

Haunting Experiences of Images

Blind Spots and Fantasy-Frames in the Mass Mediated Suburb

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In the early sixties, the Social Democratic party launched the so called million-programme. It aimed at addressing the housing shortage. Instead of maintaining worn out inner-city apartments, new suburbs were designed to house a million people. This specific political ambition was achieved. But during the construction of the suburbs, and in the aftermath of the project, the public reacted and questions were asked. The suburb thus became an arena for political controversies. Up to this day, the suburb is host to narratives about society. The million-programme was supposed to mean housing for all, and represent “Folkhemmet” – the welfare-state – as defined by the Social Democratic party. At the beginning these areas were national symbols for ideas about “Swedishness” and the future. It wasn’t only a housing programme, but a reform programme that aimed towards and prepared to take Sweden into the future. Nature and natural elements were used to build the self-image of Swedishness into the very architecture of the new housing. The suburb was portrayed as a national event – even though similar high-rise buildings and large scale neighbourhoods were also springing up in many parts of Europe.

Critics thought that the high-rise buildings were anonymous and created a hostile environment. Certain suburbs were soon singled out by the Swedish press, and connected to certain stereotyped images. Major city suburbs were represented in the mass media as places where unemployment, criminality, anonymity and other alarming social tendencies could be witnessed daily. The suburb thus became

a problem. In addition, migrants living in these areas became increasingly represented by the mass media as images of the Other. As a result, the suburb no longer represented Sweden’s future but an attempt at integration into Swedishness. The geographical positioning of the suburbs – on the outskirts of a city – had become metaphorically associated with outside societies in terms of Immigrants and Ethnic groups. Such images had previously been reserved for the working class, but from the late seventies and early eighties, the ethnic element became increasingly emphasised in mass mediated narrations. It had become a place for the Other.

The concept of Otherness is built into the definition of a city, in that people who pass each other in the street are strangers. The mass media has therefore been important in that it enabled people to get to know city areas they had no connection with. Narratives about other parts of the city can, on the one hand, lead to a feeling of intimacy with the stranger, although on the other hand, such representations can also have the opposite effect. I have therefore analysed the imagery of the Swedish suburb with this in mind.

In this article I will use Slavoj Žižek’s notion of the *fantasy-frame*, together with Avery F. Gordon’s discussion about *blind spots* and *haunting experiences*, to explain the representations of the Swedish suburbs in the mass media. It all boils down to what it is like to live in the shadow images of the stigmatised suburb and how such images are dealt with. These experiences are dealt with in different

ways, depending on the relationship to the suburb and the relationship to the mass media. In this article, the examples of Maya, who lives in Gottsunda, a suburb in Uppsala, and the football player, Zlatan Ibrahimovic, from Rosengård in Malmö, illustrate different ways of dealing with the suburban fantasy-frame – something that they face daily. I will describe how both the viewer and the portrayed articulate relations of power in mass mediated images. The article also focuses on the observer's production of the suburban space. By using this approach I hope to show that the mass media confronts both the observer and the portrayed with images that become real in the sense that they have to be dealt with. Media becomes practice.

The Haunting Experience of Emptiness

Looking through a window is a peculiar form of mixing distance with closeness and is, I think, like reading a newspaper or watching TV, in that short and fragmented glimpses of life appear before the reader or observer. The pane of glass allows you to see everything, and in that respect everything seems close, although there is no actual opportunity to take part in the activities outside. The window is a filter that divides seeing from doing and inside from outside, with distinct boundaries between text and practice. But these dichotomies are too simplistic if one is to take account of the multitude of relationships that exist between viewer and performer. What happens on the other side of a pane of glass – the reality that the viewer beholds – can be described in terms of Žižek's *fantasy-frame*. Drawing on Hitchcock's *Rear Window*, he outlines a concept for an understanding of the attention that recognises the power of seeing and the techniques of perception. A *fantasy-frame* involves a scenario where the performer has to act in line with the spectators' expectations in order to become visible and recognised. James Stewart's character in *Rear Window* is physically connected to his apartment in that he has broken his leg and there is nothing else to do but look out at the backyard activities of his neighbours and into the daily lives of people living in the other

