Constituting Citizenship through the Emotions: Singaporean Transmigrants in London

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Abstract: Drawing on a qualitative study of Singaporean transmigrants in London, this article examines the way that citizenship is constituted and contested through the emotions. I draw attention to, first, the emotional representations associated with citizenship, particularly the politics of belonging in relation to citizenship-making projects and with regards to the emotional valences of racialized belonging. Second, I explore the emotional subjectivities underpinning social behavior and constituting the social relations of citizenship. I focus on the ordinarily experienced emotions in everyday settings that play an important role in shaping citizenship, but which have hitherto been neglected in the citizenship literature. An emotionally inflected analysis of citizenship, or what I term as "emotional citizenship," helps illuminate social relations and structures producing the politics of citizenship.

Keywords: emotional citizenship, politics of belonging, transnational migration, Singapore, London

In an inaugural address marking the transition of political leadership during the Singaporean National Day celebrations in 2006, the new Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong highlighted the significance of overseas Singaporeans to the national community. He described the overseas citizenry as a generation "with wings" and emphasized the need "to create emotional experiences that will bind them" to Singapore and the importance of allowing them to "take ownership of the country" (Lee 2006). Yet, that same year also saw the country embroiled in a public controversy regarding legislative changes made to deter Singaporean national servicemen from capitalizing upon migration to avoid the two and a half years conscription period (*Today*, 4 April 2006). Emotive exchanges in media reports strongly debated whether notions of citizenly duties, national belonging and loyalty should prevail or if a flexible and forgiving approach should be adopted as more Singaporeans venture overseas.

Citizenship as a status, identity, and practice has received renewed attention in the light of contemporary globalization and transnational migration flows. Citizenship scholarship is traditionally characterized by normative and institutional approaches (Brubaker 1992; Bauböck 1994; Soysal 1994). While recent empirically led research has made significant advances demonstrating that citizenship is an experiential and negotiated social process in everyday life (Ehrkamp and Leitner 2006; Nyers 2007), this article argues that citizenship scholars have yet to fully explore the way citizenship is constituted and contested through the emotions. Despite

earlier attention given to the emotions in writings on nationalism and terrorism as well as some aspects of transnationalism, what remains relatively lacking is a systematic analysis of the effects the emotions have on other types of political behavior, such as citizenship. Citizenship may be produced by institutional factors and social relations, but the emotional dynamics through which these processes happen are also important. This is because the intersubjectivity of emotions structures social relations (Davidson and Milligan 2004) and underpins the social structures operationalizing social life (Ahmed 2004). Examining the emotional logics of citizenship helps interrogate the substance of social relations and structures instead of reifying them. The emotions act as an analytical tool for linking individual experience to broader social trends, without claiming the ontological nature of the social and cultural or the individual (Good 2004:531).

I understand citizenship to be "a non-static, non-linear social, political, cultural, economic, and legal construction" (Marston and Mitchell 2004, 95) that enacts territorial and social closure by restricting entry, residency, and other rights to persons holding citizenship status (Brubaker 1992, 21-34). Whilst taking onboard conceptualizations of citizenship as both a political-legal formula (conferring formal state membership with rights and duties) as well as a social-cultural fact (in terms of identity and belonging) (Painter and Philo 1995, 113-115; Joppke 1999, 632), my goal is to underscore the importance of studying the emotional aspects of citizenship.

Recognizing the relationship between emotions and citizenship, or what I term as "emotional citizenship," raises two lines of inquiry that will be addressed in this article. First, what are the emotional representations associated with citizenship, by whom and for what purposes are such discourses constructed? Second, what types of emotional subjectivities emerge in response to citizenship governance, and how do they influence political and social behavior? My argument makes an analytical distinction between emotional representations and subjectivities. I define emotional representations as the lexicon and metaphors that individuals use to describe and give meaning to citizenship, such as "home" and "belonging." Such discourses contain an emotional quality that should be critically analyzed to understand its effects. Emotional subjectivities, on the other hand, emphasize the way individuals experience the social world, especially the manner in which they emotionally negotiate the power relations of citizenship governance. These analytical distinctions, however, are not mutually exclusive. Rather, emotional representations and subjectivities mutually constitute one another, thus producing citizenship as a status, identity, and practice. Studying these aspects of citizenship adds to our understanding of the way that emotions constitute the social discourses and human subjectivities contained in citizenship.

My choice of the term "emotions" rather than "affect" is influenced by debates within human geography arguing that the scholarship on affect tends to be universalizing, ethnocentric

and anti-historicist, thus glossing over uneven power relations (Tolia-Kelly 2006). In contrast, the scholarship on emotions consciously foregrounds embodied experiences (Thien 2005), contextual grounding and the power geometries that permeate social life (Tolia-Kelly 2006). Furthermore, affect theorists pay attention to the preconscious "sense of push" or non-reflective thinking that stirs up emotions (Thrift 2004, 64) whereas my analysis foregrounds the way conscious thoughts about social structures condition emotional responses and behavioral cues (also see Conradson and Latham 2007). Thus I utilize the term "emotional" rather than "affective" citizenship to develop my argument on why the emotions matter with respect to citizenship.

I address the issues raised here through an empirical study of Singaporean transnational migrants (transmigrants) in London. Several scholars have argued that expanding and accelerating flows of transnational migration complicate the premises of citizenship, including the relationship between belonging, identity, community, and rights, and duties (Soysal 1994; Yuval-Davis 2006; Joppke 2007). The banality of citizenship as a status, identity, and practice makes it a difficult subject to study but migration arguably ruptures the ordinariness of citizenship in several ways. Experiences of being away from "home" often accentuate the centrality of belonging in the citizen imagination. Moreover, migration enables individuals to come into contact with other nationalities and cultures, thereby altering perceptions of self and "Other." Migration also gives migrants an opportunity to reflect upon their citizenly experiences and status through a different lens; for some, allowing them freedom to speak openly about their thoughts and attitudes toward citizenship. The Singaporean case study may be unique because of its politically conservative and morally interventionist government (Mauzy and Milne 2002; George 2003). Nonetheless, the discernible techniques of citizenship governance in this study make clear the emotional dimensions of citizenship, thereby leading to theoretical reflections that can be usefully applied to other contexts.

In the remainder of this article, first, I underline the significance of studying the emotions with respect to citizenship scholarship. Second, I highlight selected dimensions of citizenship to argue that paying attention to the emotions helps advance a clearer understanding of the politics of citizenship. Third, I provide an overview of my study context in London and the methodology. Fourth, I analyze the way emotional representations of citizenship–most prominently belonging–are constructed by state actors and citizens, and further problematize the racialized politics of citizenly belonging. Fifth, I focus on the emotional subjectivities expressed by Singaporean transmigrants toward citizenship governance in Singapore so as to understand social behavior and social structures. Lastly, I draw out the mutually constituting relationship between emotional representations and subjectivities to reiterate the significance of studying citizenship through the emotions.

