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Race: What is it good for?

- A social constructionist analysis of the argumentation underlying the eventual discard of race from Swedish legislation

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Abstract

Recently former minister of integration Erik Ullenhag proclaimed the eventual discard of the concept of race from Swedish legislation. This is legitimized by referencing towards the potential harmful effects the existence of race in legislation has on combatting racism. The decision spawned support as well as resistance from several sources within Swedish society, both advocating for that the own understanding of race is the path forward in attaining racial equality. The purpose of this paper is to conduct an argumentative analysis of the argumentation underlying the eventual discard of race in two broadcasted debates, two interviews and two SOUs to initially determine how the function of race is depicted and how a discard is legitimized. A social constructionist analysis will then follow as an evaluative tool to discern if the argumentation can be considered legitimate. Initially I arrived at the conclusion that the function of race is contextualized by the arguments expressed with the effect of stipulatively defining it to solely function for negative and racist purposes. The social constructionist analysis deployed highlighted this simplified understanding of race with references towards how race might instead be viewed as an important part of a group's collective history and identification. Certain attention was also paid to why ethnicity and skin-color are not adequate substitutes, the claim that race is different in Sweden and why a proclaimed lack of individuality within race might be beneficial. It was conclusively decided that the argumentation underlying the eventual discard should not be viewed as logically sound and thus not legitimate. Finally the need for further clarification in to how these different stipulative definitions meet the sufficient and not only the necessary conditions for combatting racism was highlighted.

Key words: Social constructivism, argumentative analysis, Sweden, race, discard.

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1 Introduction

You're black. You're not even a nigger. You're an African.¹

Colonel Oliver in "Hotel Rwanda"

These words are uttered by the actor Nick Nolte as his character, based on the actual person Colonel Oliver, is trying to frantically answer the question why nothing has been done to stop the atrocities committed in Rwanda. This sentence highlights the intrinsic complexity that exists within racial profiling. Ethnicity and race are not independent phenomenon with guaranteed locations of subordination or superiority. They exist within a complex hierarchical formation where both concepts have been used as tools of racial oppression as well as the voice of differential acceptance. As modern society is continuing its understanding of how to most effectively combat racial discrimination and racism, the differing perceptions of these two concepts have resulted in a dislocation of race and ethnicity from the discourse surrounding the debate. Sweden is no exception. On the 30th of July the former minister of integration Erik Ullenhag proclaimed that the use of the concept race shall be effectively discarded from Swedish law.² This was met with resistance from several sources, most notably from the Afroswedish national association and authors of the book, *Afrofobi* (Afrophobia), Samson Beshir and Thomas Hubinette.³ Despite the fact that several governmental reports have previously advised against a discard, the concept of race was effectively discarded from the discrimination act of 2009 and an eventual discard of the use of race from the rest of legislation where it appears is currently being evaluated in a report set to be published at December 2015.⁴ The debate is torn in how we should perceive race and ethnicity and centered on the question: is the use of race in Swedish legislation combatting racism or reinforcing it? This paper will attempt to deconstruct and analyze the argumentation underlying the Swedish government's principal decision in an attempt to problematize what the desired way forward is in a society that is continuing its fight against racism through different perceptions of race.

¹ "Hotel Rwanda", DVD, Directed by Terry George, MGM, California, 2005.

² "Rasbegreppet ska bort ur lagen", VIDEO, SVT, ,2014.

³ Hubinette, Thomas, Beshir, Samson, "Avskaffa inte rasbegreppet ur svensk lagstiftning ", SvD, 2014/8/7.

⁴ DIR 2014:115, "Stärkt skydd för transpersoner och översyn av vissa termer", Stockholm, 2014/7/14, pp. 5-8.

1.1 Formulation of the problem, questions and purpose

Although it is not until recently that a question concerning the necessity of the concept of race has been elevated to the general debate, the same discussion has been prevalent in Swedish politics for decades. As early as the 1970s, traces of a discussion concerning an eventual discard of race for more fitting substitutions can be found in several law propositions.⁵ The proposed replacements diverse from each other in minor ways but share a common homogeneity in being grounded in ethnicity, nationality and skin-color. This has been legitimized by proclaiming that the use of the word race reinforces racism and racial profiling by presupposing the same differentiation within humanity commonly expressed by racist organizations.⁶ On the other side of the spectrum we find, among other, the Afroswedish national association and the two previously mentioned authors who strongly oppose an eventual discard. Much of their argumentation is legitimized by proclaiming that the use of the word race is an accurate depiction of the structural racism that is prevalent in Swedish society.⁷ Interestingly, and quite paradoxically, both parties generally claim to advocate for a common goal through their proclaimed understanding of the concept of race. Thus there exists certain mutual understanding about what the use, or nonuse, of the concept should attempt to achieve. The defining difference between the two parties can instead be found in their understanding of how race functions. How should the function of race be understood in relationship to a struggle to combat racism? This area of complexity will be the subject for my investigation. Initially an argumentative analysis will be used to try to evaluate and deconstruct the underlying argumentation for an eventual discard in relation to how it perceives race to function. Secondly social constructivism and social critique will be employed as an evaluative tool in relation to the argumentation with the specific purpose of giving insight into how race is constructed and, more importantly, if the argumentation for an eventual discard can be perceived as accurate and legitimate. The purpose of this paper will thus consist of two parts. The first will attempt to deconstruct and map the arguments expressed concerning the function of race with the specific purpose of concluding how the function of race is depicted in the debate for an eventual discard. The latter will attempt to evaluate the argumentative standpoints in relation to an eventual discard of the concept and

⁵ DIR 2014:115, "Stärkt skydd för transpersoner och översyn av vissa termer", 2014/7/14, Stockholm, p. 5.

⁶ See section "Argumentative overview" for full account of the argumentation.

⁷ Hubinette and Beshir, "Avskaffa inte rasbegreppet ur svensk lagstiftning", 2014/8/17.

then explore if this decision is legitimate in regards to effectively combatting racism. The purpose of the paper will be to answer the following questions:

- How is the function of race depicted in the argumentation for an eventual discard of the concept in Sweden and how is a nonuse of race legitimized?
- Does the argumentation for a discard of race from Swedish legislation provide a correct understanding of race in terms of combatting racism and acting towards racial equality that results in it being legitimate?

1.2 Primary material

In the following section my primary material will be foremost presented and then adequately discussed in terms of credibility and range. The paper will, as I have previously mentioned, be comprised of an argumentative analysis of the underlying argumentation legitimating an eventual discard. In an attempt to facilitate understanding the chosen primary material will be discussed in relevant subcategories. Due to the fact that the majority of the articles include arguments for as well as against a nonuse of race the decision to present the primary material under categories relating to the thematic of the material seemed the wiser decision. This section will initially comprise of a presentation of my primary material, its legitimacy and academic implications. It will then conclude with a separate discussion concerning source criticism and delimitations.

1.2.1 Legal documents and SOUs

Much of the argumentation will comprise of SOUs (official governmental reports) conducted on the behalf of the Swedish government. The foremost reason for deciding to use this material is a question of availability. My chosen subject is a fairly new phenomena and this is what it is primarily comprised of. There is, although, a matter of strategic decision making regarding my choice of material. The SOUs date back to as far as 2001 and are beneficial in the fact that they give me a continuous opportunity to follow the historical debate concerning an eventual discard of the concept of race. The majority of the SOUs treat the eventual discard within the context of discrimination. The heaviest and most substantial report is SOU 2001:39 “Ett effektivt diskrimineringsförbud - Om olaga diskriminering och begreppen ras och sexuell läggning” (An

effective ban on discrimination – on unlawful discrimination and the concepts of race and sexual orientation). The SOUs author and sender is the Swedish department of justice and the purpose of the report concerning the concept of race is to give further insight into race as a ground for discrimination and to analyze if race can be discarded from Swedish law.⁸ The other significant document is SOU 2006:22 ”En sammanhållen diskrimineringslagstiftning” (A consolidated discrimination legislation). Much like SOU 2001:39, SOU 2006:22 also attempts to answer if the concept of race can be discarded from Swedish legislation within the context of combatting discrimination.⁹ Essential to note is that both SOUs arrive at the same conclusion, namely that there is not enough substantial evidence concerning the possible consequences surrounding an eventual discard and therefore they cannot recommend that the government proceed with the decision at that moment of time.¹⁰ These SOUs are excellent material in relation to their scope and range. They function as an important mapping of the debate that has taken place within the governmental framework with detailed arguments from both standings on the decision of an eventual discard.

1.2.2 Interviews and debates

The final part in my attempt to comprise an adequate primary material will consist of several interviews and debates concerning an eventual discard of race from Swedish legislation. The first one is a streamed debate from 6/8/14 by the media network Aljazeera with several important parties in a discussion of the discard of the word race.¹¹ The involved include representatives from the Afroswedish national association, scholars as well as representatives from Swedish newspapers. The topic of the streamed debate is to discuss if an eventual discard will combat or reinforce discrimination and racism.¹² Additionally a personal interview with the former minister of integration Erik Ullenhag and his standpoint are included.¹³ The concentration and diversity of arguments as well as the involvement of several important actors in a debate with each other results in a highly legitimate and appropriate material. Although former minister of integration Erik Ullenhag is not directly present in the debate, several actors

⁸ SOU 2001:39, ”Justitiedepartementet, Ett effektivt diskrimineringsförbud - Om olaga diskriminering och begreppen ras och sexuell läggning”, Stockholm, Håkansson, Marianne, p. 187.

