Youth Citizenship, Civic Education, and Spaces of Belonging In Tallinn, Estonia

Catherine Michelle Cottrell
University of South Carolina - Columbia

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YOUTH CITIZENSHIP, CIVIC EDUCATION, AND SPACES OF BELONGING IN TALLINN, ESTONIA

by

Catherine Michelle Cottrell

Bachelor of Science
Florida State University, 2005

Master of Arts
University of Miami, 2006

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

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Geography

College of Arts and Sciences
University of South Carolina

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Accepted by:

Caroline Nagel, Major Professor

Amy Mills, Committee Member

Kara Brown, Committee Member

Doyle Stevick, Committee Member

Lacy Ford, Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies
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credit for helping me to achieve this and so many other goals. This dissertation is a product of their work as much as my own.
This dissertation investigated the ways that young people in Tallinn, Estonia conceptualize citizenships, identities, and belongings in national and post-national communities. Focus groups were conducted with 29 students from ethnic Estonian and Russophone backgrounds in their final year of secondary school; in-depth interviews were conducted with 16 civic education teachers from the students’ schools. Theories of citizenship and nationalism, as well as civic education research, were used to explore the ways in which young people conceptualize the terms of belonging and negotiate cultural difference as they move within and through their everyday spaces, particularly in the school.

The study demonstrated that young people encounter, negotiate, and contest multiple and often competing discourses of national, multicultural, and post-national citizenships in their everyday lives, and that these coexist and interact complexly rather than existing as discrete entities at separate scalar hierarchies. The complex interaction of these discourses is thrown in to sharp relief in the Estonian context because of the country’s persistent socio-spatial division between ethnolinguistic groups at the national level and its membership in the European Union. In Tallinn, young people attempt to navigate cultural diversity through the liberal democratic framework of multiculturalism but concomitantly engage in Othering practices to structure the terms of belonging and exclusion in society. The results of this study suggest that future research
should consider the simultaneity of multiple discourses of citizenships and how they produce and are produced by myriad political identities and relationships. The findings further imply that while theoretical conceptualizations of divided societies should recognize persistent socio-spatial divisions, they should also consider the complicated narratives that work to blur the lines of those divisions and to create a reality of societal divisions that are not as black-and-white as they may first appear.
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Chapter 1

Introduction

“I hope that in the future everything will change and there won’t be so much hate in society. For example, I know my friend, an Estonian, learns Russian. And it may feel strange, but it is—it’s happening. I think that in the future when you speak Russian, this won’t draw any special attention because this is the European way of treating different nationalities…”

(Pushkin Boy 3, focus group participant, Tallinn, Estonia, 2012)

This Russian-speaking student’s narrative about belonging and identity in Estonia illuminates the complex, multi-sited reality of citizenships for young people in contemporary Europe. In a few simple sentences, this young man contends with nationalist, multicultural, and post-national discourses as he negotiates identity and belonging in Estonian society. His statement is illustrative of the multiple configurations of citizenship that young people in Tallinn, Estonia are confronted with—and must contend with—on an everyday basis. This dissertation explores the ways in which young people in Tallinn, Estonia understand societal membership in a nation-state that is both a society divided along ethnolinguistic lines and a liberal democratic member state of the European Union. In their everyday, mundane spaces, young people in contemporary Estonia encounter discourses of national, multicultural, and post-national citizenships that conceptualize community, and the terms of belonging in
that community, in varying and often contrasting ways. Recognizing young people as active agents in the construction of their own political subjectivities, this study examines the ways that youths in Estonia understand and negotiate citizenship, identity, and belonging as they move through and within the everyday spaces of their personal geographies. In doing so, this study aims to interrogate how politicized identities and multi-scalar citizenship discourses interact to structure and restructure the terms of membership in society.

Theoretical Questions

What are the everyday contexts in which young people develop an awareness and understanding of societal membership(s)? What role does civic education play in the citizenship imaginaries of young people? And what is the significance of everyday urban space and place in the development of young people’s cognizance of belonging and exclusion in the context of a divided society?

In this study I investigate conceptions of identity, citizenship, and belonging amongst ethnic Estonian and Russian-speaking youths in Tallinn, Estonia. In contemporary societies, identity, citizenship, and belonging are bound together in multiple ways. Modern citizenship has traditionally established and codified the relationship of the individual and the state through a language of universal rights and responsibilities; at the same time, it has been understood to denote membership in a national community that is defined in terms of particular cultural norms and values, and in some cases, historical ethnocultural markers (Janoski and Gran 2002; Hall 1996; Heater 1999).
While legal status may be universal within a nation-state, individuals or groups who are viewed as “unassimilated” or “unassimilable” into the national community may have different access to rights, different abilities to participate in public life, and a different sense of belonging in the wider community of citizens (Isin 2002). Such tensions and differentiations of citizenships are perhaps most visible in “divided societies”—those societies characterized by persistent socio-spatial polarization (Ansorg, Haass, and Strasheim 2012; Dobbernack and Modood 2011).

Even as patterns of exclusion remain salient, modern citizenship and national communities have been reconfigured through a number of pressures and processes. Trends in post-World War II Western societies have caused citizenship to be both reconfigured at the national level and broadened beyond it (Nagel and Hopkins 2010). Multiculturalism has played a steady but contentious role in the sociopolitical discourses of liberal democracies as cultural diversity and difference have altered the ways that nationhood is articulated and negotiated. Furthermore, contemporary processes of transnational migration, European integration, and human rights regimes continue to challenge traditional notions of citizenship rights and responsibilities, locating identities and spaces of belonging above and across state lines and forming “post-national citizenships” (Soysal 1997; Benhabib 2007; K. Mitchell 2007). Assessments of these trends vary considerably. Some studies, for instance, have couched multicultural and post-national citizenships as institutions of universal equality and rights that can overcome the exclusionary politics inherent in nationalist projects (Soysal 1997;
Kymlicka 2007; Banks 2008) Others, in contrast, have demonstrated that particularisms undergird all citizenship regimes and discourses, belying wider claims of universal access and status (Laclau 1992; Young 1989; Benhabib 2002). From this latter perspective, the nation-state remains the primary guarantor of citizenship and therefore continues to be a significant focal point in theoretical discussions of citizenship (Ehrkamp and Leitner 2003; Desforges, Jones, and Woods 2005; Faas 2011).

This study takes a different approach to contemporary citizenships—that these citizenship discourses have not had fully transformative effects, but rather, have formed multiple layers of citizenship discourse that people negotiate in their everyday lives. This study aims to examine how multiple citizenship discourses circulate within divided societies by engaging with the wider body of citizenship literature that has dealt with multiculturalism and post-nationalism, in contrast to divided societies literature that has tended to focus solely on the nationalisms that mediate socio-spatial divisions (Boal 2002; Yiftachel and Ghanem 2004). Furthermore, by engaging with both multicultural and post-national theories, this study brings the simultaneity of multiple citizenships in liberal-democratic societies.

Different forms of ideas about citizenship circulate within societies. Layer upon layer of citizenship ideals with different rights (or conceptions for rights) flow from these discourses. This is particularly true in Europe, where both resurgent ethnonationalist projects and European Union (EU) integration processes have been present in the wake of collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. The youngest
generations in Europe’s post-Soviet nation-states have been raised amongst competing discourses, particularly within civic education curricula, of nationalisms aimed at reasserting titular majority hegemony and European multiculturalisms focused on these countries’ “return” to Europe and democratic value systems (Delanty 2006; Kolossov 2003; Hughes 2005). Empirical studies suggest that in such contexts, young people’s understandings and negotiations of belonging and citizenship are highly fraught processes that take place in the spaces of everyday life, from schools and neighborhoods to places of work and recreation (Sarah L. Holloway et al. 2010; Weller 2003; Reed-Danahay 2007; Michaels and Stevick 2009).

This study examines the relationships between youth conceptions of citizenship and belonging and the multi-scalar discourses of identity. As such, the aims of this dissertation are to investigate (1) the ways in which configurations and conceptualizations of citizenships are mediated by multiple, varied, and sometimes conflicting discourses of identity and belonging; (2) how young people encounter, negotiate, and contest the terms of identity and belonging in their everyday geographies; and (3) the ways in which young people’s positionalities in national communities mediate and inform their ideas of citizenship and their citizenship practices.

The complex interaction of varying discourses of belonging and identity is particularly visible in divided societies that experience cleavages along ethnonational lines. Estonia is one such divided society. This dissertation engages with these theoretical approaches to citizenship through in-depth focus
groups and interviews with young people in their last year of secondary school, and through interviews with civic educators in Tallinn, Estonia. The study participants were recruited from both Estonian-medium and Russian-medium secondary schools. Formal focus groups and interviews were conducted over a three month period in the autumn of 2012. Participant observation was also carried out in secondary schools, where I interacted informally with students and gave talks on the 2012 US presidential election, religion in America, and higher education.

The decision to focus on young people in Estonia was made in order to engage with changing modalities of citizenship in a group that has only recently generated interest in geographic literatures on citizenship. Traditionally, young people have been viewed as “citizens-in-the-making” who are the passive objects, rather than active subjects, of the discourses of citizenship and nationalism (Weller 2003, 154). But recent research trends in multiple disciplines, including geography, have centered young people as political agents who construct their own understandings of identity and actively negotiate discourses of citizenship (Skelton 2010; Leonard 2006). Young people in Estonia, in particular, are in a unique position of encountering and contending with many and varied discourses of citizenship, identity, and belonging because their society is both socio-spatially divided along ethnonational lines and situated within a multicultural, pan-European space that is “united in diversity.” To further demonstrate why this generation of young people in Tallinn is a compelling group
within which to examine citizenship, identity, and belonging it is necessary to briefly discuss the historical contexts in which Estonian society is situated.

**Historical Contexts of Belonging in Contemporary Estonia**

On February 24, 1918 the Republic of Estonia declared its independence after several centuries under German, Swedish, Danish, and finally Russian rule. After fighting a War of Independence against both the Soviet Red Army and German forces with the help of British, Danish, Finnish, and Swedish allies, the Republic of Estonia was established when its first constitution was ratified and parliament elected in 1920. Estonia remained a sovereign nation-state until it was conquered by the Soviet Union in 1939 and later annexed, along with the other Baltic states, in accordance with the Nazi-Soviet Molotov Ribbentrop Pact, which was best known in the West for invading and partitioning Poland. Estonia was occupied by the Soviets from 1939-41, followed by Nazi German troops from 1941-44, and Soviet troops again from 1944-1991 (Raun 1987).

During the Soviet era large-scale migrations (forced and otherwise) saw an influx of Russians and Russian-speakers into Estonian territory. In the years leading up to World War II, Estonia was quite ethnically homogenous, with almost 90 percent of the population listed as ethnically Estonian, eight percent Russophone, and two percent other nationalities. By the end of the Soviet era in 1991, however, Estonia’s population was 61 percent ethnic Estonian and 35 percent Russophone (Statistics Estonia 2013). The in-migrations of Russophones was not uniform throughout the territory, however, such that Harju
County (centered by the capital city, Tallinn) and Ida Virumaa County in the northeast (centered by the industrial city of Narva) were the only areas with sizable Russophone populations. Since its re-declaration of independence in 1991, Estonia has retained a large Russophone minority that constituted 29 percent of the population in 2011 (Statistics Estonia 2011). Moreover, the socio-spatial divisions in the country continue to reflect those of the Soviet era. The Russophone population almost exclusively reside in Tallinn/Harju County and Narva/Ida Virumaa County (Tallinn City Office 2012; Statistics Estonia 2011; Statistics Estonia 2013).

In addition to the large influx of Russophones during the Soviet era, Estonia was also subject to Sovietization and Russification policies and processes. Russian became the lingua franca for government, industry, and many parts of everyday life. Educational curricula were dictated by Moscow, and Soviet histories, policies, and ideologies permeated civics, history, geography, and language lessons (Ahonen 2001). The era also involved attempts to suppress local cultures throughout the USSR, and as such Estonian traditions and language were relegated to the private realm while Soviet Russian culture was reflected in public spaces, places, and landscapes (Raun 1987; Merritt 2000; Zeigler 2002; D. J. Smith and Burch 2012).

The Soviet era was also marked by physical violence and brutality that included exiles, deportations, disappearances, forced conscription into the Red Army, and executions. Important to note, however, is that these brutalities were inflicted by the Soviet regime on Russians and Russophones just as they were
on the titular populations of USSR republics and satellite nations. But for ethnic Estonians the Soviet legacy of physical, political, and cultural violence was associated with Russophones broadly construed, an outlook that had major implications for the Estonian nation-state after the collapse of the USSR in 1991.

Upon re-establishing independence in 1991, Estonian nationalist elites set about “establishing social structures aimed at perpetuating cultural distinctions” between the titular majority and Russophone minority, which was cast as a group of interlopers who did not belong—simply a remnant of the illegal Soviet occupation (Kolossov 2003, 252; Laitin 2003). The marginalization of Russophone culture and language was legitimized by the new Estonian government through discourses of righting historical wrongs, acting for the self-determination and sociocultural preservation of the Estonian people, and “stressing the European nature of Estonian identity, a natural westward tilt that for 40 years had been forcibly bent to Moscow’s will” (Merritt 2000, 247). The socio-spatial division of ethnic Estonians and Russophones very notably continues today, for instance, through the country’s school system, which, as alluded to above, provides both Estonian-medium and Russian-medium primary and secondary education to accommodate the large Russophone enclaves in its society.

The key elements of the Estonian nation-building project have been language policy and citizenship laws. Estonian replaced Russian as the lingua franca throughout society, and the use of the Russian language was considered a threat to the stability and integrity of the Estonian state (Pavlenko 2008;
The new Estonian citizenship laws dovetailed with language policy through the new parameters established for naturalization, which included an Estonian language exam.

When the USSR dissolved, so did Soviet citizenship. But citizenship in the newly independent nation-states that emerged from the USSR was not automatically extended to all residents of these new countries. Estonian citizenship, for instance, was automatically extended to any resident who could prove that their family resided in the Republic of Estonia before the Soviet and Nazi occupations of World War II. This policy immediately legally and politically alienated the majority of the Russophone population whose families moved to Estonia during the Soviet years (often as a result of forced migration and population transfer policies) and therefore were left with no citizenship at all. The result was that 32 percent of Estonia’s population in 1992 was rendered “stateless” (“Citizenship in Estonia” 2013). Residents of Estonia who could not prove their family’s pre-war status would have to go through the naturalization process to obtain legal citizenship, which included examinations “demonstrating proficiency in the Estonian language and knowledge of the Estonian Constitution and Citizenship law” (Feakins and Białasiewicz 2006). Because of the dominance of Russian and subsequent lack of need for the Estonian language during the Soviet era, the majority of the stateless Russophone population had little or no Estonian skills and therefore could not pass such naturalization exams easily or soon after Estonia’s redeclaration of independence.
Estonia’s Citizenship Law and language policies caused great concern in international circles, especially in Brussels, (as Estonia was an EU candidate country in the 1990’s and early 2000’s), for encroaching upon the rights of the Russophone minority (Feakins and Białasiewicz 2006; Brosig 2008). Thus, “constrained by international oversight [and] political reality” Estonia began making legislative moves to liberalize policy. In 1998, significantly, the Estonian parliament amended the Citizenship Act to allow parents who are stateless but had lived in the country for at least five years to request citizenship through naturalization for any children born after 26 February 1992¹.

Shortly thereafter, the Estonian government implemented the first Estonian State Integration Programme, which ran from 2000 to 2008 (Laitin 2003, 197). The chief goal of the first Integration Programme was to address the issue of statelessness amongst Estonian residents (“Integration in Estonian Society” 2013). Specifically, citizenship and naturalization legislation was altered to reduce the amount of time required to process citizenship applications and the government made reimbursement for the cost of Estonian language lessons available to at least 3,000 people per year. The most significant legislative move for young people in Estonia was the bestowal of citizenship at birth to any child with at least one Estonian citizen parent. This was followed by the second phase of the State Integration Programme, which has run from 2008-2013, and which aims to “ensure rapid modernization of society in the context of accession to the

¹ Children who are naturalized under this amendment are not subject to the exam requirements of the Citizenship Law.
European Union, while preserving both stability and commitment to the protection and continued development of Estonian culture.”

While the effectiveness of the Integration Programmes has been debated (Brosig 2008; Kulu and Tammaru 2004), the number of naturalized citizens in Estonia has increased noticeably since 2000. However, the presence of 84,494 stateless residents (6.5 percent of the population) in 2011 “indicates the persistence of a major unresolved problem” (Feakins and Białasiewicz 2006, 651). These mixed assessments of the first two phases of the State Integration Programme, together with the Estonian government’s announcement of a third phase of the State Integration Programme (2014-2018), demonstrates that integration in Estonia is an uneven process, subject to the vagaries of individual experiences with multiple discourses of identity and belonging and contemporary Estonia.

The Integration Programmes have focused heavily on primary and secondary education in Estonia. Although the education system is still divided between Estonian-medium and Russian-medium schools, the Integration Programmes have implemented a controversial “60 percent” rule that requires 60 percent of all classes in secondary schools, regardless of language medium, must be taught in the Estonian language. According to the Estonian government this policy is “demand driven” and necessary to ensure that “all permanent residents of Estonia, irrespective of their ethnic origin… are able to lead a fulfilling life by participating in the societal, economic, and cultural life of the country” (“Integration in Estonian Society” 2013). Furthermore, the policy dictates
that all secondary school history and civics courses must be taught in Estonian. The “60 percent” rule has caused friction between the Estonian government and Russophone population for several reasons. First, many teachers in Russian-medium schools were pedagogically trained in the Soviet era and therefore do not have the Estonian language skills to teach the required courses in Estonian. The Estonian government has provided language training for Russophone instructors, but the problem persists (Kulu and Tammaru 2004; Brosig 2008; Toots 2003). Furthermore, although Russian-medium primary schools are required to teach Estonian as a second language to its students, the lengthy and uneven implementation of such policies, combined with teacher language skill issues, has resulted in many Russophone students entering secondary school without the Estonian skills needed to effectively absorb 60 percent of their curricula in Estonian.

Despite Estonia’s efforts to liberalize citizenship laws, promote integration of majority and minority populations, and comply with European Union regulations regarding minority rights in member states, socio-spatial divisions remain present in Estonian society. The complex interaction of varying discourses of citizenship, identity, and belonging are particularly evident in Tallinn because it is home to 30 percent of Estonia’s entire population and is the only city to have sizable numbers of both the Estonian titular majority and Russophone minority. Ethnocultural tensions have flared in Tallinn, most recently and violently during the Bronze Soldier Crisis of 2007. Riots and looting erupted in Tallinn’s city center in the middle of the night on 26 April 2007 when the
Estonian government dismantled and relocated the Bronze Soldier War Memorial, a Soviet-era monument commemorating the Red Army’s “liberation” of Estonia from Nazi Germany. The issue of whether the USSR “liberated” or “occupied” Estonia at the end of WWII remains a highly contentious issue between the Estonian and Russophone communities. Many, if not most, Estonians viewed the Bronze Soldier’s presence in Tallinn’s city center as an incorrect, illegitimate public display of Soviet “victory” that was no more than an occupation. The Estonian government’s previous discussions of relocating the monument, which is also a gravesite for Red Army soldiers who perished in Tallinn during World War II, generated intense resistance amongst the Russophone community because of the Bronze Soldier’s “importance…as a place of Russian national honor and symbol of victory” (Kattago 2009, 159). The Estonian government’s decision to relocate the Bronze Soldier in April 2007 to the Defense Forces Cemetery, a “less controversial place,” turned out to be an extremely controversial decision that highlighted the complex interaction of the many and varying discourses of citizenship, identity, and belonging that exist on a daily basis in Tallinn.

These political, cultural, and social histories are the contexts in which belonging, identity, and citizenship are negotiated in contemporary Estonia. The national conflicts that emerged after the breakup of the USSR have attracted significant scholarly attention in the 1990’s and 2000’s (Pavlenko 2008; Megoran 2004; Kolossov 2003; Berg 2000; Skalnik Leff 1998; G. Smith and Wilson 1997). This dissertation builds on that research while broadening the discussion beyond
the question of post-Soviet identity. It considers how this process has been shaped in part by a wider set of processes in Europe relating to the acceptance of multicultural discourse and the reconfiguration of rights and identities through the EU. Tallinn’s young people represent fertile ground for addressing theoretical issues of belonging, identity, and citizenship within a society that is divided along ethnocultural lines, subject to competing historical memories, and negotiating nationalism, post-nationalism, and multiculturalism on a daily basis.

The Arguments

While over nearly of the student respondents and every teacher respondent hold Estonian (and therefore EU) citizenship, they exhibit remarkably diverse understandings of what identities are associated with substantive national citizenship. Broad patterns and similarities in the responses, however, can be detected along the ethnolinguistic lines that socio-spatially divide Estonia. The conceptual framework developed in this dissertation draws on the complexities of the study population’s responses to demonstrate and explain the following theoretical points:

1. The tensions between the universalism of liberal-democratic citizenship and the particularisms of the Estonian nation-building project permeate, and are permeated by, post-national and multicultural modes of citizenship. Discourses of post-national and multicultural citizenship, which aim to address cultural diversity and alleviate conflicts between majority
and minority groups, actually complicate and multiply the particularisms that delineate belonging and citizenship. This calls into question whether the inherent tensions between universalisms and particularisms can be alleviated at all.

2. Young people are subject to multiple and often contradictory discourses of citizenship and identity in their everyday spaces, particularly in the school. Teacher attitudes serve to mediate the manner in which discourses of nationalism, post-nationalism, and multiculturalism are presented to young people in the classroom. Importantly, however, the discourses and experiences that young people encounter in their everyday personal geographies, such as homes, neighborhoods, and city landscapes, are equally influential. Young people are more likely to demonstrate internalization of discourses that they have meaningfully experienced in multiple spaces rather than what they are taught in school.

3. Urban space is particularly significant to the delineation of belonging, identity, and citizenship in divided societies. Memorialized landscapes, displays of banal nationalism, and the ascription of meanings to particular neighborhoods perpetuate and mediate the projection of hegemonic narratives and identities and the marginalization of minority narratives and identities.

4. Young people’s positionalities within the nation-state as members of the majority or minority group affects the way in which European Union citizenship and European identity is conceptualized, understood, and
asserted. In other words, the sociopolitical inclusion or exclusion that young people experience based on their ethnolinguistic identity tempers whether EU citizenship, Europeanness, and the attendant rights and opportunities are couched in terms of either supplementing or substituting for their Estonian citizenships. These varying postionalities of young people influence the way they plan for and think about future plans to migrate within Europe, implying that citizenships are intersecting rather than one form of citizenship simply replacing another.

These theoretical points suggest that national, post-national, and multicultural citizenships coexist and interact in complex ways with each other rather than existing as discrete entities at different scales. Citizenships, from this perspective, are dynamic political relationships, ideals, and discourses that affect and are affected by each other. Moreover, this complex interaction indicates that individuals’ negotiations of their various citizenships will depend upon their unique experiences at and perceptions of the urban, national, and post-national levels. Subsequently, theoretical abstractions of citizenship, identity, and belonging must consider diverse individual conceptualizations that occur within broad patterns identified amongst groups.

This dissertation focuses on the ways that young people conceive of and ascribe identities, conceptualize citizenships, and understand the terms of belonging at multiple scales as a result of their movements within and through the everyday spaces and places of their personal geographies. The joint
examination of the coexistence and interaction of multi-scalar citizenship and identity discourses diverges from existing theoretical engagements which tend to address national, post-national, and multicultural discourses separately from one another and view these as trends that have definitively reconfigured “modern citizenship.” This study moves beyond the views of proponents and skeptics of these various discourses by showing the simultaneity of multiple forms, ideals, and discourses of citizenship, painting a much murkier picture than what can be found in some of the contemporary literature. The analysis presented in this dissertation suggests that young people’s conceptualizations of various citizenships and identities neither develop discretely from each other nor evolve in one space, but are established via complicated interactions of multi-scalar discourses within and through multiple spaces, including those of the everyday.

**Organization of this Dissertation**

Chapter Two of this dissertation reviews theoretical approaches to citizenship, identity, civic education, youth geographies, cultural landscape, and urban geographies from multi-scalar perspectives including the national, post-national, supranational, and multicultural. This review of the literature constructs the theoretical framework that guides the analysis of this empirical study.

Chapter Three provides a methodological overview of the study. This chapter discusses the qualitative methods used to gather and analyze the data collected during fieldwork. It also discusses the characteristics of the study population and the methods used to recruit the study participants. It also briefly
addresses researcher reflexivity and power dynamics between the interviewer and interviewee(s), and how these issues influence data collection and analysis.

Chapters Four, Five, and Six draw on focus groups and interviews to examine the ways that young people’s encounters with different discourses in different spaces inform and are informed by their conceptualizations of citizenship, identity, and belonging in Estonian society. Chapter Four investigates the complicated ways that the tensions between discourses of nationalism, post-nationalism, and multiculturalism manifest themselves in the space of the school and in students’ narratives of identity and belonging in Estonia. It pays special attention to the teachers’ descriptions of how they present citizenship discourses in their classrooms and compares them to the students’ narratives of how they understand citizenships and belongings. This chapter discusses how the things that students are taught in school about citizenship and belonging are mediated by their experiences in other everyday spaces. Chapter Five extends this analysis by addressing bordering practices that the student participants engage in while navigating everyday spaces. It focuses in particular on how language spaces interact with the built environment of the city to shape students’ encounters with and negotiations of belonging and citizenship in Tallinn. Young people, it is demonstrated, actively conceptualize and contest citizenship and identity in Tallinn through their varied experiences in the divided spaces of the city. Finally, Chapter Six investigates the student participants’ engagements with EU discourses of supranational citizenship and identity. It examines the students’ perceptions of their EU citizenships through the lens of their positionalities in the
national community as part of either the Estonian majority or the Russophone minority.

Taken together, these three chapters suggest that young people’s conceptualizations of citizenships and identities are negotiated in the context of inherent tensions between universalisms and particularisms that are present in multi-scalar discourses of citizenships and belongings. Although multiculturalism (framed as tolerance) is present in the student descriptions of terms of belonging and exclusion in Estonia, Europe, and the city of Tallinn, particularisms pervade their narratives of everyday negotiation of the spaces of citizenship in a socio-spatially divided society. While the space of the school is a crucial site for the development and understanding of citizenships and identities for young people, it must be situated within the wider context of young people’s personal geographies outside of the classroom in order to render a comprehensive, thorough assessment of youth conceptualizations of belonging at multiple scales. In particular, the mediation of young people’s ideas of national and post-national citizenships takes place within and through urban spaces on a daily basis, indicating that the citizenships at various scales are not neatly stacked in a hierarchy, but coexist complexly at many scales.

A concluding chapter summarizes the theoretical arguments made in the dissertation and draws out suggestions made by this analysis for understanding youth geographies of citizenship, identity, and belonging in divided societies.
Chapter 2

Literature Review

This dissertation explores how different modes of citizenship in contemporary Europe intersect and shape the lives of young people. I start with the premise that despite the language of universalism, the parameters of citizenship are defined by particularisms that marginalize and exclude certain individuals and groups. The particularisms of a society’s dominant group become naturalized and are therefore framed as the “universal” traits of citizens. The universalization of the dominant group’s culture and customs creates an impetus for minority groups to adopt assimilatory practices or be subject to sociopolitical marginalization, exclusion, and alienation. In this dissertation I use this premise to investigate the identities of young Estonians not only in terms of belonging to their national community, but also to the European community.

Young people in Estonia, and indeed throughout Europe, are implicated in multiple political projects with varying objectives. Discourses of national, post-national, and multicultural identities and citizenships circulate within and through young people’s everyday spaces, especially the space of the school. These varied and often contradictory discourses are normally examined as discrete processes, but this dissertation argues that discourses of nationalism, Europeaness, and multiculturalism in fact operate simultaneously and are thrown together in different contexts. As a result, young people must sort through and
assemble multiple conceptions of citizenship and social membership. This dissertation discusses the nature of the varying discourses of citizenship that Estonian young people encounter, the spaces in which they are encountered, and the ways in which the interplay of different discourses shape young people’s articulations of belonging and identity. The discussion is aimed at contributing to wider discussions of young people’s understandings of belonging and identity and contemporary modalities of citizenship in Europe.

In the modern nation-state era citizenship and national identity have often overlapped to the extent that the terms are taken to be synonymous. Conceptions of nation and national identity have often drawn upon ethnocultural markers, accentuating some social divisions while diminishing others already present in societies. The granting of citizenship along the lines of such national identities has given these societal divisions legal and political dimensions, resulting in the further marginalization of non-assimilating minority groups. In recent decades configurations of national identity and citizenship have shifted, becoming de-coupled from ethnicity. These configurations, developed largely in the context of post-World War II Western Europe and America, have increasingly tied citizenships to residency, rather than to membership in an ethnocultural group. This shift has taken place in the context of the creation of supranational, transnational, and global/cosmopolitan identities and citizenships. Policy-makers, EU leaders, educational professionals, and scholars assert ideas of multiculturalism and cosmopolitanism as essential in a globalized and globalizing world. However, ethnonationalisms have never disappeared, compelling scholars
to investigate the ways in which groups, individuals, and states navigate and negotiate multiple and, sometimes, conflicting conceptions of belonging, identity, and citizenship in divided societies.

Academic studies of citizenship and identity have often implicitly focused on adults and the implications of exclusionary citizenship forms and practices affecting access to employment, housing, and social services. In the past decade, however, scholars have begun to address more explicitly and specifically the active role young people play in the development of their own identities and conceptions of citizenships. This small but growing body of work argues for the recognition of young people as capable, active agents rather than passive 'citizens in waiting' that are dictated to by adults. Within the framework of political geography theory, studies of youth geographies focus on the sites and spaces in which young people learn about and encounter and experience identity, belonging, and the meaning of citizenship. The roles of civic education and school spaces are, along with the home, crucial sites of learning and performing identities and community membership. As such, much of the analysis of youth political geographies is centered on the spaces of formal education. But the personal geographies of youths outside of school and the home are also beginning to be recognized as critical sites of identity formation and performances of citizenship—thus, analyses of the urban space are being folded in to the broader examination of young people’s worlds.

This review weaves together theories of citizenship, identity, belonging, civic education, and urban spatiality, providing a theoretical framework to
examine young people’s development and maintenance of identity and citizenship in divided societies. Insights about citizenship and belonging provided by young people are unique because youths encounter and engage multiple discourses while they are in the world of adults, but not entirely of it. Young people are situated within political communities where their capacities for formal political and legal interaction are dependent upon adults.

But formal limits on young people’s political agency do not remove their ability to negotiate, interpret, and contest the discourses they encounter in the adult world. Young people contend with discourses set by adults—such as their families, educational officials, and policy-makers—but actively negotiate and interpret these discourses within the context of their own lives and for their own purposes. This negotiation results in the performance of different, highly contextualized identities and citizenships that are influenced by the discourses of adults but reflected through the prism of young people’s lives. In examining the spatiality of young people’s lives, we can develop a better understanding not only of how youths come to conceive of belonging, identity, and citizenship, but also of how citizenship in general forms and is formed by complexly interacting discourses of societal membership. Finally, it pays particular attention to the multi-scalar nature of the sites and spaces in which young people encounter discourses of belonging, identity, and citizenship.
Identity, Citizenship, and the Politics of Belonging

Theories of identity and of citizenship are bound up together, informing by one another. Identity and citizenship are both inclusionary and exclusionary constructs that delineate insiders and outsiders as well as what attributes define those who belong and those who do not. Citizenship theories, traditionally concerned with the narrow parameters of formal membership in a bounded political territory, especially rights and responsibilities, have expanded in recent decades to include discussion of socio-cultural identities and the ways these mediate access to and exercise of rights that exist on levels other than the nation-state. Therefore, understanding identity formation has become central to understanding the construction of citizenship.

Contemporary scholarship understands identity to be a social construction rather than an a priori characteristic (Paasi 2001; D. J. Smith and Burch 2012) and to be both performative and discursive in nature- that is to exist in the realm of language and ideology and in the realm of social, spatial, and institutional practices (Jenkins 2000; Paasi 2003; Newman and Paasi 1998; Entrikin 1999; Merritt 2000). Identity, at a fundamental level, is a relational concept: it involves defining oneself in relation to some “other”, “us” in relation to “them” (Browning and Christou 2010; Kolossov 2003; Paasi 2002; Jenkins 2000; Delanty 2006; Fuchs and Klingemann 2002). Groups uphold such distinctions through borders and bordering practices that are simultaneously spatial, social, temporal, and discursive (Newman and Paasi 1998). Borders, in this sense, are instruments of power that make the inclusion of “insiders” and exclusion of “outsiders” visible
and real (Paasi 2001; Delanty 2006). As products of human agency, borders can achieve a degree of fixity, but they also shift over time, re-shaping the identity(ies) of those included and excluded, as well as relationships and interactions between groups (Delanty 2006).

The construction of an identity is a process of binding people together and creating solidarity between them. The ways in which identities are learned, accepted, and ascribed are myriad. Families are one important sphere of identity formation; as Jenkins states “we know who we are...because, a long time ago...other people told us” (Jenkins 2000, 15). Identities are also continuously produced and reproduced through education systems and curricula, in historical narratives, public rituals and monuments, art, literature, and other media (Newman and Paasi 1998; Kolossov 2003; Yiftachel and Ghanem 2004; Berg and Oras 2000; Delanty 2006; Murphy 2002). Dominant identities come to saturate societies, becoming so ubiquitous that they seem natural and banal (Billig 1995). Those who do not assimilate, whether by choice or discrimination, face the disciplinary power of dominant groups. At times though, the subordinated and the unassimilated can challenge exclusionary practices and alter identities from within. In short, while identities uphold systems of privilege, they can also be mobilized to press claims for inclusion. Identities, in this sense, are not static or singular, but dynamic, multiple, and context dependent.

Identities are given material and symbolic structure through their geographies (Rose 1997). Individuals and groups use discourses and narratives to spatialize the definitions of identity and, subsequently, understand the terms of
belonging and exclusion through space, place, and landscape (Keith and Pile 1993). The discourses of “power ridden social relations” produce “particular spatialities” that articulate identities “by giving them spatial form” (Rose 1997, 2). Discourses of “‘race,’ gender, sexuality, and nation (and by extension, class, ablebodiedness and so on)” (Rose 1997, 2) produce multiple identities and, subsequently, spatialities of identities. Individuals, then, have “multiple and sometimes contradictory subject positions, and are sometimes torn between identifications, often moving between identifications in different situations and places” (Pratt 1998, 27; Yuval-Davis 2006; K. Anderson 1987; Mahtani 2001).

The processes of power relations work to produce spaces and places where identities are enacted and negotiated in different ways by different individuals and groups (Massey 1995; Pratt 1998). Hegemonic discourses manifest hegemonic entities and work to organize space, privileging dominant identities and relegating minority identities to the margins of society. The power relations that “produce bounded areas” of identity have marked implications for “those who are contained and enact their identities within” those spaces (Pratt 1998, 31). Discourses of power and the politics of identity mark the spatialities of dominant identities as spaces of belonging, thereby organizing spaces—and access to them—according to hegemonic identity processes. Dominant discourses and identities, however, are processes that can be challenged and contested by. Spaces of belonging, like the identities associated with them, are “dynamic process[es], not reified fixities,” and may be “stable, contested, or transient” (Yuval-Davis 2006, 199).
As individuals ascribe multiple identities to themselves and to others, they are often negotiating multiple spaces of belonging simultaneously. Individuals and groups perform many identities simultaneously as they move through the spaces of their everyday lives, but the politics of identity will affect how each individual or group performs these identities (Keith and Pile 1993). Several scholars have observed how “different aspects of identity come to the fore in different contexts” and spaces (Pratt 1998, 32). Empirical studies have demonstrated that people’s “concrete social locations are constructed along multiple axes of difference” (Yuval-Davis 2006, 200), and that they will emphasize or suppress certain aspects of their identities, such as class (Pratt 1998), ethnocultural heritage (Leonard 2006; Secor 2003), and religion (K. Mitchell 2006a) in order to navigate and cross the borders of spaces of belonging and exclusion.

The contemporary literature on identity has demonstrated that the complexity of the interactions between power relations and social boundaries account for the changeable nature of identities and their spatialities. But the fact that identity can be said to be an always-becoming, dynamic process does not negate the realities of boundaries in space and place that are crucial to identity formation “and its complement, the production of difference” (Pratt 1998, 27). Geraldine Pratt (1998, 27, 35) describes the spatialities of various identities as “grids of difference” that are complexly situated at varying scales. These grids are bounded places that “can stabilize identities or, alternatively, open up the potential” for cross-boundary movement and communication (Pratt 1998, 44).
Individuals’ movements within and across the borders of grids of difference, she argues, illustrate the complex nature of identity as both located and mobile, and the complex nature of bounded spaces of belonging/exclusion as both palpable and changeable. People’s negotiations within and through grids of difference may serve to challenge or reinforce boundaries of identity spaces, promote progressive change or protect the status quo, and fragment identities or solidify them. The concept of grids of difference provides a framework within to acknowledge both the structure of identity spaces and the potential for those structures to be shaped and reshaped by power relations.

Pratt’s conceptualization of grids of difference as the spaces and places where identities are enacted and subjectivities negotiated demonstrates how crucial identities and their spatialities are to understandings of citizenship. The recognition that identities become associated with spaces of belonging and exclusion, the center and margin, and insider/outsider status illuminates the ways in which societies become divided and the ways in which the rights and responsibilities of citizenship are accessed and demanded. Recognizing the processes by which citizenship itself serves as a particular form of identity that is bound up with state power and access to rights allows for a more nuanced and comprehensive understandings of how individuals and groups are included or excluded from accessing rights in contemporary nation-states.

Many types of identities figure with people’s claims to rights and political membership in nation-states. The processes and performances of myriad identities—national, ethnic, class, and religious, among many others—that
structure individuals’ and groups’ social locations take place within the political-legal framework of the contemporary nation-state. Examining the ways in which young people develop and understand notions of belonging and exclusion in terms of citizenship reveals the ways in which their movements within and through grids of difference and their performances of varying identities both shape, and are shaped by, political structures of the nation-state that permeate daily life. The following sections address the ways in which citizenship, as an identity, is configured in the contemporary world, how it structures the ways in which people navigate their daily geographies, and the ways in which it affects peoples’ access to political, social, and civil rights.

Citizenship

From the ancient Greek polis and the Roman Republic to the modern nation-state system and globalizing world, citizenship has been an institution that confers rights on and demands duties from members of a political community. Historically, citizenship has been connected to the territorial space of a bounded political unit—i.e. the rights and duties of citizenship are both established and acted upon within the space of a sovereign, bounded polity (Painter and Philo 1995).

Traditionally, citizenship implied politico-legal rights that entitled the bearer to protections within the polity and demanded politico-legal duties (of widely varying degrees) to society (R. Smith 2002; Dagger 2002; Schuck 2002; Lefebvre 2003; Isin and Turner 2002; Heater 1999; Isin 2002). Academic
literature in the twentieth century conceptualized citizenship as a body of rights including civil and social rights and duties in addition to political ones (Marshall 1964); citizenship has often been seen as becoming more expansive over time, encompassing more rights and applying more widely across society. National citizenship configurations in Western liberal democratic societies have contended with and extended beyond-political rights inconsistently and unevenly throughout the history (Marston 1990; Yuval-Davis 2006; Yiftachel and Ghanem 2004). But the concept of a comprehensive space of citizenship rights and obligations is ubiquitous enough that a number of policy makers and scholars “equate genuine citizenship with full possession of all three types of rights: civil, political, and social” (R. Smith 2002, 110).

Contemporary theorizations of citizenship have moved beyond a rights-focused discussion to interrogate the scales at which communities are defined and the ways in which membership in communities is defined, regulated, and applied (Hobsbawm 1990; Billig 1995; Desforges, Jones, and Woods 2005; Staeheli 2008; R. Smith 2002). The contemporary body of scholarship on citizenship represents myriad conceptualizations of the nature of community, rights, and duties, but the concern common to these scholars is the examination of the how power, politics, and identity interact to include and exclude individuals and/or groups from access to rights.

The concept of citizenship has always implied an entitlement to rights, an expectation of duties, and "participatory practices and contestations in the public sphere" that allow citizens to make claims (Soysal 1997, 510; R. Smith 2002;
Citizenship has always been presented as a status that not only connotes that the bearer possesses rights and duties (Marston 1990; Yegen 2008), but also that those without that status do not possess those rights and duties (Bosniak 2000; Marshall 1964; Hughes 2005). Citizenship defines “us here” from “them there” requiring both difference and space for its constitution (Isin 2002; Painter and Philo 1995; Desforges, Jones, and Woods 2005). As an inherently spatial institution, citizenship dictates access to the space of rights, the nature of rights and duties within that space (Marshall 1964; Soysal 1997), and the nature of the community guaranteeing the rights (Benhabib 2007; Ehrkamp and Leitner 2003; Staeheli 2008).

Because citizenship is membership of a particular community, defining what the characteristics of a community member are (and are not) is a crucial and fundamental process in the creation citizenship. Establishing which individuals and/or groups are included within the community requires the delimiting of “the community.” In other words, creating the identity of a community creates the identity of the citizen (Painter and Philo 1995). As the contemporary world political system is separated into nation-states, the most influential process of creating the identity of the citizen has been the creation of nations and national identity.

**Identifying the Citizen: Nations and Nationalism**

The construction of nations is a contentious, political process that involves the ideological production of cultural sameness in a context of modern state
formation. Benedict Anderson (2006) has argued that the establishment of common consciousness between individuals in a modern era of print capitalism and mass communication created “imagined communities.” Anderson argues that such communities are “imagined” in the sense that individuals feel connected to past, present, and future inhabitants of a territory they have not met and cannot possibly meet. These imagined communities initially formed around common language and then began to include ethnic, cultural, and heritable characteristics that created a sense of commonality between members of the group. In understanding themselves to be part of a nation, people view their commonality as stretching across time and space—as rooted in the past and as continuing into the future.

National communities establish identities via emphasis on the commonality between its members that simultaneously bind them together and distinguish the community from other groups. Michael Billig (1995) illuminates the importance of the “Othering” process in nation-building, arguing that nations are made real when they are defined against other national communities. National communities are not stand alone entities, but rely on the presence of Other national groups to define their space of existence. The commonality that is the foundation for community is derived from myriad social, cultural, economic, and political factors that interact within that community. Nationality is simultaneously the “marker of inclusion” in a community and the “justification for exclusion” from it (Staeheli 2008, 9). The processes of masking difference and promoting the image of a homogenous polity are crucial not only to essentialize the identity to
the national community, but also to naturalize its connection to the territory it
occupies. For that reason, these processes of identity construction are constantly
operating activities, rather than one-off actions that often call upon specific
readings of history to naturalize the connection between national identity,
citizenship, and the state.

We can gather from the theories of Anderson and Billig that nation is
inherently spatial because it implies place as well as a community of people.
Historical accounts of a national community inhabiting a territory provide
justification for that nation's sovereignty and political control over the territory
(Agnew 2001). As a result of historical narratives, political control over territory
becomes essentialized as a fundamental part of a nation. These "constitutive
stories" naturalize the presence of the nation and give it legitimacy (R. Smith
2002, 109). National histories use social, cultural, and political elements to
naturalize the geography of national community and impart a spatial quality to
national identity. Because memory and history are hegemonically produced and
maintained, the group in power determines the "official" history of a nation (K.
Mitchell 2003). The ways in which a national history is cast will have great impact
on the territory the nation exercises sovereign political control over.

Historical narratives play a vital role in the conflation of the nation and the
state because they construct an intrinsic connection between the nation and
sovereign control of territory. This connection tends not only to naturalize
categories of belonging, but subsequently, also entitlement to political rights from
the state (Murphy 2002). The importance of national identity is realized in this
essentialization because any individual with the proper identity markers of the ruling nation will automatically be included in the political community. Political membership in a state has therefore often hinged on the identity markers of the nation, such as language, ethnicity, and race (Billig, 1995).

Political Rights and National Citizenship

It is readily apparent from the literature that both the conception of a nation based on common ethnocultural, heritable traits and the definition based on common ideas for governance of the people have had, and continue to have, real and lasting effects on the granting, performance, and maintenance of national citizenship. The critical literature on nationalism exposes the highly contested and complex nature of national identities and establishes that national consciousness emerges neither quickly nor easily (Hall 1996; Billig 1995; Till 2005; Forest, Johnson, and Till 2004). National identities are far from stable, homogenous characterizations, but are rather constantly subject to competing historical narratives, internal power politics, contradictions of performance, and cross-cutting allegiances (Hall 1996). However, while the nation is constantly in flux there is a concerted effort by contemporary liberal democratic states to naturalize identities and give them the appearance of universality. It is at this point that national identity, as defined by those in power, intersects with the status of citizenship to naturalize, essentialize, and enfranchise some individuals and groups while excluding, alienating, and marginalizing others.
Universal Citizenship and Particular Identities

By the late nineteenth century the linkage between national identity and citizenship had become well established, as had the use of universal, inclusive terms to obscure the highly particular, exclusionary practices of citizenship (Laclau 1992; Young 1989; Yuval-Davis 1997). Universalist vocabularies of citizenship have always been central to liberal democratic citizenship (Lefebvre 2003; Ipperciel 2007). Post-War sociopolitical developments in the West compelled marginalized and politically alienated groups to assert their right to “full citizenship status—that is, equal political and civil rights” with increasing frequency and fervor (Young 1989, 250). As discussed by Marshall (1964), these post-War conditions prompted the expansion of rights and their extension to previously marginalized groups such as women, working classes, and minorities. However, the achievement of full formal national citizenship status has not translated into freedom and equality for all individuals and groups, compelling scholars to interrogate and challenge the extent to which universal citizenship is actually universal.

