Social Context and Perceived Belonging: A Comparative Study of Children of Immigrants in New York and Madrid

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Social Context and Perceived Belonging:
A Comparative Study of Children of Immigrants in New York and Madrid

By Jessica Sperling Smokoski

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Sociology in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New York.

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This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Sociology in satisfaction of the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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Abstract

Social Context and Perceived Belonging:
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by

Jessica Sperling (Smokoski)

Adviser: Professor Richard Alba

This project examines the ways in which distinct contexts – and, specifically, distinct histories of immigration and ethnoracial diversity - affect the form, nature, and salience of boundaries demarcating an us/them (immigrant/non-immigrant) divide, including the perceived possibilities of social membership and the compatibility of minority and majority identity. It centers on the following research questions: What do the young adult 1.5/2nd generation see as the dominant boundaries or social divides in their countries of residence, in terms of differentiating immigrant-origin or ethnoracial minority groups from a perceived native-origin/mainstream population? How fluid are these boundaries, and when/why may they be subject to change? To what degree do children of immigrants feel receiving society national membership is available to them, and how does immigrant-origin or ethnoracial minority status play a role in in limiting (or, perhaps, permitting) membership? It examines these issues in a comparative perspective, focusing on young adult 1.5 and 2nd generation Dominicans and
Colombians in New York City (a location with a historical immigrant presence) and Madrid (a location new to immigration). Methodologically, it utilizes 105 semi-structured in-depth interviews with these populations. By identifying the bases of, and barriers to, perceived possibilities of belonging in different social context, this project improves understanding of the current shape and possible future course of diversity in receiving societies.
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# Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction ........................................................................................................... 1  
Conceptual Foundation ............................................................................................................. 3  
Boundaries, Social Identities, and Social Organization ......................................................... 3  
Assimilation, Boundaries, and the Significance of Context .................................................. 12  
Transatlantic Studies of Second Generation Assimilation ..................................................... 16  
Research Focus ....................................................................................................................... 19  
Research Contexts ................................................................................................................... 21  
Methodology and Data Collection .......................................................................................... 26  
Chapter Overview .................................................................................................................. 32  
Chapter 2: Experiences in Destination Society Institutions .................................................. 35  
Arrival ...................................................................................................................................... 36  
Neighborhood ......................................................................................................................... 40  
Police Interaction .................................................................................................................... 46  
Experience in School ............................................................................................................... 54  
Intergroup Student Relations ................................................................................................. 55  

viii
Discrimination by School Staff................................................................. 60
School-Based Discussion of Immigration and Diversity.......................... 64
University Interest and Attendance.......................................................... 68
Employment Prospects and Future Plans.................................................. 78
Discussion and Conclusion......................................................................... 85
Chapter 3: Markers of Difference............................................................... 93
Markers of Difference in Madrid and New York City................................. 93
Race........................................................................................................ 94
Language.................................................................................................. 107
Cultural Values and Norms of Interaction *(Forma de Ser)* ..................... 115
Comparing and Explaining Similarities and Contrasts............................... 123
Conclusion............................................................................................... 133
Chapter 4: Identities................................................................................ 137
Origin and Destination Country Identification......................................... 138
Origin-Country Identity............................................................................ 138
Destination-Country (American/Spanish) Identity..................................... 142
Identity Situationality and Identity Change............................................ 158
Identifications beyond the Origin/Destination Society............................. 161
Chapter 1: Introduction

Throughout the last half-century, international migration has increased globally and spread into new regions, developing diversity in places with long-standing immigration histories and creating diversity in places with no such histories (Castles and Miller 2009, Massey 2008, Penninx 2006, Vertovec 2007). Given the role of immigration in reshaping global social and demographic realities, academia has seen renewed attention to the study of immigration and immigrant assimilation during this period, both in historic immigrant destinations, like the United States, and in areas newer to large-scale immigration immigrant receiving areas, like Europe.¹ More recently, scholarship has begun highlighting the importance of comparative study of immigration and assimilation (e.g., Bloemraad 2013, Favell 2003, FitzGerald 2012, Thomson and Crul 2007), including specific comparisons of the US and Europe (or specific European nations). This comparative work is necessary for understanding the role of context in determining outcomes, and for developing theoretical understandings of immigration and assimilation processes (e.g., Bloemraad 2013, Crul, Schneider and Lelie 2013)

This comparative work is now beginning to incorporate the next generation – the children of immigrants, who are raised in the destination society, and whose outcomes indicate the long-standing effects of this immigration. Thus far, this research has tended to focus on a number of important outcomes measures, including educational credentials, economic incorporation, and

¹Though Europe it typically viewed as relatively new to immigration sociological and political science literature, some historians (e.g., Leo Lucasson) have provided clarification to this perspective. For instance, some countries (e.g., Spain, Italy) are truly new to large-scale immigration, but some countries (e.g., France, Germany) had previously received significant immigration from other European nations. For this latter group, newness refers to receiving non-European immigrants (specifically, Muslim and/or non-white immigrants).
political involvement (e.g., Holdaway, Crul and Roberts 2009, Mollenkopf and Hochschild 2010, Silberman, Alba and Fournier 2007). However, questions of identity and perceptions of social boundaries and societal membership remain relatively unexplored. This gap in research is particularly noteworthy for two reasons. First, perception of boundaries and perceived opportunities both reflect and affect more concrete measures of integration and immigrant success (Martiniello and Rath 2010, Thomson and Crul 2007). Second, modern assimilation theories (Alba and Nee 2003, Portes and Zhou 1993) are based on studies of social boundaries and membership in the US context. Though researchers have tried to apply these theories to other settings, their applicability in non-US locations, and particularly in settings without histories of immigration or ethnoracial diversity, remains inconclusive (as noted by Crul, Schneider and Lelie 2013, Vermeulen 2010, and others). To understand the impact of context on the process and possibilities of immigrants’ incorporation in the broader society, scholars should assess the construction, nature, and salience of perceived social boundaries in other contexts, and they must determine how these boundaries permit or prohibit perceiving membership in receiving societies.

This project directly addresses these issues; it identifies the ways in which different contexts shape the nature and relevance of ethnoracial\(^2\) and other related boundaries, and it analyzes the perceived possibilities of social membership in receiving societies. It examines these issues in a comparative perspective, focusing on children of Dominican and Colombian immigrants in New York City (a location with a historical immigrant presence) and Madrid (a

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\(^2\) Because the concepts of race and ethnicity overlap – and because Hispanics in the US are understood in both ethnic and racial terms, and classification of this population as an ethnic or racial group has not yet been well theorized in Europe - I use the term “ethnoracial.”
location new to immigration). By identifying the bases of, and barriers to, perceived possibilities of belonging in different social context, this project improves understanding of the current shape and possible future course of diversity in receiving societies.

**Conceptual Foundation**

This study is rooted in the concept of assimilation, particularly as it relates to social boundaries. I therefore begin with an overview of literature on boundaries and follow with a specific discussion of US-based assimilation theories. In each case, I highlight the centrality of context in determining boundaries' nature and salience. I then review select transatlantic comparative studies on boundaries and children of immigrants, showing how the contextual basis of social boundaries emerges in this literature.

**Boundaries, Social Identities, and Social Organization**

Intergroup boundaries, or institutionalized social distinctions, are inherent to social organization, and thus represent a core element in the study of sociology and related disciplines. The creation of, and classification by, categories represents a natural human tendency (Fiske

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3 Both “assimilation” and “integration” are used within the wider body of literature on immigration to refer to immigrants’ incorporation in the host society. Assimilation is more widely used in US literature, and integration is more widely used in European literature. Because this project spans the two contexts, both terms are used within this overall project. However, because theoretical conceptions of this concept more often employ “assimilation,” this term is primarily used in this chapter’s discussion of the project’s conceptual underpinnings. Within the context of this project, these terms refer to the decreasing salience of ethnoracial intergroup boundaries, and to ethnoracial minorities’ perception sense of membership and belonging in the destination society (whether the broader society, or a segment of society) Alba, R. and V. Nee. 2003. *Remaking the American Mainstream: Assimilation and Contemporary Immigration*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. This is not meant to indicate immigrants’ or minorities’ wholesale adoptions of receiving society culture and norms.
and boundaries play a central role in interpersonal and intergroup relations (Lamont and Molner 2002). Categorizations and perceived boundaries provide a foundation for inequality and societal stratification (Massey 2007). Boundaries have been a focal point of numerous sociological subfields, such as social movements (e.g., McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly 2001), cultural sociology (e.g., Swidler 2000), gender (e.g., Epstein 1992), race/ethnicity (e.g., Waters 1999, Wimmer 2008a), and class (e.g., Lamont 2000).

In conceptualizing the meaning of “boundary,” Wimmer (2008a:975) explains that it “displays both a categorical and a social or behavioral dimension. The former refers to acts of social classification and collective representation; the latter to everyday networks of relationships that result from individual acts of connecting and distancing.” Boundaries thus not only classify at the macro level, but also have concrete implication on the micro level. He further defines “social boundary” as occurring when the categorical and behavioral aspects of boundaries coincide – in other words, when the categorical aspect of boundaries, or the conception of the us/them divide, is linked to the behavioral aspect, or the employment of such divides in relations with others. This mirrors others’ definitions of social boundary in other works; for instance, Alba and Nee (2003) define the concept as a “categorical distinction that members of a society recognize in their quotidian activities and that affects their mental orientations and actions towards one another.” This definition of social boundary will be employed in this project.4 Although boundaries may present clear-cut divides, Wimmer (2008a) and Alba and Nee (2003)

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4 This definition of the term “social boundary” is distinct from Lamont and Molnar’s (2002) definition, which explains social boundaries as “objectified forms of social differences manifested in unequal access to and unequal distribution of resources (material and nonmaterial) and social opportunities” (168).
further specify that a “boundary” does not necessarily signify a stark demarcation between groups. Boundaries may be flexible or blurry; individuals belong to multiple groups within the same identity dimension (e.g., belonging to multiple ethnic identities) and may switch between and across groups (e.g., emphasizing certain identities over others; for instance, by altering language use depending upon the context).

Boundary research typically takes one of two perspectives. Some scholarship focuses on the implications of existing boundaries, in terms of intergroup relations and/or access to resources. Given its connection to social hierarchy, this perspective is central research on inequality and stratification, including work on interracial/interethnic relations and immigrant/non-immigrant relations (e.g., Cheng and Espiritu 1989, and many others, Marrow 2011, Massey and Denton 1993). Other boundary work centers on the construction of boundaries themselves. This constructivist perspective – which forms a conceptual basis for this project - has been central to much research on ethnicity and race (Barth 1969, Brubaker 2004, Nagel 1994, Omi and Winant 1994, Wimmer 2008b), and research on immigration has specifically examined immigrant groups with an emphasis on the nature of intergroup boundaries (e.g., Alba 2005, Bail 2008, Zolberg and Woon 1999).

A constructivist perspective on boundaries necessitates the development of frameworks for analyzing boundaries. For instance, one can examine boundary-making at various levels (Wimmer 2008b). At the macro level, scholars tend to study the creation and reinforcement of categories through collective action and political projects (e.g., Omi and Winant 1994). At a micro level, scholars concentrate on individuals’ every-day interactions with others and in
specific social fields (e.g., Goffman 1959, Lamont 2000, Mead 1934, Waters 1999). The experiential basis of boundaries, though relevant to both levels, is most explicitly explored in micro literature. In other words, it shows how individuals’ life experiences lead them to perceive or observe particular boundaries and categories. Discrimination, or experiencing unjust or negative treatment based on membership in a negatively stereotyped group, represents one clear means of perceiving group boundaries (Stangor 2000). However, interaction that is not overtly perceived as discrimination can also lead to or reinforce understandings of group difference, with negative but also neutral implications. For instance, boundaries may be perceived though symbolic violence (Bourdieu and Passeron 1977), where certain individuals are excluded or placed at a disadvantage due to lack of insider cultural knowledge; this is possible both through interaction with individuals and with societal institutions. Even where no clear disadvantage results, interaction with others leads individuals to define boundaries by highlighting differences or similarities between themselves and “others” – essentially, by creating and or clarifying who comprises an “us” (Mead 1934, Simmel and Wolf 1950, Tajfel and Turner 1986).

At either the micro or macro levels, one may examine various aspects of boundaries (Lamont and Molner 2002). This can include conceptualizing and outlining different types of boundaries; Lamont and Molnar (2002) provide a clear example of this when distinguishing between symbolic boundaries and social boundaries, where the former are drawn by actors and the latter are embedded in institutional structure. A focus on properties of boundaries, or their relative salience, visibility, and permanence, presents another option. Alba (2005) utilizes this perspective when distinguishing between “bright” boundaries, which form unambiguous group
divides, and “blurry” boundaries, where individuals may simultaneously sit on both sides of the boundary or cross between groups with relative ease. A focus on the *boundary construction and cultural membership* centers on “how social actors construct groups as similar and different,” and how this relates to overall group belonging (Lamont and Molner 2002:187). This, in other words, entails examining the perceived bases of group membership.

Beyond categorizing or defining boundaries, one may also examine how boundaries change, including incorporation of the circumstances that permit certain forms of boundary change. This is clear in the differentiation between boundary blurring, crossing, and shifting (Alba and Nee 2003, Zolberg and Woon 1999): boundary crossing entails individual movement between groups without real change in the actual dividing line, boundary shifting entails a change in the location of a line itself, and boundary blurring entails the decreasing social clarity of the dividing line. Wimmer (2008b) further develops work on boundary change from an agency-based perspective, examining how actors attempt to alter (specifically, ethnic) boundaries. He offers a taxonomy of boundary change strategies; this includes shifting of boundaries, which can take the form of excluding individuals or including new members; altering the meaning of membership, which can include changes in intergroup hierarchies; and efforts to highlight other modes or bases of classification.

The fact that boundaries are socially constructed is central to boundary studies overall, and to each of the aforementioned conceptual frameworks. Research and theorizing within this constructivist orientation find that boundaries are determined though a dialectical relationship between internal definitions and external categorization and recognitions (Barth 1969, Brubaker
2004, Merton 1968). Boundaries are thus inherently relational, and they are commonly established and strengthened though comparisons to other groups. This relationality implies the key role of context in determining social boundaries: as boundaries are guided partly by external definitions and recognitions, differences in context will determine their specific construction.

*Comparative boundary studies*, as another analytical framework, permits specific examination of how distinct contexts affect various aspects of boundaries. It can work in conjunction with - and further develop - other aforementioned boundary study frameworks by clarifying and highlighting how various aspects of boundaries (e.g., the properties of boundaries, and processes of boundary change boundary) are themselves contextually based.

Boundaries are fundamental to an understanding of identity, and particularly social identity - a key concept for this project. ⁵ Social identity refers to how one sees the self in terms of his or her group memberships, and as defined against other groups (Deaux 2001). ⁶ Within psychology, where identity research is most developed, discussion of social identity came to prominence in the 1960s and 1970s, in response to criticism of identity literature’s previous emphasis on intrapsychic/interpersonal processes over macro-level constructs and group processes (for more on this, see Hogg and Williams 2000, Hornsey 2008). This led to the

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⁵ This section addresses social identity overall rather than specific identities (e.g., ethnic identity). This is because literature on specific identities rests upon the underlying factors discussed in this broader identity literature, and because this project positions itself within a broader discussion of identity (beyond solely ethnic identity, or racial identity, or any other specific identity category). Moreover, relevant conceptual aspects of literature on specific identity categories (principally, ethnic identity) are included in the earlier discussion on boundaries.

⁶ Discussion of identity throughout this dissertation typically refers to social identity, as explained here. Within social identity, one can further differentiate between identifying *as* and identifying *with*. The former refers more to a cognitive realm, in defining oneself as a member of a group; the latter entails “introjection,” or “the degree to which the groups is experienced as an integration and inseparable part of the self,” and feeling “personally affected by what happens to” other group members (Rosenberg, M. 1979. *Conceiving the Self*. New York: Basic Books.). Based on this distinction, this project refers more to identifying *as* than identifying *with* - in other words, an internalized labeling more than a sense of common fate.
development of a “social identity approach,” principally based upon social identity theory (SIT) and self-categorization theory (SCT). Social identity theory (Tajfel and Turner 1979, Tajfel and Turner 1986) deals with the creation and implications of in-group/out-group distinctions, purporting that individuals tend to attribute positive views to their in-group and more negative views to the out-group. Self-categorization theory (Turner et al. 1987) builds upon SIT by outlining circumstances under which a person perceives his/herself and others as part of group. It purports that social identity, as one of various levels of categorization, is determined partly by what categories are seen as reflective of social reality and as socially acceptable.7

Beyond this “social identity approach,” other works further develop the link between boundaries and social identity through different foci. Ashmore, Deaux and McLaughlin-Volpe (2004), for example, expand on social identity in discussion of collective identity. As they explain, the perceived permanence and legitimacy of intergroup boundaries determine the ways in which one deals with self-categorization within a socially devalued group. Depending on the boundary situation, an individual may change his or her identity by attempting to ‘pass,’ or move into a different group; by attempting to change the basis of inter-group comparison; or by engaging in some form of collective action, including seeking social change (Ashmore, Deaux and McLaughlin-Volpe 2004:105). This trio of identity change options is highly aligned those in boundary-oriented sociological assimilation literature (Alba and Nee 2003). Hybrid identity (e.g., Verkuyten 2004) addresses the ability to simultaneously claim multiple memberships within one identity dimension (e.g., claiming multiple ethnic identities), and is thus linked to the

7 CST also understands social identity as determined by what categories are cognitively accessible to an individual.
concept of blurry boundaries.\(^8\) Within sociology, Goffman’s (1959) work highlights the performative aspects of establishing social identity; an individual’s action is aligned with assumptions regarding his/her assumed role, meaning one acts within recognized boundaries between social categories. Though varied in focus, these different takes on social identities all highlight boundaries’ central role in governing inter-group divides, including the circumstances under which individuals can profess membership within specific social categories.

Access to identities, as determined boundaries’ form and salience, is further determined by identities’ valorization. Most clearly, certain individuals may be excluded from identifying with the most valorized categories. In fact, in cases of bright boundaries (Alba 2005), as discussed earlier, or stigmatized identities (Goffman 1963), where individual attributes (stigmas) are viewed as a personal flaw within a social context, certain characteristics may fully bar an individual from accessing a particular identity. A highly valorized group has various bases for limiting out-group individuals’ claims to the prestige identity category, ranging from the tendency to view out-group members negatively, as described by social identity theory (Tajfel and Turner 1979), to potential infringement upon higher-prestige groups’ access to material goods and opportunities, akin to Weber’s (1978) explanation of social closure. The cognitive basis of exclusion varies as well, regardless of the motivation; it may be unconscious or unintended, or it may be explicit and pointed, and this can differ across individual group members and situations.

\(^8\) Hybridity is distinct from intersectionality, which involves combinations of identities from different dimensions, such as race and gender Crenshaw, K. 1991. "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color." *Stanford law review* 43(6):1241-99.
Literature on social identity explicitly highlights the various ways in which group memberships and intergroup relations are affected by social context. In this, it builds upon and mirrors the contextual aspect of boundaries. First, the specific setting plays a key role in defining identity categories. This is clearly evident in self-categorization theory’s understanding that social identities are based upon the perceived social reality and social groupings. Second, context determines the ability to claim a particular identity. For instance, the situational aspect of boundaries’ salience (i.e., whether they are blurred or bright) indicates the contextual basis of access to identities, as access is highly driven by the nature of inter-group boundaries.

Discussing adoption of collective identity, Ashmore, Deaux and McLaughlin-Volpe (2004) state that “a basic proposition of our framework is that collective identity must be considered in a social context” (103), highlighting the influence of not only micro-level situation but also overarching sociocultural backdrop. Third, identities’ valorization is depends upon the setting. This is supported by social identity theory’s indication that intergroup divides are more significant when groupings are made more salient, and that emphasizing an us/them distinction can affect one’s image of an out-group and increase views of in-group superiority. It is further recognized in research on stigma, which explicitly notes that stigma itself is socially constructed and thus varies across contexts (Crocker, Major and Steele 1998). Fourth, the exclusivity of identities is situation-dependent; hybrid identity literature (e.g., Verkuyten 2004) suggests that the ability to combine identities, or to invoke particular categories over others, is based upon the external environment.

The interconnected concepts of identity and boundaries serve as a basis or this project’s
discussion of “belonging” (or, similarly, “perceived membership”), which is defined here as an internalized sense of inclusion in a specific group, community, or social category. As Verkuyten (2004:68) notes, “identification and a sense of identity also encompass feelings of belongingness” (68). Relatedly, a sense of belonging within a group is predicated upon the adoption (and external recognition of) the associated social identity. The need to belong, like the creation of social categories and boundaries, has been recognized as a core human attribute (Fiske 2004). Much literature on belonging is set within social psychology, focusing on belonging’s role as a motivator for particular actions, its link to positive self-esteem, and its association with favorable outcomes (e.g., in health and education, see Baumeister and Leary 1995 and more). However, most central to this project are not the implications of belonging, but rather its basis - in other words, how and why belonging may (or may not) be claimed. Drawing on this section’s previous discussion of boundaries and identities, the potential for belonging within a group depends upon one’s perceived ability to claim that particular identity, as well as the related external acceptance of a claimed identity. This is predicated upon the placement, nature, and salience of the boundaries dividing identity categories.

Assimilation, Boundaries, and the Significance of Context

Assimilation theory, which has developed and expanded throughout the past century, has maintained a consistent core focus on intergroup boundaries. Park and Burgess, both of the Chicago School, brought about the sociological use of assimilation in 1921, defining it as “a process of interpenetration and fusion in which persons and groups acquire the memories,
sentiments, and attitudes of other persons and groups and, by sharing their experience and history, are incorporated with them in common cultural life” (735)(735)(735)(735). Gordon (1964) further develops the concept through an explicitly multidimensional view of assimilation, dividing it into two principal components: acculturation, which signifies the appropriation of the host society’s “cultural patterns,” and structural assimilation, which signifies minority group entrance core host society institutions. This dual perspective thus distinguishes between different types of boundaries (cultural and structural), and it highlights the role of crossing each in diminishing the salience of the borders themselves. Moreover, the separation of distinct types of boundaries – as either cultural or structural, and including further subdivision within the category structural assimilation – represented a significant advancement in analysis of assimilation processes and outcomes. Gans (1973) and Sandberg (1973) incorporate a temporal and trans-generational perspective, indicating that each passing generation represented a new stage of assimilation and decreasing boundary salience. Gans’s later developed the related concept of symbolic ethnicity, typically occurring in later generations, where ethnicity can be invoked by the individual but does not serve as an ever-present social boundary (Gans 1979).

More recent developments in assimilation theory maintain, and further develop, the centrality of boundaries. Segmented assimilation theory (Portes and Zhou 1993) incorporates the multiplicity of societal sectors into which immigrants may assimilate, noting that existing racial boundaries in the US mean children of immigrants may assimilate into specific racial groups. In contrast to segmented assimilation theory, which centers on the assimilation of immigrants into established social groups, neoassimilation theory (Alba and Nee 2003) considers the ways in
which group boundaries themselves may change, whether through boundary crossing, boundary shifting, or boundary blurring. Literature on panethnicity (Espiritu 1992), though not often seen a branch of assimilation theory, presents an additionally relevant perspective. This literature examines on the role of institutionalized ethnoracial categories in leading to the creation of panethnic identities. Like neoassimilation, it deals with boundary formation, though panethnicity theory more clearly emphasizes how the creation of new boundaries may link to societal inclusion.

A focus on boundaries is thus central to assimilation theory, from its origins to its present-day iterations. However, a complementary focus on the role of context in determining boundary placement and salience has not always been similarly central; instead, it came to the forefront in the more recent conceptual developments of the 1990s and 2000s. This is evident in Gans’ revision of “straight-line” assimilation to a “bumpy line” (1992), accounting for historical circumstances influencing assimilation. It is further evident in newer theories – specifically, segmented assimilation and neoassimilation - which explicitly critique earlier assimilation theories (e.g., Gordon 1964) for lack of attention to context. Segmented assimilation highlights the role of economic context in determining outcomes, contending that today's hourglass economy and reduced possibilities for upward mobility may limit opportunities for children of immigrants’ upward economic advancement. It also highlights on the role of geographical and racial context; for instance, it argues that residence in a poor urban neighborhood and close association with a black urban underclass can result in downward assimilation. Alba and Nee's neoassimilation theory highlights context by invoking on the importance of institutional and
cultural changes in the post-civil rights era US. As they contend, these changes have resulted in concrete negative consequences for discrimination and a broader cultural rejection of racism, both of which increase the possibility of assimilation through boundary blurring and/or crossing. Panethnicity literature invokes the importance of context by showing on how government institutionalization of ethnoracial categories creates particular boundaries that likely would not have existed without this external classification.

While an emphasis on context is a key contribution of modern assimilation literature, it also invokes a possible limitation in applicability. Dominant theories of assimilation, particularly with a focus on the second generation, were developed in the US, and based on empirical study of American society.\footnote{For instance, Crul, Schneider, and Leslie, as recently as 2013, acknowledge that “scholars in the United States have been at the forefront of studies producing both research results and theoretical models on the subject of the second generation” (19).} They lack a multi-sited or comparative orientation, which would call attention to the implications of context on assimilation. In fact, certain assumptions about the context - specifically regarding the perceived permissibility of diversity and the presence of established minorities - may prove problematic in other settings, as recently noted by various researchers (Crul, Schneider and Lelie 2013, Martiniello and Rath 2010, Silberman, Alba and Fournier 2007, Thomson and Crul 2007, Vermeulen 2010). For example, immigration is a more
recent phenomenon for most European countries, and racial (non-white) minorities are not generally seen as historical component of European societies, as are blacks in the US. Moreover, American understandings of race and ethnicity, which serve as underpinnings of US-developed assimilation theory, are not universally applicable; different constructions of race and ethnicity may hold different meanings for assimilation processes and possibilities.

**Transatlantic Studies of Second Generation Assimilation**

As the issue of context has become increasingly recognized, researchers have begun developing comparative studies specifically centered on differences in assimilation outcomes between research sites. Moreover, as the new second generation has come of age in the US and Europe, and as scholars have increasingly noted the importance of research on the second generation for understanding the longer-term implications of immigration, researchers have begun applying this transatlantic perspective to the second generation. For instance, Mollenkopf and Hochschild (2010) focus on political incorporation, specifically examining how various contextual differences between the US and Europe (e.g., immigration history, racial hierarchy, social welfare and education systems, and political party dynamics) differentiate the political incorporation of the first and second generation. Alba and Silberman (2009), Holdaway, Crul and Roberts (2009), Crul and Holdaway (2009), and Alba, Sloan and Sperling (2011) examine education, highlighting how the different structures of the educational systems in

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10 The focus on the US and European nations are based on their comparability as Western, highly-developed immigrant-receiving societies, which permits study of the effect of various differences in political and institutional structure on immigrant integration.
American and European sites affect educational outcomes. Kibria (2008) highlights religion, examining how differences in the social and cultural context of the US and the UK affect the Bangladeshi second generation’s adoption of particular forms of Islam. Though various European sites rather than a transatlantic comparison, Crul et al.’s (2013) large-scale study of the second generation in various European cities further show how the local context affects integration in labor market integration, educational trajectories, and religious attitudes.

This research is significant in showing how distinct contexts differentiate various integration outcomes. However, this work tends to focus on structural integration – for instance, through its strong emphasis on educational achievement – rather than questions of identity and/or belonging within the receiving society. This gap is particularly significant, since perceived opportunities of belonging both reflect and affect more concrete measures of integration and immigrant success. As such, researchers have called for studies specifically dealing with cross-cutting topics like boundaries (Martiniello and Rath 2010, Thomson and Crul 2007). Reviewing the literature, a small number of studies has examined questions of race, ethnicity, and the construction of social boundaries; they provide useful indications of the ways in which context matters for social boundaries and identities.

Alba (2005), for instance, analyzes the salience of boundaries for second-generation Mexicans in the US, North Africans in France, and Turks in Germany. In the European case, he notes religion as the most salient difference, presenting a bright boundary between immigrants and natives. In the US, he identifies race as the main divide, but notes that it leads to blurred, not bright, boundaries for Mexicans. The principal immigrant/native distinction in Europe is thus
clear and durable; in contrast, the principal immigrant/native distinction in the US (at least for Mexicans – the population addressed in this study) is more flexible. The issue of race is further problematized in studies of children of black immigrants, since the black/white divide in the US, in contrast to the Hispanic/white divide, is less fluid. Foner (2011) examines racial meanings among second-generation Caribbean immigrants in New York and London, and she finds that the existence of a native minority population plays a significant role. In New York, Caribbeans find they have less social contact with whites, but they can establish American membership by claiming African American identity. In London, the lack of a native black population leads to a less strong social divide between the Caribbean second generation and whites, yet this also means that the Caribbean second generation is less able to claim British identity. Through their comparative perspective, these studies show the complicated relationship between racial boundaries and the possibilities for membership in the receiving society.

Crul, Schneider and Lelie (2013), in their study of the integration of children of immigrants in various European cities, provide another conceptual link to this project (though their work is based only in Europe). The foundation of this project rests on “comparative integration context theory,” which specifically highlights the role of context in determining integration outcomes; they implement this work through large-scale, quantified interviews with young adults with parents from predominantly-Muslim countries (e.g., Turkey, Algeria, Morocco) in 15 cities across Europe. As mentioned earlier, they maintain a primary focus on structural or institutional differences, as relevant to education, the labor market, and religion. Yet they also include a focus on identities, directly addressing how and whether affiliation with
the origin country and destination city/country vary by research site. Though no grand conclusions emerge touting certain sites as paragons of positive integration outcomes, findings support the overall understandings that integration context matters in the various focal themes, including identities.

Recent research thus suggests that the specific destination context determines second generation outcomes in structural advancement, and a more limited body of work shows how it matters for perception of social boundaries, including identification with the destination country or with minority populations within the destination context. However, this established work suffers from certain limitations. Specifically, transatlantic boundary/identity-oriented work (e.g., Alba 2005, Foner 2011) tends to rest on secondary analysis, which limits the comparability of the cases involved. Crul et al.’s (2013) study, though based on primary data, lacks a transatlantic comparative component and a focus on the sociohistorical basis of links between diversity and national identity. In addition, its quantitative basis for studying identity limits its exploration of rationales for identities and perceived bases of difference, and its emphasis on national and religious identities leaves open the question of other grouping, such as race. These studies thus indicate the significance of the role of context for assimilation, but they leave room for further study of perceptions of belonging and membership in destination societies.

**Research Focus**

Drawing from the theoretical and literature basis outlined above, this project examines the ways different histories of immigration and ethnoracial diversity affect the form, nature, and
salience of boundaries demarcating an us/them (immigrant/non-immigrant) divide, including the perceived possibilities of social membership and the compatibility of minority and majority identity. It is therefore centers on the following research questions: What do the young adult 1.5/2nd generation see as the dominant boundaries or social divides in their countries of residence, in terms of differentiating immigrant-origin or ethnoracial minority groups from a perceived native-origin/mainstream population? How fluid are these boundaries, and when/why may they be subject to change? To what degree do children of immigrants feel receiving society national membership is available to them, and how does immigrant-origin or ethnoracial minority status play a role in in limiting (or, perhaps, permitting) membership?

Though this project maintains clear links to research on assimilation, race, and ethnicity, it is principally centered on the topic of social boundaries – the foundational concept behind research on these other areas. It includes the study of race and ethnicity, but it does not take their categories for granted. Rather, it analyzes empirical data on perceived social divides to understand where, how, and why specific intergroup distinction are drawn. It utilizes assimilation as an overarching framework, but it does not take the perspective of one specific assimilation theory, nor does it aim to evaluate, prove, or disprove specific assimilation theories. Rather, its core focus on boundaries allows it to inform understandings of assimilation processes and possibilities, and to inform application of assimilation theories in diverse contexts.
Research Contexts

This project examines two research sites: the US (specifically, New York City), and Spain (specifically, Madrid). These sites have highly distinct histories of immigration and ethnoracial diversity. A study of boundary creation in locations with contrasting sociodemographic and institutional histories allows one to better understand how context affects social boundaries and under what conditions minority groups may access the mainstream. The section below provides basic contextual background on this key difference, including information on histories of immigration and institutional forms of immigrant/minority grouping.

The US has a long and established history of immigration; in fact, as a settler nation, immigration in the US can be traced back to the country’s origin. In the earliest era of the US, most immigrants arrived from Northern and Western Europe, including England, Scotland, Ireland, the Netherlands, Germany, Sweden, and France, and from Africa (though forced migration). In the late 19th and early 20th century, the profile of European immigrants transitioned from Northern and Western Europeans to Southern and Eastern Europeans (who, although European, were seen as racially distinct). Beyond Europe, the US also saw significant migration stream from Asia, and especially China, during the 19th century. The inflow of immigrants to the US decreased between the 1920s and 1960s, with the passing of legislation creating restrictive immigration quotas, but an immigration policy overhaul in the 1960s reopened the borders to a large number of new immigrants. Following the 1960s, most new immigrants arrived from Latin America, Asia, and the Caribbean (Barkan 2012). The rootedness of immigration in American history is evident in popular discourse and in the minds of
immigrant-origin communities (as discussed later in this dissertation), with the US regularly referred to as a “nation of immigrants.” It is further evident in numerical data. In absolute numbers, the immigrant population in 2010 – the most recent census data available – exceeds that of any previous census period. However, in relative terms, the percentage of foreign-born reached an apex over a century ago, in 1890 (Grieco et al. 2012). Like the US as a whole, New York has a long-standing history of immigration and ethnoracial diversity; in fact, within the US, New York is known for its central role as an historical immigrant destination, and it remains a prime destination into the present era (Foner 2007, Foner 2013, Glazer and Moynihan 1970 (1963), Kasinitz et al. 2008). In New York, Latin Americans represent the largest regional-origin population (New York City Department of City Planning 2010b).

In contrast to the US, immigration is a relatively recent phenomenon for modern Spain; for most of the past five hundred years, it has been primarily a country of emigration. The nation began attracting immigrants in the late 1970s and early 1980s, as Spain transitioned from an insular dictatorship to a democracy and experienced economic growth. This early immigration was relatively slow, mostly encompassing Northern and Western Europeans seeking a pleasant climate for retirement. However, economic migrants soon began to arrive from other regions (specifically, from Latin America, from Northern and Western Africa, and later from certain Eastern European nations) in larger numbers. Spain’s economic growth, its need for low-wage workers, and its minimal border control and immigration restrictions in this era all helped to promote labor migration into Spain (Arango 2000, Kleiner-Liebau 2009, Kreienbrink 2008). In 1975, just as the early upsurge in immigration began, approximately 200,000 foreigners were
living in Spain; by 2000, this number has risen to over 1 million (Kleiner-Liebau 2009, Kreienbrink 2008). Even with this marked increase, the most drastic rise in the immigration population has occurred even more recently, after 2000. By 2012, the immigrant population in Spain grew to almost 7 million, almost quintupling in just over a decade (Instituto Nacional de Estadística 2013). Madrid is a prime immigrant destination within Spain (Instituto Nacional de Estadística 2013),¹¹ and trends in the recent and rapid growth of immigration there mirror those of the nation; for instance, the number of foreigners residing in the city increased by almost 500% between 2000 and 2013 (Ayuntamiento de Madrid). By 2013, over 20% of the population of Madrid was foreign-born. As in New York, Latin Americans represent the largest foreign regional population (Ayuntamiento de Madrid 2013).

In addition to histories of immigration, the two sites further differ regarding cultural incorporation of minorities and minority identity within local and national identities. The historic presence of African Americans in US/New York, and their characterization as a native minority rather than foreign-origin population, indicates a perceived compatibility between racial minority status and identification as American (even if this population has faced, and continues to face, various forms of discrimination and inequality). Unlike New York, Madrid does not

¹¹ In 2001, the Comunidad de Madrid had 6.8% of the foreign-born population living in Spain; the only Comunidades with higher numbers of foreign-born were Ceuta y Melilla (7.4%), located on the African continent, and the Baleares (8.2%), a group of Mediterranean islands Ferrer Rodríguez, A. and M. A. Urdiales Viedma. 2004. "Características De La Población Extranjera En España." Scripta Nova, VIII/160.. In 2013, the Comunidad of Madrid had the second-highest foreign-born population, falling just short of Catalunya Instituto Nacional de Estadística. 2013. "Estadística Del Padrón Continuo, Datos Provisionales a 1 De Enero De 2013." Retrieved: 31 May 2013 (http://www.ine.es/jaxi/Tabla.do?path=/t20/e245/p04/provi/l0/&file=0ccaa001.px&type=pcaxis&L=0)
have a similarly embedded native minority population.\footnote{Other previously-present minority populations (namely, Jews and Moors) were forced out of Spain centuries ago. The Roma – a typically-insular minority population present in many location in Europe, including Madrid – are seen as separate from mainstream Spanish or Madrileño society, with limited claims to (or perceived interest in) broader societal membership.} In New York and the US, racial and ethnic divisions have long been become encoded in governmental population measures and political organization. In Spain and Madrid, there are no official governmental ethnoracial designations, and the recent immigration stream is identified in government documents only by citizenship and/or place of birth, meaning that the second generation is undifferentiated from native Spaniards.\footnote{The categorization used depending on the particular measure and the year measured; earlier data in Madrid tends to differentiate by citizenship, while more recent data also includes differentiation by place of birth.} In the US/New York, there is an established discourse on the rights of minorities, provoked by the 1960s’ Civil Rights Movement and the broader “minority rights revolution” (Skrentny 2002). In Spain, however, an established focus on minority rights is largely based on regional identities (e.g., regarding use of the Basque and Catalan regional languages). Unlike in the US, there is no precedent for general race- or immigration-based minority rights discourse and policy. In the US, a post-Civil Rights era programs for ethnoracial minority groups provide de facto integration services (Fix 2007, Kasinitz 2008), embedding integration services with the broader realms of minority aid. In Spain and Madrid, however, integration policy and programming is oriented specifically toward foreign and foreign-origin populations.

Previous second-generation research in each context provides some indication of how context differences may matter for questions of identity and belonging. Empirical American studies of the second generation have proliferated since the late 1990s. While they vary in their
specific data basis and findings, they generally indicate that children of immigrants in the US feel their ethnic heritage does not prevent American belonging, with a general acceptability of minority identity and multiculturalism playing key roles in shaping this maintenance of ethnic identity. For instance, Kasinitz et al.’s (2008) study of second-generation groups in New York City finds that New York City’s ethos of multiculturalism allows the second generation to feel that their ethnic heritage does not counter American belonging. Studies in other US sites find similar possibilities of compatibility, even suggesting that integration can occur specifically by claiming ethnic identity (Dhingra 2007, Zhou and Bankston 1998) and showing that children of immigrants in the US claim identities that are particular to the US, such as native minority or panethnic identities (Itzigsohn 2009, Waters 1999). Similar research on second-generation identity and belonging Spain is much more limited, though extant work provides initial hints. For instance, one recent study (mainly quantitative) of the early adolescent and young adult 1.5 and second generation in Madrid and Barcelona tends to find more limited identification with Spain, even with relative little incidence of reported discrimination (Aparicio 2007, Portes, Aparicio and Haller 2009, Portes, Vickstrom and Aparicio 2011). Though this work does not directly address the possibility of dual or hybrid identification with Spain and the origin country, other research on Spanish natives’ perceptions of social boundaries provides additional information. Medrano (2005), examining the construction of Spanish national identity among Spaniards, finds most believe immigrants should adapt to the larger society rather than maintain their customs; Bail’s (2008) meta-analysis of symbolic boundaries in European nations finds that Spain aligns with countries that maintain strong racial and religious boundaries, suggesting limited
possibilities of boundary blurring.