⁹ SOU 2006:22, ”Diskrimineringskommittén, En sammanhållen diskrimineringslagstiftning – Slutbetänkande av diskrimineringskommittén”, Stockholm, Fritze, p. 287.

¹⁰ DIR 2014:115, ”Stärkt skydd för transpersoner och översyn av vissa termer”, 2014/7/14, Stockholm, p. 5.

¹¹ ”No such thing as race in Sweden?”, VIDEO, *Al Jazeera*, 2014.

¹² ”No such thing as race in Sweden?”, 2014.

¹³ ”The Stream phone interview with Sweden's Minister for Integration”, VIDEO, *Al Jazeera*, 2014.

that argue for the use of the concept are. Further, several quotes from Erik Ullenhag are presented and discussed, so even if Erik Ullenhag is not present himself, his standpoints are.¹⁴ The argumentation is also similar to that expressed in several SOUs and proclaimed by Erik Ullenhag himself.

I have further decided to include an interview with Erik Ullenhag in the internet magazine The Local. The Local is a magazine for Europeans living abroad and specifically publishes articles concerning Europe or European interests.¹⁵ The article I am concerned with is called “The concept of race is a slippery slope: Ullenhag” and is an interview conducted with the former minister of integration.¹⁶ The interview is relevant primary material for several reasons. Initially the purpose of the article is to gain insight into why the government deems it necessary to discard race from Swedish legislation. Secondly certain opinions against the discard are included which Erik Ullenhag then responds to, this adds to the diversification and general quality of the argumentation. Further I don’t regard the papers lack of international recognition to be of any concern due to the format of the article consisting of an interview.

The last interview is a debate named “Rasbegreppet tas bort ur svensk lagstiftning?” (Will the concept of race be removed from Swedish legislation?) broadcasted by the public service radio channel “Sveriges Radio” (Sweden Radio). It consists of about a ten minute debate between Erik Ullenhag and the chairman of the Afroswedish national associations Stockholm division Zakarias Zouhir.¹⁷ The focus of the debate is centered on the discard and its differing perceived implications. I have decided to include this material due to the diversification and concentration of argumentation expressed. It is also beneficial in relation to my chosen method being an argumentative analysis when central actor’s arguments are set against each other. This usually gives rise to more complex forms of counter arguments and in summary generally benefits the amount of material as well as the diversification and quality within it.

Finally I would like to comment on the fact that argumentation expressed in several sources has been translated from Swedish to English. This will not be of any major concern due to the following reasons. Initially the nature of an argumentative analysis is to specify expressed argumentation in such a way that it is rewritten to avoid obscurity and vagueness but not

¹⁴ ”No such thing as race in Sweden?”, 2014, 18.31 min.

¹⁵ The local, “About us”, *The Local*, 2014.

¹⁶ Solveig, Rundqvist, ”The concept of race is a slippery slope: Ullenhag”, Interview with Erik Ullenhag, *The Local*, 2014/08/01.

¹⁷ ”Rasbegreppet tas bort ur svensk lagstiftning?”, VIDEO, *Sveriges Radio*, 2014/08/14.

reinterpreted,¹⁸ thus the translations perfect exactness is not a crucial demand. In addition to this, I am a native speaker of both Swedish and English and thus adequately proficient in both languages.

1.3 Delimitations concerning the primary material

In terms of delimitations concerning my primary material I have followed the simple guideline of relevance. The eventual delimitations suffered have all attributed to an attempt to increase the primary materials relevance in relation to the purpose of the paper. Foremost there has been certain beneficial decisions made in relation to included SOUs due to the abundance of material in this specific area. I decided to include the material that was most important to the purpose, as well as the reports that were especially comprehensive in their treatment of the eventual discard of the concept of race and that, in the largest degree possible, acted as a conclusion of the general debate. This resulted in me only including the two previously mentioned SOUs.

Another delimitation worth discussing is the choice to adhere only to the “Swedish context”. Sweden is not the only country that has effectively discarded race from its national legislation. Most notably Austria and Hungary decided to treat the concept in a similar fashion.¹⁹ One could argue that I should include relevant material from these instances. Important to note is that the purpose of this report is not to gain greater insight into the global debate surrounding the concept of race and its perceived function. The purpose is to treat the subject within a specific Swedish context and adhere specifically to the debate surrounding the Swedish decision. Although I would recommend such a global, meta level study for further research as an important piece in gaining greater understanding on the subject. The purpose of the paper is only to evaluate the argumentation attributed to a legitimization of a discard or nonuse of the concept of race. This decision was made for matters of relevance and possible societal benefit. Due to the fact that a discard of the concept of race is a process which has already, in parts of legislation as well as in public discourse, begun with several consequences the decision to evaluate the argumentation for a discard seemed the wiser decision. A conclusion on such a matter could most definitely, in contrast to the opposing argumentation, be

¹⁸ Næss, Arne, *Empirisk semantik*, Läromedelsförl., Svenska bokförl., Stockholm, 1961, p. 87; Björnsson, Gunnar, Kihlbom, Ulrik & Ullholm, Anders, *Argumentationsanalys: färdigheter för kritiskt tänkande*, 2. [utökade] utg., Natur & kultur, Stockholm, 2009, pp. 117 – 118.

¹⁹ Rundqvist, ”The concept of race is a slippery slope: Ullenhag”, 2014/08/01.

of great societal benefit. I thus conclude the legitimacy of such a delimitation and instead recommend that further research include the argumentation against a discard. Finally I have decided not to include all the arguments for an eventual discard, this for reasons of relevance and manageability. The abundance of arguments and claims in relation to my desire to evaluate the arguments in a rather in depth fashion has resulted in the decision to include the arguments that were of the highest quality as well as of frequent occurrence. The goal has thus been to achieve a holistic representation of the debate by including arguments from several instances.

1.4 Source criticism and ethical assessments

Initially I would like to state the fact that source criticism is something that will not necessarily have to be accounted for in any larger fashion in its own section. It is something that has functioned as an evaluative tool to constantly be used and related to. Although there are certain factors I deemed beneficial to discuss further. Initially the debate between Zakarias Zouhir and Erik Ullenhag is broadcasted by the public service company Sweden Radio. Just as the name implies the company is for the public's service, free from all profit driven commercials and independent in their work despite receiving financial support indirectly from a public tax designed by the government.²⁰ Thus the affiliation between the Swedish government and Sweden Radio will not have any effect on the objectivity of the debate. Finally the argumentative analysis functions in such a way that arguments and claims are specified and rewritten to increase understanding and reach the core of the claim in order to better be able to evaluate them. I will now conclusively contend that the purpose of this process is solely to rewrite the arguments, with the purpose of increased clarification contingent with the method, and not to reinterpret them. They are thoroughly based on direct accounts and quotes that have been adequately referenced to. In terms of the ethical assessments one of the two subject in need of specific attention has been the presence of Swedish politics in the debate. I would contend that the debate overall is wound up in the right versus left block politics that is currently prevalent in Swedish politics. Finally I would also like to add that I am not racialized which, due to the nature of the debate, situates me as the writer of this paper. Paradoxically enough race is a present factor in the debate, where the argumentation for a discard of the concept is overall argued for by white individuals and vice versa. Predicting the possible implications of

²⁰ Sveriges Radio, "Om Sveriges Radio", *Sveriges radio*, 2014.

such a personal effect are immensely difficult. They could be positive in the lack of personal experiences to cloud my judgement or negative in a lack of understanding stemming from these same experiences. My response is that adequate understanding of these facts and a healthy dose of self-examination have resulted in neither being of any major ethical concern.

2 Methodology and theory

The decision to account for theory and methodology under the same section has been a conscious one. It appeared as the logically sound decision as the two will not approach the subject separately, but instead cooperate intrinsically throughout the paper. What do I mean by this? An argumentative analysis consists, in its most simple form, out of two steps.²¹ The first being a deconstructed documentation and presentation of the existing thesis and arguments.²² This is followed by an interpreted and evaluative analysis of the previously presented arguments and thesis ending in a conclusion.²³ One option is that the theoretical application would then approach and treat the conclusion drawn from the argumentative analysis. The two would thus function rather separately. I will oppose this. The theoretical application will attempt to approach the actors understanding of the word race in an interpretative manner. The purpose of this will not necessarily only be to evaluate but to gain greater insight through problematization of the presented arguments concerning an eventual discard of the concept of race. The argumentative analysis second part will thus coexist and cooperate with the theory. I will assert that allowing the theory to function within the methodological framework will facilitate understanding and adhere in the greatest possible manner to the papers presented purpose, namely how the presented understanding of the function of race should be understood in relation to effectively combatting racism. I will now proceed with discussing the argumentative analysis elements that will be present and how they stand in relation to the papers purpose and theory. What is an argumentative analysis? An argumentative analysis can be understood as the philosophical study of arguments and their claims on validity.²⁴ It is a method in which the user presents and then evaluates arguments and, among others, their sustainability, relevance and conclusive power.²⁵ I chose the argumentative analysis due to several factors. Initially it corresponds well with the papers purpose. The argumentative analysis nature is much like the nature of my purpose. I am initially deconstructing the argumentation for a discard of race in an attempt to answer how its function is depicted. This corresponds well with the initial part of an argumentative analysis which also is an attempt to deconstruct and map the arguments surrounding a thesis. The second part of my purpose is, much like the argumentative analysis,

²¹ Næss, 1961, p. 84.