“The ideal of universal citizenship” has driven the “emancipatory momentum of modern political life” and assumes that the status of citizen not only entitles fundamental rights to the bearer, but also that the bearer will have equal access to the spaces of said rights (Young 1989, 250). Young’s classification of universal citizenship as an ideal rather than an objective reality stems from the fact that unfettered access to political, civil, and social rights and
the ability to interact meaningfully in a shared public sphere remains to be realized (S. J. Smith 1989).

Universality of citizenship is a “core tenet of liberal citizenship theory” (Bosniak 2000, 377) that conceives citizenship in individualistic, rights-based terms (Schuck 2002). IM Young (1989, 250) has argued that the “universal” assumption in modern conceptions of citizenship is “citizenship for all.” If all members of a political community have the same citizenship then:

“that citizenship status transcends particularity and difference. Whatever the social or group differences among citizens, whatever their inequalities of wealth, status, and power in the everyday activities of civil society, citizenship gives everyone the same status as peers in the political public.”

This universal equality that comes with citizenship status is an “equality conceived as sameness”—an equality that is based on generality and commonality amongst citizens rather than particularity and difference. Moreover, such a universal citizenship implies that rights and duties within the political community, such as laws and rules, are “blind to individual and group difference” and as such are impartially applied to everyone (Young 1989, 250; Young 1990; Yuval-Davis 1997; Yegen 2008).

Equality conceived as sameness is necessary to the modern Western political system because it works toward achieving a homogenous citizenry that has a unified general will for the polity (Yuval-Davis 1997; R. Smith 2002). Both liberal and republican conceptions of citizenship cast difference as a threat to freedom and stability in society (Calhoun 1997; Schuck 2002; R. Smith 2002), holding that “the particular can only corrupt the universal” (Laclau 1992, 84;
emphasis in original) or at least fragment it. In the modern nation-state ‘homogenous citizenry’ is built upon the foundation of the national community (Yuval-Davis 1997; B. Anderson 2006; Yegen 2008), which exposes the inherently exclusionary nature of the ostensibly “universal” and equal national citizenship. Because national identity and citizenship are both built upon exclusionary practices, such that claims of universality and inclusiveness are in fact obscuring foundations of particularity and difference (Painter and Philo 1995; Jenkins 2000; Enríkin 1999; Laclau 1992; Lefebvre 2003).

Theoretical debates regarding the universality of citizenship have informed and been informed by empirical studies exploring the alienation of certain individuals and groups in Western liberal capitalist societies (Wemyss 2006; Aasland and Flotten 2001; Isin 2002; Laclau 1992; Marston 1990; S. J. Smith 1989; Young 1989; Young 1990; Yuval-Davis 1993; Secor 2007; Staeheli 2008). This literature raises significant points regarding the ways that the ideal of universality of citizenship subsumes social and cultural difference under the paradigm of equality and works to perpetuate the marginalization of Others through the politics of identity and belonging.

Firstly, and as previously noted, this literature reveals the ways in which citizenship is a status and membership that is bestowed upon those with the accepted identity markers. Within political communities, the particular traits of the dominant group in society become naturalized and universal (Laclau 1992; Young 1989). These naturalized identities come to be taken for granted as “inherent” to members of the political community, making the bestowal of
citizenship status contingent upon performance of the particularities of a
hegemonic group. The gendered, racialized, ethnicized, and religious
considerations that construct the borders between insiders and outsiders, those
who belong and who do not, are asserted as neutral, universal markers of a
citizen’s identity (R. Smith 2002; Marston 1990). The result of such politics of
identity is that the ideal of universal citizenship becomes a mechanism through
which hegemonic ideologies are advanced (Young 1990) and those deemed “too
different” or “unassimilable” are positioned outside of the boundaries of
citizenship and, thus, unable to fully access the space of rights in a community.

A second point raised by this literature is that the universal extension of
formal citizenship rights in liberal democracies maintains the appearance and
assumption that not only are those rights substantively distributed (Holston 2008,
7), but also that all citizens are “in a position to avail themselves of these rights in
a meaningful way” (Bosniak 2000, 378; emphasis mine). This assumption
obscures the ways in which the politics of identity and belonging intercede to
alienate certain individuals and groups based on ethnic, cultural, gender,
religious, social, and/or class-based differences (Yuval-Davis 2006; Yegen
2008).

Lastly, several scholars note that nationalism becomes “the most
frequently troubling instance of identity politics writ large” (Calhoun 1997, 80)
because of its “historical alliance” with the “discourse of citizenship” (Yegen
2008, 103). The identity politics of ethnonationalisms may seem more overtly
exclusionary because of their bounding of the nation-state along ethnocultural
and heritable lines (Aasland and Flotten 2001; Hughes 2005), but civic
nationalisms that are based on common adherence to political practices and
ideas also serve to exclude individuals and groups from the community (Dagger
2002; Ipperciel 2007; Lefebvre 2003). Nationalisms are actively constructed as
the particular ideologies of dominant groups become *universalized* as the
ideologies of the community, subsequently, the citizen.

This literature has generated attention to the outcomes of identity politics
in national communities. Such scholarship not only deconstructs hegemonic
identity politics as they relate to national citizenship, but also reexamines the
constant contestation and negotiation of identities and belongings that
characterizes modern societies.

For individuals and groups who hold formal citizenship but fall outside of
the dominant group’s identity parameters, substantive citizenship often remains
elusive. The inequality that survives within nation-states in spite of a universal
extension of formal political citizenship is what Young describes as the “paradox
of democracy” (1989, 259). In large part due to the naturalization and
essentialization of the dominant group’s identity and its equation with the identity
of the citizen, certain citizens are simply more powerful than others even when
political rights are universal. This is an imbalance of social power where, as
George Orwell’s pigs assert, “all animals are equal, but some animals are more
equal than others” (Orwell 1997, 92).

The result of persistent imbalances between citizens is what Holston
(2008) describes as a “differentiated citizenship,” where differences, rather than
commonalities, are emphasized through the dominant group’s appropriation of spaces of meaningful citizenship for only those individuals who possess the right identities. Holston’s extensive research in Brazil demonstrates that configurations of citizenship that are “universally inclusive in membership and massively inegalitarian in distribution” are particularly conducive to the reproduction of the inequalities of substantive power within nation-states (Holston 2008, 7). In nation-states where the blend of civic nationalism and ethnonationalism is particularly fraught, social and ethnocultural differences are used to “distribute different treatment to different categories of citizens” (Holston 2008, 7).

In such nation-states social differences, such as education and occupation, are affected and reproduced based on ethnocultural differences like language. The interplay of such social and ethnocultural differences can sometimes form a negative feedback loop that replicates majority/minority group identities, further complicating any attempt to rectify differences in access to the spaces of social, civil, and political rights (Kulu and Tammaru 2004; Secor 2007; Faas 2011). The resultant differentiated citizenship “generates a graduation of rights… in which most rights are available only to particular kinds of citizens” (Holston 2008, 7).

An entirely different kind of paradox emerges, then, when minority individuals and groups with differentiated citizenships move to demand access to spaces of political, social, and civil rights (e.g. education, employment, or consistent application of law). Laclau argues that individuals and/or groups that cannot or will not fully integrate into the nation-state—i.e. groups that maintain
differentiated identity—can only make demands for truly equal access to rights by
demphasizing their differentiated identity and appealing to the “universal
principles that [they] share with the rest of the community: the right to have
access to good schools, to live a decent life, to participate in the public space of
citizenship, etc.” (Laclau 1992, 89).

The realities of such uneven power dynamics in the modern Western
political system have prompted much discussion in academic literature on how
best to deal with the obvious heterogeneity of nation-states and the unequal
distribution of rights and duties that result. The implementation of multicultural
policies and discourses has been one way of addressing these problems and
resolving these tensions. However, as the next section will address, neither
scholars nor policy makers have a unified conceptualization of what
multiculturalism is or should be.

**Multiculturalism and its Critics**

The word “multiculturalism” is ubiquitous in contemporary Western
societies and yet there is no absolute, agreed upon understanding of what it is.
There are multicultural policies and practices in the political arena as well as
theoretical and conceptual discussions in the academic arena. Definitions of what
it means to be multicultural exist across the ideological spectrum but all notions
of multiculturalism revolve around recognition of difference. Multiculturalism’s
coeexisting ubiquity and uncertainty, while seemingly contradictory and
counterproductive, are realities that are essential to understanding how
multiculturalism has affected (and continues to affect) contemporary liberal democratic societies and why there are simultaneous proclamations of its success and failure.

Nagel and Hopkins (2010) provide a cogent representation of multiculturalism that is conducive to understanding such a contested concept. Multiculturalism, they argue, is more than “a particular philosophy of governing diversity” but “represents the on-going disruption of ideas about nationhood and culture and the articulation and negotiation of cultural differences by state and non-state actors” (2010, 2). Operating from such an understanding allows for an easier negotiation of the chaotic collection of propositions for dealing with cultural diversity.

Contemporary multiculturalist policies emerged out of post-war emphases on new and different approaches to cultural plurality and minority rights (Kymlicka 1995). Nagel and Hopkins (2010) identify concomitant processes that “led to the reimagining of national communities” and the prompted a reassessment of how citizenship rights and responsibilities are made available to individuals and groups “marked as deviant and the other” (Young 1989, 268; Kymlicka 2007). One process was a collective recognition in the wake of the destructive nationalisms of the Second World War “that strident, militaristic ethnonationalism could no longer have a place in a free, democratic West.” A second process was the “emergence of civil rights and feminist movements” that “destabilized and undermined deeply entrenched systems of discrimination in Western states” (Nagel and Hopkins 2010, 3). These processes affected public policy and
confronted uneven citizenship distribution not only amongst groups distinguished by racial or ethnic difference, such as indigenous peoples, immigrant populations, and national minorities (Carens 2000; Kymlicka 2007), but also groups distinguished by religious, gender, and sexual differences (Yuval-Davis 2006; Nagel and Hopkins 2010; Marty 2007).

The increase in discussions of multiculturalism, its existence, success, and failure within the past two decades specifically has been attributed to “volatile disputes over the rights of… cultural minorities” in the West (Kymlicka 1995, 1; Wemyss 2006) and the eruption of ethnonationalist conflicts in the wake of the collapse of the USSR (Feakins and Białasiewicz 2006; Heater 1999; Pavlenko 2008; Laclau 1992; Hughes 2005; Kuus 2002). Underlying the debates over multicultural policies and practices in Western societies is the tension between the democratic principles of individual liberty and the wellbeing of collective society. Although some scholars argue that these two principles need not be seen as antagonistic toward each other (Benhabib 2002; Kymlicka 1995; Carens 2000), the varying opinions on whether recognition of group difference is the solution to the challenges posed by cultural plurality (Young 1989) or is the death knell of a free society (Balint 2010) continue to permeate the multiculturalism debate.

The following sections address the different forms of and attitudes toward multiculturalist discourses and policies and how those forms and attitudes manifest themselves in liberal democratic societies. The broader point being made is that while the word “multiculturalism” may have been discredited in
discourse and policy, its underlying concepts are not dead. Rather, multiculturalism endures as an innocuous means of talking about cultural difference. Multiculturalism may not be effective at integrating minorities, but its discourse remains present under different vocabularies of addressing diversity and difference.

Liberal multiculturalist theories that focus on recognizing group difference and embracing cultural heterogeneity argue that universalistic configurations of citizenship require assimilation of minority individuals and groups into political communities shaped by “hegemonic, majoritarian” identities (Yuval-Davis 2006, 207; Carens 2000; Marty 2007). Multicultural theory and practice, in contrast, is “designed to give recognition to, and to affirm, cultural diversity” by creating an environment where performance of cultural difference in the public sphere would not jeopardize access to the full spectrum of citizenship rights and responsibilities (Nagel and Hopkins 2010, 4).

The scholarship favoring liberal multiculturalism asserts that suppression of group difference in favor of emphasizing the commonalities of the citizenry will severely restrict the ability of minority groups to meaningfully access rights and to participate fully in society (Kymlicka 1995; Young 1989). Multicultural advocates assert that protecting cultural difference is not an act that will threaten individual liberty by giving recognition to groups, but rather is a protection of the right of all individuals to have their own beliefs, ideas, identities and cultures (Kymlicka 2007; Yuval-Davis 2006). Also, the positive recognition of difference is consistent with the liberal citizen’s responsibility to respect the equality of their
fellow citizens (Modood 2007). Different citizens have different needs, and measuring all individuals and groups against “neutral” behavioral and performative citizenship norms, which are nothing more than the norms of the privileged hegemon made natural, perpetuates discrimination and division amongst the citizenry (Laclau 1992; Young 1989).

These perspectives on liberal multiculturalism maintain the importance of positive recognition of group difference for substantive, meaningful citizenship in contemporary societies. While liberal multiculturalism’s critics cite the continued conflict and inequality amongst dominant and minority groups and threats to social cohesion and national security as the “failure” of liberal multicultural policies, its advocates maintain that such charges are “greatly exaggerated” (Carens 2000, 88) and note the continued existence and prosperity of nation-states that have implemented such policies (Kymlicka 2007). Additionally, despite the pronouncement of multiculturalism’s vast failures in Western societies, it “still has a great deal of currency in everyday language” (Nagel and Hopkins 2010, 2). But whether the actual configurations and implementations of liberal multiculturalist policies affect meaningful and substantive citizenships for minority groups is hotly contested.

Critiques of multiculturalism have had great currency both in scholarly and policy-related circles (Nagel and Hopkins 2010; Gill, Johnstone, and Williams 2012). Criticism of liberal multiculturalism has been vociferous and has come from both ends of the ideological spectrum. Moreover, the proliferation of counterarguments to liberal multicultural policy and theory has ensured that,
even though it is being challenged, the issue of multiculturalism is still pervasive in contemporary, everyday life.

One critique of liberal multiculturalism centers on a “social fragmentation” or “Balkanization” argument. This line of thought posits that respect for and recognition of group difference is a direct threat to the unity of the national polity (Schlesinger 1998; Miller 1995; Phillips 2009). Furthermore, intense focus on group specificity that bleeds into the arena of differentiated needs amongst the citizenry will undermine the “common good”—a core tenet of liberal theory at the base of all liberal democratic societies and the critical parts of republican thought. A stable democracy is dependent upon a certain solidarity or universal character to define, uphold, and protect the rights of citizens. The distillation of a democratic society into separate cultural groups “crystallizes differences, magnifies tensions, [and] intensifies hostilities” thereby threatening the freedom of the citizenry (Schlesinger 1991, 2; Doppelt 2001; Phillips 2009; Zechenter 1997).

Still other critics argue that the inchoate character of liberal multiculturalist policy has allowed for its relatively uncontested “shunting aside” in favor of neoliberal, market-based conceptions of citizenship in many Western nations (K. Mitchell 2006b; Carens 2000). These arguments typically come from a more leftist perspective that recognizes the importance of groups but view multiculturalism as hopelessly naive. These critics suggest that the inarticulate yet routine nature of liberal multiculturalist principles has effected nonsensical, mindless, and meaningless celebrations of cultural difference “while doing little to
address deeply entrenched racism” (Nagel and Hopkins 2010, 5). Thomas (2008; see also: El-Haj 2007) argues that this is particularly evident in schools, spaces that are integral to the development of citizens who value diversity and respect difference. “Uncontextualized and unexplained” discourses of multiculturalism circulate in school curricula fostering a mere “banal or rote celebration of difference” rather than an actual achievement of diversity (2008, 2964). Benhabib (2002, 129) cautions that if multicultural discourse becomes rote then what may result is:

“a kind of multicultural cold war: there may be peace but no reconciliation; there may be bargaining but no mutual understanding; and there may be stalemates and standoffs, dictated less by disrespect for the positions of others than by the fear of others.”

The variety of approaches, interpretations, configurations, and criticisms of multiculturalism have ensured that it is a ubiquitous presence in Western societies. Regardless of those who proclaim that multiculturalism is alive, well, and effective (Kymlicka 2007) and those who have claimed to observe its “strange death” (Hesse 2000, 10), multiculturalism is present in the in cities, schools, and civic organizations. The “ways in which social groups encounter, experience, recognize, and make sense of cultural difference” on a daily basis demonstrate that, outside of policy and scholarship forums, multiculturalism exists in “everyday, lived” realities (Nagel and Hopkins 2010, 2). However, multiculturalism’s continued presence in Western societies does not imply that the contestations over its meanings and proper practices have been resolved. Such ambiguity has affected many practices that use the legitimacy of
multicultural keywords such as “tolerance” to mask uncritical pseudo-engagements with group difference.

_Tolerance as Multiculturalism_

Multiculturalism’s reluctance to coalesce around one meaning has meant that debates regarding its validity remain present in discussions of both theory and policy. As debates on validity have continued a kind of “soft multiculturalism” that revolves around ideas of tolerance has become ubiquitous. This trend reflects a widespread acceptance of actual cultural differences and a need for everyone to tolerate—i.e. accept and permit—those differences. In the absence of a consensus on how to meaningfully integrate different groups within societies with each other, the basic consent to the presence of such differences has become the most common way of dealing with cultural diversity. Tolerance, then, can be seen as a soft form of multiculturalism that attempts to “deal with cultural difference” (Nagel and Hopkins 2010, 2), however ineffective it may be at producing meaningful integration of different groups.

Tolerance, like multiculturalism, does not have a unified, agreed-upon meaning with regards to the way that it is put into practice (especially in the political space), but has come to be couched in the realm of public practice as the desired telos of the culturally diverse liberal democratic nation-state (Gill, Johnstone, and Williams 2012; Balint 2010). The discourse of tolerance is ubiquitous at every geographic scale, ranging from the supranational (e.g. the EU) to the local (e.g. educational spaces), as the “appropriate solution” for
contending with sociocultural difference while respecting the liberal principles of freedom and equality (W. Brown 2008).

Tolerance is, at its heart, is a normative principle that “organizes the ‘conduct of conduct’” (W. Brown 2008, 4; Dobbernack and Modood 2011). It is a principle shot through with judgment of what is right or wrong, good or bad. Although the greater complexities of tolerance are debated, most scholars agree that tolerance (and tolerating behaviors) involve three paradoxical elements. The first element is that both objection and acceptance are necessary for tolerance to exist (Forst 2003; Gill, Johnstone, and Williams 2012; Dobbernack and Modood 2011; W. Brown 2008). Tolerant behavior exists when a person, practice, belief, or identity is deemed objectionable but is allowed to be present in spite of the objectionable behaviors.

The second paradoxical element of tolerance arises from the first. In the name of being “tolerant” towards someone/something that is distasteful, the person doing the tolerating is simply withholding their power to eradicate it—i.e. tolerating “even if she or he has the power not to tolerate” (Dobbernack and Modood 2011, 10). Therefore, the act of tolerating constructs and assumes a power hierarchy in which the person doing the tolerating is “anointed with virtue” because they are “standing for a principled act of permitting one’s own principles to be affronted,” while the subject of the tolerance is marked as distasteful, objectionable, even deviant, and therefore occupies a subordinate position.

The last paradoxical element of tolerance is that while it parades as an act of acceptance, it is actually a bordering practice built on the politics of belonging.
(Dobbernack and Modood 2011, 25). The label of “tolerable” on a practice or belief implies that there are practices and beliefs that are “intolerable.” Thus, persons, practices, and beliefs are saddled with identities that include or exclude them from the space of tolerance. Significantly, this “bordering practice” also establishes who is tolerant and who is intolerant. Thus, tolerant people are constructed as bastions of Western liberal antiprejudice and those who are intolerant are marked as barbarians who, by virtue of their intolerance, are intolerable (W. Brown 2008, 6). These three elements that underpin tolerance have informed the critical engagement with it as a path toward peace, acceptance, and substantive equality. The continued presence of minority groups’ inequalities within Western societies have laid bare that tolerance has, at times, “overtly blocked the pursuit of substantive equality” instead creating an environment of mutual respect between dominant and majority groups (W. Brown 2008, 9).

Rainer Forst (2003) contends that while there are types of tolerance that reify power structures and perpetuate inegalitarian citizenship, an “esteemed” conception of tolerance (2003, 75) that “is driven by a desire to be inclusive, emancipatory, and equality-driven” (Gill, Johnstone, and Williams 2012, 515) is the component of a democratic society essential to promoting mutual respect and substantive equality amongst the citizenry. Forst’s prescription for achieving “esteem” tolerance is inadequately articulated, however, in that he assumes that “the most important rights and resources” are the same for all individuals and groups (Forst 2003, 76). Dobbernack and Modood (2011, 9–10) assert that the
establishment of what rights and resources should be protected is a contested process, and one that problematizes liberal conceptions of tolerance:

“The liberal difficulty here is to establish the exact definition of which interests are important—and should be protected by rights—and what constitutes harm and therefore a violation of those rights. From the very beginning, this points to some ambiguity in liberal toleration and to its context-dependence.”

This point underscores that the modalities of tolerance operating in Western society are in constant contention with the politics of identity and belonging. In some modalities of tolerance, individuals or groups vie for the recognition that their differentiated identity is within the bounds of tolerance. Other modalities of tolerance strive to promote social cohesion and political unity by marking certain identities as threatening to the polity and therefore not worthy of being tolerated.

Wendy Brown (2008) maintains that this process of establishing the rules about what gets tolerated and by whom is a cleverly disguised way of ensuring that liberalism, which is itself a culture, retains its socio-political and cultural hegemony (2008, 23–4). Tolerance, as practiced in liberal nation-states, has established itself as a “universal value and impartial practice” (2008, 7) when in fact it is establishing the interests of liberal society as most important. Subjects of tolerance are marked as “inferior, deviant, or marginal vis-à-vis those practicing the tolerance,” and the liberal democratic state allows for those in need of toleration to be present in society in spite of their difference. When this allowance is projected as an equalizing act, any other existing inequality becomes something “innate” or “natural” that exists in spite of tolerant attitudes. Brown
calls this depoliticization (W. Brown 2008, 15), a process which “involves constructing inequality as either personal or natural in origin, or otherwise natural, religious, or cultural and therefore profoundly antithetical to claims for equality” (Gill, Johnstone, and Williams 2012, 514). Brown’s conception of tolerance as a process of regulating aversion within the parameters of liberalism illuminates its inefficacy as an instrument for promoting substantive citizenship in diverse societies. The “mainstream” understanding of tolerance in the West has served to confirm the universalization of particular identities and cement power hierarchies instead of “removing social stigma” and providing “for equal accommodation in the public sphere” (Dobbernack and Modood 2011, 8).

The ideals of multiculturalism, tolerance, and diversity remain embedded in the political discourses of Western societies even as new modes of citizenship are coming into being. While many of these discourses have been (and continue to be) deployed and contended with at the national level, multiculturalism and tolerance are also embedded in the discourses of the more recent configurations post-national citizenships. Post-national citizenships, which are decentralized from the nation-state, are centered heavily upon human rights discourses, the acceptance of cultural diversity, and the toleration of difference. The conditions of these “post-national citizenships” entail rights that are derived from membership in international and supranational citizenships and are often engaged with separately from multicultural citizenship in the literature. But post-national citizenships, such as cosmopolitan and European citizenship, reflect discourses of tolerance and acceptance of diversity, suggesting post-national citizenships
interface with multicultural discourses just as national citizenships do. The following section considers post-national citizenships in greater detail in order to uncover the ways in which post-national and multicultural citizenship discourses interact with each other.

**Post-national Citizenships**

Since the 1980's significant changes in the world system stemming from the many forms of globalization have generated conceptualizations and observations of citizenships that are multivalent, and dynamic (Sassen 2002; Calhoun 2002; Desforges, Jones, and Woods 2005). Citizenships that supersede the national scale have been termed “post-national” (Soysal 1997). The literature on post-national citizenships notes that advancements in communication and transportation technologies and the proliferation of migratory movements, free market capitalism, liberal democratic ideals around the globe have fundamentally altered the boundaries societal associations (Soysal 1997; K. Mitchell 2007; Kofman 2003; R. Smith 2002; Paasi 2002). The parameters of post-national citizenships have reconfigured the rights and forms of political participation associated traditionally associated with citizenship. Post-national citizens may be defined by multiple dimensions such as identities (e.g. transnational communities), political participation (e.g. environmental activism), rights (e.g. the right to identity), and norms (e.g. international human rights regimes). Changing ideologies, apparatuses, and capacities of nation-states have “engendered or strengthened alternative notions of community membership,” many of which have
emerged from an unwillingness to “automatically identify with a nation as represented by the state” (Sassen 2002, 277). These changes to ideas and practices of belonging, identity, and rights have problematized the traditional conceptualization of citizenship as a national phenomenon and have shifted the boundaries of “the political vis-à-vis citizenship” (Soysal 1997, 510).

Cosmopolitan ideology has undergirded the emergence of the post-national, global citizen that is part of “the worldwide community of human beings.” Cosmopolitanism is composed of “global identities, attachments, and commitments” (Banks 2008, 134) and is linked to “political practices associated with globalization and the possibilities of a new global democratic order” (K. Mitchell 2007, 706). Cosmopolitanism, therefore, is a key component of post-national citizenship that eschews the primacy of national community membership in favor of membership in the worldwide community of human beings (Calhoun 2002; Soysal 1997; Banks 2008).

The “entrenchment of international human rights regimes and the spread of cosmopolitan norms” (Benhabib 2007, 19) have perhaps posed the most significant challenge to the absolute primacy of the nation-state as the guarantor of citizenship rights and duties. According to Soysal (1997, 511), the notion that all humans are entitled to rights regardless of formal citizenship status within a nation-state and can claim access to those rights have brought about systemic challenges to conventional conceptualizations of the public sphere:

“What this challenge entails is that public spheres are realized intra- or transnationally; solidarities are shaped beyond national boundaries; and the referent is no longer exclusively the national
citizen, but increasingly an abstract individual entitled to claim the collective and bring it back to the public sphere as her ‘natural’ right.”

These developments have embroidered the traditional configuration of citizenship with multi-scalar components that are “shaped by conditions, processes, and institutions at the local, national, and international scales” (Staeheli 2003, 99). In addition to the “recasting” of national rights as human rights, some forms of citizenship are multilayered institution and only partially political (Painter and Philo 1995). It is not clear whether social, cultural, economic, and civil attributes are working together to actually change the fabric of citizenship or simply to shift understandings of citizenship, but such attributes are being mobilized in contemporary society and “may be used as resources in political struggles” that take place at different places and moments in time (Staeheli 2003, 99; Staeheli 2008; Ehrkamp and Leitner 2003; Soysal 1997).

These recastings relating to scale and rights have effected new vocabularies surrounding citizenship. Discourses of cosmopolitan citizenship are commonly circulated “in reference to the promise of global democracy based on liberal conceptions of human rights, tolerance, and universal standards of dignity and justice” (K. Mitchell 2007, 706). Cosmopolitanism, while not a new concept by any means, has in its contemporary usage contributed to the linking of democratic ideals to scales beyond the nation-state by naturalizing the universality of human rights and legitimizing beyond-national public spheres for claiming those rights.
The spread of cosmopolitan norms and the naturalization of international human rights regimes are evident in real-world practice and not solely in theoretical conceptualizations. Such norms and understandings of universal rights are enshrined in and protected by many international documents, such as the United Nations’ Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the European Union’s Charter of Fundamental Rights, the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, the Inter-American System for the Protection of Human Rights, and the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights (Benhabib 2007, 19–20). Such human rights regimes assign “fundamental rights” to individuals who are not formal citizens of the national polity in which they reside. This contributes to a condition in which residents claim some semblance of membership in the political community without full legal status or participation in the polity’s public sphere. Furthermore, the extension of such universal rights may be used for those with formal but without substantive citizenship to claim access to the space of meaningful rights within their polity.

The articulations of post-national citizenships also complicate the relationship between identity and citizenship. Whereas the formulation of the identity of a citizen and the negotiation of cultural difference has most commonly taken place at the national level, post-war reconfigurations of citizenship rights transformed identity into a fundamental human right. Alternative notions of collective identities and solidarities that cross borders and transcend the nation-state are “natural attributes and rights” that “are exercised in individual and

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2 The European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms is distinguished by the inclusion of non-EU nation-states as signatories.
collective actors’ narratives and strategies” for participation in the multiple manifestations of the public sphere (Soysal 1997, 513). The “identity as a right” phenomenon undergirds the multiplication of identities and legitimizes particularities relating to ethnonationalisms, religious identities, and various other expressions of the self within the space of the nation. These trends demonstrate that post-national citizenship processes and practices are intersecting with discourses of multiculturalism and tolerance in multiple ways and at multiple scales.

Furthermore, the universal right to identity provides the opportunity for myriad identities to validly attach to post-national citizenship. The importance of collective identities to the experience and performance of post-national citizenships demonstrates that the tension between universality and particularism exists beyond national scale discussions of multiculturalism and identity. Indeed, post-national citizenship seems to both produce these tensions and allow them to proliferate. The widening and reassertion of the boundaries of citizenship to the universal/cosmopolitan scale complicates and multiplies identities, which are at their very core based on particularities. Post-national citizenship regimes, such as the European Union, often celebrate multiple identities within their communities but also must contend with how those identities complicate community solidarity.
European Citizenship

The pervasiveness of the international human rights discourse has been crucial to the development of European Union citizenship, the most formalized of post-national citizenships (Sassen 2002, 277–8). More accurately termed “supranational” than cosmopolitan or international, EU citizenship is one result of the post-war politico-economic integration of Europe. The rights and duties guaranteed by Europe’s supranational citizenship are clear demonstrations that citizenship is no longer inexorably tied to the nation-state. But while the creation of such post-national rights at the supranational scale changes the nature of identities and claims to rights and membership, it does not fundamentally alter the dynamics of inclusion and exclusion intrinsic to the institutionalization of citizenship. My argumentation in this section is based on the premise that although modes of post-national citizenship present many new possibilities for claiming rights and asserting belonging, they ultimately work to reinforce (and sometimes multiply) the tensions between universalisms and particularisms.

The implications of European citizenship are manifold, but three are particularly salient. First, its relationship vis-à-vis national citizenship is that the EU’s sovereignty over supranational citizenship rights is constructed from a the voluntary reduction of its member states to national sovereignty over rights claims (Benhabib 2002). The rights afforded to European citizens are heavily influenced by international human rights discourses, such as the right to particular identities. The various EU institutions provide public forums within
which to make claims on the fundamental rights accorded to European citizens, allowing such practices to be performed above the national scale.

But the second implication demonstrates that European citizenship serves to link the particularisms that exist on the national level to the supranational level. European citizenship status is contingent upon national citizenship in a member-state. This contingency is significant because it demonstrates that the multi-scalar natures of post-national citizenships do not erase the importance of the national scale or eradicate the need for national citizenships, but instead interact complexly with national citizenships (Delanty 2006; Desforges, Jones, and Woods 2005; D. Kaplan and Häkli 2002; Painter 2006; Shaery-Eisenlohr 2011; Paasi 2001). Therefore while the EU passport makes the portfolio of citizenship rights, experiences, and practices more robust, the nation-state “remains by far the most important site” of citizenship (Sassen 2002, 278). As Reed-Danahay (2007, 198–9) argues, the EU’s on-going endeavors “to get its inhabitants to see themselves as European citizens…is not intended to supplant national identities; rather it is intended to supplement them with an additional frame of reference.”

The third significant implication of European citizenship is that like all citizenships it functions as an identity that relies on alterity to constitute itself (Isin 2002). The European citizenship certainly is a unique institution that sets itself apart as a formalized status of a supranational polity which “alters the topography of participation and facilitates new projects of citizenship” within its borders (Soysal 1997, 514). A substantial softening of Europe's internal borders has accompanied the deployment of universalisms regarding supranational rights.
afforded to European citizens. However, there is a concomitant hardening of its external border that is an equally important component of creating the identity of the European citizen (Delanty 2006). EU geopolitical discourses invoke “European values” as the identity markers of European member states and their citizens and unquestioningly “demarcate the EU inside from its outside” (Browning and Christou 2010, 112; Boedeltje and van Houtum 2011). These concurrent border-softening and -hardening processes further illustrate that while the possibilities for new rights and opportunities are manifold, European citizenship is ultimately characterized by a tension between the universal identity that encompasses a European citizenry and the particularisms that exclude non-European Others from the space of belonging (Reed-Danahay 2007).

But as a post-national citizenship whose rights are based on international human rights norms, European citizenship not only multiplies identities by distinguishing Europeans from non-Europeans, but also multiplies identities within its own borders. The European Union’s recognition of identity as a fundamental right has “authorized” both ethnonationalisms and minority group identity projects to proliferate within its borders (Deets 2006; Soysal 1997; Feakins and Białasiewicz 2006; Dobbernack and Modood 2011). The introduction of a supranational citizenship, and thus a supranational forum within which to mobilize rights claims, has wrought intense struggle between the EU and (particularly post-Soviet) member states regarding the treatment of minorities, multiculturalism and tolerance within national and supranational boundaries, and the right of formerly oppressed titular majorities to protect their
own cultures (Johns 2003; Kolossov 2003; Feakins and Białasiewicz 2006; Deets 2006). These situations are acute examples of how post-national citizenship articulations complicate the relationship between identity and citizenship. In many European countries, both titular majorities and minorities are drawing upon the post-nationalist concept of identity as a universal human right—a concept codified in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union—to assert the legitimacy of particularisms at national levels. Identities, community memberships, and entitlements to rights converge and diverge in ways that are made difficult by post-national configurations of citizenship.

Such struggles over identities and rights in the European Union have furthermore created complex negotiations of identity and membership in the everyday, lived reality of European citizens. Citizens of national majority and minority groups have agency within the political limits of both their nation-states and the European Union, but their majority or minority group affiliation will create differing understandings of how and when national and supranational citizenships are negotiated, invoked, and performed. As such, understandings of citizenships in Europe are multiple, fluid and, because they are multi-scalar, somewhat fragmented (Reed-Danahay 2007; Benhabib 2002; Sassen 2002; Delanty 1997). With respect to minority exclusion and marginalization, however, the universality of European citizenship (and its protections of identity rights) does not erase the dynamics of inclusion and exclusion on the national level, but rather complicates them. Therefore it can be said that while majority/minority politics have long existed, they have been greatly complicated by the introduction of post-national
discourses and modes of citizenship. The EU’s supranational space allows national majority and minority groups to partially locate the politics of belonging and identity outside the confines of the national-state by deputizing the universal rights of “Europeans” into arguments for performances of particular collective identities (Laclau 1992; Soysal 1997), making the discussions on the value of diversity and the limits of tolerance much more intricate and involved.

European citizenship is illustrative of the increased opportunities and entrenched tensions that characterize post-national citizenships on a broader level. Although post-national citizenships are construed in universal terms, the ways that they complicate the interaction between identity and citizenship reveal that post-national citizenships are shot-through with particularisms that perpetuate processes of inclusion and exclusion. Moreover, post-national citizenships interact complexly with national citizenships and therefore demonstrate that a thorough consideration of citizenships on multiple scales should not treat them as discrete entities, but rather processes that take place at various scales at various times. The following sections will shift this discussion from post-national and national conceptions of citizenship to the role of the local scale in understanding the interface between state agents and actual citizens. The school is one of the most crucial spaces at the local scale in which nation-state and supranational citizenship practices and discourses are deployed. Giving particular attention to the educational realm illuminates the processes of production and reproduction of citizenship at multiple scales.
Creating the Citizen: Schools and the Formation of Youth Citizenships

Schools have long been recognized as important socializing agents whose purpose is to prepare young people for life as members of the nation-state and inculcating multicultural values (S. L. Holloway and Valentine 2000; Wylie 2004; Heater 1999; Calhoun 1997). More recently the literature has noted the importance of the school in also the fostering of post-national citizenships, such as the European and the cosmopolitan (K. Mitchell 2006b; Banks 2008; E. Doyle Stevick 2007). Education frameworks and curricula are influential vehicles for shaping young people’s perceptions of the world in their developmental years. This influence materializes later in life, as adult attitudes (including those about cultural identity and solidarity) are directly linked to attitudes formed early in life (S. L. Holloway and Valentine 2000; Leonard 2010; Wylie 2004).

Previous sections in this chapter discussed the important link between identity formation and conceptions of citizenship. Education curricula and schools sites work not only to develop understandings of citizenships, but also the identities that mark citizenships. Thus, schools should be seen as sites where young people confront multiple citizenship ideals and norms, engage with national and supranational ideologies, and learn how to be citizens (S. L. Holloway and Valentine 2000).

Instructing the National Citizen

State actors use the space of the school to foster particular conceptualizations of nationalism. Consequently, when nation-state citizenship
regimes are exclusionary educational will frequently diffuse ethnocultural identity markers and schools will become key spaces of nationalist political ideologies and control (Hromadzić 2008; Kolossov 2003). Nation-building projects become embedded in school and educational policy in different ways. Arguably the most easily recognizable forms of nationalism in the classroom are curricula and textbooks that privilege ethnoculturally specific versions of various courses. Teaching methods will also naturalize and essentialize the connection of the dominant ethnic group to the territory when the group's particular ethnocultural markers are emphasized.

Subjects outside of the formal civics can have just as much (if not more) influence on students' attitudes and conceptions of citizenship than the of the formal civics courses. For instance, several studies note the important political socialization abilities of a variety of courses, including but not limited to history, language, and geography courses (Faas 2011; Galston 2001; Ahonen 2001). Historical myths, language, religion, and folk customs taught in schools serve to "supplement biological evidence of kinship, and are deployed to circumscribe who does and does not belong to the national ‘family’" (Michaels and Stevick 2009, 228). Narratives of the past particularly play a crucial role in demarcating spaces of belonging in the nation, and subsequently the polity (Staeheli and Hammett 2013; Ahonen 2001).

Nationalist ideologies and socio-cultural attitudes can also be performed implicitly in the classroom, even in the presence of explicit democratic civic education. “Informal curriculum” disseminated in learning spaces through
teacher attitudes and practices, as well as classroom climate, are just as important and communicative to students as formal curriculum and school policy (S. L. Holloway and Valentine 2000; Hahn 1998; Wylie 2004). Implicit agreement with nationalist ideologies may manifest in “diluted recognition” of programs intended to promote inclusive, democratic, and open ideals of civic education (E. Doyle Stevick 2007). Just as significant can be teacher avoidance of critical and open discussion on nationalistic attitudes and practices.

Ethnonationalist policies coexist with more democratic notions of civic education in the classroom, even in divided societies. In EU member states, tension between universalist and particularist notions of civic education Union member states arises from the presence of both state discourses promoting national solidarities and EU multicultural discourses promoting a “unity in diversity.” Thus, young people in Europe in particular are on the receiving end of multiple civic education discourses that play roles in the creation, performance, and experience of the multi-scalar citizenships that they claim.

**Instructing the Cosmopolitan/Multicultural Citizen**

Multicultural and cosmopolitan discourses have had a salient position in European schools. As cultural diversity within nation-states spurs discussion and debate on how liberal democracies define their societies and their citizenry, the school has become a site where multiple and conflicting discourses of multiculturalism and national citizenship exist simultaneously (Banks 2008; Faas 2011). Furthermore, the supranational space of the European Union adds
another layer of citizenship education to the already crowded space of national education, as these multi-scalar formations interact with recognition of cultural diversity. Thus, the challenges of building a society whose citizens are both connected by shared values, ideas, national identity and who respect the cultural diversity within the citizenry are translated to educational in schools (Michaels and Stevick 2009).

Discourses of multicultural and cosmopolitan youth citizenship have currency within national education systems because, despite the criticisms discussed earlier in this chapter, such discourses “remain important ideals” in Western liberal democracies (Thomas 2008, 2864). The forces of globalization, including transnational migration, are highly salient influences on citizenship education as nation-states are forced to contend with differentiated identities and loyalties that operate on multiple scales (El-Haj 2007; Faas 2011). That being said, nationalist discourses are still highly influential within citizenship education, and as such discourses of national unity and (oftentimes poorly articulated) discourses of multiculturalism interact unevenly and complexly within the space of the school (Michaels and Stevick 2009; Thomas 2008; K. Mitchell 2006b).

Citizenship education in the European Union is a clear instance of the project to make young people into multicultural citizens who are capable of interacting across cultures within their own nation-state, within Europe, and within the global community. Much of the universalist rhetoric of liberal citizenship is deployed in order to foster common identities between young people at the supranational level (as European citizens) and the cosmopolitan level (as citizens
of the world). Although European Union member states retain almost exclusive control over national education (Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union 2009, Article 6), Brussels’ focus on citizenship education in its member states is considerable. Many empirical studies of civic education in European countries note the persistent conflict between member states’ prioritization of the “development of national consciousness and citizenship” and the European stress on fostering inclusive, multicultural citizenship (Faas 2011, 481; Wylie 2004). However despite such tensions within educational spaces, incentives for funding extended to member states by the EU “provide European proposals with substantial clout” and many opportunities to enter into classrooms (Michaels and Stevick 2009, 226).

The proliferation of European rhetoric in member states’ civic education has been paralleled in interdisciplinary scholarly literature by discussions regarding whether European youth citizenship discourses are (in)effective at enabling young people to enact substantive multicultural citizenships. For example, scholars note that notions of inclusion and exclusion actually undergird the European identity project (Reed-Danahay 2007; Faas 2011). The project to create a pan-European identity involves concerted efforts to “instill a sense of belonging and identity connected to Europe as a social unit” and identify as EU citizens. But while the EU casts itself as a multicultural unit that is “united in diversity” it universalizes its particular values and ideologies while simultaneously Othering individuals, groups, and nation-states that do not espouse liberal democratic norms in the ‘correct’ way (Reed-Danahay 2007; Johns 2003; Jeffrey
Moreover, EU civic education curricula and materials emphasize commonalities between its member states to solidify Europeanness while “any fundamental cultural or political differences either within or between countries” are minimized (Reed-Danahay 2007, 203). These contradictions, rather than fostering substantive attitudes of cultural acceptance amongst young Europeans, reify “stereotypical notions” of what it means to be European, effectively blocking out other religions and cultures (Reed-Danahay 2007, 213).

Michaels and Stevick (2009) and Ahonen (2001) address how the dialogue between nationalist and European citizenship education can work to reify inter-cultural boundaries and cause conflicting understandings of a Europe that is “united in diversity” to be presented in schools. EU member states (particularly in Central and Eastern Europe) that have histories of state socialism promote nationalist rhetoric in their civic education curricula as part of a wider societal project of “correcting” the illegitimate histories and identities promulgated by their former socialist rulers. Such ideas are also meant to emphasize these nation-states’ inherent “Europeanness” and are framed in terms of a “return to Europe” after decades of interference from political interlopers. The EU, however, operates under vastly different Western European conceptualizations of being European that are rooted in the liberal-democratic ideals of inclusiveness, acceptance of cultural diversity, and universal democratic rights. As such, while in school young people are subject to and made to negotiate competing notions of what it means to be European (Michaels and Stevick 2009; Faas 2011). The result within classrooms is citizenship education that focuses on superficial
celebrations of cultural difference and focuses on issues that are easy to talk about, such as rights and privileges of European citizenship, rather than programs that address entrenched inequalities and substantive pluralism (Thomas 2008; Hahn 1998).

A slightly different yet no less relevant observation about current citizenship education in Europe its “implicit association” of the “successful” European citizen with the cosmopolitan citizen who is able to compete for employment in the global economic system (K. Mitchell 2007, 397; Reed-Danahay 2007; Johnston Conover and Searing 2000). Katharyne Mitchell (2006b) coherently articulates this argument by examining the marked, albeit uneven, shifts in EU policies, particularly those of the Education and Culture Directorate of the European Commission. The changes to policies and programs for education are trending away from the “philosophical ideals of state-sponsored multicultural integration” and toward characteristics associated with neoliberal policy aims, such as “a focus on individual pragmatism and...the skills and mobility needed for economic success” (K. Mitchell 2006b, 391–2, 404). Major policy initiatives such as the EU Lifelong Learning Programme (2013) explicitly aim to “make lifelong learning and mobility a reality,” which leads Mitchell to conclude that educational spaces in Europe are becoming forums for “constitution of both market-rational and state-oriented subjects (2006, 396, emphasis in original). The nature of such neoliberal projects in the EU is “highly contested... hybrid and contextual, often cohabitating and/or overlapping with other regimes,” but the ubiquity of EU civic education discourses equating the
“advancement of citizenship” and the “strengthening of cross-border employability” is undeniable (K. Mitchell 2007; European Commission 2013). This suggests that the culture of liberalism (W. Brown 2008) has, to some extent, universalized its norms rational economic behavior and individual responsibility for effective sociocultural integration, leading citizenship education programs in Europe away from the valuation of difference and towards the valuation of economic competitiveness in Europe.

