This article discusses the iconography of home and the representation of space in Zaanstad, a Dutch city on the northern fringe of the metropolitan region of Amsterdam. Zaanstad is saturated with iconic images of local, regional, and national identity. Linking questions of home and belonging to the politics of symbolic representation, the current article examines home as a multi-sided field of action. Large-scale redevelopments frame home as a regional landscape of belonging, cast in vernacular architecture, and landmark buildings. Grass-roots initiatives to revitalize working-class communities highlight identities based on class and local culture. The empirical case studies locate the politics of urban space in the symbolism that professionals and residents use for “homing” their city. Combining the study of
symbolic representation and political discourse on urban space, it is argued, is a way toward framing home as a multi-sided ideological project.

KEYWORDS: home, politics of representation, postmodern architecture, urban redevelopment

INTRODUCTION

This article discusses the iconography of home and the representation of space in the redevelopment of Zaanstad, a medium-sized city on the northern fringe of the metropolitan region of Amsterdam. Zaanstad is a city that is saturated with iconic images that link local sites of work and residence to political strategies of urban redevelopment and consumption spaces of regional and national identity. This can be seen in references to the industrial past and vernacular architecture, reworked in landmark buildings such as the newly built town hall and condominiums in waterfront areas, as well as in small-scale interventions such as artist impressions and community projects that figure in the restructuring of working-class neighborhoods. How do these images, as projections of local and regional identity, mediate notions of home, and belonging in a complex urban landscape? And how do the morals and aesthetics of identity planning relate to the local and the every day?

The article examines how the politics of representation intersects with images of home and landscapes of belonging. Using observations, interviews, and document analysis, home is analyzed as a multi-sided field of action. Following a discussion of the politics and representation of home, the article shows how images of home are implicated in the symbolic politics of redevelopment within design and architectural projects, which frame home as a regional landscape of belonging. The images, stories, and symbols that are used for “homing” the city help in framing home as a multi-sided ideological project in which professionals and institutions as well as residents and local communities are implicated.

REPRESENTATIONS OF HOME

In November 2003, the Dutch artist Ida van der Lee organized a procession to memorialize the demolition of the Vissershop, an early twentieth-century garden village on the east bank of the Zaan River (Van der Lee 2006) (Figure 1). During the event, a group of residents transported a “treasury” filled with stories, photos, letters, and poems on a tugboat to the Zaanse Schans, a reconstructed village and tourist attraction. The procession assembled various objects of working-class life in the old neighborhood. The coffin, for example, was constructed out of material objects from the interiors of demolished houses, such
as birdhouses, a barber window, and the blades of a windmill. Those who carried the coffin wore costumes of geyser hoods and helmets with faucets and doorknobs and were serenaded by a local male choir. The physical space of the new neighborhood also incorporated elements of the old Vissershop [Fisherman’s shop]. Stories and memories were engraved in natural stone tiles and processed in five properties, temporarily transformed into a “maze of stories.” Typical design elements were retained, such as the buckled street pattern and hedges marking the boundaries of private lots. “It felt like coming home,” a woman remarked after returning to the site of her former neighborhood. Expressing a more resentful attitude, another former resident said she did not miss “the other side.” “The atmosphere has gone,” agreed her husband, standing on the opposite side of the river. “The neighborhood has completely changed” (Snuverink 2009).

In March 2011, the Inntel Hotel—a landmark building designed by the Dutch architect Wilfried van Winden as part of a large-scale redevelopment of the city center—was opened on the other side of the Zaan River (Figure 2). Offering a “special experience of the history of Zaandam,” as a brochure puts it, the façade of the building consists of replicas of typical old wooden houses, for example, a notary house with gable and a working-class house with curled eaves. The hotel’s guest rooms are named after local entrepreneurs and hung with archival footage of the arts and crafts of old workplaces and factories. Located in the hotel complex, the restaurant Puur Saen offers meals made of “pure” local ingredients like mustard and Duyvekater (bread). One year later, the nearby new town hall also opened its doors, its façade constructed out of a row of enlarged houses in bright green colors. The two projects were the focus of intensive
media coverage, but also elicited, especially among architectural critics, a heated debate about esthetics and authenticity. Some proudly recognized symbols of the “new city,” while others saw a pastiche of styles that only superficially referred to the real thing. “It makes me chuckle,” said one inhabitant during an interview:

I mean, what is beautiful and what is nice? Venice is beautiful. The old canals in Amsterdam are beautiful. Of course, there is no country that only consists of highlights. Here [in the Low Countries], however, are only highlights because the rest is flat.