²² Næss, 1961, p. 84.

²³ Næss, 1961, pp. 84-85.

²⁴ Nationalencyklopedin, "Argumentationsanalys", NE, 2014.

²⁵ Næss, 1961, pp. 90-91.

of an evaluative nature in where I am applying my theory to gain greater insight into how the function of race should be depicted and thus if the previously presented arguments can be considered relevant and logically sound. In summary the argumentative analysis is the most suitable method due to its ability to facilitate theoretical application within a methodological framework that corresponds to the papers specific purpose. Finally I will now give a detailed presentation of how the method will be used in the paper. Initially thesis and supporting arguments will be presented through a deconstructed overview of the debate. This will follow the *pro aut contra* method of presenting an argumentative overview. The *pro aut contra* method translates to for or against and is presented in the following way in *Empirisk Semantic* (Empirical Semantics) by Arne Næss.

A *pro aut contra* overview provides a general overview of the weightiest of the arguments according to the author of the overview or pursuant to any specific person or group that speaks for and against a claim. The review ends with a conclusion and therefore assumes that the arguments are considered in relation to each other.²⁶

I decided to go with the *pro aut contra* overview instead of the *pro et contra* overview due to the fact that the former includes a conclusion in which the arguments are considered against each other.²⁷ Although certain modifications have been made for it to suit the papers purpose. Instead of weighing the arguments for a discard against the arguments against, a conclusion will instead take place through problematization and evaluation in relation to my presented theory. Social constructivism as a theory will thus act as the counter part to the presented arguments.

After this illustrative overview has been achieved and a conclusion has been drawn concerning how the function of race is depicted I will proceed with the second step. As I have previously mentioned the following step is a mesh of the classical argumentative evaluative analysis and my chosen theory that attempts to problematize the conclusion drawn from the previous part. I will thus analyze the conclusive power of the arguments and thesis presented regarding sustainability and relevance through an application of social constructivism. I will begin with presenting my theory and its implications. I will be using a social constructionist theory with elements of social critique. To answer what the nature of these two are in cooperation I must first answer what they are separately. Social constructivism is a critical

²⁶ Næss, 1961, p. 84.

²⁷ Næss. 1961, p. 85.

perspective that questions the supposed naturalness of a social phenomenon or artefact.²⁸ A social constructionist analysis of race thus challenges the everyday assumption of the concepts naturalness. Race becomes, as Sally Haslanger, proclaims “the social meaning of colour”²⁹. Social constructivism has been chosen due to its ability to problematize the relationship between supposed natural facts and the social artefacts in question. In an attempt to evaluate the implications of a certain understanding of the function of race, it will first be of great importance to be able to problematize and understand how different arguments supposed natural facts produce a social meaning of race. Moreover than being interested in the relationship between the natural and social, the purpose of this paper is to evaluate different perceptions of the concept of race and its function in regard to combatting racism. This why I have decided to include elements of social critique to compliment the overall constructionist theory. Social critique comes, as a result of its interdisciplinary nature, in many forms.³⁰ In a simplified manner one might say that it is interested in discerning what social institutions, laws etc. that are bad and which ones are good.³¹

Social critique is an interdisciplinary enterprise that comes in many forms. One central form takes aim at existing social institutions, laws, and practices, for example, health care policies, the gendered distribution of family work, racial profiling, and argues that they are bad or unjust[...] One step involves describing the social practice in question in a way that highlights those features that are relevant to normative evaluation. Another step invokes explicitly normative concepts to evaluate the practice as just reasonable, useful, good, or not.³²

What is of central importance is the two steps described and how they comply with my papers purpose, namely to draw relevant conclusions from a social practice and then treat it in a evaluative manner in regards to a greater increase in justice or normative good, in this case a reduction of racism. These two theories will cooperate in the greatest amount possible in an attempt to adhere to the papers purpose.

Finally the two correspond well with my chosen primary material and evaluative purpose concerning the goal of combatting racism. I am interested in how the function of race is constructed in a general political debate that is far from the walls of the local university, and

²⁸ Haslanger, Sally Anne, *Resisting reality: social construction and social critique*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2012, p. 5.

²⁹ Haslanger, 2012, p. 249.

³⁰ Haslanger, 2012, p. 16.

³¹ Haslanger, 2012, p. 16.

³² Haslanger, 2012, p. 16.

most importantly how this debate, its conclusions and arguments, have implications regarding effectively combatting racism. The following quote demonstrates not only the relevance of my primary material but also social constructionist ability to treat it adequately within my specific critical antiracist purpose.

What concept of race should we employ in order to achieve the antiracist goals we share?

To answer this question, I contend that we must look at the semantics of the term race in public – specifically nonscientific discourse – discourse, for this popular notion of race is what we use to frame our identities and political commitments.³³

All scientific decisions carry with them certain implication in need of addressing. My choice of theory is no exception. I have decided to only use a version of social constructivism that draws upon two theoreticians; Sally Haslanger and Linda Alcoff. More specifically I am using articles by Haslanger that in parts expand on thoughts and conclusions previously stated by Alcoff, therefore the overall social constructionist account will be one developed by Haslanger. Usually the proverb the more “the merrier seems” to be the guideline in these instances. I acknowledge the fact that diversification in terms of theory can be a good choice, but I will argue for that it is preferable in relation to the context of my paper to delaminate in such a way. But first, what is the Sally Haslanger version of social constructivism? It is in many ways just like any other. Certain phenomenon and objects are analyzed in terms of understanding the social meaning inherent in the concepts. What sets it apart, according to me, is a matter of context and analytical applicability. Haslanger uses social constructivism mainly in relation to social justice and critical antiracist- and feminist theory. This brings me to the first argument for only using Haslanger. Social constructivism is an interdisciplinary theory that has been applied to a magnitude of fields. By only using a theoretician that functions within the same context, namely social justice and critical antiracist theory, I relevantly narrow myself within a field that demands delimitation. The second argument for only using Haslanger is the existing relevance between her studies and the purpose of this paper. Overall Haslanger’s theory connects to my purpose by functioning within a context of social justice and, among others, antiracist theory. On a more specific level Haslanger’s version connects to the purpose, and differentiates itself from other social constructionist theories, by not just asking how race or gender are constructed but how we want them to be constructed in relation to the goal at hand³⁴. The fact that Haslanger treats gender and race within the same framework is not a problem as relevant differentiation

³³ Haslanger, 2012, p. 298.

³⁴ Haslanger, 2012, pp. 298, 226, 224, 309.

is conducted throughout the theory. Lastly I am aware that Haslanger has her own method that she proclaims is the most optimal in relation to also using her theory. I will not describe the method but I will argue for why I have not decided to use it, if interested the method can be read here in full³⁵. Though incredibly useful in either elucidating a variety of understandings over time or how we want a concept to function³⁶ it does not correspond to my presented purpose as well as the argumentative analysis. The argumentative analysis provides more suitable tools for deconstructing and handling a primary material of my sort, namely identifying complex argumentative structures in a diverse debate. I will also argue for that my choice of methodology contains certain structural advantages in relation to Haslanger's. The argumentative analysis has specific ways for deconstructing and presenting argumentation that are easily understood and most importantly have been refined during much of modern philosophies history. Haslanger's method stretches over a few papers and has not achieved this maturity.

My chosen theory is comprised of several papers written by Haslanger on the subjects of antiracism, conceptual use and social constructivism. It is not per se a complete theory despite the fact that there is major homogeneity in the articles. I have thus decided to treat it more as a theoretical framework to apply elements of the different articles as I see fit. The conclusions drawn from this application will adhere to the overall conclusions expressed in the different articles and thus not risk misinterpretation.

Finally I will discuss in what manner the theory will function within the method. I previously argued for that my theory will exist within the methods evaluative part, and therefore function within its framework. This means that I will draw upon a social constructionist understanding of race in order to evaluate the conclusive power in a thesis or argument. Specifically the theory will attempt to problematize chosen arguments in relation to the classical argumentation analysis criteria consisting of conclusive power, sustainability and relevance. What is conclusive power, sustainability and relevance? Conclusive power can be summarized as the arguments ability to convince and prove the reason for accepting the argument, or rejecting an opposing argument.³⁷ Important to note is that the definition for measuring conclusive power varies depending on if the argument is a pro argument (P) or a counter

³⁵ Haslanger, 2012, pp. 365-381.