*Education in a Broader Context of Youth Identity and Citizenship Formation*

In understanding ways that different educational policies shape identity and citizenship, we must recognize young people to be active political agents rather than passive vessels into which knowledge is poured (S. L. Holloway and Valentine 2000). Education policy makers, and especially those involved in devising citizenship education, have historically viewed young people as citizens-in-waiting—as minors learning about their rights but not yet capable of exercising them (Skelton 2010; S. L. Holloway and Valentine 2000; Weller 2003); they have also assumed in many instances that young people are politically passive, apathetic, and disengaged. One strand of literature has countered this image of young people by demonstrating the variety of non-traditional ways (e.g. electronic petitions, volunteering) in which young people participate in politics and are active as citizens (Galston 2001). Others have made the broader argument that young people are profoundly aware of the networks of power relations in which they are embedded and that they act politically by
accommodating, challenging, and subverting such power relations in their daily lives (Skelton 2010). In this sense, their ideas about identity, citizenship, and belonging might flow from different set of ideals than that offered by formal curricula. It is crucial, therefore, to place young people at the center of analysis and to understand the ways in which they actively participate in the politics of citizenship and identity in their societies, drawing on a panoply of discourses and experiences both inside and outside the space of the school. By considering youth geographies, we understand nation building and citizenship from the ground up—as performed and practiced by people and not as simply dictated by states or supranational bodies.

Young peoples’ conceptions of citizenship and identity are not only dependent upon state or local official curricula, but are also heavily influenced by teacher attitudes, classroom climate, and school-specific approaches to subjects. Moreover, whether young people’s understandings of citizenships—especially post-national ones such as EU citizenship—are based on access to rights or mere association with a group is heavily influenced by the nature and time of instruction devoted to those topics. An equally valuable consideration when understanding how education and youth perceptions interact is that youths are “active in the construction of their own lifeworlds” and “are not passive dupes learning a set of skills deemed necessary by national government” (S. L. Holloway and Valentine 2000, 769). Young people have agency and will construct their own meanings of citizenship and identity by combining what is taught in school, what is experienced in their everyday lives outside of school,
and by what is observed in the media and wider culture (Hahn 1998; Dittmer 2005).

This requires, in turn, that we view the school in relation to a wider set of youth geographies, that is, everyday spaces in which young people formulate identities, negotiate social differences, and make various claims of belonging. Focusing on youth spaces is especially important in divided societies, where numerous social and geographical barriers can reinforce a sense of privilege or a sense of oppression and subordination (Leonard 2006; Leonard 2010). In addition to examining interaction between groups (or the lack thereof) in schools, we need to consider the cultural landscapes they are confronted with and negotiate, how they navigate city streets and neighborhoods, and how in moving through the city, young people accommodate or subvert social, political, and spatial boundaries (Weller 2003). The next section of this chapter will consider the ways in which socio-cultural landscapes reinforce, subvert, or mediate the politics of belonging and discourses of citizenship and identity that they encounter at home, school, and in wider society.

Identity, Citizenship, and Everyday Space

Space and spatiality provide a lens through which we understand citizenship as more than state practices and discourses.Citizenships also exist in everyday experiences and actions of national citizens and non-citizens who reside within a nation-state’s territory, who are subject in varying ways to inclusionary and exclusionary narratives and practices (Staeheli and Hammett
2010; Nagle 2009; Holston 2008). Focusing on youth citizenship demands understanding the ways that young people relate to space, place, and the material construction of belonging and exclusion.

Several scholars have enriched theories of citizenship by investigating the spatialities of citizenship at the local scale and articulating the importance of the urban context to how citizenship learned, performed, experienced, and negotiated. Such studies tease out intricacies that illuminate citizenship as more than an abstract status or bundle of rights (Staeheli 2003). Citizenship is a dynamic institution that is learned, understood, performed, and negotiated by individuals on a daily basis. Moreover, the urban environment is a site at which citizenship takes place rather than simply existing in the abstract. The following sections of this chapter will explore the theoretical and conceptual understandings and research regarding the everyday, “lived” spaces in which individuals and groups learn about and experience citizenship, national identity, and belonging.

City and Society: Citizenship Formation at the Local Level

As demonstrated in the previous sections of this chapter, citizenship is a fluid, dynamic marker of community membership that can (and does) take multiple forms and exist at multiple scales. Citizenship, therefore, is not an a priori concept applied evenly to individuals and groups in society by political institutions, but one that is continuously being constructed and understood, and spaces of everyday interaction and experience are critical points at which these
constructions and understandings take place (Isin 2002; Staeheli 2003; Secor 2004; Bollens 2007). Engaging with local spaces allows investigation into how citizenship is “continuously being reconfigured from the bottom up” through practices in the everyday realities of the city (Secor 2004, 365).

The spaces of the city are crucial to the ways in which individuals and groups use the processes of inclusion and belonging to understand their relation to the wider political community because it is in these spaces that “routinized interactions…shape social relations and feelings of belonging” (Staeheli 2003, 99). More than just a status of membership, citizenship is “relational” and can be conceptualized as a “process” of establishing who belongs by delineating boundaries (Staeheli 2003, 99; Coward 2012). It is in the everyday spaces of the city that “identities are staked, belonging is negotiated, and rights are pursued” (Secor 2004, 353). These processes and the urban spaces where they take place are “crucial constitutive elements” (Ehrkamp and Leitner 2003, 145) of the “meaning and practice of citizenship” (Secor 2004, 353).

By prioritizing the everyday life at the local level the relational character of citizenship becomes apparent, but so too does its spatial character. Anna Secor (2004, 353) demonstrates that, especially within the context of the city, citizenship is a spatial strategy that that “fixes identities, delineates boundaries, and disciplines the meanings and practices of social space,” thereby organizing claims-making through urban positions. Ordinary urban spaces such as neighborhoods, shopping districts, workplaces, and homes are where citizenship extends beyond government sites and is actively negotiated by all individuals.
Because of the “ordinariness” of everyday urban spaces, individuals and groups that are excluded from the formal political spaces of citizenship (such as non-citizens or young people who are not yet old enough to vote) engage with rights and notions of inclusion and belonging through spatial practices.

The city gives meaning to citizenship by spatially differentiating identities. The ways in which people move through urban spaces delineates boundaries of sociocultural difference and locates identities in certain areas. But such boundaries oscillate between fluidity and concreteness as contests are waged between various groups about access to rights and resources (Staeheli 2003; Isin 2002). The city harbors the “flows of people and ideas” about belonging, identity, and legitimate membership in society (Secor 2003, 149), and as such navigating and negotiating its spaces are the practices and processes through which “relationships and definitions about citizenship are mediated” (Nagle 2009, 133).

Spatial strategies of establishing the parameters of citizenship operate by disciplining space—that is, making spaces accessible or inaccessible, welcoming or hostile, or contingent upon specific identity performances. Holston (2008) and Weyeneth (2005) describe how regimes of sociopolitical power are reproduced in work and leisure spaces via architecture that “assigns… place and reinforces social relations” (Holston 2008, 278). Moreover, several empirical studies demonstrate that access to public space for civic actions (Ehrkamp and Leitner 2003), demonstrations of cultural identity (Nagle 2009), and performances of historical memory (Ehala 2009) are crucial to claims making and that “continued
exclusion” from such city spaces are “spatial confirmation of unequal status” in society (Nagle 2009, 136).

Spatial strategies of citizenship work to discipline space and establish dominant power structures, but this very action also prompts marginalized and alienated groups to “decide whether to dissemble or to articulate” their identities in those spaces (Secor 2004, 362). Thus, the urban is fertile ground for not only contestations and negotiations over belonging, exclusion, and access to resources in the city but also dialogue regarding fairness, tolerance, and acceptance (Bollens 2007). This underscores the important point that although citizenship attempts to discipline and organize space, it does so unevenly and to varying degrees of success. Economic, cultural, social, political, and gendered processes constantly interact in the ordinary urban spaces, creating “fluidity of identity across community lines” and “diversity of meaning within supposedly bounded spaces” (McDowell and Shirlow 2011, 704; Secor 2003; K. Mitchell 2006b; McDowell 2008; Leonard 2006).

Empirical studies that prioritize the role of urban geographies in everyday conceptualizations and configurations of citizenship demonstrate that “the urban or local are inextricably connected to processes operating at other scales” including nation-building and state formation (Staeheli 2003, 97). They also provide a framework within which to address divided societies, those polities where the politics of belonging and struggles over citizenship are most acute and the spatial divisions are most entrenched.
In understanding the roles that everyday urban spaces play in the construction, contestation, and negotiations of citizenship, the material sites in cities that shape and are shaped by the politics of belonging and identity must also be examined. In the context of nationalism and citizenship, landscape theory has provided a framework through which to view dominant meanings, power geometries, and contestations of identity. Although landscape has been conceptualized in different ways, it can broadly be understood as the “tangible, visible entities that are both reflective and constitutive of society” (Schein 1997, 660).

Contemporary landscape theory revolves around questions of power and the way power relations produce material landscapes and are in turn reproduced through spatialities. Richard Schein’s (1997, 663) approach to landscape as “discourse materialized” is helpfully comprehensive because it acknowledges the simultaneously material and non-material nature of landscapes. Schein (1997, 663) agrees that discourses have textual and ideological manifestations, but argues that:

“As a material component of a particular discourse… “cultural landscape” at once captures the intent and ideology of the discourse as a whole and is a constitutive part of its ongoing development and reinforcement.”

This theorization mediates the tension between ideology and materiality inherent in cultural landscape literature while remembering that the landscape is perpetually becoming and unbecoming as a result of human action. Within the context of the processes of citizenship, Schein’s theory is a mechanism through
which the materialization of notions of belonging and exclusion and practices of enfranchisement and alienation can be assessed.

Don Mitchell (1996) also stressed the need to scrutinize both the materiality and the representation of ideas that structure landscape. A significant contribution of Mitchell’s empirical study of migrant labor and the California landscape is the recognition of the duplicitous nature of landscape—that is, the ability of specifically constructed landscapes to mask the power relations behind it. Landscapes, he argues, are both a “work and an erasure of work” (1996, 6), spaces that are the result of contests between groups of varying economic, social, and political power. The dominant group will reproduce landscape in order to represent the “natural” qualities of the land, and in doing so will fade and erase the power disparities, exploitation, and oppression of minority groups. Only by seriously considering the materiality of the landscape, instead of only considering its representation, can the presence of minority groups, opinions, and work be revealed alongside hegemonic forces.

The theorizations of Schein and Mitchell are particularly useful to understanding nationalist landscapes because nationalist landscapes reflect and project very particular sets of historical narratives and identity discourses while actively submerging others. By interrogating the materiality of nationalist landscapes, both the ideology of hegemonic discourses that informs and is informed by landscape and the power relations that are masked by it are illuminated which allows for a richer and more comprehensive understanding of the politics of identity operating within the nation.
Interrogating the mutually constitutive relationship between landscape and identity is crucial to understanding the wider set of everyday geographies in which youths negotiate spaces of belonging and social difference. Because the landscape is constructed out of the contests waged between groups with differing degrees of power (D. Mitchell 1996; Falah 1996; Steven Hoelscher 2003; Price 2004), youths’ geographies are populated with multiple ideologies of varying strengths. This point is critical, as it underscores the nature of landscape as fluid and contested rather than a unilateral exercise of the hegemon’s control.

The urban landscapes encountered by young people will not only serve to reinforce the sense of belonging or exclusion perpetuated by the prevailing narratives in their national society, but will also make real the ideologies of supranational identity as well. Young people, as engaged, active citizens, will respond to, interact with, and affect change on the landscape because of—or in spite of—overarching identity narratives and nationalist discourses disseminated and enacted by adults (Weller 2003; Skelton 2010; Hörschelmann 2008).

Young people with Outsider status—whether at the national or supranational level, or both—can and do challenge or contest the societal divisions and socio-cultural narratives that are embedded in the landscapes of their cities and towns. Importantly, however, all young people will “work through and alongside” the dominant discourses that have made categories of belonging and exclusion seem natural and incontrovertible (Mills 2006). This means that, in divided societies with pervading nationalist ideologies, youths contend with the landscapes that are constructed, destroyed, preserved, and maintained by
nationalist elites. Similarly, in European member states, youths contend with landscapes that are influenced by Brussels. For instance, Tallinn’s landscape is inscribed with symbols of what could be termed “banal supranationalism,” such as EU flags and EU symbols on the euro currency.

The use of landscapes of memory to establish how the nation-state’s past is remembered is a central and long-established practice of producing and reifying national identity (S. Hoelscher and Alderman 2004). Societies—and their governments—will create “material representations of the past” that are “symbols of a ‘people’ or nation” (Forest, Johnson, and Till 2004, 357; Mensagem, Sidaway, and Power 2005). The features landscapes of memory are most often monuments, statues, and memorials, which are nationalist discourses that mark out favored histories, heritages, and people while simultaneously ignoring others (Johnson 1995; Hay, Hughes, and Tutton 2004). Nation building projects and landscapes are both ongoing processes, and since nation building is made material and public through memorialized landscapes (Johnson 1995), the two processes are intertwined.

Nationalizing elites will move to alter places of memory to reflect the ‘right’ representations of history (Till 1999). However, while political elites have control over public spaces of memory in the urban landscape, they cannot control how those places are interpreted and understood by various individuals (Till 2003). Nations do not have one solitary history, but many competing versions of history (Billig 1995; Forest, Johnson, and Till 2004; Nora 1989), and therefore the meanings of historical landscapes can be and are contested. Especially during
times of social, political, and economic change, the struggle over memory is an important societal issue (Steven Hoelscher 2003; D. J. Smith and Burch 2012). Struggles over existing monuments and memorials can reveal changing conceptions of the nation that are part of the contestations of identity and belonging in wider society (K. Mitchell 2003).

The geographies of national identity and citizenship, therefore, can be identified not just by uncovering visible entities in the cultural landscape, but also by locating ideologies and power relations in a multitude of spaces. The geographies of identity and citizenship are not fixed, however, but are fluid and are contested and negotiated in individuals’ movements through everyday spaces. Seemingly mundane urban spaces host processes that establish identity and belonging at multiple scales, making them sites of complex and multilayered interaction of community memberships.

Cultural landscapes are meaningful parts of the ongoing fluctuations, reconfigurations, and shifts in contemporary modes of citizenship. Careful consideration of landscapes reveal not only the visible translations of nationalist discourses into concrete forms but also implicit discourses of diversity, tolerance, and cosmopolitan understandings of societal membership. Contemporary nation-building projects may be concretely inscribed in the cultural landscape through monuments, memorials, and other places of memory, but they operate within a context in which national identities have been challenged through multicultural and post-national understandings of societal membership. The everyday, palpable presence of multicultural and post-national modes of citizenships
alongside national citizenships has lent legitimacy to identities and understandings of belonging that are alternative to nationalist concepts and, subsequently, to alternative readings, productions, and reproductions of cultural landscapes. Cultural landscapes, then, further demonstrate that multicultural, post-national, and national discourses operate simultaneously and interface complexly at multiple scales on an everyday basis. Moreover, current approaches to studying cultural landscapes also suggest that the tendency to address nationalisms, post-national citizenships, and multicultural citizenships separately will result in partial, fragmented understandings of identity, belonging, and community membership in contemporary society.

Conclusions

In this chapter I have attempted to draw a theoretical framework for understanding the multiple conceptualizations and configurations of citizenship that young people encounter and negotiate in contemporary Western societies. Citizenship is often broadly construed as a national phenomenon and the nation-state continues to be an important agent in understanding it. However, citizenship is a much more complicated institution that exists at multiple geographic scales. Empirical trends in citizenship studies have thoroughly demonstrated that it is not only the prerogative of the nation-state, but also supranational and international institutions, spawning manifold articulations and understandings of citizenship rights, entitlements, and duties. At any given moment in any given context, different discourses and formations of citizenship
exist. As such, citizens necessarily negotiate their citizenship rather than passively receive it.

   Citizenship at any scale exists in tension between universalism and particularism, inclusion and exclusion. The language of liberal democratic citizenship employs a vocabulary of universalisms that emphasizes the equality and sameness of community members and the egalitarian distribution of rights and duties throughout the citizenry, notably at the national level. But the qualifications for inclusion in the community of citizens hinges upon particularisms based on dominant identity narratives and discourses. Moreover, even in polities where formal citizenship has been universally extended to all groups, meaningful access to rights is still restricted to those seen as “too different” from or “unassimilable” to dominant identity norms. Post-national and multicultural conceptualizations of citizenship also adopt vocabularies of universality and contextualize community membership beyond the national level. But while post-national and multicultural citizenships offer new many possibilities for rights, belongings, and identities, they are ultimately premised upon the same tensions between universalisms and particularisms that national citizenships contend with and, indeed, can serve to multiply and reinforce these tensions.

   Conceptual insights into the citizenship of minority groups within multicultural societies have revealed citizenship to be a highly contested institution. The reality of cultural heterogeneity within nation-states and the multiplication of identities and loyalties that have resulted from globalization have prompted intense debate over access to rights and requirements of duties.
Scholars and policy makers alike grapple with the most effective way to deal with differences in society, resulting in many competing conceptualizations of multiculturalism at national, supranational, and global scales. The lack of consensus on how best to talk about and engage with cultural difference, however, has resulted in myriad proliferations of “multiculturalism” that are ultimately mindless and feeble. But while multiculturalism may not be effective at integrating diverse groups, the discourse remains significantly present in political and social rhetoric through innocuous vocabularies of tolerance, acceptance of difference, and respect for diversity.

Citizens’ negotiations of multi-scalar citizenships take place at the local level in everyday urban spaces. National, supranational, and international community memberships are made meaningful by the movement through and encounters in urban spaces. Of the urban spaces, the school can be said to be a critical site of citizenship formation, as young people contend with adult discourses of identity and belonging in the nation and broader world. But young people, far from being passive citizens-in-waiting, are active agents in the development of their citizenships and identities. The questions that emerge from this theoretical framework are, How do young people in Tallinn contend with multiple, and sometimes contradictory, discourses of identity, belonging, and citizenship? What are the everyday spaces and contexts in which young people in Tallinn develop and awareness and understanding of social membership(s)? What role does a young person’s positionality within the nation-state have on his or her understandings citizenship in the European Union?
This dissertation attempts to unpack how young people understand and contend with notions of identity, citizenship, and belonging at multiple geographic scales using the case of young people in the last year of secondary school in Tallinn, Estonia. The analysis that follows pays particular attention to the way that these understandings unfold in young people whose national communities are simultaneously socio-spatially divided and part of a wider supranational community that emphasizes unity. In doing so, this analysis uses a theoretical framework blended from scholarship on citizenship, identity, belonging, civic education, and cultural landscapes in order to better address the complex environments in which young people negotiate and develop their sense of identity and citizenship.
Chapter 3
Methodology

In this research project students in their last year of secondary school in Tallinn, Estonia provide an empirical evidence for exploring wider theoretical questions relating to citizenship, identity, and belonging in divided societies. This research employed qualitative methods and is situated within an interpretive paradigm that “highlights the socially constructed and locally negotiated nature of experience” (Rubin 2007, 455). This dissertation draws on qualitative data gathered in focus groups and semi-structured interviews. Qualitative research is often criticized for lacking scientific vigor and the ability to make generalizations (Staller 2010), but the findings that result from qualitative studies contribute to theory-building and, as such, can provide a basis for theoretical abstraction (Yin 1992). Moreover, qualitative methods are pragmatic and constructive when the questions at hand demand explanations of phenomena that cannot be quantified, such as how the ways that people think, know, and feel relate to the ways that people behave (Secor 2010; Stake 1978).

This chapter explains the methodology used in this dissertation and why qualitative techniques are apropos to the research questions. Next, data collection and analysis are described, specifically addressing the steps taken to
recruit research participants, formulate focus group and interview questions, and code and evaluate the data gathered. In addition, this chapter addresses the reflexivity specific to this project’s data collection. As qualitative research has become more accepted within the social sciences, the issue of reflexivity has assumed a significant role in the discussion of knowledge production and validity. Reflexivity is “an awareness that the researcher and the object of study affect each other mutually and continually in the research process” (Haynes 2012, 73), i.e. cognizance on the part of the researcher that there are power dynamics between her and the research participant(s) and that those dynamics affect the production and interpretation of information (Secor 2010).

Qualitative Study and Research Techniques

Qualitative research is an “umbrella term” for a wide variety of research methods and approaches that “provide holistic, in-depth accounts and attempt to reflect the complicated, contextual, interactive, and interpretive nature of our social world” (Staller 2010, 1159). The various research methods under the umbrella label of “qualitative” are not mutually exclusive (Yin 1992) and combining more than one method in a research design allows for triangulation of data and, thus, a more rigorous research project (Baxter and Eyles 1997; Morgan 1996; Peek and Fothergill 2009). This research has elements of both case study and ethnographic evaluation, allowing for a methodologically appropriate forum within which to “answer questions about the ways in which certain events, practices, or knowledges are constructed and enacted within particular contexts”
These qualitative approaches are often criticized for lacking reliability, precision, and the ability to produce generalizable conclusions (Staller 2010). But these criticisms ignore the validity and usefulness of qualitative data and methods in studying the highly contextual political and sociocultural processes involved in the production of citizenship, identity, belonging, and exclusion (Yin 1992; Fetterman 1989).

This research project uses the case study method to investigate “contemporary phenomenon[a] within… real-life context when the boundaries between phenomenon[a] and context are not clearly evident” (Yin 1992, 123). Integrating features of case study methods into this project gives proper attention to the positionality and situation of knowledge within networks of power and daily, lived experience. Case studies can include quantitative data, but the importance of contextual factors in this method makes the richness of qualitative data particularly salient. This dissertation seeks to understand how young people develop notions of citizenship, identity, belonging, and exclusion as they negotiate myriad discourses in spaces of everyday life. As such, the case study approach is fitting for this project because it is best for research questions that ask “how” and “why” questions about phenomena that the researcher has little or no control over (Yin 2009).

The qualitative research methods like the ones used in this study are sometimes criticized for producing findings that are not generalizable. However, this is an un-nuanced appraisal of qualitative methods. Case studies allow for generalizing about existing theoretical discussions (Yin 2009). Such research
allows for substantive engagement with existing theories of citizenship and identity, explaining and expanding upon previously advanced theories and conceptualizations. In this respect, qualitative research projects are theory-building, rather than theory-testing, which is no less valuable when attempting to contribute to the knowledge of identity formation and delineation of citizenship boundaries.

Furthermore, qualitative research methods’ use of qualitative data—such as narratives, observations, and artifacts—helps preserve the contextual integrity of the research findings. Qualitative, non-numeric data is situated within real-world settings and maintains the link between people’s experiences and the meanings that they attach to them, which cannot be said of quantitative data (Staller 2010). In this dissertation, the use of qualitative data ensures that the nuances and complexities involved in understanding, negotiating, and formulating conceptualizations of citizenship and identity are not lost or drowned out by inflexible techniques.

Quantitative studies focus on highly standardized, pre-determined variables to measure phenomena in order to produce “objective” and “value neutral” conclusions, but in doing so lose the texture of individual perspectives that provides for deeper explanations. Quantitative studies have attempted to categorize and streamline the identities of young people in transitioning societies (Nimmerfeldt 2008), predict the feasibility of citizenship projects intended to unify diverse groups (Fuchs and Klingemann 2002), and measure the correlation between the adoption of certain identity practices and feelings of belonging or
Exclusion (Kulu and Tammaru 2004). But such studies tend to be reductionist in that they isolate identity markers and citizenship traits in the vacuum of statistical analysis and therefore cannot account for the multiple and varied meanings of community membership and identity. Moreover, quantitative scholarship tends to rely on pre-given categories to define citizenship, such as Bloemraad’s examination of naturalization levels amongst migrants to the US and Canada (Bloemraad 2006; Bloemraad 2004). Qualitative research, in contrast to examining citizenship within such narrow, pre-given parameters, tries to interrogate these very categories and uncover the complexities of societal membership. Furthermore, quantitative studies cannot appreciate the value of non-quantifiable experiences and actions that are important to young people’s understandings of belonging, identity, and citizenship rights such as everyday encounters with discourses, narratives, and other people. As a result, quantitative studies are limited with respect to the depth of knowledge they can produce, even though they can produce a great breadth of it (Staller 2010).

Recent literature on the geographies of citizenship and identity demonstrates the understanding that can be achieved through the meanings and motivations behind actions and experiences is produced through analyzing qualitative data gathered from interviews, focus groups, observation activities, and documents. For instance, Leonard has used focus groups and participant-generated maps to articulate how young people’s identities are attached to certain performances and movements through certain spaces in Belfast, Northern Ireland (2006; 2010). Her studies show how youths not only inherit
certain understandings of citizenship and belonging from their parents but also actively construct their own awareness of their community and membership in it. Also, Zeigler (2002) compares pre- and post-Soviet era maps in Central and Eastern European countries as a means of illustrating how the meanings of identities are re-framed and naturalized through banal visual and textual mediums. Hromadzic uses “multisited participant observation” (2008, 545) and interviews to illuminate the tension between discourses of citizenship and democratic principles that are situated at multiple scales and how that tension becomes tangible within neighborhood, school, and urban spaces. Hromadzic’s findings indicate effects of competing notions of acceptable interaction between ethnonational groups on the development of youth citizens.

The important characteristic of qualitative studies, only a few of which have been mentioned here, is that they allow for both substantive understandings of highly contextual phenomena and meaningful engagement with theory. Qualitative research methods recognize that the researcher and the research participants are situated in networks of power, privilege, and positionality, but that such situations provide understandings of the contexts of political and sociocultural processes (Secor 2010; Jones 2004). So while qualitative data, such as that gathered from interviews and focus groups, are context dependent and situational, they can also be used to draw out and explain theoretical propositions regarding citizenship, identity, and belonging.
Study Population and Research Sites

As explained in the introductory chapter, students in their last year of secondary school in Tallinn were chosen as a study population because of the growing recognition of young people as competent beings with political agency and the importance of investigating how they formulate understandings of citizenship, identity, and belonging in their everyday lives. As the focus on Central and Eastern European nation-states' transitions to democratic polities increased after the collapse of the USSR, so too did the focus on how these nation-states construct their national identities, engage with their Russophone minorities, and educate their younger generations on citizenship and belonging. As members of a society divided along ethnolinguistic lines, the young people in Tallinn, Estonia are a study population that will provide fresh insights to the theoretical issues that this dissertation engages with.

Secondary school students in Tallinn contend with discourses of belonging and citizenship in the context of a divided society on the national level, but also in the context of a pan-European community on the supranational level. This makes for a messy and complicated forum within which to investigate youth Citizenships, but I argue that it is this complexity that gives this project significance and relevance in broader theoretical discussions of citizenship in the contemporary world.

Furthermore, investigating the citizenships and identities of Estonian and Russophone students in Tallinn sheds light on a majority/minority politics that does not fit comfortably into the common minority group categories of indigenous
peoples, immigrant groups, and minority nationalisms (Kymlicka 1995). As previously noted, the vast majority of Russophones in Estonia are a “beached diaspora” that resulted from (voluntary or involuntary) Soviet-era migration. Therefore, the processes of citizenship and identity formation, negotiation, and mediation in the student study population illuminate a set of sociocultural and political cohesions and fragmentations.

While young people’s identities and citizenships are “made and remade” in and through everyday spaces, the school is a key site where they are “socialized with regard to their roles in life and their places in society” (Holloway and Valentine 2000, 770; Aitken in Holloway and Valentine 2000, 771). Teachers are included in the study population because, as discussed in Chapter Four, they are implicated in wider processes of social, cultural, and political interactions are reproduced through formal and informal curricula. This places teachers in a prominent role of transmitting and mediating the discourses of citizenship, identity, and belonging within the nation-state as well as within supranational and global contexts.

Secondary schools were chosen as the primary site to engage and recruit student and teacher research participants. While there are a small, but growing, number of private schools throughout Estonia, public secondary schools were chosen for this study to reflect the fact that the large majority of basic and secondary schools remain publicly funded by the Estonian government. As mentioned in the introductory chapter, primary and secondary education in Estonia is divided into Estonian-medium and Russian-medium schools. There is
a large overlap between school language medium, student ethnolinguistic heritage, and student mother tongue (Kulu and Tammaru 2004), so in general it can be said that Estonian-medium school students’ mother tongue and ethnic heritage will be Estonian, and Russian-medium school students’ mother tongue will be Russian and ethnic heritage will be Russian/Slavic. This overlap is beneficial to study population recruitment in that the student focus groups recruited from school sites will reflect the wider socio-spatial and educational segregation in Tallinn.

Two secondary schools from each language medium were approached to be part of the research project. Research into Tallinn’s educational landscape and school demographics was conducted via public reports, national surveys, and personal contacts in Tallinn. Contacts at each of the four participating schools were made through emailed invitations to school administrators and teachers describing the nature of the research project. Koidula School and Pushkin School are well known in Tallinn for their prestigious reputations, high national exam scores, and vibrant school atmospheres. It should be noted that these schools are located in upper-middle class areas and that the student populations generally come from comparatively higher socioeconomic backgrounds. Both of these institutions are located in middle class areas of Tallinn. These schools were selected with due consideration to stratifying the study population over middle and lower level socioeconomic backgrounds so as to reduce skew to upper class respondents as much as possible.
Research Questions

This project’s data collection and analysis were shaped around three major research questions:

1. What are the everyday contexts in which Estonian youth develop an awareness and understanding of social membership(s)?

   Empirical inquiry for this research question concentrated on the following issues: (a) how young people position themselves, their own group, and the Other group within Estonian society; (b) the cultural, social, and political narratives they use to constitute belonging and exclusion in the Estonian nation-state; and (c) the extent to which historical memories of conflict endemic to adult populations in Estonia influence their perceptions and narratives of citizenship and identity.

2. What role does citizenship/civic education play in the citizenship imaginaries of Estonian youths?

   Empirical inquiry relating to question two focused on: (a) how educational discourses on national identity, European citizenship, and multiculturalism impact the way young people understand, express, evaluate, and negotiate their citizenships and identities; (b) how young people evaluate, understand, and act upon their citizenships at the national and supranational level; (c) the extent to
which they feel politically and socially vested in Estonia, Europe, and/or other places.

3. What is the significance of everyday, urban space and place in the development of young people’s cognizance of belonging and exclusion in the context of a divided society?

Empirical inquiry for the final research question addressed: (a) the ways that students’ own identities and the identities of the Other group shape and are shaped by the everyday, urban spaces that they move in and through; and (b) how day-to-day experiences impinge on their access to rights and feelings of belonging vis-à-vis different groups.

These research questions pivot around the multiple, everyday contexts in which young people experience and express citizenship and identity and attempt to reveal the processes by which they negotiate discourses of belonging and exclusion, group boundaries, and multi-scalar polities. These research questions use everyday contexts as a base for exploring youth citizenships for two main reasons. First, citizenships and identities are lived, negotiated, and experienced in institutions rather than passively received labels. It is in the everyday spaces and places that individuals live their citizenships and identities, contending with myriad discourses and narratives. Second, national and global discourses and processes are embedded and operate in local spaces and contexts (S. L.)
Holloway and Valentine 2000; Staeheli 2003). Consequently, an investigation
into the everyday environments that young people are situated in exposes how
multi-scalar citizenships and identities intersect and are made meaningful on a
daily basis. This study approaches everyday spaces as more than inert
containers in which activity takes place, but as meaningful, active parts of the
lived practices through which young people articulate citizenship and belonging
at various scales. In this way it contributes to prevailing understandings of how
young people, understood as active agents, produce, reproduce, contest, and
negotiate multiple citizenships and identities. These questions relating to
everyday contexts and spaces, citizenship discourses, and identity narratives
structured the data collection and analysis, discussed below.

Primary Data Collection

Focus Groups

Focus groups were chosen as the primary data collection technique for
conversations with the student research participants. Focus groups are noted for
their ability to be adapted to the needs of many different types of research (Peek
stress the “utility of focus groups for studying children” because the researcher is
able to understand children’s views from their own perspectives rather than
“relying on the accounts of adults.” Furthermore, focus groups have the ability to
“give a voice” to marginalized groups” (Joseph et al in Morgan, 1996: 133; Kidd
and Parshall, 2000). This research engaged Russophones, the obvious
marginalized group in Estonia, and focus groups allowed them to openly discuss topics that contribute (or not) to their feelings of marginalization. It is argued here that because of the tendency by dominant adult actors to discount or altogether ignore the opinions and experiences of children, youths in general can also be considered a marginalized group (Skelton 2010). The focus groups actively engaged youths in a setting where their opinions were not only be heard, but were also valued.

Moreover, focus groups create a group dynamic which solicits richer data than one-on-one interviews because participants interact with each other (Peek and Fothergill 2009; Seale 2004). Group members have been found to ask questions of each other, explain themselves to each other, and engage in spirited debate, which makes the sum of the focus group parts greater than the value of individual interviews (Morgan 1996; Hambach et al. 2011). Group engagement can also encourage participants to volunteer information that they would not have disclosed in individual interviews (Kidd and Parshall 2000; Peek and Fothergill 2009). The researcher can also take advantage of the group setting to ask the participants to compare and contrast their own experiences “rather than aggregating individual data in order to speculate about whether or why the interviewees differ” (Morgan 1996, 139). Focus groups allow the researcher to learn multiple perspectives on a topic at one time (Gibbs 1997), and they provide an opportunity for social interaction and engagement amongst research subjects, helping to uncover tensions and different viewpoints that might exist among a group of people (Morgan 1996; Morgan 1997; Leonard 2006; Goss and Leinbach
Eight focus groups were conducted with 29 students over a three-month period in the autumn of 2012. The focus groups ranged in size from three students to five students, and each focus group was comprised of students from the same school. As previously mentioned, the participant school sites were used to recruit student participants.

It was imperative to the research process that the students voluntarily agreed to participate in the focus groups in order to reduce bias arising from teachers or school administrators selectively identifying particular “types” of students to participate. Teachers in each of the four participating schools agreed to post an informational flyer in their classrooms and verbally alert students to the opportunity to participate in the project. The informational flyer was made available in Estonian and Russian and explicitly detailed the nature and purpose of the project, the format of the focus group meeting, the assurance that the focus group conversation would not be shared with any teacher, school administrator, family member, or individual outside the focus group, and my personal contact information.

The focus groups were assembled through a combination of direct responses to the flyer and the snowballing technique. Snowballing “begins by finding an entry point,” (in this case the students who contacted me directly about participating) and asking “these contacts…to provide the names of others” (Secor 2010, 201). The initial student contacts were encouraged to invite other
classmates to the focus group. The snowballing technique can “lead to focus
groups where participants are mostly acquainted with each other,” and therefore
bias the sample with participants who are similar to themselves (Secor 2010,
210). Nonetheless, homogeneity of background and personal identity traits in
focus groups can be beneficial because it decreases participant anxiety over
voicing different opinions and promotes “free-flowing conversations” (Peek and
Fothergill 2009, 39; Morgan 1996; Secor 2010). In this research, homogeneity of
personal characteristics were not found to preclude differing attitudes and
opinions as students in the same focus group often disagreed with each other
and debated topics.

The voluntary participation and snowballing recruitment techniques,
however, did not produce a sample representative of Tallinn’s young people that
would allow for inferences across the entire population of youths in Estonia, or
even Tallinn. For instance, because participation was voluntary, some
characteristics, such as gender, could not be controlled for. This resulted in
overrepresentation of females in the Estonian-medium school focus groups and
overrepresentation of males in the Russian-medium school focus groups.
Despite these limitations, however, the voluntary participation and snowballing
recruitment strategies did produce a broad range of attitudes and opinions on
belonging, exclusion, identity, and citizenship amongst young people in Tallinn.

The small size of the student study population prohibited large-scale
generalizations from being made across youths in Estonia or, indeed, in Tallinn.
The limited sample size meant that the analysis is necessarily skewed along
lines such as gender, class, and student participants with relatively homogenous ethnolinguistic identities. As such, the analysis of the data gathered from the student study population contains gaps in attention to issues addressed elsewhere in literature on citizenship, identity, and education in Estonia, such as non-Russophone minority identities (K. D. Brown 2005; Tammaru and Kulu 2003) and the decline in the number of Russian-medium schools in Estonia (Hogan-Brun et al. 2008).

Table 3.1 summarizes the student study population. Coded identifiers are used instead of pseudonyms in order to maximize anonymity across the student population. The coded identifiers label students by their school and gender (e.g. Koidula Girl 1, RB Boy 4) in order to compare responses to the interview data gathered with teachers at their school during the analysis process. Because of the aforementioned overlap between school language medium, student ethnolinguistic background, and mother tongue, the majority of the students were categorized into “Estonian” and “Russophone” subgroups. The four students whose school language medium, ethnolinguistic heritage, and mother tongues did not line up neatly were categorized in a separate subgroup labeled “outliers.” These students are identified by an “O” in front of the standard coded identifiers.
Table 3.1. Student Study Population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Identifier</th>
<th>Family Heritage</th>
<th>Self-Reported Ethnolinguistic Identity</th>
<th>Mother Tongue</th>
<th>Legal Citizenship</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Koidula School</td>
<td>Koidula Girl 1</td>
<td>Est</td>
<td>Est</td>
<td>Est</td>
<td>Est</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Koidula Girl 2</td>
<td>Est</td>
<td>Est</td>
<td>Est</td>
<td>Est</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Koidula Girl 3</td>
<td>Est</td>
<td>Est</td>
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<td>Est</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Koidula Girl 4</td>
<td>Est</td>
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<td>Est</td>
<td>Est</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>O-Koidula Girl 5</td>
<td>Mixed Heritage</td>
<td>Est</td>
<td>Est &amp; Rus</td>
<td>Est</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Koidula Boy 1</td>
<td>Est</td>
<td>Est</td>
<td>Est</td>
<td>Est</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Koidula Boy 2</td>
<td>Est</td>
<td>Est</td>
<td>Est</td>
<td>Est</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tammsaare School</td>
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<td>Est</td>
<td>Est</td>
<td>Est</td>
<td>Est</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Est</td>
<td>Est</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Est</td>
<td>Est</td>
<td>Est</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tammsaare Girl 5</td>
<td>Est</td>
<td>Est</td>
<td>Est</td>
<td>Est</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tammsaare Girl 6</td>
<td>Est</td>
<td>Est</td>
<td>Est</td>
<td>Est</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Rus</td>
<td>Est</td>
<td>Rus</td>
<td>Est</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Rus</td>
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</tr>
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<td>O-Pushkin Girl 2</td>
<td>Mixed Heritage</td>
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<td>Rus</td>
<td>Est</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>O-Pushkin Boy 1</td>
<td>Mixed Heritage</td>
<td>Est</td>
<td>Est &amp; Rus</td>
<td>Est</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pushkin Boy 2</td>
<td>Rus</td>
<td>Rus</td>
<td>Rus</td>
<td>Est</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pushkin Boy 3</td>
<td>Rus</td>
<td>Rus</td>
<td>Rus</td>
<td>Est</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pushkin Boy 4</td>
<td>Rus</td>
<td>Rus</td>
<td>Rus</td>
<td>Est</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pushkin Boy 5</td>
<td>Rus</td>
<td>Rus</td>
<td>Rus</td>
<td>Est</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pushkin Boy 6</td>
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<td>Rus</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pushkin Boy 7</td>
<td>Rus</td>
<td>Rus</td>
<td>Rus</td>
<td>Est</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tolstoy School</td>
<td>Tolstoy Girl 1</td>
<td>Rus</td>
<td>Rus</td>
<td>Rus</td>
<td>Est</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tolstoy Girl 2</td>
<td>Rus</td>
<td>Rus</td>
<td>Rus</td>
<td>Est</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tolstoy Girl 3</td>
<td>Rus</td>
<td>Rus</td>
<td>Rus</td>
<td>Est</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tolstoy Boy 1</td>
<td>Rus</td>
<td>Rus</td>
<td>Rus</td>
<td>Russia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tolstoy Boy 2</td>
<td>Rus</td>
<td>Rus</td>
<td>Rus</td>
<td>Est</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tolstoy Boy 3</td>
<td>Rus</td>
<td>Rus</td>
<td>Rus</td>
<td>Est</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Est = Estonian/Estonia; **Rus = Russian/Russophone
The focus group template utilized structured questions (in the form of an intake survey) and semi-structured questions (in the form of open-ended conversation). The structured questions on the intake survey were intended to collect basic information to be used in concert with the semi-structured question responses to make connections about ethnolinguistic heritage, identities, and family background. The intake survey, shown in Appendix A, assessed data such as place of birth, mother tongue, self-identified national identity, citizenship status, and family background. “National identity” was a problematic category for Russophone students because of the variety of Slavic backgrounds in their heritages. After due consideration and discussion with the student participants, this category was given the more appropriate label of “ethnolinguistic identity” for the entire student study population as it better represented the group identification that cleaves Estonian society. The intake survey, then, allowed for comparison of identities and establishment of sub-groups within the student study population.

The semi-structured questions facilitated in-depth assessment of how individual and group identities are constructed, how boundaries are made and unmade between different groups, how terms of belonging and exclusion are established, and how different discourses influence and mediate narratives of identity and citizenship. The questions corresponded to the three main research questions stated above. The questions addressed: (a) the students’ mental appraisals of the city landscape and how/why certain meanings are attached to urban spaces; (b) how the students identify themselves and others, and how they
evaluate different identity classifications (e.g. Estonian, Russophone, European); and (c) how the students perceive, contend with, and internalize discourses of citizenship and identity in their everyday spaces such as schools, home, and in public. The focus group intake survey and semi-structured question templates are included in Appendices A and B.

During the focus group the students were also shown maps of Tallinn and encouraged to mark out which areas and locations are meaningful spaces in their lives and what territorial impressions (if any) that they had of the city. The use of this data collection technique was influenced by Leonard’s work on Protestant and Catholic students in Belfast, Northern Ireland (2010). In her work this mapping technique was very effective in prompting study participants to explain their socio-spatial practices and how these relate to their identities and their experiences of belonging and exclusion.

*Conducting Focus Groups*

I coordinated focus group meeting times via emails with student respondents. I chose a café in Tallinn’s historic Old Town as the meeting place because the city center is a site where people of many ethnic, cultural, and national backgrounds mingle together freely. The café was chosen because it had a small, relatively secluded upstairs section where the focus groups could be conducted in as discrete a manner as possible. Furthermore, my personal acquaintance with the café staff made reserving the same tables for each focus group very easy, thus ensuring that the atmosphere was consistent for each
group of students. Each focus group lasted between 60 and 90 minutes, and was preceded and/or followed by exchanges of pleasantries and inquiries into American culture, life, and higher education.

All focus groups were recorded on a digital voice recorder. Each focus group was offered the opportunity to have an Estonian or Russian interpreter present during the conversation. A Russian interpreter was present at all of the Russian-medium school focus groups, while the Estonian-medium school students opted not to have a translator present. The English skills of all students were advanced, however, and the interpreter present at the Russian-medium school focus groups served principally to clarify vocabulary rather than to interpret the entire conversation. Conducting focus groups in a language other than the participants’ native tongue or through an interpreter poses the risk of muddled meanings, miscommunications, and adding a power dimension. However, due to the high quality of the students’ English skills and the interpreter’s linguistic dexterity, few issues arose during the focus groups. Regarding the addition of a power dimension between the interpreter and the students, this was minimized due to the fact that the interpreter used was of Russophone heritage and therefore the Russophone students were not apt to adopt defensive or intimidated attitudes because of her presence.

*Interviews*

The research questions informed the interview templates used for schoolteachers. The interview template consisted of semi-structured questions
used to investigate the discourses and narratives of identity, citizenship, and belonging that circulate within spaces of education in Estonia. These questions were intended to draw comparisons between the discourses and narratives presented by teachers in the classroom and the discourses and narratives used by student respondents. The interview template can be found in Appendix C.

**Identifying Interviewees and Building the Adult Study Population**

Semi-structured interviews were chosen for data collection amongst schoolteachers, education government officials, and NGO representatives. Interviews are often used for “experts from whom [the researcher] hopes to learn how certain practices, experiences, knowledges, or institutions work” and have the benefit of allowing research subjects to explain the context in which they live and work and how it informs their thoughts and actions (Secor 2010, 199; Jones 2004). Semi-structured interviews are the most appropriate method for acquiring in-depth, subjective opinions from individuals who occupy particular positions in public or private enterprises because “it might be socially awkward and logistically difficult” to arrange a focus group. Furthermore, the use of semi-structured interviews in addition to focus groups increases the rigor of the research by producing richer data, allowing for triangulation, and balancing the strengths and weaknesses of the utilized methods (Baxter and Eyles 1997; Morgan 1996).