Foregrounding the Emotions in Citizenship Scholarship

Within geography, cultural approaches toward the study of the state have started to interrogate the subjectivity and meanings of the state (and associated political actors). These studies include efforts to decenter the state by considering the way state power is materialized (Mountz 2004) and the prosaic practices through which "stateness" is achieved (Painter 2007; Secor 2007). Rasmussen and Brown's (2005) analysis of the body politic as a spatial metaphor for citizenship also underlines the unstable formations of state governance. It is in the light of these debates over the subjectivity of the state as well as recent transformations to governance in the context of migration that citizenship, a foundation of the "nation-state," has come to be put under the spotlight. Citizenship functions as a social contract between the government voted into power to run the institutions of the state and the citizens who confer upon the government this right to make decisions on behalf of the citizenry. The political-legal and social-cultural faces of citizenship are now widely recognized (see Painter and Philo 1995; Joppke 1999); however, the emotional dimensions of citizenship deserve analytical attention too. An emotionally inflected analysis of citizenship can help advance critical views of the political-legal and social-cultural content of citizenship.

Despite repeated urgings by feminist scholars (Hochschild 1983; Nussbaum 1995), the emotions have been largely sidelined within the social sciences in favor of scientific approaches advocating reason. The privileging of scientific, or more commonly economic, rationality is arguably replicated in the political realm in which policy decisions actualizing experiences of citizenship are made by scientific "experts" and legitimized in the name of public interest (Raco and Imrie 2000). The marginalization of emotions in the political realm also reflects the public/private divide critiqued in feminist approaches toward citizenship (Lister 2003; Staeheli and Mitchell 2004). Emotions, associated with femininity and domesticity (Lupton 1998), are popularly regarded as an intimate or private matter, whereas citizenship pertains to the public domain; however, this rigid public/private split between the emotions and citizenship is untenable because political and policy decisions are often experienced in a personal and emotional way. For example, Brown's (2004, 74) study of American neoliberal policies on hospice care reveals the emotional stress experienced by care workers who feel overburdened by state cutbacks in funding and human resources.

In recent years there has been a proliferation of adjectives to describe and analyze various features of citizenship, such as postnational citizenship (Soysal 1994), transnational citizenship (Bauböck 1994), and multicultural citizenship (Kymlicka 1995). Traditional analyses of migration and citizenship by disciplines such as political science, sociology, and philosophy tend to focus on macro-level analyses, thus producing models of citizenship that describe, explain,

and predict behavior. Theoretical models of citizenship are important for advancing the way we think about citizenship in a transnational world, but such approaches tend to write about citizenship in a distanced, mechanistic, and disembodied way. Joppke (1999, 629), for example, describes citizenship "as a mechanism of closure [and] a filing mechanism, distributing people to just one of the world's many states." Such models and metaphors of citizenship overlook the felt experiences of citizenship, the agency of individuals, and reify citizenship as a monolithic instrument of state power.

Instead a number of geographers and other scholars looking into the social practices of citizenship have highlighted the contingent and contested nature of citizenship (Marston and Mitchell 2004; Leitner and Ehrkamp 2006), thereby producing contextually "grounded" theories. Nagel and Staeheli's (2004) study of Arab activists in the U.S., for example, illustrates that ideas of identity, community, citizenship, and belonging are more complex than implied by normative debates over new and old models of citizenship. Work by Ehrkamp (2006, 1676) on Turkish migrants in Germany underlines the dialectical relationship between migrants and the receiving society. She argues that migrant "identities are socially and politically constructed through individual and group formation, shared experiences and the narratives that groups tell about themselves." She adds that representations of migrants in discourses among the receiving society–through labels and ascriptions–are integral to migrants' own constructions of identity.

Current approaches studying citizenship through identities, representations, and relationality provide one entry into understanding the manner in which social categories, relations, and structures are produced; however, the way that migrants emotionally negotiate discursive representations and social relations should also be investigated. Emotions are often mentioned in writings on identity, belonging and citizenship (Nagel and Staeheli 2004; Secor 2004; Leitner and Ehkramp 2006) but their analytical potential has not yet been fully realized. How do particular emotions become translated into motivations producing behavior, action and policy? Ahmed's (2004) study on the racialization of British state discourses, though not directly addressing migrant negotiations, shows how an emotionally inflected analysis of migration and citizenship enriches our understanding of the social world. She argues that in portraying the nation as an object of love for the British public, the failure of migrants to become culturally British is narrated as their failure to love (or identify with) the nation. This failure to love helps legitimize the social and legal exclusion of migrants through immigration and citizenship policies. Such cultural politics of emotions (Ahmed 2004, 12), particularly from the view of the migrant, should be explicated so as to, first, better understand the processes underlying belonging, identity and community formation; and second, political and social-cultural contestation by different social groups. These aspects of citizenship will be discussed in the next section.

An Emotionally Inflected Analysis of Citizenship

The idea of belonging, particularly for migrants, has emerged as a prominent aspect of recent academic writing on citizenship (Nagel and Staeheli 2004; Secor 2004; Leitner and Ehrkamp 2006). Belonging, as Yuval-Davis (2006) suggests, is about emotional investments and desire for attachments. Belonging is thus integral to citizenship debates on migration, integration, and assimilation. Yet in such writings, "belonging"–like race and nation (Jackson and Penrose 1993)–is still treated as a "known" ontological condition that structures the way individuals and groups experience and understand the world. The idea of belonging is mentioned as a naturalized aspect of membership in a political community though it is recognized that national, ethnic, religious, and other more particularistic identifiers are socially constructed and negotiated during transmigrancy (Nagel and Staeheli 2004, 2005; Secor 2004). Belonging is established not only through narration (Bhabha 1990) or performance and repetitive acts (Fortier 1999). Instead national governments actively use emotional metaphors to establish boundaries for national belonging (Yuval-Davis 2006; Fortier 2007). Love for the nation (by citizens) and the perceived failure to love (by migrants) delineates an inside/outside (Ahmed 2004) establishing the boundaries of belonging. Belonging should thus be examined as an emotionally constructed category to understand its implications for citizenship and nationhood.

Alongside such critical perspectives on belonging, I further argue that the emotional valences of belonging experienced by individuals should be carefully scrutinized too. Several scholars have suggested that the social positionings of individuals and groups, such as racial identities (Nagel and Staeheli 2004; Ehrkamp and Leitner 2006), shape their differential inclusions with respect to home and belonging; however, understanding the emotional dynamics through which social positioning influences an individual's (positive or negative) orientation toward belonging is also important. Examining the "sociality of emotions" (Ahmed 2004, 10), or the way an individual responds to others through the emotions, is helpful in this regard for understanding the politics of citizenly belonging. Ehrkamp's (2006) study of Turkish migrants in German society suggests, for example, that bodily and social markers of racial difference place these migrants in a subordinate subject position. Turkish migrants sense the animosity of German society *toward* them, which in turn directs them *away* from the host nation by invoking feelings of cynicism and resistance toward expectations of assimilation. In this way, the sociality of emotions constitutes the social relations and structures associated with citizenship.