**Methodology and Data Collection**

A comparative perspective is the core methodological backbone of this project and key to its conceptual basis. Comparison is implicit in virtually all research projects, in that the researcher compares his/her findings with previous literature. However, an explicit and pointed comparative design offers specific benefits. For instance, comparative perspectives draw attention to the fact that particular social phenomena and processes are not fixed, reveal factors that be overlooked with a focus on just one case, identify contextual elements that may have been taken for granted, and contribute to theory-building both generally and specifically within migration research (Bloemraad 2013, FitzGerald 2012, Foner 2005). 14 Bloemraad (2013) and FitzGerald (2012) further addresses the particular benefits of qualitative in-depth case studies, which permit study of the contextual differences in processes and help to identify and explain causal relations and mechanisms.

This project takes a dual comparative approach. First, it examines two contexts – Spain (Madrid) and the US (New York). This geographical comparison is the crux of the study, for it investigates the effect of this contextual difference on espoused identities, membership

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14 Within a comparative framework, there are various options for types of comparisons and case selection. One may examine different immigrant-origin groups (usually national origin groups, but also other characteristics, like citizenship or level of education); different locations (different destination locations, or the sending and destinations); and different eras (typically comparing the present-day group, location, or phenomenon to a past parallel case). Within these frameworks, one may examine highly similar cases, where the researcher seeks to account for differing outcomes; cases that are similar in most respects but differ along one key variable, and the researcher seeks to establish the effect of this difference on outcomes, or cases that differ along an array of characteristics, most commonly used to develop or examine ideal types or typologies.
possibilities, and assimilation processes. These two countries were chosen primarily due to their stark contrasts in histories of immigration and diversity, as outlined earlier in this chapter. In addition, these two settings share immigrant populations from the same national origins, permitting a comparison of the same groups across research sites. Both also provide the second generation with automatic or near-automatic access to citizenship.\footnote{Children born in the US to immigrant parents are US citizens at birth, and children born in Spain to immigrant parents are eligible to become citizens after one year.} Beyond these comparative reasons, study of Spain adds to the empirical literature on immigration and integration in Europe, which is largely concentrated on Northwest European countries, like France, Germany, the UK, and Sweden.

A comparative perspective at the national level, in terms of perceptions of belonging within the nation of residence, is core to the project; the concept of immigration itself is based on national boundaries, so much research on assimilation treats the nation as the prime unit of analysis. However, in an in-depth qualitative project, specific locations within the nation must invariably serve as the bases of research. Madrid and the New York were chosen based on their similarities within the national context. Both are the most populous cities in their respective countries, national economic centers, and centers of immigration in their respective countries. The selection of two sites with significant common characteristics permits a focus on areas of marked difference between these destination cities, and their respective nations: specifically, their vastly different histories of immigration and diversity, and the potentially contrasting links between diversity and belonging.

While this study’s comparative method examines sites that are similar in many structural
respects, I recognize that the contexts nonetheless show considerable complexity. Comparative social science research, though echoing an experimental design, cannot employ a true natural science-style experimental design given the complexity of the social world; the researcher cannot fully manage the setting, and independent variables cannot be completely controlled (Ragin 1987). Throughout my data collection and analysis, I therefore have remained open to other factors that vary across sites and could contribute to differences in perceptions of identification and belonging; this is in line with the comparative social science research’s attention to the effect of combined or intersecting conditions on outcomes.\(^\text{16}\) Relatedly, though this project is partly conceptualized as a national comparison, this project also recognizes and accounts for the influence of the specific city contexts.

In addition to its primary geographically-based comparison, this also examines two national origin groups in each site – Dominicans and Colombians. The decision to examine multiple groups – and, these specific groups – stems from two factors. First, including multiple groups enhances the potential broader applicability of this project’s findings. Second, and relatedly, race or physical appearance (specifically, visible African descent) may affect boundary perceptions and membership possibilities differently in each location, particularly given the presence of a native African American minority in the US. I therefore selected two groups that have a significant numerical presence in each location, similar socioeconomic backgrounds in

\(^{16}\) E.g., regarding comparative research generally, Ragin, C. 1987. *The Comparative Method. Moving Beyond Qualitative and Quantitative Methods*: Berkeley: University of California Press. notes that “it is the intersection of a set of conditions in time and in space the produces many of the large-scale qualitative changes, as well as many of the small-scale events, that interest social scientists” (25). Regarding comparative migration research, Bloemraad Bloemraad, I. 2013. “The Promise and Pitfalls of Comparative Research Design in the Study of Migration.” *Migration Studies* 1(1):27-46. adds that such research “examine[s] how structures, cultures, processes, norms, or institutions affect outcomes through the combination and intersection of causal mechanisms” (28).
each location, and sufficient longevity in each location to have a 1.5 and 2\textsuperscript{nd} generation,\textsuperscript{17} but that tend to have different physical characteristics: Dominicans more commonly have visibly African-influenced phenotypes (often mixed with European-origin), while many Colombians generally have more indigenous-influenced phenotypes (also often mixed with European-origin).

In conjunction with a comparative framework, I explore this project’s research questions using qualitative methodology, and specifically semi-structured interviews. Qualitative methods are particularly well-suited to capturing the perceptions of borders between ethnic, racial, or national identity identities; indicating the extent or strength of certain identities; indicating how and why individuals may choose one label over another; or revealing multiple identities and the interactions between identities (Lamont and White 2008). Established work on boundaries and identities has therefore commonly utilized such methods (e.g., Lamont 2000, Waters 1990, Waters 1999). Semi-structured interviews allow me to compare trends across locations and national-origins groups while also permitting the open-response format ideal for studies of

boundaries and identities. Interviews consisted of two blocks. The first block dealt with background characteristics and experiences in different realms of life (school, work, etc.), and the second entailed explicit discussion of identity and membership. This dual focus provided information about respondents’ life experiences and the experiential basis for perceptions of boundaries, and it permitted attention to any links between specific life experiences and outcomes in identity and membership. In Madrid, interviews were conducted in Spanish. In the New York, interviews were conducted primarily in English, though Spanish was also occasionally used. All interviews (105 in total) were conducted in 2010 and 2011. For more on the interview process and researcher reflexivity, see the methodological appendix (Appendix I).

The sample includes children of Dominican and Colombian immigrants in early adulthood (ages 16-27). The sample is further limited to those with substantial schooling in the US or Spain - either the 1.5 (arriving before age 12) or the second generation (born in the country of residence). This is in keeping with the standards of established research on children of immigrants (e.g., Portes and Rumbaut 2001). Studying children of immigrants rather than immigrants themselves best suits this project's focus on social boundaries and membership; children of immigrants are raised and educated in the receiving societies, so they have a greater possibility of social membership than their immigrant parents, who were born, raised, and attended school elsewhere. Children of immigrants also form a significant component of the receiving society, so studying membership and boundary perceptions for this group provides indication of the future make-up of the receiving society.

Respondents were recruited from various sites, including immigrant/minority-oriented
community organizations, schools and universities, ethnic economic niches, public parks, radio advertisements, and social networking sites. I also used snowball sampling from initial respondents, specifically seeking those who are not affiliated with the institutions or locations where I began initial recruitment. Because sample selection is a potential concern in any non-randomized study, the active inclusion of various base nodes, as well as the limited snowballing from each individual respondent (in both sites, I was referred to no more than two further respondents by an original respondent), served to reduce bias. Moreover, I actively sought out respondents who represented various different demographic characteristics to ensure variability within my sample. Respondents generally had few, if any, reservations about speaking with a researcher. This openness can be attributed to two points. First, I was often seen as close in age to the respondents, and I worked to create a comfortable and informal interview context that put the respondents at ease (see Appendix A for more). Second, the topic of the interviews, while personal, did not deal with information seen by respondents as particularly sensitive. This was perhaps enhanced by the fact that the respondent were at an age and era - given the high use of social media - where openness about virtually all aspects of personal life is a norm.

In total, I conducted interviews with 70 respondents in Madrid and 35 respondents in New York. The greater number of Madrid respondents is based on the limited literature on the second generation in this location, compared to New York. In Madrid, respondents were divided nearly equally by national origin (38 Dominicans and 32 Colombians) and equally by gender (35 males, 35 females). The mean and median respondent age is 19. Twelve respondents were of the second generation, and 58 respondents were of the 1.5 generation. This imbalance in generation
is linked to the demographics of the immigrant-origin population in Spain. Given the Spain’s recent development as an immigrant-receiving society, most members of the second generation are still relatively young, and most immigrant-origin late adolescents/young adults are of the 1.5 generation or are more recent immigrants. In New York, the sample included 19 females and 16 males, and it included 24 Dominicans and 11 Colombians. The mean and median respondent age was 20. Twenty-one respondents were second-generation, and 14 were 1.5 generation; as in the Madrid case, this imbalance reflects the context, as New York has a larger second generation. In both locations, virtually all respondents had legal status in their receiving society.

In Madrid, I also interviewed experts/researchers of immigration and integration, leaders of immigrant-serving organizations, and government officials in immigrant-oriented programs. As there is significantly less established research on immigration and immigrant integration in Madrid than in New York, this information gathered provided me a better understanding of the context and immigration/integration situation in Madrid. Though interviews do not appear in this project’s empirical data, I occasionally draw from them in my analysis.

**Chapter Overview**

This dissertation consists of three empirical chapters. The first chapter discusses respondents’ experiences in various arenas of life. It first reviews the experience of arrival, both for the respondents’ national origin groups generally and for this project’s 1.5 generation respondents. It then discusses experiences the arenas most prominent in respondents’ lives thus far – neighborhoods, schools, and employment – and highlights intergroup relations and
experiences of othering and of discrimination. This data provides background information on the study’s respondents, allowing for a clearer sense of their overall life experiences and their basis for perceptions of social boundaries and identities. In line with this project’s principal focus, it further shows how various differences in destination society context affect numerous institutions and areas of life.

The second chapter deals directly with the concept of social boundaries. It discusses the principal characteristics perceived as differentiating immigrant-origin young adults from their native-origin peers, comparing particular markers of difference and their salience as social divides in New York City and Madrid. Based on analysis of this project’s data, this chapter reviews three principal bases of difference, or boundary markers: physical appearance (race), language, and cultural values and norms of interaction (referred to in Spain as forma de ser, or “way of being”). This chapter begins with empirical data on the describing the three principal markers of difference in each research site, and it continues by highlighting and explaining difference between the two sites for each marker of differences.

The third chapter centers on identities. Specifically, it discusses the basis and salience of specific identities (primarily, destination country identity and origin country identity), as well as the perceived compatibility of such identities. Explicit attention to identification with the destination country is core to understanding perceptions of membership in the destination, since identification conveys an internalized sense of belonging. This chapter begins by discussing

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18 Othering and discrimination are related but distinct concepts. Othering refers to an encounter or interaction that emphasizes intergroup difference. Discrimination refers to instances where an individual or group is treated unequally based on a specific perceived characteristic or difference.
respondent identification with the origin and destination countries, including the perceived compatibility between origin and destination-country identifications. It then addresses other relevant ethnic/geopolitical identifications beyond the nation of origin and destination; these identities may support, counter, or provide additional bases for belonging beyond destination-country identity. As with the overall dissertation, this chapter centers on how and why respondent identities, and the bases for identification (or lack thereof), differ between the two research sites.

The concluding chapter reflects upon the overall project. It first summarizes the empirical chapters’ data and principal conclusions. It then addresses this project’s main research question and aim, drawing upon the individual chapters to discusses the project’s overarching themes and findings. Because revisiting early-stage research questions and hypotheses highlights the project’s (and researcher’s) growth and maturation throughout the data collection and analysis, this section also discusses how specific research questions developed and changed throughout the course of research, from initial project proposal to the completed dissertation; assesses the accuracy of the proposal’s initial hypotheses; and discusses unexpected findings that ultimately proved significant to the central research aim. Finally, this chapter outlines this project’s various contributions to scholarship on assimilation, immigration, and boundaries, as well as its potential applications in assimilation-oriented programming and policy.
Chapter 2: Experiences in Destination Society Institutions

Discussion of lived experiences in various arenas of life provides an essential foundation for a study of perceptions of social membership. At the most basic level, this data provides background information on the study’s respondents, presenting a clearer sense of their overall life experiences. A focus on experiences in various destination society institutions and arenas of life is consistent with other studies of second generation integration (Crul, Schneider and Lelie 2013, Kasinitz et al. 2008, Portes and Rumbaut 2001). Moreover, these arenas play a key role in forming an experiential basis for perceptions of social boundaries and identities. This chapter thus sets the stage for the following chapters’ more focused study of these topics.

This chapter covers four main areas. First, it discusses the overall context and experience of arrival, both for the respondents’ national origin groups generally and for this project’s individual respondents and their families. It then discusses experiences in the key arenas of respondents’ lives thus far—neighborhoods, schools, and employment. Within a general overview of these topics, this chapter specifically highlights intergroup relations and experiences of othering or discrimination. In line with this project’s principal focus, it further highlights how differences in histories of immigration/diversity have contributed to varied experiences in the two research sites, and it shows how particular differences in context affect experiences across various institutions and areas of life. Though differences between national origin groups are noted when clear distinctions emerge between Dominicans and Colombians, analysis principally focuses centers on differences between Madrid and New York.
Arrival


In both locations, established social ties to the destination society (largely through family and/or friends who had already immigrated), as well as views of economic opportunity, prompted respondents’ families’ immigration and choice of destination. However, the specifics of these rationales differed between locations, often reflecting destination difference in immigration histories. In Madrid, respondents often note one family member or friend preceding them, whereas in New York, respondents more often cite a larger established networks and longer-term family presence. The disparity in the size of social networks is linked to the longer coethnic presence in the US, and it holds implications for economic motivators as well. Those in New York typically spoke of a generalized sense of greater economic opportunity in the US, sometimes citing other family members’ relative success. In Madrid, more mention that parent(s) came for specific jobs (and due to the overall economic growth in Spain in the 1990s
and early 2000s). The longer-standing coethnic presence in New York allows respondents’ families to be informed by numerous other family members’ experiences, contributing to a generalized sense of opportunity. The general lore of the US as a land of opportunity for immigrants, which is not evident in Madrid, further supports this. Moreover, the greater number of social/familial ties in New York provides a broader base of support networks, facilitating relocation without already-secured employment.

Beyond social/familial connections and economic opportunities, Madrid respondents (both Colombian and Dominican) also cite Spain’s earlier lax border control and ease of entry as motivation for their parents’ move to Spain (e.g., “here, everyone…could come in…the immigration laws were really bad, there was no control;” “it was easier to come here than to go to the United States … to come here, they didn’t ask for a visa or anything…you come with a passport and you’re all set”). Greater ease of entry to Spain is even noted by a New York respondent with family in Spain. Again, this difference in motivation is linked to differences in histories of immigration; with the recency of large-scale migration to Spain (as well as its need for low-wage workers), Spain was delayed, both compared to the US and other Western European nations, in developing and in enforcing border control policies (Encarnación 2004, Kreienbrink 2008). Finally, other Madrid respondents cite the benefits of a shared language in

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19 For instance, one notes that his mother came to Spain instead of the US, where much of his family had previously emigrated, because “an uncle of mine knew some monks, and they wanted someone to come work here;” another adds that his mother came to Spain instead of the US because “my mom got a job contract here.”
Spain (e.g., “the language, too – this had a lot to do with it;” “I don’t think my parents would have thought of themselves as able to learn [another language, in the US]”\textsuperscript{20}).

Respondents in both locations who experienced migration (the 1.5 generation) often arrived either with their mothers or a few years after their mothers. The presence of fathers varied, with some remaining in the origin country, some moving with the mother and remaining together, and some moving with the mother but later separating (and potentially returning to the origin country). These respondents’ first impressions of Madrid and New York were often similar, based on contrasts between living in a smaller city/rural area and living in a large, highly-developed city. For instance, many highlight differences in infrastructure, including the number of tall buildings and the predominance of apartments over individual houses; a lack of independence and more limited ability to play outside, both due to lack of open space and parents’ lesser comfort with letting children play without supervision; the shock of cold weather, especially for those who moved during the winter; and language issues (in New York, the difficulty of the transition to an English language environment; in Madrid, differences in the form of Spanish). While many of these differences are seen as negative, others recall positive aspects, such as the relative cleanliness of the destination compared to their place of origin.

While the overall first impression upon moving was common in both locations, certain differences did emerge. Most notably, Madrid respondents appeared less prepared for what to expect in their new place of residence, and many directly reference greater knowledge of the US

\textsuperscript{20} Interestingly, although language poses a lesser logistical barrier in Madrid for the first generation, it becomes a greater symbolic boundary in Madrid among the second generation. This is discussed at length in Chapter 3 (Markers of Difference).
context. As one explains, “I hadn’t seen anything about Madrid – not photos or anything. I thought of it like the US.” Another in Madrid comments that “I didn’t know Spain, I knew New York more. I had an idea more or less of what New York is, so I imagined that the apartments were going to be like New York, the blocks, everything – the streets, the people.” When questioned about whether it was like this upon arrival, he comments “No, no …there [in New York] it’s more colorful, more light, more people, more noise, you know? More – or a relationship, more or less, between Latinos and … I mean…[a] mix there, in New York, that there isn’t here.” This respondent’s reference to a more lively overall atmosphere in New York hints at perceptions of Spaniards/Madrileños as cold or boring, and others in Madrid explicitly recall Spaniards’ perceived coldness in interaction upon arrival. In contrast, those in New York do not cite initial perceptions of New Yorkers’/Americans’ personalities or forms of interactions.

As with the motivators for migration, these contrasts in experiences of arrival reflect difference in longevity of the immigrant and coethnic presence in each site. For one, it contributes to greater general exposure to New York as a destination context in the origin country. It also promotes comparatively positive perceptions of intergroup relations in New York, even if intergroup interaction in New York is not actually as common as respondents may imagine. Madrid respondents’ difficulties in having been one of being the only non-native Spaniards upon arrival (discussed in this chapter’s later discussion of education) are also based on this site’s limited immigration history and may further comparatively positive perceptions of intergroup relations in New York. In Madrid, a particular native-origin Spaniards

21 This knowledge is surely supported by the prominence of New York, and the US in general, in global media.
personality/form of interaction, which informs respondents’ relocation experience, is further linked to Madrid’s more limited history of immigration; this is further discussed in Chapter 3 (Markers of Difference).

**Neighborhood**

In considering respondents’ neighborhoods, discussion overall differences in levels of ethnoracial minority population size and concentration between New York and Madrid provides a necessary backdrop. First, the two sites differ in the size of their foreign-born and ethnoracial minority populations. As a percentage of the total population, the foreign-born population is almost twice as large in New York compared to Madrid, at 37% and 20% respectively (Ayuntamiento de Madrid 2013, New York City Department of City Planning 2010a, New York City Department of City Planning 2010b). Though Madrid does not collect data on the second generation, including the second generation would only increase this disparity, given recency of large-scale immigration to Madrid compared to New York. Madrid also does not collect data on race or ethnicity, but the recency of large-scale immigration and the lack of a native minority mean that the majority of the native-born population is white. In New York, however, almost 70% of the population identifies as non-white and/or Hispanic (New York City Department of City Planning 2010a).

The two sites also differ in levels of residential segregation. Residential segregation by race and ethnicity is widely noted in the US and New York (e.g., see Alba and Romalewski 2012, Logan and Stults 2011, Massey and Denton 1993), while there is no precedent for similar
racial or ethnic segregation in Madrid in recent history (even if some degree of segregation is emerging). Moreover, New York, as well as other US locations, are noted for the historical and present-day prominence of immigrant enclaves (Foner 2002, Logan, Zhang and Alba 2002); again, this is not the case in Madrid. Comparing data on the immigrant concentration in each site conveys the contrast in segregation. In Madrid, only a small number of neighborhoods consist of over 30% foreign-born, and only one reaches into the 40% range (Ayuntamiento de Madrid 2013). In New York, a many more of neighborhoods contain significantly higher percentages of foreign-born, with numerous neighborhoods exceeding 60% and even 70% foreign-born (New York City Department of City Planning 2004). This means that New York has both a larger overall immigrant/minority population and a higher degree of segregation based on ethnoracial/immigrant minority status.

These population and residential concentration differences are reflected in respondents’ image of their neighborhoods. Regarding the racial and foreign/native-origin make-up of neighborhoods, most Madrid respondents note the presence of native-origin/white Spaniards in their neighborhoods. (As referenced in the introductory chapter, the conflation of native-origin and white in Madrid is based on the lack of a clear native minority, meaning the Spanish-origin population is essentially exclusively white.) The fact that Spaniards live in their neighborhoods is often seen as self-evident; one respondent, explaining the population in his neighborhoods, states “there are [people] from Morocco, from Ecuador – that’s what there’s most of, Dominicans, from Morocco, from Ecuador.” Yet when followed with the clarifying question “Are there Spaniards too?” – he responds, “of course.” In the US, some (particularly
Dominicans) reference living in areas with native-origin Americans. However, these native-origin Americans are almost invariably African Americans, not white Americans; with the exception of a very small number who reported living in areas with white immigrants (e.g., Russian Jews) or who spent parts of their childhoods in the New York suburbs, New York respondents lived in primarily minority/non-white areas.

In Madrid, though one particular immigrant group is sometimes dominant within the neighborhood, respondents often report a mix of different national origins: for instance, besides Dominicans and/or Colombians, respondents frequently mention other Latin Americans (particularly Ecuadorians, who are the largest foreign-born population in Madrid, but also Brazilians, Venezuelans, Peruvians, and others), Moroccans, sub-Saharan Africans, Romanians, and even Chinese. In New York, some Colombians mention living in similarly diverse areas (especially those living in certain areas of Queens, such as Jackson Heights, which is noted for its diversity in immigration population (New York City Department of City Planning 2004)). However, this is much less common among Dominicans in New York. Discussing immigrant groups in their neighborhoods, Dominicans typically cite primarily coethnics, though some also reference African Americans and Puerto Ricans.

Conflict between native (white) and immigrant-origin youth in the neighborhood setting is not highly prevalent in either location. In Madrid, many report minimal conflict with native-origin Spaniards. For instance, one explains that “I know everyone and [it’s] normal, good… I get along with everyone… everything’s always been fine;” another adds that “here [in my neighborhood], relations between Spaniards and Latinos… it’s always good.” Yet others note
issues between native Spaniards and immigrants; for instance, one explains he sees this “a lot...fighting, I’ve seen a lot of fights between Spaniards and Dominicans...someone gave you a dirty look, and you come with your people [to fight];” however, he adds that “this is from a while ago. The truth is it’s been a while since something’s happened.” Increasing familiarity with immigrants among native-origin Spaniards can contribute to decreases in such observations of conflict; for example, one notes that such intergroup conflict “is really uncommon – people are already used to [immigrants].” Yet some indicate continued issues, as in the comment that “here, in my neighborhood, around where I live there’s a lady who’s really racist. Every time she sees me, for instance: ‘You, negro, go back to your country!’ I’m not talking about when I was younger, I’m talking about now.” Most typically, respondents discussing present-day discrimination specifically reference incidents with older Spaniard neighbors. For instance, one explains that discrimination occurs “not very often,” adding that when it does, “it’s from older people,” and a second notes that “there are always” issues with “older people – I don’t know what their deal is, for any little thing they’re on you, insulting you... normally they’re – what I’ve seen are older people who tend to complain.” Others cite intergroup conflict as based on specific incidents; for instance, one explains that, one time, “a Dominican killed a Spaniard, so all the Spaniards got angry with us...if they saw a Latino on the street, they’d beat him...[one time] I was around the neighborhood...with a friend... [I heard] ‘a Latino, a Latino,’ and they came after us running, to beat us... I didn’t go out for a while because of this, because I was scared.”

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22 It should be noted that the term “Latino,” in reference to Latin Americans, is used in Madrid. This is discussed in
In New York, reporting of conflict between native-origin white Americans and immigrant-origin populations is virtually absent. This is linked to the overall lower white presence in New York compared to Madrid, and to the higher ethnoracial residential segregation in New York; both factors provide the lesser opportunity for native (white)/minority contact - and, thus, conflict. When New York respondents live with native-origin non-whites (e.g., African American and Puerto Ricans\textsuperscript{23}), which is most common among Dominicans, reporting of conflict is relatively minimal. As one explains, Dominicans and African Americans in his neighborhood “hang out with each other…they know each other, so they just - they play basketball with each other, so they just get close to each other.” Some do note limited interaction with native-origin minorities, often based on perceived difficulty relating; as one explains, “it's two completely different person [sic] together. It just…they don't mix.” A small number report tension with native minorities, typically based upon views of native minorities a dangerous or problematic (e.g., “the cops are always there, the firefighters…[so the Dominicans] think they cause a lot of trouble”), and on native minorities’ perceptions of Dominicans “taking over” their neighborhoods. One notes efforts of distancing, adding “there’s definitely…some sense of, like, ‘we’re better than them’ kind of thing both ways.” However, reporting of such neighborhood tension with native minorities is relatively minimal, and it is associated with implicit tension and each group keeping to itself rather than outright negative exchanges. Moreover, it is not clearly linked to a sense of being othered from mainstream American society.

\textsuperscript{23} Puerto Ricans are considered a native minority, in that Puerto Rico is a US territory and Puerto Ricans are US citizens.
Though neighborhood demographic make-up and intergroup relations differ in each location, respondents in both locations had similar overall perceptions of the quality of their neighborhoods. In both New York and Madrid, many respondents cited issues of delinquency. One in Madrid explains that “there are some really difficult people… they fight about nothing…Vallecas [his neighborhood] is a really known neighborhood here, in Madrid, and not for good things.” Another, who grew up in the same area, explains that “on the weekends, I saw drunk people, fights, shouting, all sorts of things.” A third, living in Cuatro Caminos, an area known for its immigrant population, notes that “[it’s] a little dangerous…there are clubs, so there are, sometimes – when you leave fighting, stuff happens. There are always problems.” In New York, a respondent from the Bronx similarly explains that her area is “just too ghetto… you see them kids - like, even the little kids, like, fighting each other.” Others in both sites reference issues with drugs; for instance, one in Madrid states that “in Cuatro Caminos, there’s a lot of delinquency…trafficking, drug trafficking,” and one in New York adds “[my neighborhood is] kinda rough, you know…a lot of drugs around.”

Some even report their own experiences as the victims of violence in their neighborhoods. A respondent in New York recalls that he has “been robbed before. I’ve been jumped. I fought a lot. I, I’ve lived the Bushwick [his neighborhood] lifestyle, you know.” Another in Madrid clearly recalls a specific incident, explaining:

I went out, and some kids came up to me to rob me…I [said] ‘Look, I’m telling you that I’m not going to give you anything’…and they followed me and got out a razor, so clearly you freak out…am I going to let something happen to myself for a cell phone and 20 Euros? [So] I got that out and gave it to them.
This respondent continues, adding that “I kept walking when a kid came running…he gave me my things back and said to me, ‘no, don’t worry, that was just a test’…I guess it was some gang… the usual, they see if you rob someone to see if you’re a man.” This highlights another aspect of many respondents’ neighborhoods: gang presence, which is linked to neighborhood violence. Respondents in both research sites cite gang issues, though it is more common in Madrid, where respondents also note the fact that gangs are most prominent among Latin Americans, and some thus conflate Latin Americans and gangs/gang-related violence. However, those in both locations – and especially Madrid - also state the gang presence is much reduced from what it once was.

Although many respondents find their neighborhoods dangerous or otherwise problematic, there are certain stated positive aspects of their neighborhoods. As with negative aspects, the positives are similar in both research sites. For instance, respondents stress the value of living in areas with a strong sense of local community, good relations between neighbors, and a sizeable coethnic presence. Others highlight the advantages of living in neighborhoods that offer the benefits of city life, such as easy access to public transportation, but that are somewhat removed from the bustle of the city center.

**Police Interaction**

Interactions with police, though not solely based in respondents’ own areas of residence, shape respondents’ experiences in their neighborhoods and overall destination society. Perceptions of police targeting and unjust treatment by police are present in both Madrid and
New York, but they are much more commonly cited in Madrid, and more clearly linked to sentiments of being considered an outsider in the destination society. For instance, as one Colombian explains “if there’s a problem or something…they’re [the police are] always more suspicious of an immigrant.” Though this respondent invokes the importance of immigrant origin, others specify the importance of skin color (which is conflated with immigrant origin in Madrid). Another adds that “there are policemen who… if you’re two or three black friends… they’re always going to stop you, you know? It’s not the same going with a group of Spaniards and going with a group of Dominicans, because they’re always going to think the worst - that we’re looking for trouble, or that we’re going to cause trouble somewhere or something…there’s always this harassment.” A third adds “if the police stop you on the street … if [it’s] a Spaniard… they ask for your DNI [national identity documents], and they ask ‘have you gotten into any trouble?’ ‘No.’ ‘Have you been in prison before?’ ‘No.’ ‘Ok, you’re done.’” He compares this with the treatment an immigrant receives, stating that “it’s not the same… they’re going to look you over, they say ‘how long have you been here?’, where you live?…[if] an immigrant…says ‘what?’ or something, they put him in [the car], they take him away, they beat him up, and the next day they let him go.” Yet another conveys a personal experience that left a clear negative impression; recounting leaving a bowling alley with her immigrant-origin friend and their younger brother and cousin, she explains:

> When we left the bowling alley…the two kids picked up some papers [off the ground]… they were playing with them, and the police stopped us…they asked for the kids’ documentation…they told us ‘you can’t be throwing papers on the ground’… [then] a car

24 This is reported by both origin groups, though more often by Dominicans.
passed us with guys who were – they looked like they were drinking, they went driving … [the policeman] let them go…like it wasn’t anything…[but] they stopped us just because the kids were playing with papers…our only explanation for why they said something just to us was because we were immigrants.

Others in Madrid add that, beyond skin color, cultural characteristics associated with their national origin group attract police attention. For instance, some highlight the impact of certain clothing styles more typical to Latin Americans (and, more often, Dominicans). As one explains, “I’ve been stopped… because I used to dress *rapero* [in a rapper style], with a hat, a bandana, boots, all that… when I dressed like that, every time they saw me, [they said] ‘you, against the wall.’” Another explains that “because of how Latinos dress – I’m talking about baggy clothes, hats, things like that… the police stop you and without saying anything to you, they beat you or whatever… just because of your clothes.” He further references the perception of this clothing as linked to gang membership, increasing police suspicion of those wearing this style. As referenced earlier, others also note the police being called for loud music, which respondents claim as part of their particular Dominican and Colombian cultures. As one states, ‘if I put on music, neighbors are like ‘this music is really loud – I’m going to call the police.” Another adds that this is a legitimized practice in Madrid, where loud music “is illegal… neighbors can report you and police come to your house, and they look and see if you have really loud music, and if you have it really loud they report you and they give you a fine.” Some further note the negative implications of Latin Americans’ (more specifically, Dominicans’) perceived tendency to speak loudly. One explains that “we talk loudly, like this – you understand? So they [the police] think you’re disrespecting them or you’re speaking badly to them, when it’s not that;” he then adds that this results in being beaten by police, echoing a previously-quoted respondent’s report.
Another indicates the confluence of various physical and cultural factors linked to Latin Americans “in this neighborhood, there’s a lot of police harassment…because we talk more loudly, our tone of voice, our accent, whatever…[the police are] more interested in arresting us than arresting them.”

In Madrid, the effect of these police stops in leading to an overall sense of otherness is indicated in various recounting of interactions with police, but some indicate the consequences in starker terms. Speaking generally about police harassment, one notes that “they make integration policies, so people from elsewhere can integrate – but they don’t let you integrate…I don’t have any problems with people from here, or from elsewhere, or anything…. [but] I’m out on the street, and the police are there, [asking for] documents…[so] how are you going to integrate?” This poignantly expressed the effect of police targeting as seen by some immigrant-origin youth; being singled out and stereotyped as problematic leads to feeling unwelcome. Another recalls an additional, more explicit, example of the police stops as indicating lack of acceptance: “they ask for your documents…there are policemen who have said to me, ‘even though you have Spanish citizenship, you’re not Spanish.’”

In New York, some report police harassment or targeting, but this is actually much more limited than in Madrid. The most notable cases of police harassment occurred for those who spent parts of their childhood in majority-white areas. For instance, one respondent reports particularly harsh interactions in a nearby New Jersey suburb, explaining:

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25 This observation is not necessarily solely based on physical appearance. Spanish identification cards list place of birth, so anyone can see if an individual is foreign-born, even if he/she is a naturalized Spaniard.
I would get stopped all the time…We would get taken into the precinct for no reason…we would always ask, “Excuse me sir, we would just like to know why you’re stopping us.” We – and then they’ll get really aggressive, like, “We ask the questions here.” Like, it was really like some harassment. I mean, they had me in the precinct for like an hour and a half talking to me about that my mother hated me… and they kept like yelling at me, they were cursing me out…I could bet any money that they would tend to stop me over a white kid. Like that – that is a given…they’re very prejudiced, you know?

Though issues in the city of residence are not noted in New York as frequently as in Madrid, or with as much fervor as for those New Yorkers who had spent time in the New York suburbs, some cite similar issues in New York City. For instance, another explains “I’ve had issues….a lot with the cops,” adding that racial profiling “obviously does happen…like, I could bet any money that they would tend to stop me over a – a white kid. Like, that – that is a given, you know.” He continues to address perceptions of police using unauthorized tactics: “a cop is legally allowed to – to frisk you outside for his own safety…but they’re not allowed to, like, go in your pockets. And, you know, I’m, like, ‘You know, officer, you’re not allowed to do that.’ And they’re like, ‘Oh, you want to be like a smart –‘You know, they always – they always want to be dicks.” A third relays a recent incident where she perceives unequal treatment for white and non-whites:

My sister actually had this issue a few months back where a Caucasian woman came, she was crossing the street…my sister [in her car] was somewhat in the pedestrian line, so the woman started yelling at her and …[my sister says] ‘the light is red, the cop just told me I couldn’t park there so I was going to move and the light turned red, I’m not going to run the light’. So then the cop came and saw that the Caucasian woman is arguing with my sister, and she’s [my sister’s] of – like, she’s my skin color, and they went at it…she felt like he was taking her side just because she was white, and she was like, you know, ‘I have rights as well.’
She then adds that “I think just minorities in general are handled bad. We don’t have the same
treatment as a Caucasian might have,” indicating that she does not feel this treatment is based on
her foreign-origin status, but rather on her minority/non-white status. Relatedly - and in contrast
to Madrid - there no similar suggestion of police discrimination as linked to being seen as un-
American. In fact, though mistreatment is generally linked to general minority/non-white origin,
some point to the prominence of issues with police specifically among native African Americans.
One respondent, quoted earlier in discussion of relations with African Americans in her
neighborhoods, notes that police are always at the buildings where African Americans live.
Another states that knowledge of police mistreatment of African Americans has even spread to
her origin country, explaining that her cousin in Colombia has mentioned “how they treat, like,
the black community, like, incarceration and, like, the role of, like, police and police
brutality.” Police targeting and mistreatment of African Americans is a widely documented
issue in New York and in the US overall (e.g., Alexander 2012, Miller 1996, and more, Smith,
Visher and Davidson 1984). 26

Some in Madrid attribute negative police relations to the fact that the police force is
largely white. As one explains, “you see a black policeman here, and you say ‘shit, a black
guy!’” Others cite perceived official limitations to immigrants joining the police force: “I think

26 Interestingly, there was virtually no explicit discussion of the controversial “stop-and-frisk” policing policy in
New York, where a police officer can stop anyone for whom they have reasonable suspicion of having committed a
crime based on a broad range of behavioral criteria (e.g., “furtive movement”), and which has been broadly accused
of being applied in an ethnорacially discriminatory fashion. While a clear explanation for this lack of reference
cannot be definitively determined, it may be linked to a greater application of stop-and-frisk for African Americans
compared to Latinos – both in terms of respondents’ perceptions, and as reflected by police data on the program
that this year [immigrants] can join [the police force], but till now they couldn’t join…I think that, for …[the] municipal police, civil police, you can’t be an immigrant - I think you have to be Spanish, but this year they changed it.” 27 In contrast to Madrid, those in New York show no perception of a limited minority/immigrant-origin presence in the police force. In fact, some note that their own family members are police officers. However, the presence of other minority policemen in New York does not necessarily limit negative experiences with the police. One respondent makes this clear, relating an incident where a “Hispanic cop was like, [saying] that I’m a disgrace to our race, and that because of kids like me is why our race is like looked down upon.”

Beyond issues with police in neighborhoods and streets, many in Madrid reference police targeting of immigrant-origin people in the local metro system. As one explains, “the police…are always in the metro, and they ask for all immigrants’ papers – all of them, all of them…if, for instance, you’re going out with your friends, they stop you, and they search you…they frisk you…just because you look different.” Asked whether this happens only to Dominicans (the respondent’s origin group), he notes that “it happens to all immigrants.” Although some explain that they do this to locate undocumented immigrants, it also has a negative impact on legal residents in terms of emphasizing their outsider status. In New York, respondents do not highlight issues with police in the subway system, but some do cite a police presence in their high schools. While they do not explicitly indicate discriminatory treatment in this arena, other literature cites a harmful effects of policing, which occurs predominantly in

27 At the time this interview was conducted, immigrants who had obtained Spanish citizenship could serve in the police force, but legal permanent residents could not.
heavily-minority schools (e.g., Sussman 2012). This indicating an institutionalized form of unequal treatment - if not in police harassment, then simply in terms of police presence - that may not be directly observable by respondents.

The fact that mistreatment by police is more widely noted in Madrid than New York is perhaps surprising to those familiar with the New York context, especially given controversial issues in police policies in New York (e.g. the police department’s current stop-and-frisk policy). However, the data and analysis above suggest a confluence of various factors helping to explain this finding – specifically, factors that lead police discrimination to be more readily observed, or made more explicit, in Madrid. For instance, the contextual difference in the ethnoracial makeup of the police force, with a dominantly white force in Madrid, may make discrimination by police feel aligned with an overall ethnoracial hierarchy or power imbalance, and thus particularly salient. Moreover, because of the confluence of non-white appearance and foreign origin in Madrid, respondents are doubly othered, with police explicitly invoking foreign status. In New York, while police targeting is sometimes explicit, there is also evidence of institutionalized discrimination, which may make it less visible. Moreover, the presence of another ‘other’ in New York – African Americans – may lead respondents to feel less targeted through comparison with this group. Finally, any targeting in New York is perhaps more expected, based on historical discrimination against minorities, and thus treated as a simple fact of life, and thus less noteworthy. Taken together, these factors may lead mistreatment by police to be less cited by New York respondents. However, we should note that this data represents perceptions of police
targeting/mistreatment. It does not necessarily signify police discrimination actually occurs with less frequency in New York, or with fewer consequences for respondents’ futures.

