The London School of Economics and Political Science

The ambivalence of resistance and identity: using

psychoanalysis in a case study of Gringo magazine

Parisa Dashtipour

A thesis submitted to the Social Psychology Institute,

London School of Economics for the degree of Doctor of

Philosophy, London, 27th of October 2009.

1

UMI Number: U613424

UMI

Dissertation Publishing

UMI U613424

ProQuest

Declaration

I certify that the thesis I have presented for examination for the MPhil/PhD degree of the London School of Economics and Political Science is solely my own work other than where I have clearly indicated that it is the work of others (in which case the extent of any work carried out jointly by me and any other person is clearly identified in it).
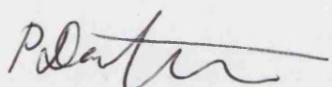
04/12/09

Abstract

There is a lack of critical social psychological research which sufficiently investigates the complexities of *resistance* to racism. The main question which has motivated this research is *how can we understand the affective aspect of resistance to racism and identity, along with the multiple and unconscious processes and dynamics of identity, without falling back to individualism, essentialism and determinism?* This thesis suggests how Lacanian psychoanalysis can be used to highlight the ambivalent, overdetermined and libidinal nature of such resistance processes. The Lacanian subject is a split subject, a subject of lack, and thus I argue that resistance to racism is much more than simply about 'knowledge' or 'agency'. Social Identity Theory is also re-interpreted and criticised along these lines. It is by taking seriously not only issues of power, but also Lacanian notions of the big Other, desire, fantasy and the three registers of subjectivity (Real, Symbolic and Imaginary) that we can recognise why resistance to racism can be an ambivalent and contradictory process. A type of discourse analysis which is in constant dialogue with significant psychoanalytical notions is adopted in order to examine the Swedish anti-racist magazine *Gringo*. Firstly, I understand *Gringo's* renegotiation of the immigrant (or *blatte*) as being in relation to the desire of the big Other. On the one hand, *Gringo* conforms to the ego-ideals of the Swedish big Other and on the other hand, it resists these ego-ideals by fetishising the representation of blatte. Secondly, I show that the magazine may challenge Swedishness at a Symbolic level, but there is still an attachment to this identity at the levels of the Imaginary or the Real. This ambivalent nature of *Gringo's* critique of the Swedish identity has not prevented some members of the public from perceiving *Gringo* as a threat to a narcissistic notion of Swedishness. Thirdly, I argue that *Gringo's* challenge to institutional racism and exclusion can be categorised in-to three groups: critique in the form of humour/jokes, hysterical critique and obsessional critique. The study concludes that *Gringo* may have made overt and unsettled certain of the constituent elements of the fantasy of Swedishness, but its overriding function was to evoke a temporary experience of castrated *jouissance*.

Acknowledgements

Table of contents

Tables and figures

1 Introduction

1.1 Critical social psychology, resistance to racism and identity

It has been argued that it is important to study points of resistance in order for social psychology to develop a seriously critical perspective in questions of racism and multiculture (Hook and Howarth, 2005). Similarly, Chantler (2007) suggests in relation to immigration, the 'war on terror', and the strict regulation of racialised bodies that it is imperative to emphasise resistance to such arrangements. Hence, the current thesis emerges out of this type of increased concern about critical psychology's engagement with not only how certain 'ethnic' or 'racial' 'others' have been negatively represented or discriminated against, but also how there is a possibility to challenge and resist racism. Thus, the focus is on how certain communities are involved in counter-hegemonic strategies and how they defy social exclusion.

Researchers in traditional social psychology have long been studying identity and resistance more generally. In the current study, I am interested in the more recent research, and especially in those perspectives which would be considered to adopt a 'critical' approach; those which concern themselves with issues of power and oppression. In this thesis, resistance, or counter-hegemonic strategies could loosely be understood as "narratives that call into question dominant assumptions [and] demand that the reader or listener begin to question dominant frames" (Harris et al.., 2001). As Foster (2004) claims

> modernity has...inventively produced many techniques of resistance: boycotts, martyrdom, strikes, go-slows, hunger strikes, sit-ins, pamphleteering, marches, slogans, protests, guerrilla warfare, passive resistance, disruptions, bra-burning, consciousness raising, self-help groups and charters of demands (p. 17).

Many of these types of resistance could be said to be 'action-oriented'. The focus in this research is on the relationship between discourse (which should never simply be viewed as opposed to action), representation and resistance. It is the aim of this thesis to complicate and deepen our understanding of resistance to racism, to emphasise the

ambivalent and overdetermined element of such attempts. The objective is to point towards the complex and intricate nature of resistance to racism and inequalities.

Ormond's (2001) research on Maori youth in New Zealand highlights the complexity of such efforts. She emphasises that "the counter story...empowers...voices" but she also calls for "recognising their struggle – allowing complexity, uncertainty, the unknown" (p. 52). Along these lines, she shows the ways in which youths struggle between voice and silence: "when thinking and questioning provokes social anxieties [silence] pulls the youth back into a comfort zone" (p. 57). Not only does she indicate that silence itself can be a form of resistance, but she also acknowledges that counter-stories and resistance struggles require an elaborate analysis that takes ambiguity into account.

Referring to resistance in general, Hopkins et al.. (2006) propose that there is a need to focus on resistance as a contextualised experience. They recognise that a focus of agency and social change should also acknowledge the issue of power which limits social change; they warn us to beware of the dangers of falling into a "pernicious voluntarism" (p. 54) in our understanding of resistance. Further, in a social psychological theory of social action, social relations and transformation "the concept of identity must be central" (p. 56). They thus pinpoint that "those marginalised and oppressed by particular identity definitions may reconstrue their collective identifications so as to realise social change" (p. 56).

Thus, the issue of identity is seen as imperative in resistance to racism. For example, Fine and Sirin (2007) conducted an impressive study which applied a multi-disciplinary and a multi-method approach to investigate Muslim youth identity in the US. They argue that a notion of 'hyphenated self' provides a critical understanding of the ways in which power, conflict, and contested identities play a role in the construction of youth identities. The notion of the hyphenated self points to a social psychological space, that is the opening between social conflict and power on the one hand, and the subjectivities, emotions and creativities of the Muslim youth on the other. They state that "we can theorize the complex ways in which young people perform new hybridities of resistance and innovation, working the hyphens in a wide-ranging diaspora of youth who dare to speak back" (p. 34). This research is willing to use a variety of theories not typically combined. They utilise psychoanalytic concepts such as desire and fantasy, which are to

an extent drawn from postcolonial writers such as Bhabha, but their focus on the 'hyphenated' space or the self-other relationship is largely inspired by Winnicott.

However, despite this greater appreciation of the complexity of identities and ambivalent unconscious investments in understanding resistance and identity, there are still very few studies carried out in critical social psychology on this topic. It appears that within this discipline, most of the research which has been engaged with resistance to racism and discrimination are those informed by social representations theory and those with a discourse analytical perspective. Both of these paradigms are concerned with the same problem: how can people disrupt certain racialised forms of representation? How can people critically engage with identity construction and alternative discourses?

1.1.1 Social representations approach to identity and resistance

Moscovici's (2008) theory of social representations deals with the issue of social knowledge and how it is associated with community identity. It illustrates how social knowledge or meaning are socially shared, constructed and changed through language and communication within particular historical and cultural contexts. Representation or meaning is connected with ideology and power which organise their particular form and content and structures our psychological and material world. Nevertheless, Moscovici (2001) claims that images or representations are negotiable, and it is possible for them to be questioned. Thus, they may either be confirmed and maintained or they may be 'renewed'. Although representations are historical creations of a community, their inherent dynamic character means that they will eventually "give birth to new representations, while old ones die out" (Moscovici, 2001: 13). Through a social representations lens, the mind and representation are not viewed as static, but as phenomenon "in communication, tension and change" Markova (2003: 24). Moscovici (2001) implies that resistance may be at the very heart of the theory: "what we are suggesting is that individuals and groups, far from being passive receptors, think for themselves, produce and ceaselessly communicate their own specific representations and solutions to the questions they set themselves" (p. 16). Duveen (2001) implies that identity and social representations are inherently coupled with resistance and he states

13

that "resistance is the point where an identity refuses to accept what is proposed by a communicative act, that is, it refuses to accept an attempt at influence" (p. 269).

Since according to the theory, resistance is part and parcel of representational practice, social representations theory has been used extensively by Howarth (2002a; 2002b; 2004; 2006a; 2006b) to investigate how representations and racial identities intersect and how communities engage in resistance[1]. Her studies illustrate the ways in which ideological representations which exist in the social space and precede individuals provide limitations as well as possibilities for identity formation. She claims that in order to develop its critical potential, social representations theory needs to not only analyse "the reification and legitimisation of different knowledge systems" but also "agency and resistance in the co-construction of self-identity" (Howarth, 2006a: 66). The critique is that there has been "an over-emphasis on the perceptions of the stigmatizing or on the psychological damage of stigma and not enough attention given to the *social psychological* conditions for challenging stigma from insider's perspectives" (Howarth, 2006b: 449, emphasis in original). The aim is to move beyond an overly cognitive or individualistic account of stigma and racialisation and instead highlight both their symbolic function as well as their institutional, material, historical and political nature. Representations are used by people in order to adopt a specific position in a particular social group, and to engage in resistance. What is important is "the reproduction of power in the reification and legitimization of social representations, as well as in the collaborative struggle for recognition and in possibilities for resistance and transformation" (Howarth, 2006a: 80). Thus, the collective element of resistance is emphasised, rather than an individualistic account of how people 'cope' with stigma, racialisation and discrimination: "Resisting stigma can only be a collective enterprise" (ibid.: 449). This implies that "while racialising representations pose a threat to identity and esteem...our psychological capabilities, our collective potential for dialogue, debate and critique, gives us the possibilities to become *agents not objects* of the stigma of race" (Howarth, 2006b, emphasis in original).

---

[1] Within the social representations framework research has also been carried out on how people resist stigmatized representations of HIV/AIDS (see for example Joffe, 2003; Markova and Wilkie, 1987).

Moreover, at a more theoretical level, Wagner et al.. (2009) discuss how essentialised social representations and stereotypes of groups, such as women and blacks, become re-negotiated, challenged and changed over time. Another empirical study from the social representations paradigm is one carried out in New Zealand by Nikora et al.. (2007). Their research emphasises the "critical reflection and conscious choice" (p. 488) of Maori people when they engage in the custom of *moko*. They point out how *moko* wearers are involved in critical resistance to refashion the meaning of *moko* and Maori identity. Thus, this study along with the ones by Howarth discussed above, focuses on the way in which a stigmatised group themselves engage in resisting discrimination and stigma which racialise.

However, along with the increased attention turned towards the issue of 'whiteness' in critical social sciences, Howarth (2007) has also studied the ways in which children in a predominantly 'white' school make sense, negotiate and contest racialised representations and racism because as she argues "it is imperative that we explore the ways in which the underlying logic of racism is also made *unintelligible, uninhabitable and non-productive*" (p. 132, emphasis in original). The focus is then on the "functionally useful account of agency, resistance and transformation in the face of racialised difference" (Howarth, 2007: 151). This is thus "an explicit focus on the social dynamics of 'race', that is, the collaborative, social and ideological construction and reconstruction, negotiation and contestation of representations and practices that race" (Howarth, 2007: 134).

Moreover, since ambivalence and tension is taken seriously in the social representational approach, it has been shown that speech which aims to resist racialised representations may demonstrate contradiction (Condor, 2006). Condor studies the speech of officials of the British Labour Party. She notes that although the overt objectives of their speech are to challenge 'otherness', they covertly assume a notion of a bounded nation and thus reproduce what they aspire to resist. Nevertheless, there is still a lack of studies within the social representations approach which has taken the task to *seriously* investigate the ambivalence and ambiguities of resistance to racism.

1.1.2 Discourse analytical approach to identity and resistance

Although contradiction, negotiation and tension are emphasised in the discourse analytical paradigm in social psychology, in this field too, there has been very little research which noticeably highlights the less than obvious facets of ambivalence. Wetherell and Potter's (1992) analysis of white New Zealander's talk makes note of the contradiction of counter-discourses adopted by some:

> A few people we interviewed could draw on counter-ideological discourse [but] people were not consistent, either, across the field of debate. Anti-racist arguments became meshed together with support for racist policies. An argument would be mobilized in one direction only to veer back on itself (p. 219).

Despite this declaration, the focus of their study is the way in which *racist discourse works*, rather than *resistance to racism*.

Given that in the discourse analytical field researchers largely focus on the contested, hybrid and fluid nature of identity and on the rhetorical and argumentative character of discourse, the topic of resistance has been identified. Hopkins and Kahani-Hopkins (2004) (see also Kahani-Hopkins et al.. 2003) underline the significance of a discourse analytical approach in the understanding of contested, collective identities and political action. In their study focusing on the Muslim community, they suggest that highlighting contestation, rhetoric and argumentations is crucial in order to counter the essentialist academic and popular notions of Islam where the "Muslim's agency [is] denied" (p. 353). They state that "actors are able to transform their representation of themselves and their interests. That is, behavioural change...is a product of changes in actor's social identifications and characterisations of their identity-related interests" (p. 354). In their view, "strategic construction of identity lies at the heart of constructing and communicating alternative characterisations of British Muslims' predicament" (ibid.). In short, racialised identity can be re-constructed through discursive, rhetorical and argumentative strategies, in conscious, voluntaristic terms.

Similarly, Hylton and Miller (2004) adopt a discursive perspective, but they focus on the narrative approach to argue that the social category of 'blackness' or black subjectivity can be interpreted in "terms of a change in narrative from a 'Tragic Negro' to 'Romantic Black' to 'Satirist African'" (p. 397). They state that "the nature of

16

identity is such that we are [the] constituent of the stories (accounts, discourses and language-games) in which we become animated" (p. 392). Therefore, their perspective views identity as constructed through available or appropriate stories, and as essentially historical, fluid, hybrid and relational. Hence, the paper discusses the possibilities for a fluid black identity to shift radically after the 1960s. Likewise, Duncan (2001) examines the identities of black youth, and argues for a discursive understanding of the black identity which emphasises the "competing discursive positions that shape their subjectivities in ways that are complex and contradictory even as they are partial and in flux" (p. 98). Along these lines, the author claims that "the activities of racialised youth take on a global character to challenge disparaging myths, as evident, for instance, in the international appeal of hip-hop culture" (p. 99).

Just like Howarth (2007) researchers in the discursive paradigm have recognised the importance of shifting the focus towards 'whiteness' rather than 'otherness'. Kirkwood et al.. (2005) propose that it is significant to pay attention to the ways in which the white majority group in New Zealand resist discriminatory discourses about indigenous rights. They adopt an argumentative or rhetorical analysis in order to investigate counter-hegemonic accounts "that may facilitate personal and political action against discrimination" (p. 502). Their position is that "engagement with opposing arguments is crucial for the development of critical thought" (p. 503).

Likewise, drawing on writers such as Bakhtin, Lynn and Lea (2003) point out the dialogic and intertextual nature of ideology, identity and critical thought. According to these authors this perspective "sees people as shaped by discursive practices, but also capable of shaping and therefore structuring those practices" (p. 431). They demonstrate how letters written by members of the public to British national newspapers construct the asylum seeker as the 'enemy', but at the same time they examine the rhetoric of a counter-discourse which positions the state's lack of democracy rather than the asylum seeker as the enemy. They conclude that "only by frequent (re)exposure to this counter-discourse will commonsensical, taken-for-granted attitudes be challenged" (p. 448).

17

1.2 The need for psychoanalysis in the examination of resistance to racism

Most of the above mentioned studies are limited for three reasons:

Firstly, they emphasise too much voluntarism, the 'critical' reasoning and the agency of the subject; their point of analysis is a subject who is able - almost without exception – to detach themselves from the discursive and power struggles in which they find themselves, too easily separate themselves from representations that racialise, otherise and exclude. Secondly – and this is related to the first – most of the research referred to above does not *adequately* account for the less than explicit, less than conscious ambivalence, ambiguousness and the overdetermined nature of resistance to racism. A particular absence in this research concerns the study of how resistance itself may generate certain counter-productive fixities of identity. Thirdly, their over-emphasis on 'agency' and their lack of focus on ambivalence is due to their refusal to take seriously the *affective* element of identities and resistance as an analytical object. Such studies emphasise representations over and above the dynamic processes of identity that give them force and hold them in place.

It follows that one of the main aims of this thesis is to demonstrate that resistance is not simply equal to 'agency', 'emancipation' or 'critical consciousness'. The objective here is to point out how psychology is involved in a politics of identity and counter-hegemonic struggles, and to demonstrate how resistance to racism is not merely about a change in the discursive representation of identity or change in social structures – the issue of change importantly implicates the issue of desire and libidinal economy. Thus, a theory of resistance to racism is advocated which does not lose grip on the psychological, with those processes such as unconscious dynamics and mechanisms of identity. It is in this sense that the psychological is viewed as political, the political as psychological.

To reach these objectives, I have had to follow Hook and Howarth's (2005) proposal that "critical social psychological forms of analysis need to be *more* multi-disciplinary, *more* multi-perspectival than has traditionally been the case" (p. 510, emphasis in original). Hence, I have examined disciplines other than critical social psychology, such as the anti-racist work inspired by Stuart Hall in cultural and media studies. However, my key reference point is Lacanian psychoanalysis, and I draw heavily from authors in

for example literature, critical and political theory such as Mark Bracher (e.g. 1993; 1994), Marshall Alcorn (e.g. 1994; 2002), Slavoj Žižek (e.g. 1989; 1992; 1993; 1994; 1997; 1998; 2005), Yannis Stavrakakis (e.g. 2007; 2008) and Jason Glynos (e.g. 2001; 2003).

The aim of using psychoanalysis would be "to understand how a kind of psychology might *inform a politics of resistance*" (Hook, 2004: 86, emphasis in original). It should be noted though that my position is that political[2] and psychological resistances to racism are both an effect of economic/material *and* socio-psychological exclusion. They cannot be understood without considering the specific inequalities in power and various forms of demeaning conditions or representations which give rise to resistance. Thus, the identity and the affective economy of those who are subjected to racism, identities and affects which may lead to political resistance – must be viewed in relation to inequalities in power including economic, socio-cultural and historical realities. However, this does not mean that resistance is simply due to 'critical agency' of those implicated in racism or those opposed to racist discourse. The conception of resistance exceeds the frame of 'consciousness' or 'critical consciousness' proposed by writers such as Freire (2005) and Said (1994). Although the idea of 'conscientization' may prove useful in theorising resistance and change, it depicts a rather Cartesian subject who is rationally and progressively developing "a critical awareness" (Freire, 2005: 15). Though it may indeed involve this process, resistance can be more ambiguous than "an increasingly critical perception of the concrete conditions of reality" (ibid.: 10). Just as racism would not simply be eliminated by making the racist 'aware' of their 'distorted' beliefs, resistance to racism involves much more than becoming 'critical' of one's condition.

Nonetheless, I have carried out this research knowing that psychoanalysis is not a welcomed discipline in traditional social psychology and is even viewed sceptically by some critical social psychologists (e.g. Billig, 2006; Parker 2005b). Perhaps the reason for this resistance to psychoanalysis in the traditional forms of social psychology is that

---

[2] I use 'political resistance' in a critical or leftist sense to refer to any struggles against racist or discriminatory practices, or indeed to struggle against any other form of oppression or exclusion.

historically, psychoanalysis and psychology have been considered as two distinct disciplines (Frosh, 1989). There is likewise the issue that psychoanalysis is viewed as too 'unscientific' for social psychology, a field which has long attempted to establish a scientific reputation for itself. However, despite this resistance, psychoanalytic concepts are slowly gaining ground in critical social psychological debates and research[3].

The focus of this thesis is then to take seriously not only the *political* but also the *affective* element of resistance to racism and identity; the orientation thus adopted is that of a psychoanalytic form of social psychology. The hope is that a by-product of this research is a strengthening of the link between critical social psychology and Lacanian psychoanalysis. By using psychoanalysis the objective is to gain a more in-depth and elaborate understanding of group identity and resistance to racism. Thus, the main question which has motivated this research is *how can we understand the affective aspect of resistance to racism and identity, along with the multiple and unconscious processes and dynamics of identity, without falling back to individualism, essentialism and determinism?*

The thesis attempts to provide an answer to this question by using a culturally available form of Swedish anti-racist discourse as a case study. Thus, it differs from most of the above mentioned research in that it is not based on interviews with individual subjects. It follows Hook and Howarth (2005) who propose that "terms of outside reference (the domains of fiction and popular culture) are able to put us into a different relation to moments of everyday experience than can be expected from many current social psychological methods" (p. 508). The argument is that cultural discourse is interlocked with affect and desire, which is why they are able to have an impact on social groups. As Bracher (1993) argues, Lacanian theory is exceptional "when it comes to explaining how linguistic and discursive phenomena affect specific elements of subjectivity and

---

[3] See for example Henriques et al.. (1998) and research by Frosh et al.. (2003), Gough (2004) and Hollway and Jefferson (2001) which will be discussed later in this thesis. Moreover, both the International Research Group for Psycho-Societal Analysis (http://www.irgfpsa.org), and the Psychosocial Network (http://www.psychosocial-network.org/) take psychoanalysis seriously in the research and understanding of social psychological issues. Also note the debate which was played out in 2008 in the journal *Psychoanalysis, Culture and Society*, 13 (4). Furthermore, the forthcoming *Annual Review of Critical Psychology* (in press) is publishing a special edition on critical social psychology and Lacanian psychoanalysis in 2009.

thus *moves* people" (p. 12, emphasis in original). Cultural material, such as popular culture and media, should be significant as a source of study for critical social psychology because "if culture plays a role in social change, or in resistance to change, it does so largely by means of desire...by evoking some form of desire or by promising satisfaction of some desire" – typically in forms amenable to mass media consumption (ibid.: 19). I have therefore used a widely distributed type of magazine called *Gringo* as a case study for my analysis of resistance to racism.

1.3 Outline of the thesis

In the following chapter I introduce *Gringo* magazine and provide a review of Swedish socio-historical context from which it emerged. This chapter discusses the multi-cultural framework of Swedish society, including the creation of an idea of a 'pure' and superior Swedishness. This notion has its roots not only in the imaginary construction of Swedishness as tolerant, modern and equal, but also in a colonial racist ideology. I highlight how this ideology is at the basis of media representations of the 'immigrant' as the uncivilised 'other', as well as the attitude behind the institutional exclusion and discrimination against immigrants. *Gringo* magazine which consists of a diverse editorial board, emerged in order to make up for this exclusion, to resist against racialised representation of those with an immigration background, to promote and re-evaluate the denigrated immigrant or *blatte* category, and to advance a new and hybrid form of Swedishness. In short, this chapter places *Gringo* in its context and provides a background to racism and resistance in Sweden, and draws attention to why the magazine is interesting as a case study. The following working questions were posed about *Gringo*:

- How effectively does *Gringo* challenge/re-evaluate stereotypes and identities?
- How does *Gringo* criticise discrimination/racism?
- Why was the magazine so strongly criticised?
- What broader functions might *Gringo* have had in Swedish society?

In order to answer these questions, a theoretical and a methodological approach to identity and resistance is adopted which is inter-disciplinary in nature. In Chapter 3, two theories which have dealt with these issues will be discussed: Social Identity Theory

(which is rooted in social psychology) and Stuart Hall (whose writings are largely considered to be grounded in cultural studies). I underline Social Identity Theory's arguments regarding the importance of the out-group as well as the significance of the in-group (and its ideologies and norms) in the constitution of identity. Crucially, Social Identity Theory's proposals concerning the strategies of resistance which those within denigrated groups can adopt will be reviewed and criticised. Consequently, I use Hall's thinking about discourse, representation and ideology in order to compare with and develop ideas of Social Identity Theory. Lastly, by condensing 'political resistance' with 'psychoanalytical resistance', the final part of this chapter draws attention to one way in which the ambivalent nature of resistance to racism can be understood.

Chapter 4 continues to properly develop Lacanian psychoanalytic concepts which have proved useful in my comprehension of in-group and out-group identifications and resistance. The aim of this chapter is twofold. Firstly, it is to introduce the concepts which I have used in my analysis of *Gringo*, such as the Lacanian three registers, the big Other, desire, fantasy and *jouissance*. Secondly, its goal is, from a Lacanian perspective, to provide a critique of Social Identity Theory's ideas about group formation, inter-group relations, and resistance. I will argue here that Social Identity Theory may implicitly include a version of the notions of the Symbolic and the Imaginary, but it lacks a conceptualisation of the Real: it does not have a theorisation of *jouissance*, which is the concept that can explain the *why* of social identity and inter-group rivalry, as well as the reasons behind resistance to change.

Following from the above theoretical considerations, the objective of Chapter 5 is to provide the methodological and analytical framework for the investigation of the case of *Gringo* and illustrate how I went about conducting my analysis. It should be emphasised that the theory and the method are viewed as inherently interconnected in this research. Three main points are made in this chapter. First, the methodological agenda is focused on the patterns and functioning of discourse, on dominant forms of 'public idiom' rather than on the author of a text or on interview participants. This leads to a radical de-individualisation of psychoanalytic phenomena. Second, the use of a type of discourse analysis which is in constant dialogue with psychoanalytic concepts highlights the *libidinal elements* or effects of discourse. This follows directly from our theoretical

considerations on social identity in the previous chapters; the focus on the way in which discourse makes use of the Imaginary and Symbolic registers to organise a certain group identity or social bond which is libid.inally arranged. It thus calls for an analytical strategy which goes beyond both content and the standard procedures of discourse analysis and which underlines the *formal elements of text*. Third, since literature on this kind of analysis is scarce given that it is a newly emerging type of method, in the last part of this chapter I discuss the problem of identifying the relationship between discourse and *jouissance*.

The subsequent three chapters are a presentation of the results of the analysis. Chapter 6 discusses how in *Gringo*, the stigmatised representation of the immigrant and the suburb is resisted and re-evaluated. The image of the immigrant in the text of *Gringo* is a contradictory one. The chapter demonstrates how *Gringo's* attempt to re-evaluate the stereotype of the immigrant is not only in constant dialogue with the ego-ideals of the Swedish big other, but also how this strategy is ambivalent. The argument of the chapter is essentially this: on the one hand, there is conformity to the ego-ideals of the Swedish big Other, on the other, the re-evaluation or fetishisation of *blatte* [immigrant identity] is a resistance to these ego-ideals. Thus, the promotion of the *blatte*-category should not only be understood as an attempt to re-evaluate it, but it should be interpreted in relation to desire and the Lacanian notion of *jouissance*. The fetishisation of *blatte* indicates a stimulation of *jouissance*, which could be understood as one reason why there is a resistance to do away with this social category.

Nevertheless, in Chapter 7, I emphasise that the re-evaluation of *blatte* should be understood as being in dialogue with the ego-ideals of Swedishness as big Other, because making *blatte* positive means changing these ego-ideals. The focus in this chapter is on this challenge of Swedishness more generally. Thus, a type of resistance to racism in *Gringo* which is not centred on stigmatised representations of the 'other', but one which turns the attention towards and contests Swedishness is discussed. This is associated with the above research which has focused on how counter-discourses focus on the location of power, on 'whiteness'. However, I demonstrate that in *Gringo* the attempt to renegotiate Swedishness is in fact very ambivalent. For example, although it maintains a critique of Swedishness at the Symbolic level, it nevertheless upholds a

23

libidinal attachment to the Imaginary elements of the Swedish community. Nonetheless, despite this ambivalence, *Gringo's* use of slang language and its effort to change Swedishness has been perceived as highly threatening by parts of the public. This chapter elaborates on how *Gringo* is perceived as the out-group who is accused of stealing a lost *objet petit a.*

Chapter 8 demonstrates how *Gringo's* mission is not only to renegotiate identities, but also to attack institutional racism and exclusion. I argue that such attacks in *Gringo* appear in three forms: critique in the form of humour/jokes, hysterical critique and obsessional critique. In this chapter I discuss Billig's (2005) and Freud's (1960) accounts of the role of jokes and humour in resistance. I draw attention to the importance which Freud (1960) puts on the role of the listener, the third party in jokes. Taking these theoretical issues into account, I then analyse *Gringo's* use of humour in the ridicule of certain institutions. In addition, in this chapter I demonstrate that even though *Gringo's* attack on institutional racist practice may indeed exhibit powerful forms of resistance and a prioritization of change, the hysterical and the obsessional character of such critique indicates an enjoyment which can paradoxically have the opposite effects of non-change and fixity.

Chapter 9 provides an integration of the main arguments of the thesis. Firstly, it claims that it is imperative to incorporate Lacanian psychoanalysis in social psychological theories on identity, inter-group relations and resistance to racism. Secondly, it offers a conclusion regarding *Gringo* and its impact in the Swedish public sphere. I claim that *Gringo* did little more than manage to outline and slightly disrupt the fantasy of Swedish language, on the one hand: providing a temporary space in which castrated *jouissance* could be experienced, on the other. In this sense, rather than being an agent of change, *Gringo* could be interpreted as a means of supporting the prevailing social order. Thirdly, this chapter offers a discussion about how change in the psychoanalytic setting can be applied to our interpretation of social change. The implication is that we need to move beyond a notion of resistance to racism as simply being about modification in knowledge or discourse or even in structures of power; it is therefore essential that we incorporate notions of desire, fantasy and *jouissance.*

2 The context of Gringo[4] magazine

2.1 Introduction

> Gringo was certainly not the first media outlet to bring the question of 'new Swedishness' to the table, but it was perhaps the most 'up front' and visible advocate of the mainstreaming of multicultural and multi-ethnic Sweden (Christensen, 2008: 237).

Gringo magazine started in August 2004 as an independent supplement in the Swedish free newspaper, *Metro* and was produced by *Latifeh AB* until it filed for bankruptcy in August 2007. It was a self-claimed anti-racist magazine and it started as a commercial and journalistic project with the aim of enhancing social integration of excluded immigrant groups. *Gringo* is an unusual example of a minority/integration magazine which was accessed by prominent public figures and which was involved in public political debates (Christensen, 2008). Crucially, it was engaged in debates on the politics of identity in Sweden (Alarcón, 2008). In the representation of those in Sweden with an immigration background or refugee status, the media has and continues to exclude those who are being represented; the immigrant does not have a 'voice', and this is what *Gringo* aimed to fight against. Its creator and chief editor, Zanyar Adami, writes in the inaugural edition that

> the politics of integration has been discussed on the editorial boards of a Per or an Anna[5]. When did Abdul or Manuela...have an opportunity to speak? The politicians are after all talking about them. There is a need for an insider's perspective, a voice...that speaks with an accent, yao[6]! (*Gringo* 1[7])

According to the magazine itself, the frequent use of unsettling language such as *blatte* or *svenne* is part of its resistance struggle. *Blatte* is an offensive term with racist connotations - similar to 'nigger' - referring to those with an immigration background.

---

[4] *Gringo* is a Latin American offensive term referring to a foreigner, especially one of British or North American descent. According to their website, the magazine is called *Gringo* because it does not want "Sweden to give a shit about what one looks like" (Gringo.se, accessed February 2007).

[5] These are rather stereotypical Swedish names.

[6] 'Yao' is a slang word used frequently in the text of *Gringo*. According to one of the comments made by a reader on the *Gringo* website, it originates from the Syrian language and literally means 'not being bothered to deal with something'. But it is more often used like the American slang 'Yo'.

[7] '*Gringo* 1' stands for *Gringo* issue number 1. Note that all the extracts from *Gringo* and from other analysed text in this thesis have been translated by me.

Svenne[8] is also denigrating and refers to those who are 'native Swedes' (an analogy would perhaps be the word 'whitey'). The aim is to 'own' these terms, so that their racist connotations and functions no longer work in the same way. *Gringo* emerged at a time when the '*blatte* identity' was not only a marker of difference, but was emerging as a symbol of the resistance struggle by immigrant youths. The magazine trespasses on prohibitions, both linguistic and cultural, and ridicules and criticises established power. The magazine could be viewed as a manifestation of the changes which have occurred in the meanings of certain identities. The changing Swedish identity on the one hand, and ambivalent feelings which still exist about immigrants on the other, are both revealed in the language of *Gringo*. The commodification and branding of '*blatte*' is also evidenced in this magazine.

Hall (1992a) states that "in each society, racism has a specific history that presents itself in specific, particular, and unique ways" which means that we should "not...speak of racism in the singular, but of *racisms* in the plural" (p. 13, emphasis in original). This implies that a study which aims to investigate resistance to racism in a society should inevitably examine the historical and ideological context of that particular culture. Therefore, the aim of this chapter is to locate *Gringo* magazine in the context of the modern Swedish multi-cultural society.

2.2 Ethnic minorities in Sweden: a short background

During the past decades Sweden has changed from a primarily homogenous country into a vibrant multi-cultural one. However, it has to be noted that the so-called 'ethnic minorities' date back at least to the Middle Ages even though historically these were small and largely of German or other European origins. During the 1930s many Jews from Nazi Germany were not allowed to enter the country due to widespread anti-Semitism in Sweden. However, during the war, around 200,000 Finns, Norwegians, Danes and Baltic-state migrants "were allowed to gain admission as the result of a stance that was at once more compassionate and expedient, informed by a sense of moral obligation and by economic considerations" (Pred, 2000: 39). In the first twenty-

---

[8] *Svenne* derives from Sven, a very common Swedish name. The meaning of *blatte* will be discussed later in this chapter.

five years after the war, there was no immigration policy because it was assumed that the immigrants would return or 'become Swedish' (Catomeris, 2002). At this time, Sweden experienced industrial and economic development and labour shortages as a consequence. It was also a time when values of solidarity and hospitality were flourishing (Los Reyes, 2002). Labour migrants from Italy, Germany, Austria, former Yugoslavia, Greece and other Nordic countries were admitted to the country. Nevertheless, in the 1970s, as in the rest of the industrialized countries of the world, Sweden experienced economic decline and thus reduced the acceptance of labour migrants.

Up to the 1970s the non-European immigrants were less than 10 per cent of all immigration but in the mid 1980s more than half of immigrants came from the Middle East, Latin America, Africa and South East Asia (Pred, 2000). This is the time when Sweden really started to experience 'difference'. These newly arrived refugees were not only distinctive in culture and manners, but there were also stark physical differences. If it was not for this increase in immigration, Sweden would have experienced a decline in population (Ekberg, 2000). This large reception of refugees and immigrants was coupled with a self-affirmed discourse that Sweden was the world leader in immigrant and refugee policy; policies which were aimed at integration rather than assimilation. As part of the social democratic ideology - in which equality, freedom, cooperation and 'the common good' were strongly valued - minorities were encouraged to continue to exercise their cultural practices[9] and engage in harmonious relationships with the 'native' Swedish majority.

As a way to minimise costs and increase efficiency and integration, most refugees were assigned to the same areas within the municipalities and this made the presence of 'difference' very visible. Further, as soon as the country entered declining economic conditions, arguments came to light which stated that Sweden could not afford more refugees. In 1989, the government restricted the once liberal refugee policies and a

---

[9]For example, school children of immigrants are taught their mother tongue without charge, libraries stock foreign language newspapers and literature, radio stations and TV broadcast foreign language programs. Nevertheless, despite the encouragement of media for immigrants, 'minority' media usually struggle financially and find it difficult to make themselves known (Christensen, 2008).

public discourse started to emerge representing immigrants and refugees as a 'burden'. During the 1990s what had always been taken for granted, the relatively stable and familiar Swedish identity was being threatened (Pred, 2000). Contrary to popular belief, these implicit and explicit hostile attitudes towards those who are considered 'foreign' have their roots in historically old notions about 'race'.

2.3 'Race' in Sweden

Sawyer (2002) claims that Swedes have historically considered themselves a fairly homogenous people. She points to the widely held assumption that it was only with the relatively recent increase in 'immigrants'[10] that the nation has come into contact with people who have different appearances and cultures. She further states that "descriptions of the Swedish historical past as 'homogeneous' serve to posit Sweden as a place in which racial meaning is absent, where people came to learn about 'race' only with the World War II migration of southern guest workers, students, and asylum seekers" (p. 16). However, racism and ideas of 'race' have in fact a very long history, even though, as Molina (2005) implies, an important part of racism in Sweden is the denial and silencing of this history.

Ideas about different groups positioned hierarchically exist in Sweden in a way "that resembles the colonial, despite the fact that Sweden was never a colonial power"[11] (Dahlstedt and Lindberg, 2000: 8). However, since colonialism was not merely about the occupation of other territories, but also about a certain kind of ideology, a form of colonialism can be said to have been part of the country's history. Evidence for this argument is to be found in the work of the Swedish scientist Carl von Linné who, in the eighteenth century, divided humans into four different 'races' and ascribed to them

---

[10] From here on, I will not put this word in quotation marks, but it should be noted that I use the term to refer to those who have an immigration background. This includes people who are born and raised in Sweden, but because of their immigration background, name or distinguishing physical features they are nevertheless represented as 'immigrants'. Whether they have immigrated or not, the term 'immigrant' points to their apparent 'difference'. Moreover, with the terms Swede or Swedish, I refer to the way in which, in the public imagination being 'Swedish' means being born in Sweden of Swedish parents. The same can be said about the use of '*blatte*' and '*svenne*' in this thesis.

[11] Sweden made minor attempts to establish itself as a colonial empire. The first Swedish colony was New Sweden in North America and the country colonized parts of present day Ghana. Swedish colonialism ended in the late 19th century.

different characteristics. Moreover, in the 1920s the social Democratic government and their so-called *folkhem* [people's home] nationalist ideology relied on the notion of a 'home-nation' (Johansson and Molina, 2003). It was based on the premise that Sweden should be a homogenised and 'equal' nation; a "classless, raceless, 'model' society that was above all, modern" (Sawyer, 2002: 16). Its ideology required an exclusionary policy, which meant that those who were considered 'different' needed to be identified, classified as such and dealt with.

The *people's home* government considered eugenics a viable form of scientific knowledge in the 1930s. The country even established an international scientific reputation through the foundation of the *rasbiologiska institutet* [institute of race biology] in Uppsala. This government stood for a certain way of controlling the national population through eliminating (by means of forced sterilization methods) those who were 'different' such as the Romani population or those with disabilities (Molina, 2005). The 'difference' and resulting exclusion of certain groups, such as the Romani, was justified in terms of these groups' specific genetic and 'racial' characteristics. Los Reyes et al.. (2003) affirm that, "these are the ideas behind the cultural racism of today" (p. 19, my translation) and they argue that the modern integration policy in some ways resembles colonial strategies which assumed that 'those' who have backward lifestyles needed to become civilized like 'us'.

The importance of distinguishing bodily features, or markers of racial difference in Sweden should not be underestimated. The darker you are, the harder it is to become accepted in this society. Molina and Los Reyes (2003) mention that in a study conducted on both Swedish and immigrant participants, 70 per cent of unemployed people who had just obtained jobs perceived that appearance, such as dark hair and skin, affected their employment opportunities. This reveals a great deal about what kind of appearance is considered 'Swedish' and 'immigrant' and is primarily about the notion of 'race': your skills and capabilities in a job are considered to be determined by physical features, such as hair and skin. Research from many disciplines shows that forms of racial hierarchy exist in Sweden whereby non-Europeans and specifically those from Muslim countries are placed lowest on the scale and those from Northern countries at the top (Molina and Los Reyes, 2003).

Despite the importance of biological factors or assumptions about 'race', research has normally studied the multicultural context of Sweden in terms of ethnicity. The word 'race' is not commonly used in this country. Bredström (2003) points out that the word 'race' as used in the Anglo-Saxon tradition cannot be completely and directly translated in to the Swedish language. The debates around multiculturalism are usually about ethnicity, culture and nationalism, rather than 'race'. Molina and Los Reyes (2003) argue that "the perspective of ethnicity is inadequate, [it] neglects deeper ideological notions that explain the concrete mechanisms, as well as unconscious assumptions and practices which articulate...discrimination" (p. 296, my translation). The effects of 'race' in Sweden create a racialised society. The definition by Neergaard (2002) is useful:

> Racialisation is the way in which groups of people, many (not everyone) who are immigrants or children of immigrants, who are differentiated through biological and cultural constructions, are 'created' as different and subordinated. Racialisation occurs through ideological constructions with material effects (p. 116, my translation).

One way in which the racialisation of immigrants is demonstrated is the use of the word *svartskalle*, which means 'black skull' or '*blackhead*'. This is a demeaning phrase that designates those who are marginalized, culturally different and of lower class (Sawyer, 2002). According to Sawyer,

> this word is imbued with colonial meanings of blackness [which] function as a code for all that does not meet Swedish middle-class, white standards of cultural normalcy. Here racial meanings are accessed to 'blacken' certain Swedes and to mark their peripheral belonging to the national community (p. 20).

In the process of racialising the 'other', 'native' Swedes are of course positively racialising themselves, although this can be disguised, since they are in a position of power (ibid.). Nevertheless, the norm of white Swedishness - of insidiously normalized white Swedish identity - is absolutely critical in the specificity of Swedish racism. According to Molina and Los Reyes, the reason why words such as 'race' or 'racism' are almost taboo in Sweden, is that they evoke old memories of disasters of World War II and it is these events and feelings that people want to avoid thinking about. Racism is considered to be an absent phenomenon in Sweden, a country in which values of equality and human rights are apparently adhered to. The avoidance of words such as

race and racism is strongly linked to the imagined Swedish nation as the 'paradise' of solidarity and tolerance. The taboo and avoidance of these words can be read as a defence and a desire to perpetuate the perceived superiority of the Swedish identity.

2.4 The Swedish identity

The identity of Sweden as a world leader of solidarity and equality characterises the current Swedish multicultural context. Not only does this identity contribute greatly to the denial of racialisation and discrimination against minorities (Mattson and Tesfahuney, 2002), it also works to differentiate between us Swedish people and 'them' who are both inside and outside the country's borders, between the 'modern', 'democratic', 'civilized' people, and those who are 'traditional', 'oppressive' and 'uncivilized'. Dahlstedt and Lindberg (2002) refer to this identity as "a retrospective self-image that seeks its self-identity in a lost paradise, in the Swedish peoples' home" (p. 25, my translation).

Catomeris (2002) argues that unconsciously there exists a heritage in Sweden which has been repressed and never dealt with, which shows its effects in modern day Sweden. The effect of the identity of the 'Swede' who is imagined to value fairness, tolerance and solidarity is the projection of racism onto someone or somewhere else. There is a widespread notion that racism is a belief system that exists in other places such as in the government of Denmark or in the supporters of extreme right-wing, nationalistic parties (Mattson and Tesfahuney, 2002). This belief system exists in most European countries in general, but in many ways it has a particularly acute presence in Sweden because of this nation's international reputation as the world leader in human rights, tolerance and equality.

Modes of Swedish self-importance and indications of superiority are usually tacit and discrete: it is not considered culturally appropriate to boast and talk explicitly about the aspects of oneself that are considered socially valuable. Nevertheless, it is in the practices of people, in the rules and regulations of the country, in the highly bureaucratic and exclusionary organizational arrangement, that a narcissistic attitude may be uncovered. For example, immigrants' qualifications from their country of origin are not usually accepted. Immigrants 'learn' "from authorities and employers to forget

the education and experience they obtained before their arrival in Sweden" (Neergaard, 2002: 127, my translation). Moreover, Mattson (2001) discusses the 'Swedish-specific' human capital, which is based on an assumption of a kind of "cultural homogeneity" (p. 254, my translation). She argues that in deciding to employ someone for a job, employers look for 'Sweden-specific' social competence. This competence encompasses knowing the Swedish language well; having an understanding of the makeup of Swedish institutions; the ability to communicate with Swedish authorities; the capacity to socialise with Swedish colleagues; and knowing how to behave in the Swedish world of work.

Another way in which the Swedish identity is constructed is the use of ideas of gender equality in order to differentiate Swedishness from 'immigrant' identity. Immigrants are not considered to understand the Swedish values of gender equality. Bredström (2003) has illustrated how in the media Swedishness is made equivalent to gender equality, and how the 'other' is represented as oppressing and denigrating women and being ignorant of values of gender equality. Specifically, Swedish men are considered as being modern and non-oppressive. On the contrary, immigrant men are represented as primitive, aggressive and sexually violent. This creates the Swedish masculinity as the valued and implicitly superior norm. In the everyday imagination and in the media, gender inequality and the inferiority of women are presented as phenomena that belong to other cultures and nations, not the Swedish. If it does occur in Sweden it is deemed to be an "exception to the rule" (Los Reyes, 2002: 182). Los Reyes argues that believing that gender inequality exists only in other cultures and nations is a way of maintaining the hierarchical differentiation between what is Swedish and what is not and functions to maintain the image of Sweden as a paradise of gender equality.

It is the increase in immigration and enhanced globalisation that has led to a sense of threat to an imaginary homogenous Swedishness, and the response has been the above mentioned delimitation of Swedishness and its other. The 'us' and 'them' world-view is manifested most visibly in the spatial organisation of Swedish society.

2.5 Spatial organisation and the 'suburbs'

Most segregated areas in Sweden were historically part of the so-called *miljon program* [million programme] which the government implemented between 1965 and 1975. The aim of this project was to build a million new homes in a short time across Sweden to raise living standards. These new areas symbolized modernity: "[t]he run-down and un-modern environments were to be cleared and the final bits of dirt and impurity were to be washed from the body of society" (Ristilammi, 1994: 181, my translation). In today's Sweden, these very same areas are the ones which are viewed as dirty.

A geographical space with a bad reputation implicitly refers to the suburbs in which many immigrants live. An area with a good reputation symbolizes the places where most people are Swedish. The inner cities, the central areas of Swedish cities are usually considered desirable places and generally it is the suburbs, the neighbourhoods which are 'immigrant dense' and stigmatized. Normally, the closer to the inner city you live, the higher status you have. The word *förort* [suburb] has a negative connotation and the phrase itself is almost viewed to be 'dirty'. According to Mattson and Tesfahuney (2002) "to move between suburb and the inner city is not only a move between two physical spaces, but it is also a move between positions of power" (p. 38. my translation). The closer to the central area of the city, the more difficult it is for a non-European or a Muslim to find an apartment, a job or to enter bars or clubs. This maintains a hierarchical, coloured or gendered organization of space (ibid.). The power over and access to space is central in the explicit or implicit racism in Sweden. The fact that those who are racially discriminated against keep away from certain places in order to avoid discrimination or being 'looked down' upon, and the way Swedes abstain from 'immigrant-dense' areas, reproduces this segregated organization of space. Molina (1997) states that to problematise the ethnic segregation of Swedish cities is tantamount to arguing that it is caused by a widespread and deep rooted racist ideology. She argues that spatial segregation is not only about distance between people in terms of geography, but also about a complex organization of institutions, social relations and everyday practices which are arranged by a (conscious or unconscious) racist ideology.

There are areas in the larger cities of the country in which over 90 per cent of the population are of non-European or Muslim backgrounds (Pred, 2000). The word

'immigrant-dense' usually signifies stigmatized or racialised areas. This word emphasises 'the immigrant' and points the problem of segregation towards immigrants. To avoid this, Andersson (2002) refers to these areas as 'Swedish-scarce' in order to explain the segregation problem in terms of "the preferences of the majority population, rather than the minority" (ibid.: 94, my translation). He further argues that Swedish-scarce areas have been created because the majority population have left the areas which have in turn become available spaces for immigrants. The author claims that the reason why those who are refugees, or who have an immigration background usually live in the least desirable areas is because it is only in these suburbs that available apartments can be found. According to him, the creation of 'Swedish-scarce' areas is the result of a development that has been going on for a long period of time and this ethnically selective process of movement proves a dominant factor behind ethnic segregation. Each Swedish person who moves out of an undesirable area and each immigrant who moves into his or her place contributes towards further segregation and stigmatization. He stresses the institutional (state, municipalities, banks) role in the reproduction of ethnic segregation in the housing market. Hence, he points out that change-programmes that focus on one single area (for example, on an area with a high number of immigrant residents) will not solve the problem since it does not uncover the wider networks and practices of institutions that each contribute towards segregation.

Andersson's analysis is undoubtedly important and has useful critical potential since it re-directs the cause of the segregation problem towards those who are more privileged and have recourse to power, those who are considered to be Swedish. Nevertheless, the term 'Swedish-scarce' is problematic because it assumes that people living in marginalised and stigmatized suburbs are not Swedish. Although there are indeed many newly arrived refugees or immigrants, a vast majority of inhabitants are either born in Sweden or have been living in these areas for years. They have Swedish passports and most speak the Swedish language. It is only their immigrant status, cultural background and their dark complexions which make them non-Swedish. Calling these areas 'Swedish-scarce' only serves to reinforce the belief that the residents do not belong to the national identity. This argument is in fact very similar to one of the criticisms which *Gringo* has expressed when it attempts to re-evaluate the stigma attached to the suburbs

and thereby change what it means to be Swedish. *Gringo's* claim is that the suburb residents need to be recognised as part of a new Swedishness.

Similarly, segregated spatial arrangements are manifest in the labour market. Those with an immigration background and their children are closed off from certain jobs. There is a general assumption that the integration of immigrants into the labour market in the 1970s was a success and this argument is often used in comparison to today's high unemployment rates of immigrants. Nevertheless, although the immigrants in the 1970s were largely employed (they immigrated because of employment), this does not mean that the labour market at the time was not racialised. "Finns, Yugoslavians, Greeks, Turks, Italians, Spanish, and even Danish workers were given specific ethnic characteristics [and] these groups were employed in the lower levels of the employment sector" (Neergaard, 2002: 121, my translation). Thus, the current racialisation of the labour market is a trend that had already started with the first stream of immigration.

The effect of racialisation can be seen in the kinds of jobs that those with an immigration background usually obtain. For example, those who are overqualified for their jobs are usually immigrants (Neergaard, 2002). Over-qualification affects both those who are educated in Sweden and those who are educated in other countries. Neergaard argues that it is not only important to look at unemployment rates among those with immigration backgrounds in order to understand racialisation in the labour market. It is also crucial to analyse the different kinds of employments that immigrants usually obtain (for example, jobs they are overqualified for and temporary jobs). He implies that even if the unemployment rates among immigrants decrease, it can mean that there is an *increase* in racialised 'segmentation' within the labour market.

Although racialisation of the labour market was evident in the 1970s and the 1980s, it was in the 1990s when the country was suffering economic crisis, that the situation for immigrants became worse. Despite the improvement in the economy at the end of the 1990s, there were still large differences between immigrants and Swedes in terms of salary and work opportunities. The opportunities for employment are usually better for those who have lived in Sweden for a longer period of time. Nevertheless, even after 20 years of being a Swedish resident, those with an immigration background are at much greater risk of becoming unemployed and this is so even when taking into account

education, gender and age (Molina and Los Reyes, 2003). Molina and Los Reyes argue that the notion of 'cultural distance' is used in order to explain the limited employment possibilities for 'immigrants'. For example, the low employment rates of immigrant youths are explained in terms of the lack of the Swedish work-culture and language (Räthzel, 2006). These ideas about the 'other of Swedishness' is to a large extent produced and maintained in the media, where those with an immigration background are routinely represented as the underdog of Swedishness.

2.6 Representations of the 'other': The role of media

It is in people's everyday lives, in the mundane practices of society, in the subtle discourses of media and other institutions that a representation of those who do not quite attain the full status of Swedishness is reproduced. Just as in most other European countries, immigrants or those with an immigration background are represented as culturally distant and "refugee groups from Africa, Asia and Latin America are assumed to be most culturally different from 'Sweden and the Swedish'" (Mattson and Tesfahuney, 2002: 32, my translation). Non-European immigrants of today are portrayed in similar ways as the gypsies were represented in earlier times in Sweden, but "categories of the population today are not based on racial differentiations in terms of biology...it is culture that dominates the discourse" (Los Reyes, et al., 2003: 19, my translation). Nevertheless, physical appearance or 'colour' does matter. Just as the word 'immigrant' in the UK signifies 'blacks' or 'coloured' people, in Sweden it refers to those with dark complexions whose appearance does not correspond to Swedishness (Mattson and Tesfahuney, 2002). Further, Trondman (2006) illustrates how the racialised category immigrant as a social meaning is adopted by youth from both native Swedish and ethnic minority backgrounds in a way that creates dilemmas for these young people. He demonstrates both that the word represents social problems and that the youth in their experiences and practices reproduce, sometimes unintentionally, the stigmatized category of 'immigrant'. In the public imagination, this word is inherently related to a whole series of assumptions about crime, violence and failure and it works to maintain unequal social relationships. The representation of the immigrant becomes, as Trondman suggests, 'an ingrained stigma'.

The Swedish media contributes greatly towards the production of this representation. A large amount of the media representations of immigrants include stories of refugees and criminals (Asp, 2002) and the media, being influenced by a colonial worldview, has constructed 'them' as threatening and problematic (Brune, 2004). The suburbs are represented negatively and its inhabitants are considered to have a specific culture, the so called 'suburb-culture'. The high rates of criminality among young men in these areas are, for example, often explained as a consequence of this presumed culture. Bredström (2003) claims that the perception of a 'suburb-culture' includes an image of failure. The immigrant families are considered to have failed in the Swedish context, failed to properly integrate their children into the society. Within this discourse, "'the immigrant family' is re/presented as a failed opposite to the 'Swedish middle-class family'" (ibid.: 198, my translation). Bredström further notes that the kind of masculinity that is produced in these areas, rather than being explained in terms of resistance, is usually explained as the effect of 'suburb-culture' or the 'problem family'. Even when in recent years, new and more nuanced media representations have appeared, they are still implicitly caught up in a stigmatising worldview (Dahlstedt, 2005).

Not only is the media the third most powerful institution in Sweden (Kamali, 2006), it is also mainly governed by the white majority population; only a very small proportion of minorities are involved in media production (Camauer, 2006; Catomeris, 2002). This minority are only given their positions if they show they comply with the 'normal' way of writing like 'us', or when they are 'allocated' in order to merely write around the topic of integration and tell the 'truth' about the immigrant (Kamali, 2006). Even when those who do finally get the chance to be involved in practices of representation and who do engage in the subjectification and particularisation of the immigrant experience, they will be viewed as 'representing' the whole social category of the 'exotic', unfamiliar, immigrants/suburbians (Jones, 2003). Their task will be to represent a homogenised suburb, its people, its culture and its language. The 'suburb-language' is the accent, or the 'broken' Swedish spoken by youth from these excluded and stigmatized areas.

2.7 Swedish language and its 'other'

One profound indication of the 'difference' of youth who are from communities with high numbers of people with an immigration background is their way of speaking Swedish. 'Rinkeby-Swedish[12]' (which is nowadays more often called *blatte*-Swedish) usually refers to a type of accent and slang language which is not considered to be proper Swedish. It is an indicator of ethnic belonging/exclusion, but also very much a class marker. It "has acquired a stigma similar to that of the 'double semi-lingualism' of the immigrant youth who are presumed to lack linguistic competence in both their native language and in Swedish" (Ålund and Schierup, 1991: 91). Ålund and Schierup argue that their accent is seen as confirmation of the youth being deviant from the 'norm' and serves to confirm their marginal position in society. The authors suggest that Rinkeby-Swedish is viewed as problematic; there is a fear that it will influence standard Swedish. In the public imagination it is seen as a real problem and risk to social stability. This might be because Swedish language is seen as central to the Swedish identity, the workings of power and in the constitution and operation of the cultural and institutional norms of Sweden. However, *blatte*-Swedish is part of the *blatte* identity and is used by immigrant youth as a tool for resistance.

2.8 Blatte as resistance

Although the pejorative terms *blackhead* and *blatte* can be used interchangeably, it is '*blatte*' which has become more popular in recent years. The meaning of this term is doubtful. It has been said to mean cockroach or clown and it can also be related to the English word 'black'. Whatever the term literally means, what we know is that it traditionally has negative connotations.

The *blatte*-identity is defined by ethnicity and it stands in contrast to the conception of traditionally homogenous or 'pure' Swedish identity (Lacatus, 2007). *Blatte* has become a signifier of the minorities in Sweden with immigration backgrounds from the Middle

---

[12] Rinkeby is a segregated suburb with a high number of immigrants in the outskirts of Stockholm. Sometimes this accent is called Rosengård-Swedish (Rosengård is a stigmatized community in Malmö). A study found that people view Rosengård-Swedish as being different to foreign-accented Swedish (Hansson and Svensson, 2004). Thus, Rosengård-Swedish (or its equivalent Rinkeby-Swedish) is distinct from accented Swedish spoken by non-Swedes in that it refers to a hybrid slang and accent used by youth.

East, Africa, Latin America or Eastern Europe. One of the main markers of this identity is the darker hair and skin complexion compared to the fairer 'native' Swede. The recent influence of the American 'ghetto' culture in the suburbs helped to give a new image to these segregated areas (Vaughan, 2007). Thus, *blatte* usually refers to the minority youth who live in the immigrant suburbs and who speak *blatte*-Swedish, adopt the hip-hop and 'gangsta' culture, and who experience discrimination and stigmatization in Swedish society. The *blatte* identity is hence a complicated one: on the one hand it means being part of a marginalised and denigrated social group, and on the other hand, from the perspective of those who view themselves as belonging to the *blatte* social category, it designates pride and the fight against discrimination and segregation. A potent form of resistance against authority and transgression of cultural ideals and standards, *blatte* could be viewed as a metaphor for the transformations in multicultural Sweden and the crisis in Swedish nationalist ideology (Lacatus, 2007).

Ålund (1997) shows how in multicultural areas around Sweden young people develop mixed identities, which use *blatte*-Swedish as a tool for resistance. These hybrid identities can be seen as a challenge towards those discourses who construct ethnicity and identity as permanent, homogenised and fixed. Moreover, the common experience of exclusion and stigmatization has created ways in which youths contest negative representations[13]. Pred (1997) argues that

> these young people often take defiant pride in their 'blackhead' identity, in appropriating and reversing the sign of that most frequently used of Swedish racist epithets...these youths culturally rework their circumstances in ways that are often brimful with political connotations, often super-charged with the symbolic undermining of power relations, often saturated with a hybridity that transgresses and subverts (p. 398).

It is argued that for the youths themselves, Rinkeby-Swedish is a tool through which they relate to each other, a means by which they develop a shared identity in a community which is ethnically mixed. "In other words, for the youth, [Rinkeby-Swedish] is not something negative, but it is rather a secret language, a vehicle for the production of consciousness and resistance" (ibid.: 92).

---

[13] See also Dahlstedt (2001) who discusses how immigrants in the segregated areas engage in 'silent resistance', which reveals a counter-image to the politically 'passive' immigrant.

For Sernhede (2002) speaking the sometimes intentional, deviant form of *blatte*-Swedish is an expression of local identity. Furthermore, his study about young hip-hop musicians in the segregated areas in Gothenburg demonstrates how the music gives 'voice' to these segregated youth; the hip-hop lyrics not only reveal the social exclusion of this group, but they also entail a counter-story to the stigmatizing representations. The author points out that the young people engage in collective forms of resistance where the suburb is viewed as the only safe haven. This is why sometimes the 'suburb' becomes romanticised, he claims.

The symbolic undermining of power relations means that youths in their everyday experiences are engaged in resistance that can take different forms:

> Thus the usage of Rinkeby-Swedish, a fluid linguistic amalgam of proper and improper Swedish, of phrases from American popular culture and terms derived from Spanish, Turkish, Arabic and other migrant tongues spoken within Stockholm's suburbs. Thus the music of groups such as the Latin Kings, music that speaks meaningfully to some and is grating cacophony to others, music that pulsates with logical belonging and yet is clearly out of place (Pred, 1997: 398).

Media plays a significant role in the transmission and circulation of *blatte*-Swedish. For example, the rap-group *Latin Kings* had already used this form of Swedish in the 1990s in their music lyrics. In 2003 a book called *Ett öga rött* [A red eye] by Jonas Hassen Khemiri was very successful and controversial because of its use of *blatte*-Swedish. Speaking with this accent or slang means expressing a distinguishable *blatte* identity, which has, through its circulation in the media, become not only a tool for resistance but also a commercial product.

Bredström and Dahlstedt (2002) have a critical view of the role of Swedish hip-hop as a tool for resistance. They indicate that resistance should be understood as the effect of the complex relation between ethnicity, class and gender. Along these lines, they argue that Swedish hip-hop lyrics not only demonstrate a patriarchal world-view, but they also construct identities as naturally given and fixed. Moreover, rather than being a radical form of critique against, or 'threat' to the social order, the music conforms to the given hegemony. Swedish hip-hop "has a 'people's home style', it is cocky, but decent, well-behaved and accommodating" (ibid.: 2, my translation). Thus, they imply that the

40

potential critical edge of Swedish hip-hop is blunted by subscribing to dominant hegemonic values.

2.9 *Gringo's* alternative journalism

Gringo's aim is to engage in a complex critique which takes into account all forms of social exclusion. Thus, not only does the magazine re-evaluate and re-negotiate identities, it also has the aim of challenging all forms of social exclusion and discrimination (such as racial or gender), although the focus is mainly on racial/ethnic discrimination. In contesting exclusion, *Gringo* engages in a relatively radical form of critique against power and official institutions in Sweden.

The publication of the magazine was a response to both the stigmatized image of the immigrant/suburb in the media *and* the lack of journalists with an immigration background. Thus, the idea is to represent immigrant-hood, integration and multiculture from the perspective of those who have an immigration background, the people with typically 'non-Swedish' names and who have not had a powerful voice in the public sphere. *Gringo*'s project is thus to fill a gap in the Swedish media and in this sense, the magazine consciously identifies itself as a representative of immigrants. However, although it was created by Adami (who immigrated to Sweden as a child from the Kurdish part of Iran) its editorial board is diverse and also consists of people with 'native' Swedish backgrounds. Thus, despite the fact that it is sometimes called a 'minority' media, from the content of its subsequent editions, it emerges that immigranthood or problems of integration are far from the main concerns of the magazine: a great deal of the text deals with questions about Swedishness[14]. Furthermore, the heterogeneous 'ethnic' blend in the editorial board of *Gringo* is a reaction to the more homogenous working force in the mainstream Swedish media. Thus, the magazine represented its identity as opposite to mainstream Swedish journalism (Christensen, 2008).

---

[14] A word frequency result of the entire text showed that the words 'Sweden' and 'Swedish' were the most frequently used alongside 'immigrant', '*blatte*' and 'suburb'.

Adami implies that this 'alternative' journalism is also one which promotes love, joy and humour, rather than bitterness and conflict:

> We're no angry, whining blackheads. We are not Swedes, nor are we immigrants. We are individuals, representatives of the new Sweden. Our Sweden that we love. We make fun of everything and everybody, but we always do it with compassion. We take life softly and would rather see your dimples than your wrinkled forehead (*Gringo* 1).

The content of the magazine is rich and colourful (see appendix 1.1 for a sample edition in Swedish). Christensen (2008) argues that *Gringo* is a good example of the changing nature of media which blurs the differences between entertainment and news. Further, Adami has claimed that the magazine raises issues which other newspapers do not have the courage to talk about (Neuman, 2005). These issues are highlighted in a *blatte-* Swedish permeated by obscenity, humour and slang; a language which would ordinarily be considered offensive and improper in public discourse.

The text of the magazine is usually focused on the topics of integration, racism, multiculture, ethnicity and identity[15]. However, the overarching objective is to redefine Swedishness. The main editor writes that *Gringo* is about a re-conceptualisation of what it means to be Swedish:

> *Gringo* started as a newspaper that wanted to change the negative media image of the suburb. But we soon realized that by telling stories about our dear million-program, we also told stories about today's Swede. It is in the suburb that we find the future of Swedishness. A hybrid of old Swedish and a constructed immigrant-hood. If we would put together all passport photos, a new image of the appearance of the average Swede...would emerge. Yet, the template for how a Swede looks like is still light-skinned and light-haired...Gringo is...an update of Swedishness (*Gringo* 13).

Thus, the goal is to re-negotiate Swedishness and immigrant-hood and this involves questioning the meaning of these identities. For example, in each edition of the magazine, there is an image of the Swedish flag, but the position of the blue and yellow colours are reversed (see appendix 1.1). This is what Adami says about the distortion of the flag:

---

[15] See appendix 1.2 for the coding frame of the content of the text.

> I think that we need a new flag because in the last 30 years Sweden has gone through such a transformation. The reason why we are Sweden's most Swedish paper is because of the mix in the editorial. We're an editorial which represents Sweden best today (in Gergely, 2005).

The reversal of the Swedish flag symbolises the attempt by *Gringo* to question traditional Swedishness. Adami views himself as a revolutionary and a protagonist of a resistance struggle; it is known that he makes resource to Martin Luther King's autobiography and Paolo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (Gergely, 2005). Adami writes that

> Gringo is where immigranthood touches the old Swedishness. We're the third way. For those who do not want to choose between 'immigrant or Swede'. Gringo is the name for the mental change we need in Sweden. An update of Swedishness (*Gringo* 11).

Hence, there is an attempt to make *Gringo* a signifier of the revolution opposed to the view of identities or categories as fixed and homogenised essences. Consequently, the magazine is also viewed as the symbol for the new Swedishness. With its diverse editorial board and the practice of writing about *both* a contested immigrant-hood *and* forms of Swedishness, *Gringo* is a unique, mass-published newspaper supplement in Sweden. Furthermore, the magazine took the step to re-name Rinkeby-Swedish or *blatte*-Swedish as 'million-Swedish'. The aim was to argue that this type of accent is not only spoken in the Rinkeby suburb but in all million-program areas across Sweden, and it is spoken by both *blattes* and *svennes*. The rather unsettling use of 'million-Swedish' is a strategy to simultaneously express the specific *Gringo* identity, to represent the '*Gringo* brand' and to provide resistance against the ideals of Swedish identity and linguistic norms.

The magazine was highly popular when it was being published. According to *Gringo's* own estimates, its number of readers is very high. Christensen (2008) points out that during the publication of *Gringo*, *Metro* had over 1.5 million readers and was the most read newspaper in Sweden[16]. The readers are said to consist of young urban people, half

---

[16] *Metro's* readers are largely in the three main urban centres of Sweden: Stockholm, Gothenburg and Malmö.

of which have an immigration background and the other half a Swedish background[17]. Moreover, its creator Zanyar Adami, was given *Bonnier's* journalism prize – a highly regarded award - in 2005 for creating *Gringo*. According to *journalisten.se*, he deserves an award

> because he opens an arena with warmth and humour for the young and multicultural Sweden, transforms the suburb into a centre and contributes towards the enrichment of journalism both linguistically and in subject matter (in Jansson, 2005).

Despite this praise, the magazine sparked an intense debate in the public sphere in Sweden because of, amongst other things, its obscene humour and its vulgar use of Swedish language. A number of bloggers used their blog space to condemn the magazine and there was even an anti-racist 'Gringo hate blog' called *Adios Gringo* fully dedicated to criticising the magazine for fuelling racism rather than eliminating it. Many of its critics claim that *Gringo* helped to maintain an 'us' and 'them' divide, for example in its frequent use of words such as *blatte* and *svenne*. It has been challenged by Quick Response, an organisation which scrutinises the largest newspapers, for reproducing the same stereotypical images of the suburb which it is trying to contest (Sköld, 2007a). However, the chief editor's response to the criticism is:

> How can we strengthen a division which is already cemented in peoples' consciousness? How can we get rid of a problem if we never admit it? The alternative is to stick your head in the ground and pretend the black and white truth does not exist and to suggest that we all are individuals, while the reality divides us into groups which we haven't chosen ourselves. For fifty years, the establishment has divided us. The conveyor belt in the fabric of the people's home has labelled our foreheads with 'Swedish' or 'immigrant'. Gringo is a backlash (*Gringo* 13).

The argument is that by discussing these 'divisions' and exaggerating them, their absurdity is revealed. Alarcón (2008) claims that *'blatte'* and *'svenne'* should be viewed as having extremely ironic functions in *Gringo*. Indeed, he argues that the replacement of 'Swede' and 'immigrant' with *'svenne'* and *'blatte'* exposes the concealed ideological basis of these terms, and that one of the subversive aspects of the magazine is that *'blatte'* and *'svenne'* are both subsumed under the encompassing signifier of

---

[17] Note that with the advent of *Metro* in the late 1990s, newspaper reading in segregated areas increased sharply (Wadbring, 2007). Thus, we can assume that a large number of *Gringo* readers were those with immigration backgrounds living in segregated areas.