apartments. This occupies all his time, and one night, he suspects that a neighbour kills his wife. This window becomes his fantasy window. Everything that he sees through the window captivates his hopes and his desires. The window becomes the media for seeing and that self-made filter becomes a prerequisite for seeing. At first, no one believes in the story. His girlfriend, played by Grace Kelly, at first doubts his speculations. She wants him to stop imagining things and instead concentrate on their relationship. Her wish to develop their relationship becomes a hindrance to him and a spot that disturbs his view, as she does not fit into his fantasy. In order to get into his life and evoke his desires, she has to act within his fantasy. She does that by leaving the apartment and crossing the backyard, thus becoming visible to Stewart's gaze through the window. Her absence and re-appearance then fit into his *fantasy-frame*. It all became possible when she became a part of the scenery, or the plot, that he had invented (Žižek 1989:139). This sequence in Žižek's analysis is important, I think, in connection with the mass mediated narratives of the Swedish suburb and the portrayal of the immigrant as a stereotype character within that blind field of Otherness. The suburb can, when looked at from a window, or on mass mediated screens, be regarded as a space and frame, and thus comparable to Stewart's character looking down at the backyard. One of the major features in Stewart's character is that he has to keep and make a distance so that he can come close. It is very much like Boorstin writing about the tourist and the tourist's relationship to the exotic and foreign. The tourist's appetite for what is foreign is satisfied when the preconception of foreignness is verified (Boorstin 1992:109).

I will now describe a recent event that made me conscious of the importance of mass mediated images – and will use this scene as an introduction in examining the impact of mass mediated images and how the understanding of Otherness is created by the observer's imagination of the Other.

Looking at the Blind Spot

Maya and I were standing in her daughter's bedroom, looking out across Stenhammar Park. Pine covered slopes and children's playground areas were visible. The houses surrounding the park could be discerned through the leafy tops of the trees. Children walked along one of the footpaths, busily looking into each other's bags of sweets. Just in front of the window was a rather big lawn. Two girls came running to fetch a forgotten football.

Such suburban views always take me by surprise. While these ordinary, or trivial, scenes of what is happening outside a window in the reality of everyday life in the suburb catch my attention, I am aware that something is missing. On this occasion I found myself waiting, rather intently, for something to happen. Even though things were happening in front of me, there was something missing. This "waiting for something to happen" feeling made me curious. It made me think about how different happenings are associated with different spaces, and if "nothing" occurs it is signal that the viewer lacks the ability to see. It is as if the viewer is blinded by his, or her, own way of looking at an event. Every window is an invitation to see. This view of nothing, or emptiness, triggered my expectations and in doing so also made me see my preconceived notions of this particular space. I had this reflection in mind when I started to talk to Maya, who was still looking out of the window. I told her that this view supposedly took in one of the most crime-ridden areas in the neighbourhood. She said:

"Yes I know, but it is hard to understand. I've been living here for over a year. I moved to this apartment last spring and I have never seen or heard anything. I'm never afraid to walk along the pathways at night. I think this is a beautiful neighbourhood. It is close to the day nursery, and only a few minutes walk to the centre where all the services are. Hopefully I'll get a job there. That would be great. I know this area has a bad reputation, but I don't know why. I haven't seen anything."

While looking out of the window, Maya and I were sharing a view that was not ours but a kind of *re-memory*, recalling something we had never seen (Morrison 1987:36f; see Gordon 1997:165). It was as if we had already created an image which was not there, even though we were standing there talking about it and relating to it.