The farewell ritual for the Vissershop and the opening of the hotel and town hall highlight two symbolic events in the redevelopment of a city. Although they address different publics and use different symbolic languages, both cases illustrate how “authentic” images of home and working-class culture are implicated in the representation of a new city. Claims of authenticity surface in the replicas of vernacular architecture that decorate the exterior walls of landmark buildings, but they also emerge in a whole spectrum of images that frame the new with references to the past; this is exemplified by the repurposing of factory buildings as museums, restaurants, or housing complexes and the restructuring of working-class neighborhoods. The inscriptions of local and regional identity make Zaanstad an interesting setting for examining the cultural politics of home.

Symbolic representations are part of the transformation of post-industrial places, such as the mining towns in Britain (Byrne 2002), the docklands in London (Foster 1999) and Dublin (Moore 2008), and port cities like Hamburg, Bilbao, Barcelona, Belfast, and Amsterdam (Gold and Ward 1994), but also of small- and mid-size cities (Bell...
Since the 1980s, cultural strategies have played a pivotal role in the redevelopment of urban space. This is especially noticeable in spectacular examples of urban transformation such as the iconic flagship projects for the Rope Walks Quarter in Liverpool and the El Rawal in Barcelona (Miles 2005), the revitalization of post-industrial cities like Glasgow (Paddison 1993; García 2005) and Newcastle (Miles 2005), and the redevelopment of urban areas led by multinationals such as the Potsdamer Platz in Berlin and Times Square in New York (Mele 2000). These forms of culture-led development are generally seen to exemplify changes in the production and consumption of space in post-industrial cities (García 2005; Miles 2005), where images of home are transformed into a form of corporate control that is tied to processes of privatization and deregulation. As Zukin (1995) argues, images have become central to the promotion of visions of cities, while traditional institutions such as social classes and political parties become less relevant to the expression of identity. Cultural symbols are thus not a byproduct of the material transformation of an area, but are part of the “active economies of signs” in the social production of space (Zukin 1995: 3).

Times Square and Sony Plaza are often-cited examples of branded spaces, in which images are used to frame the redevelopment of the city. It is often argued that brands reduce our complex life-worlds to slogans, one-dimensional images, and touristic clichés. Ultimately, Times Square and Potsdamer Platz are forms of ersatz-cities (artificial cities). As the American architect Michael Sorkin describes Times Square:

> The historic Disney discourse – the pleasurable economies of life in a cartoon – pervades the Disneyland experience like a kind of constitution. It offers an enjoyable passivity, a place where one’s responsibilities are very small – don’t litter, don’t cut in line – and where the anxieties of genuinely political participation are held at bay. It reformats the space of daily life as a place to spend, ratcheting up our narcotic alienation. (Sorkin 2009: 76)

Sorkin’s critique resonates with an often-heard cultural critique of the commercialization of urban space and the advent of branded images as postmodern forms of communication. This critique is linked to the preoccupation with images and what Jean Baudrillard refers to as “the precession of simulacra”: a hyperreality in which images can hardly be traced back to the original. Images are metonymic; they replace material reality with signs and images (Shields 1996: 229).

