



Introduction: At home in Asia? Place-making, belonging and citizenship in the Asian Century

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Abstract

For the authors of this introduction, home is not always or only sweet home. For us, it is constructed with contradictions, ruptures and anxieties. Indeed, the world never fails to present us with ‘real’ people with ‘real’ issues of home. After ‘rescuing’ the idea of home from its two assumed arch-enemies ‘mobility’ and ‘urbanization’, we will proceed to formulate our appeal to reconceptualize ‘home’ and explicate why and how to do so. We have cited instances from Hong Kong, Beijing and Asia at large, not only because the empirical core of this special issue is on Asia, but, more fundamentally, also because we want to take issue with the Eurocentric bias in the debates on home hitherto. We conclude by making a modest plea – or more accurately, to configure various trajectories of thinking on ‘home’ into a plea – to bracket home as (making) place, (not) belonging and (flexible) citizenship.

Keywords

Asian Century, Asian urbanity, Asianization, belonging, citizenship, globalization, home, identity, migration, place-making

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You don't have a home until you leave it and then, when you have left it,
you never can go back.

James Baldwin, *Giovanni's Room*¹

We found this quotation when, out of sheer curiosity, we googled 'home' and landed on a site offering a total of 662 quotations.² Following our curiosity, we did a cursory analysis of these quotations and found a few recurring themes. For instance, home is not necessarily a place; it can very well be a person. And, home is something that relates to the past, to a place that is more often than not long gone – as alluded to in Baldwin's quotation. And, home is a matter of the heart, a structure of feeling, an affective state of belonging ... Indeed, the sentimental associations of home evoke in almost all of these quotations a sense of intimacy, of warmth, of nostalgia – it is a word saturated with positive meanings and affect.

For the authors of this introduction, however, home is not always or only sweet home. For us, it is constructed out of contradictions, ruptures and anxieties. Jeroen, born and raised in the Netherlands, remains, by and large Dutch-based. Yet, due to his long-term attachments to China – attachments evolved, in the first place, figuratively and literally, out of a longing to escape from the confines of his home – Jeroen often feels out of place in Amsterdam, sometimes like a hint, sometimes like a push. For Yiu Fai, born and raised in Hong Kong, his understanding of home has always been ambiguous, always intertwined with vexing questions of political as well as cultural citizenship. During the time of colonial rule, he held a British passport, which stated clearly the holder did not have any right of abode in the United Kingdom. Now, almost two decades after Hong Kong reverted to Beijing rule, he still finds it difficult to put 'People's Republic of China' after 'Hong Kong' when he has to write his home address. His move to the Netherlands in 1992 was partly an attempt to find a new home, while his relocation to Hong Kong in 2011 superseded that attempt with an acknowledgement that perhaps it would suit him fine to travel and live here and there, a refusal to choose either. For Sonja, born in the Netherlands, but raised in the Asian urbanities of Jakarta and Singapore as well as Dutch suburbia, her academic endeavours brought her again to Indonesia, the United States and, since 2010, Australia. Apart from the changing *localities* of home, the visuality of her mixed-race background has often prompted questions of home and belonging posed to her by others. Born as the child of a Belgian father and a Chinese-Indonesian mother, she often encountered the questions 'Where do you *really* come from?' and 'Where is your *real* home?' But rather than giving in to authenticity or singularity in developing a sense of home or belonging, Sonja, as with Yiu Fai, understands the multiplicities of home in such a way that it is quite impossible, and also undesirable, for her to establish a solid or singular sense of home.

