

# Bordering in Public Space in Tallinn, Estonia

“In Estonia, it feels like you have a stepmother. It is not your mother country. It is your stepmother country. But you don’t have any other choice. Stepmother is better than no mother at all. It feels like your stepmother doesn’t like you that much. But, well, I was born here.”





# **Bordering in Public Space in Tallinn, Estonia**

**A study on the fluidity and ambivalence of borders and their presence in public space.**

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## Executive summary

Estonia has a population of around 1.3 million. Estonians make up 69% of the population and the Russian-speaking minority makes up 26%. However, the Russian minority is in many ways a second-class citizen of Estonia. Various policies problematized the integration of the Russian minority after 1991. A section of these integration policies focused on aligning the Estonian language and culture with the state's sovereign space. These policies focused on reterritorializing public space to align Estonian language and culture with the nation's space. However, such actions can also be viewed as bordering. Therefore, the research question of this thesis is:

*How can the reterritorializing of public space by the Estonian state be seen as a form of othering/bordering and how do Russian residents of Tallinn experience and live with these othering practices in public space?*

This thesis adheres to the development in border studies that calls for focusing not only on national borders, but also on borders within an entity that are based on social and cultural bases. Borders have long been understood as natural or necessary; however, they are not natural or eternal, but political, and do not exist without man creating them. Borders are not only located at the edges of polities, but also within societies and public spaces. Furthermore, the concept of public space is often falsely perceived as being open and accessible to all. It is assumed to be devoid of culture and neutral. However, this is not the case. Lefebvre demonstrates how spaces can become meaningful and can become a representational or lived space. Spaces are filled with the meaning that people have imbued into the physical environment.

Often, public space becomes representational space, meaning that people use it and thereby the space acquire meaning. However, the state wishes to manifest and reterritorialize space in order to affirm the hegemony of the nation. Thus, while people can give meaning to space, space can also be used by governments to strengthen and materialize imagined identities and claims on territories. Places, Tallinn's public space, are currently being used as media to negotiate identity and as tools for remembering or forgetting history. The moving of the Bronze Soldier by the Estonian state is a good example of the state negotiating identity and history. In moving the statue, great emphasis was placed on the Estonian identity, giving precedence to the Estonian meaning of symbols and the Estonian language. Those who could not identify as Estonians or could only do so marginally felt unwelcome and undesired.

This thesis uses a qualitative approach to focus on the experiences of the Russian minority in Estonia. Qualitative approaches describe, interpret, and explain the behavior, experiences, and perceptions of respondents. Interviews, mental mapping, and observations were employed in this study to gather data. This thesis is built upon the information provided by 18 respondents via individual interviews. One third of this group consisted of Estonian respondents.

This thesis makes a distinction between state-controlled public space and semi-public space. Within state-controlled public space, two sites are used as examples: the Bronze Soldier monument and Freedom Square. Both examples make it clear that bordering in these state-controlled spaces is mainly based on symbols and the different meanings that the two groups ascribe to them. In highlighting the symbols of the Second World War and the Estonian meanings and symbolisms of these monuments in particular, differences of opinion, meaning, and appreciation were induced. It is clear that different representational or lived spaces are placed on the perceived space. These differences in meaning and lived space have resulted in the alienation of the Russian minority from certain public spaces and the Estonian state in general.

Within semi-public space the created public narrative concerning Russia is of great influence. Because of the focus on Estonian language and the negative narrative concerning Russia, citizens feel justified to undertake borderwork. Bordering in these semi-public spaces, for instance denying services, is often based on language and undertaken by citizens and service personnel. A language border is used to distinguish and identify social differences.

Therefore, bordering is not only in the hands of the state; it can also be undertaken by citizens, social groups, residents, and other social actors. This is what Rumford calls 'borderwork'. Since citizens are capable of bordering, experiencing these borders can be very different from one person to the next. One person might see the border as an uncrossable obstacle, while another may not perceive the border at all. Borders, especially when based on language and borderwork, are becoming more and more diffused throughout society, differentiated, mobile, fragmented, fluid, individual, and networked.

In Tallinn, these mobile and fluid borders are often experienced by individuals who identify more strongly as a Russian or Russian speaker and who are less capable of speaking the Estonian language. These individuals live with these borders and resist them by avoiding certain places, socially segregating, ignoring their feelings and the symbols, migrating internally, speaking English, or trying to understand the motivations of Estonians. Communicating in English contributed to creating a third and more neutral language space.

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## Introduction

The 1940 annexation of Estonia by the Soviet Union was considered internationally to be a violation of international law. For Estonia this conviction of the annexation was very important in the representation of Estonia during the Soviet occupation. When the late 1980s independence movement in Estonia succeeded in 1991, the country became independent and daily life in Estonia changed. According to Feldman (2008), “this change generated a serious discrepancy between the spatial concept of a restored and ostensibly homogenous Estonian nation-state and the empirical presence of the Soviet-era Russian speakers who came to Estonia to participate in the now defunct soviet economy” (Feldman, 2008, p. 336).

Today, Estonia has a population of around 1.3 million. Estonians make up 69% of the population and the Russian-speaking minority makes up 26% (Estonia.eu). About one-third of the population lives in the capital of Tallinn and almost half of the population of Tallinn is made up of non-Estonians (Kährik, 2006). When Estonia became independent in 1991, the Estonian state did not provide citizenship for the Russian-speaking minority. They became stateless and acquired immigrant status. The goal of the state was for the Russian speakers to leave the country, but, as already highlighted, many remained in Estonia. The Russian minority is in many ways a second-class (or not even second-class) citizen of Estonia. This group faces a disproportionate number of low-skilled workers, unemployment and difficulty entering the labor market (Kährik, 2006). Also, high levels of drug abuse, HIV, and prostitution mark other dimensions of the group’s social exclusion. The quote on the cover of this thesis highlights the complicated relationship that Russian speakers can have with Estonia. It is a familial bond that makes respondents feel inseparable from the country, but at the same time very much disliked and unwanted by the family.

Also, spatially the Russian minority is segregated in Tallinn (Kährik, 2006). According to Kooij, Tallinn is an archipelago where Estonians live in wooden houses and Russians live in flats (Kooij, 2015). Education and language are also of interest because the state abolished Russian as an official language and established the successful fulfillment of an Estonian language exam as a requirement for naturalized citizenship (Feldman, 2008). Language is more frequently raised as a barrier for residual nationalized barriers, which is also highlighted by Favell (2008). According to Favell, although territories can share closely related languages and cultures, it is the obsession with small differences that keeps nation-states firmly in place. The denying of citizenship is a strong gesture of exclusion. Historically, nation-states protect rights, provide services, and enable freedom for members or citizens who are entitled to these services (Favell, 2008, pp. 143 - 149). Denying these rights and services to the Russian-speaking minority was the starting point of their exclusion from labor, education, housing, etc.

Various policies also problematized the integration of the Russian minority as a “security matter that could be addressed by aligning the Estonian language and culture with the state’s sovereign space” (Feldman, 2008). As a result, several integration policies were implemented. These integration

policies also focused on reterritorializing public space in Tallinn to align the Estonian language and culture with the nation's space. The removal of the Bronze Soldier is a good example of reterritorializing space (Kaiser, 2012), as the Estonian state reclaimed a public space and turned it into a nationalized Estonian and Europeanized space.

As Foucault and Miskowiec wrote in 1986, "we do not live in a homogeneous and empty space" (Foucault & Miskowiec, 1986, p. 23). We do not live in a void, inside of which we can place individuals and things.

Indeed, Foucault and Miskowiec are correct. Public space in Estonia is not empty space, but space filled with meaning and intention. This thesis explores how reterritorializing space is an act of bordering and how the Russian minority experiences living in Estonian reterritorialized public space.

The research question of this thesis is:

*How can reterritorializing of public space by the Estonian state be seen as a form of othering/ bordering and how do Russian residents of Tallinn experience and live with these othering practices in public space?*

The following sub-questions have helped to guide the research and answer the main research question:

- How has public space in Tallinn changed?
- How and by whom can this be seen/experienced as an act of othering/bordering?
- Which personal and social aspects explain these bordering/othering experiences?
  - o (ethnic) identity
  - o language
- How does the Russian minority cope with these bordering/othering practices concerning space?

This study is intended to contribute to the academic debate on bordering and othering and elaborates on the connection between othering and public space, language, sense of place, and lived space by providing qualitative insight into the social consequences of excluding/othering minorities in public space. Also, the relation between othering, public space, and also language is central to this research.

## **Scientific and societal relevance**

On November 5, 2015, the Baltic states Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania announced their desire to be compensated by Russia for damages suffered during the Soviet occupation. This recent demand illustrates that there are still many points of tension between Russia and the Baltic states today. The tensions manifest both within the international political arena and also internally within these countries. Therefore, this research is relevant not only to the academic field of border studies, but also to Estonia and international politics. Fostering a better understanding of the internal affairs of

Estonia with respect to the Russian minority can foster understanding of the political position of Estonia in Europe and NATO. Insight into how European, NATO, and Estonian affairs relate to Russia in particular can be obtained. Also, researching the experience of Russian speakers in Estonia contributes to creating more knowledge concerning this group and their position in public space. This knowledge can then be used in (depending on the wishes of the user) the process of integrating minorities or for better understanding this group and Estonia as a whole. Scientifically, this research aims to contribute to the debate on inclusive and exclusive public space. Also, within border studies, the aim of this thesis is to contribute to research on internal borders created in public space, which personal and physical factors (symbols) play a role in bordering, the connection between (public) space, language, and othering, and how citizens can be active in bordering (borderwork). This thesis offers a very unique case study of Estonia, where the Russian speakers are a particular subject of the bordering process of the state.

## Chapter 1: Borders in public space

### 1.1 Borders

Traditionally, within political geography, 'boundaries' were perceived in relation to state boundaries. However, the narratives around boundaries have shifted to focus more on social and cultural boundaries as means through which social-political differences are constructed (Newman & Paasi, 1998). This means that borders, which determine whether we are included or excluded—the 'us' is 'here', inside the border, whereas 'they' are 'there', outside the border—, can also be found within societies and states. Therefore, it would be a mistake to reduce the border to a geographical line marking state territory, for bordering can also take place within states and be implemented by many actors (Walters, 2002).

Political borders have traditionally been understood as natural or necessary for nation-states, but a more critical perspective is now necessary. Borders and the state do not naturally share a relationship. This relation between the state and the border is "not natural or eternal, but political and historical" (Walters, 2002, p. 565). "A boundary does not exist in nature or by itself. It always owes its existence to man. Man chooses between certain priorities and values—of faith, philosophy, or civilization—and decides according to them where the boundary ought to be: follow the line of religious division, extend to where 'might made it right', or separate the people according to their tongues and customs" (Kristof, 1959, p. 275). Man bring borders to life and man needs to constantly sustain them. Boundary-making is highly political in nature and is not an objective process. According to Kristof, objective conceptualization of politics would eliminate choice. "Politics without alternatives and choices is a contradiction in terms, like dehydrated water". This notion dismantles the often advocated depoliticized politics of borders (Kristof, 1959). The existence or wish to create a border can prove that there is a difference in ideology or goals, if not in the present day then at least imbedded in historical heritage (Kristof, 1959).

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the history of the nation and the idea of ancient roots belonging to national people became one way to nationalize the border in terms of geography, geology, and culture. The national political border has also been historically constructed in terms of the different other. The nationalistic view of friends and enemies and the national claim and fight for territory (Walters, 2002). Estonia has found its other in Russia and this other can also be found internally. By labeling the Russian speakers as a security threat, Estonians have created a public and political discourse that associates 'Russian' with undesirable characteristics; the discourse has created a 'folk devil'.

Borders have also more and more become an instrument of biopower, in the sense that they operate on the level of the individual and the population. The border has become an instrument for regulating the population (Walters, 2002). Bordering is concerned with filtering the population and controlling the movements of the population. Two examples of this are the creation of visa requirements and language requirements for enrolling in school and receiving access to universities

and education in Estonia. Borders can be regarded as “a larger heterogeneous assemblage of discursive and non-discursive practices” (Walters, 2002, p. 572).

## 1.2 Borders in public space

Borders are no longer only found at the edges of polities, but also within societies (Balibar, 1998). Border can be found in many places, like “railway stations, airports, cafes, the city-center, and shopping malls” (Rumford, 2008, p. 52). Public spaces and everyday life have more and more become securitized. Rumford agrees with John Urry, who states that “everyday life equates to living in a ‘risk society’ in which traveling through public spaces has come to resemble our experience of passing through the airport” (Rumford, 2008, p. 52). It is no longer sufficient to singularly focus on national borders, for it is also important to look at the multiplicity of borders and new types of borders and bordering processes (Rumford, 2008). “Borders are diffused throughout society, differentiated, mobile, and networked, which also increases the chance that they are experienced by different groups” (Rumford, 2008, p. 54). In this sense, bordering is also not singularly in the hands of the nation-state. This is what Rumford calls ‘borderwork’ and the capability to border has been shifted upward to Europe, but also downward to regional and urban levels and to a range of societal actors like interest groups, citizens, enterprises, residents, associations, etc. This can be complicating when discussing, creating, and maintaining borders because it can result in a blurred and individualised border (Rumford, 2008).

Borderwork has become a process for ordinary people and citizens, as they have become accustomed to all kinds of borders being an element of everyday life. Some, however, are more comfortable when confronted with borders than others. There are those who have a desire for a differentiating border, for a border which selects the desirable and undesirable. According to Rumford, borderwork by citizens can also occur on behalf of the state. The desire for borders and security can be fueled by a ‘politics of everyday fear’. This fear is fueled by the perception of risks. To increase security and the sense of being safe, local borders or gated communities are put in place.

Borders, especially those based on borderwork, can be experienced differently by individuals or groups on either side of the border and are highly individual. For some the border might not even be perceived to exist, while for the other it may be perceived as uncrossable. These diffused borders within society can lead some to be inhibited by borders and for some to be encouraged to be indifferent about establishing new borders.

This indicates and highlights that borders can be found in many places, spaces, and in public spaces. Public space is becoming less public and more securitized. Public space, according to Habermans, is assumed to be open and accessible to all. However, it is in fact not fully accessible. Women of all classes and ethnicities were excluded for long periods in history from official political participation (Fraser, 1990). The concept of public space or sphere assumes that there can be a space of zero degree of culture, stripped of any specific ethos to accommodate perfect neutrality. This assumption, however, is incorrect (Fraser, 1990; Johnson & Miles, 2014). “In stratified societies, unequally

empowered social groups tend to develop unequally valued cultural styles". By stratified societies, Fraser means "societies whose basic institutional framework generates unequal social groups in structured relations of dominance and subordination" (Fraser, 1990, p. 66). This stratification results in the development of a powerful informal pressure that can marginalize the members of subordinated groups and their contributions both in public spheres and everyday life.

According to Goheen, public space in a modern city is charged with meaning and controversy. Mitchell (1995) illustrates that some users of public space are not allowed in certain public spaces and uses the example of People's Park. Public space is presented as an orderly and controlled place, where, in the case of People's Park, only properly behaving people may enter. According to Mitchell, there are two visions on public space. In the first vision, public space is taken and remade by political actors and politicized to its very core; it is a free space of discussion in which the risk of disorder is tolerated. In the second vision, public space is planned, orderly, and safe. Lefebvre's distinction between representational (lived space, space in use) and representations of space (ordered space, controlled) is recognizable in these two visions of public space.