This article examines constructions of home through the iconography of images, symbols, and stories that are implicated in the politics of urban redevelopment. It stretches the concept of home from the
fixed geographical spaces of house and yard to the collective domains of memory and history. Although traditionally, the products of writers, artists, photographers, and filmmakers, symbolic representations have developed into a legitimate field of academic study. In several disciplines, ranging from cultural geography to urban history, attention has focused on themes such as literary and (audio)visual representations of the city, discourse analysis, urban symbolism, and the perception and experience of urban space (cf. Nas 1993; King 1996; Balshaw and Kennedy 2000). Symbolic representations are deemed important, as they mediate between the worlds of planning and everyday life. Images, as the French philosopher Henri Lefebvre argues, are at the core of the politics of space. For him, space is an ideological and political construction that is tied to specific locales. In *The Production of Space* (2003), Lefebvre differentiates between the codified and institutionalized practices of knowing space (representations of space), the social and spatial practices of everyday life (spatial practices), and space as it is represented and symbolized (representational space). The “dominant” space of planners and technocrats—given form through spatial practices of commodification and bureaucratization—thus exists alongside representations of space in discourses of planning and surveillance and the lived spaces of everyday life that are sensory and sensual (Merrifield 1993). This conceptual distinction—based on actual, contextual spaces produced by human thought and action—shifts attention from reading, coding, and analyzing material spaces to the spatial “strategies” and “tactics” (De Certeau 1997) used by professionals and institutions as well as by users and residents. For De Certeau, strategies are used to create, arrange, and control space, while tactics are used to create room to maneuver within these spaces that have been produced by institutions. Questions about the social and ideological construction of space thus deal with the problem of representation. As Harvey (1992) argues, there is, however, no transparent relationship between social–material reality and the language of representation.

Since “the most successful ideological effects are those which have no words, and ask no more than complicitous silence”, the production of symbolic capital serves ideological functions because the mechanisms through which it contributes “to the reproduction of the established order and the perpetuation of domination remain hidden.” (Harvey 1992: 78–9)

Questions about the representation of home and belonging emerge in all kinds of places where illusions of the home as a fixed site of meaning have been disrupted. As we will see below, notions of home also become prominent in the politics of urban redevelopment, from large-scale metropolitan positioning to the smaller tactics of neigh-
neighborhood space. Below, I examine the symbolic representation of home in the Dutch city of Zaanstad, a city with a specific history of economic growth and regional development. The data used in this article were collected as part of a larger research project on symbolic space and collective identity in four neighborhood sites in the city of Zaanstad. In this research, ethnographic methods were used to explore the intersections between personal narratives of space and the collective realm of residential spaces. The material was collected during interviews with local professionals, guided tours, and a study of historical and policy documents.

**LANDSCAPES OF HOME IN A (POST)INDUSTRIAL CITY**

Zaanstad is a city of 147,000 inhabitants, located seven kilometers northwest of Amsterdam. It comprises seven villages, all but one of which border the Zaan River. In 1974, they were combined into one administrative unit. The city grew out of the cultivation of agricultural land rather than a system of markets or a spatially marked center (Helsloot 2002; Holleman et al. 2008). It is not a product of deliberate planning; it developed through trial and error into a complex landscape of towns and villages stretched out over long distances. This is noticeable, for example, in the intricate pattern of path communities that have left a permanent mark on the social and spatial structure of the villages bordering the river. During the seventeenth century, these paths gradually developed into fine-grained collective spaces. Guarded by “path masters,” residents drafted regulations on all kinds of issues such as the building lines of houses, the width of paths, the maintenance of overtuintjes (front gardens lying between ditch and path), the pruning of trees, and the use of “secrecies” (toilets). This structure was also manifest in the organization of local industries, where people often worked in small informal units without clear differentiation between social ranks and classes.