'new Swedishness'. Not only is the ambiguity of the terms 'Swedish' and 'immigrant' revealed, but the use of the word *blatte*, which is considered taboo in public discourse, works to make apparent and question the stigma attached to it. Alarcón further asserts that although the magazine might neglect the more insidious power structures that permeate social categories, it combats 'dualism' and advocates hybrid identities as part of its 'identity politics'. Hence he argues that it does not necessarily portray categories as essences as some critics have claimed. Nevertheless, he acknowledges that by giving voice to the immigrant/*blatte* the magazine risks homogenising it and thus reproducing the very structure it is aiming to resist. However, he claims that it has managed to circumvent this danger by using 'new Swedishness' as its tool: *blatte* is represented not as a homogenised group, but as part of Swedishness. This is why, according to Alarcón, *Gringo* has opened up possibilities for seeing *blattes* as subjects, rather than objects, and created the potential for a new and hybrid subject position. Nevertheless, perhaps it is the case that *blatte* and *svenne* are meant ironically by authors, but one can never guarantee that this is how they will be received by readers. This is evidenced by the fact that some appreciated the irony[18], and others, such as *Adios Gringo*, detested it.

Furthermore, as was noted earlier, *Gringo* is a commercial magazine and is financed through its advertisements. The more people read the magazine the more expensive it becomes to publish advertisements. So apart from the objectives of social change, there is also an economic intention: the aim is to attain profit. Thus, *Gringo* should be viewed in the context of "global commodification of urban and street culture" (Christensen, 2008: 238). The magazine is said to have had an income of 8 million Kronas in 2006 and has offshoots in five different areas: events, education, lectures and advertisement (Sköld, 2007b). The idea, according to the chief editor, is to engage in "commercial humanitarianism" (in Sköld, 2007a). However, it has been criticised for using "ethnicity as a business concept", for being a form of "ethno-pornography" and for taking advantage of people in vulnerable areas for profit (ibid.).

---

[18] I have analysed the responses to *Gringo* which were available online (see appendix 1.4 for coding framework). This issue will be discussed further in the thesis.

In August 2007 *Gringo* started to cut-back the number of issues regularly published. Not long after, publication stopped completely because its publishing company, *Latifeh AB*, went into bankruptcy. Allegedly, the reason for this was that its readership had been declining (Schori, 2008a). In 2008, *Gringo* was re-launched outside *Metro* as a free magazine with a new chief editor. The new chief editor resigned in June 2009 and the future of *Gringo* is as yet unclear.

Despite its criticisms and its fall,

> the importance of the magazine could be found in the way in which Adami and his co-workers openly challenged a number of orthodoxies related to Swedishness, journalism and language (Christensen, 2008: 227).

It made an impact in public debate, especially with its use of *blatte*-Swedish and its challenge of Swedish language (this will be discussed further in chapter 7). Christensen points out that fear and denial were important reasons why there was such resistance to *Gringo* in Swedish society.

2.10 Conclusion

There is no doubt that the rich content of *Gringo's* articles is worthy of in-depth analysis. This thesis will point to the contradictions and ambivalences in the text of *Gringo* as well as some of the ways in which it has been received by the public. It will be shown how the magazine satirically uses stereotypes, mocks 'us' and 'them' worldviews and how it attempts to re-negotiate fixed categories such as Swedishness and immigrant-hood. In the representation and/or challenge of the 'suburb', the 'immigrant', the 'Swede', or racism, the text is replete with jokes, ironies, linguistic images and plays on words, as well as visual images - these are all considered important material for a psychoanalytic investigation. My aim then is to use *Gringo* magazine as a case study in order to bring to light not only the ambivalence of resistance to racism, but also the intricate ideological, social *and* affective or libidinal elements of resistance and social identity. In the following chapter, I will provide a review of two perspectives which have dealt with the issue of identity and resistance: one from the discipline of social psychology and another from a cultural studies perspective.

3 Identity, representation and resistance

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I provide a review of two theories of contested identities. Social Identity Theory (SIT) is discussed because firstly, it is one of the most influential frameworks in social psychology and widely used as an explanatory tool. Secondly, although others have highlighted 'contested' identities[19], it is probably the only model in the discipline which aims to engage in-depth, not only with the importance of the group in identity construction, but also with how those with denigrated identities engage in resistance and strategies for social change. However, in my use of the SIT paradigm[20], I would say that I am influenced by Lacan's approach in reading the work of an eminent author, which succeeds in producing something new on its ground. Believing that the signifier does not have a fixed signified (in other words meaning is not fixed), Lacan plays up under-emphasized or seemingly unintentional facets of Freud's ideas through the work of textual re-interpretation. This approach results in completely new ways of viewing the original text. In my treatment of the SIT paradigm, I am highlighting its ideas surrounding the importance of the group and its accompanying ideology in social identity, and its suggestions on how groups can resist a devalued identity and social exclusion.

However, the SIT paradigm does not contain a crucial element of social identities, an element which poststructuralists take seriously: language. I will use Stuart Hall's ideas of identity in order to critique SIT and consider some of the similarities and differences between SIT and more discursive approaches. Further, Hall recognises the wider ideological and discursive context of social identities and investigates how they are produced and challenged within language and representation. His idea that identity is

---

[19] Contested identities have been discussed in more traditional forms of social psychology such as Clark and Clarks' (1939) famous study on black children's self-image; Breakwell's (1986) intra-psychic, interpersonal and social analysis of coping strategies for people with 'threatened identities' and Timotijevic and Breakwells' (2000) paper on immigration and threat to identity.

[20] In this thesis, when the abbreviation 'SIT' is used, I am referring to the part of the theory which deals with intergroup relations. 'SCT' refers to self-categorisation theory (intra-group processes). When I state 'SIT paradigm' or 'tradition', I am referring to the whole tradition of intergroup and intra-group research and theory (thus SIT and SCT combined).

what is *in between* the discursive/ideological and the psychic provides us a link to Lacanian psychoanalysis which I will elaborate on in the next chapter.

In the last part of this chapter I consider the relationship between political resistance struggles and psychoanalytic resistance in order to think about how sometimes the two converge. I will discuss how a political resistance to oppression, racism or any other social change efforts might paradoxically include the kind of resistance that psychoanalysis talks about: the resistance to change. Psychoanalytic notions of the 'symptom' (the return of the repressed) and 'repetition' (the 'insistence' of the signifier) may be used to further point out limitations of change in identities.

3.2   Who is the Other in the SIT tradition?

This chapter will be limited to provide a critical review of some of the main ideas of the social identity tradition and will not consider its more recent developments. Tajfel's (1981) famous definition of social identity is: "that *part* of the individual's self-concept which derives from their knowledge of their membership of a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance of that membership" (p. 255, emphasis in original). This implies that there are two aspects of identity: a social and a personal and may be criticised for introducing a false dichotomy. However, Tajfel (1981) recognises the 'personal' as possibly being derived from the social. Turner et al.. (1987) also admit that the so called personal identity may be fundamentally social: "there is no implication that...the personal levels [of categorisation] are not also social in terms of their content, origin and function" (p. 46). Tajfel's aim seems to be to primarily focus on the issue of group-membership:

> Our explicit preoccupation is with the effects of the nature and subjective importance of...these memberships on those aspects of an individual's behaviour which are pertinent to inter-group relations (Tajfel, 1978: 63).

However, he recognises that the notion of 'identity' is a difficult and complicated one:

> there is no doubt that the image or concept that an individual has of himself or herself is infinitely more complex, both in its contents and its derivations, than 'social identity' as defined and circumscribed here (p. 63).

48

The idea in SIT is that different groups become salient for individuals in different social situations. People's knowledge of their in-group and out-group and the way these are evaluated has an effect on self-image and action. The important concepts of the theory are *social categorisation, motivation for positive in-group distinctiveness* and *social comparison* (see Tajfel, 1981).

There seems to be an ambiguity regarding the notion of social categorisation and this is one of the issues which have been the topic of much criticism against the SIT paradigm (see below). On the one hand, categorisation is argued to be a psychological necessity, "the tendency to simplify in order to cope" (Tajfel, 1981: 133). We divide the complex world (including people) into categories in order to help perception and establish order for ourselves. Social categorisation is here viewed to be a means through which the individual orients him or herself in society (Tajfel, 1978). On the other hand, categorisation is viewed to be a "socially evolved representation of social structure" (Turner, 1996: 20). Hence, here 'psychological necessity' appears to be downplayed. It is not very clear in the literature what categorisation is exactly considered to be: a psychological or a social process, or both, and if both, the relationship between the two remains unelaborated (see Wetherell and Potter, 1992). However, Tajfel did mention that "[the] interaction between socially derived value differentials on the one hand and the cognitive 'mechanics' of categorisation on the other is particularly important in all social divisions between 'us' and 'them'" (Tajfel, 1978: 62).

In relation to 'positive distinctiveness', the idea is that the group in which we belong to has significant implications for our self-esteem so people have a motivation to "seek a positive social identity" (Turner et al.. 1987: 30). Tajfel (1981) emphasises that in social comparison people attempt to "create, achieve, preserve or defend a positive conception of oneself, a satisfactory self-image" (p. 338). Although in recent years, the motivation for a positive self-esteem has been re-evaluated and problematised (Hornsey, 2008), it has traditionally been assumed that a positive self-esteem depends on the way the group positively distinguishes itself from other groups. Comparison with other groups is a crucial element of this process: "a group becomes a group in the sense of being perceived as having common characteristics or a common fate mainly because other groups are present in the environment" (Tajfel, 1981: 258). So because we have a

motivation to enhance our self-esteem, we tend to compare our own group with other groups and this leads to in-group favouritism and out-group discrimination. In short, the relation between all these elements could be seen as "a causal sequence, from social categorisation to social identity, to social comparison, to positive distinctiveness" (Turner, 1996: 16).

Self-Categorisation Theory (SCT) (Turner et. al, 1987), which is a branch of SIT moved away from the focus on inter-group relations and includes an investigation of intra-group processes and of the ways in which the group and its culture, values and standards become significant for individuals. In other words, it deals with the *consequences* of groups. The questions which are addressed in SCT are

> How does a collection of individuals become a social and psychological group? How do they come to perceive and define themselves and act as a single unit, feeling, thinking and self-aware as a collective entity? What effects does shared group membership have on their social relations and behaviour? Is there such a thing, in fact, as a psychological group as distinct from a merely social arrangement? (Turner et al.. 1987: 1).

The assumption is that social categories have important psychological and behavioural consequences for the group member. It is suggested that group membership *itself* can be understood "as a distinctive explanatory process in social psychology" (Turner, et al.. 1987: 1), and attempts have been made to understand various issues such as conformity, collective behaviour and attributions as being directly or indirectly caused by people's knowledge of their group-membership (see Turner, 1991; Turner et al.., 1987).

The argument in SCT is that the reason why social identity (or group membership) has such an effect on behaviour and thought is because people categorise themselves in relevant groups. It is assumed that categorisation leads to the *accentuation* of similarities within a group and exaggeration of differences between groups (Turner et al.., 1987). Hence, "categorisation of self and others...accentuates the group prototypicality, stereotypicality or normativeness of people" (Hogg and McGarty, 1990). When people see themselves in terms of their group belonging rather than in terms of their personal characteristics, the group has a fundamental effect on the psychology of the individual which leads to *depersonalisation*. It is argued that depersonalisation is that which is at the basis of group cohesion, social influence processes, shared norms, co-operation, collective behaviour, altruism, social stereotypes

and ethnocentrism (Turner et al.., 1987). Depersonalisation does not mean that there is a loss of identity; on the contrary, it is a *gain* of identity because when an individual identifies with a group, that group will provide a sense of identity for that individual. Hence, when people view themselves in terms of a given social identity, the norms, standards and values of that identity will guide individual cognition and behaviour:

> Identification with a social group is a psychological state very different from merely being designated as falling into one social category or another. It is phenomenologically real and has important self-evaluative consequences (Hogg and Abrams, 1988).

For example, social influence is considered as an effect of the social norms of the group membership in question:

> Social norms are the basis as well as the product of influence: a response is persuasive to the degree that it represents and participates in some shared, consensual reaction stereotypically associated with an in-group self-category and hence is perceived as valid, correct, competent...which in turn leads to *its perception as appropriate, desirable, expected, something one ought to believe or do* (Turner et al.. 1987: 76, emphasis added).

Intra-group norms have an effect on the group member because they represent what is acceptable and desirable in the group, they signify who one should be and how one should think and behave in order to be accepted, *recognised* as a group member. Further, social identities are context dependent and situational and since we are part of many groups in society, we also have many possible social identities. So when we identify with a specific group we behave and think according to the norms and values of that particular group. A woman adheres to different standards of behaviour when she is working as a doctor during the day, as opposed to when she is being a mother to her children during the evening. Thus, because different identities are linked to different norms, we behave differently depending on which group we categorise ourselves into.

From this overview of the SIT and the SCT we can identify two different, but equally important, uses of the Other in this tradition. In SIT, where the focus is mostly on inter-group relations, the Other is quite explicitly and clearly identified as the *out-group:* the social category which the members of the in-group compare themselves with and which is required for in-group distinctiveness. In SCT, however, we seem to find a different use of the Other which, while implicitly assumed, is not as clearly elucidated. This is the Other as members of the *in-group*. From the perspective of the individual group

member, the in-group as a whole, including the norms, ideals and values shared by the group and as long as it has psychological significance for the group member - could be seen as an Other. Hence, we can understand the suggested ideas in *dialectical* terms: SCT deals with the issue of the self/subject and his or her relation with the outside world. Although the SCT might understand this as being about *self* categorisation (as if people can simply and reflexively take themselves as objects) - in stating that groups have psychological effect on the self, it *does* recognise the fundamental impact that the social world has on the 'individual'.

To sum up this section, the SIT tradition has two different uses of the Other:

> 1) the Other as the out-group (as in the inter-group relations of Social Identity Theory) and

> 2) the Other as the collection of in-group members, including their shared norms and ideology about codes of behaviour and thinking (as in the intra-group relations of the Self-Categorisation Theory).

I will come back to the issue of the Other in the SIT paradigm in the next chapter and provide a comparison and critique of SIT and SCT from the perspective of Lacanian and Freudian psychoanalysis. For now, I will move on to discuss the strategies for change, suggested by the SIT framework, which groups with a denigrated or devalued identity can adopt. The assumption is that in the wider social and political field, some groups have more power than others and being a member of a subordinate or minority group has psychological consequences. As the theory is at pains to emphasise, group membership has either a significant positive or negative effect on self-image.

3.2.1 The search for a positive social identity

I stated above that social comparison is a fundamental notion in SIT, an idea which is borrowed from Festinger (1954) who believed that man is characterised by "a drive to evaluate his opinions and his abilities" (p. 117) and this occurs through comparison with others, especially with those others who are superior to him. Tajfel (1978; 1981) claims that the attributes of a group gain their importance in comparison to other groups and the values attached to the differences between groups are significant in this process. Thus, it is via the image of other groups that the in-group gains its sense of identity. The

relational aspects of social identities, the idea that 'we are who we are because we are not them' is here very much acknowledged: "the definition of a group (national, racial or any other) makes no sense unless there are other groups around" (Tajfel, 1978: 66). Verkuyten (2005) points out that SIT discusses 'us' and 'them' categories, but 'them' can be an *imagined* out-group - rather than a specific other - which is conceived to have a different way of life, norms and ideals to 'us'. It is through envisaging that another group is different, that we can imagine *our* own values, standards and social laws.

SIT was initially developed from the famous minimal group experiments (e.g. Tajfel, 1970) which resulted in the explanation of prejudice in terms of social categorisation, social comparison and group membership. It was demonstrated that merely having the knowledge that one is a member of a group is enough for people to positively discriminate their own group against other groups (in-group favouritism). Tajfel (1981: 274) assumes that it is "the need for differentiation" which lies behind the social comparison process. Hence, in-group favouritism and out-group discrimination could be applied to explain much of group phenomena and conflict. Through positively distinguishing one's own group from other groups we gain a satisfactory sense of self. This is an approach adopted even by those who belong to groups which are generally perceived to be 'inferior' in order to maintain a positive identity and resist denigration of their group.

Reicher (2004) claims that the SIT tradition is in essence about social change and resistance. He states that the theory allows for flexibility, creativity, innovation and agency: "flexibility is a function of varying social categories and is achieved through differing category constructions" (p. 936). He points to the role of category definitions in social change. This is perhaps the social constructionist aspect of the theory, because in assuming that the value attached to categories are 're-definable', it implies that the latter meanings are not out there 'fixed' in the world, but socially constructed.

According to SIT, a negative, threatened or stigmatized social identity may lead to various resistance strategies depending on subjective belief structures (e.g. Tajfel, 1981; Tajfel and Turner, 1986; Turner and Brown, 1978). When the boundaries of social categories are seen as permeable, people will employ an individual strategy and distance themselves from - or exit - the negative social identity. They will no longer define

themselves in terms of this category and will try to gain acknowledgement in the dominant group (this is referred to as the *social mobility* belief system). For example, this kind of strategy is used among some people with an immigration background in Sweden when they change their names into Western sounding names, in order to 'pass' as a member of the Swedish group because they believe it will be easier for them to gain access to jobs and other privileges that come with belonging to the majority group. This could be seen as an assimilation strategy (Tajfel, 1981) and it could also be viewed as 'identification with the out-group' because the in-group is discriminated against and the out-group favoured. Individual mobility is not considered to have any influence on the overall structures of inequality and the status quo will be maintained.

What interests us most in this thesis is the 'social change belief system'. This involves *social creativity* strategies, which are adopted by people from minority groups when the group boundaries are not perceived to be permeable, and when the social power structure is believed to be legitimate (or when there are no 'cognitive alternatives'). Social creativity may entail the following methods:

The negatively evaluated group can introduce *new dimensions* through which they can compare themselves against other groups in more positive terms. For example, the notion of 'strong family ties' is a new dimension sometimes used by immigrants in order to compare themselves positively with Swedes who are usually considered to have 'weak' family relationships.

They can change the *value* of those aspects which are previously considered as inferior and *reverse* these. The trend which has been developing in Sweden in recent years towards the use of the *blatte* identity in the media is an example of this strategy - where the attempt is to give *blatte* positive connotations. This is where "old characteristics are being given a new meaning of different but equal or superior [value]" (Tajfel, 1981: 285).

Another strategy involves *finding other 'low-status' groups to compare the in-group with*, rather than comparing with the dominant group. This entails developing a higher status by means of comparison with a 'lower' status group.

If subordinated groups engage in any of the above consistently, the group may bring about a change in the way in which they are perceived (something which in traditional social psychological terms is usually named 'minority influence').

It is important to point out that re-evaluation of identity and the introduction of new and positive dimensions do not occur in a way that is isolated from the society at large. Tajfel (1981) recognised that getting the redefined characteristics of the group accepted by the society is indeed a problem and a struggle:

> The battle for legitimacy...is a battle for the acceptance by others of new forms of intergroup comparison. As long as these are not consensually accepted, the new characteristics (or the re-evaluation of the old ones) cannot be fully adequate in their function of building a new social identity (ibid.: 297).

It is unfortunate that Tajfel does not elaborate more on this issue. Moreover, in a different section of the same book, he claims that the strategies which minorities adopt are "an attempt to create or preserve criteria of group definition which are not imposed from the outside" (p. 317). I argue that even when there is an attempt by minorities to define themselves in their own terms - whether this involves introducing new dimensions which are more acceptable or re-evaluating the existing ones - it is carried out *in relation* to the cultural standards of what is considered to be a positive, desirable, or socially valorised identity. Even when a minority is transforming previously negative aspects of identity into positive ones, even when they aim to define these aspects according to their own criteria - this does not usually occur in isolation from general cultural norms and values and from the 'majority's' point of view. In the following chapters, I argue that we can understand the relationship between the denigrated category and societal norms in terms of the Lacanian notions of 'ego-ideals' and the 'big Other'.

The last strategy which is labelled 'social competition' by Turner and Brown (1978) is employed when the subordinate group considers its position as illegitimate. The aim is to work for more profound changes, for example by engaging in demonstrations, wars, terrorist acts and the like in order to gain the recognition and respect which the affected groups feel they deserve. One could say that the publication of *Gringo* itself falls under this strategy, because the objective of the magazine is to effect change in the social

system (at least according to its producers). For example, *Gringo* aspires to not only effect change in the way in which immigrants and the suburbs are portrayed in the media, but it is also fighting the exclusion of immigrants in media related jobs. Moreover, *Gringo's* content includes many articles in which there is a critique against institutional discrimination and other forms of exclusion – one could argue that it is *representing* social competition in its text. Social competition involves the idea that recognition is not something that is simply awarded by those in power to those who are disempowered, but must be taken, even if by aggressive, violent means, if it is in fact to be worthwhile[21].

Nevertheless, what is rather problematic in the SIT is that it assumes that the sole function and aim of social competition is social change and the attainment of a dignified identity. Resistance struggles, such as protests and violence and the like may have other functions and psychological significance apart from social change and a positive identity. For example, some of these movements can paradoxically have the function of fixity, rather than change. Later on in this chapter I will complicate the notion of resistance and claim that sometimes resistance to racism might paradoxically go hand in hand with resistance to change.

All the strategies discussed above are considered by SIT to depend on possibilities for the subordinate group to change themselves. These possibilities are delimited by the actions of dominant group members and the existence of cognitive alternatives. Moreover, as briefly alluded to earlier, it has been acknowledged that those group members who have been subordinated or negatively evaluated do not always demonstrate in-group favouritism, and can in fact show preference for the out-group and discriminate, devaluate and denigrate their own group (e.g. Moscovici and Paicheler, 1978; Tajfel, 1981). Despite this acknowledgement, Reicher (2004) claims that minority members of the subordinate group's actions are "aimed at challenging and dismantling current structures of inequality rather than creating and defending them" (p. 932).

There are some studies and theories that that can be used as evidence against this kind of argument. For example, Clark and Clark's (1939) famous and controversial research

---

[21] This is similar to Fanon's (1990) discussion of violence as a means of liberation.

showed that black children preferred to identify themselves with white dolls and thus discriminated against their own group. Social psychological notions such as 'stereotype threat' (Steele and Aronson, 1995) point to the possibility that denigrated groups risk confirming rather than challenging negative stereotypes of the in-group. As Hook (2004) suggests, in a racist society, one risks viewing oneself according to racist values which may thus contribute towards one's own oppression. Moreover, Marriott (1998) discusses the psychoanalytic notion of *identification with the aggressor* and states that those who are victims of the phobia against blacks or other minority groups may respond by unconsciously viewing themselves as if they were white. In other words, they are in a state of "racial misrecognition" (Marriott, 1998: 418). In this unconscious dynamic, an 'internal white' identity displaces the black 'self' or body, a traumatic experience which leads to a radically fragmented and split sense of being (see Fanon, 1986). Put simply, the society that hates you is introjected; you end up – even if only unconsciously – hating yourself. The 'inferiority complex' of the oppressed is a consequence of internalisation of the values and actions of the oppressors (Bulhan, 1985). This split identity creates a feeling that someone else is being "damaged" and not oneself, as if one is being an "actor" watching someone else being this "terrifying" person (Marriott, 1998: 419). Hence, one is being *alienated* from oneself. Fanon (1986) used the term alienation in order to explain the detrimental effects of racial identity and oppression[22]. The 'internal' oppression is the reason why sometimes it is so hard to resist racism (Bulhan, 1985). To put it simply, the actions of members of a minority will not always be directed towards challenging structures of inequality. Even if they are, the question as to the underlying motives and tactics of resistance remains open. One should not under-estimate the complexity of this situation, that is, the issue of which strategies are used, against whom the challenge is directed, how effective it is and what kind of intricate and sometimes overdetermined ideological and psychic functions these attempts serve. Despite SIT's practical suggestions on how people engage in

---

[22] As we will see in the next chapter, via the mirror stage, all subjects undergo alienation according to Lacan, but social asymmetries and various forms of political oppression tend to exaggerate and worsen such forms of alienation.

strategies for change, one of the aims of this thesis is to show that a stigmatized identity is not always undesired (see chapter 6).

3.2.2 Criticising and defending the SIT tradition

In spite of the relatively elaborate ideas about strategies for change, some have challenged the SIT tradition for having a rather static view of categorisation (Billig, 1985) and it has been argued that it is not very useful in understanding the complex and negotiated 'in-between', hybrid categories such as Black-British identities (Verkuyten, 2005). There is a neglect of the content of identities, and too much focus on the process (Duveen, 2001; Verkuyten, 2005). It is also claimed that SIT implies cognitive processes to be universal and that prejudice is inevitable (Billig, 1985; Wetherell, 1996; Wetherell and Potter, 1992). The theory has been challenged for taking categories for granted (Finlayson, 1998; Wetherell and Potter, 1992) and for neglecting the fact that categorisation is carried out by larger socio-political representations and discourses: that it is more of a matter of how one is *being categorised* by these forces, rather than how one *categorises oneself* (e.g. Billig, 1996; Howarth, 2002b). Further, since it is part of the social cognition paradigm, a paradigm in which the fundamental concepts are those of knowledge, information processing, cognition and perception, SIT has been contested for being overly individualistic and reductionist (e.g. Farr, 1996; Wetherell, 1996). Individuals are seen as "self-contained and independent organisms, with perceptual systems, distinct cognitions and motive systems" (Wetherell and Potter, 1992: 46). Similarly, it has been argued that the theory perceives contextual and social issues as being external to the individual, as existing merely as set of stimuli to which the individual responds (Condor, 1996). In short, these criticisms problematise SIT on the grounds that *it does not view subjectivity as a function of the dialectical and intricate relation between the self and the Other.* The importance of the Other is viewed as being underplayed in the theory. These critical perspectives take on a more societal view of social groups and social identities, rather than staying at the level of group, as is the tendency in the SIT tradition.

I also add to the criticisms that in the SIT tradition the focus is largely on how the 'minority' or 'inferior' group is being re-negotiated. Although the 'higher status' group's reactions to minority action is mentioned (e.g. Reicher, 2004; Turner and

Brown, 1978), not much is found in the SIT literature about instances where 'social creativity' involves not re-evaluating the subordinated group's identity, but changing or re-constructing the 'dominant' identity. Contestation may also involve a challenge to the meaning of the non-minority group identity, the contestation of for example, Swedishness or Britishness. Not much is offered in Social Identity Theory by way of efforts at social change which involve 'threatening' the 'dominant' identity of a culture. This is something which I explore in more detail in chapter 7.

Tajfel developed SIT during a time when social psychology had been criticised for being reductionist and individualistic in its explanation of social behaviour and the mind. SIT emerged as a critique against individualism in social psychology. Previously reductionist psychoanalytic theories had been used to explain intergroup relations as being an effect of intra-psychic processes, frustration or authoritarian personalities (for example, Dollard et al.., 1939; Adorno et al.., 1950). It has to be noted that the SIT paradigm, as it was developed by its pioneers, is different to these more individualistic perspectives because it recognises that the group (or the image of the group including its ideology) have an explanatory effect on the mind, action and self-concept. In SCT for example, importance is put on "understanding the structures and processes whereby society is psychologically represented and mediated by individual minds" (Turner et al.., 1987: 205). Indeed even if it is carried out implicitly or before it became such a dominant scholarly paradigm, Tajfel (1981) engaged with a social constructionist notion of the world. He states for example: "black skin is not, outside of specific social contexts, either an inferior or a superior attribute; but it may become one, given certain social psychological conditions" (ibid.: 277). Of course, for some more radical social constructionists, such as those influenced by Foucault, psychological constructions of the world would be seen as of secondary importance, these themselves having been determined by larger structural/material factors. However, this does not undermine the fact that Tajfel's intention was to demonstrate the mind as embedded in a social, historical and political world, even though his theory might not have been taken up as such by some of his successors. As Wetherell and Potter (1992) recognise, SIT cannot very easily be criticised for individualism. Moreover, I implied above that Self-Categorisation Theory shows us that just having knowledge of – or the assumption of

being a member of a group – is enough for the group to have a determining effect. A group's ideals, norms and values have crucial consequences for the mind and behaviour of the group member. Thus, attraction or interaction between group members is not necessary for individuals to think of themselves as belonging to a group or for discrimination against out-groups to occur (Turner et al.. 1987). The group and its norms, ideals and values takes on the role of an Other, and even if explained in mechanistic terms, the theory does show the importance of this Other in a 'person's' sense of identity. As it is claimed, "society is in the individual as much as individuals are in society"[23] (Turner, et al.., 1987: 205). However, although there are indirect references to the importance of society or the group in the structure of the individual, the SIT paradigm does not adequately elaborate on this as an extra-psychological factor, as a radical Other, as the locus of alterity, the trans-subjective function of societal process and structure. I develop these Lacanian terms in the following chapter.

Moreover, SIT mentions *motivation for positive* distinctiveness as a crucial dimension of identity. It is also this dimension which has led to contradictory claims against it. Some social constructionist and postmodern approaches imply that this element of the theory is partly why it remains stuck in an individualizing perspective (e.g. Wetherell, 1996). However, Billig (2002) suggests that the aspect of motivation is in fact not theorised *enough* in SIT. Motivation for positive distinctiveness might be explained in individualistic or mechanistic terms, but it is problematic to assume that it is not involved in processes of identification and categorisation. If motivation is inadequately theorised in the SIT paradigm, it might be due to the fact that the affective component of social identity has not been adequately addressed (Brown, 2000; Hogg and McGarty, 1990) and due to the theory's excessive focus on cognition. It appears that a proper emphasis on motivational aspects of identities would not fit into the SIT tradition; a tradition which is historically aimed at criticising the 'blood and guts' model of prejudice. It is also a tradition which has the goal to construct a rational model of the individual-society relation and hence excludes psychoanalysis which views human

---

[23] It is interesting to note the similarities between this quote and Butler's poststructuralist statement that identities are "the sedimentation of the 'we' in the constitution of any I" (1993: 105).

behaviour and the mind as contradictory and chaotic (Brown and Lunt, 2002). In psychoanalytic terms, motivation for positive distinctiveness is a crucial aspect of subjectivity, but instead of the predominantly rational and conscious notion of motivation, the more general term *desire* is usually employed. I will elaborate more on this issue in the next chapter.

Criticism against Social Identity Theory has largely emerged from the more postmodern and discursive perspectives in social psychology which prioritize what they take to be the neglected aspects of language and symbolic elements of group life.

3.2.3 What about language?

From the above discussion on Social Identity and Self-Categorisation theories, we see that these theories are more concerned with cognitive processes and less with language, that is, with the discursive aspect of identity and inter-group relations. The lack of conceptual engagement with language has meant that many of those who are usually labelled 'postmodern' in social psychology have almost as a matter of course taken issue with the SIT tradition. These writers have proposed the translation of cognitive processes into processes in language. For example, Billig (1996; 2002) notes that categories are 'done' in language and their meanings cannot be understood without consideration of ideological history: "Categorisation and stereotyping can be investigated within discursive interaction" (Billig, 2002: 184). Similar to some other perspectives in social psychology[24], discursive psychologists such as Wetherell (2004) (see also Augoustinos et al., 1999; Dixon and Durrheim, 2000; Dixon et al., 1994; Wetherell and Potter, 1992) point to social dialogues which become internalised in the subject and they emphasise how identity and inter-group relations are influenced by discourses in culture. Such symbolic tools give us the building blocks of the cognitive and identity functions that provide the basis for many psychological operations; they

---

[24] Social representations theory is also influenced by early theorists, such as Mead, Vygotsky and Bakhtin. These all emphasised the importance of dialogue, language, culture and negotiation in identity. Note that Parker (1989) criticizes symbolic interactionism and argues that 'the new paradigm' in social psychology which aims to move away from reductionism and take language and discourse seriously needs to move a step further and engage in issues of power and be more suspicious of constructions of authenticity, agency and self.

supply the means through which we can make sense of ourselves and events. This blurs the distinction between the 'personal' and the cultural or collective, between what is 'personal' identity and what is 'social' identity. In talk and text, people take on meanings which exist in culture, of what is 'the ideal' (e.g. ideal self) and reproduce them (Wetherell, 2004). This entails for an important difference to Social Identity Theory which focuses mainly on process, namely the fact that now the *content* of identities is brought to the fore. Moreover, from this perspective, the SIT tradition is thought to miss the fact that there are diversities within groups and that people are not limited to their majority or minority group memberships but shift positions within and across groups (Verkuyten, 2005). Furthermore, some discourse analysts imply that categories can be negotiated in specific localised contexts, in text and talk (e.g. Billig, 1997; Edwards, 1998; Wetherell and Potter, 1992). For example,

> categorisation and similar cognitive events can be seen as entirely mental events but they are also, very obviously, forms of social action established through discourse. The process of categorisation, and thus the psychology of categorisation, resides, not just in the mind, but we would suggest, within discourse as part of a collective domain of negotiation, debate, argumentative and ideological struggle (Wetherell and Potter, 1992: 77).

Hence, challenging the stigma attached to 'minority' identities is a process which involves discursively re-negotiating categories and traversing or contesting their content and value (see chapter 1 for a discussion of some research which has investigated how people engage in counter-discourses in relation to racism). A discourse analytic research programme can also examine how discrimination is constructed and how those who are affected, make sense and represent discrimination (see Verkuyten, 2005).

Nevertheless, it should be noted that Condor (1996) - despite being critical of the SIT tradition - points out that the idea of social comparison, and the stress on differentiation has in fact many similarities with the poststructuralist approaches which were being developed simultaneously.

3.3 Discourse, representation, ideology and resistance

I will now move away from the field of social psychology and discuss an alternative 'discursive perspective'. Some ideas in cultural studies about cultural representations, identity and resistance have influenced my theoretical and methodological thinking and

62

analysis of *Gringo*. Rather than discussing this vast field as a whole which poses not only problems of space, but of developing a focussed, integrated line of argumentation and conceptualization, I have opted to concentrate on the thinker who is perhaps the most single important exemplar of this approach: Stuart Hall. I have looked at Hall firstly because unlike much discursive psychology (such as that mentioned above), Hall focuses on wider culture and very little emphasis is put on analysing the inter-personal level of text and talk: he does not adopt what Parker (2003: 133) calls a 'micro-sociological' view. Secondly, many of the themes and concerns of the SIT tradition about contested identities are actually reproduced in Hall, but without the problematic cognitive terms such as perception, accentuation and stimuli. Instead, he emphasises ideology, representation and language. Thirdly, despite the importance placed on discourse, he recognises that identities also have a psychic element and hence, his ideas can be seen as a bridge to Lacanian psychoanalysis[25] which is discussed in the next chapter.

Hall synthesises his writing from a variety of traditions and one cannot say that he has a neat, completed and original *theory* because he draws on many influential writers and his ideas developed over time. It is more accurate to state that he grounds his writing (especially the later material) in poststructuralist thought in order to speculate about the relation between identity, cultural representations and ideology. I am attempting to provide a review of this later work as a consistent reference point through this heterogeneous field.

From the poststructuralist perspective, a theory of social identity cannot be separated from a notion of discourse. Discourse could be defined as

> ways of referring to or constructing knowledge about a particular topic of practice: a cluster (or *formation*) of ideas, images and practices, which provide ways of talking about, forms of knowledge and conduct associated with, a particular topic, social activity or institutional site in society...'Discursive' [is] the general term used to refer to any approach in which meaning, representation and culture are considered to be constitutive (Hall, 1997: 6, emphasis in original).

---

[25] Despite drawing from psychoanalytic ideas in his later writings, Hall also demonstrates some critical reservations for the use of psychoanalysis in the understanding of representation and ideology (see Hall, 1980).

Discourses provide us with ways to see ourselves and others, our in-groups and out-groups; discourses furthermore limit other ways of seeing these issues. Hall claims that despite the postmodern fragmentation and splitting of the notion of identity, (which makes it difficult to even conceptualise it), it is a fundamental concept "without which certain key questions cannot be thought at all" (1996a:3). For example, we cannot understand ideology or politics without such a notion; but neither can we understand identity without ideology and politics. Hence, the emphasis is on the de-centred self – which does not mean that the subject is inoperative but that we conceptualise it in a different way (Hall, 1992b; 1996a). The modern world, with its rapid transformations, increasing technology, globalisation and migrations, has challenged the sense of identity as integrated and whole. Hall refers to this as "double displacements - decentring individuals both from their place in the social and cultural world and from themselves", leading to a "crisis of identity" (1992b: 275). Hence while we might once have felt our identities to be unitary, the modern world has led to the fragmentation of the self, a self-image which is constructed out of many different identities. People who are marginalized may belong to several subordinated categories. For example, one can be Muslim *and* of lower class; one can be of multiple nationalities and multiple affiliations. Identities are "multiply constructed across different, often intersecting and antagonistic, discourses, practices and positions" (ibid.: 1996a: 4). This is similar to the SCT idea "that the self-concept comprises many different components [and they are] situation specific: particular self-concepts tend to be activated (switched on) in specific situations producing specific self-images" (Turner et al.. 1987: 44). However, what Hall suggests is that this is a problematic process because it means that the self is created from "contradictory or unresolved identities" (1992b: 277). Moreover, many collective identities (or categories in SIT language), which might have previously been viewed as homogenous, are today in fact fragmented. They are not already there for us to identify with and Hall states, "they do not give us the code of identity as...they did in the past" (1991: 47). Hence, the understanding of categories in the SIT tradition, such as those of class or nation, do not have such stable grounding in the first place for people to categorize themselves in non-contradictory ways.

What is more, SIT's notion of social comparison and search for distinctiveness can be translated into Saussure's (1974) idea that signs can only obtain their meaning through being different to other signs. Nevertheless, apart from this being an aspect of language (something neglected in SIT), Saussure's perspective also brings out the importance of the *relation* between the signs. Thus, being a 'black' does not mean much without the knowledge that there are also 'whites' in this world. Hence, this point is about no positive essences: identity is only produced via the differential comparison with those who are 'other than me'. It is about making *identifications* with people who are considered to be *same* as me, but more importantly, it involves *splitting* myself from those who are considered to be *different* to me (Hall, 1991). In other words, the very basis of identity is that of a differential comparative framework, an idea taken to hold not only for signifiers within a language, but for categories of personhood as well. Hall, following Derrida, Laclau and Butler, takes this somewhat further and claims that identity "as a process, as a discourse, is always told from the position of the Other" (ibid.: 49; 1996a). Thus, what is viewed to be outside us when we make social comparisons and self-categorisations – to use SIT language – is in fact both inherently external *and* internal to us. Identity "requires what is left outside, its constitutive outside, to consolidate the process" (Hall, 1996a: 3). Identity construction only substantiates itself by continual negative or discriminating reference to what it is not. Social categories are then not natural phenomenon 'out there'. Rather they aim at a unitary, homogenous and coherent status; they are never as stable as they would pretend, and could be said to be partly fictional or imaginary (ibid., 1996a). However, what this process excludes will always destabilise what it includes (ibid.). This reaffirms the idea that identity categories are not completely separate and unitary, but *ambivalent* and hence especially in our globalised world, the social comparison and 'differentiation' that Tajfel discusses are perhaps more complex and problematic in nature, never relying on a stable inherent term.

Further, it is through language and signifying processes that we attempt to represent, 'fix' and create a unitary and coherent identity. *It is signifiers which are involved in categorisation processes.* However, as the SIT tradition very well illustrates, categorisation is temporary. Hall (1997) draws from Saussurian ideas about the arbitrary

relation between the signifier and the signified, to state that representation allows for slippages. It enables the polyvalent, over-determined and ambiguous nature of meaning. There is always a potential of upsetting the meanings produced. Any form of identity based on such processes is thus not fixed, essential or permanent. The multiplication of different perspectives and contexts, i.e. reading-positions which undermine the conventionality of the signifier-signified relationship further opens up the horizon for ambiguity and polysemic proliferation of potential meanings. The fixedness of the signifier-signified relationship destabilizes, and hence undermines the closedness of self-unified, fixed identities.

There are some parallels to SIT in the idea that social identities are context dependent and malleable, but added are the factors of *language, culture and ideology*, which allows the tools with which people are represented. So, we temporarily identify with one or many of the multiplicity of cultural meanings available to us in the modern world. This means that "identities are constantly in the process of change and transformation" (ibid.: 1996a: 4).

This does not imply that we can categorise ourselves into one or other group as we please. Just like some of the discursive psychology approaches mentioned above, Hall's (1996a; 1997) ideas about identity are not about *self*-categorisation, but about representation and power. How we have been represented/categorised influences how we narrate/represent ourselves (ibid., 1996a). Our identities are subject to and depend on historical and discursive processes. They emerge, and are spoken of from a specific historical position. Therefore, what we say about our identities never completely comes from us and only us. In many ways, one could say, following Hall, that our identities had already *been spoken of, even before* we spoke about ourselves. Language comes before us and thus we have already been positioned by language and discourse.

What we learn from Hall is that "attempting to fix meaning is exactly why *power* intervenes" (1997: 10). If a given order of representation, or more precisely the operation of the signifier allows for forms of slippage, then what will stop this slippage, secure a signified, and introduce *meaning* is ideology. Thus, much of what lends identities their fixity is ideological in nature. In fact, ideology could not succeed if it did not work at the level of identity because ideology requires people to identify with

certain representations. However, crucially, Hall also recognises that identities cannot be merely about representation because they "can never be adequate – identical – to the subject processes which are temporarily invested in them" (1996a: 6). Representation, discourse, words, speech, can never capture the 'whole' of identity; it can never encapsulate everything that is involved in identification processes (as Lacan (1975) also recognises). Although it is important to understand the ways in which discourses, ideologies and power produce subject positions, it is just as important to look at the other side of the coin, that is, to understand the *psychic* processes which are involved when the subject attaches themselves to these positions. Hall states that

> if ideology is effective, it is because it works at *both* the rudimentary levels of psychic identity and the drives *and* at the level of discursive formation and practices which constitute the social field (1996a: 7, emphasis in original).

Identity emerges at the meeting point between the psychic and the discursive/social (ibid., 1996a: 7). Although Hall suggests that psychoanalysis can help us in this task of bringing out exactly *how* these two processes converge (see especially Hall (1995; 1996a) where he frequently uses psychoanalytic terms in his explanation of identity), he does not elaborate much more on this issue. This is why in the next chapter, I draw from Lacanian psychoanalysis in order to further complicate both SIT's and Hall's understanding of social identity and resistance and argue that Lacan succeeds in opening up and scrutinizing the relation between the psychic/affective and the discursive. In the following chapter, I discuss the strategies for resistance which Hall proposes.

3.3.1 Transcoding representations

The view of representation as flexible and malleable, rather than fixed and given, allows for the possibility of challenge, contestation and resistance. Thus, the SIT tradition is correct when assuming that categories can be re-negotiated. Hall is very much concerned with resistance and negotiation of identities. He argues that we need to study

> what the mechanisms are by which individuals as subjects identify (or do not identify) with the 'positions' to which they are summoned; as well as how they fashion, stylize, produce and 'perform' these positions, and why they never do so completely, for once and all time, and some never do, or are in a constant, agonistic process of struggling with, resisting, negotiating and accommodating the normative or regulative rules with which they confront and regulate themselves (1996a: 12).

In order to analyse how meaning becomes re-appropriated, Hall (1997) discusses three forms of 'transcoding' strategies: reversing stereotypes, changing negative images into positive ones, and challenging the representation from within. These remind us of SIT's 'social creativity' ideas. However, what Hall's version really emphasises, is that the strategies of social creativity work within the domain of representational practices and cultural images (not cognitive, but representations as a product of discourse, culture and power). He also comments on how effective they might be.

Reversing stereotypes is a method which inverts one kind of image into its opposite. The examples which Hall gives are the African-American movies which proliferated in the 1970s which reversed the usual stereotypes of blacks as 'childlike', 'dependant' into 'heroes' (although they were usually depicted as criminal heroes). SIT does not have a version of this strategy, but one could say that this approach involves the technique of 'introducing new dimensions' – so for example, the hegemonic codes of representation (the automatic equation of blackness with the juvenile, the unintelligent) is altered and varied by the introduction of a new set of potential identities and meanings, still related to, but not wholly contingent upon the previous cultural codes: black masculinity remains tied, for example, to ideas of criminality, but here it attains a more heroic, even 'Robin Hood' like status, in which the subject possesses a more agentic subjectivity, a position more open to relative identification. This strategy, Hall claims, is not necessarily successful as it still works with stereotypes and the risk now becomes, for example, that instead of seeing blacks as 'childlike', they are viewed as 'criminals'. The problem is that the representation of blacks is still stereotypical.

The second strategy which the author discusses is the substitution of negative images with positive ones; what has usually been represented in negative terms, is now viewed positively. In SIT- language this entails re-evaluating a negative aspect of the social category. One can state that this involves 'celebrating difference', or what Tajfel called the demand to be 'equal, but different'. However, we learn from Hall that this method risks further otherisation. Moreover, the alteration of negatively evaluated images into positively evaluated ones does not necessarily eliminate the negative ones. Further, as in the case of United Colours of Benetton, one can question whether the proliferation of positive images of 'difference' is just another manoeuvre of liberal-capitalism to sell

products (Hall, 1997). Another potential problem is that because one never simply eradicates the past history of a sequence of representations or codes, then even a reversal of a negative into a positive will not work simply to make it just another item in a set of positive terms. It is different to these terms by virtue of having undergone a reversal. Thus, we are left with three categories: the good, the bad, and the bad-turned-good, which now has a different status.

The last, but very important strategy is non-existent in Social Identity Theory, perhaps because it fails to account for language and representation in processes of identity and resistance. This method deals with the *form* of representation rather than attempting to work mainly with its content. The aim here is to engage in the struggle of representation and accept that meaning can never be finalised. So it is a type of contestation enabled by working *with* the representations themselves, attempting to make them odd, absurd, and bring out in the open that which is usually concealed: their contradictions and obscurities. As Hall recognises, even this method has its limitations as its effect is undecided: will it unsettle or confirm stereotypes? In short, despite that meaning can never be totally fixed, the ambivalent nature of representation means that its transcoding is a very difficult task. Ali-G is an example of this. The Ali-G character is a mode of depiction which uses humour and exaggeration in both unsettling/ridiculing a type of racist representation, while simultaneously running the risk of reinforcing it. It opens up multiple possibilities of response: people can laugh at the *stereotypes*, which may lead the spectator to question the latter. However, they can also laugh at the *social group* who are meant to be represented by the Ali-G character, the 'pakis' or the 'blacks', and this might result in the strengthening and affirmation of the already held stereotypes.

Indeed, both the re-negotiation of stereotypes/representations and the contestation of inequalities – or in other words resistance or social change struggles – sometimes paradoxically have the effect of fixity or non-change. I will return to this problem in later chapters, but I want to point out here that some terms in psychoanalysis can be used to show why change is a struggle. In fact, in psychoanalysis the notion of resistance is less about change than about fixity. Hence, social identities are not always voluntary and momentary as Social Identity Theory and some postmodern approaches

seem to suggest (cf. Condor, 1996). Psychoanalysis can help us in theorising how political resistance struggles might be inextricably linked to psychic resistance.

3.4 Political resistance and psychoanalytic resistance

Resistance in psychoanalysis is an important (and contested) concept and if we were to simplify a very complicated idea, it could be described as *resistance to change in oneself or in the way in which one gains pleasure*. Laplanche and Pontalis (1973) propose that the term

> 'resistance' is given to everything in the words and actions of the analysand that obstructs his gaining access to his unconscious (p. 394).

It is the refusal to put what is repressed into consciousness; it is the blockage that hinders progress in treatment. Thus, the term resistance can be argued to be a kind of defence which is specific for the analytic context.

Although resistance to racialised identities or racism on the one hand, and the psychoanalytic definition of resistance on the other are normally considered to be distinct phenomena, they in fact have similarities and may well be intertwined. They can both be seen as resistance to being affected by discourse; in the former, one resists racist discourse, in the latter, one resists the powers, or the effects of, the psychoanalytic discourse; the discourse which is used with the aim of changing the subject. Alcorn (1994) claims that "one can, in the first instance, resist 'bad' ideology [and] in the second instance one can resist knowing that ideology is bad" (p. 34). Although given political and material circumstances may have a detrimental effect on a particular subject, they can still refuse to accept that certain worldviews, activities, and modes of life, are oppressive or unfavourable. Alcorn argues that the first kind of resistance, which includes political resistance - for example resistance to racism - is encouraged by "knowledge" and "self-consciousness", and fights those influences that cause pain and misery (p. 33). The second kind is a form of resistance that refuses to accept or *even know* what it is that causes suffering. Political resistance can be proactive and beneficial, it is aimed at change, whereas analytic resistance is more negative, it inhibits change (Alcorn, 1994). Rose (1996) argues that, psychoanalytic resistance is more

related to "defensiveness" than to liberation; "you resist when you don't want to budge" (p. 5). Alcorn's idea can be shown schematically in a simple table:

Political resistance	Psychoanalytic resistance
Resistance to the effects of discourse	Resistance to the effects of discourse
Resist prevailing, status quo ideological formations	Resists challenging prevailing, status quo ideological formations
Encouraged by knowledge	Resists knowing the cause of suffering
Resistance to the hegemonic effects of discourse as it exists as 'public idiom' within the social realm	Resistance to the psychical effects and productions of discourse as it is generated with relations to given patterns of libidinal economy
Aimed at change	Inhibits change

Table 1: Comparing and contrasting political resistance with psychoanalytic resistance

From this table we can clearly see that the only element which the two kinds of resistances have in common is the fact that they are both resistance against the effects of discourse. In other respects, they contradict each other: the column on the left represents challenge, contestation and transformation, whereas the column on the right represents rigidity and inflexibility.

My argument is that it may be problematic to assume that political resistance might always be motivated by knowledge. In fact, the notion of 'knowledge' might mislead us. One can question what has motivated some political revolutions in history. Sometimes revolutions have led to surprising consequences, which makes one rethink what kind of 'self-consciousness' or 'knowledge' they were motivated by (the 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran, which led to the establishment of a fundamentalist, oppressive Islamic Republic is an example). Žižek (2002) states that "in so far as 'actuality is rational', it is precisely the external, social realisation of our aims and intentions that testifies to their true meaning" (p.71). In other words, the 'true' intentions of an action are more likely to be identified by the *result* of the action than by the self-conscious intentions as uttered by the actors. From Lacan's teachings of the 'four discourses' we learn that political protest is sometimes not simply aimed at 'real' change, but may have other – perhaps more ambiguous or concealed – goals (I will come back to this in chapter 8). Hence, if we condense the ingredients in the right

column with those in the left column, we will have an understanding of resistance which is more ambivalent.

The clinical psychoanalytic situation can be used as a metaphor for the ambivalence of political resistance struggles, contestations against racism or social change efforts. We can use the analogy of someone commencing psychoanalysis. Let us assume that before starting, this person is sometimes in great emotional and mental pain. This state is affecting and hindering this person from living a happy and fulfilled life. The decision to start analysis is a way of resisting this kind of damaging influence that the pain is having on this person. It is a rather 'self-conscious' decision to start fighting a destructive psychological state. However, given that we know from psychoanalysis that the ambiguous pleasure-pain of psychical symptoms remain gratifying even while they are disruptive, that indeed, we enjoy our symptoms – as Freud (1957) insists people never willingly abandon a source of libidinal satisfaction– the analysand will tenaciously fight against giving up such symptoms. The notion of the 'flight into health', the idea that the analysand would rather make one or two minor changes to their life than give up their underlying libidinal patterns of gratification, is crucial here. Lacan (1975) views the ego itself as structured by resistance and fixity, and is thus against change or a dialectical movement of desire. Thus, once this person starts analysis, he or she does "not *use* knowledge to effect a freedom from suffering; the subject in fact *denies* knowledge in order to continue to suffer" (Alcorn, 1994: 34, emphasis in original). This indicates the ambiguous nature of resistance: "a person wants something (for example, to change) but [they do] not want it at the same time" (Frosh, 2003: 84). What I am arguing then should by now be clear: The two kinds of resistances (political and psychoanalytic) can be combined and occur at one and the same time. Resistance to racism can *contain* resistance to change. In other words, (psychic) resistance can exist within (political) resistance.

The psychoanalytic clinical language has many vocabularies which point to the difficulties of change. The Lacanian idea of *repetition* is the tendency of the subject to compulsively repeat certain signifiers, or more accurately, it is the 'insistence' of

signifiers to repeatedly enact themselves[26]. Repetition is related to the death drive which, for Freud (1955a), is the drift towards repeating destructive or upsetting experiences and finding a sense of enjoyment in them. For Lacan, the death drive can be understood as the repetition inherent in any circuit of discourse, which because of the various factors of entropy, message breakdown, and other such vicissitudes of communication, often gets locked into incessant patterns of repetition (Lacan, 1988). Bracher clarifies this point:

> The human subject, that is, as a phenomenon having some sort of identity from one moment to the next, is constituted by the effect of the signifier, the signifier serving to mark a certain state of affairs as the repetition of an earlier state of affairs. And the repetition of the [signifier] as the subject's identity is the motive force beneath the workings of both conscious and unconscious systems (Bracher, 1993: 25).

Further, the idea of *symptoms* as the return of the repressed (Freud, 1915a) lends to the Lacanian notion that symptoms are kinds of knots of *jouissance*: symptoms tie up enjoyment and suffering together. This is the real reason for their inertia, our resistance to changing them because they give us libidinal enjoyments. Symptoms demonstrate to the subject that there is 'a past which will not pass'. "A symptom is that which we would like to get rid of, but which sheer will-power does not budge" (Glynos, 2003: 7). The symptom disrupts the unity and sense of coherence of the subject; it keeps the subject and fixes it in a certain place and it leads to repetitive regression back to a previous state of being. In short, the symptom is that part of the subject which resists change and treats any attempts at transformation as unwelcome because the subject, in some sense, unconsciously enjoys the symptom, even if it is consciously painful. In clinical psychoanalysis, although the aim is to induce change in the subject, it is recognised that given patterns of gratification, of libidinal enjoyment, there is a resistance to change; the entrenched libidinal patterns, modes of *jouissance* are particularly resistant to change. In short,

> from a psychoanalytic point of view, socio-political symptoms persist exactly because they provide the social subject with a form of enjoyment. This explains why it is so hard to dis-articulate or displace such symptoms (Glynos and Stavrakakis, 2003: 120).

---

[26] Note that the signifier itself is the dominant category for Lacan, not the agency of the subject.

3.5 Conclusion

SIT is useful because a) it shows us that groups have significant effect on members and b) it gives us tools to investigate the processes of change that those with subordinated identities engage in. Poststructuralist approaches to identity are an important development which demonstrates a) how identities are a product of wider historical, political and discursive forces and b) how the maintenance and challenge of identities are sustained through different regimes of representation. Stuart Hall's approach recognises first, that ideology or power is what fixes meaning/identity and second, that identity is not fully a matter of language, discourse and representation: the subject is not reducible to discourse. Hence, what is missing in our theoretical development is an account of enjoyment insofar as it produces types of fixity and ideological closure, and insofar as it links to operations of desire and fantasy. It is only through incorporating these concepts which we can understand the *libidinal economy of representations*.

To conclude, from the above discussions we may pose a list of questions that we can develop in the next and following chapters through an appeal to psychoanalysis.

- Why do group ideals and norms function so as to have such important consequences for individuals?

- Why do groups and individuals reproduce some dominant hegemonic representations rather than others?

- Why does depersonalisation happen when social groups become salient to individuals?

- What is it that underlies the motivation to seek positive distinctiveness? In whose gaze is distinctiveness desired?

- Why is there sometimes a resistance to do away with a stigmatized identity?

- How can we theorize the circumstances under which the 'majority' identity, the entrenched ideology of a particular culture, can be effectively challenged?

4   Real, Symbolic and Imaginary: What can we learn from Lacan?

4.1   Introduction

In the previous chapter, we saw how the social psychological theory of social identity shows some of the *processes* involved in intergroup relations on the one hand and in intra-group relations on the other. A discursive perspective indicates the importance of *ideological* issues and the *content* of identities, which means that discourse and representation cannot be ignored. However, as Hall recognised, identity should not be reduced to discourse, and hence we need a theory which includes both language and psychic/psychological processes, and which does not reduce such processes to a solely cognitive or rationalistic dimension. This is because a rationalistic perspective does not adequately account for what it is that *attaches* people to specific content of identities, nor does it explain why certain identities *stick*, despite rational argument. Psychoanalysis can be used to answer the *why* of identification processes. As Frosh (1997) argues,

> psychoanalysis could...make sense of the complex business of creating and recreating
> 'identities' and of filling these out with content as well as exploring the intense investment
> which people hold in them and the deep aggression (for example, as racism or homophobia) to
> which they often give rise (p. 160).

Lacanian theory can be used to elaborate on what Hall calls the 'psychic'; it gives us clues about how to view identity as existing *in between* the discursive and the psychic/libidinal [27]. Lacan shows us that the discursive is the field of the Other - this is the domain of Symbolic functioning, the mediated social exchange, which for Lacan is also a precondition for a trans-individual unconscious. Although the subject is partly constituted by the discursive (without operation of the signifier, the subject as such

---

[27] Hall seems to use the psychic as a general term, but it should be clear that the psychic and the libidinal are not the same: the psychic refers to anything that pertains to the mind, including unconscious symbolism, while the libidinal concerns the bodily, sexual energy which can be displaced. Skelton (2006: 284) defines the libidinal as: "everything that energizes and binds people together – ties of loyalty, brotherhood and community". Following Lacan, in this thesis 'libido' or 'libidinal ' refers more generally to the domain of the Real, to *jouissance*. This also means that I treat libido, affect and *jouissance* as synonymous because as Fink (1999a) states: "where there is affect, there is *jouissance*" (p. 212). Note also that one can state that the libidinal economy is one way of organizing jouissance.

would not even exist) the Lacanian School nevertheless recognises that there must be something which comes in between the subject and discourse. A concept of libidinal economy is needed, as a 'connector', as that which makes subjects attached to discourses and societal ideals. In other words, in order for the subject to assign itself to discourse or ideologies, there has to be something 'in it' for him/her in the form of 'libidinal reward'. Lacanian theory demonstrates more precisely how the joining of the discursive and the libidinal works, by teaching us about desire, fantasy, *objet a* and *jouissance*. In this chapter I provide an overview of the three registers of the Real, Symbolic and the Imaginary (RSI) and argue that this triad is useful for deepening an understanding of identity. In the last section of the chapter, I compare the SIT/SCT paradigm with Lacanian concepts and provide a critique of this paradigm using the RSI. Thus, rather than re-interpreting the SIT tradition in discursive terms, as for example Billig (2002) has done, I promote a Lacanian perspective.

The dubious reputation of Lacan in social psychology and the relative lack of Lacanian terms in the field (Hook, 2008a) means that because of the radical unfamiliarity of its terms and language, it becomes rather tricky to embed Lacan in social psychological research[28]. In this chapter I provide an overview of some of those Lacanian concepts that I have found most crucial in my research on contested identities and resistance. Given that this is not essentially or exclusively a psychoanalytic research project and that I have drawn select concepts from a wide and complex terrain of ideas, it is important to comment on how I have gone about using certain Lacanian terms. My decision to do so has been to complicate the notion of identity, and to enlarge the conceptual resources I have had at my disposal to theorise the challenging phenomena of identity, inter-group relations and resistance that I confronted in the empirical data. Not only did psychoanalytic theory open up possibilities of a multi-dimensional analysis of identity that I could use alongside other (social psychological and discursive) approaches, it also enabled a far more productive perspective on theorizing and analysing the ambiguities of resistance that I found elsewhere.

---

[28] See Parker (2003) for an account of why Lacan's work is not easily accommodated within psychology.

4.2 Psychoanalysis and identification

> In the individual's mental life, someone else is invariably involved, as a model, as an object, as a helper, as an opponent; and so from the very first individual psychology, in this extended but entirely justifiable sense of the words, is at the same time social psychology as well (Freud, 1959: 1).

Freud views identity as being first and foremost about *identification* which involves another person: "identification is known to psychoanalysis as the earliest expression of an emotional tie with another person" (ibid.: 37). For him it is about the shaping of the ego after another object. In other words, it is a process in which the ego partly introjects another person's ego; it is the taking in of an outside object. However, in as much as the object in question is an external object, the idea of becoming *similar* to someone or something simultaneously implies *difference*. Identification takes place via taking in outside objects and making them part of the ego. Difference is thus implied by virtue of how this external image does not always correlate with inner experience. Thus, because identity is about identification with another, we can deduce from Freud that identity in both content and process is always necessarily social. Further, being so dependent on an outside image is one of the reasons why it can never be viewed as having a unitary, coherent or homogenous nature.

The Lacanian position is exactly that there is no such coherent essence. The subject is considered to always be about to arrive, it is not already finished and completed but it is in the process of becoming - a retroactively constituted process, an effect of the signifier which gives the subject its identity 'after the event'. Although the illusion is that the subject was already there from the very beginning (Žižek, 1989). If this is the case, however, how are groups formed which are more or less coherent? What is it that makes a certain identity *stick*? What is it that maintains or helps to uphold it? As Hall (1995; 1996a) claimed, it is power and ideology which fixes representation and hence identity. However, Lacan shows us that we cannot neglect the libid.inal/affective dimension[29]

---

[29] The Freudian/Lacanian principle states that the subject does not repress affects, but the representations/signifiers related to those affects: repression "operates on nothing other than signifiers" (Lacan, 1986: 44). Glynos and Stavrakakis (2008:267) further state that "if affect represents the quantum of libidinal energy, we could say that emotion results from the way it gets caught up in a network of signifiers (or 'ideas' in Freudian terms)". Hence, emotions deceive us, they can get displaced and it is

and the factor of fantasy as crucial 'binding' factors. Lacanian theory demonstrates that identity is constituted by a certain lack, it is some experience of lack of 'fullness' which allows for identification and which permits the subject to subsist. As Žižek (2005) states, "the subject is a paradoxical entity which is, so to speak, its own negative, i.e., which persists only insofar as its full realisation is blocked" (p. 254). Hence, lack implies that incompletion, desire and the inadequacy of full identificatory meaning are all hallmarks of the modern subject. Even though it can never be filled, made complete once and for all, in the attempt to fill the lack, we identify with certain representations (Glynos and Stavrakakis, 2008).

Lacan's development of the 'Real, Symbolic and Imaginary' can be used to "sidestep a simple distinction between what lies 'inside' and what lies 'outside' discourse" (Parker, 2005a: 171). These three registers can also fruitfully be added to a theory of identity. We might link these to the domains of a) cognition, meaning and (mis)recognition focused on substantiating an ego (Imaginary), b) the operations of discourse, language and socially-codified laws and traditions (Symbolic) and c) the extra-discursive realm which includes those intense libidinal affects (often understood in the terms of *jouissance* or enjoyment) that escape the domestication of language (Real).

4.2.1 Imaginary and Symbolic identification

For Lacan, the subject is constituted by a sequence of identifications, which create a split subject. In his earliest theorisation of the constitution of identity, Lacan claims that in the first stages of life, in what he calls the *mirror stage*, a lack of motor coordination, and the experience of anxiety and disharmony instantiates the identification with a coherent and unitary image in the mirror, a like-image of others in the infant's environment, or the reflection of its body in the eyes of its parents. Lacan states:

> We have only to understand the mirror stage as an identification, in the full sense that analysis gives to the term: namely, the transformation that takes place in the subject when he assumes an image (Lacan, 1977: 4).

---

therefore not useful to focus on them. We should rather investigate ideas/signifiers in the fantasies which structure enjoyment (ibid.).

In short, the subject takes on a finalised/gestalt body-image which comes from the outside and promises totality and completeness. Thus, "the mirror stage is a drama whose internal thrust is precipitated from insufficiency to anticipation" (ibid.: 5).

The ego is then a creation through an image given by the Imaginary other, by *a* (which stands for the French word *autre* (other)). The subject "sees himself in *a*, and that is why he has an ego" (Lacan, 1988: 243). As Leader (2000) puts it: "the ego is first of all the other" (p. 173) and it is through this other, that we can have any sense of self or identity. Imaginary identification is then identification with a lovable image, and for this reason it entails a narcissistic component. It is the image which appears likeable to us and signifies *who we want to be*. It should be noted that the Imaginary register is typified by similarity and difference. It is also characterised not only by the ego's self-love but also by rivalry and aggression.

The subject first experiences jubilation at finding a coherent image instead of its fragmented bodily reality, but then it undergoes alienation, because the image is from the outside; the subject has to pass via a third party in order to gain a body-image." The mirror stage...manufactures for the subject...an alienating identity" (Lacan, 1977: 5). The image in the mirror is an image *for someone else*; there is someone else who authorises the images as *our* image. This third party (the mother for example) links this image to Symbolic aspects of the family history ('your nose is just like your grandfather's). Thus, the subject is not at the centre of thinking about himself, although he may believe that he is. This is about an identification with the lovable image, the *ideal-ego* mediated by the Symbolic values of an Other. However, the inherent dependence on this third party of the big Other is concealed here (Žižek, 1989).

This implies that the ideal-ego is not enough for the achievement of an ego, and it is only through identification with "a fixed point"; with a set of Symbolic *ego-ideals* that there can be a completion (Fink, 2004: 118). Although the mirror stage sets the ground, it is mainly the existence of the Symbolic world which proves that we are not just biological beings. Symbolic identification is with *the position from which we are being seen*, and from which we appear lovable. This is the point from which our ideal-ego is approved. This is "the Other's ideal that the subject internalizes, [it is] the subject's identification with the Other's ideal" (Fink, 2004: 117). This ideal is what he or she

would need to be in order to be seen as lovable in the gaze of the Other. It is thus from the point of the ego-ideal that the body image makes sense. The meaning of our ideal-ego images is determined by an Other, which has an existence before and beyond the subject. Moreover, in Imaginary identification we try to resemble the image with which we identify. Here, the other can be replaced by the ego and the ego can be replaced by the other, and "we may therefore speak of dialectic of identification of oneself with the other and of the other with oneself" (Dor, 1998: 12). In Symbolic identification, however, the other is always a radical Other, it is not like us, it is not possible to subjectify the Other. It is not identified with something concrete, but with an order or mandate which is passed on to the subject by his history and cultural environment. Culture works largely by the force of demand made by the Other, the expectations or ego-ideals of the Other.

What we can deduce from this is that not any arbitrary set of attributes, not *all* potentially available images can function as the basis of an idealizing image (ideal-ego). We can also add that what we identify with in the Imaginary field does not always have to be a 'positive' feature, it can also be with something 'negative', such as a failure or a weakness (Žižek, 1989). The Symbolic identification determines the image with which we identify, because we believe that by identifying with this or that image, we obtain the recognition and love of the Symbolic Other. "It is in terms of...want-to-please attitude or its corollary, a fear to displease (or what Lacan formulates as a primitive need for recognition and love), that [the Other's] demand is successful" (Alcorn, 2002: 40).

We shall note that "what is central to and for identification is not in the first instance a set of contents, but a *position* in relation to the other of identification" (Cowie, 1997: 74, emphasis in original). This positioning has specific functions for the subject. Freud (1959) gives the example of a group of girls in a boarding school who copy the hysterical symptoms of their friend who receives a dismissive letter from her lover because they also wished for a love affair. Thus, this is not so much about the *content* of the identification, or about wanting to be the girl who received the letter, but it is about the wish to be in her *position* in relation to an Other (the lover).

Therefore, we might ask: which Other is the subject desiring recognition from? Which Other is considered when the subject identifies themselves with an image? Here is not a matter of how we see ourselves in images, but how we are seen by that Other which gives these images an order and which provides the co-ordinates according to which they become viewable, prioritized, important versus non-important.

The Symbolic offers the subject another possibility of coherence, but this is also alienating. Nevertheless, the Symbolic does provide a set of ego-ideals in which the subject can recognise itself, and be recognised by others:

> The result of this...is the establishment of a cluster of master signifiers as the ego-ideal, which originates in the child's attempt to be desired and loved – that is, recognised...by the Other (Bracher, 1993: 24).

Thus, despite being alienating, the master signifiers offer momentary sense of continuity, coherence or identity. They are signifiers which are accepted without scrutiny or questioning; they are what justifies arguments or demands in a given discourse. When we identify with master signifiers, they make us feel significant in the eyes of the Other, they make us feel recognised.

The relationship between Imaginary and Symbolic identification can be demonstrated with Freud's (1959) theory of the libidinal constitution of groups. Freud is concerned with how subjects identify with each other in the context of large groups or ideological affiliations. He claims that the people in a group identify with each other because of "an important emotional common quality; and we may suspect that this common quality lies in the nature of the tie with the leader" (p. 137). Thus, he implies that the identifications between the members of the group are different to the identification the members make with the leader:

> A ...group...is a number of individuals who have put one and the same object in the place of their ego-ideal and have consequently identified themselves with one another in their ego (ibid.: 147).

Thus, we can suppose that the identifications which members of the group make with each other are *Imaginary*, because they are about identification with like-others - while identification which is made with the leader is *Symbolic*, because this involves identification with someone who is not like anybody in the group, but which, following

81

Freud, we could say takes the position of the ego-ideal or the big Other for the members.