**Experience in School**

Education is central to the second generation’s experience in their host societies. Given their age (late teens and early twenties), schooling forms a major part of their life experience so far. Moreover, schooling plays a major role in the integration process (Alba and Nee 2003). Schools are historically charged with socializing children of immigrants to function in the mainstream society, and education represents the first intensive contact with mainstream institutions. Educational attainment also relates to job opportunities, and the ability to secure appropriate employment is a key factor in second-generation economic integration. This section discusses four aspects of schooling. The first three aspects – intergroup student relations, discrimination by teachers and school administration, and school-based discussion of diversity – highlight respondents’ experiences in school contexts, with a focus on othering and/or inclusion. The final aspect – university interest and attendance – speaks to attainment (though ultimate educational attainment cannot be addressed, many respondents were still in school), highlighting aspects of the educational systems and cultures that differentiate attainment goals in each location.

Though each aspect discussed highlights different points, and though each reveals nuances and complexities in the two contexts and in their comparison, a broader look at the overall data indicates particular trends. Generally, the Madrid context offers more daily and
explicit challenges, based on the prejudices of fellow students and teachers and on limitations to university access. In New York, barriers tend to be more structural in nature, and they are not necessarily experienced as directly and overtly as in Madrid.

**Intergroup Student Relations**

The vast majority of respondents in each site attended public school. Most in both Madrid and New York attend schools in their neighborhoods, although more in New York report attending non-neighborhood schools; when they attend non-neighborhood schools (more commonly the case for high school), they typically choose their school because a family member or close friends had attended that school. Though some in both sites stated their schools were known as “bad” schools, respondents themselves tended to report reasonably neutral or even positive experiences at school. Some report issues of fighting or delinquency, but this was not a major part of most students’ experiences, and those with serious issues often resolved their problem by transferring to a different school.

In the New York, the student bodies included other children of immigrants - largely Latinos - and African-Americans. Very respondents few reported white classmates. In Madrid, student bodies typically included a mix of immigrant-origin (largely Latino, but also Moroccan, Romanian, and Chinese) and native Spaniard (white) classmates. This difference is logical, given the aforementioned geographies of each location: in New York, the native population - especially where respondents live - is largely African American, whereas in Madrid the native
population is white, and New York is also more ethnoracially segregated than Madrid at the neighborhood level, meaning that neighborhood schools in New York would be more uniformly minority than in Madrid.

Reports of interethnic mixing among students vary in both locations, with some reporting many cross-ethnic friendships and some reporting ethnically-based cliques. Where interethnic mixing is noted, students cite the importance of school for as venue for promoting such contact. In New York, extracurricular activities like clubs and sports are specifically noted as helping students meet and befriend people of other backgrounds. In Madrid, school-based extracurricular activities are not generally mentioned, though involvement with youth soccer leagues, which are not linked to schools but may serve an equivalent purpose, is linked to friendship with native Spaniards. When students report limited interethnic mixing, respondents in both sites often perceive and/or explain it as largely innocuous, and not linked to intergroup tensions or rivalries. For instance, one New York respondent tells that “all the Asians were grouped together. And I never really noticed it until I graduated. All the Dominicans were together. All the um, Mexicans, Central Americans, South Americans were sort of mixed all together.” She continues to specify that this grouping is because “they felt comfortable, you know, connecting with people with their same background.” Madrid respondents who report the same phenomenon give a similar rationale: “it's because immigrants stick with people from their country because it’s the easiest thing. A lot of time it can be harder for them to interact with others.”
In New York, when interethnic tension, discrimination, or othering by students is reported, conflicts most commonly occurred between Latinos and African Americans. These issues were sometime related to gang rivalries, though respondents note that these gang problems are less common today than in the past. For the few respondents who spent parts of their childhood in majority-white areas, discrimination or othering by native whites was also reported; for instance, one notes that “my best friend went to school in California, and she went to a school that was mostly white, and yeah, she experienced a lot of….she had a hard time over there, from what I hear, from what she tells me.” In Madrid, any sense of discrimination or othering usually took the form of native white Spaniard students insulting immigrant-origin students, though there is some mention of intra-Latino conflict. Gang issues in Madrid promoted conflict between Latino national origin groups (commonly between Dominicans and Ecuadorians – the two groups most often noted as having gang affiliations). Yet these gangs were more often mentioned as neighborhood rather than school issues.

When discussing discrimination by native Spaniard students, Madrid respondents frequently specify that these experiences have decreased over time. As one reports, “I felt a little weird at first….the kids my age, I felt like they were a little distant, you know? A little like ‘el negro, el negro! [the black kid, the black kid!]’,” but he adds that “this was more at the beginning, when I came here. Later on, the others got more used to it.” With the arrival of more immigrant-origin students, those there since young childhood went from being the only non-whites to one of many non-whites, making their distinct physical appearance and cultural backgrounds less of an oddity. The increase in immigration and the passage of time also allowed
native students to become accustomed to - and befriend - more immigrant-origin students.

Similarly, with time, respondents note that they became more accustomed to Spanish society and adopted Spanish ways. In fact, because there were relatively few immigrants in Madrid when the respondents arrived, respondents had little choice but to make Spanish friends – friends who exposed them to Spanish customs and culture.

In certain occasions, however, reported decrease in experienced discrimination was attributed to another facet of increasing immigration: the power gained by increasing coethnic numbers. As one respondent relays,

In those times, there weren’t so many Colombians. Because of this, I probably didn’t mess with them [native Spaniards], because if you mess with them, it’s all of them against you. In contrast, it’s different now…now there are Spaniards and Colombians…if they’re insulting you, and if you’re from my country, I’m going to get involved. Because it’s like they messed with me. If they say ‘go back to your country,’ I’d mess with them too, because it’s like they said that to me.

This respondent thus indicates a conflictual relationship between immigrant-origin and native-origin students. Though this highlights a significant interethnic division, it is somewhat paradoxically also linked to lessened overt conflict. Even without reporting of such tension, some further note that the coethnic/immigrant increase allows respondents to switch from their earlier majority-Spanish social circle to a preferred majority-coethnic or immigrant-origin social circle.

28 The implications of long-term residence in Spain, and the resultant long-term friendships with Spaniards, differentiates respondents’ experiences from the experience of youth who immigrate in their teenage years: “If you come when you’re young and you’re in school for a long time and you stay with your same schoolmates in instituto [high school], it’s different because you already have a long-term friendship. It’s not the same if you come to instituto and you hadn’t studied with anyone in colgeio [primary school].”

29 The phrase “go back to your country” (“vete a tu pais”) was very commonly noted as an anti-immigrant/racist insult in Madrid.
In addition to reporting generally limited experience with school-based discrimination, respondents in both New York and Madrid often also downplay its significance when it is reported. Most commonly, respondents write it off as mere childish behavior – as one New York respondent calls it “kid stuff” and says that “ultimately, you know, it’s not like there’s any, um, longstanding rivalries or anything like that. I see all these kids, and, you know, I know them all…. [previous conflict is] something we joke about.” They often explain that children always tease one another, and if conflict were not created based on ethnic background, it would have occurred on some other basis. In Madrid, discrimination is also attributed to parents’ imposed views, and particularly to Franco-era xenophobia.  

One respondent recounts reconnecting with a childhood classmate, who had previously taunted her by singing a Franco-era hymn:

After years had gone by… I saw this kid with a black girl. The kid who sang me this hymn, with a really black girl! …. He gave me a hug and he said ‘Tía, I’m sorry for everything I did to you. I realize that life isn’t like that.’ And I got to know him, and now we’re now friends. And he told me it was his parents and grandpa’s fault, because his grandpa was really right-wing… it’s not their [the children’s] fault, it’s the fault of the education they get at home.

The experience of taunting while young was certainly significant for this respondent, but the historical context and the observed change in his stated beliefs and actions, allows the respondent to attribute it to family influence rather than this young man’s independent thought. This further reflects an overall sentiment that racist/anti-immigrant attitudes are more common in the elder population, compared to present-day youth. In this case, as well as in other respondents’

30 “Franquisto” ideology was commonly seen as discriminatory towards immigrants, since Franco-era mentality is associated with a right-wing ideology of Spanish purity.
relatively understanding interpretations of discrimination, these responses may also represent a coping mechanism for dealing with such occurrences.

In considering overall differences in intergroup relations in schools, those in Madrid do indicate greater encounter with majority prejudice (although those in both sites show similarly limited mention - or, perhaps, downplaying - of tensions between ethnic or racial groups). This difference can be tied to the fact that those in Madrid have more contacts with whites than those in New York, based on the overall population within the cities, with Madrid showing a larger white population, and based on lesser residential segregation in Madrid, as schools’ student populations are often drawn from the surrounding neighborhood. In New York, where students more often attend schools with predominantly minority populations, respondents’ feelings of being distinguished from a perceived mainstream/majority population - often understood as whites - is not as experientially clear (even if it may be is cognitively known - for instance, based on media portrayals of young adults and schools). Moreover, the relative rarity of non-whites in Madrid, especially in respondents’ early childhoods, allowed for respondents to be easily distinguished (and taunted) by peers. In New York, given the long-standing nature of the non-white/immigrant presence in the city, respondents were not singled out in the same way in early childhood.

**Discrimination by School Staff**

Just as reporting of discrimination by fellow students was relatively infrequent, reporting of discrimination by individual teachers was similarly infrequent in both locations. In fact, most
respondents in each site had positive views of their teachers, and even the few experiences of discrimination were largely noted as isolated incidents. However, the relatively few incidents reported indicated differences in the form of perceived discrimination between the two research sites.

In Madrid, respondents report discrimination in teachers’ outright anti-immigrant or racist statements. For instance, one respondent notes that “professors said, like ‘your opinion doesn’t count, because you’re not from here…because you’re black,’ and like that.” In New York, in contrast, respondents do not tend to report teachers directly calling attention to the students’ origins or race. For them, perceived discrimination by school faculty is more often implicit. For instance, one in New York describes discrimination in “favoritism” towards white students, and others perceive discrimination in being unduly punished for misbehavior. One respondent, discussing his experiences of discrimination by school staff, explains that “me and my friend…in class, we would always get in trouble… we used to get in trouble a lot, like for no reason.” He felt that the teachers punished him and his friends mainly because they were Latino. Others perceived discrimination in the form of low expectations for minority students. For instance, one respondent reflects on her college advisor: “he was so racist. Horrible…he’s like, “What are you applying for this school for, you know you’re going to end up working at your father’s bodega or something”…Black kids, Latinos, he just – he didn’t – he didn’t have a high expectation from us, he didn’t treat us with high expectations.”
Such perceptions extend into educational arenas beyond high school. Discussing a friend who gained admission to a prestigious post-high school educational program, one respondent explains:

When she goes to DC for, like, the group orientation, she’s like the only dark-skinned – she’s like one of the few dark-skinned Latinas in there. Most of the people there that are accepted into the program are white...why is that? Why is it that it’s hard to see people of color succeed, you know? …Obviously it’s harder for Latinos. Why? Because we live here [a poor New York City area]. We don’t have all that space that other people may have. We don’t have all the opportunities. In a classroom, there’s like 32 people, one teacher. And then you have home. You know, there’s a lot of things that impede us from getting where we want to get sometimes.

This highlights the recognition of institutional discrimination, as well as the relevance of the lower socioeconomic status and related residential situation of minorities, in lowered expectations and opportunities. In addition, a greater awareness of, and sensitivity to, racism in the US could affect New York respondents’ experience of racist/discriminatory events, in terms of their perception of racism in cases where it is less overt and more institutional. In Madrid, where attention to racism is less historically embedded in the social and political context, and where there is more overt anti-immigrant/discriminatory action, respondents may be less sensitive to, or less aware of, implicit forms of racism.

Though not always understood or explained as a form of discrimination, it is worth noting that Madrid 1.5 generation respondents often report starting a grade behind upon moving to Madrid; this is virtually absent in the New York case. Some explain that this occurs because the schooling in the origin country is slower or less rigorous than in Madrid, meaning students are not adequately prepared for the equivalent grade in Madrid (e.g., “when I came, they put me
a grade lower… because schooling in Santo Domingo is easier;” “schooling there [in the origin country] is… worse, a lower level…so what they do when people come here is they put them a grade below… I came in second grade, I was going to go into third, and they made me repeat second grade again”). Others relate this to differences in the timing of the school year; one, explaining that he was put a grade behind upon arrival, explains that “in Colombia, [the school year is] from January to November. In contrast, here it’s from September to June… I came in June, so I had done six months, but when I began in school [in Madrid], they didn’t count any of those six months, so they made me repeat.” Yet some feel that this practice is arbitrary. For instance, one states that “there is a difference in level… of schooling and all that. But I think it’s a little exaggerated.” He then recalls that students were sometimes given an exam upon arrival, but he was not, and adds that “often, they put you a grade below just because they want to… I’ve seen many cases of kids who are really smart who come with a good level [of education], and they put them a grade below.” While some respondents do not seem bothered by this practice, others do; this is most evident in those who emphasize the arbitrariness of grade placement, and in those felt they were good students in the origin country. One also notes that feelings of inferiority were reinforced by continued contact with friends in the origin country, who were now a grade ahead. Madrid respondents also more often reported being held back than New York respondents, though those in Madrid stated that this was also relatively common for native Spanish students - an observation supported by empirical data showing high overall levels of grade retention in Spain, as well as in various other European nations (Eurydice Network 2011) (though there may still be higher incidence of grade retention for immigrant origin students).
Thus, though respondents’ experiences with teachers and administrators thus follow an overall pattern of more explicit/experiential discrimination in Madrid and institutional discrimination in New York, these factors - starting a grade behind, as well as the possibility that grade retention in Madrid occurs more often for immigrant-origin youth than native youth – indicate that institutional discrimination may also be significant in Madrid.

**School-Based Discussion of Immigration and Diversity**

Immigration and/or diversity is sometimes discussed in the school setting in both sites, but the two locations differ in both the frequency, setting, and tone of discussion. In Madrid, respondents occasionally mentioned that immigration and/or diversity was explicitly discussed in a curriculum setting. These discussions usually took place in secondary school ethics courses, were reported as debate-based or open-format, and focused more explicitly on immigration than resulting issues of diversity. One Spanish respondent explains what comprises discussion of immigration in her ethics class: “these themes [immigration and immigrants] always come up...because, obviously, it’s a topic you see...so there was a conversation on this in class. (Q: And what did you talk about, about immigration, in this class?) ‘How do immigrants seem to you? Should they make the immigrants leave the country? What immigrants should be here?’ Things like that.” Though this seems particularly harsh, it reflects aspects of the overall debate on immigration in Madrid (as evidenced by a Spanish policy, in place at the time of interviews, providing financial incentives for immigrants’ return to their countries of origin). In New York, discussion of immigration and diversity in school was much more frequently noted, and these
topics were often incorporated into high school social science, including history, courses. Respondents report learning terms like “melting pot” and “salad bowl” – terms used to describe the historic ethnic development of the US. In New York, topics of immigration and diversity are even more commonly noted in college courses, including specific seminars on diversity and courses on particular ethnic or racial groups.

In both locations, respondents’ understandings of such discussions’ implications are sometimes positive. Some see it as helping them learn more about themselves, particularly by learning about their own ethnic group’s history and about the immigrant experience overall. Others note that this creates room for dialogue, which in turn opens the possibility for increased understanding between native and immigrant-origin students and for immigrant-origin individuals to educate native peers. However, bringing such differences into the open can also have certain negative implications. Talking about such discussions, one Madrid respondent relays a particularly memorable incident:

One [native Spanish] classmate of mine…he didn’t think things were so bad in Latin American countries, so bad that people send so much money there and all that. So another [foreign-origin] classmate of mine got angry. I mean, she got really mad. And she said to him, “you don’t know how things are there, because your parents give you everything. Here you’re not rich, but when you want to go to the clubs, you go – your parents give you money. When you want to go party with your friends, they give you fifty euros.” She said, “I could ask my mom for fifty euros, and, with an aching heart, my mom would say ‘look, honey, I don’t have it. I couldn’t even give you five.’” So then he got pissed off, too…

In this case, an open discussion of immigration-related issues, even if it may ultimately lead to increased native understanding of immigrant-origin students’ experience, more immediately led to antagonism between an immigrant-origin and native student. A New York respondent, who
attended a majority-white private university and took a course that covered diversity issues, explains that:

They like forced us to speak about, like, where we come from and, you know, about touchy topics... The professor actually asked everyone “are you ever scared about, you know, being discriminated as a immigrant.” I’m like – I was the only one in the classroom that raised my hand and it, I don’t know, it just felt awkward... certain kids were kind of scared of saying things because, you know, yeah, ‘I might offend her.’

In this case, she felt that such discussions were “forced upon” the student body and made her feel singled out, accentuating the fact that she was unlike other students. Moreover, discussing the root and effects of her university’s focus on diversity, she explains, “From upper classman, I found out that there was a hate crime that happened against a basketball player. So they’re trying to diminish that from happening. At least in the years I’ve been there it’s been – nothing bad has happened. But I think that’s what they’re trying to do. But it’s – I’m not sure it’s working.”

She sees the institution of diversity-oriented courses and coursework as a superficial and ineffective response to real problems.

Another New Yorker similarly notes the superficiality of a diversity focus; discussing his high school, he explains that, although “diversity” is often highlighted by school administrators as a positive aspect of their institution, the actual diversity is no more than a token:

My school loves diversity, but it’s not real diverse...they’re like, ‘Oh, you know, like, but wait, this a very diverse school, you know - there’s black people.’ I’m like, ‘Yeah - there’s only, like, five black people. I don’t know if that’s what constitutes diversity’... I guess I see it more because I’m a minority, as opposed to, you know, a lot of Caucasians.

He continues to note similar issue in his university, recounting an incident where an administrator, to emphasize the school’s diversity, states “‘look at the – look at the, um, the
executive board that makes up for this event…this girl is – she’s, um, Palestinian.”” He emphatically criticizes this, explaining that the director is really just “singling someone out … [it’s] singling someone out that constitutes what diversity is. But I don’t really think that’s – you know, that’s how it works;” as he notes, one non-Caucasian is taken to represent diversity. Moreover, his opinion echoes previous respondents’ complaint that attention to supposed diversity can result in “singling out” non-white students, thus highlighting difference in a negative manner.

Comparing the two sites, certain overarching contrasts become apparent. In the US, discussion of immigration occurs more often and is relatively integrated into educational programs and courses, is linked to the broader concepts of societal multiculturalism and diversity, is often couched within a historical/national identity context, and is positively framed. In Madrid, such discussion is less frequent and less integrated into educational programs and courses, not as clearly linked to overall concepts of diversity, couched within a discussion of present-day issues, and more ambiguously (and sometimes negatively) framed. This may present the New York context as generally more inclusive in this area, but it is important to note certain factors mitigating this. For one, multiple New York respondents also reference the superficiality of such discussion; in their view, diversity is idealized and/or addressed at a surface level, without actually linking such discussion to a deeper understanding of related societal problems. This is not as clearly noted in the Madrid case, where the blunter form of diversity/immigration discussion may also allow students to more readily acknowledge and discuss related societal problems. Moreover, in New York, the ostensible focus on inclusivity
and belonging may make being “singled out” particularly difficult to manage. While being single out in Madrid is certainly difficult as well, there is a lesser contradiction between the tone of conversation and the personal effects for respondents.

**University Interest and Attendance**

The two research sites showed clear differences in university interest/attendance, with those in New York more often interested in attending or enrolled in university, compared to Madrid. Though this project’s non-random sample and the virtual lack of previous research on university attendance among the 1.5/2nd in Madrid cannot conclusively confirm that low levels of interest/attendance in university are broadly typical for those in Madrid, my research experience supports the limited university enrollment of children of immigrants. In the process of Madrid data collection, I set out to actively recruit university-educated respondents upon noting that, midway through data collection, I had none in my sample. Knowledgeable sources (e.g., organizational leaders, school officials) repeatedly reported that this would be difficult or impossible, for Dominican- and Colombian-origin youth rarely attended university; in the end, and after much targeted recruiting and outreach, I was able to secure just five university-educated respondents in my sample. In the US, higher rates of university interest/attendance are supported by other large-scale quantitative research showing relatively high levels of university

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31 While research exists on children of immigrants in basic education in Spain and Madrid, this research has not extended to the university level. This is likely at least partially due to the fact that most children of immigrants in Spain are still relatively young.
education for children of immigrants in New York, at least relative to comparable peers (e.g., native minorities) (Kasinitz et al. 2008).

In discussing university interest/attendance, background information on the differences in the educational systems is necessary. Basic education in both locations is similar, though shorter in Madrid. In Madrid, primary school lasts from approximately age 6 to 12. This is followed by secondary school, commonly known as ESO (Educacion Secundaria Obligatoria, or Mandatory Secondary Education), which consists of 4 grades and lasts until age 16 (or up to age 18, if the student has repeated grades; this is not unusual, as addressed earlier). ESO completion marks the end of basic education. In New York, primary school begins at age 6 and continues through age 11. The student then continues on to middle school, which lasts until age 14, followed by high school, which consists of 4 grades and lasts until approximately age 18. High school completion marks the end of basic education. Everyone completing basic education in both the New York and Madrid receives the same degree.\(^3\)\(^2\) Options after basic secondary education differ between the two sites. In Madrid, after completing the ESO, students who choose to continue their education can begin a “bachillerato” (an academically-oriented track, where the student receives no applied training) or a “grado medio” (a more vocationally-oriented track, where the student study in a specific field and receive applied training). Each of these courses of study lasts 2 years. These are both part of the

\(^3\)\(^2\) Though school enrollment is only mandatory until age 16, there is no actual outlet until age 18; those who leave school before completing high school are considered to have “dropped out.”

\(^3\)\(^3\) This is in contrast to various other European systems, where students are tracked at a young age and, depending on their track, receive different degrees Alba, R., J. Sloan and J. Sperling. 2011. “The Integration Imperative: The Children of Low-Status Immigrants in the Schools of Wealthy Societies.” Annual Review of Sociology 37:395-415.
public educational system, and there are no entrance requirements these two tracks. Those who want to pursue further education action after a bachillerato have two options: they can enter university, or they can enter a grado superior - a higher-level vocationally-oriented track. Those completing a grado medio cannot begin university following this course of study. If they want to continue their education, their only option is a grado superior.\textsuperscript{34} After completing a grado superior, these students can attend university, although anecdotal evidence suggests that many completing a grado superior see that as their final course of study. In New York, a student can begin university education directly following basic secondary education (high school). This university education may consist of an Associate’s degree (typically though a community college, and typically lasting 2 years of full-time study), or a Bachelor’s degree program. After completing an Associate’s degree, students can enter the workforce, or they can move into a Bachelor’s degree program at a 4-year university.

As noted in other comparative work (e.g., Alba, Sloan and Sperling 2011, Crul and Holdaway 2009), the structure of an educational system can play a key role in determining educational outcomes. In this case, various aspects of the two educational systems help to explain differences in university attendance. First, in Madrid, basic education (ESO) is not followed by university, but rather by two optional intermediary programs (grado medio or bachillerato). Only one of those tracks (bachillerato) can lead directly to university. In contrast, anyone in New York who completes high school can begin university. Second, although respondents in New York were sometimes concerned about admission to certain universities,

\textsuperscript{34} The grado medio and grado superior are sometimes referred to jointly as an FP, for “formación profesional,” or “professional training.”

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there was little concern about being denied access to all universities based on poor grades or test scores. Within New York City, the City University of New York (CUNY) is particularly noted for its high accessibility to students of all educational backgrounds and achievement levels (as well as its affordability, relative to other universities in the US), and many respondents did attend CUNY. In contrast, Madrid respondents commonly cited difficulties in university admission, particularly in the form a national content-based entrance exam (referred to as selectividad). For some, the requirement to take this exam serves as discouragement from considering university. The specific grade received on the exam determines which subject matter the student can pursue; this presents an additional deterrent to those who do not achieve the entrance exam score for their subject of interest, or even for those who think they will not achieve the necessary score. Finally, Madrid’s educational system structure also offers more non-university options following basic education than New York, permitting continued education without university. In fact, though significantly more respondents in New York than in Madrid had at least some university education, many in Madrid (almost half of the total sample) had another forms of educational experience beyond mandatory ESO. Among those in Madrid who had already continued their education beyond ESO, 13 had completed some or all of a vocational program (grado medio, superior, or a private program), and 20 had completed some or all of bachillerato (though this does not necessarily indicate university plans; more typically, respondents were considering a grado superior or were not sure of their future educational plans, sometimes seeing bachillerato as a means of delaying career decisions).
The structure of the American/New York university system thus more readily permits university attendance, while the Spanish/Madrid system more readily restricts university attendance and/or encourages other options. However, it should be noted that differences in the educational structures complicate equivocating this difference with clear or objective greater educational outcomes in the US. In some ways, Madrid’s post-ESO non-university programs – *grado medio* and *grado superior*, and also *bachillerato* – may be seen as an approximate to a community college in the US: they follow basic education, are not required, and focus on specific areas of study or work. If these are seen as equivalent to university in the US (or, more likely, community college) this view, the two sites are more comparable in achievement. However, there are significant differences between these post-ESO programs and community college: the *grado medio*, *grado superior*, and *bachillerato* are part of the public educational system, and structurally linked to secondary schooling, wholly separate from university systems, and are not understood as as “university.” Attempt to draw definite parallels between post-basic educational options are thus fraught, since various options following basic education in Madrid are not part of university, whereas the primary option following basic education in New York is university (whether community college or a four-year program).

These structural differences, in conjunction with broader cultural differences, are further evident in differences between two sites in views of the value and utility of university education. In New York, respondents discuss university education as necessary for success. As one notes, “I guess that it has been established from – from a – from a society point of view, that, you know.

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35 Many in the US (and New York) begin in a community college. Thus, though New York has a more open system, those who access university are not necessarily beginning in 4-year programs.
The way up…is for you to pursue college. You know, college is the way out. So, it’s like, ‘Oh, college is only the way.’ Spanish respondents, in contrast, do not note a general focus on university education in Spain. In fact, many note a general lack of interest in university education, and in educational success overall, among native Spaniards. As one respondent explains “I think people in other countries have more made more progress in schooling….if a kid doesn’t want to study, well, he doesn’t study, he does what he wants.” Another adds that schooling in Spain is “really mediocre…of ten Spaniards, two want to go to university.”

Though these views may be influenced by the fact that respondents tend to live in lower-income areas and based on interaction with lower-income Spaniards, who are likely less focused on university attendance than upper-class Spaniards, the relative lack of a broad cultural emphasis on university education as the key to success presents a marked contrast with the New York case. Respondents in Madrid also note that a vocationally-oriented training (a grado medio, or more advanced training through the grado superior) instead of university is common, even for native Spaniards. As one respondent explains, “from one grade, more or less half go to university. And the others, well, they start working after the ESO or they do a grado medio, and then a few of those do a grado superior.”

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36 The terms “college” and “university” [“university” applies to institutions with post-graduate programs] are generally used synonymously in the United States. For consistency’s sake, I use the term “university” in all instances except direct quotations.

37 These perceptions do have a factual basis. As these respondents reference, international comparison of educational achievement in fact shows Spanish youth to have low achievement relative to comparable Western industrialized nations, as well as lower achievement than the OECD average. Portes, A., R. Aparicio, W. Haller and E. Vickstrom. 2010. “Moving Ahead in Madrid: Aspirations and Expectations in the Spanish Second Generation.” International Migration Review 44(4):767-801.
In New York, virtually no respondents discussed a vocational track as an alternative to a university education; vocational programs are not as commonly offered as in Madrid, nor are they as integrated into the public educational system. Some were enrolled in a community college, but in New York, a community college and a four-year university are not necessarily seen as two distinct alternatives. Rather, community college is seen as a “stepping stone” to a four-year university degree, underscoring the fact that a four-year university degree remains the end goal. Moreover, a community college does not consistently or necessarily offer the same clear applied focus as a grado medio/grado superior; while some focus on specific career training, they often also consist of general education courses more focused on preparing students for a transition to a four-year university program.

Beyond differences in general cultural focus on university, the two sites differ in respondents’ sense of the employment value of university. Those in New York see a university education as vital to job prospects, and especially non-menial employment; as one respondent succinctly explains, with a “high school diploma you don’t get anywhere,” and adds that people in the US think “there’s no job that’s gonna accept you, um, if you don’t have some sort of college degree. You know?...It gives you credentials.” This is in contrast to the Madrid case where many see a grado medio is generally seen as sufficient, and a grado superior, rather than a university degree, is seen as providing further qualification for solid employment. In fact, many stress the benefit of applied training in these programs, compared to university or the pre-university secondary track (bachillerato): “in bachillerato, all you do it study and take exams. In a grado medio, you do a year of studies, a half-year of internship;” “in university, it’s like they
want to put a bunch of theory in your head, but they don’t give you any applied training…you don’t know how to make use of it in the real world. In contrast, in the FP [grado medio/superior] you get a lot of practical training;” “those with university degrees…don’t have work experience, and employers don’t want to risk things not working out, so they prefer to look for something safer - people who have experience and know what they’re doing.”

Building on this established sentiment, those in Madrid overwhelmingly feel that the economic recession decreases the value of a university education. Discussing the recession, respondents highlight the fact that those with a university education often cannot find work at all; after being asked whether it is worth doing a bachillerato and going to university, one respondent answers: “Here, no. Because everyone who’s studied is on unemployment,” and another adds “I know a lot of people who are in university and have finished and don’t have a job. And a lot of people who finished bachillerato and did a grado superior, specialized in something, and they have a stable job, they have money.” Some respondents even report university graduates who, upon graduation, encounter difficulty finding work and decide to do a grado superior (e.g., “there are people that did a university degree, and then they hide this, or they don’t tell anyone they have this degree, and they go do an FP.” The value of direct work experience embedded in a grado medio/superior, as well as the lesser cost of hiring someone without a university degree (“a company can pay less to someone with a grado medio…it’s better for them to pay less than to hire a university graduate, who they need to pay more”) increase the market value of a more applied training. In stark contrast, New York respondents
overwhelmingly note that the economic recession increases the value of a university education. As one explains:

> Things are so competitive nowadays, I mean I’ve heard people tell me that if you don’t have at least a bachelor’s you can’t even be a secretary at certain places…. You’ve to stand out. If you’re just a nobody who has the same thing as everybody else, you can’t differentiate yourself ….I have to do the best I can possibly do here so I can put myself in a position where I’m so much more qualified than everybody else and I don’t have to worry about being cut out or beat out by somebody else.

This sentiment is echoed repeatedly throughout interviews with US-residing respondents. Given the greater competition for jobs, those with the highest credentials are seen as having the best chance of being hired, even for relatively low-skilled work.

In addition to differences in the structure of the educational system and valuation of university, the two research sites differ in the presence and role of minority-focused programming. In terms of accessing university, respondents in New York are aided by programs specifically for minority students and/or low-income students (who, given the high correlation between minority status and class in New York and the US, are largely minority.) For instance, one reports that he was part of a program that helps disadvantaged students with college applications, and he even traveled with this program to visit universities. Others report participating in support programs once enrolled in university. One, enrolled in such a program at a private university, explains the extent of the benefits: “they give you a counselor that stays with you all four years of college. They help you with letters of recommendation. They find you internships. It's – you know, I really like it.” Others note these programs’ social benefits; speaking of an academic aid program at CUNY (which is not explicitly for minorities, but ends
up serving this purpose), one explains that this program “brought together a lot of people, and most of them are, like, minorities, so Hispanics, Asians, black students….we all got really, really close with each other…we help each other out..” She continues to highlight corollary educational benefits, explaining that “I think if I wouldn't have been in that program…I wouldn't have been, like, as motivated…[to] do well in school or, like, go to all my classes. Because a lot of times you need, like, the support from your friends…we all have fun and we're friends and we're cool and we hang out - but at the same time, when it comes down to studying, we do it.” The value of such programs’ social support is even more marked among those at private universities, where students sometimes report having difficulty relating to wealthier – and largely white – general student population. Beyond academic aid programs, numerous New York respondents report participating in minority or Latino student groups, or at least note the presence of such groups. In stark contrast to the New York case, respondents in Madrid do not report any minority-oriented academic aid programs, nor do they report minority/ethnicity-based student organizations in university. 38

Given contextual non-university educational tracks and related differences in the broader cultural views of university education, it is important to note that Madrid’s lesser university interest and attendance does not necessarily signify low achievement as it might in New York. Nevertheless, the findings on university interest support the overall trend of more explicit educational challenges and barriers in Madrid, compared to New York. There are clear limitations as to who may enter university in Madrid, while anyone can pass through to the

38 The implications of this for Latino/a identity in New York is addressed in Chapter 4 (Identities).
university system in New York. The fact that minorities are sometimes offered specific aid programs in New York further contributes a lesser sense of barriers to access. This does not imply that the educational outcomes of minorities in New York and the US are in equal to white peers, but it indicates that the *experience* of disparity differs between sites.

**Employment Prospects and Future Plans**

Respondents in both locations feel that educational achievement has some bearing on employment prospects, though the type of educational profile seen as most useful for employment varies between sites, as discussed above. Yet beyond educational profile, various other factors - most notably, the economic climate, the impact of their immigrant origin, and personal connections – also play a key role in views of employment prospects for immigrant-origin youth in both locations. However, their form and degree of impact often differs between the two sites. Respondents also differ in their future plans of residence, including their degree of intent to remain in the country of residence and the potential alternate destination.

In Madrid, most respondents report very limited hope of finding work. The majority of those who have finished schooling are either unemployed or working in low-level sectors, like retail and food services. Those who are seeking work note the futility of their search; as one notes, “everyone’s looking for work.” Difficulties in finding employment are heavily attributed

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39 As other research on New York has shown Kozol, J. 2012. *Savage Inequalities: Children in America's Schools*: Broadway., definite inequality remains, in both school quality and related achievement, between whites and ethnoracial minorities in New York and the US.

40 This section mainly examines view of job prospects rather than job experience, since so many respondents actually have little work experience. In New York, this is generally because they are still in school. In Spain, this is generally because they are still in school or have finished school but not found steady employment.
to the economic crisis, rather than their educational attainment or ethnic background.

Respondents note that employment is particularly difficult for youth, since employers are seeking those with previous experience – the most sought-after quality in employees. In fact, some respondents also feel that this overwhelming emphasis on experience negates any previous anti-minority employment discrimination; they state that employers now simply look for the best qualified and most experienced individuals, regardless of their ethnic background.

However, others feel that the economic crisis increases employment discrimination. Respondents note that much current anti-immigrant sentiment is based on the idea that immigrants are taking Spaniards’ jobs, so employers would rather give the little work available to native Spaniards than to minorities. In a similar vein, some even explain that the negative economic climate adversely affects minorities, even if they end up finding work: “there are a lot of companies, a lot of jobs, that like to hire blacks to exploit them…now with the crisis, if you’re an immigrant and have a job, you basically have to put up with whatever comes [e.g., poor treatment at work], because if you complain, no matter what they say, they can get rid of you easily, because there’s a lot of demand for work.” In the past, this respondent explains, an immigrant could simply leave a job and find another if he has problems with a racist and exploitative employer. While this ostensibly affects all employees, including native Spaniards, crisis-based increases in anti-immigrant sentiment make these issues of mistreatment particularly

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relevant to minorities. Respondents report also that lack of citizenship significantly decreases the likelihood of finding work, and especially long-term, contract-based work.

In New York, some respondents express concern about finding employment, but they are not nearly as bleak about their prospects as Madrid respondents. Some simply hope that everything will fall into place; talking about whether the economy worries her, one respondent says that “it’s going to be harder to find a job. But like, I mean when I get there, let’s see what happens.” Another acknowledges that the job market is “tough,” but then says that “I just have to, uh, go out there and put, you know, my best foot forward and see what I can find.” Others are more worried about finding work in their area of interest than in finding any work at all. For instance, one college student explains that “hopefully it’s just not going to be I finish college and I can’t find a job...it’s a little scary, so I’m like – I do sit at home and think like, wow, what am I going to do if I don’t find a job that’s in my field?” Another, talking about her older friends, says that “to live in the city they have to be a waitress, be a waiter - and then maybe if they have time, [they can] do what they want to do.”

As with the Madrid respondents, those in New York are mixed in whether they feel discrimination will adversely affect them in employment. Even though respondents readily recognize that discrimination in hiring is illegal, a few note that it does occur. In recounting her experience applying to jobs, one explains “like it’s sad to say, but...sometimes, I’m like wow, I feel like I’m not going to be chosen, they’re not going to even look at my resume because of how I look… if I’m going against someone who’s not like me, they’re going to choose her, or him, you know?” However, many respondents also feel that such discrimination issues do not affect
them in the job market. In fact – and, in contrast to the Madrid case - some feel that their minority status has certain advantages. For those who speak Spanish, they feel that being bilingual gives them a competitive advantage for many jobs (as further discussed in Chapter 3 (Markers of Difference)). Others note that diversity is seen as a positive in the work place, meaning employers are particularly interested in hiring minorities. One respondent whose last name does not clearly mark him as Hispanic reports using his maternal grandmother’s overtly-Hispanic last name on job applications, so employers will know his ethnic background. Another notes that companies like to:

hire Spanish [meaning Latin American] people…I don’t know if it’s, like, the states or like there’s an ethnicity checkup or, um, companies know how many black people, how many white people they have on their staffing. And look, ‘why you don’t have a Latin person in your company? You racist?’ Like, they do that. And there’ll be companies that are like crazy going after well-prepared Hispanic people.”

As he explains, being Hispanic – and particularly a “well-prepared” Hispanic – can actually be a benefit on the job market.

In both locations, the perceived role of personal connections in finding employment, both in prestigious and low-level work, adds to a sense of job insecurity. Employed respondents in both sites frequently note that they were hired through personal connections – generally through their friends, their parents, or their parents’ friends. As one youth in Madrid explains, “your resume is worthless. In the factory I worked at here, it was because it was owned by a friend of my dad. And other jobs, [I got them] because they were companies of people I knew.” A New York respondent, recounting her recent experience looking for work, explains that “I applied to Target, they was like, ‘Oh we don't have like space for other people’…to work in Target…you
got to have hookups - like somebody who works so you be able to like, ‘Oh, I know this person.’” This can represent a disadvantage for immigrant-origin youth, since their families’ more limited time in the country and lower socioeconomic levels often means that they have fewer connections - especially for higher-level positions. Moreover, some Madrid respondents also feel this decreases the perceived value of higher education for those without such connections.