Teacher interviewees from the participating schools were recruited either by direct email or the snowballing technique. Interviewees were identified through
their subject of instruction. I not only interviewed civics teachers, but also history, geography, and language arts teachers due to the fact that civic values and national consciousness are shaped in many different subjects and curricula (Faas 2011; Ahonen 2001; E. Doyle Stevick 2007; Galston 2001).

Teacher participation was voluntary. This accounts for the varying numbers of teachers (and subjects) that were interviewed for each school. The teachers who declined to participate cited time constraints and, on one occasion, unsuitability of their subject for my project\(^3\). The teachers of the twelfth level, i.e. the grade level of the student participants, were prioritized as interviewees. However some teachers that volunteered handled other secondary school levels. These interviews were still conducted on the basis that the students’ civic education is not limited to their last year in secondary school, but takes place throughout their childhood and adolescence. As such, the discourses and narratives of schoolteachers throughout students’ education are likely to impact the conceptualizations of citizenship and identity they hold in their last year of secondary school.

The adult research participants were given coded identifiers similar to those of the student respondents. Teachers’ coded identifiers are based on their school and their subject (e.g. EB History/Civics or Pushkin Russian Language). Table 3.2 summarizes the adult population, but it is addressed in more detail in Chapter Four.

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\(^3\) A geography teacher that was contacted replied that she only taught physical geography and not human geography, and therefore would be unhelpful to interview given the subject matter of the research.
Table 3.2 Teacher Study Population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Identifier</th>
<th>Self-Reported Ethnolinguistic Heritage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Koidula History/Civics</td>
<td>Est</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Koidula Estonian Language</td>
<td>Est</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Koidula English Language</td>
<td>Est</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Koidula Geography 1</td>
<td>Est</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Koidula Geography 2</td>
<td>Est</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Koidula Extracurriculars</td>
<td>Est</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tammsaare School</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tammsaare History/Civics 1</td>
<td>Est</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tammsaare History/Civics 2</td>
<td>Rus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tammsaare History/Civics 3</td>
<td>Est</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pushkin School</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pushkin History/Civics 1</td>
<td>Rus</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pushkin History/Civics 2</td>
<td>Rus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pushkin Russian Language</td>
<td>Rus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>Pushkin Geography</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Tolstoy Geography</td>
<td>Rus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Est = Estonian; **Rus = Russophone

Conducting Interviews

Interviews were arranged according to the needs and preferences of the interviewee. Interviews with teachers were conducted in their classrooms during after-school or break hours. Education government officials and NGO
representatives were interviewed in their offices (with one exception of an interview being conducted in a café of the interviewee’s choosing).

The interviews were recorded on digital voice recorders and lasted from 45 to 70 minutes. As with the student study participants, all adult study participants were offered the opportunity to have an Estonian or Russian interpreter present. Throughout the majority of the adult study population, interviewees who were younger and/or operated at state and international levels opted not to request an interpreter. The English skills of these interviewees were exceptional, decreasing the possibility for miscommunication and linguistic barriers. Conversely, older and locally based interviewees requested an interpreter. These interviews included both conversations that were completely conducted via the interpreter and those where the interviewee spoke English and consulted the interpreter for vocabulary and/or grammar issues. In order to maximize the interviewees’ comfort levels and decrease awkwardness, the interpreters used shared the same ethnolinguistic background of the individual being interviewed.

**Reflexivity: Power Relations in Focus Groups and Interviews**

Several scholars of qualitative methodologies have written on the inherent subjectivities of research. Constructivists, such as feminist and critical theorists, in particular “reject the basic premise that an objective researcher discovers truths from preexisting data” (Staller 2010, 1159–60; C. Brown 2005). In qualitative data collection techniques such as focus groups and interviews, the
The interviewer and interviewee(s) are situated within a power relation that is imbued with meanings, values, and ideas. This power relation affects both the researcher and respondent because during focus groups and interviews the “encounter becomes a mutually co-operative event” (Seale 2004, 253; Secor 2010).

In recognizing the researcher’s embeddedness within the social interactions and iterative processes, qualitative methods theorists have argued the imperativeness of reflexivity—that is, the awareness on the part of the researcher that she affects and is affected “by the research processes and outcomes” (Haynes 2012, 72). Moreover, reflexivity on the part of the researcher must extend past the face-to-face encounter and into the data analysis and research dissemination phases (Gee 2011; Haynes 2012; Fetterman 1989; Oakley 2004; Staller 2010).

A properly reflexive researcher acknowledges not only that she and her respondent(s) are entrenched in webs of power relations, but also the way in which she herself is situated within the respondents’ communities. This involves both the way that she perceives her respondents and the way that her respondents perceive her (Nagar and Geiger 2007). Moreover, when the researcher is or becomes, to a certain extent, an “intimate insider” of the community she is researching or at least “friendly” with the respondents (both of which I experienced during fieldwork) the importance of reflexivity is elevated (Taylor 2011). The relationships that develop between the researcher and respondent(s) will generate certain biases, but will also enhance the richness of the data gathered.
In my case I decided to ingratiate myself with the Estonian community by studying the Estonian language intensively for six weeks prior to fieldwork. The Estonians regard their language as the hallmark of their identity and are extremely protective of its continued existence because of the small number of people who speak it (approximately 1 million speakers in 2012). Estonians are known for looking favorably upon any foreigner who learns their language, not only because it is a basic show of respect but also because Estonian is a notoriously difficult language to study and therefore requires a great deal of effort on the part of the learner.

Being able to converse, however basically, in Estonian was quite clearly appreciated by Estonian respondents—both young and adult—and generally effected friendly, relaxed atmospheres during interviews and focus groups. The Estonian research participants were forthcoming and enthusiastic during conversations, demonstrating a genuine appreciation for an American researcher that was informed about Estonian culture, language, and history. To be sure, my “insider” status should not be interpreted as complete knowledge of sociocultural substance and structure, but rather as a status that makes me “privy to undocumented… knowledge of the people and cultural phenomenon being studied” (Taylor 2011, 9).

This insider status was not uniformly applied, however. My abilities in conversational Estonian did not, for instance, preclude some Estonian respondents’ from adopting a somewhat frosty attitude towards an American whose research project included questions of Russophone experience and
minority politics in Estonia. With Estonian adult respondents in particular there was an emphasis placed on addressing the historic plight of Estonians at the hands of Russian and Russophone interlopers and the subsequent right of Estonians to preserve and protect their culture and identity.

Conversely, Russophone respondents tended to perceive me as a friendly figure (even though my Russian was extremely limited) because I was acknowledging the legitimacy of their perspectives and narratives. Several Russophone respondents expressed surprise that an American (a) knew that there was a Russophone diaspora living in Estonia and (b) did not appear biased against Russophones because of the historically contentious politics between the USA and Soviet Union/Russian Federation. These attitudes contributed to many open, frank, and enthusiastic responses from Russophones.

These and other factors contributed to the relationships that I developed with many of the research participants, and those relationships continue to influence this dissertation in several aspects. For instance, the reciprocal perceptions developed between myself and the respondent(s) are evident through the tenors of the conversations. The mood and tone of each conversation contributed to the ongoing development of these mutual perceptions during the encounter, which affected the amount and content of the information exchanged. Furthermore, the natures of these relationships have a continual effect on the ways in which I interpreted and engaged with the data during the analysis process. In consideration of trust and confidence between my respondents and I, great care was given to use and analysis of the data so as to
respect the contexts in which statements were made while also reporting information relevant to my research.

**Secondary Data Collection**

The two main components of data collection outlined above were supplemented by the collection of Estonian government policy documents, census data, reports, and assessments, EU educational policy documents, treaties, and directives, newspaper stories, and other secondary materials that provide context and background information for this project. Particular focus was given to the following: Estonian reports and assessments of integration programs and policies; newspaper articles about interethnic issues in Estonia; EU programs and policies aimed directly at youths in new member-states; and materials and websites published by NGOs dealing with youth issues, especially youth citizenship.

**Data Analysis**

*Evaluative Criteria and Coding*

The analysis of the primary and secondary data was organized around the topics that relate directly to the primary research questions detailed previously in this chapter:

1. **Student Identities**: Focus groups were evaluated according to (a) the respondents’ definitions of themselves (e.g. Estonian, Russophone,
European, and/or combinations of these); (b) their explanations of the boundaries of their identities as well as the permeability of those boundaries; (c) the terms of belonging to or exclusion from certain identity groups and the processes of Othering different individuals and groups the extent to which ideas of diversity and multiculturalism are relevant to their identities; (d) their sense of possessing rights an identities somewhere other than Estonia; (e) the extent to which school is a meaningful site of citizenship formation; and (f) the extent to which identities if formed through everyday experiences.

2. **Civic Education Curricula and Discourses:** For this element of the research, both focus groups and interviews were assessed according to: (a) teachers’ engagements with nationalist discourses of citizenship and identity in the classroom; (b) teachers’ engagements with discourses of multiculturalism, diversity, and tolerance in the classroom; (c) the characterizations of national, post-national, and multicultural citizenships within the classroom and wider school environment; (d) the styles of informal curricula present in the classroom; (e) students’ perceptions of the discourses, narratives, and strategies employed by their teachers in the classroom; and (f) students’ conceptualizations of citizenships, identities, and terms of belonging as compared to the discourses they and the teachers report experiencing in the classroom.
3. *Youth Geographies*: For the final research component focus groups were examined according to: (a) students’ narratives of Tallinn’s urban geographies; (b) descriptions and evaluations of Tallinn’s sociocultural landscape, including specific places of memory such as monuments, memorials, and museums; (c) spaces of inter- and intra-group social interaction, including where students feel comfortable and uncomfortable, and places that they frequent or avoid; (d) evaluations of the meanings and identities attached and/or ascribed to certain spaces and places in the everyday urban landscape of Tallinn; and (e) the sense of belonging or exclusion felt in particular areas or places in the city.

The evaluative criteria were formalized through color-coding of focus group and interview transcripts. The coding guide designated certain colors to responses regarding various topics, such as self- and Other-identify traits, dialogues on language use, perceptions and meanings assigned to urban spaces, discussion of traits and significances of national and European citizenships, and explicit and implicit evaluations of identity and citizenship discourses disseminated in schools and other everyday spaces.

Following fieldwork, focus group and interview recordings were transcribed and prepared for analysis. Both primary and secondary data were evaluated using the discourse analysis technique. Discourse analysis, according to Gee, “is the study of language-in-use” and is appropriate for this research project because “all language is political and all language is part of the way we
build and sustain our world, cultures, and institutions” (Gee 2011, 10). By
language-in-use, Gee refers to meanings, attitudes, and opinions that are
conveyed both through and beyond words. Discourse analysis involves careful
selection of formal and informal, direct and indirect themes of meaning in oral
and written texts. Such an analysis technique is salient to the research questions
that shaped this project because,

“people build identities and activities not just through language, but
by using language together with other “stuff” that isn't language…
[Discourses are] ways of combining and integrating language,
actions, ways of thinking, believing, valuing, and using various
symbols, tools, and objects to enact a particular sort of socially
recognizable identity.” (Gee 2011, 28–9)

In order to establish patterns in narratives and identify discourses, student
and adult respondent traits were input into several spreadsheets labeled with a
specific criteria topic. In each of these spreadsheets, the participants’ responses
on the particular topic were matched with the corresponding participants’
identifying traits. For instance, focus group or interview participants’ traits, such
as sex, school-language medium, ethnolinguistic identity, mother tongue, or
subject taught in school, were listed on each spreadsheet. Then, the responses
of each participant for the spreadsheet’s particular topic were matched to the
particular participant’s identity trait. This allowed for their responses to specific
topics to be sorted and compared within the group according to particular identity
traits. This ordering was not intended to make broad generalizations across the
entire student or adult study population. Instead, this sorting aimed at identifying
patterns within sub-groups of the study population in order to establish what, if
any, connection existed between sex, school-language medium, ethnolinguistic
identity, mother tongue, or subject taught in school and the nature of the responses for that particular topic. Table 3.3 is a partial example of one such spreadsheet that grouped responses by identity trait.

**Table 3.3. Partial Spreadsheet Sorting of Coded Responses**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Medium</th>
<th>Heritage</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Study Abroad?</th>
<th>Length</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Estonian</td>
<td>Estonian</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Short</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estonian</td>
<td>Estonian</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Short</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estonian</td>
<td>Estonian</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Short</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estonian</td>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Long/permanent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estonian</td>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Short</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russian</td>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Short</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russian</td>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Short</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russian</td>
<td>Russophone</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russian</td>
<td>Russophone</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Short</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additionally, a reverse sorting of responses and identity traits was performed. Instead of sorting responses by identity traits, identity traits were sorted by responses. Clustering by response allowed comparing and contrasting between subgroups according to how various members of the study population delineated boundaries of social groups, characterized citizenship meanings, and ascribed identities on urban spaces. Moreover, this type of grouping aided in evaluating response patterns that may not have coincided with preconceived notions and assumed linkages between certain identity traits and attitudes or opinions. For instance, it became clear that narratives of multiculturalism were woven into the fabric of several Russophone students’ conceptualizations of belonging and exclusion in Estonian society. Not all Russophone students, however, incorporated those tenets into their thoughts on issues of belonging.
Thus, the multiculturalist ideas cannot be assumed to be part of the narratives of all Russophone students, much less all Russophones in Estonia, simply because they are part of the minority group. However, by comparing student responses that included and omitted multicultural ideas, I was able to explore the ways in which different discourses play into individuals’ perceptions of the politics of identity and belonging in Estonia.

One benefit of performing these two sorting methods on responses and participant identity markers was the ability to monitor consistency, or lack thereof, in respondents feedback about interrelated topics. For instance, in clustering one set of responses that involved phrases and ideas related to multiculturalism and another set of responses that privileged specific ethnolinguistic or cultural practices over others, I was able to discern which members of the study population contradicted themselves, either explicitly or implicitly. As is discussed in greater detail in Chapter Four, this analysis revealed trends that suggest uneven internalization of multicultural discourses amongst the student respondents in particular.

The focus group and interview transcripts were analyzed according to the criteria outlined at the beginning of this section. I engaged with the results of the research in the context of both the issues of Estonian youth citizenship that interested me and the possibilities that I anticipated prior to fieldwork. To begin, these young people’s unique position of being the first wholly post-Soviet generation in Estonia posed interesting questions about the interaction between historical narratives of older generations and young people’s personal
experiences in a democratic Estonia. I anticipated the possibility that tensions between Estonian and Russophone youths would have remained high due to the strong influence of negative narratives in home spaces, but also the possibility that EU membership and discourses may have served to mediate animosity between the younger generations. Second, the fact that the young people in the proposed study population holding Estonian citizenship have been European citizens for almost a decade at the time of fieldwork raised compelling questions about their perceptions of supranational citizenship and the attendant rights and responsibilities. Third, my research on Estonian society prior to fieldwork led me to expect that the students’ personal geographies would reflect the socio-spatial divisions of Tallinn’s neighborhood districts. I was interested in exploring whether this expectation was true and how the student respondents ascribed meanings and identities to urban spaces and place. Finally, I was interested in what kinds of narratives and discourses operate in secondary schools in Tallinn and how they address multi-scalar identities and citizenships in a post-Soviet, European Estonia. The data collected in focus groups and interviews was compared against these assumptions and that analysis was used to inform arguments made regarding the original research questions noted above on youth citizenship and identity formation.

Conclusions

To summarize, this dissertation has applied qualitative research methods in the framework of a case study. This research project has attempted to achieve
results that are valid and reliable through methodic ordering, organizing, and analyzing of focus group and interview transcript data. The highly contextual, rich, and subjective explanations of citizenship and identity perceptions presented by young people in Tallinn required the use of qualitative techniques to produce substantive and considered arguments about such unquantifiable topics. While not concerned with generalizing findings to young people in Tallinn (or Estonia) as a whole, this dissertation has focused on using conclusions to engage with and contribute to current theories and approaches to citizenship, identity, and belonging in youth populations.

As the body of citizenship and identity theory indicates, myriad conceptualizations of belonging, rights, and community membership have been advanced. What is apparent in these contemporary conceptualizations, regardless of the numerous striations within the literature, is that citizenship, identity, and belonging are not static statuses or institutions, but rather are constantly being formed and reformed in and through various spaces, places, and scales. In assessing the data and investigating the potential trends that the data suggests, this dissertation intends to illuminate the ways in which young people actively negotiate, mediate, and contend with multi-scalar discourses of belonging, identity, and rights and the spaces in which these practices occur. These issues are the focus of Chapters Four, Five, and Six, which use focus groups and interviews to engage with contemporary understandings of citizenships.
Chapter 4

Youth Citizenship and Identity:
Navigating Multiple Discourses of Belonging

Liberal theory defines citizenship as a rights-based institution that establishes a relationship between citizens and the state. Liberal theory rests on an “ideal of universal citizenship” that assumes an equality amongst all individuals in a political community and that “transcends particularity and difference” (Young 1989, 250). Most contemporary definitions of citizenship treat the universality of citizenship as a given and draw upon a vocabulary of equality, sameness, and generality. Critics of these assumptions of liberal theory, however, suggest that such universal ideals are in fact predicated on difference. Liberal theorizations have been challenged by cultural conceptions of citizenship as a “collective identity… that can come to terms with cultural difference and fragmentation” (Bosniak 2000, 967).

Because equality has been “conceived as sameness” (i.e. a status that is common to all regardless of differences of identity, social standing, or economic worth), the universality of citizenship, it seems, rejects particularity. Universality means that citizens are defined by what they “have in common as opposed to how they differ” and that laws and rules are the same for everyone because they are “blind to individual and group differences” (Young 1989, 250). However the
The universality of citizenship in contemporary liberal democratic nation-states has failed to bring real equality to all individuals within the polity. Groups and individuals with formal national citizenships still experience significant discrimination and marginalization.

Several citizenship theorists have interrogated the reasons why universal citizenship has not led to the actual equality of all groups and individuals in nation-states (Bosniak 2000; Laclau 1992; Young 1989; Wemyss 2006; W. Brown 2008). These discussions indicate that although membership in the nation-state is defined in universal terms of common identity markers and the “same general point of view” (Young 1989, 251), those identity markers and the elements of the same point of view are in fact defined by the particularisms of the dominant group in society. Hence, the privileged position of the dominant group in a liberal democratic nation-state results in “the universalization of its own particularism” (Laclau 1992, 86; emphasis mine) that “asserts its…perspective on social events as impartial and objective” (Young 1989, 268). Universal citizenship, therefore, is nothing more than a particularism that has been made dominant.

The liberal insistence on “equality as sameness” has resulted in a universal citizenship that suppresses or ignores group difference in order create a seemingly homogenized society. In recent years multiculturalist theory and practice have attempted to rectify the suppression of social and group differences through discourses of acceptance and tolerance of cultural difference. Multiculturalism has attempted to decouple the idea of sameness from equality.
by arguing that recognition of socio-cultural difference will lead to true freedom and equality for all citizens. These multicultural ideas have permeated most Western societies, as evidenced by the European Union’s assertion that it is “united in diversity,” among much else. But the ambiguity in multiculturalist discourse and theory is revealed in actual practice of multiculturalism. Brown (2008) argues that multiculturalism usually means mere toleration of difference that allows the majority group to maintain privilege. Wood and Gilbert (2005) have observed that multiculturalism in practice involves superficial contact with the Other in urban, educational, or political spaces. The result is that theories of multiculturalism are not as adept at alleviating the tension between universalisms and particularisms as its proponents suggest. In fact, multiculturalism reproduces these tensions and indeed brings them into sharper relief, calling into question whether the tensions between universalisms and particularisms can actually be alleviated at all.

Still, multicultural discourses are important in Western societies. They operate in myriad spaces and have become important fixtures in political and social discourses (Kymlicka 1995; Balint 2010). The pervasiveness of multicultural discourse in educational spaces in particular demonstrates their significance in Western nation-states. Schools are principal sites where citizenship ideals are communicated to young people and are sites where youth encounter and learn about multicultural discourses. Multicultural discourses, in all their variations, are attempts to articulate and practice sameness and difference in diverse societies—i.e. they are modes of negotiating the tensions in attempting
to reconcile the idea of equality and sameness with the reality of differences and disparities. As such, despite the theoretical paucity of multiculturalism, the consideration of multicultural discourses is requisite to the examination of articulations of belonging and identity.

Western nation-states and the EU are constantly contending with how to balance between promoting nation-building/social cohesion and espousing tolerance/respect of difference. This contention is thrown into sharp relief in culturally diverse divided societies. Multicultural integration is often framed as the desirable alternative to assimilatory nationalisms, processes that involve minority culture(s) being subsumed under the dominant culture. However, a more critical reading of these two apparently competing discourses illuminates that both rely on processes of Othering particular groups. Similar logics of alterity lead both multiculturalist and nation-building practices to define terms of membership in society, thereby locating Other groups on the margins or outside the boundaries entirely. Multiculturalism does not eliminate assimilatory practices and discourses, but rather complements and complicates them.

This chapter attempts to illustrate how the narratives of national citizenship and multiculturalist discourses inform identity, citizenship, and belonging among young people Estonia. The analysis here assesses how the student interviewees ascribe identity traits to the Estonian citizen. This chapter also highlights the interaction between the student participants’ positionalities within the Estonian nation-state and the Western liberal democratic ideals of multiculturalism (framed as tolerance) that circulate in their educational spaces,
and how this interaction produces conceptions of belonging, identity, and citizenship.

The findings from this study reveal that the politics of identity and citizenship in Estonia are much more complex than simply a titular majority discriminating against a minority. Young people are prone to delineating the parameters of substantive citizenship along ethnolinguistic and socio-cultural lines rather than solely on formal politico-legal membership in the nation-state. This results in a contestation over who is or should be allowed access, and under what terms, to all citizenship rights—legal, political, socio-cultural, and civil. The legacy of Estonia’s Soviet era has produced an unpredictable environment where the “righting of historical wrongs” interplay with the country’s dominant narrative of leaving behind an oppressive Soviet past and embracing a free, democratic, Western European way of life and with ideas of diversity and tolerance.

Estonian students often justify universalizing the particular identity traits of ethnic Estonians as a means of protecting an Estonian culture that has been historically threatened by outside forces (most recently Russophone Soviet forces). At the same time, Russophone students adduce the ethnopolitics of exclusion that Russian-speakers have faced in recent years to highlight threats to their own identities and to argue for their sociocultural and linguistic rights. Tellingly, however, Russophone students continue to maintain and assert their differentiated identities in response to the dominance of the Estonian group even while holding Estonian citizenship—in other words, they assert sameness and difference at the same time. Further complicating the students’ ideas and
opinions is their use of multicultural keywords like “tolerance” and “acceptance” (likely influenced by EU discourses on unity in diversity in schools and wider society) without any indication that they have internalized attitudes of acceptance. The meanings of citizenship articulated by both the Estonian and Russophone students reflect stereotypes, prejudices, assumptions, and experiences, which in turn lead to frequent contradictions. As such, the student focus groups reveal highly complex and dynamic conceptions of belonging and citizenship.

This chapter focuses on the tensions between universalisms and particularisms present in both multicultural and national citizenship discourses and how these tensions interact with the students’ ascriptions of identities in Estonian society. Using data collected in student focus groups and teacher interviews, this chapter examines the tension inherent in negotiating an apparently universal citizenship that is in fact underscored by differences in the students’ positionalities in the Estonian majority or Russophone minority. It pays special attention to the discourses that they encounter in schools by exploring the similarities and differences between the narratives of the students and their teachers. This chapter is organized around the contexts in which young people form citizenship and draws on direct quotations from focus groups to illustrate how they negotiate, contest, and perform citizenship in Estonia. These contexts are not limited to formal circumstances in which official discourses of citizenship circulate, but also include mundane spaces of daily life where engagements with informal, varied configurations of citizenship take place. The varied nature of the
contexts in which young people develop understandings of belonging suggests that citizenship is a multi-sited process, de-centered from the nation-state, and present everyday spaces and interactions

The Classroom as Forum for Multiple Discourses of Citizenship

Educational spaces have long been recognized as a crucial site for the development of citizens. Through national curricula that emphasize certain “values and behaviors associated with citizenship” and particular readings of history nation-states not only create citizens but also the identity of the national community (Staeheli and Hammett 2010, 668; Michaels and Stevick 2009; Ahonen 2001; Kolossov 2003). In Western nation-states civic education curricula are by and large aimed at forming democratic citizens, and are therefore laden with discourses of liberal ideals of citizenship that include “post-national” narratives of equality, tolerance, and multiculturalism (Banks 2008; Ahonen 2001; Soysal 1997). Such post-nationalist narratives work to reconfigure rights, identities, and political processes that are traditionally associated with the nation-state, instead conceptualizing citizenships as institutions and processes that exist above and across national boundaries. But even in liberal democratic nation-states that espouse multicultural ideals there are narratives and discourses of nationalism that seek to construct a cohesive national community (Faas 2011; McGlynn et al. 2004). The coexistence of different civic ideals reflects multiple layers of citizenship discourse that are multivalent rather than uniformly constructed. As a result, national and post-national agendas and discourses
operate and circulate simultaneously, generating ideological tensions that must be then negotiated by teachers and students in the classroom (Hromadzić 2008; Sarah L. Holloway et al. 2010).

The coexistence of national and post-national discourses in educational spaces is particularly evident in divided societies. Civic education in divided societies that are in the process of transitioning to liberal democratic systems is particularly fraught because of the simultaneous desires to establish and solidify a national community and a democratic citizenry. These discourses exist in tension with each other, creating civic education discourses that “veer between ethnocentrism” and liberalism (Faas 2011, 480). During the process of democratic transition in divided societies, teachers are required to both navigate the “step-by-step” transformation into democratic civic education (Toots 2003, 566) and the shift in the grand narratives used in nation-building (E. Doyle Stevick 2007; Ahonen 2001; Staeheli and Hammett 2010). In such situations classroom environments are not only subject to conflicting discourses and narratives but also to widely varying attitudes projected by teachers, parents, and fellow students (Sarah L. Holloway et al. 2010; Hahn 1998).

Teacher narratives, classroom environments, and curricula discourses, along with the actual built environment of the school, are all parts of what Brown (2005, 79) calls the “schoolscape”—the “physical and social setting in which teaching and learning take place.” Schoolscapes are the everyday contexts that comprise part of educational spaces, where abstract educational plans, ideals, and values are enacted. If educational spaces, broadly construed, are where
citizens are developed, schoolscapes are the crucial “factor[s] in shaping identities and dispositions toward” citizenship and the terms of belonging in society (K. D. Brown 2005, 79). The schoolscape contributes to what Havel (2009, 18) describes as “the panorama of everyday life,” which constantly, and often subliminally, “reminds people… what is expected of them…and what they must do well if they don’t want to be excluded” from society. For young people in particular, schoolscapes are prominent and oft-encountered parts of the “panorama of” their everyday lives and geographies and transmit ideas not only about what it means to be considered legitimate in society, but also about what it takes to be excluded from society.

The schoolscape encompasses discursive, material, and even virtual elements that convey particular assumptions about identity, belonging, and legitimacy in wider society. School curriculum topics and projects, displays of patriotic symbols in the school and on the school grounds, ceremonial events and rituals, and even the use “of the school’s social space” (K. D. Brown 2005, 84) are components of the schoolscape that (re)produce and even reinforce certain understandings of citizenship, the rights it affords, and what individuals (and groups) those rights are available to. Schoolscapes are undoubtedly an important factor in shaping educational spaces, but must still be considered as situated within young people’s broader geographies amongst other spaces where socialization takes place, most notably the home and other familial settings (S. L. Holloway and Valentine 2000; Wylie 2004; Thomas 2008).
Schoolscapes in divided societies, (i.e. those with divided school systems), often introduce an added layer of complexity to the education of citizens. Even if there is a formal, official, national curricula that applies to all schools in a divided educational system, the physical and social settings in which learning takes place will vary considerably depending upon whether the school’s student body is from the majority group, minority group, or is mixed (integrated) (Hromadzić 2008; Hayes, McAllister, and Dowds 2007). In addition to the possibility that schoolscapes will vary according to societal divisions drawn along ethnocultural lines, young people’s experiences within the schoolscape will interact with experiences in other spaces of their personal geographies, especially the home and the segregated urban landscape. In minority group schools, for instance, “required” curriculum material dictated by the government (read: dominant majority), as well as the way in which that curriculum is presented, may serve to reinforce feelings of exclusion and “supply raw material for partisan narratives” (Barton and McCully 2005). Therefore, the schoolscape, as the “vital, symbolic context” in which values and ideals are “socially supported in the school” (K. D. Brown 2005, 79), will serve to communicate standards of legitimacy, but cannot guarantee that all young people will experience the schoolscape similarly or positively.

Civic education is not a static, unilateral process in which adult agents pour knowledge into young people who are passive receptacles of ideas and information (S. L. Holloway and Valentine 2000; Hahn 1998; Skelton 2010). Civic education is a dynamic set of processes in which teachers, students, and
communities interact within highly contextual political, economic, social, and cultural situations to actively “rework both the teaching of citizenship education and the ways in which it is received” (Staeheli and Hammett 2010, 668). Therefore it is important to consider the role of teacher narratives, classroom environment, and the school site in the production and reproduction of citizenship discourses within the space of the school.

As detailed in chapter one, the Estonian school system is divided by language-medium. Similar to this research’s student study population, there is a sizable overlap between the teachers’ ethnolinguistic heritages and the language medium of the school they teach in (with a few notable exceptions). This point is worth noting, as teachers’ backgrounds can and do figure into the informal curricula of teacher attitudes to produce varying classroom environments even when the formal curriculum is standard across schools (McGlynn et al. 2004; E. Doyle Stevick 2007; Hahn 1998). The special attention given to the teachers’ narratives and discourses is not meant to imply that the school is the only or the most meaningful space in which young people encounter and negotiate conceptualizations of citizenship; on the contrary, this section will illuminate that young people’s conceptualizations of citizenship and belonging cannot be compartmentalized within one discrete space, but must be understood as fluid products produced and reproduced through and in multiple spaces of their everyday geographies such as the home and the urban environment. Because citizenship education “inevitably has to confront the histories that children, parents, and teachers have lived” it will necessarily involve discourses of
citizenship, identity, and belonging in other spaces that complement, contradict, and mediate each other (Staeheli and Hammett 2010, 668). The evidence gathered in this project substantiates these theorizations of the school as one of many important spaces for young people’s development and understanding of belonging and identity in society.

My findings suggest that Holloway and Valentine’s (2000, 771) theorization of “the spatiality of the school as both embedded within wider socio-spatial relations and as a site through which these are reproduced” is a helpful mode of understanding the complexities of young people’s negotiation of citizenships and identities. In comparing the responses of the student and teacher study populations I discovered that the interaction between students’ experiences in the school and in other spaces (e.g. the home and the city) is complex and circular—that is, the discourses that students encounter in the classroom inform and are informed by the discourses and experiences in other spaces. This finding suggests that citizenship is produced in a very uneven political landscape, resulting in multiple productions of ideas about belonging. Importantly, the discourses of identity and belonging that the students from different schools speak ardently about vary between multiculturalisms and ethnonationalisms, and between nationalisms and supranationalisms.

The sections that follow will address the citizenship discourses present in all participant schools, how teacher narratives of these discourses vary, and the patterns that emerge between the students from the same participant schools. Responses and narratives from both teachers and students are compared in
order to demonstrate these patterns. Tables 4.1 and 4.2 outline the teacher and student respondents’ identifiers, school affiliations, and ethnolinguistic heritages, and are provided for reference purposes.

Table 4.1 Teacher Study Population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Identifier</th>
<th>Self- Reported Ethnolinguistic Heritage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Koidula School</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Koidula History/Civics</td>
<td>Est</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Koidula Estonian</td>
<td>Est</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Language</td>
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*Est = Estonian; **Rus = Russian/Russophone
Table 4.2 Student Study Population

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*Est = Estonian/Estonia; **Rus = Russian/Russophone
Teacher Narratives of Belonging

A pattern that emerges across the student study population as a whole is one of inconsistent but frequent narratives about multiculturalism, tolerance, and respect of diversity. This pattern, I argue, results from students’ contradictory encounters with multicultural and ethnocultural discourses both in their individual school sites and in the wider Estonian educational space.

In almost all of the teacher interviews there are persistent referrals to multiculturalism and tolerance. All but one of the teachers interviewed explicitly state that teaching tolerance and respect of difference to their students are major priorities. Unsurprisingly, the teachers’ descriptions of their classroom practices and narratives indicate that there are different levels and modalities of engagement with multicultural discourse depending upon subject, teacher ethnolinguistic heritage, and school-language medium, and combinations of these elements. But the manner in which the teachers describe their classroom narratives and teaching methods invariably include multicultural vocabularies:

Tolstoy Estonian Language:  [I say to them] Ok, it doesn't matter who you are! The most important thing is that we are human beings, and you have to be tolerant about everybody.

Tammsaare History/Civics 2:  We have [the topic] pluralism—that our nation, that Estonian society here, we are from different nationalities, we are multicultural.

Pushkin Russian Language:  During the lesson I can’t just specify that here we are studying Russian culture and here is Estonian [culture]. So they are connected... We respect traditions of both cultures...I don’t like to separate them.

Koidula Geography 1:  When we talk about human geography [I want] them to understand that the world is very...that
there are different parts to the world and that they understand these differences and that they respect them.

Tammsaare History/Civics 1: Tolerance is in the curriculum—in the history curriculum especially. We have these seven points that we have to get through to them, and one of them is tolerance and empathy [sic]... I have to think about this, when making up every lesson, to ask some questions or tell some stories to make them think about this, because empathy is the thing to learn.

From these interviews we can gather that multicultural rhetoric is very present in each of the four participant schools. The teachers’ responses suggest that if nothing else students are exposed to formal curricula that define the “right” attitude toward identity and belonging is a tolerant, multicultural attitude. The statements in student focus groups mirror those in teacher interviews. Both groups verbally espouse narratives of tolerance and assert that a tolerant attitude is what everyone “should” adopt. Because we know that multicultural ideals are heavily present in formal educational curricula, I argue that the students’ verbal affirmations of multicultural values are directly related to their official prominence in the classroom.

However, students' tolerance talk, which is addressed in detail in the following section, is often followed by contradictions, qualifications, and particularisms that contravene their espousal of multicultural ideas. Careful consideration of the teacher interviews reveals that ethnoculturally specific narratives and discourses are also present in the teachers’ formal and informal curricula. Most, but not all, teachers make statements in the interviews that indicate an implicit bias towards prioritizing Estonian or Russophone culture, depending upon the ethnolinguistic heritage of the teacher in question.
Teachers with Estonian heritage tend to reify the importance of Estonian cultural traits to forming the base for Estonia’s multicultural society even if they speak passionately about respecting Estonia’s cultural diversity elsewhere. Koidula History/Civics teacher, for instance, describes Estonian national identity to the students as “our own language, our own culture, our own traditions, and loyalty to our country.” The use of “our” is a verbal bordering practice that legitimizes Estonianness, locates Russophone characteristics outside the bounds of the national community, and implies that it is the responsibility of non-Estonians to assimilate in order to be accepted. Tolstoy History/Civics, an Estonian teaching in a Russophone school, notes that the history of the Soviet era “is difficult to teach” because “I think the students have their own different opinion from the ‘official road’ opinion on the subjects in Estonia, because their opinion is based on Russian media.” Tolstoy History/Civics goes on to describe how national identity is discussed with the Russophone students:

[Defining national identity] is a problem for me. I had this problem during my lessons. And actually, I asked my Russian students, “who do you think you are? Are you Estonians or Russians? So the majority of my students are Estonian citizens, but for example if I ask them, ‘if you go to Russia, what do you say? Are you Estonians or Russians?’ They say ‘we are Estonians.’ But then I say, ‘but you don’t speak Estonian!’ So there is a great paradox with this question.

This teacher’s unease with the students’ lack of proper Estonian qualities filters into the classroom environment and exists in tension with the multicultural discourses in the formal curricula. These two teachers’ narratives imply suspicions, if not rejections, of multiculturalism in the classroom, attitudes that
have been observed in Estonian heritage teachers elsewhere (Valdmaa 2002). These teacher’s comments exemplify a pattern in the interviews with Estonian heritage teachers that reveal the simultaneous presence of formal multicultural curricula and informal ethnocultural biases in the classroom.

Teachers with partial or fully Russophone backgrounds tend to put emphasis on the fact that, while respecting Estonian culture is important to integration, Russophone culture has the right to exist in the Estonian nation-state and that Estonians have a responsibility to accommodate Russophone culture within their society. Russophone teachers create dialogues about tolerance and respect of cultural diversity in their classrooms, but also exhibit attitudes of marked sympathy for the Russophone community in Estonia. One example of this is how Pushkin Russian Language describes the importance of continued Russophone education in Estonia:

It’s important to learn [Russian] because, firstly, it’s our culture, it’s our national identity, and we are integrating, but we are not assimilating into the Estonian society…I think we should think of the [fact that] there are not only Estonians living here, but we have to honor the other cultures. We [Russophones] have to be proud of our own.

Similar to Koidula History/Civics, Pushkin Russian Language uses the word “our” repeatedly, which reifies the borders in Estonian society drawn along ethnolinguistic lines. Again we see national identity not connected to citizenship in the nation-state, but to a cultural subgroup within it. These teachers’ perspectives seem to understand integration as a process of protecting rights to
cultural identity rather than meaningfully incorporating multiple cultures into one society.

The invocation of “right to identity” is used alongside discourses of “respect for diversity” in Tolstoy School as well. Tolstoy Estonian Language, who is of mixed Estonian and Russophone heritage, explains to her students that learning Estonian is crucial to economically successful citizenship. But Tolstoy Estonian Language also displays sympathy for the students being forced to take 60 percent of their courses in Estonian when they haven’t been properly prepared:

Sixty percent, I think that is a very big number… I do not think [it is fair] because first of all, I don’t believe that they [the students] have to study history or civics in Estonian because they don’t understand it. They don’t speak Estonian well enough to understand about history or the other issues in the Estonian language… They won’t be able to speak about those dates or events of historical wars and so on in Russian because they won’t have the Russian vocabulary. They just take a text [in Estonian] and they are learning every phrase from there, but they don’t understand what it means.

What these examples from both Estonian-medium and Russian-medium school teachers imply is that the students in this study move through and in school spaces that are unevenly populated with seemingly contradictory discourses of multiculturalisms and cultural particularisms. This fact creates a school space within which opportunities for critical engagement with multiculturalism are often contradicted or obscured by ethnocultural rhetoric, leading the students to impart inconsistent narratives about the terms of citizenship, identity, and belonging in Estonia.
These characteristics of the student respondents’ individual school sites are reinforced by the wider structure of the Estonian education space. The fact that the Estonian education system is divided along ethnolinguistic lines serves to reinforce the socio-spatial division of young people’s everyday geographies and to reduce the number of opportunities to have meaningful encounters with the Other group. While simply putting young people from the different groups together in a physical setting is no guarantee of meaningful exchange, educational spaces are much more likely to induce cross-cultural dialogue and mixing than a short-term space like a youth camp. The majority of the teachers interviewed for this project use group projects and in-class discussions on a frequent basis in their classrooms. However, because schools in Estonia are largely ethnolinguistically homogenous, group classroom activities and lesson plans are facilitating interaction between students who are, by and large, ethnolinguistically similar. Such consequences are not lost on the student respondents in this study. O-Koidula Girl 5 asks “How can you learn the [other] culture if you are surrounded by people like you?” Tammsaare Girl 2 and Pushkin Boy 2 both make mention of the fact that, similar to home and leisure spaces, schools are not a place where Estonian and Russophones encounter each other and therefore “don’t communicate” as a result of spatial separation. Perhaps Pushkin Girl 1’s pithy summary of the benefits that young people would reap from an integrated school system is most telling:

It would be great if the schools would have been mingled so Estonians and Russians, for example, would go to the same school. And maybe some different cultures also—this would be
great for practice for language. In the future there wouldn’t be any problems between people who don’t understand each other because there wouldn’t be any language barrier, if they had studied together.

Integrating the Estonian education system is quite easier said than done as the language barrier exists not only between Estonian and Russophone young people, but also between Estonian and Russophone teachers and administrators (Toots 2003; Laitin 2003; Kulu and Tammaru 2004; Brosig 2008). But the data that I gathered through focus groups, interviews, and participant observation indicate that the division of schools along ethnolinguistic lines works to exacerbate the negative effects of Estonia’s wider socio-spatial divisions, especially in terms of inter-cultural dialogue and experience between young people.

Divided along linguistic lines, it is important to note that Estonia’s schools, to say nothing of each classroom, engage with varying discourses of citizenship and belonging in unique ways and thus produce unique schoolscapes. The following section demonstrates the impact that specific school environments have on student narratives by examining patterns that appear between student respondents from the same participant schools.

*Pushkin School: The European Discourse*

The students from Pushkin School consistently and earnestly speak of their identification as European citizens. More than conceptualizing their EU citizenship as a means to access Western European spaces of economic wealth and education, several of the students perceive it as a marker of their
membership in a cross-cultural space of human rights where respecting diversity
is “the European way” (Pushkin Boy 2). To be sure, the Pushkin School students
value the rights that they are afforded by their EU citizenship. But these students,
more so than students from the other three participant schools, specifically
address the inherent values of learning about other cultures and respecting
cultural diversity. The Brussels discourses of cooperation, connection,
integration, and facilitation of communication that are part of the EU’s mantra are
present in the focus groups, such as O-Pushkin Boy 1’s statement that:

I totally value EU citizenship because, firstly, it’s really cool to be a
part of something big, and also it connects many people and it’s
easier to cooperate with different European countries.

Furthermore, the students from Pushkin School are more apt to embrace
a European identity. For O-Pushkin Girl 2 being European is a “big part” of her
identity; Pushkin Boy 3 uses “European” to define himself because he has many
European heritages in his family lineage; Pushkin Boy 4 states that he would say
he’s “European. That’s the best.” It is also worth noting that Pushkin Boy 4
previously held an Alien’s passport and tells me that he applied for Estonian
citizenship in order to get European citizenship. As such, it can be argued that
the student participants from Pushkin School not only look favorably upon
Europe as a “space of rights” but also readily identify as European.

Each of these student participants is taught history and civics by Pushkin
History/Civics 1. In their civics class they are exposed to in-depth lessons and
activities on the EU, how it functions, what its core values are, and current
controversial issues including enlargement and financial bailouts. But Pushkin
History/Civics 1 goes beyond formal, required curricula and also applies for EU education grants and enters his students’ work on EU topics into competitions. During a tour of Pushkin School I viewed a large wall mural comprised of students’ one-by-one foot paintings depicting their interpretations of the various rights outlined by the Charter of the Fundamental Rights of the European Union. The mural (Figure 4.1) is a product of a Comenius Program\(^4\) competition that students of Pushkin History/Civics 1’s twelfth level civics had won the year before. The school received the funds for students to paint pieces and then to construct the mural, which also included large plastic panels featuring the main articles of the Charter in Estonian.

The schoolscape of Pushkin School, then, is heavily laden with specific ideas and messages about these students’ place in a European Estonia. In another corridor of the school a display cases features student interpretations—in Estonian and English—of a Comenius sponsored in-school project on how Europe is changing and Estonia’s role, alongside other member states, in that change. Even the in-school and after-school activities, which are a part of a cooperative program between Tallinn and Turku schools to promote the health- and well-being of young people, are financed in part by the EU. For Pushkin School students, the social and physical setting in which they learn legitimizes the values and ideals of a united, but multicultural, Europe.

\(^4\) Part of the EU’s Lifelong Learning Programme, the Comenius Programme puts “Europe in the Classroom” of basic and secondary school students across the EU. The programs “aims to help young people and educational staff better understand the range of European cultures, languages and values. [Comenius] also helps young people acquire the basic life skills and competences necessary for personal development, future employment and active citizenship.” (“The Comenius Programme: Europe in the Classroom” 2013)
This mural project is one of many examples of how students at Pushkin School encounter EU discourses in their schoolscape. The active engagement with EU discourses beyond lectures through hands-on activities, open discussions, and grant competitions can be connected to the frequency and ardeny with which the students from this school speak about EU citizenship and identity. But other participant schools in this study also engage in EU sponsored learning activities, and the student respondents from those institutions did not speak as often or as avidly about their Europeanness. Analysis and comparison of the focus group data reveals that the students from Pushkin School, uniquely
amongst the student study population, enthusiastically relate multiple stories of engaging with EU discourses outside of the space of their classroom.

Several of Pushkin School students comment on their travels to Western Europe and their engagement with other European cultures. O-Pushkin Boy 1 and Pushkin Girl 1, for instance, talk about their trip to London for a school project and how they enjoyed discussions on different stereotypes that Europeans have about each other. Pushkin Boy 4, Pushkin Boy 5, and Pushkin Boy 7 enthusiastically recall going to Brussels on an EU-paid trip after “We won a competition. We had to make a video about ‘My Home as A Part of Europe’.” Other students recount travels to parts of Europe with their families and friends that have enticed them to want to return to other parts of Europe to learn more about other cultures, practice their language skills, and meet new friends.