From the seventeenth century onward, small manufacturing industries gradually filled the banks of the river. Partly due to the lack of protective guilds and council regulations, the Zaan region was able to develop a booming economy based on shipbuilding and wind-powered wood and food processing industries (Mönich and Post 1984; Schuit and Woudt 1996). Scattered around the flat and windy landscape were more than a thousand windmills, which supplied energy for activities such as paper making, grinding dyes, peeling barley, beating hemp, and refining staple products stored in the global trading center of Amsterdam. By the end of the nineteenth century, the city had developed into a national and global center for the food and chemical industries. Zaandam transformed “from a wooden into a stone city” (Helsloot 2002: 104). Once a complex landscape of headlands, coves, and harbors, the waterfront turned into a solid wall of industrial sites and packing houses that closed residential sites off from the river.
Like many cities in the industrialized world, in the years after the World War II, the Zaan region faced a gradual process of industrial decline and economic restructuring that saw a varied manufacturing sector depart from the banks of the river. As activities such as the sawing of wood and the peeling of rice relocated overseas, large industries such as shipbuilding and staple food production disappeared from the city. Some companies remained but were subject to a process of up-scaling, whereby family businesses were absorbed by international firms (a process also referred to as *ontzaansing*). In 1954, a fire destroyed the famous warehouses “The Netherlands” and “Czaar Peter,” symbolizing the decline of the industrial sector. Witnesses spoke of a “horrifying inferno of blazing flames, jet-black smoke and a thick lava of burning cocoa floating into the Zaan.” In a few days’ time, the wall of industry had transformed into “a mess of blackened ruins, a collection of twisted iron, stone and remnants of goods” (Roggeveen 2001: 68).

The processes of industrialization and rescaling fueled a transition from the informal organization of housing construction and regulation to a strategy of urban renewal and development, led by government and local housing associations. Industrialization began to overtake a society that had been largely structured around enclosed, family-oriented communities; a socially stratified society emerged that spatially differentiated between the working, middle, and upper classes (Van Braam 1946). Whereas factories were formerly organized in small-scale communities of workers and entrepreneurs, industrialization saw the formation of a proletariat of factory workers (Kingma 1999: 11). Socialist and Catholic workers organized themselves in theater and musical groups inserted into a system of social organization that was mainly based on religious affiliation (the so-called “pillars” of Dutch society). With the emergence of a strong labor movement, the Zaan region acquired the label of a progressive “red” zone—as seen in its private associations, newspapers, radio stations, and local neighborhoods, like the above-mentioned Vissershop.

Although this structure of associations was gradually lost in the post-war process of “depillarization” (the elimination of parallel structures in a society marked by religion and ideology), local neighborhoods still contain numerous communities that are eager to protect their home places from redevelopment. This process is pronounced in the representational space of visual art projects, publications, and museum exhibitions on local history and industrial life proliferating in the region’s many villages. A case in point is the Rosmolenwijk, a working-class neighborhood bordering the Zaan River, which since the 1990s has been subjected to a process of redevelopment. Here, waterfront industrial sites have been transformed into luxury apartment complexes and parts of the working-class district have been renewed to attract a middle-class public. The neighborhood is often
referred to as a working-class district, reflecting characterizations of
the urban working class as a place-bound community whose daily
lives, unlike middle-class or bourgeois families, are home-centered
(Bott 1957; Young and Willmott 1970). Locals often refer to the neigh-
borhood as the “Zaanse Jordaan,” an old “folky” (now gentrified)
district in the inner-city of Amsterdam, a nickname also used on post-
ings and flyers of the local residents association. In response to rede-
development plans, several projects have been initiated to reclaim and
preserve a “lost space” (Boyd 2000: 117) of a working-class commu-
nity. One group of some sixty residents who loyally attend community
meetings traces their sense of solidarity back to the once popular
labor movement and communist party. Their sense of belonging is
expressed in signs and images of local community life, such as the
symbolic paraphernalia in a local bar (Figure 3) and the vernacular
architecture of green wooden houses (Figure 4).