We foreground our biographies not only because such a reflexive act is not unusual in the academic tradition we situate ourselves in, that is, to take the personal as the political; more poignantly, it is inspired by the very observation that our biographies are not at all unusual among our fellow academics. Many of our colleagues are not 'native' to the 'home' they are occupying at this moment. This sparked off our interest in organizing the conference 'Where Is Home?', leading finally to the collection of

articles in this special issue, covering the experiences of people far beyond the confines of academics. We started off with the questions our biographies prompted us to raise: What are the ideological and geopolitical implications of the notion of home? Why do we consider it so important to feel at home, to return home or to produce a sense of home? Do intensified patterns of mobility affect our sense of home, and are mobility and home rightly juxtaposed with one another? Is there a possibility to turn *not quite at home* into something more political, or something more positive and productive? How to escape from home? If these questions, as profound as they are urgent (given the eager appropriation by the nation-state of the notion of home), appear abstract, the world never fails to present us with ‘real’ people with ‘real’ issues of home. For migrants from Vietnam, whose citizen’s rights are refused in Australia, yet whose children are born in, say, Sydney, would home be his or her place of birth in Vietnam? Can Sydney ever feel or become like a home, even when one’s citizen status is denied? How much at home do these children feel, born and raised there, yet without the right papers? And so on and so forth.

Occupying different intersections in the ‘host’ country, these migrants are wrestling with issues of home quite different from ours. We mentioned them without any intention of flattening the complexities of such experiences; rather, doing so was precisely meant to flag up such complexities in order to underline a sense of urgency about revisiting the idea of home. For us, and for many others like these migrants, we share, at the very least, similar negativity – unease, inability, reluctance, refusal – to take home positively, that is, with all its evocatively, overwhelmingly positive associations. Whose home are we talking about? Who gets the right to feel at home, at the expense of whom? Thus, to feel at home may well be a privileged feeling, often policed and secured by legal rights. In short, ‘home’ is a less innocent concept than we first expected it to be. It is as evocative as it is elusive.

If home is not a stable, fixed or secure place, where we are supposed to be at, to return to or, if it’s not yet there, to construct, we must hasten to add: neither is it the opposite of mobility. Instead, ‘mobile individuals achieve security, stability and familiarity under conditions of temporality, flexibility and anxiety characteristic of a mobile lifestyle’, argues Magdalena Nowicka (2007: 70) in her study of transnational professionals. Paradoxically, while technology enables mobility, it also enables the kind of security, stability and familiarity presumably interrupted by mobility. In our current, deeply mediated world:

electronic means of communication allow the radical intrusion of what Zygmunt Bauman calls the ‘realm of the far’ (traditionally, the realm of the strange and potentially troubling) into the ‘realm of the near’ (the traditional ‘safe space’ of ontological security). (Morley, 2003: 436)

The problematic demarcation between far and near, between strange and safe, renders the juxtaposition between mobility and home unproductive. Closer to what we have been discussing, the related assertion that especially mobile people – be they refugees, migrants, tourists, expats or indeed we academics – face a challenge in constructing a sense of home is equally unproductive if not fallacious. What is at stake is not only to recognize the penetration of the realm of the far into the realm of the near, but also to stay

sensitive to its ramifications. It may unsettle the distinction between both; it may also produce the urge to redraw cultural boundaries between the here and the there.

And we must not forget there is, at the same time, a peculiar version of mobility going on: one stays put, but everything else is moving. We are talking about the kind of flux, of losing control that urbanites may feel when their cities expand, when people all over the country and all over the world go there to seek a better life. The penetration of the realm of the far into the realm of the near is not always only mediated; it can be very tangible. Accelerating urbanization, when more and more people are coming from there to here, is often perceived and cited as another major force in this historical conjuncture, forcing us to address issues of home, particularly its evanescence. Just when we were drafting this article, a quality Dutch newspaper published a lengthy feature on London and the challenges large-scale migration brings to the city. Its subtitle conveyed precisely the tension if not opposition between urbanization and home: 'By 2050 one third more people will live in London. What can you do to make them still feel at home?' (Ketelaar, 2014: 14). And this worrisome question is raised in the context of a United Nations prognosis of 66 percent of the world population living in cities by 2015. With the same urge to nuance the relationship between mobility and home, we side with researchers who wonder if mass urbanization must work against home building and maintenance. Eric Klinenberg, focusing on singlehood, a new form of life enabled by big cities, foregrounds the richness of 'subcultures' and argues that 'cities with high numbers of singletons enjoy a thriving public culture' (Klinenberg, 2014: 18). Regarding the general fear of the decline of American communities, Klinenberg replies with the paradoxical need for single urbanites to reconnect. The point we are trying to make by way of this particular group of urbanites is simple: to avoid any foreclosure of the discussion over urbanization and home.