4.2.2 The big Other and the unconscious

As implied above, there are two orders of alienation: the alienation of the subject in assuming the other's image (the alienation of taking on an Imaginary identification), and the second order of alienation of adopting signifiers from within the field of the Other as a means of assuming a Symbolic identity. The submission to the Other "involves choosing one's own disappearance" (Fink 2003: 246). This is the disappearance of the bodily, living being. However, it is through this alienation in the Other that the subject gains a place in the Symbolic domain, he becomes a speaking subject, a subject of the signifier even though he stays empty; he is 'lacking' in the sense that the 'full' *jouissance*, the mythical complete bodily intensity associated with the primal object of satisfaction, is now forever compromised. Hence, in alienation the subject has a choice to become a subject of language, and to let language represent her desires and needs and her subjectivity. Thus, by becoming a subject of the signifier, there is a transformation from the bodily and animal 'nothingness' in the field of the Real, to existence as 'something' in the Symbolic field. In this process the signifier is repressed, the Symbolic order is constituted and the unconscious is created, and thus it is the beginning of the constitution of the subject. This is why we could say that because the ego is inherently alienated, created through identification by means of a Symbolic Other, identity is inherently split: Split between the conscious (the realm of the ego) and the unconscious (the realm of the Other).

Nevertheless, the register of the Other cannot be understood as being about intersubjective, i.e. other-to-other, ego-to-ego, relationships. Lacanian psychoanalysis goes beyond the locus of 'intersubjectivity' (Grigg, 2001). The latter is according to Lacan in the sphere of the Imaginary. Meaning making is not only an intersubjective process because the big Other is the main source from which meaning is co-produced:

> We must distinguish two *other*, at least two – an other with a capital O, and an other with a small o, which is the ego. In the function of speech, we are concerned with the *Other* (Lacan, 1988: 236, emphasis in original).

However, the paradox is that the big Other, belonging to the realm of the Symbolic and external to the Imaginary, simultaneously grounds these Imaginary relationships, makes them possible. The position of the big Other is the point from which the subject understands himself and gains the socio-Symbolic co-ordinates that his Imaginary subjectivity and relationship depend on. Thus, it is at one and the same time radically external and deeply internal to the subject and therefore helps us to go beyond social/individual, internal/external and objective/subjective dualisms: it has an 'in-between' kind of place, it exists in between society and the psyche. Hence, the big other is a mediator between the subjective and the objective, and it cannot be reduced to either. Moreover, as such it is reducible neither to the psychological nor to the societal; it is something parallel to the *indivisible mediator* between the 'internal' and the 'external'. This is why Lacan states that "the unconscious is the discourse of the Other" (e.g. Lacan, 1977: 214); because each unconscious is inscribed with what was originally outside and Other to the subject. There is a quote in Freud himself which alludes to the Otherness in the unconscious, which we can suggest anticipates the Lacanian big Other:

> All the acts and manifestations which I notice in myself and do not know how to link up with the rest of my mental life must be judged as if they belonged to someone else (Freud, 1915b).

As Fink (2004) states "that which is unconscious is not something one 'actively', consciously grasps but, rather, something that is 'passively' registered, inscribed, or counted" (p. 109).

Introducing the concept of the big Other into our understanding of the unconscious, means that we depart from a conception of it as only existing 'deep within' the subject. According to Lacan (1977), the big Other can be viewed as the 'treasury of signifiers' (the Symbolic codes and laws). Hence, because the Symbolic Other is the source of the unconscious, it is incorrect to state that the content of the latter is simply repressed instincts: "the unconscious is neither primordial nor instinctual; what it knows about the elementary is no more than the elements of the signifier" (Lacan, 1977: 187). It has little to do with biological instincts, nor is it necessarily a trace of childhood events (Grigg, 2001). The unconscious is always in a sense beyond individuality; it is something which is 'out there' in society, in the social structure and institutions of any culture, as well as in the psychic field of the subject. It is not antithetical to language, and its content is not

simply affective in nature, functioning on the metonymic and metaphorical lines of the signifier. It would be more accurate to term it "trans-individual unconsciousness" (Hook, 2008a: 68; see also Parker, 2005a: 167). As Žižek (1994) stresses:

> the concept of the unconscious is to be conceived in the strictly Freudian sense, as 'trans-individual' – that is, beyond the ideological opposition of 'individual' and 'collective' unconscious: the subject's unconscious is always grounded in the transferential relationship towards the Other; it is always 'external' with regard to the subject's monadic existence (p. 33).

Similarly, Chiesa (2007) points to the trans-individual unconscious which cannot simply be conceptualised as the unconscious as 'the Other within me' nor as the unconscious as 'the Other subject':

> The idea of an 'individual' unconscious – on which both intra – and intersubjective accounts of the unconscious are based makes sense only if the symbolic is associated with the imaginary. More importantly, we should emphasize [the] unconscious understood as the...nonindividuated *Other of language* (which...relies on the linguistic notion of the signifier and the structural laws that govern it). [W]hat appears – from an imaginary standpoint – to be the 'individual' unconscious of one given subject cannot be dissociated from language as such. It is in this sense that the unconscious is at times said to lie 'outside' the subject...Lacan's transindividual unconscious [thus] corresponds to a symbolic signifying structure (pp. 43-44, emphasis in original).

Recognizing the unconscious as trans-individual, functioning in accordance with the operations of the signifier (rather than equating it with the id as some psychoanalytical traditions do), we can also acknowledge that the content of unconscious desire is not universal but dependent on historical and discursive practices (Hook, 2006).

Lacanian psychoanalysis suggests that when we speak, a locus of 'how I am heard' comes into operation, this is the factor of the Other, a position that, as it were, hovers beyond us, that we can never fully assume or understand, but continually try to. Thus, when I speak, when I write, when I think, I send messages not only to the other in the communicative dialogue, or to myself, but also, and more importantly, I communicate with the big Other, the third and probably most crucial interlocutor in a given communication. Thus, speech or writing is not simply the product of an ego, the signification of the unconscious for Lacan is not in the control of the speaking subject. The Other is that which "when even in the simplest case may aim at a point beyond the flesh and blood listener"[and hence] meaning comes from the Other" (Leader, 2000: 100). This Other is the trans-subjective social matrix, the very stuff of language and

law, the 'social mediation' through which we understand ourselves and our past, through which we make sense of the demands of our family and our society. The ego's Imaginary objective is to project coherent messages, and a unified sense of being, but this Other disrupts this intention and makes our discourse inconsistent and contradictory. Discovering the subject's relation to the Other is important in clinical analytic work:

> the analysis consists in getting [the analysand] to become conscious of his relations, not with the ego of the analyst, but with all these Others who are his true interlocutor, whom he hasn't recognised. It is a matter of the subject progressively discovering which Other he is truly addressing, without knowing it (Lacan, 1988: 246).

Thus, we might approach the Other as Lacan intends, insisting on the omnipresence of social mediation, as the ever-varying network of trans-subjective social structures and values underlying a given society. The Other can hence be viewed not only as the Other of language but as the very principle of a trans-subjective social network that co-ordinates a collective, and holds certain ideals, norms and ideology of a particular society or community. Indeed, we could say that every society brings such an Other into operation, and – to some or other degree - believes in it, as a means of legitimating certain values. The hypothetical nature of the Other should be noted, the fact that it is a point of imaginative speculation. Although the Other is the trans-subjective network of social values, it is also the outcome of assumption (Hook, forthcoming).

Moreover, we must distinguish between the ego-ideal and the big Other. As already mentioned, the Other is the varying network of trans-subjective values, a *position*, a presumed or posited point (or perspective) of appeal to authority, knowledge, validation, embodied in the Symbolic. It has no innate contents. The ego-ideal, by contrast, functions to give the ego a sense of unity, as a benchmark for the ego's achievements (or lack thereof); it exists outside of the ego, and it is comprised of the parental, societal and ideological ideals of our historical, cultural and social location. The term ego-ideals designates a set of ideological values, it is precisely a set of *contents*. Hence, we could say that with the Other we mean the *point* from which we judge our body-image, whilst ego-ideals are the Symbolic *content* of values and norms that fills out, animates this virtual supposition of the Other - the storehouse of signifiers, which determine the subject. What needs to be emphasised is that the Other should not

85

simply be perceived as a set of cultural contents (norms and values for example). The Other is not equal to *fixed* norms; although it organises culture, it should be perceived as a dynamic, evolving process. In short, we suppose that the big Other

1) is the locus, the place, that routinely comes to be filled up with the values and ideals of a society. It comes to be occupied by a set of *contents*; it functions as a store-house of values, 'treasury of signifiers' which contains the collected contents (ego-ideals) of the socio-political and cultural milieu; and

2) it is also a *point* of reflexivity, the structurally necessary point of reference from which one sees and judges one-self.

4.2.3 Desire is the desire of the Other

> the subject is always fastened, pinned, to a signifier which represents him for the other, and through this pinning he is loaded with a Symbolic mandate, he is given a place in the intersubjective network of symbolic relations. The point is that this mandate is ultimately always arbitrary: since its nature is performative, it cannot be accounted for by reference to the 'real' properties and capacities of the subject. So, loaded with this mandate, the subject is automatically confronted with a certain 'che vuoi'? with a question of the Other (Žižek, 1989: 109).

According to psychoanalysis, desire lies at the very heart of the human condition. It is what keeps the subject going; without desire, the subject of psychoanalysis, the speaking subject of the signifier, would not exist. One of the useful elements of the Lacanian school is that it has a dialectical conceptualisation of desire. Desire is not a repressed longing deep within us, but something which always needs to be understood as a result of the attempt to take on signifiers within the domain of the Other, and to thus assume a Symbolic identity pleasing to this Other. What the subject is doing when questioning 'what does the Other want from me' is making his own desire the desire of the other: 'I desire to be desired by the Other'. Hence, the theory of the big Other is also a theory of recognition. As implied above, how we think that we are seen, how we understand ourselves, is possible by *recognising* ourselves through the eyes and ears of the big Other. Fink (2004) puts it like this: "*I want to be wanted.* In order to be wanted, I try to figure out what the Other wants so I can try to be it and thereby be wanted. I desire the Other's desire for me" (p. 119, emphasis in original). Reading between the lines of the mother's talk and behaviour, the child asks, "what does the Other want from

me"? "how am I important to my parents...Man learns to desire *as an other*, as if he were some other person" (Fink, 2003: 248).

Hence, social identification is formed in relation to the desire of the big Other. In a sense, one can say that the subject becomes what he unconsciously perceives that the Other wants him/her to become, the subject's constant assumption is that the Other knows the answer to who he or she is or should be. Power and culture is thus significant in the circulation of desire in society:

> Power can determine desire, as when the discourse of the master controls desire in the follower, but this determination of desire is curiously secondary. It is the derivative of a more primary desire to relate, to love, and to be loved (Alcorn, 2002: 65)

We should note that the big Other is radically socio-culturally contextual, in the sense that in different historical situations, a different big Other could be said to be in operation, and desire should be understood as that which is specific in relation to the particular big Other in a given context[30]. Lacanian theory of the big Other and desire suggests that we need to

> recognize that desire, more so than need, is the central fabric of politics. That is, humans characteristically follow desire and not need in their expression of, and response to, politics...As politicians have long known, people will gladly suffer physical deprivation and kill their neighbours for little more than a need for a symbolic identity (ibid.: 66).

However, where there is social demand imposed by the Other, there will also be resistance; there will also be those who will desire something other than what is demanded of them by society. Ego-ideals are not always strictly and completely followed; there will always be some (unconscious or conscious) resistance to the desire of the Other.

There are two aspects of desire which are crucial to underscore: desire is a) always in relation to a constitutive lack - it is lack which sets desire in motion, lack and desire are thought of as one and the same thing, as flipsides of the same coin - and b) that which is

---

[30] This poses the interesting question of what structural features of the Other could be said to be trans-historical, for although the Other of one socio-cultural context would clearly vary from another, presumably certain features of the Other (the fact that the Other is always a form of radical alterity, and the fact that there is an intimate relationship between desire and the Other for instance) remain relatively constant.

held up by fantasy. Our assumptions about what the Other wants, and our ongoing attempts to figure this out, and respond to this, this hypothetical line of speculation and response is what generates unconscious fantasies. It is fantasy which provides the scene in which desire for an object is played out.

4.2.4 Fantasy and *objet a*

It is the field of the Other – the network of signifiers within which the subject attempts to grasp the Other's desire, and assume a role conducive to it – that leads to Symbolic alienation. This though is not the whole picture: fantasy, inasmuch as it enables a form of separation[31] from the Other, poses the possibility of escaping the permanence of such alienation. Hence there is a

> difference between the desire of the Other and the 'individuated' status of the subject's fantasy...between the alienated reproduction of signifiers within the field of the Other (firstly), and the fantasy-productions enabled by separation and supported by given modes of *jouissance* (secondly) (Hook, 2008b: 16).

Alienation directs the subject *towards* the Other, but separation moves the subject *away* from the Other. One can state that in separation, the subject moves *away* from being the object of the mother's *jouissance* (Fink, 1999a). Hence, the process of separation illuminates aspects of the child's break from complete Imaginary involvement with the mother. Lacan's earlier theory of the Oedipus complex also provides a version of how such a break might occur.

In Lacan's account of the Oedipus complex, the paternal metaphor, the *Name-of-the-Father* replaces the desire of the mother: there is a change over from the attempt to incarnate everything the mother desires, to *be* the desire of the mother, to needing to live one's life in terms of the Other; in terms of the assumption of the laws, the prohibitions linked to the Name-of-the-Father. The *paternal metaphor* is what instantiates the process of having to swap one for another. There is something beyond the mother, something that she wants, and that proves that she is lacking (she does not

---

[31] Lacan only theorizes separation in his later seminars. The concept of separation is considered by many Lacanian commentators to represent something of a breakthrough because until this point, Lacan did not make clear how fantasy activity might hold out any possibility of transcending alienation.

have it all). Giving up on attempting to be the desire of the mother involves seeing that the mother desires something, the *phallus*, as the object of desire beyond the child:

> The child, in his relation to the mother, a relation constituted ...not by his vital dependence on her, but by his dependence on her love, that is to say, by the desire for her desire, identifies himself with the imaginary object of this desire in so far as the mother herself symbolizes it in the phallus (Lacan, 1977: 219).

The attempt to be this phallus as an Imaginary object eventually fails. The imposition of a key signifier, the father's 'no', the law of the father, the father's name (historical lineage, paternity as an institution that embodies the law, and institutes certain 'no's') is a big relief for the child – it means he or she has to give up being all of the mother's desire, it rescues him or her from this anxiety-provoking task by imposing limits and rules. The-Name-of the-Father prohibits the child attaining pleasure from the mother and this requires the child to obtain pleasure from acceptable sources (reality principle in Freud) (Fink, 1999b). Such prohibitions and rules also thus represent the condition of possibility for the child's own desire to emerge, a desire not totally alienated by the image of what the mother wants. Gradually, the Name-of the-Father will become the key signifier which disrupts the mother child unity. "The subject is freed from the impossible and anxiety-provoking task of having to *be* the phallus by realising that the father *has* it [and] this allows the subject to identify with the father" (Evans, 1996: 129, emphasis in original). The child will have to take on the Name-of-the-Father as a way of finding a viable Symbolic identity.

The later theory of separation might thus be said to echo the earlier Oedipal accounts of the Name-of-the-Father and the paternal metaphor. In order for separation to happen, the mother needs to show that she is also lacking, that she is also a desiring being. She must show that she is also divided subject with contradictory desires. It is only then that the process of separation is commenced. The substitution or metaphor (the Name-of-the-Father) has the effect of producing a subject which is separated from and lacking full bodily sense of pleasure, a lack which precipitates desire.

Separation should be seen as in the context of the splitting of the Other into the Other who lacks. Thus, we are dealing here with both the subject's as well as the Other's lacks:

In separation, the subject attempts to fill the mOther's lack - demonstrated by the various manifestations of her desire for something else - with his or her own lack of being, his or her not yet extant self or being. The subject tries to excavate, explore, align, and conjoin those two lacks, seeking out the precise boundaries of the Other's lack in order to fill it with him or herself (Fink, 1999b: 54).

If alienation covers over the bodily Real, separation aims to recover that Real. This 'recovering' is the job of fantasy. Fantasy "is then to be conceived as an Imaginary scenario the function of which is to provide a kind of positive support filling out the subject's constitutive void" (Žižek, 2005: 254). However, fantasy is not simply an Imaginary kind of hopelessness because in later Lacan, fantasy which involves *objet a* and separation seems to hold some promise of a move beyond alienation. It should be noted though that fantasy does not completely overcome alienation. The movement of separation and alienation are both maintained in fantasy; fantasy both alienates and separates. Therefore, fantasy itself should ultimately be crossed in the analytic setting. This issue of 'traversing' the fantasy is discussed later in this thesis.

The *objet a* – the cause of desire presented in the fantasy scenario is a leftover of the mother-child unity. It "can be understood here as the *remainder* produced when that hypothetical unity breaks down, as a last trace of that unity, a last *reminder* thereof" (Fink, 2003: 253, emphasis in original). Hence, there is a separation *from* the mother, and a move *towards* the *objet a*. The latter makes the subject overlook that there has been a division, and promises unity or wholeness in fantasy. Fantasy is what mediates the subject and the social reality through the promise of *objet a* and *jouissance*.

The idea that fantasy aligns the objective and the subjective is a key focus in psychoanalysis. Clinical psychoanalysis consists largely in figuring out the fantasies related to dreams and symptoms. However, it should be pointed out that fantasy involves not simply the attempt to attain a desired object, but the setting out of a scene,

a *sequence* in which the subject has his own part to play and in which permutations of roles and attributions are possible [fantasies are] the *mise-en-scene* of desire (Laplanche and Pontalis, 1973, emphasis in original).

Hence it is a *scene of desire* and even though it is fundamentally subjective, it cannot be understood without the notion of the Other, because it is the response of the questions about the Other's desire. It provides us the answer to the question 'what does the Other

want?' It deals with the puzzle of the Other's desire. More accurately yet, fantasy constitutes the scene where the subject imagines himself in relation to the cause (Other's desire) (Fink, 1999a). It provides an answer to the question of 'who/what I am to the Other? Where do I fit in?'

In the fantasy scenario something, an object, or a person, or experience functions as 'it', as the cause of our desire (Dean, 2006a). This object in so far as it "serves as a symbol of the lack" (Lacan, 2004: 103) sets desire in motion. Hence, an object only becomes an object of desire when it enters fantasy (Žižek, 1989). What this means then is that fantasy shows the way to what we desire, it gives the co-ordinates of our desire, provides the parameters for desired objects. In this scene the split subject is portrayed in relation to the *objet petit a*, which promises to undo the split: It is that thing which holds the promise of making one complete. Nevertheless, we shall note that this object

> signifies lacking but in doing so it makes something present, that is, the lost object in its absence – the *objet petit a* is a monument to lackingness, to a non-existence of the subject (Cowie, 1997: 219).

This 'lost' object is what maintains the subject's desire, and constructs the subject as a desiring subject. It is "perhaps best understood less as an object, then, than as the space or the marker of the space which would be filled" (Neill, 2008: 333). Many things or objects can take up the role of the *objet a*, such as money, consumer products, someone's gaze or smell, a mother's newborn baby, but *objet a* cannot ultimately be symbolised, because it has a "Thing-like quality, requiring the subject to come back to [it] over and over again" (Fink, 1999b: 92).

The fantasy scenario keeps desire constantly alive, it never manages to fully satisfy desire once and for all. It constantly tells us why we are not enjoying (Dean, 2006a). It tells us about a fundamental lack in our existence and it informs us how to cover the lack and how to attain *jouissance*. It is this promise of *jouissance* kept in place by fantasy, which makes it difficult to change or break free from the place of the subject. Fantasy is also a defence against the gap or the lack within the self and desire itself is a defence against the desire of the Other (Žižek, 1989). Thus, the function of fantasy is to hide the inconsistencies in the Other. It is the scene through which the world is viewed as unified and meaningful.

We can assume that fantasy is not only a matter of 'individuals' in the clinical situation: it is very much maintained and produced in public representation and it "links the 'dry' socio-Symbolic field (through a reference to its official insignia) to the 'sticky' affects of the subject" (Glynos and Stavrakakis, 2008: 263). It is also that which helps to create the national identity and create the cohesion of the national community (Glynos and Stavrakakis, 2008). Subjects become 'linked' to the national community through the fantasy scenario, which promises the *objet a* and *jouissance*. Indeed, it is in fantasy, in the "by product of symbolisation", that we experience (partial) *jouissance* (Fink, 2003: 254).

4.2.5 The Real and *jouissance*

Stavrakakis (2007) asks a very important question:

> How is it possible to re-introduce emotion, affect and passion into the picture, avoiding, at the same time, both [a] rather instrumentalised, constructionist use of emotion and any return to an outmoded affective essentialism? (p. 167).

As this extract points out, writing about or trying to explain something which is so radically outside the linguistic field, but paradoxically related to it, is not an easy task. This is one of the contradictions of *jouissance*: it is an experience which exceeds Symbolic mediation, but at the same time it would not exist in any shared or *binding* social forms without the assistance of the operation of the signifier. *Jouissance* "drives the Symbolic but can never be fully captured by it" (Daly, 1999: 227). It is not exactly representable in language, but even so, it is inseparable from language. According to Lacan subjectivity is not only about oppositional signifiers in language: the referent is also important, even though we can never fully know or capture it. This is because we are dealing here with the field of the Real - the domain which cannot be symbolised, despite our everlasting attempts to do so. In Lacan's (1988) own terms, the Real is

> something which always lies on the edge of our conceptual elaboration, which we are always thinking about, which we sometimes speak of, and which, strictly speaking, we can't grasp, and which is nonetheless there (p. 96).

Thus, Lacanian theory is different to poststructuralist theory, since he assumes that linguistic meaning is not derived simply from a system of differences, but is fundamentally related to the effects of the Real (Alcorn, 2002).

Jouissance is in the sphere of the Real. Both the Symbolic and the Imaginary are permeated by the Real, which Lacan already in Seminar I recognised as the field which "resists symbolisation absolutely" (Lacan, 1975: 66). He variously understands it as the place of the extra-discursive, the brute materiality of bodily or traumatic experience, or as the terrain of those extreme affects of pleasure-pain, *jouissance*, which simultaneously thrill and pain the subject:

> this pleasure - this excitation due to sex, vision, and/or violence, whether positively or negatively connoted by conscience, whether considered innocently pleasurable or designingly repulsive - is termed *jouissance*, and that is what the subject orchestrates for him or herself in fantasy (Fink, 2003: 254).

With the introduction of the Symbolic, *jouissance* is prohibited, and so "when subjectivity is conceived in terms of lack, this can be understood as a lack of *jouissance*" (Glynos and Stavrakakis, 2008: 261). This lack produces a desire and everlasting search for *jouissance*, although this can never be fully and permanently obtained. The Lacanian idea is that *jouissance* is a libidinal substitution for the mother child unity which has been lost due to the penetration of the Symbolic. *Jouissance* takes the subject away from alienation and emptiness associated with the production of Symbolic meaning and gives it a sense of being namely that of various bodily intensities of experience. "While existence is granted only through the Symbolic order (the alienated subject being assigned a place therein), being is supplied only by cleaving to the real" (Fink, 2003: 254).

Hence, despite the sacrifice of *jouissance*, the fantasy of it experienced at an early stage between mother and child, permeates our existence in language (Dean, 2006b). This implies that we do not enter language completely, there is always something which remains outside it, and kept in the domain of the Real. Language or signification eliminates *jouissance* or the Real of the body, but not fully: there will always be remainders. *Jouissance* is what animates the subject. The Lacanian subject according to Fink (2004) is in the gap between language and *jouissance*: "if language is what makes

us different from animals, *jouissance* is what makes us different from machines" (ibid.: 124). Further, we act in ways or say things which are considered to be irrational in the pursuit of *jouissance* and the continuous attempt of the drive to be satisfied can itself be enjoyable. *Jouissance* is possible both in transgressions of ideals as well as obedience and conformity. It is because of this extra-discursive domain which supports discursive representations that efforts to change particular social realities through persuasion are often unsuccessful (Alcorn, 2002).

4.3 Social Identity Theory and psychoanalysis

Now that we have a toolbox of Lacanian concepts, we can go back to Social Identity Theory and provide a re-interpretation and a critique of it. What is becoming apparent now is that an attempt can be made to combine SIT and SCT and hence schematically approximate some of the explanatory routes provided by Lacan's Imaginary and Symbolic identifications.

As we saw in the previous chapter, SIT is mostly concerned with the relations *between groups*. The idea is that social categorisation provides people with social identities, and individuals engage in social comparison which leads to in-group favouritism and out-group denigration because they want to maintain positive distinctiveness. Hence, we could say that SIT works at the level of competition, difference and similarity. In other words, the theory is largely focused on the *Imaginary* relations between groups. As I claimed earlier, the Other here concerns the other groups which the in-group compares itself with. Here, SIT acknowledges that the distinctive image of the group is guaranteed through the existence of other groups. It is about the concrete identifications or dis-identifications with other groups that one's own group can be constituted. We should note, however, as Lacan (1988) does, the Imaginary other is "the other which is not an other at all, since it is essentially coupled with the ego, in a relation which is always reflexive, interchangeable" (p. 321). Thus, from a Lacanian perspective the in-group and the out-group cannot be precisely differentiated. In Imaginary identification, subjects misrecognise themselves in the ideal-egos of others, or on the contrary, they do not accept the non-ideal or threatening elements of the other in themselves:

> This to and fro movement, the incessant sliding towards and then away from the *other-who-is-I*, complicates the possibility of any absolute differentiation between individuals and groups alike...Others (or other groups) are always vehicles for, *extensions* of an ego, just as they exist at the very core of the ego's 'I' as its foundational basis (Hook, forthcoming).

Moreover, the motivation to achieve positive distinctiveness (or self-esteem) could be translated into a desire for an Imaginary, narcissistic and lovable image of one's own group; in other words, here is an implicit acknowledgement by the SIT paradigm of one of the basic facets of what makes us human: our *desire to be recognised*. SIT's idea of motivation is confirmed by Bracher (1993) who claims that "identifications are always *motivated* – that is, they respond to a want-of-being" (p. 22 emphasis in original). The question is then: From what position is positive distinctiveness or recognition desired? According to Bracher it is "the ego-ideal [that] produces a sense both of permanence and self-esteem" (ibid.: 24). The ego-ideal of the Symbolic Other provides self-esteem as well as the *jouissance* which comes with it. However, the subject will not obtain this *jouissance* once and for all; it will always remain *lacking*: a sense of bodily fullness which is aspired in 'positive self-esteem' can never be completely or finally achieved. Nonetheless, in SIT there is no clear concept of the Symbolic, or the big Other as a point *beyond* imaginary inter-group relations, a point from which positive distinctiveness is desired.

SCT on the other hand, suggests that when we categorise ourselves in to a group because of some accentuated similarity or 'prototypicality' with the group, we conform to the ideology of the group. Hence, what seems to have a significant effect on the individual member is not simply another group member, but the norms and values, a more abstract notion of the rules and laws of the group as epitomized in the figure of the Other. These norms and values, we could state, are the 'leader' in Freud's terms, or in Lacanian vocabulary, the ego-ideals of the Other as virtual embodiment of the *Symbolic*. Self-Categorisation Theory might not make this argument clearly, but from the perspective of the group member, what is the group with its norms and values, if it is not a holder of a 'treasury of signifiers' or the point of view of the big Other? Hence, these norms and principles of the group act as ego-ideals for the group-member; *the social category provides members of the group with ego-ideals*. As Emler and Hopkins (1990) from the SIT paradigm state:

> When people align themselves with social identities...they are not proposing to be indistinguishable from all other members of the category. Rather they are invoking the standards that inhere in those categories and claiming to be more-or-less adequate exemplars of the categories judged in the terms of those standards (p. 129).

To reaffirm what I argued before - it is the perspective of shared values and norms, which could be viewed as the ego-ideals of the Other in SCT. However, it is of course not a matter of straightforward *self-categorisation*, but about how one has been defined by the socio-Symbolic field of the Other, and how one attempts to, consciously and unconsciously, make sense of the co-ordinates within which one has been placed. Moreover, the Lacanian big Other is of course unlike the version of the Other implied in SCT. The Lacanian Other is specific in that it is beyond subjectivity, beyond the present and material other, and it is not fully graspable for the subject.

Once given a place in a group, members view themselves as part of the same collectivity, with shared attitudes and worldviews because they all view themselves from, or identify with, some or other variation of the Other typifying that social location[32]. It is this perspective, subject to a degree of subjective latitude, which is inscribed in the members: *the group has an influence on thinking and behaviour because the ego-ideal signifiers of the group (of the Other) have been engraved in the structure of the subject*. The following statement by Alcorn (2002) can be understood in relation to Self-Categorisation Theory:

> From early in our life, groups make demands of us to laugh with them, eat their food, appreciate their models of beauty, and feel repulsion towards things they despise. When our performance earns their approval, they smile at us with recognition. We show the first step in any kind of understanding; we understand what the Other wants (p. 104).

Further, SCT even states that when the individual identifies with a group, there is an experience of depersonalisation, a loss of a sense of his 'own' person, which is not about losing one's identity, but about *gaining* an identity: in categorising with a group, the latter provides the subject with an identity. In Lacanian language, this paradox of

---

[32] The Other could be understood as the actual subjective experience of the Symbolic order (the realm of law and language); the Other as the symbolic for each particular subject in a group. However, for a group to exist and in order for communication to work between the members, there must exist a place of authority, an Other which is irreducible to each 'individual' in a group.

loss and gain is exactly what *alienation* in the signifier is about. The subject, when identifying with the Symbolic, is at the same time both experiencing a loss of bodily 'something' which was 'previous' to the entrance of the Symbolic, as well as a 'gain' of identity; he can only be a subject when he has identified with the Symbolic mandate of the Other. Despite the fact that there must be a general continuity throughout a given social group in terms of the presiding Other that precisely holds this grouping together as a society and as a collective defined by certain values or key signifiers, it is also true that there can be different instantiations of this Other, different authorities, or positions of knowledge that embody this function: we identify with different big Others when we are working as a doctor at a hospital as opposed to when we are home with our children (compare this with SCT's idea of the contextual nature of self-images).

In short, we can make a general comparison to Lacan's theories and state that SIT implicitly approximates what Lacan would group as the Imaginary, but not for the most part, as the Symbolic. SCT on the other hand contains much of what Lacan would understand by Symbolic functioning, but not of the Imaginary. In other words, SIT is about what we might term *vertical* Imaginary relationships and SCT is about what we might equally cautiously term the horizontal *Symbolic* relationship. This can be put in the following model in order to compare with Lacanian Symbolic and Imaginary registers:

SIT

Group X → Group Y

Group Z

SCT

The group
and its
norms and
ideologies

Member X   Member Y

Member Z

Lacan's
Symbolic and
Imaginary
registers

Ego Ideals of
the Symbolic
big Other

Subject X   Subject Y

Subject Z
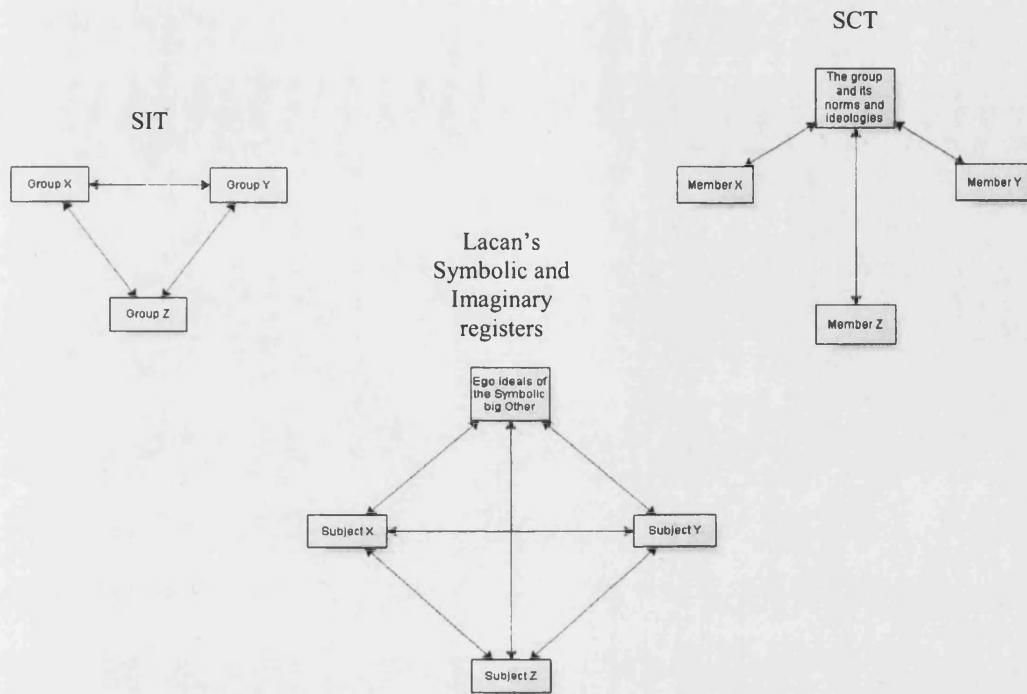
Figure 1 Groups and the Imaginary and Symbolic

Hence, in order to have a more complete view of intergroup relations (which is really what interests us in this thesis) we need to add to SIT, the concept that is not properly there, namely the idea of a big Other - a Symbolic point of reference through which different groups evaluate themselves and each other[33]. A different version of this concept of the Symbolic Other is however implied in the SCT. Moreover, as stated in the previous chapter, Tajfel did allude to it when he stated that re-evaluating a stigmatized group category is "a battle for the acceptance by others of new forms of intergroup comparison" (Tajfel, 1981: 297). It is the ideal of the big Other of society and specific ideology of a culture which provides the frameworks for the contents/images of social categories. Thus, for Lacanian types of analysis we need the

---

[33] There are of course many different sub-groups co-existing in a society such as Sweden, each with their own particular version of the big Other. However, there will also be an overarching big Other of Swedish society, which will potentially have some importance for each of the sub-groups. For example, an Arab community in Sweden may have its own Symbolic Other, but the more or less hegemonic culture of Swedish society also has some form of significance for this community.

provision of the Symbolic *and* Imaginary axes of identification, but also the overlap, the joint-intersection of both of these. This means that we end up with the following model:

Inter-group
relations and the
big Other


```
        ┌─────────────┐
        │ Ego ideals of│
        │ the Symbolic │
        │  big Other   │
        └─────────────┘

┌─────────┐            ┌─────────┐
│ Group X │            │ Group Y │
└─────────┘            └─────────┘

        ┌─────────┐
        │ Group Z │
        └─────────┘
```
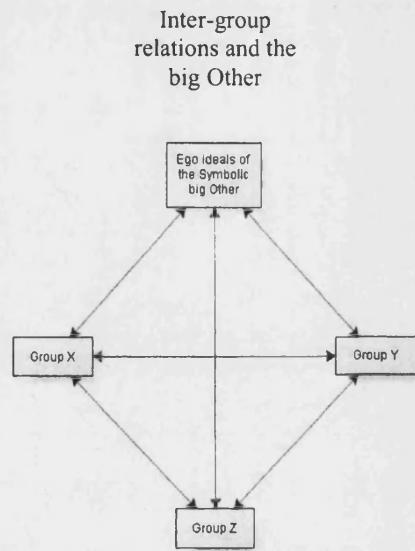
Figure 2 Inter-group relations and the big Other

However, ultimately, even the combination of the Symbolic and the Imaginary will need to be complemented by a third line of analysis. This would be considered the Real, *jouissance*. Hence, we might pose the following questions: through what psychological processes does society or the group instil itself in the subject? *Why do people identify with group ideals?* This is where the Freudian/Lacanian perspective radically differs from the SIT paradigm. The latter is heavily focused on cognitive processes such as categorisation and accentuation, whereas these are very much downplayed in psychoanalysis. Cognition (or mis-recognition) and rationality are for the most part considered to be elements of conscious ego functioning, that is to say, Imaginary functions (e.g. Lacan, 1975)[34]. Psychoanalysis is more interested in the libidinal aspects of identification often existing just beneath the level of conscious awareness (which is not to say that these libidinal elements cannot also be conscious).

---

[34] Cognition should also be understood as being a process closely linked to language and the Symbolic (Parker, 2003).

99

We can begin to see now how it is that groups, discursive practices - or the big Other - have the power to attach subjects to themselves, or to 'fix' subjects in Hall's words. Social construction and symbolic representation is an incomplete exercise; something will always remain outside of symbolisation. Nevertheless, through identification with Symbolic representations - with the Other - the subject aims to regain the *jouissance* which has been lost due to the introduction of the socio-Symbolic field. It is the lack of *jouissance* which forces the subject to enter the social arena and which creates the dynamics of desire. Thus, *it is the lack of jouissance which attaches group members to group ideals and norms, which fixes subjects to discourses*. People accept the reality and commands coming from the big Other, the socio-discursive domain because it is followed by a fantasy in which *jouissance* is promised. Thus, the formal or negative command comes with a positive value: its *object petit a* and the promise of *jouissance*:

> Taking into account the enjoyment promised or (partially) experienced...can decisively help to explain our sticking (even with some ironic distance) to symbolic constructions (ideals, rationalisations and the like), which are obviously disabling and enslaving (Stavrakakis, 2007: 181).

Jouissance is usually what underpins ideals, and it can in itself function as a "purpose, a cause" (Stavrakakis, 2007: 183). Hence, what we need to add to the SIT paradigm is the idea that people conform to group norms, to ego-ideals because of a fantasy and a promise of *jouissance*, these are what enable group coherence and passionate investments in its values and symbols. It is this kind of partial libidinal experience which bonds subjects to certain discourses or identity positions: we cannot neglect the important role of *jouissance* in maintaining the "grip of identity" (Glynos and Stavrakakis, 2008: 266), because without this libidinal element, identity would not function, it would not be kept in place. Indeed, it is the reach for *jouissance* which makes us identify with political projects, social roles or consumer choices.

Furthermore, the practices, rituals and traditions of the group including the zeal and the ardour present in certain national practices (e.g. celebrated sporting victories) are only material manifestations of *jouissance*. The following quote by Freud (1955b) about the role of the totem meal might be said to point to the way in which regular patterns of *jouissance* manage to bond subjects to groups.

100

Each man is conscious that he is performing an act forbidden to the individual and justifiable only through the participation of the whole...every instinct is unfettered and there is a license for every kind of gratification. Here we have easy access to an understanding of the nature of festivals in general. A festival is a permitted, or rather, obligatory excess, a solemn breach of a prohibition...excess is of the essence of the festival; the festive feeling is produced by the liberty to do what is as a rule prohibited (p. 140).

In the above, Freud alludes to the transgressive, excessive nature of *jouissance*. Particular cultural, societal myths and ceremonies provide a common identity, but these practices also keep a fantasy in place, which includes a taste of an *excessive jouissance* in bonding with one another. Identifying with a community or a group would not function without the experience or the promise of this extreme bodily element. This is shown by Stavrakakis (2007) who claims that the reason why there is a failure to create a European hegemonic identity is because the project has been unsuccessful in evoking the necessary *jouissance* - the kind of libidinal bond that exists in other forms of national identity. Moreover, the bonding of excessive *jouissance* involves a kind of violation and guilt. In other words, a community is sustained through the identification of the transgression of its norms and laws. I will come back to this issue in later chapters.

There are two related but different kinds of *jouissance* implicit in the literature in relation to group/community identity. We could schematically differentiate between the two, although they are closely associated:

- 'We are a community because of the way in which we enjoy'- this is the *jouissance* which binds a community narcissistically together and which is elicited in the various activities, ceremonies or myths and the like. To be a member of the group means to be part of its *jouissance*. Apart from the symbols, narratives and practices, this is the physicality, the bodily aspect of being part of a group. It typically qualifies what is most special about us, what we have, certain ways of arranging our life, particularities of our culture that no one else has, which give us a unique identity, i.e. these are elements which link to the narcissistically-valorised component of group identity. This could be understood to be at the intra-group level. However, it is associated with inter-group relations because the group is in fact bonded by, and gains *jouissance* from problematizing foreign, *other* modes of *jouissance*, which are simultaneously

101

viewed as embodying the very kernel of alterity, otherness, and as threatening to given, existing modes and approaches to *jouissance*. For example, the customs, the habits, the traditions of other groups (the way they speak, the oddity of their food, their strange work habits).

-   'They stole our enjoyment' – this could be firmly placed at the inter-group level of Imaginary relations. This concerns the enjoyment in fantasising that the out-group enjoy in our place; that *they* stole our enjoyment (Žižek, 1993) or "they want to ruin our life by corrupting it with their own peculiar enjoyment" (Dean, 2006a: 22). This fantasy is based on the idea that we would enjoy if only *they* would disappear. It is a kind of rage about the threat that those 'who want to steal our *jouissance* pose, a rage which can manifest itself in violence, and the enjoyment of the suffering of the other (Palacios, 2004). This is the core of the racist fantasy. And given the post-modern times we live in, where enjoyment is an obligation - as well as an ever more difficult aspiration - the other's *jouissance* becomes even more unbearable (Dean, 2006a).

It is these libidinal aspects which are totally missing in the Symbolic intra-group relations postulated by SCT and the Imaginary inter-group dynamics illustrated by SIT. However, it should be noted that Tajfel himself did make an allusion to the role of enjoyment in social group membership:

> An individual will tend to remain a member of a group and seek membership of new groups if these groups have some contribution to make to the positive aspects of his social identity; i.e. to those aspects of it from which he derives some satisfaction (Tajfel, 1981: 256).

In figure 2, *jouissance* which is not visible, not representable is what distinguishes groups from each other and attaches each group to the ego-ideals of the big Other. In short, it is *jouissance* which a) bonds people together in a group and b) is usually at stake or even exacerbated in in-group favouritism and out-group denigration[35].

---

[35] Note that Billig (2002) from a non-Lacanian perspective has pointed towards enjoyment in extreme forms of inter-group discrimination, especially the "pleasure in bigotry" (p. 185). Frosh (2002) however, criticizes him for staying overly focused on discourse when theorizing intense out-group hatred.

4.4 Resistance and change

At this point it is worth briefly returning to the preceding chapter's discussion about the possibilities and limits of social change struggles. We now have a more elaborate view of this 'sticky' libidinal element in identifications with group images and discourses which may put limits to change. *Jouissance* is "a kind of fixity – something that holds the subject together and that provides it with a place" (Dean, 2006b: 17), and as implied previously, it is also that which is linked to repetition and stagnation. People are libid.inally attached to discourse, "attachments that are often resistant to criticism and change" (Stavrakakis, 2007: 163). This is what makes the subject 'stuck' in sometimes destructive and harmful positions, even when external structures allow changes to happen. Thus, *jouissance* is the libidinal element involved in organisation of discourse, groups and social identities, *and* in the difficulties in changing the latter two. As Alcorn (2002) states

> Because of a kind of adhesive attachment that subjects have to certain instances of discourse, some discourse structures are characteristic of subjects and have temporal stability. These modes of discourse serve as symptoms of subjectivity: they work repetitively and defensively to represent identity...some modes of discourse, because they are libid.inally invested, repeatedly and predictably function to constitute the subject's sense of identity (p. 17).

From the Lacanian perspective, one should not emphasize too strongly the opportunities for flexibility and change beyond the bounding constraints of *jouissance*. *Jouissance* is why specific representations of social identities 'stick' at the libidinal level, and why we experience resistance to change. "Oppression, then, is supported by the pleasures of identification [subjects] cannot (literally) suffer to give up" (ibid., 68).

Does this mean that resistance is impossible? How can we theorise the moment when change in categories happens through Lacan? First, we need to recognise that social change or change in identities is *not only about a change in content or structure of representations*, as Social Identity Theory and even Hall seem to be suggesting, but they are about the *removal of libid.o from representations* or *investment of libid.o in alternative representations*. Resistance is possible but a difficult enterprise. Even when there is resistance, very rarely does it lead to the breakdown of the fantasy in which the signifier functions as the *objet a* (Stavrakakis, 2008). It is this fantasy which needs to be challenged. This implies, according to Glynos and Stavrakakis (2003) "that if

psychoanalytic intervention (and, by extension, political intervention) is to have any effect in these cases, it must aim between the lines, so to speak, at the ineffable *objet petit a*, at the whole field of *jouissance*" (p. 125).

Hence, a change in identity is not just about a change in representation, "knowledge and/or 'rational' argumentation are not enough as catalysts of change" (Stavrakakis, 2007: 165). Change means a change in relation to our *jouissance*; it means a change in or the removal of the libidinal investments in representations or signifiers. This suggests that non-conformity or resistance cannot be understood as being so much about 'self-consciousness'. Indeed, "resistance is not an intellectual issue precisely because obedience, also, is not sustained at an intellectual level" (Stavrakakis, 2008: 177). Furthermore, the fact that the big Other is itself lacking and not complete is what makes resistance possible and this is the reason why the subject is never fully determined by discourse or power (Hook, 2008b; Stavrakakis, 2008). It is the fact that the Real also creates a gap in the Other, which makes it possible for resistance to take place. Thus, we can assume that pointing out the lack in the Other may be a step towards change. Nevertheless, the problem is that even when resistance is possible, even when the lack in the Other is realised, there is a risk of submission to a new instantiation of the Other. I return to these issues in later chapters.

4.5 Conclusion

The SIT paradigm does not give us a satisfactory answer as to *why* inter-group relations are such passionate processes and *why* in-groups and their values and ideologies have such influence on its members. In this chapter, I have compared and contrasted the social identity paradigm with Lacanian conceptual tools and proposed that if we combine SIT and SCT, we can re-interpret the latter two in terms of the Imaginary and Symbolic which the subject, *lacking in jouissance*, identifies with. We need to recognise that it is the causative function of lack which means that group ideals and discourses, which come with a fantasy scenario and *objet a*, have such an influence on people. It is also *jouissance* which is at stake in Imaginary inter-group relations. As Tajfel (1981) recognised, social comparison is *not* a dispassionate process: it involves the desire of the subject to gain a sufficiently 'decent' self- worth, a positive distinctiveness. What Lacan adds is that social comparison and out-group discrimination

are much more than cognitive issues and involve the fear of being deprived of an in-group *jouissance* and/or the resentment of the *jouissance* of the out-group.

In the last part of the chapter, I raised the issue of resistance and change once again. I argued that SIT's suggestion regarding social change strategies, and even Hall's transcoding methods are not adequate for an understanding of how identities become disrupted, because they both point to the issue of representation without accounting for fantasy and *jouissance*. What might lead to change in identities and hence to social change is 1) the removal of the fantasy structure and its associated modes of *jouissance* from Imaginary and Symbolic representations and 2) the realisation that the Other is also lacking. Taking the theoretical issues discussed in this and previous chapters, in what follows, I develop a methodological and analytical framework for the investigation of the case of *Gringo*.

5 Methods in analysing Gringo magazine

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter I illustrate the methodological approach for the study of *Gringo*. One crucial aspect of this is that theory and method are viewed to be inextricably connected. The methodological/analytical framework, which involves an explorative mixture of content analysis, discourse analysis and psychoanalysis, is reviewed. Following directly from the previous discussion of theory, I argue that this research could be perceived as a 'social diagnosis' where the aim is not to unravel individual psychologies, but the libidinal economy of group phenomena and discourse. Libidinal economy can be understood here as the distribution, patterns, gains and losses of libid.o that hold certain social formations, and groups, together. The libidinal economy in question is multidimensional; it is linked to not only the Real, but also to Symbolic and Imaginary components. Given that this is a somewhat newly emerging methodology in social psychology, the final part of the chapter discusses the problem of identifying the Real or *jouissance* in discourse.

5.2 Representation and alternative media

In our modern daily lives, the media is extremely prevalent and to put it simply "we cannot evade media presence, media representation" (Silverstone, 1999: 1). Media discourse, such as that which is circulated in newspapers, television, and the internet is one of the main means through which representations and culture are reproduced or changed. Hall (1977) states that

> the media...are socially, economically and technically organized apparatuses, for the production of messages, signs arranged in complex discourses: symbolic 'goods' (p. 346).

Thus, the media is at one and the same time cultural, symbolic, socio-economic and political. As Thompson (1990) argues, mass-media greatly influences the ways in which ideological symbolic forms are transmitted, because they are able to be taken from their context in which they are produced and reach audiences who are distant both in terms of time and space. With the rise of the mass-media, ideology found a new way to affect culture and the social world of people (Hall, 1977; Thompson, 1990).

The news-media greatly influences identity-production. Notions of 'goodness' and 'badness', 'normality' and 'abnormality' permeate media images, and the news-media has great power in the creation and labelling of social categories (Blackman and Walkerdine, 2001). The mass-media contributes towards maintaining or changing prevailing patterns of discourse, such as those of cultural or national identity. As mentioned in chapter 3, discourse is understood to be "forms of knowledge and conduct associated with, a particular topic" and it is a term which is used when "meaning, representation and culture are considered to be constitutive" (Hall, 1997: 6). Parker (2005a) understands discourse as also functioning to provide a social bond of sorts. Hence, discourse could be said to be very similar to much of what is contained within the Symbolic field in Lacanian terms; to the domain of the Other, the institutional, socio-historical and political register, the collection of signifiers or mediated social exchange. We shall note that discourse and practice are not necessary distinct. Hall (1992) argues that the production of discourse is itself a practice: "'a discursive practice' – the practice of producing meaning. Since all social practices entail meaning, all practices have a discursive aspect. So discourse enters into and influences all social practices" (p. 291).

Hall (e.g. 1981; 1992a; 1996b; 1997) has widely studied the media in order to analyse representations of 'race' and difference. However, the media is also an important communication tool for minorities to gain symbolic power and recognition as well as a means by which dominant negative images are resisted (Silverstone and Georgiou, 2005). Thus, what may be termed 'alternative-media' plays a crucial role in representing marginalised or excluded identities, in resisting hegemonic and oppressive discourses, and it is imperative in the possible change of social structures (Bailey et al.. 2008). This type of media is a crucial source for analysing the challenge to various forms of stigma and exclusion because strategies of recognition and resistance involve using and changing/producing media representations.

Despite the importance of the media in representation and resistance, there has been little research on minority media in Sweden (Christensen, 2008). Nevertheless, it is contestable whether *Gringo* could be considered as a 'minority' media. If 'minority media' refers to media by and for so called ethnic minorities, then *Gringo* could hardly

be categorised as one, because although it was created by a young man with an immigration background, the editorial board consist of both 'Swedes' and 'ethnic' minorities, and it has a diverse readership which include both 'minorities' and 'majorities'. *Gringo* has an unusual status, because even though at some level it does focus on seemingly minority interests, it is included as a supplement within a widely distributed, popular free newspaper so it breaks boundaries, defies the usual categories of minority versus widely-distributed media forms. More information on *Gringo* will be given later in this chapter.

5.3 Diagnosing the social

Some researchers have applied psychoanalytic concepts in order to understand the ways in which and the reasons why individual subjects invest in or oppose certain discursive positions (e.g. Hollway and Jefferson, 2001; Frosh et al.., 2003; Gough; 2004). Frosh et al.. for example argue for an analysis that illustrates the "powerful effects of social discourses and the agentic struggle of particular subjects" (p. 42). This is presented as a critique against a discourse analytic approach in psychology which implies an "impoverished notion of subjectivity" where the social [dimension] and language are favoured "whilst the individual is suppressed" (Gough, 2004: 247). These studies have a 'local' analytic focus in that they investigate how and why particular individuals take on or negotiate specific subject positions available in culture and discourse. In this sense, the emphasis is not only on how contested identities are used and re-negotiated in discourse and language, but also on what relationship this process has to the affective and unconscious world of individuals. The focus is on the reasons why individual subjects invest in or oppose to certain discursive positions. Although these developments in social psychology are crucial, they tend to draw predominantly from Kleinian or object relation traditions[36]. Only a small minority of researchers fruitfully draw upon Lacanian theory to show how it can help to expand upon social psychological perspectives (see for example Frosh, 1989, 2002; Georgaca, 2005; Hook,

---

[36] Even though the aim of this type of research is to avoid the familiar social-individual division, their use of 'agency' as more or less un-problematic and the focus on how discourses are used at 'individual' level, might actually reproduce social-individual dualism (see Parker (2005b) for a critique of this paradigm).

2005, 2006, 2008a; Neill, 2008; Parker 1997, 2005a; see also Parker, 2000, 2001; Stavrakakis, 2008)[37].

Unlike the above mentioned 'Kleinian' studies, I am not interested in investigating how particular individuals invest in discourses, but rather, I am keen to examine the libidinal economy of *cultural representations and discourse*. It is a very dubious practice to extend psychoanalytic techniques beyond the clinic for use in research interviews to interpret individuals' talk (see Frosh, 2008; Hook, 2008c; Parker, 2005b). Psychoanalytic practice typically requires that the analysand be in analysis for a considerable period, and the analyst needs to be fully trained to carry out such a task. Although the research mentioned above has been important in pinpointing how certain aspects of discourse are heavily affectively-loaded, intertwined within intense investment, using psychoanalytic tools to interpret interview participants' 'inner world' and biography can be problematic. According to Frosh (2008) applying the clinical method in research interviews not only "does a disservice to psychoanalysis but also raises epistemological and practical problems" (p.419). Further this approach can be argued to individualise, essentialise, pathologies and disempower interview participants, and it can be challenged for falling prey to psychological reductionism (Parker, 2005b) as well as for being ethically questionable.

In the present study, the objective is to analyse public text with the use of concepts from Lacanian and Freudian psychoanalysis in order to 'diagnose' the themes and ruptures of representation. The effect of this kind of analysis may be seen as a de-individualisation and de-personalisation of research and psychoanalytic issues. Hence, the psychoanalytic phenomena which are found in the text are seen as the result of the dynamic interrelation of various factors, such as the 'motivations' of the author, the representations which exist in the Swedish socio-political culture and the effect of language and discourse. The author may indeed use language in order to express 'individual' concerns, but he is not the focus of this analysis. As Parker (1989) states:

---

[37] See also forthcoming special issue on Lacan in *Annual Review of Critical Psychology* edited by Carol Owens.

a word and other collections of signs have a meaning by virtue of social context and the other signs which are present (or significantly absent). This is why the decoding of items from a text or discourse can proceed without the presence of the 'subject' acting as an authority for the 'true' meaning (p. 93).

Moreover, as was discussed in the previous chapter, symbols, and the unconscious are social and collective; they are 'trans-individual'. Indeed, even the material which surfaces in the clinical setting does not necessarily belong solely to the individual. As Paul (1987) comments regarding Freud's ideas about symbols:

> [Freudian symbols] are not projected from dreams into the culture, at least as Freud conceptualizes the matter; they are, rather, out there in the culture to begin with...Just as grammar is a characteristic of the language itself, not of an individual speaker who has learned that language, so too Freudian symbolism is a symbolic system which is not understood best merely as function of an individual mind. As Freud said in rejecting the Jungian notion of the 'collective unconscious', the unconscious is collective anyway (p. 89).

Thus, what is analysed in this research is a cultural production. The author may indeed 'give off' messages which he or she is not intending, and which are the products of the language he is using and the culture in which he is situated. Paul further argues that fantasies being "so stereotyped" (p. 90) are not necessarily private, psychic productions, but precede the individual psyche or exist separate from it. They are

> a collective, rather than purely individual phenomenon. When they express themselves in forms intended for public consumption, such as art, literature, myth or ritual, we may be assured that precisely because they are intended for communication, it is possible for us to comprehend them (ibid.: 91).

Newspaper and magazine articles are a media form which possess a specific genre or format, and they depend on symbols and images, and their aim is particularly public or cultural communication, and as such they are an ideal source where transindividual fantasies and patterns of *jouissance* can be studied. Inasmuch as they appeal to a certain readership, and are produced to sell, i.e. are marketable to a sector of a community, they also play their part in producing given social identities.

The focus on the themes and ruptures of a text is not only typical of Lacanian psychoanalytic social criticism. In fact, discourse and language is also the essence of psychoanalytic theory and clinical method. In the clinical setting, the unconscious is understood mainly through the use of language via the scrutiny of for example, slips of the tongue, jokes, absences or repetition of words and expressions. Further, not only are

110

signifiers crucial in dream formation, but even when dreams are interpreted, they first have to be translated into words in order to be analysed. As was pointed out in the previous chapter, Lacanian psychoanalysis postulates that the unconscious cannot be viewed as something outside the Symbolic field of signifiers. Thus, it is less a 'thing' which is deep within us, and more a field of representation or a 'discourse of the Other'. As Lacan (1977) states

> The unconscious is that part of the concrete discourse, in so far as it is transindividual, [which] is not at the disposal of the subject to re-establishing the continuity of his conscious discourse (p. 54).

The use of psychoanalysis is not something new in disciplines other than social psychology. It has for example, been used in relation to racism and feminist critique (e.g. Clarke, 2003; Khanna, 2003; Lane, 1998; Rustin, 1991) and some approaches adopt mainly a Lacanian perspective (e.g. Bhabha, 2004; Campbell, 2000; Gross, 1990; Seshadri-Crooks, 2000; Žižek, 1998). Furthermore, Žižek (e.g. 1989; 1992; 1993; 2005) has extensively applied Lacanian theory to the study of culture and ideology more generally. Moreover, many theorists have recognised the value of psychoanalytic tools in the understanding of the work of representation. For example, Hall (1997) uses the notions of fantasy, fetishism and disavowal in order to analyse representations that 'race'. In addition, Pajaczkowska and Young (1992) consider psychoanalytic concepts such as the unconscious, denial and identification in their discussion on representations of the colonial 'other'. Within film studies Cowie (1997), using Freudian and Lacanian concepts, investigates how film positions the feminine and masculine spectator, by illustrating the connections between fantasy, identification, fetishism and desire. Additionally, Gilroy's (2004) analysis of comedy in the British media uses psychoanalytic terms to investigate how humour reveals psychic anxieties against cultural others. Williamson (1978) drawing from Lacan and Freudian dream theory, studies the work of advertisements and shows the importance of the analysis of the form of ads and how they rely heavily on signifiers to evoke certain affects. Stavrakakis (2007) also discusses the fantasy of advertisement and consumerism, and maintains that the understanding of advertisements cannot be complete without a grasp of how they promise *jouissance* and animate desire. These are just a few examples of how

psychoanalysis has been used outside social psychology in order to understand various cultural representations.

The present study follows the above group of research in the focus on cultural representations. In short, the analysis of the current study could be said to involve a *societal diagnosis* of sorts of the various identifications that certain texts make possible. For example, Gilroy (2004) is implicitly carrying out a kind of cultural societal diagnosis when he is interpreting English identity and its relation to its colonial history and the prevalent multicultural atmosphere. He claims that "a pathological character" which he calls "postimperial melancholia" has affected British culture (p. 98). This pathology which is characterised by a failure to properly mourn the loss of greatness, has shaped the current cultural mood and the contradictory attitude towards cultural diversity; an attitude in which on the one hand multiculture and tolerance are supported, and on the other, fundamental "resistance to convivial culture" is expressed (ibid.: 112). The contradictions and ambivalences that this kind of position conveys are an expression of a "symptomatic contradiction" (ibid.: 112). The denial of colonial history is intrinsically bound up with a "guilt ridden loathing and depression that have come to characterize Britain's xenophobic responses" (ibid.: 98). Similarly, Fanon (1986; 1990) used concepts from psychoanalysis such as neurosis in order to both understand the psychology of power, as well as subjects of oppression in the colonial context. Fanon was deeply concerned with the socio-political and historical uses of psychoanalytic terms. At some level, he aimed to reveal the affective/libidinal state of a culture.

5.4   The libidinal elements of discourse

> Discourses exercise force over a group of people by engaging, directly or indirectly, signifying circuits common to either the ego-ideals, the body images, or the fantasies of members of the group. Through these often conflicting forces, subjects are pressured to relinquish previous desires (including identifications) and embrace new ones – or alternatively, to invest all the more completely in old ones (Bracher, 1993, pp. 51-52).

The theoretical framework developed in the previous chapters, which points out not only discourse, but also the 'transindividual' unconsciousness and *jouissance* in relation to group psychology, implies that our analytical method is one which should be understood as the study of the *libidinal economy of representation or discourse. Gringo*

is a magazine, a cultural material produced for cultural or public dissemination, as opposed to for example, diaries, focus groups or interviews. Thus, the text is an instance of a particular cultural and historical time which exemplifies the discursive strategies prevalent amongst a certain readership, discursive strategies which perform a powerful identity function, providing thus a platform not only for various forms of self-understanding, and shared group fidelities, but also for the associated 'affect-positions'. Speaking of libidinal force, Alcorn (2002) states that "the libidinal power of language is found in its potential for attachments, attractions, organizations, repulsions, and bindings that create relatively stable sites of identification" (p. 20). Similarly, Vanier (2001) claims that "'discourse' is a collective organization for managing *jouissance*" (p. 41). The objective then is to pinpoint facets of a group identity, which is itself, importantly, made up of Imaginary, Symbolic and Real constituents as it is facilitated, constructed, held in place, 'bound' by types of discourse which perform a libidinal function. It is important to bear in mind that

> identification, along with the other forms of desire, operates in each the three registers of subjectivity: symbolic, imaginary and real. In culture, these three registers manifest themselves, respectively, in signifiers, images, and fantasies (Bracher, 1993: 22).

Discourse then plays a significant role in evoking our desire and sense of identity by working on the Imaginary register and emitting powerful imagery. Bracher makes an allusion to the *jouissance* involved in the sense of mastery which comes with identification with imagery in discourse:

> Anything that affirms and reinforces our body image thus provides a narcissistic gratification, a sense of security and self-worth, which has its roots in a sense of bodily integrity and mastery (ibid.: 38).

Indeed, according to Lacan (1975) imagery plays a determining role in the libidinal drive. Hence, the aim of this research is to focus on how discourses and imagery that *stick* are produced, how they *bind* a group, give group identification a *lived* substantiality, an affective foundation. The focus on *jouissance*, on the pleasure/pain facets of discourse "helps us answer in a more concrete way what is at stake in socio-political identification and identity formation, suggesting that support of social fantasies is partially rooted in the *jouissance* of the body" (Glynos and Stavrakakis, 2003: 120).

In the previous chapter, we noted the paradoxical nature of the Real: although never fully separable from the Symbolic, the Real can never be fully captured by it. Speaking of the extra-discursive Glynos and Stavrakakis state that

> the limits of discourse are internal to discourse itself, even if these end up being inextricably intertwined with notions of extra-discursive existence/reality. If it is never possible to fully grasp what escapes discourse, this is not because of some epistemological barrier that can be progressively overcome in an asymptotic fashion. Rather, it is because this barrier is ontologically constitutive. In this view, discourse is in a constant state of tension - a tension which is internal to discourse (p. 114).

Hence, the goal here is to take a route of discourse analysis, the critical analysis of particular representations, which remains especially attentive to how desire, *jouissance* and *objet a* function as part of/related to discourse, as a means of stabilizing and lending libidinal cohesion to groups.

5.5 The data: Gringo magazine and some of its responses

The material of this research is the first version of *Gringo* which was a supplement of around 8 pages in the Swedish *Metro* newspaper between August 2004 and March 2007. The analysed editions were published every four weeks in *Metro* (see appendix 1.1 for an example of an edition in Swedish). The text in *Gringo* is in Swedish and the analysis was carried out in this language.

Each edition consists of an editorial section, written mostly by the chief editor who introduces the particular edition, but in a few cases the editorial is written by other editors. Editions also include a *Debatt* [debate] section (which later changed its name to the *Tankesultanen* [thinking sultan], in which one author outside the editorial team is invited to write a short article about a particular topic. These people range from journalists in other newspapers, freelance journalists, artists, poets, bloggers and chairpersons in organisations such as the Red Cross. *Gringo* readers and other members of the public are also able to publish an article here.

The magazine consists of articles around a range of topics, but the focus is on information/news/entertainment around issues of racism, immigration, multiculture, the suburb, and the Swedish and immigrant identity (see appendix 1.2 for coding of content). These may be long discussion articles or very short pieces of writing

consisting of one or two paragraphs. Apart from this, *Gringo* also contains sections which appear regularly. In the first ten editions, there is a section called *Svensson skolan* [Svensson school], in which major Swedish values or traditions are discussed (this will be examined in chapter 7). Another short section which appears now and then is for example *Nya svenska ord* [New Swedish words] where terms from other languages such as Spanish, Arabic, Persian and Turkish; words which are argued to be used by people in the suburb, are translated and their meanings are discussed (this will be analysed in chapter 6). *Mångfaldsmanualen* [The multi-culture manual] introduces and teaches readers about supposed traditions, habits and rituals of the suburb (this will be discussed in chapter 6). Yet another section is called *Gringos arbetsförmedling* [*Gringo* jobcentre] where fictional and humorous job ads are published (this will be discussed in chapter 8). Lastly, *Flyktingens dagbok* [the refugee's diary] is a made-up diary of a fictional refugee (this will be discussed in chapter 8). Some articles are in the form of fictional 'tests' or 'manuals'. *Gringo* also contains a large amount of advertisements. All of the content of the magazine (editions 1-32)[38] which was available online was used for analysis[39]. Appendix 1.3 provides short summaries of the regularly published sections in *Gringo*.

The selected texts which are cited for the purposes of illustration in the next chapters and in the appendices have all been translated by the author of this thesis and checked with a professional proofreader. In the following chapters, I have either quoted whole articles or long extracts from *Gringo*, and if only extracts are quoted, the reader is referred to the appendices for the whole text. I found it important to quote at length given that the last and most important part of my analysis consisted in carrying out in-depth discourse analysis of whole articles (see below). Further, in the appendices, I provide more examples from *Gringo* of each 'theme' which is discussed in the chapters. In the appendices I have also included images whenever they accompanied the text in the magazine. However, I have not carried out any systematic analysis of the images,

---

[38] Four editions were not analyzed in depth due to problems uploading them into NVivo 7.

[39] Apart from appearing in the *Metro*, the editions also existed on the *Gringo* website. Moreover, every five weeks a bigger version of *Gringo*, which was called *Gringo Grande*, was published independently from *Metro* and was sold in newsagents. The current study consists of the analysis of the *Gringo* editions that were published in *Metro* and available online between 2004 and 2007.

not only because of lack of space, but also for the reason that, given my research concerns, I did not sense that a detailed investigation would add much more to the textual analysis.

As mentioned in chapter 2, *Gringo* makes great use of slang or '*blatte*-Swedish' in its text. It should be noted that it is certainly not a straight-forward matter to translate *blatte*-Swedish into English. The richness of the data is sometimes lost or the reader may feel disorientated as a result of translation. Some statements only make sense if the reader is familiar with the Swedish slang language. For example, *Gringo* wants to show that in the labour market, European immigrants are favoured as against non-European immigrants and the statement *Engelskmän knäcker Irakier* in Swedish slang is used. This would roughly be translated as 'Englishmen beat Iraqis'. There is no exact English word for the expression *knäcker* in this context and *knäcker* [crack] is used as slang to mean something like 'conquer' or 'win' or 'beat'. These words do not, however, *fully* capture the mischievousness or playfulness of the above expression. This kind of language is typical of Swedish slang and is particularly used by youth in the suburbs. Many of the peculiarities of the text are lost in the translation. In the examples in the following chapters, sometimes there is no equivalent for a word in English, and hence non-slang English has been used in its place. In spite of these challenges of translation, every attempt has been made to do justice to what is being expressed in the Swedish text.

Gringo can be seen as a case study on which a very thorough and detailed analysis is employed. Given the theoretical and analytical approach presented here, it makes sense to focus on one magazine in great detail rather than on large amounts of media discourse on the 'surface'. This is in line with the psychoanalytic method and Freud's own technique of analysing each case in-depth. It also accords with a discourse analysis approach which often prioritises detailed scrutiny of a specific designated section of discourse rather than a wide sample analysed only superficially.

Gringo is an ideal source of data and deserves to be focussed on precisely for its specificity. It is what Hall refers to as discourse as public idiom. The magazine represents a mass-circulated instance of minority resistance culture. In addition, the content is very rich, diverse and indicative. It includes texts, pictures and other images

and the mode of expression is both formal and informal. Moreover, it sparked off intense debates and controversies in the Swedish public sphere. These are some of the main reasons which make *Gringo* worthy of deeper investigation.

