Article

Identity Awoken in Second-Generation British Poles in the UK—Personal Journeys

Antonia Bifulco [1,*] and Maureen Smojkis [2]

[1] Centre for Abuse and Trauma Studies, Department of Psychology, Middlesex University, London NW4 4BT, UK
[2] Department of Social Policy and Social Work, University of Birmingham, Birmingham B15 2TT, UK; m.n.smojkis@bham.ac.uk
* Correspondence: a.bifulco@mdx.ac.uk

Abstract: We examine the identity of British Poles born in the UK, whose parents arrived as allied servicemen and their families, seeking asylum following WW2. The two authors are from this community, and here examine their British-Polish identity along with other second-generation Poles in the UK. These individuals grew up in distinct communities exposed to the Polish language and culture but with restricted contact with communist Poland. The themes of response to parents' trauma experience, Polish identity in childhood and in midlife, Polish language, and visiting family in Poland were explored. Many described parents as secretive about the horrors of war but keen to retain and propagate their Polish identity. Some felt they were not fully Polish, but their identity increased with access to modern Poland as adults. The Polish language was important to identity but linked to feeling inadequacy when not fluent. Visiting family in Poland enhanced identity, was valued, and provided information on family history. European identity was adopted by some to cover both their British and Polish identity. Genealogy and family history are popular and linked to community, and British Poles have a distinct contribution and a voice in showing how identity can emerge out of family trauma.

Keywords: identity; Polish community; WW2 asylum-seekers; trauma; Polish language; family history

Citation: Bifulco, Antonia, and Maureen Smojkis. 2023. Identity Awoken in Second-Generation British Poles in the UK—Personal Journeys. *Genealogy* 7: 59. https://doi.org/10.3390/genealogy7030059

Received: 29 June 2023
Revised: 7 August 2023
Accepted: 8 August 2023
Published: 14 August 2023

Copyright: © 2023 by the authors. Licensee MDPI, Basel, Switzerland. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).

1. Introduction

The study of genealogy allows for substantial overlap of personal family history with membership of a community, including those migrants or refugees who settle in the UK. This is linked through self-identity and cultural identity and its transmission occurs both within a family and across the community (Moore and Rosenthal 2021). Whilst individual family history gives a very personal and specific view of identity, it expands when linked to a community group who have some shared experience. Within refugee or asylum-seeking groups, this identity may be underpinned by first-generation trauma experience around difficulties leaving their homeland and in relation to war, journeys, separation, and flight from danger. The trauma narrative can, thus, become part of the family identity, crossing generations to those born in the host country, who may continue to view the country of origin as dangerous (Jarvis 2022). Such transmission of trauma elements often invokes disturbed attachment and mental health issues over experiences that may be hidden (Bifulco 2021; Parker-Drabble 2022). It can also lead to "event centrality", whereby the second generation incorporates the knowledge of the original trauma experience as a central element into their own identity, thus, acting as a mechanism for trauma transmission (Greenblatt-Kimron et al. 2021). This paper looks at identity in British Poles who had one or two parents that settled in the UK following often traumatic WW2 experiences. For this second generation, their sense of Polish identity, both in childhood and now in middle age, is explored. Such self-identity is defined as being based on a perception of common

descent, friendship, and kinship—expressed in language and culture, food and music, and in traditional Christmas customs (Lane 2001). It also involves drawing boundaries between groups—in this case, between Polish and British.

To explain the background context to the community—some 200,000 Poles, ex-servicemen and their families, remained in the UK after WW2, after struggles in avoiding deportation and in acknowledgement of their substantial input to the war effort (Lane 2001). We will refer to these first-generation Poles as asylum seekers. However, their precise status was unclear—the men (and some women) arrived as combatants under British command and with an invitation to fight. The families involved were mainly those deported to Siberia by the Russians in 1940 and then dispersed worldwide by the Allies to Commonwealth countries and others that would take them. These, together with some adults and children released from Germany for forced labour by the invading Allies, were displaced persons. None felt they could return to Poland under communism, and they were granted political refugee status. We refer to them here as asylum seekers, given they sought asylum with the British government in return for their significant war contribution.

This was the largest asylum group ever allowed access to Britain and occurred in 1947 under the Polish Resettlement Act, (www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/Geo6/10-11/19; accessed 7 August 2023) with the War Office undertaking to bring the dependents of Polish ex-servicemen from the allied wartime camps following Polish deportations from India, East Africa, the Middle East, and elsewhere (Blaszczyk 2020). These servicemen and their families were unable to safely return to their homeland, the newly communist Polish Republic under Russian Stalinist control, where they were seen as enemies (Sword 1986). Some vowed not to return to Poland under Soviet domination. In fact, some no longer had homes when the national borders changed following the Yalta Conference agreement in 1945, where Poland lost its Eastern territories (Loizos 2003). The aim was for assimilation, or at least integration, of the Poles into British society. They lived firstly in Polish resettlement camps, some of which were in existence as late as 1969 (Biegus and Biegus 2013). Their perceived prime duty was to present a political voice to defend Polish interests and maintain their language, culture, and traditions, which they felt were under attack by communism in their homeland (Rogalski 2019).

The Poles given asylum were distributed across Britain, with the largest numbers in London, the north (Lancashire, West Yorkshire), midlands (Staffordshire, Warwickshire, Derby, Nottingham, and Birmingham), and the west of England (Gloucestershire and Bristol) (Lane 2001). The community in the UK became a somewhat marginalised and disenfranchised group with themes of “injustice, abandonment, betrayal by the West, trauma, and victimisation” emerging (Hewer and Kut 2010). Their nostalgia for their homeland was not only one of place and geography but also of time and history, as their homeland culture became denigrated under communist rule. The first generation in the UK believed they were the “true Poles” and holders of its language, history, and culture until Poland was returned to a democracy (Brown 2011). As Lane states: “But they also believed that it was their great responsibility, their God-given duty, to preserve Polish culture and traditions for a post-communist Poland, since ‘our countrymen in Poland cannot in the face of forced Sovietisation’. Consequently, they were determined to maintain the Polish language, religion, and identity during their stay in Britain” (p. 51) (Lane 2001). Given the determination to keep their culture alive in the UK, its transmission to their children is of interest as a unique community created by particular political events.

Research on the Polish community in the UK has origins in Zubrzycki’s seminal work on Poles in the UK, post-WW2, in the 1950s. He looked at how this group established themselves and retained their culture and identity, with examples of “importing” of culture through the Polish language, Saturday schools and church services, scouts and guides, and Polish social clubs (Zubrzycki [1956] 2013). These were established around the UK and contributed to the “we-feeling” of shared identity amongst this group. This also provided the childhood context for many of the second-generation British Poles. Language played a central part, with the first generation needing to learn English and the second generation

learning Polish for both family and outside communication. The children typically grew up in very traditional Polish families with Polish as their first and domestic language, traditional Polish food served at home, Polish School on Saturday, Polish Catholic Mass attended on Sunday, and Polish guides and scouts and sports in the evenings (Mąkosa 2015). The community considered language important in identity, central to concerns of themselves and others in the community, and an important part of being Polish (Temple 2010). There was a view that second-generation British Poles would become totally integrated into the host population within a generation, with little to distinguish their unique history and traditions going forward and the language disappearing in the community (Sword 1996). However, a linear progression from Polishness to "Britishness" cannot be assumed, and the "hyphenated" state of Polish-Britishness was also noted in relation to the second generation, comparable to the third or fourth-generation descendants of Irish immigrants to Britain who think of themselves as Irish-British (Lane 2001). Also, changes in the UK population following Poland's accession to the EU in May 2004 meant many more Poles arrived from the newly democratic republic, emigrating to the UK with the potential for reviving the Polish communities already in existence (Okólski and Salt 2014).

There is relatively little written on the cultural identity of this second generation of British Poles (Mąkosa 2015). However, one study in Leicester indicated a relatively small community of 1600 Poles and undertook interviews with 25 respondents across generations. Most families were those who had been deported to Siberia by the Russians from Eastern Poland in 1940, and this became the dominant trauma narrative of this generation, whose memories of that atrocity were still clear after 60 years (Burrell 2002). Others had escaped wartime German labour camps (Horodowicz Knab 2016), but many were servicemen who joined the Polish army at the outbreak of war, making their way to the Allied forces. This Leicester community of Poles was identified by their Catholic church attendance, membership of various clubs, and shared experiences of war dislocation, but also by a common set of core values deemed to be particularly Polish in nature. Significantly, all of those interviewed saw their religion as a binding feature, providing the pivotal focus for annual events and celebrations and setting out a moral guide to live by (Burrell 2002). Burrell noted some dissension in the second-generation views of the past: "While sympathetic to the ordeal their parents and grandparents faced during the war, the younger members display a tangible frustration with their perceived unwillingness to live in the present: They always say, 'but remember we've suffered, we've been through Russia . . .' To the old people, history stood still. Poland is as it was in 1939. The Poles really are in this time warp" (p. 75) (Burrell 2002). The second generation may have been raised on the trauma histories, but have become orientated to the modern political world.