³⁶ Haslanger, 2012, p. 376.

³⁷ Björnsson, Kihlbom, Ullholm, 2009, p. 22.

argument (C).³⁸ Since P is meant to convince the reader of accepting a thesis (T) I will call on the following definition of conclusive power in relation to P.

Def. 1. The conclusive power of a pro argument P for the allegation T is a measurement of how good reasons P gives us to accept the T.³⁹

Since C is meant to convince the reader of rejecting T I will call on the following definition of conclusive power in relation to C.

Def.1. The conclusive power of C against an allegation T is a measurement of how good reason C gives us to reject the T.⁴⁰

Conclusive power is the translation of the Swedish word “Beviskraft” that I will use in this paper. “Beviskraft” literally translates to “evidential/evidence power”, yet in the numerous dictionaries sought out the translations “conclusive power”, “logic” and “probative” were suggested. My decision is to use the translation “conclusive power” due to the decisiveness and definitiveness inherent in the concept, a conceptual use that corresponds well with how I want a translation to function. An arguments conclusive power is not a mathematical question that can be answered with a number or a definite yes or no. As a result of the fact that different arguments are qualitatively different the question of conclusive power becomes relative.⁴¹ I will therefore use terminology that has already been established to account for the degree of conclusive power inherent in an argument. An arguments conclusive power can be one of the five: Very low, low, moderate, high, very high.⁴² An arguments conclusive power depends, in part, of how sustainable it is.⁴³ Sustainability can be summarized as how much trust we have for the argument or thesis.⁴⁴ Trees are made out of wood is an example of high sustainability since we have never observed a tree made out of anything else. The argument trees are tall is an example of moderate sustainability. Sure trees grow and tend to be tall, but this does not exclude the fact that trees can't be anything but tall. In judging sustainability I will keep to the same five form terminology previously accounted for. Based on this I present the following definition of sustainability.

³⁸ Björnsson, Kihlbom, Ullholm, 2009, p. 22.

³⁹ Björnsson, Kihlbom, Ullholm, 2009, p. 23.

⁴⁰ Björnsson, Kihlbom, Ullholm, 2009, p. 23.

⁴¹ Björnsson, Kihlbom, Ullholm, 2009, p. 23.

⁴² Björnsson, Kihlbom, Ullholm, 2009, p. 23.

⁴³ Björnsson, Kihlbom, Ullholm, 2009, p. 23; Næss, 1961, p. 91.

⁴⁴ Björnsson, Kihlbom, Ullholm, 2009, p. 24

The sustainability of an argument is a measurement of the degree of trust that we have reason to have for the claim.⁴⁵

The last piece of the puzzle in determining conclusive power is relevance. In assessing the relevance of an argument one tries to determine how relevant P is for us to accept T if, and only if, P is true.⁴⁶ Let us look at the following argumentation as an illustrative example. T) “Smoking is not only harmful.” P) “Because it tastes good.” This is an example where P has a high level of sustainability but no relevance to the thesis. If P instead was P) “Nicotine has positive effects on brain activity” the relevance would be higher. I will use the same five form terminology in determining relevance and thus the following definition will be used.

Def. 4. The relevance of P for T is a measurement of how good reason P would give us to accept T if we assumed that P was true.⁴⁷

Determining an arguments conclusive power in relation to the thesis it is meant to support is not an exact science.⁴⁸ When evaluating arguments against my theory I cannot “crunch” numbers and arrive at a definite truth. The conclusion is relative due to the fact that the argumentation is evaluated in relation to certain decisions and interpretations made by me. With this established I will present how I will determine the conclusive power of the thesis. This will be done in two steps. The first step will consist of an evaluation of each specific argument where the conclusive power is a result of a weighing of the level of relevance against the level of sustainability.⁴⁹ This conclusion will then be graded according to the previously discussed format. Important to note is the way the conclusive power inherits the eventual flaws and strengths present in a way where the conclusive power can never surpass the lowest grading of relevance or sustainability.⁵⁰ A very high relevance in addition to a low sustainability will thus result in low conclusive power. Here are a few more examples; high relevance in addition to very high sustainability will result in high conclusive power, low relevance and very low sustainability will result in very low conclusive power. Finally I want to draw attention to the fact that an arguments conclusive power is impacted by both the relevance and sustainability’s possible flaws.⁵¹ Thus if sustainability and relevance are both moderate the conclusive power will be low. In assessing the conclusive power of the thesis a similar procedure will take place.

⁴⁵ Björnsson, Kihlbom, Ullholm, 2009, p. 24.

⁴⁶ Björnsson, Kihlbom, Ullholm, 2009, p. 34.

⁴⁷ Björnsson, Kihlbom, Ullholm, 2009, p. 34.

⁴⁸ Björnsson, Kihlbom, Ullholm, 2009, p. 49.

⁴⁹ Björnsson, Kihlbom, Ullholm, 2009, p. 44.

⁵⁰ Björnsson, Kihlbom, Ullholm, 2009, p. 45.

⁵¹ Björnsson, Kihlbom, Ullholm, 2009, p. 45; Næss, 1961, p. 90.

Specifically the thesis conclusive power will be a result of a weighing of the arguments supporting the thesis conclusive power. This will follow the previously established guidelines where the thesis level of conclusive power inherits the flaws and strengths present in the supporting argumentation. This will then finally be graded on the five form scale where the thesis level of conclusive power and thus its legitimacy will wary. I will then discuss the level of conclusive powers relation and impact on the perceived legitimacy of the thesis in order to fully answer my question if an eventual discard is legitimate.

3 Literary oversight and previous research

I will in the following section discuss how several fields of research affect and relate to my paper and its purpose. First a short introduction concerning the significance of an adequate research review will take place; this is followed by a discussion concerning the selection criteria that has been employed and ends in a short introduction and presentation of relevant literature with specific consideration to how it relates to my papers purpose as well as the need for further research. To facilitate understanding this will be done under relevant subcategories relating to specific thematic.

3.1 Significance and selection criteria

The impact an adequate research review has carries far beyond matters of only descriptively presenting literature deemed relevant. Initially it is part of developing the specific purpose of the paper in question. It is part of a process where the framing of a central question is sharpened through identifying issues and the need for further research. I will argue for that this holds especially true for my paper due to its interdisciplinary nature. My chosen theory rests on the very wide and diverse shoulders of social constructivism. It is a theory which has been employed to such an extent within different fields of study that it varies in applicability and relevance. By positioning my purpose within the field I have been able to choose the theoretical framework within social constructivism that best suits the paper. The selection criteria employed can be summed up as a matter of context. By contextualizing the purpose of this paper within different fields of study concerning the function of race has yielded relevant and interesting literature and more importantly identified subtopics and trends within my field of study. Overall special attention will be shown towards previous literature on the function of race in the context of antiracial development and the function of race in Sweden.

3.2 The function of race in the context of antiracial development

However, at the same time, and in a striking parallel to the earlier modernist contradictions regarding the significance of race, in the very midst of our contemporary scepticism toward

race as a natural kind stands the compelling social reality that race, or racialized identities, have as much political, sociological, and economic salience as they ever had.⁵²

This central area of problems stands at the centre for much of Linda Martin Alcoff's work in *Visible Identities: Race, gender and the self*. Alcoff contends that only when we come to terms of how race is lived in its multiple manifestation can we start to imagine the possibility of eradicating it.⁵³ Alcoff begins her work by tracing the roots of what she calls "the modern contemporary confusions about race"⁵⁴. Race and its existence is denied by scientists, politicians and even philosophers while the social reality of race continues to reproduce itself in disparities among groups of people in terms of incarceration, unemployment and health care.⁵⁵ "No wonder, then, that we are confused about what to do with the category of race"⁵⁶ Alcoff concludes. There exists a political paradox where universal policies are appalled by the use of race since it diverges from the view of justice as sameness, at the same time as naturalists cannot seem to handle the cultural variety and biological invalidity inherent in race as a conceptual use.⁵⁷ In handling this Alcoff contends that the question of whether the conceptual use of race should be continued is answered in three standings. Race *nominalism* proclaims the biological invalidity of race and denies the social and cultural reality of race and race should thus be avoided at all costs to further antiracists causes.⁵⁸ Race *essentialism* does instead not challenge the method of racial identification but the content, the shared interests, opinions etc. that have been altered by racism.⁵⁹ Finally race *contextualism* is proclaimed as the best suited option due to that the fluidity of race demands an understanding of the concept as socially constructed, culturally contextual and reproduced through perceptual practices.⁶⁰ It is within this framework that Alcoff launches her own understanding of race and racial identity. Alcoff argues for a view of racial identity as preliminary phenomenological, this is motivated by the claim that this is correct due to how race functions: "Visible difference, which is materially present even if its meanings are not, can be used to signify or provide purported access to a subjectivity through observable, "natural" attributes, to provide a window on the interiority of

⁵² Alcoff, Linda Martin, *Visible identities: race, gender and the self*, Oxford University Press, London, 2006, p. 181.

⁵³ Alcoff, 2006, p. 194.