These narratives of positive experiences with Europe and EU discourses in spaces both within and outside of the immediate school environment are unique to the students from Pushkin School. This element of their focus groups suggests that meaningful experience with European topics in multiple spaces of their personal geographies translates into more frequent and more ardent espousal of European ideals, citizenship, and identity than the remaining student study population. This intimates that significant engagements within and through multiple spaces, rather than only the school, may produce greater internalization of European discourses on citizenship, identity, and belonging.
The students from Koidula School move within and through a unique school space. The history of Koidula School is closely tied with the history of the Estonian Republic. This unique feature of Koidula School plays a large part not only in formal classroom curricula, but also in the schoolscape via informal curricula of teacher attitudes, the school’s landscape, and extracurricular school events.

Estonian history forms a powerfully symbolic part of the fabric of the school site at Koidula School. The physical setting of the Koidula schoolscape is heavily laden with nationalist materials, such as statues, flags, and photographs of past Estonian presidents. One of the most prominent physical features of the school’s grounds is a statue, originally created in the 1920’s to commemorate the Estonian War of Independence. Several students and one teacher from Koidula School died in the War of Independence, and the statue is considered by both teacher and student study participants to be an important reminder of Estonia’s struggle for freedom and the unique connection that their school has to the War of Independence. Soviet officials had the statue removed from the school grounds because of its connection to the Estonian War of Independence, an action that both the teacher and student study participants cite as evidence of Soviet “occupation” rather than “liberation.” Upper-secondary school students at Koidula School maintain the statue and the area around it, a job that is seen as an honor and privilege by both the teacher and student study participants.
The social setting of Koidula School’s schoolscape “officially sanctions” and “socially supports” (K. D. Brown 2005, 79) messages, values, and ideals of Estonian nationalism and the Koidula School’s role in Estonian history. At in-school festivals and assemblies that take place throughout the school year, the Estonian flag and national folk costumes play prominent roles, as do Estonian songs, school traditions, and visits from alumni. O-Koidula Girl 5 remarks that “our school, I think we can say it’s a little bit different because our school is very patriotic…So we are taught to be more close to each other, and to respect our country, traditions, and history. So it’s a little bit different than the so-called ‘normal’ schools.”

The students at Koidula School display a pattern of articulating citizenship, identity, and belonging in Estonia from a platform of Estonian nationalism which demands assimilatory actions on the part of Russophones. Although they do address values of multiculturalism and cosmopolitanism, there is a distinct element of Estonian nation-building discourse in these students’ narratives that permeates their broader conceptualizations of belonging and identity in Estonia. While Estonian particularisms are not unique to the students at Koidula School, these students also verbally construct hard and fast borders between Estonians and Russophones in society.

These student respondents are almost unanimous in the deep conviction that an individual is only Estonian when they speak the Estonian language, and that the extension of this identity into the parameters of legal citizenship is not only legitimate, but necessary for the preservation of Estonian society:
Koidula Girl 3: [It is fair that you have to know Estonian to obtain citizenship] because otherwise the Estonian language wouldn’t survive.

Koidula Boy 1: The constitution says that one of the main goals of the Estonian country, the state, is to protect the Estonian language.

Koidula Girl 4: If the person wants to be Estonian, then he studies the language, he accepts the rules... But a lot of Russians are like, they don’t want to learn the language... to be an Estonian [citizen] you actually need to know about Estonia and you actually need to know about the culture and language and everything. I think it’s the main point to become Estonian. I don’t know how difficult the [citizenship] exam is. But I mean, some kind of [citizenship] exam, there should definitely be one.

The feeling of these students is that the hegemony of Estonian culture is a crucial part of the Estonian nation-building project. That project, moreover, is seen as one with historical precedence, cultural and linguistic legitimacy, and democratic validity due to the Soviet past (among other remnants of the Russian Empire’s influence). As a result, these students’ narratives rather obstinately link the extension of citizenship, identity, and belonging to Russophones with the Russophones’ acquiescence to the hegemony of Estonian culture. Russophones who do not meet such standards are deemed unassimilable and relegated to the margins of society.

Formal and informal displays of Estonian nationalism, then, often abut the formal and informal curricula of multicultural discourses. Several of the teachers at Koidula School, for instance, relate how they teach tolerance in the classroom by “reiterate[ing] that we always look at the different opinions, the different sides of an issue, and we try to understand all the different sides” (Koidula History and
Civics 1) or by reminding students that “young Russians that we have here now, they have not come from Russia” (Koidula Geography 1). But an emphasis on the particularisms of Estonian culture as the standards of belonging in Estonian society is clear in teacher narratives as well:

Koidula Extracurriculars: [Estonian] independence is very fragile, so [the students] have to remember that and think about that for a second, because we have this scary neighbor next door! So independence is not self-evident for us.

Koidula Geography 2: The background of the school is very connected to the independence movement. And the population of small people who speak Estonian, the number of people is small, so the school has a focus of making sure that Estonianness stays alive and the language stays alive, and that the students care.

Koidula Estonian Language: I think that in certain ways in the current local context it’s perhaps not even politically correct to be so proud of your nationality, or it might seem that it’s not politically correct. But I think that to really understand the Estonian people you have to understand the pride that they have in their resilience and in their survival, and the pride that they have in their unique, rich culture and how important that is to being an Estonian.

The interviews with teachers in Koidula School are flecked with these nationalist narratives of varying subtleties. Moreover, these teacher attitudes are not lost on the student respondents who mention that “our history teacher really stresses the Estonian history, like, from world history. Estonian is most important” (Koidula Girl 3) and that their teacher makes it clear that “when you get marks, the marks that you get in Estonian history are more important” (Koidula Girl 1). This indicates that in addition to any nationalist undertones in formal civic education curricula, these students encounter the informal curricula of a nationalist school environment and teacher attitudes that belie the discourses of tolerance and
openness that circulate in their classrooms. The space of this school is, to some degree, situated within the space of the Estonian nation-building process.

The students from Koidula School also relate personal anecdotes from their experiences in urban spaces that may contribute to and/or reinforce the notion that Estonian culture needs to be protected—mainly from Russophones. Many of the students relate their memories of the Bronze Soldier crisis in 2007 when the abrupt relocation of a Soviet war memorial from the city center to a war cemetery caused widespread rioting between Russophones and Estonians in Tallinn for two nights. Although the students were 13 or 14 years old when the incident occurred, the memories of the television footage (Koidula Girl 2), damage to the city center (Koidula Girl 4), and the fear they felt (O-Koidula Girl 5, Koidula Girl 3) are associated with the “Russians who were destroying the city” (Koidula Boy 1).

A few students also relate everyday encounters with Russophones as evidence that Russophones are “too different” to fit in to Estonian society. Koidula Girl 4, for instance, harbors resentment for the Russophones she has encountered that do not want to learn Estonian because they’re leaving Estonia for good after school, feeling that this proves that they don’t care about or have loyalty to the country they’ve grown up in. Koidula Girl 1 tells of how Tallinn’s Russophones just “throw garbage everywhere” and have turned the Lasnamäe into a trash dump, which to her makes it “seem like they are differently raised and don’t have the same values as us.” While these anecdotes of banal encounters may seem insignificant, they are indicative of the pervading sense of
irreconcilable socio-cultural divisions that these students have between themselves and the Russophone community at large.

The narratives of students from Koidula School suggest that what they learn in school is reinforced by what they observe outside of school, and that they tend to interpret Russophones and Russophone spaces through a notably nationalist lens. The stories, experiences, and encounters in everyday urban spaces that these students describe over the course of the focus groups illustrates that their formulations and negotiations of identity and belonging are situated in multiple spaces of their everyday personal geographies. Young people’s understandings of the nature of citizenship are constantly being shaped and reshaped by fluid movement within and through multiple spaces rather than statically conceived at discrete sites.

_Tolstoy School: Discourses of Alienation_

The responses from the student participants at Tolstoy School illustrate the ways in which the discourses that they encounter in school can exacerbate and deepen existing feelings of exclusion and alienation developed in other spaces, such as their workplaces or leisure spaces. Tolstoy School is located in a less socioeconomically affluent part of Lasnamäe, the city district with an overwhelmingly Russophone population. As such, the school is situated within the wider socio-spatial geography of Lasnamäe that is largely devoid of Estonianness in general.
The physical setting of the schoolscape features a few displays of cultural artifacts and student projects about Russophone and Central Asian cultures, but otherwise the atmosphere is rather staid. The Estonian flag does fly near the entrance during school hours, but little else in the schoolscape suggests that it is an educational space for young people in an actively integrating Estonia. The social contexts of the school are, unsurprisingly, largely Russophone because of the ethnolinguistic heritage of the vast majority of the teaching staff and student body. However, other messages—such as the integration between Estonians and Russophones, or the ideals and values of the European Union—are not notably part of the social or physical setting of the schoolscape. Thus, the schoolscape of Tolstoy School runs counter to, or at least does not provide a fostering atmosphere, for official curricula requirements that are dictated and tinged with Estonian nationalist overtones.

The students from Tolstoy School tend to identify more strongly and singularly as Russophone, explicitly deny any feelings of Estonianness, and harbor overtly anti-Estonian feelings. Much of their feelings of alienation are linked to experiences such as encounters with Estonians who “discriminate” against them (Tolstoy Girl 3) or their perceptions that Estonians are wealthier because they dominate the economy and purposefully exclude Russophones from economic and occupational spaces (Pushkin Boy 1, Pushkin Girl 2). Their responses also indicate that the students the Bronze Soldier crisis from 2007 plays a continuing role in their perceptions of belonging and understandings of identity in Estonia. The broad consensus amongst the students is that the
Estonian government moved the Soviet war monument to deliberately discriminate against the Russophones, disrespect Russophone history, and make the Russophone community feel like outsiders in Estonia.

The pattern of disaffected narratives amongst these students is further revealed through their accounts of interactions in their school space. These students' take history and civics from Tolstoy History and Civics, whose ethnolinguistic heritage is Estonian. By all accounts these students' relationship with Tolstoy History and Civics is antagonistic and serves to deepen their feelings of alienation in society. In their history and civics class the formal curriculum requirement that this subject must be taught in the Estonian language dovetails with the informal curriculum of the teacher's perceived anti-Russophone behavior to intensify the students' resentment of their treatment at the hands of the Estonian nation-building process. This is illustrated by these students' descriptions of Tolstoy History and Civics:

**Tolstoy Girl 3:** Our history teacher is Estonian and he doesn't really like Russians, and we quarrel a lot about this language topic because he knows Russian and he doesn't want to speak it during the lesson. That's why a lot of things within the topic of history and civics remain unclear.

**Tolstoy Girl 1:** Actually, he [Tolstoy History and Civics] doesn't state his opinion clearly. Sometimes, still, it slips, his opinion towards Russians. But still, we are used to his style of teaching. He teaches from the textbook.

In the eyes of these student respondents their teacher's attitude combines with the formal curricula of the textbook and language requirement to further marginalize them within their educational space. While these students have had
Estonian language lessons for several years, by their own admission their Estonian language skills are poor and therefore the requirement that 60 percent of their curriculum be taught in this language is unfair:

Tammsaare Girl 1: It would be fair if we had had Estonian subjects, for example, since the fifth grade. But we have them since the tenth grade—and a lot of us choose, still, to do our examinations in Russian because we can’t do them in Estonian.

Their lack of language skills combined with the fact that their history and civics teacher refuses to help them clarify topics in Russian, means that the students “have some things clear and some things remain unclear” (Tolstoy Boy 1). In line with these sentiments is Tolstoy Girl 2’s assertion that “the language is very difficult, and it’s very difficult to understand the topics. Maybe it’s because of the fact that this [history and civics] textbook has been written by Estonians for Estonians.”

The students from Tolstoy School perceive their teacher’s attitude and the formal curriculum as part of a wider, systematic discrimination of Russophones by Estonians and the Estonian nation-building project. Their accounts of their movements within and through their school space are interspersed with descriptions of their everyday geographies outside of the school, indicating that the pattern of feelings of exclusion from substantive citizenship and feelings of belonging in Estonian society emerge from encounters with discourses of exclusion multiple spaces. Analysis of the Tolstoy School student participants’ responses suggests that young people can also engage with negative discourses, such as discourses of exclusion, and not only with positive
discourses of rights and opportunities (e.g. Pushkin School students) or discourses privileging their identity over the Other’s (e.g. Koidula School students).

*Tammsaare School: Discourse in Only One Space*

Tammsaare School is located in Mustamäe, Tallinn’s second most populous district. Tammsaare School is unremarkable in terms of reputation and draws its student body from Mustamäe’s middle-class, mostly Estonian population. Taamsaare’s School’s schoolscape is rather “averagely” Estonian. The students pass the Estonian flag flying in front of their school’s main entrance each day and the curricula certainly unfolds in a culturally and linguistically Estonian context, but the ideas and messages that are “officially sanctioned and socially supported” (K. D. Brown 2005, 79) in the schoolscape at Taamsaare school are not undergirded by any particular fervor. The school’s material environment is clean, orderly, and neat, but devoid of artwork or special displays featuring national, supranational, or multicultural topics. In short, the schoolscape of Taamsaare School is a physical and social setting in which the dominant Estonian culture is banal and rote, and generally not a setting where issues of nationalism, multiculturalism, or supranationalism are critically assessed or emphasized often.

Analyzing the responses of Tammsaare School students revealed a pattern in their responses converse to that of the other student participants. The narratives of the students from the other three participant schools were more
fervent with regards to discourses that they had encountered both in school and in other spaces. The narratives of Tammsaare School imply that a discourse only meaningfully encountered in school, but not in other spaces, will tend not to appear significantly in young people’s narratives, or at least appear much less frequently.

The discourses of multicultural values and tolerance are present in each of the four participants schools via both formal and informal curricula (something that is addressed in greater detail in the following section). The interview with Taamsaare History and Civics 1 reveals that she embraces a discourse of multiculturalism that aims to dismantle prejudices and preconceived notions of the Other. She is convinced of the value of respect for diversity and takes great care to address the entrenched inequalities in her lessons. This teacher’s in-class activities regarding controversial history topics are designed to strongly encourage critical thinking amongst the students. For instance, one activity involves assigning different groups in the class with an unidentified source of information, such as a newspaper article or pamphlet, and requiring the group to analyze and probe the message in the source and what it can reveal about nation-building, historical interpretations, political views, and so on.

Taamsaare History and Civics 1 also creates a discursive environment in the classroom that allows students to express their opinions and also to be questioned by her. For instance, Taamsaare History and Civics 1 relates the following account of a discussion on the topic of coexisting respectfully with Russophones in Estonia:
[Some students] talk about “bad Russians” and “Oh, they steal and they are hokum. Sixty to 70 percent of all the people in prison are Russians, in Estonia” and all that kind of stuff, and “the Russians are like this and that. And then [I say], “look to your left or right. This friend [classmate] of yours [who is Russian]—are you speaking about him or her? And usually they’re like, “no, no, he’s really ok, he’s normal and fun.” And I’m like, “Ok, who are you talking about?” I’m saying “you can’t generalize” and that kind of stuff.

This interactive style of classroom discussion was exhibited when I observed one of Taamsaare History and Civics 1 class sessions during fieldwork. The students’ biases against opinions, peoples, and attitudes that are different from their own are evident, but this is something that Taamsaare History and Civics 1 is aware of. During the interview, Taamsaare History and Civics 1 recognizes that the fact that the presence of Russophones in Estonia “is so normal and everyday” results in many students not perceiving their home country’s diversity as a multicultural space:

When we talk about multiculturalism they are saying about this Islamic world coming to Europe and that we have this and that kind of people living everywhere and so on... last year [during a discussion] it was, I don’t know, a half an hour or something like that until someone threw in the Russian minority in Estonia.

Taamsaare History and Civics 1 plans her lessons with the idof combating the biases and preconceived notions that her students bring into her classroom. However, this teacher states that the discourses the students encounter in their home and leisure spaces oftentimes have an impact that school curricula cannot overcome.

Taamsaare History and Civics 1’s perceptions of the strength of discourses in home and other everyday spaces outside of school is supported by
the focus group conversations between students from Tammsaare School (each of whom is a student of Taamsaare History and Civics 1). Analysis of these students’ focus group conversations reveals that, like the other student participants, they nominally acknowledge that being tolerant of Others is the correct modality of addressing difference. But Tammsaare School students speak much more forcefully about the legitimacy of Estonian sociocultural and political hegemony than about respecting diversity. This appears to be in spite of the fact that there is significant engagement with multicultural discourses in the space of their school through their lessons with Taamsaare History and Civics 1.

I argue that these students’ narratives of their movements in and through everyday spaces away from the school are evidence that they have few, if any, significant encounters with discourses of tolerance and/or respect of diversity outside of their classroom(s). These examples from focus group conversations are illustrative of these students’ prevailing attitudes towards belonging and identity in Estonian society:

Tammsaare Girl 4: My mother is an Estonian language teacher in a Russian school, and when she teaches the Estonian language, a lot of the Russian students don’t want to learn because they say that they don’t think that the Estonian language is important, and they fight for that. They don’t have to take exams in Estonian, and they don’t want to take classes in Estonian. They, like, fight for it. And my mother often comes home and is just astonished by the Russian younger demographic. They [her students] are [saying] “my grandfather said you Estonians are liars and so I think so too, because of his opinion.” So it’s a bit of a battle, that when you have a Russian student in your class, they maybe you can’t be that liberal about “Oh, Estonia, yay!”

O-Tammsaare Boy 1: There are two types of Russians. One type is the bad type, because they’re more like, “It’s still Russia. We
came here! We saved Estonia, so they Estonians still owe us!” Historical matters [sic]. And they don’t want to learn the language, they don’t care about anything—they just live here. So that’s [the type of Russians in] Lasnamäe, mostly.

Tammsaare Girl 2: I think it was ok to move the [Bronze Soldier monument] because they [Russophones] can still visit if it’s important to them—it didn’t have to sit, like… to Estonians, to the older generation, maybe, it’s important that the Soviet thing doesn’t sit under your nose all the time. And [the Russophones] can still visit it, so I think that it’s ok.

The students’ experiences and negotiations within their home space, Tallinn’s urban neighborhoods, and memorialized landscapes interact to produce narratives with a distinctly pro-Estonian bent. The responses of the students from Tammsaare School suggest that the varied spaces of everyday geographies are not discrete containers of action. They also imply that the space of the school is one of many significant spaces of young people’s personal lives. While not denying the influential power of school sites in young people’s conceptualizations and contestations of citizenship, I suggest that the Tammsaare School students’ statements reveal that discourses encountered in only one space, however meaningfully, may not inform young people’s broader narratives of identity and belonging.

By engaging with student focus group and teacher interview responses, this section has argued that the space of the school is a crucial site for citizenship formation, but one that is situated amongst other spaces of young people’s everyday geographies. Moreover, the analysis has detailed the ways in which young people’s movement through and within the multiple spaces of their personal geographies inform and are informed by each other rather than existing
as discrete, static entities that contain uniform experiences and discourses. Giving special attention to the space of the school and the many, sometimes competing, discourses that circulate within it has also contributed to the argument that the politics of identity and belonging in Estonia are far more complex and dynamic than a unilateral discrimination of a minority by the titular majority. The remainder of this chapter will explore the students’ chaotic deployment of competing multicultural and identity-specific frameworks to conceptualize citizenship, identity, and belonging in Estonia.

**Student Narratives of Multicultural Citizenship in Contemporary Estonia**

The previous section demonstrated that the interaction of various political discourses that young people encounter in schools is quite complicated. As a result, the student respondents are confronted with coexisting narratives of nationalism, post-nationalism, and multiculturalism in their classrooms. These multiple citizenship discourses are emphasized differently within schools, and then are further absorbed and acted upon differently by young people. Youths take the varying ideas presented in their complicated school discourses and then develop their own interpretations and explanations of multiculturalism and “tolerance” within the wider contexts of their daily experiences. Using the students’ diverse characterizations of the terms of tolerance in Estonian society, the analysis that follows attempts to illustrate that the production of citizenship is a disjointed process that takes place at multiple sites.
Both Estonian and Russophone students articulate the desire and need for a less conflictual co-existence between the two groups in Estonian society. Many of the students cleave their generation from their parents’ and grandparents’ and claim “tolerance” and “integration” as marks of the younger generation that is forward-looking, an attitude that has also been observed in young people in Northern Ireland (Leonard 2006, 2010). The influence of multiculturalist discourse is evident here because its vocabulary is utilized to mark the older generations’ attitudes as relics of an era of intolerance and the younger generations’ attitudes as proof of a modern, European Estonia that is not marred by historical trauma. The quotes below demonstrate how students rate their generation’s ability to reconcile the ethnocultural tensions in Estonian society very highly and blame the specter of the Soviet era for the older generations’ reluctance to move on.

Tammsaare Girl 5: For our grandparents, it was more like…
O-Tammsaare Boy 1: Historical.
Tammsaare Girl 5: Yeah, historical.
Interviewer: So it matters more to them than it does to you?
Tammsaare Girl 5: Yeah.
O-Tammsaare Boy 1: I think we do get along better… of course, it depends on the attitude, but yes, I think that our generations are more tolerating each other.

Interviewer: So there are some Estonians that don’t feel anything bad towards you?
Pushkin Boy 7: Yes.
Pushkin Boy 6: Yes. The older generation tends to worry about problems between Russians and Estonians. But young Estonians are not like that. You can communicate with them.

Pushkin Boy 3: Today, it [nationality] is not so important, like right now, because there’s the process of integration and adaptation…But when nationality is taken into consideration…and
that’s why you’re making some decisions, only based on nationality, it is not right. It means that the person’s living in the past, and today the society is different.

These quotes exemplify how the student participants view themselves as the standard-bearers of the tolerant, accepting attitudes that will push Estonia further into the “good” realm of modern, multicultural societies and further away from the days of yore when the divisions between Estonians and Russophones were dominant. However, as the next sections will demonstrate, the students’ actions, and even their words, contradict their initial avowal of multicultural attitudes. These frequent and sundry contradictions corroborate Leonard’s (2006; 2010) observations that the complexity of youth geographies in divided societies stem largely from young people’s tendencies to both reproduce the prejudices of their parents and develop their own ways of knowing the world that are separate from that of adults at the same time.

Multiculturalism framed as “Tolerance”

The generational divide that the students perceive is framed by Estonia’s re-entry into the Western “club” of liberal democratic nation-states, demonstrated most notably by its membership in the European Union. Estonia’s place in the club of Western liberal democracies is cited as proof by the student respondents that their generation is living in a “different” more “tolerant” and “multicultural” world that that of their parents and grandparents. “Their” Estonia is one that is already exhibiting more tolerance than their parents’ Estonia, and multicultural values of Western liberalism will provide a sturdy foundation for the new,
improved Estonia that their generation is building. In focus groups, Estonian and
Russophone students explicitly espouse the values and ideas that Western
liberal democracies are built on, which, I argue, is indicative of the pervasiveness
of liberal multicultural paradigm in Estonian society:

Pushkin Boy 3: I think that in the future when you speak
Russian, this won’t draw any special attention because this is the
European way of treating different nationalities, and Estonia is
getting—trying to get [become] more and more of a European
country. [emphasis added]

Tammsaare Girl 2: How to solve the problems [between Estonians
and Russophones], like, in geography we talk about that.
Interviewer: And do you think there’s anything you can do, or that
people can do, to solve the conflict?
Tammsaare Girl 3: Maybe be open-minded, and accept other
people...
Tammsaare Girl 1: Be tolerant.
Tammsaare Girl 3: Tolerance.

The predominant belief in the students’ narratives about the divide in Estonian
society, how it should be handled, and how it will be handled in the future is that
tolerance of difference is a cure-all. The liberal values of acceptance of diversity
and respect of difference has made its way into the students’ conceptualizations
of a good, stable society.

But the cracks in the multicultural foundations of the students’ narratives
are revealed as the focus group discussions progress—or fail to progress—into
how tolerance is or should be performed. The true keyword quality of the
multiculturalist vocabulary is exposed when the students immediately contradict
themselves with regards to advocating tolerance. For instance, being “tolerant”
and open-minded are the go-to fixes for the conflict between Estonians and
Russophones. But it’s quickly revealed that, from the perspective of the Estonian student respondents, the onus is on the Russophones to facilitate integration. What the Estonian students, by and large, characterize as multicultural integration is actually an assimilatory demand placed on the Russophones. The platform of tolerance is laid upon a foundation of the Estonian language; tolerance can only be achieved after a smoothing out of cultural difference.

Russophone students attempt to paint Estonian society—within the younger generations—as already tolerant and accepting. There are assertions that there is “no discrimination” between young Estonians and Russophones (Pushkin Boy 5, Pushkin Boy 6, and Pushkin Boy 7), and that when they do their part to respect the Estonian language and culture, their culture and language receive respect in return. But these assertions are countered within minutes with stories about how their attempts to tolerate Estonian culture are rejected by Estonians, (e.g. when Russophones try to speak Estonian the Estonians “just laugh about our accents”). Even in describing how Estonian and Russophone young people get along, there are numerous examples put forth by the Russophone students about how they are more tolerant, more accepting, and more “forward-looking” than their Estonian peers—which in itself speaks to persistent practices of Othering. The Estonian young people, the Russophone students claim, call on the Soviet past to discriminate against Russophones. According to Pushkin Girl 1, “all my [Estonian] friends, for example, they said ‘I don’t know why I hate Russians, but it comes with my family…and now I think that too.’ But they don’t understand why.” Aside from the incongruent
characterization of people who “hate Russians” as her “friends,” Pushkin Girl 1’s portrayal of Estonian young people as less tolerant is illustrative of the Russophone student population in this study.

Some student respondents express bewilderment at how they are supposed to interact meaningfully with the Other group when there are significant obstacles to doing so in Estonian society. For instance, Koidula Girl 3 describes a summer camp\(^5\) that was designed to give Russophone and Estonian students a chance to connect with each other:

Koidula Girl 3: I've been to youth camps, and there was like half Estonians and half Russians. But actually, it was meant to make us come together and to work together and communicate with each other more. But as I was there, still, just Russians were just with Russians, and Estonians were just with Estonians. Although we had mixed groups and so forth, you still didn’t really like, talk to them.

These summer programs, many of which are coordinated by the quasi-governmental Estonian Integration and Migration Foundation (MEIS), are an attempt to foster meaningful communication between young people of different backgrounds as part of the Estonian government’s larger, ongoing “Integration Programs” detailed in chapter one. Judging from Koidula Girl 3’s experience at youth camps, the inherent ambiguity of the ideas of multiculturalism engenders anemic attempts by the government to implement them in society. In the absence of any firm conviction from the youth camp organizers about how the coexistence of Estonian and Russophone identities should be handled, the socio-spatial

\(^5\) The belief amongst policy makers that simply putting young people together in the same setting will break down barriers has been observed in other divided societies, such as Northern Ireland (Leonard 2010) and Lebanon (Staeheli and Nagel 2013).
divisions present in everyday Tallinn society are simply reproduced in the microcosm of the youth camp setting, further obscuring the path to achieving meaningful inter-cultural dialogue from the youths (if such a path even exists).

The socio-spatial division of Estonians and Russophones throughout the Estonian nation-state complicates matters for the students as well. As noted previously, Harju County (Tallinn) is the only county in Estonia with a relatively equal number of both Estonians and Russophones. The rest of the country’s demographic makeup is very homogenous, with the other 15 counties either 90+ percent Estonian or Russophone. O-Koidula Girl 5 notes that this areal division is a barrier to real integration:

I have talked to people, both Russian and Estonian. Russians want to communicate and contact with Estonians more. But in their areas there is just no possibilities. They don’t have enough Estonians. And if you don’t have enough people then how can you practice your language [skills]? How can you learn the culture if you are surrounded by people like you? And at the same time people from the islands, they’re mostly Estonians, and they want to speak with Russians, but on the islands there are no Russians.

O-Koidula Girl 5 is touching upon a larger structural deficiency within the policy framework of multiculturalism — how will the neatly packaged ideas of respecting and accepting cultural difference play out in the real world, where the everyday geographies reflect socio-spatial divisions along ethnolinguistic lines? The effects of such geographies are not lost on the students who participated in this study. Multicultural activity and real integration is not a reality for them because even in Tallinn, a city with a fairly equally mixed population, the spaces of the two groups are mutually exclusive, preventing meaningful exchanges with young people
different than they are. Moreover, as Koidula Girl 3’s experience with the youth

camp suggests, putting young people together in an attempt to overcome the

socio-spatial divisions is no guarantee of meaningful interaction either. The

students’ responses suggest that it can be argued that the socio-spatial division

is both a cause and a symptom of the politics of identity in Tallinn.

Given cursory instructions to espouse the Western ideals of equality and

acceptance but no mechanism to implement them, the students in this study are

left to muddle through the particularities that abut such universalisms,

contradicting and confusing themselves along the way. The outcome of this

chaotic interaction of insufficiently articulated multiculturalist values and strong

ethnolinguistic identities is a manifestation of what Wendy Brown calls

“depoliticized tolerance” (W. Brown 2008, 13). Tolerance in Western liberal

societies, Brown argues, is not the wholehearted universal acceptance of all

cultures and groups, but instead is an identity-producing process that marks out

the subjects of tolerance as “inferior, deviant, or marginal vis-à-vis those

practicing tolerance.” Tolerance becomes “depoliticized” when inferiority or

inequality is “constructed as either personal and individual in origin, or otherwise

natural, religious, or cultural and therefore profoundly antithetical to claims for

equality” (Gill, Johnstone, and Williams 2012, 514). Tolerating difference, then,

becomes “not simply the withholding of speech or action” against things that are

distasteful or deviant, but also “the enactment of social, political, religious, and

cultural norms” (W. Brown 2008, 13).
Striations of Belonging: Framing the Particular as Universal

The student participants acknowledge the conflict in Estonian society, the need to eradicate it, and the multiple barriers to its resolution. Their oft-conflicting comments and conversations demonstrate the inadequacy of the liberal discourses of multiculturalism that they encounter at school, at home, and in everyday urban spaces. That multiculturalism is inherently problematic because it requires the consideration of equality and cultural difference is exemplified by the students’ articulations of highly particular conceptualizations of the ostensibly universal space of Estonian citizenship.

Because the cultural norms of the dominant (Estonian) group are enacted as the standard for the ideal universal citizen (Laclau 1992; Young 1989), the students are operating within an Estonian dominated framework that is portrayed as universal. This allows the Estonian students to “operate from a conceit of neutrality” (W. Brown 2008, 7) and forces the Russophone students to appeal to universalisms to claim their rights to perform their particular identities while maintaining equal status in society. The remainder of the chapter explores the student participants’ ideas and opinions on tolerance, acceptance, and belonging which they fold into their arguments regarding the definition, discussion, and performance of citizenship. The students’ engagements with these three issues demonstrate how particularisms pervade the “universal” space of citizenship.
Depoliticized Tolerance in Action: Tolerable vs. Intolerable Behavior

Both Russophone and Estonian students invoked the concept of tolerance in describing their interactions with the Other. The students contend with tolerance in terms of identity production and what cultural norms and values are enacted, which is symptomatic “depoliticized tolerance”. The depoliticization of tolerance involves “construing inequality, subordination, marginalization, and social conflict” as “natural, religious, or cultural” phenomena rather than as the historical results of power politics (W. Brown 2008, 15–6). Construing difference as innate to an individual or group “position[s] the tolerator as a morally superior individual” (Gill, Johnstone, and Williams 2012, 514; Dobbernack and Modood 2011; W. Brown 2008). Unsurprisingly, the Estonian and Russophone students employ this depoliticized tolerance in quite different manners. The crucial element here is that there are fundamental disagreements between Estonian and Russophone students about what needs to be tolerated and how multicultural discourses are interpreted.

For the Estonian students, as part of the titular majority, the Russophones are the subjects in need of toleration. In the Estonian students’ narratives, discourses of multiculturalism and tolerance become an “impartial practice” when in fact the act of tolerance is shot through with power politics that marginalize Russophone practices and culture. The Estonian students tend to legitimize the Estonian nation-building project by invoking the Soviet era when the Estonians and their culture were suppressed in favor of Sovietization and Russification. By couching protection of Estonian language as a move to counteract authoritarian
Sovietization policies, these students are mimicking a “decolonization” discourse present at the state level in Estonia (Hughes 2005, 748–9). Any effort on the part of Russophones to detract from or not fully support the Estonian efforts to reestablish their national culture is marked as a disloyalty that is intolerant of the Estonian right to “preserve” their culture, and therefore will not be tolerated. Some of the Estonian students describe what type of behavior amongst Russophones qualifies for tolerance:

Koidula Girl 2: For me, it depends, for a Russian who is living here, on their attitude. Because when they are “yeah, we want to rule you” in the same manner as the Russian Federation, then I don’t like them. But if they’re like, “Ok, we’re living here, and we’re trying to learn” and be more open to our society and community, then I am ok with it.

Tammsaare Girl 1: I think it’s the education thing—that Russians should learn Estonian language… it’s a big part of [integration], because then we communicate more and understand each other more.

Koidula Girl 4: Russian people who are more or less Estonian also, I don’t really care about [their Russianness].

To qualify for tolerance, Russophones have to be open to Estonian society and community. Otherwise, they are classified, as Koidula Girl 1 puts it, as people who “don’t respect that Estonia exists,” i.e. “intolerant” people that do not belong in the “tolerant” liberal democratic society that is the Republic of Estonia. Again, the Estonian students’ conversations showcase the convoluted interactions between the standard of equality, what person qualifies for that equality, and what identity belongs in Estonia.
Two common themes running through the Estonian students’ statements are that tolerance is deeply valued by free, democratic societies and that the people who qualify for tolerance are those who “respect” Estonianness. Importantly, these students also believe that the Russophone Other that “disrespects” Estonianness by retaining too much Russianness is in fact being intolerant of the mainstream values, and therefore does not belong in the tolerant, liberal democratic space of Estonia or qualify for tolerance from “true” Estonian citizens.

The Russophone students invoke tolerance—or access to it—as a way of demanding their equal rights as citizens. The overwhelming irony is that, as Laclau (1992, 89) noted, minority groups who are asserting their right to both equality in a nation-state and the right to maintain their group identity must make their demands in terms of the “universal principles that the minority shares with the rest of the community.” Simply put, the Russophone students demand their rights both to complete access to the space of rights in Estonia and retention of their minority identity by appealing to the universal principles that the dominant Estonian culture defines.

Most often the Russophone students speak in broad terms about what should be tolerated. But many of them are open to accepting Estonian cultural norms, not because they have a desire to abandon their Russophone heritage, but because it is seen as the pathway to being tolerated in return. Here again we see a shift in the invocation of tolerance that depends upon positionality within the nation-state. The minority group is apparently adhering to the dominant
group’s definition of tolerance because it is a value of wider society that will level
the playing field for their group. However, what is actually happening is that they
are acquiescing to the demands of the Estonian nation-building project which are
framed in terms of “respecting” Estonian culture. Take the following exchange
between students from Pushkin School:

Pushkin Boy 2: A lot of people just see your surname and they
make a decision about you. But lately, I feel that there is more
tolerance in society. Knowledge is taken into consideration, not only
[your] language. So I think that you should respect the culture of
Estonians and the local culture, and then we will be respected also.
Interviewer: And then you will be respected in return?
Pushkin Boy 2: Yes.
Pushkin Boy 3: I think this problem [intolerance] is being
solved…of course it’s important to learn the state language and to
respect the laws of the constitution and the traditions of the country,
and of course tolerance is important.

This exchange is illustrative of a larger assumption amongst many of the
Russophone students. They have the right to their own culture, but in order to
have that right respected by Estonians, they must reach out and make an effort
to learn about the Estonian nation. A good citizen, according to Pushkin Boy 7, is
“the one who treats other citizens equally. So we are one—all of the citizens, we
are equal.”

At the same time that the Russophone students are calling on the idea of
performing tolerance as a means to receive toleration, they are also leveraging
what they perceive as lack of tolerance on the part of the Estonians to accuse
them of not abiding by the universal principles that unite everyone in Estonia.
Here we see the history of discrimination and oppression in Estonia brought into
play again, except the Russophone students describe discrimination in the post-
Soviet (rather than Soviet) era that has been directed at them by Estonians. Several students share the plight of their Russophone grandparents and parents in order to establish a pattern of Estonian discrimination, and then follow up with stories of their own experiences of it, to paint a comprehensive picture of their exclusion from the equality that they are entitled to by law. Tolstoy Girl 3 tells how “Estonians are offended when they hear the Russian language” and they “hang up the phone” on her when they hear it; Pushkin Boy 2 describes how his mother “was on maternity leave, she went to the state department for the unemployed, and she was treated very badly there. They didn’t respect her”; Pushkin Girl 1 cites the fact that young Estonians parrot the anti-Russian feelings of their families even though they “don’t understand why” and “they can’t explain it.”

The result of this complicated web of asserting their right to retain Russophone heritage while at the same time conforming to Estonianness is that there is no set pattern of Russophone student attitudes towards performing their citizenship. Their particular experiences lead them to different conclusions about how to contend with being a Russophone in Estonia, and more often than not their statements reveal internal contradictions.

For instance, Pushkin Boy 6 claims that he “doesn’t pay attention to such minor things” as when he is discriminated against and that young people should “look to the future” instead of focusing on identity, but then also laments that “a Russian native can’t find a place in the Estonian community.” Tolstoy Girl 3 states that she “loves this country” because she was born in Estonia, but later
says she only has the “feeling of attachment with my family and relatives, and if I could take them all and leave from here it would be great.” Tolstoy Boy 1 draws on other multicultural nation-states to question the norms of tolerance in Estonia, arguing that “in Sweden, they have the second state language as Finnish. Still there are not so many Finnish people living there, [but] they [the Swedes] learn Finnish. And I don’t understand why we are forced to learn Estonian”.

The swirling vortex of invocations, applications, and qualifications of tolerance that are revealed in the focus groups with the Russophone students speak to the contestedness of the multicultural paradigm. The considerations that these young people making in defining membership in the Estonian community demonstrate that “tolerance” is central to this multiculturalist framework. The student respondents assert and act upon conflicting interpretations of tolerance, including what it means to be tolerant and also who is the subject/object of tolerance. Legal citizenship is not a guarantor of full access to participation in society or acceptance (or tolerance) in Estonian society. Rather, full access to the space of rights is predicated upon performance of a national identity—Estonianness—that is presented as “common to citizens” but that in reality is wholly within the bounds of the Estonian nation-building project. What can be argued, then, is that multiculturalism does not actually present a viable alternative to assimilatory nationalisms. Multiculturalism simply complicates the politics of belonging by adding another layer of political discourse about who belongs and on what terms.
Conclusions

This chapter on the conceptualizations of citizenship amongst young people in Tallinn highlights the tensions inherent to identity and belonging in a national community—tensions that multiply when several different citizenship ideals and discourses coexist alongside one another. By addressing themes common to all of the student focus groups this analysis exposes the points at which competing discourses of national identity, multiculturalism, and belonging mediate the students’ negotiations of citizenship. The analysis shows that for this generation of wholly post-Soviet young people, historical inter-ethnic tensions in Estonia abut Western liberal democratic standards of multiculturalism and form a contentious environment in which they have to confront notions of belonging exclusion in Estonian society. Informed by identity politics, nationalist and multicultural discourses in everyday spaces, Soviet and post-Soviet history, stereotypes, and personal experiences with the Other, the students’ conceptualizations of citizenship are particular, often contradictory, and in continuous flux.

All of the student participants contend with notions of citizenship from a platform of Estonian nation-building processes. As part of the titular majority, the Estonian students tend to define the parameters of citizenship on identity markers particular to ethnic Estonians that have been naturalized as traits common to all ‘real’ Estonians, allowing them to speak in “universal” terms while mediating difference. The Russophone students negotiate their Other status by
asserting sameness—via their equal status as citizens—in order to maintain their difference.

Although much of the student narratives on belonging reflect adult discourses and can be separated along ethnolinguistic identity lines, the young people are neither mirrors of their adult counterparts nor consigned to groupthink. The discourses that they encounter in the spaces of their schools are influential parts of how they conceptualize citizenship and identity, but that influence is situated within the wider contexts of the students’ everyday personal geographies. Their acceptance or rejection of the terms of belonging in Estonia is mediated by their personal experiences and negotiations of all of their everyday spaces rather than one or two particular spaces. A close analysis of the focus group conversations reveals that these young people are active agents in defining and performing their citizenships at the national level. The students’ abilities to contend with belonging and community membership on their own terms are also evident as they negotiate citizenship at other-than-national levels. The following chapters discuss how students’ negotiate citizenship in everyday urban spaces and in the supranational space of Europe.
Chapter 5

Negotiating Citizenship and Belonging in Everyday Spaces

The previous chapter elaborated on the varying discourses of citizenship and identity that this study’s student participants contend with and deploy in their narratives of belonging in Estonian society. Recent scholarship illustrates that contemporary citizenship is mediated by diverse discourses that exist in multiple spaces and that are formulated in different political realms (Secor 2007; Ehrkamp and Leitner 2003; Nagel and Staeheli 2004). Young people, especially those in divided societies, contend with differentiated discourses of belonging and community membership that coexist in their everyday spaces (Skelton 2010; Leonard 2010; Cairns 2008). These students actively conceptualize, negotiate, and contest citizenship and identity as they encounter varied discourses of belonging and citizenship in the socially divided spaces of Tallinn.

Young people’s understandings of citizenship and belonging, then, must be considered as active processes that are continually being produced and reproduced by their actions and reactions in their everyday lives (Sarah L. Holloway et al. 2010; Staeheli 2008). The student participants’ narratives reflect the ways an individual moves through and within certain everyday spaces.
such as spaces of language, memory, and the urban landscape. This chapter builds on this argument, suggesting that the young people in this study encounter and participate in spatial strategies of citizenship, which can be understood as “process[es] that fix identities, delineate boundaries, and discipline the meanings and practices of social space” (Secor 2004, 353). The socio-spatial division of Tallinn and Estonian society at large continues to play a central role in these students’ understandings, negotiations, and contestations of citizenship and identity. Although the students acknowledge discourses of multiculturalism and efforts to integrate the Estonian and Russophone communities, their personal geographies are still organized through ethnolinguistic, sociocultural, and territorial boundaries with varying degrees of permeability. The analysis in this chapter focuses on the ways that students’ operate within and through these bounded spaces and use and invoke space as a strategy for delineating the parameters of citizenship and belonging in Tallinn.

This chapter uses data collected in focus groups with the student study participation to engage with the students’ narratives of how they describe movement within and through certain everyday spaces as indicators of identity and belonging. In this chapter, when general patterns appear between students in schools of the same language medium the student participants’ responses are identified as being from “Estonian-medium school students” or “Russian-medium school students.” However, when patterns emerge along ethnolinguistic lines rather than school language medium lines, the students’ responses are identified
as being from Estonian heritage, Russophone, or “outlier” students. For example, if an outlier student at Estonian-medium school, such as O-Tammsaare Boy 1, who is Russophone, expresses opinions that are similar to students from a Russian-medium school, the student responses will be noted by ethnolinguistic heritage rather than school language medium in order to highlight that such response patterns appear outside the space of the school.

The previous chapter illustrated that the tensions between the universalisms and particularisms of citizenship are manifested through inconsistencies and slippages in the students’ narratives of belonging and citizenship in Estonia. This chapter extends that point by analyzing the ways that the student participants actively negotiate citizenship and belonging in Tallinn on a day-to-day basis. Drawing out the themes that the students consistently deploy in focus group conversations about negotiating citizenship, the following sections engage with students’ accounts of their movements in and through physical spaces of the city. By examining the ways that students actively negotiate citizenship this chapter expands upon the argument made in the previous chapter that the politics of identity and citizenship in Estonia are complex and dynamic, and that the terms of citizenship and belonging are complicated by the shifting tension between universalistic and particularistic political claims, projects, and identities.

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6 As noted in chapter two, “outlier” students are those four participants whose ethnolinguistic heritage, mother tongue, and school language medium do not neatly overlap into Estonian or Russophone categories.
Language is without a doubt the trait used most often to identify belonging in Estonia. Language has always been at the center of post-Soviet Estonian politics and socio-cultural relationships. Estonia’s constitution, which was written in 1938 and re-instituted in 1992, declares in the preamble that the Estonian state will “…guarantee the preservation of the Estonian nation, language, and culture throughout the ages…” before going on to establish Estonian as the sole national language in Chapter I (Constitution of the Republic of Estonia 1992). Moreover, the naturalization process for adults in Estonia includes an Estonian language exam component. These formalizations of the Estonian language as chief marker of national identity ensured in no uncertain terms that it also served as the chief marker of citizenship.

Government documents, street signs, history textbooks, and most officially sanctioned modes of communication explicitly and implicitly convey that Estonian is the only socially, and often legally, legitimate means of communication in wider society. Although publically funded pre-K, basic, and secondary education in Estonia is offered in Russian to accommodate the large Russophone minority, “the use of Russian is interpreted as a major threat to national identity and as a tool of ‘Russian imperialism’” (Kolossov 2003, 258). As alluded to in the previous chapter, a part of the Estonian government’s “Integration Plan: 2007-2012”, Russian-medium secondary schools are required to teach 60 percent of the curriculum in Estonian (regardless of the quality of
teachers’ and students’ Estonian language skills). Many students’ perspectives on the “60 percent” rule indicate that it actually works to ensure socio-political exclusion by guaranteeing that Russophone students can’t learn effectively, which will be discussed in greater detail in the following sections.