Given these concerns about employment, one might assume that many of the second generation – especially in Madrid, where the economic climate is more severe - may be looking to pursue work opportunities in other locations. However, many respondents in both New York and Madrid report not wanting to leave their receiving society. As one Spanish respondent explains, “when you’ve been here so many years, you’ve made your life, you have your friends.” New York respondents express similar points; one explains that New York is “like my home plate, I know everything about New York City, I know how to get around, so I feel comfortable,” and another adds that “I’ve grown up here. It would be really hard to just adapt over there. I mean after a month…I need to go back…I guess I miss things, and…I don’t have many friends there.” Even if they feel distanced by the native population, they recognize that having spent their formative years in New York or Madrid means that living elsewhere would be foreign to them. In addition to the social connections in their cities of residence, modern amenities and comforts unavailable in their home societies, such as a sense of personal safety and reliable electricity, adds to their sense of identification with these receiving societies.
In addition, poor employment prospects in their origin countries are a significant deterrent for return migration, whether in New York or Madrid. As one Spanish respondent explains, “If there was work in another country, I’d go. But in Colombia, no, no… what you earn in Colombia isn’t anything…if I’m not working here, I’d be working even less in Colombia.” In a few isolated cases, however, respondents do see positive economic value in moving to the origin society. Though infrequent in both cases, this is more often presented as a concrete and/or impending plan in New York. For example, one New York respondent notes the potential utility of her US education in Colombia, explaining that “I'll get my degree, and if I don't – can't get a job, and if the recession is that bad and I really can't find anything, then I'll just, like, fly over there. … over there, with my degree, I can make more money… it's a degree from New York, from here, so it pulls more weight than anything else over there.” For those in New York, their English language skills further present an advantage in securing professional employment in the country of origin. For those in Madrid, potential plans for relocation to the origin country tend to be more distant and vague. For instance, some mention potential relocation upon retirement, or if/when the respondent has already achieved some measure of a financial stability. This may therefore be aligned more with a “myth of return” (Anwar 1979) or “mirage of return migration” (Guarnizo 1997) than with concrete return intentions.

Though those in both locations have little plans for relocating to the origin country, some respondents in Madrid express more marked interest in relocating elsewhere in Europe, where they feel job opportunities are more promising than in their home countries, and where they can live and work legally with Spanish (and, thus, EU) documentation. Some maintain contact with
friends and family who have left for other European locations and learn about employment prospects elsewhere; as one respondent explains, “many have gone to London, yeah, many Dominicans…they say there’s work there.” Some others in Madrid cite interest in moving to the US for work, noting the greater ease of (at least, short-term) legal entry with Spanish/EU passports, compared to those emigrating directly from the origin country. In New York, respondents do not show a parallel interest in moving from the country of residence to an alternative non-origin location.

Taken together, views of employment prospects are relatively negative in both locations, but the data point to a bleaker outlook among Madrid respondents than New York respondents. Though a lack of personal connections is seen as a detriment in both locations, the more severe economic recession in Madrid, coupled with the lack of perceived benefits of ethnoracial minority status in securing employment, provide respondents a relatively more negative outlook. While this may present a troubling situation for Madrid, the possibility of migration to other European countries through EU citizenship - as well as their dual frame of reference (Guarnizo 1997), drawn from comparing their origin country with their residence country, and leading them to consider EU citizenship’s benefits for migration to the US - presents a potential outlet. In contrast, those in New York, considering long-term legal migration, have only the options of the US or the origin country. However, since their views of economic prospects are not as negative as in Madrid, the lack of viable emigration alternatives may not prove so problematic.
Discussion and Conclusion

In much research on immigrant integration and the second generation, discussion of the topics covered in this chapter focuses on socioeconomic integration; this is highly clear in research on education and employment, and it is also evident in work on neighborhoods, in terms of using neighborhood ethnoracial and socioeconomic makeup as an indicator of integration. However, this chapter does not analyze these topics with a primary conceptual focus on their role in socioeconomic integration. Rather, it focuses on how experiences within these institutions – institutions that form the basis of most young adults’ lives - affect and convey a perceived sense of membership in the destination society. This chapter thus indicates the value examining experiences in destination society institutions through various perspectives.

Within this chapter’s discussion of various different arenas of life, we see a number of similarities between the two research sites. For instance, respondents in both locations shared similar first impressions upon arrival to their destination societies; they often described their neighborhoods as dangerous or “ghetto,” they have conflicts with police, they experience at least some degree of discrimination or othering in schooling , and they are unsure of future job prospects and highlight the importance of personal connections for securing employment. This highlights commonalities of the immigration experience in both locations. Yet of more interest to the overall project is how this chapter’s data indicates ways in which particularities of the destination society context differentiate experiences in various areas of life. Reflection on this chapter’s data indicates certain overarching themes, centered on the two sites’ differences in
histories of immigration/diversity, that hold implications for respondents’ experiences and processes of integration.

For one, we see clear differences in the demographic makeup of each site, and thus in respondents’ interaction with other ethnoracial groups. In Madrid, respondents live in neighborhoods with native-origin (white) Spaniards, and they attend schools with native-origin Spaniards. This is not the case in New York, where respondents’ report minimal interaction with whites. Instead, any interaction with native-origin populations centers on African Americans. As indicated earlier, this difference is partly based on the overall demographic makeup of the two locations, where Madrid simply has a larger white population than New York. This contrast is clearly linked to differences in histories of immigration and ethnoracial diversity, as immigration (including immigration of Hispanic/non-white groups) is more long-standing in New York than Madrid, and as New York/the US has a historical native-origin non-white population. Moreover, within the city, New York’s greater degree of residential segregation between white and non-white (immigrant, Latino, and African American) populations can further be linked to the US’s history of diversity and ethnoracial stratification. For instance, earlier legally-enforced segregation (both in formal laws and informal practices, such as redlining (Katznelson 2005, Massey and Denton 1993, Oliver and Shapiro 2006), provides the basis for the present-day demographic landscape and potentially increases general tolerance for (or the ability to overlook) continued segregation. Moreover, residential concentration of immigrant groups is not always seen as a problem, given historical examples of immigrant groups who lived in in ethnic enclaves
and are now seen as largely successfully integrated (e.g., the case of Russian Jews migrating in the late 19th/early 20th century).

This difference in demographics has significant implications for respondents’ experience. Most clearly, it affects the ethnoracial makeup of with whom they interact; it allows interaction and encounters with whites in Madrid, but less so in New York. In one sense, this may decrease the experiential basis of perceived otherness in New York. Respondents note their image of “American” is linked to white, not to African Americans (see Chapter 4 (Identities)); this highlights their implicit understanding of African Americans as a fellow minority group, and it means that discrimination from blacks may not have the implications for belonging (i.e., being seen as American) as would discrimination from white Americans. However, when interethnic mixing (e.g., in schools) does occur, this demographic distinction could also decrease identification as American in the New York case. In Madrid, forming friendships with native peers means forming friendship with white Spaniards – those who are seen as truly Spanish. In New York, however, forming friendships with native peers (blacks) means forming friendship with African Americans – a population that, though recognized as native, is not seen as quintessentially Americans. Though befriending native blacks may signify integrating into New York society, this may not necessarily signify integration into broader US society. Beyond interaction, differences in the presence of a native minority can have implications for the othering of immigrant/immigrant-origin groups. In the US, the presence of a native minority also serves as an alternate, or an additional, “other;” In New York, this may deflecting some
negative attention from respondents, in a way not possible in Madrid. For instance, this is suggested by differences in perceptions of police targeting: respondents in Madrid overwhelmingly feel that immigrant-origin individuals are primarily targeted, while those in New York show more limited experiences of police discrimination, and they indicate that African Americans may be subject to greater targeting.

We also see the effect of differences in histories of immigration in the contrasts in discussion of, and reference to, demographic changes in immigrant presence. In Madrid, where the immigrant population has increased so drastically in such a short amount of time, we see how this affects respondents’ own lives; for instance, in discussing classmates, respondents note an increase in the number of immigrant-origin peers over time. This change appears largely positive, in terms of the increasing normalcy of non-native Spaniards. However, it also means that respondents who once had no choice but to socialize with other native-origin Spaniards may now instead form core friendships with coethnics, thereby potentially decreasing the opportunities for close intergroup relationships. The impact of this rapid demographic change is further evident in reporting of greater discrimination by the elderly in Madrid; presumably, younger populations have been exposed to greater diversity in their youth and are more generally open to change, thus indicating a potentially broader societal shift.

Moreover, there are clear distinctions between the two sites regarding institutional and cultural attention to diversity and ethnoracial minorities. Specifically, there is a greater focus on

\[\text{\textsuperscript{42} One potential exception in Madrid is the Roma. However, the Roma are more commonly seen as distinct from Spanish society.}\]
these issues in New York, where the greater history of immigration and ethnoracial diversity, as well as the related post-1960’s emphasis on diversity and minority group rights/protection (Skrentny 2002), provides longer-standing basis and a means for addressing such issues. This chapter’s data evidences this in various arenas: reporting of minority-focused financial aid and in employers seeking out minority employees, in the heavier incorporation of diversity discussion in school courses, and in the existence of university courses/programs on specific ethnic groups. In Spain, although immigrant rights have emerged as an issue in recent years, there is no similar historical basis for recognition of immigrant-based diversity and a lesser historical precedent for the unacceptability of blatant racism. In fact, while the US was experiencing the minority-rights push of the Civil Rights Movement, Spain was still headed by a fascist dictator (Francisco Franco). Although this government ended in the 1970’s, remnants of its xenophobic views sometimes visible in the school setting – for instance, in the aforementioned incident of a student repeating his grandfather’s Franco-era views to his immigrant-origin classmate.

Though the reasons for this difference are relatively defined, the implications of this difference, in terms of the potential positive or negative impacts on integration and belonging, are less clear. In some ways, the US/New York model offers many benefits. For instance, the educational programs/aid offered to minorities and perceived benefits for employment offered to minorities has clear positive implications for socioeconomic advancement (Kasinitz 2008), and embedded nature of discussion of diversity into school curricula has the potential to improve a sense of belonging for minority groups and to further intergroup relations. However, a focus on “diversity” can also highlight intergroup differences that may not have previously been highly
salient, and can further a sense of othering by being specifically highlighted as minority, as noted by this project’s respondents. Possible perceptions of minority aid programs as unfair to non-minorities, including perception of minorities attaining certain positions due to affirmative action rather than qualifications, and the perception that minorities receive an undue amount of public funding, can further problematize images of immigrants and minorities (as evidenced by the current Fisher v. University of Texas Supreme Court case and the 2003 Grutter v. Bollinger case, in which inclusion of race in university admissions was challenged as discriminatory towards whites but it was upheld in this instance).

This focus on minorities is also linked to different forms of discrimination, and different perceptions of discrimination, in each location. This is evident in discussion of experiential othering, such as discrimination by school authorities and by police. Madrid respondents more often experience direct disparagement, with others speaking negatively about their race or origin. In New York, where the overall history of racial diversity and the Civil Rights Era legacy promotes political correctness and sensitivity to difference, respondents more often experience structural racism, through diminished expectations and unequal access to quality education, rather than overt discrimination (Bonilla-Silva 2010). Moreover, perception of discrimination in New York is more often based upon large-scale social structures and systems of inequality; in Madrid, such perceptions are more commonly based upon interpersonal experience and everyday interactions, and are not as often seen in terms of macro-level forces. The institutional embedding in New York may make it more difficult to outwardly recognize or note when
compared to Madrid, though it is nonetheless significant in driving overall experiences and outcomes.

In addition to highlighting contextual differences based on contrasts in histories of immigration and diversity (the core focus of this project), this data also indicates other bases of contextual difference. For instance, Madrid respondents’ potential interest in relocating to other sites within Europe speaks to the relevance of the supranational political context. In New York, respondents with dual citizenship in their destination and origin countries are limited to those two locations as potential places of long-term legal residence. In Madrid, however, Spanish citizenship opens the door to various other options in highly-developed Western societies – particularly other EU nations, like the UK and Germany, but the US. While not necessarily practical for respondents, they are at least possible (or, in the case of the US, seen as a possibility). Additionally, discussion of interest in/plans for university attendance speaks to the impact of differences in institutional structures in destination societies, and specifically differences in the structure of educational systems. This supports other comparative research highlighting the impact of schooling systems for children of immigrants’ educational attainment (Crul and Holdaway 2009); it indicates potential problems in using the attainment of a certain level of educational achievement (like university attendance/completion) in cross-national comparative studies of education, given differences in educational system structures; and it develops a parallel focus on differences in cultural view of university education, in addition to
the structure of educational systems. Thus, in addition to indicating context’s role in differentiating experiences of othering, this data also highlights the importance of context in shaping various others factors relevant to integration, such as higher education opportunities and long-term residency options.

43 This is applicable not only to research on the second generation, but also for the general public. As suggested here, the access university education, as well as view of its utility and the availability of other alternatives, may differ not only for immigrant-origin populations, but also for native-origin populations.
Chapter 3: Markers of Difference

This chapter reviews the principal characteristics perceived as differentiating immigrant-origin young adults from their native-origin peers. It utilizes a constructivist perspective of boundary studies, comparing particular markers of difference and their salience as social divides in New York City and Madrid. Though this project focuses on two national origin groups, it does not place primacy on national origin-based divides or groupings over other potentially relevant boundaries. Rather, it examines the factors that serve as the primary markers of difference. Analysis of this project’s data identifies three principal bases of difference, or boundary markers: race, language, and cultural values and norms of interaction (referred to in Spain as forma de ser, or “way of being”). This chapter begins with empirical data on the describing the three principal markers of difference in each research site. It continues by highlighting and explaining difference between the two sites for each marker of differences. It concludes by indicating this chapter’s contributions to literature on boundaries and immigrant integration.

Markers of Difference in Madrid and New York City

This section explains how meaning and salience of the three principal markers of difference – race, language, and cultural values and norms of interaction. Before addressing the

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44 Although these three factors are treated as conceptually distinct here, there are, of course, certain interrelationships between them. For instance, in the New York, class is highly linked to race (with whiteness associated with upper-class status). In Madrid, language is linked to personality traits in the reported brusqueness of Madrileño’s speech. Language is also linked to race in Madrid, with a non-Madrileño Spanish associated with non-white status.
data itself, two points must be noted. First, in examining perception of membership, this article focuses primarily on membership at the national levels – to identification and belonging as Spanish and American. Yet research for this project was conducted in specific sites within each nation: Madrid and New York. These sites were chosen based on their comparability within each nation, but it should be noted that respondent data may have been different were this research based in other locations – for instance, more rural locations, or smaller cities. As relevant, the potential implications of the specific local research sites on views of national-level membership are noted. Second, similarities between the two national origin groups (Dominicans and Colombians) in perceived markers of us/them divides are much more common than differences; this is true in both research sites. Given this, and given this article’s primary comparative focus centers on the two research sites, specific national origin is not necessarily mentioned unless it relates to differences in perceived boundaries. Each section first discusses the Madrid case, and then discussed the New York case.

Race

Because this research finds that the meaning and usage of the term “race” varies by context, this section begins discussion of each case by first explaining the meaning and

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As understood in this chapter “race” referrers to physical appearance and skin color, based on the American color-coded conception of the topic, and in line with Omi and Winant’s Omi, M. and H. Winant. 1994. *Racial Formation in the United States: From the 1960s to the 1990s*: Routledge. phenotypical definition of race. Though race was raised by both Dominicans and Colombians, it should be noted that Dominicans tend to show more visible African ancestry (though often mixed to varying degrees, with indigenous and European origin), and Colombians tend to show more visible indigenous ancestry (though strong European origin is also often present). While there is a definite Afro-Colombian presence in Colombia, this project’s Colombian respondents generally exhibited little visible African ancestry. This difference in appearance is noted, as relevant, within this section.
understanding of “race,” as well as respondents’ understandings of racial categories and self-identifications. It then reviews the relationship between race (or non-white status) and perceived membership in the destination society.⁴⁶

In Madrid, the term race (in Spanish, *raza*) is not commonly used when discussing population categories. As one respondent succinctly explains, “no. Race – no, no, no, they don’t use that much. I feel like I haven’t, I haven’t heard that.” This sentiment is expressed by numerous others.⁴⁷ Because the term “race” was not widely utilized in Madrid, many respondents had difficulty explaining different racial categorizations. When they were able to explain the concept as used in Spain, it was sometimes linked with color – for instance, referring to the *raza negra* (black race) and the *raza blanca* (white race). In these cases, Dominicans commonly recognize their characterization as part of *the raza negra* (although some note that not all Dominicans are black, and that people in the Dominican Republic often do not consider themselves black). Categorization as negro is less clear for Colombians, who may define themselves as “moreno,” “indigeno,” or “indio.” However, when race is split into a black-white

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⁴⁶ Though race was raised by both Dominicans and Colombians, it was more commonly raised by Dominicans in both locations. Dominicans typically have a more visible African ancestry, while Colombians typically have a more indigenous Latin American ancestry; this suggests that African ancestry leads to a greater sense of othering in each location.⁴⁶ In New York, this is expected based on literature showing second generation Dominican identification as Blacks – a historically dominated group in the US. In Madrid, the fact that Colombians are often closer to “white” in appearance than Dominicans – with lighter skin, and hair texture more similar to Spaniards – may lead to this lesser indication of race as a highly salient marker of difference.

⁴⁷ Though this may be partly due to the lack of historical stark racial divides in Spain, it potentially also influenced by definitional aspects of the term – specifically, the fact that *raza* also means dog breed. As one explains, “race, when talking about people, means you’re talking pejoratively about a group. Because race is more about dogs… it’s like you were talking about a dog – Rottweiler, Pitbull, whatever…when you talk about a people having a race, you’re talking like they were a dog.” Another, when discussing what he would say if someone asked him about his race, responds sarcastically that “I would tell them I’m a German Shepherd,” and continues to say that “I would tell them that I don’t have any *raza* because I’m not a dog.”
dichotomy, the black portion comes to encompass all that is not white; as one explains, “if you’re a little dark, they call you black; if you’re white, you’re white.” For others, “race” was understood not as color, but as national origin. For instance, when discussing classmates, one respondent notes that “there are Dominicans, Spaniards, Moroccans – from all, from all races.” When race is seen in terms of national-origin-based categories, respondents typically see their racial identification as their national origin (Dominican or Colombian). In addition to indicating just color or just national origin, race is further understood as a mix of color and national origin. As one explains, “the word ‘race’ is like your kind of skin, being from another country. That’s the meaning of the word race in Spain.”

Though the term “race” is not commonly used, the term racismo (racism) is frequently cited. In these cases, it is sometimes refers to color-based discrimination, yet it is often used to reference negative feelings or actions towards people based on their foreign origin, without direct reference to color. For instance, one respondent discusses Spaniards who “have a really racist outlook…[saying] ‘they should stay in their country!’” Another explains that “sometimes there’s some racism [Q: Like what?] Whenever the topics of Latin America, of South America, come up, they always begin to put down Colombia,” and a third, describing “problems with racism,” provides the example of people saying “go back to your country [vete a tu país];” – a phrase echoed by many other respondents.

48 Though racial categorizations in the countries of origin may influence respondents’ own sense of racial categories, this is not outwardly mentioned by respondents.
49 For some, even more salient than the divide between national origin groups is the immigrant/native divide, with everyone of foreign origin included as “immigrants.”
Yet even when not recognized as races, categories based on physical appearance or color (for instance, negro (black), blanco (white), indio or indigeno (Indian or indigenous), moreno/morenito (brown)) are often referenced by respondents in general conversation, and they hold clear implication for belonging or membership in Madrid and Spain. As one Dominican respondent explains, “by seeing your color, they already know you’re not from their country,” and he continues to clarify that this is true not only for Dominicans but also for other nationalities, including Colombians. A Colombian similarly explains, “If I came to identify as Spanish, I think it would sound weird to them, because, because they [would] say ‘You, with your skin color, you’re going to tell me you’re Spanish?’” Even though the term “race” is not commonly used, skin color nonetheless plays a clear role in social categories.

Links between whiteness and Spanishness, invoked implicitly above, are more explicitly references by many others. For Dominicans, identification as black (negro) makes this extremely clear: one notes that “here if you’re white you’re Spanish. If you’re black, it’s because obviously [from] elsewhere, your parents are from elsewhere;” another similarly states that “just the fact that you’re black, you’re not Spanish.” Although Colombians are less likely to identify as black, they recognize their color, as non-white, is seen as non-Spanish. One Colombian, born in Spain, explains that “if you’re brown-skinned [moreno] – not black, brown…they wouldn’t think you’re Spanish, because most people here are white,” adding “when you see someone it’s really easy to know if he’s Spanish or not.” Even a respondent who self-

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identifies as Spanish and has mostly Spanish friends recognizes the importance of color. As he explains, his friends joke that he’s “‘fake black.’ That I’m painted - they say that if I scrub myself hard in the shower, the black will come off.” Though he says this with clear amusement, it readily shows the link between whiteness and Spanishness, and between non-whiteness and non-Spanishness.

Relatedly, some who are lighter in appearance indicate they are taken for Spanish rather than for their immigrant origin. In some cases, this physical similarity is seen as holding implications for overall inclusion; discussing her light-skinned brother, one respondent explains that “it’s easier for someone who has the look [of a Spaniard] to be more adapted… in contrast, someone else who looks more like they’re from somewhere else, no. Well, they’re always going to say he’s from somewhere else, you know? They’ll treat you differently because they know…you’re from somewhere else.” Others feel that belonging is easier to achieve for European immigrants, who physically blend more easily into the native Spanish society. Yet, for some, whiteness itself does not lead to greater inclusion for immigrant-origin people. For one, other markers of difference can belie this Spanish belonging. As one Colombian girl explains “They think I’m Spanish, seriously. Because of my physical appearance or, you know, my whiteness, my features…. on first look, they think I’m from here…. but when I talk and all that – well, no.” Moreover, for immigrant-origin individuals, light skin does not necessarily mean one is seen as white. One notes that “my mom’s family is white, racially white, but they’re Dominican. So one day my aunt was arguing with a girl and, although she’s white, the girl said to her “Puta negra [black bitch], go back to your country.” This further highlights the link
between race and foreign origin, as references earlier in discussion of the term *racismo* (racism), with a non-white racial identity imposed even on light-skinned people of foreign origin.

Though a few state that skin color or physical appearance does not matter for those born in Spain, many more feel that physical appearance still matters. Some initially state that those born in Spain are Spanish regardless of skin color, but then explain how Spanish-born children of immigrants are actually received: “As brown as I am, I could be Spanish, because if I’m born here I’m Spanish. But, it [being Spanish] has to do with this, with physical characteristics and that….you’d say to me ‘you’re from some Latino place, from around the Caribbean,’ you’d say that to me at first glance because of my physical characteristics.” Similarly, when discussing her Spanish-born sister, another explains that “she was born here, which is to say they’d accept her [as Spanish] too. But seeing her color, they’d say “You? Spanish?” A third, discussing her future children’s ability to be accepted as Spanish, adds that “Yes [they would be seen as Spanish]. But also it depends…their features are – they’re not how they should [be], white…probably some people will be confused and say ‘where are you from?’”

Others feel that the second generation can be Spanish, but a different class of Spanish; discussing a Spanish-born dark-skinned friend, one states that “they would probably say ‘yeah, he’s Spanish, but not Spanish-Spanish like us.’ Because, clearly, they know his parents are from somewhere else.” Finally, for many, however, there is no pretense of being Spanish for those with darker skin -even if born in Spain; for instance, “what they pay attention to is the color of your skin. Whether you were born here or not – they’re not interested. My sister, my sister was
born here, her dad is Spanish, and they ask her for her documents like she was a foreigner." Based on the researcher’s own experience, direct referencing of skin color was much more common in Madrid than in the New York, both by immigrant-origin respondents and by native-origin individuals. This is likely attributed to the long-standing social sensitivity regarding race in the US, and the corollary focus on political correctness. Yet some in Madrid do indicate a difference between what people would say and what they actually think. For instance, discussing whether a dark-skinned person, Spanish-born person could be considered Spanish, another explains “you were born here, but probably a Spaniard wouldn’t accept you in the same way. Probably he’d say ‘yes, of course you’re Spanish,’ but in his mind he’d think ‘[how] are you going to be Spanish?’”

Despite views of physical appearance as a significant marker of difference, some feel that this is subject to change, and is perhaps already changing. While respondents said they were singled out due to their foreign origin or different color (having grown up just as immigration became a strong presence in Madrid), they observe that young children today are in classes with numerous other immigrant-origin children. Often drawing on the experiences of their younger siblings and cousins, they explain that today’s Spanish youth - by becoming accustomed to diversity from a young age, and from having known nothing else - see diversity as the norm. In addition to the lesser likelihood of being singled out for immigrant origin, others note differences in experiences of discrimination or exclusion. As one explains:

51 Many respondents reported repeatedly being asked for documentation by police.
Things since I arrived [in the late 1990s] have changed a lot. Yeah. At first, you heard a lot of - of racism, that there were a lot of racist people, racist Spaniards…people who still had really closed minds, who wouldn’t accept that immigrants were … they’d insult immigrants, they’d go after them. But now, it’s changed a ton… there will probably be some people who are still racist, but you don’t see this like before. Before, before it was – yeah – Spaniards [saying]: ‘This is mine, this is mine, I don’t want immigrants to come.’ But now that they’ve opened a little, things have changed a fair amount. Now there isn’t so much racism, I think. Not anymore.

In explanations of this change, Spaniards’ simply being more accustomed to seeing immigrants plays a central role: “Before, it was really uncommon to see an immigrant, so when they stated to come – well, they didn’t want immigrants in their country. And now, since there are so many… well, the people are used to it.” Moreover, respondents find discrimination less common with younger people than with the elderly. As one explains, “when you see someone who’s racist, it’s always an old person. A teenager, a young person – you’re not going to see them like that, because they mix with everyone. But adults who are already used to another- another way of life [are more racist].” This age-based imbalance in discrimination provides a possibility that, as the elderly population passes and the younger populations age, experiences of discrimination and othering will decrease.

For some, this increased acceptance of, and mixing with, immigrant-origin people translates into increasing willingness to see non-whites as Spanish. One notes that “there are so many people that have been here for so long, so they’ve had their kids here, so now they don’t see it as so weird that – that they could be Spanish,” and another adds that “in Spain, until just a bit ago, it was something weird to see a black person…now you see blacks who are Spanish, you see Chinese who are Spanish, you see Latinos who are Spanish, you see Arabs who are Spanish. Before, no. [But] now, it’s normal that they’re Spanish.” Though this is certainly not a universal
sentiment, even some who feel that immigrant origins or non-white status prevents Spanish identification note the future potential for change.

Compared to Madrid, “race” in New York is a more oft-used and clearly conceptualized term. Most see it as color-oriented and/or aligned with government-outlined racial categories, noting “black” (or African American), “white” (or Caucasian), “Asian,” and “Latino” or “Hispanic” as examples of races. Many also directly reference experience with racial categories on forms when discussing their own racial identification and racial categories in the US. For instance, some discuss their own personal identity by explaining which box they check on a forms, and others note how these labels guide their understanding of racial categories – for instance, in informing them that they must be either black or white, or informing them that a national origin (Dominican, or Colombian) is not a racial category. In some cases, respondents feel these racial categories become salient based on their inclusion in forms. Discussing race, one explains that “I don’t really think it’s something that’s in the back of everyone’s mind for most part. I think it’s sort of – once you have those questionnaires where you're like ‘what race are you?’ or ‘what’s your, you know, I think what’s your ethnicity or nationality’…you're like ‘wait a second, well, what am I?’”

Despite the relative clarity of racial categories (particularly in comparison to Madrid), respondents are not always clear on their own racial classification. Considering the black/white dichotomy, both Dominicans and Colombians question to which group they belong; one

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52 While Hispanic/Latino is actually included on the US Census as an ethnicity rather than a race, respondents often mention it as a race.
53 Respondents largely do not reference racial categorizations in the countries of origin.
Dominican respondent explains that “I know I’m not black. I know for sure I’m not white,” and a Colombian explains that “sometimes there’s just White, Asian, and Black. And, and so I’m like – sometimes I just don’t, I just don’t answer it.” Some Dominicans, who often have visible African racial ancestry, do identify as black. However, this black identity is more often referenced in choosing a best-fit check box than as a true self-identification; one Dominican girl, discussing how her family identifies, explains that “we are definitely in the middle…we're not white, [but] we're not, like - I think I put ‘black’ down because that was the best box that – or, categorization that I felt comfortable with.” Another explains that “I think people just have it, either you’re white or black. So it’s like, you’re not white, then you’re not white, then you got to identify yourself as black.” Some avoid the black/white dichotomy by claiming Latino or Hispanic as their racial identification. This option holds particular appeal to Colombians, who have more limited visible African origin and less frequently see themselves as black. Very few self-identified as white; those who did felt that they could because they had little or no visible African or indigenous ancestry.

Despite the relatively established nature of racial categories in New York (even if respondents are not sure where they fit within these categories), definite variance emerges in the link between race and belonging in the US. For some, race was not seen as a significant marker of difference or limited membership; this is often attributed to the historical multiracial presence in the US and the diversity of immigration. For instance, one discusses America as “multiethnic,” due to its immigrant origins, meaning that “when you say, are you American it’s
like… there’s no one race that you belong [to].” Another, discussing non-whites’ possibility of being seen as American, expresses a similar point:

It’s the United States, just this whole mixture, like you have so many immigrants from so many different places… in the United States it’s hard to just be like, ‘You’re black, and you’re American. You’re white, you’re American. But if you’re Chinese, you’re not American.’ I think it’s hard to say that in the United States just because of all the mixture, you know, because you could be third-generation or whatever.54

Finally, some point to other aspects of American-ness, and specifically a commitment to supposedly American ideals, that can override race: “I think being American is not just by how you look anymore. It’s just like what you do – what Americans do and the – having the American dream. Things like that.”

Yet even with this understanding of inclusivity, many respondents note a connection between whiteness and Americanness. Some are ambivalent about this connection, as in the case of one respondent who states that her physical appearance would not prevent her from being accepted as American, but continues to say “but, I don’t know, maybe the way I look some people would be like, ‘Okay, but what else are you?’” Others note that they may be considered American, but then differentiate “American” from “American-American”; for instance “they can’t really consider me like American American…cuz of my skin. [Q: What’s American

54 Others point not to the history of diversity in the US as a whole, but specifically in New York. This reflects distinctions between New York and the US found in other second generation literature (e.g., Kasinitz et al. 2008) and addressed in the following chapter.
American?…they look at it like, let’s say everyone was white, they would be like all right, he’s American because he’s white.”

Others are more outright about the link between whiteness and being American; in fact, when asked what it means to be American, multiple respondents cite whiteness. One explains that “growing up here in the United States and in New York, when I was a child, when people said American… [it meant] that you were white…if you’re white, you’re American.” Another corroborates, explaining that “when you think of Americans, right away you think white people….once you think America, it’s like oh - white people.” For some, this association exists despite their own self-identification as American. One Colombian explains that “if somebody asks me where I’m from, from, I always say I’m American. I don’t say I’m Colombian,” but adds that “they’d probably be like no, but where are you from? Like, they’ll insist. They’ll probably insist, like, ‘no.’ Because they can tell. I mean, I’m not white.” This conception of “American” as white also emerged implicitly, in discussions of background life experiences; for instance, when talking about her building’s residents, one respondent states that “in my building we have Asian descent, and Americans, yeah. [Q: Americans, like…?] Like white.” This clearly echoes the situation in Madrid, showing that whiteness is linked to destination country identity in both locations.

In fact, American national demographic history, though often supporting views of racial inclusion, is also occasionally also used to explain links between whiteness and Americanness: “I would say the typical American that people image is, like, a white person. It’s just a white person. Because it was, you know, back in the 1700s and everything, it was dominantly white.
They came from Europe. So it’s like that’s the first assumption they make. If you’re white, you’re American.” Even given this historic presence of African Americans in the US, respondents do not typically consider African American when considering links between whiteness and Americanness. They typically do not even mention African Americans when discussing who “Americans” are, or how “Americans” look.

In New York, whiteness is further associated with being wealthy or having plentiful material resources. When discussing his preferred friends, one notes that “I feel comfortable with minorities because they know what I know. They know, they’ve been through what I’ve been through…one of my friends told me that ‘I wonder, I wonder how my life would be if I was white- if I would be more successful.’ Because that’s the, that’s the stereotype. If you’re white, you’re doing fine. But if you’re a minority, you have to get help.” Another respondent, when discussing her difficulty relating to white peers, explains the lack of connection in terms of class difference: “I say ‘we’ as in, maybe, students of color who are aware of what's going on in terms of issues pertaining to Latinos, pertaining to blacks, pertaining to Asians… it's just that, for someone who has horses and money, and comes from money, like, you know, to understand these things.” When explicitly asked whether the disconnect stems from race or class, she first notes class issues, but then adds that, “of course,” race disparities are linked to class disparities. Another, after noting that “I don’t think it’s that [race] much of a problem anymore. It’s mostly more class,” adds that “well, the thing is that like they’re also like intermingled because usually minorities are in the lower classes.”
This connection between whiteness and greater wealth is drawn from a variety of sources. For some, this image comes through the media. One of the above-quoted respondents, when discussing white Americans as having the resources to buy anything they want, then explains that “MTV has a - a show… ‘My 15th Birthday’ or something like that. So think every girl who has - celebrates her birthday, it’s like they - everything they want they get it.” This connection is also sometimes drawn from lived experience that shows minorities as poorer than whites. For instance, one explains that:

When I was living in the Bronx we lived off food stamps for a while…I always went with my mom to this certain spot where she always got paid. And I remember just looking around me. And I didn’t see one white guy there, one white woman there. I didn’t see any of them….all of them were either brown or some kind of black or something.

Another, discussing her switch from a private school to a large public school, explains that “you saw most of the Caucasian families and stuff [at the private school]… those people really had a lot of money.” Discussing her transition to a large and predominantly minority public school, she further indicates the social divide between wealthier white youths and poorer minorities: “when I told them [the private school students] I had to transfer to Lehman [a public school], they were like ‘oh, my God, you’re going to a poor school and, just, like, so many people there that live in the projects.’ I’m like ‘and [Laughter]? You know, my grandmother lives in the projects.’” As evidenced by this data, respondents observe connections between class and race in a variety of social arenas.

Language
In Madrid, respondents’ heritage language is ostensibly identical to the destination society language, as Spanish is dominant in both locations. However, the style of Spanish spoken in Spain and Madrid is markedly different from the Spanish spoken in Latin American nations (Lipski 2012). Respondents readily note these differences, which include variation in accent, vocabulary, and register. For simplicity’s sake, the variety of Spanish spoken in Madrid is hereafter referred to as “Madrid Spanish.” The variety of Spanish spoken in respondents’ origin societies is referred to as “Latin American Spanish.”

Respondents generally learned to speak Madrid Spanish by growing up and attending school in Madrid. Yet many report maintaining their Latin American Spanish with family and friends (particularly coethnic friends), and even in interactions with non-Latin Americans. There was high reporting of code-switching depending on their conversation partners. For those who reported code-switching, they typically spoke Madrid Spanish in school or in other settings where they were interacting with native Spaniards.

In a few cases, these differences between Latin American Spanish and Madrid Spanish were seen as preventing full communication, and respondents highlighted occasions where native Spaniards simply did not understand Latin American Spanish. As one respondent explains, “there are a lot of Colombian words, that, if I say them to a Spaniards, they’re going to say ‘what do you mean?’ or something. So I always try to talk more like them, so they understand me.” However, most respondents feel that the two varieties of Spanish are generally mutually

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55 Although are definite differences in the Spanish spoken in different Latin American countries, Dominican and Colombian respondents largely note the same contrasts between their heritage Spanish and Madrid Spanish. Because this article deals specifically with the heritage language/destination society language contrasts, I can therefore refer to the Dominican and Colombians’ heritage language jointly as “Latin American Spanish.”
intelligible. On occasion, respondents felt that Spaniards sometimes simply act as if they do not understand Latin American Spanish: (e.g., “they pretend like they don’t understand. Yeah – when you talk with a Latin American accent, or my grandma or my mom sometimes talked with Spanish people in offices, [people say] ‘señora, I don’t understand you’

Regardless of whether language serves as a true barrier to communication, language issues are frequently raised in connection to host society identity in Madrid. Speaking Madrid Spanish is seen as highly related to belonging, or to being accepted as Spanish; as one succinctly states, “If you don’t speak with a Spanish accent, you’re not Spanish…to be Spanish, the basic requirement is that you change the way you speak.” For respondents, speaking Madrid Spanish is thus central to their sense of belonging in Spain. One respondent explains “I’m integrated in Spain because I already know their dialect, their language, pretty well.”

Respondents also often report that Spaniards use their language as an indication of their identity. For instance, speakers of Madrid Spanish note that this is seen as a marker of them being Spanish. As one explains, “people often say to me ‘you’re already Spanish, you’re already Spanish.’ They say this because I don’t have any accent.” Another explains that people tell him they see him as more Spanish than Colombian because “I always try to use Spaniards’ vocabulary…so they think of me more like – more like I were Spanish.” A third, when discussing whether Spaniards would ever accept her as Spanish, cites language as the biggest issue: “it depends on how you speak. To me, for instance, people always ask me where I’m from. And I tell them ‘Colombia’. They say to me, ‘but you’re not Spanish?’…If I told them ‘I’m Spanish,’ they’d probably believe me, because I speak [Madrid] Spanish.” A fourth relays
similar exchanges, with language as the basis of perception of her as Spanish: “They ask me ‘where are you from?’ ‘Dominican [Republic]’ ‘Oh, but you speak Spanish well…you don’t have a Dominican accent.’ ‘That’s because I’ve lived here a long time.’ ‘Oh, well then you’re already Spanish.’”

Just as speaking a Madrid Spanish allows respondents to be seen as Spanish, using Latin American Spanish can lead to people to identify respondents as non-Spanish. One respondent, who self-identifies as both Colombian and Spanish, explains: “they always say to me, ‘if you’re Spanish, why do you talk like that? You need to talk like this’ …if I talk like that [like Spaniards] and say that I’m Spanish, it would be easier for them to believe me. But if I talk the other way and say I’m Spanish, it’s harder.” In this case, not speaking Madrid Spanish leads others to challenge self-proclaimed Spanish identity. When discussing the possibility for identification as Spanish among Spanish-born children of immigrants, language again proves significant. One explains that “those who are born here are more integrated, for instance, because they already talk like that [like Spaniards].” Others, discussing future children, explain that “they’ll be more Spanish, because by being here they’ll already be speaking [Madrid] Spanish” and “being born here, it’ll be their country. They’ll have their accent.” In these cases, the social membership is not simply linked to the place of birth; rather, it is tied to the linguistic incorporation that results from being Spanish-born.