After 'rescuing' the idea of home from its two assumed arch-enemies 'mobility' and 'urbanization', we will proceed to formulate our appeal to reconceptualize 'home' and explicate why and how to do so. Indeed, the question of home is closely tied to notions of place, belonging and citizenship. Ideally, these may all come together: home is the place you feel you belong to, and that is part of a nation-state that has granted you citizen's rights. As we will explain later in this introduction, the three terms articulate different dimensions of the idea of home: *place* refers to the locality and materiality of home, *belonging* refers to the affective investment in the idea of home, whereas *citizenship* points at the legal dimensions of being at home. Increasingly, we witness disjunctures and fractures between these three different modalities of home. People are forced to move, for instance, and then, even if they do develop a strong sense of belonging to that new place, they have to fight for their rights of citizenship. We are thinking of one concrete case of Hong Kong, where domestic helpers from the Philippines and other localities leave behind their own families to take care of other families. This displacement between homes plunges them deeply into the workings of global capitalism, without earning them any citizen's rights from the authorities. In other fast-changing cities in Asia, such as Beijing, which de Kloet, one of the authors, regularly visits, people often feel alienated, negotiating a deep sense of non-belonging with the massive mutation of the cityscape. It is our contention, as we posited at the outset of this article, that these disjunctures will increase in future; the tensions between home and the actual place we

find ourselves living in, between home and our sense of belonging, and between home and the rights attached to it, are increasingly out of joint.

We cited instances from Hong Kong, Beijing and Asia at large, not only because the empirical core of this special issue is focused on Asia, but, more fundamentally, also because we want to take issue with a certain bias in the hitherto debates on home. While questions of home, place, belonging and citizenship have been high on the intellectual agenda since the early 1990s, most of these studies take ‘the West’ as their focus point. More often than not, the West conflates with the USA, which is problematic, as ‘it is not possible to generalise from the USA to the whole of the First World’ (Massey, 2004: 12). And when places outside the West are studied, then they are often read as localities that resist globalization through tactics of localization and appropriation. Arturo Escobar (2001) and Doreen Massey (2004), among others, have critiqued both the Eurocentrism in inquiries into place, and the related validation of the local and the indigenous. The local is generally imagined as a product or the outcome of the global, as if the global – that, in turn, is frequently equated with ‘the West’ – penetrates into, or even cannibalizes, the local (Massey, 2004: 10). As Escobar writes: ‘the global is associated with space, capital, history and agency while the local, conversely, is linked to place, labor and tradition – as well as with women, minorities, the poor and, one might add, local cultures’ (2001: 155–6). We aim to steer away from such uncritical validations of ‘the local’ or related celebrations of ‘home’, and instead follow a relational understanding of home, connecting it to other localities, as well as other spatial scales. In line with Massey, we’d like to think of home in a relational way, as one of the possible spatial identities that are ‘internally complex, essentially unboundable in any absolute sense, and inevitably historically changing’ (2004: 5). Home, like *any space*, including a ‘global space’, ‘is no more than the sum of relations, connections, embodiments and practices. These things are utterly everyday and grounded at the same time as they may, when linked together, go around the world’ (Massey, 2004: 8). Consequently, home is not a fixed, pre-established place, instead, it is space in-becoming (Nowicka, 2007: 73).

This relational perspective runs the danger of producing what Massey calls a ‘hegemonic geography of care and responsibility which takes the form of a nested set of Russian dolls’ (2004: 9). She goes on to explain this: ‘First, there is “home”, then perhaps place or locality, then nation, and so on. There is a kind of accepted understanding that we care first for, and have our first responsibilities towards, those nearest in’ (2004: 9). Such Russian doll geography tends to validate ‘a rhetoric of territory, of nation and of family, through which we are daily urged to construct our maps of loyalty and of affect’ (2004: 9) Here we see a return of the validation of the local place as the source of real meaning and the global space as an abstract outside force. When thinking of both together, and thinking of home as a relational place and space, we aim to avoid such a privileging of the local, and of home, and circumvent its implicit complicity with family ideology and the maintenance of the nation-state.

