⁵ On different types of discrimination/disadvantages, see Behtoui, "Unequal Opportunities"; Kalmijn, "Children of Inter-marriage," 246–65; Smith, Helgertz, and Scott, "Time and Generation," 1–32. On maneuvering within the White norm, see Adeniji, "Searching for Words," 169–81; Arbouz, "Vad betyder det att inte känna sig hemma?," 37–42; Arbouz, "Multiracial identitet," 199–213; Hübinette and Arbouz, "Introducing Mixed Race Swedes," 138–63.
- ²⁶ Gokieli, "I Want Us to Trade Our Skins," 266–86.
- ²⁷ Arbouz, "Vad betyder det att inte känna sig hemma?," 37–42; Arbouz, "Multiracial identitet," 201–14.
- ²⁸ See the analysis that includes multiethnic Swedes in Osanami Törngren, "Challenging the 'Swedish' and 'Immigrant' Dichotomy," 457–73; Osanami Törngren, "Understanding Race in Sweden."
- ²⁹ Root, "Bill of Rights."
- ³⁰ Elise, interview by author, December 19, 2018. Unless otherwise noted, all interviews were conducted virtually.
- ³¹ Tova, interview by author, January 8, 2019.
- ³² Sana, interview by author, November 30, 2018.
- ³³ Lou and Lolande, "Signs of Transcendence?," 85–95; Rockquemore and Brunnsma, "Socially Embedded Identities," 335–56; Daniel, "Black and White Identity," 121–39.
- ³⁴ Jennifer, interview by author, December 17, 2018, Malmö.
- ³⁵ Eri, interview by author, December 10, 2018.
- ³⁶ Eman, interview by author, January 9, 2019.
- ³⁷ Mari, interview by author, August 27, 2018.
- ³⁸ Mina, interview by author, November 27, 2018.
- ³⁹ Ines, interview by author, December 18, 2018.
- ⁴⁰ Bueno-Hansen and Montes, "White Passing," 522–23; Lundström and Teitelbaum, "Nordic Whiteness," 151–58; Loftsdóttir and Jensen, "Introduction: Nordic Exceptionalism," 7.
- ⁴¹ Aspinall and Song, *Mixed Race Identities*; Gaither, "'Mixed' Results," 114–19; Osanami Törngren and Sato, "Beyond Being Either-Or," 802–20.
- ⁴² Nills, interview by author, December 13, 2018.
- ⁴³ Adam, interview by author, December 18, 2018.
- ⁴⁴ Agnes, interview by author, November 28, 2018.
- ⁴⁵ Amiot and de la Salbonnière, "Facilitating Development and Integration," 34–61; Shih et al., "Social Construction of Race," 125–33.
- ⁴⁶ Edvin, interview by author, December 14, 2018.
- ⁴⁷ Felicia, interview by author, December 13, 2018.
- ⁴⁸ Song and Aspinall, "Is Racial Mismatch a Problem?," 730–53.
- ⁴⁹ Brubaker and Cooper, "Beyond 'Identity,'" 1–47; Jenkins, *Social Identity*.
- ⁵⁰ Osanami Törngren, "Challenging the 'Swedish' and 'Immigrant' Dichotomy," 457–73. See also Deaux, "Ethnic/Racial Identity," 39–47.
- ⁵¹ Alba, *Great Demographic Illusion*; Brubaker, *Trans*; Morning, "Kaleidoscope," 1055–73.
- ⁵² Gokieli, "I Want Us to Trade Our Skins," 266–86; Lundström, "White Side of Migration," 79–87; Runfors, "What an Ethnic Lens Can Conceal," 1846–63.

⁵³ Aspinall and Song, *Mixed Race Identities*; Osanami Törngren, Irastorza, and Rodríguez-García, “Understanding Multiethnic and Multiracial Experiences Globally,” 763–81.

⁵⁴ Roth, “Unsettled Identities?,” 1093–112.

⁵⁵ Aspinall and Song, *Mixed Race Identities*.

⁵⁶ Lou and Lolande, “Signs of Transcendence?,” 85–95; Amiot and de la Salbonnière, “Facilitating Development and Integration,” 34–61; Shih et al., “Social Construction of Race,” 125–33.

⁵⁷ Brubaker, *Trans*.

⁵⁸ Osanami Törngren, “Understanding Race in Sweden”; Osanami Törngren, “Challenging the ‘Swedish’ and ‘Immigrant’ Dichotomy,” 457–73.

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