It should be noted here that *Gringo* is a case in point for the study of social fantasy. Despite being in *Metro*, which means that it supposedly has a wide readership. I argued in chapter 2 that *Gringo* sees itself as being outside mainstream journalism. This fact and *Gringo's* rather 'obscene' content suggest that the magazine should be considered to be in the margins of official public discourse rather than part of it. It is in this kind of alternative discourse where social fantasy can best be found:

> Evidence for social fantasies might be found at the margins of 'public official discourse': many cultural artefacts, 'trashy' magazines, the yellow press, etc., would constitute legitimate sources in generating a procure of social fantasies (Glynos, 2001: 205).

5.6   The analytic procedure

5.6.1   A circular approach

Given the theoretical framework of this research, a qualitative analysis which allows for flexibility and in-depth investigation of the libidinal element of signifiers is best suited to the task at hand. The method of this research is greatly informed by theory. Conclusions drawn from the data are not merely based on empirical evidence, but have also been illuminated, opened up to further analytical scrutiny by virtue of reference to the theoretical framework presented in the previous chapters.

The methodology-theory relationship in this study has been rather distinct from the more common 'linear' approaches. Rather than starting with clear theoretical or conceptual frameworks with clearly identified data sources, the data and the theory have informed each other in a more circular fashion. Initially, the plan was to study media discourse and perhaps carry out interviews or focus groups on the authors or readers of the specific discourse, but the idea was to start with the analysis of *Gringo*. As the theory building and the analysis progressed, not only did I sense it was inappropriate to conduct interviews, but I also realised what a rich and informative source this magazine was in and of itself. To do justice to the complexity of this material, I found it necessary

to concentrate solely on the discourse of this magazine and of some of its responses in media.

This kind of 'purposeful' sampling could be said to be similar to theoretical sampling (Glaser and Strauss, 1967), where the selection of data depends on previous data that has already been studied, and where the goal is a deep study of certain cases/materials. However, it is distinct from this approach because I draw on a field of existing concepts rather than attempt to generate a new theoretical framework from the ground up. However, although my analysis is informed by theory, my conclusions will not necessary be limited to a psychoanalytic framework.

5.6.2 Beyond content and discourse analysis

The data analysis process could be said to have involved two main stages. The first stage entailed a type of content analysis; it consisted of an extensive mapping of the data, breaking it down into manageable groups and themes. The second phase included the selection of a sample of articles picked out from the themes found in the first stage for a more detailed discourse analysis. The second stage was not just about investigating what texts contained, but how they functioned, what they did, what they performed, enacted and what they constructed. These were more pragmatic or action orientated forms of analysis with a focus on the libidinal elements of the text. The second stage was the main part of the analytical process.

Discourse analysis is a very varied and broad field (in social psychology the main two perspectives are Parker (1992) and Potter and Wetherell (1987)). However, two elements which are shared by all discourse analytic methods are their focus on language and their emphasis on the socially constructed nature of the social world. The following points discussed by Gill (1996) illustrate some of the main aspects of discourse analysis:

- Discourse or "texts of various kinds *construct* our world" (p. 142, emphasis in original). Discourse analysts do not generally look for something which lies beyond language, for example the 'real' mental states or attitudes or beliefs, but focus on the discourse itself, the way it uses pre-existing linguistic resources in order to construct a particular version of the world as opposed to another.

118

- What is emphasised is the "'action orientation' or 'function orientation' of discourse" (p. 142). Discourses are a means of social practice which do things (e.g. blaming groups, defending oneself, repressing certain accounts). They also enable certain practices to happen (or not to happen).

- "All discourse is occasioned...Discourse analysts are involved *simultaneously* in analysing discourse and in analysing the interpretative context" (p. 142, emphasis in original). Researchers should pay attention to the particular context in which the discourse is being uttered, because it is largely the given situation which conditions its meaning.

- Discourse is a rhetorical act aimed to win over opposing positions or possible criticisms: "the emphasis on the rhetorical nature of texts directs our attention to the ways in which all discourse is organised to make itself persuasive" (p. 143).

Thus, the emphasis is on the interactional aspect of psychological phenomena and the effects of talk and text. In critical discourse analysis (e.g. Fairclough, 1989; 1995) the focus is on how text and discourse work to reproduce power and inequalities. An account does not only portray/describe something but it also has an ideological and material function. Discourse analysis then investigates the patterns of strategies, actions that a particular discourse does. The example provided by Eagleton (1991) demonstrates this principle of discourse analysis: "a pronouncement like 'black is beautiful'...looks on the surface as though it is characterizing a state of affairs, but is in fact of course a rhetorical act of defiance and self-affirmation" (p. 19).

In the analysis of *Gringo*, I have drawn on the elements of discourse analysis listed above. In addition, I have also been attentive to the 'inter-textual' aspect of text, the sense that it anticipates future text and "responds to, reaccentuates, reworks past texts" (Fairclough, 1992: 270). I also pay attention to what may be the effects of certain readings of the text and how it maintains or resists certain structures of power.

As argued above, discourse analysis has been accused of having an 'impoverished' theory of subjectivity. Similarly, Jovchelovitch (1996) within the social representations framework criticises discursive approaches for depicting subjects as "nothing but positions in discourses, inhabitants of or embedded within discourses" (p. 131). The idea that only observable discourse can be studied has meant that some have accused

discourse analysis for being another form of behaviourist reduction (e.g. Hogg and McGarty; 1990; Verkuyten, 2005).

In the case of emotions, discursive psychologists are correct in stating that talking about emotions, for example, about being angry at someone, is to be understood within an interactional context, as not an expression of 'real' inner feelings, but as an activity, which is performing something, for example resisting injustices. However, this does not mean that the feeling of being angry does not exist without discourse (cf. Frosh, 2002). Further, affects such as racist disgust do not only exist within the realm of language (Hook, 2006), although language or representation is one of the means by which they might be expressed - albeit in an oblique manner. Even if everything cannot of course be reduced to affect, the focus on textuality or discourse sometimes seems to neglect the fact that after all, discourses is produced by real human beings, with motives and desires. The analysis of text sometimes proceeds as if this fact is insignificant. What should be emphasised then is that an affect is linked to symbolic content, although the affect in question is not limited to discourse. For example, anger might be 'extra-discursive' in as much as it is not reducible to discourse, but it is not 'extra-symbolic'. We continuously try to domesticate or organise the excessive elements of affect such as anger by giving it a meaning, putting it in a symbolic space.

Bracher (1994) implies that Lacanian psychoanalysis helps to animate the text. He states that the Lacanian School engages in

> an analysis of discourse that views every linguistic and discursive phenomenon in terms of the role it might play in the full range of psychological and social functions and structures that underlie human motivation on various planes - including identity, identification, ideal, values, alienation, anxiety, shame, desire, and fantasy (p. 127).

Discourse analysis and psychoanalysis do have things in common. As I argued, reference to things in absolutely factual, empirical 'reality' is not a concern in discourse analysis. The emphasis is more on the status of the *truthful* than the status of reality. This is in fact very similar to the psychoanalytic method in which the analyst is not particularly interested in verifying the actuality of what has happened, the relations between the patient's discourse and actual events. The Freudian/Lacanian position assumes that things that happen in the analysand's life only gain a meaning after the

event. Not only is meaning *deferred*, but the process of analysis involves a work of 'construction' of events and things in the world. Lacan states that it is "the world of words that creates the worlds of things" (Lacan, 1977: 72). Constructions do not necessarily have to be true, but they are 'true' in the sense that they are derived from past experiences and they have real effects on the subject. As Freud (1937) states in one of his papers on technique regarding the similarities of psychotics' delusions with those of a culture or society,

> if we consider mankind as a whole and substitute it for the single human individual, we discover that it too has developed delusions which are inaccessible to logical criticism and which contradict reality. If, in spite of this, they are able to exert an extraordinary power over men, investigation leads us to the same explanation as in the case of the single individual. They owe their power to the element of *historical truth* which they have brought up from the repression of the forgotten and primeval past (p. 269, emphasis in original).

Moreover, phenomenon such as the unconscious, the Symbolic and the *objet a* are not 'deep' within the subject, but 'external' to it, and therefore pertinent for discourse analysis (Parker, 2005a). The focus in the present research is on the 'sticky' elements behind the rational and coherent aspects of discourse. As Bracher (1994) suggests, the position of the cultural analyst is to identify the fantasy and its *objet a* behind the disguises of the Symbolic. "In discourse, anything that functions for an audience as an object of desire or a precondition for *jouissance* has assumed...the role of the *objet a*, the fundamental cause of desire" (Bracher, 1993: 44).

While this study draws on and follows many of the basic premises of standard forms of critical discourse analysis as detailed above, it remains an unconventional form, a type of discourse analysis that is in constant dialogue with a series of crucial psychoanalytic concepts. One might perhaps describe the form of research that I am employing here as one in which the analysis of discourse is always managed via an engagement with extra-discursive facets. This is not something new. Glynos and Stavrakakis (2003) suggest that Žižek, in his first book *Sublime object of Ideology*, was already situating discourse analysis in relation to the issue of *jouissance*.

Thus, the idea in the current thesis is that one best grasps the textual facets of discourse and how it works via a sense of those seemingly 'extra-discursive' conditions that motivate the political functioning of language. This is already a lesson of Foucault's

(1981), namely that the analysis of discourse is best managed with reference to a series of extra-textual aspects (aspects of concrete materiality, details of spatial configurations, practices, operations upon bodies and so on). The hope is that analysis of discourse is not limited only to descriptions of textuality, reducible thus to the ontology of the text. Likewise here, my objective is to trace the functioning of discourse - as a means of stabilizing a mode of group identity – precisely in terms of the role of a series of extra-discursive features (*jouissance, objet a*: facets of the Real) with which the forces of discourse are in constant negotiation. As the extract from Vanier (2001) demonstrated above, discourse is a collective organization for managing *jouissance*. One might emphasize thus that discourse is a domesticating force, an attempt to control and organise anxiety, *jouissance* and identity.

5.6.3 The stages of the analysis

In the following, I illustrate in more detail the analysis from the beginning to the end. In the initial stages, the qualitative package NVivo 7 was used to aid the coding process. Rather than having preformed hypotheses, I came to the text having some provisional questions in mind:

- How are the immigrant and the Swedish identities represented?

- How are these identities re-negotiated?

- How is racism, exclusion or discrimination represented or resisted?

I started by reading and rereading all the articles and making summaries of the regularly occurring sections in *Gringo* (see appendix 1.3). This was useful since it provided an insight into, not only the content, but also the different *styles* of writing in the magazine. After a sufficient familiarity with the data had been gained, the content of articles was categorized into different groups depending on the main discussion topic. Three main codes emerged from this analysis: *Gringo magazine, identity* and *resistance* (see appendix 1.2 for coding framework). Thus, for example, those articles which were mainly about identity were categorized under the group 'identity'. These main categories were further subcategorized. For example, under the category 'identity' there are two subcategories 'immigrant identity' and 'Swedish identity'. These in turn have their own subcategories. The same piece of text can be categorized in two or more

different categories. This procedure gave an insight into the themes and imagery which are re-occurring in the text as a whole. It gave an excellent overview of the dataset.

In the second part of the analysis, I went back to the categories which were found in the first stage and decided to focus on specific themes. I decided that *Gringo's* discourse deals with three main themes: *immigranthood*, *Swedishness* and *critique* (see the following chapters). Each of these themes was then studied carefully using specific articles for in-depth analysis. So this approach involved a close reading of a manageable set of texts. It should also be noted that these three different 'themes' or 'issues' which are discussed in the following chapters very often intersect with each other.

This part of the analysis seriously engaged with Lacanian and Freudian ideas. For each theme focused questions were asked of the text (these questions can be found in the beginning of the following chapters). For example, in some parts of the analysis, recurring imagery (the Imaginary) was studied, and in other parts, the focus was to look at how speech expects a certain response, and how "every communication is viewed as directed to an audience, as an appeal for recognition" (Parker, 2005a: 175) (see for example chapter 8).

Thus, one can summarise the entire analytic procedure as starting very broadly with a focus on *Gringo's* text as a whole and ending with a focus on specific themes and articles (and then reflecting back on the themes). As I wanted to make sure that by picking out a limited number of articles, I would not leave out important data, choosing the articles for more in-depth analysis and reporting was not straightforward. However, as much as possible, I selected those articles which seemed to most clearly represent a particular issue or contradiction in *Gringo*.

The analysis concentrates for the most part on *Gringo's* text, on the images it contains and represents, and how it resists identities, racism or discrimination. However, in order to obtain an overview of how *Gringo* was received by the public, the comments made by readers, which were available on *Gringo's* website, were subjected to a thematic

content analysis[40]. This text was coded into 'negative' and 'positive' comments (see appendix 1.4). Moreover, at a later stage in the analytical process it was found that some of *Gringo's* text could not be adequately understood without a deeper investigation of wider public discourse. Thus, there was certain flexibility in the method in that at times the analysis moved between *Gringo's* text and its context. This is in line with the understanding within discourse analysis methodology concerning inter-textuality, the idea that texts are in constant negotiation with one another. So the decision whether to conduct an in-depth analysis of text outside the magazine itself depended on whether the content of *Gringo* required a grasp of the wider context. As will be shown in later chapters, this was particularly the case in the analysis of the theme about Swedish language. Much of the articles about the Swedish language in *Gringo* seemed to be a response to not only the criticism against the magazine, but also the debate which was occurring in the Swedish public sphere regarding the suburb-slang and Swedish language. Selected articles in one of Sweden's major news paper, *Dagens Nyheter* were then subjected to analysis (see chapter 7).

I should make a note regarding interpretation. Consider the following example from *Gringo*, which discusses *Frölunda*, a suburb with a high number of residents with immigration backgrounds:

> Frölunda - Home to probably the world's biggest collection of noisy tower blocks. The architects must have seen the greatness in Warsaw's and Moscow's suburbs when they designed these buildings. Wonderfully ghetto style (*Gringo* 12).

A colleague with not much knowledge or experience of the Swedish context understood the part "wonderfully ghetto style" as being sarcastic and as making fun of the 'ghetto' image of the suburbs. This is certainly one way in which it can be interpreted and indeed *Gringo's* text is full of sarcasm. However, I read this particular sentence as a celebration of the 'ghetto' image. I came to this interpretation because, being brought up in a rather stigmatized area in Sweden, the expression of delight and pleasure in the image of the 'ghetto' feels very familiar. I would argue the 'ghetto' image is an

---

[40] These comments were available on the website of the first version of *Gringo* (*Gringo*.se). They were accessed and downloaded on the 29th April 2007.

important part of the identity of many of the youth in the areas. The different ways in which my colleagues and I understood this text demonstrates how there is no objective way in which one can 'interpret' discourse; there is never a straightforward one to one relationship between signifier and signified, there is no one definitive reading of a text. Having said that, there is a way of reading and understanding key signifiers in a given context, which shows a very present and powerful aspect of how these signifiers and ideas are being used. This strategy involves looking at the discourse or signifier itself. Fink (2004) states "no statement has any other guarantee than its very enunciation...the only guarantee is found in the discourse itself" (p. 123). We can hence arrive at a possible understanding of the above extract, through for example analysing its structural relationship to other parts in *Gringo* (and even other text outside *Gringo*). We can also investigate how often an issue is repeated (or not repeated, is absent) and in what ways it is contradictory. According to Parker (2005a) "the task of an analyst is to work on 'the line of the symbolic' (working within the domain of the text)" (p. 177). It should be noted though that in the present research, although the Symbolic, or the big Other are certainly issues of concern, it is *jouissance* and the factor of the Real which is largely focused on for reasons which I have already outlined above.

5.6.4 An analysis of form, contradictions and inconsistencies

At various points in the text, the analysis involved studying the particular relation to the big Other, to the Symbolic. The aim was to first identify where the big Other was assumed to be positioned and second how/if this position was being challenged, contested. One way in which one can identify this relation

> is to trace the points in a text where knowledge is presumed. The 'supposition' of knowledge by the speakers or characters in a piece of text will indicate, for example, where authority and power are presumed to lie (Parker, 2005a: 172).

Further, the analysis of the Imaginary entailed examining how the relation of similarity and difference are constituted and reproduced; this involves looking for those particular types of "textual operation that hold antagonistic positions in relation to each other"(Parker, 2005a: 171).

Moreover, the psychoanalytic method postulates that analysis of a text involves for example *questioning* explicit statements and not taking what is stated for granted. In my method, I did not search for coherent narratives or accounts. On the contrary, I aimed to challenge and disrupt any stories or identities which appear consistent in order to investigate the field of implications, unintended meanings and associations put in play by these texts. An obvious similarity that discourse analysis and psychoanalysis have is the focus on inconsistencies and contradictions (Parker, 1997). In psychoanalysis the focus on these tensions may for example reveal the unconscious as well as grapples with the Real (see below). Further, not only what is said, but also what is not said is taken seriously:

> The convolutions, inadequacies, gaps and errors in linguistic production - both spoken and written - are all regarded by Freud as revelatory of the underlying intentions and meanings of the person; indeed, they are more revealing than well-organised discourse, which is produced by the repression of disruptive, unconscious forces (Frosh, 1989: 134).

Identifying 'gaps' also means finding instances where an account assumes to be telling the 'truth', and neglects other things that could have been said (Parker, 2005a). Since the unconscious is Symbolic or 'outside', the study of absences helps to identify what is considered 'normal', the standard position of a culture (i.e. master signifiers). It is sometimes absence which reveals the structural relationship to the Other. Thus, the understanding of the text is a process which goes far beyond what is explicit.

However, the idea is not so much that we can tell something simply on the basis of absences, but that there are a series of traces linking what is not said to instances of what is said. It means identifying the instances of the *form* of how something else is said. This entails looking for the implicit associations the text functions to elicit, how certain formal inconsistencies/features of the text index other elements. This strategy points to the insufficiency of standard content analysis approaches. In relation to the workings of racism, Hall (1992a) argues that racism's functioning is "rather more like Freud's dreamwork than anything else...racism expresses itself through displacement, through denial, through the capacity to say [or represent] two contradictory things at the same time" (p. 15). This analytical strategy looks for *symptomatic effects* which signify racism in mundane ways (via condensation, displacement, for example, via the form of discourse).

We could state that just as racism does not only work on *content*, resistance does not merely function at the level of *what* is said. Indeed, Lacanian analysis of discourse is characterised by its emphasis on formal structures of different signifiers in tension rather than the content of the text (Parker, 2005a). According to Geogarca (2005) this involves for example, "analysing the articulation of I's and others in the text"; or examining the "signifying history" of the words used; or "exploring the flow, including repetition of terms...terms which stand out from the rest of the text"; or studying "the broader cultural frames" which are drawn upon; or examining absences (pp. 86-87). Although what is represented is important, *how* it is represented - the kind of imagery, metaphors and styles of expressions that are used and the extent to which they are repeated - reveals something about fantasy and *jouissance*.

Further, the psychoanalytic notion of *overdetermination* means that one symptom, problem, or statement might be due to multiple simultaneous causes, and one interpretation does not rule out others. Freud (1997) adopts the notion of overdetermination to argue that the manifest content of a dream may have many causes at once (for example residue of the day, childhood traumas). I analysed the material of *Gringo* having in mind that the text could be explained in multiple ways. As much as a particular discourse might be an effect of the socio-political and material circumstances it can also be a result of psychic processes. Overdetermination is a term which generally reflects the stance of this research: that identification, resistance and discourse work through a complex and interwoven set of factors, including political, discursive and libid.inal.

5.7   The problem of identifying and analysing jouissance

The assumption of this thesis is then that there is much more to identity and resistance than language and discourse. In other words, the force of language and discourse should always be seen as in relation to what it cannot completely contain or mediate, namely the factor of *jouissance*. The analysis proceeded with the assumption that although identity and resistance are socially constructed, there is nevertheless a group mobilisation of affect which holds the discourse together, and which can be traced by looking at the discourse itself. Nevertheless, how can we know that a signifier or image is charged with libidinal elements or is stimulating *jouissance* for its audience?

This is not simply a matter of 'identifying' *jouissance* in the positivistic sense because "when we carry out any form of psychoanalytic discourse analysis we are indeed reproducing and transforming what we name rather than 'discovering' things" (Parker, 2005a: 178). Nevertheless, some features of a discourse might act as indices of *jouissance*, even though it is crucial to acknowledge that these indications are only ever provisional. I have not been able to find any literature on the topic of how to trace signals of *jouissance* in texts other than Glynos and Stavrakakis (2003) references to 'indices of the Real'. However, their theoretical engagement does not really lend itself to the pragmatics of methodological application in a thorough way, and so the following tentative ideas have mainly been generated in supervision meetings.

The theoretical position of this research implies that the uncovering of an 'objective reality' is an unobtainable fantasy. Hence, the subjectivity of the researcher is not irrelevant in the analysis, and the object of study does have an effect on the researcher in one way or another. This implies that the researcher can pay attention to what *effects* the text has on him/her, how it produces certain affects in the analyst as the reader. This is perhaps one way we can identify *jouissance*. However this strategy, which in some psychoanalytical traditions would be referred to as 'counter-transference', is far from reliable (Parker, forthcoming)[41].

A good place to start then is to look to what we discussed above: the *form* of enunciation, the *how* of something is said (formal rather than content analysis). This would make one attentive to *excessive repetitions* of words or phrases, repetitions that appear to index a degree of enjoyment or anxiety. Fink (1999a) suggests that in the clinical setting, the subject has hit the Real when an issue is being discussed or repeatedly raised without being able to fully make sense of it or feel content with it. He argues that the Lacanian Real is apparent in the patient's discourse when he or she

---

[41] Lacan is against the use of the 'feelings' of the analyst as a tool in the analytic setting, and considers that those approaches which value counter-transference as an indicator of what is happening with the analysand to be focused on the Imaginary, rather than the more important Symbolic. He implies that to use the subjectivity of the analyst is to project their ideas onto what they are analysing. However, it should be noted that I am not conducting a clinical psychoanalysis, but a piece of research. My own background sensitizes me as a researcher to the types of language, the meanings, the particular signifiers in use in the research.

seems fixated over a notion, an issue, or an event without being able to fully move on. Hence, we can conclude from this that a repetition of signifiers might indicate an attempt to induce *jouissance* or an effort to allude to the *objet a*. As implied in chapter 3, we should be on the lookout for the 'insistence of signifiers'.

Further, powerful *irrationalities* can indicate 'gaps' and towards issues which have not been able to be completely made sense of at a Symbolic level and thus which might point to the Real, to something anxiety provoking or traumatic. Indeed, one way in which *jouissance* or the Real is able to reveal itself is through inconsistencies or contradictions in signification (Žižek 1989). According to Parker (2005a)

> the real is not a realm 'outside' discourse that can be identified and described, but it is something that operates at a point of breakdown of representation, at a point of trauma or shock that is then rapidly covered over in order that it can be spoken of (p. 176).

However, Glynos and Stavrakakis (2003: 116) make clear "that in Lacanian theory the Real is not only associated with moments of disruption, with traumatic or dislocatory experiences" which demonstrate the lack in the Symbolic. The Real is also linked to the "lack of real *jouissance*" (ibid.: 116). This implies that we also need to be attentive to those discourses, signifiers and modes of expressions which allude to this lack, which *alludes to an object* which might stand in as the *objet a*, the cause of desire: "the lack of the real is usually positivised (imaginarised) and presented in fantasy as an object of desire" (ibid.: p.117).

The enunciative dimension is of course of great importance in the analytic setting. It sensitizes the analyst to *voluptuousness* in language, as in the case of how a racial slur is uttered in speech, the spoken violence, for example of how an insult is delivered might be an indication of how text endeavours to stimulate *jouissance*. One can also look for *volatile* and overheated language (hyperbole, exaggeration, excessively denigrating or celebrating terms of description). Text which attempts to *contaminate the reader with feeling*, to evoke some kind of response, to for example involve the listener/reader in a shared sense of outrage should also be attended to. Here *jouissance* is generated in a way which hopes to link subjectivities, to create forms of shared intersubjectivity, as in the case of pinpointing enemies. It is also in *outrageous, scandalous* or *sensational*

language which might signal stimulation of *jouissance* as in those cases which passionately condemn injustices and unfairness.

Moreover, in strict Lacanian terms, spoken language might be seen as a privileged medium for 'carrying' *jouissance* (which would be easier to detect in terms of the tonality of voice, etc). One of the methodological ideas I experimented with was asking myself what the spoken version of the written text might sound like. Clearly, this involved a degree of conjecture, but it was a useful way of sensitizing me to the *affective tone of written language*, to envisaging its performative power.

To sum up, the analytical framework was something of an experimental approach to discourse analysis, an approach very much in its infancy. Although the identification of texts which attempt to generate and stir up patterns of *jouissance* was rather exploratory rather than definite, the above points were used as guidelines. A careful formal analysis of discourse may be able to identify the strategies and techniques by which texts attempt to bring about *jouissance*-effects to the surface.

5.8 Conclusion

The aim of this research is to use the theoretical concepts from the SIT paradigm, Hall, and Lacanian psychoanalysis developed in the previous chapters, with a discourse analysis centred on tracing libidinal economies, that is, processes of identification as mobilized in affective forms of discourse. The following chapters largely represent the conclusions drawn from the analysis.

6 The contradictory image of the immigrant

6.1 Introduction

This chapter is about the parts in *Gringo* which aim to resist the stigmatised representation of those with an immigration background and of the suburbs, the so called million program areas in Sweden. The following analytical questions were asked of the data: *How is the negative representations of the immigrant/blatte resisted? What images are produced? What 'modes of being' are imagined to be desirable (to the Other).*

There is an attempt to reverse the negative images into positive ones. Thus, the immigrant who has traditionally been viewed to be 'different' or 'lazy/useless' is here represented as 'ordinary' and 'successful/useful'. These I argue, are images which conform to given societal ego-ideals which determine what a 'positive' identity should be. However, at times the 'positive' images are in fact more ambiguous, and mixed with a subtle affirmation of 'difference'. This suggests that an identification with the ego-ideals of the Swedish big Other is what leads to the covert reproduction of the immigrant as 'different'.

Another strategy engages with the *form* of representation rather than merely with its content. This involves using humour to make stereotypes seem absurd, to make the reader laugh at their meaningless quality. This approach is criticised, and it is suggested that the repetitive, fetish-like representations of the gangsta/*blatte* image is contrary to the normal/successful one and hence it can be seen as a resistance against ego-ideals. The fantasy of *blatte* does not only include a desire to be seen as 'different' but there is also an effort to be a 'threat' to normalising ego-ideals. Hence, the re-evaluation of the *blatte* category involves a fetishistic exploitation of the representation of the *blatte* and the suburb.

6.2 Reversing the image of the immigrant or conforming to ego-ideals?

6.2.1 The 'ordinary' image

The section in *Gringo* called *Svenskar med annan bakrund än typisk svensk...typ* [Swedes with a different background than typically Swedish] includes articles which report on people who have an immigration background or other background to the 'typical' ethnic Swedish. It includes for example reports on a couple of Turkish siblings and a group of young Somalis (see appendix 2.1 for sample extracts). In other words, these articles report on a social category which is usually considered to be 'different'/'other' than the Swedish category. The following example is the story of a group of young Chinese-Swedes (see appendix 2.2.1 for full text).

Bo &Peng
"Chuan qiu", yells Bo Huang and takes the ball...."Most people think that Chinese people are short, but just
look at us", Bo says and points towards his brother Lei Huang and the friend Peng Zhou.
Every Saturday a dozen of young Chinese-Swedes meet in the Tibble court to play basketball...Nobody is
below 1.80 cm tall.
Chinese-Swedes are one of the most anonymous minorities in Sweden. You only get to meet them at
Chinese restaurants. "Most Chinese-Swedes socialise only with each other. Most know each other because
we are not that many. The language is a barrier, Chinese is very different to Swedish, which makes it
difficult for a Chinese person to understand Swedish", says Bo Huang and dries the sweat from his
forehead.
... "If we would add an "f" to Lei, we would be called Bo and Leif[42], and more Swedish names are difficult to
find", says Bo. He remembers his first impression of Sweden very well. "I came here in January and
remember the snow and the air was so clean. People said 'hej' to me and dad and I couldn't understand why they were so rude to us. In China 'hej' means something like 'hey' and it's very rude", says Bo and laughs widely which makes his eyes into thin openings.
What prejudices exist against Chinese people? "We look like this", Peng Zhou says and laughs at the same time as he is making a facelift with his hands and makes his eyes even smaller. "Just because we are Chinese, people think that we are good at kung fu and can play table tennis, I can't do any of that", says Bo Huang. "I know kung fu", says Peng Zhou who has recently started to practice.
... "I feel at home in China in a different way. If I had been born here, Sweden would have perhaps felt like home. I am trying to fit in as much as possible, but my appearance is a

---

[42] Bo and Leif are traditional and common Scandinavian names.

hindrance", says Bo. Bo Huang thinks well of Sweden and he sees his future here. He wants to stay here, build a family and create a life...
No one knows exactly how many Chinese people there are in China. The government recently employed six million Chinese people and gave them the task to count the other Chinese people in two weeks. They got an approximate number which is 1,298,847,624... (*Gringo* 1).

In this article, as well as in other similar ones, those who are reported are portrayed in a relaxed, friendly, informal setting, aiming to represent them as 'any other ordinary people'. These articles have quite a 'defensive' style in that they all implicitly refer to and challenge other texts in media which portray immigrants as 'other'. The function here is to strip the immigrants of their 'difference'. The images accompanying these texts confirm this. They usually depict people as happy, relaxed in an everyday kind of context (such as in a basketball court, bowling hall or a park). The objective is to represent, make recognised, a social group which has been negatively represented or which is usually not visible in the public-sphere. For example, the demographic information in the article seems to do just that. This text also negates the usual stereotypes of Chinese people, such as the stereotype of 'Chinese people are short'. None of the boys here are "under 1.80 cm tall". The discussion of stereotypes is a strongly prevalent theme in these kinds of articles. The question which is implicitly asked is 'are these stereotypes true or not?' And sometimes there seems to be a tension between on the one hand denying stereotypes and on the other hand affirming them. For example, the reference to the bodily aspect of the boys (Bo "laughs widely which makes his eyes into thin openings") works to repeat the well-entrenched bodily stereotypes of Chinese people, stereotypes which emphasise Chinese difference. At the same time the text also works to ambiguously challenge the otherising aspect of the stereotypes, suggesting that the 'Chinese are not that different, despite their Chinese body'.

This repetitive refutation of stereotypes of immigrants works not only to contest them, but it is also part of the attempt to produce an 'ordinary', 'normal' image of the various social groups which are reported on. The boys in this article are depicted as 'down-to-earth' and they make fun and laugh at prejudices against Chinese. The attempt to remove the 'difference' of Chinese people also includes reducing the gap between the Chinese and the Swede: Bo is quoted to say that their names are close to Swedish names. The implicit meaning seems to be 'Chinese are just like Swedes, even their names are similar'. A resistance strategy which *Gringo* uses is the representation of

133

identities as mixed and hybrid, rather than uniform and homogenous and we can see this strategy being played out in the above text.

Moreover, the text sweepingly points out that the boys are discriminated against, that they are inhibited by their bodies (their "appearance says stop"). Nevertheless, despite this, the argument is that these boys are enjoying life in Sweden and they do not consider moving back. The idea that life in Sweden is enjoyable, that they are content and feel at 'home' in this country, is another recurrent theme. This is a rhetorical argument against the general view that immigrants are unhappily living in the margins of society. Nevertheless, there are also other ways in which this attachment to Sweden can be understood and these will be discussed later.

Here, we can see how the 'ordinary' image involves what Hall (1997) calls *reversal of images*. For example, the image of Chinese people as 'different to Swedes' is being reversed into Chinese people as 'same as Swedes'[43]. Thus, the claim is that 'Chinese are not different, they are ordinary'. One could also say, following SIT, that the 'ordinary' image is adopted as a *new* aspect of the Chinese group, which can be used for comparison with out-groups. However, this method is in reality not very different from an attempt to *assimilate* the Chinese identity into what is considered to be the majority norm, because making the Chinese 'ordinary', not 'different' is the same as making them 'blend in', absorbing them in the majority group. Thus, the 'ordinary' image is another way of making the Chinese identical to the Swede, or conforming to the majority image.

However, it needs to be stressed that this is a very ambivalent strategy, because despite the attempt to make the Chinese 'normal', assumptions of difference strongly permeate this text. The objective to oppose the stereotypes of the Chinese paradoxically affirms the fact that they are Chinese; it still asserts their difference. The mentioning of the above differences which may be ostensibly minor (their language, their eyes, their overpopulated country) immediately become tantamount to essential differences which matter and which link to longstanding stereotypes. This reaffirmation of

---

[43] One can also say that negative images are being reversed into positive ones.

difference/stereotypes despite the attempt to resist them is typical of these types of articles. I elaborate on this issue later in this chapter.

The following article is again an attempt to put the 'immigrant' in the centre of representation and to reverse the stereotype, but here, in order to be recognized, it is not enough to be simply 'ordinary'.

6.2.2 The 'hero' image

There are a number of articles in *Gringo*[44] which depict immigrants as exceptional people, rebels or agents of social change. I have called these 'hero' articles. These include reports on young music bands, singers, actors, sportsmen or women. In the following, we will see how Nessim, a middle-aged man, is being portrayed as an outstanding representative for the Swedish community (see appendix 2.2.2 for full text).

> **Nessim**
> Love and loyalty for Sweden is what drives Nessim Becket to find 500 jobs every year for jobseekers all by himself.
> ...During his time here Nessim has helped find jobs for about 500 people every year...There are no replacements so when he is ill or when there are holidays, the 'cafe' is closed. "It can of course be difficult to work alone with lack of resources. I am quite stingy but never with my strength. The driving force behind my work is my loyalty to Sweden. I feel great love for this country and think that more people would feel like that if they had a job".
> On the walls there are thank you cards and dried flowers from visitors...."I don't have much space for myself right now. My working day starts already at the underground because I meet several of the unemployed there. And the job then continues at the office, in the centre of town and on the way home. I don't even have time for my family, but everybody is actually my family... There is often an underlying reason for why a person hasn't been able to find a job. I try to find out what that is and work from there. I never want anybody to leave empty handed"...Nobody is questioned here. "Instead of saying 'why did you do that' or 'contact the social welfare secretary' I chose to say 'let's see what we can do'. I never see people as a problem" (*Gringo* 3).

This is a typical article in *Gringo* which aims to depict the 'immigrant' as not only 'an ordinary' person but also as successful and ambitious. In this text in particular Nessim is portrayed as a 'hero'. He is covertly being compared to the 'Swede' and shown as being as 'competent' and 'morally good'. He is given an important role here: a representative of the socio-cultural institution of the Swedish community. Nessim is a hard working and benevolent man, who helps people find jobs. The setting is his work environment,

---

[44] These articles are found not only in the *Swedes with a different background than typically Swedish* section, but can also sometimes be stand-alone articles in other sections of *Gringo*.

135

which is represented as a harmonious place, one which reflects his appreciated status in the community (there are "thank you cards" on the walls). Nessim is referred to in terms which emphasize how gentle and understanding he is towards individuals and how he gives all his energy to helping other people: he "never sees people as a problem", and he is incredibly sympathetic towards those he helps.

This is in stark contrast to the media representations and other stereotypes, which link immigrant men with laziness, crime, patriarchal women abusers and exploiters of government funding. There are a number of 'hero' articles in the editions that were analysed. They all have similar content to this one (success, ambition, immigrants as agents of change) and similar functions (reversal of representations). For example, some of these articles could be said to deal with the *revolutionary hero*. The immigrants in these texts are usually youth in the music or entertainment industry who are depicted as not only being successful artists, but also rebellious people working for social equality and change. In Sweden those who produce hip-hop are largely considered as hard-working and independent role-models who are socially critical and who work for social change (Bredström and Dahlstedt, 2002). For example, the following extract quotes a female hip-hop musician with an immigration background (see appendix 2.2.3 to 2.2.5 for full text of these articles)

> "I want a revolution, not a sudden one, but an 'every-day' revolution, where people in their everyday choose to stand up against things they believe is wrong" (*Gringo* 1).

Another category of hero articles (which intersects with the *revolutionary hero*) could be labelled as the *successful hero*. Contrary to the mainstream representation of 'failed' immigrant youth, the text here displays this social group as accomplished, ambitious and perseverant. The following is an extract from an article about a group of young men who have 'made it' in New York:

> Mackan is celebrity chef, Keke is superstar-stockbroker, Jakob is starting a business in China, Mezz runs the biggest photo-studio in New York, Pierre is working as a marketing guru for...an awesome advertising agency... (*Gringo* 24).

One article reports on Rita, a young woman involved in martial arts. This text kills two birds at the same time: it reverses both the representation of immigrant youth as failed, and the representation of immigrant women as oppressed and inferior to their men:

136

Rita...gladly fights. And often. The reason: Mixed martial arts. She is head strong, and always competes under the same conditions as the dudes (*Gringo*, 22).

Thus, similar to the strategy of the 'ordinary' image, by introducing new dimensions (in the example about Nessim these dimensions would for example be success, ambition, compassion for people), the stereotypes which are usually attached to 'immigrant' men in Sweden (laziness, dishonesty, exploiters of government funding) are being reversed. Now, one can ask whether these attempts are successful or not. However, the question here that concerns us more is: *for whom are these images depicted?* Why is there a repetitive and rather overstated reference to Nessim as being a kind, loving, helpful man?

The 'ordinary' image and especially the 'hero' image depict *Imaginary* images - they are narcissistic ideal-egos of the 'immigrant' identity, and they may be invested with the equivalent of the kind of *jouissance* which is involved when an infant jubilantly (mis)recognises itself in the mirror stage. These images are portrayed as coherent, unitary, valorised and lovable. In this sense, they disavow lack - the immigrant is represented as a perfect complement to society; the images fulfil a function of mitigating against social lack, they are positively socializing. What is crucial though is that *it is the big Other which determines what would be a 'positive' identity*. The foreign immigrant can only be represented favourably if done so in the terms set by the ego-ideals of an existing Swedish Other. What makes the two positive images above work as a source of ideal-ego identifications is that they are located with reference to the Symbolic ego-ideal benchmarks of what are accepted and demanded social ideals in society. As such they come into play only via the Other, that is to say, when the entrenched perspective, the standard ideological position of the community in question is dominantly present. The process of reversing negative identities is fundamentally *dependent* on what the desire of the big Other is imagined to be - on the ideals set in place by the compass of social and discursive values.

Therefore, in the case of *Gringo*, reversing the stereotype of the immigrant category involves identifying *with the ideals of the Swedish out-group*. Immigrants are made loveable, they become the narcissistic means, the ideal-ego resources whereby Swedes see what they like about themselves in someone else. This means that in this

137

fundamentally narcissistic process – the other is never seen beyond their usefulness as an idealizing mirror– it is only via the Swedish ego-ideals, the values of Swedish culture that the other takes on any real value. Thus, in the 'ordinary' and the 'hero' discourse, it appears that there is no way to represent the cultural positives of these subjects in their own terms, the only way they can appear likeable is by being subject to, filtered through the ideals of this Other otherwise they do not attain any positive representability.

We may ask what is it that the Swedish big Other wants? There are certain attributes which appear to be seen as valued, and we can detect these from the text. The articles mainly use formal, standard Swedish language, which differs from other articles in the magazine where informal slang language or 'blatte-Swedish' is used. This is another indication that we are dealing here with an identification with the perspective of the Swedish Symbolic Other. Moreover, we can also see that in order to be desired by the Other, one needs to enjoy life in Sweden and love and be loyal to this country. A positively evaluated immigrant is one who is faithful to Sweden. Further, in the first article above, being 'ordinary' is depicted as desirable (for example, the young men do not particularly stand out, they do not complain about injustices, and they are happy and enjoying life). In the second article, 'ordinary' is not enough and being helpful, hard working and 'morally good', and perhaps socially aware, is prescribed as a desirable mode of being in the eyes of the Other. In most of the articles about 'the immigrant', the people who are reported on all have some kind of job, are studying to obtain a decent or highly regarded education, or are busy with some or other commendable, socially acceptable activity. There is an absence of images of people who are unemployed or 'socially failed' in other ways.

Hence, to wrap up our argument regarding the above text we can make two points: First, in order to be seen, one has to be represented via the mediating lens of the ego-ideals of the Swedish big Other. Thus – unless one is to be relegated to a negative identity, of those negatively-defined by their opposition to, or failure as regards these values – there is a need to meet and affirm these minimal standards if one is to attain any form of positive visibility, to be seen as normal. Second, the Other, the point from which 'normal' is judged, entrenches a highly specific set of cultural and societal values. This Other, moreover, at least in popular media discourse, appears to be desiring, not only

'ordinariness', but also excellence and prominence, the exceptionality of the status of the hero, the helper. Thus, as an immigrant one needs to do something in addition to merely being able to claim acknowledgement, one must do something extra to attain citizenship recognition, be involved in some kind of civic duty.

This makes apparent a challenge for *Gringo*: the problem of representing the immigrant, creating a 'positive' identity of this social group, without identification with the ego-ideal values of the host culture, the dominant out-group, and without *conforming* to the desire of the big Other. This will be discussed later on. In what follows I will confer more about something which we have already touched upon above: the ambivalence that exists regarding the image of the immigrant.

6.2.3 Swedishness as the big Other

As mentioned above, in the *Swedes with a different background than typical Swedes* section there is a very strong tendency to reproduce assumptions of difference, despite the attempt to resist them. Although the aim is to reverse negative stereotypes, there nonetheless seems to be an identification with the out-group - the ego-ideals of the big Other of Swedish society. This point will be elaborated on using the following example (see appendix 2.2.6 for full text).

They are called whores
...Thirty year old Nicklas Norberg is living with a Thai-Swedish woman. One evening when he is out with his partner a guy approaches them. "She is the one who cleans and cooks at home", isn't she? The guy asks....People think that Nicklas has bought her, that she is a prostitute whose main task is to clean and take care of the house.
...We are sitting in a Thai restaurant. The decor gives the feeling of Thailand....Tik, who has lived here for almost two years, thinks that Swedish food is good, but not as good as Thai food. And she is enjoying it here, even if the disadvantages are many, the advantages are greater. "Life is difficult in Thailand. I earned 3000 Kronas a month as a host and master of ceremonies. Here, I earn 14000 Kronas", says Tik....Before she and Nicklas found each other, she earned 20 Kronas on average per day, six days a week in various jobs, including waitressing jobs and work at a factory. "Life in the factory was hard. Everything become so much better when Nicklas turned up", says Jeab. Not with a melancholic voice, but she is really shining when she mentions Nicklas and then she laughs. Both she and Tik laugh a lot during the conversation.
...Next year in March, Jeab and Nicklas are going down to Thailand to get married. Nicklas is going down with fourteen of his closest friends who are going to meet the other 350 guests (*Gringo* 4).

Clearly this is again about challenging stereotypes and prejudices[45]. As in the previous articles, the context is a relaxed and informal one (a Thai restaurant), the people are depicted as happy (the Thai women "laugh a lot"). Enjoying life in Sweden is another theme which we have already come across (there are more "advantages" of living in Sweden than "disadvantages"). However, this text demonstrates most clearly that the task of reversing stereotypes in Gringo is an ambiguous one.

As I already mentioned in the discussion about the Chinese boys, in a great number of the articles which report on those with immigration backgrounds, resistance of representations and reproduction/confirmation of difference occur simultaneously. For example, in the above text, it is claimed that these women face the stereotype of Thai women as "prostitutes", who only want to marry someone in order to be able to leave Thailand. Although the attempt is to contest this stereotype, the picture that the text draws is one that presents life in Thailand as "difficult" and coming to Sweden makes life much "easier", and in this way Thailand may be understood by the reader as being inferior to Sweden. It becomes difficult to break free from the stereotype when the Thai woman is described as being saved from the "hard life" of Thailand when meeting Nicklas who made everything "so much better". Moreover, at first, the heading of this article *They are called whores* appears as a critique or objection to the prejudice against women as prostitutes. However, in the same process of condemning this stereotype, the heading also reproduces it. In addition, the great deal of attention which is given in the body of the article to the link between Thai women and being seen as "whores" in some ways confirms this very same link.

Thus, there seems to be a paradox between on the one hand intending to criticise stereotypes of Thai women and depict them as ordinary, happy, honourable, righteous and 'normal' - thus, making them as desirable to the big Other (the position from which an ideal woman is seen) - and on the other hand, 'unintentionally' reproducing ideas of 'difference'. The renegotiation of the social category in question works then hand in hand with, what the SIT tradition would call, 'identification with the out-group'. It is in

---

[45] We can note that this text is not only about prejudices directed at Thai women, but also those aimed at Swedish men who are in a relationship with Thai women.

140

terms of the identification with the ego-ideals of the Swedish big Other that the devaluation of the immigrant (or in-group) should be understood.

Furthermore, as demonstrated in the text above, resistance to stereotypes usually works through negating them. In psychoanalysis, negation or denial are certain defences which refer to the

> procedure whereby the subject, while formulating one of his wishes, thoughts or feelings which has been repressed hitherto, contrives, by disowning it, to continue to defend himself against it (Laplanche and Pontalis, 1973: 261).

Freud (1925) claims that through negation a disallowed statement can be uttered, "the content of a repressed image or idea can make its way into consciousness" (p. 234). In the clinical setting, negation puts what is repressed into awareness. Psychoanalysis postulates that in negation, there is no destruction of what is being negated; in fact negation reveals what is still there, what is still troubling the subject. Negation "is the paradoxical way in which what is hidden...in the unconscious is located in spoken, enunciated discourse" (Lacan, 1986: 64). There are obviously many ways in which readers may respond to, and understand the above refutations of stereotypes. Nonetheless, there is something not altogether convincing about these negations of a certain stereotype which simultaneously reiterate it and thus nevertheless re-evidence it. Such negations always bring with them the possibility of an inverted reassertion of what they are negating. Since they reproduce the content of the stereotypes, readers might pick up on the stereotype, rather than its contestation. Indeed, one might contend that the stereotype is retained, but at a higher (more excusable) level, retained on condition that a negation is appended to the statement. Thus, it becomes apparent that in the text such as above, what we are dealing with is the possibility of an unadmitted *ambivalence* towards the immigrant, a tension between refutation of stereotypes and affirmation of the same. On the one hand there are 'positive', ideal-ego images of the people in the articles, and on the other hand, these same people can be depicted as 'different'.

Such an outcome seems, however, to be unavoidable. One can argue that what *Gringo* is attempting at is understandable. Nevertheless, in simultaneously normalizing and yet al.so admitting difference, a kind of deadlock is reached whereby although similarity is emphasized (a model of sameness), the similarity in question is immediately put in parenthesis, qualified by the admission of a difference. Hence, the aim of these kind of

141

articles in *Gringo*, which is to strip 'immigrants' of their difference, is in some sense undermined. The people in the articles are all positioned as 'other' even by being the object of investigation (see appendix 2.1 (Swedishness as the big Other)) for more examples of how images of difference are reproduced). Thus, the 'Swedish' way of life seems to be taken for granted, seen as the background, the accepted backdrop against which examples of difference come to light and are particularized. What is considered to be the norm is communicated - the big Other of these texts is indirectly demonstrated in the images of difference. The big Other is Swedishness and from the position of the 'Swede' the immigrant needs to be represented, talked about and 'we' need to learn about 'them'.

We can sum up this section in saying that it is indeed about a 'social creativity' strategy which involves reversing the stereotypes of the immigrant, resisting images of difference using an ostensibly counter-discourse. However, this is not only a fundamentally ambivalent process, but it also involves conformity to the ego-ideals of the big Other of Swedish society. In the following I discuss the strategy in *Gringo*, which does not involve reproducing the ego-ideals of the big Other, but is an attempt to make the immigrant recognisable on their 'own' terms, which means challenging the values embodied in the big Other. In what follows, I examine a strategy which aims to renegotiate the devalued category of *blatte*: the method of working with the *form*, rather than content of the stereotype.

6.3   Ridiculing stereotypes or fetishism?

6.3.1   The 'gangsta' image

The text about the 'immigrant suburb' is very similar to the ones discussed above as it also functions to contest negative stereotypes: its aim is to resist the stigma attached to the million-program areas. There are many articles which include demographic, historical and 'factual' information about the suburbs. The function is to make these places recognised in the public sphere, to turn these stigmatized and 'excluded' areas into ones with a recognized and distinctive history and identity. Moreover, in a few of the editions of *Gringo*, there is a competition called *Suburb championships* (see appendix 2.3 (information about the suburb) for sample extracts). This is to nominate

the 'best' suburb in Sweden, which is an attempt to put the suburb at the centre of representation. The descriptions of each suburb - written in a mixture of standard and *blatte*-Swedish - are for the most part positive, depicting these areas as festive, diverse and trendy places, thus reversing the negative representations. Similarly to the articles analysed above, the function of these types of text is very clearly to make the suburb visible, and to disrupt the negative connotations that have been attributed to it.

However, apart from the strategies which mainly involve working on the *content* of the stereotypes, there are also those which focus more on ridiculing or making fun of them. This kind of mockery of stereotypes about both the immigrant and the Swede is carried out in many sections in the magazine. For example, in the *Gringo jobcentre* section, there are a number of fictional and parodying job advertisements in which organisations look to hire for example thieves or illegal/unregistered cab drivers, 'jobs' stereotypically attributed to immigrants (see appendix 2.3 (the gangsta image) for examples). Although the stereotypes of the Swede are also ridiculed, it is not done in quite the same manner, a different tone, and style is utilized here, the language is more overtly parodying, repetitive, and sensational. In the following we will see an example of how the image of the suburb is parodied (see appendix 2.4.1 for full text).

> **Survival guide for the suburb**
> Gringo has created a survival guide for all of those who are courageous and want to go to the deadly suburb.
> Before you go:
> -Go to the doctor in order to make sure that you're completely healthy. It is tough out there....
> -Take a course in first aid where you learn how to stitch gunshot wounds and knife-stabs on yourself.
> -Find out what gang-colours you need where you're going.
> -Write your will.
> How to behave:
> -Try not to go alone. Bring a sidekick. Or a bodyguard is even better...
> -Don't show your bling-bling. Hide the mobile phone and everything else which is valuable....
> -If a car slows down and has its windows wound down, you can be sure that it is a drive-by. Lie on the ground and play dead... (*Gringo* 2)

This 'survival guide' comes with an image of an opened travel bag which includes a shot gun, a bullet-proof vest and the rest of the materials listed in the text. With the use of slang and sensational language, the stereotypes of the suburb are accentuated. In order to understand the humour of this text, one needs to be aware of the representations of the suburb which pervade Swedish public discourse. There is reference to the ideas of

the suburb being "deadly" and "rough". There are also allusions to African-American gangster characters in Hollywood movies (there are "drive-bys" around).

According to *Gringo* the intention of this kind of exaggerated depiction of stereotypes is to show the absurdities in prejudices. For example:

> [We] take stereotypes and turn them around a few times more in order to make clear all their absurdities (*Gringo* 13).

This statement suggests that at one level the above article is representing the suburb in an exaggerated way in order to criticise and mock the idea that the suburb is 'dangerous' and show the nonsensical nature of these stereotypes. It also implies that *Gringo* 'knows' these stereotypes are not in reality true. We can see how the exaggerations and the humour in the text can have the effect of critique, of showing the irrationalities or meaninglessness of these stereotypes. This is typical of the 'Ali G style' critique, which by going over the top and eliciting laughter, the stereotypes are made ridiculous. It is similar to the strategy of resistance that Hall (1997) discusses which involves working within the stereotype itself, with its *form*, more than its content, in order to challenge it and demonstrate its illogicality. It can also be argued that through humour, identities are made performative and contingent, which can be a challenge to essentialising stereotypes.

However, the fact that the above article is a fictional, made-up guide; the use of humour indicates that the aim is clearly not only to critique, but also to incite laughter/pleasure. The text is enticing, it involves and engages us imaginatively, it draws attention, and it elicits a kind of voyeurism, indeed, even a type of prurience[46]. Thus, ultimately the assertion that the absurdities of the stereotypes would be demonstrated by exaggerating them is doubtful. In the analysis of the responses to *Gringo*, it was found that indeed, the ridicule of stereotypes can sometimes be perceived as *confirming* stereotypes and the perceived distinction between '*blatte*' and '*svenne*' identities (see appendix 1.4 (negative comments)).

---

[46] Sernhede (2002) notes that the hip-hop lyrics written by youth in segregated areas in Sweden not only resist stigmatisation, but they also quite intentionally use clichés about the 'on the edge life' of the suburb in order to attract the public.

The claim that stereotypes will be made absurd by ridiculing them is in itself quite ambiguous. What does it exactly mean? How will, according to *Gringo*, the stereotypes become absurd when reproducing and joking about them? Are they just made laughable, and more easily dismissed? Is the hope that they will thus fade from prominence, and cease to exist? Then again, the fact that even parodying stereotypes produces and maintains a large audience – as in the case of Ali G's success – suggests that ridiculing stereotypes does not take them out of circulation, or cause them to disappear.

Thus, the outcome of this 'critique' is 'undecidable' in that even as one pretends to be critiquing a certain portrayal, one might still elicit effects of *jouissance*, obscene thrills, which can allow the reader to enjoy at a distance from (and to cement a strong identification *against*) what is being objectified. This portrayal of the suburb can also be a prurient or vicarious access to the suburb. It gives answers to the question: 'what is it like in such undesirable places'. In other words, despite that there is a distancing-mechanism in place, by virtue of the use of parody, this mechanism allows us to enjoy at a remove; safe in the sense that this is joking discourse, we can nonetheless experience something of an imaginative 'thrill of the ghetto'. This is to say that although this is fiction, some of what it evokes by way of guarded response in its audience is nonetheless *true*: we might here draw on Lacan's (1986) enigmatic statement according to which sometimes "truth has the structure of fiction" (p. 12). Moreover, the use of jokes in the text of *Gringo* about stereotypes might suggest that anxieties about the immigrant are repressed in public formal language, but are nonetheless able to be expressed in humour. As Freud (1960) claims, when we have a negative feeling towards something instead of discharging distressful affects, we may use humour.

Nevertheless, the fiction also allows the reader to identify *with* this image; one can perhaps detect a desire to *be* this image. The kind of language used in this piece of text is very common in *Gringo*. The slang and the use of North-American English words (for example the suburb is referred to as "the hood") might evoke an Imaginary identification with the African-American vernacular style of speaking. Thus, contrary to the articles above, the desirable ideal-ego image depicted here is one of a 'dangerous gangsta' image, *different* to the righteous, normal and hard working one.

From the above, we can assume that there is a disavowal occurring: we *know* that stereotypes are not true, but we still *believe*, or *feel* them as if they are true. There is a contradiction between what I know and what I believe. This is about both believing and not believing in something. For Freud (1927) the refusal to accept a certain reality or knowledge includes *disavowal* of this knowledge which is instead replaced with a fetish object. He claims that the little boy, when seeing that the woman is lacking a penis, refuses to accept what he sees, "for if a woman had been castrated, then his own possession of a penis was in danger" (p. 153). The little boy keeps two contradictory beliefs at the same time: he saw that the mother did not have a penis, he 'knows' that there is a lack of penis, but he refuses to acknowledge it. This refusal needs the help of an object to be effective, an object which is a substitute for the mother's penis and can thus ensure he is protected against a loss of something precious which makes him what he is. This object becomes the fetish. Hence, *the fetish proves that something is not so.* The fetish helps to forget a threatening knowledge or reality. The denial of a reality leaves a gap and there is a need to fill that gap with a fetish object. This object becomes very important to the subject because it conceals the gap, and it helps the subject 'forget' about it. However, the fetish object also signifies the gap. Thus, paradoxically this object represents both the disavowal of reality and its acknowledgement. It represents both anxiety and pleasure. It is the ambivalence of anxiety and pleasure which requires the fetish object to be repetitively evoked; it needs a repetition of action in order to make sure that the threatening idea which brings about anxiety is covered over. It needs to provide a certain kind of fixity. The more I repeat it, the more I establish to myself that something is not the case, because I have the fetish object to prove it. If the fetish is in evidence, continually resorted to, then the sort of identity that would otherwise be threatened can be maintained, as in the case of the little boy's threatened masculinity; that which is special about him, and ensures his own narcissistic *jouissance,* can be protected, assured.

In the text of *Gringo*, the exaggerated image of the suburb as 'dangerous', 'violent', or as the same as the African-American 'hoods', the ideas of 'difference' which come up again and again might indeed be a resistance strategy which involves making the stereotypes absurd. However, they can also be read as a repeated and fetishised

146

representation. Bhabha (2004) productively links stereotypes in the colonial setting with the fetish object, and demonstrates how the stereotype is not only a discursive creation, but also an ambivalent psychic monument, like that of a fetish, with which anxiety about difference is made manageable. Although this is certainly how the stereotypes might be operating in *Gringo*, I am using the notion of the fetish somewhat differently to Bhabha. In the case of *Gringo*, the *blatte*/ghetto identity is almost like a piece of clothing that people can wear in order to project a more desirable image of themselves. In this sense, we can say that the *blatte* identity is like a commodity fetish, the commodity (*blatte*/gangsta identity) is filled with fetish qualities, and it is worshipped for the ability to provide satisfaction, a satisfaction which is similar to that of sexual gratification. Just like products such as shoes, or cars, the *blatte*/ghetto identity is a fetish object which assures fulfilment.

This fetishism of the *blatte*/ghetto image is evident in the repeated articles and information about the 'gangster' figures in movies and music. For example, in one article a fictional competition between Tupac Shakur - an American 'gangster rapper'- and Tony Montana - the character in the 'gangster' film *Scarface* – is carried out (see appendix 2.3 (the 'gangsta' image) for a sample extract). The aim of the fictional competition is to see who is the 'toughest' out of the two. It is assumed that a suburb guy identifies with these people. Although, it appears that this text might be a rather sarcastic mockery of the above two characters, the obsession with providing a great deal of information about the North-American 'gangster' figures may stimulate a libidinal investment in the 'gangster' image. Moreover, the section in *Gringo* called *Multiculture-manual* introduces and teaches customs and habits which are common or perceived to be typical of the suburbs (see appendix 2.3 (idealisation of the suburb) for an example). These usually involve 'gangsta-behaviour', or customs more generally considered not 'Swedish' and typical of youth in the suburbs. This is again part of the idealisation and fetishisation of the suburb life-style.

6.4 Changing the value of the blatte category or resisting ego-ideals?

Similar arguments can be made about the last form of resistance strategy which will be discussed in this chapter: the attempt to reverse the negative *value* of the *blatte*-category. As I claimed in chapter 2, *Gringo* makes use of the so called *blatte*-identity

and follows the trend which had already started in the media in Sweden: the attempt to 'redeem' *blatte* or *blackhead*. Adami states that: "When I call myself *blackhead*, I will immediately take the word back" (*Gringo* 18). This involves the aim of making '*blatte*', a category which is usually negatively evaluated into a positive one. The idea here is to be 'proud' of being a *blatte*, looking like a *blatte*, or talking like a *blatte*, rather than being ashamed of it. Hence, the repeated use of the words *blatte* or *blackhead* in the text of *Gringo* and the effort to make them 'everyday', ordinary words. Adami further states,

> For me, both blackhead and svenne are positive words. They have been loaded with negative meaning by being used in negative contexts. We use the words positively in order to neutralise, in order to disarm everybody who wants to discriminate with words. When someone calls me blackhead, I thank the person for the compliment. Same goes when I am called svenne (*Gringo* 5).

Nevertheless, despite *Gringo*'s attempt, and despite the fact that many of those invited to write articles in *Gringo* use these words, it is still a loaded word, one which is nonetheless considered taboo and offensive. In one of the articles in the *Thinking sultan* section (in which other people are invited to write), the author is expressing her concerns over using such words (see appendix 2.4.2 for the full text):

> "I think it is a b..b...blatte thing". In the middle of a discussion, I test using The Prohibited Word... I am dropping the word as cautiously as someone who takes a naked bath in February. Oooo how scary it is (*Gringo* 23).

This text demonstrates how there is still a taboo surrounding the word *blatte*, how it is still considered to be an offensive word and how it is a prohibited term in official, polite discourse. This suggests that the use of the term *blatte* in *Gringo* may not only be associated with a resistance strategy, an attempt to make it ordinary. Although resistance may indeed be one of the intentions, we cannot neglect the *jouissance* which may be involved in repetitively using a tabooed term, a *jouissance* which comes with transgression of social values and prohibitions regarding appropriateness.

Furthermore, just like the use of the term *blatte* is an attempt to make it ordinary, to make people 'proud' of *blatte*, the use of *blatte*-Swedish is similarly an intention to promote it. For example, there is a section which is called *Nya svenska ord* [New Swedish words] (see appendix 2.3 (idealisation of the suburb) for an example). Here new words from languages which are spoken in the suburbs, such as Turkish, Arabic, Persian or Spanish, are introduced and their meanings are explained and examples of

how these terms are used are given. *Gringo's* use of the 'slang' which is spoken by youth in the suburbs is a larger attempt to make this way of speaking Swedish recognised as *part* of the Swedish language, and not its opposite, not something which signifies that which is not Swedish[47]. *Gringo* calls this accent 'million-Swedish'. According to the magazine, it was one of the editors who came up with the aforementioned name, which is used instead of *blatte*-Swedish. The argument is that "it is the best term because it suggests that the language is geographically linked to million program areas and does not exclude *Svennes* and at the same time it doesn't include all *blattes*" (*Gringo* 22). Thus, *Gringo* prides itself on taking the initiative to "define [Swedish] culture" (*Gringo* 22). Million-Swedish is a marker of social identity, but it is also a transgression of Swedishness.

Thus, although the use of *blatte*/million-Swedish may indeed be an attempt to promote it, make it recognised as part of any other accent in Sweden, an effort to de-stigmatize it and make it commonplace in the public discourse, it should not only be understood as a conscious resistance strategy. This is so because as we saw in the text above, not only may the discourse evoke an Imaginary identification with the 'ghetto' life of black-American sub-cultures, but the use of million-Swedish appears to provide or organise some kind of libidinal enjoyment (for the author or for the reader of *Gringo*). Hence, the use of this slang language may be part of the fetishisation of the *blatte*-category.

In the responses to *Gringo*, there were indeed many comments made in million-Swedish, which suggests that some readers not only identify with this way of speaking, but it also points to the *jouissance* which it stimulates. The following is an example (see appendix 2.3 (responses to Gringo: the use and *jouissance* of million-Swedish) for more examples).

Maaaaan, you're so daaamn cool!
Hey all Gringo-people! One day I was sitting in the canteen eating when a teacher came to sit with us. We were talking and then I said 'I am cracking up'. And my teacher said, 'what are you saying? You should speak sensible Swedish': EEEEyyy maan, it's my damn free-time language! Stop complaining about how we talk. Not everybody is as perfect as you are. Hehe. We can talk however we want to...never talk real Swede-language, blatte-Swedish is better :D I think your magazine is soo freakin cool. I started to read it when it was out in Metro and I can't wait for

---

[47] The use of *blatte*-Swedish and the subversion of the Swedish language will be discussed further in the next chapter.

each new edition to come out. Damn, you're good. Keep it up! Your biggest fan, the blattis (Dated 11-12-2006).

Anyone who uses *blatte*-Swedish is also at the same time expressing an identity and making a claim that he or she belongs to a certain social group and leads a specific way of life which is different to the 'norm' and the 'ordinary' lifestyle of a devoted Swede. The repetitive use of *blatte*-Swedish is part of the indulgence of the representation of the suburb as a fetish object.

If as we stated above, the fetish is proof that something is not so, what is it that is threatening and is being disavowed? In the beginning of the chapter, it was stated that the re-evaluation of the immigrant identity involves making the immigrant 'normal' and just like any other 'ordinary' Swede, similar to the Swede. It might be the idea of *sameness, homogeneity, or lack of difference* which proves threatening, because it means that I am just like anybody else, that I am not special. After all, being seen in the gaze of the Other as different to everyone else provides me with a sense of distinctiveness, a kind of affirmation of specialness; the feeling of difference provides *jouissance*. 'No difference' might itself be a threatening idea; it is a threat to the *jouissance* which comes with difference. The fetish object is the representation/stereotype of the ghetto suburb. This is the object/monument which keeps difference alive and denies complete non-difference. Here it helps to refer back to an earlier analytical observation: that there is no room for the immigrant to be positively visible except by taking up a place within the ambit of the home culture's ego-ideals, as governed by the Other. One would expect then that some representations would play into these ego-ideals, but also that there would be some attempt to resist them, to deny this homogenisation, and assert an identity able to evince a degree of difference. In other words, this example of a fetishistic resort to ensure a threatened identity should be seen as dynamically related to the foregoing ego-ideal-harmonizing identities. It provides a crucial way of ensuring a different mode of identity against the threatening homogenization of the ego-ideals of the Swedish Other; it keeps a threatened identity alive and secure, and enables its own particular type of *jouissance* into the bargain. In short, this depiction of the suburb, may be seen as challenge to stereotypes or an attempt to ridicule prejudice, but it can also be interpreted as *resistance to the ego-ideals of the*

150

big Other; a resistance to be what the Other wants me to be. Therefore, we could state that the fetishisation of the *blatte* category which we are dealing with here involves a transgression of Swedishness, and from the repeated and almost theatrical mode of expression - both in the 'guide' to the suburb and in the comment we saw above - we can argue that there may be a *jouissance* involved in this transgression; a certain kind of 'kick' in violating standard, formal Swedish – disobeying the accepted social laws about the use of language.

If we understand the fetishised image of *blatte* as being something which is available in Swedish public discourse, we can see how it can be identified with by both 'immigrants' and 'Swedes'. The following extracts are taken from an article in the *Thinking sultan* section which shows how someone who defines themselves as a 'Swede' is identifying with this image.

Svenne in Blatte-package
As soon as I enter the ATG-corner[48], he blinks as if he is seeing something familiar.
"Ai where are you from", mate
"Well, Oland", I said.
"No but where are you born?"
"Hm...Sweden. Boring I know".
The girl in the corner however, has looked at me for a long time, you know the way you do when you are trying to figure something out. But now she is smiling widely.
"No, but where do you have your roots? Are you Iranian?"
I become embarrassed and say that I am truly boring Swedish. The most exotic in the blood is my grandfather who is Swedish-Finn....And of course I never dare to say that my dark brown hair is fake. That I am a real wanna-be *blatte*. Or it wasn't really that thought through, I was just sick of my red hair. Everybody wants to try something new?
"What about lightening the hair a little instead?" says the newly obtained and hyper blonde friend.
"Are you joking? I would look like a ghost...I prefer to strengthen the contrasts.
And if you think about it, the difference is not as big now as it was then. At first everybody thought that I was Irish, British or Australian. Everything but totally, average Swede.
Now I am a south-European, middle-eastern-something. Everything but totally, average Swede (*Gringo* 27).

The author is someone outside of the *Gringo* editorial, but the text is affirming what we have already seen in *Gringo*[49].The readers are informed that the writer is a 'Swede'. One may understand this text as aiming to disrupt the notion of the traditional uniform blonde Swede, thus being involved in the activity of re-negotiating this identity, stating

---

[48] ATG is a betting shop.
[49] It also suggests that the issues in *Gringo* are not exclusive to the small editorial group of the magazine.

that there is no essence to Swedishness, and showing how identity is both transgressive of borders and performative. Thus, resisting essentialised identities might certainly be the intention of the text. However, this reading would perhaps overlook something about desire and libidinal investment of the *blatte* identity as a fetish object.

We can identify a tension between on the one hand, 'knowing' that the author is a 'Swede' (and that they will always remain so), and the desire to be seen by the gaze of the Other as *blatte*, as non-Swede. Moreover, since we know from the name and the image which accompanies the text that the author is female, the example demonstrates how *blatte* may not only be a masculine category. In addition, "contrasts" seem to be an issue; she likes to "highlight the contrasts". Thus there is a fascination with contrast/difference/being distinctive. The significance put on the bodily, the physical and the visible is coupled with the importance to be seen as Turkish, Iranian or Albanian, as "exotic" and different to the "completely average Swede". She wishes for some fetishistic quality to make herself a little more interesting/sexy/attractive. Difference is here overvalued, glorified; there is an idea that a modicum of difference, of otherness is somehow necessary to create an effect of allure and interest, that the absence of difference is totally unsexy. Hence, the author denies/disavows Swedishness – that aspect of her that makes her feel average, invisible, unexciting, just one among many – by fetishizing her 'difference'. The representation of *blatte* is an eroticised fetish object – it is almost a sexual signifier. As Cowie (1997: 266) states "the fetish is the signifier of an excess of meaning, becoming thereby a signifier of excess". The narcissistic desire to be seen as standing out physically would appear to be related to sexual desire, to transgression. After all, in fetishism desire is directed towards an object instead of the genitals, and the object is charged with sexual attraction. Thus, we can note the importance of the body as a signifier of difference: the *blatte* identity is about the body and the physical appearance of the *blatte* body is fantasised to have revered qualities, it is fantasised to bring about narcissistic satisfaction. It is as if the *blatte* identity is something one wears, like a pair of shoes, to make oneself more desirable. We can see in this text the importance of the fetish object in the visual field: there is a link between being *seen* as *blatte* and *jouissance*: it is the *jouissance* of *blatte* which is

desired. The *blatte* identity is like a fetish object being consumed and 'worn' as a resistance against the ego-ideals of the Swedish big Other.