Respondents also explain that Latin American Spanish is evaluated as inferior to Madrid Spanish. One explains that Spaniards
See [Latin American Spanish] as something low-class, like you don’t know how to speak…. Two years ago, I had a Spanish boyfriend, so I changed [how I spoke], I stopped speaking like I used to, I started speaking better… I realized that, talking like I did, I was making a fool of myself.” Another respondent explains Latin American Spanish as “bad Spanish, you could say. [Q: Why ‘bad Spanish’?] ‘Bad Spanish’ in the sense that you don’t speak correctly, how you should speak.

This perception of Latin American Spanish as inferior or incorrect Spanish is thus both seen as the Spanish view and internalized by respondents as such. Despite this negative valorization, respondents convey a strong sense of connection between the Latin American Spanish and pride in, and connection to, Latin American identities. One respondent who admits she does commonly speak like a Spaniard nevertheless notes that “losing your accent is losing your homeland.” Other respondents note that, because of this cultural link, they actively try to maintain their Latin American Spanish. Explaining why his accent has not diminished after living in Spain over half his life, one respondent says “I try not to lose it. [Q: Why?] Because it’s all I have left, and I don’t want to lose that.” This emphasis on pride and maintaining a Latin American speech style is further reinforced by peer pressure from coethnics: “[if] I’m with my Latin American friends and I speak [Madrid] Spanish, [they’d say] ‘Hey man, where are you from? What are you doing speaking that Spanish?’

In New York, respondents’ heritage language is Spanish, while the dominant destination society language is English; this presents a clear difference from the Madrid case (with

56 If respondents are largely exposed to Latin American Spanish in the home or informal settings, it is likely that they learn a particularly informal or colloquial form of their home region’s Spanish. This is particularly true if their families are from rural areas, which often have more distinct form of Spanish, or if their parents of have lower levels of education, since this would limit their learning of more standard forms of Spanish in school.
significant but counterintuitive implications, as explained below). All respondents are fluent in, and primarily speak, English. Although a small number of respondents spoke English with a Spanish accent, the majority spoke with no discernible Spanish accent. Most report being able to speak at least some Spanish, but many note that they are less proficient in Spanish than they are in English. These findings mirror those of previous research on heritage language use for the second generation (Kasinitz et al. 2008, Portes and Rumbaut 2001). When respondents did report speaking Spanish, it was most frequently used for communication with parents.

New York respondents occasionally reference the Spanish language, or a Spanish accent, as a marker of difference. For instance, discussing her mother, one states that

My mom’s had a hard time in certain – in a lot of places because of her accent. The minute they hear an accent, they right away don’t want to deal with you and they’re really – they’re not receptive. And my aunt went to a hospital one time, and she can’t speak English, and, like, they really gave her a hard time. They said, ‘If you don’t know English, you shouldn’t even be in this country.’

However, language as a basis of exclusion was rarely mentioned amongst US respondents. When it was mentioned, it was not linked to respondents’ own experiences of inclusion or exclusion, but rather as more relevant to those who arrived to the country at an older age (as in the case of the respondents’ aunt and mother noted above). Also unlike in the Madrid case, New York case respondents rarely mentioned negative valorization of their Latin American Spanish as opposed a different or more formal/proper dialect; in fact, they generally did not bring up any mention of difference between their Spanish and other forms of Spanish unless prompted by the interviewer.

57 As references elsewhere in this chapter, New York also has a significant Spanish-speaking population.
When respondents discussed their heritage language, it was most commonly discussed as an advantage, not a marker of difference. The most commonly cited of positive aspect of language was perceived benefits in employment. One respondent, who works in retail, explains that:

[Spanish] always help[s] no matter what. [Q: In what way?] Just getting work. Like at my job for example, um, they pretty much need always like a Spanish person because there’s so many people who speak Spanish that come in. So they’re going to need a Spanish guy there. So, I mean, that probably gave me an advantage over the other applicants, you know.

Another respondent, who works in customer service, corroborates: “I got hired because I can speak well English and Spanish, basically. So it was an advantage knowing two languages.”

Even those who had not experienced this benefit directly recognize its potential. For instance, one respondent, when speaking about teaching Spanish to his future children, explained “that could be a very beneficial thing for them, too. You know? In terms of, like, careers and all that. You know, um, that’s a skill that – that shines out a lot when people are hiring you. So, ‘Oh, you’re bilingual,’ you know?” Spanish is seen as beneficial not only for local service-oriented jobs, but also in working for international corporations who may do business with Spanish-speaking markets.

Other respondents explain the advantages of knowing Spanish in terms of mental flexibility afforded by multilingualism. As one respondent explains, “I think that it is a very good tool in life to be multilingual ….I think it helps you think differently. It helps you see the relativity of, of, of things.” This respondent continues to expand: “I realized that at some point, like, water, agua, they’re the same thing…it doesn’t matter what we call, call it. And that is
extremely beneficial, to see the sort of relatively of, of, of what we call truth …[being multilingual] helps you sort of break down problems in such a way that you, you are – you’re able to see many sides… of an issue.” Relatedly, others focus on the benefits of being able to communicate with more people, and the resulting broadened experiences and perspectives. For instance, “if you speak Spanish you get to meet a whole bunch of new people. You get to have conversations with them, learn about their lives and everything.”

Heritage language was also seen positively in its links to Latin American identity, echoing similar sentiments among Madrid respondents. In New York, one respondent explains that “I feel like the first step of losing your culture is losing your language…like, the language is so, so important and to maintaining, like, your cultural [connection].” Another explains that “I actually don’t know Spanish all that well, um, but it’s so important for me to know that I’m actually taking Spanish class to improve my Spanish… language is part of culture. So I just feel you should know it.” Discussing his future children, a third respondent tells that “I want my son to know Spanish, for one thing. [Q: How come you want him to know Spanish?] Just ‘cause I want him to be in touch with his culture, you know?” Related to this cultural connection is the ability to connect with family members. Another respondent, when discussing his future children, explains that teaching Spanish would help them in this respect: “I want them to interact with, you know, their grandparents, you know…my parents know English, but it would just be so much easier for my aunts because they speak, like, they don’t speak English at all.”
For Madrid respondents, perceived difference in *forma de ser* (literally translated as “way of being,” and understood as broadly encompassing culturally-based values, preferences, and norms of interaction) was very commonly noted as a principal difference between themselves and native Spaniards. Respondents generally described Latin Americans as happy, open, willing to help others, and focused on family, while Spaniards were instead simply described as *frío* and *seco*, (“cold” and “dry”). This coldness and dryness manifested itself in a variety of ways. For instance, Spaniards were commonly seen as more reserved than Latin Americans: “here the people are more reserved…timid, quiet;” they “are really closed and serious. In contrast, people from our country are more open, happier, looser.” Another states that Spaniards are “really *sosos*, as they say… they’re not happy, they’re very spiritless, really – not as fun-loving as Colombians, you know, who are happier.” Some see this reflected in Spaniards’ perceived self-restraint; another explains, “the way of behaving in Latin America is more about making noise, about talking loudly, about laughing too much, you know? In contrast, here no… I think people are scared to make a fool of themselves…they don’t like to call much attention to themselves.”

58 Regarding *forma de ser*, it is possible that cultural characteristics attributed to the destination society are actually differences resulting from comparing large metropolises (New York and Madrid) with their families’ places of origin in the origin society. Even when respondents’ families are from cities (e.g., Santo Domingo, Cali, Medellin), these cities are still significantly smaller than New York or Madrid and are not centers of international business and finance in the same way as New York or Madrid. Perceptions of the native populations’ personalities may have differed if respondents lived in smaller cities or town in the US and Spain, or in other regions of the US or Spain. Thus, though respondents often use their experience in New York or Madrid to determine supposed characteristics of the US and Spain as a whole, we must recognize the significance of their specific cities of residence.
Many also see this reserved nature manifested in an overall lack of openness to others. For instance, one explains “here [in Madrid] they’re more serious, more, I don’t know - they’d probably look at you weirdly because, I don’t know, if you’re not one of their group of friends, you’re a strange person.” He adds that Colombians “could not know someone, but as soon as you meet them, talk, they’re really nice. So – and in contrast, probably if you meet someone Spanish, they’ll be more reserved, more serious. If they don’t think of something to talk about, they won’t talk.” A Dominican respondent expresses a similar point: “There [in the Dominican Republic], you get on a bus and people start talking. You know? You’re just sitting on the bus, and they’re already starting a conversation. Here, that’s unimaginable.” Many observe this in relations with neighbors, which they see as particularly distinct between Latin American and Madrid. One explains that, in Madrid, “everyone lives in their house…they don’t really interact with each other…the people are more distant;” in the Dominican Republic, “everyone in the neighborhood knows each other, everyone shares, they eat together.”

For many, this lack of openness is understood as rudeness. Some note that their manner of speech is brash, lacking social niceties common in Latin Americans’ speech: “here people lack a bit of – of politeness, to put it that way. Because people say things really curtly. Or, they say things really, like - they say it, and that’s it. In contrast, in Latin America, they try to say thing more carefully, to not offend the person you’re talking with.” Such social niceties are also seen as more generally absent from social interaction. One explains that “here, you go

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59 Although respondents attribute this limited social interaction and friendliness with neighbors to the Spanish forma de ser, it could also be a result of Spanish neighbors’ disinterest in interacting specifically with immigrant-origin individuals. In other words, relations could be more open with other native Spaniards than with immigrant-origin individuals.
somewhere and oftentimes people don’t even say hi to you, or say anything to you.” Another expands on this point: “There [in the Dominican Republic], when you go to a store, you greet them, you say “Good day, greetings,” whatever else. Here, no. Here, everyone does their own thing, you know? In their world…I shop, and that’s it. If you greet the cashier, you probably just say, ‘Hello, take this, give me this.’”

Respondents further see this closed nature in Spaniards’ selfishness or lack of willingness to help one another, especially when compared to Latin Americans. As one explains, in the origin country “there’s not so much – so much selfishness” as there is in Madrid. Another explains that in in the Dominican Republic “someone will always give you something to eat, no matter where you go in Santo Domingo. But here, no. Here is totally different. Here there are people that would give you something to eat one day, but not every day. There, you go every day and they’ll give you something to eat.” Though this could reflect not only personality differences but norms resulting from the greater incidence of poverty in Latin American than in Spain, others extend this unwilling to help to a more general realm. As a third respondent explains, that “the mentality of Madrileños is more like…all that matters is them and their family. Everyone else doesn’t matter to them,” and another relates that “[elderly] people that go ‘oh, please, can you help me?’ Most people just past by them. In my country this is seen as bad, and when they ask me, of course I always help them and everything. And they say to me ‘how odd that a young man of your age [helps],’ and I say, ‘It’s probably because I’m not from here’ [Laughter].”
This last quote, in addition to demonstrating an unwillingness to help others, further reflects a general sense of disrespect for elders and authority figures, which respondents see as characteristic of Spanish youth. Speaking about relations with parents, one explains that “in Latin America it’s stronger, respect for parents, for the elderly. Here…I have friends who talk back to their moms.” Another expands upon this point: “We’re really polite and really respectful with our parents, and especially with our moms. In contrast, here you don’t see that… my brother has a friend – a friend from work – and he went to eat at his house and that [the friend said] ‘Ah, hija de puta’ [literally, “daughter of a bitch’] to his mom. We were like, ‘that’s really intense!’” This respondent, supported by others, see a similar rudeness in treatment of teachers. She continues to explain that “those who are really difficult with teachers are the Spanish. The Spaniards talk back to them… in contrast, Colombians, we are…really respectful to parents and teachers.”

In respondents’ views, these differences in the Spanish and Latin American forma de ser relate to differences in likes and preferences; as one succinctly relates, “We don’t have the same tastes, or the same interests.” Given perceptions of Spaniards’ more reserved nature, respondents frequently note that Spaniards prefer tranquility, while Latin Americans prefer noise and activity. One explains that “Spaniards’ and Latin Americans formas de ser are totally different. Spaniards are more calm,” and another concurs that “we like to party more; they’re more calm.” Though some enjoy certain aspects of Spanish tranquility, many see it in a negative light. This is particularly evident in respondents’ perception of what Spaniards do for enjoyment. One explains that “we enjoy life more, Spaniards are always bored at home. And I know this,
because my house – I live in a building where only Spaniards live. And if I put on music, they’re like ‘this music is really loud,’ ‘I’m going to call the police.’ If it’s the weekend, I’m listening to my music! Damn it, you have to enjoy the day.” Music – and especially playing music loudly - is commonly noted as conveying the perception of Latin Americans as more open, happy, and fun-loving.

Others focus on adolescent/young adult activities in particular, noting differences in Spanish and Latin American-origin young adults’ socializing preferences. One respondent explains that, in the past, “all my friends were Spaniards,” but cites differences in social activities as a basis for moving towards coethnic friends. “Their lives are really boring - it’s being in a park, drinking, smoking, and that’s it… [with Colombians] we go to a club, while we listen to music we have a drink. It’s more enjoyable than being there in a park, with music from your cell phone.” As he indicates, Spanish young adults often socialize by gathering in a park or other outdoor space and drinking pre-purchased alcohol – an activity known as a botellón (literally, “big bottle”). Even considering native-Spaniard young adults’ socialize outside of botellones, respondents still see Latin American activities as more fun: “Spaniards are like more passive, they go to a pub, one of those bars with quiet music, they get some drinks or have dinner or something. And Dominicans are more about partying…they stay at home to have dinner, for instance…and then they go to a club, but it’s with really loud music, to dance and everything. So, I think they’re two really different environments.”

The sense of Spanish lack of openness further extends into other arenas of youth socializing. One explains that “my mom never told me friends can’t come to the house,” but
“parents from Spain don’t like [their kids’] friends coming up to the house. Yeah, it’s like…you’re invading their privacy, you know? I’ve had friends like this…[but] it’s never happens with people from – with Latinas. No. We share more.” And when respondents do report going to Spaniards houses, some feel that the “boring” nature of Spaniard young adults’ social activities is seen in their home life as well. “I’ve had meals with my [Spanish] friends…and we’re all calm, talking and everything, and later, when I go to Dominicans’ meals, we eat, put on really loud music…the atmosphere is really different.” So, even when the Spanish friends do open homes to Latin Americans, their home environment corroborates images of Spaniards as more boring than Latin Americans.

Finally, respondents – particularly females - often see these differences manifested in Latin Americans’ and Spaniards clothing and style preferences. They note that Latin Americans like to dress in ways that call attention to themselves, with brighter colors, painted nails, and large earrings. In contest, Spaniards dress is more “classic,” “restrained” or “simple.” Latin American females’ clothes also call attention by being “sexier” than Spaniards’ clothes: “Latinos usually wear really tight clothes, really tight pants that show off your butt, really low-cut shirts that show off your boobs, that show your belly button, things really – a lot about sensuality. In Spain, no. In Spain, they dress more simply.” Dominican males are sometimes noted as having a distinguishing “rapero” (rapper) style, in contrast to Spanish males’ perceived conservative/preppy style. In a few cases, a contrast between Latin American’s fun-loving nature and Spaniards boring nature was seen in views of Spaniards as more focused on work or studying. This particular manifestation, however, was mentioned relatively infrequently.
In contrast to Madrid, personality characteristics were not central to New York respondents’ understandings of what it means to be American, and they were not widely noted as a marker of difference between themselves and other Americans. However, such differences did occasionally emerge as relevant. In these cases, New York respondents typically described Latin Americans similarly to Madrid respondents – as fun, open, and family-oriented. However, the description of the destination society character, and thus the basis for distinction, differed from the Madrid case. In New York, personality contrasts were often based on view of Americans as more hurried and busy than Latin Americans. This is often related to a perceived American concentration on work, school, and success. Describing people in the US, one respondent explains that they are “hardworking - you got to go there, you got to be here, you got to go to school, you got to work.” And another relates this to the achievement of end goals, stating that being American is “being very competitive, you know. About the American Dream, getting that house, getting that car, you know?”

This emphasis on work and achievement also means that Americans are seen as leading more boring lives than Latin Americans. For some, this stems from the monotony of an American lifestyle; as one explains, “to be American, I think it also has to do with the way you’re thinking…when I think of American, I just think routine, work, study.” For others, this stems from the focus on work and business as detracting the ability to relax and enjoy oneself:

The American lifestyle is just, you know, going home, going to work, like be with your friends for a little bit and then going back home. Dominicans don’t do that. [Laughter]

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60 Principles, such as liberalism, the American dream, and capitalism were more commonly cited than personality characteristics as central to American-ness. This is further addressed in the Chapter 4 (Identities).
Dominicans, when they have a party, it’s - it - it lasts the whole weekend, you know, and, uh, they - they could go out on a Monday and a Tuesday and a Wednesday and not stress it. You know, go have drinks or whatever and just go all out. And Americans, they can’t do that.

As this respondent explains, Americans, in contrast to Latin Americans, are unable to relax and have a good time. This respondent’s use of the word “can’t” indicates that it is not seen as a choice, but rather part of the American nature.

Related to this link between being “American” and work/success is a prioritization of the individual over the family. One respondent explains how the Dominican tradition of eating lunch as a family is lost in the US, where his family members are too busy with school and work to maintain this tradition. Others relate the individualistic nature of Americans to other aspects of family life and relations, including parent-child relationships. As one explains: “in Colombia, at the age of 16, 17, you’re not considered like an adult. You’re still considered a child … here it’s like you just become independent and just do your own thing.” The American desire for success and focus on oneself over family even has implications for future family formation: referencing expectations of having children while young in her origin country, one respondent explains that “most Americans, we just think, for instance, we’re going to college…we’ll wait awhile until establish a job, and then we can marry. I don’t want to get married until…in my thirties.”

Others note that youth in the origin society are “more respectful to the parents,” which draws on broader views of American as impolite. Though this presents a similarity to the Madrid case, it is unlike Madrid in that this impoliteness is often related to Americans (and especially New Yorkers) as always being hurried. However, it is also sometimes more broadly understood; for instance, on respondent relays a story he finds particularly revealing:
One of my Colombian friends…brought one of his white friends from, from Pennsylvania [to my house]. I was just hosting them, whatever, and, you know, he, he just, like, opened the fridge. And, I mean, I – the way I was brought up from, you know, you, you tend to, to ask. You, you would always ask if you can open the fridge. It’s just like a rude thing to do. So, like, I looked at him, and I was just like, “Is this really – is this dude really opening my fridge?” Like, you know, but I wasn’t gonna say anything, ‘cause obviously I was, you know, well, aware that culturally, maybe, that’s not something that he was brought up learning. You know, that’s a rude thing to do.

Although this may not actually be acceptable to all Americans, this respondent clearly sees the lack of social niceties – in this case, in opening someone else’s refrigerator without asking – as an American characteristic.

Finally, some reference on Americans, and especially American youth, as spoiled or entitled. As one explains, an American is “a brat who had everything I wanted, and all I had to do is stomp on my floor and say I want it [laughter], you know, and, um, have everything coming to me,” and another explains that “some kids, like - I don’t know, I think Americans cry, whine a lot, too. So I guess, like, America’s full of whiners [laughter].” In contrast, respondents describe being Latin Americans as humble and happy, regardless of material wealth.

**Comparing and Explaining Similarities and Contrasts**

Race clearly serves as a significant boundary in both Madrid and New York, though it operates differently in each location. At the most basic level, the two cases show clear differences in the understanding and usage of the term “race.” In Madrid, though there is clear evidence of differentiation and social division by physical appearance and skin color (akin to colorism (Hochschild and Weaver 2007), the term “race” is not commonly used; in contrast, those in New York are familiar with the term and have a common general understanding of
different racial classifications. This difference between Madrid and New York is logical given their distinct historical treatment of, and experience with, race. New York (like the US as a whole) has a long history of populations of distinct physical appearance, and race-based classification traces its root to the earliest parts of the nation’s history. Although Spain had early interaction with people of distinct physical appearance (race) in its colonial era and previous expansion into North Africa, this largely did not translate into similar physical diversity in Spain itself. Non-white physical appearance and foreign origin are thus sensibly linked in Madrid.

Moreover, the US has encoded race as a valid and significant category through its inclusion on the census, other government documents, and for civil rights and discrimination measurements. This is significant both for establishing race as a known concept, but also for establishing set racial categories. In fact, as mentioned earlier, respondents’ understanding of racial categories often aligns with the categories set forth on government and other official forms, and the completion of forms or the census is regularly referenced when discussing racial categories and respondents’ own racial identification. Spain has no official racial categories on government of other official forms, contributing to the relative lack of clarity on racial groupings.

Links between race (specifically, whiteness) and destination society national identity, though distinct between the two locations, do show certain similarities. In both Madrid and New York, there was a lack of consensus about the link between race and belonging. For many, whiteness explicitly bears a strong relation to the destination society national identity, with respondents in each location drawing on some aspect of national history to explain this race-
belonging link. Yet this link was not universally seen; for others, whiteness was not seen as necessary for inclusion as Spanish or American. However, this inclusionary aspect is often attenuated in both cases; although there is some sense in each location that one could be Spanish or American and non-white, whiteness is nonetheless often related to being *truly* Spanish or American (e.g., being “Spanish Spanish” versus just Spanish, or “American American” versus just American). This reveals the complexity of the link between race and belonging in each location, and for the general measurement and analysis of race as an exclusionary factor.

Despite these similarities, the degree to which whiteness was linked to national identity differed between the two sites. Most notably, Madrid respondents more uniformly cited whiteness as a prerequisite for destination society national identity. This relates to the stark differences in the history of immigration in each location. As respondents note, the US has a long-standing history of immigration, immigration is part of the national lore, and immigrant groups of the past have become part of the accepted American social framework. Visible diversity is not new to the US, but has been a part of its demographic makeup for centuries. In Spain, in contrast, immigration is a relatively new phenomenon. Moreover, Spain was ruled by a largely xenophobic regime that embraced racial and ethnic purism for much of the 20th century. New York respondents thus cite national history as an explanatory factor for racial inclusivity, while Madrid respondents cite national history an explanatory factor for racial exclusivity. In Madrid, prospective future changes - rather than historical bases - serve as a basis for potential inclusivity.
In addition, differences in respondents’ interaction with whites in New York and Madrid could also prove relevant to contrasts between race and belonging. In New York, respondents report mostly interacting with other minorities in their daily lives, often due to high levels of racial and ethnic segregation in New York neighborhoods and schools (as discussed in Chapter 2). But in Madrid, where residential and school segregation is more limited, respondents regularly interact with white Spaniards. Moreover, compared to Madrid, New York simply has fewer whites relative to racial minorities. Paradoxically, this increased interaction with whites may actually increase the salience of a racial divide; it means that Spanish respondents more regularly experience direct acts of racism and directly differences in treatment of whites and non-whites.

In Madrid, class did not appear to be a salient marker of difference or generally linked to race. However, some in New York did link race and class, specifically associating whiteness with wealth. This distinction in research sites may stem partly from differences in perceptions of destination society national identities. Respondents often relate Americanness to educational and economic achievement, to dedication to work, and to success. This view may lead them to see lower-income status as un-American. In the New York case, class was also commonly linked to race, with higher class status associated with whiteness; this is particularly significant in linking class to Americanness, given aforementioned links between whiteness and American identity. No such links were references in Madrid. Differences in the links between race and class relate to the fact that, in the US, historical circumstances and the long-standing presence of minorities (particularly African Americans, but also other minority groups, like Hispanics) have created
clear and broadly-known links between racial and class inequality. In Spain, the recency of the current minority populations means there is no similar historical basis for race/class links, and such links are not as deeply entrenched in the nation’s psyche. A white working class is perhaps also more visible in Madrid, as respondents in Madrid more often share neighborhoods with this population.

The variance in race/class connections may also stem from differences in interaction with whites of varying socioeconomic backgrounds, and related distinctions in views of whites’ socioeconomic statuses. As discussed in Chapter 2, respondents in New York report mostly interacting with other minorities in their daily lives, which can be attributed to high levels of racial and ethnic segregation in New York neighborhoods and schools. The lack of white residents in respondents’ lower-income neighborhoods and schools can contribute to the images that whites live in other, wealthier, areas; an image often supported by media depictions of New York area-whites as either living in wealthy urban areas (e.g., the Upper East Side) or the suburbs. Given this overall limited exposure, the impressions left by television shows depicting wealthy whites – even if not representative of the whole of the white population – may hold undue influence in forming views of whites as wealthy. Yet in Madrid, where residential and school segregation are more limited, respondents regularly interact with white Spaniards, including those from a greater variety of socioeconomic backgrounds than in New York. Some in Madrid even explicitly mention poor whites – a reference virtually absent among New York respondents.
While race appears relevant as a boundary in both locations, heritage language appears a much more salient as a marker of difference in Madrid than in New York. The fact that language serves as a greater marker of difference in Madrid may seem counterintuitive, since the actual difference between the heritage language and the main language of communication is greater in New York than in Madrid. But, upon closer examination, this greater similarity may actually increase the symbolic significance of a language-based divide.

For one, native and immigrant Spaniards may assume that, for Spanish-speaking immigrants, language will/should not be a significant difference. Defiance of this expectation of similarity may actually create a greater sense of distance than in the New York case, where stark differences between Spanish and the native language, English, are expected. Relatedly, this greater salience in Madrid is potentially related to the greater linguistic similarity in Spain relative to New York. In Spain, despite differences in accent and vocabulary, Latin Americans and Spaniards do speak the same language, whereas Latin and other Americans clearly speak a different language. Relative to the New York case, Spaniards thus may feel more of a need to outwardly emphasize of whatever language distinctions exist in order to differentiate themselves from Latin Americans. This is supported by social psychology’s social identity theory, and specifically by the concept of “distinctiveness threat,” which indicates that “similarities between groups are likely to be important in instigating a search for distinctiveness” (Jetten, Spears and
Because groups desire a positive distinctiveness from other groups, greater similarity leads to greater perceived threat.

Moreover, it is logistically necessary for respondents in New York to speak English in order to participate in mainstream New York society, and literature on the young adult second and 1.5 generation shows that its members are fluent in English (Kasinitz 2008, Portes and Rumbaut 2001). In Madrid, different styles of Latin American Spanish and Madrid Spanish are generally mutually intelligible, so it is not logistically necessary for Latin Americans to learn to speak Madrid Spanish. This may permit linguistic differences between the native Spanish population and the Latin American population to persist at the individual level, and potentially across generations, especially given that many respondents speak Latin American Spanish with their parents and coethnic friends. Ironically, the contrast between a clear English/Spanish distinction in the US and a more complex and fuzzy Latin American Spanish/Madrid Spanish distinction in Spain may actually make language a more significant factor for the second generation in Madrid. Using the Latin American style of Spanish is also associated with showing pride in one’s origins and is reinforced by coethnic peer pressure, which furthers the likelihood of maintaining this manner of speaking.

The fact that English and Latin American Spanish are wholly distinct languages, while Madrid Spanish and Latin American Spanish are not, further relates to other aspects of the

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61 For more on this topic, see also Brown, R. J. 1984. "The Role of Similarity in Intergroup Relations." The social dimension: European developments in social psychology 2:603-23.
62 Of course, this potential is not guaranteed. Though it is beyond the scope of this project to predict future language-use patterns, it is possible that a today’s young second-generation may more commonly speak Madrid Spanish; here, I merely indicate that transgenerational maintenance of linguistic difference is possible and is evidenced in this project’s respondents.
different role of language in New York and Madrid. For one, New York respondents are more likely than Madrid respondents to limit their heritage language use to the private sphere; in fact most Spanish-speaking New York respondents report Spanish mostly at home. In Madrid, in contrast, respondents can functionally use their heritage language in all aspects of their lives, including in communication with Spaniards. This makes the language difference more audible (or more salient) in Madrid than in New York. In addition, in New York, exposure to the Spanish language is based on Latin American Spanish. In Madrid, however, Latin Americans interact with other speakers of Madrid Spanish in all interactions, and they are regularly exposed to other forms of Spanish. This permits them to recognize that their manner of speaking is distinct, and permits a perception of Latin American Spanish as negatively valorized. Finally, the employment benefits of Spanish in New York are based on the benefits of knowing a second language – a benefit not relevant to the Madrid case, where knowledge of Latin American Spanish and Madrid Spanish does not represent bilingualism.

Differences in the histories of migration in each place may further support the lesser role of language as barrier to belonging in New York versus Madrid. Given the historical presence of Latin American immigrants (and Puerto Rican migrants) in New York and their current population size, Spanish has a long-standing presence in New York. It is possible that respondents’ Spanish may not be seen as a significant marker of difference due to its historical prevalence. Relatedly, the significant historical immigrant presence across the US, and especially in New York, means that residents are more accustomed to hearing non-English languages in general. In Madrid, where Latin American immigration is much more recent, there
is no similar historically-based prevalence of Latin American Spanish, or for the broader presence of languages besides Madrid Spanish.\(^6^3\)

*Forma de ser*, or culture norms of interaction and values, was seen as a basis of difference in each location. However, this factor appeared much more salient in Madrid. It was raised extremely frequently in Madrid, often without any prompting from the researcher, and Madrid respondents also frequently couched descriptions of Spanish personalities in a direct and explicit contrast with Latin American personalities – for instance, saying “Spaniards are like X, but Latin Americans are like Y.” This further highlights that personality is not only seen as core to each identity, but as highly distinct between the two locations. Moreover, in Madrid, personality issues were often raised when discussing what it means to be Spanish or to be Latin American, or how someone may know if one is Spanish or Latin American. This indicates their centrality as markers of identity.

As with language, this difference may stem from presumption of similarity based on a common language and interconnected cultural heritage in the Madrid case, with Latin Americans expecting Spaniards hold similar cultural attitudes. This difference may also stem from the strength and valuation of the association between a particular *forma de ser* and the destination society population. Respondents in Madrid very easily identified certain Spanish or Madrileño cultural characteristics, which permitted drawing of clear contrasts between Spanish culture/personality and immigrant-origin culture/personality. In New York, however, respondents have relatively more difficulty defining a core American culture. This difference

\(^6^3\) Spain does have regional minorities with their own languages, but these minorities are based in certain geographic areas (e.g. Cataluña, País Vasco) and do not have a significant presence in Madrid.
can be linked to the history of immigration and cultural mixing in the US, which makes a core
culture more difficult to define. In addition, the conception and valuation of destination society
*forma de ser* differed. In New York, respondents often see the native population as less
social/friendly than Latin Americans due to their focus on work. Though this characteristic is
often seen in a negative light – as detracting from enjoyment of life and family togetherness, and
as emblematic of overemphasis on material goods - it is also sometimes seen in a positive light;
for instance, it is sometimes viewed as emblematic of personal motivation and the “American
dream.” Similarly, although an emphasis on individualism has many negative attributes, it is
also linked to values of liberalism and respect for rights – values that are commonly cited by
respondents as central to being American, and which are seen in a positive light. In contrast,
Madrid respondents do not attribute the Spanish *forma de ser* to a focus on work. In fact, they
do not attribute it to any specific reason. It is simply seen as a fact of the Spanish personality;
Madrid respondents do not offer justification or redemptive aspects to this closed or cold nature.
Thus, in the New York case, the native populations’ negative characteristics are somewhat
balanced by a perceived rationale for these characteristics. In Madrid, there is no rationale
offered to mitigate the negative aspects of the Spanish personality. This difference in valorization
could contribute to the varying salience of *forma de ser* in each location: where the destination
society *forma de ser* is seen in a generally negative light, respondents have greater incentive to
view this characteristic as a marker of difference.

Perceived differences in *forma de ser* may also hold implications for the likelihood of
native-origin/immigrant-origin intermixing or friendships, though this again differs between
locations. In New York, discussion of personality differences, and specifically a focus on work, is largely generalized and not overwhelmingly focused on respondents’ peers. This could be attributed to the overall lesser salience of this marker in New York, but it can also draw from the fact that the respondents’ peers are largely other minorities – not those who are perceived as “real” Americans (i.e., white Americans). So, when referring to an ‘American’ personality, they are not necessarily referring to the people with whom they are most likely to form friendships. In Madrid, however, personality differences are cited as based on respondents’ peers, and this has a clear relation to ones’ social group and friendships. For instance, when discussing the root for limited interethnic mixing, some respondents cite differences in the *forma de ser*. As they see it, Latin Americans and Spaniards simply prefer to socialize with others who have similar characteristics and ways of interacting. The link between perceived personality differences and limited interethnic mixing is even more apparent when personality differences are linked to different social activity preferences (for instance, Spaniards preferring a *botellón* and Latin Americans preferring loud music and dancing).

**Conclusion**

This data shows a difference in both the nature and salience of us/them boundaries between the Madrid and New York cases. In Madrid, physical appearance/race, language and *forma de ser* (“way of being”, or cultural norms of interaction and values) serve as the main bases of difference. All three are highly salient, and they are often referenced as interrelated. In New York, race served as the clearest marker of difference, even though some draw upon the US’s history of immigration to establish belonging for non-whites. Class is also sometimes
invoked, though this is typically linked to (or even subsumed within) race. Some in New York also reference cultural norms of interaction and values as a marker of difference, though this specific boundary appears much less salient than in Madrid. Language was generally not perceived as a marker of difference, at least for the second/1.5 generation.

The focus on perceived boundaries contributes to the overall body of literature on salient social boundaries for immigrant-origin individuals and communities in various respects. For instance, it develops empirical and conceptual study of race through its comparative approach, showing that race can be relevant even where conceptions race and histories of racial divide are not rooted in the destination society, and even where usage of the term itself or popular discussion of the concept is limited. It further highlights markers of difference that, in contrast to race, are less evident in previous literature on the second generation and integration: language, and cultural norms of interaction and values (forma de ser). Within second generation literature, language is often included in research as evidence of integration and/or maintenance of ethnic identity, but it is rarely examined itself as socially salient marker of difference. This limited attention may be substantiated by research findings showing that the second generation generally speaks the destination society language. However, this chapter shows that the ability to speak the destination society language does not mean that language is irrelevant as a marker of difference. For instance, even if the second generation is fluent in the host society language,

64 This chapter’s findings on race and its contributions to broader scholarship on race are further discussed in Chapter 5 (Conclusion).
65 In fact, the topics of language and personality were not initially raised by the researcher as potential markers of difference, but respondents regularly emphasized these topics. This both speaks to their importance as markers or bases of difference and provides a concrete example of grounded theory.
accents or other non-native linguistic markers - which may more easily persist even into the second generation in certain receiving context, as is the case this project’s Madrid-based second generation - could permit language to nonetheless serve as a basis of otherness. This project’s qualitative approach is particularly relevant to this finding; in a quantitative study of integration, where respondents would have indicated fluency in the host society language, language’s role as highlighting otherness would have remained invisible. Culture, like language, is often considered in second generation literature as evidence of integration and/or maintenance of ethnic identity. However, the focus often rests on cultural consumption, such as watching ethnic television or listening to ethnic music; limited attention is paid to norms of interaction, or to the role of perceived personality differences between native-origin and immigrant-origin groups. This chapter thus adds to the literature by highlighting this aspect of culture and by showing that it can prove significant for immigrant-origin youth’s perception of otherness.

Though the explanations for site-based contrasts in markers of difference vary by marker, certain themes emerge throughout. Most notably, the impact of the presence or absence of historical immigration and diversity links is linked to site-specific contrasts for each marker of difference. For one, this link is evident in the specific analyses of each marker of difference: for instance, in the citing of long-standing diversity as permitting racial inclusion in New York but not Madrid; in the rootedness of (Latin American) Spanish in New York but not in Madrid; in respondents’ relatively greater ability to specify a core Spanish forma de ser relative to a core American culture, and in the presence of perceived links between race and class inequality in the US. It is further evident in which specific bases of different appear as most salient. With the
US’s long history of racial categorization and racial divide, it is sensible that race serves as the primary marker of difference. But in Madrid, because race is not historically rooted as the principle social divide, other factors may emerge as more prominent – in this case, differentiating factors like language and culture. Moreover, and echoing in Chapter 2’s findings on perception of discrimination/othering, this chapter shows that the perception of dominant boundaries in New York is often rooted in large-scale social structures and knowledge of the destination society; in Madrid, such perceptions are more clearly rooted in interpersonal interactions and less connected to macro-level systems of inequality. As explained in Chapter 2, this is further linked to contextual differences in histories of immigration and diversity. This study’s explicit examination of boundary perceptions through a comparative lens, in addition to highlighting contextual difference in explaining markers of difference’s varying salience, represents a valuable step more generally for research on boundaries and immigrant incorporation.\(^\text{66}\)

\(^{66}\) These contributions are discussed in greater detail in Chapter 5 (Conclusion).
Chapter 4: Identities

The study of identification with the destination country is core to understanding perceptions of membership in the destination, since this identification conveys an internalized sense of belonging. Relatedly, the rationales for lack of identification with the destination country clarify the bases of perceived exclusion. This chapter thus examines identification with destination countries; in addition, it further examines identifications with other relevant geopolitical/ethnic entities. Given this project’s comparative approach, this chapter further focuses on whether, why, and how the two sites differ in respondent identification.

Conceptually, this empirical examination rests upon the concept of social identities, as discussed in Ch. 1 (Introduction). It draws upon and reinforces the social construction of identity, as different factors in the two destination societies – for instance, different demographic experiences of immigration and diversity, and resultant differences in cultural norms of identification – shape meanings attributed to various identities, and shape the perceived possibility and basis of espousing these identities.

This chapter begins by discussing respondent identification with the origin and destination countries, including the perceived compatibility between origin and destination-country identifications. A focus on national identities is core to research on immigration and assimilation; immigration is defined by the crossing of national boundaries, and national identities are the main identity referent in established research on second generation assimilation (e.g., Kasinitz et al. 2008, Portes and Rumbaut 2001). This chapter then addresses other
ethnic/geopolitical identifications – specifically, identification as foreign-origin, with the city of residence, with a panethnic identity (Latino), and with a supranational entity (European). These identifications provide additional basis for belonging beyond destination-country identity; they also highlight the relevance of each site’s differences in history of diversity and immigration, and, in certain cases, they can support or undermine perceived membership in the destination country.

In comparing and analyzing identities in the two research sites, this chapter does not attempt to quantify respondents’ identifications. This is due to the qualitative nature of this project’s data, which showed how respondent self-identities was often complicated and even contradicted within interviews. For this reason, numerical depiction or quantification of this data would be misleading or even erroneous. Instead, this chapter highlights overall patterns in identification, describes the perceived meanings of specific identifications, and outlines reasons for (or against) identifying with particular geopolitical entities or ethnic labels.