In her book, *Ghostly Matters*, the sociologist Avery F. Gordon sets out on a ghost hunt. She takes ghosts and haunting seriously, as they have real importance in both social life and sociological research. "Being haunted draws us affectively, sometimes against our will and always a bit magically, into the structure of feeling of a reality we come to experience, not as cold knowledge, but as transformative recognition" (Gordon 1997:8). In conjunction with Roland Barthes' reflections on photography, Gordon writes about blind spots and blind fields. In Barthes' terminology, these fields are called *punctum*. A detail in the picture disrupts the harmony and, in Gordon's analysis, it means that, paradoxically, invisible fields visualise or evoke a kind of seeing and understanding. *Punctum* is not an individual aesthetic experience, Barthes writes, but it manages to activate the dynamic in the blind field. "It is what I add to the photograph and what is nonetheless already there" (Barthes 1981:55; see Gordon 1997:107). These blind spots accentuate *punctum*, and are a way of making the invisible visible: "... when we catch a glimpse of its endowments in the paradoxical experience of seeing what appears to be not there we know that a haunting is occurring" (Gordon 1997:107).

Looking out over Stenhammar Park was a haunting experience. Maya and I were still talking about the neighbourhood and the positive things she felt about the suburb when she suddenly told me that she didn't want her daughter to grow up in this suburb, and they'd have to leave. I thought that was a surprising statement. She felt that she had to leave this beautiful place even though they both enjoy their living there. The statement came out of the blue. On the basis of what she had told me earlier, I thought that there was no real reason for this impatient desire to move. When asking

her about that, and why she felt that way, she couldn't give me a direct answer. Maya did not agree with the dark images of the suburb, telling me that these images were mass mediated and didn't represent what it was really like to live there. Her eagerness to move away wasn't related to her actual experiences, but to the mass media's haunting images of crime, insecurity and bad reputation. This reflection can also be observed in other interviews with people in Gottsunda and relates to a daily and recurring questioning of the mass mediated images (Molina 1997:209). My waiting for something to happen was a waiting for the stereotyped mass mediated images of suburbs and immigrants to be played out in front of my eyes. In order to bring together both mine and Maya's feelings of the haunting emptiness of reality, and Gordon's theoretical approach to that same feeling, I will describe an event where a social worker talks about the suburb of Gottsunda in

Uppsala, and especially the surroundings of Stenhammar Park – the very same park that Maya and I observed that afternoon.

Mapping the White Spot

The suburban scene was already set when we climbed the stairs from the vestibule to the conference room. Our guide talked about the shootings that had taken place a couple of months earlier. Someone had fired two shots into the hall, at night. She pointed to bullet holes in the wall. Perhaps the social worker was responding to the expectations of her audience. I couldn't help thinking that these holes in the wall were a kind of trademark for the social workers: a visit to a suburb known through the mass media for its problems with crime should contain these images. It was like a suburban ready-made.

The audience at this information were students and scholars who were there to listen to