However, paradoxically, what also comes out from the text is not only the allure of difference, but also the threat of difference, because there is evidence of a resistance against being anything other than 'Swede'. She is not a "wanna-be *blatte*" she is just "trying something new". She is in fact a "completely average Swede". In this respect, 'difference' is threatening a Swedish identity. Thus, difference is both admitted and denied, the very mechanism of disavowal. This article written by someone who is classifying themselves as a Swede, demonstrates that despite the aim to reappraise the value of the *blatte*-category, and despite the desire for this category as a fetish object, the attitude towards *blatte* is ambivalent: it arouses both desire and anxiety.

6.5 Conclusion

The various images of the immigrant or of the suburb people contradict each other. *Gringo's* self-assigned mission to resist the stigmatized media representations of those with an immigration background and renegotiate the immigrant identity involves producing images which appear desirable, or positive in the eyes of the Swedish big Other. It is influenced by the discourse of the Other, which demands one to be either 'ordinary/normal' or a 'successful/helpful' model citizen. These images, however, are ambivalent in that they subtly affirm difference. Indeed, despite aiming to change the social representations of the immigrant, they express and evoke an anxiety which still exists towards cultural others in Sweden.

This chapter started with images which *conform* to ego-ideals of the big Other and it ended with the fetishised image which on the contrary *resists* these ego-ideals. The *blatte* as fetish object is proof that a threatening difference exists, which challenges the normalising image of the big Other.

Blatte can in fact also be interpreted as *resistance to resistance*. In other words there is a resistance, a blockage against the desire to engage in 'political resistance'. It is precisely because the image of *blatte*, or the image of 'difference' (different to the Swede), is a fetish - it brings the promise of *jouissance* - that there is a resistance to abandon this image. *Gringo* magazine seems to be engaged in administrating and evoking *jouissance*

of the *blatte*. Rather than this being an effort to re-evaluate the *blatte* and bring about change, on the contrary, it might suggest a resistance to change. This can be read as repetition, or the 'insistence of the signifier', a return of castrated *jouissance*, which transgresses the Symbolic rules, and the ego-ideals of the big Other.

7 The challenge and idealisation of Swedishness

7.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, it was demonstrated how *Gringo* ambivalently reverses the negative stereotypes of the immigrant; a strategy which is dependent on what the desire of the Other as Swedishness is imagined to be, and which is located with reference to the ego-ideals of this big Other. It was also shown that the re-evaluation of *blatte* can be understood as non-conformity to these ego-ideals, a strategy which involves a fetishisation of *blatte*. This chapter further elaborates on this resistance to the ego-ideals of Swedishness, which entails a more direct criticism or challenge to the values, norms or signifiers of the Swedish identity. Thus, the analysis was carried out asking the following question: *How does Gringo challenge the ego-ideals of the Symbolic big Other of Swedishness?*

Alarcón (2008) maintains that the way in which the magazine represents Swedishness reveals its constructed and arbitrary character and demonstrates that it is not an essence, but a contingent category. In Lacanian terms this is an activity of identifying the 'lack' in the big Other and hence it could be viewed as a first step towards resistance and change. However, in this chapter I argue that the critique of Swedishness is a very *ambivalent* process in *Gringo*. In order to do this, I use the hypothetical distinctions between the Real, Symbolic and Imaginary forms of identification. I demonstrate how this type of analysis helps us make more complex our understanding of identification and resistance.

There are at least two routes of identification working in relation to Swedishness. The fact of two or more lines of identification means that you can create effects of distance from one level of identity (the strict ego-ideals of Symbolic identification for example) while still remaining linked to the same overall identity (Swedishness for example) via the identifications of *jouissance* or Imaginary. This means apparent departures, even resistances to *Symbolic* identity need not represent a total breakdown of the identity in question, because it can be retained at another level, precisely that of *Imaginary* (ideal images) or identifications with ways of organising *jouissance*.

It will also be demonstrated how what we saw in the previous chapter: the reversal of the value of the *blatte* identity (the attempt to represent 'immigrants' on their own terms) is in fact an effort to change the ego-ideals of the big Other as Swedishness. Hence, even when there is an attempt to represent the immigrant without conforming to the ego-ideals of Swedish culture, the big Other cannot be excluded from the analysis. In the final part of this chapter, it will be illustrated how the attempt to change the Symbolic is taken as a 'threat' by respondents of *Gringo*.

Thus, this chapter is divided into two sections: the first part discusses the big Other, the Symbolic as Swedishness and how there is an ambivalent attempt to challenge and change it. The second section points out some of the ways in which this challenge has been received by readers.

7.2 Svensson-school: Challenging or establishing a bond with Swedishness?

In the first ten editions of *Gringo* there was a section called *Svenssonskolan* [Svensson-school]. This is a fictional school which is meant to teach people Swedish traditions and values. The language is in formal Swedish, but the tone is very humorous and sarcastic. This section was first introduced with the following statement:

> Gringo is hereby launching a course where you can learn to become a real Svensson....After the completion of the course you can write an exam in order to prove your Swedishness. If you make it, you will get a Svenne diploma which you can display on the wall (*Gringo* 1).

This 'course' is meant to teach the major Swedish values or norms that characterize the Swedish identity. They are specified here:

> Göran Hägg has recently written a book 'The history of Swedishness' in which he has looked back at history to find out what Swedishness is. He has found four characteristics that are especially distinctive. He argues that if you want to become Swedish, you have to take on some values. Love for nature, exaggerated respect for law and order, protection of agriculture and farmers and a moral duty to work (*Gringo* 1).

There are ten articles, each about a topic which is considered to be typically part of the Swedish identity. These include for example the *Jante-law*, which is the Scandinavian so called unwritten law which prohibits anyone distinguishing themselves from the crowd. In other words, this is the Symbolic law which promotes homogeneity and conformity to what is 'average'. It encourages compliance with norms, and discourages deviance. Other topics include: The Swede's love for nature and animals, hard work,

adherence to law and order, St.Lucy's Day[50], conformity to majority opinions, gender equality, the people's home ideology and the so called 'summer-Swede' (see appendix 3.1 for a sample of extracts). In the Swedish cultural context, these may be considered as the ego-ideal signifiers of Swedishness.

The subversive aspect of this section of the magazine involves the way it reverses how stereotypes usually work. Rather than focusing on the stereotypes of the immigrant other - something which is typically done in Swedish media as well as in strategies of resistance - there is an attempt to playfully poke fun at the cultural norms of Swedishness, to 'stereotype' the Swede. In fact, the Swede is talked about very differently to the immigrant. Much of the text on the immigrant is in the form of reports on specific people. There is a lack of similar articles on the Swede. The subversive element in the way in which the Swede is 'generalised' in the *Svensson-school* section should not be underestimated. Swedishness is talked about in abstract and nonfigurative ways. This might be the very opposite of what one would have expected. Usually there is specificity and individuality afforded to singular Swedes and generality and stereotypical treatment of cultural others. It is a reversal of the tactics through which racist stereotyping often works - here the Swedes are made homogenous. Nevertheless, in careful examination of this section, we find a complex structure of identifications *with and against* the signifiers of Swedishness.

Gringo does at some level manage to contest Swedishness through ridiculing aspects of historically entrenched Symbolic values. For example, in the article called *The people's home which disappeared*, elements of Swedishness which are traditionally set as models for excellence, as exemplars of a perfect prosperous society are questioned (see appendix 3.2.1 for full text):

> The people's home, which flourished during the thirties and until 1946 under the protective wings of prime minister Per Albin Hansson, was the beginning of the most holy of Swedish cows: the welfare system. In Sweden, not even the most liberal of liberals talk badly about the welfare system. Social benefits, social security and peace, financed by the world's biggest tax burden. This was the foundation on which the red and white summer cottages were going to be built. In a nice and 'just enough' mix of Lutheran moral and Marxist solidarity, the Swedes would take care of each other and give a helping hand to the poor people in the less advanced countries...No one can be safer than this....The people's home is dead, if not buried...(*Gringo* 6).

---

[50] St. Lucy Day on the 13th of December is the church feast day dedicated to St. Lucy.

The people's home, a political notion and a signifier of Swedish identity and history, sometimes perceived as evidence for Swedish excellence in welfare and modernity, and as an emblematic component of the history and status of Sweden - in other words, as the ego-ideals of the big Other - is here questioned. Thus, there is a kind of 'bringing down to earth' happening here. The following list headed *Welfare teachings and Swedish country lies* which is given at the end of the article, is a challenge to the signifier of Swedishness inasmuch as it occupies a privileged moral position:

> If people abroad are so now gullible that they think that Sweden is the Mecca of welfare, surely we don't need to disappoint them. We can continue pretending that:
> -The constant cut-downs since twenty years back are just a temporary downturn.
> -That our ideal society is the only right one and that all other nations will realise it if only they think about it.
> -That Swedes are not nationalists.
> -That Sweden is influential in the UN (*Gringo* 6).

Hence, this article is a challenge to a Symbolic element of Swedishness, an element which is commonly viewed as what makes Swedishness more pure and precious and as somehow better than others. So this appears to be quite a subversive text in so far as it challenges, almost attempts to overthrow, a belief in an ideal aspect of Swedishness; it is pointing out the lack in the big Other.

However, we should not over-emphasise the subversive aspect of this text, because despite being a strong critique, it does at some level enable the possibility of identifying *with* Swedishness. In the following article, we see more clearly how a 'distancing' from the Symbolic is coupled with identification with an Imaginary.

Everybody should think alike
There is a reason why politicians only socialise with each other. Ordinary people don't want to know what uncomfortable opinions you have because if someone thinks differently an argument can start. If you loudly make comments about which party you belong to, there is a risk that you have attracted many enemies. Not just because they think differently, after all 'we live in a free country', but because it disrupts the calm. As long as we don't argue, we are friends. This is the general rule. The coffee rooms are every think-alike-anthropologist's dream place. The conversations in the coffee breaks are a festival in the art of talking with loud and indignant voices, but still always in agreement.
"It's bloody awful with this new decision! Excuse the language. Colleague number 2:
"Tell me about it. It is obvious that these politicians have no idea what it is like to work in the real world". Colleague number 1:
"I'm so angry!" Colleague number 2:
"Absolutely, I feel so deceived".
At this point, they almost get the agreement-lump in the throat. You feel truly moved. And you know that there is nothing nicer than the feeling of being truly, wonderfully in agreement. The

worst that can happen then is this. Colleague number 3:

"But don't you think that the decision benefits families with children? I actually think it is quite good that the politicians dare to do something drastic". Wrong, wrong, wrong! If you want a clap on the shoulders in the corridors again, don't ever destroy a consensus festival.

It is difficult to always think alike. In many situations there are laws and rules for how to behave in Swedish society; where you should park, which colour you are allowed to paint the house, where you are allowed to smoke and when you are allowed to play loud music in your flat. Everything is in order for people not to end up on a collision-course with each other and for the atmosphere to be calm and sensible. We don't need a dictator police force in order to sit down, keep quiet and wait for the word. If anything, we feel lost if there are no clear directives to follow.

So, in order not to end up in unwanted discussions, we have an unspoken rule: always let an authority take over when there is trouble (it is unnecessary for you to yell when your car crashes with someone else's, the insurance company will do it for you). And try to secretly find out what political positions people have. It'll be great if it appears that you have the same views. You then have a consensus friend with whom you can talk to about anything without ending up in difficult situations.

Cut and keep!

To have the same views and avoid arguments:

1. Grope. Don't ask direct questions about for example, which party people belong to.

2. In new situations, wait before saying something. When you know for example what views your new colleagues have, then you can throw yourself into wild consensus festivals.

3. Don't raise your voice if you happen to present a different opinion.

4. Do you unhelpfully have different views to everyone else? In that case you should rather sit quietly and look odd, than being the one who is hot-tempered and destroys the good atmosphere (*Gringo* 9).

What is the libidinal energy of this text? What is the pattern, the organisation of *jouissance* which it elicits in the reader? There is an interesting interaction between humour and seriousness here; one can be the basis for the other: humour underlying apparent seriousness, and vice versa. Freud (1960) argues that humour is sometimes used when something is difficult to talk about openly (see next chapter for further examination of humour and jokes). The humour in the discussion about Swedishness indicates that it may be a topic which is uncomfortable to criticise outright without the use of humour which dilutes or detracts somewhat from the brunt of overt, direct critique. This may indeed be a viable reading. However, we can detect more complicated structures in the text.

The resistance in the above article is in fact ambivalent. On the one hand, the text is ridiculing and thereby *critiquing* the signifiers of the big Other of Swedishness and the *Symbolic rule* about 'fitting' in to the 'norm' and not deviating from the general consensus. The Swede is comically constructed as obsessively law abiding and afraid of standing out. The text mocks ideas about how one 'should' behave, who one 'should'

159

be, what social rules and regulations one 'should' follow[51]. It is ridiculing the rituals, habits, practices, and norms of interactions, in other words, the ego-ideals that the Other is imagined to embody. This humorous mockery perhaps also affects a type of *jouissance* which is evoked in instances of ridicule. Here, a libidinal reward may be stimulated by pointing out the flaws in Swedishness: the *jouissance* that emerges in the act of pinpointing what is distasteful in the ideals of the Symbolic big Other; the enjoyment of transgression. Also important to point out is that this ridicule would not be identified if we were only looking at the constructed content of the image of the Swede. The ridicule of these Symbolic rules and regulations is found in the *form* of the language used, in the sarcastic humoristic style of writing. Thus, it is crucial to emphasise the content/form discrepancy, because it seems like it is the comic form of this text which enables its potential subversive quality. Moreover, this discrepancy also points to the complicated relationship between the outward content or appearance of the text, and the underside of the enjoyment it engenders.

On the other hand and paradoxically, a *bond* is established with the Imaginary category of Swedishness. 'Fitting in', being reserved and not deviating from the norm are considered to be typical stereotypes – perhaps ideal-egos - of Swedishness. These are traits which are usually believed to be linked to Sweden's socialist culture which places importance on being similar to everyone else, of equality and having a 'homogenous' culture and population. Thus, the text might be seen as reproducing these ideal-egos of the Swede and it is saying that inherent to the Swedish identity is the importance placed on being the same as everyone else and "thinking alike". One might also detect an evocation or organisation of *jouissance* in this construction, and this libidinal element is also what creates an attachment to this representation. The text is 'creating' a way in which to relate to the Swedish identity, it produces a jubilant community and a bond with this community; it tells the reader 'this is how we are and how we attain our *jouissance*'. At this level participants are invested in a sequence of narcissistic images (identifications here of the ideal-ego sort).

---

[51] The text also makes an allusion to and ridicules the *jouissance* of being in agreement and belonging to a group ("you know that there is nothing nicer than the feeling of being truly, wonderfully in agreement").

We note a rather complicated relationship to Swedishness. We cannot state that the humour is *merely* a tool for critique because it appears to allow at one and the same time a bond *as well* as an effect of distance against the ego-ideals of the big Other of Swedish culture. We might assume that there is a degree of enjoyment involved in the light mockery or 'the making light of' the Swedes. An attachment is held in place, along the lines of 'making fun of ourselves', a type of *jouissance* of humour that bonds us even in how we (lightly) critique ourselves. Through its humour the text evokes an identification with narcissistic ideal-egos of Swedishness, thus, 'the making fun' can be seen as part of the identification with a group of people who are 'like us' and who belong to the Swedish category. This simultaneous conformity and resistance reminds us of the *Ratman* case, a young man who Freud (1909) diagnosed as suffering from obsessional neurosis. Late at night when he used to study for his exams, Ratman used to have a fantasy in which his dead father would be delighted to see him study. He would imagine his father coming to visit him and at the same time he would pull down his trousers and look at his penis. Freud implies that in one and the same act, the Ratman was conforming to as well as defying his father's ideals.

Ultimately, whether this text is a light 'making fun' or an aggressive attack on Swedishness depends on how it is received by readers and the kind of *jouissance* which it evokes: is the *jouissance* elicited by reproducing a bond with 'Swedish people like us' or *jouissance* from the aggressive *ridicule* of Swedishness?[52] Humour is an exemplary case here because it can go either way; indeed, these two potential *jouissance*-responses might even overlap. What seems crucial to emphasise though is that no matter what modality of humour-*jouissance* is utilized (denigration and distance, affection and joining) each one involves a subject-to-community relation because *jouissance* is never simply on its own, or 'asocial', but a potent means of bonding groups or creating divisions amongst them.

However, it should be noted that the fact of the type of *jouissance* experienced by the receiving subject cannot however be localized in the text: we can allude to it, indicate its

---

[52]As will be discussed below in more detail, *Gringo's* critique of Swedishness has also been taken up as a threat by some readers. Thus, there is a third line of *jouissance* effect which the text makes possible: the *jouissance* involved in blaming *Gringo* for threatening Swedishness.

possible presence, but can by no means *prove* it. We can only point to certain parameters of response the text makes available. Thus, strictly speaking - at least until perhaps a detailed analysis has been carried out on the readers' reception of the text - the way in which it is taken up is undecidable. Indeed, in the coding of the responses to *Gringo*, it appeared that this challenge to Swedishness is taken up differently by different readers: some enjoy the humour, and the 'making light of ourselves' and others take serious issue with the critique of Swedishness (see appendix 1.4) and protest that *Gringo* is "anti-Sweden" (the last part of this chapter discusses in more detail how *Gringo* is perceived to be a threat to Swedishness).

Thus, we could argue that *Gringo* is both 'within' Swedishness and simultaneously 'outside' of it. This in-between position of 'inside' and 'outside' is very frequently taken in the text. Žižek's (1989) argument is that this is how ideology works in the contemporary world: you need to be able to exhibit a degree of distance, a kind of cynical separation, as a very condition of possibility for the full belief in the thing that is being criticized: "cynical reason, with all its ironic detachment, leaves untouched the fundamental level of ideological fantasy, the level on which ideology structures the social reality itself" (p. 30). Moreover, we have seen how the transgressions of Swedishness happen simultaneously with its affirmation. Hence, not only are the ideals of Swedishness not subverted, their ridicule "make possible the enjoyment of their transgression, which in turn sustains those very same ideals" (Glynos, 2003: 8). As psychoanalysis has advanced, what maintains a community is not only a shared identification with a signifier, but also the identification with its *jouissance*-evoking transgression.

7.3   Criticising Symbolic ideals and identifying with an Imaginary future

What is becoming apparent here are the tensions and combinations that can exist between different lines of identification. As was discussed earlier in this thesis, the Lacanian position postulates that there are different dimensions of identification: there are (Symbolic) identifications that entail a set of well-entrenched Symbolic values and historical markers, that pertain to social roles, responsibilities, obligations in a system of exchanges and reciprocations. There are (Imaginary) identifications made up of ideal and typically narcissistic images, which perform the function of shoring up, giving a

substantiality and coherence to fragmentary and lacking subjective and social experience. Finally there are types of (Real) identifications of *jouissance* based on shared types of enjoyment. These different strands of identification are able to offset one another in interesting ways. This gives us a sophisticated way of understanding the complex and never finalized identifications that result. Such that there might be a lampooning of Symbolic values while there is still very possibly narcissistic (Imaginary) ties to what is being lampooned, or indeed, ties of *jouissance*. So, even when one strikes some distance or dis-identification to the Symbolic, one can still retain something of an over-riding identification by means of the alternative routes: Imaginary or Real.

These different lines of identifications and dis-identifications occur in various parts in *Gringo*. The following text is about the Swedish national anthem and *Sverige paraden* [the Sweden parade] which is organised by *Gringo* on the Swedish national day. This parade is part of the non-media activities of *Gringo* (the others being *Hoodsfred*[53] and anti-racist campaigns with institutions such as the police). The idea of the Sweden parade is to 'celebrate the Swedish flag'. This is a quote from an article interviewing *Brox Worku*, the person who organised the 2006 parade:

> On the national day in the Sweden parade we will celebrate the Swedish flag. When we have taken everybody to orten [the hood] and created a sense of belonging by walking the parade, we will take responsibility for society. The Sweden parade is for everybody who is living in Sweden and for the flag which is the biggest symbol of our country (*Gringo* 23).

This is part of the way in which *Gringo* is involved in organising possibilities for libidinal bonding with Swedishness. The idea is to get the suburb residents involved in celebrating the Swedish national day. This event and much of the text in *Gringo* are evidence of the way in which Swedishness is identified with at least at the level of the imaginary. This will be demonstrated more clearly in the analysis of the following article from the editorial section, which is on the topic of the Sweden parade. I have picked this article because it shows very clearly that the complex relationship between

---

[53] *Hoodsfred* is a music festival in the suburbs which *Gringo* took part in organizing every year. The choice of the name is a play on words with the name of the rock-festival *Hultsfred*, one of Sweden's biggest festivals. The word *Hood*, which is derived from the English word *neighborhood*, refers to the suburb.

identifications, and dis-identifications which was pointed out above, also occurs in non-humorous text. The following demonstrates how a distancing from the Symbolic can be evoked while still stimulating ties to the Imaginary or the Real elements which Swedish identity makes possible (see appendix 3.4.1 for full text).

I want to live and die in the Nord
Around February-March this year, I read the national anthem for the first time. The only thing I knew then was 'du gamla du fria du fjällhöga nord' [the ancient, the old, and the mountainous Nord] and the part about living and dying in the Nord...the part which I remember exactly was 'you rest on the memories of the great days of yore'. It felt a little uncertain to imagine myself with my hand on my chest and happily singing that with conviction.
For me, Sweden has become my Sweden, only recently when I started to feel that Sweden as a nation and people are willing to progress. There is a loving energy which is sprouting and if everything runs smoothly, our self-image will change, and we will start to behave towards people in a way which also makes million program kids and blackheads feel like Swedes....Sweden has already developed, and we can develop even more. If I am able to continue to feel that concrete houses are as beautiful as red houses with white corners, dark skin, as worthy as light skin, and million-Swedish as Swedish as Gothenburg dialect, I will want to live and die in this country, no doubt...
I can sing for mine and my family's future, but I can't sing for what Sweden has been. My memories from the so called great days include the Laserman[54] and Bert Karlsson[55], newspaper headings which state that the Swedish people want to drive immigrants out, and I have the memory of my dad's disturbed voice when he was bullied at his work because his workmates thought he talked funny. I don't feel any pride in Sweden's history, but a worldly energy in the future. Perhaps Sweden is the country which has even the most energy, love and requirements, to get al.l people living here feeling included, and for them to want to participate and build their lives and their environment.
So, after our Sweden parade, which was Sweden's biggest national day parade with over 2000 participants, we took part in the celebration with around 10 000 more people who had gathered. At the end, the national anthem was projected on a screen and I sang very loudly, except the verse about the great days. Then I shut my mouth. Then I sang again and sang really hard. That day I felt, after having felt so much love for my Sweden and for *Gringo*, that I probably want to live and die here (*Gringo* 25).

Swedishness is here in Hook's (2008a) terms, the "unquestioned assumption as a centring point" (p. 62). The signifier Sweden is an evasive, difficult focal point, a master signifier of sorts, which is of central importance in anchoring a discourse, even though here, the master signifier is one which remains open and not precisely determined; there is ambivalence expressed in relation to this master signifier.

---

[54] In the 1990s, a man was caught and jailed for shooting and killing, with a laser-gun, random people on the street who had black hair or looked like they had an immigration background. He was given the famous nickname the '*Laserman*' by the public.
[55] Bert Karlsson established the nationalist party *New democrats*.

There is a tension between Swedishness both being challenged *and* loved/idealised. In this case, there is a distancing from history and certain Symbolic values (elements of Symbolic identification), but the retention of the love-bonds of an ideal image (Imaginary). On the one hand, the author is criticising a section in the Swedish national anthem in which the lyrics are idealising Swedish history, because this history is considered to be full of memories of racism, and thus there is no "pride in Swedish history". It is this history and it is the fact that the million-program areas are represented as inferior, which is preventing the author wanting to "live and die" in Sweden. Thus, this is about a resistance to the historical idealisation of Sweden. Importantly, we shall note that this critique seems to involve an attempt to *change* the values embodied in the big Other as that which is most valorised and desired in society; there is an effort to make the Other acknowledge "concrete houses", "dark skin" and "million-Swedish"- to make the big Other recognise what is not at the moment recognisable. On the other hand, despite the contestation of Swedishness and the attempt to change the ego-ideals of the big Other, there is also a great deal of idealisation and love expressed for Sweden. For example, the Nord is treasured in the use of the heading "I want to live and die in the Nord" - a piece taken from the national anthem[56]. This is a taking on, and affirmation of a set of signifiers and confirming attachment.

There is thus ambivalence recognized in response to Symbolic values – which one might articulate in this way as a distance to the history of Sweden but a hopeful attachment to a future idealised image. So although something of the Symbolic is rejected, Swedishness remains a firm pillar of identification in the sense of a loved image. Imaginary links are retained even as Symbolic ideals are questioned[57]. The challenge of the Symbolic aspects of Swedishness and the 'bringing down to earth' is evidenced in different ways in *Gringo*. For example in one of the editorial pieces, the

---

[56] This proclaimed 'love' for Sweden can also be understood as an utterance which is made in order to appear likeable by the Swedish Other. In order to be accepted and part of the Swedish society, one needs to express love and devotion for Sweden, one needs to appear as loving Sweden. See previous chapter on the image of the immigrant for more detailed discussion on this issue.

[57] These various dimensions are always to some extent overlapping, entangled – such that Symbolic roles and obligations are for example reinforced with idealizing images and the like - but for the purposes of stimulating analytical enquiry it is useful to try and identify dominant strands, particularly so when apparent contradictions become evident.

author idealises Britain's multicultural context, and by doing so, he indirectly questions Sweden's impression of itself as the most tolerant country in the world (see appendix 3.3 for an extract).

The question which arises is whether all the above critiques against the Symbolic, or the ego-ideals, really suggest a *distancing* from the Swedish big Other. Does not the very act of putting something into the critical spotlight – the gesture of pretending to separate ourselves from it – strengthen an attachment to it, similar to the obsessive questioning and critiquing of one's analyst which proves that the analysand is still very much under the influence of transference? The very need to show up the weakness is evidence that one is still enthralled by it - one is still *idealising* it. It is therefore questionable whether the apparent distancing from the Symbolic values and signifiers which we see in these examples is actually a *dis-identification*. That is, this 'distancing' from Swedishness which we see occurring here might ironically in fact be a sign of *proximity* to Swedishness; an indication of the valorisation of Swedishness. Nevertheless, even though this may indicate an attachment to the Symbolic of Swedishness, a sign that Swedishness is still relevant and crucial, it does not eradicate the fact that there is a critical position taken against a set of exclusive historical ego-ideal values posited in the position of the Other.

7.4 Re-evaluating the blatte category means changing the Symbolic

We have so far discussed the ambivalent attempt to challenge the Symbolic values and traditions of Swedishness. In fact, as mentioned briefly above, in *Gringo* not only is the ego-ideals of the big Other of Swedishness criticised, there is also an attempt to *change* them: there is a similarly ambiguous attempt to transform the Symbolic. The following are some extracts from a short article about the Swedish names day calendar (see appendix 3.5 for more sample extracts):

> Are you tired of your Svenne name? It is more common than you think and nothing to be ashamed of. You can just change it. You can now blatte-fy your name without betraying your origins....If your name is something incredibly common such as Rebecka, you can change it into a luxurious Asian name such as Ping or a foxy name such as Felicity...The Swedish calendar, just

as the rest of the country does not follow the new Swedishness. It is about time that, for example, the 190 Ringvalds[58] disappear and leave space for the over 5700 Ali's... (*Gringo* 12).

The values usually attached to 'Swedish' and 'foreign' names are being inverted in this text. In Swedish society in which institutional discrimination prevails, it would be foreigners who would feel they need to change their names into more Western or Swedish ones in order to be accepted, and perhaps in order to open their paths for social mobility. Here it is the Swedes who are being called upon to change into more non-Swedish names. Hence, we can argue that this is a type of *social comparison* strategy in which the in-group (those with foreign names) is favoured and the out-group (those with Swedish names) is negatively discriminated against. This method of social comparison and in-group favouritism and out-group discrimination against the Swedish social group is rather common in *Gringo*. This method also simultaneously re-appraises the previously devalued *blatte* category; it reverses the negative value of the *blatte* identity into a positive one. However, we cannot treat the Swedish identity as a straight forward 'out-group' through which Imaginary identifications and rivalry are made since, as we have argued in this thesis, Swedishness is not just any 'other': it is put in the place of the *big Other*. Hence, we should understand this text as being about the relationship with the socio-Symbolic field of Swedish society.

Thus, making *blatte* into a positively evaluated category should be understood as an effort to change the Symbolic. In other words, the *blatte category could not be positively evaluated without changing the ego-ideals* – those ideals of the big Other which determine what is and is not a 'positive' category. The proposal to include Muslim names such as Ali, a signifier of something essentially non-Swedish, would otherwise be considered as threatening to the names-day calendar, which is a deep-rooted religious Symbolic tradition. It would alter the calendar radically if Ali was part of it. Thus, there seems to be a simultaneous and contradictory impulse to question and to change this Symbolic tradition as it stands, but yet to be inside of it, a part of the accepted tradition. We have here a deadlock of fantasy not dissimilar to that discussed by Bhabha (2004). He refers to Fanon's work as being about a contradiction of wanting

---

[58] Ringvald is an old-fashioned Swedish name.

"to occupy the master's place while keeping his place in the slave's *avenging* anger", thus this is about "being in two places at once" (Bhabha, 2004: 64). The above text in *Gringo* suggests an antinomy, an impasse of wanting to be included in the Swedish Symbolic history, yet at the same time to retain those qualities inimical to it, which would fundamentally modify this tradition.

The effort to change the signifiers of the Swedish big Other is most apparent in the attempt to *alter the Swedish language*. As was discussed in previous chapters, as part of the re-evaluation of the *blatte*-category, *Gringo* makes use of slang language in its text - an accent which is spoken by youth in the suburbs, the so called *blatte*-Swedish, or 'million-Swedish' as *Gringo's* editors themselves call it. Nevertheless, this is not only an attempt to re-appraise million-Swedish: it is also a transgression of Swedish language, and an attempt to alter this Symbolic aspect of Swedish society. However, as we will see below, the use of slang language in *Metro*, a widely available media source was not received without criticism in the Swedish public sphere. The publication of a series of articles in *Gringo* about Swedish language is a response to these criticisms. The function of these articles is to defend *Gringo's* use of million-Swedish and challenge the negative connotations of this dialect and thus remove the stigma which is attached to it. The following extract is from an article in the editorial section. The author is writing that he is no longer ashamed of his *blatte*-Swedish (see appendix 3.6.1 for full text):

> Today I can be ashamed for being ashamed. Or not ashamed, but look back and think, it was bloody pity that it had to be that way. Just like everyone else, I had an image of the million-Swedish that I was speaking as ugly. An ugly dialect which was used by ugly people. Something I had to wash away if I wanted to be successful. Today, newspapers, companies and teachers who don't appreciate million-Swedish lose points in my eyes. And I will never in my life work for a company which thinks million-Swedish is bad Swedish (*Gringo* 22).

This pressure of being 'Swedish' and 'normal', the demand to adhere to the ego-ideals of the Symbolic field of the Other, is being resisted passionately. Making million-Swedish accepted as part of Swedishness also means renegotiating the Swedish language itself. This includes an effort to strip the ego-ideals of the big Other of their perceived supremacy. For example, one article with the heading *Swedish: a stolen language* is an attempt to de-valorise the Swedish language, show how it is not 'pure' but in fact mixed with other languages (see appendix 3.6.2 for full text). In the original

168

text in Swedish, the word *baxa* is used instead of 'stolen' in the heading (in Swedish the heading is *Svenskan – ett baxat språk*). *Baxa* is slang, meaning 'to steal'. But it is also slang for 'having intercourse' or being 'fucked'. In the context of this article, both of these associations could be applied to the signifier *baxa: Svenskan – ett baxat språk* could both mean that Swedish is a stolen language, and that it is a 'bastard language'. Hence, we see how the attempt to change the Symbolic might indeed involve an attempt to make it 'dirty', make something which is considered to be 'pure and precious' into something polluted. The text about the Swedish language in *Gringo* could not be adequately made sense of without an investigation of the wider debate which was occurring in the Swedish public sphere and which involved a criticism of the use of *blatte*-Swedish in the media. Hence, while analysing the theme of Swedish language, it was also deemed necessary to study more carefully the reactions to *Gringo's* use of million-Swedish. We will see below how *Gringo's* attempt to change the signifiers of Swedishness is taken as a serious threat by some.

7.5 'Threatening our jouissance': Responses to *Gringo's* transgression of Swedish language

In the analysis of the responses to *Gringo*, there were of course both positive and negative reactions, but it was the negative ones especially in relation to the Swedish language, which were most passionately expressed. Other negative comments were for example that *Gringo* was helping to create an 'us and them' worldview rather than fight it and the argument that the magazine is 'commercially' romanticising the suburb and the *blatte* identity for its own gain (see appendix 1.4). Although these criticisms are significant in themselves, I did not pursue them as a route of further analysis because it appeared that it was specifically the Swedish language that became a topic of public debate, particularly in Sweden's largest morning newspaper, *Dagens Nyheter*. This debate was also replicated in *Gringo's* editorial and other sections, where the use of million-Swedish was defended, and where the idea of the Swedish language as untainted and pure was criticised.

Even though *Gringo* was not the first to introduce the so called *blatte*-Swedish to the media (see chapter 2), the use of million-Swedish in the text of the magazine and *Gringo's* aim to introduce new foreign words into the Swedish language, caused

169

controversy in Swedish society at large. The slang language of *Gringo* and the 'misuse' of the Swedish language was one of the main issues which evoked strong defensive reactions by the public. This indicates that it is through the transgression of the Swedish language that *Gringo* is perhaps most subversive. We will examine this idea.

The increased use of *blatte*-Swedish in the media also led to an increased public debate about the status of the Swedish language. The subject of the Swedish language became such a heated topic in Sweden in 2006 that the anti-racism program called *Nollrasism* [Zero racism] on *TV4*, one of Sweden's largest TV channels, focused on the Swedish language as the theme of that year's program. Elsewhere, a debate was stirred up with the introduction of two words, *keff* ['lousy, 'shitty'] and *guss* ['chick'] – words created and used in the suburbs - in the 2006 version of the *Svenska akademiens ordlista* [Swedish Academic Wordlist]. This introduction of *blatte*-Swedish into a wordlist which is highly regarded as the Symbolic container of Swedishness led to fierce emotional responses.

Not specifically referring to *Gringo*, the use of *blatte* Swedish was criticised in 2006 by Ebba Witt-Brattström, a professor in Swedish literature, in a debate on TV. She argued that the government, rather than focusing on mother tongue education[59], should encourage the teaching of Swedish to immigrants, and not give the message that knowing only *blatte*-Swedish is sufficient to cope in the society, and it should promote the learning of Swedish so that people with immigration backgrounds will face less discrimination in the labour market (Witt-Brattström, 2006a). Apparently viewing this as an attack on its use of *blatte*-Swedish, the *Gringo* editorial were quick to show their discontent by publishing a fictional job advert in their fictional jobcentre section:

> The company of Witt-Brattström is looking for language fascists. You, yes you! We need You. Under the condition that you want to keep Sweden Swedish in the most Aryan sense of the word and will not withdraw from saying things which need to be said (in clean Swedish of course), you have a given place in the company which is going to take back the Swedish spoken language to the beauty of the twenty first century's radio-standard-Swedish. CALL EBBA (*Gringo* 21).

---

[59] Teaching mother tongue to pupils with immigration backgrounds is part of the school curriculum in Sweden.

This piece is a strong critique not only against Witt-Brattström's arguments, but also against the view which takes the Swedish language as a signifier of a pure and precious Swedishness that needs to be saved from the threat posed by what is not "clean Swedish". It is critiquing the way in which the Swedish language is rigidly being related to as 'closed', as opposing any influences, as static and inflexible, an attitude which resembles the 'Fascist's' worldview. This advert caught the attention of not only Witt-Brattström, but also some bloggers and commentators (e.g. Helgesson, 2006). It was perceived to accuse the professor of being xenophobic and racist (Witt-Brattström, 2006a). A debate was stirred up in *Dagens Nyheter*, in which major public figures, including Witt-Brattström and the *Gringo* editorial, were defending or attacking the use of million-Swedish, the teaching of mother tongues in schools for children with immigration backgrounds, and the status of the Swedish language. The debate became heated and started to extend to rather unrelated topics such as the link between *blatte-*Swedish and sexism. The core of this discussion, however, seemed to surround the topic of Swedishness.

In one of her articles, Witt-Brattström criticised *Gringo's* use of 'million-Swedish' and called it a "media-bluff" and a "marketing-concept" (Witt-Brattström, 2006b). This is what she stated about the suburb language:

> The standard language is Swedish, and its importance as a communication tool is also fundamental for new Swedes. The multi-slang is not an alternative. To advocate a school which takes seriously the role of Swedish as important in society does not mean to be against mother tongue education, or for that matter against other important languages within our immediate geographic context. Multilingualism is good, but Swedish is the base of everything because we live in Sweden, and only literate people can fully participate in the society (Witt-Brattström, 2006b).

The author is defending herself against potential criticism about appearing as someone "against mother tongue education" or "multilinguism" – a defence in the form of a rather unsuccessful strategy of negation, which from a psychoanalytic perspective might be understood as confirming that which is being negated. What is crucial though is the way in which the text clearly expresses a fantasy of Swedish language as something which is somehow pure, uncontaminated, and primary, necessarily superior and potentially threatened by an alternative slang language. I also came across very similar criticisms to Witt-Brattström's arguments in the analysis of the negative comments

made about *Gringo* by readers. A great deal of the remarks implied that *Gringo* is a threat to the Swedish way of life and to Swedish people. Many perceive the discussions which are raised in *Gringo* about Swedish culture as being 'anti-Sweden'. This is particularly so with regards to the use (or as some seem to be thinking - the abuse) of the Swedish language. Many of the comments refer to million-Swedish and – as one of the commentators puts it – 'the destruction of the Swedish language' (see appendix 3.7 for the full comment and more examples). This is an example:

> You're part of the aim by the Swedish left to weaken Swedish culture and the Swedish language. You're a big bluff by claiming that a million immigrants want to talk your bluff language. You're simply bluff-blattes. Everybody apart from media has already seen through you. How long do you think that you can go on before people get tired of you? Laissez faire, et dire (Dated 29-05-06)

It is likely that this person has read Witt-Brattström's article (which was published before the date of this comment) and it is interesting how it reverberates a more fiery version of Witt-Brattström's voice. *Gringo* is seen as "weakening the Swedish culture and Swedish language": a 'precious' Swedishness is considered to be threatened by *Gringo*. Other comments include similar images of threat:

> Bloody hell. I become dead-anxious when I see that you're raping the Swedish language. You don't seem to want to be here in Sweden and adapt to our culture, but you should not think that you can rule however you want and moan about the Swedes being racists. Shut down the bullshit and grow up. Halstatt nordid (Dated 20-02-07).

There are passionate feelings being expressed in this comment and it shows an anxiety about *Gringo* who - by not being "willing to adapt to the Swedish culture" - is a threat to the Swedish way of life. Thus, it becomes apparent that what we discussed earlier in this chapter - *Gringo's* challenge to Swedish language and Swedishness and its attempt to change a seemingly unchanging Symbolic order (a challenge which is in fact ambiguous in nature) - is viewed by some as threatening something which is highly emotionally charged. However, what is it about the Swedish language which means that any attempt to challenge it and alter it, is felt to be so frightening? Why are the responses to the use of million-Swedish in *Gringo* so defensive and 'paranoid'?

From a psychoanalytic perspective, it is not necessarily about the Swedish language itself, it is surely not the case that 'radio Swedish' attains some particular qualities that prove it to be superior to all other languages. The language here is a token for

something else, for that elusive *objet a* quality, that which is 'in me more than myself'. This is the factor of the *agalma*, the irreducible quality that is never simply fixed or objectified, the kernel of that which is most special, loveable in me. "The agalma, the hidden, precious object...represents the *objet a*, the object-cause of desire'" (Glowinski et al., 2001: 126) that which promises *jouissance*. This agalma is reflected in the Swedish language, which is a point of considerable libidinal investment by those who feel themselves to be members of the Swedish community.

It is the fantasy that the Swedish language is the source of one's *jouissance* that means that any threat to the language is also a threat to the particularity of one's *jouissance*. The fantasy of the Swedish language is linked to a certain unconscious bodily response, it is linked to the bodily Real. It appears that we can apply the idea of 'Imaginary castration'. This is a Lacanian extension of the Freudian notion of castration, and it relates to a threat to some or other Imaginary attribute or quality, something which has been valorised and loaded with narcissism. This is also Žižek's (1993) idea about an aspect of racism which deals with the fear of a loss of some 'properties' of a community and thereby a loss of *jouissance* (an issue which we already touched upon in chapter 4). These properties are those aspects which give the community its distinctiveness - these can be myths, legends, language, cultural rituals - anything that defines 'who we are' and which has been given the quality of a precious object and invested with narcissistic enjoyment. This facet of a sublime feature (or sequence of features) that are 'in the object more than itself' is explored under different names in psychoanalysis, although all of these routes of enquiry arguably fit within the ambit of *objet a*. Importantly, this object is neither specularisable, nor simply an Imaginary object and it cannot be reduced to the Symbolic. It takes on the value of a privileged object which is pursued and protected because it holds the promise of a type of *jouissance*, a fundamental fantasy is constituted around this *objet a*. *Objet a* is the sublime kernel that arouses desire, and that which can never be reduced to the actual empirical properties of the thing. Žižek (2005) speaks of it as a

> paradoxical uncanny object that stands for what in the perceived positive empirical object necessarily eludes [me]...and serves as the driving force of my desiring it, *objet petit a*, the object-cause of desire; another name for it is plus-de-jouir, the 'surplus-enjoyment' that

designates the excess over the satisfaction brought about by the positive, empirical properties of the object (p. 256).

Nevertheless, perhaps the most profitable route of enquiry in relation to nationalism and national identity comes with Žižek's (1993) idea of the National Thing[60]. These features of a specific community and the *jouissance* which they are believed to provide, Žižek (1993) calls the Thing: "National identification is by definition sustained by a relationship towards the Nation qua Thing" (ibid.: 201). However, the Thing can never be achieved and it can never be completely represented, it can "only [be] alluded to" (Daly, 1999: 228). It is the Thing which makes us who we are and sustains our community. What is paradoxical about the *jouissance* of these features of a community, however, is that *jouissance* exist only insofar as it has been threatened. Thus, "what we conceal by imputing to the Other the theft of enjoyment is the traumatic fact that we never possessed what was allegedly stolen from us" (Žižek, 1993: 203).

The property, the Thing which is at stake in the above is alluded to in the Swedish language. Swedish language, a national tool loaded with narcissism is viewed as a specific, irreplaceable attribute of Swedishness. It is one of 'our' qualities which make us special - alongside our culture, our children, our way of life - and it gives us *jouissance*. The above comments by readers - which demonstrate feelings of persecution - express a fear that one's *jouissance* is being unjustly threatened. *Gringo* in challenging Swedishness and the Swedish language is being blamed by some readers for contaminating and thus depriving the nation of its *jouissance*, its bodily enjoyment. The remarks point to the anxiety that one's National Thing (Swedish language) and the *jouissance* linked to it is being spoiled with the use of million-Swedish - something radically other and dirty. There is a fear here of the other contaminating our language with their own ways of speaking, their own *jouissance*. As Žižek (1993) states, the

---

[60] The *objet a*, agalma and the Thing are of course not exactly the same. However, they are not very dissimilar either because reading Lacan in sequence shows how he generates a series of concepts each of which refines and develops the former. Having said that, Chiesa (2007) points out the differences between the *objet a* and the Thing: "The *objet a* is the hole from the standpoint of the symbolic order, it is the hole of the symbolic, whereas the Thing qua transcendent hole is somehow independent of the symbolic...The Thing should be regarded as the reified negation of the primordial real...we are dealing with the presence of an absence that exists per se" (p. 132).

feeling is that "he [in this case *Gringo*] wants to steal our enjoyment (by ruining our way of life)" (p. 203).

In short, we could state that *Gringo* is believed to be a) threatening, polluting the *objet a*, the object which is believed to guarantee *jouissance*, with its own strange, odd way of speaking; and b) it is the perceived *jouissance* of the *blatte*-language spoken by *them*, which is unbearable, intolerable:

> The [imaginary] Other is always someone who gives body to the very excess of enjoyment which, in our innermost being, denies us homeostasis. The allure of the others enjoyment, therefore, is ultimately an experience of that which the discursive order attempts to repress/master but which always returns in the Real (Daly, 1999: 230).

The other's *jouissance* is intolerable because it is a token of the disgust of our own excessive enjoyment (Žižek, 1993). *Gringo's* transgressive language use represents excessive, unbearable enjoyment which needs to be eliminated because it does not conform to the Imaginary unity, the ego-ideals of Swedishness. The last two comments above made by *Gringo* readers may express the *jouissance* involved in problematising this 'foreign' mode of *Gringo's jouissance*, and could perhaps be seen as unsanctioned versions of Witt-Brattström's official and authorised discourse. The examples nonetheless demonstrate how there is a fantasy in which a 'pure' Swedish language, alluded to as the *objet a*, untainted by *Gringo's* 'bluff' Swedish, is what would permit ultimate purification or what Daly (1999: 224) calls "the realisation of harmonious reconciliation". Accordingly, the fantasy is that 'if it wasn't for *Gringo* and its *blatte*-language, we would retain that treasured, lost Thing'.

To sum up, *Gringo* managed to upset a narcissistic relation to 'radio-Swedish' as the superior Thing. Nevertheless, whether *Gringo* had a more significant effect than that is questionable. It is not the case that *Gringo* *undermined* the narcissism of 'radio-Swedish', but it is more accurate to state that it offended a rigid fantasy. As the examples we saw suggest, although the fantasy of the 'pure' Swedish language might have been revealed and slightly shaken up, we could question whether it was made even stronger by portraying *Gringo* as the threat. *Gringo* may have become the Other that is responsible for the loss of the *objet a*. In that sense, the magazine could be said to have in fact been strengthening the narcissistic fantasy of Swedishness as superior. With the

advent of *Gringo* and its threatening transgressive language, the fantasy of Swedish language needed to be defended, affirmed and fortified. Hence, it is through embodying *Gringo* as the blameworthy villain who poses a threat, that the fantasy in which the Swedish language is alluded to as the *objet a* which promises salvation, can be sustained.

7.6 Conclusion

This chapter has shown how the Lacanian notion of the Symbolic, Imaginary and Real can complicate our understanding of identification and resistance, and how although one can appear to criticise one aspect of identification, one can still remain loyal to another type. The benefit of applying these Lacanian notions is that it adds to the complexity of how we understand the various strands of identification, enabling us to better grasp not only the overlapping strength of different modalities of (Symbolic, Imaginary, Real) identification but also the nuances and contradictions enabled by the combination of these different facets (how an identification may be consolidated and strengthened at an Imaginary level even whilst seemingly threatened by the rejection of particular Symbolic aspects). The advantage of this analytical framework, moreover, is that it deepens our understanding of resistance and those instances which point to the lack in the Other: it reveals the ambivalence in such processes.

In this chapter also, I have argued that in *Gringo*, the effort to make *blatte* positive cannot be successful without an endeavour to change ego-ideal signifiers of the big Other. As one would perhaps expect, this project of *Gringo* has been taken by some readers as a serious threat to Swedishness. This has specifically been the case regarding the use of million-Swedish which is seen as contaminating Swedish language - the 'property' of Swedishness which is alluded to as the *objet a* and which is invested with *jouissance*. Nevertheless, *Gringo's* transgression of Swedishness may in fact support the fantasy which sustains it. This is so despite the threat that *Gringo* seems to have been posing. In the next chapter, I will discuss further *Gringo's* 'critique', especially in relation to racism and institutional discrimination.

8 Three forms of critique

8.1 Introduction

One of the major themes of *Gringo* is the *critique* of institutional racism, discrimination, and the nationalist party which is nowadays called *Sverige demokraterna* [Sweden Democrats]. Consequently, the questions that arose were: a) *how is the critique expressed* and b) *what are the implications of the different forms of critique expressed there?* The analysis at this point involved exploring this theme in more depth. I carried out the analysis asking the question: *What is the relationship to the Other exemplified in the different forms of critique?*

The chapter discusses three forms which were found in the text of *Gringo*. The first one is *critique in the form of humour/jokes*. The use of humour in *Gringo* has already been demonstrated in previous chapters. Humour is used both in the ridicule of stereotypes of immigrants and in the mockery of the ideals of Swedishness. In the current chapter, I discuss humour more theoretically and then move on to examine how it is used in relation to the critique of the discriminatory practices of powerful institutions and the Sweden democrat party. Rather than giving a thorough outline of the vast literature on the subject, I focus on Billig's (2005) and Freud's (1960) analysis and critique of humour and jokes. I argue that the perspective of Billig neglects Freud's emphasis on the crucial *libidinal economy* of humour. The fact that all sorts of humour or jokes evoke *jouissance* points to their *temporary* subversive quality. Further, I discuss an element of humour which is not usually emphasised enough. The big Other, the third point of reference is not sufficiently present in Billig's discussion, but we can find it in Freud's triadic structure of jokes. The gaze of the Other is taken into account in the analysis of the humorous text about nationalist parties and Nazis in *Gringo*.

The second form of critique I have called *hysterical critique*. I argue that some of the challenges of discrimination and institutions involve taking up a position which enables complaint and blame. It is similar to the hysterical position which finds some form of *jouissance* in the making of complaint; a gratifying generation of *jouissance* which creates fixity. Finally, in *obsessional critique*, we can detect ambivalence in relation to the Other, which also reveals an implicit dependence on the Other.

8.2 Critique in the form of humour/jokes

8.2.1 Nonconformity or a tool for the maintenance of the social order?

The use of jokes and humour in the political field and the employment of satire are phenomena that have presumably existed since the very establishment of various political forms of authority. Jokes tell us something about the *relationship* between the joker, the object of the joke, and the listener. Moreover, they usually work through representation: in jokes, people, objects and events are represented in a certain comic manner. Jokes are an imperative tool used widely in inter-group relations, and they are importantly associated with *jouissance*:

> Jokes have meanings that are not quite the same as the meanings of everyday discourse. Jokes demand bodily response from us, and thus 'mean' in the terms of an involuntary bodily response (Alcorn, 2002: 104).

Further, Freud (1960) recognises that effective jokes are those that concern controversial topics, issues which are of importance to people. As he states "there is a sense behind joking nonsense" (p. 58) and for him, jokes are never without some kind of libidinal element. Although Freud shows that the method of jokes (the *joke-work*) includes condensations, displacements, double meanings and substitutions, in my analysis I have not strictly followed this strategy of uncovering the joke's technical structure[61]. Rather I focus on what the jokes and humour in *Gringo* are *doing*, what functions they serve and what Other is implicated in the text.

Freud argues that in a joke, one is "making [oneself] out stupid in order to show that something or something else is stupid" (ibid.: 9). He calls these kinds of jokes 'tendentious jokes', implying that they are not innocent, but have a specific aim. The tendentious joke

> is either a *hostile* joke (serving the purpose of aggressiveness, satire, or defence) or an *obscene* joke (serving the purpose of exposure) (Freud, 1960: 97, emphasis in original).

---

[61] As Billig (2005) suggests, the first section of Freud deals with technical aspects of jokes and the language of humour rather than its psychology.

The tendentious joke works to avoid internal obstacles (for example the super-ego agency which imposes prohibitions) and external obstacles (for example the powerful position of the people which the joke is directed at) and satisfy an immodest or aggressive drive. The tendentious joke reveals the absurd and ludicrous in the enemy and "brings the laughers over to our side" (ibid.: 103). In parody for example, one humiliates the enemy "by destroying the unity that exists between people's characters as we know them and their speeches and actions" (ibid.: 201). In jokes we are able to express aggression towards those in power and Freud implies that there is a temporary release from the pressure of authority, and this release or elimination of inhibition is what makes the joke so pleasurable. We use jokes to say things which we would not be able to say easily or openly. For example, the humour about Swedishness (see previous chapter) in *Gringo* may reveal the difficulty of critiquing Swedishness openly. This difficulty is demonstrated for example in the harsh responses that *Gringo* received. Swedishness is transgressed and ridiculed through humour. A critique of an idea of Swedishness which is more or less entrenched in the socio-cultural field and that is not easily problematised is made possible through humour. Hence, the jokes and humour are a limited discharge of some of what is repressed: repressed aggression is able to show itself through the joke. It also implies that we joke about things which make us uncomfortable, which might be anxiety provoking. Thus, jokes reveal anxiety about something, but they also conceal this anxiety because the hearer thinks that he laughs at the technique of the joke, rather than its object (Freud, 1960). Note that the fact that jokes attempt to circumvent prohibitions suggests that they are already partly licensed by morality, the law and conformity, which produces the joke and endorses the identities of the joker, the object of the joke and the hearer (Seshadri-Crooks, 1998).

When we laugh at a tendentious joke it may be because of the target of the joke rather than its technical aspect. As Billig (2005) has shown, it is not only the latter which produces pleasure, but inasmuch as the content of the joke is linked to a certain object, the target is also significant. For example, what elicits enjoyment is the fact that the joke is against authority; the fact that the joke destroys the respect and dignity which authority demands may be pleasurable.

Billig (2005) praises Freud's claim that we should think suspiciously of humour, that humour does not only have positive or healing effects, but may reveal something more disturbing. However, he argues that the focus is too much on the "humour of rebellion" and not on the "humour of power" (p. 173). Billig demonstrates how ridicule is used as a tool for power and thus works to maintain the social order. His claim is that individuals comply with appropriate rules and conduct because they are afraid of being ridiculed. Moreover, he cautions against the belief that rebellious humour has a subversive effect, because rebellious jokes do not necessarily make any actual changes in the social order. In addition, Billig implies that non-compliant humour can itself have disciplinary effects because the current ideological context *promotes* identities and behaviour which are rebellious. Rebellious identities and behaviour have become products to be enjoyably consumed. Hence, he is stressing that being rebellious means conforming to ideology rather than asserting resistance to it. Rebellious jokes are indeed part and parcel of the ideological context of the western world, and Billig is right in claiming that we are sometimes encouraged to rebel against traditional rules of conduct. Putting this in Lacanian terms, rebelliousness has become a desirable mode of being, an ideal-ego with which we can identify in order to imagine ourselves as lovable in the eyes of the Other[62].

Nevertheless, we could argue that whether a joke or an instance of humour is subversive or not depends on the target of the joke. For example, racist humour, or jokes used to ridicule those who are considered 'different', viewed not to fit into the norms of society, is hardly subversive; this kind of humour rather works to maintain a certain exclusionary ideological structure, and otherise certain social groups. However, jokes and humour used against a power structure which is racist or against an ideology which is oppressive *may* hold out the potential of genuine subversion. Both of these types of humour may express some kind of repressed anxiety or aggression, but they are not both subversive. Billig over-emphasises the 'humour of power' when he critically focuses on

---

[62] Note that Žižek (2003) also indicates that in today's society transgression of traditional norms and identities are encouraged.

overt, negative elements of humour: its disciplinary and coercive aspects. In this thesis, I am interested in rebellious type of humour.

Furthermore, there is something problematic in the way the concept 'negative' is used in Billig's account and this is due to his refusal to take libidinal economy seriously in his analysis. When he uses the word 'negative', he seems to refer to aspects of humour which have an ideological, oppressive effect. However, arguments about whether humour is 'good' or 'bad', neglect its psychic significance. What Billig is missing out is that even when those in power are using humour to coerce - even when there is a 'negative' side to humour - the process involves a surplus-enjoyment, a *jouissance*. Thus, even 'negative' humour contains positivity, at least in the sense of a produced excess that goes beyond merely coercive/manipulative or discursive operation. Though there is a great deal of reference to the link between humour and pleasure in Billig's account, it lacks a clear conceptualization of the role of excess enjoyment, of the fact that both disciplinary/coercive *and* rebellious jokes may involve undermining elements of *jouissance*. It is this possibility of *jouissance* in the joke which makes it a common practice in social life and something of a tool in the transgression of authority. Hence, we can argue that humour or jokes against authority or power *are subversive in so far as they enable jouissance*, in so far as there is something 'in it' for the joker, something is 'gained' by the use of humour. The thrill of *jouissance* in question is that of something *not allowed*, of a transgression, be it that of a given moral discursive norm taken *too far*, or simply violated. Both such forms of extremity give the joker a potential thrill of enjoyment, both hold the potential for a certain subversion, but neither makes for a secure or steadfast progressive subversion of reactionary values.

This 'positive' element of transgressive humour is exactly why some writers who work within the Lacanian framework argue that the ability of jokes and humour to make any real changes to a certain ideological structure is limited. Žižek (1997) indicates that humour, jokes and ridicule *maintain* rather than properly undermine the given social order. He stresses that it is by being outside a given power, by creating a distance from it - something which jokes and humour help to ensure - that one is really gripped by the power structure. By making figures of power look absurd or ridiculous, they allow a *momentary* suspension of the usual order of things such that those who are normally

subordinate can for a brief instance experience the reversal of those roles. There is indeed a type of *jouissance* which is linked with such temporary reversal of the power structure. However, these mockings – which for a time appear genuinely subversive inasmuch as they call the status quo into question, make power seem arbitrary - in fact actively support the existing structure. This is so exactly because they allow for the experience of a temporary thrill of *jouissance*, but people then 'get back to work'; the normal order of things then continues as it was. According to psychoanalysis, the law is based upon 'non-law': It is in fact the law *itself* which enables its transgression, and the *jouissance* which comes with it. Transgression is thus not completely outside the law, or independent of the law. Hence, rather than posing a real threat to morality, power and authority, jokes and ridicule in effect help to affirm them, lend them paradoxical support. This issue will be elaborated further in the next chapter. In the following I draw attention to an element of humour and jokes which has been given inadequate attention: the role of the third party, the Other.

8.2.2 The role of the Other in jokes/humour

Although Billig points to the fact that rebelliousness is becoming 'popular', an institutionalized ideal aspect of Western liberal identity, he dismisses a clear illustration of how the gaze of the Other is implicated in the production and use of jokes. In his book on jokes, Freud repeatedly pays attention to the important role the hearer plays in the joke making process. In his mind, it is the Other who is completing the joke - without a hearer, the joke is inconclusive (ibid.: 155). It is the laughter of the Other which signifies the success of the joke and its completion:

> A tendentious joke calls for three people: in addition to the one who makes the joke, there must be a second who is taken as the object of the hostile or sexual aggressiveness, and a third in whom the joke's aim of producing pleasure is fulfilled (Freud, 1960: 100).

The focus on the third person in Freud's account seems to anticipate the Lacanian big Other, the addressee and position of appeal in acts of speech. The above quote implies that it is by satisfying the Other that the joke is completed. Hence, on the one hand, the joke is aimed at giving the Other pleasure. On the other hand, by laughing and thus signalling the success of the joke, *the Other completes the joke.* Moreover, pleasure in the first person - the joker - would not be evoked without the third person:

182

The role of the Other implies that there is a certain kind of narcissistic component involved in humour and jokes, that there is an element of self-affirmation enabled via resources to the Other and the recognition supplied. Thus, the fundamental question to pose in the analysis of the critique in *Gringo* which uses jokes is not only 'what anxieties do the jokes reveal' or 'what kind of nonconformity do they disclose?' but also *What is affirmed or entrenched in the use of humour, what facet of recognition is demanded?*

In the following, I draw from the theoretical perspectives illustrated above in order to analyse the critique sections in *Gringo* which rely heavily on jokes and humour. I will first show how *Gringo* uses jokes to mock powerful institutions in Sweden and thereby enables a potential for subversive *jouissance* in the process. Secondly, I demonstrate how the magazine ridicules and insults the nationalist party Sweden Democrats (SD). I argue that here also, the text permits a kind of subversive *jouissance*, but in the same process it affirms a narcissistic ideal-image of *Gringo* as anti-racist.

8.2.3 The parody of institutions: taking the position of the big Other

There is a section in *Gringo* called *Gringos arbetsförmedling* [*Gringo's* jobcentre]. This is a fictional jobcentre where *Gringo* puts itself in the place of employers and publishes fictional advertisements for job vacancies. Those fictional advertisements which parody powerful institutions are analysed here[63]. With the use of parody, these institutions - such as political parties, the police or the Immigration Board - are criticised for being contradictory in their actions, or for being discriminatory against immigrants. Take for instance the following:

> Hospital is looking for doctors
> We know that the competence of foreign doctors is being wasted for example when doctors make a living by driving a taxi. We think that it is a shame that doctors are not allowed to be in their natural environment. We are therefore now looking for people who have foreign medical

---

[63] There are also those adverts which joke about and mock stereotypes of for example 'gangsters', pizza shop owners or illegal cab drivers. These are a mockery of the stereotypes about the immigrant, an issue which is discussed in chapter 5.

qualifications. You should be hygienic, have surgical precision and enjoy being in hospital corridors. You will be member of a cleaning team together with the business school graduates. Label your application: 'I hate dirt' (*Gringo* 13).

These job advertisements in *Gringo* (see appendix 4.1 for more examples) use the same resistance strategy which the controversial activist group 'The Yes Men' employ, which includes humorously impersonating powerful institutions to 'correct' the identities of the latter; to show the 'real' corrupt and dishonourable identities behind the Symbolic 'masks'. In the above parody there is an allusion to the problem of discrimination against skilled immigrants. Hospitals are represented as being involved in these discriminatory practices. The text uses what Freud (1960: 62) calls "diversion of a train of thought", or displacement from the opening topic to another. It makes the reader think at first that the hospital is looking to employ doctors; it makes the reader believe that this hospital is different to all other institutions that discriminate. Then it becomes apparent that the vacancy is for a cleaner, and thus the hospital is as discriminatory as any other institution.

A similar attack is made on the Swedish Immigration Board. This institution has been the subject of public scrutiny and critique in the media especially in 2005 for supposedly having a 'champagne party' after deporting a family in 2004 (see for example Nilson, 2005):

> Immigration Board is looking for experienced party-organisers
> After the recent parties that were thrown due to the expulsion of people in need, we are now starting a real cool club: 'Club Go Home' will be held on our premises in Solna once a month, or as soon as we succeed in throwing the shams out of the country. We are now looking for a party-organiser with experience in events who can arrange DJs, champagne and handcuffs to the club. Call xxx and talk to Annica. Call or go home (*Gringo* 18).

The implicit argument here is that the 'real aim of the Immigration Board is to deport as many refugees as possible'. It represents this institution as ruthless and insensitive to the asylum seekers with whom they deal.

We could understand these parodies made about such public establishments as an example of inter-group relations, and would then say that through ridicule the out-group is being discriminated against. Nevertheless, it would be misleading to view these institutions which *Gringo* is dealing with here as just another out-group because these are representatives of authority and power, of rules and regulations, and socio-political

and economic establishments of Swedish society. In this sense they are authorized by, or indeed, the state apparatus extensions of the Symbolic big Other. Hence, the above text not only makes fun of the institutional embodiments of the Swedish big Other, but also challenges and disrupts its position.

The ads refer to problems in the real world - such as discrimination against skilled labourers, and the critique of the Immigration Board - but in their adoption of the voice of the institution and in their exaggerations, they are imaginary creations. Institutions are represented as inconsistent, contradictory and their apparent unity is powerfully deconstructed. The format is very revealing in itself. The critique of institutions in the *Gringo jobcentre* section, works through imitation. Thus, the text challenges these institutions from the position of the institutions themselves, through pretending to be them. If powerful institutions could be seen as the representatives of the big Other, these advertisements are written in the voice of the Other. As has been discussed before, the Other is often considered to be the point of reference from which I can get an answer back as to who I am, or more importantly, who I should be. Adopting the voice of the institution allows the joker to adopt this powerful position in a potentially subversive way and very effectively make a mockery of the ideological positioning supposed by the society that is being critiqued, i.e. the ego-ideals (or 'what you need to be'), contained both within and between the lines of such adverts.

Hence, as long as these texts are seen as transgressions of ego-ideals of authority, we may assume that there is a *jouissance* involved: *jouissance* of the thrill of subversion, but also *jouissance* in the playful Imaginary scenarios which are depicted. We might also assume that this libidinal effect can be evoked in the reader. This leads us to the following two questions: 1) are these advertisements subverting these institutions or do they merely enable some temporary *jouissance*? and 2) if, as we argued in previous chapters, there is always a presumed big Other as interlocutor involved in every act of speech (a big Other which is appealed to for acknowledgement) and if jokes and humour necessarily imply a big Other, then what type of recognition is *Gringo* aspiring to gain for itself? I will leave the first question unanswered for now and come back to it in the next chapter. I am hoping that the second question might be answered below.

8.2.4 The ridicule of nationalists and *Gringo's* redeployment of racist discourse

In *Gringo*, there is a great deal of text about Sweden Democrats and their members. This may be due to many reasons, one is that from the position of *Gringo* - a so called anti-racist magazine - nationalist parties such as SD or Nazi groups are the out-group, the 'enemy'. Another reason may be that in the 2006 elections, Sweden Democrats gained around 2.9 per cent of the votes, a relatively high figure which meant that the party could receive funding from the government. The success of this party in the elections and their continued growth in Sweden has resulted in great deal of media coverage. In *Gringo*, most of the articles about this party appear in the latter editions (around the time of the elections) and the vast majority of the text uses jokes, humour or parody. As Freud (1960) argues, we use humour in relation to things which are difficult to discuss openly, which are anxiety-provoking. The humour used in relation to the SD can be understood as signifying the anxiety which was felt in parts of society when this nationalist party - a party which has openly expressed hostile attitudes towards foreigners - gained growing support among voters. It is clear that the humour in relation to this party is tendentious, it is meant to ridicule and insult. The following is an example (see appendix 4.1 for more examples):

Best of Sweden Democrats (unbelievable but true)
1. One of the party's spokesmen told an undercover journalist from Svenska Dagbladet[64] that immigration is costing Sweden 300 billion Kronas. What he forgot to say was that with the same calculation, the native Swedes cost the country 900 billion.
2. During a heated debate in Goblin hood (Trollhättan) some Sweden Democrats stated that Islam is an anti-democratic terrorist religion. Politicians from the other parties objected. The whole thing calmed down, and the story ended when the Muslims in Trollhättan got bacon slices in their postal boxes.
3. SD was surprised when they succeeded in the municipal elections. They didn't even have enough people to fill their seats. So many municipalities have empty seats. Sweden Democrats do not complain. They get fat subsidies for their empty seats anyway.
4. Sweden Democrats are clear about more severe punishments for criminals. After the success in the last elections, they had the honour of appointing jurors to the Swedish courts. Several of SD's jurors are themselves convicted of crime, perhaps to be funny, perhaps because they're stupid.
5. Sweden Democrats have never feared to be witty in their political manifestations. The party which today claim that they have absolutely nothing to do with racism, had "another six million" and "exterminate the blackheads" written on their banners in a demonstration in 1994.

---

[64] *Svenska Dagbladet* is one of the major daily newspapers.

6. Sweden Democrats are sometimes accused of being xenophobic. This is probably not true. For example, they hang around a lot with the foreigners in the French Front National party which has a party leader who doesn't think that all races are equal (*Gringo* 32). ˙

The function of this text is to portray the members of the Sweden democrat party as inconsistent and contradictory. Clearly these series of parodies have a hostile aim, which is to insult this nationalist party. The heading is ironic since the content and the imagery in the main body of the article denigrates their actions, showing the 'worst' about this party. The actions of this party are made questionable, contradictory, problematic even, and these comments are assumed to be the "truth". Overall, it is clear that the humorous and sarcastic language is aimed to incite laughter or pleasure in the reader and to bring the reader to *Gringo's* side. The style of the article is in point form. There is no logical continuity between the claims that are made. It excludes a more detailed discussion of the arguments, which is a rather effective rhetorical approach because the text establishes a certain authority status for itself. The sources of the claims made about Sweden Democrats are not given. Just like authority figures' claims are expected to be accepted without the need for disclaimers or evidence, one is invited to take the assertions here as if they are coming from a source of authority.