A similar study of Poles in Bradford focused on issues of assimilation or integration (Lane 2001). Some 18% of Poles in Bradford married non-Polish women—mainly British, but also Italian and Irish, these having a common Catholic affiliation (Lane 2001). For the children in these families, the sense of Polish identity, whilst evident, was more prone to assimilation into British culture, with lower involvement in the Polish community and institutions (op cit). There is little modern research on mixed heritage Europeans; most studies instead focus on racially mixed heritages where both benefits (e.g., pluralistic world views, a stronger sense of self) and challenges (e.g., identity tensions, communal concerns) are identified in those of mixed parentage (Soliz et al. 2017). Ultimately, however, mixed heritage is argued to be tied to the potential promise of pluralistic worldviews, although not without its own tensions and identity confusion (op cit). It can also lead to feelings of inauthenticity and anxiety around culture (Cheng 2004).

The issue of European identity and heritage was newly assessed for many when the EU enlarged to include Eastern European countries, with greater recognition of diversity and more questioning of values and tradition emerging in a critical cosmopolitan approach (Delanty 2010). In discussing communalties in this wider Europe, Delanty identified trauma as one source of common identity, "the idea of trauma suggests a more appropriate way for Europe to articulate its historical self-understanding. The proposal for the Holocaust

to be recognised as a European commemorative event is one such example of the entry of trauma into the very idea of the European heritage" (p. 14) (Delanty 2010). This could also be applied to the trauma suffered by Poles, which is both communal but also a feature of personal family history, with each individual story carrying different elements of trauma and resilience (Bifulco 2021). These trauma themes are now acknowledged in historical analysis and through the growth of museums and memorials in Poland. The second generation, too, seeks out their history and roots.

Hirsch discusses the notion of transmission of trauma across generations in terms of "postmemory" with reference to the Holocaust. She writes "postmemory describes the relationship of the second generation to powerful, often traumatic, experiences that preceded their births but that were nevertheless transmitted to them so deeply as to seem to constitute memories in their own right" (p. 103) (Hirsch 2008). Her focus is on the potency of images and photographs, given that the generation following those who experienced cultural or collective trauma directly, can only "remember" by means of the stories, images, and behaviors with which they grew up. She states, "these experiences were transmitted to them so deeply and affectively as to seem to constitute memories in their own right" (pp. 106–7) (Hirsch 2008). She quotes Eva Hoffman in noting that the first-generation Holocaust survivors were not, in fact, silent about their past trauma, but their indirect communication to their families was rather through the language of the body, of symptoms, of nightmares, and of illness (Hoffman 2004).

Landsberg calls such memories "prosthetic memories" and notes these are enhanced not only through family stories and photographs but also through cinematic media where individuals effectively "look through someone else's eyes" in a way not possible until the 20th-century film industry (Landsberg 2009). Such "reliving" of historical war trauma further underlines potential impacts on second-generation trauma "witnesses".

Academic research on Polish communities in the UK has largely focused on the Poles coming to the UK post the 2004 EU accession, with some studies commenting on their relationship with existing Polish communities, which was not seamless (Cook et al. 2011; White 2016). The new immigrants have been shown to be at risk in mental health terms with more depression, substance abuse, and suicide compared with other migrant groups. There are few comparable figures on mental health in the first generation of Poles seeking refuge post WW2 in the UK, although figures from England and Wales in 1977 showed even then that suicides amongst Polish men were the highest recorded (Cochrane 1977). This community suffered not only isolation and discrimination (for example, after the war, a number were mistaken for Germans by the British public, and they were overlooked for employment and accommodation opportunities), and expressed bitterness about the "betrayal" of Poland by the Allies and their forced exile (Winslow 2001). The appreciation of their war effort was soon eroded: "At first the Poles were the inspiration of the world and dear Polish friends, but when the war ended we were very unwelcome friends and 'bloody foreigners'" (p. 49) (Lane 2001). Recent studies of older people in Poland born during the war show worryingly high rates of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) of around a third (Rzeszutek et al. 2020). It is not known if the same applies to the first-generation Poles in the UK since, to our knowledge, this has never been investigated. Rzeszutek and colleagues examined the lack of social acknowledgement of the trauma as critical to a poor clinical outcome. This lack of social acknowledgement is also relevant to those older age Poles in the UK who may indeed have had high rates of PTSD. It needs to be remembered that clinical diagnosis of PTSD only dates from 1980, with most treatments emerging since that time, which means that the WW2 generation generally missed out on such help. Without resolution, vulnerability to mental health problems through war trauma can be generationally transmitted, potentially putting the next generation at risk (Greenfeld et al. 2022); this makes both generations of Poles in the UK of psychological and sociological interest.

The fall of communism represented a liberation for the second generation of UK Poles in being able to travel freely to Poland, similar to the recent Polish immigrants (Rabikowska

and Burrell 2016); this enabled a strengthening of family ties. For them, Poland no longer represented a place of danger linked to family trauma. Prevalent views of immigration highlight transnationalism, indicating regular contact and movement with the country of origin. Second-generation immigrants are viewed as more socialised into the rules and institutions of the countries where they live and as retaining contact with the countries from where their families come. They have the advantage of often acquiring social contacts and skills that are useful in both settings, and can master several cultural repertoires in response to the opportunities and challenges they face (Levitt 2009). This transnationalism did not occur for first-generation Polish in the UK post WW2 because their access to their country of origin under Russian communism was effectively cut off for much of their adult lives. It is the second generation who have the potential for transnationalism post Polish accession to the EU, being able to travel between the countries, visit relatives with ease, and even take out Polish citizenship and live there (Carling and Erdal 2014). This has the benefit of having a foothold in both countries, of which many second-generation Poles have taken advantage. This has the potential to increase their identity with their Polish roots.

To what extent is the study of such a community an issue of genealogy or family history? To some extent, this new discipline is still exploring its overlap with other disciplines, including immigration studies and the sociology and psychology of identity (Moore et al. 2020). We would argue that a key factor in the post-WW2 Polish communities in the UK is that it is their family trauma histories that informs their sense of identity. These histories are passed down as family stories, the trauma largely unrecognised by the outside world. The basis of these histories are still in the process of being discovered by the next two generations. For example, the deportation to Siberia of two million Poles (half of whom perished) by the Soviet Union in 1940 went largely unrecognised after the Soviet Union became a WW2 Ally and later saw itself as the saviour of Europe against fascism, leaving out of history the non-aggression pact with Nazi Germany (Davies 2015). The deportations have never been pursued as a war crime. The same can be said of the Katyn massacre of 25,000 Polish officers by the Soviets in 1940, who denied responsibility until Gorbachev released the orders signed by Stalin in 1989; this was also never processed as a war crime (Etkind et al. 2013). Added to this is the Official Secrets Act, which in the UK lasts for 30 years and precluded public discussion of issues such as the Special Operations Executive activities, which included Polish divisions (Valentine 2004; Crowdy 2016). Such secrets related to community trauma were ones known about in families and stories (albeit incompletely) passed down to the next generation as part of a mission to "remember". Now, there is extensive documentation of these traumatic events and circumstances, which can be discussed in public forums, including websites set up by second-generation Poles around the world. However, for years, this community felt it was the carrier of injustice which needed public recognition (Burrell 2002). Therefore the importance of family narrative, and seeking family history, has been a deep concern of the second generation of British Poles, a key aspect of their identity and of keeping their culture alive, and hence, of relevance to the study of genealogy.

It is of interest that the seminal work by Thomas and Znaniecki introducing life history and biographical method to the topic of immigration should also have involved Polish immigration, but in their case to America at the turn of the 20th century (Thomas and Znaniecki 1920). They utilised an "exemplary" use of personal records, as well as a range of other documentation, effectively convincing sociologists to utilise qualitative methods when studying periods of social change in examining the relation between human behaviour and the broader situation in which it is set (Sinatti 2008). In his critique, Mucha noted, however, that little was made of the successes of the following generation (of American-born Poles) in leadership, education, and in their effective associations and media contributing to the "Polish-American reality" (Mucha 2019).

In this paper, we, as authors, ask ourselves about our sense of Polish identity and how it has changed with the changing political landscape and our own life stage. We look for echoes in the interviews of other British Poles. Our qualitative approach thus

involves personal commentary combined with the reutilisation of interview quotes from published sources to which we have access. Such secondary analysis, when used with care, can further enhance and elaborate common themes and understanding (Bornat 2003). Genealogical study, with its core of family history, has extended to a number of disciplines and embraced innovative use of methods (Moore 2022) that allow some flexibility and creativity of approach in extending one family case study to a wider context and community. Our own prior interest as authors has been in how our own family history as British Poles has invoked themes of both trauma and resilience from our parents' stories handed down through the generations (MPCA 2011; Smojkis 2014; MPCA 2015; Bifulco 2018; Bifulco 2021). From this, we now look to our own generation—those that were born following WW2—to see what was unique about growing up in the Polish community in the UK and what has been transmitted in the way of a specific identity related to a displaced culture within a trauma context. We bring to this our own experiences of being brought up as second-generation Poles during the Cold War with very restricted contact with Eastern Europe, and utilise overlapping themes derived from existing sets of interviews with this same community in the UK.

Thus, the aim of the present study is to examine perceptions of identity in second-generation British Poles both as children and as adults, with a focus on language and contact with family in Poland and in the context of family trauma stories.

2. Materials and Methods

The method utilises a 3-way comparison of narrative. First, the authors describe their own experiences of the Polish community in the English Midlands, having Polish fathers and British mothers. They utilised a transcribed online interview with further comments made individually (these are identified by their initials as M.S. or A.B.). These views are then compared and contrasted with relevant interview quotes taken from two existing sources of interviews (secondary data) with second-generation British Poles—the Birmingham Oral History Project (Smojkis 2014; MPCA 2015) and the Invisible Poles (White and Goodwin 2019). Overlapping themes around identity, language, family contacts, and response to parental trauma were selected from these sources to also reflect the relevant literature reviewed. The samples and sources are further described below.