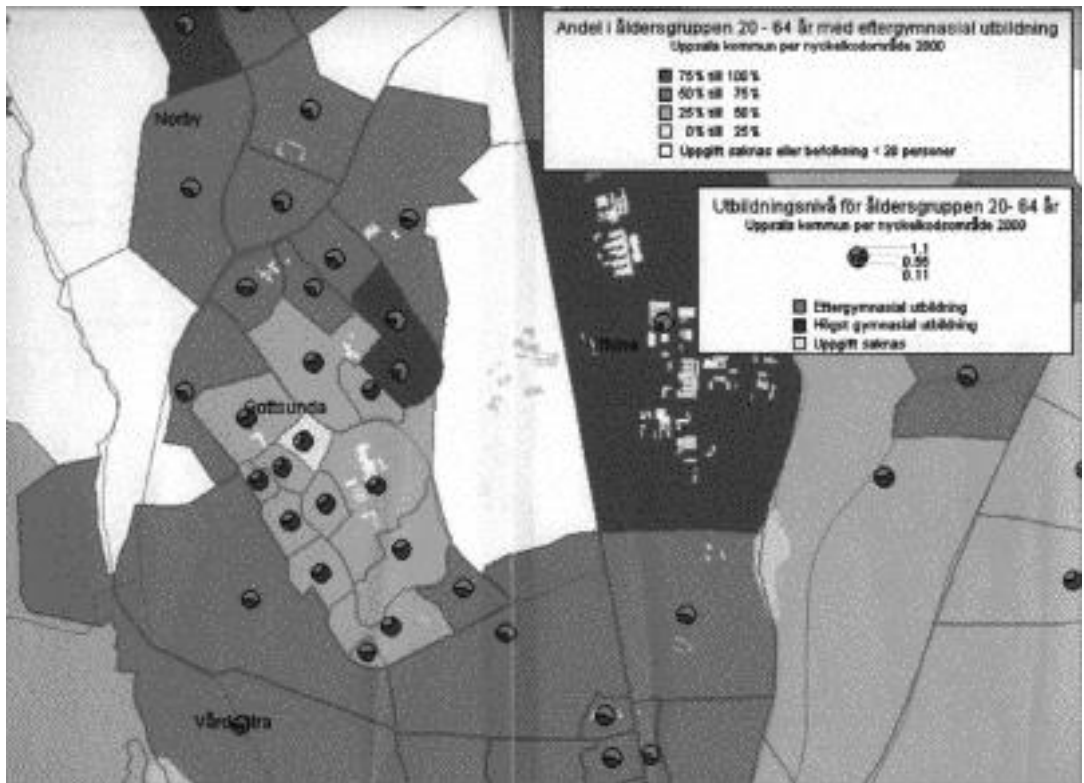


Fig. 1. Scanned copy of the original map. The area of Stenhammar Park and “the white spot” can be seen underneath the text, Gottsunda.

and learn about the demography of the suburb and how the area was to be integrated into society by different projects. The social worker began her presentation by showing us a local map. The map showed the distribution of the levels of education in the area. Different shades of green represented the education levels in the suburb – the deeper the green, the higher the education level. A white spot in the centre of the map immediately attracted our attention.

Benedict Anderson writes about the map as a technique of representation. The colouring of the map – where the imperial states portrayed the colonies in different colours to indicate ownership – emphasised the authority of the empire (Anderson 1991:175). The white spot on the map in the lecture room reflected another relationship to the state, and evoked a vision of Otherness. Even though some members of the audience wanted to unpack the notion of criminality and look into the underlying structures of the area, we could not get away from that white field; the blind spot that, paradoxically enough, couldn't be explained in any other way than that it didn't exist. It was like an invisible magnetic field that captured all our attention. Attempts to talk about something else were impossible. Even though the uncertainties were great, or just because of that, the gossip started. We heard about drug addicts' needles being found in the children's sandpits – the same story that was told in the suburb of Rosengård a couple of days later when another social worker gave a similar "suburban talk".

The map's borders, frames and colours brought matters to life. While the white areas represented very low education levels, it soon came to be understood as an area that neither the social workers, nor the local population had any knowledge about. The social worker explained how some efforts had been made to "come in" to this area. To those of us at the seminar – including the social worker – the configuration of the map seemed to represent a haunted space. Making maps and framing the suburb is an act of recognition. In the case of the white or blind spots of Gottsunda, it was a recognition of the lack, or absence, of knowledge. An intense emptiness was materialised in the

map's white spot, as there was no expression or representation of people's informal space or what kind of education they had received before coming to Sweden.

The white colour functioned as a metaphor. In most narrations, the colour white evokes an image of innocence and purity. In this case, however, it signalled a desire to turn white into green. In a sense, it functioned as a visual technique to expel the feeling of being blind, or haunted.