Apart from examining belonging through an emotional lens, this article also argues that emotional subjectivities (the emotional negotiations of citizenship experience) are important in analyses of citizenship. It is through the emotions that individuals engage with the people and events they encounter in the social world. For instance, Secor (2007) argues that the resignation

expressed by lower-class Kurdish migrants toward the vulnerability of their rights in Turkey reveals an expectation of subjugation to the Turkish authorities. The emotion of resignation hinders them from mobilizing to demand citizenship rights, thereby reinforcing the hegemony of the Turkish state. Individually experienced emotions may furthermore generate the politics of citizenship at a community level. Fortier's (2007, 116) analysis of British multiculturalism discourses argues that British politicians engineer multicultural intimacy by aligning emotions at an individual level ("love thy neighbor") with feelings for the community and the nation (national love). These examples demonstrate that relating the individual to their wider social worlds through an emotional analysis helps bridge the gap between methodological individualism and social ontologizing (Boellstroff and Lindquist 2004). The emotions provide clues and signals (Hochschild 1983, 29) to understand the world in which we live and the social structures under which we operate (Barbalet 1998).

Writings about politics and emotions have mostly focused on overtly emotional moments of public life, such as parades, holidays, public rituals, and rallies (Kong and Yeoh 1997; Nava 2007). Other scholars frame their study of emotions around social movements, nationalism, and violence, thus on emotions leading to obvious political action (Dowler 2001; Berezin 2002; Bosco 2007). Nationalism, in particular, is most often associated with emotions such as love for the nation or passion for a political cause. These studies provide useful insights into the world of emotions and politics, but they also privilege some emotions–such as love, hate, joy, and shock–over others. This is an outcome of the tendency to study emotions that are visibly expressive or easy to recognize (TenHouten 2007, 2). My analysis on emotional subjectivities focuses instead on ordinarily experienced emotions such as unspoken fear as well as aversion. Although these emotions may be less noticeable, they are still integral for maintaining or challenging the social contract of citizenship as a foundation of the nation-state.

Earlier geographical work has suggested that the emotions matter for creating place meanings (Tuan 1974; Cresswell 2006), but recent work on emotional geographies further valorizes the significance of the emotions in the social world (Anderson and Smith 2001; Davidson, Bondi and Smith 2007). Similarly, emotional theorists such as Milton (2005, 36) have become interested in the way "feelings and meanings both shape and are shaped by an individual's engagement with their environment." This article builds on these scholarships to critically examine how appraisals of the social world produce emotional outcomes that in turn influence behavioral responses toward citizenship governance. My analysis is also influenced by arguments foregrounding the connotations emotions have in specific cultural contexts, thus uniquely shaping people's emotional experiences (Boellstroff and Lindquist 2004; Conradson and McKay 2007, -170; McKay 2007, 180)[i].

I consider the emotions invoked by representations and subjectivities associated with citizenship, or what I term "emotional citizenship." The idea of emotional citizenship functions, on one level, as an adjective to describe important features of citizenship alongside the better-known political-legal and social-cultural dimensions of citizenship. On another level, emotional citizenship also acts as a tool of critical analysis for relating micro-level emotional dynamics to social and political structures. This analysis responds to recent critiques of emotions scholarship by emphasizing the manner in which emotional representations of citizenship are socially constructed in political and popular thought, rather than an object of "implicit universalism and putative authenticity" (Anderson and Harrison 2006, 334). Furthermore, unlike affect theorists who may prefer to "avoid personalizing affect such that it becomes a matter of individual emotion" (McCormack 2006, 331), my analysis explores how emotional subjectivities are performed/staged and managed at an individual level while having implications for a broader politics of citizenship. My goal is to examine the ways in which emotions and citizenship mutually constitute one another (through representations and subjectivities), so as to advance a more nuanced understanding of the politics of citizenship.

Methodology

The research informing this article examines the relationship between transnational migration and citizenship among Singaporean transmigrants in London. The Commonwealth ties between Singapore and Britain along with the international reputation of London help propel Singaporean migration flows to this global city. London has possibly the largest concentration of Singaporeans living abroad and this is reflected in the number and variety of Singaporean community associations found there. The profile of predominantly young and highly skilled Singaporeans in London also corresponds to the prototype of overseas Singaporeans with whom the Singaporean state is interested to maintain connections. This group of citizens abroad represent a valuable cache of skills, experience, networks and mindsets that the Singaporean political elites believe will help advance the country's globalization pursuit. Additionally exposure to the liberal democratic ethos in British society may gradually affect the attitudes and feelings these Singaporean transmigrants develop toward Singaporean citizenship. My research utilized a triangulation of methods to uncover the meanings, feelings, and dispositions underpinning the social processes of transnational migration and citizenship manifested in the Singaporean context.

First, I carried out a discourse analysis of government speeches, media reports, and legislation on migration and citizenship. Second, I engaged in ethnography amongst the overseas Singaporean community in London. Last, I conducted semi-structured, in-depth interviews with three groups of social actors: Singaporean policymakers in-charge of migration and citizenship

affairs in London and Singapore; representatives of Singaporean community associations in London; and forty-three Singaporean transmigrants in London. This article focuses on the narratives of Singaporean citizens, but my overall sample included Singaporean permanent residents and former Singaporean citizens. I obtained interview access by participating in the activities of the Singaporean community[ii] in London and by snowballing personal contacts. While a proportion of overseas Singaporeans may participate in the Singaporean community associations, there are many others who do not. I therefore made a deliberate effort to reach out to such individuals through other friendship networks in order to capture a spectrum of Singaporeans who embody different attitudes toward Singaporean citizenship.

Most of the Singaporean transmigrants I interviewed were young, highly skilled, and well-educated individuals; approximately half of the sample had British work permits. I interviewed twenty-two male and twenty-one female Singaporeans. The majority of my interviewees were of Chinese ethnicity, reflecting the profile of Singaporeans in London, but I also purposefully got in touch with Singaporeans of other ethnicities to obtain their views. As an "insider", I had the advantage of knowledge gained over a sustained period of time living in both Singapore and London, and the ability to tap into social networks facilitating my study; however, these research moments also translated into complex and intense social relationships, such as the way that my research impinged on my social identity and vice versa. Additionally, my identity as a Chinese-Singaporean came under scrutiny during the research process. I encountered comments by Singaporeans from other ethnic groups that amplified my Chinese identity and derogatory remarks about other ethnic groups that might not have been said in my presence if I was a non-Chinese. These fieldwork experiences heightened my awareness of the politics of ethnicity and the emotional negotiations underpinning citizenship.