Our turn towards Asia can better be seen as another attempt to use ‘Asia as method’ (Chen 2010), that is to use Asian experiences to interrogate theories which are often Eurocentric but claim to be universal.³ Just in case anyone thinks that this reminder, if you like, has become quite trite, David Morley issues a similar appeal to avoid what he calls ‘EurAmericanism’ in a very recent publication: ‘we might better look to conditions

in what will be the mega-cities of tomorrow' (2014). While Morley is primarily referring to media and communications development and the cities he mentions are Lagos and Mumbai, we believe we are doing something quite similar here. After all, Shanghai's population stands at 23 million and Delhi's at 25.9 million, while *merely* 8.3 million live in the old metropole of London (Ketelaar, 2014). A turn towards Asia may help not only serve to counter the Eurocentrism that haunts theorizations of home, place, belonging and citizenship, but also to rethink these notions, to:

refigure our 'common sense' ... to better correspond to conditions outside the Metropolitan West, if we wish to have things to say which are relevant outside the unusually privileged conditions which still apply in (at least some parts) those specific socio-geographical area. (Morley, 2014)

What does home mean to Asians, and those who aspire to be Asian? How do Asian migrants make themselves at home in Singapore or Sydney? What does belonging mean in a changing Hong Kong or Guangzhou? And how can culture – be it art or popular culture – help to foster alternative imaginations of place, home and belonging beyond the confines of the authoritative discourses of nationalism, capitalism, family ideology and religion? How is the sense of home connected to the production of place (Appadurai, 1996)? And how are such constructions of home implicated in authoritative discourses of nationalism, capitalism and religion/philosophy (for example Islam or Confucianism) – the three interlocking discourses that seem to constitute the current rise of Asia? Can one construct a sense of home that moves beyond these discourses, or that challenges them? Or may a move towards homelessness, one that gestures towards a sense of cosmopolitanism, be a possible tactic to resist Asianization?

All the articles in this special issue engage with the notion of 'home' as representing an important and contested node in the intersection of place, belonging and citizenship. They come from different disciplinary perspectives, namely empirically oriented social sciences (Budianta, Castillo, and Moreh), urban studies (Ang and Chu), and the cultural studies of law (Erni). Taken together, they reiterate Morley's (2014) reminder of cultural studies' commitment, epitomized in the subtitle of his article, to 'the infra-ordinary, the interdisciplinary and the particular'. They also respond to Pink et al.'s (2013) call, in a recent publication in this very journal, to continue shifting the study of 'home' towards spatial theory and non- or beyond-representation accounts 'that direct our attention to the affective, unspoken, sensory and political elements of the everyday'. In their own lucid ways, the articles coherently work towards addressing the complex (and problematic) interplay of identity and sense of belonging to a specific place, in particular in the age of the so-called Asian Century, where new emerging economies such as China and India are reconfiguring locations of power and culture. The articles do this by looking at the processes of Asianization in the national imaginary of Hungary (Moreh), the influx of new mainland Chinese immigrants to Sydney (Ang), the disappearing Hong Kong identity as it is integrated into China (Chu), alternative homing practices among Africans in Guangzhou (Castillo), the 'home-making' of Southeast Asian migrant communities in Singapore and returning Indonesian female migrants (Budianta) and, finally, the changing state practices of managing citizenship rights (Erni).

By way of navigating through the articles, this introduction to the special issue makes a first attempt to address the notion of ‘home’ and aims to problematize practices of belonging and their consequences for global mechanisms of culture and power through both empirical and theoretical lenses. In what follows, we reflect upon the three themes of place, belonging and citizenship – and draw upon both the articles of this special issue and additional sources. We discuss briefly under each heading two of the articles of this special issue, but would like to stress that all contributions traverse the three modalities of home, while placing a different emphasis on each. As explicated below, we feel the need to put the three notions into brackets. Inspired by the theoretical thrust to hyphenate identity, we make a modest plea – or more accurately, configure various trajectories of thinking on ‘home’ into a plea – to bracket home.