Displacing Emptiness – Making the Invisible Visible

Staging the suburb through the mass media does not just concern images of criminality and barren concrete environments, even though these aspects might lurk in the background (Ristilammi 1997; Dahlstedt 2004:4). In poets' docu-fictions, in musicians' lyrics and in mass mediated interviews with well-known individuals (all in some way identified with their migrant background and their relationship to the suburb), there are traces of another understanding; an active struggle with emptiness (dreams, fantasies) and an attempt to relay that emptiness to the viewer.

In typecast settings, where the suburb is the scene and the fronting individual performs or relates to that scene, the individual is described as a creative representative of the suburban culture. In such settings, the mass mediated suburb becomes the place where multicultural feelings are exposed to the viewer through entertaining dances, carnivals and flavours. In this kind of staging it is crucial to separate and disconnect the suburb from the surrounding society in order to make it viewable (see Stallybrass & White 1986:126ff). The multicultural is made separate and exclusive to the suburban space. The multicultural thus becomes something that those outside – in "normality" – look at but don't participate in (Ericsson 2001).

Graham Huggan writes about *staging the margins*, and asks whether articulation from the margins is a way to social change – and whether it can be called resistance or just reproduces the mainstream culture. Sometimes,

representation from the margin is a result of a political and self-designated task, while at other times it is a designation from the mass mediated representatives. In both cases, however, it is the ones who stage the marginality that risk losing their credibility. Judgement is in the hands of the media and the spectator or reader (Huggan 2001:85). Every now and again, the mass media represents the long awaited suburban voice that finally gives a true picture of the suburban way of life. In these representations, the fantasy-frame is evident through the narrating structure of the mass mediated articles. The mass mediated images and texts about a celebrated Suburban Immigrant is a way of talking about Otherness in praise-filled articulations (see Marshall 1997). The fantasy-frame confirms the spectators' expectations by the way the individual is portrayed. Many of these celebrated individuals have to act against a haunting emptiness of Otherness (Ericsson 2003). Their doings are measured and understood in terms of results and shadows of their suburban past. Alexandra Pascalidou, writer and journalist, writes about her experiences of media in her book, *Frontkick*:

“As soon as the media expeditions came along to portray ‘the suburb’s losers’, we knew what they were after. We therefore invited them to the spectacle they expected – or the opposite. When they started filming, my boy friends who were hanging around in the town centre, suddenly started to fight or shoplift to secure a few moments of fame on the TV screen. We either had to fight in order to be seen or mount a counter attack to glorify our existence. ‘Rinkeby is best – no protest!’” (Pascalidou 2003:158).

The mimetic practice, as explained by Pascalidou, corresponds to the viewers' blind spots. It doesn't have to be as abstract as a white spot on a map, as these white spots or blind fields can be found in other sequences, as is shown in the above quotation, or in interviews where the focus is on the questions as well as the answers. Every question is, in a way, an attempt to fill the emptiness of not knowing. It is where, in the imagination (emptiness) of the observer,

the scene is set. It leaves the performer or actor without any power other than to act within the viewer's fantasy frame, and paradoxically it is this portrayal that makes the fantasy real. The subject seems to be entangled in the stereotypes made for her/him. In order to discuss this power relation, the rest of the article will consider the footballer Zlatan Ibrahimovic's articulating strategies, and analyse the *media-graphy* surrounding him.

Embodying the Suburb

The following headings are included to give a quick overview of the media narratives:

Zlatan Ready for Success (*Sydsvenska Dagbladet* 05/09/2002)

Zlatan's Magic Night (*Sydsvenska Dagbladet* 14/06/2004)

With Zuper-Zlatan the Team Will Never be out of Count (*Dagens Nyheter* 18/06/2004)

Zlatan Can be the Difference (*Expressen* 22/06/2004)

The footballer, Zlatan Ibrahimovic, who plays for the Italian football club, Juventus, is one of those highly recognised and celebrated individuals surrounded by a distinct fantasy-frame. In the Swedish mass mediated biographies, his immigrant and suburban background constantly reappears. In 1999 he made his debut for Malmö FF (FC) and, together with his team mates, took the team back to highest division after a short spell in the second division. Ibrahimovic became known as the person who made it all possible. The journalists made out that his brilliant footballing skills were a result of his suburban background. Just as place and the individual intermingle, Ibrahimovic's ascribed characteristics were, and still are, to be understood in relation to the stereotype of the suburb and the Immigrant. Otherness performs in the name of the hero and saviour when he scores for the national team. These representations thus involve a kind of racism, or Othering, which to a certain extent contain the encouragement and approval of difference.