Although ethnography informed my analysis of citizenship (see Ho 2008a), this article focuses on the emotions expressed about citizenship and in response to citizenship during interviews. This focus enables me to develop an argument drawing out both the overt and subtle emotional dynamics revealed in conversations about citizenship. Paradoxically, the staged setting of interviews–pre-arranged conversations in which both the researcher and researched are aware of the focus of the conversation–makes it simultaneously easy to comprehend their responses, but also, for a while, puzzling why interviewees expressed their thought and feelings about citizenship in the manner that they did. These conversations reveal some of the seemingly banal emotions[iii] that have been hitherto neglected in citizenship scholarship even though they play a role in giving meaning to the social structures and power relations contained in citizenship. The emotions discussed in this article are noteworthy because they repeatedly emerged in the coded interviews conducted with a variety of Singaporean transmigrants. Due to the sensitivities

associated with my research on a political subject like citizenship, I have used pseudonyms in this article.

Emotional Representations of Citizenship

Citizenship, as Joppke (2007) argues, represents different things to people. My research sought to find out what citizenship means to Singaporean transmigrants. The interview narratives suggest that a sense of belonging is the most salient aspect of citizenship, and other aspects of citizenship, such as rights and duties, are often premised on the idea of belonging. Take for example Dina's (Indian-Singaporean, thirties) response when I asked what citizenship represents to her:

> Home actually. It's like belonging to a club, knowing that if you get kicked out of anywhere else you still have a place to go to, and the right to work and the right to live.

Dina's idea of citizenship is premised on belonging to a community ("club") defined by citizenship status, which confers the rights to live and work within that territory. This conceptualization of citizenship, typical amongst my respondents, emphasizes that citizenship enacts territorial and political-legal closure through axes of inclusion and exclusion (Brubaker 1992) based on social-cultural criteria, such as place of birth or culture (Painter and Philo 1995). To them, citizenship membership connotes an emotional attachment that is described through lexicon and metaphors like "home" and "belonging".

Such cognitive framings, although nebulous, give citizenship an "emotional agency" (Davidson and Milligan 2004, 524), or power over its subjects. It is this emotional quality of citizenship that provides "clues and ways of seeing" (Bennet 2004, 414) the manner in which citizenship defines identities, subjectivities, social relations and social structures. In the following dialogue with Isaac (Chinese-Singaporean, thirties) who has lived overseas for more than a decade, he relates:

> Singapore is home. … It is where my roots are. It is where I grew up; it is where my memories are most etched. It is where my relatives and family are; it is a place where I go back to feel comfortable … Singapore is to me where I am a citizen of because it is where I grew up and where my family [is based] … It is not so much a piece of paper that says who I am or where I come from, but the psychological and sentimental affiliation to the country. … I find it important because for me, it is difficult to pin down, but it is where I want to go back and where I am deeply concerned about. Even though I am not there eighty percent of the time, I am thinking about it all the time.

To Isaac, citizenship is not merely a legal status but also connotes an emotional quality that he finds "difficult to pin down." The "psychological and sentimental affiliation" expressed by Isaac

materializes as tangible attitudes of concern and longing for Singapore, thereby producing place-based belonging for him. This illustrative anecdote underlines the emotional contours of "home" and "'belonging" in the migrant imagination, and how these representations help produce a sense of citizenship, including aspects of citizenly obligations ("I am deeply concerned"); however, a simplistic association of membership and belonging with injunctions of duties or rights belies the emotional, political, and social dynamics that structure citizenship. The idea of belonging as an ontological condition associated with citizenship should be unraveled for analysis, which will be discussed next.

Emotional Belonging and Political Projects

Political actors often strategically highlight the quality of belonging (in terms of inclusion/exclusion) so as to define citizenly membership to the polity. Belonging to a country connotes ideals of feeling at home and feeling safe in the homeland. In the Singaporean context, politicians repeatedly use such imagery to underscore to overseas Singaporeans the importance of remaining committed to the country. This is, as Fortier (2007) suggests, a means of appropriating intimacy to command loyalty and allegiance. The following anecdote from the National Day Rally Speech (in 2002) by former Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong exemplifies this:

> The more we educate Singaporeans, and the more economic opportunities we create for them, the more internationally mobile they will become. ... Will Singaporeans be rooted to Singapore? Will enough Singaporeans stay here, to ensure our country's long-term survival? The answer depends on whether they feel deeply for Singapore, and for their family, friends, colleagues, and fellow [National Service] men in their army units. ... If they feel Singapore is home, then they will stay and fight for Singapore. Even if they are overseas, they will return and fight. They will work with passion and conviction for our future. They will make sure that Singapore continues to progress and prosper. (Goh 2002)

Goh's speech emphasizes the role that overseas Singaporeans play as an integral part of Singaporean society. The moral framing of the state discourse constructs a risk that mobility generates for the Singaporean nation in the absence of roots, emotional bonds, and loyalties amongst overseas Singaporeans. This notion of risk is akin to Isin's (2004, 223) argument on "governing through neurosis" whereby anxieties are incited by state actors to achieve political projects. Goh further suggests that the social contract of citizenship exists not only between the state and citizen, but also between fellow citizens in a spirit of reciprocity. The figurative use of emotional metaphors, such as roots, home, family, and friends, underscores the way that belonging is instrumentally used to produce citizenship meanings by political actors, in this instance, to "stay and fight for Singapore."

Such state-projected interpretations of belonging may be internalized by citizens and used to rationalize emotionally the duties associated with citizenship. Steven (Chinese-Singaporean, twenties), for example, states that:

> I am a [Singaporean] citizen. If Singapore goes to war, I fight for Singapore. That is my definition of citizenship. *Guo ming*, or rather, *gong ming*,[iv] you are part of the country... Maybe I am more nationalistic. That is what NS [national service] has made me.

Steven's narrative emphasizes belonging to an organic body politic personified in the Singaporean nation-state. He claims that his willingness to defend Singapore in war is an outcome of his national service training: feelings of love and allegiance for the country are nation-building ideologies propagated through Singaporean national service. Later in the conversation, Steven also differentiates the depth of belonging and loyalty felt by Singaporeans like himself who obtained citizenship by birthright (rather than naturalization) from those who only have permanent residency status. The Singaporean nation is thus fetishized as an object of affection whereby an interiority and exteriority is established not only through formal citizenship status, but also idealized notions of belonging ("part of the country") (Ahmed 2004; Yuval-Davis 2006). Belonging acts as an emotionally laden spatial metaphor enabling citizenship to assert particular political claims over its subjects (Secor 2004, 353).

Heightened feelings of political belonging are not, however, widely held among those I interviewed. Steven's comments should be viewed in the context of his personal support for the male conscription policy in Singapore. In contrast, the women I interviewed rarely couched citizenship and belonging in terms of allegiance. The men also held differing views about the national service policy in Singapore: Some find it useful for nation building and personal character building whereas others wanted it to be abolished.