⁵⁴ Alcoff, 2006, p. 179.

⁵⁵ Alcoff, 2006, p. 181.

⁵⁶ Alcoff, 2006, p. 180.

⁵⁷ Alcoff, 2006, p. 181.

⁵⁸ Alcoff, 2006, p. 182.

⁵⁹ Alcoff, 2006, p. 182.

⁶⁰ Alcoff, 2006, p. 182.

the self'.⁶¹ What does Alcoff mean with this? Alcoff contends that although phenomenological accounts of racism can be intimidating in its resemblance to the practice of racism itself, they are necessary in the way a critical phenomenological account not only repeats the process but reorient the attributes connected to such an identity.⁶²

Alcoff's section on racial identity has proved beneficial in the way it treats a lot of the same thematic prevalent in my paper. This modern confusion among the makers of political policies concerning the use of race is an example of this, which I believe to characterize much of the same argumentation I am analysing. What the study also has provided has been a depiction of the necessity of phenomenological accounts of race. Not to necessarily shy away at the first glance of how such theory seems to repeat racist differentiation but explore how it may lead to positive antiracist development. In the context of how race should be perceived to function in terms of combatting racism my papers departs in the way of contextual applicability. By positioning related social constructivist theories as evaluative tools of current accounts of how race functions I am taking, what I have perceived, as two different steps forward. The first is to position social constructivist accounts of race within a methodological framework which tests the "micro" level applicability of such theories through using them as evaluative tools. The second is an application of said accounts within a different context. Much of the current studies are limited within the US, thus by applying them within a Swedish context my contribution to the field is a matter of contextual difference.

3.3 Biology, colour-blindness and the function of race in Sweden

Colour-blindness and the unwillingness to talk about race in Sweden is something that, in the public discourse, often is attributed as something to aspire after. This does not however mean that matters of race are historically and contemporary irrelevant. Tracing how race has functioned in Sweden historically brought me to ponder the historical depiction *Skeletten i garderoben – Om rasismens idehistoriska rötter* (The skeletons in the closet – On the historical roots of racisms ideas) by Bernt Skovdahl. The majority of the book is a general account of the history of racism in Europe touching on relevant themes such as Darwinism, globalization etc. The sections of the highest relevance concerning my study have been those on how race has

⁶¹ Alcoff, 2006, p. 192.

⁶² Alcoff, 2006, p. 194

functioned in Sweden. Skovdahl concludes that the biological meaning of race has been of outmost significance in defining how the Swedish concept of race functions.⁶³ Due to this the Swedish meaning of race is narrower in what the conceptual use implies in comparison to the English or French use.⁶⁴ The difference being that the biological evocation so prevalent in the Swedish use of the concept is instead expanded to include nationality in the context of culture.⁶⁵ In this Skovdahl references towards another study conducted within Sweden by Gunnar Broberg called *Det multukulturella Sverige* (The multicultural Sweden). Here Broberg attempts an investigation of the entry word “rasism” in Sweden where he concludes with the following definition “Racism claims particularly a difference in value between peoples on a biological basis, which means that a people are what they are due to their nature, and can hardly be anything else”.⁶⁶

On the function and meaning of race in contemporary modern Sweden *Om ras och vithet i det samtida Sverige* (On race and whiteness in contemporary Sweden) Tobias Hubinette, Helena Hörfeldt, Fataneh Farahani and Rene Leon Rosales arrive at similar conclusions. They contend that potential harmful effects might spring from eliminating the category of race from public discourse. The colour-blind ideology currently prevalent within Swedish antiracism struggles with the fact that ideas of race are still prevalent in Swedish society.⁶⁷ At the same time as a higher level of acceptance is proclaimed in relation to the view of restraining from using race as a category, what is perceived as ethnically and religiously different from Swedish culture is met with increased resistance.⁶⁸ The authors contend that race should be reintroduced due to its reflection of a current reality, a reality where discrimination is foremost directed towards people due to their physically differing traits.⁶⁹ The foremost evidence for the existence of race in Sweden is proclaimed to be the discrimination of adopted non-white swedes, since the only differing factor between them and the majority population are physical attributes.⁷⁰

What has become very clear in my investigation of the previous research concerning the function of race in Sweden is how the biological connotation has remained at the centre of the

⁶³ Skovdahl, Bernt, *Skeletten i garderoben: om rasismens idéhistoriska rötter*, Mångkulturellt centrum, Tumba, 1996, p. 17.

⁶⁴ Skovdahl, 1996, p. 17.

⁶⁵ Skovdahl, 1996, p. 18.

⁶⁶ Gunnar Broberg i Ingvar Svanberg, Harald Runblom (red), *Det mångkulturella Sverige: En handbok om etniska grupper och minoriteter*, Stockholm, 1988, p. 313.

⁶⁷ Hübner, Tobias, Hörfeldt, Helena, Farahani, Fataneh & León Rosales, René (red.), *Om ras och vithet i det samtida Sverige*, Mångkulturellt centrum, Tumba, 2012, pp. 13-14.

⁶⁸ Hübner, Hörfeldt, Farahani and Rosales, 2012, p. 14.

⁶⁹ Hübner, Hörfeldt, Farahani and Rosales, 2012, pp. 17-18.

⁷⁰ Hübner, Hörfeldt, Farahani and Rosales, 2012, p. 20.

conceptual use. This has primarily though been treated as either a historical subject or matter of perceived individual discrimination. What I hope to achieve is to add to the field by expanding such an analysis to determine if the perceived problem of discarding race is actually illegitimate.

4 Argumentative structures and terminology

This section will attempt to further clarify how the argumentative overview and the accompanying concepts will appear in the paper. This will be done in a short and concise manner to reach the highest level of simplicity and understanding. The argumentation will appear in a chart consisting of the name of the argument, and abbreviation of this name and the argument itself. The first one is the name of the type of argument. A pro argument is read as P, a counter argument is read as C, a relevance argument is read as R and a sustainability argument is read as S. The number following the letter is to specify which order the argument appears or to which argument it references towards. P1 is simply the first pro argument for the thesis whilst P2P1 is the second pro argument for the first pro argument. C1P1 is thus by the same logic the first counter argument against the first pro argument. In addition to this relevance and sustainability are not only concepts functioning as evaluative tools, they can also signify if an argument is specifically referencing towards the sustainability or relevance of another claim. To simplify it: T= Thesis, P = Pro argument, C = Counter argument, S = sustainability argument, R = relevance argument, 1 = reference to the first order of the specified argument, 2 = reference to the second order of the specified argument etc. Finally I will discuss the order in which the arguments will appear. This will be done after the following established format: 1) The thesis will be placed on the top of the overview, 2) Pro arguments of the first order will follow the thesis, 3) Counter arguments of the first order will then follow etc., 4) Arguments referring to the sustainability or relevance for or against a claim will follow this order: a) arguments for the sustainability of a claim, b) arguments against the sustainability of a claim, c) arguments for the relevance of a claim, d) arguments against the relevance of a claim.⁷¹

⁷¹ Björnsson, Kihlbom, Ullholm, 2009, p. 80.

5 Argumentative overview

In the following section I will present and account for the argumentation supporting an eventual discard of the concept of race. Firstly I will present an argumentative overview in the format previously discussed. This will be followed by a discussion under “argumentative analysis part one” that attempts to further clarify the expressed arguments and draw a conclusion on how they depict the function of race. “Argumentative analysis part two” will attempt to evaluate the arguments conclusive power in the format previously discussed. Important to note is that the following display is not a direct reproduction of an actual debate, the arguments have appeared throughout different situations on the subject with different actors. These are the ones included due to their complexity and frequent occurrence. Although not a copy of a single actual event, this summary of sorts is an exemplary holistic representation of the underlying argumentation for a discard in its fullest form that adheres to the purpose of this paper. Due to the fact that some of the arguments arose as counterarguments, I have chosen to include the argument they were originally directed against. However, these will not be analyzed in any further extent. Concerning the length of the arguments specifications and abbreviations have been made for the purpose of facilitating understanding to the extent possible without risking the possibility of misquoting or reinterpretation. I consider them being of an adequate length.

Thesis:

The concept of race should be discarded from Swedish legislation in order to combat racist prejudice and racism.⁷²

The first pro argument supporting the thesis: (P1)

The concept of race has no scientific basis and therefore serves only to fuel ethnic, national or cultural discrimination based on skin-colour, since it is based on the mistaken notion that there exist established, hierarchically divided races.⁷³

⁷² ”Rasbegreppet ska bort ur lagen”, VIDEO, SVT, 2014, 0.22 min; ”Rasbegreppet ska bort ur svensk lagstiftning?”, 2014/08/14, 0.35 min; ”The Stream phone interview with Sweden's Minister for Integration”, 2014, 0.40 min.

⁷³ SOU 2001:39, P.191; ”Rasbegreppet ska bort ur svensk lagstiftning”, 2014/08/14, 1.0 min; SOU 2006:22, p. 290.