**Origin and Destination Country Identification**

**Origin-Country Identity**

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67 For my initial data analysis, I did quantify identity responses. Specifically, I noted each time a respondent stated something to the effect of “I identify as X” within an interview, and I grouped responses into three principal categories: identification with the destination country, with the origin country, and with both. I then assessed the relative prevalence of responses within each category between the two research sites. Yet because respondents often stated different primary identities at various times in the interview (in which case I included multiple responses for singular respondents), this data proved not well suited to concrete quantitative analysis or standard quantitative presentation. Instead, I used this quantification to inform and support my qualitatively-based assessment of overall patterns in identification, description of the perceived meanings of specific identifications, and discussion of reasons for (or against) identifying with particular geopolitical entities or ethnic labels. This qualitatively-based data and analysis represents the core contribution of my work.
In both New York and Madrid, respondents evidenced strong identification with their origin country. Because the meanings attributed to origin-country identity are virtually identical between research sites (Madrid and New York), and also between national origins (Dominican and Colombian), the following section describes general views among respondents. Although this deviates from the overall project focus on contrasts between New York and Madrid, the strong prominence of origin-country identity among respondents necessitates an overview of rationales for origin-country identity. Moreover, the perceived meaning of origin identification interacts with the meanings of American and Spanish identification in distinct ways; explaining origin identification is necessary to understand site-specific relationships between origin and destination-country identification.

Respondents predominantly describe origin identity as linked to specific values, personality traits, and cultural characteristics. For many, happiness and an overall enjoyment of life are key (e.g.: “for me, being Dominican is a good thing - I mean, they’re happy people;” “being a Dominican would involve having fun;” "to be Colombian…is to be happy… you'll go down there and you'll just see so many smiles.”) Many note this emphasis on overall happiness despite the poverty and tumultuous political histories of both nations. Relatedly, respondents also describe origin identity in terms of being friendly and open (for instance, “over there…even people, like, next to you in a car and they’ll say hi randomly”), often extended to a parallel willingness to help others. Especially in Madrid, these characteristics are contrasted heavily with perceptions of the destination society as cold and unfriendly, as discussed in Chapter 3 (Markers of Difference). A smaller number also indicate specific cultural content; for example: “[being
Dominican means] you have traits of the culture, if - or if you like things of the culture, like merengue [a dance], the food;” “[being Colombian means] you dance cumbia and you enjoy vallenato…your family is very connected …everyone’s involved with each other.” As this last respondent indicates and others echo, a strong focus on family, as well as a respect for elders, is also seen as highly linked to origin identity.

In conjunction with these characteristics and cultural attributes, respondents often cite pride as essential to Dominican and Colombian identity. For instance, describing the meaning of Colombian identification, one respondent states that "[we are] always really proud…maybe our country is in conflict, there's a lot of chaos, we're always going to be really proud of our country;” a Dominican-origin respondent adds that "I feel proud of being Dominican, of course. We're like that, really patriotic…no, we're always like 'I'm Dominican.’” This understanding of pride as a requisite for origin identification recurred throughout numerous interviews. In contrast, understandings of Spanish and American identity were not seen as strongly linked to pride. Origin-country pride, in addition to supporting other explanations of origin identification, it even serves as its own basis; for instance: “I say I’m Dominican because I’m proud of my country.” Both Dominican and Colombians characterize both emigrants and those still in their countries of origin as highly patriotic.

A primarily coethnic (co-national) friend group and socializing in coethnic environments also serve as bases for origin identity. For instance, one person defines herself as Colombian because "I don't have Spanish friends, and I always go to Colombian places.” Another explains that "the things I do on a daily basis are associated with Santo Domingo - the places I go out, for
instance, are Dominican, I mostly talk to Dominicans - Dominican food, Dominican music, everything, you know? A coethnic environment can further the association between origin identity and pride, in terms of coethnic pressure to identify with the origin country. For instance, one Colombian in Madrid explains that speaking a Madrid-style Spanish (which is heavily associated with identifying with Spain, as explained in Chapter 3 (Markers of Difference)), is seen as “rejecting your country,” and she adds that her friends have called her a “vende-patria [homeland-betrayer]” for speaking Madrid Spanish. In discussing what would happen if she outwardly identified even partly as American, A New York-residing Dominican says “my friends…will see me as a traitor.” Although data shows that respondents do show an internally espoused identification with the origin country, this coethnic pressure can further outward identification.

Some explain their origin identification on a more biographical basis. One person explains that he identifies as Dominican because “I was born there, and my parents are from there.” A Colombian similarly states that “I was born there, and I was there for my childhood, so I believe that I’m Colombian.” Even independent of place of birth, having parents and family heritage from the origin country can provide a basis for this identification. Another notes that he feels Colombian because “you have it in your blood…those are your roots, so, of course, you can’t change that.” Finally, perceived inability to identify with the destination country can also contribute to or strengthen identification with the origin country, as implied in the explanation that “I’m Dominican, because I’m not going to say I’m Spanish.” Though somewhat evident in

68 Various factors (e.g. residential segregation, lack of mainstream formal employment) can contribute to the ability to remain in a dominantly coethnic social environment.
both research sites, a sense of origin identification based on exclusion from destination society identification is more overtly expressed in Madrid.

In a very small number of cases, and specifically among New York-residing respondents, respondents claimed to not identify with the origin country. The principal explanation was a perceived lack of commonality with the coethnics in the destination society; one explains that “I feel like - I feel like I don’t really connect with the Dominican community,” and another adds that he “just did find [coethnics] that relatable.” The fact that this is more common in New York than Madrid could be attributed to greater perceived ability to identify with the destination country (or city) in the New York case – a point discussed below in further detail. It could also relate to the greater prevalence of the true second generation in the New York case, who may be less likely to identify with coethnics based on their lack of lived experience in the origin country. In fact, both above-quotes respondents are US-born. Yet it should be noted that lack of origin identification among second generation respondents is not the norm; the two quotes above are exceptions.

Destination-Country (American/Spanish) Identity

Although origin-country identity is prominent in both research sites, identification with

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69 In Latin America, the term “American” is often used to refer to all of North and South America. With this understanding of the term, some respondents initially stated they are “American” by being Dominican or Colombian. In these cases, I specified to respondents that I was interested in discussing their specific identification with the United States. The meaning of “American” and identification as American, as described in this section, thus refer to the United States and not more broadly to North and South America. Respondents’ understandings of what it means to be “Spanish” or “American” are often drawn from their lived experience in their specific city of residence – thus, through a New York or Madrid lens. It is possible that understandings of destination country identity would differ for people living in other location in the US and Spain.
the destination country (though is evident in both locations) is more prevalent among
respondents in New York. The section below explains bases for destination-country identity, the
perceived compatibility between origin country and destination-country identification, and the
meanings attributed to destination-country identities. This discussion notes certain similarities
between the two sites but primarily focuses on contextual differences.

**Bases for Destination-Country Identification**

In explaining the basis for destination-country identity, many respondents in both
locations note this identity is based on being accustomed to life there. One respondent in Madrid
explains that she feels “from Spain, a little…because I’ve lived here for so long and I’m used to
being here,” and another similarly adds that "being in another country, things stick to you.” A
New York respondent indicates that he identifies as American because “my style, uh, the way I
dress…I just feel a little bit more comfortable over here.” As this indicates, simply by living in
the destination country and taking on some of its norms and customs, one may identify, at least
partly, with it. Similarly, some claim destination identity based on comparison with their origin
country and the recognition that they, having been raised elsewhere, are not the same as those in
the origin country; for instance: “I know – I know what a real Dominican is. My family, they’re
real Dominicans; I am a Dominican-American.”

In both New York and Madrid, being born in the destination country sometimes serves as
a basis for destination-country identity. As one New Yorker explains, “For like those people
who were born here, they're American.” A Madrid respondent similarly adds that “by having
been born here, you’d be Spanish…I have a little brother that…was born in Spain, and we ask if
he’s or Spanish or Colombian, and he says Spanish.” Yet in Madrid, there is an important distinction between second-generation respondents from this project, who were born in the 1990s, and today’s younger second generation, who were born in the 2000s. While this project’s second-generation respondents tend to feel they are seen as Dominican/Colombian, not Spanish, they often report that younger second generation siblings and cousins are seen as Spanish (as in the quote included earlier in this paragraph). This difference can be linked to growth in immigrant presence in Spain/Madrid between respondents’ childhoods and today, including the emergence of a sizeable second generation, and Spaniards’ related increasing familiarity with - and acceptance of - immigrants and immigration. As one explains “now … there are so many [immigrant-origin] people …they’ve had kids here…so it’s not seen as so uncommon that - that they’re Spanish.”

Others, and particularly those in New York, attribute destination-country identity to the opportunities the country has provided. One reflects that “I’m here, you know, with the opportunities that an American has. So I can’t, I don’t want to be like all, you know, fuck America… I don’t want to be, like, you know, I hate America - because I don’t. I like living here. So I definitely do consider myself American.” Another notes that “I identify more with this [American] culture, I think. I guess because like this is the country that’s given me all these opportunities… if I was in the Dominican Republic, I don't even know if I would've been where I

70 However, this respondent does subsequently note that “his customs are Spanish,” indicating that Spanish identity may emerge not solely from place of birth but also from a related increased likelihood of embracing Spanish customs.

71 This difference in is further evidenced in discussion of greater othering and exclusion in respondents’ childhood experience than for their younger siblings and cousins, as discussed in Ch. 2.
am now.” While some in Madrid explicitly note positive experiences and opportunities in Spain, this is not typically referenced a basis for identification as Spanish; as one explains, “I like [Spain]…it’s a country that has given me – that is giving me – many opportunities that I wouldn’t have had in my country…[but] I consider myself Colombian.” Positive aspects of opportunities available in Madrid/Spain are thus distinguished from an overall sense of belonging.

In conjunction with reasons for destination-country identity, we must consider rationales against espousing destination-country identity. Lack of identification with the destination country is frequently based on the premise that the native-origin population would not accept the respondent as Spanish/American. This rejection is commonly linked to the dominant markers of difference outlined in earlier in this dissertation: race (non-white status), language, and *forma de ser* (norms of interaction and values); see Chapter 3 (Markers of Difference) for specific discussion of these factors as limiting perceived belonging in Spain/the US. In some cases, Madrid respondents note that views of this limited permissibility as particularly evident among certain native groups; this includes the elderly, as addressed in elsewhere in this dissertation, and also “*fachas*” [fascists], who are seen as “really pro-Spain, really ‘Here, Spain is for the Spanish, and immigrants should leave…you’re not from here.’” Reference to *fachas* arose among Madrid respondents in various aspects of interviews, highlighting the symbolic relevance of this population (even if small in number). In the New York case, there was some reference to highly anti-immigrant or exclusionary groups, but this was largely limited to discussion of other

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72 Respondents in Madrid also acknowledge opportunities available to them in Spain that would not have been available in the root country, but this is not explicitly linked to identifying as Spanish.
locations within the US (e.g., Arizona, Texas) – not to people potentially living in respondents’
city of residence. In both sites, just as being born in the destination country contributes to
identification as Spanish/American, being born elsewhere contributes to lesser identification as
Spanish/American. Respondents in both sites also note the role of origin-country pride in
limiting their destination-country identity; this is manifested in coethnic pressure against
identifying with the destination country, as previously discussed, and in internalized sense of
destination-country identity as signifying rejection of one’s roots.

Lack of citizenship was not often cited a basis for limited belonging. This is likely
influenced by the fact that almost all respondents (in Madrid as well as New York) were either
citizens of the destination country or in the process of obtaining citizenship; citizenship status
may have been a more significant issue had the sample included significant numbers of
undocumented respondents. On occasions when destination-country citizenship was noted,
respondents in both locations often differentiated formal citizenship from internal identity. For
example, a respondent in Madrid explains that “my papers say I’m Spanish and, well, I’m
Spanish because I’ve lived my whole life here…[but] I feel Dominican.” A New York
respondent highlights the pragmatic aspect of American citizenship in greater details, stating that
“I have to identify as a US citizen…when it comes to legal issues…if I don’t identify as a US
citizen, I won’t get as much financial aid as someone who is a resident, or I won’t be able to
travel outside the country for as many months, you know… [but] I’ll feel more happy saying I’m

73 One significant exception was seen in one undocumented respondent in New York, who was involved in activism
promoting the DREAM Act, a proposed legislation permitting a pathway to citizenship for young undocumented
individuals in the US. This supports the hypothesis that citizenship status would have been a more significant issue
in a sample that included more undocumented respondents.
Dominican, and I usually do say that.” As they explain, formal citizenship does not necessarily align with identification.

Though discrepancy between destination-country citizenship and identification is evident across research sites, the perceived *limitations* of citizenship as a basis for destination country belonging is stronger in Madrid, where the disconnect between formal citizenship and identificational membership is linked to native-origin rejection. For instance, the Madrid respondent quoted in the paragraph above later adds that “when someone of color says that she’s Spanish, well, it’s understood that she’s Spanish by citizenship - not because she was born here. Or, maybe she was born here, but her parents aren’t from here;” this indicates the assumption of foreignness, even with citizenship. Another explains that, with Spanish citizenship, “you have the same rights… this is what Spanish nationality means – you have the same rights as any Spaniards. But, the treatment is different.” This respondent offers various examples indicating poor treatment, despite citizenship, and attributes this to his non-white appearance. Speaking of being stopped by police (an issue discussed in greater detail in Chapter 2), a third provides a highly telling anecdote. As he explains, “policemen have said to me, ‘Even though you have Spanish citizenship, you’re not Spanish’… I told one ‘But I have my documentation,’ [and he responded] ‘Yeah, but you’re not Spanish. You’re from somewhere else – you’re naturalized, [but] not Spanish.’”

The absence of similar references in New York can be linked to two

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74 Through this othering in Madrid may be due to non-white appearance or other markers of difference, commonly-used Spanish identification documents also provide an individual’s place of birth, thus creating an additional – and, government-provided - marker of non-Spanish origins for the 1.5 generation. This is a clear contrast to commonly-used American identification documents (specifically, a driver’s license), which does not state citizenship status at all, let alone differentiate citizens by birth from naturalized citizens.
related factors, which contrast significantly with Madrid: the historical precedent of immigration and of becoming American, as well as the long-standing ethnoracial diversity in the US/New York, where non-white status does not automatically mark one as an outsider.75

Permissibility of Dual or Hyphenated identities

Though some in each location evidence destination-country identity, identification solely with the destination country was virtually nonexistent in both sites. Rather, respondents – and especially in New York, where destination-country identity was more common – typically expressed dual or hybrid identification that incorporated both the origin country and the destination country. Specific attention to perceived compatibility between origin country and destination-country identification is thus necessary, and further addresses the adoption of destination-country identity. Respondents in each site differ significantly in their understandings of how and whether these two identifications can coexist.

In Madrid, when respondents reference the possibility of being both Dominican/Colombian and Spanish, it was typically understood as referencing dual citizenship, not dual or hybrid personal identification. For instance, discussing the possibility of identifying as both Colombian and Spanish, one respondent states “of course [you can be both] – you can have both citizenships, Spanish and Colombian.” Another, who states that his mother is “Colombian-Spanish,” explains this by adding that “she was born in Colombia, and last year she

75 Though the greater representation of true second generation in New York could be seen as influencing this finding, these issues are also absent among the New York 1.5 generation. This points to the role of the above-referenced contextual factors.
got Spanish citizenship.” Others specifically contrast the possibility of being both in a citizenship sense with the possibility of being both in terms of general identification; for instance: “[for] citizenship, well, you would say you’re Spanish and Dominican, you have *la doble* [“double,” meaning dual citizenship]…[but] if someone’s talking to you [about] another topic, well, he’d say that you’re more Dominican or more Spanish.” In the New York case, there is some reference to citizenship when discussing dual or hybrid identities, but dual identity was not generally understood as specifically or solely referencing citizenship.

Beyond this citizenship-based understanding, most in Madrid express the view that origin-country identity and Spanish identity are not compatible. For instance, one notes that “I've never thought about it [being both Colombian and Spanish] - I've never heard it.” While never having considered dual identity may be attributed to potentially minimal overall reflection on identity, the addition that “I’ve never heard of it” supports the fact that a dual or hyphenated identity is not commonplace. Moreover, this sentiment is echoed by numerous others; for instance, another adds that “no, no, that [identifying as both] is really uncommon. It’s not very typical.” Among the few in Madrid who note combined origin country and Spanish identity as compatible, some clarify that this dual identity may be accepted only after someone knows you well; for example: “[people] would say ‘no, no, no. If you’re Spanish, you’re Spanish – if you’re from another country, you’re from another country.’ But, after a while, they would accept it, after they know you.”

Spaniards’ perceived lack of acceptance of dual identity is central to the limited basis for such identification. For instance, one makes this point with particularly strong language; asked
whether it would be acceptable to identify as both Dominican and Spanish, this respondent replies "they would say, 'you're an idiot,' you know? 'You're one.'" This same sentiment is expressed by numerous others, evidencing the prevalence of this view. Moreover, while some in Spain feel that being born in Spain allows one to be “Spanish” – especially for those coming of age in the present era, as discussed earlier - others note that this does not permit a dual identification as Spanish and Dominican/Colombian. For instance, speaking about his brother, one respondent notes that “he says [he’s] Dominican and Spanish. [Q: But for Spaniards?] He’d be Spanish.” As this indicates, while there is a perceived increasing permissibility in the young second generation being considered Spanish, this does not imply the permissibility of a dual or hybrid Spanish/origin-country identification. In the New York case, this sense of rejection of identity compatibility by the native-origin population is much more limited.

Given the relative lack of compatibility in Madrid, it is not surprising that respondents almost never reference a dual or hybrid term, such as Colombian-Spanish/Spanish-Colombian or Dominican-Spanish/Spanish-Dominican. Asked specifically about a hyphenated term, one notes that “I don’t know what I’d say [upon hearing a hyphenated Spanish-Dominican identity label], because never in my – no one’s said that, nothing like that.” Another adds “people don't say that - no.” One Madrid respondent did claim self-identification using a hyphenated term “Spanish-

76 E.g.: “They see it [dual identification] as incompatible…I always say that, and they always correct me;” “They [Spaniards] just think that – that you can be just Colombian or just Spanish, but not both at once;” “Of course they don’t [think someone can be Colombian and Spanish]. They think – I supposed everyone thinks the same, like this: “You’re Spanish or Colombian.”

77 It should be noted that many initially state that this younger generation would be seen as Spanish, but then express subsequent hesitation or backtracking, citing the continued relevance of physical appearance in limiting identification as Spanish.
Dominican” but in explaining the basis for this identification, she notes that, “I never heard it from anyone… [but] there are a bunch of centers - Spanish-Paraguayan,’ ‘Spanish-whatever,’ so I took that name. But I never heard anyone say it, to be honest.” This respondent is referencing local government-sponsored social service/educational organizations, which are named through a hyphenated Spanish/national origin label. Though this respondent echoes others in noting the lack of hyphenated identities, the fact that she uses these organizations as a model for a joint identity label speaks to the importance of external use (and legitimization) of hybrid identities for internal espousal of such labels.79

While Madrid saw virtually no reference to hyphenated identities, references to dual and hyphenated identities occurred more regularly in New York. Importantly, the majority of respondents in New York do not initially invoke a hyphenated label when discussing their personal identity. We should therefore not overstate dual identification as a pervasive personal identification. Nevertheless, the fact that some do contrasts greatly with the Madrid case, and - in further contrast to the Madrid case - respondents regularly note having heard hybrid terms and their general permissibility; this is supported by other research showing that “American” is often seen as an inclusive identity open to hyphenation (Dhingra 2007, Kasinitz et al. 2008). For instance, one respondent explains “I think people are going to accept that [his hyphenated identity], because I think a lot of people identify the same way I do…. you know, Columbian-American, or Bangladeshian-American, or Indian-American.” Another directly links hyphenated

79 According to interviews with CEPI leaders, a main goal of these centers is to bring together immigrant-origin and native populations and increase interaction between these groups, so it is possible that this hyphenated label was actually meant to refer to the joining of two populations rather than a dual identity.
labels to the US’s history of immigration, stating: “you say things like Italian-American, Polish-American, German-American….American is sort of this other thing you can be in addition to other stuff, because eventually you sort of…eventually we’re all here. We’re all from somewhere else. We’re still all American, regardless.” Yet another highlights compatibility as specific to the US: “I don’t know if you can be Dominican and anything. I don’t know if you can be French and anything…[but] you can be American and anything…. being American isn’t letting go of everything.” He adds that being American “can coexist with a lot of things” because it is “additive.”

Taking this conception a step further, others note that identifying as simply “American,” without an additional national origin or ethnic affiliation, may be seen as insufficient. This reinforces a cultural norm of hyphenated/hybrid identities. As one respondent notes, “people usually ask, ‘Where you’re from?’ Even though you’re here, [people] say, ‘Where are you from?’… everybody has a background…not everybody was born here, not everybody’s grandparents were born here, everybody has their own nationalities, different nationalities.” This indicates indicating a non-American background extends even to those with distant immigrant pasts, and similar points are noted by others. Reference to culturally accepted, and even culturally mandated, hyphenated identities implies an inherent compatibility between American

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80 For instance, another states that “usually you meet someone, you say ‘Where you from?’ They’re usually from another country… even if they’re like third generation they’ll, they’ll still say like ‘oh, my grandma’s from [X].’” Yet another adds that, if someone identified as just American, others “would be like ‘yeah, but what are you, you know? Besides American, are you something else?’” When explicitly asked whether people might question a sole American identification specifically for non-white people, this respondent negates this idea, noting that “it’s general.”

152
and origin-country identity, and presents a stark contrast from the Spanish case.\textsuperscript{81} In conjunction with this hybridity, US norms of expressing pride in ethnic identity are additionally significant, given respondents’ aforementioned understanding of pride as central to origin-country identities. Yet while some respondents note that the presumption of a dual American/origin-country identity is applied to whites and non-whites alike, others reference the importance of race (e.g., “I wouldn’t ask them [someone with light skin] where are your parents from… I know you’re American, from here. Your parents are probably, like, descendants from England or something”). Origin country and destination-country identification may be compatible through a presumption of widespread immigrant origins in the US, but white Americans may be able to claim a sole American identification in a way not possible for this project’s respondents, who largely see themselves as non-white.

Though various respondents recognize hybrid or hyphenated terms and use them for their own personal identification, some note that the use of these terms is relegated to certain arenas. For example, one explains that “Colombian-American - you would say mostly in professional environments… saying Colombian American becomes just like saying Jewish American, black American.” This respondent is thus relying on precedent set by earlier immigrant/minority groups to justify the hyphenated identity, albeit only for specific environments; he clarifies that he would not use this hyphenated term among friends or in his neighborhood. Another, who identifies as Dominican-American, also speaks to limited usage of that term in social arenas: “If I

\textsuperscript{81} Of course, it is possible that this would not happen in more predominantly white locations, or in locations with a lesser immigrant presence than New York City; but, nonetheless, the idea of dual identification as inherent to American identity remains a stark contrast from the Spanish case.
would say that I'm Dominican-American, let's say, next to my friends, they would laugh at me. Oh, you just want to basically, want to be American now.” As this indicates, hyphenated identity, while more common in New York than Madrid, is not necessarily evident in all aspects of their lives.

**Meaning of National Identification**

Differences in the *understandings* or *meanings* attributed to Spanish and American further relate to differences in perceived identification. When discussing what it means to be “Spanish,” respondents overwhelmingly focus on the salient markers of difference reviewed in Chapter 3 (Markers of Difference) - whiteness, certain personality characteristics (a subdued, closed, and unfriendly “*forma de ser*”), and language. Because these topics and their connection to belonging in Spain were discussed at length in this earlier chapter, they will not be discussed here. Meanings of being American, in many cases, were also linked to markers of difference discussed in Chapter 3 (Markers of Difference) – most clearly, race (whiteness). Yet meanings attributed to American identification also extended beyond these specific markers of difference. This is in contrast to the Spanish case.

First, many in New York simply struggled to explain what it means to be “American.” For instance, one succinctly states that “I don’t know if there is, like, a – a standardized culture of – of what constitutes being an American,” and another similarly explains that “I wouldn’t say there’s really an American culture. Maybe I’m wrong, I don’t know. Because I don’t feel like there’s a culture in America that have, you know it’s just you’re here.” This a clear contrast to the Spanish case, where respondents much more easily identified and explained specific
characteristics that entail Spanishness. Moreover, the specific nature of American identity as difficult to define becomes particularly clear when respondents compare it to their origin countries. For example, one Colombian-origin respondents notes that “I will have a much more hard – a harder time answering what’s – what’s American as to what’s Colombian….it’s much easier to [say]… ‘you’re not Colombian if – if you don’t listen to this music, or, like, if you don’t have a manger in – under your Christmas tree.’” Similarly, a Dominican respondent who had concretely described Dominican identity as linked to specific foods and music encounters greater difficulty defining American identity: “What does it mean to be American? I think I would say…that’s tricky. Uh, I don’t know. I don’t know.” In discussing the difficulty defining Americanness, some respondents explicitly reference the United States’ immigrant origins and ethnoracial diversity. As one explains, “America is so multiethnic… it’s like a whole bunch of people from different countries have come here and migrated and had children... nowadays when you say ‘are you American?’ it’s like, are you- are you this and this and this and this and this, like, all together.” Another notes that “being American, I think, is a lot more open,” because the United States is “sort of makeshift nation and culture.” Though Spain has certainly seen significant cultural changes over its long-term and recent history, this point is not mentioned by Spanish respondents, indicating the perceived rootedness or fixed nature of Spanish culture and identity.

Given this historical diversity and the related difficulty defining American cultural traits, American identity - when it could be explained by respondents - was often linked to particular principles or ideals. This is in contrast to perceptions of Spanish identity, which were focused
minimally on principles and overwhelmingly centered specific personal characteristics. For instance, when discussing what being “American” means, some respondents focus on openness, liberalism, or diversity of ideas. As one explains, “I think a lot of different people have different views in this country, and I think that’s part of their American identity also, you know. Just being open to different ideas and opinions… just the freedom of expression.” Others link Americanness to a sense of equality. For instance, another states that “my mom, she said she's, like, more American now than Dominican. [Because] she believes in equality,” and a third focuses on equality of opportunity, explaining “what it means to be American…[is] the belief in personal choice and being able to have opportunity… the belief in that one can achieve in some future or some time equality for all, um, or that you can at least fight for it without, um, having, you know, very explicit barriers.” While this respondent recognizes that equality is not necessarily a reality, she stresses the belief in equal opportunity, as well as the lack of explicit barriers, as an American characteristic. This implicitly references the idea of the “American dream,” and many others explicitly invoke that concept to explain the meaning of American identity. As one states, “basically, being American, to me, is actually, like, pursuing the American dream.” Another explains Americanness as “the cliché of… land of opportunity…moving your way up,” and a third described being American as “trying to live the American dream, and, um, just, like, going to school, getting a good education, getting a good job.” Yet another compares this link to the American dream with a possible link to origins or appearance: “I think being American is not just by how you look anymore…because of the different people coming here …It’s just like what you do – what Americans do, and the – having
the American dream.”  

Linked to meaning of destination-country identity is its valuation, which holds further relevance to affiliation with this identification. Perception of American identity is often linked to attributes seen as positive, such as equality and freedom. In contrast, perceptions of Spanish are less clearly positive, and in some cases – such as depiction of Spanish *forma de ser* – they are seen as broadly negative or undesirable. While this could serve as a reaction to exclusion from Spanish identity, it can also serve as base for relatively limited desire to identify as Spanish. Moreover, valuation of pride in destination country identities differs between the two sites. In the US, pride in American identity is not clearly positively or negatively valorized by respondents. In contrast, pride in Spanish identity is linked to Spain’s recently political history of dictatorship, xenophobia, and enforced homogeneity. For instance, one explains that:

Here in Spain, being Spanish is problematic, right? Because of everything with Franco [Spain’s previous dictator, who ruled until the 1970s] and all that, you know? So you say “*arriba* Spain! [go/long live Spain!]” and they’re going to think of you as – as fascist, you know? [In Franco’s time] it was like ‘just Spaniards – Spaniards are the best.’ Many people didn’t want other races…like maybe to say in Germany, “*arriba* Germany, and everyone else, get out!” you know?... you can’t carry the [Spanish] flag with so much pride, because it’s probably not considered acceptable.

Though Spain’s 20th century history of racism and xenophobia is certainly less extreme than the German case, this respondent’s invocation of the Spanish-German comparison speaks to the public perception of extreme Spanish patriotism. Another adds that “many times, when you see a Spaniard wearing a bracelet [with the Spanish flag], you’d say he’s a racist or a fascist, or that…

82 Within this focus on the American dream, others more explicitly note links between Americanness and capitalism (e.g., “Being American…[is] living, like, capitalist society of course. Being very competitive, you know. About the American Dream, getting that house, getting that car, you know?”
he doesn’t like immigrants… it’s really common to think that a Spanish person showing patriotism has to be racist.”

Various aspects of the meaning of American identification, particularly compared to the meaning of Spanish identification, also speak to the perceived permissibility of identity compatibility between destination country and origin country identities. For one, the difficulty identifying specific American cultural characteristics – especially in contrast to the Spanish case, where specific characteristics were highly associated with Spanishness – creates a more accessible identity label by not requiring the adoption of certain traits. The fact that American identity and Dominican/Colombian identity are linked to distinct arenas, with American identity most commonly related to principles and origin-country identity commonly linked to personal characteristics and tastes, also suggest that adoption of an American identity is less likely seen as directly competing or zero-sum. In contrast, Spanish and origin-country identity both heavily linked to personal characteristics and tastes, and are thus more likely seen as directly competing or zero-sum.

Identity Situationality and Identity Change

Beyond showing the contextual basis of identity through the Madrid/New York comparison, this project’s data also indicates identity situationality, where “an identity is tied to a particular person in a particular situation” (Scheff 1973:204). For instance, some respondents differentiate their identification when they are in the destination country and when they are in the
origin country, typically identifying more with the destination country when visiting the origin country, and identifying more with the origin country when in the destination country. Others note a stronger origin-country identity when around other coethnics, including friends and family; this is supported by previously discussed coethnic pressure to identify with the origin country and not the destination country. In addition to changing identities, numerous respondents also indicate differences between their own self-identification and other’s external labels; this further indicates the complexity of measuring identity, since internal identity may not necessarily coincide with external categorizations. Even within the duration of the interviews conducted for this project, respondents stated differing identities, sometimes stressing origin-country identity and other times stressing destination-country identity. One respondent, who explicitly acknowledges this, poignantly notes that “I have contradicted myself a million times, but that’s sort of – that’s a complexity of identity, you know?”

Just as identities can change depending on context, they can also change over time – a point noted by various respondents in both research sites. Some (and more in New York) note increasingly identifying with the destination country as they get older. For instance, one in New York relates that, when she was younger, she “would have never thought of myself that way [as American], but I feel like I have grown up here all of my life …my experiences have been - I can see myself maybe at one point identifying myself solely as American.” Another highlights a similar change, stating that “now I – I see myself more so as American. I mean, I’ve been given such wonderful opportunities by being a part of this country.” The focus on opportunities as a basis for American identity highlights the relevance of age, since a child would likely pay less
notice to opportunities available than would a young adult. Moreover, the likelihood of
increasing identification with the destination country as one lives there for a longer time is
logical, given further life experience in this setting, as well as greater familiarity with this
context and separation from the origin society. This positive relationship between length of
residence and identification with the destination country is evidenced on other research on
second generation integration/assimilation (e.g., Kasinitz et al. 2008, Portes and Rumbaut 2001).

In contrast, some others state an increasing identification with the origin country as they
age. For instance, one, who lived in a predominantly white suburb of New York as a younger
child, highlights a sense of embarrassment for being different as a young child, noting that she
“kind of rejected…my Dominican identity … I wouldn't want to bring, you know, our food to
school even though, like, that's what my mom would pack for lunch for me.” Another notes that
“when I was younger I was always like – yeah, I’m American,” but then adds that “eventually,
like, I was able to embrace my culture.” Others note greater socialization with coethnics as they
age; this is relevant to identification, as respondents indicate a stronger origin-country identity in
more predominantly coethnic environments. For instance, one respondent in New York points to
an increasing interest in origin-country identity: “when I was in elementary school, junior high
school, that [having a coethnic-based friend groups] wasn’t so much the case. Like I think most
of us, we didn’t find out where we were from until we were in high school… [there] sort of
became a sudden spark, a sudden, um, obsession with Columbian culture.” The emergence of
greater ethnic identity during adolescence and early adulthood is consistent with social
psychological research on ethnic identity (e.g., Phinney 1989).
For Madrid respondents, the increase in Latin American immigration is additionally significant for increases in origin-country identification. Many respondents noted being the sole immigrant-origin student among native Spaniards during elementary school, and without the possibility of coethnic friendships, respondents socialized with Spaniards. Yet as other immigrants and coethnics migrated to Spain, respondents are able to form a co-(pan)ethnic social circle. For instance, one respondent notes that “in my elementary school, everyone was Spanish – my friends from childhood, all were Spaniards.” She then adds that she later “started to hang out more with, with my friends, who are basically all Latinos,” noting that “almost all of them were older when me when they came [to Spain].” Beyond providing the possibility of coethnic friends, the continuing migration also provides greater access to overall origin country-based environments, neighborhoods, cultural activities, and goods, all of which can support origin-country identity - a parallel to ethnic replenishment, as noted in the US (Jiménez 2010).

**Identifications beyond the Origin/Destination Society**

In a project on immigrant assimilation, a primary focus on the origin and destination country national identities, as well as compatibility between the two, is certainly sensible. Yet respondents in both locations also categorize themselves - and see themselves as contrasted with the native-origin population - through other labels or groupings, and these other identifications hold implications for perceived membership in the destination country. Below, I identify and explain four other salient identifications: immigrant-origin, Latino, city-based (New Yorker or Madrileño), and European.
Immigrant/Immigrant-Origin

In Madrid, a macro-level native-origin/immigrant-origin (or native-Spaniards/other) boundary serves as one of the most relevant perceived social divides, especially from the perceived view of Spaniards. For example, discussing whether Spaniards prefer immigrants from certain countries or regions over others, explains that “I think [they think] the same about all of them. I – they see all immigrants as the same…they see us as all alike.” Another, discussing differentiation between immigrant groups, succinctly states that “they think about immigrants as one group.” A third, discussing the pan-national grouping of Latino, one Madrid respondent adds that “in Spain, they refer more to ‘immigrants’ than ‘Latinos.’” The primacy of the immigrant/non-immigrant divide is further evident in the use of the term “racism” to mean anti-immigrant sentiment, as discussed in the Chapter 3 (Markers of Difference). This native-origin/immigrant-origin categorization is virtually unreferenced in New York. This difference can be explained by recency of large-scale migration to Madrid, which provides a clear means of distinguishing immigrant-origin from native-origin populations. In New York, in contrast, immigration has occurred almost continuously since the beginnings of the city; even today, so many in New York have immigrant origins that a clear division between immigrant-origin and native-origin would be difficult or impossible to draw.

Latino/a

Respondents in both New York and Madrid sometimes identify as Latino, but the
prevalence and basis of Latino identification differ between the two sites. These differences can be linked to two specific contextual contrasts. First, the greater longevity of the Latin American-origin immigrant population in New York creates a basis for a Latino commonality, and for this identity to gain meaning beyond reference to foreign origin. Second, institutionalization of this panethnic category in the US serves as an additional basis for Latino affiliation. These effects of these contextual differences are manifested in a variety of ways, including prevalence of Latino identification and the various explanations for Latino identity.

Compared to those in Madrid, respondents in New York show relatively prominent use of the term Latino as a self-identifying label. In this usage, they show variance in the relationship between Latino identification and origin-country identification. For many, they use Latino identification and their origin-country identity in tandem, with some identifying primarily with their national origin but also noting identification as Latino, and others specify that they identify as primarily as Latino and then noting origin-country identification. For others, Latino identity and origin-country identity are seen as virtually synonymous (e.g., “I don’t really like uh, like separate the two [“Latino” and “American”] that much;” “I feel like it’s all the same – Hispanic”). Yet others in New York see identifying at Latino as an alternative to identifying with the origin country, usually linking Latino identity to the fact that they are not purely Dominican or Colombian; they are also “Americanized.” For instance, one explains that

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For simplicity’s sake, this section uses the term Latino to signify a panethnic Latin American identity. Others terms used for Latin American panethnic identity among New York respondents include Hispanic and, occasionally, Spanish; however Latino was much more commonly used than these other options. Among Madrid respondents, Latinoamericano (Latin American) was sometimes used as an alternative to Latino; this is discussed within this section. As discussed later in this section, “Latino” in Spain is understood as referencing Latin Americans, not Spaniards; respondents do not affiliate with Spanish identity through identification as Latino.
“Dominican is to be from Dominican Republic…it is not my experience… I would always say, “Well, you know, Hispanic”…that’s how I would define myself…[that’s] where I fit in.” A second adds “I’m very proud of being Colombian…but I don’t know a lot about the history… I ended up speaking more English growing up than Spanish. Um, so I – I identify as Latina, being a part of the Latina experience,” and a third similarly reports that “I used to think like oh, I’m Dominican….but now, a couple years back, it's like - I grew up here. This is my home. I could never live in [the Dominican Republic]…now, I consider myself American Latino.”

New York respondents, though recognizing differences between people of various Latin American national origins, indicate a sense of commonality that can serve as a basis for Latino/a identification. For instance, one respondent explains “I say [I’m] Latina just because it encompasses not just a Dominican. It just - it goes through, like, any type of person who can relate at all…. whose parents are from a Spanish-speaking country or, you know, who grew up in somewhere Latin America…and came to the US and, you know, lived that life.” Another New York respondent further highlights this commonality: “When non-Hispanic people - they say, you know, those - this is about, like, Mexicans or something, or beaners [a derogatory term for Mexicans] or whatever they call them, I sometimes feel offended, too.” For some, this is more directly related to common interest, and to the power of panethnic unity. Another, after stating that “a lot of the people…are gonna start identifying with that identity of Latino,” notes that he believes this is because “I think just a lot of Latino immigrants … are all fighting for the same cause. We’re all trying to achieve the same political clout, and, uh, uh, opportunities in this country, and why not rally it together?”
When explaining Latino identity, many in the US also reference organizations or official
designations, and especially demographic categories on forms. One, discussing the relationship
between her Dominican and Latino [or, Hispanic] identity, explains that “I feel like it’s all the
same - Hispanic. Like it falls under the same like - you’re filling out an application where they
don’t say like each country there. So it’s, like, Hispanic.” Another, when asked about
identifying as Latino, immediately references applications: “I say I’m Hispanic. Whenever
someone asks me the application asks if you - if you’re Hispanic.” Though the power of the
external classificatory schemes is evident in these quotes, some even state it more explicitly:
“We call ourselves Latino because we see it in job applications and stuff like that. Other than
that, if we didn't see that word there, we wouldn’t be using it.” Others further note the
importance of panethnic organizations; as one explains, “in school [I think of myself as] Latina,
since I’m part of the Latino Culture Society.”