### 1.3 Production of space

Space is not an empty or separated notion or entity, just as the experiences of people in this space are not separate entities within such space (Johnson and Miles, 2014). Lefebvre helps us to understand that mental space is different from real space. The spatial triad of Lefebvre conceptualizes the ongoing process of production and reproduction of space and consists of three dimensions: spatial practice, representation of space, and representational space. *Spatial practices or perceived spaces* consist of the routes, networks, and places in which "routinized social production and reproduction occur" (Feldman, 2008, p. 319). It is space in a material term that can be described as the daily life of a tenant in a housing project, for example. "Spatial practices enable individuals to participate in a spatial event by reinterpreting and restructuring it" (Johnson & Miles, 2014, p. 1894). *Representations of space or conceived spaces* "are the spaces that impose order and manifest the relations of production" (Feldman, 2008, p. 320). These spaces are connected to knowledge, signs, codes, and "frontal" relations. Representations of space appear to be historical and apolitical. These are spaces of scientists, planners, technocrats, business people, and the state, who code space by using abstract symbols or concepts. Lefebvre (1991) also writes about *representational space or lived space*. This is the space of lived experiences; it is the space of inhabitants, which is central to the formation and facilitation of diversity and individuality. Representational spaces are the 'user' spaces that carry meaning that people give to their physical environment in their daily lives. This representation of space can lead to a change of that space. People may inscribe meaning on global economic, cultural, and political processes. Also, Soja's thirdspace can help us to understand and bridge the binaries of objective/subjective, material/mental, and real/imagined: "Thirdspace is practiced and lived rather than being simply material (conceived) or mental (perceived)" (Raadik-Cottrell, 2010, p. 26). According to Johnson and Miles (2014), "Lefebvre's way of conceptualizing space has been widely accepted by geography, urban planning, and theorists because it allows one to

link imagination and representational space to the physical space of the environment and provides a better understanding of the complexity of space” (Johnson & Miles, 2014, p. 1894).

Politics tries to keep these three space/processes in harmony by affirming the hegemony of the nation. This can be understood as the territorial representation of space. The state must reform representation of space into “a manifestation of what Lefebvre calls ‘abstract space’” (Feldman, 2008, p. 320). This space diminishes the importance of personal history by creating “subjectivities through practices of categorization” (Feldman, 2008, p. 320). It is aimed at reducing difference, particularity, and peculiarity. Abstract space can appear timeless, depthless, and transparent. It appears to be what one sees, but it hides the exploitative relations that facilitate social order. Since these relations are hidden, resistance to them becomes harder to address. It is the transparency or the idea of transparency that hides the real ‘subject’ of doing its violence. Abstract space is, however, not homogenous; it only has homogeneity as its goal” (Feldman, 2008).

### 1.4 Public space

Often, public space begins as a representation of space, as a courthouse, square, monument, public park, etc. However, as people use them, these places become representational spaces, appropriated in use (Mitchell, 1995). By expressing attitudes, citizens create meaningful public space. They assert their claims and use the space for their own purposes, and space thereby becomes a meaningful public resource. It is a dynamic process, for uses and meanings are always subject to change (Goheen, 1998). “It is not a static space but are constantly in flux, created and recreated by residents themselves” (Johnson & Miles, 2014). Goheen provides two definitions of public. It is “not only a region of social life located apart from the realm of family and close friends, but also . . . [the] realm of acquaintances and strangers”. Also, the “defining characteristics of urban public space [are] proximity, diversity, and accessibility” (Goheen, 1998, p. 479).

According to Sennet, state planners have mainly created public space based on power, order, and the desire for security, rather than on interactions. Sennet calls this the growth of “dead public spaces”. Planners of semi-public spaces like shopping malls have experienced that controlling diversity can be more profitable than being open to all social differences (Mitchell, 1995). Planners use tactics like surveillance cameras and security guards to control these spaces, the behavior of users, and who has access (Johnson & Miles, 2014). These techniques are used to exclude those who are feared or do not fit the intended use of space (Johnson & Miles, 2014).

During this century, corporate as well as urban planners have aimed at imposing control and limits on spatial interaction. “The territorial segregation created through the expression of social difference has increasingly been replaced by celebration of constrained diversity” (Mitchell, 1995, p. 120). These controlled spaces, like shopping malls, can create an image of the public and in so doing exclude the undesirable public. Excluded from these spaces, the undesirable are not visible and their legitimacy as members of the public and society is put into doubt. They are unrepresented in our image of the public. Social groups can become public by claiming public space. If social groups do not become

visible and do not claim space, they remain invisible to society and fail to be counted as legitimate members of the polity (Mitchell, 1995). They are left out of our image of the public and out of our image of the broader society. According to Mitchell, this is not an accident. To classify the public into social strata and classes keeps them separated and disconnected as they are spread across territory. These images create an illusion of a homogenized public (Mitchell, 1995, p. 120). According to Mitchell, public space “is also a place within which a political movement can stake out the space that allows it to be seen” (Mitchell, 1995, p. 115). Political organizations can use public space to represent themselves to a larger population.

## 1.5 Place identity

Public space, as has become clear, is not accessible to all and is not neutral, without meaning or importance. Governments may also use meaning connected to a space to strengthen and materialize imagined identities, as claims on territories are often based on imagined geography and imagined identities (place identity). These imagined identities can influence the material future of a particular place as well as the behavior of humans related to this place. Different groups with different meanings may be willing to battle over the material future of the place based on rival interpretations of, for instance, the past. However, these battles often occur in an unequal context and between unequal forces due to social, economic, cultural, and environmental or political unevenness, as we can observe in Estonia (Raadik-Cottrell, 2010).

If people experience a threat to a place that is meaningful to them, sense of place becomes more intensely experienced. Claiming the identity of a place may be based on the present, but it is more often based on its past (Raadik-Cottrell, 2010, p. 41).

The past or imagined past and heritage are very important resources for imagining the future. “Material artifacts from the past are ascribed by contemporary values, demands, and moralities and thus as much about forgetting as remembering. Transformed materiality of landscapes helps with forgetting, sometimes the destruction is deliberate, and sometimes re-creation takes from imaginary past what could have been there or even actually never was” (Raadik-Cottrell, 2010, p. 42).

Therefore, a place can be used as a medium to negotiate identity and as a tool to remember, but also to forget, multiple histories. Heritage is also often used to shape the identities connected to a place to support particular political ideologies. Particularly when political ideologies are controversial and places have been undergoing turbulent change, some aspects can become very significant icons of identity. These artifacts, monuments, or institutionalized memories can become important instruments for ordering history and materializing identity. The reality of place can therefore be influenced by individual, but also collective, imaginings.

Place is very important, as identities are places and connected to spatial entities. These imaginary geographies and identities can relate to the idea of home, where people can feel and share the same culture, feel at home and belong to the same imagined community (Raadik-Cottrell, 2010). Not feeling at home or even feeling displaced can stimulate people to move to places more

accommodating to their identity. And “If a physical relocation is not desired or possible, they can be searched for either virtually or through ‘internal migration,’ to retreat to places of other times” (Raadik-Cottrell, 2010, p. 52).

The Soviet Union tried to control collective memory, which in post-Soviet space has resulted in a noticeable contrast between pre- and post-Soviet materialized identities and ideologies. In these spaces, elements of the Soviet period have been erased, but not all elements of it can be totally removed.

## Chapter 2: Interviews and observations

This thesis employs a qualitative approach to answer the main questions. Qualitative approaches are intended to describe, interpret, and explain the behavior, experiences, and perceptions of the respondents (Boeije, 2009). Qualitative research assumes that people ascribe meaning to their surroundings and act on these meaning. Qualitative research attempts to explain and interpret people's behavior. Describing only a single aspect is not enough to explain and interpret such behavior. If we want to understand the social reality of people, a context is needed (Boeije, 2009). Therefore, qualitative research requires that the researcher not study many research units or respondents, but study the many features of the respondent in order to create a full understanding (Boeije, 2009). While generalization is central to quantitative research, the gaining of a profound understanding is the key to qualitative research (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2015). Methods of data collection for qualitative research include participatory observations and qualitative interviews (Boeije, 2009).

### 2.1 Interview

The interview is a powerful instrument because it entails the potential expressive power of language. Interviews can help one to describe, explain, and evaluate the experiences of respondents, assuming that they can articulate what concerns them. Interviews are particularly suited for learning about the opinions and experiences of respondents (Dunn, 2010, p. 102). A qualitative interview "attempts to understand the world from the subject" (Jordan, 2011, p. 29). Given the aim of this research, the qualitative interview is therefore very relevant. Preference was given to semi-structured interviews because this type of interview allows interviewees to raise additional issues. A semi-structured interview safeguards the relevant subject and leaves room for respondents to raise questions. According to Jordan, this can be an integral part of the study's findings (Jordan, 2011, p. 29).

The interviews centered on the respondents' sense of place. Since sense of place is a vague concept, according to Shami and Ilatov (2004), some guidelines were needed to clarify it. Although Shami and Ilatov talk about measuring sense of place in a quantitative way, some of their ideas can be applied to qualitative methods as well. People may have a negative attitude toward sense of place. Shami and Ilatov call this '*polarity*' and point out that most studies only measure positive attitudes toward sense of place. Sense of place, however, should also be measured or be able to be measured in terms of negative attitudes. Moreover, the issue of '*directness*' highlights the directness of the questions, particularly whether they employ direct or indirect techniques. A direct technique entails that the respondent is familiar with the place examined or is aware of its existence, while a more indirectly formulated question could be more complicated and more open to different interpretations (Shami & Ilatov, 2005). The third out of the four guidelines for measuring sense of place consists of '*components*'; the question used to measure sense of place can be built out of one or more components using a multiple or uni-components method. This means that sense of place is measured using several questions that together compose or lead to an answer to one main question or scale.

Components should not to be confused with '*dimensions*'. Dimensions have to do with breaking down the concept of sense of place into parts in order to widen the spectrum of the study of sense of place and to achieve a better understanding of it (Shamai & Ilatov, 2005). Identifying the dimensions can be somewhat problematic, however, as it is difficult to know which are the right ones. The difference between multi-component and multi-dimensional is important to note. A multi-component scale is based on several questions which result in only one scale. A multi-dimensional scale is also based on several questions, but results in more than one scale (Shamai & Ilatov, 2005). Although in qualitative research scales are not useful, the ideas raised by them are certainly valuable to constructing an interview.

As already highlighted, identity can be approached using a wide variety of questions. In this study, respondents were first presented with identity options and asked to arrange them on a scale according to how strongly they identify with them. The following categories were used: Estonian, Russian, Estonian-Russian, Russian-Estonian, Estländer, Russian-speaker, Russian-speaking Estonian, Estonian citizen, Russian in Russia. Next, a more abstract aspect was introduced and the respondent was asked to respond to statements such as 'I love Estonia' and 'I feel welcome in Estonia'. This provided a wide variety of options for identifying (or not) with different components of possible identities. Therefore, ethnic identity, national identity, and feeling of connection to the country were all taken into account.

After establishing the identity of respondents, Estonian society, language regulations, the Bronze Soldier, Freedom Square, and semi-public spaces were discussed and mental mapping was employed.

## 2.2 Mental mapping

Mental mapping exposes the cognitive process with which people gather information about their environment. 'Mental mapping' was introduced in 1960 by Kevin Lynch as a new method in the world of urban planning and architecture (Sulster & Schubert, 2006, p. 1). With respect to urban research, mental construction of the city is a fascinating concept. Spatial environment is not only assessed according to its functional performance, but also its potential significance and meaning. The identity of an area lies in both the socio-cultural and physical spatial conditions of it, which develop slower. Each individual perceives, interprets, and ascribes meaning to the environment and identifies with it from a personal framework. By definition, the spatial environment always has many possible meanings (Sulster & Schubert, 2006). The sense of belonging to a place is also an important socio-psychological aspect of inclusion of vulnerable groups (Besten, 2010). The 'reading' or 'labeling' of a city is dependent on culture, individual framework, and the use of the city by the individual (Sulster & Schubert, 2006). The personal mental reality is a guide to how people move through the city, ascribe meaning, and make choices. Mental mapping is an instrument used to make those complex mental constructions clearer (Sulster & Schubert, 2006, p. 3).

A mental map is an individual, selective representation of reality. Everyone has a different experience of the city and collects such experiences in his or her own 'mental map'. Mental images of the urban

environment are all different, but originate in the same reality. A personal mental map is the result of the individual's experience of an area, including his use of it and his routes, experiences, validations, and associations. Such a map structures memories, emotions, and other spatial aspects of reality (Sulster & Schubert, 2006). In geography attention for emotions has increased in the last years. Several studies have researched the relation between emotions, place and belonging. Drawing a map is an task-oriented method which allows respondents from diverse ethnicities and languages to participate in addition to only an interview (Besten, 2010, p. 184).

However, mental maps can become more complex when people gain experience through direct and indirect sources. A mental map can also be created on the basis of the images of an area created by the media when there is a shortage of personal experience. People create mental images of places they have never been on the basis of this information. These media images can also mix with personal experiences (Sulster & Schubert, 2006).

A mental map was drawn by participants who have a link with the area of focus. Each participant created his or her own personal map focusing on the city center of Tallinn. Participants then reflected on the resulting image and provided an explanation of their map. This method was mainly used to determine whether the Russian minority is segregated or reclaiming space in the city center of Tallinn.

## 2.3 Observations

Participatory observation is one of the basic methods of data collection for qualitative research. The goal of participatory observation is to observe normal life and participate in it, which makes it possible to perform direct observation of actions and behaviors (Boeije, 2009). Participant observation involves spending time, being, living, and working with people or communities in order to understand them (Laurier, 2013). This means that no specific site is chosen to perform observations. When I was living in Tallinn, my daily life was entirely focused on the research, which allowed me to make multiple observations that were of great value to better understanding information provided by respondents concerning their daily lives and experiences. However, most of my insights about Estonia and the position of the Russian minority were gathered at my internship organization, the Integration and Migration Foundation, MISA. My internship provided me with the opportunity to work within a mixed company where both Estonians and Russians are employed. It also gave me the opportunity to experience a working environment. However, it is important to be aware of what Valentine calls the 'political correctness' of respondents in public space. According to Valentine, individuals act out of ritualized etiquette because these conventions are integrated into public modes of being. Valentine argues that encounters in public space are regulated by codes of so-called 'political correctness' to an extent that they feel obliged to control their public expressions and negative feelings. Their actual thoughts are only allowed to leak out in private spaces such as at home or when part of a closed group of friends. These places where opinions are shared, validated, or even challenged are places where there is no risk of personal consequence to them (Valentine, 2008). This is something to be aware of while observing people in public spaces, like while working or

even interviewing. The atmosphere of the 'home', where no harm will come as a consequence of their expressions, needed to be created during the interviews. Creating a non-judgmental atmosphere was very important for conducting the interviews.

## 2.4 Site

The fieldwork for this research project took place in the city of Tallinn. Besides work and living spaces, Sunday schools were also visited. Sunday schools of the following countries were visited: Russia, Finland, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Armenia.

An important site in the city that was visited and often discussed with respondents was the cemetery where the Bronze Soldier is currently located. The celebration of Victory Day on May 9<sup>th</sup> was an important event to observe for this research. Freedom Square, the Russian orthodox church, Kadriorg Park, and Lasnamae (respondent's home) were also important sites. Also, touristic trips were taken to observe and experience the descriptions that are given to tourists about some of these sites and Estonia itself. I also went about my daily life with the research in mind. Therefore, the tram, supermarkets, shopping centers, the university, police station, museums, and multiple restaurants provided me with more insight into Estonia.

## 2.5 Respondents

The respondents in this research mainly consisted of the Russian-speaking minority living in Tallinn. Some native Estonians were also interviewed, but mainly the perceptions and experiences of the Russian speakers were of interest for this research. The aim in composing the group of respondents was to incorporate a wide variety of personal characteristics like age, gender, educational level, and activities. The focus of this research is mainly respondents with a maximum age of 40. This group represents second-generation Russians.

This thesis is built upon the information provided by 18 respondents in individual interviews. Five of these respondents, of which one was male, identified themselves as ethnic Estonians. The other 13 respondents were chosen because of their Russian heritage and all could speak Russian or considered Russian their mother tongue. These respondents represented a wide variety of identities. Seven of them were female and six of them were male. The age of the respondents varied between 21 and 39. The second generation was the focus due to practical reasons, such as the requirement for respondents to speak English. Some of the respondents had lived all of their lives in Tallinn, while others came to Tallinn for study or work. Also, four of the respondents came from the border city of Narva in the northeast of Estonia. The city is populated by a large majority of Russian speakers. The researcher managed to acquire a great variety of respondents, studied many features of the research group, and acquired a profound understanding of the Russian minority in Tallinn. All respondents are anonymous and when quoting, no name is given to the respondent.

My supervisor at the migration and integration foundation played a key role as gatekeeper during the process of acquiring the interviews. She is Russian and has acquired an extensive network over the years through her work and activities. Most of the respondents were obtained through her

network and friends. She asked specific respondents herself, but also posted a call on Facebook for her Russian friends. The rest of the respondents were obtained through social interaction, were friends of friends, and thus a snowball method was used. Furthermore, I posted on forums, social media, and internations.org.