The first argument supporting the sustainability of pro argument 1: (S1P1)

Modern science has concluded that there exist no races within humanity.⁷⁴

The first argument supporting the relevance of pro argument 1: (R1P1)

The Swedish Resistance Movement and other racist organizations work and function based on the notion that there are different human races.⁷⁵

The first counter argument against the first pro argument: (C1P1)

The discard creates a situation where there are no adequate tools to protect those in danger of racial discrimination and through statistics measure the differences in living conditions that exist between different groups in society.⁷⁶

The first counter argument against the first counter argument against the first pro argument: (C1C1P1)

Existing substitutes for the concept of race in discrimination laws are better suited. These are "unfair or abusive treatment because of skin-colour, national or ethnic origin or other similar condition".⁷⁷

The second pro argument supporting the thesis: (P2)

Using the concept of race in legislation legitimates the fact that there are different races and encourages people to identify in terms of racial belonging and to think in terms of biological race.⁷⁸

The first counter argument against the second pro argument: (C1P2)

We do not choose what race we belong to or identify with, race is forced upon us by society.⁷⁹

⁷⁴ "The Stream phone interview with Sweden's Minister for Integration", 2014, 0.55 min; "Rasbegreppet ska bort ur svensk lagstiftning?", 2014/08/14, 0.33 min; Rundqvist, "The concept of race is a slippery slope: Ullenhag", 2014/08/01.

⁷⁵ "Rasbegreppet ska bort ur svensk lagstiftning?", 2014/08/14, 8.45 min.

⁷⁶ Hubinette, Thomas, Beshir, Samson, "Avskaffa inte rasbegreppet ur svensk lagstiftning", 2014/8/7.

⁷⁷ "Rasbegreppet ska bort ur svensk lagstiftning?", 2014/08/14, 4.52 min; "No such thing as race in Sweden?", 2014, 8.45 min; SOU 2001:39, p. 184, 188; "The Stream phone interview with Sweden's Minister for Integration", 2014, 1.30 min.

⁷⁸ "Rasbegreppet ska bort ur svensk lagstiftning?", 2014/08/14, 5.0 min; "No such thing as race in Sweden?", 2014, 13.55 min.

⁷⁹ "No such thing as race in Sweden?", 2014, 9.45 min.

The first counter argument against the first counter argument against the second pro argument: (C1C1P2)

The problem with that view is a loss of individuality. A liberal way of fighting xenophobia is more effective, where it is always unacceptable to judge people from a collective standpoint.⁸⁰

The third pro argument supporting the thesis: (P3)

The concept of race in Sweden carries with it biological connotations and has historically been used as a confirmation that subspecies and "races" of human kind exist. The use of race in legislation is thus a heritage from when racial biology was prevalent in Swedish society and not an adequate reflection of a current reality.⁸¹

The fourth pro argument supporting the thesis: (P4)

By using the concept of race one legitimates the fact that there are different races. This is a conceptual use that takes place on the racists' conditions.⁸²

⁸⁰ "The Stream phone interview with Sweden's Minister for Integration", 2014, 2.15 min; Rundqvist, "The concept of race is a slippery slope: Ullenhag", 2014/08/01.

⁸¹ Rundqvist, "The concept of race is a slippery slope: Ullenhag", 2014/08/01; "Rasbegreppet ska bort ur svensk lagstiftning?", 2014/08/14, 0.40 min; "The Stream phone interview with Sweden's Minister for Integration", 2014, 2.30.

⁸² SOU 2001:39, p. 188; "Rasbegreppet ska bort ur svensk lagstiftning?", 2014/08/14, 1.58 min.

6 Argumentative analysis part one

What can we discern regarding the perceived function of race from the argumentation? Initially let us look at certain arguments to begin discerning eventual trends in the presentation. Let us begin with the counter argument concerning the importance of individualism (C1C1P2). The argument arose against the perceived implications regarding combatting racism by using the concept of race. It is an attack on the fact that one would be paradoxical in its view on humanity by using the concept. To reference to race is to act on a premises that bases its view on humanity in the collective. By deploying ethnic origin or skin-color one individualizes the situation and sets an example that highlights the perceived danger of, in resemblance to racism, judging people from a collective standpoint. What can we discern from this regarding the argumentation as a whole? I will argue for that this is a prime example of how politics and the rules for conceptual use have intersected to contextualize the function of race after the current political climate. The cornerstone in liberal politics is the dual view of freedom: freedom from coercion and freedom of choice. The freedom of choice being the individual's right to freely choose work, place of residence etc. What does ethnicity offer that the concept of race does not in regards to discrimination? It allows a certain amount of an individuality. Where race is a collection of certain collective traits imposed foremost by others, ethnicity offers the individual a choice to define herself in regard to an individual perception of the self. My first conclusion is thus one of how the concept of race and its worth is relative to the current political climate, where a lack of perceived individuality contextualizes the danger of a potential use of the concept.

Continuing on the pathway of contextual influence I will proceed with the argument concerning the biological heritage inherent in the concept of race (P3). The argument is a way of proclaiming that race is obsolete in regards to how it came to be, and more specifically how the former context has conditioned the conceptual use. What can we discern from this? Foremost there is a static perception of the function of race. A perception where the concept has not evolved but still statically is conditioned by former perceptions of valid racial biology. This interacts with much of the other argumentation where race is viewed as a tool foremost to be used by racists to proclaim or advocate for racial subordination, instead of functioning also as a tool to be used by antiracists for antiracist purposes of highlighting structural racism. Thus the conceptual use is still perceived to be conditioned by former perceptions that determine the concept to functioning solely for racist purposes. Further the latter part of the argument interacts

with the argument concerning racist conditioning (P4) and the one about race creating negative incentive (P2) in its perception of the supposed relationship between race and the purpose of conceptual use in legislation. The function of race is conditioned by a perception that legislation should either mirror current or wanted societal values. In this situation it is worth noting the context surrounding this decision. A context where the entrance of a populist party into Swedish parliament is forcing Swedish politicians to recognize the possibility of Sweden following the xenophobic path set by many other European nations. I want to highlight the possibility of how a discard might seem desirable for the Swedish government in light of current political events. By eradicating the concept of race from legislation, thus taking affirmative action against former and present forms of racism, a view of Sweden as being antiracist is legitimized and upheld in the wake of political incidents that might suggest otherwise. The following quote from Erik Ullenhag adds to the possible confirmation of this.

We also need to be crystal clear in Sweden that we will not follow the same path some EU nations have done by following xenophobic forces. Our government has been very clear that, yes, we do have a xenophobic party in parliament, but we will not let them change the political map.⁸³

Finally I will turn to the argument concerning the existence of better suited substitutes instead of race (C1C1P1). The argument arose from the base of arguing for that the concept of race is obsolete in comparison to other possible substitutes. Ethnic origin, skin-color etc. are proclaimed to be more suitable for the task at hand. What can we discern from this? Again we arrive at the supposed solely negative function of race. This leads me to my conclusion concerning the depiction of the function of race in the argumentation. I have arrived at the conclusion that the argumentation serves to construct a stipulative definition of the function of race. A stipulative definition is a definition of how a concept should be understood in a certain context.⁸⁴ The following definition of what a stipulative definition is has proved useful.

A shall, as a consequence of the definition, have the same meaning as B in the specified context C.⁸⁵

An example of a stipulative definition could be: Water shall be understood as a liquid necessary for the origin of life. The author has put in place certain conceptual framework that limits the understanding of water within the context. Important to note is that a stipulative definition is

⁸³ Rundqvist, "The concept of race is a slippery slope: Ullenhag", 2014/08/01.

⁸⁴ Næss, 1961, pp. 30-32.

⁸⁵ Næss, 1961, p. 31.

thus a consequence of certain decisions made by the author in relation to conceptual understanding. Due to this water could also be defined as a collection of Australian poems and thus be more or less relevant for the purpose at hand. This is something I will discuss later. What implies that the function of race is constructed as a stipulative definition? Although there is no outright definition of race or the function of race present there are certain arguments which function in a similar manner. The function of race is, as I have previously argued for, depicted as conditioned by certain factors. The lack of individualism, the presence of former racial biologist connotations and rules regarding conceptual use in legislation defines the concept of race as and its function as, and I am quoting here, “serves only to fuel ethnic, national or cultural discrimination based on skin-color”⁸⁶. Certain conditions are thereby imposed to restrict and define the concept of race to solely function in a harmful and racist way. The concept of race functions, as has been proclaimed on numerous occasions, either in creating incentive to think in biological terms and thus differentiating in humanity, reflecting past understandings of racial subordination based on racial biology or increasing prejudice. This with the concluding observation that race is a conceptual use that takes place on the racist’s conditions. In summary the function of race is stipulatively defined, within the context, to solely function for racist and not antiracist purposes.

6.1 Argumentative analysis part two

In the following section the evaluative analysis previously discussed will take place. A social constructionist analysis will form the evaluative tool that will be applied to the arguments and thesis in order to clarify the level of logical soundness present. This will not follow any specific format but present itself as a rather unrestrained discussion where the argumentation is discussed in terms of relevance, sustainability and conclusive power.