2.1. The Oral History Project (OHP) (Smojkis 2014; MPCA 2015)

This project provided a source of analysed interviews with second-generation Poles living in Birmingham, UK. It included 26 men and women interviewed between 2014–2015, all second-generation Poles brought up in Birmingham who had at least one parent who was Polish and had settled there since WW2. These ranged in age from 46 to 66, the oldest born in 1948 and the youngest in 1968. There were four who had one Polish parent (all were fathers), of whom three had Irish mothers and one had an English mother. The focus of the study interviews was on the identity and cultural values of this group through eight themes of Polishness in England, including language and food, clubs, schools, and leisure, travel to see family in Poland, and identity as British Poles. This study took place before Brexit in 2016.

2.2. The Invisible Poles (IP) Interviews (White and Goodwin 2019)

This project consisted of 28 interviews of men and women, undertaken from November 2017 to July 2018 at the University College London, School of Slavonic and East European Studies (SSEES). The interviewed participants were from a range of locations across England. Most (23) were the children of "post-war refugees" and are reported on here. Of the remaining five excluded, three were third-generation, and two had parents who came to the UK as economic migrants during the period of communist rule in Poland. The respondents were aged 51–69 at interview. Most had two Polish parents who settled in the UK after WW2, but two had English mothers, one a Welsh mother, and two had Italian mothers. The focus of the project was around British-Polish identity and contacts with

Poland, Poles, and Polishness, and whether this had changed since the 2004 Polish accession to the EU. Follow-up questions were about topics such as their use of the Polish language, visits to Poland, and Polish friends. This study was undertaken after the Brexit vote of 201. The interview quotes are taken directly from the document but are truncated (indicated by . . .). The full transcribed quotes of the Invisible Poles Project can be found here: https://discovery.ucl.ac.uk/id/eprint/10070108. (Last accessed 7 August 2023).

2.3. Ethical Permission

Ethical permission for the two projects reported on was received from the University of Birmingham (OHP) and SSEES (IP) prior to commencement of these studies, with signed informed consent from participants. Proxy names were utilised for confidentiality. Given all the quotes used are already in the public domain, no additional ethical permission was sought for their current use.

2.4. Analysis

Five main themes were derived from the two project sources for the purposes of this analysis, all clustered around the identity of second-generation Poles in the UK. This included (i) family trauma narratives, (ii) Polish or British identity in childhood (iii) Polish or British identity now later in life, (ivi) the Polish language and its importance, and (v) contact with modern Poland and family in Poland. These are introduced first by the two authors describing their own experiences, and these are then illustrated by key quotes from the two projects identified.

3. Results

The five themes will be examined in turn with illustrative quotes.

(i) Family trauma narratives

This section considers respondents' comments on their parents' war trauma experience, their openness or secrecy, and how much their parents told them about the war. This led to speculation on their parents' likely trauma reactions. Both authors summarised their father's wartime experiences:

> *M.S.: He was only 12 when war broke out. . . My father was in a forced labour camp in France from the age of 14 until the end of the war. It was an iron ore mine it was very hard. He told me that there were times when he wanted to commit suicide. . . .the Germans wouldn't let you have any heating in the barracks. . . .So basically at the end of the war they were liberated. He and these three older Poles came out and they walked. He told me the different stories about what happened to them. He ended up in in a displaced persons camp in France. He left there on his own, he would have been 16 by then, I think, almost 17, and he found the Polish army.*

She learned little of what happened to his mother (her grandmother):

> *M.S.: I believe my father and his mother were in the same detention camp for a while in Wilno, and then he was sent to France and she was sent to Siberia. I don't know much about what happened to her. So that's what I'm trying to find out now. But trying to find out about the Siberian accounts is difficult.*

She recalls that her father was not connected to the established Polish community:

> *M.S.: He had Eastern European friends, I don't think he did much with the established Polish community. but the Polish community in Birmingham was thriving from the 1940s onwards, but he did not connect to them. I think for his own reasons. . .. My father never talked about his experiences. He didn't talk. There was trauma involved in his experience, and I also think there was shame. So he never told me until just before he died, what had actually happened. Because he actually committed some sort of minor offence, him and his friends, and I think he was quite ashamed of that. But interestingly, when I*

asked his cousin in Poland recently he knew why my father was sent to the forced labour camp, so they all knew why. But we didn't.

So M.S. acknowledges secrecy and unwillingness to engage. She links this to trauma response. She also notes his "alien" status:

My father was in the Polish Resettlement Corp, he did not become a British citizen until 1990, and only so that he could visit my sister in Canada without anxiety of being sent back to Poland. . . . I do not know how my father felt about having to take his Alien order certificate of registration document to the police station to be stamped and signed every time he moved house or changed employment. He did this until 1960 when the regulations changed with the last stamp being from the 14 February 1961. But we as children knew nothing about it, I found the document after he died, carefully saved along with his soldier's service and paybook.

Whilst A.B.'s father was also in France, he was already an adult when war started and had made his own way there to fight,; his decision partly based on the fact he was a French speaker:

A.B.: My father was already 25 or so when war broke out. Living in Warsaw, he was conscripted to the army, . . . they were all told, as soon as they realized the Nazis were invading, to leave the country and get to France. So that's what he did. And these men left Warsaw going southeast, I think, through Romania. . . . then Yugoslavia getting to the coast there and taking ship to Marseille. and then they joined up with other Polish forces to join the French army. . . . After Dunkirk . . . he decided to stay in France since he was a French speaker. . . . He made his way to Vichy France, but he had no papers, of course, and wasn't legally supposed to be there. He went to Grenoble to the University. . . But he worked for the French Resistance. So he was taking secret messages and doing other things. . . of which we don't know very much . . . But then, when the Nazis invaded Vichy France, he had to get over the Pyrenees to Spain. . . Then he got to Gibraltar, and then he got a British troop ship from Gibraltar to Liverpool, and that's how he got to the UK. And then he was enrolled into Special Operations Executive, in a Polish division.

With regard to secrecy, she says:

A.B.: . . . he was doing things (in SOE) of which we don't know very much, because he was still covered by the Official Secrets Act until he died in 1971. And it was a covert operation, and all records were destroyed soon after the war. But he was generally quite open about his early life and childhood in Poland. . . sometimes there are formal reasons why people can't talk about their wartime roles. . . I think this can be an additional reason for secrecy, hiding information.

A.B. did not think her father was highly traumatised, even though he had been exposed to trauma, both in the gruelling trek to France, undertaking forced labour in France, and nearly starving in Spain. But he had benefited psychologically from a settled happy childhood and later a close and stable marriage, as well as his leadership role in the Polish community, which gave him a sense of purpose. He liked England.

A.B.: So I think he dealt with it, but I think when telling us about the war and his stories, it was always about actions, but never any of the horror or never any feelings. Although I suppose that may have been because we were children. . . I've since found the letter that my grandmother had to write to him, after the war saying that his first wife had died in a concentration camp. And I've got his letter subsequently to my mother . . . they weren't living in the same city at the time. And he said, 'oh, I'm not well today. I think I've got a tummy bug I'm taking to my bed.' And it was the day he got the news about her. I think he knew she was dead, but didn't know what had happened to her. But my grandmother had been sent her death certificate in German, issued in Auschwitz with all her particulars. . . that level of bureaucracy in wartime is quite bizarre. So he knew then for certain.

In fact, A.B. and her sisters were never told about their father's first wife in Poland, and researching the family history brought her whole story to light, with her letters still held in the family (Bifulco 2018).

Other respondents from the Invisible Poles interviews talked about their lack of detailed knowledge or understanding about their parent's trauma and histories:

> *I didn't chat to my father when I was younger, because I grew up with so many stories, and he told them time and time again, and you didn't really want to know then. Whereas now I would be quite interested in exploring them in more detail, but the (family) they've all died now. (Zuzanna, IP)*

Ewa did not know much detail about her mother's wartime experience in Siberia, and was responsible for looking after her for the later years of her life. When her mother died, she realised how little she knew:

> *I started having all these questions that I never asked before. For example, the Siberian experience, the African experience. Mum always used to say, 'When I was in Siberia this', and 'When I was in Africa that', and I'd heard these stories so many times I just took them for granted. I didn't understand properly what was being said. And then when she'd gone, I was looking through some of her photographs from when she was in Africa, I found her passport when she was in Tehran, and all these questions came flooding in. What was she doing in Siberia? How many people were there in Siberia? Why Africa? How big was that camp in Africa? How many people were involved? What happened? Why? All these things were starting to fill up my head. And I thought, I need to do something with this, I need to find out more about my history. (Ewa, IP)*

Adelaide remembers her father as very secretive about his background. She had always thought he was fully Polish but later found out he was half Ukrainian. He claimed all his family were dead, that his Polish parents had emigrated to Canada when he was small, and he was adopted by an aunty. It turned out this was not true, and later it transpired the family were in fact alive:

> *He never talked about his background, like many of them didn't. In fact, he was very secretive about it, he didn't want us to know. . . ..he was arrested in May 1941 and ended up in a Siberian gulag. He told us his family in Poland were all gone, they were all gone. I didn't know where he came from at all. And he had his army documents. He crossed out his place of origin, so nobody could find out. A big secret. But we thought he was Polish. . . .My father died thirty-four years ago, and six years ago I started my research. I asked the Red Cross to look for his family, because he said they were all gone. . . ..I was having an existential crisis during all of this. I went in 2016 the first time and found out that he had a wife in Poland, he had a son. I had a half-brother, but they were no longer alive, sadly. But my nephew is there. I found out that his (father's) mother was Polish, but his father was Ukrainian. (Adelaide, IP)*