Areas of industrial decline and socioeconomic deprivation are
invested with notions of attachment to family and community as
well as nostalgia for a shared industrial past (Mah 2009). Indeed,
issues of home and belonging feature prominently in the narratives
of the established community as well as of middle-class residents
entering the area. Most of the new apartment residents are on famil-

Figure 3
Paraphernalia of regional identity in a neighborhood bar in the Rosmolenwijk
(photograph by the author).
new apartment calls up associations with her childhood home. “I’m very used to these kinds of working-class neighborhoods,” she says. “I’m used to the wood and the tinkering.” Zaanstad is a post-industrial landscape where people can feel they belong, but where people also make claims of authenticity. In the following sections, I show how this sense of home is expressed and transformed in media images and architecture.

THE MEDIATIZED LANDSCAPE OF HOME
Although most industries have departed, the city of Zaanstad still bears witness to its industrial past. Some factories, notably in the cocoa industry and a large linoleum manufacturing firm, remain operational; 16 percent of the current population still works in industry. In the second half of the twentieth century, trade and services grew dominant in the economic structure of the Zaan region. Since the 1970s, the city council has developed strategies to tie Zaanstad to the wider metropolitan region: numerous infrastructural projects including new roads, car tunnels, train stations, and viaducts have lessened the region’s geographical isolation. In 1974, seven municipalities were merged into one administrative unit, which made Zaanstad the thirteenth largest city in the Netherlands. The town hall was built in a meadow located in the geographic heart of the region that many considered to be a no man’s land.

The processes of de-industrialization and rescaling fueled heated debates over issues of authenticity and identity. As explained above, the “new” city incorporated a heterogeneous society of villages and immigrant cultures. A historian refers to Zaanstad as a “society of minorities” populated by Jews, Methodists, members of the Reformed Church, Catholics, and Mennonites, each “fighting” to “enforce” their “dignity” and “identity.” Although they shared “a common ground in a...
tolerant legal community,” these groups did not tolerate others intervening in their “private lifespaces” (Kranenburg 1975: 10). Hinting at the layering of local and regional identities, the president of the Dutch Society for Industry and Trade remarked after the administrative merger: “Towards outsiders that entity [Zaanstad] has always been clear...but locals defend their identity. As soon as they put a foot outside their region they profile themselves as Zaankanters” (Simonsz 1975: 6). The very term “Zaankanters,” used to refer to the native population that is attributed with a distinct character linked to regional space, is a case in point. Similarly, a public administrator refers to a “central value system” in which “divisions of territorial nature, both real and imagined, fall away.” He writes:

I am aware that the idea of Zaanstad is not for everyone a living thing. I believe this feeling will be declining...How much chauvinism there might be among the inhabitants of the former Zaan villages, they feel as one community. Though the “Kroosduikers” from Westzaan and the “Gladoren” from Wormerveer [references to local village cultures] may still feel autochthonous, if they are in Amsterdam they act as Zaankanters. (Zaan 1975: 18–20)

These constructions of collective identity, some argue, are threatened by processes of unification and “massification.” Some local councils in the region resisted a “mammoth municipality” because, they argued, the strength of government is helped by a “clear subdivision grafted on societal reality” (Roggeveen 2001).

Zaanstad has been struggling with a split image. For many outsiders, the city is a non-descript place, geographically close to Amsterdam but mentally and culturally far removed. Alluding to the American crime series, a Dutch journalist describes the area between Amsterdam and Zaanstad as a “Soprano-landscape,” a fragmented landscape of polders, plug-in ports, industrial sites, residential and recreational areas, winding dykes, and “disposable architecture” (Vanden Boomen 2010). National magazines and newspapers likewise often depict the city as terra incognita. A journalist writes:

This is a city where you travel through, on your way to somewhere else. It is a name on road signs you find at exits you never take. Is it actually possible to get there? Zaanstad, doesn’t it take an hour and a half by train, two changes, a bus, then another bus, with a small ferry across the river, a 25 min walk over a muddy country road until you reach the little church at the cake factory far off in the distance? (Vreeken 2010)
Despite its peripheral location, Zaanstad has contributed several iconic images that are claimed as part of a highly mediatized landscape of “traditional” Dutch culture. This is displayed, for example, in the green colors used in the façades of private houses, a tradition that dates back to the end of the nineteenth century when wood was available in abundance. A wooden house expressed the Baptist conception of a sober lifestyle that prescribed that one should not show off one’s possessions. The public faces of these residential buildings contrasted with the lush façades of the homes of Amsterdam’s traders and merchants. Over the years, however, a more exuberant façade design was developed with curved curls and tufts (Mönich and Post 1984: 86). Wooden houses were also sometimes extended at the rear, a practice known as goedjaarsend, to display an economically prosperous year.