What seems to stand out though is the fact that in its mockery, *Gringo* is actually itself using similar strategies as racists. This is most evident in the point about *Trollhättan where Gringo is mocking the SD members to be like Trolls. Trollhättan* is a city in the south of Sweden, which is known for inhabiting racist groups and which is a stronghold for the Sweden democrat party. Trolls are typical figures in Swedish and Scandinavian folklore and literature and are usually seen as harmful, mischievous and uncanny little creatures. However, in a manner *Gringo is itself adopting the characteristics of a troll.* The point though is not simply that Gringo is being witty or mischievous; as true as both these characterizations are, the more important point to be made here is that Gringo appears to be redeploying racist strategies, even if in an ostensibly humorous, irreverent manner. On reflection, the strategy of abusing someone by referring to them as a troll, an impure creature, not fully human, associated with squalor, demoted to a feared 'underclass' status, sits uneasily within the terms of anti-racist discourse.

After the success of the SD party in the 2006 elections, there was a debate in some of Sweden's major papers about which social group was voting for this party (see for

187

example Larsson, 2006; Sannerstedt, 2007; Thunberg and Nesser, 2006). The following extracts are from a piece in *Gringo* which refers to this debate. Here *Gringo* is taking up and dealing with the question that many have posed after the party's success in the elections: Why did so many people vote for Sweden Democrats? The text is a fictional 'know-yourself' guide for the Sweden democrat voters (see appendix 4.2.1 for full text):

> Which Sweden democrat are you?
> In the elections, Sweden Democrats got 162 000 votes. Because we believe that confusion is common among SD voters, we are offering a test which gives all the mini-racists the chance to find their own voter-profile. Here you go, and keep Sweden quite so Swedish[65] (Gringo 30).

The format in which this extended example of a tendentious wit is presented seems itself to contribute a great deal to the depiction of the SD members as foolish. It borrows this design from 'glossy' magazine articles which aim to tell you something about yourself (e.g. 'are you a sex addict?' type tests). These are usually aimed at (perhaps youthful and naive) teens and they work to tell you something about yourself that you did not already know. This extended joke format also copies exam questions designed usually for juniors, ('pick one option' out of four) which again works to insult the SD members as unintelligent. For example:

> 2. Why did you vote for the Sweden Democrats?
> a) Because my last party SAR (Shoot All Race-Aliens) didn't attract votes.
> b) I'm not racist but it was probably when my neighbour's cousin's yoga instructor said that we are not allowed to sing the national anthem anymore.
> c) Because they want to decrease taxes and the amount of non-blondes in Sweden
> d) I want to show that I understand that as a blatte I am a problem for Sweden... (*Gringo* 30)

Thus, this playful fictional guide is another example which is meant to ridicule Sweden Democrats. The party's voters are portrayed as themselves not knowing what they are doing when they vote for the SD and thus *Gringo* is providing them with a guide in order to find out who they 'really' are. At the end of the text the four 'types' of Sweden Democrats are illustrated.

> Most A's: Tactic-Thomas
> You actually think that SD is a cowardly party. But right now they are the only racist alternative. You hope that more people will discover Shoot all Race-Aliens for the next elections.
> Most B's: Million-Svenne-Maria

---

[65] This is an allusion to the racist organisation *Bevara Sverige Svenskt* [Keep Sweden Swedish]. The founders of the Sweden Democrats are said to have been members of this organisation.

You're not a racist, but having voted for social democrats for 800 years, you switched to SD. You live in a suburb with loads of blattes around you and it's alright. But someone has to be responsible for the fact that your salary is not increasing and the blattes are the probable culprits.

Most C's: Upperclass-Örjan.

You actually don't have any opinions about immigrants, you have just met them in their natural reserves in Africa and Asia. But it would be quite nice with more *linlottor* [little white kids]. They're so cute! And white!

Most D's: Blatte-Behnaz

SD promises that they like law-obeying blattes like you. You're not completely convinced, but to vote for them feels like a good way to signal to the svennes at work how much you like Sweden. Perhaps you're allowed to come along next time they are going out for a drink[66] (*Gringo* 30).

The common denominator uniting the four types is their *illogical action of voting for this party*. The message here is clear: their choice for voting for Sweden Democrats is not grounded in rationality. This text is also implicitly making reference to the *jouissance* of racist outrage and it allows the reader to laugh at this excessive 'nonsensical' racist pleasure. It makes apparent, and ridicules the fact that there is a certain gratification that functions in such representations, a degree of pleasing displeasure in such angering depictions.

However, in the two examples above, this seems to be what *Gringo* itself is doing: *Gringo is borrowing from the strategies utilized by forms of racist discourse to potentially different ends.* Seshadri-Crooks (1998) claims that there is a convergence between jokes and the uncanny[67] in contexts of racial anxiety. In the text about the SD party, the usual relations between immigrants and nationalists are being reversed in quite subversive ways: it is usually the immigrants who are being portrayed as uncanny

---

[66] It is worthwhile drawing attention to the fourth type of voter depicted here. This is an immigrant with a lack of confidence and who votes in order to demonstrate how much they like Sweden and in order to become accepted in Swedish society. In other places in *Gringo*, I found a frequently occurring theme about 'love for Sweden' (see Chapter 5). There are repetitive claims about dedication and love for Sweden in many different parts of the overall text of the magazine. The immigrant voter above is considered to support SD in order to be accepted in Sweden. This is perhaps also what *Gringo* itself is doing: loving Sweden and having dedication for this nation may be perceived to be important in order to become acknowledged in the Symbolic field of Swedish society. Here, *Gringo* perhaps itself relies upon and distributes the signifier 'love and dedication for Sweden' as a fantasy which states what the Other wants; that if one presents oneself as loving Sweden, one might be acknowledged and accepted in the socio-Symbolic field of the Other.

[67] Freud's (1919) term *unheimliche* which has been translated into 'uncanny' in English is a complicated one. He views it as something "undoubtly related to what is frightening – to what arouses dread and horror" (p. 219). However, he also perceives this term as being related to what is familiar, "for this uncanny is in reality nothing new or alien, but something which is familiar and old-established in the mind and which has become alienated from it only through the process of repression" (p. 241).

in racist representations, but in these jokes it is the SD members who are portrayed in this way. We should emphasize that it is not just that similar discursive strategies of racism are apparent here, but also *similar libidinal patterns of enjoyment*. The text reveals a particular pattern of *jouissance*, that of uncovering and refuting the contradictions in the nationalists and in ridiculing them. Thus, it opens up possibilities for the reader to experience *jouissance* in these depictions of the SD party and thus 'join' *Gringo* in its *jouissance* of attacking nationalists.

In short, it is quite clear that the text about the SD is meant to ridicule and insult this party, but in doing so, *Gringo* to an extent re-deploys not only the discursive strategies that the SD party is accused of, but also similar racist organisation of *jouissance*. The magazine assimilates aspects of what it mocks, takes on the attributes of that criticized, an odd kind of identification with the enemy which speaks of a certain ambivalence. For, in doing as someone does – even with a degree of variation – I am like them. If in *Gringo's* critique of racism the strategies of discursive racism are. re-used, with its accompanying *jouissance* effects, then it is questionable whether *Gringo* has really escaped their field of influence, transcended the discursive operations that have been used against the victims of racism.

8.2.5 The ridicule of nationalists and the narcissism of Gringo

As we argued above, the humour and parodies used in relation to the SD party work to insult racism. This is a strategy which is in fact rather ambivalent, because there is the possibility of a type of identification with the racists apparent in *Gringo's* re-use of various of the discursive strategies used in racism (although it should be admitted that such discursive strategies are also evident in other discourses, beyond the domain of racism). Therefore, we can deduce from this that there is the prospect of an Imaginary relationship of sorts with the SD party. In insulting the SD party, *Gringo* is positioning itself as anti-racist, as the opposite of everything that the nationalist party stands for. As I mentioned before, the text about the SD can be understood in relation to Social Identity Theory's social comparison process: *Gringo* is negatively discriminating against SD, the out-group, but importantly, by doing so, the in-group is gaining positive distinction. What we see here is that in the provocative representation of the Sweden Democrats as foolish, contradictory, bizarre and dishonest, there is simultaneously an

implicit construction of *Gringo*, as the opposite; as honest, coherent and intellectually sharp (in being able to spot the foolishness of the Sweden democrat for example). Similarly, in the representation of this party as racist, immoral and intolerant of immigrants, *Gringo* is constructed as anti-racist, tolerant and moral. Thus, we could state that *Gringo* is engaged in out-group discrimination and in-group favouritism in an Imaginary relation with the SD. The latter is occupying the position of the 'little' other, the opponent, the contender. The denigration of this Imaginary 'rivalry' thus contains a narcissistic component. Freud in fact mentions this aspect of narcissism or exhibitionism in jokes:

> The motive force for the production of innocent jokes is not infrequently an ambitious urge to show one's cleverness, to display oneself - an instinct that may be equated with exhibitionism in the sexual field (1960: 143).

Consequently, the jokes above could be understood as being as much about serving a narcissistic image of one-self as they are tendentious. Looking at the above texts about the SD from this angle, they are both an aggressive insult to the SD party, as well as a self-expression, and a projection of an image of oneself.

Hence, Gringo's relation to the SD party is one which involves overlapping (or counterposed) formations of *jouissance*: the jouissance of the 'thrill of attack' on the one hand, and an Imaginary form of *jouissance* related to an ideal-ego on the other. As I mentioned before, if we take Billig's (2005) argument that humorous rebellion has become encouraged, taken as a fashionable 'trait', we can say that these 'traits' operate as Imaginary ideal-egos: Humour and rebelliousness are desirable traits to have in the western liberal socio-Symbolic field. Hence, the object of these jokes may be SD members, but there is a more important third party for whom these jokes are aimed at. It is likely that apart from the *jouissance* in attacking the SD party, there is also a possibility of *jouissance* due to identification with the ideal-ego elements, those Imaginary identifications with the present neo-liberal culture which encourages humour and rebelliousness as model characteristics. These offensive remarks about the SD party seem to anticipate a response, an affirmation of *Gringo*. The (fantasmatic) response from the Other may be used for the narcissistic gratification of *Gringo*, for its verification as an anti-racist magazine. The problem one faces here is that of the

political critique of an oppressive system going no further than the *jouissance* gratifications of aggressive put-downs, insults. Sincere and often quite vital political energy is thus squandered in a dyadic, Imaginary ego-to-other conflict which works more to secure ego-gains, to enjoy deriding the other, and gain a satisfactory image of one-self, than to properly transcend the oppressive system in place.

This role of the Other also exists in the jokes about institutions discussed earlier. Despite being subversive jokes, violating positions of authority, the jokes might also be a form of role play in front of the gaze of the Other. Even though the text in the *Gringo jobcentre* section is impersonal, *Gringo* as subject is very strongly there. This implies that antiracist activism can sometimes be more motivated by *how one generates an appealing, reputable image for one's self as anti-racist* in the social field, for the perspective of the Other, rather than (simply) contesting racism. There is here the dimension of the *making of a likeable image of one's self*, and the *jouissance* connected with that image, be it the image of someone caricaturing existing power or of speaking back to nationalist parties. The making of a heroic image of myself is linked to a certain type of narcissistic, self-affirming *jouissance*.

The critique of institutions is also prevalent in the mix of humorous and serious language in the section in *Gringo* called the *Refugee's diary*.

8.2.6 Humour and victimisation: The refugee's diary

In a number of editions, there is a section called *Flyktingens dagbok* [The refugee's diary] where a fictional refugee is publishing a diary. These are usually in the form of 'stories' where the 'refugee' is telling the reader about his experiences in broken Swedish language. The text is a playful, fictional construction and humour is mixed with seriousness.

The refugee's diary links to themes discussed in other chapters. On the one hand, one could state that in these texts the refugee, his lifestyle and his drastically broken, non-standard Swedish, signifies a resistance to the homogenising and standardising ego-ideals of the big Other. In this sense, the *refugee* should be understood alongside the images of the immigrant which we discussed in chapter 5. On the other hand, a careful analysis of the refugee's diary reveals that although it may be an attempt to resist ego-

192

ideals, it also represents a powerful critique against prevailing institutions and against inequalities and unfairness in Sweden.

The stories are often about the refugee's struggle in Swedish society, his struggle for asylum and for recognition. They usually include a critique of the asylum process in Sweden, the Immigration Board and the Swedish society at large which has difficulties accepting or acknowledging refugees. In the following example, there is the issue of recognition and lack thereof (see appendix 4.1 for more examples). The 'refugee' is here struggling with their marginalized identity, who he is and who he wants to be. A hypothesized encounter is presented with the then Swedish Prime Minister Göran Persson.

The refugee's diary[68]
Written by: The refugee
The refugee showed up at our editorial and said that we should put his diary in *Gringo*. He passed some of his text over to us and we were in love. Now you will get the chance to read his shizzle too and it can be the softest diary you've ever read.
Dear diary. I'm not anybody. Today something big hapen in my live today I go from one phase to another phase in my live. You know when you take one step up in society. Yesterday I at the bottom. But today, I'm hapy guy. I work as dishwasher, very good salary 25 Kronas every hour and free food. I'm bloody hapy. I work decent work hours 15 hours everyday, and I'm of Monday morning. It is not why I'm hapy. There is other things why I'm hapy.
I work in a very nice restaurant in Östermalm[69]. There comes big and celebrity people, I have meeting many politic people and artist. I not have talked to anybody, but see them from where I work. But today, I feel very important. Primeminister Göran Person here eating with us. Today he comes with wife and eat dinner. I was bloody close to Sweden's first man first woman. Not even three metres from them. I heard their talk their laughs. But they not hear my pain and tiredness. I wanted to go and say hi. But was afraid he might be not hapy. He maybe not want to know I am so close. He maybe want me away, but I'm here!! So close that he can hear me whisper: Hi Göran here I am, not far from you, open your eyes. I actually more near than you think.
He was busy, poor Göran with having coffee. And I had job, much job. I took care of his plate. I washed the primeminister plate and cleaned his table for 25 Krona. This make me hapy. Because I have reached far in society. Today not like any day. (*Gringo* 26)

This text has similar voyeuristic qualities as the mock article about the 'dangerous' suburb discussed in chapter 5. An element of curiosity about the life of a refugee can be found: Who is he? How does he live? How does he speak? This exaggerated and humorous depiction both reveals the stereotypes of the refugee and mocks these same

---

[68] Note that I have translated the text in 'incorrect' English in order to represent the original Swedish text as accurately as possible: the diary is intentionally written in incorrect Swedish.
[69] Östermalm is a wealthy district in Stockholm.

stereotypes. However, there is an important fantasmatic quality of imagining oneself in the refugee's position, of imitating him. So the text suggests a desire to become close to him - after all, a diary is a very intimate piece of writing, one whose narrative form enables closeness to the author. This is one of the critical qualities of the text: by *enabling closeness, proximity* to a social group which is usually considered to be culturally and psychically different and distant. However, the effect of these stories should be viewed as uncertain because they simultaneously work the other way around: they can also enforce *distance*. The text also appears to make fun of the refugee, and we might detect a familiar pattern of *jouissance* in this mockery. His lack of fluency in the Swedish language and his naivety are funny. The reader can dissociate him or herself from the refugee, laugh at him and find *jouissance* in this performance of ridicule and otherisation. Affectionate identification might be said to topple over into something less sympathetic here, into a counter-identification, an identification against what appears to be pathetic or ignorant in the refugee's account. However, this does not undermine the rather vigorous critical aspect of the text in the refugee's diary, which includes a challenge to powerful institutions. This presents us with an odd combination: the example incurs a certain anger by virtue of the implicit critique of the double-standards and difficulties confronted by immigrants and refugees with whom we can sympathize, yet it also, simultaneously, sets up a degree of distance to, a possible counter-identification with, these same subjects. As in so many of the examples discussed so far, we have the case of a resistance which contains within it elements of counter-resistance, traces of ambivalence, crossing lines of identification in which the reader is a afforded both the possibility of identifying with and identifying against the subject in question.

One way in which the critique in this text seems to work is through juxtaposing the harsh life of the refugee with the comfortable life of the prime minister. It is through this juxtaposition which reveals the *difference* between the refugee and both the environment he works in and the prime minister's comfortable life, which may qualify for the successful critique of this text. However, what is the most biting critique is that the refugee presents himself as happy to be in such a servile position. There is something pathetic about this, which is an important part of how the text positions us. The word 'hapy' is repeated again and again throughout the text – perhaps deliberately

to irk us, to provoke something in us. This word is eye-catching – and it is misspelled, which perhaps points to the fact that this is a naïve sentiment, a kind of ignorant or servile emotion. This connotes a kind of alienation, and we are presented with the difficult case of how to respond to someone who is 'hapy' to please, to be in a relatively debased, alienated position. The critique the text makes is that many Swedes presumably feel that immigrants should be happy to be in such a position, that it is an honour to serve Sweden.

There is also something about the relationship between the refugee and the big Other (here given a direct and palpable embodiment in the person of the prime minister). One may identify a struggle to be acknowledged in the Symbolic field of Swedish society. What is worth pointing out is that the signifiers which might connote 'difference' in this text, such as the broken Swedish, suggest that there is an intention to keep one's difference (even the difference which may be viewed as a threat) and yet be recognised by the socio-Symbolic field of the Other. Thus, there is an impasse that is represented here: the subject's desperate need for recognition from the Other, which sits uncomfortably with the attempt to maintain certain markers of distinctness, markers of difference. This again points to a contradiction or deadlock we already came across in the previous chapter: that of 'I want to be recognised by the Swedish Other, but I also want to maintain what makes me unrecognisable (my imperfect Swedish language for example)'. The subject is put here in what seems an impossible position, stretched between competing demands that pull in opposite directions: 'I want to keep my difference, and I want to be accepted as with difference, but the Other demands that I get rid of it'.

Thus, the interpretation of this text is far from straightforward: it is humorous, yet serious; it is resisting ego-ideals and criticising the Other, yet it is expressing a desire to be recognised. The text's argument also relies heavily on pathos; a pathetic appeal to the readers' emotional sympathy. It perpetuates a kind of suffering. One might detect here something of a hysterical relation to the Other and a sense of 'victimisation' being at play in these images. In the above example, the refugee is in such close proximity to the prime minister, but yet so far away from him; the prime minister does not even know that he exists; he does not recognise the pain and agony of the refugee. The text seems

to play out for the reader a set of implicit questions: 'Who am I to you? Do you see me?' All of the refugee's diary stories contain similar relations to the Other, they seem to pose the questions: 'What do I need to do to be desired by You?' In these texts, there is on the one hand a wish to be the object of the Other's desire, and on the other hand, a critique against the Other is expressed for being ignorant of the refugee's miserable life. Thus, behind the humour, the language is rather melodramatic, there is almost a theatrical performance of the refugee as a 'victim', and it draws the reader in to feel for the refugee, it pulls the reader in its *jouissance*. I will now move on to discuss further this hysterical form of critique which is indeed very much prevalent in the text of *Gringo*.

8.3 Hysterical critique

Lacan's illustration of the four discourses provides an account of various forms of social discourse and one of them is the discourse of the hysteric: "The hysterical subject makes a master out of the other...who has to produce an answer" (Verhaeghe, 2002: 28). The discourse of the hysteric is adopted in some instances of psychological and social protests. Bracher (1994) states that

> the hysterical structure of discourse...characterizes...instances of resistance, protest, and complaint – from the plaintive anthems of slaves to the yearning lyrics of lovesick poets to the iconoclastic rhetoric of revolutionaries (p. 122).

This discourse is founded on the refusal by the hysteric to pursue the ideals set by the master signifier or society, on the questioning of the master. The Lacanian discourse of the hysteric emphasizes how the hysteric poses a resistance to the master. "The speech of the hysteric thus performs an important social function. It draws attention to the non-sense of the master" (Alcorn, 2002: 75).

Paradoxically, the hysterical subject is at the same time also subsumed by the master, because this subject exists as the answer to the Other's desire. However, the desire of the hysteric is never completely satisfied, "it is an ever insisting desire" (Verhaeghe, 2002: 24): there is a 'desire for an unsatisfied desire'. The hysteric addresses the Other for an answer to his or her existence and desire.

In several editions of *Gringo*, the chief editor entered into correspondence with the Swedish prime-minister Fredrik Reinfeldt. A letter was published on the front page of one of *Gringo's* editions in 2006 after the elections when the centre-right took power in Sweden. It has traditionally been known that policies of the centre-right are largely disadvantageous for those with immigration backgrounds. Nevertheless, in these particular elections more people with immigration backgrounds voted for the right wing parties than usual, partly due to promises of the creation of jobs for the unemployed. The editor is here presenting *Gringo* as a representative of 'the people' in the suburb. In this example, the hysterical form of critique is most apparent (see appendix 4.3 for more examples).

Yo Fredric Reinfeldt
Congratulations on earning the title as Sweden's most powerful suedi[70]. You say that you're the new labour party. The old labour party was not very useful. Perhaps this is why your voters among blattes increased by a third. As you already know, it so happens that there is an over-representation of unemployment exactly among blattes. We are even dissed[71] by the housing market. By the clubs and bars. By the media. By the authorities (especially by our dear Immigration Board. (Cheers!).
The darker you are the more you are discriminated against. How are you going to stop the discrimination? How will you set free the enormous energy that exists in the million-programme areas? We have many more questions and demand an answer. Therefore we challenge you to come to the suburb and meet the people. Let me know if you dare to take on the challenge and we'll decide time and place my friend (*Gringo* 29).

An appeal is made here to be "listened to" and a hysterical questioning about the place of the suburb-people in the gaze of the Other; who are they for the Other? The prime minister is appealed to in order to show how much he "prioritises" the suburbs. He is also pleaded with to provide answers to problems of discrimination and unemployment. Nevertheless, despite addressing the Other as all-knowing, the language is rather informal with some use of million-Swedish, and the prime minister is invited to the suburb, hence indicating an attempt to bring the Other 'down' to the same 'level' as the people in the suburb and strip him of his supremacy. Moreover, although the prime minister is being treated as the authority that has power to solve the problems of discrimination and injustice, the questions which are posed for him suggest that he is also paradoxically doubted, and even tested. As in the discourse of the hysteric, a master

---

[70] 'Suedi' is *Gringo's* slang for Swede or Swedish.
[71] 'Diss' is slang and comes from the English discriminate.

is both at some level prioritized (because it is important to know the Other's desire, to be located in reference to an Other and its desire) yet the master is also questioned, doubted. Hence, in the above, the *lack* in the Other is pointed at; the Other is impelled to fail in satisfying the demand that is given to him. As Fink (1999b) claims, "the hysteric goes at the master and demands that he or she show his or her stuff, prove his or her mettle by producing something serious by way of knowledge" (p. 133). Thus, even when the Other is doubted, there is still a reiteration of the importance of the Other. However, the hysteric will never be satisfied with what she gets. In the above, we see how *Gringo* is simultaneously addressing and challenging the Other; doubting, but also emphasising the importance of the Other.

Moreover, the hysterical discourse "is in force whenever a discourse is dominated by the speaker's symptom - that is, his or her unique mode of experiencing *jouissance*" (Bracher, 1994: 122). In Freud's (1905) famous 'Dora' case, he speaks about Dora's 'fixed' position, her taking up a role which in analysis enabled her to repetitively complain and blame the people around her for making her suffer. Although Freud acknowledges that her immediate context was certainly - so to speak - 'oppressive' or destructive, with a father who was indirectly taking advantage of her for his own enjoyment, a passive mother and a seductive male family friend, he suspects that "she had made herself an accomplice in the affair" (p. 36). Freud recognizes that her symptoms were signs of resistance against her father and her situation: they were genuinely motivated resistance and not merely self-serving. Nevertheless, her malingering and her symptoms show that there may be some form of enjoyment in the act of blaming other people for her situation. Žižek elaborates upon this theme when he discusses the '*jouissance* in one's own victimization'. Similar to the subject of racist remarks who finds *jouissance* in their hatred, the victim of a racist society might also find *jouissance* in his position:

> My description of the circumstances whose victim I was can be entirely truthful and accurate, but this very enunciation of my predicament provides me with a surplus-enjoyment: the report on my victimization, by means of which I impute the guilt to others and present myself as... innocent... always provides a deep libidinal satisfaction. Founding one's identity on a specific injury can be a source of deep satisfaction, and for this satisfaction contained in my subjective position of enunciation, while I report on my victimization, I am responsible (Žižek, 2005: 266).

Gringo's text is replete with this victimised discourse. One article is headed *Hole*[72] *in the dentistry dream* and is about discrimination in the dentistry programmes at the universities. The following are some extracts (see appendix 4.4.1 for full text):

> At the dentistry program at Gothenburg University, a handful of students are 'barred' every term. In the last five years this has only happened to the program's black head Swedes....
> " Sometimes, if some students talk Persian during a lunch break it will be taken up as a problem in the review meetings", says the student Sara.
> Sara's name is actually something else, but she wants to be anonymous because she is scared of the consequences if she were to use her real name....Despite that the program is five years in length, many have been there for up to eight years. Apart from big debts, many have psychological and physiological problems, which have led to both sick days and divorces...
> "I have seen how my completely Swedish friends have made big mistakes but they have not been barred by the teachers"....
> Jan Olsson is responsible for the program. Even he is aware of the problem, but he doesn't think that this is necessarily about discrimination.
> "These kinds of assertions are difficult to handle. One explanation for why many immigrant students are barred could be that it is more difficult for some of them, for example they might have trouble with the language".
> He also says that he takes seriously the problem of students who feel badly treated.
> "Our type of education is special, it is about judgements from the teachers. What we can do is to keep our criteria for examinations as strict as possible. There are unfortunately no obvious solutions" (*Gringo* 32).

This article is mainly focused on making a case about unfairness. There is a repetitive complaint about this group being under-privileged compared to other students. Thus, although the two examples above are both characterised by a form of hysterical discourse, there are differences in the type of complaint that is being made. The complaint in the first example points to the lack of recognition from the Other, whereas the text above criticises the Other for "barring" the students from the *jouissance* that their chosen career path seemed to promise; they have no access to it. A fantasy is projected in which the Other (the teachers, the person responsible for the course) is

---

[72] In Swedish, this heading runs *Hål i tandläkardrömmen*. The immediate meaning is that there is a hole, gap, a flaw in the dentistry dream. But in Swedish, the expression 'having a hole in one's teeth' means 'having cavities'. Thus, the heading makes use of a bridge-word connecting two spheres of meaning, a form of condensation thus whereby 'hole' (*hål*) refers to the dentistry concepts of having cavities, flaws in ones teeth, as well as to the holes, 'flaws' within the dentistry education. There is a further meaning: the word *hål* is also similar to the word *håll* (hold). So In Swedish using the word *håll* instead of *hål* in the sentence would translate into 'holding on to the dentistry dream', which would be a rather positive statement compared to the negative connotation of "hole in the dentistry dream". The use of the word hole (referring to flaws, weaknesses) is related to the rest of the article which is criticizing the flaws in dentistry education.

blocking admission to *jouissance* from the students with immigration backgrounds and it seems that the quest for *jouissance* is futile.

This is a very typical example of the instances where *Gringo* is focused on exposing forms of racist unfairness that do exist in the Swedish society. It repetitively depicts the immigrants' situation as unjust and 'horrible' and it does so by calling upon the reader to 'feel' with the *blackhead's* situation which is, according to this article, psychologically and physically unhealthy. As useful a rhetorical strategy as this might be politically, one is nonetheless justified in questioning whether the strategy stalls here, becomes mired in complaint, enjoying its suffering, unable to move forward. This repetitive language about the 'miseries' of the students leads one to question whether there may be fixity or stagnation in this position of 'complaint'.

We can make use of the notion of *overdetermination* to understand how these complaints are both based on a reality (and they are also politically important), *and* how they function to intensify a sense of victimhood. Overdetermination in psychoanalysis refers to the fact that dreams and symptoms can have several, "a plurality of determining causes" (Laplanche and Pontalis, 1973: 292). If we interpreted this text merely as an attempt to resist and change 'real' discrimination and neglect its hysterical aspect, we would miss out on how, by exacerbating a kind of victimhood, it can be counter-productive to change. Understanding this text as an effect of overdetermination means that we point out the ambiguity of the complaint which is being made, the narcissistic satisfaction in the identity of the victim. One may ask following Žižek (2005), whether these expressions of complaint and a victimised identity is part of a role played for the gaze of the empathizing reader.

8.4   Obsessional critique

In other articles in *Gringo*, the position of the victim or hysteric is not taken up as strongly. Rather, the discourse here is likened to that of the obsessive. This includes a discourse in which *ambivalent* critique is expressed. Here there is an oscillation between complaint and non-complaint. The following extracts are from an article headed *The journalistic void*, which is about the media's exclusion of people with an immigration background (see appendix 4.6.1 for full text and appendix 4.5 for more examples).

The racism in the Swedish media is decreasing. The change is happening in accordance with more journalists with immigration backgrounds entering the industry. But there is still a lack of competence at the editorial level to represent the growing Sweden. As a reader you can help more than you think.

Josef is one of the fulltime employees at Quick Response...which scrutinises the content of the largest newspapers..."Almost every day a bad article is published, but it is not because of racism or ill will", he claims.

"Not many journalists today have foreign backgrounds. The mixture of the editorial is bad and they don't succeed in depicting the society we live in today in a good way".

The lack of journalists with immigration - and suburb - background means that the editors will not scrutinise the articles which are about 'immigrants' as carefully. It happens frequently that false information about for example Islam appears in articles because there's no-one in the editorials well placed to keep an eye on such inconsistencies.

Most of the newspapers are now actively working to get more people with an immigration background....But a lot of it is a game for the galleries. When it comes to the selection process, extremely few of the journalists with immigration backgrounds who apply for the jobs are employed.

Josef El...has the impression that most of the journalists and especially the bosses want to change the situation and their attitude, but he still thinks that many are far too sloppy....Josef is optimistic and often sees signs that the media is raising the level of 'immigrant'- and suburb reports (*Gringo* 1).

This was published in the first edition of *Gringo*, possibly in order to not only criticise the lack ("void") of people with immigration backgrounds in the field of journalism, but also starting the magazine with this topic is an expression of the identity of *Gringo*. With this article the magazine positions itself in opposition to the exclusion of immigrants in the media and against the negative media representations of this social group. This article is followed by a number of subsequent ones with the aim of critiquing media institutions for negatively representing immigrants and for excluding immigrant journalists and other media workers.

There is evidence of tension and contradictions in relation to the Other. Contrary to the argument which is made in the main body of the text (as well as in many other instances in *Gringo*), this article starts by arguing that racism is being reduced in the media and that more 'immigrants' are entering the field, thus abandoning a harsh critique of institutions for being discriminatory. It is also argued that the "bad" articles (those that depict immigrants negatively) are not due to racism, but due to the lack of immigrants on the editorials. This attitude changes as the article moves on to complain that the efforts to get more immigrants is only a "game for the galleries". Throughout the text, there is a form of complaint which oscillates with defence but, importantly, they do not

cancel each other out. This creates a difficult tension, a doubt in relation to the Other (here embodied in the institution of the media).

This two-fold to and fro movement of doubt, the inability to settle on a single definitive position, is characteristic of obsessional neurosis and is an indication of ambivalence. Freud argues that a "need, which is ...shared by obsessional neurotics...is the need for *uncertainty* in their life, or for *doubt* " (Freud, 1909: 232, emphasis in original). He claims that the Ratman was caught up in a tension between both loving and hating his father, both wanting him dead and then rejecting and repressing this belief and finding it necessary to prove that he still loves this figure. This is typical of obsessionals:

> If we consider a number of analyses of obsessional neurotics we shall find it impossible to escape the impression that a relation between love and hatred such as we have found in our present patient is among the most frequent, the most marked, and probably, therefore, the most important characteristics of obsessional neurosis (ibid.: 239).

Hence, there is a relationship with the Other which is characterised by tension and conflict. This ambivalent relationship is evident throughout the above article. On the one hand, the Other is criticised and on the other hand, the complaint is renounced: the attitude here is that one can take things in one's own hands, and the readers are called upon to act; there is here a sense of independence.

This sense of independence from the Other can be found much more strongly across *Gringo's* discourse. For example, some articles, include reports on immigrants (usually second generation youths) who take the situation into 'their own hands' and either fight their circumstances – by for example setting up their own night club after being excluded from the conventional ones - or by moving abroad to find jobs after being discriminated against in the Swedish labour market. As Fink (1999a) argues, the obsessional "believes himself to be master of his own fate" (p.122) and in his actions he denies that he is still acting under the influence of the Other. In this respect it is of interest that one recurring theme in *Gringo* concerns people who have moved abroad because they did not find jobs in Sweden. The following extracts are from an article headed *Blattes get jobs in London* (see appendix 4.6.2 for full text):

> Aram Fatehi got tired of the fact that his blond mates in the military service got jobs while he remained unemployed. He moved to London. The employers are fighting for him there.

> Aram...was close to giving up. He looked for jobs for six months after finishing his military
> service..."In the end I was fed up". He says that employers would make comments such as: did
> you do military service here in Sweden which is not your own country?
> Aram realised that he had to do something drastic. His uncle who owns a restaurant in London
> offered him a job and since he had no other opportunities he took it. Half a year later he was
> picked up by a luxury shop owner on the other side of the road.
> "He offered me double my salary", he says with a big smile...
> ...Many of those Swedes who go to London every year to study or work decide to stay there
> (*Gringo* 8).

This text and others similar to these (see appendix 4.5 for sample extracts) express a covert 'revenge' against the Swedish big Other who does not recognise immigrants; an obsessive vengeance. One might contend that this revenge is of a narcissistic nature in as much as it demands recognition from the Other. Freud claims that the retribution expressed by the Ratman is evidence of ambivalence towards the Other: "His phantasies of revenge and such obsessional phenomena...bore witness to his divided feelings" (Freud, 1909: 237). The revolt against the ego-ideals of the Other which can be read between the lines of the above text denies the importance of the Other and hides an unresolved conflict. As Fink (1999a) states,

> The obsessive lives out his life in rebellion against one or all of his parents' wishes, but denies
> any relation whatsoever between what he does and what his parents wanted him to do or be.
> His whole life may be a protest against the Other's ideals (p. 130).

In another article called *Very expensive to diss*, the discrimination of immigrants is criticised, a critique which involves listing how much money Sweden is losing by keeping immigrants out of the labour market. What is of particular interest here - especially when one considers the typical obsessional strategies of quantification, measuring, the division of exact amounts, of using such numerical devices; along with the generation of lists, the ordering of facts, and the meticulous arrangement of evidence – is just how well such an approach suits a mode of obsessional defence. The following are some extracts (see appendix 4.6.3 for full text):

> Discrimination is always a lousy thing, and it also costs a crazy amount of money for Sweden.
> The total cost: At least 4.4 million Kronas.
> According to an earlier study, a realistic increase of blattes in the workplace would improve the
> treasury by 20 to 25 million Kronas per year...
> ...Expenses which include unemployment, social security and housing benefits would decrease
> by 5.2 million Kronas. Over 80 percent would be gained by an increase of taxes by 26. 4 million
> Kronas.

> ...Blattes are heavily overrepresented in social security benefits...In 2004 the costs for foreign born individuals who would have work if they were born in Sweden was around 3.4 million Kronas...
>
> ...The lousy work situation for blattes means that they are more costly due to sick leaves and early retirements. In 2004, the 540 000 early retired individuals cost Sweden about 64 million Kronas.
>
> The integration policy is also expensive. It costs in total around 1.8 million Kronas.
>
> ...Finally, there is the issue of invisible costs...namely the fact that the skills of blattes are not used and that their qualifications become invalid. This is partly why only half of the 100 000 unemployed blattes are viewed as available for work (*Gringo* 27).

This kind of critique is likened to that of the obsessive's tendency to robustly point out the inadequacies of the Other (here embodied in the government and other powerful institutions in Sweden). It is worth emphasising the repetitive way in which this text brings up the exact cost of the unemployment of the *blattes*, and the way in which this cost is also backed up with evidence (at the end of the article there are references to the numbers given). This reminds us of the Ratman's religious preoccupation with facts and details when for example explaining the *pince-nez* incident (Freud, 1909).

The obsession with numbers and facts and the particular style of language in the above article makes it quite different to the 'hysteric' form of discourse which we encountered above. The language here is not immediately melodramatic or sensational; it is difficult to pinpoint what kind of *jouissance* effects it might have, other of course than the robust attempt to contain, control and domesticate *jouissance*, to make it more manageable. This kind of 'dry' language is rather characteristic of the obsessive's discourse. When speaking about traumas for example, the form of expression in the obsessional, even in *written* language, is typically devoid of affect. The obsessive remembers difficult experiences, but the affective component of the trauma is typically repressed. In obsessional neurosis

> the trauma, instead of being forgotten, is deprived of its affective cathexis; so that what remains in consciousness is nothing but its ideational content, which is perfectly colourless and is judged to be unimportant (Freud, 1909: 196).

Ideational content are of course signifiers in Lacanian terms. We see above that the numbers, the signifiers, are listed repetitively, but in a language empty of passion, in a kind of 'dead' language more intent on imposing order, the comfort of a systematic frame, than in touching upon the troubling kernel of experience underlying such

defensive strategies. According to Lacan, the obsessional awaits the death of the Other, but it is the obsessional who is effectively dead:

> The obsessional's basic story is that he is entirely alienated in a master whose death he awaits, without knowing that he is already dead, in such a way that he can't make a move. Isn't it by making him realise who he is truly the prisoner and slave of, of the dead master, that you can hope for the solution? (Lacan, 1988: 217).

There is a certain kind of alienation in the numbers listed in the above text, and which despite all the critique, makes the obsessional a slave to the master. Nevertheless, the particularised manner in which the big Other is critiqued, and the way it lists numbers and facts is an indication that there *is* some importance assigned to these signifiers. These numbers can be seen as symptoms which fix the discourse and the circulation of desire. Alcorn points out that "symptoms are fixated verbal and bodily expressions that imprison desire within obsessional and ultimately stultifying forms of repetition" (p. 73). Thus, we can suggest that the repetitive listing and critique may indicate a way of organising *jouissance*, a pattern of enjoyment which can also be provoked in the reader. This *jouissance* also indicates the limitations of the obsessional type of critique for effecting any change. As Lacan (1975) states "the slave...is much too happy being a slave" (p. 287).

The strategy in question may have viable progressive political effects, but, as in the case of hysterical complaint, the defensiveness in question can result in a repetitive pattern which is more about the management of disturbing *jouissance* than a contribution to a robust and ongoing political resistance to racism. The domestication of *jouissance* may ultimately override a strategy of actually acting or doing something. Žižek (e.g. 2006) often refers to the obsessional's strategy of constant activity so as to ensure that nothing is actually changed, or done. Thus, just as we had resource to the hysteric discourse as creating fixity in a victimised type of complaint, we may claim that the obsessive discourse creates fixity in two ways. It creates paralysis in a) ambivalence and doubt; or b) a master-slave dialectic where the alienated obsessional conceals the dependence on the master.

8.5 Conclusion

In this chapter we have seen how *Gringo* engages in criticising racism and discrimination, and this criticism takes different forms. Three forms of critique were discussed; *critique in the form of jokes/humour, hysterical critique* and *obsessive critique.*

We can then state that there are various ways to be subversive. Gringo may potentially be subversive by

- taking on the position of the big Other and mocking ego-ideals and institutions from this perspective;

- using the same strategies which racists adopt and employing these strategies on the racists themselves. In other words, anti-racist strategies sometimes end up employing similar discursive strategies and indeed, similar patterns of libidinal economy to that of racism itself; and

- disclosing the contradictory and discriminatory practices of institutions, and questioning positions of authority.

However, the ability of Gringo to properly transcend what it aims to criticise is limited.

The *critique in joke form* largely provides a short-term kind of subversion in the *jouissance* that it enables. The critique of nationalists also includes a narcissistic affirmation of *Gringo* as anti-racist and in so doing it supplies an ideal non-racist identity, but stops short of surpassing the political system that it is locked into rivalrous antagonism with. Both the hysterical and the obsessive critique demonstrate a dependence on the Other which they attempt to critique, they covertly reveal the significance, perhaps even valorization of the Other; their resistance is in fact under the influence of the Other. In short, Gringo may be subversive, but this subversion is only a *temporary* one. Subversion works hand in hand with the stimulation and domestification of *jouissance* and hence rather than moving towards change, it risks engendering repetition and thus fixity.

9 Conclusions and discussion

In chapter 1, I reviewed theories in social psychology which have dealt with the issue of resistance to racism. This thesis has provided an alternative perspective on the problem of anti-racism by taking into account the ambivalent, undecided and the overdetermined nature of resistance. From this perspective, the social representations research which we examined over-emphasises 'agency', and the discourse analytic paradigm gives too much attention to discourse and language and neglects the extra-discursive element involved in resistance to racism. Not only do we need to incorporate the Symbolic (or the big Other) and the Imaginary, but crucially we require a notion of the Real, of *libidinal* economy, the affective part of group identity which is often the factor involved in ambivalent resistance processes. Thus, the main goal of this chapter is to argue that Lacanian/Freudian psychoanalysis needs to be taken seriously in not only the understanding of social psychology of social identities and discourse, but crucially also in the study of anti-racism and social change. I finish the chapter by discussing how change in the clinical psychoanalytic setting can give us clues about social change.

In chapter 2, I provided an overview of the socio-political context of *Gringo* magazine. The magazine had a well-intentioned objective to provide a counter-story, to make a change, to combat racism and renegotiate Swedishness. The conclusions of this research are that on the one hand, *Gringo* may have exposed a great deal of institutional discrimination. It possibly challenged a narcissistic relation to Swedishness, more specifically, it may have had an impact in bringing to the surface and slightly shaking up the fantasy of the Swedish language. On the other hand, however, the main function of the magazine was the *temporary* evocation of *jouissance*, and in this sense, rather than being an agent of change, it could be understood as a *support* of the existing social order.

In chapter 3, I argued that we can identify two uses of the Other in the social identity tradition. In the inter-group theory, the Other is quite clearly the out-group with whom the members of the in-group compare themselves. In the intra-group theory of self-categorisation, the Other is not very explicitly defined, but since it is assumed that as soon as the individual considers themselves as part of the group, ideologies about how

to act, what to think and say, influence his or her thought and behaviour, we can suggest that the Other here is exactly the in-group and its ideologies and cultural codes and standards. Thus, the ideology or cultural norms of the in-group mentioned above can be understood as dominant discourses, ego-ideals, which frame and limit the group member's thought and action.

Stuart Hall's approach is useful because not only does it take language seriously, but it also views wider cultural and discursive representations and signifiers as tools in categorisation processes. This suggests that he does not adopt any 'micro-sociological view' in the study of identity, representation and change. From his perspective we learned that what is viewed as outside us in social comparison processes, is in fact inherently part of us - the in-group is perceived from the perspective of the out-group. This already suggests that there cannot be any conclusive differentiation between groups. As psychoanalysis acknowledges, the other, out-groups, are instruments for the foundation and the extension of the ego. Hall also emphasises that we have already been represented by language and discourse before we represent ourselves, hence highlighting the Other who represents and 'fixes' us. His approach, moreover, adds significantly to SIT's suggestions about strategies for transcoding group images. He points out that the attempt to change previously devalued representations or social identities/categories is an inherently difficult task.

Consequently, the complex and ambivalent nature of socio-political resistance strategies against racism and exclusion needs to be recognised. Psychoanalytic concepts such as clinical resistance, symptom and 'the insistence of the signifier' add to our understanding of resistance to racism, and they demonstrate that social change strategies should not so easily be taken for granted or celebrated, but should rather be carefully examined for their complexity.

This is where Lacanian psychoanalysis can help us. The SIT paradigm tells us a great deal about the process of inter-group relations, identities and change, and Hall's focus on discourse demonstrates the importance of process, content, language and signification. However, the questions that remain - and which Hall perhaps points to when he states that there is more to identity than just representation - is *why*? Why do ideological discourses and norms have such power over subjects? Lacan is not only

useful, but fundamentally *needed* when speculating about these issues because he gives us some very crucial ideas about the *why* of identification and resistance.

9.1 Why do we need Lacan?

Coelho and Figueiredo (2003) discuss the major trends in psychology towards studying otherness in the constitution of self or the 'I'. They illustrate four simultaneously occurring levels of intersubjectivity and their philosophical roots: trans-subjective, traumatic, interpersonal and intra-psychic intersubjectivity. Although they discuss the psychoanalytic perspective, they fail to include Lacan's radical Otherness, that Otherness which is not equal to another human flesh and blood person (who may be seen as a copy of myself), but a Symbolic Other. Lacanian psychoanalysis goes beyond the other as an element of intersubjectivity; the level of analysis is not focused on self and other, but on self-other and Other. It postulates that we require an investigation of a third dimension in any study of intersubjectivity: the third being the domain of language and discourse, which for Lacan constitutes the unconscious. Thus, by the time we have factored the Other into our analyses we are engaging not only with the levels of subjectivity and intersubjectivity, but with the level of a trans-subjective social logic, namely that instantiated by the Other.

However, what is most distinctive about the Lacanian approach is that it draws attention to the *causative* function of lack. This helps us understand why it is that people conform to group ideologies, why they conform to the Other. If group ideologies or discourses did not come with a fantasy which promises the lack being covered over, the group would not have such an influence on the subject. The promise of *jouissance* is what libid.inally 'attaches' people to group norms which includes judgements about the appropriate way to think and behave: *jouissance* is the reason why people view themselves as belonging to the group. Hence, what is important to investigate is the issue of group mobilisation of *jouissance*. This implies that Lacanian psychoanalysis demonstrates that identities are not only a matter of content or process, but probably and most significantly, they are also about a libidinal relationship with the Other.

I criticised and re-interpreted the SIT paradigm using a Lacanian perspective. I argued that SIT and SCT need to be combined in order to account for both *Imaginary* relations

209

between groups, as well as the relations of these groups *with something which is beyond just any other group*, which is over and above these groups. In the inter-group context of Sweden, the category 'Swedish' is not any other out-group with which the 'immigrant' group for example compares itself: it is the big Other. This big Other as Swedishness is the point from which the immigrant category is judged and evaluated. Hence, renegotiation of the immigrant/*blatte* identity is always carried out in relation to the big Other as Swedishness. This suggests that the norms and values of both the immigrant in-group *and* the ideology of the Swedish out-group have psychological significance. However, the former is necessarily mediated by the latter. The attempt to obtain a positive identity means gaining recognition and approval from the big Other of Swedishness. *Gringo* never changes the out-group with which the *blatte* category is compared (a strategy which some minorities can adopt according to Social Identity Theory) and the dominant out-group, the Swedish group, is the group which is always used in social comparison strategies. This may demonstrate the significance of the big Other as Swedishness.

This research explored a newly emerging methodology which aims to move away from an individualistic use of psychoanalysis in the investigation of available social discourse by employing a discourse analysis which is in constant dialogue with key psychoanalytic concepts. Further, what became evident in this thesis is that methodologically, the relations to the big Other and the libidinal economy which representations help to reproduce or stabilise, cannot be adequately analysed if the focus is merely on the *content* of the text. This study points out the importance of effectively investigating the contradictions, gaps and the *forms* of a particular discourse. Although content analysis is necessary, when used on its own, it fails to allow for an adequate analytical insight into the effective functioning of the text. What I found in my analysis is that sometimes it is the content-form discrepancy which may indicate something about *jouissance*. For example, it is the way in which the *blatte* image is repeated and the passionate language which is used in relation to the image, which led me to question whether *blatte* is symbolised as a fetish object in *Gringo*.

9.2 Blatte represents the *objet a*

The 'social creativity' or the 'transcoding' strategies in *Gringo* were investigated in relation to the big Other of Swedish society. Contradictory images were found. On the one hand, the text engages in what Hall would call 'reversal of images'- where common images of the immigrant being 'different' or 'lazy/useless' are reversed and instead we find the 'ordinary' and the 'hero' image. These are Imaginary identifications with the lovable image - the image which is judged as respectable by the big Other. Thus, in order to even obtain some visibility, to even be seen, *one needs to pass via the ego-ideals of the big Other*. However, what is interesting is that the 'ordinary' image and the 'hero' image are in themselves quite contradictory. The 'ordinary' image is almost an assimilation strategy to make the immigrant 'blend' in with the Swedish group - make him or her 'same' as the Swede. Whereas the 'hero' image is one that aims to stand out, one that seeks to be *extra*-ordinary. Here, being 'ordinary' is not enough in order to be recognised by the Other and be judged as respectable. This leads to the odd logic that for the immigrant to even be granted visibility, he or she needs to stand out in order to be seen as normal. Nevertheless, because all these images represent decency, 'goodness', ambition, success, they could be perceived as conforming to the ego-ideals of the big Other. Hence, the strategy of 'reversing' stereotypes here means the desire to be who the Other wants the subject to be, to fulfil the Other's ideals, to 'normalise' the immigrant. This is problematic according to Alcorn (2002):

> The problem is that the 'normal' creation of human subjects causes social problems. Because the normal subject of society is produced by a submission to the demand of the Other, the normal subject is robbed of a flexible response to feeling states both within the self and within others (p. 51).

One can state that despite perhaps providing the possibility of being granted recognition and given a respectable representation or identity, the immigrant is alienated since this ideal image is coming from the Other; desire here is not the immigrant's, but the desire of the Other. This alienation as a result of identification with the ego-ideals of the big Other as Swedishness means that - despite attempting to depict an improved image of the immigrant – the text sometimes reproduces assumptions of the immigrant as different/other. Hence, the discourse which is mainly found in the section called *Swedes with a different background than typical Swedes* and which, in contrast to other parts in

Gringo, is in standard Swedish language, is the discourse of the Other as Swedishness *par excellence.* This identification with the ego-ideals of the out-group is problematic because it hinders the effectiveness of social creativity strategies, it reproduces 'difference'. This suggests that sometimes *forms of resistance exhibit an uncomfortable ambivalence, a complicity with the powers they intend to critique.*

This implies a challenge for *Gringo*: to represent the immigrant without the mediation of the discourse of the Other. There is perhaps an attempt to do that in the use of a transcoding strategy that tries to disrupt the stereotype from *within* by working on its *form* instead of content. The frequent use of humour in the discourse of stereotypes - both of the *blatte* and the *svenne* stereotypes - may be an attempt to challenge them by showing their absurdities and meaninglessness. However, the success of this strategy is undecided - one can never ultimately control how it will be received. For example, will it be taken as challenging or as affirming stereotypes? Indeed, as was found in the analysis of the responses to *Gringo*, readers both praised the magazine and criticised it for reproducing 'us and them' assumptions.

What we have seen in *Gringo* is the case of a type of resistance which is ambivalent. Much of the representations of the immigrant in this magazine allow the readers to both identify *with* and *against* the subject in question. One can understand this in many ways, but I have suggested that applying the notion of a resistance which is permeated by counter-resistance - a psychoanalytic type of resistance - may be useful in accounting for the way in which representations which are libid.inally charged hamper change.

This takes us to another strategy in *Gringo* which I have argued is not only a political one, but also one which is loaded with affect. This is the method which SIT and Hall would call 're-evaluation'. *Gringo* aims to re-evaluate a previously devalued, and almost tabooed, '*blatte*-category' into a more positive, respectable and acceptable one. Hence, the repeated use of the word *blatte* and the repeated use of the so called million-Swedish. Perhaps one can state that the attempt to make the *blatte*-word or *blatte*-Swedish positive is *Gringo's* effort to define immigrant identity on their own terms, rather than the terms of the big Other. As we saw in the responses to *Gringo*, this was received with strong resistance from the public, whereas for example the 'hero' and the 'ordinary' images were not much referred to in the comments. Thus, the latter images

which fit into the ego-ideal set of signifiers of the Swedish big Other are not problematised whereas the *blatte*/gangsta image which challenges these ego-ideals, are faced with passionate opposition. Nevertheless, one can question whether the re-evaluation of the *blatte* really is an attempt to be recognised on the terms of the immigrants themselves. After all, '*blatte*' is not a signifier that the immigrants have assigned to themselves. And of course, there is a fine line between the celebration of *blatte* and commercialisation of it. *Gringo* is, in spite of everything, a commercial magazine and one can argue that the *blatte* image is used in order to make the publication more commercially viable.

Hence, the question is: to what extent is this repeated use of the *blatte* signifier and *blatte*-Swedish a re-evaluation strategy and an effort to question the ideological stigma attached to *blatte*, as Alarcón (2008) has suggested? And to what extent is this signifier - if we consider it in relation to the big Other - a possible resistance to established ego-ideals? Tajfel emphasised an important aspect of social identity which is to retain a sense of being different to others. Thus, the image of *blatte* - an image which affirms difference and disavows sameness - may be a fetish symbol.

I have argued in this thesis that the oft repeated use of the *blatte*/suburb stereotype (more dominant in *Gringo* than the *svenne* stereotype) might in fact be a fetishised 'indulgence' of this representation. Even the wish to use the word '*blatte*', a socially tabooed word, a word which would not otherwise be accepted in mainstream public discourse, suggests that there might be a *jouissance* in the transgression of social rules and laws. However, it seems that for *Gringo*, the only way in which one can resist the discourse of the Other, the only way one can resist the ego-ideals of the Other and the threat of alienation in the signifier, is to over-value and fetishise the menacing *blatte*/suburb/gangsta image. This image ensures safety when facing the threat of sameness. What is interesting to note is that in Freud's case, the little boy fetishises an object in order to disavow *difference*. In *Gringo*, on the contrary, the fetish is maintained in order to disavow *sameness*. In Freud the fetish covers over difference to guarantee sameness, here the fetish as *blatte* covers over sameness to *guarantee difference*. However, in both cases, the fetish functions to protect a treasured, narcissistic quality, something that makes the subject in question special.

This suggests that the 'gangsta'/*blatte* image should be understood as being strongly associated to the rather alienating 'ordinary' and 'hero' images of the big Other. Given that they are deeply dependent on the desire of the Other, these latter images have the potential to create a lack. In other words these ego-ideals can create a subject castrated from its *jouissance*. Thus, 'lack' could be understood as the violence/alienation that comes with the identification with the ego-ideals of the big Other. Alternatively, it can be interpreted as the inability of the Swedish big Other to provide the immigrant with an esteemed, full identity. In any case, the fetish is needed to provide a fantasy of a full identity, of fullness and it is that which allows for *separation* from the big Other. Freud (1927) argues that the fetish "remains a token of triumph over the threat of castration and a protection against it" (p. 154). We could say then that *blatte is a triumph/signifier which attempts to cover over the lack,* and which is a symbol for *jouissance.* In other words, the *blatte* image is an attempt to represent the *objet a.* It is that which transgresses the ego-ideals, and which promises *jouissance.* Indeed, the text of *Gringo* signals to the *jouissance* involved in the use of the *blatte* word and the use of million Swedish - it signals to a *jouissance* in the transgression of Symbolic laws, the transgression of the Other's ideal. Hence, we can suggest that *blatte* as a resistance strategy leads to an impasse: it indicates towards change, because it challenges and refuses to accept the ego-ideals of the big Other. However, it also produces fixity because the de-valorised images of the *blatte* are reproduced, and more importantly, because the *blatte* signifier is invested with *jouissance.* Further, we cannot state that this is where *Gringo* is relieved from the sway of the big Other, because even when *blatte* is used as a fetish object in order to resist ego-ideals of Swedishness, it is *inherently dependent on what it is resisting.*

9.3 *Gringo's* ambivalent relation to Swedishness

The SIT paradigm and Stuart Hall both fail to account for the strategy of resistance to racism which confronts the dominant/majority group. Although we showed in chapter 1 that some research in social psychology has pointed out the way in which counter-discourses contest dominant representations and turn the attention towards those in power, these studies do not adequately account for the *ambivalence* in this process. This

ambivalence can properly be addressed if we incorporate the Real, Symbolic and the Imaginary in our analysis.

In *Gringo*, criticising Swedishness is a method which, rather than focusing on the stereotypes of the minority or the subordinate group, aims to bring about change through 'generalising' and 'stereotyping' the majority group and challenging the image that the majority has of itself. This strategy involves an effort to point out first, that Swedishness is not a permanent, essential identity given by nature, but a constructed representation, and second, that the narcissistic image of 'perfect' Swedishness is in fact deficient. In other words, this is a technique which aims to show the lack in the big Other. It is interesting that this is *intimately linked to the re-evaluation of the blatte identity*. The criticism of Swedishness in *Gringo* includes an attempt to make the *blatte* category acceptable. Not only is the *blatte*-fetish a transgression of the ego-ideals of the big Other, it is in fact also an attempt to simultaneously be part of and change these ideals of the Other, to almost 'force' the Other to include *blatte* as part of these ideals without changing the aspects of *blatte* which would usually be stigmatized, devalued and considered a threat to the Other. Hence, the re-evaluation of a stigmatized identity (a strategy which both SIT and Hall discuss) cannot be understood as being isolated from the wider socio-ideological context: it should be perceived as being in an intricate dialogue with the big Other. But for Gringo, wanting to be included in the Symbolic while keeping what is threatening to it, implies an impasse, a contradiction of being stuck in an impossible fantasy.

Despite the challenges to the big Other of Swedishness and the transgressions of the ego-ideals, a closer reading of *Gringo's* text reveals a much more ambivalent relationship to Swedishness. Although Swedishness as Symbolic and historical can be ridiculed or contested, there can nevertheless still be an identification kept in place at the level of the Imaginary or in terms of the organisation of (Real) *jouissance*. This indicates the importance in opening up our analysis of identity and resistance via recourse to the RSI. For example, when we discuss resistance, we may ask, 'resistance to which element of identification? Symbolic or Imaginary? Which aspect of identification is kept in place (and indeed made stronger)?' We are dealing here with a concurrent *resistance and conformity* to the Swedish big Other.

215

Nevertheless, perhaps the most interesting element of the ambivalent critique of Swedishness is the facet of humour. As Freud argues, we use humour when we want to criticise something which is not so easily challenged, due to, for example, the factor of social inhibitions. So we could assume that since Swedishness may be an entrenched ideology which is deep rooted and difficult to criticise openly (especially if we consider it as occupying the position of the big Other), humour or jokes are used in order to disguise the criticism. The humour in the discussion of Swedishness seems to have a very ambivalent function. It can work both to mock prevailing Swedish norms and values, to set up a critical distance from them, *and* to express a bond with, or evoke an identification with Swedishness. This kind of 'critical' humour – an affectionate means of poking fun at someone whose identity one somehow shares - is a very strong tool in holding communities together. Thus, rather than being a means of subverting group ideals, this is one way in which the members of the community in question bond with each other, a means through which they organise shared *jouissance*. If this is the case, the humour used in the transgression of Swedishness might work to strengthen the ideals and standards of Swedishness, rather than subvert them. One may claim that *Gringo* provided for its readers a transgressive *jouissance*, allowed a 'breathing' space from which the 'straightjacket' ideological structure could be temporarily suspended, but then lets people get on with their everyday lives. So not only has there not been any real changes in Swedishness, but this breathing space actually helps to affirm its nationalistic ideology.

9.4 Gringo disrupts the fantasy of Swedishness

The harsh responses to *Gringo's* challenge to the Swedish language, and the fact that there was such significant public debate regarding the place of *blatte*-Swedish, indicates that *Gringo did* have, if not exactly a subversive then a notable effect in the public imagination. Some writers, such as Ålund (1997) have pointed out that *blatte*-Swedish is viewed by society to be a problem and a threat to the Swedish language. This suggests how language can be a libidinal object and an object of identification. The responses to *Gringo* point to a fantasy which attempted to symbolise the Swedish language as a precious Thing, as the *objet a*, that desired object-cause in Swedes which is 'in them more than themselves'. Nevertheless, it is not just that *blatte*-Swedish is the

216

signifier which is viewed as dangerously threatening the *jouissance* of the Swedish community: *blatte*-Swedish also signifies the *jouissance involved in those who use it*, and it might be this *jouissance* which cannot be tolerated. In any case, *Gringo* by using *blatte*-Swedish and 'contaminating' the Swedish language is perceived to be a real 'threat' by some. Hence, if *Gringo* did manage to achieve only very little in Swedish society, it did at least manage to *raise to the surface* the fantasy which depicts the Swedish language as the *objet a*. Nevertheless, one can ponder whether this fantasy became even stronger with the advent of *Gringo* which could be made to represent the thief of *jouissance*. In other words, Gringo became the Other to the Other of the Swedish fantasy. 'Radio-Swedish' is a libidinal object which bonds a community to the Swedish Other, and Gringo, with its *blatte*-language became the threatening Other. Along these lines we can argue that Gringo, which represents and promotes the *blatte* identity by using and inventing a new language form, is then itself reliant on a big Other. The question to be posed then is whether an effective means of political resistance involves the creation of a new, alternative big Other, as a way of rivalling the standard Swedish big Other. However, we shall note that if this is the case, Gringo is itself based on a similar kind of fantasy to which it poses a threat.

This complex situation is then a form of divisive identity politics, which is the concern of Social Identity Theory. As I claimed in chapter 4, it is *jouissance* which is at stake in inter-group relations; in-group favouritism and out-group discrimination. In the case of this research, we could assume that the 'Swede' cannot tolerate the *jouissance* of '*blatte*'. However, as the hysterical form of critique in *Gringo* suggests, '*blatte*' may envy the *jouissance* of the 'Swede'.

9.5   Criticising *Gringo's* critique

We demonstrated that *Gringo's* text is not only about the problem of identities, the aim of *Gringo* is not only to re-negotiate what it means to be *blatte* or Swedish, but also to expose and criticise inequitable structures of power and to reveal discriminatory practices and racism. We could argue that this might be part of a social competition strategy; an attempt to attack power, racism and exclusion and to bring about change. Hence, *Gringo's* anti-racist approach might be praised at some level since it not only criticises 'extreme', marginal versions of racism, such as those that are practised by

217

Nazis or the overt nationalism of the SD party, it also recognises that modern racism works at a structural, institutional level and is a widespread phenomenon. We found that overall, *Gringo* engages in three different forms of critique which we could term humorous, hysterical and obsessive.

Humorous critique or critique in joke-form is important in inter-group relations - not only in the re-negotiation of stereotypes, but also in social comparison processes where it is used as a tool in out-group evaluation and in-group identification; in the construction of a community, a libidinal sense of belonging. However, humour is also a very ambiguous strategy and its subversive potential is ultimately undecided. Nevertheless, in the *jobcentre* section, using humour and impersonation, *Gringo* points out the perceived contradictions and hypocrisies of power or the big Other in such a way that allows for temporary subversion of the prevailing order of things, and perhaps also a temporary release of aggression against authority and institutions that are deemed unfair. The same could be said about the jokes used in the mockery of the Sweden democrat party. Interestingly however, in these jokes, *Gringo* re-deploys similar denigrating discursive strategies, the libidinal economy, patterns of enjoyment as those of racists (denigration mockery of a somehow inferior other). We may question the effectiveness of an anti-racism which uses similar strategies as those of racists. Furthermore, in relation to the jokes against the SD party, we could just as well assume that there is an attempt by *Gringo* (or readers) to project a respectable narcissistic image of itself as anti-racist in the gaze of the Other. All this means that in our analysis of tendentious jokes, *we need to pay attention to the overdetermined motivations of anti-racist jokes*, the fact, for example, that they may also be encouraged by producing a likeable image in the gaze of the Other than simply contesting racism.

Moreover, the same argument made about the humour used in the discourse of Swedishness can be repeated here: the jokes in the text of *Gringo* might enable a temporary non-conformity and offence against power, and also a moment of *jouissance* for readers, but this might in fact strengthen the power structure rather than properly subvert it. So the question is whether the jokes in *Gringo* actually *support what they intend to subvert*. Perhaps the Swedish Symbolic field, or the ideological structure of similar societies *need* magazines like *Gringo*, which enable a space in which power can

218

temporarily be subverted and where *jouissance* can momentarily be experienced. As argued earlier, given ideological structures are supported by transgressive *jouissance*.

Contrary to Adami's claim that *Gringo* is not about the complaint of *blackheads* (see chapter 2), chapter 8 demonstrated that a hysterical form of discourse, one which is structured by complaint, is manifested in the magazine. Hysterical critique may indeed be useful in pointing out contradictions and in questioning power; pointing out the lack in the big Other. However, this type of resistance does more than simply problematise the big Other. The hysteric is someone who wants to maintain an unsatisfied desire. This type of critique in *Gringo* does a similar kind of thing; there is an apparent relishing of the disempowered position, almost a masochistic enjoyment in this portrayal, as if this type of representation is gratifying a need to continuing being oppressed. The hysteric continually makes critique, points out the inadequacies of the master, or the system of knowledge, so they sometimes acquire a type of heroic status for this unending critique. We have here a situation of the secondary gain of political complaint. However, the problem is that this critique is not always translated into action, because it engenders a certain amount of enjoyment – one can very well enjoy parading one's woundedness. Therefore it is less a case of constructive critique that leads to something being repaired, improved upon, but more a case of a stasis of suffering, a stasis of complaint that must be maintained, because the critique makes a lack which propels desire. The hysteric wants to maintain lack, to keep desire going, to be desirable to others – they do not want desire to be sated, to come to an end. Therefore there is something self-perpetuating about the critiques of the hysterical subject.

In the appeal addressed to the Other, the hysteric is asking for answers, for knowledge. This knowledge rather than relieving the hysteric of its suffering or providing solutions, on the contrary objectifies the hysteric's identity: the knowledge produced by the Other creates the hysteric as an alienated subject (Verhaeghe, 2002).

Recognising that social change efforts may sometimes be permeated by a hysterical discourse is important because it implies that social competition strategies might also have functions other than social change. Thus, Social Identity Theory needs to include an illustration of other psychological functions that social competition strategies might have apart from social transformation. From psychoanalysis we learn that when

219

inequalities are considered unfair, protestations and revolutions might have a hysterical character, and as Lacan (2007) argued, what protests are really asking for is not change, but another master. Thus although protests against the big Other may sometimes appear as if we are dealing with an act of resistance, psychoanalytic theory tells us that this kind of objection can express a neurotic relation in which the big Other is still at the centre of the neurotic's mental structure: this kind of hysterical critique still relies on the big Other in the framing of his/her life. As Fink (1999b) states, "the revolutionary was, in fact, no more than a rebel against a very specific law, and as such utterly and completely dependent upon that which he or she rebelled against" (p. 211). These arguments provide a different way to view claims which appear to criticise racism (or any other forms of injustice for that matter). Critique is not always an empowering exercise, but may in fact help to maintain the prevailing order of things, it may enable 'fixity' in the *jouissance* which is facilitated by the 'complaint/victim' identity, rather than permit any real change. The *jouissance* is in fact the truth of this kind of hysterical critique: "the truth will appear in the hysteric's complaint and in her symptom, which are addressed to the Other, a complaint that means that she will become plaintive, a plaintiff" (Quackelbeen et al.. 1994).

In the form of critique which I have called 'obsessional', *Gringo* may appear to abandon a hysterical form of discourse and ostensibly move beyond pathos, a melodramatic, victimised type of language, and discard a dependency on the Other. Although this may indeed be a politically progressive strategy, we noted in fact an ambivalence in relation to the Other, typical of the obsessive. Rather than evidencing a liberation from the desire of the Other, this obsessive discourse which at times projects a 'rebellious' image might actually still be dependent on what it tries to rebel against. This is similar to the image of *blatte* as revolt against ego-ideals of the Other. These rebellious images are analogous to the clinical cases which Fink (1999a) discusses. These analysands

> would sooner live their whole lives in opposition to the demands made and the ideals fostered by the parental Other than let anything they do serve that Other. Thus, all of their behaviour is, in some sense, a protest: It secretly or not so secretly defies the Other's wishes. Consciously, of course, they may believe there are all sorts of reasons for their behaviour that have nothing to do with their parents or with rebellion against social ideals. Nevertheless, they have made themselves into living symbols of protest (ibid.: 34).

This leads to a challenge for *Gringo* or for any other 'social change' attempts: how can power be criticised and challenged without falling into a hysterical, or obsessive type of discourse which may have counter-productive effects? This is not to adopt a fatalistic position, or to maintain that resistance to racism is impossible; it is not to advocate a deterministic theory. Rather, I am suggesting an alternative Lacanian approach which helps us develop and complexify our understanding of resistance to racism. From a psychoanalytic perspective real change involves a thorough separation from the desire of the Other and the confrontation with the *objet a*.