In New York, some respondents also cited increased identification as Latino upon
entering college. One explains that “when I was in college, that was the first time I actually
explored the idea of really thinking of myself as Latina…in high school and middle school…
everyone was Latino, so you didn’t really think about it.” As this indicates, the sudden shift
away from a heavily (pan)ethnic New York City neighborhood prompted reflection on the
previously taken-for-granted identity. Further supporting this inter-Latino mixing and greater
Latino identification were the presence of Latino student organizations, which are common on
US colleges campuses; numerous respondents reported having joined such organizations, or at
least being aware of them.
In New York, some respondents emphasize Latino identity as an American conception, or as rooted in common American immigration experience. For instance: “the experience of growing up being from a different culture and perhaps sharing similar traditions or similar languages creates that identity of being Latina in the United States.” Another adds that “Hispanic … felt very, um, uniquely American… it has a lot to do with being American and being an American with immigrant parents.” A third respondent further highlights this by relating American use of Latino to the origin country: “it’s just in the United States that you have all these terms. If you go to another country, if you go to DR and you start using these terms, they’re gonna look at you like, ‘What does that mean?’” Given this explanation of Latino as an American conception, it is not surprising that some specifically explain the two identities as compatible. For instance, one directly references the US origins of the term, explains that “Latino would fall under the term of being American… [“Latino” was] created specifically for people – Spanish-speaking people here in the United States… I feel like you can’t be Latina and not be American.” Another speaks to the overall experience of growing up in two cultures, explaining that “I think you can definitely – you can be Hispanic and American at the same time. Maybe because you have no – no choice but to be. … you’re raised and you were born into American society…but, you know, you’re living in your parents’ house…they’re talking the language, you know. So you have no choice.” Though this respondent had previously stated that one cannot be jointly Dominican and American, such incompatibility does not appear to apply to panethnic Latino identity.

In Madrid, numerous respondents reference identification as Latino among Latin
American-origin peoples (e.g., “there are many who always say ‘ah, yeah, I’m Latino, I’m Latina;’” “between ourselves, everyone in general, [we say] ‘I’m Latino, you’re Latino.’”) However, when comparing identification as “Latino” (or “Latin American”) with identification as a specific national origin, the virtually all respondents note the primacy of national origin. For instance, as one respondent succinctly explains, and as many others echo, “they identify more with the country they’re from… they always say ‘I’m from this country.’” In contrast to the New York case, Madrid respondents do not claim Latino identity as indicating adaptation to the destination country.

In discussing the meaning or basis of identification as “Latino,” those in Madrid understood it as primarily linked to geographical origins. When discussing usage of the term, one explains that, ‘Yes, [people use] ‘Latinos’ - from Latin America,” clearly indicating the geographical basis. Another notes that “of course I consider myself Colombian, but also Latina – I come from a Latin American country,” and a third adds that “I consider myself Latino… because I’m from, from South America.” Yet especially compared to Madrid, those in New York also link Latino identification to a connection with Latino society/culture within the US, and not just to a foreign location of origin. This difference can be attributed to the recency of Latin American immigrants in Spain; since the population is so new, it is sensible that it is more linked to a foreign/geographical understanding than in the US, where Latino can refer to people whose families have been in the US for generations.

Madrid also evidences a stronger emphasis on the external imposition of the label “Latino,” and many specify that this is more often a label utilized by Spaniards, based on their
perceived limited ability to differentiate between Latin America. Emphasis on external categorization was much less prominent in New York. This is likely linked to the greater self-identification as Latino in New York, which leaves a lesser contrast between an imposed Latino label and internal Latino identity. Given this incongruence with their own personal identities, which are centered on national origin over panethnicity, respondents in Madrid are also more bothered by external imposition of a panethnic label by native-origin Spaniards. Moreover, those in Madrid clearly indicate negative implications of the term “Latino” when used by Spaniards. For instance: “when they talk about ‘Latino,’ normally they’re looking down on you,” and “I don’t like…[when] they say ‘Latino’ - often times they say it with a tone like, like Latino is something derogatory.” Others similarly note that Spaniards use the term Latino “like an insult” and “more [as] discrimination than [just] to describe you.” While respondents in New York note negative perceptions of Latinos – for instance, due to the perception that Latinos are taking American jobs or generalized anti-immigrant sentiment - only in Madrid does the simple usage of the term itself evoke negative association. This could certainly lessen desire to associate with the term.

Lesser Latino identification, as well as negative views of being externally grouped as Latino, also emerge from more limited presumed commonality between Latin American-origin populations in Madrid than in New York. For instance, one Colombian in Madrid initially states that she identifies as Latina, but she then equivocates, saying “if not [Latina], Colombian….lots of people say Colombians and Ecuadorians are the same thing. They’re not – that’s not true.” Other respondents cite intergroup animosity between Latin American immigrant-origin
One respondent in Madrid notes the potentially unifying aspect of a panethnic identification, but he indicates that it does not (yet) serve this purpose Madrid, and he compares it to the US: “in the US, there’s more of this, of ‘Latinos, stand up!’ and all that…. here you don’t see that as much, that Latinos all join together… [but] I think it would be good if we were more united like that: ‘we’re all Latinos.’” He then explains why panethnic unity may be stronger in the US, stating that “there, [immigration] has been going on for longer … Latinos in the US…have been there a lot longer … they establish themselves there, all that. In Spain, that hasn't happened until just a little bit ago.”

While New York respondents readily reference official forms as a basis for Latino identification, official classification as Latino/a does not occur in Madrid. Moreover, those at university reported that their universities have no pan-ethnic or national origin-affiliated student clubs or organizations, Latino or otherwise, representing another clear contrast to the New York case. However, in discussing a basis for Latino identity, some do note the presence and relevance of certain pan-Latino institutions. For instance, one reports that some do “say ‘I’m Latino,’” continuing to state “for instance, Alma Latina [“Latin Soul,” the name of a small community organization] – a Spaniard didn’t give it that name!” Certain forms of pan-Latino-focused media exist, such as radio stations and newspaper, including one newspaper specifically

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84 In particular, both Dominicans and Colombians often cited animosity against Ecuadorians. This was particularly sensitive for Colombians, who were often confused with Ecuadorians by native Spaniards based on physical appearance; this confusion appears particularly bothersome, especially as some clearly state their perceived superiority to Ecuadorians.
called *Latino*. Though the institutionalization of the term Latino is lesser in Madrid than New York, the beginnings of Latino organizations are noteworthy, especially given literature indicating institutionalization as a basis for broader panethnic identity development (e.g., Espiritu 1992).

While those in New York typically saw Latino and American identity as compatible, the Madrid case shows no similar reference to a panethnic Latino identity as intrinsically compatible with Spanish identity, or as a Spanish construct. Though one might have presumed a certain commonality to be drawn based on historic colonial links, this is virtually absent from the data; when questioned on colonial links, respondents largely reject this as a basis of commonality or compatibility. Some do state that they believe Spaniards should be seen as “Latino” based on the Latin origin of their language (“I even identify Spaniards as Latinos… It comes from the language…all the languages that came from Latin are Latinos to me”), but they recognize that Spaniards do not actually use this rationale to see themselves as Latino (“they don’t want to say they’re Latinos...they don’t think about Latinos from here [Spain]”). The relationship drawn between identification as Latino and Spanish is thus highly distinct from the New York case.

**City of Residence**

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85 Interestingly, an employee for this newspaper, when discussing the basis for the newspaper’s panethnic Latino affiliation, notes that the founders had known of panethnic Latino periodicals from the US; this evidences the transnational spread of this US-originated term.

86 In addition, two other factors less frequently serve as a basis for city identity and/or identification with the city of residence: city-based (versus suburban or rural) norms of interpersonal relations, and simply having lived in the city of residence. Yet these points are less central to respondents, and are less overtly differentiated in the Madrid and New York cases; they are therefore not discussed here.
In both locations, respondents sometimes specify a certain city-based character and identity as distinct from the country of residence. However, the two sites differ in the prevalence of the perception of a distinct city identity. In New York, the city is virtually never understood as analogous to the nation as a whole; respondents express the particularity of New York City within the larger United States context. In Madrid, however, views of city identity as differentiated from national identity are much less prevalent. For instance, asked about whether identifying with Madrid is different from identifying with Spain, one notes that “I see it as the same,” and another echoes “I feel part of Madrid, [of] Spain…it’s more or less the same, right?”

This difference between New York and Madrid in city/county equivalency can be linked to differences in the perceived relation between the city and a core national culture. In New York, a core “American” culture, when discussed in conjunction with New York City, is typically perceived as referring to places other than New York (e.g., the Midwest); New York is an outlier or an exception. In contrast, Madrid is associated with Castilian culture, which is the basis of the core or normative national “Spanish” culture. Other regionally distinct cultures or groups, like the Catalans or the Basques, are seen as the outliers to “Spanish” identity.  

In New York, the meaning of city identity is commonly linked to images of New York’s diverse population and resultant acceptance/appreciation of difference. For instance, one respondent notes that “if you live in New York, like, you’re tolerant to anything, 'cause you see

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87 Perceptions of limited Madrid/Spain distinction is supported by research on the broader Madrid population; Crul, M., J. Schneider and F. Lelie. 2013. The European Second Generation Compared: Does the Integration Context Matter? Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press. show that almost all native-origin Madrid residents (99%) identify with their country of residence, compared to only 72% of Barcelona residents. Interestingly, Madrilenos’ affiliation with their country’s national identity is actually the highest among the 13 European cities included in the study.
so many things every day. But when you go outside of New York City, it’s like a whole new country… a lot of people get scared when it’s something different.” As implied here, and as referenced by various others, the fact that New Yorkers are exposed to a variety of peoples is seen as key to increased tolerance of diversity. Another adds that “immigrant food and cultures have kind of been appropriated into the New York City scene, so it becomes cool… to go eat Thai food or Ethiopian food.” New York City’s cultural mix thus holds concrete implications for people’s attitudes towards not only demographic diversity, but also to diversity in cultural goods. New York’s public transportation and walking/street life culture is also contrasted with most other US locations, and provides the possibility for increased intergroup contact; for instance: “we have more interactions in subways and the bus and all… if you've got to come here, you've got to take the subway. So right there, you see people from different parts of the world.” 88 Another links her New York identity to a general broadened horizons resulting from mixing with such a diverse population, explaining that “I feel I am from New York just because I just – more aware of all the different things that could possibly exist in this world, it’s just like you see so many different things.”

Some specifically draw on New York’s history as an immigrant mecca. Discussing public perceptions of immigrants, one respondent states that “New York City’s always been an immigrant city, you know, from the start… so I don’t think there’s any clash or any disagreement on the fact that it [immigration] shouldn’t be here.” Numerous respondents draw on ideas of historic New York diversity when explaining their own identity as New Yorkers, often drawing

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88 Respondents in Madrid also note city-specific infrastructure as differentiating Madrid from other Spanish locations. However, this is not typically linked to increased exposure to diverse populations.
on the trope of New York as a melting pot. As one explains, “being a New Yorker is different … in New York, you have - it’s like a melting pot…you’re around all these different, like, ethnicities and different races.” Another states “I always feel New York, for the most part, because it’s so diverse…New York is known for, for, for its diversity, you know. Like, they call it the melting pot,” and a third adds that “for the most part, a lot of places, [Latinos are] a minority… it’s them trying to fit in. Here, it’s almost everybody sort of meshed together … It’s a melting pot, like they say.”

Beyond this emphasis on acceptance of diversity, the sheer number of immigrants promotes a sense of membership in the city. Some feel that their status as immigrants loses significance because so many people in New York are immigrants or second generation; one explains that “people don’t pay so much attention here to the immigrants… because we’re so many, so many of us.” Some further see the size and history of New York’s immigrant population as contributing to inter-immigrant solidarity and empowerment. As one respondent explains, there is “a lot of communities and activism going on … people of Latino descent, African-American descent, Muslim descent, Jewish descent, always rallying and making sure that … [immigrants are not] discriminated against because of their color or their, you know, race or ethnicity.” Drawing on this, he then notes that “you have a lot of people of color, and then, you know, hiring, and in high positions of employment,” thereby mitigating (at least some) discrimination in employment. Another respondent focuses on the political power of immigrant-origin peoples and communities. “You can see [discriminatory laws] in Arizona and those others

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89 This interview occurred during broad public controversy over Arizona passing severely anti-immigrant legislation.
states …Something like that might not happen here, because there are so many immigrants here you might, like, not allow [that].” With this large immigrant presence, another notes the broader unacceptability of expressing anti-immigrant sentiments, explaining that maybe some people in New York “don’t like the immigrants, but… they just keep it to themselves, because they know they can’t say anything.”

Drawing upon this diversity, some explicitly note differences in their perceived ability to identify as a New Yorker and as an American. One respondent, for instance, states that “the perception of the American person is someone who is Caucasian, blonde, blue eyes, probably from a southern town, you know middle class, middle upper class.” She contrasts this with a “New Yorker,” who “is anyone that just has the courage to get into a subway during rush hour…someone who is not going to stop until they get what they want…. achieve their goals.” In contrast to a general American identity, New York City identity is thus linked not to specific racial/class traits but to other characteristics. Another furthers this point, explaining that “it would be different…living in another like neighborhood, like all white people and stuff like that. Like you really feel like you [are] an American, like you live in America…[but in New York] you mix with so many cultures…I really don't [feel like I live in America].” As she explains, New York, given its lack of white homogeneity, is not seen as equivalent to “American;” identifying as a New Yorker does not indicate identification as American. Yet others feel that they can identify as American specifically because they live in New York. For example, one explains that “if I go down, down South, and I say, ‘Yeah, I’m, you know, strictly American,’ they’ll look at me like, ‘Well –‘ But at my school [in New York], I don’t… think people really
put mind to it like that.” Another adds that “to ask someone in New York City, you know, what
an American is, like then they’ll be much more open… they would be more inclusive…[but]
kids in these small towns, you know, [would be] like, ‘Oh, being an American is being this, this,
and that.’” In this view, American and New York identity are not presented in contrast; rather,
the New York context permits identification as American.

In Madrid, some reference the city’s great immigration-based diversity relative to other
Spanish locations, and many felt that this led to a more welcoming environment for immigrant-
origin groups. Nevertheless, there remain clear contrasts with the New York case on diversity
and city identity. First, general discussion of diversity in the city of residence, and discussion of
diversity as differentiating this city from the nation at large, was less prevalent in Madrid.
Second, while diversity was cited as creating a more welcoming environment due to greater
Spaniard accustomedness to immigrants, it was not clearly linked to core city history, culture,
and identity. Third, some felt that Madrid’s new diversity actually made it a less welcoming
environment than other places in Spain due to anti-immigrant backlash. Finally, explanations of
personal identity as Madrileño/a as based upon this diversity were highly limited, especially
relative to the New York case.

In Madrid, the differences between specific regions in Spain, and specifically political
understandings of regional difference, play a more dominant role in city identity. For some,
Spain’s strong regionalism, where certain Autonomous Communities (a political entity
somewhat akin to states in the US) see themselves as distinct nations within Spain, serves as a
basis for Madrid identification. For instance, certain respondents identify with Madrid simply
because each region within Spain has a highly specific self-identity. Others explain identification with Madrid based on lack of interest in other regions’ issues – specifically, regions that emphasize their unique political and/or cultural identities: “I don’t like the individualism in Barcelona, Basque Country, Galicia…they have their own dialects [languages]…they want to do other weird things, like considering themselves a country.” Identifying with Madrid thus serves as a way to disassociate from these regional separatist movements and promotion of regionally specific cultures. Another explains that a stated Spanish identity can imply a pointed interest in Spanish unity, and Madrid identity serves as an alternative to this: “I don’t feel Spanish, I feel Madrileña…I don’t have this conception of unity, this concern for the nation… about conflicts with ETA [a Basque pro-separatism terrorist organization] or with Barcelona, that they want to separate [from Spain] …this isn’t important to me.” Another adds that “with Andalucians, with Catalans, you really notice the difference. But I think that Madrileña is a middle-ground term” – a reference to Madrid’s association with the normative Spanish Castilian culture. Claiming Madrid identification can thus also serve as an apolitical proxy for Spanish identification; this is particularly relevant given previous discussion of Spanish identity as associated with the former dictator Franco, fascism, and suppression of regionally specific cultures and identities. While this presents a positive aspect of Madrid identity over Spanish identity, it does not represent an inherent positive association with Madrid. This contrasts with common understandings of New York City identity, which are generally seen as intrinsically positive.

Perceived regional differences in forma de ser between Spanish regions also hold
implications for identification with Madrid. Madrid’s *forma de ser*, typically described cold and unfriendly (as is the perception of overall Spanish *forma de ser*, explained in Chapter 3 (Markers of Difference)) is often is contrasted with *formas de ser* in coastal or southern Spain (e.g., Andalucía, Valencia, the Canary Islands). For instance, one respondent explains that, within Spain, “Madriños are more, let’s say, serious, more like that. In contrast, Andalucians are happier,” and many others echo this same point. Moreover, numerous respondents explicitly link their origin-country culture and southern Spanish culture (specifically, that of the Canary Islands), drawing on commonalities both in *forma de ser* and language. For instance, one indicates that “there are many different kinds of Spaniards…those from the Canary Islands are like twins to [those in] Santo Domingo…they talk the same, they say the same things, they act the same, and all that,” and many others offer similar comments. This emphasizes the differences between their origin culture and the Madrileño *forma de ser*, potentially creating greater disassociation with Madrid identification. In contrast with the impact of political regionalism, this focus does not tend to support or further identification with Madrid. In fact, it highlights a particularly negatively-perceived aspect of Madrid.

**European**

Looking beyond national and subnational identities, the Spanish data also shows the significance of a supranational identity, as European. The prominence of the European political and economic integration, largely in the form of the EU itself, the unified Euro currency, and a
related top-down emphasis on European unity and identity (Bee 2008) provides a basis for a supranational European identity. In New York, where there is no similar level of political/economic supranational coordination (or any real sense of a joint North American history or culture), respondents show do not cite a supranational identity. Though a number of Madrid respondents claimed some self-identification as European, it should be noted that Europeanness typically did not serve as a primary or highly salient identity. Self-proclaimed European identity was typically prompted by explicit discussion of this identity, some stated that they had not previously considered that identification, and it is not necessarily seen as relevant or salient as an everyday identity. Nonetheless, any espousal of European identity is worth noting given its possibility as an alternate basis for belonging, and given the dearth of reference to supranational identity in literature on the second generation in Europe.

Many respondents base their European identity on simply living in European country. As one respondent explains, “If I’m living here…I’m European?” Others combine residency with formal citizenship status; as one states, “yeah, I consider myself European. Because I live in a European country, and my papers are European.” Relatedly, numerous respondents cited ability to travel, desire to travel, or experience traveling as providing them a European identity. For instance, one notes that “You can go to any place in Europe…. you feel more Spanish, [so] more European. And when you want to take a trip with your school, to go to a school in London or anywhere, well, you’re going to feel Spanish and European. As this respondent explains, feeling “European” is based on having nationality in a European country, and it is reinforced by the ability to travel within Europe. Others further highlight the opportunity to travel, which turns
European identity into one imbued with a concrete positive value. This sense of “European” as a travel advantage or opportunity is key, especially since many respondents’ families come from countries where travel is difficult with the national passport. It is also particularly significant given respondents’ stated interest in visiting and living in other European nations and their contact with friends/relatives in other European nations (discussed in Chapter 2).

Respondents also viewed European identity as aligned with particular ideologies or principles, such as openness and respect for individuality, equality (e.g., gender equality, acceptance of homosexuality), and individual freedoms. Interestingly, this mirrors New York respondents’ understandings of the meaning of American identity. Others highlight order and rationality as European characteristics, and as the basis for European identification. Yet these European characteristics are not typically contrasted with Spain; in fact, perceptions of Europeanness as open and liberal are often based solely on experiences in Spain. Instead, they are typically contrasted with the origin country. Other conceptions of European identity, however, are drawn in contrasts to the Spanish setting. For instance, some respondents associate Europe with the promise of educational and occupational success. This is evident in respondents’ interest in moving within Europe for work and study opportunities, but in certain cases, this expands into a perception of Europeanness itself as related to educational and occupational success. As one respondent explains, “my mentality is more European, more, I don’t know, with different life expectations…. I want to live a European life… you can get a good job, have a stable, more or less good, quality of life…. I want to keep studying.” Numerous other respondents contrast this with a lack of educational motivation amongst Spaniards. For instance,
another adds that, elsewhere in Europe, “people have a different – a different perspective on getting ahead, of studying, of going to university…it’s much, much better than here...here, everyone thinks about finishing *ESO*, and that’s it.” She adds that this is not simply due to the post-2008 economic crisis, which severely affected employment opportunities in Spain. Instead, “it’s something they already had in themselves, in their personality.” The focus on education and advancement clearly frames European identity as more positive than Spanish identity.

In some cases, “European” identification is also seen as an umbrella or inclusive identity, and thus accessible to immigrant populations who still maintain an affiliation with their ethnic or national origin background; this, again, mirrors descriptions of American and New Yorker identification, and presents a positive depiction of European identity. This is evidenced in respondents who did not feel they were “Spanish” but did feel they were “European,” and even more explicitly evidenced by one respondent’s explanation of being “Latin-European.” As he explains, “they say *Latino-Europeo* [Latin-European] now… [it gives us] a European touch.” He then continues to clarify through analogy: “Latin-American, Latin-European. You know?” Though the respondent notes that he has only heard this term from his neighborhood friends, the fact that it exists for some is highly significant on two related counts. First, when questioned explicitly about whether people similarly hyphenate his ethnic group and Spanish (e.g., Latin-Spanish), he states that he has never heard that term, and he reinforces the label *Latino-Europeo*. By indicating a contrast in the perceived compatibility of Latino and a supranational identity (European) versus Latino and a national identity (Spanish), he further indicates the inclusive nature (albeit distant or theoretical) of supranational European identity. Second, “American” is
often seen as compatible with other national/ethnic affiliations (Dhingra 2007, Kasinitz et al. 2008); the clarifying statement of “Latin-American, Latin-European. You know?” highlights American and European identities as comparable in this respect.

This focus on greater inclusion in Europe compared to Spain is, for some, supported by specific experience in other European sites. For instance, one respondent notes that “because of my skin color… here [in Spain] they say that I’m not from here. [But] I loved being in France, because in France I saw people from all over also… I saw African people, Moroccans…there are already generations of children of immigrants… who are already French.” Another notes that, when he used to visit a major department store in Madrid, “you went in the door and… a security guard followed you, for being black.” He compares this to his experience when traveling to Paris, where he and his girlfriend went into an expensive boutique and the security guard didn’t follow them or bother them; he then attributed this difference to his perception of it being “more accepted to have black like this, who go into expensive places” in Paris. Though immigrant-origin populations in these cited European locations do in fact encounter significant issues of exclusion (Alba 2005), the fact that respondents generally see these locations as more accepting than Madrid contributes to their sense of European inclusivity as contrasted with Spanish exclusivity.

In some cases, however, Europeanness is in a more negative light. For instance, some respondents see Europeanness as associated with a particular personality type – specifically, a cold or unfriendly personality. Not surprisingly, this negative image is most often expressed by those who do not claim a European identity. As one respondent states, “I’ve never identified [as
European]…here, the people are lacking some manners, to put it that way, because the people say things really rudely. Or, they say things very – they say it, and that’s it.” Others expand this idea of brusqueness to a more general attitude: “I feel a happiness, or a state of happiness, that doesn’t fit my concept of Europe…[in Europe] it’s more dull, more closed,” or “Europeans are really cold. No, I don’t consider myself cold at all.” Though most explain this explain “European” characteristic through contrast with their origin countries, it is sometimes drawn in comparison with Spain; in this case, European is seen as even colder or unfriendly than being Spanish.

Discussion and Conclusion

This chapter’s data contributes to understanding membership and belonging in the two empirical cases examined, and highlights the relevance of contextual differences in demographic history and make-up. Overall, this data shows a greater sense of inclusion among New York respondents. Differences in histories of diversity and immigration between New York and Madrid play a clear role. For instance, the import of the US’s (and, specifically, New York’s) history of immigration is seen in in the perceived meaning of American identity, through its link to concepts like the “American dream;” in the simple difficulty in defining American identity, given the lack of American homogeneity, in the association of American identity with principles more than specific cultural characteristics, since these common characteristics are less possible in such a diverse society; and in the perceived compatibility between American and foreign-origin identification, given the historical and cultural basis for hyphenated identities. The plasticity of American identity contributes to positive views of this label, and to willingness to
(and perceived ability to) identify as American. The implications of this history of immigration and diversity are further evident in non-national identifications, including the perceived meaning of New York City identity and in the prevalence and historical root of Latino identity. In contrast, the effect of Spain and Madrid’s more limited history of immigration and diversity is seen in the limited viability of hybrid/dual identities, given the lack of political or cultural precedent for this dual identification, and in the strong association of Spanish identity with specific cultural characteristics. It is further evident in the salience of a macro-level “immigrant-origin” as grouping, and in perceptions of European identity, in that other European locations with longer histories of migration are perceived as more open to foreign-origin peoples. This demonstrates the importance of sociodemographic and historical context in determining permissible identities—a central tenet of research and theorizing on identities (e.g., Mead 1934, Turner et al. 1987), and a core theoretical basis of this research project.90

Within the overarching contextual differences highlighted here, two important caveats should be made. First, the US does not represent an ideal of inclusivity; non-white status, for instance, is seen to limit full acceptance as solely American. Second, the effect of change over time in Spain, and particularly the drastic increase in immigrant presence in the 2000s, can indicate a potentially increased belonging among future generations. For instance, this is

90 In drawing the New York/Madrid comparison, it is important to note the difference between sites in representation of the true second generation; because migration is so new to Madrid, the number of true second generation in that site’s sample is significantly smaller than in New York. Nevertheless, this data shows that there are specific aspects of the destination country identity in Madrid that speak to these respondents’ lesser identification with the destination country compared to their New York counterparts; moreover, while a very small number of New York second generation respondents claimed sole American identification (i.e., no root country identification), the same was not true among Madrid second generation respondents.
evidenced by the perception that the young second generation, coming of age at a time when native-origin Madrileños are becoming accustomed to diversity, are more likely to be seen as Spanish than are this project’s older second generation respondents. Moreover, the fact that these youth are more likely to be seen as solely Spanish rather than both Spanish and Dominican/Colombian can, in some ways, indicate greater inclusion than in the US; in the US, respondents report the limited acceptability of their adopting a solely American identification – in some cases attributed to all Americans, but also sometimes attributed specifically to non-whites (as discussed in Ch. 3 (Markers of Difference)).

This chapter’s data and analysis also indicates the importance of not simply examining adoption of destination country identities, but rather focusing on perceived *compatibility* between destination and origin country identities. If immigrant-origin populations are reluctant to completely relinquish their ethnic/origin-country identification, the perceived ability to maintain this identification in conjunction with destination-country identification is core to adoption of destination-country identification, and to perceived belonging in the destination country. Relatedly, it highlights the need to examine the perceived *meaning* of the identities in question, as well as the *valuation* attributed to these identities. We see a contrast in the perceived content or meaning of Spanish and American identities, and in the valorization of such identities, and this has strong implications for the level of identification with these labels, or even the desire to identify with them. The importance of meaning and valorization is further evident in other identities discussed: for instance, Latino is understood as linked primarily to place of origin and as negatively valorized in Madrid, but is less solely linked to regional of origin and either neutral
or positive in New York; Madrid’s city identity is linked to Spanish regionalism, and New York city identity is linked to its diversity and immigrant past. This focus on meanings attributed to specific identities, and these meanings’ significance in explaining affiliation with these identities, informs research on assimilation and perceived belonging, as it builds upon the established body of research on identity.

In addition, this chapter’s incorporation of identities beyond the destination country indicates the importance of examining identification at multiple geopolitical levels. Discussion of city identification builds upon earlier work indicating a distinction between nation-based and city-based identities among the children of immigrants (Crul, Schneider and Lelie 2013, Fleischmann and Phalet 2010, Kasinitz et al. 2008), and it develops a new in-depth empirical case through its focus on Madrid. Through its comparative lens and qualitative methodology, it further highlights the variance in the ways that city identity can be understood (for instance, largely based upon the location’s demographic and cultural history in New York, but based more upon the political history and relationship between national regions in Madrid). Similar to distinction between nation-based and city-based identities among the children of immigrants, the introduction of European identity indicates a possible distinction between nation-based and supranational identities - a topic virtually absent from integration/assimilation literature. This data thus indicates the need to consider supranational identity as an additional possible geopolitical level of belonging, in addition to national and sub-national levels. The discussion Latino identity builds upon literature on Latino identification by examining this grouping in Spain, as virtually all research on Latino identity is based in the US. Given panethnicity
literature’s focus on the role of institutionalized labels for this identity adoption (Espiritu 1992, Itzigsohn 2004), the Madrid case also contributes to broader literature on panethnicity by showing the panethnic identification in a location where this grouping is not institutionalized.

Analysis of non-national identifications also shows how other geographical or panethnic identifications interact and relate to belonging in the destination country, conveying the importance of looking beyond just destination-country identification in research on assimilation and belonging. In certain cases, these other identifications provide a means of belonging without necessarily identifying with the destination country label (i.e, identifying as “American” or “Spanish”). For instance, views of Latino identity as a form of American identity indicate a sense of belonging in the US through seeing oneself as Latino, and views of identification with Madrid as equivalent to identification with Spain overall, but with less political (or even fascist) implications, indicates a sense of belonging in Spain through identification with Madrid. In other cases, non-national identifications can provide an alternative base of membership, as clear in respondents’ sense of belonging in New York rather than to the overall US. In other cases, the appeal of non-national identification can counter or detract from potential identification with the destination country, as evident in Madrid respondents’ views of European identity as positive compared to Spain, which highlights negative aspects of the Spanish/Madrid context. A focus on interactions between identities is more commonly highlighted in intersectionality research, which involves combinations of identities from different dimensions, such as race and gender (Crenshaw 1991). This chapter highlights the potential for interaction even within a single dimension - in this case, in identification with different geopolitical/ethnic labels – and the role
such interaction can play in perceived membership in destination societies.
Chapter 5: Conclusion

This dissertation examines the contextual basis of perceived belonging. More specifically, it examines the ways different histories of immigration and ethnoracial diversity affect the form, nature, and salience of boundaries demarcating an us/them (immigrant/minority vs. non-immigrant/majority) divide; thereby, it addresses the overall perceived possibilities of social membership, including the compatibility of minority and majority identity. It examines these issues in a comparative perspective, focusing on 1.5 and 2nd generation young adult Dominicans and Colombians in two locations: New York City and Madrid. These two locations were chosen based primarily on their stark contrasts in histories of immigration and diversity, with the US and New York as a historic receiving destination with long-standing ethnoracial diversity, and Spain and Madrid as a new receiving destination, even within the European context. By identifying the bases of, and barriers to, perceived possibilities of belonging in different social contexts, this project contributes to research on immigration, integration/assimilation, and social boundaries. More broadly, it furthers understanding of the meaning, shape, and implications of diversity in immigrant-receiving societies. This chapter concludes this dissertation by addressing how the data and analysis answer this project’s principal research questions, and by discussing overarching project conclusions. It then highlights unanticipated findings and changes in the research framing throughout the course of the project, and it identifies this project’s relationship to, and contributions to, central related areas of scholarship.


Research Focus and Findings

Addressing Principle Research Questions

As noted in the introductory chapter, this project asks three principal questions of each site. It asks: What do the young adults of the 1.5/2\textsuperscript{nd} generation see as the dominant boundaries or social divides in their countries of residence, in terms of differentiating immigrant-origin or ethnoracial minority groups from a perceived native-origin/mainstream population? How fluid are these boundaries, and when/why may they be subject to change? To what degree do children of immigrants feel receiving society national membership is available to them, and how does immigrant-origin or ethnoracial minority status play a role in limiting (or, perhaps, permitting) membership? For each question, this project specifically considers how the two sites’ divergent histories of diversity and immigration explain contextual differences in findings. Below, I draw upon the this project’s data and analysis, as discussed in the three empirical chapters, to explicitly address these research questions and highlight the principal conclusions.

The first question is oriented towards boundaries’ nature and placement, and the second question addresses boundaries’ salience and permanence. These issues are most clearly addressed in discussion of perceptions of experienced exclusion/othering (covered in Chapter 2), and in discussion of the specific markers seen as dominant us/them divides (covered in Chapter 3). Data show that perceptions of exclusion/othering are more experiential and drawn from daily life in Madrid; they are more structural and/or drawn from general societal knowledge in New
York. For instance, those in Madrid live in less ethnoracially segregated areas than those in New York. In Madrid, this demographic setting provides the opportunity for more experiences of interethnic/racial contact, which is often conflictual, with peers in neighborhoods and local schools. In New York, where neighborhoods are more segregated, such discrimination is less evident in daily life, yet significant in differentiating respondents’ overall opportunities from those of wealthier and/or white peers. In Madrid, reporting of discrimination is more often based on anti-immigrant or racist statements made face to face; in New York, it was based more on implicit and institutional means (e.g., low expectations for academic achievement, and class and neighborhood disparities as limiting educational opportunities). Differences in histories of diversity and immigration are reflected in the greater ethnoracial residential segregation and less overt nature of othering in New York. For example, previous policies of residential segregation in the US provide the basis for the present-day demographic landscape, and this history potentially increases general tolerance for, or the ability to overlook, continued segregation. The post-Civil Rights focus on political correctness and related cultural unacceptability of overt race-based discrimination in the US, as well as the long-standing nature of discrimination, which contributes to its institutionalization in various arenas, allows discrimination in New York to exist on a less visible level.

Regarding the specific markers of difference, both sites show that physical appearance (race) - and, specifically, a white/non-white divide - is a dominant boundary in differentiating respondents, as immigrant-origin or ethnoracial minority, from the perceived native-origin/mainstream population. This boundary is not seen as particularly fluid in either location.
In each site, different aspects of the histories of immigration and diversity explain race as a principal divide. In New York, the salience of physical appearance/race is based on the historical institutionalization and legitimatization of racial boundaries, and the concept of race itself. In Madrid, the salience of physical appearance/race derives from the recency of the non-white population and the strong link between non-white and immigrant (or 1.5/2nd generation) status. In addition, language and “forma de ser” are also clear boundaries in Madrid; these are much less salient in New York. References to code-switching in Madrid do show boundary crossing is possible, but this crossing is highly situational and transient. Moreover, even if the children of immigrants are able to cross in language (or forma de ser), physical appearance - which is highly aligned with language and forma de ser in indicating non-native identity - remains as a marker.

The prominence of language and forma de ser in Madrid, compared to New York, also draws from differences in sociohistorical context. With the US’s long history of racial categorization and inequality, it is sensible that race serves as the primary marker of difference. But in Madrid, where race is not historically rooted as the principal social divide, other factors (e.g., language and forma de ser) are not trumped by, or subsumed within, race. The emergence of these specific factors as additional boundaries in Madrid further draws from differences in sociohistorical context, as outlined in greater detail in Chapter 3.

The third question asks to what degree children of immigrants feel receiving society national membership is available to them, and immigrant-origin or ethnoracial minority status plays a role in limiting (or, perhaps, permitting) membership. This draws upon boundary placement, salience, and permanence to inform the overall permissibility of claiming the
destination country identity. This is directly addressed in Chapter 4, which shows overall higher levels of affiliation with destination country identity in New York compared to Madrid. These site-based differences in identification are primarily explained by three aspects of destination society identity: its perceived compatibility with other significant identities, its meaning, and valuation. First, the perceived compatibility between minority/origin country identity and destination country identity - in other words, whether they are seen as combinable or as contrary - is key to adopting destination country identity. This is particularly important in this project, as respondents in both locations tend to identify with a minority identity (non-white, Latino, and/or with the country of origin). In New York, immigration is part of the national lore, immigrant groups of the past have become incorporated into the mainstream, and native non-white minorities (for instance, African Americans) are seen as American. In this context, ethnoracial minority status or origin country identity are often seen by respondents as complementary or coexisting with broader societal belonging. Hyphenated identities, with “American” combined with other ethnic or national labels, are commonly used and understood as cultural norms. This is true both in official representation of various ethnoracial and immigrant-origin groups and in personal identification, which is legitimized by this formal/organizational hyphenated identity usage. Being non-white (and/or Latino) does not necessarily preclude identification as American, and one may even claim American belonging through a minority identity. In Madrid, immigration is relatively recent, and foreign-origin and non-white populations have little precedent for being incorporated into a core Spanish society. Within this sociohistorical context, Madrid respondents typically view identifying as a minority (often understood as immigrant-
origin) as contrary to identifying as Spanish. Hybrid or hyphenated identities, with “Spanish” combined with other ethnic or national labels, are not seen as permissible, or even comprehensible, within the broader society; such identifications are not used at an individual level, and they are virtually absent in any formal/organizational representation of minority groups. In contrast to New York, minority identity is thus incompatible with majority identity, and majority identity is unattainable through minority identity. Given this, it is this not surprising that immigrant-origin versus native-origin is clearly salient distinction in Madrid, whereas an overarching immigrant-origin versus native-origin is much less salient in New York.

Second, and in conjunction with differences in compatibility, this data also shows how differences in the perceived meaning of destination identity shape in affiliation. Spanish identity is overwhelmingly associated with the markers of difference outlined in Chapter 3 - race, forma de ser, and language. Meanings of being American, while often associated with the dominant marker of difference in this site (race), are also commonly based upon particular principles or ideals, such as freedom and the American dream. In both locations, origin-country identity is heavily linked to personal characteristics and tastes. Because Spanish identity is linked to a similar realm as origin country identity (i.e., cultural characteristics and tastes), the two may be understood as directly competing or zero-sum. In contrast, American identity and origin country identity occupy different realms, with American identity more associated with principles/ideals than cultural characteristics and tastes. Given this, American and origin-country identities are more easily combined. Third, destination country identities also have distinct valuations, which additionally informs site-based differences in levels of affiliation. In Madrid, Spanish identity is
often understood negatively by the children of immigrants - for instance, as associated with an unfriendly and closed *forma de ser*. Moreover, expressing pride in Spanish identity is sometimes associated with xenophobia and racism, based upon Spain’s previous fascist governance. In New York, American identity is often understood more positively, as evident in its link with principles of freedom and opportunities for success. A greater interest in affiliating with a positively-valued identity further helps explain lesser identification as Spanish and greater identification as American.

Though this project’s analysis of boundaries and identities centers on contextual differences in histories of immigration/diversity, another contextual factor - the economic climate - must also be noted. Theoretical assimilation literature indicates the significance of economic opportunity in permitting immigrant/minority entry into the mainstream, and the lack of such opportunity for creating, furthering, or perpetuating minority identification (Alba and Nee 2003, Portes and Zhou 1993). During data collection, Madrid was experience a significant economic downturn, and perceived the lack of economic opportunity was apparent among Madrid respondent. This could support or further already-limited Spanish identification in various ways: for instance, by inducing thoughts of emigration from Spain, by increasing a sense of competition between native-origin and immigrant-origin populations, or by reducing possibilities for interaction with the majority population. Beyond the individual, lack of

91 New York/the US was also experiencing economic downturn at this time. However, the climate there was less severe than in Madrid (for instance, the unemployment rate as of mid-2011, during this project’s data collection, was 9% in New York and 21% in Madrid), and views of limited economic opportunity were less evident in New York respondent data than in Madrid data.