Popular representations often frame the Zaan region as an authentic Dutch landscape. “Actually, this is the most Dutch landscape imaginable,” a tourist guide states. “Water, polder, heaven and somewhere in between some humans and animals” (Van Koten 1994: 6). These notions of an idyllic Dutch landscape originated at the end of the nineteenth century when Dutch painters discovered the picturesque in the Zaan landscape of waterways and sailing ships. “Is this a real city?,” an Italian tourist writes. “And will it still be there next year? Isn’t the city only made for a party, and will it not be picked up next week and piled in the warehouse of an Amsterdam decorator? Oh! These pranksters of Holland” (cited in Dijkstra and Woudt 1990: 3). The Zaanse Schans, a tourist village of well-preserved historic windmills and wooden houses, and part of the European Routes of Industrial Heritage, exemplifies the iconic status of the Zaan region and attracts approximately one million visitors each year. “Experience Holland, visit the Zaanse Schans!”, as the slogan in a tourist brochure runs. The village is largely focused on the protection and documentation of the region’s urban planning and landscape and thus is home to clock and bakery museums as well as museums featuring period rooms and mills used for oils, sawing, and the supply of raw materials for painting industries.

Different periods of economic expansion mark popular representations, linking the region to a culture of commercialism and entrepreneurship. “Almighty! This is the Zaan,” states a book with panoramic photographs. “Tall factories, activities on the water. This is where people work!” (Dijkstra and Woudt 1990: 39). “The Zaan reminds one of industry,” writes a local historian. “This is where work is being done” (Woudt 1994: 7). An ecstatic example of how this work ethic is projected onto the landscape is a booklet published in the 1950s (Elburg and Van der Meulen 1958) (Figure 5). The book represents the Zaan region as a country to “work in and do business,” linking its industry to distinct Dutch virtues such as “labor,” “entrepreneurship,”
“quick-wittedness,” and “common sense.” “The Zaankanter is unsurpassed,” the book states. “He delivers four times as many products, contributes five times more to the industrial export as the average compatriot.” The texts are accompanied by photos and drawings of an industrial landscape with mills, factories, warehouses, shipyards, docks, bridges, ships, quays, and chimneys, interspersed with images of working people. Recalling a romanticized image of industrial culture, the author writes about:

The lively rhythm supplied by the xylophone of the riveting-hammers, the drums of presses, the whole orchestra of labor, set under the high skies of the Zaan region, against which the organs of chimneys and harps of iron constructions are heard. (1958: no page number)
POP ARCHITECTURE AND THE CLAIMS OF AUTHENTICITY

Today, Zaanstad shows many signs of regeneration combined with images of work and industry. In 2000, a plan was commissioned for the redevelopment of the inner-city into an area of office buildings, retail spaces, and luxury apartment dwellings. This plan aimed to attract knowledge-based firms to shore up the city's vulnerable economy. The Inverdan project (“Inverdan” refers to a shifted building line and is a corruption of “going inland”) was presented as a “Portal to the Randstad” [metropolitan region], a space for “spontaneous encounters,” a “hub for social interactions,” and a “network of urban activities.” A brochure states that the project has placed the city “back on the map.” It should provide the city with “self-confidence” and new creative industries, as well as a “recognizable” landmark for the native population.