6.1.1 Argument C1C1P1: Ethnicity and color as substituting concepts

Relevance: Assuming that the argument is correct one must conclude that the relevance of the argument is very high. It directly undermines the logical soundness of the previous argument by proclaiming the superiority of color and ethnicity and thus reinforces the legitimacy of a discard.

Sustainability: The sustainability of the claim rests in its ability to reinforce the thesis.

⁸⁶ SOU 2001:39, p. 191.

Specifically in this context its ability to legitimate that a discard would combat or diminish racism. This claim would thus be sustainable if the function of ethnicity or color are superior to the goal than that of race. I have several social constructionist objections to such a claim. I will contend that the reliance of the supposed “better” substitutes exhaust the possibility to deal with racial discrimination and racism due to a lack of a correct understanding of social hierarchy. Race is a concept that has evolved through its many years of functioning as a distinguishing factor in determining social positions of power. Throughout history race has functioned as an analysis of certain physical characteristics in determining an individual’s amount of social, cultural and economic power. Ethnicity has primarily concerned ones ancestral links to a certain geographical area with participation in certain cultural practices.⁸⁷ Thus ethnicity primarily refers to an analysis that has taken place where the physical characteristics of a person determines the individual’s geographical connection. Ethnic groups can, and are, defined in connection to certain social positions of power, but when this is done ethnicity has gone beyond that of functioning as a geographical marker to function in that of a context of race.⁸⁸ I want to clarify the difference between race and ethnicity by drawing attention to the difference in differentiating between groups of individuals on the basis of their assumed origin and that of a hierarchical differentiation based on assumed origin.⁸⁹ The consequences of not using race appears when it becomes clear that membership in ethnicity or culture entails racialization or racial membership⁹⁰ without the concepts being able to perform that type of hierarchical power analysis. Due to the fact that a process has taken place where perception of an individual’s traits such as color is conditioned to be interpreted as to be of cultural significance, the grouping and classification of people into ethnic groups will continue to function on the physical markers of race.⁹¹ A racial coding of the individuals physical traits is thus superior to ethnic or cultural identification.⁹² I will conclusively contend that ethnicity, nationality or color are not sustainable alternatives to race due to the following social constructionist analysis: the concepts have not evolved to function in a way where they enable an adequate social power analysis that corresponds with the hierarchical differentiation along racial lines of understanding currently conditioned within social perceptions of certain cultural, physical or ethnical traits. I will agree

⁸⁷ Haslanger, 2012, p. 238.

⁸⁸ Haslanger, 2012, p. 238.

⁸⁹ Haslanger, 2012, p. 238

⁹⁰ Haslanger, 2012, pp. 238, 266-267 on Alcoff, Linda M, “Is Latina/o Identity a Racial Identity?”, In *Hispanics/Latinos in the United States: Ethnicity, Race and Rights.*, edited by Jorge J.E. Gracia and Pablo De Greiff, New York: Routledge, 2000, pp. 37-38.

⁹¹ Haslanger, 2012, p.266-267 on Alcoff, 2000, p. 39.

⁹² Haslanger, 2012, p.266-267 on Alcoff, 2000, pp. 37-38.

with the previous social constructionist argumentations, ethnicity, nationality, and color are not independent from race; all of them seem to function together in the ways they intersect. I thus conclude that the sustainability of the claim is very low.

Conclusive power: Due to the fact that the relevance is very high and the sustainability very low, the conclusive power is very low.

6.1.2 Argument P3: Biological conditioning

Relevance: Assuming that the claim is correct, how good of a reason does it give us to accept the thesis? I would contend that the level of relevance is moderate. It is correct that the concept of race appearing in legislation as a heritage of racial subordination would be problematic. Yet, it is doubtful that legislation must mirror wanted societal values instead of factual circumstances.

Sustainability: There are certain facts or circumstances that would speak for the sustainability of race being a non-adequate concept in terms of its historical implications. A brief semantic and historical analysis does give us reason to accept the fact that race in the Swedish context has certain biological connotations. For example the fact that the Swedish equivalent to “breeds” concerning animals is translated into race and Swedish history being as extensively characterized by biological racism as it is. The social constructionist objection would be one of recognizing the importance of linkage between now and then in combatting racism, more specifically how race might be understood as a social and historical identity centered on shared experience and history in a larger degree than on body type⁹³. The fact being that racial discrimination and racial oppression form and create a shared history for a racialized group.⁹⁴ A shared history of experience that has served to create a collective identification along racial lines within the members of a society or community.⁹⁵ This shared history and experience grounded in racism proves the possibility that the concept of race in Sweden has evolved from being primarily biological. Through its use historically as a form of forced identification it should instead perhaps be perceived as a social and historical identity. Discarding race from legislation in regards to its implied extensive biological function is to reduce and simplify how race has evolved and more importantly to risk damaging communities and groups through a misrepresentation of major elements in the creation of their unique history. I thus come to the conclusion that the arguments sustainability is low.

⁹³ Haslanger, 2012, pp. 263, 265 on Alcoff, Linda, ”*Mestizo Identity*”, In *American Mixed Race: The Culture of Microdiversity*, edited by N. Zack, Lanham, MD:Rowman and Littlefield, 1995, p. 272.

⁹⁴ Haslanger, 2012, p. 263 on Alcoff, 1995, p. 272.

⁹⁵ Haslanger, 2012, p. 263 on Alcoff, 1995, p. 272.

Conclusive power: A moderate level of relevance and a low level of sustainability results in low conclusive power.

6.1.3 Argument C1C1P1: The concept of race lack of individuality

Relevance: The relevance of the argument is deemed very high. This due to the fact that if an individual approach to combatting racism is ineffective in comparison to ethnicity or other individually focused concepts it undermines the purpose of including race in legislation.

Sustainability: The arguments sustainability rests in the claim that referencing to race is harmful since it follows the same lines of collective judgment that characterizes racism. Treating people in reference to perceived individual traits such as ethnicity seems the wiser decision since it bypasses the same principle that is deemed problematic with race: collective judgment. The social constructionist analysis of this would in many ways point to the same conclusion presented in the previous evaluation concerning the biological conditioning. As previously stated race might be understood as a social and historical identity based on shared experience and history. Race can thus be understood as a unifying factor, although a tragic one, based on collective experiences. There is then no loss implied in a loss of individuality since an individual approach does not capture the collective identification process that is conditioned within race. Although this doesn't give us full reason to dismiss the validity of the argument. There is still need of addressing the claim that using race for antiracist purposes is a poor decision since it reinforces the same principle use of collective judgment. I think in this instance it is a wise decision to ponder the differences between correlation and causality. I would say that there definitely is a correlation between the collective "judgment" inherent in racism and the collective grouping of using race in antiracist purposes. My objection is that there is no causality between the two in relation to effectively combatting racism. Why not? Because collective treatment may be a necessary factor for racism, but it is not a sufficient one. Simply the occurrence of collective treatment in the use of race in legislation is not sufficient in claiming that it is reinforcing racism. Especially not in the light of previously stated arguments on the collective unifying function of race through shared history. I conclude that the level of sustainability is very low and leave you with the following quote by Sally Haslanger that exemplary concludes the importance of necessary and sufficient conditions.

The reason why facts don't settle the issue is that simply establishing that there is a fact or matter about something doesn't establish that is a significant fact for the purposes at hand.⁹⁶

Conclusive power: Due to the level of sustainability being very low and the level of relevance is very high the conclusive power is very low.

6.1.4 Argument P1 and P4: The concept of race fuels racism and is a racist conceptual use

Relevance: Assuming that the claim is true I would assert that the relevance is very high. If the use of race in legislation would in any manner only serve to create incentive or legitimate a mistaken hierarchy among people of a different skin-color it would completely oppose combatting racism and a discard of race would thus be legitimate.

Sustainability: The sustainability of the argument is grounded in its narrow definition of how race functions. It is proclaimed that race only serves to fuel or legitimate a differentiation based on skin color. The fact that the concept has no scientific basis is deemed to be correct, this has been established by numerous genetic and anthropological reports. The claim that racist organizations function and work based on the idea that there are different races also seems correct. Although racism has evolved in many ways to include culture etc. the cornerstone of the Swedish resistance movement and other organization appears to be racial. Even though the claim that racist organizations use the idea of race appears legitimate one can question the relevance inherent. Racism in Swedish society does not solely consist of the existence of openly racist organizations. Combatting racism is trying to change the attitudes inherent among people and within social institutions. It appears as the conclusion that a discard would combat racism based on the inductive reasoning that a few racist organizations use it is at its best a necessary requirement but not a sufficient one to grant relevance to the claim. As I previously stated the sustainability of the argument is grounded in a claim that the concept of race can only fuel discrimination, in other words race can only do the work of racism. The social constructionist analysis would oppose just this. Not the fact that race can and does function in a racist manner but the claim that it only functions in such a way. Important in this context is to note the relationship that exists between race and culture. Through decades of oppression and damaging racial profiling the subjected individuals have been grouped together to create and form cultural understandings of the group and of themselves that are valuable.⁹⁷ They are valuable in two

⁹⁶ Haslanger, 2012, p. 303.

