‘The past is never dead. It’s not even past.’ Exploring lived experiences of deportation: A counselling psychology portfolio including an Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis study on Polish civilian survivors of the deportation to the Soviet Union during World War II.

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'The real history is the history of people, not of the systems'

Robert Blaszak

To my grandfather, whose lived experience of deportation inspired me to write this thesis.

Table of Contents

THE FOLLOWING PARTS OF THIS THESIS HAS BEEN REDACTED FOR COPYRIGHT AND DATA PROTECTION REASONS:

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To the participants, thank you for the precious encounters. I hope that the past will not be forgotten.

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Declaration

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Preface

This Doctoral Thesis Portfolio consists of three individual components. These include empirical research, a publishable journal article, and a combined case study and process report. Each element was completed as part of my doctoral training at City, University of London and demonstrated my competence as a Counselling Psychologist, providing evidence of my knowledge and skills. I will begin by outlining the main threads which tie each component of the portfolio together. Then, I will give an overview of the content of each element here. In addition, I will reflect on the professional and personal challenges that I have encountered while completing my training and writing this thesis.

The patterns that run through these components and link them are psychological trauma and themes of post-traumatic struggle. Each section is centred around aspects that were considered potentially horrific and their long-lasting legacy. Exploring meanings attributed to suffering and acknowledging its different faces are the key themes in this portfolio. The empirical research, an IPA study, explores survivors' lived experience of deportation to the Soviet Union during World War II. The publishable article inspired by the empirical research findings presents one theme that emerged from the research, the long-lasting legacy of deportation. The combined case study and process report review my clinical work with the client who sought help for her self-harming behaviour following traumatic events in her childhood.

Section A: Empirical Research

The first section of this portfolio consists of a research study exploring the lived experiences of deportation of Polish civilians to the Soviet Union during World War II. I had a strong interest in the topic of trauma for several years; however, the subject matter for the research project- the phenomenon of deportation to the Soviet Union- arose unexpectedly as the result of reading an article by Marina Gulina (2015), 'The child's past in the adult's present': The trauma of the Siege of Leningrad (1941-1944). This article made me realise that the topic for my empirical research was within my reach, as it was part of my family history.

This research aims to reveal information and help to understand the lived experiences of deportation. Hence, the qualitative stance was taken using one-to-one semi-structured interviews. Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) was utilised to analyse the data, emphasising the participant's subjectivity and the practitioner's reflective stance.

In addition, my research topic has not only allowed me to explore the phenomenon of deportation in-depth but equally to reconnect with my new identity as a third-generation descendant of the Soviet Union deportee survivor. It also allowed me to uncover the truth

behind the unprocessed events of my family's past. Furthermore, this empirical journey fostered my interest in the complex nature of psychological trauma, particularly mass trauma. Hence, this made me realise that trauma work, due to its complexity, should never be forced upon clients.

I hope this qualitative study will have meaningful implications for counselling psychology and contribute to research on the deportation phenomenon by analysing and broadly exploring survivors' lived experiences. The findings of this study also consider various implications on clinical work with survivors and, for example, trauma-related training.

Section B: Publishable Journal Article

The second section includes a publishable journal article, which presents one of the superordinate themes that emerged from the research, **'**Who hasn't been there, will be, and those who have been there won't forget' – i.e., long-lasting legacy of the deportation. This article is written with the intention of being published in the Journal of Loss and Trauma. This journal was chosen to broaden the reader's perspective on various losses, including losses resulting from the war. It also highlights both the common – and the more varied impacts of significant losses. The study's findings will help broaden a socio-political understanding and, most importantly, the psychological implications of mass suffering and the importance of long-lasting silence and its impact on the survivors.

Section C: Combined Case Study and Process Report

The final section is dedicated to the combined case study and process report for the client who came to counselling because she wanted to stop engaging in self-harming behaviour and 'come to terms with [her] past.' I chose to present this work in the portfolio because of the parallel processes between the client and me. It offered plenty of opportunities for me to recognise the challenges of working with trauma and made me realise that we need to overcome our reluctance to confront this phenomenon to gain a deeper understanding of trauma. Instead, we must encourage ourselves not only as counselling psychologists but most profoundly as human beings to listen to the testimonies of survivors. Similarly, completing my clinical work with the client and my research study made me refrain from pursuing what is supposed to be 'normal' and instead accept the existence of dual reality, the present tense co-existing with ruinous, omnipresent past.