One of the plan’s eye-catching features is the Inntel Hotel, a 40-m-high hotel and office building. The architect himself bills the hotel as an example of fusion architecture that uses references to history and local traditions to mix high and low culture (cited in Palmboom 2011: 41; see also Van Winden 2010). Instead of using wood, the building is made of the less expensive and easy-to-maintain Eternit. The public front of the building consists of five vernacular building façades. The cottages are in various shades of green, except for a blue house that refers to the eponymous 1871 painting by Claude Monet. The interiors of the hotel make further claims to authenticity, with rooms named after local entrepreneurs (Verkade, Albert Heijn, Wessanen) and iconic figures like Czar Peter the Great, who visited the city in the seventeenth century. In a brochure, the manager states that the hotel “guarantees a very special experience of the history of Zaandam” (Figure 6). The hotel features “Deluxe Rooms,” hanged with archival footage, where guests can taste the “sweet and savory flavors,” “created by the hard efforts of workers.” The “Craft Deluxe Rooms” are designed to experience the “efforts of the past in a relaxed manner”: “Conveyor belts, long rows of workers, men and women who have worked hard to earn a living for their families.” The “Factory Design Rooms,” decorated with photographs of the river, are designed to recreate the “atmosphere of emerging wealth and industrial success” and show “where history has begun.” In the “Founder Suites,” guests can “discover who made the region great.” “Of course,” the brochure states, “here you will find the luxury inseparably linked to the glory days when successes quickly followed each other.” The hotel also features the restaurant “Puur Saen,” which serves a menu of “no-nonsense food with pure ingredients.” The downstairs meeting rooms and banquet hall are decorated with historic images of the region and industrial life.
The idea of editing and pastiche is also expressed in the design of the new town hall, which consists of a row of enlarged, green-colored vernacular housing façades (Figure 7). The Dutch architect Sjoerd Soeters was inspired by the classical urban plans and architecture of Italian cities, like the basilica of Santa Maria Novella in Florence, designed by Leon Battista Alberti (1404–1472). The architecture is eclectic, combining styles from different time periods, which the architect uses as a symbol of the renewal of an area that had long been regarded as poor, empty, and degenerated (in his presentations, Soeters unequivocally compares it to war zones in Beirut and Grozny). The town hall has a balcony that is used by married couples to present themselves, flanked on both sides by images of kissing whales, taken from the city’s coat of arms. The design explicitly references
local traditions in architecture and construction style, but it is also used to communicate a vision to the outside world. In an interview with a national newspaper, the architect stated:

If you know that people come from all over the world to look at the Zaanse Schans and you combine this with the need for a lively city center, then you would be crazy to not use regional architecture. Who is coming here to look at modern buildings of steel and glass? (De Lange 2010: 10)

References to local traditions are also abundant in other parts of the redevelopment plan. The Hermitage, for example, which houses a residential tower, shops, a cinema, and restaurants, is decorated with the façades of warehouses and canal houses. The canal is modeled on the principle of the overtuinen (front gardens), with banks of grass and stones as well as bridges that are typical of the region. Referring to traditional construction styles used since the 1990s in many new housing projects, the architecture of the Inverdan project is termed “neo-traditional” (Ibelings and Van Rossem 2009), suggesting that it is meant to produce a “shock of recognition” as well as an architecture of comfort and security. Neo-traditionalists are often criticized by the architectural avant-garde for romanticizing the small village communities of the past as well as the political populism of right-wing Dutch politicians such as Pim Fortuyn, Geert Wilders, and Rita Verdonk (Hulsman 2009). An architectural critic calls the hotel a “monstrosity” in which the distinctive details of vernacular houses are left out (Palmboom 2011: 50). As “symbolic representations of the ‘new Zaandam’” and “a postmodern resurrection of its own identity” (Witman 2010), the project received varied reactions from local
CONCLUSIONS

This article examined representations of home as they intersect with the politics of urban redevelopment. Through representations of regional identity mediatized in pop architecture and landmark design, Zaanstad emerges as a city with a distinct identity. As icons of postmodernist, neo-traditional design, the projects highlight a strategy of re-profiling a peripheral post-industrial city into a trendy site for a middle-class public of shoppers, tourists, and businessmen. These symbolic representations allow us to read the spatial complexity and social diversity of the city as a coherent whole. This perspective is made possible by creating distance, which brings unity and order to a multifaceted reality (Strauss 1961). As Benedict Anderson (1995) shows, images, symbols, and stories have a key role in the formation of collective identities, as these enable us to clear our vision and imagine a community, larger than the local village, as a whole. By reducing complexity, symbolic representations frame its members into the public body of a city (Borer 2006).