Using the snowballing method and the network of my advisor also ensured that respondents viewed me as a friend of a friend coming from Holland. In the beginning, I was worried that my internship at the integration and migration foundation could influence respondents to be less open in the interviews. However, the methods did not at all highlight my position as an intern and the influence therefore was very minimal. Respondents sometimes asked me my opinion of the situation in Estonia and expressed their curiosity about what my thoughts were about the position of the Russian minority. In those cases, I often remained neutral and expressed my curiosity and wish to just understand what it is like to live in Estonia. They did not often question me, however, and my position as an outsider, a Dutch girl, often made respondents very open. Overall, it seemed that respondents did not see me as a threat, but as a person to whom they could express their experiences in life. Often, respondents thanked me for the nice talk, afternoon, and for making them think about their own opinions. I asked explanatory questions, which also empowered respondents and made them more confident in answering the questions during the interview. My identity as an outsider, a non-threatening girl, and my assurance of anonymity also made respondents comfortable with having the interviews recorded. I had no problems with respondents being doubtful of whether they wanted to be recorded. Only two respondents, before making a statement, asked if they were really anonymous. In some cases, respondents sometimes acted aware of the recording in the first few minutes, but they let their guard down as the conversation progressed. Recording enabled me to transcribe all of the interviews. Recording allowed me to have very natural conversations and interviews, as I did not have to write everything down. It also allowed me to translate and quote the interviews precisely and accurately and to reflect on them. The recordings are a record of clear proof of my findings and the material can be reused or reviewed by other researchers.

## 2.6 Ethics

Writing about issues related to identity and personal experience requires some additional care. In particular, when asking questions concerning the experiences of ethnic or minority groups, it is important to be aware of their vulnerable position in society. The interview questions had to be formulated with caution. I also needed the permission of the respondents to both interview and record them. Respondents had to be fully informed about how the data are stored and who has access to them, and were given the option to withdraw from the interview at any time.

## 2.7 Analyses

The data analysis follows an inductive analysis method where existing theories and research are used as a guide. However, the starting point of the analysis is the data. Reading, re-reading, and searching for themes, categories, repetitions, patterns, and coding made up a major part of the analysis process. This was a constant process and the data were analyzed during the data gathering process

(Boeije, 2009). It was important to maintain a reflexive posture to ensure validity and reliability. All of the interviews were completely transcribed. The analyses program Nvivo was used to code the interviews and transcriptions. The role of this program was mainly to make the data more easily accessible and easy to use. The 18 interviews produced a large amount of data which Nvivo helped to structure. Searching for statements and grouping coded statements made it possible to create a better overview of the results.

## **2.8 Internship**

The internship at the migration and integration foundation had great influence on the research, not only in the process of obtaining respondents, but concerning the content and understanding of the position of the Russian minority in Estonia. Unfortunately, I was not able to assist the organization with many activities, as they required skill in the Estonian and Russian languages. I did, however, have to summarize a number of dissertations from the university of Tallinn, which was valuable for my own research. Furthermore, my supervisor is currently also researching a similar subject and our discussions, conversations, and her explanations contributed to a large extent to my understanding. Furthermore, my internship with this organization also enabled me to attend a conference about migration and integration in the Nordic and Baltic countries. During this conference, I acquired a better understanding of the importance of integration and language to Estonians, and my supervisor put me in contact with some of the employees of the Ministry of Interior.

Overall, the internship influenced this research most with respect to obtaining respondents. Also, the continued presence of an Estonian-Russian supervisor made it very easy for me to consult at least one Russian speaker about interesting discoveries or questions that I had.

## Chapter 3: Public narratives

### 3.1 Public narratives

Before we go further into the reterritorializing acts in Tallinn and the results of the interviews, it is important to sketch a broader picture of the othering narrative in Estonia as well as the political atmosphere in which othering practices in public space take place. For this, I refer to an article which is available in complete form in the appendix and from which are drawn several quotes used in this thesis as examples of the created public narrative concerning Russia. I would like to stress that this is just one of many articles and would advise those who are interested to follow this news site: <http://news.err.ee/> for more examples and articles.

The public narrative that is being put forward here is recognized by Russian speakers or those who identify themselves more strongly as Russians. Those identifying more strongly as Estonians do not or do not strongly recognize this negative public narrative surrounding Russia.

In the public narrative according to Russian speakers, Russia is depicted as a country to be afraid of. Russia is not only a cause for fear, but is also very powerful and contributes to problems. The aforementioned article is a good example, as the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Estonia, Maria Kaljurad, makes several accusations against Russia and claims that Russia has gained advantage over the U.S., EU, and NATO

*“The goal of the Putin administration was to break down NATO and the EU’s solidarity”*

*“After Russia began intervening in Middle Eastern conflicts, the number of refugees fleeing the region increased, deepening the migration crisis that had developed in EU states as a result. The deepening of the crisis in turn has led to a rise in popularity of extreme right wing populist powers, which have received direct or indirect support from the Kremlin.”*

*“Russian President Vladimir Putin doesn’t have the advantage over just the U.S. president, but rather the whole of the West, as centered around the EU and NATO” (Sarapik, 2016).*

When a narrative focuses on fear and danger, a national and political sense of fear is created. It is therefore also not surprising that the defense of Estonia and the Baltic region is also a very common subject.

*“Terras said that inadequate air defense capability made the Baltic region vulnerable to a Russian lightning attack. NATO needed to consider increasing the number of its warplanes based in the region and plan for the deployment of Patriot batteries” (Cavegn, 2016).*

These images of a problem causing, dangerous, and powerful country can be found in other articles put forth in the media. This created public narrative is also reflected on the Russian population within Estonia. A part of Estonian society also feels the need to oppose and defend themselves against the

Russian minority living in Estonia. The public narrative concerning Russia is thereby actively othering the Russian speakers in Estonia and encouraging citizens to undertake bordering activities.

It is also this image that is often recognized and highlighted by respondents. They even go as far as calling it anti-Russian propaganda put forth by the Estonian state.

*“It seems like people in Estonia would be friendly if there were no political propaganda; But then the government says [we] are enemies.”*

These narratives in the media and political sphere also reflect in public space. However, it is important to distinguish between state-controlled public space and semi-public space like shopping malls, cafes, supermarkets, etc. The next chapter discusses this further. Besides the media narrative concerning Russia, the focus that is placed on the importance of Estonia and the Estonian language is also of no small importance.

### 3.2 Estonia

*“The priority of Estonia is Estonians.”*

As the above respondent’s quote makes clear, Estonia is very much focused on Estonian culture, history, language, and citizens. This became clear to me when, as a new resident of Estonia, I encountered all of their public holidays. While every country celebrates national days of significance, Estonia, in my opinion, has an over-abundance of public holidays of which national symbols such as the flag and the language are central.

Among others, these are the main celebrations for the nation and symbols of the nation:

- January 2 – Anniversary of the Tartu peace treaty
- January 3 – Memorial day for those who fought in the war of independence
- February 24 – Independence Day, anniversary of the Republic of Estonia.
- March 14 – Native Language Day
- June 4 – Estonian Flag Day
- June 12 – Day of Mourning
- June 23 – Victory Day
- August 20 – Re-Independence Day

It is obligatory to raise the flag on the 24<sup>th</sup> of February, the 23<sup>rd</sup> of June, and the 20<sup>th</sup> of August. On the other ‘flag days’, as they are revered to in Estonia, raising the flag is optional, but highly recommended (Estonia.eu).

This is an indication that Estonia, being a young nation, is actively promoting the nation and the Estonian identity. These holidays are also celebrated in schools, where on Estonian Flag Day, extra

attention is given to, for instance, the flag and the national anthem. Furthermore, national songs, stories, and dances are also being taught to young children.

*“At the Estonian kindergartens and schools, the events are really important, as is the language ,and so on.”*

*“Yes, I think that all Estonian children learn the anthem, the old stories, and the old songs.”*

The Estonian language is also being promoted within schools. Some schools even participate in an immersion program. This program has the aim of improving children’s Estonian language skills. These immersion programs are mostly focused on those whose mother tongue is not Estonian (Estonia.eu). Use of the Estonian language is also further promoted by the language requirements for Russian schools and obligated in the Language Act which was put into force in 2013. This law imposed requirements on the use of language in advertisements, the army, judicial proceedings, etc. The law requires, for example, that advertisements be translated into Estonian in such a way that the Estonian text is not less noticeable. This means that in public space, the Estonian language is always present. Also, when I attended an international migration conference, all Estonian speakers spoke Estonian and a translation to English and vice versa was provided.

*“The translation of the text into a foreign language may be added to public signs, signposts, business type name and outdoor advertisements; thereby the text in Estonian shall be in the forefront and shall not be less observable than the text in a foreign language” (Riigikogu).*

The public holidays, or flag days focus on Estonian culture, dances, stories, songs, and language, and are an indication that Estonia is strongly promoting, forming, and highlighting the Estonian nationality and identity. The younger generation, especially, is expected to grow up with a strong and confident Estonian identity.

The negative narrative concerning Russia is also a strong tool for creating a feeling of ‘them’ in contrast to ‘us’. This strong focus on creating an Estonian identity and an ‘us’ feeling can possibly be explained by the young age of the nation. The nationalistic view of friends and enemies can, in addition to the focus on culture, language, and history, help to form a more united Estonia. Labeling Russians as a threat in public and political spaces can foster a natural association of Russians with undesirability. In short, it creates a ‘folk devil’ and a common enemy.

Focusing and highlighting the Estonian culture and language as well as the created negative public narrative are of particular relevance when studying bordering in public space, as they sketch the political and national atmosphere in which these bordering activities take place.

## Chapter 4: Reterritorializing space in Tallinn

This chapter discusses the reterritorializing process that has taken place in Tallinn as well as the experiences of Russian speakers. A distinction is made between state-controlled and semi-public space on the basis of the applied bordering strategies. Bordering in state-controlled space is mostly done by focusing on symbols and ethnic identity. In semi-public space, bordering is based on language and borderwork. First, a short historic overview is provided that focuses on the reterritorializing process after 1991 and the Bronze Soldier. Thereafter, the reaction of the Russian minority and their feelings and responses are discussed. Both state-controlled (Bronze Soldier and Freedom Square) and semi-public spaces are discussed.

### 4.1 Tallinn after 1991

The reshaping, re-creation, and materializing of the Estonian identity can most definitely be recognized in the events in Tallinn after 1991. By the 1980's, when autonomy movements in the Soviet republics were on the rise, Estonian leaders mobilized a representational space. This included symbols of the sovereign Estonian state, like the Estonian tricolored flag, that indicated resistance to Soviet rule from Moscow (Feldman, 2008). Other symbolic efforts to redefine space also took place. In Tallinn, Victory Square, which originally celebrated the Soviet victory over Nazi Germany, was renamed Freedom Square, and later, in 2009, a new monument was placed there. The term Raion was replaced with the Estonian word Maakond to name administrative subunits. Estonia changed time zones to Finland's, which is one hour earlier than Moscow's. On August 23, 1989, in protest against the occupation of the Baltic countries, around two million people formed a human chain from the Gulf of Finland to southern Lithuania that passed through Tallinn, Riga, and Vilnius (Feldman, 2008). The independence movement and leadership sought not only "to break away from the Soviet Union, but rather to restore the sovereignty of the 1940 Estonian republic" (Feldman, 2008, p. 324). On August 20, 1991, Estonian independence leaders declared national independence and more and more governments started to recognize Estonia as a restored nation-state. Estonia was legally defined as a secessionist state, which led to the disempowerment of 500,000 soviet-era Russian speakers (Feldman, 2008). As a restored state, "the leadership could legitimately re-implement pre-Soviet Estonia's 1938 citizenship law and only grant citizenship to individuals who held citizenship in the pre-Soviet Estonian republic or descended from citizens" (Feldman, 2008, p. 326). "This included 116,000 Estonians who left during the war and their descendants, with many of the latter neither speaking Estonian nor having ever visited the country" (Feldman, 2008, p. 326). Individuals that immigrated to Soviet Estonia did not automatically receive citizenship although some had lived there for most, if not all, of their lives and had to follow a naturalization process. They became illegal immigrants, stateless, and were required to register with the state as "residents" if they wished to legalize their status in Estonia. Russian speakers had to reposition themselves in new political environment. Education and language were matters of concern as the state no longer recognized Russian as an official language and required successful completion of an Estonian language exam as a condition for naturalized citizenship (Feldman, 2008).

In the 1990s and early 2000s, various policies problematized integration further “as a security matter that could be addressed by aligning the Estonian language and culture with the state’s sovereign space” (Feldman, 2008, p. 329). A stable Estonia could not be maintained if other cultural-linguistic groups persisted on Estonian territory (Feldman, 2008). As a result of this perception, several integration policies were implemented. This affected Russian-speakers, as they became an object of public policy.

The removal of the Bronze Soldier is a good example of these efforts to align the Estonian language and culture with the sovereign space (Kaiser, 2012). On the night of April 26 and early morning of April 27, 2007, the Bronze Soldier, dedicated to the liberators of Tallinn in memory of the Red Army soldiers who freed the city in 1944, was removed from its original location in the city center. This resulted in two days of violent riots in the city center of Tallinn and diplomatic conflicts between Estonia and Russia (Lehti, Jutila, & Jokisipilä, 2008). Both Estonians and Russians were present during the riots and both held very different associations with the statue. For Estonians, the statue symbolized occupation and for Russians, it symbolized liberation and victory.

Reterritorializing is not a singular act because every reterritorializing movement also implies a deterritorializing movement as well. One cannot exist without the other (Kaiser, 2012). The reterritorializing movements of Estonia came together with the deterritorializing of the Russian and Soviet eras. Russians are seen as outsiders in Estonia and the Bronze Soldier monument was an important site that embodies this idea. The Bronze Soldier became a powerful boundary between Soviet time-space and post-Soviet time-space. It served in dividing Estonia and Estonians from Russia and Russians. The monument became one of the most effective sites used in the construction of the Estonian nation-state (Kaiser, 2012). Visual symbols overall can be very important in stimulating and strengthening a collective memory, preventing forgetting, and underpinning individual identities. War memorials such as the Bronze Soldier contain the most loaded meanings. “During two centuries of nationalism, the styles of monuments as well as the obligation and justification associated with them have substantially changed in Estonia” (Lehti, Jutila, & Jokisipilä, 2008, p. 396).

The Bronze Soldier was moved to a cemetery three kilometers away from the city center and was renamed the Unknown Soldier. Also, the symbol on the monument paying respect to the Soviet Union was removed and the statue is now dedicated to all of the fallen of the Second World War. The statue is now also being watched over by four cameras and is lit up at night so that it can be watched 24 hours per day. Kaiser views this surveillance of the statue “as an effort by Estonian state officials to reduce or remove the affective power of the site to reterritorialize the space of downtown Tallinn and to cleanse it of Soviet-era monuments to reclaim it for the independent nation-state of Estonia.



Before. Source: (Delfi, 2003)



After. Source: Author's photograph 27-3-2016

Figure 1: The Bronze Soldier, at the original and new place.

We might consider the removal of the object from a public square as an unidirectional power play with Estonian nationalist interests acting against the remaining symbols of Soviet and Russian power” (Kaiser, 2012, p. 1051). After the removal of the Bronze Soldier, the identity of the place was recreated and the reterritorialization was completed (Kaiser, 2012). The square was relieved of its Soviet monuments and “rematerialized as a desovietized, de-Russianized, and newly Europeanized space as it was replanted with flowers in the colors of the EU” (Kaiser, 2012, p. 1053). With the replacement of the soldier, the square was pulled into post-Soviet Estonia and the EU space. The Bronze Night happened during the last year of the first integration program, of which the goal was to expand understanding of the Estonian language, culture, and history among Russians. The program aimed to create one civil national identity, where nonetheless, Estonianness would be protected and preserved (Kaiser, 2012).