Language in Tallinn, then, must be considered geographically in order to understand how the built environment interacts with discursive practice. The students use language to ascribe identity to people, but also use it to ascribe identity to spaces in the city and, subsequently, the people who inhabit those spaces. In these young people’s narratives of identity and belonging, it is not only whether a language is spoken that is important, but also how the language is spoken about in spatial terms. The students’ descriptions of “Russian speaking” and “Estonian speaking” spaces in Tallinn speak to Kay Anderson’s assertion that discursive practices of cultural norms construct ethnically/racially segregated spaces, which give those norms “a concrete referent in the form of” concentrated linguistic communities physically present in the city (1987, 589). The students organize Tallinn’s districts and places by using language to locate the space of the Other, against which they define themselves. Their narratives imply that in Tallinn, language has become spatialized through the “recursive relationship” between discursive political practices and the “built environment” of the city (Farrar 2000, 5). Tallinn’s spaces of belonging and exclusion are constructed through the spatialization of language identity, resulting in an urban geography coded by language. In this way, the “city explicitly and implicitly reflects and

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7 Although teacher skill is evaluated in an attempt to control quality, the success of such evaluations has been questioned (Toots 2003).
estimates the larger social and political order; in it, a society’s attitudes towards difference are codified.” Estonians’ and Russophones’ political subjectivities, and the political possibilities available to them, are “forged in and through the spaces they inhabit,” and therefore by the space of language.

The student respondents have strong opinions not only about the Estonian language, but also the Russian language. To these young people, the Russian language is just as important as the national language in defining and performing Estonian citizenship. Which language an individual chooses to speak the most often—and their attitude towards that language—will situate him or her in the space of belonging in Estonian society or in the space of the Other.

“It’s Our Country, So Why Don’t You Speak This Language?”

As members of the dominant group, the Estonian heritage students tend to speak as if they have the authority to decide whether someone is “really Estonian” or not. Because the Estonian language is now taught in Russian-medium schools and is required for adults to gain citizenship, the Estonian heritage students have narrowed ascribing full Estonianness down to the Others’ attitudes towards learning Estonian. For instance, the quotes below demonstrate a clear tendency to measure enthusiasm for the universal language of the Estonian citizen:

Koidula Girl 2: I don’t like the attitude that they [Russophones] have, “No, we don’t want to learn Estonian.” But those people of Russia, Russian people who come here and try to learn, and at least say some words in Estonian, that’s very welcoming and we are very open to it.
Koidula Girl 4: If the person actually wants to be Estonian, then he studies the language, he accepts the rules or whatever—but a lot of Russians are like, they don’t want to learn the language…

Tammsaare Girl 1: These Russians who are intelligent and smart and more…open minded, they understand Estonian, mostly.

Tammsaare Girl 2: It’s our country, and you [Russophones] live here, so why don’t you speak this language? I don’t understand that.

Perhaps even more telling about the way that Estonian heritage students conceptualize the “true” Estonian citizen is their characterization of people who speak or have a desire to speak Russian. There is a line that people whose mother tongue is Russian must cross in order to be fully accepted into the Estonian national and civic fold, because their mother tongue is a clear indication that they have to work to become Estonian. Anyone who speaks only Russian, or appears to use Russian as their preferred language even if they have the ability to speak Estonian, is perceived as not legitimately belonging to the Estonian nation-state:

Koidula Boy 1: Fifty percent of Tallinn’s population is non-Estonians, or… they might consider themselves Estonian, but they are speaking Russian.

Tammsaare Girl 1: Why don’t they learn Estonian so they can speak with us? It’s our national language, so the Estonian language is more important than the Russian.

Tammsaare Girl 6: We have many, many Russians who don’t speak Estonian. So that’s why we get really upset, because they live here but they don’t speak a word of Estonian.
Koidula Girl 2: Like, when you say “I’m Estonian” but speak Russian, then we feel like, no you’re not. You should speak Estonian.

Tammsaare Girl 4: It’s not that uncommon that when you go to a store, the cashier speaks to you in Russian. They say *privyet* [informal hello in Russian] and they tell you the sum in Russian numbers. And I’m just—I usually stare at them and say, “in Estonian please.” So then they moan something out—they really don’t know the numbers. And it’s quite difficult for me. It angers me a bit. When you go to a bus driver and you ask, “What is the next station?” they don’t understand. They will talk to you in Russian, and that upsets me because I think that in my own country I should be able to talk to most of the people in my native language—well, the country’s native language.

These comments are indicative of the general feeling of the Estonian focus group participants. Kolossov notes that “social groups tend to define themselves not by reference to their own characteristics, but by exclusion, that is by comparison with ‘strangers’” (2003, 257–8), an idea noted elsewhere (Jenkins 2000; Entrikin 1999). Consequently, what the Estonian heritage students’ comments reveal is that they are contesting the notion that full citizenship is available to individuals who do not fully conform to the key marker of Estonian national identity: the Estonian language.

Tammsaare Girl 4’s anecdote about Russophone shop clerks and bus drivers makes apparent that language spaces overlap and intersect with other everyday urban spaces. With Tammsaare Girl 4’s story, though, it is possible that everyday experiences may be used to reinforce or support preexisting impressions of the Other (I demonstrate in the next section that Russophone students may do this also). I argue this point because of her example of bus
drivers. All Tallinn public transport—trams, buses, and ‘trolls’—have digital signs clearly displayed over the driver’s seat that indicate the route’s next stop—in Estonian only. Because of the presence of these signs it is unlikely, based on my own personal experience navigating the city’s public transport routes, that any person would need to ask the driver what the next stop is. Although I don’t doubt that Tammsaare Girl 4 actually had this experience on a bus, I find it unlikely that she was expecting an answer in Estonian from the driver.

The importance of the language issue to how the Estonian heritage students demarcate the bounds of the Estonian citizenry cannot be overstated. The pronoun “our” is used regularly—at least once during each focus group with Estonian heritage students—to describe the Estonian nation-state and the language, and to irrevocably link the two. This demonstrates the extent to which the space of full citizenship and the space of the Estonian nation-building project overlap. The students’ use of “our” is a verbal bordering practice that locates non-Estonian speakers and, as I have demonstrated, those who speak Estonian but prefer to use other languages, on the outside of the “real” Estonians’ space of rights. But because of the students’ concomitant citing of Estonia’s history of oppression—particularly relating to the role cultural suppression via language use—under Soviet rule, the students act justified in asserting Estonianness via laws and norms on “their” language.

The Estonian heritage students acknowledge that the language barrier between themselves and Russophone young people is the greatest obstacle to

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8 A ‘troll’ is a bus that is connected to wire leads above the street.
integration and a lessening of tensions between the two groups. (This, it should be noted, is in contrast to the students’ earlier statements that their generation is more integrated than the older generations, and that the language barrier is “smaller” among young people.) The solutions suggested for the language barrier problem invariably involve Russophone young people learning Estonian rather than Estonian young people learning Russian.

The only specific solution that students suggest, (and suggest multiple times), is the state-level solution of phasing-out the dual language school system. Many Estonian heritage students do not think that this poses a threat to Russophone language rights because, as Tammsaare Girl 2 points out, “they can speak Russian at home, nobody takes that away from them.” Her relegation of the deviant behavior—in this case, spoken Russian—to the home is an attempt to confine that which threatens “the orderly functioning of civil society” to the private sphere (Marston 1990, 453). In this student’s statement, culture—or at least minority culture—becomes a denizen of the private sphere rather than the public sphere. The public sphere is very much based upon the dominant cultural norms, which have been universalized as the “common concerns” of the people (Fraser 1995, 287). Because language skills allow individuals to enter the public sphere and benefit from civil, social, and political rights, they are also often crucial to obtaining full citizenship (Ehrkamp and Leitner 2003). By advocating for an Estonian-medium only school system, the Estonian heritage students are

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9 Estonian-medium school students are required to begin learning Russian as their third language in or around the fifth grade. Tellingly, however, when Koidula Boy 1 pointed out that learning Russian is compulsory for them, Koidula Girl 3 responded, “Yeah, but its not that compulsory.”
implying that full citizenship can only be obtained on the terms of Estonian ethnolinguistic norms and values.

For the Estonian heritage students, it is clear that language is one of the most, if not single most, important crucial identity marker for an Estonian citizen. The majority of these students feel that associating access to substantive citizenship with Estonian language skills is key to asserting and preserving Estonia’s status both as a sovereign state and as a free nation of people. Russophones, then, are perceived as descendants of Soviet interlopers whose Otherness is proven by their mother tongue, the language of Russian imperialism, and their lack of Estonian skills. The assumption on the part of Estonian heritage students is, broadly, that the Estonian nation-state’s right to establish the terms of universal citizenship is closely tied to their right to self-determination and freedom from Soviet oppression.

Language and Class Status within the Politics of Identity

The Russophone student participants have much more complex engagements with the Estonian and Russian languages and these languages’ relationship to substantive citizenship that includes meaningful access to rights. The focus groups with Russophone students reveal yet again the paradoxical process of harnessing the universal characteristics of the Estonian citizen (which almost always overlap with the Estonian nation’s ethnolinguistic markers) in order to assert their rights to be a Russophone with access to full citizenship in Estonian society.
The general patterns of the Russophone students’ attitudes towards the Estonian language suggest that they have rather calmly accepted, or are calmly resigned to, the fact that it is a necessary part of life for claiming the political, social, and civil rights available to Estonian citizens. But the statements from the focus groups reveal that these students’ multiple and varied approaches to negotiating citizenship and language stem largely from the diverse personal experiences they have had with Estonian speakers and in their everyday spaces. Many of them speak about their Estonian language skills in utilitarian terms—a means to an end of legal citizenship, secondary school graduation, or basic communication with Estonians in everyday contexts. While this utilitarian view of the Estonian language doesn't imply enthusiastic assimilation into the Estonian culture, it signals the success of Estonian nationalist policies in restricting access to citizenship rights to individuals that acquiesce to the dominant Estonian culture.

An observable pattern in the Russophone students’ narratives regarding the role of language in negotiating belonging in Estonian society is an association between class status and experiences with the Other group. One example of this class based rhetoric is the Russophone students' distinction between “bad Russians” and “good Russians” in their own ethnolinguistic community. The “good” Russians are those who make an attempt to integrate into Estonian society, particularly through learning the language. “Bad” Russians are characterized by an unwillingness to integrate (Pushkin Boy 4), low levels of education (Pushkin Boy 2), and weak civic values such as drunkenness and drug
dealing (Tolstoy Girl 3, Tolstoy Girl 2). In particular the students from Pushkin School, known for being a ‘progressive’ institution with regards to the integration process, have constructed borders within their own community based on assimilatory practices:

Pushkin Boy 4: And also there are a lot of Russians who don’t want to integrate, and they don’t want to know anything… they are very aggressive.
Interviewer: Aggressive towards Estonians?
Pushkin Boy 4: Yes.
Pushkin Boy 7: Some Russians are just thinking that they are living in the USSR and they encapsulate themselves in this [Russian] society, and they don’t understand what’s happened here [in Estonia].

Pushkin Boy 2: I think that a lot of people who are thinking a lot about [the tension between Russians and Estonians] are Russians. They have basic education, and maybe they are working as welders. But those who are better educated, they don’t treat the nationality question the same way.

When these students speak about integration into Estonian society it is commonly understood that the most important act is learning the Estonian language. Learning Estonian, according to the students quoted above, is associated with higher levels of education, a willingness to meet the Estonians half way in the integration process, and indicative of higher class Russophones. But the fact that they are basing the “good” or “bad” judgment on Estonian socio-cultural norms evinces the pervasiveness of Estonian nation-building project in these students’ conceptualizations of citizenship.

The pattern of class-based rhetoric in discussions of language, identity, and belonging also appears in Russophone students' distinction between different classes in the Estonian community. Estonians that demonstrate
willingness to communicate with Russophones in Russian, or make a compromise between Russian and Estonian, are viewed favorably as a class that is forward-looking and progressive and distinct from the elitist Estonian nationalist class that is patently anti-Russophone. Pushkin Boy 7, for instance, makes a distinction between Estonians and their attitudes towards Russophones:

I think that there are two groups of Estonians: those who are belonging to richer classes, they don’t want to communicate with Russians. They even joke about it. But also there is another group of Estonians who really don’t mind and they communicate with Russians.

Several other Russophone students echo the sentiment of Pushkin Boy 7’s comments, implying that they associate class status and language skills with the politics of identity in Estonian society. The Russophone students tend to couch all individuals who are interested in bridging the ethnolinguistic gap in similar terms regardless of ethnolinguistic heritage, perhaps unconsciously creating a new class status shared between Estonians and Russophones that will smooth the waters for integration and cross-cultural communication. For Pushkin Boy 3 this shared class status that connects progressively minded individuals exists at the supranational level instead of at the national level:

I know one, my friend, an Estonian, who learns Russian. And it may feel strange, but it is, it’s happening. I think that in the future when you speak Russian, this won’t draw any special attention because this is the European way of treating different nationalities, and Estonia is trying to get [become] more and more of a European country.

There is a general pattern, then, amongst Russophone students’ perceptions of the role that language skills play in belonging and identity in
Estonia. But there are divergent comments amongst Russophone students, reflecting varying and inconsistent experiences. This shows that young people’s experiences are not homogenous, but rather reflect different class positions and outlooks. This is apparent in the following discussion between students:

Tolstoy Girl 3: Estonians often are offended when they hear the Russian language, and they don’t want to speak Russian…
Tolstoy Girl 1: I don’t agree. I worked in an Estonian company in the summer. They didn’t speak Russian a lot, and also I don’t have a very good knowledge of Estonian. But still, we tried to make a compromise. They tried to speak Russian and I also tried to speak Estonian as much as I could.
Tolstoy Girl 3: I don’t agree though. I think that when I start speaking Russian, when I call someone, and Estonians hear my Russian, they don’t want to talk to me. They even hang up the phone.
Tolstoy Boy 1: I agree [with Tolstoy Girl 3]. That happens.
Tolstoy Girl 1: Still, it all depends on the person.

Tolstoy Girl 1 is reluctant to subsume her conclusions about Estonians under her classmates’ opinions, which dismantles any presupposition that young people uniformly contest and negotiate belonging because they are in the same ethnolinguistic group, attend the same school, and have similar positionalities within Estonian society. Instead it suggests that they are likely to have different strategies for negotiating these identities and power relationships. The differing opinions in this conversation are also indicative of the unevenness of feelings of belonging in the Russophone community. For instance, although Tolstoy Girl 1 expresses feelings of socio-political alienation later in the conversation, her unwillingness to categorize all Estonians as hostile to the Russian language in the above conversation indicates that the parameters of belonging and exclusion (and by extension citizenship) are not clear-cut. Even Tolstoy Girl 3, who
describes Estonians as “offended” by the Russian language, later mentions that it is important to learn Estonian because it facilitates communication with Estonian people and gives Russophones an advantage in operating in Estonian society, further suggesting that young people’s negotiations of belonging a knotty and dynamic process.

*Language Norms and Feelings of Alienation Amongst Russophone Students*

The Russophone students’ narratives reflect perceptions of class status when it comes to language as a tool for communicating and integrating. But the focus group conversations also reveal that some students view the enforced hegemony of the Estonian language as unnecessary at best, and little more than cultural barbarism at worst. During the focus groups, these students are inconsistent in their assessments of the value of learning the Estonian language. For instance, in one of the focus groups I ask Pushkin Boy 5 whether he thinks that speaking Estonian is important for his future of living in Estonia, and he responds that “I think its more important for Estonians, not for us. It’s important for them that we must know their language.” But later in the conversation when I ask him if he felt Estonian at all, he answers, “Yes, because I can clearly speak the Estonian language. I can use it to communicate with other Estonians.” There’s an internal struggle taking place about exactly which side of the Estonian/Russophone “fence” he belongs on, and the pivot point for this struggle is language.
The Russophone students who are more militant regarding the hegemony of Estonian bring geographic elements into the discussion. For instance, two boys deploy the social geographies of Estonia and their personal lives in their resistance to accede to Estonian cultural-linguistic norms. Tolstoy Boy 1 and Tolstoy Boy 2 had the following conversation about mandatory Estonian in Russian-medium schools:

Tolstoy Boy 2: I think that it’s very important to think differently about the problem [of language medium in schools], because even though some children start to learn Estonian since their young age, they still don’t communicate with Estonians. They don’t speak to them. They go to work and they still speak Russian with their colleagues. It is better to enforce the second state language as Russian.

Tolstoy Boy 1: I agree. I still don’t understand why we have to do that [learn Estonian]. For example, in Sweden, they have the second state language as Finnish. Still, there aren’t many Finnish people living there. But they [the Finns] are left calm—they [the Swedes] learn Finnish. And I don’t understand why we are forced to learn Estonian.

The first geographic element introduced in this conversation is the reality of heavy socio-spatial division between Estonians and Russophones, which exists both at the urban level in Tallinn and the national level in Estonia as a whole. As discussed in chapter one, the social geography of Estonia is clearly demarcated between the two groups, with the vast majority of Russophones living in the northeastern county of Ida-Virumaa. The only other sizeable group of Russophones lives in Tallinn, which itself is remarkably spatially divided. Every single student participant in this study identified the city district of Lasnamäe as “where the Russians live,” with several also noting that districts of Kopli and Õismae are heavily populated with Russophones. Both Russian-medium schools
that participated in this project are located in Lasnamäe, and 13 of 15 Russophone student participants (as well as O-Koidula Girl 5, O-Pushkin Boy 1, an O-Pushkin Girl 2) live in Lasnamäe. None of the Estonian student participants live in the districts of Lasnamäe, Kopli, or Õismae.

From what I observed during my time in the various districts of Tallinn, the point that Tolstoy Boy 2 makes about Russophones communicating and living in almost entirely Russian language spaces is not hyperbole. There are Russian language newspapers, TV stations, radio stations, and bookstores available for the Russophone population of Tallinn. When I was in the Lasnamäe district, I quickly learned to initiate conversations in what little Russian I knew rather than Estonian, because oftentimes the bus drivers and shop clerks would either tell me in Estonian that they did not speak Estonian well, or answer immediately in Russian. All of this is to say that Tolstoy Boy 2’s point that a Russophone doesn’t necessarily have a large need for Estonian in everyday life is legitimate, concurrent with previous studies of Estonia’s language geographies (Pavlenko 2008; Laitin 1998). With this assertion, Tolstoy Boy 2 is illustrating the complex web of urban geographies, language geographies, socio-spatial divisions, and identity politics that all young people, not just Russophones, are required to negotiate on a daily basis as they contest and contend with citizenship in their country.

The second geographic element in their conversation is the inclusion of another nation-state, in this case Sweden, into the debate. Tolstoy Boy 1 and

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10 Boy 1 holds Russian Federation citizenship. He is one of only two of the 29 student participants that do not hold Estonian citizenship. This indicates that, although his legal and
Tolstoy Boy 2 both agree that Russian should be made the second national language. The style of Tolstoy Boy 1’s argument for Russian as the second national language of Estonia is compelling. Although his goal is to ensure rights for his minority group, he is arguing for that goal by putting the Russophone minority on even footing with the Estonian majority. He is arguing for the right to be different from the Estonian majority by mobilizing sameness with them—in this case, on equal rights to cultural-linguistic expression. Furthermore, he deputizes the universality embedded in multicultural discourse into his argument by citing Sweden’s “equal treatment” of the Finnish minority. He also underscores his argument by emphasizing that the Russophone minority in Estonia is even more entitled to use their language than the Finnish minority in Sweden is to use Finnish because the Russophone minority in Estonia is substantial, compared to the relatively few Finns in Sweden. Essentially, he is constructing a hierarchy of entitlement to minority rights even while operating from the base of the universality of rights. He is distinguishing between minority groups who are, ostensibly, not only equal to majority groups, but also equal to each other.

The Russophone student participants’ responses further underline language’s role as the chief identity marker that mediates access to the space of substantive and formal citizenship in Estonia. While there are a variety of attitudes towards the hegemony of the Estonian language amongst the Russophone student participants, their negotiating stances all emanate from their political citizenship is granted by the Russian Federation, his residence in Tallinn ensures that on a day-to-day basis his social, civil, and cultural rights are under the purview of the Republic of Estonia. Although he is not a legal citizen of Estonia, he is forced to negotiate his social and civil citizenship rights on dominant Estonian terms, once again demonstrating the fraught and intertwined nature of universalisms and particularisms in citizenship performances.
positionality of Others within the Estonian nation-state. The tension between the 
Estonian and Russian languages is a microcosm of the larger struggle to set the 
specific terms of who Estonian citizenship is universally available to.

*Minding the Gap in a Divided Society: the Outlier Students*

The centrality of language to the co-constitution of substantive and formal 
Estonian citizenship is further demonstrated by the way it functions in the lives of 
the “outlier” students in the study population. Of the four “outlier” student 
participants, three come from mixed heritage backgrounds, and one is a 
Russophone-heritage student who attends Tammsaare School. For these four 
students, their mother tongues, the language of instruction at their school, and 
their fluency (or lack thereof) in Estonian and Russian has great bearing on how 
they negotiate their own citizenship and also how they conceptualize Estonian 
citizenship on a larger basis.

Although the four “outlier” students listed their national identities as 
Estonian on intake surveys and hold Estonian citizenship, their performances of 
that citizenship differ highly. The variability of their conceptualizations of 
citizenship indicates that for these students, straddling the Estonian and 
Russophone communities produces a highly conflictual existence. I will also 
argue that these students’ varied familial and personal geographies interact with 
their school spaces to produce diverse performances of Estonian citizenship.

Although O-Taamsaare Boy 1 and O-Koidula Girl 5 are both in Estonian-
medium schools, their familial and personal geographies are partially or fully
Russophone language spaces. O-Taamsaare Boy 1 comes from a Russophone household, and O-Koidula Girl 5 comes from a dual language, mixed heritage household. Their narratives reveal that they contest and negotiate their Estonian citizenship quite differently. O-Taamsaare Boy 1 negotiates the conflict he feels between his Russophone heritage and his Estonian citizenship by constantly qualifying his Russophone heritage, disassociating himself from Russophones who are not properly integrating into Estonian society by learning the language and respecting the culture. O-Koidula Girl 5, meanwhile, is less conflicted about associating herself with both the Estonian and Russophone identities, but is very concerned about the level of misunderstanding that takes place between the two groups. She attempts to resolve this by citing examples of Russophones who are eager to learn the Estonian language and Estonians who are eager to learn the Russian language.

It is my argument that the way that these students' Estonian-language education space interacts with their familial geographies accounts for their different methods of negotiating and performing their Estonian citizenship. O-Koidula Girl 5 has an Estonian parent and counts Estonian as one of her mother tongues, which most likely makes her positionality within Koidula School relatively unproblematic. This mother tongue and heritage congruency with her school language medium may be why she is less concerned with affirming her Estonianness and more concerned with reconciling the misunderstandings between her two identity groups.
O-Taamsaare Boy 1, in contrast, has two Russophone parents and learned to speak Estonian in early basic school, which distinguishes him from the majority of his classmates at Tammsaare School. Because he bears some identity markers of the Other group, he concentrates on asserting his Estonianness by uncoupling his Russophone heritage from Russophones who are “disrespecting” their home country by not learning the language. Using these two examples as evidence, I posit that the presence or absence of an Estonian parent and/or the Estonian language in the home influences the ways that these two Estonian-medium school students contest and negotiate their identities and, subsequently, citizenships.

O-Pushkin Boy 1 and O-Pushkin Girl 2 are further examples of how language spaces are central to “outlier” young people’s negotiation and performance of citizenship. Both O-Pushkin Boy 1 and O-Pushkin Girl 2 are mixed-heritage students that attend a Russian-medium school, but their familial and personal geographies complicate the ways that their negotiations of citizenship pivot around language. O-Pushkin Girl 2, for instance, grew up speaking only Russian and admits that she can barely speak Estonian even though she has been studying it in school for years. She laments that she cannot attend university in Estonia because her language skills are not nearly good enough to complete higher education courses in Estonian. Although she considers herself Estonian because she was born in Tallinn and has an Estonian parent, she is conflicted by her inability to speak the national language and the societal exclusion that results from it.
Contrastingly, O-Pushkin Boy 1 comes from a dual language, mixed heritage household and declares that his ability to “speak both languages without an accent” is his ticket to moving easily through Estonian society and being “ok with both nationalities.” However, he makes contradictory statements during the focus group with regard to his apparent comfort with both nationalities. He criticizes Estonians for ridiculing Russophones who speak Estonian with an accent and notes the disadvantages that the Estonian language’s hegemony presents for Russophone Estonian citizens (such as access to jobs and higher education).

Both O-Pushkin Boy 1 and O-Pushkin Girl 2 contend with their Estonian citizenship based largely based on language, but again the varying contours of their familial geographies interact differently with their shared educational space. O-Pushkin Girl 2’s educational and familial spaces are dominated by the Russian language, which has affected her ability to access fully substantive citizenship in Estonia. This, in turn, has resulted in the national language not factoring into her conceptualization of an Estonian citizen—a position that is unique in the entire student participant study population. O-Pushkin Boy 1 shows a certain amount of conflict with regards to the preponderance of Estonian and his Estonian heritage, which he deflects by commenting on the ways that the national language is used as an exclusionary instead of inclusionary tool. His statements, I argue, stem from the unease of having Estonian heritage while moving through largely Russian-speaking spaces.
The unique set of responses from the four “outlier” students with non-uniform ethnolinguistic identities suggests three things. First, the growing number of young people in Estonia whose personal geographies are neither wholly Estonian-speaking nor wholly Russian-speaking spaces will have much more complex contestations and negotiations of identity and citizenship in Estonia due to the long-standing antagonistic relations between the titular majority and Russophone minority. Second, language is not only a central issue in the negotiation of their citizenships, but arguably makes those negotiations more fraught than their peers’ because of their regular movement through both Estonian and Russophone spaces. Last, the highly varied configurations of the “outlier” students’ personal geographies is evidence that it is, and will continue to be, challenging to make generalizations about the attitudes of other young people with similarly complex identities toward and negotiation of citizenship in Estonia.

The analysis of the focus groups with the student study population reflects the central role that language plays in negotiating citizenship and belonging in Estonia. The students often deputize the city’s landscape and topography into their narratives about language use and how it affects belonging and exclusion in Tallinn. This demonstrates that these young people’s citizenships are negotiated within and through multiple spaces, and that the experiences within the various spaces of their everyday geographies interact complexly to inform the ways in which they encounter and navigate the politics of identity in their city. The following section explores the role that the urban
landscape plays in the student respondents’ negotiation of belonging and citizenship in greater detail.

**Urban Landscape, Territory, and Belonging**

The urban landscape of Tallinn is unique among Estonian cities because of its large numbers of both ethnic Estonians and Russophones. Elsewhere in Estonia, cities are 90+ percent comprised of either the titular majority or Russophone minority. Tallinn’s population, by contrast, was 53 percent Estonian and 44 percent Russophone in 2012 (Tallinn City Office 2012). As noted earlier, the urban geography of Tallinn is very clearly divided on ethnolinguistic lines (Figure 5.1), similar to the socio-spatial divisions observed in other contexts (Leonard 2006; Kuusisto-Arponen 2002). The marking of territory in urban spaces can be accomplished through symbols of banal nationalism (Billig 1995) and spatial practices of memorialization (Till 1999; Till 2005; Ehala 2009; Smith and Burch 2012), and also through invisible borders such as language use (Pavlenko 2008) and mental maps (Kuusisto-Arponen 2002).

In divided societies, the struggles over identity and citizenship are often localized when urban spaces become spatialized as different groups lay claim to territory in asserting belonging and performing ethnolinguistic identities (Massey 1995; Mills 2006; Kuusisto-Arponen 2002; Staeheli 2008). Moreover, urban and local boundaries divide not only movement through physical space, but also social, economic, political, and cultural practices (Kuusisto-Arponen 2002; Mills 2005). As such, cities embody citizenship practices and citizenship struggles
In focus groups, my student participants engage frequently with visible and invisible boundaries throughout Tallinn as part of their conceptualization and everyday performance of citizenship. Substantiating the argument that urban places and landscapes are constantly shifting and have different meanings to different groups (Massey 1995; Rodman 1992), the Estonian and Russophone students interpret, appropriate, and navigate Tallinn’s urban spaces on the terms of their own conceptualization of citizenship.

Figure 5.1 Percent Russophone Population—Tallinn Districts. The socio-spatial divisions between Estonians and Russophones are reflected in the ethnolinguistic populations of Tallinn’s districts.
Mental Maps: Ascribing Identities to Tallinn’s Districts

Each focus group with the student participants began with a discussion about Tallinn and the places where they feel most comfortable. The students were given a map of the greater Tallinn area and asked to mark the areas of the city that they feel are distinct from others. By working together to agree upon and specify the city layout, each of the eight focus groups produced material versions of their mental maps, each of which are identical.

Mental maps are a form of mental segregation that, as Kuusisto-Arponen (2002) argues, can be more influential than actual physical lines in divided societies. This is confirmed by the students’ verbal descriptions of the borders that they drew on the maps. The invisible border around the Lasnämae district drew the most discussion in all of the focus groups. Lasnamäe is a district in the eastern part of Tallinn that experienced a housing construction boom during the 1970’s and early 1980’s under the Soviet regime, and as such is the most populated district of Tallinn. Pre-fab concrete block apartment homes were built at a fast rate during the construction boom, which gives the district a very different architectural feel than most of Tallinn. Moreover, the population of Lasnamäe has been overwhelmingly Russophone since the Soviet era and continues to be so today, with 68 percent of the district’s population identified as Russophone in 2012 (Tallinn City Office 2012).

Unsurprisingly, given that both Russian-medium schools that participated in this study are located in Lasnamäe, 13 of the 15 students from the Russian-medium schools hail from this district. Only one of the Estonian-medium school
students, O-Koidula Girl 5 (who is of mixed heritage) lives in Lasnamäe. As such, although all students’ mental maps of the city are similar, the mental images attached to Lasnamäe and its neighborhoods are highly skewed according to their ethnolinguistic group. For instance, compare how a sampling of Estonian and Russophone students descriptions vary:

Tammsaare Girl 4: They have lots of Russians there [in Lasnamägi, a subsdistrict of Lasnamäe], and its really like the Soviet Union, you can feel it everywhere. All the buildings are like nine stories high, and its really gray and so, its not really comfortable to be there. Its really, like… you can feel the Soviet Union there.

Pushkin Boy 7: We feel comfortable everywhere, but [Lasnamäe] is our district, this is our home, and we feel the best there.

Koidula Boy 1: I have really bad feelings about Lasnamäe… Russians, and the overall… it doesn’t look very nice, the region. I like Põhja-Tallinn because, architecturally, its small wooden houses. In this way, its cozy, which couldn’t be said for Lasnamäe, which is just concrete blocks. But one thing is the social… well, these areas— Põhja-Tallinn and Lasnamäe—you have lower social status, I would say, for the region. The people are probably poorer, more crime.

Tolstoy Girl 3: I think that we really like the most the district where we stay and live. And I was born and I’ve lived all my life in Lasnamäe, and I like it the most.

Tammsaare Girl 1: …Lasnamägi—
Tammsaare Girl 2: And Kopli—
Tammsaare Girl 1: Are creepy!
Interviewer: What makes those two places kind of creepy?
Tammsaare Girl 1: In Lasnamäe, there lives so many Russians.

Pushkin Boy 5: There [Lasnamäe] lives most of our friends [sic]. We can say that Lasnamäe district, there lives mostly Russians [sic].
This sample of responses reveals the obvious disconnect between Estonian and Russophone mental images of Lasnamäe district. While it is agreed that Lasnamäe is “where the Russians live,” Estonian heritage students’ unease about Lasnamäe is explicitly connected with the presence of a large Russophone population. The students associate the district with deep feelings of unease, higher crime rates, and architecture of the bygone Soviet era, but more importantly tie each of these things to the Russophone population explicitly. A few Estonian heritage students, as well as outlier student O-Taamsaare Boy 1, went as far as to laughingly label Lasnamäe simply as “Russia” or “USSR.”

Lasnamäe, because of its perceived Soviet-ness, is a “no-go area” for these Estonian heritage students, i.e. mental maps of where the Other is (Kuusisto-Arponen 2002). The images that the Estonian heritage students attach to these no-go areas—such as Soviet style architecture—are negative, which reinforce not only the spatial divisions in the city, but also the sociocultural and political divisions within society. The “Russian people” area of the city is by default associated with the Russian language, the identity marker that Estonian heritage students define as contrary to what an Estonian citizen is. Therefore what we see here is the spatiality of the city acting as a delimiter of the boundaries of citizenship. Because Lasnamäe is where Russophones and the Russian language is located, it is labeled as un-Estonian, and therefore outside the space of full, substantive citizenship. Substantive Estonian citizenship and the urban spaces of Tallinn form and are formed by each other through a process of border drawing and identity-marking.
The Russophone students, and three of the “outlier” students who live in Lasnamäe, clearly have much more positive feelings towards their home district. The two Russophone students who do not live in Lasnamäe\textsuperscript{11} also speak about the district in positive terms because their friends live there. Because these students talk about Lasnamäe in terms of community and belonging their conversations tend to ethnolinguistically homogenize the area (Secor 2004) even though roughly 28 percent of the district’s population is Estonian. These students do not mention crime or dull architecture, but instead talk about the comfort that they feel because they associate it with family, friends, and the majority of their lives.

The similar mental mapping with differing commentary amongst the student study population does not end with Lasnamäe district. Each of the focus groups also mention Kopli, a sub-district of Põhja-Tallinn, and Pirita, a district in northern Tallinn. Kopli, interestingly, is a district that is noted by both the Estonian and Russophone students as an area where drug use, alcohol abuse, and crime are common, and where the majority of the population is Russian. Given the Estonians students’ mental images of Lasnamäe, it is not surprising that they have a very negative mental image of another area with a high Russophone population. Again we see a class distinction in these narratives as the Russophone students distinguish the of Russophones that live in Kopli:

\begin{quote}
Pushkin Boy 2: Kopli is—there are living many Russians, bad Russians. They drink alcohol…
Pushkin Boy 3: And use the drugs.
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{11} Pushkin Boy 4 and Pushkin Boy 7 live in Maardu, a small town 6 miles from Lasnamäe whose population is 70 percent Russophone.
Tolstoy Girl 3: The first district I don’t like is Kopli.
Interviewer: What’s wrong with Kopli?
Tolstoy Girl 3: I distinguish it from the other districts of Tallinn.
Tolstoy Girl 2: It’s one of the oldest districts, and it’s not about
the architecture of something specific about the
district, but about the people who live there.
Tolstoy Girl 3: It’s because there are a lot of alcoholics and
drug dealers, and that’s why it’s not the best district to
live in.
Tolstoy Girl 1: I also don’t like to go to Kopli, and I don’t feel
comfortable there.
Tolstoy Girl 2: I know that in Kopli there are mostly Russians,
there are no Estonians there.

There is a distinction made that the Russophone population in Kopli is deviant.

This legal and social deviance factors into the Russophone student participants’
conceptualization of citizenship because several of them explicitly state that
following the laws and participating in the betterment of the city is the mark of a
good citizen. The Russophone students’ mental images of Kopli are associated
with negative, law-breaking actions such as drug dealing and socially
irresponsible behavior like excessive alcohol consumption. These responses
imply that the wider problem of Estonian and Russophone identity is interpreted
through urban space, and that urban space comes to signify understandings of
belonging and exclusion.

These negative mental images not only sub-divide the Russophone
population in Tallinn, but also identify an Other type of Russophone that lives
outside the bounds of proper citizenship. In this respect, I argue, the Russophone
students’ conceptualization of citizenship is working as what Secor (2004, 354)
calls “a hegemonic strategy” that “defines these groups or localities, to fix the
power differentials between them.” These perceptions of Kopli and the “bad
Russians" that inhabit it demonstrate what Kay Anderson (1987, 584) calls the “remarkable social force and material effect” of social imaginings of urban space. These students’ social imaginings of Kopli illustrate that the interaction between discursive “complexes of meaning” and “specific spatial arrangements” (Farrar 2000, 4–5) not only work to reinforce unequal social relations between ethnolinguistic groups, but also within them. The Russophone population as a whole is most often subject to an Estonian hegemonic strategy. But in this instance the Russophone community is being sub-divided according to an intra-group hegemonic strategy defined by the Russophone student participants. This further illustrates that the contested nature of citizenship and belonging in Estonia is much more complex than a linear discrimination of the Russophone minority by the titular majority. The urban spaces of Tallinn, as with the linguistic spaces of Tallinn, are tools for negotiating and performing citizenship within the Russophone community by excluding those Russophones deemed to be outside the bounds of citizenship.

The other Tallinn district that is frequently mentioned and clearly mentally defined by all of the student focus groups is Pirita. Pirita is located in the northern area of Tallinn and is separated from Lasnamäe by the Pirita River. Although all students have the same mental boundaries for Pirita and speak of it as a safe area, the mental images are again skewed according to ethnolinguistic group.

The Estonian-heritage students, as well as outlier student O-Koidula Girl 5, talk about Pirita in positive terms, such as being “safe” (Koidula Girl 1), and aesthetically pleasing (O-Koidula Girl 5). When the Estonian heritage students’
assertions that the beautiful, safe area of Pirita is filled with Estonians is compared to their mental images of the crime ridden, unsafe, and Russophone populated district of Lasnamäe, it is clear that they are using the “logics of alterity” (Isin 2002, 4) and the “spatialized strategies of differentiation to segregate and distinguish cultural difference within the city” (Secor 2004, 358).

As the Estonian heritage students describe the city of Tallinn as segregated along ethnolinguistic lines the urban geography becomes a tool for marking where the Estonian, legitimate citizens live and where the Other, illegitimate citizens live, thereby reinforcing the socio-spatial boundaries that exclude the unassimilable from the space of substantive citizenship.

Pirita is one of the most prestigious districts of Tallinn, noted for its private houses, beach scenes, and yacht club. It is one of the wealthier districts of Tallinn, a fact that plays into the Russophone students’ mental maps and images of Pirita. These characterizations of a wealthy Pirita are folded into their contestations of belonging and exclusion in society:

O-Pushkin Boy 1: Pirita is a part of the city where usually the richest people of Tallinn live, because there are some private houses, and usually most people who live there are Estonians.

Pushkin Boy 3: This part of Tallinn is—
Pushkin Boy 2: Estonians.
Pushkin Boy 3: There is private houses [sic] here where they live.

Pushkin Boy 5: The place where we live [Lasnamäe], we feel quite comfortable. But in the richest places of Tallinn we can feel a little bit uncomfortable because the atmosphere of the richest places...

Interviewer: There’s an area of the city where rich people live? Where?
The Russophone students’ class-based distinction of Pirita as both wealthy and almost entirely Estonian is a twist on Secor’s (2004) observation that areas described as places of comfort and community become ethnically homogenized. In this particular case, these students are ethnically homogenizing a district that they do not feel comfortable in and feel excluded from due to their Russophone identities (which are associated with lower socio-economic standing, because, according Tolstoy Boy 1’s frank appraisal, “This is not a big secret that Estonians live better than Russians”).

While Pirita is heavily dominated by ethnic Estonians (79 percent of the population) there is still a significant minority of Russophones (18 percent) (Tallinn City Office 2012) that the many of students do not even acknowledge. Their attitudes toward Pirita are directly tied to their impressions of discrepancy in socioeconomic status between Russophones and Estonians. O-Pushkin Boy 1 and Pushkin Boy 2, for instance, connect the contours of the city’s socioeconomic landscape to language skills and education, pointing out that some older Russophones, who never learned Estonian in school, have had considerable trouble adapting to the Estonian language environment since the
early 1990’s. These older Russophones’ lack of Estonian skills puts limitations on what level or style of education they received and, subsequently, what jobs they work in. As manual labor and low skill service jobs (which provide few prospects for career advancement) are less likely to require Estonian language skills, they are often filled by Russophones. Moreover, because there are Russian-language dominated spaces of Tallinn, Russophones without Estonian language skills are able to move through their everyday spaces easily without great need to speak Estonian.

What is revealed in the student participants’ discussions of their mental maps and images of Tallinn is the crucial role that the city’s divided landscape works to reinforce existing striations in access to full rights and equal opportunity. The city’s sociolinguistic and ethnocultural landscapes perpetuate divisions and do not incentivize meaningful contact between Estonians and Russophones. In fact, the Russophone student respondents seem to view “their” spaces as protective, sheltering areas, again suggesting that socio-spatial divisions are both a cause and a symptom of the politics of identity in Tallinn. In this regard, the city and Estonian citizenship are mutually reinforcing processes that draw lines of belonging and exclusion, reify identities, and define the performance of citizenship in social spaces (Secor 2004; Painter and Philo 1995; Painter 2006; Ehrkamp and Leitner 2003).

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12 In an effort to relax citizenship laws because of pressure from Brussels, Estonia has made Estonian-language classes available for free or for very low cost to non-Estonian speakers. However, the financial assistance for language classes has not been a great incentive for older Russophone populations in Estonia to study Estonian. As a result, the number of Russophones without Estonian citizenship remains high in older generations.
Kesklinn: The City Center as a “Neutral” Space

Tallinn’s city center district, Kesklinn, is spoken of and ascribed positive meaning among all of the student focus group participants, regardless of background. The city center is a place where the Estonian heritage, Russophone, and “outlier” students feel comfortable and enjoy being. Kesklinn is always noted directly after the home district as the place where the students’ lives are located, and as such, the students’ initial comments on the district are quite similar.

Kesklinn holds Tallinn’s Old City (a UNESCO heritage site and popular tourist attraction), the skyscrapers of the fast-growing business district, the port of Tallinn, and the largest shopping malls. The chief leisure space in Kesklinn is the Old City, where shops, quaint cafés and restaurants, historical sites and museums, and nightclubs are mingled together. The Old City is also where multiple nationalities and languages exist side by side on a daily basis, not only due to the presence of tourists but also because both Estonians and Russophones use it as a space of leisure and entertainment.

All of the students’ mental images of Kesklinn portray it as a space where they can spread their wings, as it were, away from the constraints feel in their other everyday geographies. Moreover, the congruency of the students’ feelings about Kesklinn confirms that their socio-spatial mental maps of the city as a whole are very similar:

Tolstoy Girl 3: The center of Tallinn inspires me.
Koidula Boy 1: Well, [I am] comfortable, I would say, in all central Tallinn.

Tolstoy Boy 2: The district I like the most is the center of Tallinn, and I think that this is the space where we can feel ourselves like “European,” that it is alike to Europe the most.

O-Koidula Girl 5: I like Old Town because it’s bright and there’s a lot of people.

Tammsaare Girl 2: [I like] to discover Old Town…Mostly when I come to Old Town, I find something new always, like whose house was that, or something. Its very interesting.

While the tenor of the students’ responses about the city center are positive, it is worth noting the distinctions between the Estonian and Russophone students’ perceptions. Estonian students often connect the city center with Estonian history and culture as demonstrated by Tammsaare Girl 2’s love of “discovering” Old Town. The city center is not only a place where Estonia’s heritage is celebrated but also where Estonia’s innate Europeanness is emphasized and any Russianness is de-emphasized or removed. Tolstoy Boy 2 likes the city center because it is where he can “feel European,” folding the discourse of Europeanness into his experience of a place that is central to the Estonian nation-building process. Paradoxically, he associates Kesklinn with a broader pan-European feeling rather than a Europeanness that is attached to Estonianness. The varied ways that the students ascribe meaning to the city center and, subsequently, how those ascriptions mediate their sense of belonging in wider Estonian and European societies illustrate the complex coexistence of national and post-national citizenship discourses in their everyday geographies.
Even though the students have positive mental images and speak about it in the focus groups as if it’s an area that’s relatively “mixed” between Estonians, Russophones, and foreigners (mostly tourists), a closer look at their comments exposes that spatial division in this ostensibly “shared” space. The students’ experiences in Kesklinn remain divided by their ethnolinguistic identities. The students' broad initial statements about the universal appeal of Kesklinn are in reality underpinned by an ethnolinguistically specific topography. The students' responses are uneven and sometimes contradictory, indicating that social divisions are present in the city center:

**Interviewer:** And you said everybody in Tallinn goes to the city center, is that right?
Pushkin Boy 7: Yes.
Pushkin Boy 5: Yes.
Pushkin Boy 4: There are clubs only for Russians.
Pushkin Boy 7: No.
Pushkin Boy 6: No.
Pushkin Boy 4: There is Russian music in some places.
**Interviewer:** There’s Russian music in some places? So [to the other boys] were you disagreeing?
Pushkin Boy 7: I think that if some Estonian wants to go there [to the Russian] club he will go. But if he doesn’t want to go he won’t go there. But there is no rule that this place is only for Russians.
**Interviewer:** There’s no official rule, but do Estonians and Russophone young people—do a lot of young people hang out together?
Pushkin Boy 5: Only in clubs, in nightlife… Estonians prefer some little bit expensive clubs. But Russians use such popular clubs which are not very expensive.
Pushkin Boy 4: Not so expensive.