The restructuring of space, as it has evolved in Zaanstad, speaks to questions about the meanings of home and place in everyday life (Huyssen 2003). They surface in the design and consumption spaces of urban planning, but also in the collective spaces of local villages and neighborhoods. Home and belonging are, of course, highly personal issues, entangled in the private life-worlds of individuals, but they also figure prominently in the worlds of media and consumption. This article argued for studying home as a multi-sided political realm where the personal and vernacular intersect with the collective and spectacular. It focused on symbolic representations through which people claim and mark space and tell each other who belongs and who does not (Bird 2002: 523). The soft notions of home, attachment, and belonging are thus part and parcel of ideological processes and power relations through which people localize themselves and others.

Symbolic representations are part of what Lefebvre (2003) refers to as “conceptual space,” a consistent and coherent system of signs that reduces the city as a reality in itself. Lefebvre places the “dominant” space of planning and objectified representations next to the lived and sensory spaces of everyday life. In capitalist societies, Lefebvre argues, everyday life is “colonized” by commodified space. Since they are embedded in the wider political, economic, and cultural conditions of society, the production and consumption of space are not separate domains. Lefebvre points, as Harvey argues, to a permanent tension between the free appropriation of space and
the dominance of space through private ownership and state intervention (Harvey 1992: 254). These lived spaces differ from the dominant spaces produced by planners as well as the representational spaces that Lefebvre points us to, and reveal the differential claims that social groups make on urban space.

The spectacularization of the working-class home, which is exemplified by Zaanstad’s new town hall and hotel complex, translates vernacular culture into an esthetic space that is aimed at cultural consumption and monumental appeal. This is a spectacular example of “critical reconstruction” in which specific elements of the everyday city are opened up and manipulated for the production of attractive images. At the same time, as the symbolic funeral of a working-class neighborhood in Zaanstad and the narratives of loss in the Rosmo- lenwijk show, the cultural politics of redevelopment also open up a “space for remembrance” (Huysen 2003: 69) that in many ways contrasts with the monumental architecture of the town hall and the hotel. Here, home is framed as an active, embodied practice that links individual biographies to the social networks of family and neighborhood. Moving from the objectified symbols of the city to the subjective, intimate, and every day, the boundaries of home become more differentiated and less clear (Cohen 1989: 13). Homes are physical spaces, but also encapsulate social, symbolic, and narrative fields of action. By examining the intersections of planning, design, and the vernacular, this article conceptualized home as a relational field of action that links the micro-locales of residential space to the landscapes of city and region. I have examined home as part of the rhetorical strategies of local politics and commodified space. The case studies showed how institutional strategies of home making impact, and are also derived from, local practices and narratives of place, where symbols and icons are used to frame a vision of a just and familiar city.

The process of redevelopment, as acted out in Zaanstad, points to the classic struggle between the corporate city and the urban village (Zukin 2010). There is a complex notion of authenticity involved in the redevelopment of the city, which seems to be a place that is sealed off from the outside world, but also one that longs to be linked to the metropolitan region. Zaanstad exemplifies a form of urban redevelopment in which the state takes over to regain a sense of bourgeois civility, but which at the same time threatens the local look and feel of neighborhood space. The politics of home, as expressed in the planning, architecture, and everyday life of Zaanstad, are fueled by strongly felt needs to protect and express the identities of local and regional cultures. As an amalgam of village communities and immigrant cultures, there is a dual agenda involved in the politics of home, each catering to different publics. In seeking to establish a sense of continuity between past and present, the city as home emerges as a multiple coded text, working on different scales and sites.
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