The Bronze Soldier has not been the only war memorial to fall victim in the war of monuments (2004 - 2007). A stone tablet dedicated to “Estonian men who fought in 1940-1954 against Bolshevism and for the restoration of Estonian independence” (Lehti, Jutila, & Jokisipilä, 2008, p. 402).was also a victim of the war. There were also several other war monuments around Estonia that were targeted. Many cemeteries and war memorials were desecrated from 2004-2006. Red Army memorials in the center of Tallinn, in particular, became targets (Lehti, Jutila, & Jokisipilä, 2008). “Monuments and memorials of World War II were among the most powerful and popular sites for the construction of

the Soviet national identity. During the 1990s, they were transformed from Soviet symbols into Russian ones” (Lehti, Jutila, & Jokisipilä, 2008, p. 402). According to Lehti, Jutila, and Jokisipilä (2008, p. 403), “Russians saw the treatment of the Bronze Soldier as an attempt to question their victory. The Great Patriotic War forms the basic image of Russian national and collective memory”. It is one of the most important symbols that holds the nation together (Lehti, Jutila, & Jokisipilä, 2008), making the removal of the memorial an even more poignant example of reterritorialization.

## 4.2 Respondents have their say

### 4.2.1 Bronze Soldier

Among Russian speakers, as has already become clear, the moving of the Bronze Soldier was experienced as an act against the Russian minority, especially due to the way it was done and the date it was done on. It has been perceived as an act against the traditions and history of the Russian minority. It was as if the Estonians wanted to devaluate this part of history and wipe it clean, as well as wipe the city center clean of Russians visiting the monument every ninth of May.

*“A lot of people thought it was a very impolite and strong decision against Russians and Russian history. Estonians could have made it more polite and offered to replace it on a different date than the ninth of May... We always participate in the Ninth of May. It is our history and tradition and it was rude of them to shit on that.”*

*“This part of history is really important for Russians. It is something that has caused everyone, every local Russians, their own pain because there were big families and people were lost.”*

*“Some people said it is like somebody trying to whitewash and destroy history.”*

For some, this experience also meant a break between them and Estonia. They lost their trust in the Estonian state. While they could understand the will to move the monument, they most certainly could not understand the way it was done.

*“For Estonians, it was a statue that meant occupation. For Russians, it meant liberation from fascism; so it had different meanings and I understand that for Estonians, it was something that is very bad and was in the city center.”*

*“They decided to remove it. And off course that was a big problem. We hoped it would stay. We agreed that of course it can be moved to the cemetery. There are people buried there, soldiers and everything. But it was done just before Victory Day.”*

The Russian community can to certain a extent relate to the Estonians in their will to be independent and protect their culture, language, and history. The moving of the Bronze Soldier, however, was incomprehensible to them and therefore racial and ethnic conflicts between Estonians and Russians, but also between Russians and the state, were initiated. The Russian community assessed this intervention as a predomination of the Estonians and as clear efforts and will to reterritorialize, especially because it was the active choice of the government to move the monument on that

particular date so close to the ninth of May. Despite knowing that the ninth of May is a day of celebration for the Russian-speaking minority, they proceeded with the removal of the statue. Another respondent highlighted that the government, with these actions, demonstrated that they are making no effort to create unity between all groups in the country or to respect them all. It illustrated rather that there is an aim to restructure, emphasizing Estonia. For that respondent, and not only her, the moving of the Bronze Soldier became a new symbol of how the Russian-speaking minority is not respected, welcome, or taken into account in the political decision-making processes.

*“I believe it was the government’s fault and wrongdoing. It is how you act as a government. You do something to open it (the conflict) or do something to heal. And they did the opposite. It was so long ago and I was not there . It is funny that although it has been such a long time, I pass that place on a daily basis and think about it. It is even weird for me and I always remember it. It has become a symbol. You take away one symbol and it becomes another.”*

The Bronze Soldier is no longer a singular symbol or statue as it was before; a whole new symbolism has been added to the statue. It has become a symbol of the hostility of Estonian society toward the Russian minority. All of the respondents knew where they were on the day the statue was moved. There was a clear before and after in the imagination of the respondents. It has become a beacon for the position that the Russian community is in, shoved away to the side, out of the city center, unwelcome, and disrespected.

The importance of this statue only became fully clear to me when I visited the Bronze Soldier on the ninth of May myself. On that day, I experienced a strong sense of community amongst people visiting the statue. Veterans were present and received flowers and pictures of family members dressed in the uniform of the Red Army were carried by multiple visitors. Russian music was being played and ribbons with the Russian flag were distributed.



Figure 2: The Bronze Soldier.

Source: Author’s photo, ninth of May, 2016

An enormous number of flowers were laid down and emotions were clearly visible on the faces of the visitors. The removed symbol of the hammer and sickle was put in its old place, behind the head of the soldier, and the monument was guarded by two young people dressed in Red Army uniforms. I could very strongly perceive the sense of community, and the feeling of being among 'us' on that day. The large number of people and the emotion with which people came to visit the place made it so much clearer to me how important the statue and the history connected to it are for the Russian minority.

During my visit, two people also spoke to me in Russian. For them, it was obvious and natural, as I was a visitor to the statue on that day, that I would be Russian or able to speak and understand Russian. My presence there was evidence enough to assume or imagine that I could speak Russian. It should be noted that it is very uncommon in Estonia to approach and speak to a stranger in public space. At that place, however, it occurred twice. This further highlighted for me that the place represents a Russian space, particularly a Russian language space. It is a space where habits, values, customs, culture, and language are different. Fellow visitors assume that people who come here are Russian or can at least speak Russian. The Estonian language border was lost and around this statue a new majority, and as it were, a new Russian language border and space, was created. This small cemetery was surrounded by an imagined, invisible, ambivalent, and very personal language border.

This is a very good example of how language and space can be closely connected. It is an example of a Russian space in Estonia where Russians can feel a sense of having an 'us'. At the same time, for me (just like the rest of Estonia) it was a place where I felt like an outsider, as I could neither speak nor understand the language, nor did I share the habits or values of the people there. I was there not to commemorate, but only to see. I did not share the pride or the sorrow and I was not there to convey my respect. I could not share those things or understand the language and felt out of place and experienced the border myself. At some moments, I even felt unwelcome and not completely safe. I was slightly worried about what would happen if the people surrounding me were to find out that I was not there to share their sorrow or convey my respects and that I could not speak Russian. At that moment, I may have been the only one experiencing the border. However, that fact does not make the border less real or important. The border that I experienced is something Russian speakers experience in their daily lives in Estonia on a much larger scale.

Also, when I visited Russia, there were several symbols that referred to the victory of the Red Army over Nazi Germany. It was a victory and war that became known as the Patriotic War. Stamps still refer to this victory and the Ninth of May is celebrated in grand style.

The above all indicate how important that



Figure 3: Stamp, bought by the author on 02-06-2016 in St. Petersburg. Translation: victory or winning weapon.

victory is for Russian speakers. Many people lost their lives fighting the great evil, Nazi Germany. At work, my Russian colleague talked about the Second World War more than once. She showed me a movie to illustrate the enormous number of losses Russia suffered and emphasized often that the Soviet Union was not as bad as Nazi Germany. I did not understand then why she thought it was necessary to tell me this—to try to convince me of who was the worst during the Second World War. But, as I came to understand, the Second World War and the victory over Nazi Germany is a cornerstone of Russian history and identity. This is also what makes the Bronze Soldier so important for the Russian minority in Estonia.

#### 4.2.2 Freedom Square

Vabaduse Väljak, or Freedom Square, is the second example of state-controlled public space and is Estonia's national main square. It has existed in its present form since August 20, 2009, when it was reopened after a renovation. The square is the site of a monument that commemorates the deaths of the War of Independence of 1918 – 1920.

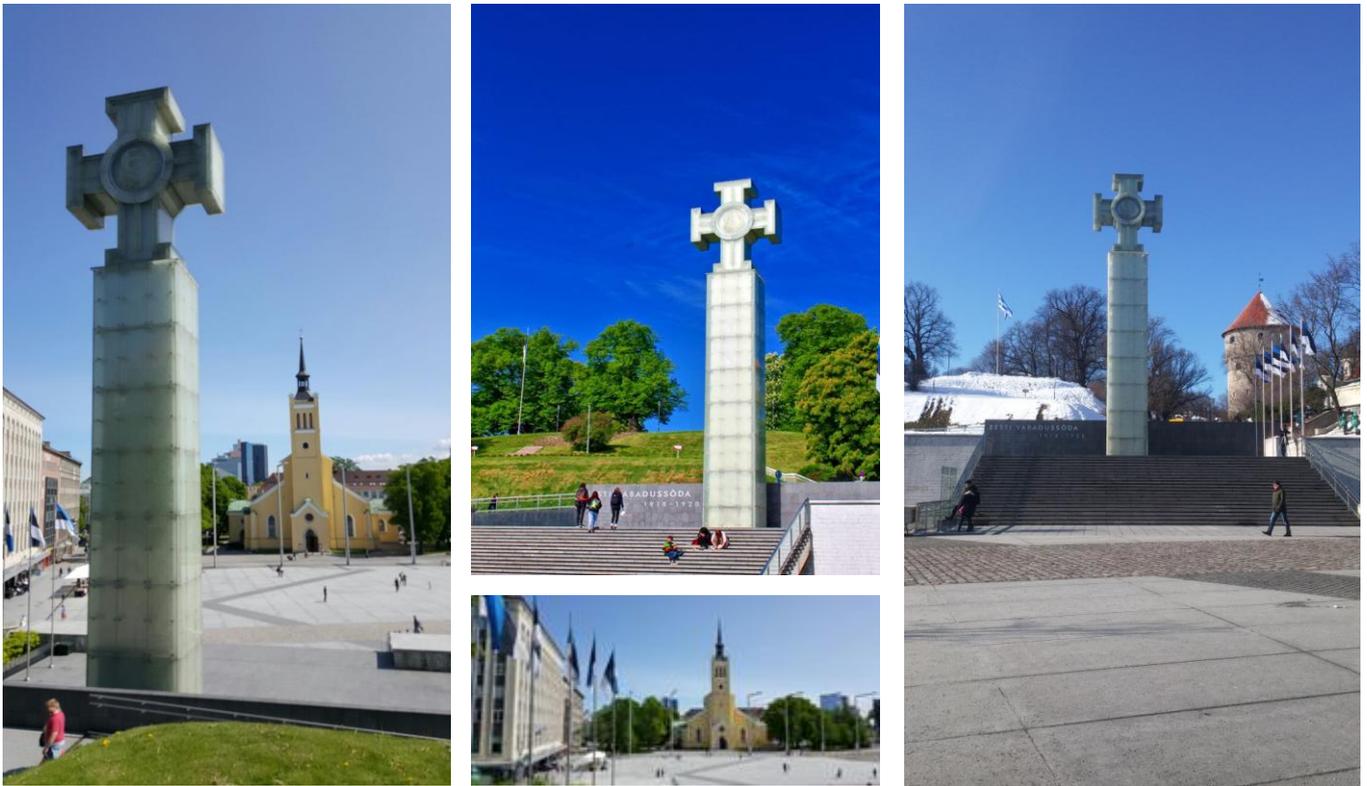


Figure 4: Vabaduse Väljak, (Freedom Square) and the Freedom Column with the Liberty Cross.

Source: Author's photos taken on 22-05-16 and 02-03-2016.

Vabaduse Väljak has had many different purposes and names throughout time. It was a wood market, a hay market, and a public space and has carried many names. It has been known as Peetri Plats, Peeter's plaza, Vabaduse plats, and Võidu väljak or Victory Square during Soviet occupation (Tallinn City Planning Department, 2010). Vabaduse Väljak is often used for entertainment events, but also for national celebrations such as Independence Day. Also, every morning, the Estonian flag is

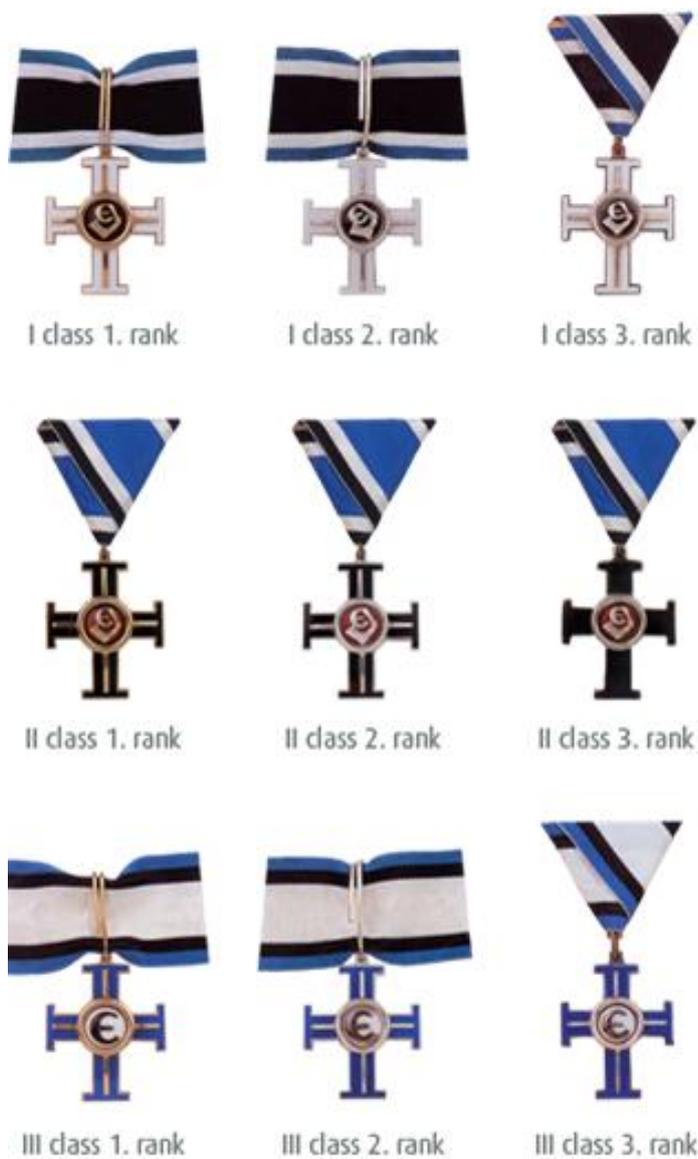


Figure 5: Military decoration with the Cross of Liberty.  
Source: (President.ee)

raised there (on the left side behind the monument on the little hill) at sunrise while the national anthem is played. A flag representing the city of Tallinn is visible behind the monument.

On the cross itself, the letter E is visible as is an arm holding a sword. The Cross of Liberty, as the cross is called, is a military decoration and was instituted in 1919 to give recognition for those who served during the Estonian War of Independence. Figure 8 depicts these decorations. The cross is given in the event of war and the defense of Estonian independence (President.ee, 2016).

It is interesting to note again that this monument's symbol also means different things to different groups of people. For Estonians, the Cross of Liberty is a national symbol, installed to remember the Estonians' fight for freedom in 1918. For the Russian minority, however, it is not a national Estonian symbol. Among the community, it has multiple meanings and is most strongly associated with the swastika of Nazi Germany.

*"The symbol, among Russians, is associated with the Nazi's. That is why there was a struggle with the replacement. The soldier was replaced with a Nazi symbol. That is the Russian soldier and the theme of the Second World War and now it is the Nazi cross. It looks like it. Maybe it is not, but it looks like it. From the Russian view, it is."*

*"You know, this cross was actually a symbol of Waffen-SS. Maybe for them, Waffen-SS is not so bad. But for me, I don't know."*

*“One monument was taken away and they replaced it with an Estonian national symbol. But, actually it is not a national symbol. It is a symbol of Estonian resistance during occupation in Soviet times. In the middle of the cross, there is an E sign. There are stories that there was a group of Estonian people who killed communists. In Russian times, in Soviet times, this was called murder. Because there was no war, people were just living their lives, yet some people were killing other people just because of their political views. If the person was caught, of course they were sent to prison. I don’t know if they were killed. But, it was called murder. Now, it is called the resistance. Because if one does not like Russians, if one does not like Soviet rule, one would kill communists; this is now called resistance. It is the symbol of this resistance.”*

*“[They] put a cross that is really a Nazi cross in Freedom Square. What are the priorities of the nation? Why did they put it there? It would be better to put maybe some Estonian woman who is for freedom. But, no they chose this one. Why? For me, it is not a nice thing.”*

Again, the history and the different meanings given to these historic events by different sections of the population is a basis upon which people are divided or feel divided. As described above, for the Russian minority, the symbol is connected to the killing of Russians and the German swastika symbol. Again, historic events and their symbols are interpreted differently. The placing of these symbols by the Estonian government, the user of the symbols, actively ignores or uses these differences in meaning to actively and intentionally divide the population.