“The Hunt for the New Zlatan. In Zlatan’s Backyard

Unemployment. Widespread crime. Social segregation. Rosengård, the neighbourhood that spreads itself over the south-eastern parts of Malmö, is a tough world to live in. Here 50 languages are spoken, but only one is common to all. It’s a language that connects all cultures, crosses all borders and breaks all barriers. It’s the language of football. Come with us on a journey to the land where sand turns to gold and talent grows on trees. Come with us to Zlatan’s world” (*Expressen* 29/05/2002).

Several elements recur in the media’s coverage of these biographies. The above quotation represents a colonial discourse. In line with journalistic strategy, the story is told in terms of a journey. The chance to break loose from the background that binds him is in the hands of Ibrahimovic, as long as he is ready to sacrifice his extreme individuality and irrationality in order to be included in the team – meaning of course, the nation. Between 2001, when he first joined the national team, and up to the European Championships in 2004, this was a major issue that concerned football experts and sports journalists alike. The suburb was the place for Ibrahimovic’s departure, it was Rosengård, defined as a place not entirely Swedish, that hosted narratives about the Other. In these narratives Ibrahimovic becomes synonymous with his suburban background. His doings can be put into an overall understanding of the concept of a journey. In the same year that he made his debut in the national team, he signed a contract with Ajax, a team in the Dutch league. At the beginning of 2004 he signed for the Italian club, Juventus. Each move has resulted in articles about how Ibrahimovic succeeded in escaping from an otherwise determined future of crime and unemployment. To emphasize the otherness and visualize the journey he undertakes the stories about Ibrahimovic also bring his parents (born in Bosnia/Croatia) into the narratives. This highlights the fact that, even though he was born in Malmö, the journey he has undertaken is not just a geographical journey, but is also to be understood as a cultural one.

Described as a fairy story, the young boy with nothing but problems could, with the help of his outstanding talent, irrationality and trainers, be guided to a successful career. Athletic heroes and heroines are often narrated in terms of their geographical surroundings. The landscape becomes the scene for the hero’s or heroine’s upbringing and rise to stardom. This mainly concerns country-raised athletes, as big city athletes are seldom connected to their landscape (Schoug 1997:43ff). This makes Ibrahimovic’s constant linkage to Rosengård unusual, although the suburb is often described as being peripheral to the city. However, it is not only in Malmö where the reader finds the explanations to Zlatan’s posing, gestures, statements and brilliant play, but in Rosengård, where a migrant background can be made into something reliable, and where every single one of his doings carries a vague reference to the nation. The discourses permeate the narratives of the suburb and the individual, typecast in the representation of that Otherness, also becomes a subject of the same discourses. On the one hand, the narratives praise and honour his move-away from the suburb, while on the other they indicate that he will never leave it. His mass mediated character is compared to that of his suburban background. His individual skills, techniques and aggressiveness on the football field are associated with his suburban background and to an appreciation of the stereotyped immigrant who has managed to break away from his background. But the pseudo-events portrayed and described by the journalists mean that he faces the constant risk of being knocked from his pedestal (Boorstin 1992).