92 It should be noted that employment in the formal economy was rather low for Spanish young adults generally, not just for immigrant-origin young adults, during the time of data collection and at the time of this project’s writing.
economic advancement can affect identification within an inter-generational and group-level perspective, as indicated in the aforementioned assimilation literature and other historically-based work (e.g., Roediger 2005). Though this project’s Madrid data shows significant non-economic bases for limited destination-country identification, and though some of the aforementioned economically-oriented possibilities are not directly evident in this project’s data, the economic situation may nonetheless further promote limited Spanish identification.

Within analysis of differences in destination country identity, this project also notes the potential importance of other geographic identities as substitutes for inaccessible national ones. For instance, city identity serves this purpose in both Madrid and New York. In Madrid, city identity is seen as relatively akin to that of Spanish identity, based on Madrid’s association with core Spanish Castillian culture. However, this city identity, in contrast to Spanish identity, is not similarly associated with negative aspects of Spain’s previous fascist governance or with current tensions between regional separatist movements. In New York, city identity is seen as distinct from US identity, and as even more strongly tied to narratives of immigration and diversity. It can promote belonging within this specific locale, but it is also seen as permitting a sense of American membership that may not have been available outside of New York. Thus, though operating differently in each location, city identity can provide a means of belonging without necessarily identifying with the destination country label in both sites. While this does not

counter overarching differences in destination identity between sites, it provides nuance to this analysis.

As clearly indicated already, this project’s main comparative focus centers on the two research sites. Yet this project also examines two national origin groups (Dominicans and Colombians) in each site, thus offering a secondary comparison. This dual-group perspective was intended to understand if/how racial boundaries are drawn differently for each group in the two locations, and whether difference in physical appearance affects perceived membership possibilities in each research location. Regarding the drawing of racial boundaries, the data does show certain differences in racial categorization. This is clearest in the case of Dominicans, who - though typically identifying as non-white in both sites - are more ambivalent about specifically citing black (*negro*) identity in New York than in Madrid. This can be linked to the fact that, in the US, the long-standing African American minority population is often understood as analogous to the racial category of “black;” Dominicans may disassociate from black identity to highlight their distinct culture and background, or to distance themselves from African Americans. In Madrid, where there is no parallel historical black population, identifying as black is not similarly loaded. But even with some variance in specific racial categorizations, this project generally finds that a white/non-white divide represents the overarching perceived racial division for both groups in each location. Since Dominicans and Colombians are typically

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93 As explained in the introduction, these groups were chosen due to their general phenotypical differences, with Dominicans more commonly evidencing African ancestry, and Colombians more commonly evidencing indigenous American ancestry. When evident based on the data, other non-racially-oriented differences between the two national origin groups were included in the empirical findings. However, these findings of difference in other arenas are relatively minimal.
understood as non-white, these groups’ difference in physical appearance does not significantly affect perceived membership possibilities in each location. Moreover, within each site, the two nation origin groups are virtually identical in their perceived markers of difference between majority and minority groups, in the salience of these boundaries as social divides, and in explanations for or against identifying with the destination country. In other words, they heavily align regarding the core aspects of this project. This supports this project’s principal focus on the contextual comparison, as set forth in the overall design and main research questions.

* * *

Drawing on the aforementioned data and analysis, this project offers certain overarching conclusions regarding contextual differences in the process and possibility of belonging. In general, this project finds that barriers to belonging are greater in Madrid than in New York. With the recency of immigration and limited history of ethnoracial diversity, immigrant-origin or ethnoracial minority populations in Madrid are seen as a clear “other” to the native-origin population; they are not a part of the perceived mainstream. In New York, with its longevity of immigration and ethnoracial diversity and its cultural acceptability of hybrid/hyphenated identities, immigrant-origin or ethnoracial minority status does not necessarily indicate exclusion from a perceived mainstream. This speaks to contextual differences in the understanding of the concept of “mainstream” - a key concept for assimilation research. In fact, this project’s focus understanding and explaining perceived us/them divides is largely geared towards explaining what comprises “them” - the supposed mainstream. In New York, “mainstream” (“American”) is typically understood as relatively inclusive; though it has some connection to whiteness,
minorities are nonetheless generally also understood as existing within the mainstream, and immigrant roots do not preclude inclusion within the mainstream. In Madrid, “mainstream” (“Spanish”) is more directly linked to whiteness and/or native Spanish heritage.

Data and analysis thus broadly indicate greater belonging and “mainstream” membership in New York compared to Madrid, based upon various implications of New York’s longer history and cultural entrenchment of immigration and ethnoracial diversity. However, this principal conclusion is somewhat complicated by two factor, stemming from the fact that the US’s history of ethnoracial diversity encompasses a parallel history of ethnoracial division. First, the overarching findings of greater belonging in New York are tempered by nuances in views of identity compatibility. Specifically, views of minority/majority identity compatibility are somewhat attenuated by the suggestion of minority identity as limiting inclusion as American. For instance, this is evident views of identification as “American American,” without hyphenation or hybridity, as possible for whites but not for non-whites. Thus, while minority status does not deny inclusion as American, a less salient but nonetheless present “other” status is seen as fixed. Second, respondents in Madrid suggest the potential for future boundary change - most notably, the possible lessening salience of physical appearance/race as a divide, and an overall increase in sense of social membership. Of course, this does not indicate that such

94 If such decreases in salience occur in Madrid, the implications for identification as Spanish are potentially varied. On the one hand, minority identity could become compatible with majority identity, somewhat akin to the US case. However, it is also possible that those considered “minorities,” in an American sense, may not become considered “minority” in the same way in Spain; for instance, they may be simply be considered Spanish. In this case, lack of compatibility between minority identity and majority identity would emerge from lack of minority classification rather than from rejection/exclusion. Though this projection is in no way certain or even likely, the possibility presents an intriguing counter to the US case.
change will actually occur. However, respondents’ mere reference to potential change is significant within this project’s comparative framework; it contrasts significantly with New York, where there is no similar sense of principal boundaries (physical appearance/race, and particularly the boundary between white and non-white) as subject to change. These divergent views of race’s permanence as a divide are linked to differences in the racial boundaries’ roots. In Madrid, race’s importance is drawn from the recent nature of large-scale and non-European immigration. It is not institutionalized as a boundary or legitimized category, and such institutionalization is understood as potentially problematic by political leaders. With this, it is seen as potentially open to blurring. In New York, race’s importance is linked to the institutionalization and established nature ethnoracial categories, supported by the long-standing alignment of minority status and socioeconomic inequality. It is thus seen as fixed or enduring.

Project Development and Expected vs. Unexpected Findings

Having explained this project’s overarching findings and conclusions, I now revisit initial research questions and hypotheses, set forth at the outset of this project. This promotes reflection on the overall research process, identifies which findings were expected and unexpected, and highlights the project’s (and researcher’s) development and maturation throughout the data collection and analysis.

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95 As indicated by material cited in public masters-level course on philosophies of immigrant integration (which the author audited during her fieldwork in Madrid), the Madrid and Spanish government is actively seeking integration policies and outcomes that counter “multiculturalism,” which is seen as negative in its perpetuation of intergroup division.
I originally conceptualized this project with the overarching objective of understanding the contextual basis of perceived processes and possibilities of assimilation. This focus remained constant throughout, but my means of addressing this core topic were further developed and reconceptualized during data collection and analysis. The changes, although subtle, are nonetheless significant. In the original project proposal, I addressed overall belonging and minority identity are first, and I then questioned salient boundaries; in the final project, I deal with the boundaries issue before addressing overall belonging and identity. While this did not alter this project’s substantive material, it conveys a conceptual reframing of the project. Boundaries serve as the root basis for conceptions of belonging overall and of identification as minority, so analysis of the placement, nature, and salience of specific boundaries is a necessary precursor to consideration of identities. I also ultimately separated boundary placement (what boundaries are seen as the dividing lines) and salience (fluidity) into two distinct questions, whereas they were originally considered jointly. While this again does not significantly affect this project’s substantive focus, it conveys my increasing view of the value of conceptually separating these two aspects of boundaries. Perhaps most significantly, my conception of “social divides” developed during the course of the project. I initially imagined examining “social divides” or “intergroup divides” in terms of identity labels (i.e., whether the main divides are based on racial categories, national origin, panethnic identity, etc.). However, I later concluded that meaning of social divides was better understood as addressing the specific characteristics or markers seen as dividing two groups, which hold definite implications for the adoption of identity labels.
In conjunction with changes in the project’s research focus, I can also address how my findings differed from my initial expectations. In New York, I originally hypothesized, based on existing literature, that panethnic and/or racial labels would serve as the dominant dividing lines. In Madrid, I hypothesized that respondents would espouse a origin-country identity or an “other” label, and that race would be a weak divide relative to national origin or immigrant-descent status, based on the lesser institutionalization of race as a category. In New York, I expected that children of immigrants in New York City would see their minority (ethnoracial or national origin) identities as compatible with an American identity; I expected that children of immigrants in Madrid would generally not see Spanish membership as available to them and would see their minority ethnic, racial, or national origin identities as incompatible with mainstream “Spanish” or “Madrid” identities.

While many of these hypotheses were generally confirmed, they were also often expanded, revealing greater nuance than I had initially envisioned. In New York, my hypothesis of race and/or (pan)ethnicity as the main divide was largely corroborated, though I came to see that (pan)ethnicity was often actually understood in racial terms, and specifically as aligned with “non-white.” In Madrid, my hypothesis of an overarching “other” (non-native) label and national origin labels as highly salient were also proven accurate. However, certain findings in Madrid were not predicted. For instance, I did not anticipate findings significant racial or panethnic (Latino) identity. However, the data indicate that such identities were salient - especially regarding race (or, physical appearance), which was highly salient and linked to categorization of “other” and “immigrant-origin.” Moreover, upon understanding social divides in terms of
specific markers of difference rather than just identity labels, I found that language and *forma de ser* (in addition to race) played a major role in limiting perceived destination society identification in Madrid.

In New York, the expectation of American identity was somewhat confirmed, in that minority identities were often seen as compatible with national identity. However, I also found that this belonging is sometimes seen as attenuated, based on non-white status, and some felt broader exclusion from American identity, often based on race (and as aligned with class). In Madrid, my expectations of limited identification as Spanish were largely confirmed. However, I gained a much clearer explanation of why this is the case, which was relevant to more generally understanding destination-country identity in both sites. I had initially considered the key role of compatibility with origin country identity, and/or with other minority identities. This indeed explained aspects of destination country identity in both locations. However, I had not explicitly considered the implication of the meanings attributed to destination country identities - in Madrid's case, as linked to specific characteristics or attributes, which directly competes with perceived the characteristic-focused meaning of origin-country identity - for overall belonging or compatibility with origin-country identity. As the data and analysis shows, this also helped to explain compatibility in the New York case, where American identity, as linked to principles or ideals, did not directly compete with the cultural content-basis of origin-country identity. Similarly, I had not explicitly considered the importance of perceived valuation of destination country identities in explaining respondents’ desire to affiliate with such a label.
In addition to the topics highlighted in my original hypotheses, various other unanticipated yet significant findings help address my overall research objective. For instance, given the comparative framing of this project, I had clear expectations that the research sites’ differing histories of immigration and diversity would matter for the possibility and means of belonging. However, I had not anticipated the effects certain other (sometimes related) aspects of context, including the greater degree of residential segregation in New York permitting lesser experience of exclusion in through more limited interaction with the perceived dominant, white, population. Though I had intended to consider other relevant geographic identities beyond national origin identity (e.g., city identity), I had not considered to the possibility of certain relevant geographic affiliations (e.g., supranational European identity), and had not fully grasped the ways in which affiliation with non-national geographic identities may further or counter, rather than simply coexist with, destination country identity. Finally, I had not expected the suggestion of potential future change in salient social boundaries in Madrid, and the ways in which it influenced understandings of these boundaries even in the present.

**Contributions and Links to Core Literature**

**Boundaries, Identities, and Assimilation**

In dealing with immigrant-origin populations’ perceived belonging in a receiving society, this project clearly falls within assimilation literature. Yet, while research on immigrant assimilation often examines levels of national identity or particular ethnic or racial (or, in
Europe, religious) affiliations, the majority of work lacks this project’s open and ground-up approach to understanding the bases for these affiliations. Moreover, most European work and much American work on immigrants and their children examine specific outcomes, such as educational and occupational standing, rather than the establishment of group boundaries. Discussing ethnic boundaries and immigrant assimilation, Alba (2005:20) notes that ‘relatively little work has been done to theorize [boundaries’] nature and the processes that affect them, even though it is apparent that both are critical to ethnic construction and change,” and others have further called for studies specifically dealing with cross-cutting topics like boundaries (Martiniello and Rath 2010, Thomson and Crul 2007).

Given the central focus on intergroup boundaries in assimilation theory, understanding the precise placement and salience of perceived markers of difference – and how they are seen as linked to destination society identity – should serve as a precursor to determining specific assimilation processes and possibilities. In fact, this is true of various other sociological topics of intergroup interaction and identity construction. This project thus offers specific contribution through its focus on boundaries and the empirically-understood placement and salience of intergroup divides. In this, it builds upon limited examples from other works: for instance, Lamont (2000), who explores how her subjects “concretely define ‘us’ and ‘them’” (4). The findings of specific markers of difference that are not identified as highly salient in previous literature on the second generation and integration (most notably, language, and cultural norms of interaction and values (forma de ser)), as well as of specific markers of difference that may have initially appeared counterintuitive (e.g., language as a more dominant marker in Spain than
the US for Latin American-origin populations), indicate the value in examining social boundaries using this a ground-up, open approach rather than focusing only on specific pre-determined factors. This project’s examination of life experiences within a boundaries orientation is further significant; in much research on immigrant integration and the second generation, discussion of the topics like neighborhoods, schooling, and employment focus on socioeconomic integration. By instead examining how experiences within these institutions – institutions that form the basis of most young adults’ lives - affect and convey a sense of membership in the destination society, this project shows how incorporating such topics within this framework contributes to a boundary-oriented understanding of assimilation and belonging.

The focus on boundaries further contributes to the extant body of literature on salient social boundaries and identities for immigrant-origin individuals and communities. It does so by developing literature on language and cultural values/norms of interaction, as noted above, and it also builds upon scholarship on race - a noted as a significant marker of difference in the US, but also evident in other locations. A significant theoretical body of scholarship focuses on racial construction, or racial formation, examining racial (and ethnic) groupings as a project and process rather than as fixed and inevitable categories (Brubaker 2004, Cornell and Hartmann 2007, Omi and Winant 1994), and international study and comparisons of race are particularly fruitful in highlighting variance in racial categories and identities (Foner 2011).  

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96 Foner (2011:252) explains that that “it is a commonplace in the social sciences to say that race is a social and cultural construction, but this statement is the beginning of an inquiry rather than the end of it... a cross-national perspective highlights just how this process of construction takes place.” Such perspectives are implicitly evident in studies of locations like Brazil Telles, E. E. 2004. Race in Another America: The Significance of Skin Color in Brazil: Princeton University Press. and the Dominican Republic Howard, D. 2001. Coloring the Nation: Race and Ethnicity in the Dominican Republic: Signal Books. where both racial classifications and the bases of racial
Madrid focus, as well as its comparative New York perspective, furthers this line of work. This study provides an empirical account of racial construction in a virtually unexplored location, and it shows that race can be relevant even where conceptions of race are not salient in the destination society, and where popular discussion of race or usage of the term itself is limited.97 This supports the contention that that race, understood as a physical appearance- or color-based category, is indeed a social divide and merits study even in locations without clear racial discourse (Alba 2005), and it shows how race can be understood as a proxy for foreign origin in locations with little historical ethnoracial diversity. Relatedly, this project also complicates panethnicity’s basis in institutionalized categories (Espiritu 1992, Itzigsohn 2004), as this project evidences the panethnic (Latino) identification in a location where this grouping is not institutionalized. These findings are relevant to research on race, ethnicity and immigrant assimilation in other locations without clearly defined ethnoracial categories, or where such terms are not commonly used (e.g., France and Germany, which reject or limit usage of the term “race” or “ethnicity” based on ideals of republicanism and national histories of ethnoracial genocide).

In conjunction with its focus on boundaries, this project also helps develop a framework for examining identity within assimilation scholarship. In addition to simply examining the level

97 This project’s empirical based in Latinos, who are formally considered an ethnicity rather than a race in the US institutional context. However, this project clearly dealt with racial construction in respondents’ of race as a salient social boundary. In addition, many US respondents understood “Latino” or “Hispanic” a race, as distinguished from unattenuated “white.”
of affiliation with a destination society, this project conveys the importance of examining the perceived meaning of the identities in question, their valuation, and their compatibility with origin-country or other minority identities. These factors - specifically, meaning and valuation - are somewhat evident in social movement literature (e.g., Ashmore, Deaux and McLaughlin-Volpe 2004, Polletta and Jasper 2001) but are much less evident in research on immigrant-origin populations and assimilation, although this project shows they play a key role in explaining espousal of destination-country identity. Moreover, much literature on valuation of identities focuses on the role of valuation for maintaining in-group exclusivity, in that higher-status groups highlight boundaries and separation from out-groups. This project also shows how negative valuation of a higher-status group can justify or promote an out-group’s limited desire to affiliate with that identity. Though this can also represent a response to exclusion, it is nonetheless worth considering in research on identity. Finally, the incorporation of identities other than the destination and origin country indicates the importance of examining identification at multiple geopolitical levels within assimilation research; as this project shows, other geographical identifications can further, counter, or otherwise complicate perceptions of belonging in the destination country.

As already suggested, this project’s comparative perspective on boundaries and identities permits a much-needed focus on context; evidence of boundary/identity differences between the research sites highlights the social construction and contextual basis of boundaries. This, in turn, can directly inform assimilation research; because the concept of assimilation centers on changes

98 This trio of identity attributed - meaning, valuation, and compatibility - can be further applied to other areas of research that examine identity.
in intergroup boundaries, findings that dominant markers of difference vary by setting indicate the need for ground-level and contextualized empirical work on the topic. Various researchers have noted that, though comparative research on immigrant incorporation is a constructive means of studying the significance of context, systematic comparisons are thus far lacking (Alba 2005, Crul, Schneider and Lelie 2013, Penninx 2006, Thomson and Crul 2007).\footnote{Crul et al. (2013), as well as select other publications noted in this project’s introductory chapter, are notable recent exceptions to the dearth in comparative literature on second generation integration.} This project’s comparative focus, especially including a non-US location, thus provides empirical understanding of contextual differences in boundaries. Though this, it further informs the potential application of various aspects of prominent US-developed assimilation theories (namely, neoassimilation (Alba and Nee 2003) and segmented assimilation (Portes and Zhou 1993)). As noted in this dissertation’s introduction, this project did not set out to assess or evaluate the broader applicability of these specific assimilation theories, whose relevance to non-US locations has been called into question (Martiniello and Rath 2010, Silberman, Alba and Fournier 2007, Thomson and Crul 2007, Vermeulen 2010). Yet, as Bloemraad (2013) notes, comparative work is not necessarily aimed at proving or disproving theories, but rather towards understanding how theories vary in application.

This project follows this line of reasoning, showing how various aspects of dominant assimilation theories apply in distinct locations. For instance, both neoassimilation and segmented assimilation highlight the importance of context in understandings possibilities and trajectories of assimilation. Given the differing markers of difference and perceived means of
accessing mainstream (Spanish/American) identity in each location, this focus on context is clearly relevant to, and supported by, this project. In addition to this shared emphasis on context, this project builds upon the central focus of each theory. Neoassimilation specifically highlights the importance and process of boundary construction and change, highlighting the combined role of cultural/political and economic factors - namely, the post-Civil Rights era, and socioeconomic advancement - in decreasing the salience of intergroup boundaries in the US. In addition to highlighting the value of neoassimilation’s explicit boundary-construction focus (as addressed earlier in this section), this project also conveys other potential bases for changing boundary construction within the overall framework of neoassimilation. In the Madrid case, the drastic and unprecedented increase in immigration and racial diversity within a short time, combined with the lack of institutionalization of ethnoracial categories and a broader culture of antiracism, serve as the principal bases for boundary change; this indicates the role of cultural/political and demographic factors. Segmented assimilation specifically emphasizes the importance of existing demographic makeup and historical ethnoracial inequalities for assimilation trajectories, in terms of assimilation into different demographic groups. Researchers have specifically challenged this theory’s applicability in locations without historically established, and historically subjugated, racial minorities (e.g., Crul, Schneider and Lelie 2013; and others, Silberman, Alba and Fournier 2007). This project somewhat limits this challenge by showing that pre-established minority categories are not necessary for racialization and related discrimination, both in experience and in socioeconomic opportunity. However, it also supports this challenge in suggesting that the meaning and process of assimilation into a minority, including the meaning and process of
minority categorization itself, may operate differently in locations without historical and institutionalized ethnoracial groupings; this is relevant at individual level, group level, and within a cross-generational perspective. Overall, this project thus supports the broader relevance of central tenets of these theories by showing how they can be differentially applied when appropriately contextualized.

Beyond relating to the application of already-established assimilation theories, this project’s focus on context and ground-up approach also establishes a different framework for this body of scholarship. Specifically, this project explores assimilation through a boundaries/identities approach: examining on the principal markers of difference seen as differentiating a minority/immigrant-origin population from the perceived mainstream; examining the salience, fluidity, and perceived permanence of these boundaries; and examining the level of affiliation with destination-country identity, as drawn from the aforementioned markers of difference, the perceived meaning and valuation of that destination-country identity, and destination-country identity’s compatibility with other highly salient (and potentially competing; such as origin-country) identities. This boundary/identities approach to assimilation is highly valuable in conceptualizing bases for and barriers to belonging, which both draw from and inform structural aspect of assimilation. It provides a conceptual framework for future assimilation studies, as it can be applied to other destinations and immigrant-origin groups; it could also be applied more broadly to various other areas of sociological research on intergroup division.
Empirical Research on Immigration and Assimilation

In addition to adding to conceptual literature on boundaries, identities, and assimilation, this project contributes to empirical research on these topics in the two research sites. This is most notable in Spain and Madrid. Despite the overwhelming increase in immigration to Spain and Spain’s recent prominence as a receiving country relative to the rest of Europe (Arango 2000, Eurostat 2010, Kleiner-Liebau 2009, Kreienbrink 2008), most research on Europe has focused on Northern and Western Europe, and even research on Spain is narrow in focus. Bail (2008:45), discussing southern European nation in general, notes that “the literature on Southern Europe focuses primarily on perceptions of economic threat induced by the abrupt increase of immigrants in the labor market and high levels of unemployment and illegal migration… the relative salience of symbolic boundaries…has yet to be studied in detail.” This study’s focus on Spain therefore contributes to the regional diversity of immigration research and improves understanding of a key receiving area. Moreover, in Madrid and Spain, research on the young adult 1.5 and second generation is particularly limited. This is due both the overall limited attention to immigration in Spain, and to the fact that the 1.5 and second generation is just now reaching adulthood. Some recent research (Portes et al. 2010, Portes, Vickstrom and Aparicio 2011) examines assimilation among the second generation in Madrid, but this work focuses on adolescents rather than young adults, and its quantitative basis limits its applicability to examining perceptions of social boundaries and their relation to belonging in the destination society. This project thus provides a different, and highly valuable, outlook on a newly-emerging and rapidly-increasing population.
This project also builds upon US and New York-oriented work on the second generation, though this body of research is already much more developed than in Spain. One subset of this scholarship, (e.g., Kasinitz et al. 2008, studying New York City) indicates that non-white or foreign origin does not prevent inclusion in the mainstream. This is supported by empirical literature in various US sites beyond New York (Dhingra 2007) and by more macro-level or conceptual work on assimilation in the US Alba (2005). Another set of scholarship indicates that race is seen as a highly significant boundary that may permit assimilation into a minority subpopulation, but not the (white) mainstream. This work is typified by Portes and Zhou (1993) and subsequent research within the framework of segmented assimilation. This project’s findings provide a nuanced view that bridges the two camps. As it shows, racial boundaries are seen as fixed and set. However, they are not necessarily explicitly drawn upon in everyday interaction, and they do not prevent overall inclusion within an American mainstream. These racial boundaries thus serve as a basis for attenuated inclusion, representing an underlying source of division within the overarching trope and perception of American inclusivity and multiculturalism. Relatedly, this project indicates a white/non-white divide as a significant racial division, thus somewhat countering other literature presenting the main emerging divide as black/non-black (Lee and Bean 2007). Even if not evidencing visible African origins (e.g., in the case of the large majority of this project’s New York-based Colombians) and not clearly identified as “black,” self-classification of non-white proved highly significant in differentiating respondents from the quintessential imagined American, as white. This being said, this project

100 This is at least, for individuals in the present, though this is also suggested cross-generationally, in negligible reporting of potential change over time.
does support Lee and Bean’s overall claims for the persistence of racial divides, whatever the specific form may be, in American society. Finally, this project also adds to empirical literature on racial identity (and, specifically, relation to black identity) for children of immigrants with visible African ancestry (e.g., Dominicans and West Indians; see, for example, Itzigsohn 2009, Kasinitz et al. 2008, Waters 1999)

In addition, this project provides information on reactions to the post-2008 economic recession. In Madrid, as noted earlier, the data shows highly limited expectation of economic advancement, and at least some interest in resultant step-migration away from Spain. In New York, where the economic situation was not as severe as in Madrid, respondents show greater views of opportunity (or at least a clearer focus on the potential for future opportunities), and virtually no interest in step-migration away from the US. In addition to the level of economic recession in each location, this data also suggests additional factors shaping and explaining views of economic opportunity, such as the effect of the destination society’s narrative of economic and educational opportunity. The “American dream” narrative provides a historical and conceptual foundation for expectation of economic gain, educational advancement, and broader success despite adversity. Spain, however, lacks an equivalent trope of the “Spanish dream.” In troubling financial times, there is no clear cultural narrative in Madrid that counters economic realities and encourages optimism and perseverance. This data thus provides concrete information on the economic recession’s impact on immigrant-origin young adults in each location, and it indicates varied contextual factors informing its impact.
In addition to the specific contributions to research on each destination country, this project also furthers empirical research through its focus on Latin Americans in Spain. Much work on immigration in Europe focuses on Muslim populations. While religion is clearly a significant issue, it may obscure the role of other (often related) characteristics, like race or ethnicity, in creating social divides. This study, by focusing on Latin Americans, as non-Muslims, directly examines the importance of non-religious characteristics and explores an understudied group in Europe. The focus on Latin Americans in Europe also contributes to the study of Latin American migration, which has been overwhelmingly focused on the United States and, to a lesser degree, between Latin American countries. Recent years have seen some work emerging on Latin Americans in European context (e.g., Marrow 2013), but this literature is still in its infancy.101

Policy/Applied Relevance

This project’s findings also hold applied relevance for integration policy development and implementation. For instance, since Spain is now creating and implementing integration policies to deal with this rapid change (e.g., Spain’s Strategic Plan for Citizenship and Integration, and Madrid’s local Plan of Integration), research work on migration and integration in this country is of great use to policymakers. An understanding of what factors serve as the principal perceived boundaries to belonging, and a broader understanding of bases of limited destination-country identity, can inform specific programmatic elements aimed to promote

101 More literature from Spanish researchers focuses on Latin American immigration in Spain, but this work is generally incorporated into international scholarship, often because it is published only in Spanish.
societal belonging and decrease intergroup divides. Beyond informing specific programs aimed at addressing the factors limiting a sense of societal belonging, this information can also create greater understanding and increased sympathy among those providing services. This was addressed in feedback from a Madrid-based social worker who had attended a presentation of my findings, and who was often frustrated by her observations of immigrants’ limited interest in mixing into the broader Spanish/Madrileño society. She explained that this project’s data furthered her understanding of their actions and attitudes; her admitted ill-will towards this population, as drawn from her work-based interaction, was lessened by a clearer recognition of their perceived inability to be accepted as Spanish, the bases for this perception, and negative views of the meaning of Spanish identity. Though the data presented here is primarily relevant to Madrid/Spain, the benefits this boundaries/identities approach to improving integration programming and delivery are relevant to other locations as well.  

In addition, Spanish government integration plans and studies have been focused on first-generation migrants, but an understanding of children of immigrants’ sense of membership and social boundaries is vital to ensuring long-term success in assimilation and social cohesion. Children of immigrants in Spain are just now coming of age, so this country has a new opportunity to examine their sense of membership and use this to guide future policy. The 2005 riots amongst children of immigrants in France show how feelings of exclusion amongst this immigrant-origin population can have significant negative consequences when unaddressed. If Spanish policy-makers and practitioners do not know whether and/or why children of immigrants

102 Though potentially relevant to the US case, this is less clear due to the US’s lack of explicit integration policy.
sense exclusion, these issues will be ignored by default. This understanding of boundary formation in Spain, as an area new to immigration, can also inform other countries in which immigration is a recent phenomenon. Moreover, this project’s data indicates Spain’s post-2008 economic crisis as limiting economic opportunity for immigrant-origin populations. Given this, and given lack of economic opportunity’s relationship to downward/limited assimilation and related problems in social cohesion (e.g., Alba 2009, Portes and Zhou 1993), programs focused on improving the immigrant-origin population’s economic mobility may hold long-term benefits for Spain.

Finally, this project speaks to the ongoing debate, clearly exemplified in recent and ongoing debates in France (e.g., Simon 2008), about the relative value and drawbacks of encoding racial or ethnic categories for assessing and addressing inequalities. Views suggesting or referencing racial boundaries’ lessening future salience in Madrid, in contrast to their perceived longevity in New York due to their institutionalization, speak to the possible benefit of not formally encoding such categories. However, it must be noted that this decrease in salience in Madrid is not a given, and it will prove significantly less likely if racial minorities (in the current view) are broadly aligned with other bases of stratification, such as class or residential location. In this case, even if racial categories are not legitimized by the government or popular discourse, race will remain a highly salient category. This leads to the key challenge in this debate: how to help the disadvantaged and prevent such stratification - or, even empirically know whether and where it exists - without institutionalizing categories based on race or ethnicity (or relatedly, in many cases, foreign origin). Though this project does not provide an answer, it
contributes to understanding and discussion of the issue by comparatively examining one location with highly institutionalized categories and one without, and by including a location where lack of categorizations is not based upon an explicit political discourse and integration ideology discouraging the practice (as with France).

In the US, this project’s indication of the significance of ethnoracial divides, as well as the links between minority status, attenuated belonging, and social inequalities, speaks to the need to counter the view of the US as “post-racial” and address such issues. Certain aspects of the data highlight actions or foci that may help address this. First, it suggests the possible utility of promoting dialogue on race, ethnicity, and related societal stratification that is open, reflective, and directly acknowledges such issues. This is based upon respondent views of the superficial and romanticized nature of discourse on multiculturalism in the US; the fact that such discourse is seen as limiting true discussion of problems linked to racial and ethnic inequality; and the overall greater institutionalization of discrimination and inequality in the US, which makes ethnoracial disparities less directly observable and experienced in everyday life. This is relevant for social discourse generally, and it could be directly integrated into the school-based discussion of diversity, which is understood by this project’s respondents as often idealized.

Second, the perceived links between race/ethnicity and class boundaries/inequalities supports the possible role of improving socioeconomic opportunity/mobility in decreasing the salience of ethnoracial divides, both at the symbolic and structural level. This is corroborated by historical American assimilation data showing the role of socioeconomic advancement in decreasing the salience of perceived intergroup difference (Roediger 2005). While this project certainly does
not offer a wholesale solution to ethnoracial inequality in the US, its empirical examination of how such problems are experienced and understood can nonetheless inform our understanding of potential remedies.

Conclusion

Overall, this project finds that barriers to belonging are greater in Madrid than in New York. With the recency of immigration and limited history of ethnoracial diversity, immigrant-origin or ethnoracial minority populations are seen as a clear “other” to the native-origin population; they are not a part of the perceived mainstream. In New York, with its longevity of immigration and ethnoracial diversity, immigrant-origin or ethnoracial minority status does not necessarily indicate exclusion from a perceived mainstream. However, each case offers its own qualifications. In Madrid, minority status is not necessarily fixed. This offers the potential for greater inclusion - and a changing meaning of mainstream - in the future. In New York, minority status (particularly when understood as non-white) is seen as relatively fixed. So, while minority status does not necessarily counter inclusion, a less salient but nonetheless present “other” status is seen as ever-present. This project indicates the contextual basis - and, the contextual complexity - of social boundaries, identities, and the meaning and process of assimilation. By identifying the perceived possibilities of belonging in different social context, by exploring the specific type of identity espoused in each location, and by outlining a belonging/identity framework for assimilation studies, this project allows for better understanding of the current shape and possible future course of diversity in immigrant-receiving societies.
Appendix I: Interview Process and Researcher Reflexivity

The first block of the interview consisted of questions about the respondent's migration experience (if any) and transnational ties, and questions about their experience in school, experience or expectations of workforce participation, neighborhood characteristics, and social relations (friendships and romantic partners). I investigated respondents’ relations with native Spaniards and members of other immigrant-descent groups, focusing specifically on intergroup relations and experiences of inclusion and exclusion. For example, in questions on social relations, I asked about respondents’ preference for friends/partners of particular national origins (co-ethnics, other Latin Americans, children of non-Latin American immigrants, and children of Spaniards), reasons for preferences, whether respondents believe others in their age cohort or peer network have similar preferences, and parents' opinions on these matters. In sections on neighborhoods, schooling, and work, I asked about the amount of interaction the respondent (and others of his/her national origin group) has with the native population and with other immigrant-descent populations, and the dynamic of this interaction. If not already discussed, I also asked specifically about the respondents’ (and friends’/family’s) experiences of discrimination in neighborhoods, schooling, work settings, and social relations. I questioned what specific interactions were perceived as discrimination, who perpetrated this discrimination (including their national origin background), what happened during this interaction, and the perceived basis for this discrimination (i.e., whether it is based on immigrant-descent status, independent of national origin; specific national origin; race; etc.). When injustice or discrimination is
perceived, I discussed what responses are seen as legitimate in the given context; this help
determines the relative availability of minority rights framework and respondents' perceived
ability to effect change in the receiving context. Such questions provided further information
about the level of perceived membership in the host society and whether immigrant background
is seen as a barrier to membership.

The second block of the interview consists of questions specifically related to social
boundaries, identity, and membership. In this section, I asked about respondents’ perceived
ability to be considered Spanish/American and the perceived compatibility between minority and
majority identities, including whether respondents feel they can consider themselves
Spanish/American by claiming or while maintaining a minority identity. For instance, I
questioned who respondents believe is eligible to be labeled Spanish/American, such as the
respondent him/herself, the respondent in 20 years, and the respondent's future children; whether
Dominican and Colombian identities are perceived as compatible with Spanish/American
identity, including whether they are situationally distinct or whether they can coexist at one time;
and whether and how Dominican/Colombians are different from Spanish/Americans and vice
versa, which tell me the perceived primary divides between these groups (i.e., based on physical
characteristics, culture, language, etc.). I questioned the reasoning behind all answers to better
understand the bases for exclusion and identity compatibility or incompatibility.

Beyond questions of identity compatibility, this second block also looked into other
aspects of social grouping and boundary placement. For instance, I assessed the relative
prominence of pan-ethnic Latin American identity by asking whether respondents feel they have
more in common with children of Latin American immigrants of different national origins (i.e.,
either non-Dominicans or non-Colombians) than with immigrants from other areas, and by
asking whether they feel the general public and/or the government sees all Latin Americans as
the same or having significant commonalities. I also considered racial identity and its relation to
mainstream membership; this includes asking specifically about the meaning associated with the
word race and discussing the degree to which one’s racial identity is subject to change, the
contexts under which it may change, and whether it is perceived as a barrier to membership in
the host society.

I conducted interviews in two waves. In summer of 2010, I conducted pilot interviews
with respondents in Madrid, and in the winter of 2010, I conducted a first wave of interviews
with respondents in New York. I then conducted my second wave of Madrid interviews in
spring 2011 and my second wave of New York interviews in summer/fall 2011. Conducting the
research in these two waves allowed me to make an assessment after completing one wave of the
New York-Madrid comparison and fine-tune the interview schedule for the second wave.
Especially given the lack of previous empirical literature on second generation integration in
Madrid, this multi-stage process allowed my initial data to focus my research project as needed.

As with any qualitative project, the characteristics of the interviewer, and the effects of
these characteristics on the interviewer/respondent dynamic, should be considered. As a New
York-residing, American-born, 20-something white female, aspects of my biography affected my

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103 These pilot interviews are not included in my final interview count or data analysis. These interviews, in
conjunction with review of the New York Immigrant Second Generation project, helped guide the development of
this research project and provided me a clearer understanding of the Madrid context that was not available from
established research.
relation with respondents in distinct ways in each location. Regarding my place of residence, the fact that I was a resident of New York City established a sense of commonality with New York respondents; as many respondents identified with the city, I emphasized my New York-ness to develop rapport. In Madrid, my place of residence represented a difference from respondents. However, I realized I could use this to my advantage; it allowed me to question them on aspects of life in Madrid that they may have felt no need to explain to a Madrileño, providing me greater information about their views of the residence society. It also allowed me to establish commonality in that I, like them, come from somewhere else. My age was a benefit in both locations; given that I was relatively close in age to my respondents (and perceived as close in age even by younger respondents), I was more easily able to establish camaraderie and a more conversational interview context. I believe my gender was also a benefit to the openness of conversation, as females are typically perceived as less threatening than males.

Language use affected interviews differently in each location. In New York, interviews were conducted in English, which was spoken fluently by all respondents. This served me logistically in allowing conversation to flow normally. When possible, I also showed that I spoke and understood Spanish (for instance, indicating understanding when respondents occasionally used Spanish words or phrases), and I believe this increased rapport. In Madrid, interviews were conducted in Spanish. Though I am fluent in Spanish, it is not my native language, and there were occasionally certain terminologies or local idioms that I did not understand. While this sometimes interrupted the flow of conversation, it also provided me a basis for asking them to clarify certain points, which allowed me to better understand their
perspective on various issues. In fact, I occasionally feigned limited understanding just so respondents would elaborate on certain topics. As with my region of origin, my status as a non-native Spanish speaker also allowed me to establish commonality in that I, like them, come from somewhere else.

In both locations, I was seen as racially different from respondents; I was seen as white while they largely self-identified as non-white. In Madrid, this did not seem to be a significant barrier to general openness or discussion of race. I attribute this to the lack of cultural emphasis on political correctness compared to the US, which allowed respondents to openly recognize – and, to a degree, move past – our racial difference, and to their greater general interaction with whites compared to New York respondents. In New York, I saw more trepidation in discussion of race; while this may have been the case with any researcher, I imagine my racial identity as white contributed to this. As a result, I emphasized other personal factors to build rapport and camaraderie, and I constructed the interview design to include ample conversation on non-sensitive matters before explicitly discussing race. Although there is no counterfactual to prove this, I believe these strategies mitigated the limiting effects of my own racial status in the New York interviews.
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