(Making) place

Most of the literature on the cultural geographies of home has focused on, and probably also overestimated, the subject of mobility, flows, and movements of people circulating within and between countries and cities. Over the past decade, Asia has become a focal point for the labour implicated in making home; think of the Filipino domestic helpers in Hong Kong mentioned earlier, and the imaginations of home that inform their practices. Social science analysis often takes the perspective that circulations of global flows have endpoints; they root in localities and particularize their global objects. Following our earlier discussion on the all too often uncritical validation of the local and the place-based, we take our inspiration from Anna Tsing’s assertion that global flows always involve *making terrain*. But *making terrain* means that no distinction can be made between the ‘global’ transcending of place and the ‘local’ making of places. Rather than thinking in global flows that set foot in the local, Tsing proposes the concept of ‘place-making’:

Place-making is always a cultural as well as a political-economic activity. It involves assumptions about the nature of those subjects authorized to participate in the process and the kinds of claims they can reasonably put forth about their position in national, regional, and world classifications and hierarchies of places. (2000: 338)

Place-making is both local and global and, if we were to take the Asian Century as a place-making project, the concept of home and ‘making home’ in this new constellation can only be approached from the practice and imaginations of the making and remaking of Asian geographies. Hence our assertion that home-making processes have profound geopolitical implications: they can help to reassert the power of the nation-state, yet they also hold the power of redrawing of boundaries.

Place is a site of negotiation, and this is often a conflictual negotiation (Massey, 2004: 7). ‘Places are surely connected and constructed yet those constructions entail boundaries, grounds, selective connection, interaction, and positioning, and in some cases a renewal of history-making skills’ (Escobar, 2001: 169). Escobar argues that:

it might be possible to approach the production of place and culture not only from the side of the global, but of the local; not from the perspective of its abandonment but of its critical

affirmation; not only according to the flight from places, whether voluntarily or forced, but of the attachment to them. (2001: 147–8)

He distinguishes two approaches, one related to political economy, in which place is produced by global capitalism, and one related to the senses, in which places are endowed with meaning and the construction of identities (2001: 153). Both trends should ideally be combined, and contributions in this special issue show how global capital inspires movements and the creation of new boundaries, yet these boundaries produce a field of forces in which the meanings of place are being contested, constructed and negotiated.

While mobility and migratory flows are central to the movement and displacement of people in Asia, this issue does not necessarily focus on the process of movement itself. Instead, it investigates changing notions of home as a consequence of movement and mobility, both of which can be real or imagined, or both, whether attached to an actual physical home, the nation-state, or a mediated home. In his contribution to this issue, 'The Asianization of national fantasies in Hungary: a critical analysis of political discourse', Chris Moreh presents us with such a reconfiguration of Asian geography by demonstrating how Hungary is actively redefining itself as part of Asia by Asianizing its history, culture and ethnicity. Moreh argues that, in the wake of the economic recession, Hungary forcefully turned to Asia in promoting a discourse that goes beyond economic relations and engages with cultural affiliations that affect Hungarians' sense of home in the Asian Century. Moreh analyses three interrelated discursive events that demonstrate how economic, cultural and racial discourses are reinforcing one another and substantiating a search for the ancestral homeland and a new national identity.

Similarly, in her contribution, Jen Ang describes how the remaking of Asian geography is proceeding in Australia as well. In 'Precariously at home: Chinatown in Sydney, Australia in Asia' she asserts that to ask the question 'Where is home?' is also to problematize the *spatiality* of home. Home, she says, is not a taken-for-granted, fixed and inert space, nor a place which is simply there, where we feel naturally at home. In paraphrasing Doreen Massey (2005) she writes that the space of home is always under construction: it is always in the process of being made, the product of a multiplicity of interrelations. It follows that if the condition of home amounts to our capacity to feel a sense of belonging, then feeling at home can only be a dynamic, ambiguous and uncertain experience, dependent on its changing spatial parameters. *Where* home is matters not just geographically, but also historically, politically and culturally. In her article she uses these reflections to discuss the changing (im)possibilities of Australia's sense of being at home in the world with the rise of Asia. Ang states that Australians are increasingly admonished to start feeling at home in Asia but she cautions that this new embrace of Asia as home is going to be no more than a chimera if the complexities of space and geography are ignored. To bracket 'making' before 'home' is to remind us that home is always already implicated in such complexities, thus always already in the processes of making.