The young men in this focus group are attempting to smooth out the “shared” leisure space of Kesklinn but finding it difficult to reach a consensus. There is, on the surface, disagreement over whether there are Russian areas in Kesklinn. For
Pushkin Boy 7, at least, the absence of an official or formal rule delimiting Russian-only places is his argument for the neutrality of the city center. However, it is clear from his classmates’ comments that the unofficial dividing lines that separate Estonians and Russophones operate more or less constantly, even in Keskküla.

The tension that exists in students’ narrations of their time in the city center is not limited to the Russophone students. The Estonian heritage students make the same types of general statements about Keskküla’s appeal to everyone. For instance, a few Estonian heritage girls admit that meaningful interaction is limited, but they seem uncomfortable with leaving the narrative there and instead end on a contradiction:

Interviewer: So you’re saying that Estonians and Russians don’t hang out at the same places?
Tammsaare Girl 1: They are quite divided.
Interviewer: Really?
Tammsaare Girl 2: Yes. Maybe they hang out at the same place, but you won’t go to a stranger and just start talking. “You’re Russian, I want to speak with you.” That is weird.
Tammsaare Girl 1: The Russians are together and the Estonians are together.
Tammsaare Girl 3: Yes.
Interviewer: So you might all be at the same club, but the Russians congregate and hang out together, and then the Estonians hang out together?
Tammsaare Girl 1: Yeah.
Tammsaare Girl 2: It’s quite logical, if you think about it.
Tammsaare Girl 1: There are some few places which are still named Russian, or something, so the Russians go there, and they have their own favorite places. [pause] I think it’s quite mixed, mostly.

This part of the conversation takes place not long after the girls had described the sociocultural contour of Keskküla as mixed between the two groups, as
compared to Lasnamäe or Pirita. Like the conversation between the Russophone boys mentioned above, there is a certain amount of chaos in the girls' narratives of Kesklinn. They are describing a socially segregated leisure landscape that is “quite logical,” but Tammsaare Girl 1 tops off the conversation by describing the Kesklinn nightclub scene as “quite mixed.”

This seesawing discourse, like the Russophone boys’ conversation, demonstrates that even the city center—the one place in Tallinn that the student respondents characterize as a shared space of multicultural character—is not home to meaningful experience and contact between Estonians and Russophones. The students’ propensities to describe Kesklinn as a place where everybody goes, yet also where everybody stays with their own culture group, is indicative of the limitations of multicultural discourses and policies that have been observed elsewhere in Western liberal democratic societies (Wood and Gilbert 2005). This weak multiculturalism is practiced through superficial contact with other groups in urban spaces rather than through interactions that contend with entrenched prejudices and stereotypes (although it must be noted that such interactions do not always produce positive outcomes). The mere presence of more than one cultural group in Kesklinn seems to pass for multiculturalism in the students’ minds, which allows them to classify the city center as a shared space instead of the microcosm of socio-spatially divided Tallinn that it really is.

Movement through a space of leisure such as Kesklinn connects in important ways with wider negotiations of citizenship rights and reveal patterns of identity performance (Desforges, Jones, and Woods 2005). The focus group
conversations that I have discussed in this section expose the subtle connections between banal identity performances and access to the space of rights within a society. The apparently “multicultural” character of Kesklinn covers a larger reluctance of Estonians and Russophones to integrate in everyday movements through space. This suggests that the everyday politics of citizenship reflect the (often uneasy) coexistence of multiple citizenship discourses in wider society. The tension between the universalisms and particularisms that exists in national, multicultural, and post-national configurations of belonging are played out by individual performances of identity in everyday, urban spaces. These students’ actual movements through and within Kesklinn, for instance, belie their characterization of the city center as a “mixed” and “multicultural” space where ethnolinguistic particularisms fade, or are at least ignored. The everyday politics of citizenship, then, inform and are informed by everyday spaces and the multi-scalar discourses that circulate within them.

**Places of Memory in the City: The Bronze Soldier Memorial as a Metaphor for Who Belongs**

In 2007 the Estonian government’s decision to relocate the Bronze Soldier Memorial, a Red Army WWII memorial, away from central Tallinn, sparked two nights of intense protests, riots, and fights between Russophones and Estonians. Although the student participants, who are 18 or 19 years of age, were young adolescents when the Bronze Solider crisis took place, the event played and continues to play a significant role in how they spatially enact and negotiate
identity and belonging in Tallinn. Furthermore the students’ recollections and negotiations of the Bronze Soldier crisis demonstrate that young people actively negotiate and contend with adult discourses of belonging and citizenship rather than passively absorbing them. This section examines the students’ passionate narratives of the Bronze Soldier crisis and reveals how they use Tallinn’s landscapes of public memory to contest, negotiate, and define belonging in Estonia. Moreover, their conversations expose the ways that space, power, and social memory interact to provide context for the contestation of national identity and to mediate access to full and equal citizenship in the nation-state (S. Hoelscher and Alderman 2004; Price 2004; Falah 1996; Massey 1995; Mills 2006).

As chapter one explains, the immediate post-Soviet years were times of intense de-Sovietization and reclamation of national identity, history, and territory in Eastern and Central European nation-states. One of the most vigorously pursued avenues of identity reassertion by titular majorities was reclaiming the national landscape from Sovietized history, and Estonia was no exception. The Estonian nationalist discourse of territoriality has been made material through myriad processes of place transformation, from re-naming city streets from Soviet icon names to more acceptably Estonian ones, removing statues of Soviet figures like Vladimir Lenin, and suppressing any spatial representation of Soviet-Russophone dominance (D. J. Smith and Burch 2012).

The relocation of the Bronze Soldier memorial is the most recent and arguably most controversial alteration to public memory in Estonia. The Estonian
government made the decision to remove the Bronze Soldier, a Soviet WWII memorial for war dead, in the early morning hours of April 27, 2007 from a Kesklinn square called Tõnismägi (Figure 5.2) to the Defense Forces Cemetery of Tallinn (Figure 5.3), located several miles from the city center (Figure 5.4).

The relocation of the statue had been an issue in recent elections, but preparations to move the memorial, which began on April 26, were a shock to Tallinn. Mass protests between Russophones, who vehemently opposed to the move, and Estonians, who strongly supported it, erupted in Kesklinn and shortly turned into riots. Two nights of riots led to massive looting, the death of one Russophone protester, several arrests, and international media coverage. The events, known in Estonia as “The Bronze Night,” intensified inter-ethnic tensions between Estonians and Russophones.

Since 1992, the simultaneous acts of preserving and emphasizing Estonian history while ignoring and erasing Soviet Russian history have been a key to bolstering Estonian nationalist agendas. An interpretation of history that labels the Soviet Union as occupiers of a formerly free Republic, combined with factual narratives and evidence of brutal Soviet domination, deportations, exiles, executions, and suppression of Estonian culture has coalesced into the framing of Estonia’s post-Soviet years as a “decolonization” period (Hughes 2005). After roughly five decades of living in and around Soviet performances of history, Estonia embarked on a project of re-constructing displays of public memory to establish the “correct” version of history. The process of public memory in Estonia was and is a crucial part of changing the conception of the nation-state
Figure 5.2: Tõnismägi Square, Kesklinn District, Tallinn. The Bronze Soldier Memorial was located in Tõnismägi Square until 2007, which has since been landscaped with shrubs, flowers, and trees.

Figure 5.3: Bronze Soldier Memorial, Defense Forces Cemetery of Tallinn. The Bronze Soldier Memorial is currently located in the Defense Forces Cemetery of Tallinn, two miles from its previous location in the city center.
Figure 5.4 Former and Current Locations of the Bronze Soldier War Monument, Tallinn Estonia. In 2007 the Bronze Soldier was moved from Tõnismagi Square in Old Town to the Defense Forces Cemetery, several miles from the most frequented parts of Tallinn’s city center.

from a Russified, Soviet one to an Estonian one (K. Mitchell 2003; Forest, Johnson, and Till 2004; D. J. Smith and Burch 2012).

The ongoing process of changing the landscapes of memory in Tallinn are extremely important to my student respondents because the urban spaces that are inscribed with (now) Estonian cultural understandings of national history are spatial reflections of what it means to be Estonian. For my student participants, the Bronze Soldier crisis represents the larger issue of belonging and meaningful citizenship in Estonian society. A dominant group’s constructions,
deconstructions, and/or changings of monuments, memorials, and museums are material actions of remembering specific versions of history (Till 1999; Hay, Hughes, and Tutton 2004; K. Mitchell 2003). Importantly, these acts of remembering always involve acts of forgetting, which at the national scale will emphasize one group identity while ignoring and delegitimizing the commemoration of an Other identity (S. Hoelscher and Alderman 2004). It is this tension that underscores the passionate feelings of the students throughout the focus groups. The issue of how universal Estonia’s national history actually is compels my student respondents to couch legitimate citizenship in Estonian society in terms of very particular understandings of the country’s history.

Along with the issue of language, the public expression of social memory is central to the student participants’ conceptualization of the terms of citizenship in Estonia. Both Estonian and Russophone students use the “correct” version and representation of history to Other who do not subscribe to it. The main theme that girds the students’ attitudes towards the Bronze Soldier relocation, as well as wider social memory in Estonia, is the interpretation of Estonian history during the Soviet era. It is during the conversations about the Bronze Soldier that the issue of occupation versus liberation enters into their narratives as proof of legitimate or illegitimate Russophone presence in Estonian society.

Each of the 13 Russophone students, as well as three of the four “outlier” students, were firmly against the relocation of the Bronze Soldier memorial, even several years after the event. The unexpectedness of the removal, as well as the disrespect to the soldiers buried with the memorial, caused several students to
frame the relocation as a deliberate insult toward Russians and Russophones by the Estonian government. These students characterize the relocation of the monument as disrespectful to Red Army soldiers who died fighting Nazi forces rather than as an attempt to remove a reminder of the harsh realities of the Soviet era from a central public place:

Pushkin Boy 3: I think it was an insult, but maybe not for the Russians here. But mainly for the Russians whose relatives died during the war.

O-Pushkin Girl 2: I think they [the Estonian government] wanted to offend Russians.

Tolstoy Boy 3: I am clearly against that decision made by our governors. I think that this is immoral to transfer the ancient memorial.

Tolstoy Boy 2: It is the right way to show that there is discrimination [against Russophones], when something is done like that.

Pushkin Boy 4: I think that it was a plan, a provocation. For Russians, it was a very important issue because a lot of people lost their relatives during the War. For example both of my grandfathers died during the War.

O-Taamsaare Boy 1: It [the Bronze Soldier] harmed no one when it was there [in Kesklinn]. The whole event was political, actually. Just 100 percent political.

In these students' narratives there is a focus on specific moments in history (a tactic that Estonian heritage students engage in as well). The Russophone students, as well as the “outliers” who disagree with the monument’s relocation, draw on the victories of the Red Army against Nazi forces to legitimize the right of Soviet history to exist in the urban landscape. While there is considerable criticism of the Estonian government’s tactics during
the Bronze Soldier crisis, there is no mention or consideration that public displays of Soviet history may be deeply troubling to Estonians whose families experienced great brutalities at the hands of the Soviet Army. These students’ arguments for the appropriation of urban space for Soviet Russian history is ultimately grounded in the belief that each group’s historical memory is legitimate and has the right to be displayed:

Pushkin Girl 1: We should respect what was in the past, and now we can live to see a new future… you can’t go away from [the Soviet era], it’s history.

Tolstoy Girl 3: They [the government] should have practiced tolerance, and they should respect the people who live here [because] maybe they have different opinions.

O-Pushkin Boy 1: Why they [the government] wanted to move it, actually, is because, as we know, the city center and the Old Town is the center where all foreigners come, tourists and everything. Maybe they wanted to move the Russian history a bit away from the center of Estonian history. So for them it’s better [for the city center] to hold most of the Estonian history, not Russian.

In an effort to give Soviet history the same legitimacy as Estonian history, these students are once more appealing to the principles of equality and tolerance that put Russophones on an even playing field with Estonians. The students’ discussions of the Bronze Soldier and Soviet history in Estonia implies belief that their membership in Estonian society entitles them to their own understandings and negotiations of the past. Moreover, in maintaining opposition to the removal of Soviet history, these students are creating a contested place identity to use as a method of resisting what they see as the ideological hegemony (Larsen 2004) of the Estonian nation-building project.
All but one of the Estonian heritage students (as well as O-Koidula Girl 5) engage in a similarly selective reading of history to assess the Bronze Soldier crisis and which version of history should be remembered. Not surprisingly, most of the Estonian heritage students’ reading of the Bronze Soldier crisis is that any legitimacy the Soviet Union may have had by “liberating” Estonia from the Nazis was comprehensively dismantled when the Soviets stayed to occupy the country for five decades. As such, the Estonian heritage students that agree with the government’s decision to relocate the Bronze Soldier deflect any argument that the Soviet era is part of Estonian history. By frequently using the phrases “our history” and “they were occupiers,” the Estonian heritage students project a narrative of territoriality that locates Russophones outside of the nation-building project because of their ethnolinguistic association with the illegal occupiers of the historical Estonian homeland. Positive material representation of the occupation or occupiers is couched as offensive to the Estonian collective memory of brutality and repression at the hands of the Soviets. For instance, Tammsaare Girl 2 argues that Soviet history should not be prominently and publicly displayed in the city center, and Tammsaare Girl 1 notes that “[the Bronze Solider] is Estonian history, but it’s not a positive thing to make a monument out of that.”

For the Estonian heritage students the Russophone community’s opinions on the Bronze Soldier crisis, both in 2007 and today, are indicative of a wider, disturbing Russophone mentality that does not respect the Estonian people and their historical right to their homeland. As an example, a part of one focus group
with Estonian heritage students uncovers the underlying resentment about Russophone attitudes to Estonian history is present:

Koidula Boy 1: What I think about [the Bronze Soldier crisis] now is that, well, it’s still a little scary because the people—the mentality is still here, if not more…
Interviewer: What mentality?
Koidula Boy 1: The mentality—well, the one thing is the всё находится наши mentality.
Interviewer: What is that?
Koidula Girl 1: Like, “everything is ours”… like they own Estonia.
Koidula Girl 3: They’re the bosses.
Koidula Girl 1: And they are destroying shops [during the riots], and like “everything is ours!”

The Estonian student respondents throughout the study tend to treat the Russophone community as a homogenous unit that acts and thinks the same way about Estonian history and territoriality and that is, by its very nature, domineering, insensitive, disrespectful, and ultimately illegitimate. I argue this in spite of the fact that comments are occasionally made about the Russophones’ right to their own interpretation of history because even after these comments are made the conversation immediately reverts to a consensus that “its just not right” to have Soviet history in Estonian spaces, which belies these students’ understanding of Russophone identity as fundamentally illegitimate. Through the very real urban spaces of memory in Tallinn, the Estonian heritage students are conceptualizing spatial parameters of citizenship that coincide with the spatial parameters of the Estonian nation’s historical narrative, thereby excluding anyone with alternative perceptions of history from equal access to substantive
citizenship in society and the sociopolitical and economic resources that accompany it.

The student participants’ conflicting conceptualizations of which version of history is universal to the “ideal” Estonian citizen stems from the refusal to recognize the legitimacy of the other group’s historical narrative. Using the Bronze Soldier crisis to frame a larger discussion about whose representations of history are appropriate, tolerant, and accurate, the student focus groups demonstrate that “social memory and social space join together to provide context for modern identities and their contestations” (S. Hoelscher and Alderman 2004, 349). For my student participants, performing and/or contesting Estonian citizenship involves engaging a selective historical narrative that is based on competing definitions of justice, oppression, discrimination, and marginalization throughout the last 70 years of Estonia’s history.

Both Estonian heritage and Russophone students ground their competing opinions on the relocation of the Bronze Soldier (and the greater interpretation of Estonian history) in terms of what history applies to all Estonian citizens. Again, but this time in terms of landscapes of memory, each student group is couching the defining traits of the citizen in terms of historical narratives that are ostensibly universal to the population at large, but that are actually shot through with selective and particular readings of history. The Estonian heritage students locate Soviet Russian history as outside the realm of a legitimate citizen’s history by characterizing of Russophones—and their Other historical narratives—as remnants of an illegal occupation. The Russophone students, by contrast, appeal
to the equality-as-sameness discourse of liberal democratic citizenship by arguing that their particular readings of history include what is common to all Estonian citizens, neglecting to realize that they themselves are insisting upon a particular narrative of history.

It is my argument that in the lives of these young people in Tallinn, the intrinsically political historical memory of Estonia is a crucial part of the spatial strategy of citizenship. The students’ chaotic negotiations of the Estonian citizenry’s history involve Tallinn’s urban landscape and how it should (or should not) be utilized to establish the “topography” of the Estonian people (Till 2003, 294). The students’ strong feelings about the Bronze Soldier indicate that Tallinn’s places of memory are crucial sites for their negotiations of the terms of belonging and exclusion in Estonian society. For the students, social memory, like language, is a both medium of communication and identity performance that demarcates the parameters of citizenship. These students are bounding the Estonian nation-state, and membership in it, by defining how exactly the nation has “stretched through time” (B. Anderson 2006) and how the state should embed the nation’s history in the landscape.

Conclusions

This chapter has focused on the ways in which the students in this study actively negotiate citizenship and belonging in Tallinn. The narratives analyzed illustrate the ways in which students both encounter and use spatial strategies to delineate the bounds of meaningful citizenship and belonging in society. The
spaces of language, historical memory, and city life discussed in this chapter are analyzed together as a framework within which to uncover the multiple and varied ways that these students arbitrate belonging and ascribe identities to themselves and to the Other.

Although general patterns emerge amongst students of different ethnolinguistic groups, they do not represent unilateral, fixed modalities of how young people produce and reproduce conceptualizations of citizenship. Rather, they suggest that while the conceptualizations of citizenship of young people in divided societies can and do reflect socio-spatial divisions along ethnocultural lines, the diversities of their personal geographies, past experiences, and movements in and through everyday spaces will produce varying narratives and understandings of belonging. As this chapter has illustrated, the spatial delimitations of citizenship and multiple discourses of belonging inform and are informed by the ways that the students enact their identities in the city. In this sense, young people’s negotiations of citizenship in divided societies cannot be compartmentalized into discrete spaces or homogenized across ethnolinguistic lines, but must be understood as a constant, active process in which they configure and reconfigure their understandings of identities and belonging in Tallinn.
Chapter 6

Positionality in the Nation-State and Deployment of EU Citizenship

I have argued thus far that the universalisms through which citizenship is constituted exist in contention with the particularisms through which citizenship is equally constituted. This chapter extends that argument by exploring the particularisms and universalisms that influence the conception, experience, and performance of supranational citizenship. A consideration of supranational citizenship is particularly relevant to any discussion of Estonian young people’s conceptualizations of belonging, identity, and entitlements because European citizenship formally guarantees rights outside the domain of the nation-state and provides a layer of identity beyond that of the national community. The student respondents’ experiences, negotiations, and performances of European citizenship are multi-layered and context dependent. European citizenship can be described as multi-layered because youths conceive of it not only in strictly politico-legal terms, but also in economic and socio-cultural terms. I characterize European citizenship as context dependent because despite its situation at the supranational level, it cannot be easily detached from circumstances at national level. European and national citizenships are not discrete, nested entities that exist on separate levels of a scalar hierarchy, but rather are institutions that interact complexly with multiple notions of identity and belonging. Therefore my
argument here is that students’ conceptions of European citizenship and identity are significantly influenced by their positionalities within the Estonian nation.

The concept of a European citizenship whose meaning shifts according to experiences at the national level problematizes two themes that often appear in the literature. The first is that contrasting experiences of citizenship by and large take place at the national level. Many pieces in citizenship literature focus on disparate experiences of national citizenship (Secor 2004; Wemyss 2006; Aasland and Flotten 2001; Bollens 2007). The results of my research suggest that supranational citizenships are experienced differently as well, and that those divergent experiences depend upon a citizen’s positionality within the nation. The student responses indicate that conceptions of European citizenship are informed by an individual’s positioning in the Estonian nation. The dichotomy in attitudes towards European citizenship between Estonian and Russophone students, I will demonstrate, is grounded in the socio-spatial divisions between the two groups in Estonian society. This runs contrary to what might be expected of European citizenship, which is presented as an overarching citizenship and identity that supersedes narrower considerations of nationalism (Reed-Danahay 2007; Delanty 1997). In fact, European citizenship is experienced and mediated by social and political dimensions within the nation-state, much the way national citizenship is.

The second assumption problematized by the idea of European citizenship is that “being European” has one meaning, and that meaning is internalized by all Europeans (Soysal 1997). In the vein of Sidaway’s (2006, 10)
assertion that “there is no single, stable, hegemonic understanding of the EU,” I argue that there is no single, stable understanding of what it means to be European. My student respondents characterize “Europeanness” in widely varying terms and levels of enthusiasm, indicating that claims of a homogenous, overarching conception of what it means to be European are dubious at best.

The interaction between supranational and national citizenships produces a *multi-layered* European citizenship that is much more than a singularly defined community membership. My student interviewees couch European citizenship and Europeanness in politico-legal, economic, and socio-cultural terms, indicating that they conceive of their supranational citizenship as a multifaceted community membership that offers them the opportunity to acquire multiple types of capital. In this discussion, capital is understood to take both monetary and nonmonetary forms. As such, human capital is used to denote “nonmonetary… sources of power and influence” (Portes 1998, 2) that are perceived to be available in the supranational space of Europe and that will enhance the students’ ability to succeed in life.

Furthermore, the manner in which the Estonian and Russophone students characterize the benefits of European citizenship vary according to their differentiated experiences of it. This supports Kolossov’s (2003, 252) argument that “identities are multiple and ‘negotiable,’ and the same individual or the same group may privilege one identity over another according to the situation and the moment.” These differentiations in experience, as stated above, are dependent upon Estonian and Russophone students’ positionalities in national society.
Young people in Estonia are included in or excluded from spaces of belonging and rights in the national arena on a daily basis through identity politics that involve everything from language to school curricula. However, the responses of the study population indicate that young people are actively creating their own European identities while concurrently negotiating their Estonian identities.

Drawing on the focus group data collected, this chapter investigates the asymmetrical ways that European citizenship is experienced, enacted, and characterized by Estonian and Russophone youths in Tallinn. The first section briefly discusses the connections between ethnolinguistic identity and positionality within Estonia, and how positionality at the national level affects conceptions of the supranational. The second section discusses how Estonian students’ positionalities within Estonia’s titular majority inform their conceptions of European citizenship and the types of capital they associate with it. The third section discusses how Russophone students’ positionalities in Estonia’s Russophone minority affect their conceptions of European citizenship and the types of capital they associate with it. The fourth section discusses the uneven nature of attitudes towards European citizenship from “outlier” students, those students whose heritage, mother tongue, and school language medium do not neatly overlap like those of their contemporaries. The last section addresses the potential effects that these students’ conceptions of Europe and European citizenship will have on Estonia in the future. These potential ramifications are

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13 Please see Chapter 3: “Methodology” for a detailed explanation of student respondent identifiers and labels.
addressed by comparing the students’ plans to migrate out of Estonia for study and work.

**Positionality, the National, and the Supranational**

As discussed in the previous chapters, there is a large overlap between the students’ mother tongues, school language mediums, and self-ascribed national identities (which I have referred to by the more accurate term of ethnolinguistic identity). The following sections discuss student attitudes about Europe based on their self-identifications with the Estonian majority or the Russophone minority. The responses of the “outlier” student participants resist grouping within the Estonian majority or Russophone minority, and are therefore addressed in a separate section.

Feelings of belonging and loyalty to Estonia are markedly higher in Estonian students, and subsequently their perceptions of opportunity in the home country are positive. In contrast, Russophone students articulate both feelings and experiences of exclusion in everyday life in Estonia. By and large, the Russophone students expect that their opportunities in Estonia will be limited because of their Russian last names or use of the Russian language, and that even Russian-accented Estonian will single them out as targets for discriminatory practices.

At first glance an individual’s positionality within their home country’s society may seem to have significance only for how he or she moves in and negotiates national society. However, the evidence gathered in focus groups
indicates that the politics of identity in Estonia enter into students’ conceptions of Europe and Europeanness, as well. Also, the student respondents do not present identical levels of enthusiasm about the EU or being European, showing that European citizens do not think “one way” as a group. But the ways in which the students articulate the value of European citizenship, the rights that it affords, and how European identity is performed (or not) is shaped by their ethnolinguistic identity and, subsequently, their positionality in the Estonian nation. It should be noted that the students use “Western Europe” and “Europe” to mean the European Union.

**Europeanness as Additive to National Identity: Estonian Student Perspectives**

The focus groups I conducted uncover a persistent association between the Estonian nation-state and the EU by Estonian student respondents. However, there is a marked hierarchy to the identities in these students’ responses, with Estonian identity generally being privileged over the European identity. Estonian student interviewees overwhelmingly characterize the European Union in terms of how it strengthens, protects, and legitimizes Estonia, and how Estonia’s EU membership confirms that it is not a “Russian” country. Moreover these students mobilize their personal European identities (via the opportunities it affords them) as a means of *supplementing* their Estonian identities.

The primacy of Estonia and Estonianness is evident from the students’ responses. The majority of the Estonian students only identify themselves as
European after first asserting their Estonian identity. The Estonian students describe more than one reason for identifying as Estonians versus Europeans:

Interviewer: Do you identify as Europeans at all?
Tammsaare Girl 1: No, it’s more just geographic… I don’t know if it’s like a “big union” and so on.
Interviewer: So if someone asks you “Where are you from?” do you mention Europe?
Tammsaare Girl 3: If they don’t know where Estonia is!
Tammsaare Girl 2: Yes!

Interviewer: Would you identify yourselves as Europeans?
Koidula Girl 4: First as an Estonian, for me… I mean, for me, it’s [Europe] not important in the way that Estonia is important for me. For me, Estonia is more like a close to heart thing. But Europe is… when I say that I feel that I am a part of the European Union, or Europe—what do I actually mean by it?
Interviewer: It’s a bit harder to define?
Koidula Girl 4: Yes.

The Estonian students also mention being “patriotic” Estonians and having feelings of loyalty to the nation-state. Students see the emphasis on their Estonian identity as crucial to preserving an Estonian culture that has been historically threatened by various politico-cultural interlopers and to solidifying a bond between the Estonian people that is already tenuous because of their small numbers. These students by no means classify Europe in malicious terms, but neither do they regard it as an institution under which they are willing to subsume their Estonian identity.

Different responses regarding other-than-national identities in the Estonian student focus groups came from two boys from Koidula School. Demonstrating that students do not think “one way” about Estonia and Europe based on their
ethnolinguistic group, the two boys describe the importance of situating oneself within the human race or, at the very least, at a level beyond the nation state:

Koidula Boy 1: I think throughout history, people have started to think more of themselves as part of bigger things. Firstly, it was “me” or “my family,” then it was the community, then it was the country—now its Europe. Someday it’s going to be the world, and universe—I hope.

Koidula Boy 2: For me, it’s of course the planet Earth first—that we are citizens of the world and everything… I do have a cosmopolitan world view, and I feel myself as more a part of that [than anything else].

These students approach the cosmopolitan community as the primary or most desirable form of human association. Rather than classifying European citizenship as coexisting equally with cosmopolitan citizenship, it is described as a stop along the way to the telos of global citizenship (Koidula Boy 2) or at the very least a substratum community to be identified with secondarily (Koidula Boy 1). These responses indicate the influence of cosmopolitan discourses that encourage youth to think of themselves as belonging to the “world” and demonstrates that the promulgation of those ideals is substantial enough for some young people to verbally espouse them.

What can be gleaned from the Estonian students’ ideas about how and when to identify as European—if at all—is that while Estonian students may claim a European identity, there is no indication that it supplants national (or cosmopolitan) identity as the primary identity. To these students, the significance of “being European” derives partially from the added benefits that come with their
home country’s membership in the EU. Estonian students ground the importance of Estonia’s membership in the European Union in the legitimacy it gives to Estonia as a “European” (read: not Russian) nation and the support that will come from the EU if Estonia faces trouble. For instance, this exchange between students from Tammsaare School indicates the importance of Estonia being recognized as European:

Tammsaare Girl 4: …and since we’re in the EU, I think that Estonia gets a lot of… support.
Tammsaare Girl 5: We want to move more to the Western side. We don’t want to be next to Russia. And every time people talk about Estonia, they’re like, “Oh yes, the little country next to Russia. It was in Russia,” and so on. We don’t want to be focused on only that part. We want to be the modern country with good technology, and move a little but more to the Western side.
Interviewer: To have a Western European style?
Tammsaare Girl 5: Yes.

The students also characterize the significance of Estonia’s European identity as a kind of “back up plan” if Estonia cannot get itself out of a troublesome situation. Koidula Girl 1 expresses comfort in the economic safety net of Europe, noting, “the economy—we’ll get help like Greece, maybe if someday we will be in a bad situation.” However, eight out of the 14 Estonian-medium school students interviewed explicitly stated that the military/security support that Estonia would receive in defending itself from Russian aggression is the most important type of European assistance:

Interviewer: So the EU makes you feel secure?
Tammsaare Girl 4: Yeah!
Tammsaare Girl 5: Yes.
Tammsaare Girl 6: Yeah!
Interviewer: Whom do you feel the need to be protected from?
Tammsaare Girl 5: Russia.
Tammsaare Girl 6: Terrorists.
Interviewer: Terrorists—what kind of terrorists?
Tammsaare Girl 6: Everyone.
Interviewer: Do you still see the Russian Federation as a threat?
Tammsaare Girl 6: Yes.
Tammsaare Girl 5: …after what happened with [the Republic of] Georgia in 2008—that was the moment when I realized that a war actually could happen to us, too. That Russia really is an aggressive country and they really could attack us.

Interviewer: Do you think being part of the EU is a good thing?
Tammsaare Girl 2: Probably, because Russia is on the other side, very close, and better in the EU than in Russia. And you see what's going on in Russia right now. Its good to be in Europe.
Interviewer: So maybe the EU gives you a little feeling of security?
Tammsaare Girl 1: Yes.
Tammsaare Girl 2: Yes.
Tammsaare Girl 3: Yes.

Interviewer: Does being an [EU citizen] matter to you?
Koidula Girl 1: It makes me feel safer, [because Estonia is] so close to the big Russia.

These conversations signify that protecting the Estonian space from non-European aggression is a pronounced concern for these students. They explicitly categorize the importance of *Europeanness* in terms of the security and protection that it *adds* to Estonianness. Rather than replacing or supplanting the identity of their home country, (or of themselves as citizens), the Estonian students describe the “supranational European” trait as independent from but additive to Estonianness. Moreover, the students’ responses reveal that Estonian
space is seen as also being *European* space when the security—whether economic or military—of that space is threatened. These responses depict the nature of the relationship between supranational and national citizenships as fluid and side-by-side rather than fixed and nested.

The data gathered shows that the majority of the students who explicitly identified the EU as a guarantor of security from Russian threats are from Tammsaare School. However, when interviewing the teachers from Tammsaare School and learning about its background, there were no indicators that the ‘threat of Russia’ was a discourse that the students would encounter. The emphasis on the EU’s potential contribution to Estonian national security by students of a school that does not take pains to stress a Russian threat suggests that the school is not the only space where young people encounter and negotiate discourses of the politics of identity. The argument here is that young people are not solely influenced by discourses they encounter in school. Parents and peers are also significant actors outside of the school that affect the ways that youths negotiate, synthesize, and internalize discourses of belonging, identity, and citizenship. The consequences of the multiple discourses that young people negotiate may be narratives that do not harmoniously align with the ideas advanced in their school curricula.

*Adding a European Dimension to Estonianness*

The presence of extra-scholastic influences in shaping young people’s biographies becomes very clear when the Estonian students describe their
conceptualizations of Europeanness on a personal level. The Estonian students define the meaning of their personal European identity in the context of the space of rights afforded to all EU citizens. The primary value of European citizenship to these students is the access to opportunity that will help them write their own successful biographies. Many of the students connected a successful or enriched life to the acquisition of not only economic capital, but also human capital. Europe is seen as a place to acquire economic and human capital that is not available in Estonia, but that will enrich their national identities by adding the “developed” and “modern” traits of Europe while retaining traditional, patently Estonian traits.

These students often spoke of the value of being European in utilitarian terms devoid of romantic notions of membership in a pan-European community. Many of the interviewees spoke plainly about using their rights as Europeans for gain without expressing hopes that the opportunities could forge deeper ties with other Europeans. But their European citizenship is certainly seen as the vehicle for accessing the opportunities to acquire capital that may not be available in Estonia. For instance:

Interviewer: Is your EU citizenship important to you?
Koidula Girl 6: Yeah, it gives us a lot more opportunities.
Koidula Boy 2: Yes, it’s very useful. I have to admit that I do think that it’s useful even though I may not think that the EU is such a great institution... but I would say that having an EU passport is really useful. Working opportunities, travelling opportunities and what have you—everything.
Koidula Girl 6: I mean, for me, it’s not important in the way that Estonia is important for me. But yeah, exactly what [Koidula Boy 2] said—it’s useful.
Interviewer: You’re EU citizens. Is that something important to you? Do you identify as Europeans?
Tammsaare Girl 1: No, it’s more just geographic… I don’t know if it’s like a “big union” and so on. It’s all about money, euros. Nothing else.

Koidula Boy 1: I like the economic union. I kind of like the euro, the currency. I like that there’s not much borders and we can do business in this way—the economical [sic] union. But I don’t like political union…

There is a tenor of pragmatism and instrumentalism to the initial discourse about the EU from the students. The students speak of the economic opportunities first and as if they are obvious, demonstrating that the union of Europe is often couched in terms of being a means to occupational and, subsequently, financial security. According to Tammsaare Girl 3, “many people think that living abroad” in Western Europe is better because it is “quite developed…in the economic sense.” The pervasiveness of this impression is demonstrated throughout the focus groups, such as when Tammsaare Girl 6 states “I think that it’s just easier to be successful” in Western Europe, prompting Tammsaare Girl 5 to agree that the job opportunities in Western Europe are much more plentiful.

As the conversations progress past basic value assessments about Europe and into exactly why European opportunities are better than Estonian ones, these students’ responses take on more nuanced appraisals of those opportunities. My Estonian interviewees distinguished European education as higher quality and on-the-job training and experience as more available. The acquisition of European education and jobs can therefore be classified as both economic/career-related and human forms of capital. Furthermore, many of
these students want opportunities to experience other cultures and “see how
other people live” before returning to Estonia. Cultural experience in Europe is
seen as a type of human capital that is not ubiquitous in Estonia.

An interesting reason given by a few students as to why European
opportunities are valuable is that Western Europe is a space of tolerance, human
rights, and democratic ideals. Given the sharp contrast between levels of
freedom and human rights in Soviet-controlled Eastern Europe and democratic
Western Europe, it is perhaps unsurprising that the Estonian students perceive
Western Europe as a place where one can live and experience democratic
ideals. Even if the students seem to be unable to articulate the exact nature of
the “high ideals” that are held in Europe, there is still a general sense:

Koidula Girl 2: For me, I like to travel, its easier—and also,
more good comes from there.
Interviewer: More good comes from Western Europe and
the European Union?
Koidula Girl 3: Yeah, something like that.
Koidula Boy 1: The Western ideals—
Koidula Girl 3: Yeah, yes.
Koidula Boy 1: The democracy—
Koidula Girl 1: And the freedom and the—
Koidula Boy 1: Yeah, the human rights. They are more
respected in the West than in The East.
Koidula Girl 3: Yes, that’s right.

From this exchange it is evident that these students identify the European space
as a repository of progressive, democratic ideals and that moving through this
space is an opportunity to acquire the cultural capital of having lived in a
“tolerant” place. Through interviews with teachers and NGO officials and study of
EU policy documents I learned that discourses of the “Western” ideals of tolerance and open-mindedness are present in the Estonia’s education curricula. I would suggest that these discourses of “Western” or “European” ideals in the classroom are discursively associated with economic and material development in Europe, which may explain why these students are eager to gain the cultural capital of living in a tolerant European space. These Estonian students perceive that the social hallmark of economically successful European member-states is the acceptance of democratic ideals and liberal value of tolerance.

Furthermore, this conversation intimates that the students understand the espousal of human rights and tolerance to be part and parcel of European citizenship. But while the discourses of tolerance and respect are present, my observation is that they are used in an instrumental way to demonstrate a proper appreciation of what it means to be European rather than meaningfully applied in the students’ everyday lives. For instance, several of Estonian students convey interest and excitement in the opportunities to learn about and experience other cultures in Europe, and express no anxiety about potential threats to their national identity or the identities of the peoples whose cultures they want to experience. But there is a tacit understanding that the cultures to be explored, respected, and tolerated are not Russophone. As demonstrated in the previous chapter, there is little evidence in the Estonian students’ focus group conversations that they perceive Russophone culture in Estonia as worthy subjects of the “European” respect for tolerance.
This section has evaluated the perceptions of Europeanness and European citizenship in Estonian students. These students’ attachments to Estonia and their Estonian identities are apparent from their comments about where their national identities rank in comparison to their supranational identities. This is demonstrative of two key points. First, the simultaneous but independent existence of the supranational European identity and the national Estonian identity is demonstrated by the students’ use of one identity to define or contextualize the other, i.e. “I’ll identify myself as European if someone doesn’t know where Estonia is,” or “since we’re in the EU, people notice Estonia.”

Second, their loyalty, attachment, and sense of belonging to the Estonian nation-state informs the perception that European identity and citizenship—and the opportunities it affords—are avenues through which to augment their Estonian identity. This “additive” quality of European citizenship and the desire to enhance Estonian identity is being articulated by students who are part of the titular majority, and therefore are on the dominant side of the politics of identity in Estonia. This positive positionality in national society influences the conceptions of supranational citizenship and identity in Estonian students.

Europeanness as an Alternative to “Otherness” in Estonia: Russophone Student Perspectives

All but two of the Russophone student participants hold Estonian and European citizenships. The Russophone students’ experiences of citizenship and identity in Estonian society affect their conceptions of Europeanness and EU
citizenship, just as with Estonian students. However, conceptions of
Europeanness and the value of the opportunities afforded by EU citizenship
contrast starkly between Estonian and Russophone students because of the
differences between the two groups’ positionalities in Estonian society.

Despite the fact that the vast majority of Russophone students hold formal
Estonian citizenship, they repeatedly articulate feelings of unease or
displacement (if not outright exclusion) in Estonia, which they attribute to actual
or de facto discrimination because of their Russophone identity. The
Russophone students’ positionalities in Estonia are ones of “outsider,” effecting
feelings of various degrees of exclusion. As a result, these students characterize
Europeanness and the opportunities afforded by their European citizenship as
viable alternatives to their identity as the “Other” in Estonian society.

The Russophone Identity and European Identity

Chapter Four discussed Russophone students’ awareness of their position
as part of the unwelcome “Other” in Estonia. The disenfranchisement of these
Russophone students at the national level is crucial to understanding why
supranational European identity is often seen as a viable alternative to these
students’ identities at the national level. Due to the socio-political alienation that
the Russophone students feel in Estonia, Europe primarily becomes a space
where they can re-classify themselves. Some Russophone students view Europe
as a space where they can claim a European identity and access rights and
opportunities. Others view Europe as a space where they can reject associations with Estonia and access rights and opportunities.

It is important to note is that the students who enthusiastically claim a European identity and the rights afforded to them by being European citizens are all students at Pushkin School. This school is an active participant in EU-sponsored projects and grant competitions. Several of the student participants from Pushkin School bring up their experiences on school trips to Western Europe for EU projects, participation in competitions for recognition and funding, and in-class engagement with EU policies, values, and ideals. These positive experiences with EU topics, combined with their self-awareness of being part of the Other group in Estonia, explain the propensity for these students in particular to eagerly claim Europeanness as an alternative to an Estonian Russophone identity:

Interviewer: What do you think about national identity? How do you identify yourself?
Pushkin Boy 2: I’m European.
Pushkin Boy 3: I’m also European, because I have different nationalities in my history.

Interviewer: If someone asked you, “Who are you?” what would you say? Would you say, “I am Estonian,” “I am Russian,” or a mix of those?
Pushkin Boy 6: I would say that I’m European. That’s the best.

Students at Tolstoy School exhibit fewer tendencies to assert a Europeanness of any kind. One student (Tolstoy Girl 2) jokingly points out that it was hard to feel European while living in Estonia because “according to the
documents [Estonia is part of Europe], but really it’s like the third world.” The responses from Tolstoy School students are consistent with Pushkin School students, however, in identifying multiple possible definitions of Russophone and in failing to constitute being “Estonian” beyond legal citizenship:

Tolstoy Girl 2: I can say that I am mostly Russian. I don't have any Estonians in my family, and we have also some members of the family who are from Kazakhstan.
Tolstoy Girl 1: I am also mixed. I have my father's family from Ukraine and my mother’s family from Ukraine and Russia.
Tolstoy Girl 3: For me it’s a very difficult question, because I have two different fathers, and also have grandmothers from different places. But I am Russian. I can clearly state it.
Tolstoy Boy 1: I can clearly say that I’m not Estonian. I don’t have any family members who are Estonians. I have some relatives from Russia, from Ukraine, from Poland, and even from Mongolia.

These students reject an Estonian national identity but do not eagerly emphasize a distinct Europeanness. However it does not automatically follow that their lack of eagerness to identify as European means that they do not interpret being European as an attractive alternative to being Russophone in Estonia. The students from Tolstoy School explicitly expressed a desire to use their European citizenship to harness opportunities outside of Estonia. For the students at Tolstoy School, performing and experiencing Europeanness through the exercise of the rights afforded by EU citizenship is regarded as a legitimate and welcome alternative from performing and experiencing Estonian citizenship, even if they do not eagerly embrace a European identity.
Practicing European Citizenship as an Alternative to Estonian Citizenship

The Russophone student interviewees actively view the value of European citizenship in terms of their right to access European (read: non-Estonian) spaces of opportunity. This is apparent regardless of whether the student espouses an explicitly European identity or not. Like Estonian students, they are interested in gaining economic and human capital via the rights afforded to them by European citizenship. But the types of human capital that Russophone students allude to are different than that spoken of by Estonian students. I argue that this results from the Russophone students’ positionalities as the Other in Estonia.

The Russophone students with Estonian/EU citizenship are unsurprisingly concerned with their future financial successes, which influences much of their plans to practice European citizenship via the right to move for work and study. They largely perceive Europe as a place of opportunities to acquire more economic capital and financial security than Estonia:

Tolstoy Girl 1: The economies are more developed there.
Tolstoy Boy 3: Conditions for future life in our country are, roughly speaking, terrible. Small wages, high prices and so on—it just drives you away from here.

Interviewer: So you think Estonia is less developed than [Western Europe]?
Pushkin Boy 4: Of course.
Pushkin Boy 6: Yes.
Pushkin Boy 7: I also think this.
Pushkin Boy 5: Let's just say Estonia is not the richest country of the European Union.
Comparing these responses to those of the Estonian students, it appears that young people, regardless of ethnolinguistic identity, make the assumption that economic and human capital is more readily available in Western Europe in general. This is a worthwhile observation to make because it calls attention to the fact that while many of the student respondents' perceptions are dependent upon their ethnolinguistic group (and positionality in Estonian society), there are assessments of the EU that are common across ethnic boundaries. The increased opportunity for financial and economic success in Europe is one such perception.

Russophone students also perceive Europe as a space in which to attain human capital because of the variety of educational opportunities in European institutions, high level of societal development, a “prestige” associated with Europeanness, and the low(er) cost of tuition. For example:

Pushkin Boy 3:  I think it’s good to be a European citizen because it gives the possibility to study in the EU.

Pushkin Boy 2:  When I was in the Ukraine this summer, I just told everyone, “Oh, you know, I’m a European citizen.” I boasted a little…and I think, for example, if you go to Ukraine or Russia you would get better opportunities with a European diploma…

Pushkin Boy 7:  I want to go to Denmark to university.

Tolstoy Girl 1:  I have already tried to enter into university in Western Europe. I still have options here [in Estonia] as well, but still, I want to go abroad.

While there are similarities in Russophone and Estonian students’ conceptions of European citizenship as a path to accumulating human capital,
the subtle difference between how the students plan to use such capital is an important element in this discussion. The Russophone students do not classify the value of European human capital in terms of how they can use it upon their return to Estonia, or to improve Estonian society upon returning home. This distinction and its implications will be discussed in greater detail in this chapter’s section regarding migration.