Within the Estonian majority of the population, this monument is also controversial, but mostly because of the costs of building the monument. A section of Estonians does, however, view the monument as something valuable.

*“You need to get free from what is reminding you of this pressure and those times. Free the space to make room for Estonia. Maybe place monuments that commemorate Estonian politicians who did great things, or writers, or the cross at Freedom Square. [These gestures] make the public space reflect how people feel inside.”*

*“So, since we received independence it was natural for us to promote ourselves and say: ‘we are independent and we decide what we do.’ We are free with words and now we are saying strongly that everyone has the right to express their opinion. The public space is a reflection of this.”*

*“I think it is great that Estonians did something that was a big project. Since it was a very big project, it is a big statement that we are strong and united now.”*

The Russian minority, however, as the following respondent describes, does not accept this symbol as uniting, Estonian, or a symbol of freedom. It can be a uniting symbol for Estonians, but most

certainly not for the Russian minority. For them, the symbol is strongly connected to Nazi Germany and the Second World War, which is a very important part of Russian identity. Recognizing this would mean that the Russian minority would have to break with a part of the Russian identity. This break is something that the Estonian government is trying to accomplish. However, the importance of the Second World War is so imbedded in the Russian culture, identity, and history that breaking away from such values is very difficult.

*“Estonian tries to integrate Russians so much that they say: Yes, I am Estonian. But, Russians have a strong identity. It is a great shame to say that you are not Russian. This comes from Russian culture.”*

*“When I and my friends grew up within Russian culture, we were very sure that all of these symbols of fascism were very bad.”*

*“Russians identify with the Russian part of the Second World War. It is who we are, actually. Russians made the world free of this very bad thing. So, it is part of our culture.”*

For the Russian minority, the placing of this symbol is therefore incomprehensible. Some of the respondents even expressed the opinion that the new monument was chosen to oppose the Russian minority. It puts on display the differences between Estonians and Russians and the confrontation between them. To enjoy the square, to be a part of it, and to own a piece of the place, one must break from one’s Russian background to become a little Estonian. Many Russian speakers, however, do not do so and therefore Freedom Square is not owned or appropriated by the Russian minority and has become a place where many of the Russian minority do not often come to enjoy celebrations or festivities that are hosted on this square. It is almost impossible to become acquainted with this national space if one is not Estonian and especially if one is Russian. Therefore, the Russian minority has also assessed the placement of this symbol as an act against the Russian minority.

*“So, it is a symbol against Soviet Union times. It is not something you own, your special thing, but something that is really against and opposed to those times.”*

*“This part of the land is forbidden for my view. I don’t care about it. Maybe it is soul pain. Some deep soul hurt. It is a soul wound that I don’t want to reopen. And I just don’t think about it. For the sake of my comfort living here, I don’t think about it. Because it is very impolite”.*

*“This meaning is quite enough for me to not love this place.”*

This strong association of the symbol with the swastika and the rejection of this symbol as a symbol of freedom and of Estonia by a large part of the population is what makes the institution of the symbol a strong act of bordering. For the Russian minority, the square does not function as or symbolize a national main square. For them, it symbolizes something that they do not want to be associated with. In choosing this symbol as a sign of freedom and of Estonia and placing it in the national square, Estonia alienated the square and what it symbolizes from the Russian-speaking

minority. While it could be a monument to freedom for all living in Estonia, it is now only a monument that symbolizes the freedom of only those who identify as Estonians and not Russians or Russian-speakers. However, the monument does not provoke the Russian minority as much as the moving of the Bronze Soldier.

*“You don’t do something so controversial in your own society. It does not provoke as strong emotions as the removal [of the statue]. But, why did they ruin the nice view?”*

*“It is not the symbol of freedom because it is not accepted by everyone.”*

What these two examples make clear is that bordering in these two state-controlled spaces was based on symbols and ethnic identity. In both examples, the use of monuments (placing or moving) and the symbolism connected to these monuments created borders for a specific part of the population. The representational space or lived space projected onto the perceived space is completely different in meaning. The perceived space, the materiality, is the same but provides meaning very differently. The meaning is highly negative for the part of the population that identifies less strongly as Estonian and more strongly as Russian or Russian-speaking. These two groups clearly see historic events differently. History and also identity are materialized to affirm the hegemony of the Estonian state and identity. One could have thought about placing a unifying, widely recognized symbol of freedom or peace instead. Therefore, it can be argued with confidence that the Russian minority was not taken into account when the symbol was chosen and the placing of this monument can be understood as an act of bordering and othering.

### 4.3 Semi-public space

In state-controlled public space, the government has a great deal of influence on how the space looks. In these spaces bordering acts are performed through the visual use of symbols. In semi-public space, however, the influence of the state is less present and bordering is mostly conducted through personal interaction (borderwork) and based on language.

Bordering in semi-public space is a good example of how bordering is no longer only done by states. It can also be done by individuals. Bordering in these spaces is often based on language. A language border is something I experienced myself on the Ninth of May, but it is part of the daily life of Russian-speakers. As has been made clear, Estonia is very much focused on preserving and protecting the Estonian language as well as degrading Russia. This can be observed in regulations, but also among the population. The general population of Estonians is in favor of the regulations that preserve and promote the Estonian language, even if they are at the expense of the Russian population. However, some perceive some problems in how the regulations are implemented.

*“I think it is great because we only have one million people and there are not many Estonians around the world. So, if Estonians don’t keep it, then no one will. I think it is great that something is being defined.”*

*“I think it is really important and necessary. I really like that they are trying.”*

The emphasis on the Estonian language is also experienced as a bordering activity by the Russian-speaking minority. The movement to preserve the Estonian language is not only focused on preserving Estonian, but on dissipating the Russian language as well. The wish to protect the Estonian language is partially understood by the Russian minority, as they understand that Estonia is a small country with a limited number of Estonian speakers. In daily life, however, they often experience negative reactions to their use of Russian. These negative reactions are often very personal and individual, as they depend on interpersonal contact. This those however, not mean that because these experiences are very personal, they are incidental. They are fragmented, but definitely structural. There is a language border experienced by Russian respondents that prevents them from receiving service, experiencing friendliness, being welcome. Sometimes, the border even prevents them from having access to a place.

*“If you smile at a person and you speak Estonian, you get a smile in return and are treated like a person. If you start speaking Russian, sometimes not always, you get hatred in return. In order to avoid this, I better start speaking Estonian. Sometimes at the supermarket, I say terre, which is ‘hello’ in Estonian, to every sales person because if they happen to be Estonian, they will respond well. Some of them are Russians, but I still start the conversation in Estonian just to avoid the misunderstanding.”*

*“I called a place and asked for space for 10 people in Russian and the girl told me, ‘We don’t have free space at all’. After, my friend called and talked with the girl in Estonian and she said, ‘Of course we have space. You can come here. No problem.’”*

*“There was a place that served crocodile or ostrich or something. I don’t remember. Most of the staff was Estonian. A Russian company came there to order food and they said, ‘We don’t speak Russian’. Then came another and they said, ‘We don’t serve Russians’. The owner was an Estonian who hated Russians, so when he hired waiters he didn’t demand Russian language knowledge. They even put a note on the door two years ago that said: ‘We don’t know Russian and we don’t serve in Russian’. But things like this happen quite often, very often. And that’s my country.”*

These quotes indicate that the a language border is very much real and can cause access to be denied to Russians. It also interferes with social interactions. They also demonstrate that a language border is very fragmented, mobile, and uncertain. One respondent does not know when he will encounter the border and therefore switches to Estonian in the supermarket to be sure to not encounter the border. He is not sure when, where, and how he will encounter the border and tries to avoid it. Furthermore, this tells us that a language border is very mobile and fragmented, but also at the same time very closed when it denies access to a place. In that case, it is not a matter of feeling unwelcome and therefore staying away, but access is fully denied. Those who are capable of speaking Estonian, therefore, often speak it instead of their native tongue to avoid negativity or

hatred. This negativity and hatred is not naturally present in Estonian citizens per se. It is fueled by the public narrative and atmosphere of fear created by politics and the media.

*“When you start speaking Russian on a personal level the person is locking down somehow. I usually don’t speak Russian because it is easier not to. If I do speak Russian, I will be looked at in a certain way. So, I am just used to acting this way.”*

Some respondents, however, do feel so unwelcome that even when they do speak Estonian, they sometimes still avoid specific places where they, as a Russian speaker, do not feel welcome. The above quote makes it clear that the feeling of not being welcome because one speaks Russian can be just as likely to deter Russian speakers as when access is explicitly denied.

*“I try not to go to places where I am not welcome and that is it. But, in general, this is not a good solution for a country. This is a bad solution because people are being divided and a great deal of potential is being lost.”*

Some of the respondents emphasized that in daily life they are always aware that they are not Estonians. They express feeling like a foreigner in their own country.

*“Let’s say I do always feel that I am a Russian speaker. I always have a certain awareness.”*

*“...because I know that when you live abroad, of course you are a foreigner. That is logical. But, when they try to make you feel like a foreigner in your own country, it is sad.”*

Furthermore, respondents expressed that disapproving attitudes towards people not speaking Estonian are mostly directed towards Russian speakers. Because of the public narrative and political climate of fear, citizens feel justified to border those who do not speak Estonian and mainly those who speak Russian. The attitude towards international expats or English speakers is quite different. This is a good indication that the wish to preserve the Estonian language is not only fueled by the desire to preserve the language, but by the desire to expel the Russian language. If the focus on Estonian was purely based on the wish to protect the language, English and English speakers would experience the same border. This, however, is not the case. As an English speaker in Estonia, I have not experienced such a border. English is widely spoken, available on menus, and accepted. Laws and other regulations are translated into English, while the Russian translation is often missing.

*“I think political matters are quite aggressively against other languages, but particularly Russian. International people’s kids go to the kindergarten and they have quite different experiences [than Russian people’s kids].”*

*“Actually, they will try to communicate in English with an English speaker. But, if the same person were speaking Russian, I am 100% sure that they would say, ‘Come on!’, maybe not to him, but to each other afterwards. Like there was a person and he was speaking Russian. And go to Russia.”*

These results indicate that there actually is a difference between the bordering tools in state-controlled and semi-public spaces. In state-controlled space, bordering is done by the state and is based on symbols and the difference in appreciation of them that is based on ethnic identity. Bordering in semi-public space in Estonia is mostly done by individuals, citizens, sales persons, and service personnel working in bars, cafes, supermarkets, shopping malls, and other shops on the basis of language. Language is thereby used to distinguish non-Estonians from Estonians and to identify social differences between these groups. A border between us and them, between languages, is thereby established. This indicates that language is indeed a very powerful bordering tool. Also, a power relation has been created where one group can require the other to speak a specific language and to refuse service or deny access to those who do not speak Estonian or English. This means that the language border can be experienced as a feeling of being unwelcome or unfriendliness, but it can also be more closed and entail denial of physical access.

Since language is used as a bordering tool in the service sector as well as in education, law and the labor market, it can be said that borders are diffused within the whole of the society, mobile, and networked among citizens. When bordering is no longer only in the hands of the state and the ability to border has shifted to citizens, borders are also experienced drastically differently by individuals. Not all border workers (citizens) border in the same way with the same intensity and border subjects experience bordering activities in different ways. The border becomes mobile and fragmented, as it only emerges where and when the individual is in contact with someone they identify as non-Estonian. The border can thus be experienced when visiting the supermarket one day, but not the next. This can result in a very insecure and fearful bordered subject, as we have seen with the respondents who are afraid to greet supermarket personnel in Russian. A border based on language is also very hard to visualize, recognize, identify, and connect to a specific spatial entity.

The language border is a far cry from the traditional concept of national borders, as it is highly mobile, fragmented, individual, ambivalent, unclear, uncertain, fluid, spaceless, diffused, networked, differentiated, constructive, and most of all very challenging.

## Chapter 5: Bordering Tools

Certain tools were used in the reterritorializing process of creating Estonian space. This chapter focuses on some of the tools and elements which made reterritorializing and bordering of space possible. The emphasis that was placed on Estonian identity was particularly crucial in this process. Because of differences between the Russian speakers and the Estonians, it was possible to highlight only the Estonian ethnic identity and values connected to it.

### 5.1 Ethnic perception

What it is that makes the moving of the Bronze Soldier and the placing of the monument of Freedom Square acts of reterritorialization and bordering is the fact that opinions on the removal of the statues and on language regulations, history, and citizenship are influenced by one's personal (ethnic) identity. Appropriation of a place, symbols and language connected to a place depend on ethnic identity, age, place of residence, personal experience (a demonstration or perceived discrimination), and also collective memory. According to Danzer (2009), the first three, ethnic identity, age, and place of residence, are, however, the most important. The border space that was created in Tallinn focuses on a part of the population who cannot identify with the Estonian identity and cannot speak (or not sufficiently at least) the Estonian language. Opinions about the Bronze Soldier were divided along the lines of those who identified as Estonians and those who did not. The basis for the creation of a bordering space is exactly this difference in identity and the language, views, and concepts that go along with identity.

#### 5.1.1 Ethnic (Russian) identity

"Ethnic identity influences how people perceive their daily life context" (Danzer, 2009, p. 1566). Therefore, it is necessary to understand the identity of the Russian speakers in Estonia. It is interesting to note that both ethnic identity and national identity influence whether one identifies as an Estonian, a Russian, or an Estonian-Russian. When discussing identification and integration, this thesis focuses on identificational integration because identificational integration goes beyond structural, cultural, and social integration. Structural integration involves integration in institutions and society, like the economy and labor market. Cultural integration involves respecting social and cultural norms and the ability to speak the language. Social integration is the third dimension, is more focused on the private sphere, and reflects people's personal relations. Identificational integration is the fourth dimension and relates to feelings of belonging and identification with groups from ethnic, national, or other types of social identification (Nimmerfeldt, 2011). Integration at the identity level is more difficult to study because the concept of identity is somewhat fuzzy and unclear. To become attached to a society, to feel welcome, at home, and respected as a member of society is important.

Integration and identificational integration can be understood in two ways that relate to ethnic and national self-identification. Ethnic and national identity can be viewed as mutually exclusive, but they can also be interpreted as separate. Identity "is not a discrete social construction that is territorially

bounded: rather, identities overlap in complex ways and geographical scales” (Raadik-Cottrell, 2010, p. 33). Multiplicity allows for an individual to have both a national and an ethnic identification. Belonging to a national identity entails forming an emotional attachment to the resident country and having a sense of belonging in its society. This is important to highlight because, according to Nimmerfeldt, Estonianness is “mainly understood as a reference to ethnic and much less to the other aspects of identificational integration at the national level” (Nimmerfeldt, 2011, p. 106).

Second-generation Russians in Estonia do not feel a strong belonging to the category Estonian. Only 6% feel a strong belonging to that category and 45% do not feel that they belong in this category at all. This can be clarified with respect to the mainly ethnic meaning of the nomination ‘Estonian’. The Russian speakers in Nimmerfeldt’s paper explain that to belong to the group ‘Estonians’, one must be born as an ethnic Estonian. This means that to be Estonian, one’s parents and grandparents must be ethnic Estonians (Nimmerfeldt, 2011). Also, language is an important determining factor. Simply knowing the Estonian language is not enough to become an Estonian; one has to speak like a native Estonian. Also, more stereotypical dimensions are mentioned; one must act and look Estonian. It can be concluded that the younger generation of Russian speakers feels that even if they would want to, they could never really become Estonian. This means that even if they would want to, they could never not see themselves as non-Estonian, or Russian. This also means that it is almost impossible, as a Russian speaker, to be completely and totally impassive when confronted with bordering symbols or activities. Another obstacle to feeling a sense of belonging to Estonia is the pressure to assimilate experienced by the Russian speakers (Nimmerfeldt, 2011). Language and citizenship regulations are tools used to put pressure on the Russian speakers. However, political and social discourse also contribute to this pressure.