(Not) belonging

The 'rise of Asia' in the changing global context of the 21st century engendered real and imagined shifts in geopolitical power relations. Scholarship has attended to the

consequences of such shifts in economic and political terms but less attention has been given to the role of social, cultural, spatial and digital processes in which such world-making constructions affect, in at least both connotations of the word, our sense of belonging. Asianization defines new ways of belonging but, as suggested by our bracketing of the negational word 'not', also that of not-belonging, and the role of (new) media, the arts and popular culture have proven crucial to our understanding of the varied ways in which we transcend old loyalties and create new allegiances of living in between; this living in between is central to the navigation of the multiple forms of belonging constructed in and through off- and online spaces.

Place-making, as part of the construction of home, is, as mentioned earlier, a profoundly sensory enterprise, it involves a structure of feeling, an affective mode of belonging, that requires constant maintenance and that remains perpetually fragile. As Massey argues:

the politics associated with the rethinking of spatial identities have been, and continue to be, equally emotionally fraught and liable to touch on deep feelings and desires not always immediately associated with 'the political'. Rethinking a politics of place, or nation, is an emotionally charged issue. (2004: 6)

The positive associations the notion of home evokes create the risk of covering up the disciplinary implications, and its ideological connection to both the family and the nation-state. The longing, as ensconced in the word belonging, gestures towards a perpetual sense of unfulfilment, of not arriving, of feeling out of place, however transiently or translucently. This state of affective insecurity makes a more 'sensuous scholarship' (Stoller, 1997) all the more important. Home is a sensory experience, home is 'a domain composed of different sensory elements (smell, touch, taste, vision, sound) that is simultaneously understood and created through the sensory experience and manipulation of these elements' (Pink, 2003: 48).

To perceive home as both a structure of feeling and a sensory experience paves the way for probing into the role imagination plays, and in its slipstream old and new media, in the negotiation of home. In most contributions to this special issue, campaigns, pictures and other visual materials attest to this important role of the imagination, as significantly as the limitations of such. Put differently, they are concerned with moments when memories flow in frustrations with imagination, when longings duly evoked play havoc with the construction and maintenance of a sense of belonging. In this regard, we would also like to add a methodological note that one challenge for the future remains how to avoid the dominance of the visual in our analysis, and how to include the other senses in a more convincing way.⁴

In 'Faces of Hong Kong: my city? My home', Chu Stephen Yiu-Wai examines the locality of Kowloon City amidst the global forces of neoliberalism on the one hand and national integration with Mainland China on the other. His article investigates how the 'sense of belonging' has become a marketing strategy in 'Faces of Hong Kong', a campaign inaugurated via the BrandHK platform in 2010. The campaign is arguably designed by the government to put local people at the heart of the new strategy. Central to this is the theme 'meet the many faces of Hong Kong', as stated by the Financial Secretary,

which invites the global audience to get to know more about Hong Kong through the real stories of people. The campaign, therefore, has been putting its main thrust into a series of promotional videos that feature different Hong Kong citizens. Inspired by Leo Lee's 'pedestrian' attempt, which is at the same time sensory and affective, Chu seeks to 'find out what indeed is (or was) there, in Hong Kong's past, that may still shed light on its culture today'. His article endeavours to 're-search' Kowloon City by walking through the district, the sensory experience of which yields a strong sense of longing that revolts against an officially endorsed and promoted sense of belonging. It is argued that Kowloon City is no longer a site for the younger generation of Hong Kong people to write their own success stories. Although one of the projects of this campaign is called 'My City, My Home', a new set of questions emerges around this new wave of 'disappearance' in Kowloon City, about how not to belong.