Furthermore, although belonging is an important way in which my respondents thought about Singaporean citizenship, their sense of belonging may be emotionally anchored in social units other than the nation-state. The family is a unit of familial intimacy that, as Yeates (2004) argues, implicates emotional labor. This emotional labor refers to the work that goes into nurturing bonds of affection and concern that family members have for one another. While McKay (2007) emphasizes the economic exchanges mediating long distance intimacy for Filipino migrants in Hong Kong, my study of Singaporean transmigrants in London reveals that physical proximity is still valued over economic and technologically mediated ways of maintaining familyhood. My respondents often highlight the guilt they feel for leaving behind family members, especially aging parents, and they cope by reminding themselves that it is only a temporary separation (see Ho 2008b).

In fact the intergenerational and extended family unit in Singapore, rather than purported political belonging, often acts as the overriding reason for Singaporean transmigrants to consider

repatriation. Hannah (Chinese-Singaporean, twenties), who had moved to London with her husband, told me about her citizenship considerations in relation to return migration:

> Our main reason [for return] would be because … if we have kids then … they can enjoy their grandparents and their grandparents can enjoy them. … I have not really considered giving up [my Singaporean citizenship] because I might go home and work. … If I take up another citizenship I would have issues when I want to return to Singapore to work.

Given the dual citizenship restriction in Singapore, considerations for the care of aging parents as well as the care and socialization of young children prompt otherwise internationally mobile Singaporeans to retain their Singaporean citizenship as a legal means of indefinite return. Singaporean citizenship signifies practical benefits, such as the right of return so as to be close to family members. The family thus acts as the primary unit of emotional investment and attachment tying Singaporean transmigrants to the country. The significance of caring responsibilities as an emotional labor should be recognized as a part of citizenship (Lister 2003). Just as in McEwan's (2005) analysis of women's citizenship in South Africa, understandings of citizenship (by both men and women) in the Singaporean case study are tied to familial roles rather than simply in relation to the state or political belonging. In this way, citizenship takes on meaning through emotional attachments and social relations operating at multiple scales.

Fracturing Belonging Emotionally through Ethnicity

The emotional quality of belonging encapsulated in citizenship is not only a politicized construct, as demonstrated in the preceding discussion, but also is shaped by the "social locations" (Yuval-Davis 2006, 199) of individuals. This refers to the social categories of identity, such as gender, ethnicity, and class, that are embedded in power relations and operationalized through citizenship in practice. Social locations shape belonging in terms of inclusion and exclusion, which is experienced as an emotional process that impinges on attitudes toward citizenship. This section highlights the emotional dynamics structuring racialization and its effects on political identities. In studying the emotional valences embedded in narratives of belonging, this article leads to a fuller understanding of the racialized politics of citizenship. Analyzing the emotional negotiations experienced by ethnic minorities illuminates why these groups might feel they lack full citizenly recognition despite official discourses and policies promoting ethnic equality in the polity.

The population make-up in Singapore is primarily Chinese so it is unsurprising that most Chinese-Singaporean transmigrants claimed a stronger sense of belonging in Singapore than in the U.K. They are less likely to encounter racism or be singled out as a foreigner in Singapore on the basis of phenotype or accent. In comparison, the non-Chinese Singaporean transmigrants

(e.g., Malay, Indian, and Eurasian) in my study expressed ambivalent feelings of belonging to Singapore. They may profess a sense of belonging to Singapore, but their stories often conveyed deeper emotional negotiations that are shaped by their racialized social positionings. Their emotional negotiations with racial difference prompt them to feel turned away from a predominantly Chinese society, rather than drawn into the political community in which they hold citizenship status. Dewi, a Malay-Singaporean in her twenties, relates her account and feelings of discrimination:

> I feel like a real minority back home. … For example in a cab when [I] speak to [the Chinese-Singapore drivers], they say, "Are you Eurasian?" Obviously I do not look Eurasian. … They always assume that certain abilities are attached to groups of people.

Dewi's account has to be viewed in the context of the informal racial hierarchy in postcolonial Singaporean society. The "Eurasians" are persons of mixed European and Asian descent; as a result of their biological and cultural heritage, they resemble their European ancestors and may speak Singaporean English with a faintly clipped accent. In contrast, the Malays in Singapore are pinned with derogatory stereotypes, such as having lower socio-economic status than the other ethnic groups in Singapore (Barr and Low 2005). Dewi, who had studied in an elite Singaporean school, surmises that Chinese-Singaporean taxi drivers question her ethnicity because her smart Singaporean English accent (indicative of social and cultural capital) is not associated with the Malays in Singapore.

Her experience of racialization is furthermore transplanted into transmigrancy during interactions with other Singaporeans in London. She described to me an incident in which she was made to feel excluded by the Singaporean student society in the British university where she studied:

> Dewi: I stood at the [society] booth – the Malaysian society was [on one side] and the Singapore [sic] society was [on the other]. The Malaysian society did this sign {signals to beckon} and the Singapore society [sic] people just looked at me like…
>
> Author: They ignored you?
>
> Dewi: Oh yeah, because I am Malay, right? And what would a Malay-Singaporean be doing [in London]? … [My response to the Malaysian society] was, "Actually it's [the Singaporean society]." So [I decided not to] join [any of them]

In this anecdote, Dewi speculates that her Malay appearance led the (Chinese) Singaporean society representatives to assume that her nationality is Malaysian rather than Singaporean. She believes this assumption is based on stereotypes that Malay-Singaporeans lack both the intellectual and financial ability to undertake an expensive overseas education ("what would a Malay-Singaporean be doing here?")

Significantly, the above dialogue suggests that Dewi took offence at the way she was made to feel turned away by the Singaporean community (based on the intersections of ethnicity, class, and assumed intellectual ability) although she holds Singaporean citizenship and has personal feelings of belonging to Singapore. It emerged during the interview that Dewi feels resentful about the stereotypes of Malay-Singaporeans circulating within the Singaporean community. Together with her past experiences of racialization in Singapore, this emotional response of resentment directs her away by socially distancing, rather than aligning herself with the Singaporean community in London. Through bodily and verbal signals, recipients of banal racism experience feelings of abjection (Sibley, 1995) that in turn influence their subsequent social-cultural relations with the perpetrators of those signs.

It is in this way that the "sociality of emotions" (Ahmed 2004, 10) creates the fluid and shifting boundaries delineating social categories and identities. These emotionally produced social boundaries impinge upon the meaning and practice of citizenship, including some within the national body and excluding others. Understanding these emotional dynamics helps explain why in spite of the official line on multiculturalism, Singapore is still fractured by ethnic boundaries. Rather than taking the condition of belonging as an ontological given, an emotionally inflected analysis of citizenship produces a fuller understanding of the social processes of exclusion and marginalization. More importantly, studying the emotions underpinning social interactions means that we can potentially address the source and effects of emotional triggers so as to promote positive social change.