⁹⁷ Haslanger, 2012, p. 263.

ways. Initially race can be understood as a social and historical identity centered on shared experience and history. This amounts to the fact that race can be an important part of an individual's self-understanding based on a collective history. In discarding race we risk damaging a part of their culture and the way they chose to view themselves. The groups of individuals subjected to racial oppression should not be reduced to passive victims, but viewed as capable of constructing race to be used in such a way as to combat racism and be a source of pride and value.⁹⁸ This might, in Sweden, not take the same shape as "Blackness" or "Latina" in the US for example, but it is of importance to acknowledge and facilitate this possibility for other racialized groups historically affected by racial oppression, such as the Saami people. The other valuable understanding is one of not dislocating oneself from history that we might draw valuable conclusions from. In discarding race we risk not fully understanding racism in Sweden historically and worse establish a false self-image of Sweden as antiracists without necessary historical information. Halt, the supporter of a discard proclaims. Racial equality is only a legitimate goal over racial elimination if, and only if, we view color to be a legitimate way of differentiating between groups of individuals.⁹⁹ It appears as if there are no legitimate reasons that this acknowledgement of physical features strives towards the common goal. To clarify previous statements, conclusively argue for why race can't be replaced with color or ethnicity and explain that race does not only function in a racist way; "Race is more than color or ethnicity, it is the subordination of groups of people marked by color"¹⁰⁰. In order to combat racism Swedish society must recognize racialized groups and the importance of race in this context to understand how discrimination and oppression has been sustained through much of Swedish history. Instead of striving for the elimination of race, society should strive for when color or race does not have hierarchical implications.¹⁰¹ By demonstrating the ways in which race as a concept can be used in preferential and positive ways this undermines the sustainability of race solely functioning to fuel racism and discrimination. I thus deem the sustainability to be very low.

Conclusive power: Due to the level of relevance being very high and the sustainability being very low the conclusive power is very low.

⁹⁸ Haslanger, 2012, p. 264.

⁹⁹ Haslanger, 2012, p. 255.

¹⁰⁰ Haslanger, 2012, p. 256.

¹⁰¹ Haslanger, 2012, p. 252.

6.1.5 Argument P2: Race creates incentive to think and identify along racial lines.

Relevance: Assuming the claim is true how good of a reason does it give us to accept the thesis? I would contend that the relevance is high. An increase in terms of identifying in biological race could, plausibly, result in a higher level of both physical and emotional segregation among citizens. Segregation and perceived differences among people is a precursor and a necessary condition for the onset of racism and racial discrimination.

Sustainability: In determining the level of sustainability there are three factors in need of evaluation. Initially one must determine if the use of a concept in legislation can be seen as a legitimization of that same concept. Secondly one must determine if the use of a race in legislation can function as an incentive to think or identify in terms of biological race. Lastly one must then determine if an increase of racial identification is something undesirable or bad in terms of combating racism. Can the use of race in legislation be seen as a legitimization of the same concept? Initially there appears to be some soundness to this claim. Legislation is a representation of the will of the Swedish state, simplified it can be seen as the governing states language in which it communicates to its citizens of what is right and what is wrong. In relation to this it would appear correct that a use of race in legislation is legitimating the use of it. I would contend that this varies on how the concept appears in legislation. If it would appear, as it does in some countries, as “the notion of race” it would be clear that the use of the concept is not seen as legitimate. It does however not appear in such a fashion in Swedish legislation. Further it is of importance to question if the use of the concept can be seen as legitimizing it in regards to the quite extensive antiracist work being underway by the government as well as the existence of an abundance of antiracist legislation. I will conclude that this does neither gives adequate grounds to reject or accept the claim. Thus we move on. Can the use of race in legislation function as an incentive to think or identify in terms of biological race? I am skeptical to that this legislative use of the concept is such a premier fact in us determining how we identify us and each other. Language appears in a much wider sense as a collective social practice than conditions and terms stipulated by an authority.¹⁰² I question the supposed importance of legislation in how individuals frame their identities since it is not a use that a majority are familiar with or exposed to on a frequent basis. The public or “everyday” use of the concept seems to be of higher importance in such identification. I will conclude that is highly unlikely

¹⁰² Haslanger, 2012, p. 298.

but not impossible that the use would act as an incitement. Since I have concluded that it is highly unlikely that the use would act as an incitement for racial identification it is not necessary to discuss the last factor any further than to simply state that an increase in racial identification is a necessary condition for racism but not a sufficient one and thus does not have to result in racism. As I have previously concluded race can also be seen as an intrinsic part of certain groups self-interpretation and self-understanding as a part of a collective history. I will conclude that the sustainability of the claim is low.

Conclusive power: A high amount of relevance in correlation with a low level of sustainability results in a low grading of conclusive power.

6.1.6 Conclusion:

I previously stated that in determining the overall legitimacy of the argumentation I would add the conclusive powers of each argument together. In accordance with the rules previously accounted for the overall argumentation and thus the thesis has been deemed to be very low. This grading being a result from the fact that all arguments were found to be either low or very low in terms of the level of conclusive power. I thus arrive at the conclusion that the overall conclusive power of the argumentation for a discard is very low and cannot be deemed legitimate.

7 Discussion

I always imagined *déjà vu* being this popular cultural phenomena reserved for Hollywood movies and less thought through pickup lines, yet throughout the weeks spent writing this report I kept feeling just that vague sense of similarity until clarification finally struck me in the words of a previous philosophy professor. “The difference between necessary and sufficient conditions is what determines if a so called truth is misleading or actually true”¹⁰³. This guideline has been the single most important tool in writing this report. Why is that? Imagine former integrations minister Erik Ullenhag would approach me with the statement “The concept of race functions in a way which is harmful and fuels racism”. My new insight would then force me to answer maybe, but that depends on what you mean with “race”. Does race solely function in a way that it is bound to be the heritage of a past characterized by hierarchy legitimized by biology and increasing prejudice? Can it also be a tool for combatting racism and an important unifying source of pride and value for groups? What has been made very clear is the need for the actors involved to further define why it is that their stipulative definitions of race are the most important ones for the goal at hand. The problem is thus not that there are different perceptions of race present, but that some of them seem to be regarded as being true without meeting the necessary and sufficient conditions for achieving the purposes at hand. I will contend that the definition and understanding of race employed by actors arguing for a discard of the concept of race is, at the current moment, ill-suited for the task at hand and should not be regarded as being true. I will conclude this statement with a quote from Sally Haslanger that I found to be an excellent representation.

Truth alone does not set us free; there are too many irrelevant and misleading truths. The choice of truths must – at the very least – be insightful and judicious.¹⁰⁴

Although I believe my report to be adequate for my purposes at hand it certainly can be improved within a larger context. Initially the decision to include not only the argumentation for a discard would be preferential. Secondly other theoretical application could certainly be applied to gain a greater diverse insight on the subject. Finally the subject could most certainly be treated either further within the Swedish context or expand and gain greater insight on the subject by looking at other countries use of the concept. In a rather fulfilling and frustrating

¹⁰³ Grafström, Björn, Filosofi B, Rudbeck, 2012.

¹⁰⁴ Haslanger, 2012, p. 303.

sense it seems like my report has spawned more questions than it answered. The largest one of them being now that we have concluded that the decision to discard race cannot be considered legitimate, how should it be constructed? Instead of not just asking the question is a discard the way forward in combatting racism, we should ask what is the way forward? Should we reconstruct the concept, leave it be or maybe substitute it for others such as ethnorate? What I hope to have achieved and contributed to the field is initially the opportunity of allowing said method and theory to function together adequately but more importantly how the argumentation and definitions of race underlying the decision to discard race from Swedish legislation are not only highly volatile and ambivalent but also not true for combatting racism.

8 Summary

The purpose of this paper was to gain greater insight into the argumentation underlying the eventual discard of the concept of race from Swedish legislation. Argumentative analysis and social constructivism were employed in order to adequately answer the following questions: How is the function of race depicted in the argumentation for an eventual discard of the concept in Sweden and how is a nonuse of race legitimized? Does the argumentation for a discard of race from Swedish legislation provide a correct understanding of race in terms of combatting racism and acting towards racial equality that results in it being legitimate? Initially an argumentative overview was presented through deconstruction of the argumentation for the eventual discard present in the debate. Although the overview did not include all the present arguments it was a holistic representation including the weightiest and most used arguments. The initial analysis served to answer the first question of how the function of race is depicted. Through a discussion of the arguments it was concluded that the function of race is stipulatively defined to solely be able to function for racist purposes. Specifically race could only do the work of racism. In the latter part of the analysis the argumentation was evaluated in regards to relevance, sustainability and conclusive power where the theoretical framework of social constructivism served as the evaluative tool. It was conclusively decided that the argumentation for a discard was not logically sound and cannot be regarded as being legitimate or provide a correct understanding of race in terms of combatting racism. The paper was then concluded with a discussion concerning the nature of the stipulative definitions of race present, highlighting the need to further clarify how they supposedly meet the necessary and sufficient conditions regarding the goal at hand of combatting racism.

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