In '*Homing* Guangzhou: emplacement, belonging and (alternative) citizenship among Africans in China', Roberto Castillo connects forcefully the issues of place, belonging and citizenship, and broadens the discussion by including Africans (and Sino-Africans) in Asian debates about belonging, cultural citizenship and global modernities. He follows the story of Tony Ifegbo, a member of the Nigerian community in Guangzhou, and explores strategies employed by individuals to negotiate their everyday lives under conditions of uncertainty. He argues that the transiency and precarity that characterize the African presence in Guangzhou have led to the emergence of 'networks of support' (sports clubs, national community offices and religious organizations), which are crucial affective and sensory arenas where solidarity, belonging and (alternative) citizenship are structured. By introducing the notions of 'emplacement within transiency' and 'precarious homing', this article explores how, in their attempts to (re)produce a sense of 'home' while in Guangzhou, individuals on the move articulate personal aspirations, transnational trajectories and locally emerging forms of belonging, with political and economic imperatives. At a time when Asian societies are articulating the multiple transnational flows structuring the alleged rise of the region, examining how Africans, whatever their longings are, might, or might fail to, feel they belonged in Guangzhou matters not only because their incorporation into the Chinese population challenges contemporary discourses of Asian identity, race, ethnicity, nationalism and citizenship, but also because it opens up possibilities for alternative (non-Eurocentric) imaginations of self, place, 'home' and identity. If, as Castillo paraphrases Paul Gilroy to summarize his findings, 'home' is, or can be, neither where you are from, nor where you are at, but somewhere in between, then perhaps in the realm of not-belonging we can also find home.

(Flexible) citizenship

The dynamics underpinning the way in which globalization affects place-making can be seen as articulating new definitions of 'denationalized citizenship' (Sassen, 2006), 'flexible citizenship' (Ong, 1999) or 'cultural citizenship' (Miller, 2007). Increasingly heterogeneous, our affiliations and loyalties to nations, cities and localities have become progressively more complex and ambiguous. This is because transnational movements of citizen-subjects intersect with multiple legal statuses that correspond with and 'perform' different subjectivities. We note, however, that these multiple subjectivities do not

necessarily coincide with the binaries of inclusion and exclusion so often alluded to in citizenship studies. Instead, following Ong (2006) and Mezzadra and Neilson (2013), we contend that inclusion and exclusion should be approached as a continuum. This continuum can be stretched to include each other, for instance, in processes of exclusion through inclusion, by introducing, maintaining and policing multiple forms of identity cards in Hong Kong.

As Halston and Appadurai write (1996: 188): ‘the nation may maintain the envelope of citizenship, but the substance has been so changed or at least challenged that the emerging social morphologies are radically unfamiliar and force a reconsideration of the basic principles of membership’. In a similar vein, Ong (2006: 15) argues that ‘contemporary flows of capital and of migrants have interacted with sovereignty and rights discourses in complex ways to disentangle citizenship claims once knotted together in a single territorialized mass’. Both the discourse of rights and the notion of cultural citizenship open up possibilities to think citizenship beyond the confines of the nation-state.

However, such a dislodging of citizenship from the nation-state has its limits, legal or otherwise, and the epithet ‘flexible’ should better be placed within brackets to draw attention to what some would even argue are increasingly inflexible practices of citizenship.⁵ As John Nguyet Erni will show in this issue, court cases remain powerful political tools for inclusion and exclusion. Given the resurgence in the recent decade of nationalisms of different kinds, and a re-enchantment of a belief in the nation-state (contrary to predictions that proclaimed the end of the nation-state in the 1990s), it becomes all the more important to align questions of home, place-making and belonging with questions of legal arrangements and citizenship. This may also help us unpack the disciplinary implications of the idea of home, and show how some people are allowed a home while others are not, or less so.

In ‘Whose home? Work and cultural belonging in a globalized Asia’, Melani Budianta draws upon research on returning Indonesian domestic workers and Indonesian-Philippine mixed families in Singapore to question whether the notion of home and sense of belonging is reconfigured to adjust to a heightened mobility of inter-Asia globalization. Her article starts by examining the ‘dream house’ motivation, arising from the marginalization of rural spaces, which drove unskilled women to do domestic labour in ‘in-transit’ homes in Asian metropolitan cities. The second part of her article deals with the search for a ‘third-country home’ among the Indonesian-Philippine mixed families as they follow the migration of capital from one Asian city to another. Budianta argues that flexibility in creating homes in new places is class and gender based. She also contends that, while Asian globalization creates the context for the making of ‘in-transit’ and hybrid cultural homes, the redefining of home in today’s globalized Asia still hinges on the national politics of Asian states concerning citizenship, economic protection and the internal politics of space-making.