I have argued that the way overseas Singaporeans think about Singaporean citizenship underlines their emotional affiliations, represented particularly in terms of belonging to Singapore. Studying the relationship between emotions and citizenship–or emotional citizenship–illuminates two distinctive findings about the emotional representations of citizenship. First, the emotional attachment of belonging may be partly produced by political rhetoric fulfilling nationalistic agendas. Yet the emotional attachment that individuals speak of may not take the form of political belonging; instead belonging is anchored in the family unit. Thus familial belonging, rather than political belonging, bolsters the importance of Singaporean citizenship. Second, using emotional citizenship as a tool of analysis draws attention to the social positionings of individuals while taking into account the emotional valences that multiply refract their citizenly belonging in the polity.

Emotional Subjectivities of Citizenship

This section examines the emotional underpinnings of behavioral responses toward citizenship governance. I pay special attention to conversation in terms of silences, overt expressions, and understatements. Conversational dynamics, as Good (2004, 532) argues, tells us more than

merely cognitive, symbolic, or political analyses. It helps us to listen and observe for emotions underlying textual narratives. What do ordinarily experienced emotions and behavioral cues, making up emotional subjectivities, tell us about an individual's appraisal of the social world and the politics of citizenship? In this section, I focus on fear to demonstrate the effect emotions have on the social behavior associated with citizenship. Following that, I consider the manner in which aversion shapes social relations between the Singaporean state and citizens. Considering the relationship between emotions and the politics of citizenship locates a person in a world of social interaction and their citizenly experiences (Barbalet 2002), which helps illuminate the way emotions constitute citizenship.

Emotions and Social Behavior: Fear

During interviews, I found it particularly challenging to move the conversations beyond articulations of belonging and home. A superficial interpretation of these narratives might conclude that belonging is the most important aspect of citizenship. An alternative interpretation could be that Singaporeans are content with material progress and political stability, therefore disinterested in issues such as citizenship rights. The phenomenon of political apathy, or a lack of interest in political affairs, is said to be a malaise troubling contemporary Singaporean society (*The Straits Times*, 7 April 2008). Nonetheless, I came to notice over the course of my fieldwork that the conversations I encountered were underpinned by distinctive emotional hues deserving greater scrutiny in my analysis of citizenship.

The difficulty my respondents had with talking about citizenship, I suggest, is indicative of their reluctance to engage with a politically sensitive topic. In this conversation with Dorothy, a Chinese-Singaporean in her forties, for example:

Author: What comes to mind when we talk about citizenship?

Dorothy: {Defensively} I don't know because I've never thought about giving up my citizenship.

Author: It's not about giving up [your citizenship] but how do you see yourself as a citizen in a country?

Dorothy: {Hesitates} I guess you have the right to vote, and so on.

Author: What kind of rights [are] important to you?

Dorothy: I appreciate what the Singapore [sic] government has done. ... As a citizen I think we have the duty to be loyal to them. Even if the government has done something wrong, like here the citizens here come out to protest and voice their dissatisfaction, but for me, I won't do that. I think everybody makes mistakes. The government cannot please everyone.

At the start of the interview Dorothy had of her own initiative qualified to me that she did not migrate because she was "running away or not happy with Singapore," responding possibly to a stereotype of Singaporeans who migrated in the 1960s when Singapore's post-independence future was uncertain, or those who moved in the 1980s due to political dissent. Her defensive reaction toward my subsequent question on citizenship may be prompted by fear of being regarded as a political malcontent. Consequently, she appeared reluctant to say more about citizenship, in particular citizenly rights, and instead performed the role of a loyal and supportive citizen in compliance with the "feeling rule" (Hochschild 1983, 56) scripted by Singaporean political ideology. This ideology, exemplified in the earlier discussion on feelings of belonging and loyalty encouraged by the Singaporean political elites, is influenced by Confucian beliefs that the culturally appropriate emotional response from citizens is an attitude of gratitude to the paternalistic/fatherly state, governed by benevolent rulers.

In theorizing about emotional processes during social encounters, Turner (2007) posits that individuals enter social situations with expectations, and positive or negative emotions are triggered depending on if their expectations are met. He adds that whether expectations are met is contingent on the clarity of expectations, common emotional language, and need states. Dorothy's behavior can thus be understood in the context of the political "out-of-bounds"[v] (OB) markers set up by the Singaporean governing elites. In the Singaporean political regime, there is lack of clarity over the limits to freedom of speech (George 2003). In the micro-context of the interview, Dorothy could also have been uncertain about whether I had vested interests as a researcher studying citizenship. Her appraisal of the social and political structures of Singaporean citizenship, coupled with her positionality in relation to mine, evoked particular emotions, in this case fear, that in turn shape behavioral responses such as defensiveness and reluctance.

Despite such supposed citizenly acquiescence, the extant state of governance in Singapore is not without its share of political critics; the emotions offer us a lens for theorizing the complex subjectivities stirred by citizenship. For instance, limits on debating and practicing political rights in Singapore may evoke a sense of injustice in individuals yet these feelings may be simultaneously revealed and suppressed, such as in this conversation with Isaac:

Author: What do you think are your most important rights and privileges as a citizen?

Isaac: {Thoughtfully} That is a question that [Singaporeans] don't ask ourselves very often: what are our rights? Because I think we have been conditioned. ... I can't remember a class that told us what our civil rights are so the thought had never come to my mind. But let me tell you an experience that struck an uncomfortable chord. When we were asked to register for voting–being able to vote is a basic right–I was rejected because

> I've been away from the country for more than two years and I was not with any governmental organization. … We have written to the Singapore [sic] embassy to say that we would have liked to vote–the group of us in London and [the company's] expatriates [elsewhere who were] rejected. The cynical reason [is] that the people who [are] away would probably not vote in the direction that {uncomfortable pause}–I am being speculative. That is pretty unfair. If we are considered a citizen, [voting] is a basic right regardless of how long we have been away.

In this conversation, Isaac highlights that he has been disqualified from overseas voting[vi] due to his prolonged working stint abroad. He regards political voting as a right in which the electorate confers on a government the power to make decisions on behalf of the citizenry. As Isaac was on the verge of pointing out, there are suspicions that the stringent voting regulations are meant to restrict the voting influence of overseas Singaporeans with views independent of the ruling party. Turner (2007) argues that amongst the need-states that individuals have is the expectation for a just distribution of resources and if this is violated, it prompts negative emotional arousals, such as anger. For Isaac, the entrenched power imbalance between the state and citizen arouses indignation, manifested in the tone of his speech.