Carole describes how trauma can be handed down, and also how individuals can become cut off from memory and emotion:

> *The whole idea of trauma, handed from one generation to the next. I suppose I felt as the first of four siblings that the trauma had got dumped on me. More so than my siblings. A feeling that something existed but was somehow not accessible. I became aware around about that time, of how un-bitter my father was. . . I think he wasn't the sort of man that held grudges. He wasn't an easy person, but I think he'd somehow tried to shut off everything that had happened. . . My father never spoke Polish after he came to the UK. He had very little to do with anything Polish until after 1992 when he did start to go back a bit, and almost had to re-learn some of his Polish, because he'd forgotten it,*

This is echoed by Natalia:

> *You don't know the secrets that a lot of these people kept. . .Post-traumatic stress is post-traumatic stress. Whatever the stress was, and the trauma. It's somehow not even acknowledged. My mum suffered from a mental breakdown. . . It's more than just a stiff*

upper lip, because, deep inside, they are crying out themselves. But we must not let that be shown, because it would be a weakness. (Natalia, IP)

Teodora also considers her father suffered from the effects of trauma:

> *He was always a fish out of water. And with three friends whose parents were Polish, I'm sure, looking back, he suffered from post-traumatic stress. Because he could lose his temper very easily—you never knew what kind of mood he was going to be in. As I say, he saw life in black-and-white, decided he would not go back to Poland until it was free again. As many older Polish people who've been through those experiences do. And after three years the Red Cross found his family. Well, what was left of his family.*

Iza compares her generation's interest in their parents' stories with the response from friends in Poland:

I suppose that's left me with [a view that] the less war the better. Appreciating that people don't just survive, they have things that go on. All the relatives that didn't survive but also the impact on the next generation. . . . I want to hear it. But some of my generation think 'Not again. It's too much.' Not in a horrible way, but it's very heavy, and they've heard it, whereas I haven't. So, you can see, some of them are just like, 'Now we're here,' they're saying, 'Now we're in the EU and why are we still talking about that?' The section on the second generation's view of their parents' response to trauma is included as an important link for a genealogical study involving family history. The family narrative, or its lack, is shown in family secretiveness, also experienced by the authors. Thus, whilst all knew their Polish parents had suffered trauma, and may have known an outline, such as the Siberian deportation, many did not know the details or the extent of the trauma exposure involved. The secretiveness they felt was a consequence of psychological trauma impact, which indeed is justified, but it could also be due to the disruptions of relationships caused during war, with a lack of information about family whereabouts and starting new relationships in a new safe country. Such reticence, at times, was related to shame.

(ii) Polish or British identity in childhood?

The authors asked each other how Polish they felt themselves to be in childhood. Both had Polish fathers and British mothers and lived in cities with vibrant Polish communities. So the issue was identified as the proportion of the self that was Polish rather than British:

> *M.S.: There is a part of me that feels Polish. We were always taught, when I was growing up, that we were half-Polish and half-English. So, when we were children, because my father was Polish, and my mother was English, and from Birmingham, where I live, if people asked us, that's what we were told to say. And I think that really is the best way to describe me, and how I see myself.*
>
> *A.B.: I think my experience was similar It's this 'half and half'. I think for the Poles with two Polish parents, it was different, I'm not sure how they describe themselves. But I think the computation was that we have one parent Polish and one English and, as you say, it was always half and half, it was never any other proportion! I think that has changed as I have got older though and am now aware of layers of identity.*

One of the Birmingham women interviewed whose mother was from Belfast and father was Polish, learnt Polish, and her family spent time in the Polish club, with Polish friends, and enjoyed social occasions. She was raised as Roman Catholic, which linked her identities, she states:

> *I was always proud to be half Polish, I was never ashamed of it. I would say I'm half Polish and half Irish. . . Religion was an important part of our lives then as we grew up because they were from similar backgrounds, being Irish Catholic and Polish Catholic, they had that in common, as a common grounding. We were bought up in the Catholic faith and church was important in our lives and important for both of them (*parents*). . ..School was sometimes difficult . . . my surname was different, so my name was always the cause for comment, people would always say 'where does that come from?' not in a bad way,*

but sometimes you'd feel, I never felt like I belonged... I'm not really Polish, because I've got an Irish mother and if I go to Ireland, I'm not really Irish either... It just feels like you don't really belong anywhere, it just feels like you don't have an identity.' (CG, OHP)

Another Birmingham participant similarly felt the duality even though both parents were Polish:

I feel Polish, I often think in Polish ... but ... I am very much aware of the fact that I lived in Britain all my life. That I am British. ... I think emotionally I'm closer to Polish culture but realistically I'm a mixture of the two. (MC FIGA)

One of the issues raised was around belonging—whether to the Polish or British community. The authors were aware of some issues about their acceptance as Poles, for example, over their knowledge of the Polish language or marginalisation because both had English mothers. Both were keen for some recognition of their Polishness, which they later achieved. In terms of school life, identity was also affected by Catholicism but also by the close proximity of Irish culture:

M.S.: I went to, I always describe it as an Irish Catholic school, because the majority were Irish. And because I've got Irish friends, I knew more about Ireland. I don't know whether there were other Polish children in the class in my primary school. I think there probably were, but I didn't connect with them, and the things that made me stand out at school always was that the teachers never knew how to say my name, and they never tried and they would laugh, or they would say, that's a funny name. It never disturbed me. But that's the way it was, and so it made me stand out as being different. But if they'd have asked me, the only thing I knew was that my father was Polish, and he came to England after the Second World War. So I didn't know a lot about his history. Really...

This was echoed by A.B.:

A.B.: My experience was similar, but different in some ways. So again, because my mother was also Catholic, from an English-Irish background, I went to primary school in a Catholic convent school, but, unlike you, half the kids there were Polish and the other half Irish. But I didn't know where I fit. And the poor Irish Nuns struggling with all those (Polish) names, but they tried! But it was about half and half of the pupils. So although everything is English in school, there was that familiarity with kids who I would see at Polish school or watch playing Polish football. ...So at grammar school there were a few Poles, but it was never a group, we didn't get together as a group.

For other people, the issue was acceptance of their Britishness, with an expectation that this would not be forthcoming, as Adelaide describes:

But I think there is a kind of suspicion on the part of some people. When I said that I passed as an English person, I did discover that when I first met someone, or a group of people for the first time, I was one of them, and there was a level of intimacy and acceptance, but when—I felt, and I still do believe this, on many, many occasions—when they found out that I wasn't quite right, it was like some shutters came down behind their eyes, everything changed, and the confidence of exchange of information was gone. You know, that openness and trust. ... And we were also given this message by our parents, that we would never be accepted.... they said 'You will never be able to be accepted, you will have to be better than (them). You have to better than English people'. (Adelaide, IP)

Filip (IP), whose father was Polish and mother Italian, talks of his school experience, but also the fact that his father was not involved with the Polish community:

I went to a Catholic school and we were dragged to church from the Catholic school, and I was confirmed and christened and all of that, but we weren't made to go to church. ...My father wouldn't go to any of the local Polish clubs. There were several locally. He would never go there... And again, that meant that we were even more isolated from the Polish community. We grew up and assimilated. There was no Polish spoken at home. He said

the Iron Curtain was there, and it was going to stay: what was the point of learning Polish? Ah, I wish he hadn't! So now I struggle to learn Polish. . .

Sara (IP) also felt singled out by religion, but also for having an uncommon name:

It's a small town, and I was a Catholic, which made it even more difficult because it's a very Welsh chapel town, and I went to the Catholic school. So, when I was eleven and went to secondary school, I would be singled out because of my religion. Because I was Catholic, they would say things like 'Oh, why are you different to us, why do you not have to come to assembly in the morning and pray with us, why are you separate?' So, there was a bit of discrimination because of faith then, for me. And because I didn't speak Welsh at that time. My surname was a problem as well then, because they [said] 'oh, you're foreign'. Even though I was born in Wales, . . . they would treat me as if I was a foreigner because of my name, and I didn't speak Welsh. So, that made me not very happy. (Sara, IP)

Agnieszka (IP) talks of an identity crisis:

In my teens I had a huge identity crisis, you know, what was I—was I English, was I Polish, was I European, what was I? But, you know, if you look [now] at my Twitter account, whatever, I just always talk about my Polish heritage, my roots are hugely strong and embedded in me. . . I've always been so proud . . . the whole world recognises the strength of character of the Poles, which is great. (Agnieszka, IP)

All respondents identified with being Polish to a greater or lesser degree in childhood. They felt positively about this, and indeed, proud of their heritage, but some did feel discriminated against as children. Their identity was strongly linked to their Catholicism, but their names and, for some, lack of English language at school made them perceived as "other" and "not quite right". For some, this was underlined by their parents, who told them they would not be accepted and had to be better than their English peers.

(iii) Polish or British identity now?

In relation to whether this changed over the life course, both authors felt that in recent years their sense of Polishness had increased:

M.S.: I feel more in touch with Poland and the Polish community now in my older years (than I did then). It has changed in my lifetime; it changed when I was in my 40s when I recorded my father's story and began doing research on the Polish community. I found out a lot about Polish history and Polish culture so it did change then.