According to Nimmerfeldt, the Russian community also does not identify with each other and have not formed a minority identity: “The Russian community in Estonia is too heterogeneous and fragmented, and therefore does not have a unifying minority identity” (Nimmerfeldt, 2011, p. 23). Only 28% of participants in Nimmerfeldt’s study reported having a very strong sense of belonging to a group labeled “Russians”. In contrast, 65% of Estonian respondents had a ‘very strong’ sense of belonging to the group ‘Estonians’. Among Estonians, ethnic identity is much stronger, especially in comparison with Estonian-Russians.

In Estonia, the distinction between national identity and ethnic Estonian identity is blurred. While national identity should refer to state-related identity, a common political system, and a shared economic structure, ethnic identity is more associated with the heritage of the own group. National identity should refer to feelings of connectedness and identification with Estonia as a state and a country, while ethnic identity should focus more on belonging in one’s heritage and ethnic group (Drozdova, 2010). However, this is not so much the case in Estonia, where the exclusive nature of the national Estonian identity makes it a good tool to use in othering activities and in the creation of a border space.

During the period after independence, “the Estonian identity was actively constructed as an ethno-cultural group, which is united by native origin, common culture, history, national traditions, feelings, language, preservation of and pride in their culture and traditions, and a deep connection with the Estonian territory and landscape. The Estonian ethnic and political identity shaped a common semantic field: ‘Estonian’ was interpreted as belonging to the Estonian nation in an ethno-cultural sense” (Nimmerfeldt, 2011, p. 38). This resulted in the exclusive nature of the national Estonian identity that makes it difficult to identify with Estonian identity.

However, by measuring sense of belonging in a different way that did not focus on the ethnically labeled Estonian identity, using statements like ‘I love Estonia’ and ‘I consider Estonia my homeland’, a different picture was formed. Twelve percent of the Russian respondents in this study felt a very strong connection to Estonia and 42% felt a strong connection to Estonia (Nimmerfeldt, 2011, p. 40). This means that in Estonia, inclusion can at best be based on citizenship and not on ethnicity.

## 5.2 Symbols

As mentioned above, people ascribe meaning to public places. *Sense of place* refers to the relationships and the perception of the relationships between oneself and a place, as well as to the connections between space and people. It is a concept that includes emotional and symbolic aspects. There is a physical world (lived space) onto which a symbol can project a (symbolic) meaning. Symbols can mean very different things to different people. Symbols in public space can serve as memories of the past as well as to assert place in the present. Symbols (as we have seen with the Bronze Soldier) can exclude as well as include different people. In a multi-cultural tension-filled environment, emotions connected to these symbols can aggravate a situation. In a post-Soviet situation like that of Estonia, one can assume that a personal ethnic identity can be related to a Soviet socialist identity and that age can explain the degree of attachment (Danzer, 2009).

If the state constructed an artifact in order to generate an ethnic or national symbolic connection (a war memorial for instance) or not (the creation of a university) both, however, can gain symbolic meaning just as both can fail to create the intended symbolic meaning. The state can provide identification opportunities; however, it cannot control how and if meaning is placed on these artifacts. Not all symbols create the same level of meaning. The level depends on personal features like ethnic identity, age, etc. The same place can be subject to diverse perceptions. In the mindset of an individual, a place can reconfirm the already established individual constellation.

The Estonian examples have already been highlighted and include two dimensions. One is the removal of the monuments and symbols of remembering or commemoration of the occupation and the Red Army. These acts have symbolically dismissed Soviet history as unofficial and incorrect (Danzer, 2009). The second dimension consists of the installation of national symbols to create a national and ethnic connection to Estonia. The Estonian flag, changing names of squares and streets, time zone shifting, and the placing of a monument in commemoration of independence all belong to the second dimension of symbolic implementation of a border space. Also, these symbols represent

and narrate a preferred perspective concerning historic events, one that emphasizes and strengthens the Estonian identity.

This means that ethnic identity in combination with the display and use of certain symbols can have a bordering/othering effect on a specific segment of the population. In Estonia, the use of symbols and handling of monuments only means something because of the connected meaning that is highly connected to people's ethnic identity.

Age and place of residence played significant role in how the interviewee judges symbols. Members of the older generation, who have been fully socialized, experience the change from urban Soviet space to national urban space very differently than younger people. One whose memory mainly consists of the post-Soviet period will have quite a different attitude than one who lived most part of their life during the Soviet period. For the second group, the destruction of Soviet monuments and history also means the destruction of their personal history, which has been symbolically dismissed as unofficial and incorrect (Danzer, 2009). This feeling of having an unofficial and incorrect history can be even stronger if the person is living in an urban environment. "As the changes in public space are not evenly distributed across the country, an individual's place and region of residence is likely to have an impact on their perception in a variety of ways" (Danzer, 2009, p. 1570). Populations are generally not evenly spread across the country and larger cities are more subject to changes in public space. Monuments and other national buildings are mostly located in cities; changing the urban landscape is therefore more often a priority in cities. Inhabitants of these cities are therefore also more likely to personally experience changes in public space. However, some symbols remain important to people independent of their place of residence.

### 5.3 Language

Language and borders refers to the idea that language differences refer to categories of people defined on an ethnic or national basis. According to Urciuoli (1995), people can assume that they have a language that equates to their belonging to a particular origin group. Borders can emerge in public space when the language is imagined to be bound to a linguistically homogenous nation or group (Urciuoli, 1995). This imagined bound also applies to the connection between language and territory. "There is thus no a priori causal relation between language and territory. Any territory can receive any language and any language may be used anywhere" (Kramsch, Aparna, & Degu, 2015). Language is grounded in human relations and can play a distinctive role in society. "The link between language and territory is secured by inhabitants who assure the guaranteed relations to the extent that they are producers of language and territory" (Kramsch, Aparna, & Degu, 2015, p. 1211). Language, also in public space, is used as a tool to keep out foreign elements and also to define foreignness and to "creatively indexing social distinctions within a society" (Urciuoli, 1995, p. 534). Language, as we have seen, produces a border "between 'community' and 'arrest, seizure, and expulsion'. Language thereby produces a border, whereby racialized and often nationalized relations of us/them, Estonian/Russian are established, defined by deep asymmetries of power" (Kramsch,

Aparna, & Degu, 2015, p. 1216). Language can also be used to control key elements of society, especially law and education. "Language policy reflects the broader construct of language ideology by highlighting links between language and identity, morality, and power relations and providing insights into the relations between institutions such as governing bodies, laws, and educational organizations" (Baba & Dahl-Jorgensen, 2013, p. 62) Learning a different language can also put a speaker in a culturally ambiguous situation. Urciuoli provides the example of Wales, where the Welsh speak Welsh and the non-Welsh do not speak Welsh. Borders based on language may be created by those in power. Creating a language border is a highly political process. Language borders are "mapped onto people and onto ethnic nationalities" (Urciuoli, 1995, p. 533).

This can be recognized in semi-public space in Estonia, but also in the proceedings that occurred after 1991. When Estonia became independent in 1991, different citizenship and language laws were introduced. Passing a language exam, which requires a high level of Estonian language knowledge, became obligatory to obtaining Estonian citizenship. The Estonian language became more important and laws established mandatory levels of language proficiency. A particular language skill level is now required for public and private sector jobs. As of 2000, almost 40% of the Russian speakers could speak Estonian and about 60% of Estonians could speak and understand Russian (Lindemann, 2014). Despite the introduction of these language laws, education can still be undertaken in Estonian as well as Russian. In 2010, 32% of the students studying in Tallinn were studying in Russian. Compared to the Eastern regions of Estonia, this number is quite low. In the Eastern regions, around 72% of students were studying in Russian in 2010. In higher education, the language of study is mainly Estonian, especially in public education institutions. In private universities, however, it is still possible to study in Russian. However, students in Russian schools do perform lower as do Russian students in Estonian schools. Language difficulty is the most plausible explanation for this. Aspirations are high amongst both ethnic groups, but for ethnic minorities, realistic expectations for educational success are smaller (Lindemann, 2014). Language regulations in education are being adapted, however, including a regulation that requires at least 60% of courses in Russian schools to be taught in Estonian.

Also, when one is entering the Estonian labor market, it is important to possess skill in the host country's language in order to reach better economic achievements, especially because Estonian language skills are required by law for some higher positions. Being able to speak Russian and Estonian can increase one's chances to enter the labor market and be promoted (Lindemann, 2014). Language interventions were largely put in place in main sectors such as state government and administrative bodies, meetings and office work, in names and information, and in education (Schmid, 2008). Also, a special holiday was installed to celebrate the national Estonian language.

## Chapter 6: Who lives with borders

### 6.1 Who feels bordered?

As borders are very individualized, they are experienced very differently by different groups on either side of the border. This means that borders for some (groups) are normalized in everyday life and for others (groups), they appear to not exist. Some might see the border as an uncrossable obstacle in life, while others may not even perceive its existence. This can also lead to there being borders for some, while others are encouraged to remain indifferent about established and new borders.

There are some personal aspects that can create a stronger sense of being bordered. Of those, I would like to emphasize identity and language because they are bordering tools and logically affect those with the “right”, or undesirable, personal aspects (non-Estonian identity and language skills) the most.

#### 6.1.1 Ethnic identity

As highlighted above, ethnic identity is very important to the perception of symbolic meaning. Appropriation of symbols and places strongly depends on ethnic identity. By focusing on creating a space where the non-Estonians do not feel at home, Estonians have caused those who identify differently to feel bordered. A difference in identity is the basis on which they have chosen to border. It is therefore not surprising that those who are not Estonian feel bordered. Indeed, the identity of an individual can determine how strongly he feels bordered. This means that ethnic identity is a very important personal aspect in determining how strongly one feels bordered, particularly in state-controlled public space, where symbols are the main method of bordering. Identity is a very complex process and there are a variety of ways with which bordering is experienced as well as varying levels of intensity.

Those who are less integrated or who strongly identify as Russians or Russian speakers feel more bordered, discriminated against, and more strongly dominated by the majority. However, the concept of identificational integration is fuzzy and complex and made up of multiple components. It is possible to feel bordered on only some of the elements that compose the Estonian identity. This means that borders, for one, can be based on different components than for the other. This results in a very different and individual effect of bordering activities. It is clear, however, that the stronger a respondent feels Russian and expresses her identity, the stronger she experiences bordering.

“This state has made so much effort to make me feel uncomfortable. You have to be Estonian.”

Danzer (2009) confirms this idea and illustrates that the more integrated individuals are the more they experience equal powers in the symbolic display. Residents who feel more discriminated against experience a domination of the Kazakh symbols. And for those who strongly identify with German symbols (restaurants, monuments, shops), the urban mind map is dominated by these places and they are said to be crucial in preserving their culture (Danzer, 2009).

### 6.1.2 Language

Language has a very important position in human relations and can distinguish people and make them outcasts. Because bordering in semi-public space is very strongly based on language, those who do speak Estonian less often experience this feeling than those who do not speak the language. Those who are incapable of switching to Estonian are to a greater extent excluded from society and politics and more often experience bordering. Those who can switch to Estonian often do so in restaurants and public spaces to avoid feeling excluded or being confronted with hatred.

Also, many differentiations can be observed with respect to the ability to speak and understand the Estonian language. This means that, concerning language, there is great diversity in levels of feeling bordered.

*“You should be a real Estonian. It doesn’t matter if you like your country. You should speak clearly.”*

*“You know without language and without some ambitions and Estonian ambitions, you can’t be in the system. You need to be a little bit Estonian to be in the system. You need to be in that state-of-mind. It is different from the Russian state-of-mind.”*

Therefore, it is very difficult to provide a single description of those who feel bordered and in what way and intensity people feel bordered. Some do not experience any borders, while others feel and see the border in their everyday life. However, it is clear that those who identify as non-Estonian feel more bordered in state-controlled space than in semi-public space. In semi-public spaces, bordering is based more on language than on identity and therefore language skills are more important in semi-public spaces than in state-controlled public spaces.

Respondents also emphasized that the feeling of not being welcome can also grow weaker or stronger in specific political situations in the country. A respondent gave the example of the elections and the recent events happening in Ukraine. The general political feeling in Estonia according to here was in favor of Ukraine. She, as a Russian speaker, was a bit more reserved in expressing her opinion, which gave her a feeling of not being welcome.

*“And with me that is saying a lot because I speak Estonian fluently and have a lot of Estonian friends. I am very integrated in society and in the culture and yet even I felt that I needed to leave this country. I felt that it would be easier to be a stranger in a place that is strange to me than to be a stranger in my own country.”*

In interviews with Estonian respondents, it also became clear that their understanding and recognition of the borders that Russians might experience is quite low. Estonians do not recognize the problems that Russian speakers might face. This is a good example of how the border is very differently experienced and ambivalent, and of how different the other side of a border might look.

## 6.2 Living with borders.

People who experience borders move about them with as much variety as there are experiences of these borders. Some choose to cope and others choose to oppose or resist the borders. Sometimes, opposition is expressed by means of demonstrations, but resistance can also be expressed in a more quiet way. Three four responses were observed, namely social or spatial segregation, avoidance, ignoring, and attempting to understand. A mix of these responses is of course possible and common.

### 6.2.1 Segregation in Tallinn

Avoiding places with a certain identity or symbolism attached to it becomes easier when an ethnic group lives a segregated life. Segregation can be a way for ethnic groups to escape conflict and struggles with the majority in society and be exposed to minimal discrimination. Residential segregation indicates a separation or uneven distribution of the population in urban space. Some areas are over-represented while others are under-represented. Sociological segregation is, on the other hand, mostly about the absence of interactions between different social groups and geographically relies on the unequal distribution of these social groups in space (Järv, Müürisepp, Ahas, Derudder, & Witlox, 2015).

Structural explanations, such as processes of exclusion and marginalization in the housing market and the type of welfare state, can be very important in shaping urban inequality (Musterd, 2008). In the city of Tallinn, spatial segregation can most certainly be observed, as the Russian minority lives in a different part of the city than the Estonians.

The majority of non-Estonians live in high-rise estates and an increasing number of them are moving to lower-quality flats. (Kährik, 2006). According to Kooij, Tallinn is an archipelago where Estonians live in wooden houses and Russians live in flats. (Kooij, 2015). In Estonia, the division between Russians and Estonians is clearly marked by language, but also by historical background and socio-economic position in the current society (Järv, Müürisepp, Ahas, Derudder, & Witlox, 2015). “As immigrants from Russia and other parts of the former USSR were usually privileged in new state housing allocation, the non-Estonian population is still concentrated in this housing segment” (Kährik, 2006, p. 49). This also means that pre-socialist apartments (often with low-level facilities, some renovated) remain dominated by Estonians (Kährik, 2006). According to Järv et al., the spatial division between the Russian and Estonian has mostly remained unaltered “with a high proportion of Russians speakers still living in the industrialized region of northeastern Estonia and in the capital city of Tallinn, especially in the northern (Põhja), western (Haabersti, Mustamäe), and eastern (Lasnamäe) areas of the city. The image on the next page depicts a map of Tallinn and the eight city and residential districts.