Yet Isaac simultaneously downplays his feelings and only claims that it is "pretty unfair." The discrepancy between his emotive outburst and behavioral cues can be understood in the light of emotional theories arguing that individuals caught in a bind between the feelings they actually experience and the requirements of feeling rules may cope with the emotional dissonance by adjusting their behavior (Turner and Stets 2005, 64). Individuals like Isaac are aware of the possible political repercussions of infringing the capricious out-of-bounds markers set up by the governing elites. As a result, his evoked emotion is suppressed through a way of speaking, namely hesitation, qualifying statements ("being speculative"), and understatement ("pretty unfair"). This is, as McKay (2007) suggests, an emotional performance that allows some emotions to be revealed while consciously suppressing the expression of other emotions. In this way, Isaac is "managing feelings" (Hochschild 1983, 35) to avoid what might be perceived as inappropriate behavior. He consciously brings his emotions in line with the expected political-cultural guidelines by modifying his behavior. In other words, he is emotionally negotiating the social contract of Singaporean citizenship.

It is significant that even though overseas Singaporeans are not under the direct purview of the Singaporean state, they are still emotionally and behaviorally self-conscious of their subjugation as subjects of the state. Such habitual behavior has an emotional basis revealing their appraisal of the social structures to which they are subjected as citizens. Nonetheless, emotional theorists contend that behavioral and emotional adjustments are only a partial solution; thus

individuals who cope by conforming to the expected emotional culture of prevailing social structures might live with chronic emotional stress (Turner and Stets 2005, 64). The next section explores alternative outcomes of the way the emotions constitute social relations and citizenship meanings for Singaporean transmigrants.

Emotions Constituting Social Relationships and Citizenship: Aversion

The emotion of aversion has been relatively overlooked in scholarly analyses despite its implications for the orientations that individuals develop toward events, relationships, and institutions. Aversion is usually characterized by strong dislike intermingled with some degree of opposition; the case study of Singaporean transnational migration illustrates the way aversion influences the social relations shaping citizenship. For some Singaporeans, migration is capitalized upon as a means of breaking free from the emotional stress of expected social conformity in Singaporean society. Lionel (Chinese-Singaporean, thirties), a former schoolteacher who left Singapore because of the social control he experienced living there, said:

> I [become] more and more unhappy [so] I finally decided that I didn't want to go on like that. It may sound like little things [such as] not being allowed … to question anything… It generated … hostility not just from the people-in-charge [at work] but also [my colleagues] who pulled me aside and told me, "We are telling you this for your own good. Stop asking so much." I felt that everyone was trying to make me fit into a system that I didn't fit into. … Whenever I read [the national newspapers] I get so angry about the way [Singapore] is micromanaged. I felt like I was being controlled all the time. … It is such a paranoid nation. … It is very top-down.

By describing Singapore as a "top-down" nation, Lionel is referring to the way that the political culture of paternalism and control has created a hierarchal model of authority in the nation-state. Lionel believes this modus operandi is replicated in the Singaporean workplace and wider Singaporean society, thus generating paranoia about the punitive measures taken against those who "question anything." This emotional state of paranoia can be read as a containment strategy to regulate citizenly behavior and secure consent from those on which it acts. In Lionel's case, his questioning attitude makes him feel unable to align himself with the status quo ("fit into") at his workplace, and more significantly, even in his wider social interactions with other Singaporeans. His feelings of frustration and anger toward the containment strategy, narrated above as well as emotionally expressed during the interview, could not be contained through behavioral adjustments (as advised by his colleagues). This series of emotional triggers cumulatively places Lionel as an outsider within Singaporean society. He finally decided to leave Singapore by migrating to London. During the interview, he expressed uncertainty over whether

he would return to Singapore in the future and the continued importance of Singaporean citizenship.

Lionel, like the other respondents who took a critically questioning attitude toward Singaporean political governance, expressed aversion toward state managed discourses of citizenship and belonging, challenging the "guilt" strategy propagated by the Singaporean political leadership:

> [Moralizing is] something that [the Singaporean political leadership] is big on. The "are you a stayer or are you a quitter?" thing. It's a way of saying, "If you leave Singapore we can't stop you but we will make you feel guilty." It's inconsistent because at the same time they [are] saying, "Foreign talent, come in!" [They] want the best of everywhere else [but they] don't want people here to leave and the only way [they] can do that is by [using] guilt. In schools we were made to teach what they called national education where we had to tell the students that they have to feel gratitude to Singapore.

In this anecdote, Lionel links the feeling of "guilt" to the discourse on belonging produced by the Singaporean political elites ("stayer" and "quitter;" see Ho 2006). He draws attention to the social contract of Singaporean citizenship by stressing that the guilt-cum-gratitude discourse is taught as part of the Singaporean national education syllabus. The "feeling rule" (Hochschild 1983, 56) strategy of the Singaporean political elites has been to capitalize upon the emotion of guilt (triggered in response to the idea that a rule of gratitude has been transgressed) to encourage loyalty and commitment to the country.

It is questionable whether the Singaporean political discourse on "guilt" has produced the intended effects on its citizenry. As I argued earlier, my respondents feel guilty toward left-behind family members rather than toward the country as a unit of political membership. Instead of guilt toward the country, they expressed aversion toward the expectation of gratitude by the Singaporean state. This sense is exacerbated by the policy of encouraging skilled foreigners to work and settle in Singapore, which has incurred the resentment of Singaporean citizens who regard these foreigners as competitors for jobs and living space (Ho 2006). This combination of aversion and resentment prompts them to "turn away" from the nation as the relationship between the state and citizen becomes estranged, thus undermining the social contract of citizenship. The emotional logics in this example can be usefully compared with Secor's analysis of the way "guilt" functions instead as a discourse producing abjection amongst Kurdish migrants in Turkey. The feeling of "guilt" may be invoked as a universally experienced emotion, but its connotations and ramifications vary in political-cultural environments.

The discussion in this section has highlighted that emotions are triggered by an individual's appraisal of the social world that in turn influences the manner in which the person

responds behaviorally. In the Singaporean case, fear of the threat of political discipline prompts emotional and behavioral management on the part of citizens who feel compelled to abide by prevailing political-cultural scripts. Citizens who adopt a critical attitude toward the top-down governance ideology in Singapore, however, react instead through the emotion of aversion that prompts them to turn away from the social contract of governance represented by Singaporean citizenship. Taking emotional subjectivities into account is thus important for understanding the social behaviors and relationships generating the politics of citizenship.