This case presented here took place in my final year in a secondary care NHS setting for clients struggling with anxiety, depression, and/or personality difficulties. This work was meaningful to me on many levels and is a critical reflection and evaluation of my practice as a counselling psychologist trainee while working with a client who presented with personality

difficulties. The mentioned traits were formed due to her early traumatic experiences, for example, being placed in a children's home and being in an abusive relationship with her ex-husband. This therapeutic work was guided by a non-judgmental, non-critical stance, which provided the client with a sense of safety that permitted her to explore previously avoided memories, thoughts and feelings and allowed these elements to emerge in their total capacity. In the case study, I suggest a formulation that hypothesizes that this client faced a lack of 'holding environment', which left her 'unequipped' in regulating challenging emotions. The anger and guilt that she experienced growing up made her feel unease when confronted with the idea of being held in another person's mind. I experienced her difficulties over a long time with a growing sense of anxiety regarding my struggles to stay with her complex feelings linked to her early traumatic experiences. In the extract of the session I have presented, I begin by exploring her omnipresent urge to 'run away' from facing her challenging feelings. I address our therapeutic relationship directly, becoming more aware of the importance of containing this client rather than confrontationally trying to push through her resistance mechanisms. Therefore, this process report is my critical reflection and comprehension of relational experiences, deepening the treatment and facilitating mutual growth and healing. Through writing this portfolio, I was able to enrich my practice and develop as a therapist in ways that I would not have been able to do otherwise and entirely understand the complexity of the therapeutic process and the power of here-and-now interpretations. Also, I understood that sometimes it was more important to stay with the client and contain her rather than confrontationally try to force her to work on her trauma.

During this placement, I had continued to find working with trauma fascinating, but at the same time challenging due to its complexity and my struggle to contain my clients' complicated feelings. I frequently felt overwhelmed and frustrated, because I found it hard to make sense of the processes between myself and my wounded clients struggling with personality difficulties. However, the whole experience of this placement was enriching. I learned a vast amount of clinical knowledge from my supervisor, who gave me plenty of time to find my own way of working with complex trauma processes. This valuable space provided by my supervisor, was significant as I reflected and evaluated my clinical work with the client that I am presenting in this portfolio.

The journey of completing this portfolio has been very challenging, stimulating and very important personally. Furthermore, completing the portfolio components made me realise that *'What we do with people is less important than what we think about what we do and how we are with them. The emphasis is on being, not doing.'* (Woolfe, 2001 p.347). This statement captures the essence of my work as a counselling psychologist and the values attached to this profession. Also, being with people, rather than their diagnosis or dysfunctions,

characterised my way of relating to the clients and participants. Moreover, being with people, rather than doing enabled me to enrich my therapeutic work and take a reflective stance on the values, beliefs and assumptions that I bring into the therapeutic encounter with each individual.

This portfolio reveals my strenuous efforts to become a thoughtful practitioner who can contain previously uncontainable emotions. I also hope that this portfolio will allow my counselling psychology practice and research skills to be assessed favourably.

References

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SECTION A: Empirical research

The lived experiences of deportation to the Soviet Union during World War II among Polish civilians.

Abstract

This study explores the lived experiences of the deportation of Polish civilians to the Soviet Union during World War II. The focus of the study also relates to the potential of deportation-related trauma of Polish civilians. Ten survivors of deportation to the Soviet Union participated in the study and were interviewed using semi-structured interviews. Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) was utilised to analyse the participants' accounts, which were transcribed. Three superordinate themes emerged from the data: Transition from one life to another; 'I was trying my best to survive'; and 'Who hasn't been there, will be, and those who have been there won't forget'- a long-lasting legacy of deportation. The study's findings are examined concerning the broader literature, and connections are made with the theoretical models related to trauma.

Moreover, the findings inform existing research on the pathological aspects relating to deportation. The implications of the results for counselling psychologists' practice and training are presented and discussed. In addition, implications for further research are also discussed.

Keywords: mass-trauma, Soviet Union deportation, Siberian labour camps, Holocaust survivors, post-traumatic stress disorder, post-traumatic growth, testimony, war trauma, genocide, IPA.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Structure of the study

I will provide a brief overview of the background, including some definitions of general trauma and more specific information on deportation, including its historical background. Following the literature review, I will provide the reasons for choosing IPA over other methods and the other methodological nuances of this study, which I include in the next chapter. I will then present all the steps that I took to analyse the data. Subsequently, I will provide the findings from the data analysis. In the last chapter, I will include the discussion section, the limitations of the study, and recommendations for future research. I will also provide the implications of the findings for counselling psychology.

Almost 80 years have indeed passed since the end of World War II. Nevertheless, the survivors of the deportation to the Soviet Union continue to suffer to this day, even though this experience was largely unreported and wholly shrouded in silence for decades. However, similar to many other disturbing experiences, the deportation phenomenon is fading away together with its survivors, as they are now reaching the end of their existence. Still, its impact remains very vivid and worthy of further exploration within the psychological context. In addition, most people are entirely unaware of the presence of such a phenomenon in contemporary history. Consequently, it is necessary to help others better understand it and investigate this unique experience and explore its various dimensions.