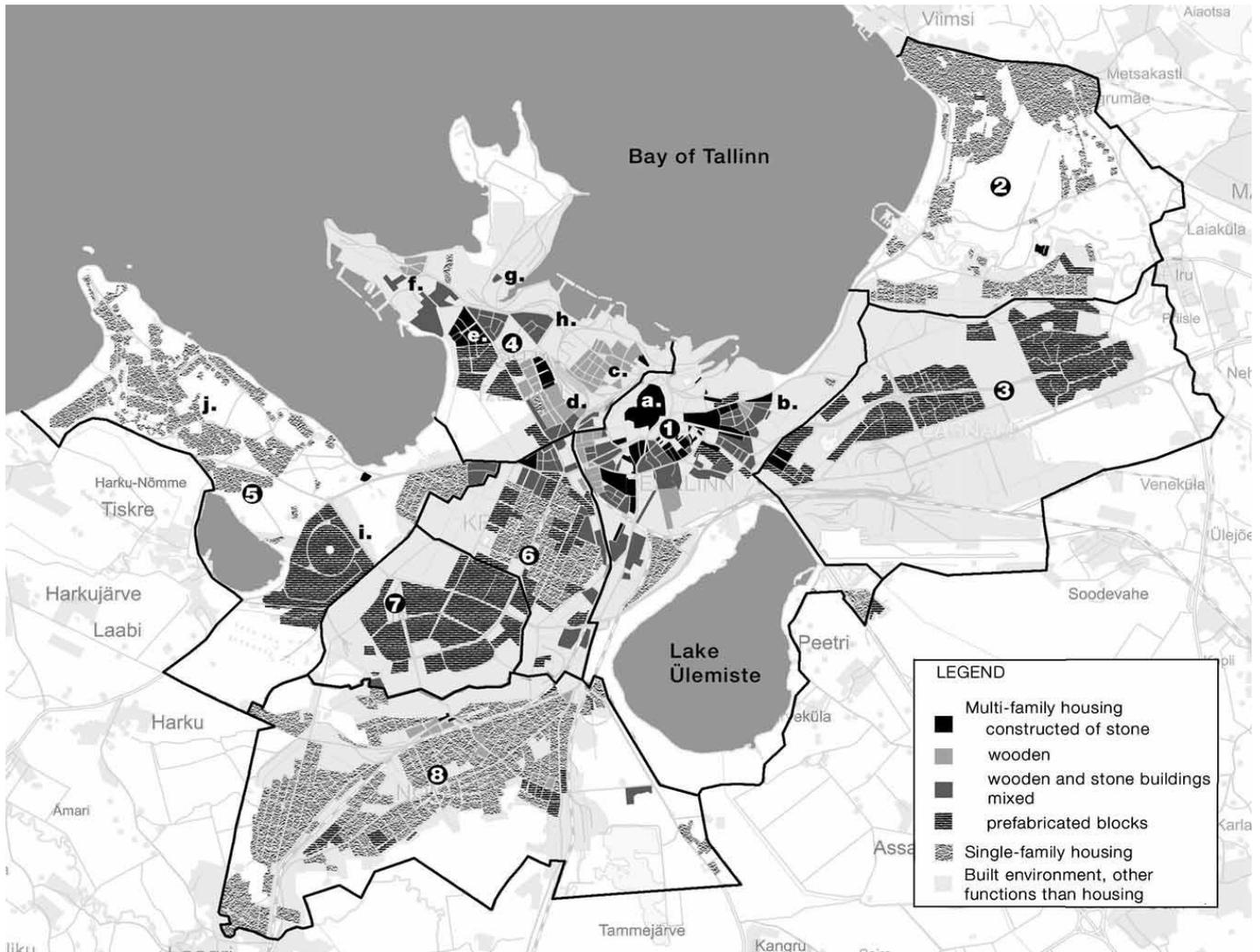


Figure 6: Principle housing types in Tallinn's residential areas. The eight administrative city districts are (1) Central Tallinn, (2) Pirita, (3) Lasnamäe, (4) Northern Tallinn, (5) Haabersti, (6) Kristiine, (7) Mustamäe, and (8) Nõmme. The following neighborhoods are within them: (a) the Old Town, (b) Kadriorg, (c) Kalamaja, (d) Pelgulinn, (e) Pelgurand, (f) Kopli, (g) Paljassaare, (h) Karjamaa, (i) Väike-õismäe and (j) Kakumäe. Source: (Kährik, 2006, p. 69)

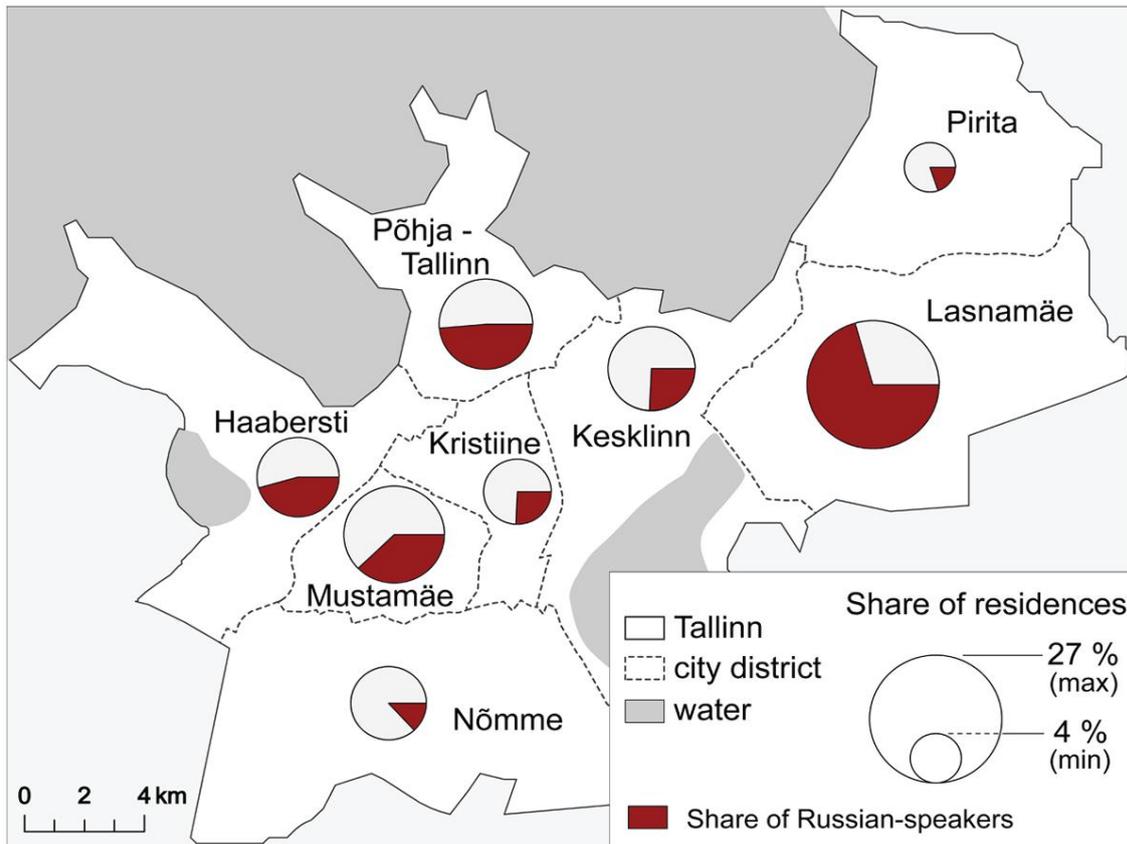


Figure 7: Distribution of residences and the share of Russian speakers by city district in Tallinn based on 2011 Population and Housing Census data. Source: (Järv, Müürisepp, Ahas, Derudder, & Witlox, 2015)

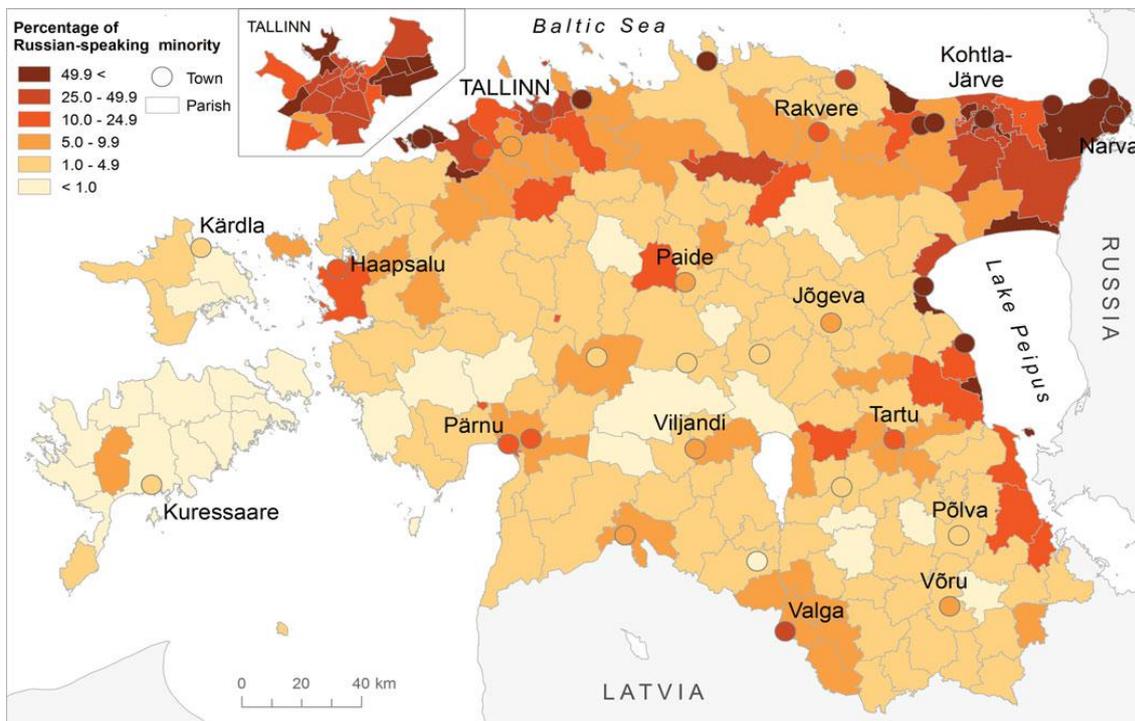


Figure 8: Distribution of the Russian-speaking minority population in Estonia, according to the 2000 census. Source: (Silm & Ahas, 2014)

Pictures of different houses and housing areas are included in the appendix and provide a better image of the city.

Also, the population tends to work in different sectors of the economy (Silm & Ahas, 2014). Contact that does exist between the two groups is mainly employment-related interaction. And also then only a third of Estonians (and half of the Estonians in Tallinn) and half of the Russian speakers in Estonia have contact with people of the other ethnic group in the workplace.

### 6.2.2 City center

Concerning the city center of Tallinn, a group of respondents also chooses to avoid specific places like Freedom Square or other semi-public spaces. However, this group is small. This means that only a small group of Russian speakers lives a spatially segregated life concerning the use of public space in the city center of Tallinn. This is also supported by previous research on daily activity space.

During the process of this research, it became clear that within Tallinn, there are differences between Russians and Estonians concerning activity space. Estonians visit the west and south of Tallinn more while Russian speakers more often visit the eastern regions of Tallinn. However, both groups do visit the city center districts. Where the homes tend to be the most segregated, irregular variety-seeking, which also takes place in the city center, is the least segregated (Järv, Müürisepp, Ahas, Derudder, & Witlox, 2015).

This means that although other sectors are segregated, like the home, both groups do visit the city center of Tallinn, and within the center, they visit the same places such as restaurants, cafes, etc. This is remarkable considering that most bordering activities in public space take place in the city center, where Freedom Square is located, as well as in most semi-public spaces. This means that a physical or spatial border within the city center that divides places and venues between the two groups does not exist. A map or visualization of the border in these spaces cannot be constructed, as this thesis has attempted to do, as spaces are used by both groups and the border is very mobile and fragmented. In semi-public space, this means that the border is not connected to a certain specific geography. The use of facilities by both groups can, however, possibly be explained by the small size of the city.

The city center may be considered a place where the border can be overcome. It is a place where Estonians and Russians can become friends with each other. It is odd that the city center offers so much potential for overcoming social borders, as bordered spaces, such as Freedom Square, are also present there. However, these borders have not been overcome, as the two groups do not interact with each other easily and live socially segregated lives.

Although Russian respondents visit the city center often, they mostly visit places with other who were considered to have the same (ethnic) identity as the respondent. Contact with Estonians is rare and family and personal networks are segregated along ethnic lines, which is also reflected in the number of marriages between members of the different ethnic groups (Silm & Ahas, 2014, p. 546). Valentine also states that although different groups in a city do share “many everyday moments of contact, they do not really count as encounters at all. Different groups are coexisting and even observing each other in the city. Still, in doing so, there is little actual mixing between these different

groups and individuals because they tend to self-segregate within particular spaces, carving out their own territory. Spatial proximity can actually breed defensiveness and the bounding of identities and communities” (Valentine, 2008, p. 326). A report by the home office of the UK describes a picture in which “Separation between individual lives and groups can be found in: educational arrangements, community and voluntary bodies, employment, places of worship, language, social and cultural networks, means that many communities operate on the basis of a series of parallel lives. Their lives often do not seem to touch at any point, let alone overlap and promote any meaningful interchange” (Valentine, 2008, p. 326). As been shown here this idea can be extended to the case of Estonia.

This means that within the same place, groups or gatherings of different ethnicities are present, but they do not mix. These groups mostly consist of only Estonians or only Russians. Sometimes, Russian speakers even have their own waitress who can serve guests in Russian.

Living a socially segregated life in contrast to living a spatially segregated life is very common when visiting the city center. Being close in proximity and using the same spaces does not automatically lead to social interaction.

The continued presence of the Russian population could, however, also be interpreted as a form of protest. Russian speakers are not letting themselves be driven out of the city center and semi-public spaces. Their continued presence despite the bordering activities by service personnel can be perceived as the perseverance or resistance of the Russian speakers. They continue to visit the city center and to be a visible minority group in public space. This visibility may help them to remain and become more legitimate members of the public and broader society. If they were not present and visible in public space and society, then they would no longer be represented in the image of the public and could more easily be overlooked. If they were excluded from these spaces, they would not be visible and their legitimacy as members of the public and society would be put in doubt and they would be unrepresented in the image of the public. By continuing to visit these places, they remain visible and thereby become more legitimate members of society. The continued presence and daily activity space, concerning the city center is depicted in a map on the following page.

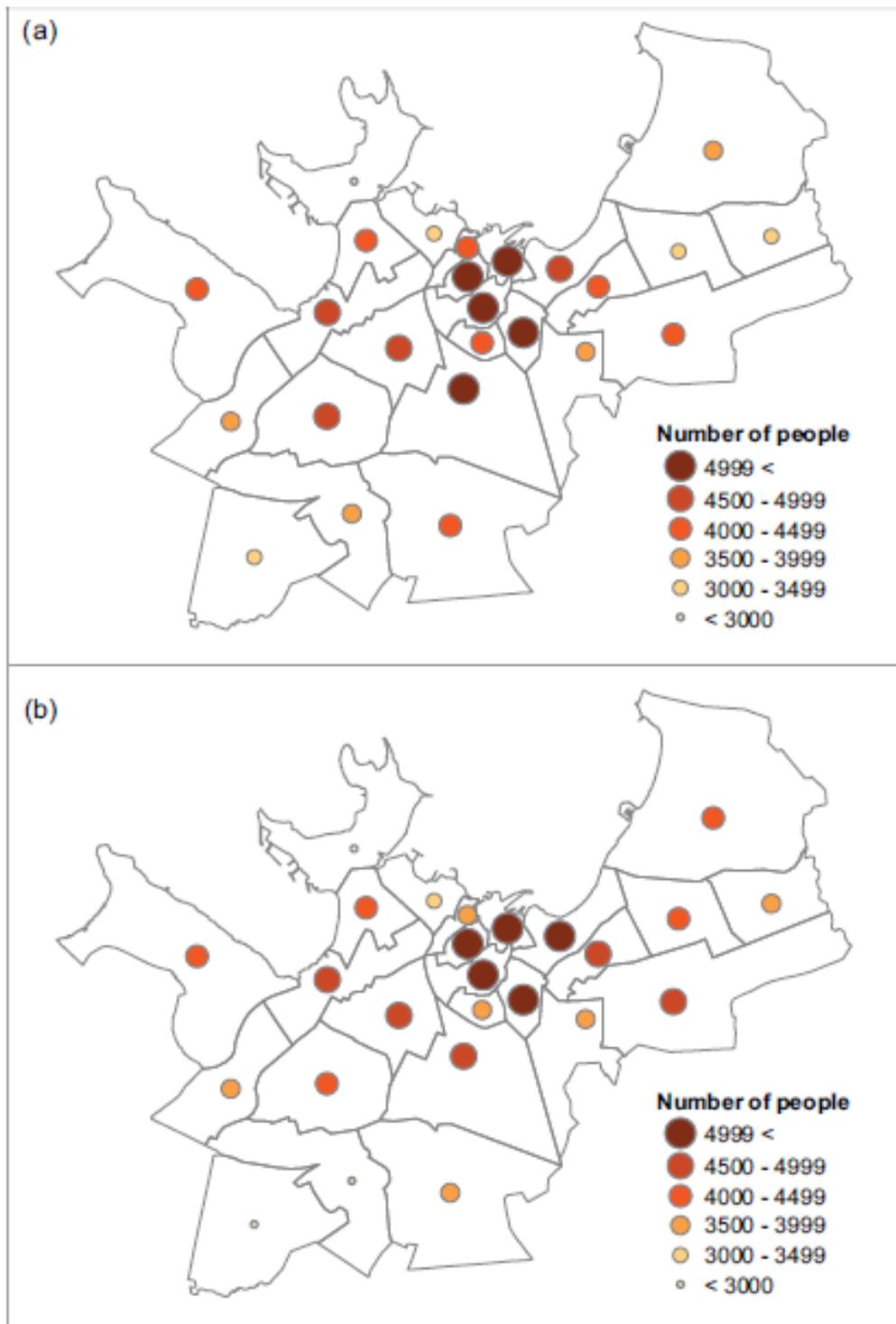


Figure 9: Differences in districts in Tallinn visited by (A) Estonians and (B) the Russian-speaking minority. Source: (Slim & Ahas, 2014)

Another way to cope with or resist the feeling of being unwelcome is to try to ignore the feelings and symbols. Respondents have often decided for themselves to live their lives. Within this group there are differences in gradation concerning the level of ignoring or being disconnected. It can range from ignoring the cross in Freedom Square but can also manifest itself in internal migration. Not feeling at home or displaced can be stimulating for people to move and “if a physical relocation is not desired

or possible, it can be searched for either virtually or through ‘internal migration,’ to retreat to places of other times” (Raadik-Cottrell, 2010, p. 52). Watching Russian television and being socially segregated is a good example of this. In Estonia, 75% of the Russian speakers watch Russian TV channels several times per week and 75% of Estonians do not watch TV channels in the Russian language at all (Silm & Ahas, 2014). Their social lives are shielded, so to speak, from Estonians and the feeling of being unwelcome.