She did, however, have an experience of her Polishness being challenged later in life:

M.S.: there was a comment made to me when I was more involved in the Polish community indicating I wasn't quite Polish. Because my professional background is in mental health, I was asked to do some talks on mental health of Polish people. One of the post 2004 Polish people who came to the talk said to me that this should have been done by someone from the Polish community, very clearly excluding me.

A.B. also felt her Polishness had increased in later years:

A.B.: It has changed over my lifetime as an adult. After I left home at 18, my father had already died two years earlier, and I think I just subsumed it (my Polishness), and I said I was British. I was married to an Italian, so I've an Italian name. So people just said, 'Well, you're probably Italian' and I hardly ever mentioned it (being Polish). . . .

With the 'new' Poles coming here after the accession to the EU and also because of investigating my own Polish family history, I started getting more involved with Poles. So now I just think with the modern ideas of identity you can have multiples—its not like portions of a pie. But with many layers, so I can be all Polish and all English at different times, you know it isn't a conflict. I suppose if it came to the crunch I'd put British first. It feels a safer place. But I tell people now I'm Polish as well, which I never did before.

The increased sense of Polish identity was for a variety of reasons—life stage and reminiscence of childhood, easier contact with Poland, and new Poles coming to England. This was noted by Aniela from the IP project:

I think the fact that there are so many more Polish people here has had quite a marked influence on the Poles here. It's sort of revived us. When I was growing up, it was very difficult—people didn't even know what or where Poland was. When I started school, I tended to stick out like a sore thumb because my name stood out. I was amongst a handful of other Polish children, and Italian children, in a class of British-Irish. (Aniela, IP)

Others interviewed said their identity increased when they were able to travel to Poland. A Birmingham woman whose father was Polish and mother Irish, and who first went to Poland in 1970 said:

I remember entering Poland and feeling like I had arrived home. Now I don't know if that was just a reflection of what my father felt, but even now when I land, because I don't go by car, I do feel like I'm at home, even though I don't speak the language very well, I do have a Polish identity I think, but equally I do feel that way when I go to Ireland too. (CG: OHP)

From the Birmingham sample, the following comment was made about Polish identity:

A strong sense of Polish identity and full integration into British society go hand in hand and make for a fulfilled busy and meaningful life. . .I have always been very patriotic: if anybody asks me, "what's your nationality?" I would always say Polish, I would never say English . . . my blood is Polish, my parents are Polish, I'm Polish. (JF HL, OHP)

There was frustration at the lack of formal recognition of being a British-Pole:

The only time I get quite annoyed is when I'm filling in a form and it gives me all these different categories to choose from. Am I 'Black Caribbean', 'Bangladeshi' and so on. I write 'Slav'. Out of total annoyance. Why are you asking about all these ethnicities? When my name attracts attention and I'm asked 'where are you from' or 'when did you come over', I say with a shrug 'I was born here', so that's my identity. . . .I consider myself European through and through. (Grisha, IP)

The issue of European identity emerged, first by the authors who had different perspectives:

M.S.: In my personal life I have always viewed myself as half Polish and half English and not more broadly a European. I did access European funding to compete a 3-week Polish culture and language course at the University in Lublin in 2002 this was directly related to my Polish heritage. As an academic I was able to utilise the links with Europe to build a strong relationship with academic colleagues in Warsaw, using Erasmus funding. . .On these visits I presented my research on the Polish community in Birmingham, this identified some unanswered questions for the Polish students about grandparents. . . .Personally, I have wanted to learn as much about the Polish community in Poland as I can. I enjoyed travelling with ease to Krakow and organised trips for family and friends where we would visit Auschwitz, the Salt mines and follow the story of the Jewish community. I personally felt that leaving the EU took away some of the ease and positive relationships we had with Poland both personally and academically.

A.B.: For me, particularly in the last decade, my sense of Polishness has been encompassed within a European identity. This ties together my other identities—Irish through my mother's family and Italian through my husband's family. It was amazing to find an open Poland in the EU with freedom of travel and work. It seemed to have moved west! And all of us being Europeans just made identity much simpler. Of course Brexit was a disaster and to have Poland in the EU and the UK outside it just seems like nonsense. It did propel me to seek Polish citizenship so I can have formal European identity. Also, I too accessed Erasmus funds for lecturing in Poland—it seemed a way of 'giving back' to

Polish students and colleagues. At one seminar the Polish professor host introduced me as 'one of us' which was pleasing to me.

Other second-generation Poles considered their European identity:

My first identity is European. But if I'm forced to choose, then of course I'm more British than I am Italian or Polish, because I lived here all my life. I, you know, understand the British way of life better than either Italian or Polish. I'm foreign in Poland, and I'm foreign in Italy. (Luke, IP)

I wanted to be just a European. If I want to identify, that's how I would fix my identity: I'm a European. And the idea that I can go to any European country and just walk around and be a European, that is my ideal. I know it's naïve, and now it's receding rapidly, but that for me would be an ideal. (Adelaide, IP)

I would say I'm more European, than having an allegiance to any particular country. I suppose that would be a fair assessment. (Joanna, IP)

Comments on Brexit were consistently negative:

Brexit has appalled me—had appalled me. I was a Remainer, I am a Remainer. I am desperately sorry for my childrens' generation because they are Europeans, they are not just English, they are Europeans. And this was a retrograde step. (Agnieszka, IP)

My siblings have Polish citizenship. I've never applied for Polish citizenship. I've never felt a need. However, I will be applying now. Not so much for myself, I think, but for my children. My children are furious about Brexit. They want to have the freedom to work anywhere they want to. They're all polyglots. They wanted to have European citizenship and their only way of doing that is via Poland. So, I will be applying. For everything that's my background, for everything that's my future. (Grisha, IP)

Most of the second generation felt a strong sense of Polish identity in later life, and this was enhanced by the number of Poles newly coming to the UK, the ease of travel to Poland, and the fact of Polish EU membership. The authors also linked it to their search for family history. This identity also linked them to modern Poland, not just to the pre-war period, and to a sense of European identity within the EU.

(iv) The Polish Language and its importance

There is great importance of the Polish language for diasporan Poles. For many of the British Poles, they spoke Polish as their first language and when they went to school. For some, their parents did not speak English or they had Polish grandparent/s living with them, who did not speak English, so Polish was often the preferred language in the home. This was different for those with English mothers.

The authors comment:

A.B.: My Polish grandmother lived with us from when I was 3 to 7, so . . . we spoke Polish in the house because she spoke no English, so we just learnt it. And these comics called 'Miś' would come in in the post every so often, and my grandmother and I would go through reading them, and the pictures and the little puzzles. When I started going back to Warsaw recently and met up with a cousin that I hadn't seen since I was a child, I showed her these, and she said 'those were mine!' So what had happened is her mother bought them in Poland, and her grandmother would read them with her. And when they were finished they'd send them to us in Derby. Wonderful connection with Poland and with family there. I've still got them, from 1958.

Maureen explains that she did not learn Polish and how she later tried to learn:

M.S.: Wilno was no longer Polish but in Lithuania, my father's father had been relocated to Bydgoszcz and his cousins had been relocated to Giyzcko (in post-war Poland), he went to visit them the first time in 1968. And in 1971 he took us, six of his eight children, and our mother to Poland to visit his cousins and his father. We travelled by train and boat, I remember my father being very stressed on the journey. He taught us one sentence in

Polish "I do not understand Polish". After I recorded my father's story, I tried to learn Polish. But I have struggled.

A.B.: Although I spoke Polish as a child, I rarely used it as an adult and found I had virtually lost it. So about five years ago I started learning online with Polword. I have an excellent young Polish teacher and we skype weekly. She lives in London, but spends summers in Poland so teaches from there. It's a really difficult language, but I find understanding and speaking relatively easy. It's the grammar that's a killer. . .and the spelling.

However, neither of them had the experience of some second generationers who went to school in the UK without being able to speak any English. An advantage perhaps of having an English mother. One of the Birmingham men said:

I remember my mother used to go out to work and my grandparents used to look after me at home, they taught me all the traditions and the prayers and all the rest of it . . . when I started going to primary school, I remember that was the first time I used any English you see, and this is a common story with a lot of people of my generation.The teachers at the time weren't open to minority cultures and languages at all. . . .the general idea was that if you don't speak English and you don't understand it means you're stupid, there was no other possibility. (Mr S., OHP)

This was echoed by another participant who began school with few words of English and where there were no other Polish children at his school:

We had to speak English to get on with (other) children and within 6 months, our English was that good that they couldn't distinguish whether we were foreigners. (HF, OHP)

Aniela (IP) had a similar experience:

I spoke Polish at home from the word go. I knew very little (English) when I started school, which sounds quite scary, but we managed. I think Mum taught me a few sentences. 'Please can I go to the toilet?' and other things, necessary things. But other than that. . . .We were taught prayers, we went to church, we went to Saturday school when we were old enough, and that continued, right up until A levels for me. . . I was also in the girl guides, so my whole childhood, my teens, up until I went to university I was very, very involved in the Polish community. (Aniela, IP)

Another barrier to learning Polish as a child was that their parents needed to learn English, as Ann (IP) describes:

We used to go to the Polish Saturday school. . . So we can speak a bit, quite a bit. But, of course, as the years went on, we grew up, everything stopped. Dad was so busy trying to learn to speak English, so we had to speak English so that he could understand, try and learn to understand. And for him to try and learn the language, the language and the accent, and the Lancashire dialect, well that caused some bits of fun, I can tell you. . . (Ann, IP)