Maturity vs Immaturity

One of the recurring media topics is whether Zlatan is mature or immature. The dichotomy cuts through most of the interviews and makes it possible for the media to discuss whether he should have a place in the national team or not. In the Swedish context, the idea of team spirit is very important. The notion of fitting into the team becomes synonymous with maturity. It is said that he has to hold himself back in order to perform for the team. The premise

applies to everything he does. One dribble too many (individualistic and immature) or a pass to the other forward (a mature working for the team) is to be understood against the background of maturity. At the same time, it is his irrationality and unexpected moves on the football field that attract the fans. As actors, suburban representatives often have these demands placed upon them in that they have to perform Otherness at the same time as they are criticised for doing just that.

Ibrahimovic has used different kinds of strategies in relation to the mass media. At one time he said that he didn't need the media. It was the media that needed him, he said. He was trying to avoid the questions because he did not think that the articles written about him were fair and representative. This attempt to avoid the mass media was then portrayed as a naïve and immature act. There was no escape, and there were no loopholes. The journalists' answer to Ibrahimovic's avoidance was to flash a patronising smile, while at the same time flirting with the audience and reassuring them that this was the Zlatan they were used to. According to Mauss' theories about gifts, the avoidance technique of Ibrahimovic is rather like a declaration of war. If you are unwilling to deliver the expected gift to the journalists, being cocky, arrogant and inviting them to a spectacle are attempts to withdraw from the mass mediated focus. The gift that journalists offer Ibrahimovic is attention (see Mauss 1997). Seen from the journalistic point of view, receipt of attention seems worthy of a return gift. When discovering that there is no actual loophole, Ibrahimovic gives the trademark *Zlatan* to the mass media, gift-wrapped.

For a while, Ibrahimovic invited the reader to think of Zlatan as a sign or an image. He often talked about himself in the third person during interviews, referring to: "Zlatan is Zlatan". Perhaps he believed that the statement – miming the sign of himself – would function as a loophole. Giving the sign of Zlatan to the mass media would keep the journalists away. Think of it as an agreement where both parties know what the other party wants. Even if the journalists have dispersed this strategy or

agreement, they can still use it to describe and discuss his actions in relation to Zlatan as a sign. The newspaper, *Aftonbladet*, published an account of Ibrahimovic in June 2004. One of the headlines tells the reader that "Zlatan should be Zlatan, but..." and then the journalist goes on to talk about what we (the media and the audience) are willing to accept, and that his arrogant attitude in relation to the media has nothing to do with professionalism. The journalist wants him to show *respect* (*Aftonbladet* 02/06/2004). On the following day, another newspaper, *Expressen*, tells the reader that: "Zlatan has to be Zlatan. We must allow him to be Zlatan" (*Expressen* 03/06/2004). The emptiness of the stereotyped sign is evident when trying to analyse these kinds of articles. Could he be anyone other than Zlatan? "No", is the first answer that comes to mind, but when instead saying "Yes", even though it seems impossible, it also becomes evident that the discussion is a pseudo-event that draws attention away from the footballer Ibrahimovic, to the media character. The Zlatan *media-graphy* embodies that haunting feeling of someone uncontrollable and unpredictable.

Q: Do you feel that the media image is incorrect?

A: I have nothing to say. Many journalists write whatever they want about me anyway, every day. It's neither the truth nor fact. I can only be me. The media goes with football.

Q: When you played for Malmö FF, you said that the reason for your arrogant attitude was 'Otherwise they put others down'

A: That was then, when I felt different. Now I have matured a lot and everything is different. Cockiness was a label that many newspapers put on me" (*Aftonbladet* 21/03/2004).

When reading the articles about Ibrahimovic, the mature vs immature dichotomy recurs and it becomes obvious that he uses it as a strategy to put the focus on the interviewer rather than on himself. The reader then sees the obvious blind spots. He "sympathetically" speaks about maturity and, without being asked, often explains his actions in terms of the dichotomy. In

reporting his success in the European Championships in 2004, the journalists said that he had matured. That could have been the end of the matter. When reading articles written about Ibrahimovic during the spring and summer of 2004, however, it has to be said that journalists hovered between their demand for the arrogant Zlatan, and criticized the same behaviour as being immature. In the media discourse, the stories make him into a floating signifier, embodying the notion of a character that can display society's values and norms.