Emotional Citizenship: Representations and Subjectivities

Critically, the emotional representations and emotional subjectivities of citizenship discussed in this article mutually constitute to give citizenship the emotional quality that I describe as "emotional citizenship." Belonging (in terms of what citizenship represents) is a malleable attribute that is influenced by what citizens perceive to be their entitlements for meaningful participation in the polity (in terms of subjectivities). Emotions act as the catalyst in a network of flows (Ettlinger 2004) to mediate between these aspects of citizenship. Ian's (Chinese-Singaporean, thirties) narrative about what citizenship means to him illustrates the overall argument that I advance:

> I think now that I have stayed [in London] for a year and a half, I feel a sense of attachment to Singapore and I feel … a certain longing to go back. ... But there are other times when I feel what does it mean? Not very much … if the opportunities are present … outside Singapore for me to have a better life there is no stopping me unless there are really good reasons for me to sacrifice that for Singapore. So that's one way of looking at it. The other way is it has been really hard. There is a certain "Singapore [sic] Story" that you can tell. It was a miracle that it happened. … You want to be part of that story … but sometimes I feel am I really participating in that process? How much involvement can I have? … Am I … contributing to someone else's story?

As an overseas Singaporean, Ian describes longing for the country to which he is emotionally attached and a sense of pride at the achievements of Singapore ("the Singapore Story"). Nevertheless, Ian also rhetorically questions his participation in the process, thus alluding to the corrosion of citizenship as a social contract characterized by citizen involvement in decision-making. It emerged later in the interview that by "someone else's story" Ian is referring to the dominant role ascribed to the former Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew as the founder of modern Singapore; the "Singapore Story" is incidentally the title of Lee's autobiography.

Ian's reactions to my question reveal oscillating and contradictory emotions that play a role in his fashioning of self (Conradson and Latham 2007; McKay 2007), which in turn suggests an uncertain relationship Ian has with the Singaporean polity and citizenship ("what does it

mean?"). Notably, the barriers to effective political participation in Singapore, such as voting and citizen consultation, work to undermine an active sense of citizenly contribution on Ian's part ("Am I really participating in the process?") creating feelings of aversion and alienation (i.e., emotional distancing) rather than a sense of ownership that augments belonging ("How much involvement can I have?"). Ian's emotional response toward what he perceives to be political disenfranchisement helps advance a clearer understanding of the emotional logics underpinning and connecting the political-legal (substantive participation) and social-cultural (belonging) dimensions of citizenship.

The political-legal and social-cultural dimensions are now widely accepted as important features of citizenship (Isin and Turner 2002). My analysis foregrounding the emotional aspects of citizenship adds to this conceptualization of citizenship. The articulation of claims for political and social recognition is integral to being emotionally involved as a citizen, thus bolstering a sense of ownership or belonging. Instead powerful institutional barriers in conjunction with perceived alienation hinder the capacity of citizens to effectively articulate claims in the Singaporean political context. These obstacles to participation are emotionally negotiated in ways that have potentially negative repercussions for citizenship. Some emotions, such as fear (Dorothy and Isaac) may prop up prevailing social structures; but other emotions such as aversion (Lionel and Ian) erode a meaningful sense of belonging and citizenship. Singaporeans have been described as politically apathetic (Mauzy and Milne 2002, 155), or uncaring about political governance. However, apathy should not be conflated with the lack of political feeling. Instead, it is important to trace the seemingly banal emotional patterns leading to what is construed as apathy and "passive politics" (Nagel and Staeheli 2004, 13).

Conclusion

Belonging, identity, rights, and duties encapsulated in citizenship can only be fully understood with the emotional aspects in mind. This article has helped advance a more nuanced understanding of social relations and structures by analyzing the emotional dimensions of citizenship. An analysis of "emotional citizenship" highlights the emotional immediacy underlying experiences of citizenship, thereby advancing current debates acknowledging the fractured, subjective, and contingent nature of citizenship. Emotional citizenship functions both as an adjective that describes features of citizenship and as a tool of analysis for studying the emotional representations and subjectivities that give rise to the politics of citizenship. I illustrated this argument, first, by examining the construction of belonging as an emotional representation of citizenship and the way belonging is emotionally fractured through racialized social positionings. Second, I considered the emotional triggers shaping human subjectivities and furthermore constituting the social relations of citizenship governance. My position has been to

argue that we should think about citizenship in a contextual and situated way, starting from the emotional constructs and experiences through which individuals find meaning in the social world. This starting point emphasizes the agency of individuals to give emotional meaning to the social relationships and structures shaping their everyday lives.

Thinking about citizenship through an emotional lens transforms it from a distanced, abstract concept to an intimate scale of identification in which individual emotions can be studied to better understand the politics of citizenship. Studying emotions as cultural "concepts used to do certain kinds of things" (Boellstorff and Lindquist 2004, 438) helps unravel the way social relations and social structures come to gain ontological status. In praxis, bringing easily overlooked emotions, such as the offense and resentment felt by subaltern ethnic minorities, into policy formulations can help cultivate empathy and respect as important aspects of citizenly relations. This is akin to Mitchell's (2007) conceptualization of "intimacy" wherein embodied and lived connections are brought to the fore for shaping a relational politics premised on mutual empathy, rather than merely blasé injunctions of "neighbourly love" (Fortier 2007, 116). Additionally, the manner in which citizens feel about themselves impacts their relationship to fellow citizens and denizens in the polity, and with the polity. Although emotions are experienced and managed by individuals at a personal level, politicians and policymakers looking to instil a stronger sense of citizenly belonging and ownership should seriously take into account the way fear and aversion structure citizenship meanings. An emotionally inflected analysis not only advances our theorizations of the social world, but also provides a potential tool for bringing about social change.

Notes

[i] For example, fear is universally experienced but its meanings and outcomes differ in social and political environments. Sparke's (2007) work on the American war on terror and Hyndman's work (2007) on securitization in Sri Lanka both show that individual and collective fear can be politically manipulated to legitimize belligerent national policies. Radcliffe's (2007) study of indigenous peoples in Latin American states argues instead that fear motivates indigenous activism. Such variations in the interpretation of emotions need to be examined for understanding the specific ways in which citizenship politics play out in a geographically differentiated world.

[ii] These activities include formal events organized by the Singaporean community associations in London, such as festive celebrations and social networking events, and informal socials with other Singaporean transmigrants in London.

[iii] My argument on banal emotions is distinct from Billig's (1995) idea of "banal nationalism." In Billig's argument, ordinary objects – such as flags and currency – function as symbols that help augment the assumed naturalness of the nation-state and nationalist sentiments. My focus on banal emotions considers the ordinarily experienced emotions in everyday settings that may or may not enhance nationalism, but which are still important for the role they play in shaping attitudes toward citizenship.

[iv] Both terms mean 'citizen' in Mandarin.

[v] These out-of-bounds markers demarcate the areas in which public debate is permissible but they are not clearly defined until transgressed and may shift according to the political climate.

[vi] A Singaporean living abroad is eligible to vote if the person has been resident in Singapore for least two out of five years before the election year (Attorney General's Chambers 2006). Exceptions are made only for Singaporeans sent to work overseas in the service of the Singaporean state. This effectively prevents most overseas Singaporeans based abroad for an extended period of time from participating in political elections.

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