9.6 Traversing the fantasy: changing social categories/identities and social critique

Both SIT's proposals about the strategies that those within denigrated groups can adopt to effect change and Hall's theory regarding the alteration of representation are largely focused on the issue of knowledge or representation of social categories. The emphasis is on how new discourses, new ways of speaking or representing categories can be effective in creating new identities and new social realities. In other words, these strategies are to a great extent still working on the Symbolic and Imaginary levels. This is, as Alcorn (2002) points out, to start at the wrong place. He maintains that "real change requires not the discursive production of new knowledge [as discourse] but as certain mobility in desire, a shift in the *objet a*" (p. 98). Psychoanalysis has taught us that change in meaning and signification needs to be accompanied by change in libidinal economy. As Dean (2006b) claims the issue is our relation to enjoyment and "how we can escape (traverse) the fantasies that provide it, even as we acknowledge enjoyment as an irreducible component of what it is to be human" (p. 43).

Clinical psychoanalysis involves investigating the position of the subject in relation to his/her Symbolic relationships; it means inspecting what the subject is saying in relation to the desire of the Other. The Lacanian perspective suggests that in the clinical setting, change involves the disruption of the 'fundamental fantasy', a 'traversing' of this fantasy. This entails realising that there is nothing behind fantasy, that fantasy is concealing this 'nothing'. This is when we identify with the symptom and recognise the truth of *jouissance*. To "'identify with the symptom' means to recognize in the

'excesses', in the disruptions of the 'normal' way of things, the key offering us access to its true functioning" (Žižek, 1989: 128). This means

> inventing ways in which to hit the real, upset the repetition it engenders, dialectize the isolated Thing, and shake up the fundamental fantasy in which the subject constitutes him or herself in relation to the cause (Fink, 1999b: 92).

Fink argues that the traversing of the fundamental fantasy implies that the subject endures *yet another separation*, a separation from the pressure of the desire of the Other: The subject "is at least momentarily out of discourse, split off from discourse: free from the weight of the Other" (ibid.: 66). The subject attempts to move beyond a demand for recognition and love from the Other; the attitude towards castration and *jouissance* is changed and the lost object is given up. Instead, the subject is identified with the drive, with *jouissance*, but a change happens in the subject's relation to the partial object that promises this *jouissance*, an alteration occurs in the relation to the *object a*. Lacan implies that the analyst discourse is the one most fruitful for change:

> In this discourse, the person acting as analyst (who need not be an analyst) offers subjects a reading of their own signifiers of desire, at a moment when they are present in the subject's own discourse but not in the subject's conscious mind.....subjects discover their own desire as a meaning that has relations to a wider world of signification (Alcorn, 2002: 87)

The implication of this is that a social change strategy would recognise the desire and ego-ideals of the big Other, and it would acknowledge that a renegotiation of the immigrant identity would not mean conformity to the alienating desire of the big Other. However, we saw that in *Gringo*, that there *is* an effort to represent the immigrant without complying with the desire of the big Other. This effort includes re-evaluating, 're-claiming' the *blatte* category. Nevertheless, from a psychoanalytic perspective we can recognise that the attempt to re-evaluate a previously 'negative' identity into a positive one, can have counter-productive effects. This means in fact that we are here dealing less with a re-evaluation of the *blatte* category and more with its fetishisation. What needs to be done is the disruption of the organisation of the fantasy; shaking the fantasy of the *blatte* image as *objet a*. *Blatte* that has become a Symbolic object of desire needs to become less fixated. As it is now, the fantasy of *blatte*, rather than being 'freed' from the desire of the Other as Swedishness, is in fact inherently related to it,

because *blatte* fundamentally *depends* on what it transgresses. As Glynos (2003) implies, freedom involves giving up on overpowering ideals and desires:

> there is a class of desires the abandonment of which would indeed result in an increase in freedom: giving up one's desires does make one more free if they are ones to which the subject is attached through self-transgressive enjoyment (p. 18).

Hence, real change does not involve *opposition* to the desire of the Other (which the *blatte* signifier seems to be doing) but *separation* from it. The use of blatte to create a new big Other would also from this perspective be ineffective, since it too would rely on a rigid fantasy.

This implies that we take responsibility for the enjoyment we take in *blatte*: "our only way is to confront [enjoyment] and take responsibility for it" (Dean, 2006b: 45) because we cannot once and for all get rid of it. Dean argues that facing up to *jouissance* implies a dislocation of our position which implies "that we refuse to accept Imaginary and Symbolic reassurance and undergo subjective destitution" (p.44). This suggests that to change social constructions, it is not enough to use language. What is required is the withdrawal of desire from representations, which is a painful process. Obviously change of this sort which deals with attachments that are strongly held involves an experience of loss and mourning:

> Because people form libidinal investments in linguistic constructions, optimum flexibility in discourse use requires painful acts of libidinal disinvestment that analysts describe as mourning (Alcorn, 2002: 110).

Gringo attempts to point out the arbitrariness of all social categories, the contingency and socially constructed nature of identities. However, as I have tried to demonstrate in this thesis, a deeper analysis of the text reveals that this is in fact a very ambivalent process. In relation to Swedishness, the 'bringing down to earth' which *Gringo* is engaged in, could be said to be an attempt to disrupt the fantasy which holds Swedish identity together, by pointing out the gaps in the fantasy. However, we saw that this can still evoke Imaginary or Real identification with the signifier of Swedishness. There is still a *jouissance* involved in the national bond with Swedishness: there is still an idealisation of Swedishness. Pointing out the lack is perhaps a start, but what is more important and more difficult is the disruption of the fantasy of the signifier of

Swedishness and the removal of *jouissance* from it. *Gringo's* attempt to do this is still very ambivalent although it may be more successful in relation to the Swedish language. The affective, passionate reactions to Gringo indicate that we are here dealing with something very Real, which suggests that if true change is to take place, the focus should be on the Swedish consciousness itself, which means that there needs to be a change in this Real, libidinal element of the Swedish fantasy, which cannot happen without a process of mourning.

Similar arguments can be made regarding *Gringo's* attempts at social critique. Although the humour used in relation to the critique of institutions very effectively challenges their position of authority, eventually, all they manage to do is evoke temporary *jouissance*. If the critique of the SD party is not much more than an identification with the gaze of an approving big Other as anti-racist discourse, then again its success is questionable. *Gringo* also needs to eliminate the hysterisation of its critique. In the clinical setting the removal of the hysterical critique means a changed attitude in relation to the Other, an attitude of "'not' it happened to me', or 'they did this to me', or 'Fate had it in store for me' but 'I was, 'I did, 'I saw, 'I cried out'" (Fink, 1999b: 62). This means assuming responsibility for the *jouissance* in the hysterical social critique and realising that the 'immigrant' or '*blatte*' has not been deprived of *jouissance*, as something that immigrants can get back. It also means acknowledging that the immigrant can never achieve a full identity with itself; we cannot 're-claim' *blatte*. A possible successful approach would be to shake up the fantasy that assumes that if only the racist societal structure would be abolished, the immigrant will finally, in Žižek's (2005: 251) words, "realise their human potential". This is because an ideal identity is never possible anyway, and there must be a realisation that "we *never had* what we were supposed to have lost" (ibid.: p. 252, emphasis in original). This involves facing the Real, facing impossibility, and hence it requires "an ethics of confrontation with an impossible, traumatic kernel not covered by any *ideal*" (ibid.: 259, emphasis in original).

It should be pointed out though that these conclusions are not meant as a means of distracting attention away from very real political disparities and inequalities in society. Racism does exist; not all social and economic resources are fairly distributed, and

immigrants are typically marginalized and treated in prejudiced ways. This argument is not against attempted political action, nor is it against the important work of taking to task unjust and oppressive social structures. It rather points to how resistance attempts often are unwittingly complicit in that which they are trying to critique, caught for example, in hysterical types of complaint, entangled in the *jouissance* position of an enjoyed victimhood.

We can summarise what the analysed versions of *Gringo* managed to accomplish:

- With the use of *blatte*-Swedish and its challenge of Swedishness, it managed to awaken the fantasy in which the Swedish language is posed as the *objet a* and *momentarily* disrupt it.

- In its transgression of Swedishness and critique of powerful institutions and the SD party, it uncovered the contradictions in power and racism, and it posed a strong challenge to established authority. Nevertheless, the question that can be left open is whether the chief function of *Gringo* was the *momentary* stimulation of *jouissance*.

Gringo was a magazine that not only transgressed the Swedish Symbolic, linguistic and ideological rules and laws, but it is also one which resisted accepted journalistic norms. It presented itself as anomalous to mainstream journalism in Sweden. As the chief editor stated himself: "*Gringo* is a backlash" (*Gringo* 13). One can also suggest that perhaps *Gringo* magazine itself acts as the *excess* of the mainstream, coherent discourse of the big Other, which represents and reproduces ego-ideals. In this sense, *Gringo's* resistance can be understood as the ways in which it allowed for a space where castrated *jouissance* could temporarily be re-instated. Indeed, one might even go so far as to suggest that *Gringo* signifies the 'perverse' repressed of the Swedish conventional media. The unfortunate consequences of this is that – as psychoanalysis warns us – perversion is often more than anything else an attempt to instantiate the law. "In perversion the subject struggles to bring the law into being" (Fink, 1999a: 165). We could state that as *Gringo* gradually fell there was a re-installation of the law. For example, the new chief editor of the new version of *Gringo* claimed that he had aimed to tone down the use of '*blatte*' and '*svenne*' (Schori, 2008b) and that *blatte*-Swedish is no longer used (Vela-Zavala, 2008). These changes and the fact that the new chief

editor also resigned in June 2009 - which may lead to the final downfall for *Gringo* - can be viewed as the repression of *Gringo's* excessive *jouissance*; the re-institution of the law prohibiting the extravagant *jouissance* which the magazine took part in stimulating.

10 References

Adorno, T.W., Fenkel-Brunswik, E., Levinson, D.J., and Stanford, R.N. (1950) *The Authoritarian Personality*. New York: Harper.

Alcorn, M.W. (1994) The Subject of Discourse. In Bracher, M., Alcorn, M.W., Corthell, R.J. and Massardier-Kenney, F. (eds.) *Lacanian Theory of Discourse: Subject, structure and society*. New York: New York University Press.

Alcorn, M.W. (2002) Changing the Subject in English Class: Discourse and the Constructions of Desire. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press.

Andersson, R. (2002) Boendesegregation och etniska hierarkier. In Dahlstedt, M. and Lindberg, I. (eds.) *Det slutna folkhemmet: Om etniska klyftor och blågul självbild*. Stockholm: Agora.

Alarcón Alanes, P.A. (2008) Konturer av motstånd: Identitet, subjektivitet och språk i tidningen Gringo. *Nordicom-Information*, 30(1), 55-66.

Ålund, A. (1997) *Multikultiungdom, kön, etnicitet, identitet*. Lund: Studentliteratur.

Ålund, A. and Schierup, C.U. (1991) *Paradoxes of Multiculturalism*. Aldershot: Avebury.

Asp, K. (2002) *Integrationsbilder: Medier och allmänhet om integrationen*. Norrköping: Integrationsverket.

Augoustinos, M., Tuffin, K., and Rapley, M. (1999) Genocide or a Failure to Gel? Racism, history and nationalism in Australian talk. *Discourse & Society*, 10, 351-378.

Bailey, O., Cammaerts, B. and Carpentier, N. (2008) *Understanding Alternative Media*, Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Bhabha, H.K. (2004) *The Location of Culture*. London and New York: Routledge.

Billig, M. (1985) Prejudice, Categorisation and Particularisation: From a perceptual to a rhetorical approach. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 15, 79-103.

Billig, (1996) Remembering the Particular Background of Social Identity Theory. In Robinson, W.P (ed.) *Social Groups and Identities: Developing the legacy of Henri Tajfel*. Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann.

Billig, M. (1997) Rhetorical and Discursive Analysis: How families talk about the Royal Family. In Hayes, N. (ed.) *Introduction to Qualitative Methods*. Sussex: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Billig, M. (2002) Henri Tajfel's 'Cognitive Aspects of Prejudice' and the Psychology of Bigotry. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 41, 171-188.

Billig, M. (2005) Laughter and Ridicule: Towards a social critique of humour. London: Sage.

Billig, M. (2006) Lacan's Misuse of Psychology. *Theory, Culture and Society*, 23(4), 1-26.

Blackman, L. And Walkerdine, V. (2001) *Mass Hysteria: Critical psychology and media studies*. Houndmills: Palgrave.

Bracher, M. (1993) Lacan Discourse and Social Change: A psychoanalytic cultural criticism. New York: Cornell University Press.

Bracher, M. (1994) On the Psychological and Social Functions of Language: Lacan's theory of the four discourses. In Bracher, M., Alcorn, M.W., Corthell, R. and Massardier-Kennedy, F. (eds.) *Lacanian Theory of Discourse: Subject, structure and society.* New York: New York University Press.

Breakwell, G. (1986) *Coping with Threatened Identities.* London: Methuen.

Bredström, A. (2003) Maskulinitet och kamp om nationella arenor: Reflektioner kring bilden av 'invandrarkillar' i Svensk media. In Los Reyes de, P., Molina, I. and Mulinari, D. (eds.) *Maktens (o)lika förklädnader: Kön, klass och etnicitet i det postkoloniala Sverige.* Stockholm: Atlas.

Bredström, A. and Dahlstedt, M. (2002) 'Folkhemsrap': Motstånd och 'anständighet' i svensk hiphop", *THEMES: Occasional Papers and Reprints on Ethnic Studies,* [7].

Brown, R. (2000) Social Identity Theory: Past achievements, current problems and future challenges. *European Journal of Social Psychology,* 30(6), 745-748.

Brown, S.D. and Lunt, P. (2002) A Genealogy of the Social Identity Tradition: Deleuze and Guattari and social psychology. *British Journal of Social Psychology,* 41: 1-23.

Brubaker, R. and Cooper, F. (2000) Beyond "Identity". *Theory and Society,* 29, 1-47.

Brune,Y. (2004) *Nyheter från gränsen. Tre studier om Svensk journalistik om "invandrare", flyktingar och rasistiskt våld.* Göteborg: Instutitionen för journalistik och masskommunikation, Göteborgs universitet.

Bulhan, H.A.B. (1985) *Frantz Fanon and the Psychology of Oppression.* New York and London: Plenum Press.

Butler, J. (1993) *Bodies that Matter.* London: Routledge.

Catomeris, C. (2002) Det svartvita tankandet. In Dahlstedt, M. and Lindberg, I. (eds.) *Det slutna folkhemmet: Om etniska klyftor och blågul självbild.* Stockholm: Agora.

Camauer, L (2006) Medarbetare med utländsk bakrund och majoritetsmediers diskrimineringsmekanismer. In Camauer, L. and Nohrstedt, S.A. (eds.) *Mediernas Vi och Dom: Mediernas betydelse för den strukturella diskrimineringen.* Statens Offentliga Utredningar, 21.

Campbell, J. (2000). Arguing with the Phallus: Feminist, queer and postcolonial theory a psychoanalytic contribution. London & New York: Zed Books.

Chantler, K. (2007) Border Crossings: Nationhood, gender, culture and violence. *International Journal of Critical Psychology,* 20, 138-166.

Chiesa, L. (2007). *Subjectivity and Otherness: A Philosophical reading of Lacan.* Cambridge MA: Cambridge University Press.

Christensen, C. (2008) Defending, Representing or Branding? *Gringo* Magazine and Swedish Multiculturalism. In Christensen, M and Erdogan, N. (eds.) *Shifting Landscapes: Film and media in European context.* Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Press.

Clark, K. and Clark, M. (1939) The Development of Consciousness of Self and the Emergence of Racial Identification in Negro Preschool Children. *Journal of Social Psychology*, 10, 591-599.

Clarke, S. (2003) *Social Theory, Psychoanalysis and Racism*. Houndmills, New York: Palgrave.

Coelho, N.E. and Figueiredo, L.C. (2003) Patterns of Intersubjectivity in the Constitution of Subjectivity: Dimensions of Otherness. *Culture and Psychology*, 9(3), 193-208.

Condor, S. (1996) Social Identity and Time. In Robinson, W.P. (ed.) *Social Groups and Identities: Developing the legacy of Henri Tajfel*. Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann.

Condor, S. (2006) Representing, Resisting and Reproducing Ethnic Nationalism: Official UK Labour Party representations of 'multicultural Britain'. Paper presented in *VIII International Conference on Social Representations*, Rome, August 30, 2006. Available at: http://www.psych.lancs.ac.uk/people/SusanCondor.html [Accessed May 2009].

Cowie, E. (1997) *Representing the Woman: Cinema and psychoanalysis*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Dahlstedt, M. (2001) Utanförskapets tysta mostånd – 'Politiskt passiva invandrare' som prolematisk problembild. *Centrum för etnicitets- och urbanstudier*. [internet] Available at: http://www.isv.liu.se/content/1/c6/13/24/10/THEMES112002.pdf [Accessed June 2008].

Dahlstedt, M. (2005) Den massmediala förortsdjungeln: representationer av svenska förortsmiljöer. *Tema etnicitet* [internet]. Available at: http://www.nordicom.gu.se/common/publ_pdf/145_015-030.pdf [Accessed May 2007].

Dahlstedt, M. and Lindberg, I. (2002) Inledning: Det slutna folkhemmet. In Dahlstedt, M. and Lindberg (eds.) *Det slutna folkhemmet: Om etniska klyftor och blågul självbild*. Stockholm: Agora.

Daly, G. (1999) Ideology and its Paradoxes: Dimensions of fantasy and enjoyment. *Journal of Political Ideologies*, 4(2), 219-238.

Dean, J. (2006a) Why Žižek for Political Theory? *International Journal of Žižek Studies*, 1(1), 18-32.

Dean, J. (2006b) *Žižek's Politics*. London: Routledge.

Dixon J. and Durrheim K. (2000) Displacing Place-identity: A discursive approach to locating self and other. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 39: 1, 27-44.

Dixon, J., Foster, D.H., Durrheim, K. and Wilbraham, L. (1994) Discourse and the Politics of Space in South Africa. *Discourse and Society* 5: 3.

Dollard, J., Doob, L.W., Miller, N.E., Mowrer, O.H., and Sears, R.R. (1939) *Frustration and Aggression*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Dor, J. (1998) Introduction to the Readings of Lacan: The unconscious structured like a language. New York: Other Press.

Duncan, G.A. (2001) Black Youth, Ethics, and the Politics of Respectability in Psychological Research. *International Journal of Critical Psychology*, 15, 85-103.

Duveen, G. (2001) Representations, Identities and Resistance. In Deaux, K. and Philogene, G. *Representations of the Social*. Oxford: Blackwells.

Eagleton, T. (1991) *Ideology: An introduction*. London: Verso.

Edwards, D. (1998) The Relevant Thing about Her: Social identity categories in use. In C. Antaki and S. Widdicombe (eds.) *Identities in Talk*. London: Sage.

Ekberg, J. (2000) Invandring och befolkningsutveckling, In *Hemort Sverige*. Norrkoping: Integrationsverket.

Emler, N. and Hopkins, N. (1990) Reputation, Social Identity and the Self. In Abrams, D. and Hogg, M.A. (eds.) *Social Identity Theory: Constructive and critical advances*. Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf.

Evans, D. (1996) *An Introductory Dictionary of Lacanian Psychoanalysis*. Routledge: London and New York.

Fairclough, N. (1989) *Language and Power*. London: Longman.

Fairclough, N. (1992) Intertextuality in Critical Discourse, Analysis. *Linguistics and Education*, 4(3-4), 269-293.

Fairclough, N. (1995) *Critical Discourse Analysis*. Boston: Addison Wesley.

Fanon, F. (1986) [1952] *Black Skin, White Masks*. London: Pluto.

Fanon, F. (1990) [1963] *The Wretched of the Earth*. London: Penguin.

Farr, R. (1996) The Roots of Modern Social Psychology, 1872-1954. Cambridge MA: Blackwell.

Festinger, L. (1954) A theory of Social Comparison Processes, *Human Relations*, 7, 117-140.

Fine, M. and Sirin, S.R. (2007) Theorizing Hyphenated Selves: Researching youth development in and across contentious political contexts. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 1(1), 16-38.

Fink, B. (1999a) A Clinical Introduction to Lacanian Psychoanalysis: Theory and technique. London: Harvard University Press .

Fink, B. (1999b) *The Lacanian Subject: Between language and jouissance*. Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press.

Fink, B. (2003) The Subject and the Other's Desire. In Žižek, S. (ed.) *Jacques Lacan: Critical evaluations in cultural theory*. London: Routledge.

Fink, B. (2004) *Lacan to the Letter: Reading Ecrits closely*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Finlayson, A. (1998) Psychology, Psychoanalysis and Theories of Nationalism. *Nations and Nationalism*, 4:2, 145-62.

Foster, D. (2004) Liberation Psychology. In Ratele, K., Duncan, N., Hook, D., Collins, A., Kiguwa, P. and Mkhize, N. (eds.) *Self, Community and Psychology*. Cape Town: University of Cape Town Press.

Foucault, M. (1981) The Order of Discourse. In Young, R. (ed.) *Untying the Text: A Post-structural anthology*. Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Freire, P. (2005[1974]) *Education for Critical Consciousness*. London: Continuum.

Freud, S. (1905) Fragment of an Analysis of a Case of Hysteria. *Standard Edition of the Complete Works of Sigmund Freud*. Volume 7. London: Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psychoanalysis.

Freud, S. (1909) Notes Upon a Case of Obsessional Neurosis. *Standard Edition of the Complete Works of Sigmund Freud*. Volume 10. London: Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psychoanalysis.

Freud, S. (1915a) Repression. *Standard Edition of the Complete Works of Sigmund Freud*. Volume 14. London: Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psychoanalysis.

Freud, S. (1915b) The Unconscious. *Standard Edition of the Complete Works of Sigmund Freud*. Volume 14. London: Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psychoanalysis.

Freud, S. (1919) The 'Uncanny'. *Standard Edition of The Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*. Volume 17. London: Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psychoanalysis.

Freud, S. (1925) Negation. *Standard Edition of The Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*. Volume 19. London: Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psychoanalysis.

Freud, S. (1927) Fetishism. *Standard Edition of The Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*. Volume 21. London: Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psychoanalysis.

Freud, S. (1937) Constructions in Analysis. *Standard Edition of The Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*. Volume 23. London: Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psychoanalysis.

Freud, S. (1955a) Beyond the Pleasure Principle. *Standard Edition of the Complete Works of Sigmund Freud*. Volume 13. London: Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psychoanalysis.

Freud, S. (1955b) Totem and Taboo: Resemblances between the mental lives of savages and neurotics. *Standard Edition of the Complete Works of Sigmund Freud*. Volume 13. London: Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psychoanalysis.

Freud, S. (1957) Mourning and Melancholia. *Standard Edition of the Complete Works of Sigmund Freud*. Volume 14. London: Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psychoanalysis.

Freud, S. (1959) Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego. New York: Norton & Company. .

Freud, S. (1960) *Jokes and Their Relation to the Unconscious*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Freud (1997) *The Interpretation of Dreams*. Hertfordshire: Wordsworth.

Frosh, S. (1989) Psychoanalysis and Psychology: Minding the gap. London: Macmillan.

Frosh, S. (1997) *For and Against Psychoanalysis*. London: Routledge.

Frosh, S. (2002) Enjoyment, Bigotry, Discourse and Cognition. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 41, 189-193.

Frosh, S. (2003) *Key Concepts in Psychoanalysis*. New York: New York University Press.

Frosh, S. (2008) On Negative Critique: A reply. *Psychoanalysis, Culture and Society*, 13 (4), 416-422.

Frosh, S., Phoenix, A. and Pattman, R. (2003) Taking a Stand: Using psychoanalysis to explore the positioning of subjects in discourse. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 42, 39-53.

Georgaca, E. (2005) Lacanian Psychoanalysis and the Subject of Social Constructionist Psychology: Analysing subjectivity in talk. *International Journal of Critical Psychology*, 14, 74-94.

Gergely, T. (2005) Intervjuer: Tre fragor till Zanyar Adami. *Internationella biblioteket*, [internet] 15 April. Available at: http://www.interbib.se/default.asp?id=14097&ptid [Accessed November 2007].

Gill, R. (1996) Discourse analysis: Practical implementation. In Richardson, J.T.E. (ed.) *Handbook of Qualitative Research Methods for Psychology and the Social Sciences*. Leicester: BPS Books.

Gilroy, P. (2004) After Empire: Melancholia or convivial culture? London: Routledge.

Glaser, B.G. and Strauss, A. (1967) *Discovery of Grounded Theory. Strategies for qualitative research*. Hawthorne, N.Y: Aldine de Gruyter.

Glowinski,H., Marks, Z.M. and Murphy, S. (eds.) (2001) *A compendium of Lacanian Terms*. London and New York: Free Association Books.

Glynos, J. (2001) The Grip of Ideology: A Lacanian approach to the theory of ideology. *Journal of Political Ideologies*, 6(2), 191-214.

Glynos, J. (2003) Self-Transgression and Freedom. Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy, 6:2, 1.

Glynos, J. and Stavrakakis, Y. (2003) Encounters of the Real Kind. *Journal of Lacanian Studies*, 1(1), 110-128.

Glynos, J. and Stavrakakis, Y. (2008) Lacan and Political Subjectivity: Fantasy and enjoyment in psychoanalysis and political theory. *Subjectivity*, 24, 256-274.

Gough, B. (2004) Psychoanalysis as a Resource for Understanding Emotional Ruptures in the Text: The case of defensive masculinities. *British Journal of Social psychology*, 43, 245-267.

Grigg, R. (2001) Signifier. In Glowinski, H., Marks, Z.M. and Murphy, S. (eds.) *A Compendium of Lacanian Terms*. London and New York: Free Association Books.

Gross, E. (1990). *Jacques Lacan: A feminist introduction*. London and New York: Routledge.

Hall, S. (1977) Culture, the Media and the "Ideological Effect". In Curran, J., Gurevitch, M. and Woollacott, J. (eds.) *Mass communication and Society*. London: The Open University Press.

Hall, S. (1980) Recent Developments in Theories of Language and Ideology: A critical note. In *Culture, Media, Language: Working papers in cultural studies, 1972-79*. London: Unwin Hyman.

Hall, S. (1981) The Whites of Their Eyes: Racist ideologies and the media. In Bridges, G. and Brunt, R. (eds.) *Silver Linings*. London Lawrence & Wishart.

Hall, S. (1991) Old and New Identities, Old and New Ethnicities. In King, A.D.(ed.) *Culture, Globalisation and the World system: Contemporary positions for the representation of identity*. London: Macmillan.

Hall, S. (1992a) Race, culture, and communications. *Rethinking Marxism*, 5(1), 10-18.

Hall, S. (1992b) The Question of Cultural Identity. In Hall, S., Held, D. and McGrew, T. (eds.) *Modernity and its Futures*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Hall, S. (1995) Fantasy, Identity, Politics. In Carter, E., Donald, N. Squires, J. (eds.) *Cultural Remix: Theories of politics and the popular*. London: Lawrence & Wishart.

Hall, S. (1996a) Who Needs Identity? In S. Hall, and Du Gay, P. (eds.) *Questions of Cultural Identity*. London: Sage.

Hall, S. (1996b) Racist Ideologies and the Media. In Marris, P. And Thornham, S. *Media Studies: A reader*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Hall, S. (1997) The Spectacle of The "Other". In Hall, S. (ed.) *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*. London: Sage.

Hansson, P. and Svensson, G. (2004) Listening for 'Rosengard Swedish'. *Proceedings*, FONETIK 2004, Dept of Linguistics, Stockholm University.

Harris, A., Carney, S. and Fine, M. (2001) Counter Work: Introduction to 'Under the covers: theorising the politics of counter stories'. *International Journal of Critical Psychology*, 4, 6-17.

Helgesson, S. (2006) Gringo missar målet. *Dagens Nyheter*, [internet] 21 April. Available at: http://www.dn.se/kultur-noje/gringo-missar-malet-1.773726 [Accessed July 2007].

Henrique, J., Hollway, W., Urwin, C., Venn, C. and Walkerdine, V. (1998) *Changing the Subject: Psychology, social regulation, and subjectivity*. London: Routledge.

Hogg, M.A. and Abrams, D. (1988) *Social Identifications: A social psychology of intergroup relations and group processes*. London: Routledge.

Hogg, M.A and McGarty, C. (1990) Self-Categorisation and Social Identity. In Abrams, D. and Hogg, M.A. (eds.) *Social Identity Theory: Constructive and critical advances*. Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf.

Hollway, W. and Jefferson, T. (2000) *Doing Qualitative Research Differently: Free association, narrative and the interview method*. London: Sage.

Hook, D. (2004) Frantz Fanon, Steve Biko, Psychopolitics and Critical Psychology. In Hook, D. (ed.) *Critical Psychology*. Cape Town: University of Cape Town Press.

Hook, D. (2005). Affecting Whiteness: Racism as technology of affect. *International Journal of Critical Psychology*, 16, 74-99.

Hook, D. (2006) "Pre-Discursive" Racism. *Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology*, 16, 207-232.

Hook, D. (2008a) Absolute Other: Lacan's 'Big Other' as adjunct to critical social psychological analysis. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 2(1), 51-73.

Hook, D. (2008b) Fantasmatic Transactions: On the persistence of apartheid ideology. *Subjectivity*, 24, 275–297.

Hook, D. (2008c) Articulating Psychoanalytic and Psychosocial Studies: Limitations and Possibilities. *Psychoanalysis, Culture and Society*, 30(4), 397-405.

Hook, D. (forthcoming, 2010). 'Empty' versus 'Full' Speech: Imaginary and Symbolic Registers of Communication. In Hook, D., Franks, B. and Bauer, M. (eds.) *Social Psychological Perspectives on Communication*. London & New York: Palgrave.

Hook, D. and Howarth, C. (2005) Future Directions for a Critical Social Psychology of Racism/Antiracism. *Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology*. 15, 506-512.

Hopkins, N. and Kahani-Hopkins, V. (2004) Identity Construction and British Muslims' Political Activity: Beyond rational actor theory. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 43, 339–356.

Hopkins, N, Kahani-Hopkins, V. and Reicher, S. (2006) Identity and Social Change: Contextualizing agency. *Feminism and Psychology*, 16(1), 52–57.

Hornsey, M.J. (2008) Social Identity Theory and Self-Categorisation Theory: A historical review, *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 2/1, 204-222.

Howarth, C. (2002a) The Struggle for Recognition and Esteem in a Stigmatized Community. *Ethnicities*, 2(2): 237-260.

Howarth, C. (2002b) Identity in Whose Eyes? The Role of Representations in Identity Construction. *Journal of the Theory of Social Behaviour*. 32, 2, 145-162.

Howarth, C. (2004) Re-presentation and Resistance in the Context of School Exclusion: Reasons to be critical. *Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology*, 14(5), 356-377.

Howarth, C. (2006a) A Social Representation is Not a Quiet Thing: Exploring the critical potential of social representations theory. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 45, 65-86.

Howarth, C. (2006b) Race as Stigma: Positioning the stigmatized as agents, not objects. *Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology*, 16, 442-451.

Howarth, C. (2007) "It's not their fault that they have that colour skin, is it?" Young British Children and the Possibilities for Contesting Racializing Representations. In: Moloney, G. and Walker, I. (eds.) *Social Representations and Identity: Content, process, and power*. Basingstoke Palgrave Macmillan.

Hylton, P.L and Miller, H. (2004) Now That We've Found Love What Are We Gonna Do With It? A narrative understanding of Black identity. *Theory and Psychology*, 14(3), 373–408.

Jansson, P. (2005) Evin Rubar kan få stora journalistpriset. *Journalisten*, [internet] 27 October. Available at: http://www.interbib.se/default.asp?id=14097&ptid [Accessed: December 2007].

Joffe, H. (2003). Risk: From perception to social representation. *British Journal of Social*

Psychology, 42, 55–73.

Johansson, S. and Molina, I. (2003) Kön och ras i rumsliga identitetskonstruktioner. In Los Reyes de, P., Molina, I. and Mulinari, D. (eds.) *Maktens (o)lika förklädnader: Kön, klass och etnicitet i det postkoloniala Sverige*. Stockholm: Atlas.

Jones, N. (2003) Representationens börda. *Nätverket*, Uppsala universitet,12, 36-49. [internet] Available at: http://publications.uu.se/journals/1651-0593/124.pdf [Accessed January 2009].

Jovchelovitch, S. (1996). In Defence of Social Representations. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour*, 26, 121-135.

Kahani-Hopkins, N. Reicher, S. and Kahani-Hopkins, V. (2003) Citizenship, Participation and Identity Construction: Political mobilization amongst British Muslims. *Psychologica Belgica*, 43, 33-54.

Kamali, M. (2006) Preface in Camauer, L and Nohrstedt, S.A. (eds.) *Mediernas Vi och Dom: Mediernas betydelse för den strukturella diskrimineringen*. Statens Offentliga Utredningar, 21.

Khanna, R. (2003) *Dark Continents: Psychoanalysis and colonialism*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Kirkwood, S. Liu, J.H. and Weatherall, A. (2005) Challenging the Standard Story of Indigenous Rights in Aotearoa/New Zealand. *Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology*, 15: 493-505.

Lacan, J. (1975) Freud's Papers on Technique 1953-1954. In Miller, J.A. (ed.) *The Seminar of Jacque Lacan Book I*. London: Tavistock/Roudledge.

Lacan, J. (1977) *Ecrit: A selection*. London: Tavistock/Routledge.

Lacan, J. (1986) The Ethics of Psychoanalysis 1959-1960. In Miller, J.A. (ed.) *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan Book VII*. London: Tavistock/Routledge.

Lacan, J. (1988) The Ego in Freud's Theory and in the Technique of Psychoanalysis 1954-1955. In Miller, J.A. (ed.) *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan Book II*. London: Norton.

Lacan, J. (2004) The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis. London: Karnac.

Lacan, J. (2007) the Other Side of Psychoanalysis. In Miller, J.A. (ed.) *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan Book XVII*. New York: Norton.

Lacatus, C. (2007) What is a *Blatte*? Migration and ethnic identity in contemporary Sweden. *Journal of Arab and Muslim Media Research*, 1(1), 79-92.

Lane, C. (1998). (ed.) *The Psychoanalysis of Race*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Laplanche, J. and Pontalis, J.B. (1973) *The Language of Psychoanalysis*. London: Hogarth Press.

Larsson, P. (2006) Vilka röstade på Sd - och varför? *Göteborgsposten* [internet] 20 October. Available at: http://www.gp.se/gp/jsp/Crosslink.jsp?d=121&a=303135 [Accessed 13 November 2007].

Leader, D. (2000) The Schema L. In B. Burgoyne (ed.) *Drawing the Soul: Schemas and models in psychoanalysis*. London: Rebus Press.

Los Reyes de, P. (2002) Den svenska jämstalldhetens etniska gränser: Om patriarkala enklaver och kulturella frizoner. In Dahlstedt, M. and Lindberg, I. (eds.) *Det slutna folkhemmet: Om etniska klyftor och blågul självbild*. Stockholm: Agora.

Los Reyes de, P., Molina, I. and Mulinari, D. (2003) Introduktion: Maktens (o)lika förklädnader. In Los Reyes de, P., Molina, I. and Mulinari, D. (eds.) *Maktens (o)lika forklädnader: Kön, klass och etnicitet i det postkoloniala Sverige*. Stockholm: Atlas.

Lynn, N. and Lea, S. (2003) 'A Phantom Menace and the New Apartheid': The Social construction of asylum-seekers in the United Kingdom. *Discourse & Society*, 14, 425 - 452.

Markova, I. (2003) Dialogicality and Social Representations: The dynamics of mind. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Markova, I. and Wilkie, P. (1987) Representation, Concepts and Social change: The Phenomenon of AIDS. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour*, 17, 389–410.

Marriott, D. (1998) Bonding over Phobia. In Lane, C. (ed.) *The Psychoanalysis of Race*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Mattson, K. (2001) Ekonomisk Rasism: Föreställningar om de Andra inom ekonomisk invandrarforskning. In Eachrane, M.M. and Faye, L. (eds.) *Sverige och de Andra: Postkoloniala perspektiv*. Falun: Natur och Kultur.

Mattson, K. and Tesfahuney, M. (2002) Rasism i vardagen. In Dahlstedt, M. and Lindberg (eds.) *Det slutna folkhemmet: Om etniska klyftor och blågul självbild*. Stockholm: Agora.

Molina, I. (1997). Stadens rasifiering: Etnisk boendesegregation i folkhemmet. Geografiska regionsstudier, Kulturgeografiska institutionen, *Uppsala universitet*, 32.

Molina, I. (2005). Rasifiering: Ett teoretiskt perspektiv i analysen av diskriminering i Sverige. Stockholm: Statens offentliga utredningar.

Molina, I. and Los Reyes de, P. (2003) Kalla mörkret natt! Kön, klass och ras/etnicitet i det postkoloniala Sverige. In Los Reyes de, P., Molina, I. and Mulinari, D. (eds.) *Maktens (o)lika förklädnader: Kön, klass och etnicitet i det postkoloniala Sverige*. Stockholm: Atlas. .

Moscovici, S. (2001) The Phenomenon of Social representation. In S. Moscovici and G. Duveen (eds.) *Social Representations: Explorations in social psychology*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Moscovici, S. (2008) *Psychoanalysis, Its Image and Its Public*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Moscovici, S. and Paicheler, G. (1978) Social Comparison and Social Recognition: Two complementary processes of identification. In Tajfel, H. (ed.) *Differentiation Between Social Groups*. London: Academic Press

Neergaard, A. (2002) Arbetsmarknadens mönster: Om rasifierad segmentering. In Dahlstedt, M. and Lindberg (eds.) *Det slutna folkhemmet: Om etniska klyftor och blågul självbild.* Stockholm: Agora.

Neill, C. (2008) Severality: Beyond the compression of the cogito. *Subjectivity*, 24, 325-339.

Neuman, R. (2005) Råblattar och risksvennarennar möts I Adamis tidning. *Svenska Dagbladet*, [internet] 3 September. Available at: http://www.svd.se/kulturnoje/nyheter/artikel_453403.svd [Accessed: 13 February 2007]

Nikora, L.W., Rua, M. and Awekotuku, N.T. (2007) Renewal and Resistance: Moko in contemporary New Zealand. *Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology.* 17(6), 477-489.

Nilson, S. (2005) Migrationsverket firade avvisning . *Svenska Dagbladet*, [internet] 20 December. Available at: http://www.svd.se/nyheter/inrikes/artikel_489975.svd [Accessed 19 December 2007]

Ormond, A. (2001) Voice of Maori Youth: The other side of silence. *International Journal of Critical Psychology*, 4, 49-59.

Pajaczkowska, C. and Young, L. (1992) Racism, Representation, Psychoanalysis. In Donald, J. and Rattansi, A., (ed) *'Race', Culture and Difference*. London: Sage.

Palacios, M. (2004) On Sacredness and Transgression: Understanding social antagonism. *Psychoanalysis, Culture and Society*, 9, 284-297.

Parker, I. (1989) Discourse and Power. In Shotter, J. And Gergen, K.J. (eds.) *Texts of Identity*. London: Sage.

Parker, I. (1992) Discourse Dynamics: Critical analysis for social and individual psychology. London and New York: Routledge.

Parker, I. (1997) Discourse Analysis and Psycho-Analysis. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 36, 479-495

Parker, I. (2000) Looking for Lacan: Virtual psychology, In K. Malone and S. Friedlander (eds.) *The Subject of Lacan: A Lacanian Reader for Psychologists.* New York: SUNY Press.

Parker, I. (2001) Lacan, Psychology and the Discourse of the University, *Psychoanalytic Studies*, 3(1), 67-77.

Parker, I. (2003) Jacques Lacan, Barred Psychologist. *Theory and Psychology*, 13(1), 95-115.

Parker, I. (2005a) Lacanian Discourse Analysis in Psychology: Seven theoretical elements. *Theory and Psychology*, 15(2), 163-182.

Parker, I. (2005b) *Qualitative Psychology: Introducing radical research.* Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Parker, I. (forthcoming) Psychosocial Studies: Lacanian discourse analysis negotiating interview text. *Journal of Psychoanalysis and Society*.

Paul, R.A. (1987) The Questions of Applied Psychoanalysis and the Interpretation of Cultural Symbolism. *Ethos*, 15(1), 82-103.

Potter, J. and Wetherell, M. (1987) Discourse and Social Psychology: Beyond attitudes and behaviour. London: Sage.

Pred, A. (1997). Somebody Else, Somewhere Else: Racisms, racialized spaces and the popular geographical imagination in Sweden. *Antipode*, 29(4), 383-416.

Pred, A. (2000) Even in Sweden: Racisms, racialized spaces, and the popular geographical imagination. Los Angeles: University of California Press.

Quackelbeen, J., Billiet, L., de Wulf, J-M., Jonckheere, L., Lorre, D. Van de Vijver, L. Van horde, H. and Verhaeghe, P. Hysterical Discourse: Between the belief in man and the cult of woman. In Bracher, M., Alcorn, M.W., Corthell, R.J. and Massardier-Kenney, F. *Lacanian Theory of Discourse: Subject, Structure and Society*. London and New York: New York University Press.

Räthzel, N. (2006) From Individual Heroism to Political Resistance: Young people challenging everyday racism in the labour market. *Journal of Education and Work*, 19 (3) 219-235.

Reicher, S. (2004) The Context of Social Identity: Domination, Resistance and Change. *Political Psychology*, 25: 6, 921-945.

Ristilammi, P. M. (1994) *Rosengård och den svarta poesin: En studie av modern annorlundahet*. Stockholm: Brutus Östlings Bokförlag Symposium.

Rose, J. (1996) *States of Fantasy*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Rustin, M. (1991) The Good Society and the Inner World. London: Verso.

Said, E. W. (1994) *Culture and Imperialism*. London: Vintage.

Sannerstedt, A. (2007) "Sd parti för medelålders". *Sydsvenskan* [internet] 12 August. Available at: http://sydsvenskan.se/opinion/aktuellafragor/article258156.ece [Accessed 13 November 2007].

Saussure, F. de (1974) *Course in General Linguistics*. Fontana/Collins.

Sawyer, L. (2002) Routings: Race, African diasporas, and Swedish belonging. *Transforming Anthropology*, 11(1), 13-35.

Schori, M. (2008a) Förundersökningen mot Gringo-gänget läggs ner. *Dagens media*, [internet] 17 June. Available at: http://www.dagensmedia.se/mallar/dagensmedia_mall.asp?version=173348 [Accessed June 2007].

Schori, M. (2008b) Gringo gör comeback - med färre blattar och svennar. *Dagens media* [internet] 22 February. Available at http://www.dagensmedia.se/mallar/dagensmedia_mall.asp?version=150651 [Accessed March 2008]

Sernhede, O. (2002) Alienation is My Nation: Hiphop och unga mäns utanforskap i Det Nya Sverige. Stockholm: Ordfront.

Seshadri-Crooks, K. (1998) The Comedy of Domination: Psychoanalysis and the conceit of whiteness. In Lane, C. (ed.) *The Psychoanalysis of Race*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Seshadri-Crooks, K. (2000) *Desiring Whiteness: A Lacanian analysis of race*. London: Routledge.

Silverstone, R. (1999) *Why Study the Media?* London: Sage.

Silverstone, R. And Georgiou, M. (2005) Editorial Introduction: Media and minorities in multicultural Europe. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration* Studies, 31(3), 433-441.

Skelton, R.M. (2006) *The Edinburgh International Encyclopaedia of Psychoanalysis*. Edinburgh: Edinburg University Press.

Sköld, M. (2007a) De har etnicitet som affärside. *Göteborgsposten* [internet] 2 June. Available at: http://www.gp.se/gp/jsp/Crosslink.jsp?d=913&a=350205 [Accessed December 2007].

Sköld, M. (2007b) Gringo- snabbväxande affärsrörelse. *Göteborgsposten* [internet] 2 June. Available at: http://www.gp.se/gp/jsp/Crosslink.jsp?d=913&a=350207 [Accessed December 2007].

Stavrakakis, Y. (2007) *The Lacanian Left: Psychoanalysis, theory, politics*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Stavrakakis, Y. (2008) Peripheral Vision: Subjectivity and the Organised Other: Between Symbolic authority and fantasmatic enjoyment. *Organisation Studies*, 29(07), 1037-1059.

Steele, C.M. and Aronson, J. (1995) Stereotype Vulnerability and the Intellectual Test Performance of African-Americans. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 69, 797-811.

Tajfel, H. (1970). Experiments in intergroup discrimination. *Scientific American*, 233, 96-102.

Tajfel, H. (1978) Social Categorisation, Social Identity and Social Comparison. In Tajfel, H. (ed.) *Differentiation Between Social Groups*. London: Academic Press.

Tajfel, H. (1981) *Human Groups and Social Categories*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Tajfel, H. and Turner, J. C. (1986) The Social Identity Theory of Inter-Group Behaviour. In Worchel, S. and Austin, L. W. (eds.) *Psychology of Intergroup Relations*. Chicago: Nelson-Hall.

Thompson, J.B. (1990) *Ideology and Modern Culture*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Thunberg, I. and Nesser, J. (2006) Främlingsfientliga partier tog många röster från s. *Expressen* [internet] 22 September. Available at: http://www.expressen.se/1.423921 [Accessed: 13 November 2007).

Timotijevic, L., and Breakwell, G. M. (2000) Migration and Threat to Identity. *Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology*, 10, 355-372.

Trondman, M. (2005) Disowning Knowledge. To be or not to be "the immigrant" in Sweden. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 29 (3), 431-451.

Turner, J. C. (1991) *Social Influence*. Milton Keynes: Open University Press.

Turner, J.C. (1996) Henri Tajfel: An introduction. In Robinson, W.P (ed.) *Social Groups and Identities: Developing the legacy of Henri Tajfel.* Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann.

Turner, J.C. and Brown, R. J. (1978) Social Status, Cognitive Alternatives and Intergroup Relations. In Tajfel, H. (ed.) *Differentiation between Social Groups.* London: Academic Press.

Turner, J.C., Hogg, M., Oakes, P., Reicher, S. and Wetherell, M. (1987) *Rediscovering the Social Group: A self-categorization theory.* Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Vanier, A (2001). Some Remarks on the Symptom and the Social Link: Lacan with Marx *Journal for the Psychoanalysis of Culture and Society,* 6 (1), 40-45.

Vaughan, L. (2007) The Spatial Syntax of Urban Segregation. *Progress in Planning,* 67, 205-294.

Vera-Zavala, A. (2008) Sanslöst bra ny Gringo. *Flamman* [internet] 3 July. Available at http://www.flamman.se/recension.php?id=5503 [Accessed August 2008]

Verhaeghe, P. (2002) *Beyond Gender: From subject to drive.* New York: Other Press.

Verkuyten, M. (2005) *The Social Psychology of Ethnic Identity.* Hove: Psychology Press.

Wadbring, I. (2007) The Role of Free Dailies in a Segregated Society. *Nordicom Reveiw,* Jubilee issue, 135-147.

Wagner, W., Holtz, P. and Kashima, Y. (2009) Construction and Deconstruction of Essence in Representating Social Groups: Identity projects, stereotyping, and racism. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour,* 32(2), 1-21.

Wetherell, M.S (1996) Group Conflict and the Social Psychology of Racism. In Wetherell, M.S. (ed.) *Identities, Groups and Social Issues.* London: Sage.

Wetherell, M. (2004) Themes in Discourse Research: The Case of Diana. In Wetherell, M., Taylor, S. and Yates, S.J. (eds.) *Discourse Theory and Practice.* London: Sage.

Wetherell, M., and Potter, J. (1992) Mapping the Language of Racism: Discourse and the legitimation of Exploitation. Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf

Williamson, J. (1978) Decoding Advertisements: Ideology and meaning in advertising. London: Boyars.

Witt-Brattström, E. (2006a) Vem äger svenskan? *Dagens Nyheter,* [internet] 19 April. Available at: http://www.dn.se/kultur-noje/vem-ager-svenskan-1.643868 [Accessed July 2006].

Witt-Brattström, E. (2006b) Miljonsvenskan - en mediebluff. *Dagens Nyheter,* [internet] 13 May. Available at: http://www.dn.se/kultur-noje/miljonsvenskan-en-mediebluff-1.695563 [Accessed July 2006].

Žižek, S. (1989) *The Sublime Object of Ideology.* London: Verso Books.

Žižek, S. (1992) *Looking Awry: An introduction to Jacques Lacan through popular culture.* Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press.

Žižek, S. (1993) *Tarrying with the Negative.* Durrham, NC: Duke University Press.

Žižek, S. (1994). The Spectre of Ideology. In Žižek, S. (ed.) *Mapping Ideology*. London & New York: Verso.

Žižek, S. (1997) *The Plague of Fantasies*. London: Verso

Žižek, S. (1998) Love Thy Neighbour? No, Thanks! In Lane, C. (ed.) *The Psychoanalysis of Race*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Žižek, S. (2002) For They Do Know Not What They Do: Enjoyment as a political factor. London: Verso.

Žižek, S. (2003) *The Puppet and the Dwarf*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

Žižek, S (2005) *Interrogating the Real*. London: Continuum.

Žižek, S. (2006) *How to Read Lacan*. London: Granta Books.

1. Assorted appendices

1.1.   Example of a Gringo edition in Swedish

Knarkboss eller lillebrusha?

I Gringos stora filmspecial guidar vi till de klassiska rullarna som är stora i orten, och till karaktärerna som syns i dom. Sid 6
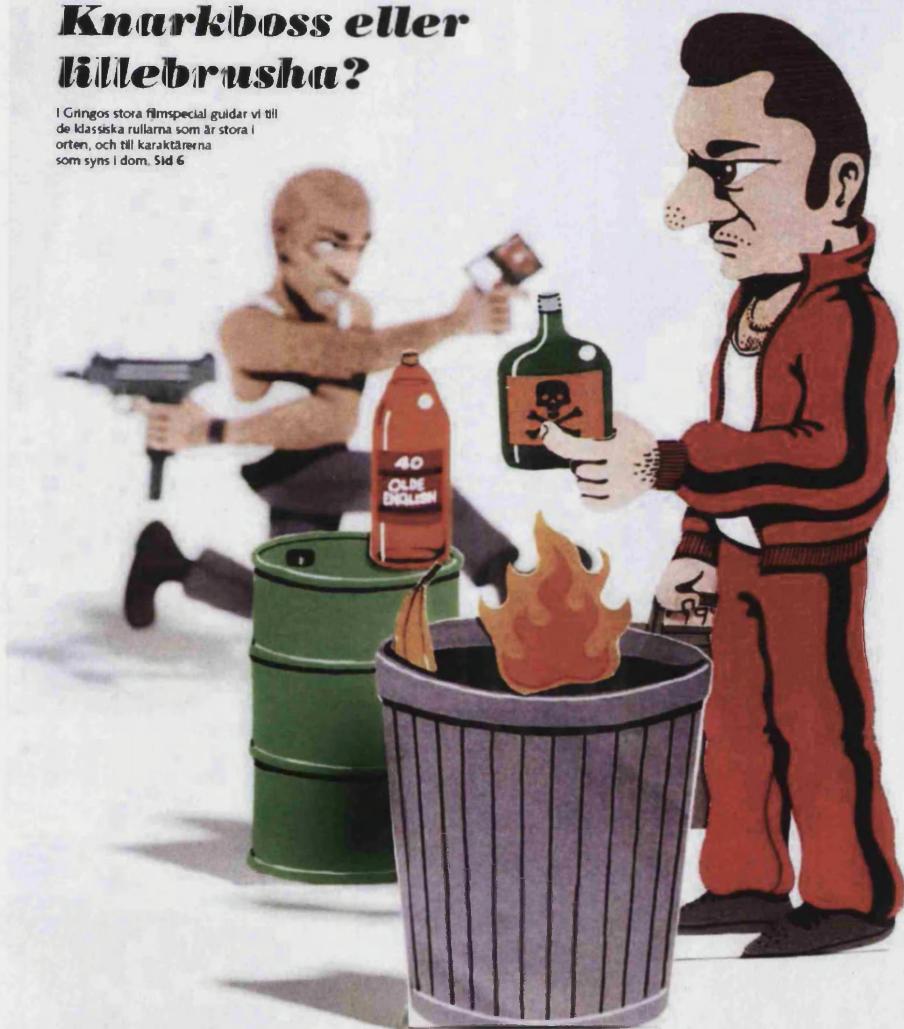
Svennkloppen: Checka de klassiska svenne-grejerna, som kebaben, häxan och den patriotiska t-shirten. Varning för svennehumor! **Sid 3**

Får du säga b-ordet? Gringo spanar in ordet som alla kan och ännu fler har en åsikt om. Vi kollar in Sveriges mest jagade ord – blatte. **Sid 6**

Fet dyrt att dissa: Galet mycket skatte-flos försvinner för att blattar fortfarande dissas när det är dags att fixa jobb. 4,4 miljarder spänn bre! **Sid 8**

242

Ledare

Från kackerlacka till rumsren

Strunt i blatteförpackning

Månadens special: Svensktoppen

En flyktings dagbok

"Ingen verkar tycker vi er lite i kläm, vi kanska i kläm behåll."

Congos arbetsförmedling

ETNOLYST

Vem får säga blatte

Sverige alldeles egna n-ord, blatte, väcker känslor. Group har träffat fyra svenskar med fyra olika perspektiv på hur det kontroversiella ordet används.

Klassiska förortsrullar

När du planerar din filmkväll i orten är
det aldrig fel att sätta på en klassiker.
Låt Gringos feta filmguide visa vägen.

Scarface

Pulp Fiction

Gudfadern (The Godfather)

Blood In Blood Out (Bound by Honor)

Menace ni Jaffar (La Haine)

De misstänkta (The Usual Suspects)

Gods stad (Cidade de Deus)

Lillebrushor och knarkbossar

Gringos karaktärsspecial ger dig en
överblick av stereotyper du garanterat
kommer träffa på i filmdjungeln. Sen
är det bara att duka upp sju sorters
pipor och filmkvällen är gjuten.

Knarkboxen

Lillebrushan

Den goda kvinnan som räddar mannen från förintelsen

Den hårda och råa polisen eller Den intellektuelle som lagt brott bakom sig

Farliga mammaridåkin

Tjackspendarna

1.2. Coding structure for articles

- Gringo magazine
    - o What is Gringo
    - o Gringo criticisms
    - o Gringo response to criticisms
- Identity
    - o immigrant identity
        - ▪ The 'ordinary' immigrant
        - ▪ The Immigrant 'hero'
        - ▪ The refugee
        - ▪ The suburb
            - • Information about the suburb
            - • Life in the suburb
            - • People in the suburb
    - o Swedish identity
        - ▪ New Swedishness
        - ▪ Swedish language
        - ▪ Swedish values
        - ▪ Sweden and multi-culture
- Resistance
    - o Abusive words
    - o 'Allocated' *blattes*
    - o Difference/threatened identities
    - o Discrimination and exclusion
        - ▪ Media
    - o Nationalist parties and Nazis

1.3. Summaries of recurring sections

Below are notes made during the initial analysis. The notes consist of summaries of the sections which occur regularly in Gringo. The aim here is to provide an overview of the structure and organisation of the magazine. Apart from these sections, Gringo also includes free-standing articles around various topics. The latter articles and the ones discussed below are all included in the coding framework of this research. When reviewing the sections summarised below I noted first impressions. I also asked the following questions: *Who or what is talked about? How is the text written? What is the form of the text?*

Editorial

Each edition includes an editorial section where the editor introduces the edition of the month. These are mostly written by the chief editor, Zanyar Adami, and only a few of them are written by other editors. The style is very personal. Authors disclose much about themselves. The language is usually standard Swedish but *blatte*-Swedish and humour is also sometimes used. The content of these articles consist of introducing the theme of that particular edition of the magazine, or generally discussing the aim of Gringo, or talk about who or what Gringo is.

Swedes with a different background than typical Swedish

In this section, the articles report on the life of people who have in one way or another an immigration background, or are part of an ethnic minority group in Sweden. For example, there is an article about a young Swedish-Chinese couple, another about a Jewish couple, and another about Turks, yet another reports on the life of two Norwegian students. Most of the people in these texts are young people.

The style is very impersonal, the reader does not find out anything about the author. The attempt appears to be to give an 'objective' illustration of the life of the people in the articles. The language is for the most part formal Swedish with very little use of slang or humour.

The aim is to provide an alternative image. The goal seems to be to challenge stereotypes about various social groups. One gets the feeling that the groups being discussed, for example, Turks or Samis, are just as any other people, trying to go on with their lives. In most of the text, there is a negation of stereotypes.

247

Svensson School section

Each article in the text of this section discusses a typically Swedish value or habit. For example the *jante-law*, the love of nature, hard work and law and order. The theme is Swedishness. Sometimes it challenges the typical stereotypes of the Swede, but the main function of the text seems to be to make fun of or ridicule Swedish values and the Swedish identity.

The style is impersonal, the reader does not find out anything about the author and the language is standard Swedish with no million-Swedish slang. However, this section is highly humoristic and many jokes and fictitious stories are used. There appears to be a paradox here, at times, it seems to construct a 'truth' about Swedishness (this is how Swedes are), at other times it seems to challenge 'truths'.

There is no report on 'real' people. Rather it is the hypothetical 'Swedish' identity which is discussed. At times this identity is referred to as 'us' for example (us Swedes) other times it is referred to in more abstract terms (for example, 'the Swede').

The thinking sultan

In this section, various people can send an article to Gringo (Gringo seems to chose who can publish their article). Various topics are discussed here, such as the term *blackhead*, living in the suburb, or experiencing racism. The style is very personal. The reader will usually get to know the identity of the author. The articles are normally accompanied by a picture of the face of the author. The writing style varies and is largely dependant on the author. Some authors write formally and in standard Swedish, others use slang and include many jokes.

Gringo jobcentre

This is a fictional jobcentre, which appears regularly in the magazine. It pretends to advertise job vacancies. There is a great deal of humour and play on words here. The jokes make fun of powerful institutions and political parties as well as stereotypes of immigrants. The language is very sarcastic and appealing.

Multiculture-manual

This section is a fictional 'instruction guide' on how to be multicultural. The text here consists of short guidelines on for example how to set up a water-pipe and how to peel nuts (both of these considered to be part of Middle-Eastern culture). The language is

very informal with the use of slang and humour. The guides usually come with an image.

New Swedish words

The aim here is to introduce and translate words which originate in other languages, and which are frequently used by people in the million-program areas. The goal seems to be similar to the one in the multiculture-manual: to familiarise readers with foreign (non-Swedish) words. The writing style is informal with the use of slang and humour.

The refugee's diary

In the later editions of the magazine, a fictional diary of a refugee was starting to appear. Here, a fictional refugee is writing about his experiences in Sweden. There is a deliberate misuse of the Swedish language. There are spelling and grammar mistakes, which signifies the refugee's lack of fluency in the Swedish language. The style is at times humorous, but it is usually very sensational and melodramatic.

Ads section

From the first few editions of Gringo, the magazine started to include advertisements and when Gringo announced that it supported itself through publishing advertisements, the number of these increased as the years went by. These advertisements are usually aimed at multicultural Sweden. For example, there are advertisements placed by telephone companies about international calls, by theatres trying to get people from the suburb to go to the city theatre and by the police who are looking to recruit a multicultural police force. The style of these ads varies.

Reactions to gringo

In this section, the public have the opportunity to express their views or comments in Gringo. The comments vary in style and topic.

1.4. Coding of responses to Gringo

Negative comments	Positive comments
Strengthening racism	Questioning stereotypes
Commercialisation	Million-Swedish
Anti-Sweden	Humour and love
Immigration	

Negative comments			
Strengthening racism	**Commercialisation**	**Anti-Sweden**	**Immigration**
Svennes? Oh my God, the only thing you do is to bring up this 'us and them'. Everyone's the same damn it! And please stop calling people 'svennes'. Would you like it if someone called you negroes or blattes? Stop that shit plz. I am an immigrant myself, but I don't like your style. Rodriguez. (Dated 20-02-07)	GRINGO!!! Zanyar Adami, one of those who write Gringo, explained in an interview that he started to study engineering at KTH, but that he dropped out at the age of 22 because 'it was boring'. Instead he is involved in the lucrative anti-racism branch where he and his colleagues can receive 225 000 Kronas to start anti-racist journalism for youth. Adami probably expects to live his whole life on project money. (Dated 18-04-07)	White is more beautiful People like you are just pissed off at the whites because they're smarter and more beautiful. Right? People like you can't reach up to the same level as whites and therefore you project your hate on any white people you find on the street. Hi Hi. Anonymous. (Dated 03-11-05)	Gringo is shit. Gringo is shit and most of the immigrants are a burden for Sweden, they only know their rights, not their duties in society. A civil war will finally erupt in Sweden, just like the civil wars in the countries they're from. Sven (Dated 25-04-07)
Politically correct blatte? Seriously I'm really mad at Gringo's editorial, which I have until now thought have done an OK job in producing an entertaining magazine. But the so called entertainment has now become a pathetic joke, because people who	'The refugee's diary'. So pathetic, all your articles suck. Refugee's diary? If I've understood it right, then you're just out after money, you sit and write a bunch of jokes about refugees in Sweden who are in reality not so happy. This is discrimination against all immigrants in Sweden. Think it's only Swedes who read this magazine to laugh at	So nice! Finally, now that Metro no longer wants to publish the worst magazine in Swedish history, I (and everybody else who feels like me) won't have to see all the fucking Gringo magazines lying around and	Who do you think pays for GRINGO?!?!? Us Swedes who have such stupid politicians who give you money for pissing on our country. GO HOME. But that's not enough (Dated 01-04-07)

encourage a xenophobic word such as blatte, are not themselves far from racism. What kind of distorted message is it that you give to people? There is no difference in saying blatte and calling people negroes! Stop making jokes about everything and listen to what it is that you ACTUALLY say! Angry. (Dated 24-10-06)	immigrants. BRING UP IMPORTANT ISSUES. N (Dated 26-03-07).	messing up the undergrounds, 'yao'. Hope it goes better with the next anti-Swedish project that Zanyar Adami starts. It won't succeed, but those of you who like Gringo can keep on dreaming. (Dated 25-04-07)	
Gringo = a racist magazine? Gringo = a racist magazine against Swedes, or? I am an immigrant and I know that it's bye bye with this newspaper if you make fun of Swedes the way you've done in the first edition. It is more Swedes than you think who read this magazine, think about that. (Dated 02-09-04)	Seriously Gringo is...what the hell should I say? First of all, I am as 'blatte' as you can get...Gringo magazine gives us foreigners the worst reputation, they pretend that they care about the blatte and stuff, and the only thing they do is to earn money on pretending that they are producing the magazine out of free will. Machiavelli (Dated 20-03-07)	Why? I am just wondering, Why do you make fun of the Swede? You portray us as idiots (Dated 05-12-06)	The worst shit! What's written in Gringo is bloody shit. I didn't know that there existed a media written by immigrants...I say, get rid of the magazine and take the immigrants with you as well. ola göteson (Dated 18-04-07).

Positive comments		
Questioning stereotypes	**Million-Swedish**	**Humour and love**
Just wanted to say that...It's so much fun reading all the comments because almost all of them generalise. Both foreigners and Swedes. People can really not see humans as humans and have to see them as for example 'bloody Turk', 'svenne', 'polish-whore' etc. Why can't we see each other as humans? Alright Turks and Greeks eat a lot of garlic and Swedes are blond, but I mean so WHAT?!?!? I don't understand what is the big difference really? And why is it so wrong if some people such as Gringo want to change the big structures in this country? It's about seeing things from other people's perspective. Do you get it?????? Neither nor (Dated 30-10-06)	Racists???? I don't get it when people say this or that about Gringo (which is the coolest magazine ever made). For example, when you say abou or guzz. They think that we're trying to take over their 'Sweden'. But if you don't like Gringo, then STOP READING DAMN IT!!!!! I respect everybody's opinions because this is how I myself want to be treated, but I think they are tooooo vulgar when they call Gringo a racist magazine. They distort the whole thing. Someone who gets upset. (Dated 14-08-06)	I say go for it! Humour for everyone! Another funny thing that I find entertaining is: Those who comment on your spelling mistakes, but who make huge spelling mistakes themselves. Well I like your magazine. You're not the ones who contribute to the us and them feeling, Swedes do that totally on their own. Keep up the good work! Gem (Dated 26-03-07)
Reply to 'some stuff you just don't joke about'. Yes, but you forget what you're saying. Adami is Swedish and his country-men are Swedes. If Gringo ridicules Swedes, they are ridiculing themselves. It's a joke. Get it?! The generalisations are meant to make people realise and act against segregation etc. Gringo does NOT agree with how things are, it wants change. People are afraid of the truth. Why is the real debate that Gringo is trying to create being put in the background? Is it because the narrow-minded Fittja/Bromma resident does not have the courage to open their eyes due to fear of themselves and for their neighbours? (Dated 29-05-06)	Evil Loco...find out facts. Hey! This is a reply to the guy who was saying that we have enough words for 'girl' in Sweden and didn't want to accept the word 'guss'.....the word 'girl' originates in Romani...what do you say about that?? You don't realise how much the Swedish language has borrowed from other languages. Javiera. (Dated 14-08-06)	MAKE LOVE NOT WAR :) YOU'RE COOL...DON'T BOTHER ABOUT ALL THOSE WHO DISS YOU. THEY DO NOT KNOW WHAT LOVE IS. PEACE. (Dated 02-02-07)

ANGRYYYYYY!!! OK, people have the right to have their own opinions. We live in a democracy in which everyone can express their attitudes, no matter how idiotic they may be. But please, what happened to the irony? What happened to the ability to take things as a joke? I have read quite a lot of comments here and I can't understand how so many can get offended by Gringo. Yes, they make fun of various minorities. Most minorities in fact. Yes, they make fun of Swedes. Since when did this become so sensitive???? If they only made fun of one particular group, then I would understand the indignation. But that's not the case! And no, Gringo does not contribute to some form of segregation. It's surprising that people can think that a small magazine can have such influence. Stop being so damn scared for our similarities and differences. Yes, Sweden is big enough for us to be able to share space. Che (Dated 14-08-06).	Million-Swedish – a Swedish dialect...OHHHHH finally!! Million Swedish, listen how wonderful that word is. A Swedish dialect, it's so fantastic!! Where do you get it all from? I love you...Mother to blonde blattes. (Dated 29-05-06)	Common!! All those out there who complain, what do you complain about? You complain about being forced to read Gringo's shit. Who the hell has forced you? I love Gringo and Gringo is here to stay (I hope)...So pull yourself together, be a little loving! Many hugs. Dafnie. (Dated 12-04-07)

2. Appendix for Chapter 6

The contradictory image of the immigrant	
Conforming to ego-ideals	**Fetishising blatte and resisting ego-ideals**
The 'ordinary' image	Information about the suburb
The 'hero' image	The 'gangsta' image
Swedishness as the big Other	Idealisation of the suburb
	Responses to *Gringo*: The use and *jouissance* of million-Swedish

2.1. Conforming to ego-ideals

The 'ordinary' image	The 'hero' image	Swedishness as the big Other
There are many reasons why there is prejudice about Somalis living on social benefits. "The Turks and the Italians came to Sweden as labour, we came as refugees during a recession" says Ahmed. And of course we also have the notion that Somalis are tall and skinny. People tell me that I can't be a Somali because I am neither tall nor skinny" (*Gringo* 19).	All three are from suburbs in Gothenburg. They find inspiration from their everyday lives...Pontius turns up the volume for the song 'Between two worlds', which is about being stuck between two worlds and not feeling at home in any of them..."This is not just music, it is more than that. We don't just want to say that we're good rappers. This is serious. We want to create a social debate", Says Saman. (*Gringo* 4).	But this is actually a prejudice which is true. Somalis are usually tall and skinny. While ordinary Svensssons stop producing after around three children, there is no limit to the birth rate for Somalis. They go for big families, around ten children is not uncommon, which means that Ahmed and his six siblings are an exception. Also, Somalis like to talk. "Somalis are very loud, whilst Swedes are more laid back. Some say it is because of the weather", Says Ahmed and laughs (*Gringo* 19)
"That's when many of the prejudices against immigrants were born. Many were probably very loud and many had customs which were perceived as non-Swedish", she explains. "But to think that all Turks today have those customs is just as idiotic as saying that all Turks grow onions in the living room, steal Swedish women, and take a bath once a year", says Devrim. Devrim and Mediha smile and tell us that they are the result of their grandfather, a Turk who came in the 60s (*Gringo* 9).	Shima Niavarani will be one of the youngest people ever who organised a performance in an official theatre. And as she says herself, she will be like 'superman', only a blatte version. (*Gringo* 9)	Devrim Budak from Märsta has come up with a theory with his uncle. "The first Turks who came were from the country side, they were working class farmers who simply had a different lifestyle to the city population. They were not familiar with the ultramodern Swedish society. Different norms, different social behaviour, says Devrim. Not necessary worst, but different" (*Gringo* 9).
Despite the confusion they understand the Swedish language well which is a prerequisite now that they plan a life here in Sweden. El Salvador is not an alternative and both have found themselves in Sweden (*Gringo* 2).	She is the Swedish hope of boxing, an ex army member, who is now aiming to compete in the Olympics. Armine Sinabian challenges most things (*Gringo* 14).	Eldin Karisik, who plays in the Helsingborg football club and the youth national team, claims that in Sweden's elite-football league there is often a culture shock which is both about the game of football as well as about a social game. Even though most players are raised in Swedish football culture, they have a behaviour which differs from players with Swedish parents. (*Gringo* 23).