Many found that Polish became more commonly spoken in the UK in recent years, due to the new influx of Poles, but still felt some differentiation, as Luke (IP) describes:

I hear Polish all around me, I hear Polish people talking on the street, shopping, in the parks, walking, I hear them everywhere! But I've never met them, to get to know any of them, because they are strangers. . . .And with my Polish, as well. I could probably communicate, but to initiate a discussion in Polish, with my Polish, would be, kind of, a bit weird? Kind of a bit odd? So, although I speak the language, I don't speak well enough to have confidence. (Luke, IP)

Many felt there were deficiencies in their knowledge of the Polish language but would use it with parents to get attention or for something secret or private:

I can hold a conversation, but I couldn't go to court, or preach philosophy, or anything like this. At home we mainly speak English, but I think that's born out of my mother's,

my aunt's, my Polish family desire to, kind of, assimilate in the UK. I only speak to her in Polish if I want to say something in secret, or if I need to get her attention like when I'm saying something important, or if we are having a joke, so we dip into that Polish identity. . . (Dave, IP)

Similarly, Zusanna comments:

[I speak English] to my mother, predominantly. . ... She speaks in Polish to me, and I can understand what she's saying, [but] I don't feel I can express myself well enough in Polish, so it's much easier to speak in English. So it's quite lazy.

. . ..I remember the father of one of the Polish children I saw. . . saying that I should speak Polish, or I should, you know, maintain my Polishness. I got 'It's a big church, a big Polish school, you should be doing it.' I felt, actually, I'm quite different to you. (Zusanna, IP)

Some like Ewa (IP) had a lack of confidence in the Polish language despite learning it early in life:

[Nowadays] I speak, but it's not brilliant. The fact is that I can't read and write, and I don't know the spellings of words and how they're supposed to be properly pronounced. I have difficulties in pronouncing words. But I understand a lot of the Polish language. . . . I'm a little more confident speaking to the older generation, but I'm very, very self-conscious in speaking . . . because I think I'm going to say something really childish, and really silly, and really stupid, and people are going to laugh at me. (Eva, IP)

Others learned little, such as Adelaide, whose mother was Italian and father was Polish describes, it was discouraged by school:

I can swear in Polish. I know a few words. No, I don't speak Polish. I've learned a few words, and because I'm writing his [my father's] memoir I'm using some Polish words in the places where he's with Polish people. But I'm limiting those, because it's for an English audience, the memoir, so I have to give translations there. So, no, I don't speak Polish. . . At home we were speaking mostly Italian, when we were very young. My father learned Italian when he met my mother, and then he spoke Polish to his friends. My brother had more Polish than I did. And then when my brother went to school, the schoolteacher from this small village primary school came to the house and said that is was completely unacceptable that we should have all these languages, and that we had to speak exclusively English if we were to stand any chance at all of an education. And so we just stopped all language at home except English. (Adelaide, IP)

Not being fluent in Polish did impact negatively on a sense of Polish identity and a feeling of inauthenticity:

At the beginnings of my dealings with them I felt like I wasn't a real Pole? Perhaps my language wasn't as great because I didn't have any opportunities to speak on a daily basis. I spoke to my parents on the phone, but what you speak about is very limited, as well, to your parents. I think, initially, I felt a bit lacking in confidence about my Polish, because I could hear that they spoke differently, and I had an English accent in the way I spoke. But, I think, with time, that's broken down. (Maria, IP)

Another theme for those fluent was the fact they had learnt pre-war Polish which was more formal and somewhat fossilised:

I suppose I'm more relaxed when I'm speaking Polish. . . I think Polish people are more emotional, more direct, and you have to learn not to be so direct with English people. It's mainly something like that. . . Mine was fossilised, mine was pre-war Polish. And then it took on some English phrases. And since the Polish people have come, I've learned current Polish, and their phraseology. (Barbara, IP)

The Polish language was an important and emotional issue for all of those voiced here. It was thought of with affection for early life family ties and cultural association, but something of a barrier for those who did not speak it well and felt inadequate about it. It

does not help that it is one of the harder European languages to learn. Starting this in later life is challenging. However, among Polish teachers in England, there is now a recognition among some that the pre-war influenced Polish spoken here is more formally correct and elegant than that used in Poland today. This perhaps underlines how the second generation were quick to interpret comments about their language as negative rather than positive.

(v) Contact with modern Poland and family in Poland

This section concerns feelings about visiting Poland and family there, and whether this has grown over time, but also extends to the idea of living there and even taking out Polish citizenship. The issue of the change of borders with family homes now being in other countries was also discussed.

> *M.S.: I think for me one of the sad things is that my father was from Wilno, Lithuania. I went once with him just before he died, when we visited in 2003 . . ..all the street signs had changed to Lithuanian and we walked through the centre and saw the church where he made his First Communion . . . he remembered. And I've got a photo of the street that he grew up on but we didn't go there. So I will return one day and I will find that street. . ., I think there are family there, but I don't know who they are. One of my father's cousins is still alive, and he gave me some details. You know it's one of those things that I think 'I should have done this 20 years ago'.*

> *A.B.: That's a bit different for me, because my mother, who was British, but ardently pro-Polish. So she kept it all up, after my father died when I was 16. So she kept up all these contacts with the Polish family. And they adored her. I think the fact she tried to be Polish, they just thought it was fantastic, so she really did a lot to connect us all up. But after she got old and had dementia, contact fell off. So in the last few years after searching for my family history, I just renewed all the contacts in Poland and then found that it was just like having cousins that you were brought up with. I mean, it was amazing finding similarities. But you know we can just talk easily and text each other. it's really nice. . .*

The authors also talked of the Polish custom of visiting family graves, which is considered important culturally:

> *A.B.: I know this sounds a bit, macabre, but when I am in Warsaw, that's where the family graves are. So you know that's a big thing in Poland. I'm going to Poland tomorrow morning, and my cousin Piotr, has . . .written an itinerary and he said: 'Well, we'll go to the cemetery first'. And he puts flowers on the grave for me on all Saints day, and all that. . . It was my grandfather's grave originally, it's in the military part of the Powązki Cemetery in Warsaw. He died at age 33 in 1920 in the Polish-Russian war. His parents, my great grandparents, died later, but they were buried in the same tomb and then my grandmother's name was added to it when she died in Derby. But I've added my father and mother's names to it recently. All the family names are on there, and it makes a really nice. . . single place to visit in a lovely old cemetery. So I think it's a good thing.*

> *M.S.: I sent a photograph of my father's grave (in the UK) to the Polish family after he died. Because, we went back to visit them in 2003, and they were so wonderful to him, and to me, he died a month later. And I've kept contact with them by card for Easter and Christmas. But this year I had no Christmas card and no Easter card. So I have to try to contact them by email. I think he might still be alive but he'd be 96. I know where my father's brother is buried, and I assume that his mother is buried there as well in Rasu Cemetery, where Pilsudski's heart is buried with his mother. So I will make a journey there.*

They also spoke of Poles who lived in territories now no longer in Poland:

> *A.B.: I think in a way, I'm lucky that the family was mostly in Warsaw, the capital city, and I haven't had all these problems of people from Eastern territories. . . .where people try to find documents like their birth certificates, or something else, and it suddenly puts them in a different country, what does that do to your national identity? It's a shame isn't*

it?... I think the places really do embody an awful lot. Buildings that family had lived in or seen, and knowing that family members, walked up and down certain streets. And to me it really embodied the history. It was really good, knowing very particular locations.

Other interviewees talked about the difficulties of visiting Poland and family when they were small:

I think the reason why I didn't have such an interest in Polish things and Poland when I was younger was because of the difficulty of visiting Poland. If you don't have a contact, it's difficult to maintain an interest. It was very difficult to have any kind of meaningful relationship with the Polish side of the family. Also, in my case, ... my parents divorced when I was quite young, and I lived with my mother, who was English, and I saw my father occasionally. So I just got on with my life as it was. (Anna, IP)

Given the trauma experiences of first-generation Poles in leaving Poland in war, for many, Poland was viewed as a dangerous place when they were children:

[Poland] was a place of danger. He, my father, created it as a place of danger. It was for him, of course, because of what I found out later. If only I knew at the time, I would have understood so much more. But it was a place of danger, he couldn't go there, he would be shot, it was closed, like a black hole. And I was afraid of it! ...Two years after (accession), in 2006, it gave me some confidence to visit the country, but I was still afraid of the country, and so I went on one of these 'Great Train Journeys'. Because we were a group of people, and we had a guide and everything, and when we got there I was, what on earth was I worried about? Ridiculous. Completely ridiculous. (Adelaide, IP)

Ann (IP) felt drawn to visiting Poland:

I will go back, keep going back for holidays, and then stay. I want to, we're planning to go to Kraków, I've never been to Kraków... And my cousin and myself, we want to go to the village [in Ukraine] where they were arrested, Oreskowce, and where the deportations took place. We want to go to find that, and we want to go and find the graves [of family members murdered by Ukrainian nationalists during the Second World War] ... They're buried on the land between two flowering cherry trees. And nobody's touched that land, it's there, empty. Nobody goes near it. (Ann, IP)

One respondent felt out of place when they visited:

It was nice [to go to Poland], but I kind of feel like I'm in between. I did quite a few exchanges when I was in high school, and we had Polish students come and stay, and we went to Slovakia and the Czech Republic, where obviously the language is slightly similar. My friends would take the piss out of me, because they'd say that I spoke like an older woman. I'd be more formal... and they were like 'Why are you being so formal?'.. But it is very nice, it's quite emotional. Like when my mum—we went for the first time after my grandparents died—my mum got quite upset... It's strange to feel so tied to a place, almost it feels a bit irrational sometimes... I thought about it [going to live in Poland]. But I don't ever think my language would be good enough. (Janina, IP)

Concerning Polish citizenship, both authors considered it:

M.S.: I have thought about it, and I did get in touch with somebody, and they said they were going to help me, but it was going to cost a lot of money, so I think I need to find out how I can do it myself.