Ignoring can be seen as a way of coping, but alternatively, it can be seen as a form of resistance. The Russians do not allow themselves to be affected too much by their feelings of not being welcome. They refuse to let the regulations and behavior of Estonians affect their lives. They resist being affected in the way Estonians wish to affect them. However, they can sometimes be very much disconnected from society.

*“I decided for myself that I am going to live here no matter what happens. My home, friends, and family are here. Here, I have social connections. So, I just stopped thinking about it and started to live.”*

A respondent who currently has an alien passport also put forth a metaphor with which he describes the integration regulations as a dance that he needs to perform before he can fully participate in society. He denies doing this dance. As a form of protest, he does not perform the integration dance of exams and language learning and still remains the owner of an alien passport.

*“It is not so important right now because all of my life I have been without citizenship. Just imagine that you own car and somebody tells you that you can drive it, but you need to dance around your car before you drive it each time. So, of course you can do so, but will you do it? You see all of these people who can just sit and drive, but you, you need to dance around the car first.”*

He denies doing what is expected of him. He does not comply with the rules that have been made to encourage him to do the dance and integrate to obtain citizenship. He has chosen to not want citizenship and therefore to not integrate. The Russian minority is expected to leave or integrate. This respondent, however, rejects both choices and chooses to remain an alien citizen of Estonia. This can certainly be labeled a form of resistance, as he ignores rules and expectations.

Another group is trying to understand the Estonians and why they chose to build the monument in Freedom Square. This group believes that understanding will help them to not take the bordering activities too personally.

*“Estonia is a very young nation, so language is part of the identity. They very strongly wanted to have a nationality. They need to persuade everyone that they are a nation. Here, language needs to unite the country. It is the way to unite. I understand them.”*

### 6.2.3 English

English is very commonly used to try to bypass or resist language barriers. Those who do not speak Estonian or do not feel comfortable speaking Estonian especially often use English. It is a more neutral language and is used by Russian speakers to communicate with Estonians. The English language is a more neutral language and thereby creates a third language space. Since Tallinn is a very touristic city, the English language is very much used in the city center and represents something different from either Russian or Estonian.

“I speak English. For me, there is a border. I speak in English to Estonians because they will pick on their own language. I don't want to say something incorrectly or with a Russian accent. I know they are crazy about their language and their nationality. I don't want to speak to them in Estonian. I use English. My English is poor and their English is poor, so it is more comfortable for me and more comfortable for them.”

These forms of opposition are very different from the open and loud form of resistance one first thinks of when one thinks of the words resistance or opposition. This does not mean that protests or demonstrations do not occur, but daily resistance takes place in a somewhat different form. This illustrates that being the subject of bordering does not make one an uninfluential subject. The subjects of bordering are in fact also actors. They tacitly resist or live with the borders that are imposed upon them. The fact that this tactic seem invisible does not mean that it is nonexistent. Within border studies, it can sometimes be fairly easy to overlook the ones being bordered, as bordering always takes place within a playing field where the most powerful are the ones who are able to impose borders. However, those who cannot are not non-actors in this power play, especially not when language is involved. Language is a very personal, social, and private phenomenon and trying to stop people from speaking their language or mother tongue is very difficult. Concerning language, the state can try to force the Estonian language to be dominant in more formal settings, but the state is less successful in stopping people from speaking their language in the private sphere. Ignoring, social segregation, internal migration, speaking English, and their continued presence in the city center can all be seen the Russian minority's forms of resistance. Within border studies, the recognition of the competences, abilities, and daily life of border subjects is of great importance.

## Chapter 7. Conclusion

It can be concluded that bordering in public space in Tallinn, Estonia is most certainly real. However, bordering practices are different in different spaces as are the tools that are used to do so. Therefore, this thesis has made a distinction between state-controlled and semi-public space.

When, after 1991, changes in state-controlled public spaces were made concerning the handling of symbols and the selection of the symbols to be displayed, bordering and dividing symbols were chosen. By highlighting those symbols that are strongly connected with the Second World War, instant differences of opinion, meaning, and appreciation were induced. A large part of the Russian minority was alienated and estranged from particular public places and also from the Estonian state in general due to these differences in meaning, feelings, and values.

This suggests that bordering in public space is based on the use of symbols, onto which different meanings are placed with respect to the ethnic identity of the viewer. This means that within border studies, a sense of place, history, and representational spaces should be of great interest. A place is evidently not an empty, meaningless space, but carries meaning, feelings and thus borders which are extremely important in the use and appreciation of the place and in this case, the state. Spaces are infused with meaning particularly when states try to reterritorialize them by placing monuments to strengthen and materialize certain imagined identities based on the past. Places are then used as a medium to negotiate identity, but also as a tool for remembering as well as forgetting. Monuments then become important instruments for re-ordering history and giving identity materiality. The reality of a place is thus changed and those who do not feel at home or who even feel displaced can be stimulated to move (physically, virtually, or mentally). The consequence of these establishment monuments is bordering. This means that within border studies, more attention needs to be paid to space and the role and involvement of these aspects in bordering. It is not only in Tallinn that space is filled with symbols. Thus, further research and more case studies are necessary to more fully understand all of the processes and ways in which public space and production of space can lead to bordering experiences.

Furthermore, borders are also experienced in non-state controlled public space in Tallinn. The negative public narrative concerning Russia and the public sense of fear created in Estonia are very important aspects of the emergence of these borders. The public narrative actively promotes and approves of borderwork being undertaken by citizens. This has effects in semi-public places like cafés, supermarkets, restaurants, etc. In these spaces, bordering activities have been undertaken, not by the state, but by citizens and service personnel based on language. Russian speakers experience borders and hatred when they do not speak Estonian and speak Russian instead. This is a good indication of the increase borderwork. Borderwork based on language changes the concept of traditional national border and challenges the concept of a borders to be more mobile, fragmented, individual, ambivalent, unclear, uncertain, fluid, spaceless, diffused, networked, differentiated,

constructive. This concept does not only challenge the traditional concept but also makes researching and understanding borders more challenging.

This means that the concept of borders and thoughts about what borders are, including where and when they emerge, need to be open and fluid as well. This study has illustrated that a border can be disconnected from a specific geography, as they are induced by very mobile border workers. Borders are furthermore based on images, imaginings, understandings, and identity and can emerge depending on one's age, place of residence, identity, and language. They are thus highly constructive. Borders are perceived and imagined in the mind, but that does not make them less real for those who experience them. However, the immaterial nature of borders makes them very challenging to research as does the fact that the experience of them is highly individual. As a researcher who does not share the same identity or mental map of a place with his respondents, a border can be perceived not to exist.

Russian speakers in general experience borders as unfair, difficult, and incomprehensible and some feel really sad about the bordering practices. As a response to these practices, they often choose to avoid, segregate, ignore, or try to understand why Estonians undertake such actions. In doing so, border subjects are not only subject to bordering, but also actors within this power play. Within border studies, it is sometimes easy to point a finger at those who border, as the most powerful, or the majority in this case, are the ones who are capable of bordering. However, this does not mean that the one being bordered is a victim or passive actor. The border subject is an actor who can actively resist. Social segregation, using the English language, and ignoring can all be seen as a methods of resistance. They might seem invisible or small, but they each demonstrate resistance to becoming Estonian or speaking Estonian. They resist the imposed will to adapt.

With this thesis, I hope to have answered the research question and also to have contributed to the academic debate within border studies:

*How can reterritorializing of public space by the Estonian state be seen as a form of othering/ bordering and how do Russian residents of Tallinn experience and live with these othering practices in public space?*

## Chapter 8. Discussion

The overall results of this thesis are in accordance with those of the literature and the expectations of the researcher. The results regarding personal characteristics are especially in accordance with expectations. However, the results concerning the method used for bordering activities and the division between state-controlled and semi-public spaces were less expected. This thesis has contributed to border studies by demonstrating the importance of the production of space and understanding the border and all of its possible forms, appearances, and bordering tools. This thesis has built upon the concepts of sense of place, production of space and borders and has illustrated that a synthesis of these concepts and theories adds value to these concepts. Also, in practice, it has demonstrated its value and viability and has fostered a better understanding of the bordering systems and tools within the context of public space. Hopefully, this thesis will spur more bordering research that focuses on public space and the use of symbols and language. Furthermore, it is hoped and expected that border studies academics will also seize the opportunity to expand their knowledge on language and borders. The difficulty that accompanies researching language borders is also what makes it so interesting. The disconnection of the border from a static spatial anchor is very fascinating and makes the border harder to visualize, understand, and conceptualize.

Future studies should include more places and respondents. Unfortunately, using a larger number of respondents and places was beyond the scope of this study, The reader should also bear in mind that this study has focused on the second generation of Russian speakers due to practical reasons. If the first generation were to be included, a slightly different picture might appear. Also, the possible influence of age could then be made clearer. It is expected that the first generation might experience the same feelings experienced by the second generation, but more poignantly. This study was also unable to encompass the entire functionality of the state and society in which all aspects of bordering can be present. This could be interesting and may lead to creating a fuller image of the life of a Russian speaker in Estonia. The language border might appear in more and other places and in different forms like the labor market, housing market, and education, but also in partner seeking, social (work) relations, and entertainment like music, theatre, etc.

It is recommended that future researchers to work with a translator so that the first generation of Russian speakers can be included. Further research could also focus on different sites in Estonia or other countries or cities. I recommend that researchers in Estonia to include Maarjamäe Memorial. There are plans to renovate it and change the dedication. Furthermore, I would strongly advise future researchers to keep their eyes open, as many public places as well as street names and monuments within cities mean different things to different people. This is also why borders must be researched using a qualitative research method. The researcher must maintain an open mind to perceive certain aspects, areas, parts of society, history, etc. that are important in the bordering process, but that might not seem so at first glance. Open or semi-structured interviews are therefore advised because they allow the respondent to add topics and convey a wider range of experiences.

For instance, within Amsterdam, there are many references to slavery and commemorations of the prosperity and dominance of the Dutch slave trade. For further reading on the topic of Amsterdam, I recommend a book called 'Roofstaat' (unfortunately, it is written only in Dutch) written by Ewald Vanvugt.. Also, I would advise not searching for the border using a spatial approach as it might prove to be impossible to find.

## Chapter 9. Appendix



Kalamaja neighborhood, Tallinn (a pre-war housing area in Northern Tallinn)



Kopli neighbourhood, Tallinn (a disadvantaged housing area in Northern Tallinn)

(Kährnik, 2006, p. 70)



Kadriorg neighborhood, Tallinn (a gentrified area in Central Tallinn)



Vilmsi st., Tallinn (a gentrified area in Central Tallinn)

(Kährrik, 2006, p. 71)



Narva st., Kesklinn, Tallinn (a residential development in Tallinn city center)

(Kährik, 2006, p. 72)



Lasnamäe, Tallinn (a soviet high-rise estate in the suburbs)

(Kährik, 2006, p. 74)



Lasnamäe, Tallinn (a soviet high-rise estate in the suburbs)

(Kährrik, 2006, p. 74)



Nõmme, Tallinn (suburban low-rise housing area)

(Kährrik, 2006, p. 75)

## Kaljurand: Russia at advantage not just over US, but entire West (2)



Estonian Minister of Foreign Affairs Marina Kaljurand (Riigikogu)

5/4/2016 6:28 PM

Category: News

Regarding the tug of war being played out by the US and Russian heads of state in a number of current conflicts, one could make the case that Russia, not the US, has scored more points thus far. Speaking on "Reporteritund," however, Estonian Minister of Foreign Affairs Marina Kaljurand found that Russian President Vladimir Putin doesn't have the advantage over just the US president, but rather the whole of the West, as centered around the EU and NATO.

"It can be said, for example, that Putin overpowered the EU by occupying Crimea, as this happened in our immediate vicinity, and while we knew what to expect after Georgia, we did not know how to react," admitted the foreign minister. "I don't want to draw a comparison to tug-of-war between just Presidents Putin and Obama — really, this is going into conflict with the entire West."

Considering recent years' developments, one could say that the goal of the Putin administration was to break down the NATO and the EU's solidarity. "I don't think that Putin would try to use the Syrian conflict to help break up NATO, but naturally Putin would love to see NATO splinter just as Russia has masterfully played various EU states against one another," said Kaljurand.

The minister stressed, however, that NATO is currently much more united than the EU, and discussions within the alliance are more unified as well. "It is occasionally curious to see colleagues of mine who tell one story to NATO, but tell a slightly different one to the EU," added Kaljurand. "It is good to be the Estonian Minister of Foreign Affairs, as I tell the same story regardless of where I am."

### **Moscow has made the Syrian conflict more complex**

The Syrian civil war has not left the EU untouched, however, as after Russian began intervening in Middle Eastern conflicts, the number of refugees fleeing the region increased, deepening the migration crisis that had developed in EU states as a result. The deepening of the crisis in turn has led to a rise in popularity of extreme right-wing populist powers, which have received direct or indirect support from the Kremlin.

Kaljurand noted that Russia's active interference in both the Syrian civil war and the Geneva peace process has made the situation especially complicated and confusing.

"I do agree that migration has torn Europe apart," she admitted. "If we look back to a year ago, when the committee presented member states with initial quotas for the number of refugees required to be accepted by each country, then this tore Europe apart, and getting over this rift took nearly half a year."

Kaljurand noted that, in her opinion, there was still a lot of finger-pointing and blaming going on as recently as last summer, at a gathering of EU foreign ministers, but such attitudes started to change as it began to become clear that the crisis would not be going anywhere, and that in-fighting and isolation between member states would clearly not lead anywhere either.

"Russia has achieved the goal of EU member states starting to splinter from one another," added Kaljurand, "But therein I see some positive as well: it is now understood that if we do not work together, then right-wing, extremist, and populist parties rise to power."

### **EU will not shut its doors**

In the Estonian Minister of Foreign Affairs' opinion, the EU needs to focus on the migration crisis, because political decisions have been made, but they have not been implemented effectively enough, including the securing of external borders, fighting against organized crime on the Mediterranean Sea, or the rejection and return of economic migrants back to their homelands.

This is why the deal signed between the EU and Turkey was so practical and important, added Kaljurand, because the migration crisis had no hope of being solved without help from partner states.

"Europe is not losing its humanity, as we are accepting those refugees who are fleeing from war," stressed Kaljurand. "We will not be closed to those people who want to come here to work or study. These are just different means, and applications, and a different procedure altogether for entering Europe."

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