Finally, Erni’s contribution ‘There is no home: law, rights and being *included-out*’ discusses the legal mechanisms in Hong Kong in which exclusion is predicated upon the workings of inclusion. Increasingly, who qualifies as a citizen, and where their sense of home is, have become vital questions for two visible groups: the Chinese Mainlanders, whose personal and cultural fortunes have been transformed by opportunities presented by the permeability of the city border, and the foreign domestic helpers whose right of

belonging has been caught up in discriminatory immigration laws. Erni's argument is that their fates are conjoined by what he terms the state of being 'included-out', something augmented by nebulous doctrines of citizenship rights as well as by legalized and informal forms of cultural racialism. He works through two landmark cases concerning the right of abode for people caught in half-sovereignty – the 1999 case of *Director of Immigration v. Chong Fung Yuen* and the 2012 case of *Vallejos v. Commissioner of Registration*. The two cases are seen as key historical bookends that sustain the politics of being 'included-out' in Hong Kong: they witness the changing state practices of managing citizenship rights, but they also galvanize new counter-biopolitical imaginations.

Bracketing home

'Home is where the heart is' is a clichéd saying, and in this introduction we have tried to question that idea, and the underpinning positive validation of the idea of home. We did so first by dislodging home from its presumed arch-enemies, mobility and urbanization. We then proposed to bracket certain key notions in discussions of home: (making) place, (not) belonging and (flexible) citizenship. The heart may feel schizophrenic, not sure which place it belongs to, and the mind may be upset by the authorities that refuse to grant him or her citizenship rights. Home is not so much where the heart is, it is also a place where power resides, a place that potentially confines, limits and constrains, a place of immobility and unfreedom, a place at times of claustrophobia and xenophobia.

Home can refer to a material place, a locality, an imagined place, a structure of feeling, a geopolitical metaphor, an affective state of being, a complex set of sensibilities and a set of legal rights – and all these gesture towards an intricate politics of inclusion and exclusion – poles of what we like to see as a continuum rather than a dichotomy. Processes of home-making thus need to be studied in the light of these inclusionary politics, and the articles in this special issue try to do just that. The lynchpin of this collection of cases is our sensitivity to and our privileging of Asian experiences, and revisiting our homes. In what is often hailed as the Asian Century, new processes of home-making, of belonging and of regulating citizenship statuses are emerging. The celebration of the Asian Century, as well as the alleged rise of China, demand critical interventions that help simultaneously to challenge the persistent Eurocentrism in academia while undermining these newly emerging claims of geopolitical and cultural hegemony. The prism of home, in its triple modalities of place-making, be/longing and citizenship, may help to do that.

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Notes

1. Taken from: <http://www.goodreads.com/quotes/tag/home?page=3> (accessed 11 August 2014).
2. See: <http://www.goodreads.com/quotes/tag/home> (accessed 11 August 2014).
3. However, the idea of 'Asia as Method' is not without its own complexities. First, it runs the danger of establishing a new parochialism, or producing its own hegemonic position. Second, as noted in the (Chinese-language) edited volume *Re-Sighting Asia: Deconstruction and Reinvention in the Global Era* (Lo, 2014), the notion of 'Asia' itself is, from its inception, already entangled with colonialism and nationalism. We may wonder if it is therefore possible at all to escape from the spectre of Europe (see also Chow and de Kloet, 2014).
4. See Erni (2013) for the role of smell in Hong Kong.
5. See for instance Toker (2014). Analysing media coverage of the last two elections in Turkey, in 2007 and 2011, the author shows how electoral discourses by political parties remained dominated by the national agenda, with European Union-related issues conspicuously absent.

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