The Mimetic Response

Instead of abandoning the topic, Ibrahimovic does a re-run of the statements and even propose them to the journalists. The reason for that could be that Ibrahimovic knows what to expect if he keeps the conversation connected to already known subjects. Reproducing the fantasy-frame will not surprise him with anything new. Instead, he seems to take charge of the stereotyped space invented for him and thus reveals the blind spot to the reader, making the reader re-memorize.

Such articulations can also be looked at in terms of mime. Lacan describes the notions of mime as a camouflage and a mask. In Bhabha's use of the mimetic, even though inspired by Lacan, he emphasises the ironic elements. Mime then becomes a strategy of resistance rather than a passive repetition, or attempt to hide. The mime instead becomes a double articulation. The superior's gaze follows the miming Other that it is trying to imitate. In the same mime, the subordinate can challenge and question the play or the act s/he has to perform by showing the extension of the stereotype (Bhabha 1994:85). On reading the articles about Zlatan, it is evident that the stereotyped media character of Zlatan is empty – a mimetic repetition of a media image. Article after article repeats the same theme and contains nothing new. The questions are always the same and so are the answers. After a while, the reading experience becomes comparable to listening to the so-called broken record, stuck in a characteristic loop. The reading also becomes a haunting experience. By reflecting the emptiness of the

questions back to the journalists, Ibrahimovic offers resistance in a mimetic and ironic way. The mime, or the mimetic, becomes a method that the subject can use to make blind spots visible. By performing as the Other, the mime reflects the emptiness back on those who invent the scene and create the fantasy-frames. One of the characteristic features of the mime is that it is silent. In the case of resistance, however, it speaks to the observer. Ibrahimovic's mime shouts the conditions for the attention bestowed on him out aloud. The mass media haunts him with the mass mediated image of himself.

Conclusion

In this article, I have tried to unwrap different aspects of the imaginary of the mass mediated representations of both Suburb and Immigrant. Using the notion of Žižek's fantasy-frame, and the haunting experience of blind spots as described by Gordon, I have illustrated how these images become real and have to be dealt with by those who are exposed to them. The experience of the imagery is lived out in everyday practice.

First of all there is Maya, who lives with her daughter in the suburb of Gottsunda, and shows how the blind spot of that area is produced around a specific place called Stenhammar Park. When looking out of Maya's window facing that particular area, she and I were sharing a view that was not ours but something ready-made. The emptiness of that view makes her want to leave the neighbourhood.

Following that sequence, the next scene is about how blind/white spots are produced and reproduced in mapping practices and conversations about suburbs. These images and maps create an imagined metaphoric space, and turn the migrant into the Other. The suburb becomes a place where Otherness is located and looked at. The press creates the stigmatised Other by attaching the migrant to a specific geographical space and making them collectively perform Otherness in the context of the surrounding society. The suburb becomes a scene for Otherness; a fantasy window that can be instantaneously evoked. Just a glimpse of a

high building, satellite dishes on balconies, or tones of a Hip Hop beat, can set the suburban scene. They are situations created to portray the suburb and the migrant as Other.

In the final part of the article, I follow the media-graphy of the footballer, Zlatan Ibrahimovic. The mass mediated character of Ibrahimovic is stereotyped and associated with his suburban background. With that, it follows that he becomes a carrier of the differences invented for him. Instead of being able to act and communicate, Ibrahimovic has little more to do than act within the predetermined space ascribed to him. In that context, I have read the articles about him and his statements in a search for resistance, discovering that he acts out the stereotypes of the viewer, and even exaggerates them, so that the blind spot of the viewer then becomes visible. The observer's gaze turns around and instead meets the observer (audience) with her/his own perception.

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