Significantly, Russophone students speak about acquiring a type of human capital that Estonian students never mention. Russophone students speak explicitly about performing and experiencing their European citizenship as a means to escape the discrimination and/or disadvantages they encounter in Estonia. The Russophone students’ perception that opportunities to succeed in Europe are not limited because of Russophone identity reveals that there is a human capital available to them in Europe that is not available in Estonia. The perception is that this human capital available to them in Europe will allow them to circumvent the politics of identity in Estonia that put them in a disadvantaged position in the nation. This is demonstrated by their characterization of life in Estonia versus life in Europe:

Tolstoy Girl 3: It’s valuable to me that I have European citizenship. That means that I can leave Estonia at any time... I want to leave here and I want to live in another country. I think we [Russophones] can only vacation in Estonia. But we can’t really study or work here. It’s still very different from Europe.

Pushkin Boy 6: We are Europeans. If you compare the living conditions [in Estonia], for example, to France or Germany, you maybe want to go there because it is now like one big country, the European Union.
Tolstoy Girl 1: We [Russophones] don’t have any prospects here. We can study, but we don’t have a really clear future. We can study here, but we can’t find any work…when I leave Estonia, I won’t miss this country. I will only miss my family and friends.

Pushkin Boy 3: ...[Estonia] is still some kind of post-Soviet society. It’s only developing into the European way, and you have [learn] to survive here.

The Russophone students do not speak about encountering ethnic identity based barriers in Europe. They speak about going to Finland, or to Denmark, or to the UK, and they do so without any reservation about the prospects for their success. Several of the students state how “many,” “most,” or “almost everyone” in the Russophone minority thinks about or plans to go abroad, indicating that (to the students at least) the general wisdom in Tallinn’s Russophone community is that Europe holds the opportunities for a successful future. Pushkin Boy 5, who was formerly stateless, frankly describes the magnitude of Europe’s appeal for him: “For me [being European] is important. And that’s why I applied for Estonian citizenship: to go to Europe.”

The ability to access and move through the European space of rights without being hampered by the identity politics in Estonia is thus transformed into a unique type of human capital for these Russophone students: European identity and citizenship is a viable, legitimate, and prestigious alternative to Estonian citizenship and the unstable identity of “Russophone in Estonia.” Again, we see how conceptions of the national affect conceptions of the supranational in the preceding instance by a Russophone student’s use of national citizenship as a means to the ultimate end of accessing European citizenship rather than as a
vehicle to participate in Estonian society. The utility of the unique human capital of Europeanness as alternative to Estonianness is useful to, and therefore desired by, Russophone students because of their marginalized position at the national level.

As with the Estonian students, the Russophone students’ positionalities within Estonian society have a great impact on how they perceive and conceive of Europeanness and European citizenship. Importantly, however, the Russophone students’ perspectives produce radically different characterizations of Europe in focus groups. Russophone students candidly describe their chances for advancement in Estonia as limited at best, and make no mention of loyalty to the Estonian nation-state or attachment to the “Estonianness” of their national citizenships.

Consequently, this data indicates that the dynamics operating between Estonian and Russophone students’ national and supranational citizenships differ based on their positionalities within Estonian society. Furthermore, these Russophone students’ experiences in and movement through Estonian society have affected multi-layered characterizations of European citizenship in economic, social, and cultural terms. Russophone students recognize and speak to the greater economic development of Europe and the subsequent financial success that can be derived from that space. But there is no conveyance of loyalty to Estonia or desire to better the nation-state with economic and human capital acquired in Europe. Because European citizenship grants them access to greater economic, educational, and socio-cultural opportunities than they would
have access to in Estonia, it is couched as an attractive *alternative* to Estonian citizenship and its limited opportunities.

**“Outlier” Students’ Views of Europe**

The “outlier” student respondents have perspectives on and experiences in Estonian society that are distinct from young people situated wholly within the ethnic Estonian or Russophone communities, which in turn affects their perceptions about Europeanness and the value of European citizenship. It is necessary to specifically address these students’ perceptions of Europeanness and European citizenship because although their numbers are few, they represent a growing segment of Tallinn, Estonia’s youth population.

As discussed in Chapter Four, the outlier students’ positionalities at the national level are unique because they cannot be put into neat associations between mother tongue, school language medium, and ethnolinguistic identity. Given the unevenness of their positionalities in Estonian society, it is unsurprising that each of the “outlier” students speaks about Europe and their European citizenships in ways that are distinct from each other. Furthermore, these students’ responses about European citizenship do not necessarily match the tenor of the responses of Estonian-only students, who view Europeanness as additive to Estonianness, or Russophone-only students, who view Europeanness as an alternative to Estonianness.

Like the other student respondents, the “outlier” students speak about European citizenship in terms of opportunity to enhance economic mobility
through educational attainment and the acquisition of cultural capital. The “outlier” students value higher education in Europe is because it provides a more well-rounded study course and the economies are better developed and offer more opportunities for career advancement. But the “outlier” students each articulated interest in a different type of human capital that could be acquired in Europe. For instance, O-Pushkin Boy 1 notes that, in addition to having access to higher salaries and good work experience from European jobs, he values his EU citizenship because “it’s really cool to be a part of something so big, and also it connects many people and it’s easier to cooperate with different European countries.”

O-Pushkin Boy 1 demonstrates an affinity for the pan-European atmosphere and identity that Brussels has tried so hard to engender. This attitude is similar to some of his classmates at Pushkin School. However, O-Pushkin Boy 1 also decisively states that he plans to return to Estonia after gaining some work experience in Europe because “I love my country… Estonia will stay in my heart forever,” which is an attitude that only students at Estonian-medium schools A and B exhibit.

O-Koidula Girl 5’s responses also have unique elements, some of which are voiced by her ethnic Estonian classmates at Koidula School, others of which are voiced by Russophone students at Russian-medium schools. For instance, O-Koidula Girl 5 speaks in the following manner about how her identity, citizenships, and opportunities in Europe are bound up together:
When somebody asks me what nationality I am, I say Estonian, but half Russian as well. But when I am approached, and somebody asks who I am, I say Estonian, and Russian, and a little but German, and a little bit Polish… Ok, it has affected me a lot that I have lived in Estonia, and for three weeks in Russia every year. But still, I have an [Estonian] national identity. At the same time, I would say that I am an European as well. I like how it has given me many opportunities, and I know that I will use them a lot. For example, in the next year I want to go abroad… But I want to go abroad and stay there. Because in Estonia, there are not so many opportunities for me—Estonia is too small for me. I want to get connections and I want to live somewhere else. I will travel to Estonia to see my friends and family and so on, but I don't want to live here.

Her identification as an Estonian and explicit espousal of an Estonian national identity echo the views of her Estonian classmates. But her low assessment of Estonian opportunities and intentions to perform her supranational identity by living in Europe rather than in Estonia are more in line with those of Russophone students.

For these two students, the language medium of the school they attend and their self-identification as Estonian are not accurate indicators of their perceptions and conceptions of Europeanness. O-Koidula Girl 5 and O-Pushkin Boy 1’s responses indicate unique positionalities within Estonian society that are neither wholly characterized by the assured confidence of the ethnic Estonian students or the political and social alienation of the Russophone students. This demonstrates the complex interaction of their positions in both Estonian and Russophone spaces and how that complexity extends to their conceptualizations of supranational citizenship.

However the situation is again different for O-Pushkin Girl 2. She identifies as Estonian although her mother tongue is Russian and her poor Estonian
language skills affect her positionality in Estonian society. Subsequently, this affects her characterization of the principle value of European citizenship, particularly with regards to educational opportunities. As of 2012, the higher education instruction in state-funded Estonian universities is no longer offered in Russian. As such, O-Pushkin Girl 2 interprets her educational opportunities in Estonia to be next to nothing because of her language skills and plans to use the right to movement within Europe to go to a university in Finland where programs are available in English:

> From this year, all [higher] education would be transferred to the Estonian language… my mother thinks that we should study in Estonian in university. But she knows that I don’t learn [speak] Estonian… I want to go to Finland [for university] because English, for me, it’s more easier to speak than Estonian.

Her attitude towards studying in an Estonian university is pessimistic because of the difficulty she has with the Estonian language. That being said, her tone and general countenance denotes a socio-cultural alienation stemming from the lack of educational opportunities for someone without high quality Estonian skills. Her European citizenship thus becomes a vehicle for circumnavigating a disadvantaged position in her home nation.

O-Taamsaare Boy 1, whose marked conflictedness about his identity within Estonian society was discussed in the previous chapter, speaks about his European citizenship in terms of the opportunity it gives him to find where he truly belongs. Interestingly, he does not tie his feelings of unease regarding his position in Estonian society to discrimination, as do the Russophone students.
But neither does he express feelings of belonging or attachment to Estonia like the Estonian students. This lack of attachment, however, is not because my parents are Russian. It’s just I have never really felt like I’m… not that I’m not welcome here. But I’ve not really felt like I belong here. I don’t think that I belong in Russia, either, or the Ukraine. I just think that’s not my place. [Estonia] isn’t my place either. I need to find my place.

O-Taamsaare Boy 1 has set his sights not only on Western Europe, but also the USA, for his future prospects. This analysis of his responses indicates that his uneasy positionality in Estonia, which results from having Estonian and Russophone spaces as part of his daily personal geographies, affects a conceptualization of European citizenship as a means to discover a place of belonging.

The responses of the “outlier” student respondents show that a students’ positionality within the nation affects their conceptions of their supranational citizenship, which is consistent with the conclusions drawn from the responses of the Estonian and Russophone students. The interactions between these students’ national and supranational citizenships are unique because “outlier” students’ positionalities in Estonian society are uneven—their mother tongue, school language medium, and ethnolinguistic identity do not form neat associations. Because of these uneven positionalities in Estonian society, their conceptualizations of European citizenship may echo those of both their Estonian and Russophone peers. As such, the “outlier” students’ responses show both additive and alternative ideas about their European citizenship, but the additive
or alternative conceptions do not line up clearly with their school language medium as they do with their peers who have uniform Estonian or Russophone heritages.

O-Pushkin Boy 1 embraces both a pan-European identity and a love for Estonia, which is not exhibited by any other student respondent. O-Pushkin Girl 2 says that she feels Estonian, like the students in Estonian-language schools, but values her European citizenship because it provides opportunities for her to circumvent the linguistic challenges she faces in Estonia, like the students in the Russian-medium schools. O-Koidula Girl 5 specifically states that she is Estonian, Russophone, and European, which is not stated by any other student respondent. But she also views European citizenship as a tool for circumnavigating the limited opportunities she perceives to be in Estonia, an attitude expressed by the students in Russian-medium schools. O-Taamsaare Boy 1 describes his desires to go to Western Europe as a means to find his place of belonging, like many Russophone students, but does not cite instances of discrimination or marginalization in his responses as the Russophone students do.

My observation from analyzing the responses of the “outlier” students is that it is difficult to make generalizations about the attitudes Europeanness and European citizenship because these students’ responses do not exhibit clear patterns of thinking in the way that responses of Estonian or Russophone students do. The results of my analysis suggest that while there may be broad patterns in the dynamics between national and European citizenship within
ethnolinguistic groups, there are many more variations in the dynamics amongst young people with less stable, more heterogeneous identities. This observation further supports the argument that the oscillations between national and European citizenships hinge upon postitionalities within the nation. European citizenship must be understood as a highly contextual institution that may have been intended to foster a pan-European community that transcends nationalisms, but that in reality is engaged with within the framework of national considerations.

**Impact of Student Perceptions of Europe in the Real World: Youths’ Intentions to Migrate**

The European integration process is on a timeline of increasing mobility. In its earliest days of the post-World War II era, European integration focused on increasing the ease and flow of the mobility of goods and services across borders. In the decades since the mobility of workers in an integrated Europe has been an increasingly significant issue. While the elimination of impediments to physical mobility across borders has been successful, the issue of worker mobility remains a contentious topic. Globalization and the westward enlargement of the EU have fostered critical changes in the philosophy of EU governmentality, specifically in the centralization of neoliberal ideals “premised on a mantra of market rationality and on the active encouragement of laissez-faire economic systems” (K. Mitchell 2006b, 389; Favell 2008; Favell and Hansen 2002). For “ordinary” Europeans, cross-border mobility is the marker of EU
citizenship. The preponderance of labor mobility is evinced by the codification of the free movement of persons as a fundamental part of the European fabric (Treaty on European Union 1992).

In the past two decades in particular, successive EU treaties, policy frameworks, and initiatives have situated the future of Europe within the global economic markets and equated a successful, peaceful, and cohesive Europe with citizens who have the “occupational mobility… skills, and adaptability ” necessary to compete in globally competitive markets (“European Year of Worker’s Mobility” 2006; European Commission 2013). Intra-European migration is seen as an indispensable process for both ensuring the EU’s place in the global markets and providing economic security within the EU (Favell 2008). Therefore, mobility plays a key role in the imaginings of EU citizenship because worker adaptability and the ability to operate profitably in multiple environments is “implicitly associated with successful citizenship” (K. Mitchell 2006b, 397).

As is evident from the tenor of the vast majority of EU policies and discourses, mobility is understood primarily through the lens of employment and wage markets. To be sure, the economic disparities between the EU’s Eastern and Western member states have precipitated observable East to West labor migration flows due to wage levels. But data from this project reveals nonmonetary motivations and noneconomic dynamics are also components that set intra-EU mobility in motion, suggesting that understanding mobility requires looking beyond employment and wage markets. Furthermore, the evidence suggests that mobility can signify not only increased opportunities for economic
advancement, but also increased opportunities for the negotiation of identity, belonging, and socio-cultural enrichment.

This section explores the potential real-world impact of students’ varying attitudes toward Estonian and European citizenships in the context of students’ intentions to migrate out of Estonia for study and work. Exploring the students’ intentions to be mobile in the European space is important because it shows how their positionalities within Estonian society can affect real changes in the Estonian nation-state and the European Union through east-to-west migration. The students’ perceptions that the high quality educational, career, and social opportunities are in Western Europe mean that they are going to migrate out of Estonia to access them. Mobility therefore becomes an asset to young people (Cairns 2008) because they value their ability to move freely within Europe for the access it gives them to better education, better jobs, higher wages, and prestigious human capital.

The previous sections demonstrate that Estonian and Russophone students conceptualize European citizenship in very different ways based largely on their positionalities as part of the titular majority or Russophone minority. Although all student respondents view European citizenship as a vehicle for accessing better education, career, and economic opportunities, the Estonian students describe the human capital to be gained from European citizenship in very different ways than the Russophone students do. This distinction becomes even clearer when the students’ conceptions of European citizenship are compared to their plans to migrate to Europe for school and work.
This analysis is not aimed at making actual predictions of the student participants’ mobility. Rather, it is aimed at evaluating how their desires to migrate reflect varying notions of belonging in Estonia and in the EU. Just as there is a difference between whether the students view European citizenship as an additive or alternative to national citizenship, there is a difference in students’ plans to migrate for work and school. The Estonian students, who position themselves positively in Estonian society, and Russophone students, who position themselves negatively in Estonian society, describe their migration plans in very different ways. The remainder of this section analyzes these differences.

**Intentions to Migrate**

The student respondents’ intentions to study and work abroad are broken down by school language medium because, as previously demonstrated, there is a high correlation between students’ ethnolinguistic identification with the titular majority or Russophone minority and the language of instruction at their schools. The data in Table 6.1 shows that the intentions to migrate do not vary between the students at Estonian-medium and Russian-medium schools. This finding is consistent with the perception by all of my interviewees that high quality educational and career-related opportunities exist outside of Estonia.

The other characteristic that does not vary highly between the Estonian-medium and Russian-medium school students is intended destination. The evidence in Table 6.2 shows that the vast majority of my student participants specify Western Europe as their intended destination. While this can be argued
as a function of geographic proximity, relative location cannot wholly explain the prevalence of Europe-oriented aspirations, especially in a world where advancements in transportation technology have compressed space-time. The significant changes in political geography effected by the creation of the supranational space of the EU have introduced convenience, ease, expanded labor rights, and increased accessibility into the mobility equation for European youths via European citizenship.

**Table 6.1. Intentions to Study and Work Abroad by School Language Medium**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Language Medium</th>
<th>Intentions to Study and Work Abroad, Raw Number (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes (86%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estonian</td>
<td>12 (86%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russian</td>
<td>12 (80%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>24 (83%)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 6.2. Intended Destination Abroad by School Language Medium**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Language Medium</th>
<th>Intended Destination, Raw Number (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Western Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estonian</td>
<td>13 (93%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russian</td>
<td>10 (71.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>23 (82%)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Length of Stay**

The divergence in my student participants’ migration plans appears when lengths of stay and reasons for lengths of stay are interrogated. Although it must be acknowledged that intention to go and stay abroad (or not) is different from
actual movement (Cairns 2008), students’ responses demonstrate that most plan to leave Estonia with a timeline for their stay in mind. Whether students actually move in the future is not entirely relevant because this analysis is interested in how the students’ senses of belonging or exclusion in Estonia relate to their stated intentions to be mobile. My research yielded evidence that among the student interviewees planned length of stay varies between the students in Russian-medium schools and those in Estonian-medium schools.

As shown in Table 6.3, half (7 of 14) of the students from Russian-medium schools plan long term stays abroad, compared to the students from Estonian-medium schools, among whom only three out of 14 plan long term stays. This comparison becomes even more significant when the students’ reasons for long-term departure are examined. The students from Estonian-medium schools spoke about the value of long-term stays abroad in terms of diversity of choice, personal growth, and stability that could be gained from Western Europe’s opportunities. The students from Russian-medium schools, however, spoke about the value of long-term stays abroad in terms of escape from Estonia, a place where they had little or no opportunities because of their ethnolinguistic identity, as evidenced by the following exchange:

Interviewer: Do you think there’s less discrimination there [in Western Europe] and that’s why you want to go get a job or go to school? Or do you think there’s more money there and that’s why you want to go?
Tolstoy Girl 2: I think its both, discrimination and money.
Tolstoy Girl 1: We [Russians] don’t have any prospects here… we don’t have a really clear future… we can’t find any work. When I leave Estonia, I won’t miss this country.…

Interviewer: You can’t find work here? Why?

Tolstoy Boy 2: This is not a big secret that Estonians live better than Russians.

This pattern amongst the responses speaks to James Hughes’ (Hughes 2005, 742–3) theory that “an ethnic minority that out-migrates because of opposition to a discriminatory ethnic hegemony, from a state where they have weak historical roots, and where they are not wanted by the majority, are not likely to return if they can find better prospects elsewhere, even if discrimination stops.” The Russophone students’ responses reflect the multiple and cross-cutting concerns that influence intentions to migrate. Moreover, their responses show how the act of migration—or the act of talking about migration—is mobilized by Russophone youths as a vehicle for negotiating the politics of identity and citizenship in Estonia.

Table 6.3. Intended Length of Stay by School Language Medium

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Language Medium</th>
<th>Intended Length of Stay, Raw Number (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Long Term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estonian</td>
<td>3 (21%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russian</td>
<td>7 (54%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>10 (36%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 6.4. Intended Destination and Length of Stay by School Language Medium

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Destination, Raw Number (%)</th>
<th>Western Europe</th>
<th>World</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Russian-Medium</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long Term</td>
<td>10 (71.5%)</td>
<td>3 (21.5%)</td>
<td>1 (7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short Term</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Estonian-Medium</strong></td>
<td>13 (93%)</td>
<td>1 (7%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long Term</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short Term</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>23 (82%)</td>
<td>4 (14%)</td>
<td>1 (4%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.3 also shows that the number of students intending to return to Estonia after short term stays abroad was much higher in Estonian-medium schools. While 11 of the 14 students from Estonian-medium schools indicated they wished to return to Estonia, seven of the 14 students from Russian-medium schools planned to return. All of the student respondents who planned short-term stays abroad mentioned the importance of family and friends as a key factor in wanting to return to Estonia. But there is a deviation in some of the reasonings for planned short-term migration based on responses, or lack thereof, about patriotic feelings towards Estonia.

Estonia is spoken of in neutral terms, if spoken of at all, by 13 of the 14 Russian-medium school students who plan to go abroad. (The only student from a Russian-medium school that articulated nationalist feelings as part of his desire to return to Estonia was O-Pushkin Boy 1, who is of mixed heritage.) But students in Estonian-medium schools who are planning short-term stays abroad frequently cite patriotic reasons for wanting to return as well as for family and
friends. For instance, these students from Estonian-medium schools speak about a deep connection to their homeland:

Tammsaare Girl 4: I’m a patriotic person, and I’d really like to [return to] Estonia.

Tammsaare Girl 2: I want to travel just to see how people live elsewhere and you can bring it back to Estonia and make things here better.

Koidula Girl 4: For me, Estonia is like… a close to heart thing.

These responses indicate that nationalist politics are also interwoven into Estonian students’ intended mobility practices in the EU, but in a starkly different manner than in Russophone students’ motivations. The act of migration is certainly bound up with the politics of identity for ethnic Estonian students, but is cast as a contribution to the vitality of their Estonian citizenship rather than a means to reject Estonian citizenship.

Russophone students’ responses, in contrast, indicate that feelings of exclusion and a lack of connection to Estonia underlie their motivations for migration:

Tolstoy Girl 3: I feel independent… I will leave here and I won’t miss it—this country—a lot.

Pushkin Girl 1: ...for Estonian people, I’m Russian. But my friends from Russia, they say that I am Estonian. For me, I don’t know who I am… I’d like go study [abroad], and then maybe, who knows?

Pushkin Boy 7: Since my childhood I really couldn’t define who I am [nationally], and maybe that’s why I want to go [abroad].
Tolstoy Girl 2: When I leave Estonia, I won’t miss this country. I will only miss my family and friends.

These responses intimate that the politics of identity at work in the lives of the Russophone students operate to alienate rather than validate. These politics have worked unevenly, demonstrated by the fact that in some cases students’ identities are defined by an explicit sense of dislocation from Estonia, while others’ express nebulous and uncertain identities that will achieve solidity and definition outside of Estonia. Regardless, mobility’s link to the politics of identity for Russophone students is assembled within the context of rejecting Estonian space.

This discussion of the differences in driving forces behind intentions to return to Estonia reveals the political and socio-cultural motivations that animate student migrants in Tallinn. I argue that the lack of national pride or connection to the homeland in Russian-medium school students could make them more likely to be influenced by experiences abroad to stay out of Estonia for a longer period of time. A planned short-term migrant youth may be more likely to become an actual long-term migrant youth as a result of the interplay between multiple determinants, such as national identity politics and economic desires.

Conclusions

This chapter has presented evidence that national and supranational citizenships relate to each other in varying ways because an individual’s positionality at the national level will directly affect his or her conceptions of
supranational citizenship. Estonian and Russophone students’ experiences of European citizenships are different because their experiences in Estonian society are different.

The contrasting positionalities of Estonian and Russophone students result in highly differentiated conceptualizations of Europeanness and European citizenship. The Estonian students view being European and having European citizenship as attributes that are additive to their Estonian national citizenship that enhance their Estonianness. The Russophone students, however, articulate Europeanness and European citizenship as alternatives to an Estonian national citizenship, and as tools for circumnavigating the disadvantages that they encounter because of their minority membership.

The analysis of the data gathered from the student participants indicate that national and European citizenships exist simultaneously but independently and interact complexly. The complexity of this interaction is subject to the vagaries of the students’ positionalities at the national level. The focus group conversations suggest that European citizenship is not a monolithic, static modality of belonging, but one of diverse conceptualizations of inclusion and exclusion that emerge from varying experiences at the national level.

Consequently the meaning of and potential for mobility, a core tenet of European citizenship traditionally cast as an economically motivated act, varies across this group of students. The Russophone students, who have negative positionalities in Estonia, tend to plan to long-term stays abroad, whereas the Estonian students, who have positive postitionalities, tend to plan short-term stays abroad.
Significantly, this demonstrates that students’ European citizenships are multi-layered because it is not only economic considerations that are affecting the students’ plans for short-term or long-term stays abroad, but also socio-cultural considerations stemming from the politics of identity in Estonia. As such, for the young people in this study, there is no one definition of “Europeanness” and what it means to be a European citizen.
Chapter 7
Discussion

This dissertation has explored the ways in which young people in a divided society conceptualize, negotiate, and contest citizenship, identity, and belonging in national, post-national, and urban spaces. Using focus groups from students in their final year of secondary school in Tallinn, Estonia and in-depth interviews with their teachers, this study has illustrated the ways in which young people contend with and mediate varying discourses of citizenship and identity within and through everyday spaces, particularly the space of the school. While this study is not large enough to be generalizable to all young people in divided societies, its value is its ability to engage with and interrogate theoretical approaches to citizenship, identity, and belonging and to explore the political agency of young people in the context of their everyday geographies.

This study has focused specifically on examining the key spaces of young people’s personal geographies, including the school and the urban landscape, in order to illustrate the complex ways that young people encounter multiple and sometimes competing discourses of citizenship and identity in national and post-national communities. By focusing on how young people negotiate different citizenship discourses, this study has attempted to show that although the liberal democratic discourses of “universal” citizenship in Western nation-states extend formal citizenship to all members of society, substantive citizenship is delineated
by the particularisms of the dominant group, leaving some individuals and groups socio-politically marginalized.

In addressing the complexities of youth narratives of belonging and identity, this dissertation has suggested that approaching various citizenship discourses as separate entities fails to produce a comprehensive understanding of the ways that individuals conceptualize and experience citizenships at different scales. Current discussions of citizenship focus on particular elements of citizenship transformations—for instance, the decoupling of ethnicity and citizenship or the decoupling of rights from citizenship (Wylie 2004; Hahn 1998; Marston 1990; Soysal 1997; Soysal 2000; Delanty 1997). In focusing on particular kinds of transformations, these literatures often fail to account for the simultaneity of citizenship modalities in contemporary nation-states. Post-national citizenship, for instance, has not replaced or superseded national citizenship; rather, it interacts with national citizenship, creating overlapping systems of rights, responsibilities, privileges, identities, and exclusions. What has not been thoroughly examined, however, is how citizenship discourses coexist and interact and, therefore, inform and are informed by each other. Considering the simultaneity of multi-scalar discourses allows citizenships to be viewed as amalgamations of political identities, relationships, and experiences that are produced and reproduced at multiple sites.
Citizenship Discourses: Simultaneity and Interaction

This study addressed multiple modalities of citizenship and the scales at which their discourses are encountered, negotiated, and understood. Rather than rejecting any specific theorizations of citizenships in contemporary scholarship, this study has considered citizenships as institutions that incorporate practices and processes addressed by many different citizenship theories. This approach involves refocusing the discussion of citizenship away from narrow assessments of separate discourses, instead interrogating the ways that multiple discourses interact and influence each other and, subsequently, conceptualizations of citizenships.

The findings in this study suggest that the tensions between the universalisms that define the ideal liberal democratic citizenship and the particularisms that ultimately delineate societal belonging undergird the complex coexistence and interaction between multiple citizenship discourses. For instance, the students in this study negotiate belonging and citizenship in Estonia by contending with both the particularisms of the Estonian nation-building project and the universality of liberal democratic citizenship. This tension is particularly acute in divided societies, such as Estonia, that remain socio-spatially polarized along ethnocultural lines. As discussed in Chapter 4, both Estonian and Russophone students attempt to reconcile the tension between nationalist particularisms and liberal democratic universalisms by incorporating discourses of multicultural and post-national citizenship into their narratives of belonging in Estonia.
Multicultural and post-national citizenship discourses aim to address cultural diversity and alleviate tensions between majority and minority groups. But the narratives of the student participants illustrate that the particularisms that delineate belonging and citizenship are actually complicated and multiplied by multicultural and post-national discourses. The students often frame the terms of belonging in Estonia within multiculturalist rhetoric that permeates both Estonian national and European post-national discourses. Both Estonian and Russophone students deputize “tolerance” of cultural difference and diversity into their narratives of citizenship. A common theme running through the student narratives of citizenship is that being “tolerant” of cultural difference in Estonia is important because it is the “European” way of treating nationalities or because it is how different groups in a democracy make integration a “two-way street.” The students’ references to multicultural, non-assimilatory integration practices and “Europeanness” in their narratives about national citizenship demonstrate that their conceptualizations of citizenship at one scale intersect with the discourses of citizenship at other scales.

The coexistence and interaction of multi-scalar citizenship discourses was also demonstrated by the student participants’ conceptualizations of their European citizenships. Patterns emerged amongst how students perceived EU citizenship based on their positionality in the Estonian majority or Russophone minority. The students’ experiences of and encounters with citizenship, identity, and belonging in the national community affected the ways in which they engaged with their Europeanness and the opportunities afforded to them by EU
citizenship. The Russophone students, for instance, tended to understand European citizenship as an alternative to Estonian citizenship that offered them better opportunities and a freedom from the social marginalization and political alienation they experience in Estonia. Estonian students, in contrast, were more apt to conceptualize European citizenship in additive terms—i.e. a useful, but secondary, citizenship that augments their Estonian citizenship. These students’ broadly differing perceptions of European space suggest that Sidaway's (2006) reflections on the diverse understandings of the EU at the macro level could also apply to young people’s understandings of it.

The complex interaction of national and post-national citizenship discourses is evident in the ways that the students used national identity politics to narrate and negotiate their European citizenships. So while Soysal’s (1997) observations of a shift in the nature of claims-making and narratives of belonging is valid, addressing citizenships as discrete entities that exist on different levels of a scalar hierarchy will yield a fragmentary account of how individuals and groups conceptualize, negotiate, and contest them. Considering the coexistence and interaction of various modalities of citizenship will render a more complete understanding of how individuals and groups conceptualize belonging and citizenship.

Further analysis of the students’ narratives of belonging revealed that in spite of their espousals of the values of tolerance and acceptance of cultural diversity, the politics of identity are still central to the way that these young people experience, negotiate, and practice their citizenships. In fact, the post-
national and multicultural discourses that are aimed at alleviating conflicts between majority and minority groups actually serve to complicate and multiply the identities that the students ascribe to legitimate citizens and those deemed “unassimilable.” The narratives of the Estonian and Russophone students exposed a fundamental disagreement on what identities and practices should be tolerated, which is indicative of a wider conflict over what multiculturalism actually is and how it should be practiced. The students’ varying opinions on what qualifies for tolerance and how cultural difference should be addressed reflect ongoing debates in academic and political circles. The lack of consensus in theoretical and policy discussions about whether multiculturalism is best practiced by recognizing difference (Kymlicka 2007) or emphasizing commonality (Balint 2010) seems to have trickled down into the ways that cultural diversity is talked about on an everyday basis.

A holistic assessment of the students’ narratives of their citizenship practices ultimately revealed that “tolerance” is a mere keyword used to mask exclusionary conceptualizations of belonging with a multicultural citizenship ideal that they perceive as the “correct” way to address cultural difference in a liberal democratic, European Estonia. The varying ways that the students mobilize tolerance in their narratives further demonstrates the pervasiveness of the tensions between the universalisms and particularisms that are used to define citizenship. For instance, the Estonian students tended to tolerate Russophone identity up to a certain point as long as the Russophone individual in question made efforts to assimilate and adopt Estonian cultural norms. The Russophone
student participants, in contrast, conceived of tolerance as a way to maintain
and/or assert their Russophone identities. Some Russophone students spoke of
the importance of tolerating Estonian culture as a means to acquire the
Estonians’ tolerance of their Russophone culture. Other Russophone students
mobilized tolerance as a means of classifying themselves as properly respectful
of cultural diversity and Estonians as intolerant and, subsequently, not
multicultural enough.

This finding indicates that the mobilization of tolerance in discourses of
citizenship merits further study. Examinations of tolerance and its uses in
contemporary liberal democratic societies should build on the works of Brown
(2008), Forst (2003), Dobbernack and Modood (2011), and Gill, Johnstone, and
Williams (2012), interrogating the ways in which “multicultural” ideals and values
are deployed in everyday spaces. Divided societies that are situated within liberal
democratic frameworks, such as Estonia and Northern Ireland, could provide
particularly fertile ground for researching the ways in which tolerance has
become depoliticized and, subsequently, used as a means for legitimizing the
exclusion of individuals and groups deemed “too different” from the dominant
cultural norm.

Youth Conceptualizations of Citizenship: Encountering, Experiencing, and
Navigating Spaces of Belonging

The narratives of the student study population revealed that young people
encounter, negotiate, and navigate multiple discourses of citizenship on a daily
basis in the everyday spaces of their personal geographies. As expected, the school was a key site where the young people encountered and contended with varying ideas about citizenship, identity, and belonging. By comparing the data gathered from student focus groups and teacher interviews I found that teacher attitudes and classroom climate served to mediate the manner in which discourses of nationalism, multiculturalism, and post-nationalism are presented to young people. Although the teachers in this study operate with the same formal curricula objectives their personal narratives and attitudes had noticeable impact on how the formal curricula relating to citizenship and identity circulated in the classroom, a circumstance that has been observed elsewhere (E. Doyle Stevick 2007; McGlynn et al. 2004; Michaels and Stevick 2009). These findings indicate that the narratives that circulate within and through the space of the school are subject to the politics of identity and citizenship in wider society through the attitudes and teaching styles of teachers.

The results of this study suggest that the school, although a crucial space in which these young people develop understandings of citizenship and identity, is simply one space among many in youths’ everyday, personal geographies where they encounter citizenship discourses and practices. This finding supports Holloway and Valentine’s (2000) argument that young people’s geographies are complex and that the school should be viewed as one space situated within a larger network of spaces that youths’ move through and within on a daily basis. The discourses and experiences that young people encounter in their everyday personal geographies, such as homes, neighborhoods, and city landscapes are
equally influential to their conceptualizations of citizenship and the terms of belonging.

Urban space was found to be particularly significant to the student participants’ delineations of belonging, identity, and citizenship in Tallinn. The findings in this study suggest that young people’s daily citizenship practices work to inform and are informed by the various discourses of belonging and identity that they are exposed to in the everyday spaces of the city. Estonia’s socio-spatial divisions reflect and are reflected by Tallinn’s landscapes and the way that these young people navigate urban spaces. The student respondents consistently ascribed meanings to particular parts of the city and used these “mental maps” to locate particular identities within certain urban spaces. The students’ ascriptions of meanings to particular neighborhoods tended to perpetuate and mediate the projection of hegemonic narratives and identities and the marginalization of minority narratives and identities. Contestations over Tallinn’s Bronze Soldier memorial, for instance, revealed that the students used the city’s memorialized landscapes to conceptualize citizenship through the “correct” retelling of history, and to legitimate the exclusion of individuals and groups that subscribed to the “wrong” version of history.

The young people in this study also negotiated and contested the terms of citizenship and belonging by navigating language spaces in Tallinn. The students’ descriptions of the city indicated that language usage was a common means of determining the identities and meanings ascribed to particular neighborhoods of Tallinn, a practice that featured heavily in their
conceptualizations of citizenship. Estonian student respondents tended to view spaces where Russian was spoken most often as representative of the Russophone community’s disloyalty towards Estonia and their unwillingness to integrate properly into Estonian society. Furthermore, the Estonian students conceptualized meaningful access to the space rights as something available only to individuals who speak Estonian, and that those without proper Estonian language skills are, in fact, excluding *themselves* from substantive citizenship because of their intolerance of Estonia’s national language. Conversely, the Russophone students described Tallinn’s Russian-speaking neighborhoods as comfortable, safe spaces where Russophones were simply claiming the human right to identity. This finding indicates that future research on how language becomes spatialized in the city and subsequently folded into the spatial strategies of citizenship may deepen our understandings of how citizenship is practiced on a daily basis.

**Implications for Future Research**

This study has been instructive in explaining how young people understand, conceptualize, and negotiate multiple discourses of citizenship, identity, and belonging. Although the findings in this study are not generalizable across large populations, their engagements with theoretical concepts produce important questions about the way that scholars conceptualize the complex interactions of citizenship modalities and the politics of identity and how those interactions are spatialized on an everyday basis. The most important
implications of this study suggest several research pathways for future research that may deepen our understanding of youth geographies, citizenship, and divided societies.

One of the most significant implications of this finding is that the complex interaction of multiple citizenship discourses (re)produces multiple understandings of identities, belongings, and citizenships. Post-national and multicultural discourses of citizenship, for instance, are aimed at addressing cultural diversity and alleviating the tensions between the universalisms of liberal democratic citizenship and the particularisms of nation building projects. However, the results of this study imply that these discourses only serve to reinforce the particularisms that delineate belonging in society, thereby reproducing the ethnonational and ethnocultural boundaries in society.

The implication of this finding is particularly important for how we view divided societies at a broader level. Post-national and multicultural discourses aim to destabilize the boundaries that divide societies. But this research has demonstrated that they serve to reinforce those boundaries. What requires further investigation is the extent to which societal divisions can be destabilized at all and how the boundaries acquire fixity despite very conscious efforts to destabilize them. It's important not to naturalize group boundaries or to fall upon notions of deep, inherent, age-old differences while also recognizing that it's not easy to fully undermine entrenched differences. There's fluidity, but there's also fixity, and the question for those studying divided societies is how, and under what conditions, one seems to overtake the other.
This study also revealed the importance of everyday, lived geographies and urban spaces to young people’s experiences, negotiations, and understandings of belonging and citizenship in Estonia. This finding is important because it suggests that active processes of citizenship formation at national and post-national levels take place in spaces and places that are distinctly mundane, and therefore may not seem relevant to citizenship research at first glance. Such everyday, mundane spaces of young people’s personal geographies can play central roles in future research by revealing the seemingly banal ways in which the particularisms that delineate citizenship and belonging are reinforced and or reinterpreted, thereby giving a more comprehensive understanding of the processes and practices of contemporary modalities of citizenship.

The methodological limitations of this study present opportunities for future research to explore whether the findings here are consistent across larger populations of young people in Estonia. Because of the relatively small study population this project’s analysis contains gaps and absences that can be addressed by increasing the number of participants and study sites involved in the research. Future research projects that expand the study population control for variables such as gender and class will increase the reliability of the data and validity of results. Furthermore, increasing the number of study participants and study sites will provide the opportunity to apply quantitative research techniques to investigate the statistical significance and implications of youths’ responses and identity traits such as mother tongue, ethnolinguistic heritage, and legal citizenship status. Employing qualitative and quantitative techniques will provide
the opportunity to deepen the richness of the analysis and perhaps to increase
the generalizability of the study results not only within Estonia, but also to other
divided societies.

In sum, the findings of this study suggest that, at the broadest level, scholars need to examine how multi-scalar discourses of citizenship coexist and interact and how everyday spaces and places implicate and are implicated in those processes. If citizenships are amalgamations of multiple political identities and relationships, scholars will need to develop more nuanced understandings of how multiple citizenship discourse circulate within and through everyday spaces to influence the way that individuals interpret and assemble those multiple political identities and relationships. Conceptualizing citizenships as dynamic, multi-sited processes will allow scholars to better understand how individuals and groups delineate the boundaries of spaces of belonging and mediate access to spaces of rights.
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APPENDIX A – STUDENT PARTICIPANT INTAKE SURVEY

Name: _________________________________
Age: ____________

Please circle your answers to the following questions:
1. Are you male or female? Male Female
2. Are you a citizen of Estonia? Yes No
   If ‘no’, what is your legal status in Estonia? __________________________
3. What is your nationality? Estonian Russian
4. What is your mother tongue? Estonian Russian English
5. What other languages do you speak? (circle all that apply)
   None Estonian Russian English Other: ___________

Please answer the following questions:
6. Where were you born?
   City and country: ______________________________
7. Where were your parents born?
   Mother’s city and country of birth: ______________________________
   Father’s city of and country of birth: ______________________________
8. Where were your grandparents born?
   Mother’s parents’ places of birth:
   Grandmother: ______________________________
   Grandfather: ______________________________
   Father’s parents’ places of birth:
   Grandmother: ______________________________
   Grandfather: ______________________________
9. How long have you lived in Tallinn? _________________________________
APPENDIX B – FOCUS GROUP QUESTION TEMPLATE

1. As a geographer, I’m interested in the ways people use cities. Could you tell me about the parts of Tallinn where you feel comfortable, or not very comfortable?
   a. Are there parts of Tallinn that are “Russian” and other parts of the city that are “Estonian”? What are those places?
   b. Are there parts of Tallinn that are “neutral,” where everyone hangs out?

2. How are Russian-speakers and Estonians different? How are Russian-speakers and Estonians similar?
   a. Do you have many Estonian friends?

3. What makes someone “Estonian”?
   a. Is it possible for a Russian-speaker to be Estonian?

4. What is your national identity—do you feel Estonian? Why or why not?
   a. If you do not feel “Estonian,” what country do you identify with?

5. Do you learn about Tallinn’s national landmarks, memorials, and museums in school? Did you visit them on school trips?
   a. Have you ever visited the Museum of Occupations? Do you agree that Estonia was “occupied” by the Soviet Union?

6. When the Bronze Soldier statue was moved 5 years ago, it was covered heavily in the newspapers and on TV. How did/do you feel about the Bronze Soldier controversy? Do you think that the monument should have been moved from the park to the war cemetery? Why or why not?

7. Estonian joined the EU 7 years ago, when you were about 11 or 12. Does being “European” matter to you now? Do you think of yourself as Estonian, or European, or something else?

8. What do you learn about national identity in your school classes? What do you learn about citizenship? Have your classes influenced how you think about your identity, or does your life outside of school matter more to who you are?

9. When Estonia regained independence in 1991, not everyone who lived in the country was given citizenship—a lot of Russian-speakers were left without any citizenship, and had to pass Estonian language and history exams in order to get citizenship. Do you think this was fair, or do you think that everyone who lived in Estonia in 1991 should have automatically gained citizenship? Why do you feel that way?

10. Should people in Estonia all speak the same language and have the same culture?
APPENDIX C – INTERVIEW QUESTION TEMPLATES

A. History and Civics Teacher
1. Please tell me about the subject(s) that you teach. Do you have only Russian-speaking students, or only Estonians? Or both?
2. What would an Estonian say as the most important event(s) in Estonia’s history? What would Russian speakers say?
3. What is the greatest challenge in teaching your students about Estonia’s history?
4. How do you teach your students what national identity is? About what it means to be a citizen?
5. What does it mean to be an Estonian?
6. What does the city of Tallinn mean to an Estonian? Is it different for an Russian-speaker living in Tallinn?
7. What is a patriotic person? Are Estonians patriotic? Are Russians?
8. How are Estonians and Russian speakers similar? How are they different?
9. Do your students ask many questions about sensitive topics, such as Estonia’s Soviet historical legacy and/or the social divisions between Estonians and Russians? If so, how do you address their questions?
10. What do you think the students should learn from their civic education curriculum, i.e. when they graduate from secondary school, what should they know about themselves as residents of Estonia? As citizens (or not) of Estonia? What should they think about living alongside other ethnicities?
11. What parts of your classes interest your students the most? What do you do to make the curriculum interesting and important to your students?
12. If you could change things about the civic education curriculum, what would you add and what would you take away?
13. What kinds of European Union educational topics do you teach in your class?
14. Do you make it a priority to address civic education topics that come from the EU?
   a. If so, how do you balance it with the Estonian civic education curriculum?
   b. If not, why?
B. Geography Teacher
1. What types of geography do you teach during the school year—is it only physical geography, or do you also talk about human geography?
2. What makes Estonia unique? How do you teach that to your students?
3. What role does the land play in Estonians’ lives? When you think of a typically Estonian place, what is it?
4. What does the city of Tallinn mean to Estonians? To Russian speakers? What does the city of Narva mean to Estonians? To Russians?
5. How do you describe Estonia’s place in the world to your students—is it a European country? A Nordic country? An “Eastern European” country?
6. What topics does the Ministry of Education require to be part of the geography curriculum?
7. What is the greatest challenge in teaching your students about the human/political geography of Estonia, and how it has changed in the past 100 years? Do your students ask many questions about sensitive topics, such as Estonia’s Soviet historical legacy and/or the social divisions between Estonians and Russians? If so, how do you address their questions?
8. Why do your main goal in teaching your geography classes?
9. What do you think the students should learn from their geography lessons, i.e. when they graduate from secondary school, what should they know about Estonia’s place in the world? What should they know about the human geography of Estonia, i.e. the different ethnic groups that live here?
10. Which geography lessons interest your students the most? What do you do to make the curriculum interesting and important to your students?
11. What kinds of European Union educational topics do you teach in your class?

C. Language Arts Teacher
1. Please tell me about the subject(s) that you teach.
2. What is the importance of teaching students about the [Estonian/Russian] language? Do you also discuss literature?
3. Do you think that language is an important part of identity?
4. Do your students think that [Estonian/Russian] language is an important part of their identity and who they are?
5. What is the greatest challenge in teaching your students about citizenship and national identity issues? Why?
6. How important do you think school classes are to teaching young people about their identity? Why?
7. What do you want students should learn from this language class, i.e. what is the most important thing that they should know after finishing this class?
8. What parts of your class interests your students the most? What do you do to make the curriculum interesting and important to your students?
9. How do you feel about the Integration Laws that require 65% of school classes to be taught in Estonian?
10. What topics are required by the national curriculum that is set by the government?
   a. What lessons would you add to the curriculum for your class?
   b. What lessons would you take away from the curriculum?
11. Do your students ask many questions about sensitive topics, such as Estonia’s Soviet historical legacy and/or the social divisions between Estonians and Russians? If so, how do you address their questions?
12. Do you think it is important to observe Mother Tongue Day? Why or why not? How do you observe Mother Tongue Day in your class?