A.B.: Yeah, I did it because I did at the time I was exploring all the family history, and it was partly to see if they'd have me (as Polish)! Do they consider I am a Pole or not? It was like a kind of final test of identity. ... And at the time there were a lot of Polish lawyers advertising online saying, 'do you want us to handle your case, your citizenship?' And so, in my family I went first and got it, because I have got a lot of family documents, and then my sisters could it get it...almost automatically. ...and our children. So my daughter has it, too. And because it's hereditary, you don't have to do any tests or anything like that. That is amazing.

When considering whether or not they would live in Poland, the authors commented:

> *M.S.: they do a 3-month (language) course and 12-month course (in Jagellonian University, Krakow), and I would love to do that. I would have liked to do it a few years ago, when it was less affected by being in the EU.*

> *A.B.: Well, I'm a bit of a homebird so I've never really thought about living abroad. . . .But really, Poland is the only place I would go. And I do go there often to visit. Now I am in contact with my cousins and I text them all the time . . . So you know I just feel very much part of it, and you know you have these fantasies like to get a flat, and have a second place over there. It is the only place where I feel I could do that, and it wouldn't be like living in another country. . .I'm learning Polish, so I can understand most of it. . .*

There were strong ties described both to places in Poland and to family living there. This exerted a "pull" for many, and some of the interviewees did go to live there for a period of time, and many thought about doing so. Border changes did represent a challenge around identity (for example, saying your background is Polish, but the family originates in cities now in Lithuania or Ukraine). Some felt out of place in Poland but were willing to learn the culture anew. All seemed to appreciate the ease of travel there.

4. Discussion

This personal and qualitative analysis has focused on British Poles, the second generation to those who settled as asylum seekers in the UK after WW2. It shows a strong sense of Polish identity for most, initially through childhood family ties to a strong Polish community established throughout the UK and its organisations, and through the use of the Polish language in the home, following Polish customs, and enjoying Polish food. Some, however, felt excluded from this community, including those with one non-Polish parent, and it seems some of the parents excluded themselves from this community. This seems to have been due to mistrust, and in some, the desire to be undifferentiated from the British. There was some feeling of inauthenticity in the second generation, whether through lack of knowledge of the language, not having two Polish parents, but also because of dislocation from Poland and "authentic" Poles whose culture had now shifted from that in the UK. The exclusion from the community worked in two ways, for those with only one Polish parent, there was a feeling of exclusion from the Polish community, and for those with two Polish parents, an exclusion from British culture and a sense of not belonging. The notion of cultural inauthenticity and anxiety has been discussed by Cheng in relation to displaced communities, mixed heritage, Irish experience, and Americans seeking their roots, where the notion of "inauthentic" he argues to be spurious in an increasingly globalised world and authenticity in culture is seen to be an unachievable task (Cheng 2004).

The negative feelings experienced by some of the second-generation Poles seem to have abated as adults. Since Poland has become part of the EU, access of second generationers to Poland has increased through travel and strong family ties there in recent years. In some ways, there has been a shift in both cultures for effective integration—British Poles have caught up with modern Polish sensibilities, and Poland has developed a more Western awareness. Both sides are now able to express their grief at wartime atrocities, and there are many new Polish museums and memorials to war atrocities, such as the Siberian Deportations and the Katyn massacre. So, maybe some collective working through of trauma which had been impeded under the communist period has taken place, and culturally, a move forward from the concept of the nation as martyrs (Porter-Szücs 2014) and with a new focus on conciliation rather than conflict (Lehrer 2010; Holc 2018) although some would argue there is still work to be done in this post-trauma modern country.

There are limitations to the secondary analysis presented here. It is recognised as subjective both in utilising the authors' own experiences and views without an external overview, and in including subjective views of other second-generation British Poles garnered through secondary analysis of existing data. Whether this synthesis is effective is a question of fine judgement. There are limitations to such an exercise, notably in

terms of generalisability given the qualitative nature of the study, but also given the possible selectiveness of those cooperating and with no comparative other ethnic view. The interviews from the secondary data were collected at different times (2015/16 and 2017/18), and in different locations, with a related but not identical topic list and quotes taken from those pre-selected from prior analyses. The earlier data set (Oral History Project) was pre-Brexit and did not specifically deal with citizenship and European identity as the latter one did (Invisible Poles). Therefore the analysis represents a pulling together of strands rather than a systematic investigation.

The issue of life stage was not explicitly asked about even though the sample were all over 50 and many retirement age. Quantitative research on 800 Australian hobbyist genealogists showed their average age to be 62, with three-quarters of the sample being over 55 (Moore et al. 2020). The "typical' family historian in this latter sample was female, over 60, partnered with children, and middle class (op cit). It may be that concerns of identity related to childhood background and family history resurface in middle age as a time of reflection and as a means of passing on family information intergenerationally. Uncovering negative information about prior generations can be uncomfortable and result in feelings of shame (Moore 2022). Whilst some of the individuals reported on here did find uncomfortable facts, including undisclosed family and prior wives abroad, and misinformation about national identity, most seem to have sympathy with the parent involved given the extreme political and traumatic circumstances. None of those included in the research turned their backs on their forebears as a consequence.

The second-generation British Poles seem to have adapted well to their dual identity and many have shown resilience. One marker for this is the number who have published their experiences of being Polish. Many of these are humourous, based on going to live in Poland and trying to understand the culture (e.g., Lipman 2012; Gajda 2016) or adaptation to being British-Polish (e.g., Maciek 2001). Some are novels about the British-Polish community (Czechowska 2006). A number have served as a voice for their parents and written their wartime stories (Kelly 2012; Malin 2013; Szlachetko 2015), also shown as film versions internationally, which have led to further comparison and discussion (Tali 2022).

The scale of interest in diasporan Poles seeking their family histories has created both a number of websites (e.g., Kresy Family Home page: https://www.kresyfamily.com/) to aid with finding information as well as demand for Polish tuition. They advertise for those seeking their Polish heritage as a major motivator for English speakers. The search for Polish identity in the UK and more widely is, therefore, highly prevalent and seems to be increasing. With the evolving Europe—firstly with Polish accession to the EU and then latterly with the UK leaving the EU, another shift in identity for all Europeans, particularly those in the UK, has occurred. The issue of plurality in Europe post-1989 and the end of communism argued for unity in diversity and "where the unity consists on multiple points of interaction rather than a progressive unfolding of a master narrative" (p. 18) (Delanty 2010). Given modern European identity is new and developing, with particular challenges for the British post-Brexit, the identity of British Poles has similarly shifted, with many who now encompass being Europeans. The many applications for Polish citizenship and passports through inheritance have risen with this, tied both to Polish identity and to European identity. The study of this unique community in the UK, thus, widens to more general issues of cultural identity and relationships to the wider world.

Author Contributions: Conceptualization, A.B. and M.S.; methodology, A.B. and M.S. formal analysis, A.B. and M.S.; investigation, M.S and A.B.; writing—original draft preparation, A.B.; writing—review and editing, M.S. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Funding: This research received no external funding.

Institutional Review Board Statement: No new ethical approval required for this secondary analysis; prior ethical approval for collecting the published case material is noted in the text.

Informed Consent Statement: None for this secondary analysis. Prior study data collection had informed consent for all interviewees.

Data Availability Statement: This is a secondary data analysis. The interviews from 'Invisible Poles' is available here https://discovery.ucl.ac.uk/id/eprint/10070108 accessed 7 August 2023. The OHP is not available due to confidentiality issues.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

References

Biegus, Zosia, and Jurek Biegus. 2013. *Polish Resettlement Camps in England and Wales 1946–1969*. Skowhegan: PB Software.

Bifulco, Antonia. 2018. Identity, attachment and resilience. In *Exploring Three Generations of a Polish Family*. London: Routledge.

Bifulco, Antonia. 2021. Family History and Searching for Hidden Trauma—A Personal Commentary. *Genealogy* 5: 46. [CrossRef]

Blaszczyk, Agata. 2020. War and Resettlement: Polish Resettlement Camps in the UK after the Second World War. The experience of creating a settlement policy for Polish political refugees. In *Forced Migration Review*. Oxford: Refugee Studies Centre, University of Oxford.

Bornat, Joanna. 2003. A Second Take: Revisiting Interviews with a Different Purpose. *Oral History* 31: 47–53.

Brown, Jennifer. 2011. Expressions of diasporic belonging: The divergent emotional geographies of Britain's Polish communities. *Emotion, Space and Society* 4: 229–37. [CrossRef]

Burrell, Kathy. 2002. Migrant memories, migrant lives: Polish national identity in Leicester since 1945. *Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society* 76: 59–77.