2.2. Full text examples

2.2.1. 'Bo &Peng'

A fifth of the world's population are Chinese. Twenty thousand of these are Chinese-Swedes. Eight of them play basketball in a sweaty court in Tibble outside Stockholm.

"Chuan qiu", yells Bo Huang and takes the ball. A drop of sweat is running down from his forehead which stops at the tip of the nose. His gaze is focused, his breath is heavy. Bo takes a grip of the ball, gets ready, jumps and shoots. The ball flies like a bow towards the basket, hits the ring, spins one lap around the ring and decides in the end to make it in the basket. Bo stretches his fists in the air and cheers. He is out of breath and sits down next to me during the break. "Most people think that Chinese people are short, but just look at us", Bo says and points towards his brother Lei Huang and the friend Peng Zhou.

Every Saturday a dozen of young Chinese-Swedes meet in the Tibble court to play basketball. Today there is only nine, including the inborn Swede whom they have allocated. Nobody is below 1.80 cm tall.

Chinese-Swedes are one of the most anonymous minorities in Sweden. You only get to meet them at Chinese restaurants. "Most Chinese-Swedes socialise only with each other. Most know each other because we are not that many. The language is a barrier, Chinese is very different to Swedish, which makes it difficult for a Chinese person to understand Swedish", says Bo Huang and dries the sweat from his forehead.

23 year old Bo Huang moved from Sweden ten years ago with his 27 year old brother Lei. The parents got jobs here as doctor and researcher. Bo is studying to become an engineer in chemistry at the royal institute of technology. "If we would add an "f" to Lei, we would be called Bo and Leif[73], and more Swedish names are difficult to find", says Bo. He remembers his first impression of Sweden very well. "I came here in January and remember the snow and the air was so clean. People said 'hej' to me and dad and I couldn't understand why they were so rude to us. In China 'hej' means something like 'hey' and it's very rude, says Bo and laughs widely which makes his eyes into thin openings".

What prejudices exist against Chinese people? "We look like this, Peng Zhou says and laughs at the same time as he is making a facelift with his hands and makes his eyes even smaller. "Just because we are Chinese, people think that we are good at kung fu and can play table tennis, I can't do any of that", says Bo Huang. "I know kung fu", says Peng Zhou who has recently started to practice.

Bo Huang is soon going back to the hometown Shanghai. When he talks about the planned trip, there is something in his gaze which suggests that he yearns for China. It was three years ago he got to smell the smell of China. A smell which he can't describe, but which he loves. "It's going to be exciting to go back and see how much the city has changed. So much is happening there now. At the same time it feels a little strange. You feel a little excluded and in the beginning you don't really fit in", says Bo.

Shanghai and the whole of China are going through an intensively quick development. Skyscrapers are popping up everywhere like mushrooms in the ground. A third of the world's cranes are in Shanghai. The competition for places at universities is intense. A thousand applicants per position are not unusual. That's why many young people who have the opportunity look abroad to study. "I feel at home in China in a different way. If I had been born here, Sweden would have perhaps felt like home. I am trying to fit in as much as possible, but my appearance is a hindrance", says Bo. Bo Huang thinks well of Sweden and

---
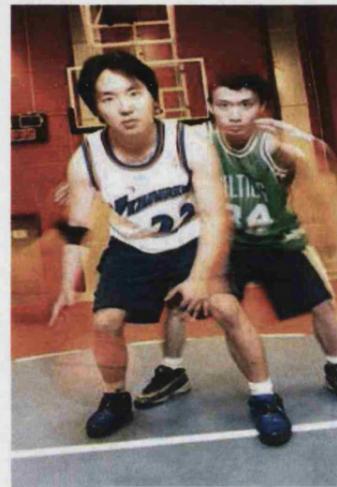
[73] Bo and Leif are traditional and common Scandinavian names.

he sees his future here. He wants to stay here, build a family and create a life. "jia you", yells Peng Zhou and everybody runs back to the court for another game.

No one knows exactly how many Chinese people there are in China. The government recently employed six million Chinese people and gave them the task to count the other Chinese people in two weeks. They got an approximate number which is 1,298,847,624. The first Chinese person came to Sweden in 1786 and met the king. Four Chinese people lived here in 1880. Today there are around 20 000 Chinese Swedes in the country (*Gringo* 1).

2.2.2. 'Nessim'

Love and loyalty for Sweden is what drives Nessim Becket to find 500 jobs every year for jobseekers all by himself.

"I act mostly as an agent, but I usually say that I deal with everything from circumcision to weddings", says Nessim Becket. He has been working at the 'IT-cafe' in Fittja, Stockholm for five years, but it isn't really a cafe. There is a coffee-machine. The visitors call it the "jobcentre", but it officially belongs to the council.

During his time here Nessim has helped find jobs for about 500 people every year. Nessim's office is about 20 square metres. He would like to have a bigger one considering that around forty people come here a day. And he works all alone so there is a high tempo. There are no replacements so when he is ill or when there are holidays, the 'cafe' is closed. "It can of course be difficult to work alone with lack of resources. I am quite stingy but never with my strength. The driving force behind my work is my loyalty to Sweden. I feel great love for this country and think that more people would feel like that if they had a job".

On the walls there are thank you cards and dried flowers from visitors. There are also framed posters by artists such as Salvador Dali, and this is revealing a private part of Nessim: His interest for art.

"But I don't have much space for myself right now. My working day starts already in the underground because I meet several of the unemployed there. And the job then continues at the office, in the centre of town and on the way home. I don't even have time for my family, but everybody is actually my family. Now and then somebody comes to the office. The door is open for everyone. I look at the individual as a whole. There is often an underlying reason for why a person hasn't been able to find a job. I try to find out what that is and work from there. I never want anybody to leave empty handed".

In order for nobody to leave empty handed, Nessim helps visitors to fill in CV's and personal statements. Applications are very often faxed or posted directly from the office. Nobody is questioned here. "Instead of saying 'why did you do that' or 'contact the social welfare secretary' I chose to say 'let's see what we can do'. I never see people as a problem". In the same moment an elderly woman enters. They talk in Arabic with each other. The woman is holding a form and it turns out that she needs help with her bank account. Nessim asks her to come back later.

A stable economy is a prerequisite for a healthy society. In the same moment that a person gets a job, money is circulated. This is Nessim's philosophy. And the way to help people is not conventional. "For example, there are no queue-tickets here. It is possible to solve some problems immediately. A person should not have to wait an hour in the queue if one can have the answer immediately".

What is most memorable during Nessim's time at the IT-cafe was when a 60 year old man from Turkey was looking for a job. The jobcentre had sent him to a computer course, despite his lack of interest in computers. "He was an engaged warehouseman. He was so neglected that I was almost crying. In the end he got a job in a warehouse. They were so proud of him and they didn't want him to retire two years later".

The woman with the form is back. Nessim exchanges quickly between different languages and explains Swedish words and professional language which she doesn't understand. There is another visitor after
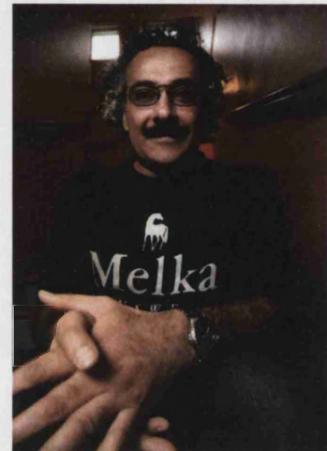
her who is waiting with a job advert in the hand. Nessim is talking with both at the same time. The small office is soon filled with people (*Gringo* 3).

2.2.3. 'Ayesha'

Ayesha Quraishi has always taken her own route. She is the girl from Hässelby who stood against the big record companies. She is now 23 years old, director of a record company, and has recently released her first album.

"I want a revolution, not a sudden one, but an 'every-day' revolution, where people in their everyday choose to stand up against things they believe is wrong. We are all equal, but every one of us should realise that. One should demand the respect one deserves", she says while she takes a blueberry pie from the fridge and puts it in the microwave.

We enter the living-room which looks like a firework of colours and patterns. Everything is hanging on the wall, from performance clothes to fabrics with African and Hindu patterns. She is dressed in an army-shirt and tracksuit bottoms with little images of the African continent. The hair is put up on the head like a ball.

Acrobat pattern

Ping! The blueberry pie is ready. The mobile is ringing at the same time and she runs to the bed to pick it up. She is talking about performance plans for next week. Ayesha sounds enthusiastic and she is also able to make everyone else enthusiastic. "I and some other girls are going to have a dance performance next week. It will be some Acrobat and music". I tell her: "You must be quite flexible then". She replies: "A little. I am good at standing on my head. I can show you". She quickly gets up. "You will not be able to do that with your hair up", I note. "No of course not", she says and releases her hair. I can't believe my eyes but she stands on her head and lifts her legs high up. Her back bends like a feather and the whole body is quickly making circles. She gets up on her feet again and puts up her hair.

The duo releases an album.

Apart from being a solo-artist, she has started the girl-duo Kwanzaa together with Sona Jarjusey. The first single of the duo is planned for Christmas, but she is going to release her first solo-album through Ayeshas record company 'K-Werks', before Christmas.

"We have very different personalities, but we work well together" she says and points to the picture on the other girl in the duo. "Which personality do you represent in the group?"

"She is the philosophical, calm type and I'm probably the rebel. Do you want to hear our new song? We wrote it in one night." She bends over and presses play on the CD-player. She sings along and she can't stop smiling. And she looks at me at times in order to contaminate me with her mood. Next verse is her rapping, it's going fast and it's not easy to follow the lyrics. In order to clarify, like many hip-hop artists, she visualises certain words with her hands.

Going back to Africa

When Ayesha was 12 years old, she was on a radio program where she was asked what she wished most in the world. She said: "That my parents get together again, that I get to go back to Africa and peace on earth". These are still her biggest wishes.

She has been going back and forth between Botswana and Sweden her whole life. She has spent half of her life in Africa and the other half in Hässelby. Her time in Africa has made a strong impact on her. Last time she was there was when she was nineteen and she met the president there and discussed anti-corruption.

Her music career started as a teenager when she was given English rap-lyrics by the famous Ken Ring who early noticed her talent. This is when her music dream started, a dream which she is now fulfilling. Without being supported by a record company, she has had to do everything herself. "The record

258

companies were not humble. They thought I was good, but they wanted to change me. I realised that I would never be able to work with those people. Therefore, I started the record company, in order to make my own decisions. But I have spilt blood, sweat and tears for this".

In a chest of drawers in the room, there is a shoe-box full of papers on which Ayesha notes down most of her thoughts. On one of them there is the lyrics of the song 'Push push': "I always had a dream to a thousand soldiers breed so if they kill me they carry on the stampede fight the glorified state and become glory mate a cold host bringing a warm dinner for my people and the one thinner." She says: "I always bring a pen with me. When I get an idea I quickly write it down. It can happen when I drive. I then stop and make a note before I forget. I relax when I write".

Ghetto princess against prejudice

Her music is not easily defined. It is not really possible to categorise it. Last year, she released the single 'Ghetto princess' and this is exactly how she feels: Like a ghetto princess. "The song is against the prejudices I have come across. Just because I am from a suburb like Hässelby doesn't mean that I have an accent or that I'm criminal".

The album 'Jade fever' was released in May. She has been on a tour this summer. Next performance is this Thursday. You can even see her every Wednesday night on the Studio Pop programme on TV.

For Ayesha music means happiness. She wants to change the industry and prove that one doesn't need to follow all the rules of the record company and one can follow one's own dreams. "I never get tired when I make music. I don't even need to sleep. It must mean that there is a meaning in what I am doing" (Gringo 1).

2.2.4. 'Blatte United Football Club'

They are raised in Sweden. But they live in New York. They have successful careers. And they're blattes. The players in Blatte United FC don't just rule in the labour market, but also on the football court. "The players in Blatte are successful, we're fucking successful", says Omino Gardezi, the founder of the team.

Selim Adira is so pepped up that he can't even stand still. He runs around in circles, jumps up and down and fun-fights with his team players. "Bloody Turk", says Omino Gardezi and laughs. Selim is not a Turk, but his dad moved from Morocco to Rosengård around ten years before Selim was born. Omino is a little Indian, a little Iranian, but most of all, he is the

founder of Blatte United FC - a football team which is now in the semi-finals in the Urban Soccer League. An hour later they have also won a game against a gang of well-shaved Brits in the finals and are thus the winners.

Keke, who has roots in Ghana has his ten year old Kevin with him. "Galli, Galli", Kevin yells and waves his index finger. "It's Goalie says" daddy Keke. On Wednesday, Kevin who has just moved to New York is going to start American school for the first time. "He will get bullied the first day", says Andreas, one of the three non-blattes in the team. "I know. But he is from Rosengård so he will make it", says Keke.

The victory is going to be celebrated in an Irish pub and Selim asks the bartender to play "We are the Champions"on the stereo. "Pure Blatte-love baby", as Omino says. The chance that someone would call him 'immigrant' in a country where everyone has roots somewhere else is very low. He worked in the newspaper industry in the US before he started his own business. He is now a marketing and advertising consultant in the American fashion and luxury industry. He thinks that a similar career in Sweden would not have been possible. "Just look at Mackan (Samuelsson) or Keke. I don't think that these people would have got the same opportunities as they have here. I didn't see any future in Sweden. I was in the ghetto in Fittja. I hanged out in town or in the youth centre and I would go out on Saturdays, and would end up in trouble. It felt like I was stuck a circle that went round and round. Many of my old pals are not

doing anything today. They're guards in the underground station and most are unemployed. It is a whole different world".

Omino had bigger ambitions. He was also inspired and spurred by his parents. "We in Blatte are successful, very fucking successful" he says. Mackan is celebrity chef, Keke is superstar-stockbroker, Jakob is starting a business in China, Mezz runs the biggest photo-studio in New York, Pierre is working as a marketing guru for another awesome advertising agency. Omino continues: "I wonder if this would have been the case if we were in Sweden. I don't think so. It is not easy here. But everybody has the same opportunity. Black, white. It doesn't matter. I like this concept".

He came up with the name of the team when he realised that he always said "hey blatte" when he called his pals. "Blatte is like the n-word here (nigger). But blatte is what we are. It's OK for us. But it doesn't seem to be OK for everybody". In May, a Swedish exile organisation organised a football tournament for friends and companies. "We couldn't use the name Blatte United. They wanted us to be called B united", says Omino and laughs.

More and more people became members of the proud team of Blatte, and very soon the first non-blattes joined. "Vanilla is fantastic. His name is Andreas, and is tall and blond. But he talks like a black person and he calls himself 'Dre'. But it was wonderful the first time I saw him, he looked like Vanilla Ice. Hence, his nick-name Vanilla", says Omino. "And of course, we couldn't have anyone having a corny name such as Oscar, so Oscar turned into Mohammed".

One night Oscar couldn't get into one of Marcus Samuelson's parties because the bouncer expected Muhammed to look a little more like someone from a southern country. "That story is still making us laugh", says Omino (*Gringo* 24).

2.2.5. 'Rita kicks'

If anyone softens because Rita is a girl, she will ask them to hit harder. Last year in December, Rtia started to train MMA, Mixed Martial Arts. It is a mixture of boxing, wrestling, jiu-jiutsu and muay thai and it has become one of the best things she knows. "It's lovely to come here. This is my refuge", she says.

Rita spends a great deal of her time in the sport centre in Gothenburg. "Even when I am not training and just feel a little restless, I just go to the club". I was here the whole of the Easter holidays, but I wasn't training", she says and laughs. "This is a warm place and it is thanks to the people" Rita says.

Majority of those who train here are guys. There are two girls in the club who kick butt together with the guys. Rita is one of them and she is the only one in her beginner's class. When she fights, she also releases a lot of her emotions. "I noticed when I started to train that I had gathered a lot of aggression, and when I trained, I released a lot and felt much better" Rita says.

She is honest and direct. When her opposition takes it easy because she is a girl, she tells him off and she doesn't keep things inside and says exactly what's on her mind. After the training session she is still as energetic. Anyone would sigh of relief, but Rita wants to go for it again. "Sometimes it is unfair because men have more muscles than women, and sometimes it is difficult to stay on the same level as the men", she says. "But I hate it if the guy I am fighting would loosen up just because I'm a woman. In those situations, I usually say something and pep them up and hit harder. I am not training on a different level just because I'm a girl, we train on equal grounds" (*Gringo* 22).

260

2.2.6. 'They are called whores'

The prejudices against Swedish-Thai women are many. They are seldom positive. Even worse is the prejudice against Swedish men who are together with Swedish-Thai women.

Thirty year old Nicklas Norberg is living with a Thai-Swedish woman. One evening when he is out with his partner, a guy approaches them.

"She is the one who cleans and cooks at home, isn't she?" The guy asks.

"No, we share everything", Nicklas says. "She cooks and I wash the dishes. She is no slave, is she?"

The guy asks: "Why did you bring her here?" People think that Nicklas has bought her, that she is a prostitute whose main task is to clean and take care of the house. "Most people have this assumption, especially men", says Nicklas. 30 year old Boonapha 'Tik' Petterson , a Thai-Swedish woman agrees: "I have met men who tell me that all Thai women are prostitutes".

Nicklas's partner, 20 year old Buppha 'Jeab' Khemmanee adds: "People look down on us".

We are sitting in a Thai restaurant. The decor gives the feeling of Thailand. A small statue of Buddha is welcoming us when we enter. On one of the walls there is King Bhumibol Adulyadej, Thailand's most worthy person and his wife, who look compassionately down on us. Jeab and Tik come here often to eat. Tik, who has lived here for almost two years, thinks that Swedish food is good, but not as good as Thai food. And she is enjoying it here, even if the disadvantages are many, the advantages are greater. "Life is difficult in Thailand. I earned 3000 Kronas a month as a host and master of ceremonies. Here, I earn 14000 Kronas", says Tik. She leans forward and laughs loudly. Tik is working as a cleaner in Sweden. 3000 Kronas is not much in Swedish measures, but it is a reasonable income for a Thai woman. In Thailand Tik is perceived to belong to the middle-class. But it was much harder for Jeab. Before she and Nicklas found each other, she earned 20 Kronas on average per day, six days a week in various jobs, including waitressing jobs and work at a factory. "Life in the factory was hard. Everything become so much better when Nicklas turned up", says Jeab. Not with a melancholic voice, but she is really shining when she mentions Nicklas and then she laughs. Both Jeab and Tik laugh a lot during the conversation.

Nicklas is talking about the time he met Jeab. It was during the first week of a three months' trip with three friends. "I never had any plans of getting a girl over there or 'bringing' a Thai woman. It just turned out that way. By accident", says Nicklas and Jeab agrees: "I didn't even think about moving from Thailand".

When Nicklas told his mom that he was going to Thailand, his mom was sceptical. Even more so when he told her about Jeab. Comments such as "those girls are no good" and "they just want to come to Sweden" were common. It wasn't anything personal against Jeab but just because she was Thai.

"If Jeab wasn't Thai she wouldn't have said anything", says Nicklas. "My brother is married with a French girl. No one has said anything about that". But to an extent Nicklas does understand his mom and other people who are prejudiced against Thai women. Some prejudices are not totally groundless he thinks. Those who bring prostitutes and take advantage of them actually exist. But that every Thai woman is like that is far from the truth. And he is protesting against that stereotype. Next year in March, Jeab and Nicklas are going down to Thailand to get married. Nicklas is going down with fourteen of his closest friends who are going to meet the other 350 guests.

"I am nervous", Nicklas says and takes a heavy breath (*Gringo* 4)

261

2.3. Fetishising blatte and resisting ego-ideals

Information about the suburb	The 'gangsta' image	Idealisation of the suburb	Responses to *Gringo*: The use and *jouissance* of million-Swedish
What is a suburb? Suburbs are built around the inner-city. It was mainly in the 50s and the following decennials that the suburbs were being built...most of the suburb-residents commute to the inner city or to other suburbs to work. The largest suburb in Sweden is Huddinge outside Stockholm. (*Gringo* 12).	*Gringo* jobcentre. Are you Gangsta? Notorious B.E.R.T from Skara seeks a gangsta-rapper. At least one bullet hole. No more special skills are required. Preferably Afro-Swedes, or whatever one can call 'them' nowadays. Label your application 'Yo' or Call XX (*Gringo* 8).	Multiculture-manual: The bro-greeting. Shaking hands are as outdated as saying 'good day Mister'. The cool way to greet nowadays is the bro-greeting. If spiced with a 'Yo bro what's up', you will be guaranteed happiness in the suburb. But don't forget the slap on the back. You don't want it to be understood as a hug. You don't hug in the suburb: you fight. The last click with the fingers comes with practice, but it sounds like pleasant Latin Kings-music in your ears. Try on yo mama, bro (*Gringo* 11).	Best! Haha, Oh my God, Gringo is the freakin best thing that has happened Sweden every since I was born. I read every sentence you write, always. You're da best! One day I will be part of Gringo and write about my ghetto. Not Worthy (Dated 23-11-07)
Building one million apartments in ten years...in the 1960s, our million-programme areas were built. (*Gringo* 14).	Gringo jobcentre. We are seeking car thieves who are not as stupid as those we had before and who are now in prison. You should be diligent and you should like working in high tempo. Commission based salary. And perhaps a doobie-snack. Below punishable age is a plus. Contact Andrés outside Husby underground station. Respond to Stolen Ltd (*Gringo* 10).	New Swedish words: Habibi. 'Habibi' means 'my love' in Arabic and is pronounced hebibi. In the suburb the term can also be used as 'hotty'. So when you hear someone say 'look, what a habibi!', the blatte means 'Look what a hotty' (*Gringo* 7).	Fuck all haters!!! I mean, just piss off if you don't like it. Don't give a damn. Idiooootss. Get a life instead of dissing Gringo. Fuck all haters. Cred to Gringo. Kissss. (Dated 25-04-05)

Information about the suburb	The 'gangsta' image	Idealisation of the suburb	Responses to *Gringo*: The use and *jouissance* of million-Swedish
For those of you who don't know your history, million-programmes are those residential areas outside the inner city. At the time they were built, only farmers lived in Hisingen and Angered suburbs. (*Gringo* 23).	Tupac versus Scarface. There are only two lads who every suburb-kid can have on the wall with pride: Tony Montana from the film Scarface or the rapper Tupac. But which one is toughest? The biff is a fact and *Gringo* is the judge. Nickname: Scarface Tony Montana was actually never called Scarface. Even though Tony has a scar on one of his cheeks, the film got its name from a classical gangster-movie from the thirties. The name Tony is however short for his Christian name, Antonio, and should be counted as a nickname. It doesn't feel that great, right? 1 point. Tupac: His name was from the beginning Lesane Parish Crooks, but later he got the name Tupac Amaru Shakur which means 'shining snake' and 'thankful for God'. He called himself Machiavelli after the renaissance humanist with the same name. His first alias was however MC New York, which prevents him getting a five-pointer. 4 points (*Gringo* 6).	The hood is my Mr Right. What is love for me? Love for me is when I meet my girl-friends and talk bull-shit. Love for me is when I get my salary at the end of the month having been broke for two weeks. Love for me is the days when the sun stops playing hard-to-get and actually shines. Love for me is when I step into my house everyday and feel this is where I belong. Botkyrka suburb is the name of my happiness. (*Gringo* 22)	Hey bro's and sisters =) I swear, this is the coolest magazine. I've just discovered it. It's freakin goooood. Multi-culti- always good breeeee. Yalla kissss AhiinRonaldo. (Dated 25-04-07)
Suburb-Championships. It is now time to determine which	Classic suburb-films. The Godfather. For those of you who don't know,	Ramin Yahangiri is one of those proud Hässelby-residents who can now say that	Million-Swedish – a Swedish dialect...OHHHHH finally!! Million Swedish, listen how wonderful that word is. A

263

Information about the suburb	The 'gangsta' image	Idealisation of the suburb	Responses to *Gringo*: The use and *jouissance* of million-Swedish
suburb is the coolest in Sweden! You decide. Read, evaluate and don't forget to vote for your hood at Gringo.se. In the next edition we will reveal which suburb has gone through to the semi-finals. May the best suburb win! (*Gringo* 12).	'Godfather' is about the Corleone family and crime. From this movie, we've learnt the real meaning of the terms such as respect, loyalty, and family. Classic scene: Sonny (James Caan) is surrounded by the enemy and has no chance to survive in the bullet-rain (*Gringo* 27).	they live in Sweden's best suburb. Apart from the fact that the kebab is a little too pricey (25 Kronas), he thinks that Hässelby is the best suburb in every way. "Why we're the best? There is no explanation. Do you ask the super-man why he is strongest?" Ramin asks (*Gringo* 14).	Swedish dialect, it's so fantastic!! Where do you get it all from? I love you...Mother to blonde blattes. (Dated 29-05-06)

2.4. Full text examples

2.4.1. 'Survival guide for the suburb'

When Latin Kings[74] welcomed everybody to the suburb, they didn't know what they were talking about. The suburb is highly dangerous. Dogge[75] and his crew must carry the guilt of hundreds of lives on their conscious. Gringo has created a survival guide for all of those who are courageous enough to go to the deadly suburb.

Before you go:

Go to the doctor in order to make sure that you're completely healthy. It is tough out there.

Make sure you've had vaccination against polio, tuberculosis, malaria and yellow fever, among other things.

Take with you an ID card on which your blood type is shown. You'll probably need blood.

Take a course in first aid where you'll learn how to stitch gunshot wounds and knife-stabs on yourself.

Find out what gang-colours you need where you're going.

Write your will.

How to behave:

---

[74] The Latin Kings rap-group became famous with the track called *Välkommen till förorten* [Welcome to the Suburb]

[75] Dogge is a member of the Latin Kings.

Try not to go alone. Bring a sidekick. Or a bodyguard is even better.

Try to fit in as much as possible, dress like a blatte but be discrete.

Don't show your bling-bling. Hide the mobile phone and everything else which is valuable. Don't wear the latest brand of basketball shoes. It can be enough to get you shot.

Make sure you have a lot of people around you. You don't want to stand alone in an alley surrounded by seventeen anabolic-Latinos.

If someone starts to argue with you, chill, try to win time. Look at the blatte, but not directly in the eyes. Give the impression that you're confident, especially if you're not.

If a car has its windows wound down and slows down the speed, you can be sure that it is a drive-by. Lie on the ground and play dead.

Don't every say the words "yo mama" to anyone.

Things to bring:

Bling-bling: it gives you status, but make sure your chain is not bigger than the local boss's. You would instantly be fucked.

Rosary: There are al-Qaeda dudes in the hood! If you see anyone with a turban and a Kalashnikov, the rosary will be your rescue.

Tan-lotion: If you're pale you'll shine like a light bulb in an elephant's arse. Put a lot on.

Hair-colour: You can't browse around the suburb with some blond Dolph Lundgren hair-do. Everybody in the hood is dark-haired.

The Latin King's lyrics: If you happen to get in a pressured situation, you can always yell out some lyrics from Dogge. For example, "Mecca a braja and light it with fire" (win the book from us and practice some cool lines).

Fake-Uzi: Use in emergency situations or when you really feel like robbing someone.

Sun-flower seeds: Learn how to bite off the shell with the teeth, it gives cred.

Bullet-proof vest: A must in the suburb, no one leaves the home without one.

In order to offer the best possible suburb-guide, we want your help. What tools do you think should be included in the bag? E-mail your suggestions. We have hundreds of The Latin Kings-books to give to the most practical and smart ideas. Win the Latin Kings lyric-book. (*Gringo* 2).

2.4.2. 'The prohibited word'

"I think it is a b..b...blatte thing". In the middle of a discussion, I test using The Prohibited Word. The word which has lead to arguments and discussions. I am dropping the word as cautiously as someone who takes a naked bath in February. Oooo how scary it is.

In one of the episodes of 'Scrubs', the pale-faced JD just had this discussion with the dark-skinned friend, Turk: "Ey, Turk. You know how much I like DMX and dig the hip-hop thing? If I kinda rap along with the song, is it OK to use the N-word? If I never, never use it otherwise?"

"Never, whiteboy!".

"OK good to know".

This rule is very strict. My best friend, who is originally Kurd, can say "it's so typical blattes" and I can raise my eyebrows and hum a little, as if I understand exactly what she means. But to say the word myself? Are you crazy? Especially not in an official place. As punishment, a little lady with seven kids as body-guards would force-feed me with a supermarket trolley.

Gringo is now saying that it's OK. That the word blatte should get incorporated into our daily vocabulary and become as common and harmless as semi-skimmed milk. I was sceptical. I tried saying it loudly alone in front of the mirror. I tried to mention it in a discussion which was so loud that no-one would hear what I said. I used it once as a test with my Kurd-pal. The Kurd-pal continued talking as if nothing happened. So: at the dinner table. Nice company: One Persson, one Ayaz, one Mohammed, one Hagefalk. The discussion was nice, the pasta and the sauce were still hot on the plates, the wine was sparkling in the glass. Someone talks about new exciting ways in which Spy-bar is discriminating against immigrants: 'You're too dark-skinned AND too much of a media-elite.

"A blatte who is aware of what's happening should start a nice hip-hop club". There. I said it. Surprised silence. Amused gazes. And then the discussion continued. I was completely red out of shame.

Gringo, it is probably cool to make blatte an everyday word, and it is cool to load it with love instead of hate. But I'm a geek. I am probably not ready yet. Just like my friend Tony when his girlfriend wanted to wear a strap-on, I say: "Can't we just hug instead?" (*Gringo* 23).

3. Appendix for chapter 7

The idealisation and transgression of Swedishness			
Svensson-School: Challenging and bonding with Swedishness	Criticising the Symbolic and identifying with the Imaginary	Re-evaluating *blatte* means changing the Symbolic	Responses to *Gringo*'s transgression of Swedishness

3.1. Svensson-School: Challenging and bonding with Swedishness

Do you obey the Jante-law? It is the law which has had a strong grip on the Swedish soul. In the country of Jante-law, you will never be the loudest and you're never better than anyone else (*Gringo* 1)	Swedish gender-knowledge Sweden is and will always be the gender-equal paradise. In Sweden women can have a career and take care of home and children while looking hot in g-strings and polyester suits. In Sweden men can have a career and take care of their home and children without getting too feminine. They can make a glossy barbeque on the home-made veranda. Just enough masculinity to bake muffins and change nappies without losing face! (*Gringo* 10).	What is Lucia? A veiled beauty competition, too much alcohol and the celebration of an Italian saint by the most Swedish ballads. Nope, because this is not true. The Lucia ballad is actually an Italian boat-song (?). From Naples. So we got fooled there! (*Gringo* 5)	The most beautiful thing according to Swedish tradition – an almost extinct phenomenon – is to work to death in the woods. The reason why it's not happening as often anymore is that people verified that it wasn't worth it. But nowadays, we stress ourselves to death instead. We therefore have to pretend that we really are as honourably hard working as our body-labouring forefathers (*Gringo* 3).

3.2. Full text examples

3.2.1. 'The people's home which disappeared'

The people's home has disappeared where the pepper is grown, but the dream about lilac bowers, intact core families and a father of the land who is watching over all of us, is still alive.

The younger generation in Sweden hardly know what the people's home is apart from the fact that it must be something very nice because their parents get tears in their eyes every time it is mentioned. And when the schools are soon forced to go back to writing slates in order to cut back on spending, the safe wealth of the people's home also seems to be nothing more than nostalgia.

When you sit in the coffee room and read the news about restrictions in healthcare, you can willingly comment about deep roots in blue and yellow soil.

"Yes, now it is obvious that the people's home is a mere memory". And you shake your head and look down as if you were talking about someone who had recently died. If your workmates are over 50, you can be sure that they start reminiscing about old times. If they're not, they will think that you're mad.

The people's home, which flourished during the thirties and until 1946 under the protective wings of prime minister Per Albin Hansson, was the beginning of the most holy of Swedish cows: the welfare system. In Sweden, not even the most liberal of liberals talk badly about the welfare system. Social benefits, social security and piece, financed by the world's biggest tax burden. This was the foundation on which the red and white summer cottages were going to be built. In a nice and 'just enough' mix of Lutheran moral and Marxist solidarity, the Swedes would take care of each other and give a helping hand to the poor people in the less advanced countries. On the continent, or even worse, in Africa, they don't know how to take care of their people. In Sweden when daddy went to work in the mornings and the family was waving goodbye.

No one can be safer than this.

The Swedish model was exported, and we learned to be proud of living in the best country in the world, the country which was at the very top of all the wealth and welfare lists. We got to know that we were sound people with good values, people who can sunbathe naked together in the beautiful nature of God without being ashamed.

But the people's home belonged to the people and perhaps this is why it is so difficult to admit to ourselves that it has come to naught. That now it only exists in the history books and that Sweden today is a relatively poor supplier of raw materials with almost the same living standards as Italy.

Many people from other countries still believe that Sweden is the land of dreams where the poor can collect money at the post-office. But while it is free to go to the doctor in Spain, in Sweden one hopes that the little boy can wait a month before getting influenza, because big sis emptied the doctor's budget with her ear infection.

The people's home is dead, if not buried, and however much cuddly uncle Göran Persson tries, when he slowly and clearly talk to his people, he will never be able to take over Per Albin's position in the conscience of the Swedish lilac bower.

Cut and save!
Welfare teachings and Swedish country lies.

If people abroad are now so gullible that they think that Sweden is the Mecca of welfare, surely we don't need to disappoint them. We can continue pretending that:

The constant cut-downs since twenty years back are just a temporary downturn.

-That our ideal society is the only right one and that all other nations will realise it if only they think about it.

-That Swedes are not nationalists.

-That Sweden is influential in the UN (*Gringo* 6).

3.3. Criticising Symbolic ideals and identifying with the Imaginary

Many blattes...look around for a more hospitable environment. They look to Great Britain which has become something of a Mecca for blattes in Europe. Just during the last few years, tens of thousands have emigrated a second time. For example, a large Somali population moved from Holland and Sweden to the more welcoming British cities. Cities such as Leicester... In a comparison with Europe, Sweden is doing quite well. I think that we will soon catch up with England and will become Europe's most tolerant country. But only if we all are willing to welcome multiculture instead of fearing it. We have long been an example of a country which is synonymous with the welfare state. Why not also become a role model in the creation of the modern multi-cultural state? (*Gringo* 8).	The journalists have not grasped the extended definition of Swedishness yet. The new generation's culture is brought up by the wing-beat of the multiculture. We in *Gringo* are not mediating an immigrant-culture, but a new Swedish culture (*Gringo* 11).	Many older blattes don't like it when we call them blatte. For them it is a reminder of a time when the Swedes turned their heads against their darker country-men. Even today there is a feeling of deceit and fear of falling back in a racist-atmosphere...The blackhead trauma is the biggest Swedish trauma of modern times. A big economic crisis can get us back into it again...it is important not to forget, but we have a very bright future ahead of us...in the Sweden of the future, everyone are Swedes (*Gringo* 15).	The football really makes me feel so unbelievably Swedish, all the way down to the soul and the heart. It is a feeling which is difficult to describe, but those of you who have felt it knows what I am talking about. For my heart has beaten and my souls has glimmered a little extra for our beautiful country and for Swedishness today while following Sweden's football games in the world cup (*Gringo* 23).

3.4. Full text examples

3.4.1. I want to live and die in the Nord

Around February-March this year, I read the national anthem for the first time. The only thing I knew then was 'du gamla du fria du fjällhöga nord' [the ancient, the old, and the mountainous Nord] and the part about living and dying in the Nord. The reason why I read it was because we had a talk in the Gringo editorial about the Sweden parade which we had planned for the national day, and we were going to distribute a little booklet with the anthem so that everyone could sing it. I still don't know the lyrics, but I know that I was thinking that it was actually quite nice, something about joy and beauty and green meadows. But the part which I remember exactly was 'you rest on the memories of the great days of yore'. It felt a little uncertain to imagine myself with my hand on my chest and happily singing that with conviction.

For me, Sweden has become my Sweden, only recently when I started to feel that Sweden as a nation and people are willing to progress. There is a loving energy which is sprouting and if everything runs smoothly, our self-image will change, and we will start to behave towards people in a way which also makes million program kids and blackheads feel like Swedes. It was around 30 years ago when modern immigration started and the million program houses were built. Now that we're some way into the twentieth century, everything exists here within our country's borders: one million suburb apartments and almost two million people with blatte a background. Sweden has already developed, and we can develop even more. If I am able to continue to feel that concrete houses are as beautiful as red houses with white corners, dark skin, as worthy as light skin, and million-Swedish as Swedish as Gothenburg dialect, I will want to live and die in this country, no doubt. This is the feeling I have now, I feel that even if it has happened a little too late, I can now sing the national anthem and stand up for Sweden. There is still a great deal to work on, mostly in respect of discrimination in all the important institutions such as the schools, healthcare and employment market. But we have a good base, a platform on which we have shown that the suburb and the Swedish generation who came here and are now having children are also our future.

I can sing for mine and my family's future, but I can't sing for what Sweden has been. My memories from the so called great days include the Laser-man76 and Bert Karlsson77, newspaper headings which state that the Swedish people want to drive them out, and I have the memory of my dad's disturbed voice when he was bullied at his work because his workmates thought he talked funny. I don't feel any pride in Sweden's history, but a worldly energy in the future. Perhaps Sweden is the country which has even the most energy, love and requirements, to get al.l people living here feeling included, and for them to want to participate and build their lives and their environment.

So, after our Sweden parade, which was Sweden's biggest national day parade with over 2000 participants, we took part in the celebration with around 10 000 more people who had gathered. At the end, the national anthem was projected on a screen and I sang very loudly, except the verse about the great days. Then I shut my mouth. Then I sang again and sang really hard. That day I felt, after having felt so much love for my Sweden and for Gringo, that I probably want to live and die here (*Gringo* 25).

---

[76] In the 1990s, a man was caught and jailed for shooting and killing, with a laser-gun, random people on the streets who had black hair or looked like they had an immigration background. He was given the famous nickname the '*Laserman*' by the public.

[77] Bert Karlsson created the nationalist party *New democrats*.

3.5. Re-evaluating *blatte* means changing the Symbolic

It is important to differentiate between that which is referred to as the accent that the older blattes talk with and the million-Swedish which the youth use. Neither of these needs to be bad Swedish. They're just new variants we're not used to and therefore we instinctively push them away from us. *Gringo* will continue to fight for million-Swedish. We will never call it blatte-Swedish, because it is only a minority of the blattes who use it and many more Swedes than you think talk this most creative and innovative Swedish in Sweden (*Gringo* 28).	The old Swedishness consisting of jante-law-hungry, nature-loving, consensus-horny Swedes belongs to times gone by. The massive immigration during the last thirty years has changed Swedishness completely. The 'Turk' who buys a red cottage not to assimilate, but because he wants to. The blond Swede who talk blatte-Swedish and who has an accent. They both represent the new Swedishness. Our image of Swedishness is not accurate. It needs upgrading. (*Gringo* 12).	But we soon realized that through telling stories about our dear million-program, we also told stories about today's Swede. It is in the suburb that we find the future of Swedishness. A hybrid of old Swedish and a constructed immigranthood. If we could put together all our passport photos, a new image of the appearance of the average Swede... would emerge. Yet, the template for what a Swede looks like is still light-skinned and light-haired...*Gringo* is...an update of Swedishness (*Gringo* 13).	Say goodbye to Sandra Backlund. Or at least Backlund. She will soon change her surname to Baqirjazihd and she hopes that more people want to do the same. "I want to show that it's bizarre to judge something according to a surname. A name does not say anything about a human being or her experiences and merits" (*Gringo* 12).

3.6. Full text examples

3.6.1. 'I betrayed my blatte Swedish'

I was the fluffiest snotty-nosed kid in town when I started in journalism. My home base was Vårbygård and I was proud of it big time. But I was also very impressed by everything outside. Impressed in a way that I nowadays think is very dangerous. A big reason why I started to write was because my teacher in Swedish babbled something about a potential that I didn't develop and said that I should write more 'ordinary', instead of free styling in my essays. So I got sick of it and kick started a paper on the net where I could write the way I wanted. This was almost exactly six years ago and very interesting to look back on.

My goal was to come back many years later and throw an employment letter from Dagens Nyheter[78] on my teacher's desk. It was there I wanted to get into, the place I later realised was the establishment. Not that a suburb kid otherwise would even stumble on that word. But I wanted to work with everything which had status in that field - writing and journalism. There were many obstacles on the way there. What I could remember most was the language.

---

[78] Dagens Nyheter (DN) is one of the biggest newspapers in Sweden.

I had subscribed to DN and every day I took five words which I didn't understand and put it in an excel list, which I later memorised. I was up to a couple of hundred and thought that I had started to sound like the smartest dude. I went to meetings and dressed smartly and tried to say Svennish things. I thought I needed it all the time in order to be accepted, and I remember once when I was having coffee with my sis and a sort of important friend of hers, and I was madly proud when I told them that I certainly could talk both suburb Swedish and academic Swedish. I remember exactly the words, my hand movements and how my sis killed my self-esteem when she said "bro, it's obvious when you talk that you're from Vårby, even when you try to talk nicely. And I remember that I was ashamed.

Today I can be ashamed for being ashamed. Or not ashamed, but look back and think, it was bloody pity that it had to be that way. Just like everyone else, I had an image of the million Swedish I was speaking as ugly. An ugly dialect which was used by ugly people. Something I had to wash away if I wanted to be successful. Today, newspapers, companies and teachers who don't appreciate million-Swedish, lose points in my eyes. And I will never in my life work for a company which thinks million-Swedish is bad Swedish.

Luckily, Sweden feels very good right now and everyone dares a little more. Guss and keff[79] were included in the Swedish academic wordlist and I am quite sure that million Swedish will soon be seen as any other dialect, with the same status as their sisters in the Swedish language. I write this with a smile on my face because I'm sure it will turn out that way. And why shouldn't you think the best. There will always be one day (*Gringo* 22).

3.6.2. 'Swedish – a stolen language'

There is a lot of talk of the English language influencing Swedish, and million Swedish is picked on even more. Is there reason to panic? Will the Real Swedish die?

So what's the deal? Swedish language humbly borrows its *gravlax* and its *smörgasbord* and receives back everything from wine, breakfast and stock, to church, toilet and opera. And the truth is that we all originally spoke the same language. Swedish, more proud than anything, is in reality a mess of newly borrowed words such as airbag and old words such as potato and tomato. Perhaps aina[80] will be as

natural as girl, maybe not, but people didn't stop saying girl just because we got another word.

The eternal whining about Swedish language is not something new. The southerners' slang has provided us with words such as tjej [girl], and when this slang was prevalent, people wrote column after column about how the language was being destroyed.

Swedish, just like all European languages belongs to the same Indo-European family. Because of migration and the separation of people, the Indo-European language later branched off into different language groups, and people developed their language in different locations. Swedish is a Teutonic language,

just like our Nordic neighbouring languages, and German, English and Dutch. More than 600 million people have Teutonic language as their mother tongue. Many words change their meaning when they change languages. This causes confusion between closely related languages. If you order a bärs[81] in

---

[79] These words originate in Middle Eastern languages and are presumed to be used by youth in the suburbs. These words were included in the Swedish Academic Wordlist in 2006.

[80] *Aina* is *blatte*-slang.

[81] *Bärs* is slang and means beer in Swedish.

Norway, at worst you'll be offered a brown sausage. And if someone asks you to hold their task[82] in Denmark, don't bark up the wrong tree, because task in Denmark means handbag.

However much we twist and turn the situation, the truth is that we have lent out words to many people, long before the Vikings, even if they were diligently borrowing every-day words such as alcohol. Thanks Vikings (*Gringo* 28).

3.7. Responses to *Gringo's* transgression of Swedishness

Swedish media? What is this? Alternative Swedish? If not even the media is using correct Swedish, how can those who already struggle with the Swedish language learn? Remove 'blatte'-Swedish from our media! M-L. (Dated 25-04-07).	Translation. Interesting magazine, but I need a translator. What does keff, fett, svenne, kompish mean? Or is the magazine not for Swedes? (Dated 30-03-07).	Language Stop destroying the Swedish language for fuck's sake! It's one thing that you talk your mother tongue at home, but you won't get far with your home-made slang here. Down with Gringo and out with the immigrants! (Dated 01-04-07).	If you come to Sweden to live, then you SHOULD learn to read and write in Swedish. It becomes difficult to get a job if you can't make yourself understood. I also believe that if you don't learn the language, then you shouldn't either apply for any social benefits whatsoever. This drivel about trying to mix a bunch of idiotic phrases from whatever country into the Swedish language should be shut down immediately. If you come to another country, you simply have to learn their language and customs. Something that we will count on if we would move abroad is that there wouldn't be many who would give us benefits if we can't or don't want to learn anything. Swedish in Sweden. Peter (Dated 06-03-06).

---

[82] *Task* means penis in Swedish.

4. Appendix for chapter 8

Three forms of critique		
Critique in the form of jokes/humour	**Hysterical critique**	**Obsessional critique**
The parody of institutions	Demanding recognition	Ambivalent critique
The ridicule of nationalists	Barred jouissance	Independence from the Other
The refugee's diary		Obsession with facts

4.1 Critique in the form of jokes/humour		
The parody of institutions	**The ridicule of nationalists**	**The refugee's diary**
We are looking for a new alibi. Our last mulatto left us for SVT83. So we are now searching for a durable blatte-alibi for the coming Zero Racism week. Do you have an exotic golden brown colour? Or are you perhaps even a little black? Do you have a name we cannot pronounce? In that case, we want you to contact us immediately! The situation is starting to become untenable. No special skills required. Don't hesitate and call xxx (Gringo 12).	How to become a Nazi. Gringo wants to crush the prejudices surrounding the Nazis. We have heard that they are a little sad because we don't understand them. It is actually not only those who have a hard time at school who become Nazis. There are other types as well. **The natural born Nazi.** If you are named after the Nazi Rommel and if the big portrait of Hitler is next to the family photos, then you know your destiny. It can make the other Nazis respect you. But it can also be very confusing for you out in the big world. You will feel lonely when it turns out that you are the only one at work who got a swastika-cake when you turned ten. (Gringo 30).	Dear diary, today like every day I go to the kebab restaurant to work and I'm tired and unshaved, I sit with al hapy and cheerful Swede, al have a god live. Al have god clothes good job and have asylum. I suddenly fel lonely. But blody hel. There is 30 000 and 50000 ilegal immigrants in Sweden, where are they? Why we not hear from them? (Gringo 27).
Work at the Immigration Board. Do you want a stimulating job where you will meet people from other countries on a daily basis and listen to exciting stories? Then the Migraine-board[84] is	Heavy quotes from the thinking sultans of the New democracy party: "I'd like to see Bengt Westerberg[85] get his daughter raped by a refugee". Bert	If I am doctor in this country it not enough to get asylum. Blackheads can not be doctor. Because we don't know midicin. Even the society need more doctor but doctor who ask for

something for you. The only requirement is that the word "yes" should not exist in your vocabulary. Label your application "Keep Sweden Swedish" or call: xxx. (*Gringo* 19).	Karlsson. HIV-fantasises about Bengt Westerberg's daughter. "Before two out of three children died, got eaten up by a lion or died because of disease". John Bouvin thought that it was not cool to give money to Africa because all too many black kids survive. (*Gringo* 26).	asulym they rejected. To stay in Sweden have to be something else. I think long about this and finally I know. Bloody hell I know what want to be. A dog. Simply a dog. Dogs have right to have Swedish passport... Dog they have doctor if they ill. They have food, they have house, they have clothes, hairdresser and school (my children not have school)...it could not be better. I want to be dog. (*Gringo* 30).
Rubbish.se Rubbish.se is looking for a Rinkeby reporter. Did you like the article about the Somali who wanted to invest in Rinkeby? Did you also think it was a very strange thing to do? And do you think that 25 years in Sweden is not enough to be seen as a Swede? If you answer yes to those questions, then you are welcome to help us with more doubtful articles without news value. In addition, if you can take really lousy crowd-pictures of red-blotched svennes, then we think that the job is for you. Ring-keby us on: xxx (*Gringo* 30).	Racist parties become multi-cultural. Right-wing extremists from various countries plan to create a united party in the EU parliament. The group will get many benefits: more time in the rostrums, more money and finally the racists will finally become multi-cultural (*Gringo* 32).	Dear diary, Today like all day I wake I have night mare. So terrible, I dreamt I was deported. I sweat all night and they send me back to war...I dreamt those at the migraine-board laughed in the airport when I was leaving. They laugh when I cry out for mercy. She looks in my eye and she very hapy. I don't know why!! (*Gringo* 28).

4.1. Critique in the form of jokes/humour

4.2. Full text examples

4.2.1. 'Which Sweden democrat are you?'

In the elections, Sweden Democrats got 162 000 votes. Because we believe that confusion is common among SD's voters, we are offering a test which gives all the mini-racists the chance to find their own voter-profile. Here you go, and keep Sweden quite so Swedish[86].

1) In one of the evening papers you love to hate, you read about a dude who is wanted by the police for having robbed an iron shop. How do you react?

a) Wonderful! Let's hope for a group rape at the weekend, and perhaps the white race dares to rise.

b) I'm not a racist, but have had enough of immigration now!

c) I saw a nigger once in Africa, he seemed to feel much better there than those who are here.
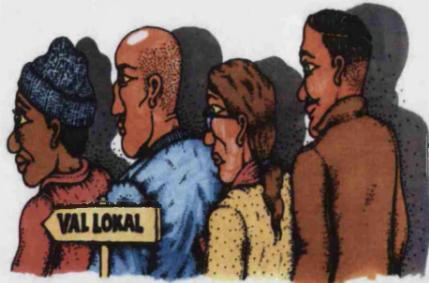
d) Bloody blattes, they need to go! Apart from me, my family, Mehmet across the street and the queen of course.

2. Why did you vote for the Sweden Democrats?

a) Because my last party SAR (Shoot All Race-Aliens) didn't attract votes.

b) I'm not racist but it was probably when my neighbour's cousin's yoga instructor said that we are not allowed to sing the national anthem anymore.

c) Because they want to decrease taxes and the amount of non-blondes in Sweden

d) I want to show that I understand that as a blatte I am a problem for Sweden.

3. Do you know an immigrant?

a) I buy my 'all cops are bastards' jackets from a guy who is from Finland.

b) Yes, I am not a racist, the guy in the kiosk and my daughter's twelve best friends are nice.

c) Well, Consuela has been cleaning for us for four years now.

d) I am one, and my whole family. But I hang around with Swedes. Real Swedes.

4. Is there a country which Sweden should become more similar to?

a) Germany 1939!

b) I am not a racist, but Denmark seems to be quite tough against those Muslims.

c) South Africa in the 80s was good I think. Apartheid is just wrong if you can't afford to drive a car.

d) A bit more like Iran. They don't let in any foreigners. But we should of course not have more Iranians here. Or. I mean ahh...

5. Should criminal immigrants be kicked out of Sweden?

a) Yes, or "disappear" some other way. .

b) I am not a racist, but less Turks wouldn't do any harm.

c) Well, it's enough with those prisoner camps..."Million-program" is what they're called aren't they?

d) I got a receipt for that dish antenna I swear! It looked legal. Please let me stay!

Which Sweden democrat are you?

Most A's: Tactic-Thomas

You actually think that SD is a bad cowardice [better here simply to say cowardly, not bad cowardice] party. But right now they are the only racist alternative. You hope that more people will discover Shoot all Race-Aliens for the next elections.

Most B's: Million-Svenne-Maria

You're not a racist, but having voted for social democrats for 800 years, you switched to SD. You live in a suburb with loads of blattes around you and it's alright. But someone has to be responsible for the fact that your salary is not increasing and the blattes are the probable culprits.

Most C's: Upperclass-Örjan.

You actually don't have any opinions about immigrants, you have just met them in their natural reserves in Africa and Asia. But it would be quite nice with more little white kids [linlottor]. They're so cute! And white!

Most D's: Blatte-Behnaz

SD promises that they like law-obeying blattes like you. You're not completely convinced, but to vote for them feels like a good way to signal to the svennes at work how much you like Sweden. Perhaps you're allowed to come along next time they are going out for a drink (*Gringo* 30).

4.3. Hysterical critique

Demanding recognition	Barred jouissance
Who would trust a suburb-blatte against uniformed men in the service of society? The power difference was provoking and some of the frustration we felt was projected onto uncle police...(*Gringo* 14).	The students that entered the Uppsala University due to affirmative action quotas had to go through tests that their study colleagues were excused from. The questions were among other things about group rape, honour killings and the temperament of immigrants. Maria found out that as an "immigrant" she has to make more effort if she wants to study because Swedish is her second language. "I don't think it's OK for the teacher to say that, but what could I do?" says Maria, who studies law at Uppsala University (*Gringo* 7).
It is first when the discrimination becomes like a big search light aimed straight at your face, that you are forced to open your eyes and will then see everything through a new light. Suddenly you realise why you have been treated differently the whole of your life. This is when you start your blatte-revolution (*Gringo* 10).	Once in the water-festival we were called 'fucking Turks' by an older blond group of guys. When we dissed them back, the police was there straight away. They took us away and let the laughing Swedes go. We were questioned and yet again judged in advanced (*Gringo* 14).
I went through old editions of *Metro*. I found one article which said 'exterminated Romanis are forgotten'. Yes, a better definition is probably hard to find. The article was about how Romanis and other groups are forgotten in talks about the war. Perhaps you wonder what I mean? I will tell you. Us Romanis are used to being forgotten in many different situations. Of course it hurts, but the pain is also a defence against non-Romanis and against society (*Gringo* 25).	The most fuck up thing I've been through has been because of my black hair. I didn't get in to dance clubs, I was excluded in school, and the media has denigrated the suburb ever since I knew I existed (*Gringo* 11).
"I am a calm person who never makes trouble, even though I have met many mean bouncers. If I did anything wrong, why did they not take me to the police? And why did the police not come? Why did it take so long? There are many questions. How can someone say 'fucking monkey' in a restaurant? These are service men who have to do their job even if they hate blacks", says Samuel. "And when I ask for help in a life and death situation, even that person starts hitting. Whom should I turn to?" (*Gringo* 30).	Diana started at the police school a year ago. She has her roots in Africa but has lived in Sweden for twelve years. She describes her time as a student as very difficult so far, and she has been close to dropping her studies due to comments from fellow students. Diana says, "One student told me that he 'finds it difficult to deal with black people' and another told me that I 'look like a prostitute'" (*Gringo* 14).

4.4. Full text examples

4.4.1. 'Hole in the dentistry dream'

Gringo has met a group of future and current dentists who feel dissed because they're blattes.

To study dentistry means first learning theory and then practice. During these practicals it is up to those responsible for the program to pass or fail the students. At the dentistry program at Gothenburg University, a handful of students are 'barred' every term.

In the last five years this has only happened to the program's black head Swedes.

"Over the last ten years the program has attracted many students with different backgrounds especially from Iran. Sometimes if some students talk Persian during a lunch break it will be taken up as a problem in the review meetings", says the student Sara. Sara's name is actually something else, but she wants to be anonymous because she is scared of the consequences if she were to use her real name. "Many students don't feel welcome and those who have protested have become barred because of it", Sara says.

Several of the students which *Gringo* has talked to have described a similar situation. No one wants to reveal their name because they're afraid of even harsher treatment by the school. Despite that the program is five years in length, many have been there for up to eight years. Apart from big debts, many have psychological and physiological problems, which have led to both sick-days and divorces. All the students which *Gringo* has met witnessed the lousy treatment of the blattes and the extra low tolerance for this group.

"I have seen how my completely Swedish friends have made big mistakes but they have not been barred by the teachers. Those of us with foreign backgrounds are scrutinized very harshly and especially those who wear the headscarf", says Sara. She has talked to students in other programmes at the University who also have problems with discriminated blattes. But it seems to be worse in the dentistry program. "Our program takes the medal for discrimination".

Jan Åberg at the Antidiscrimination Office in Gothenburg knows the problem at the dentistry program. "They've had other criteria for these students and this is a problem which has existed for twenty years", he says. He says that many students, both current and graduates, have contacted the antidiscrimination office. "Many are not feeling well and they can't be bothered to do something about it. We can only help to a certain extent. Several have moved abroad after graduation".

Jan Olsson is responsible for the program. Even he is aware of the problem, but he doesn't think that this is necessarily about discrimination. "These kinds of assertions are difficult to handle. One explanation for why many immigrant students are barred could be that it is more difficult for some of them, for example they might have trouble with the language". He also says that he takes seriously the problem of students who feel badly treated. "Our type of education is special, it is about judgements from the teachers. What we can do is to keep at our criteria for examinations as strict as possible. There are unfortunately no obvious solutions". (*Gringo* 32).

4.5. Obsessional critique

Ambivalent critique	Independence from the Other	Obsession with facts
What I know is that it is not difficult to use the racist label. It's used all the time. And everyone is afraid of being called a racist. This is why the debate never gets started, and instead there is a whole lot of politically correct bullshit (*Gringo* 5).	Warmer climate, home-sickness or higher salary could be the reasons to be enticed outside the borders of Sweden. Kebba Colley really wanted to stay. But if he doesn't get a job before April, he will go to Ireland with his graduate competencies worth half a million Kronas. "I am not going to sit here and rot with my skills", says Kebba who finished his master's degree in June last year (*Gringo* 32)	This year the discrimination ombudsman received almost 700 reports about ethnic or religious discrimination, but there were no convictions in court. The reports are just the tip of the iceberg. According to research done by Sweden's Antidiscrimination Offices, 94 percent of those who have been discriminated against don't make a report. Many simply think that the laws against discrimination don't work (*Gringo* 12).
Something has happened to Sweden, the winds of change are sweeping over the whole country, the pendulum is about to swing. The new generation of Swedes think it's completely natural with a Mustafa in the classroom, we don't raise our eyebrows when we see a 'nigger' in the supermarket...The only reason we have more young people and people with immigration backgrounds is to compensate for the lack of these groups which exist on other editorials. (*Gringo* 2).	In self defence, they keep away from Avenyn. They don't go further than the bars in Vasastan. They don't think there is any point going there, but they would not hesitate to organise a party at Avenyn, just to show the bar owners that discrimination is meaningless (*Gringo* 25).	If we assume that one and a half persons live in each flat in the suburbs, it means that there are one and a half million Swedes living in the million-programme areas. At least 16.7 percent of Sweden's population are million Swedes. However, there are not many million-Swedes in government. The party who's got highest number of MP's living in the suburbs is the Green party, who's got three of them. This is 15.8 percent of their total number of MP's in government (19 MPs). (*Gringo* 29).
How to face hate? We can make a change. My tips: Discover your attitudes. It's Friday and you're going out and think 'I don't get in anywhere'. Question your attitudes. The lady on the bus stares at you. 'Is she racist?' She may be blind! Analyse the hate. Someone tries to talk very clearly when they talk to you. Ask kindly 'do you	Despite the north pole summers, it is possible to spend your holiday in Sweden. Are you thinking of staying in Sweden and inviting friends from Turkey or Greece? Don't take them to the inner city. The hospitality in Ibiza or Kos is not the same here. The risk is that hopes for a party and dance turn into a walk in town and you'll end up in McDonald's instead. Go to the hood instead. (*Gringo* 12).	Only 30 think that the media image of the suburb is correct. Out of those who are most critical (youth between 15 and 29 years old), they think that only one fifth of the image is true. Most critical are the girls in that group. (*Gringo* 9).

Ambivalent critique	Independence from the Other	Obsession with facts
work as a speech-therapist?' (*Gringo* 24).		

4.6. Full text examples

4.6.1. 'The journalistic void'

The racism in the Swedish media is becoming less. The change is happening in accordance with more journalists with immigration background entering the industry. But there is still a lack of competence at the editorial level to represent the growing Sweden. As a reader you can help more than you think.

"Look at this for example", says Josef El Mahdi and shows me a copy from a *Metro* article from the second of April about rape. One section is marked with blue: "Another common denominator for young boys who are sentenced for rape is that they've got a distorted view about women. They know very little about women. It is especially common among some boys from foreign cultures." He says, "It's quite funny. What does the person who wrote the article mean by 'foreign cultures'? [says Josef]. 'Foreign' for whom? For the person from Iceland, for the Iraqi, or the Cypriot who read the paper on the tube, or for the journalist who seems to think that all readers have the same background as himself"?

Biased report

A majority of the newspaper articles about the suburbs are negative and are often about crime and misery. Josef is one of the fulltime employees at Quick Response, which is part of the youth organisation of the Red Cross, and which scrutinises the content of the largest newspapers. They notice both well and badly written articles in which people with foreign backgrounds are included. Almost every day a bad article is published, but it is not because of racism or ill will, he claims. "Not many journalists today have foreign backgrounds. The mixture on the editorials is bad and they don't succeed in depicting the society we live in today in a good way".

The lack of journalists with immigration - and suburb - backgrounds means that the editors will not scrutinise the articles which are about "immigrants" as carefully. It happens frequently that wrong information about for example Islam appears in articles because there's no-one in the editorials well placed to keep an eye on such inconsistencies. The editorials don't manage their assignments because of the lack of competencies they have within certain areas.

Wanting to employ non-Europeans

Sydsvenska dagbladet[87] in Malmö for example had problems when the mosque was on fire about a year ago. Several reporters went out in order to interview those affected, but because none of the reporters spoke Arabic; they were Christian Swedes and they were not well received by the Muslims. The material they got from the event was far from what the chief editor Hans Manson had wanted to see. But he learnt from his mistakes. "We are now actively recruiting journalists with experience of different languages and cultures", he says. "According to the statistics we are actually in quite a good position and have quite a lot of immigrants, but many are Danish, we want more non-European immigrants".

Most of the newspapers are now actively working to get more people with an immigration background. In adverts those "who speak several languages or have an immigration background" are often invited to apply. But a lot of it is a game for the galleries. When it comes to the selection process, extremely few of

the journalists with immigration backgrounds who apply for the jobs are employed. The argument is usually that they are not sufficiently competent.

Björn Hager is a project leader for Sveriges Radio[88] new channel, SR Sverige. In order to employ journalists who can represent the new Swedish population he put up an ad with an original text: "Do you have a foreign name, do you have an accent or do you have trouble keeping quiet? If you answer yes to any of the questions, we want you to apply". He says: "I was drowning in applications. We got more than 500 and to my understanding many are super competent. I don't understand those who say they don't get any good applications from journalist with foreign backgrounds". He claims that in a multicultural Sweden, the editorials have to be multicultural, it is a democratic must.

Sloppy bosses

Josef El Mahdi has got the impression that most of the journalists and especially the bosses want to change the situation and their attitude, but he still thinks that many are far too sloppy. Sometimes it seems like they just sit and wait for "multiculture", and for a Kurd to come and save them. Just waiting for such a solution doesn't work. They have to get a hold on their lack of knowledge themselves. If they don't have contacts in the suburbs, they have to get them. It's not enough for a school reporter to make the excuse for a bad and misleading article and say "I don't have any insight into what happens in the school because I'm never there and I don't know any teachers". Josef is optimistic and often sees signs that the media is raising the level of "immigrant"- and suburb reports. For example, the Monday before we talked, P1[89] had for the first time a morning service with a Muslim woman. He encourages everybody who read newspapers to help: "It is possible to change more than you think. The best and simplest thing one can do is to contact the journalists, call or mail, if you think that something is wrong. They care more than you think", he says convincingly (*Gringo* 1).

4.6.2. '*Blattes* get jobs in London'

Aram Fatehi got tired of the fact that his blond mates in the military service got jobs while he remained unemployed. He moved to London. The employers are fighting for him there.

Aram Fatehi was close to giving up. He looked for jobs for six months after finishing his military service. Aram and two blatte mates were discriminated whilst his blond friends got jobs. "In the end I was fed up". He says that employers would make comments such as: "did you do military service here in Sweden which is not your own country"?

Aram realised that he had to do something drastic. His uncle who owns a restaurant in London offered him a job and he took it since he had no other opportunities. Half a year later he was picked up by a luxyry shop owner on the other side of the road. "He offered me double my salary", he says with a big smile.

Aram has now lived in London for more than two years and he has no plans to move back. When friends come to visit from Sweden, they don't want to go back either.

"No one looks down at you here. No one looks at you as an immigrant, as long as you know the language. You're one of them, not just one among them. I feel more at home here".

Many of those Swedes who go to London every year to study or work decide to stay there. London has a great number of Swedes living there now. People even say that it is Sweden's fourth largest city. The shop that Aram works in is in Barnes which is one of the most Swedish dense areas in London. "It is like little Sweden here, everybody talk Swedish. There is even a Swedish school".

Aram thinks there is a big difference between London and Gothenburg, where he used to live. For example, he no longer has problems getting into bars. But even if he thinks London is more tolerant, the postcolonial legacy still exists. "I'm white in the eyes of the black people. According to the white Englishmen, I am something in between white and black. The black people here are like the blackheads in Sweden".

But Aram also misses Sweden. His girlfriend and all his friend are still here. And in a big city such as London it is difficult to make friends. "Sweden is wonderful in many ways. It is worth paying the extra money in taxes in Sweden. Everything is so clean. The standard is much higher. And of course there is the tap water. I miss the Swedish tap water" (*Gringo* 8).

4.6.3. 'Very expensive to diss'

Discrimination is always a lousy thing, and it also costs a crazy amount of money for Sweden. The total cost: At least 4.4 million Kronas.

According to an earlier study*, a realistic increase of blattes in the workplace would improve the treasury by 20 to 25 million Kronas per year.

This is the total gain of getting 50 000 people into employment. If number of blattes in employment was equal to the number of svennes in employment, twice as many of them would have employment. But long term unemployment among other things makes it difficult to get 100 000 people in to work.

According to another study**, the government would save 31.6 million Kronas if the income of foreign born people increased to the same level as the income of those born in Sweden.

Expenses which include unemployment, social security and housing benefits would decrease by 5.2 million Kronas. Over 80 percent would be gained by an increase of taxes by 26. 4 million Kronas.

It is difficult to determine how much of unemployment of blattes depends on discrimination. Researchers are not clear on this issue. Most of them agree that discrimination exists and that it makes a big impact. Since there are no definite numbers, in this article, we assume that discrimination explains about half of the unemployment of blattes.

Blattes are heavily overrepresented in social security benefits. More than half of this goes to blatte families, despite the fact that they only make up 12 percent of the population. One of the reasons for this over-representation is the large families of blattes big in which both parents are unemployed. In 2004 the cost for foreign born individuals who would have had work if they were born in Sweden was around 3.4 million Kronas. If half of this is due to discrimination, this means that the cost is 1.7 million Kronas.

The lousy work situation for blattes means that they are more costly due to sick leave and early retirement. In 2004, the 540 000 early retired individuals cost Sweden about 64 million Kronas. Non-Nordic blattes are more often on long-term sick leave and they also retire earlier. This is among other things due to exhausting work tasks and limited opportunities to change the workplace. The 540 000 early pensioners cost around 64 million Kronas in 2004. the over-representation of blattes was around 36 000 people, which is less than 4.3 million Kronas. If half of this is due to discrimination, we have 2.1 milliard Kronas.

The integration policy is also expensive. It costs in total around 1.8 million Kronas, although most of this goes to refugees. 163 million Kronas is spent on integration and anti-discrimination projects. Most of this money goes to the Integration Board and the Ombudsman against discrimination (DO).

Finally, there is the issue of invisible costs. Namely the fact that the skills of blattes are not used and that their qualifications become invalid. This is partly why only half of the 100 000 unemployed blattes are viewed as available for work. The state would save more than 80 percent in the form of tax income from blattes if they worked. Discrimination can be very destructive for the Swedish economy. But one should not forget the individual behind the statistics; all the blatte-Swedes who are affected.

This is how much discrimination costs:

Economic assistance in 2004: 1713 million Kronas

Early retirement in 2004: 2149 million Kronas

Anti-discrimination and integration work in 2006: 168 million Kronas

Employment market measures in 2006: 358 million Kronas

Total: 4388 million Kronas

the total cost is around 4.4 million Kronas. This number shows how much discrimination cost in 2006.

* Daniel Rauhut and Gustaf Blomberg 'Economic effects of integration and immigration', 2003.

** Jan Ekberg 'Can the immigrant make the support of an aging population easier?', Economic debate, 4, 2004. (*Gringo* 27).