Carling, Jørgen, and Marta Bivand Erdal. 2014. Return migration and transnationalism: How are the two connected? *International migration* 52: 2–12. [CrossRef]

Cheng, Vincent John. 2004. *Inauthentic: The Anxiety over Culture and Identity*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.

Cochrane, Raymond. 1977. Mental illness in immigrants to England and Wales: An analysis of mental hospital admissions, 1971. *Social Psychiatry* 12: 25–35. [CrossRef]

Cook, Joanne, Peter Dwyer, and Louse Waite. 2011. Good relations among neighbours and workmates? The everyday encounters of accession 8 migrants and established communities in Urban England. *Population, Space and Place* 17: 727–41. [CrossRef]

Crowdy, Terry. 2016. *SOE: Churchill's Secret Agents*. Oxford: Shire publications.

Czechowska, Joanna. 2006. *Black Madonna of Derby*. Chippenham: Silkmill.

Davies, Norman. 2015. *Trail of Hope: The Anders Army, an Odyssey across Three Continents*. Oxford: Osprey Publishing.

Delanty, Gerard. 2010. *The European Heritage from a Critical Cosmopolitan Perspective*. London: London School of Economics.

Etkind, Alexander, Rory Finnin, Uilleam Blacker, Julie Fedor, Simon Lewis, Maria Mälksoo, and Matilda Mroz. 2013. *Remembering Katyn*. Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons.

Gajda, Karola. 2016. *Are My Roots Showing? A Laugh-Out-Loud Comedy with Heart & Soul*, 1st ed. Scotts Valley: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform.

Greenblatt-Kimron, Lee, Amit Shrira, Tom Rubinstein, and Yuval Palgi. 2021. Event centrality and secondary traumatization among Holocaust survivors' offspring and grandchildren: A three-generation study. *Journal of Anxiety Disorders* 81: 102401. [CrossRef]

Greenfeld, Daliya, Andrea Reupert, Nicholas Harris, and Nicky Jacobs. 2022. Between Fear and Hope: The Lived Experiences of Grandchildren of Holocaust Survivors: A Qualitative Systematic Literature Review. *Journal of Loss and Trauma* 27: 120–36. [CrossRef]

Hewer, Christopher. J., and Małgorzata Kut. 2010. Historical legacy, social memory and representations of the past within a Polish community. *Memory Studies* 3: 18–32. [CrossRef]

Hirsch, Marianne. 2008. The Generation of Postmemory. *Poetics Today* 29: 103–28. [CrossRef]

Hoffman, Ewa. 2004. *After Such Knowledge: Memory, History, and the Legacy of the Holocaust*. New York: Public Affairs.

Holc, Janine. 2018. Memory Activism Challenging the Reconciliation Paradigm. In *The Politics of Trauma and Memory Activism: Polish-Jewish Relations Today*. Berlin: Springer, pp. 21–36.

Horodowicz Knab, Sophie. 2016. *Wearing the Letter P. Polish Women as Forced Labourers in Nazi Germany 1939–45*. New York: Hippocrene Books.

Jarvis, Pam. 2022. Ancestral Selfies and Historical Traumas: Who Do You Feel You Are? *Genealogy* 6: 1. [CrossRef]

Kelly, Matthew. 2012. *Finding Poland*. New York: Random House.

Landsberg, Alison. 2009. Memory, Empathy, and the Politics of Identification. *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society IJPS* 22: 221–29. [CrossRef]

Lane, Thomas. 2001. Victims of Stalin and Hitler: The Polish Community of Bradford. *Immigrants and Minorities* 20: 43–58. [CrossRef]

Lehrer, Erica. 2010. Can there be a conciliatory heritage? *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 16: 269–88. [CrossRef]

Levitt, Peggy. 2009. Roots and Routes: Understanding the Lives of the Second Generation Transnationally. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 35: 1225–42. [CrossRef]

Lipman, Jonathan. 2012. *Polska Dotty: Carp in the Bathtub, Throttled Buglers, and Other Tales of an Englishman in Poland*. Bucks: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform.

Loizos, Demetris. 2003. The Polish Question at the Yalta Conference. *ANISTORITON Journal of History, Archaeology, ArtHistory* 7: Section E034.

Maciek, Michael. 2001. *Bigos and Chips: The Joys and Perils of an Anglo-Polish Life*. Paterson: Fran and Mike Oborski.

Mąkosa, Paweł. 2015. The communities providing religious education and catechesis to Polish immigrants in England and Wales. *British Journal of Religious Education* 37: 182–94. [CrossRef]

Malin, Jola. 2013. *Faith, Hunger and Song*. Tewkesbury: Tewskesbury Co.

Moore, Susan A., and Doreen A. Rosenthal. 2021. What Motivates Family Historians? A Pilot Scale to Measure Psychosocial Drivers of Research into Personal Ancestry. *Genealogy* 5: 83. [CrossRef]

Moore, Susan, Doreen Rosenthal, and Rebecca Robinson. 2020. *The Psychology of Family History: Exploring Our Genealogy*. London: Routledge.

Moore, Susan M. 2022. How Ancestor Research Affects Self-Understanding and Well-Being: Introduction to the Special Issue. *Geneology* 6: 20. [CrossRef]

MPCA. 2011. In war and peace. In *Collected Memories of Birmingham's Poles*. Birmingham: Midlands Polish Community Association.

MPCA. 2015. Fitting in and getting along. In *Integration and Identity for Birmingham's British Poles*. Birmingham: Midlands Polish Community Association.

Mucha, Janusz. 2019. The Polish Peasant in Europe and America and the missing ethnic leaders. *Przegląd Socjologiczny* 68: 9–27.

Okólski, Marek, and John Salt. 2014. Polish emigration to the UK after 2004; why did so many come? *Central and Eastern European Migration Review* 3: 11–37.

Parker-Drabble, Helen. 2022. How Key Psychological Theories Can Enrich Our Understanding of Our Ancestors and Help Improve Mental Health for Present and Future Generations: A Family Historian's Perspective. *Genealogy* 6: 4. [CrossRef]

Porter-Szücs, Brian. 2014. *Poland in the Modern World: Beyond Martyrdom*. Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons.

Rabikowska, Marta, and Kathy Burrell. 2016. The material worlds of recent Polish migrants: Transnationalism, food, shops and home. In *Polish Migration to the UK in the 'New'European Union*. London: Routledge, pp. 211–32.

Rogalski, Wieslaw. 2019. *The Polish Resettlement Corps 1946–1949: Britain's Polish Forces*. Warwick: Helion & Company Ltd.

Rzeszutek, Marcin, Maja Lis-Turlejska, Aleksandra Krajewska, Amelia Zawadzka, Michal Lewandowski, and Szymon Szumiał. 2020. Long-Term Psychological Consequences of World War II Trauma among Polish Survivors: A Mixed-Methods Study on the Role of Social Acknowledgment. *Frontiers in Psychology* 11: 210. [CrossRef] [PubMed]

Sinatti, Guilia. 2008. The Polish peasant revisited. Thomas and Znaniecki's classic in the light of contemporary transnational migration theory. *Sociologica* 2: 1. [CrossRef]

Smojkis, Maureen. 2014. *Out of the Shadows: Exploring the Lives of the Birmingham Polish*. Birmingham: University of Birmingham.

Soliz, Jordan, Sierra Cronan, Gretchen Bergquist, Audra. K. Nuru, and Christine E. Rittenour. 2017. Perceived Benefits and Challenges of a Multiethnic-Racial Identity: Insight From Adults With Mixed Heritage. *Identity* 17: 267–81. [CrossRef]

Sword, Keith. 1996. *Identity in flux. The Polish Community in Britain*. London: UCL School of Slavonic and East European Studies (SSEES).

Sword, Keith R. 1986. 'Their Prospects will not be Bright': British Responses to the Problem of the Polish 'Recalcitrants' 1946–49. *Journal of Contemporary History* 21: 367–90. [CrossRef]

Szlachetko, George. 2015. *Wira of Warsaw. Memoirs of a Girl Soldier*. Great Britain: Emedal Publishing.

Tali, Margaret. 2022. Transnational therapeutic memories: Remembering forced migration in documentary film. *Memory Studies* 15: 551–62. [CrossRef]

Temple, Bogusia. 2010. Feeling special: Language in the lives of Polish people. *The Sociological Review* 58: 286–304. [CrossRef]

Thomas, William I., and Florian Znaniecki. 1920. *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America. Volume IV. Disorganization and Reorganization in Poland*. Boston: Richard G. Badger, The Gorham Press.

Valentine, Ian. 2004. *Station 43. Audley End House and SOE's Polish Section*. Stroud Glos: Sutton Publishing.

White, Anne. 2016. Polish migration to the UK compared with migration elsewhere in Europe: A review of the literature. *Social Identities* 22: 10–25. [CrossRef]

White, Anne, and Kinga Goodwin. 2019. *Invisibe Poles: A Book of Interview Extracts*. London: University College London.

Winslow, Michelle. 2001. *War, Resettlement, Rooting and Ageing: An Oral History Study of Polish Emigres in Britain*. Sheffield: University of Sheffield.

Zubrzycki, Jerzy. 2013. *Polish Immigrants in Britain: A Study of Adjustment*. Berlin: Springer Science & Business Media. First Published 1956.

Disclaimer/Publisher's Note: The statements, opinions and data contained in all publications are solely those of the individual author(s) and contributor(s) and not of MDPI and/or the editor(s). MDPI and/or the editor(s) disclaim responsibility for any injury to people or property resulting from any ideas, methods, instructions or products referred to in the content.