1.2. Overview of the problem

Following the invasion of Poland by Russia and Germany in 1939, Stalin wanted to destroy Eastern Poland entirely. Hence, he confiscated land, property and business and deported around 1.7 million Poles to the depths of Russia between 1940 and 1941. It is estimated that only one third survived since many died because of the horrific conditions during the journey to the Soviet Union and at the camps (Paczkowski, 2005). However, to date, only a few, mainly quantitative studies within Western psychology, explore the phenomenon of the Soviet Union deportation. Therefore, there is a strong need to explore in-depth how the survivors experienced this phenomenon today. This research endeavours wholeheartedly to conduct and then analyse interviews with the survivors of the deportation to the Soviet Union during World War II.

1.3. Purpose of the study

Until today research on Polish survivors of mass deportation is scarce in psychology literature; considering what is known about the impact of the Holocaust on Jewish survivors and their descendants, the lack of psychological research aimed at exploring and analysing the experience of Polish civilian survivors of the deportation to the Soviet Union is both considerable and surprising. Consequently, there is a solid need to study and explore lived experience and its consequences on survivors and descendants. The study's findings will contribute to the general knowledge of the potential impact of deportation in the Polish, European and worldwide context and help people better understand its perception better. The results will also help to reveal how various cultural and situational circumstances affected post-deportation responses. Hence, gaining that understanding will assist counselling psychologists in helping individuals and families with this type of background recognise and work through their potential post-deportation struggles, however only if they are willing to do that. In addition, therapy delivered by counselling psychologists will create an opportunity for the 'survivors to develop a capacity to bear the past traumatic events as history rather than being trapped in the past and endlessly reliving it' (Blackwell, 2005 p. 320). As collective-suffering related studies have focused mainly on Holocaust survivors and their offspring, this group formed the central platform for the literature review and three studies conducted on Polish survivors of deportation to the Soviet Union.

1.4. Historical background of the deportations

Approximately 1.7 million victims of Stalinism, who are commonly called: '*Sybiraks*', were deported from Poland into the depths of the Soviet Union during World War II as part of a policy of ethnic and political repression, which at present can also be seen as ethnic cleansing (Paczkowski, 2005). The primary purpose of the deportations was not only to intimidate the Polish civilians and weaken their political opposition but also to make Polish territories ethnically less homogenous (Rutkowski & Dembinska, 2015). Hence, to purge those parts of Poland from '*undesirable elements'*, who were also called '*alien elements'* (Snyder, 2015, p.79) or '*anti-Soviet elements*' (Sword, 1996, p.13), among whom were university professors, teachers, engineers, the whole of the forestry service, wealthier peasants and smallholders, as well as military personnel (Sword, 1996). Families were arrested at night, and they were given between fifteen minutes to two hours to gather their necessary belongings. Civilians were transported in four waves of deportation in February, April, June 1940 and June 1941, as part of the actions carried out by the Red Army and People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs (NKWD). The first wave targeted military settlers '*osadniki*'- army veterans granted land

for their service in the Polish-Russian war in 1918-1921. *'Osadniki'* were predominantly transported to the mining and forestry camps in Siberia. In April 1940, deportees who were deported with their families comprised civil servants (police, prison warders, administrative staff) and 'property-owning classes' such as bankers, industrialists, shop owners. They were mainly deported to Kazakhstan, where they were forced to find accommodation and employment by themselves after reaching the destination of state and collective farms. Other transports of deportees from this wave went beyond the Ural Mountains. The third wave, in June 1940, included refugees who settled in eastern regions of Poland after fleeing Western Poland and who refused to accept the citizenship offered by the Soviet authorities. The final wave, in June 1941, spread over to the Baltic countries and Moldova, intending to cleanse those territories from anti-Soviets and '*socially dangerous elements'* (Sword, 1996, p.13).

Following the arrest, deportees were transported for several weeks in unheated, sealed and overcrowded freight wagons without access to water, sanitation and food. From the first moment of their deportation experience, they were exposed to death, as several people usually perished in transit, and their bodies were thrown on rail tracks. Their lives did not improve after reaching their destination, as they were deprived of all means of support. Furthermore, upon the arrival, they were allocated to multiple occupancy barracks or dugouts, which in many cases, they needed to dig out by themselves. Throughout their exile, they were also exposed to hunger, primitive living conditions, forced labour, and the severity of the climate- therefore, the mortality rate in this group was very high. They were also exposed to the death of immediate family members as well as other deportees. Intimidation and punishment by imprisonment or labour camps were part of their daily deportation existence.

Moreover, they had limited, or no communication with others and their letters to their families and/or friends were censored. On 22nd of June 1941, the Soviet Union was attacked by Nazi Germany, which resulted in a treaty agreement signed on 30th July 1941, between Stalin, Eden, Churchill and the Polish Government in exile, with the demand that the Russians granted freedom to the Poles who had been deported to the various destinations in the Soviet Union. Even after the war, the survivors were prevented from returning to their idyllic *'ojczyzna'*- homeland by a Soviet system which continued to confine them (e.g., by imposing Russian citizenship). Many wandered around for months to join General Anders' Army, which was formed of men and women released from the camps, hoping that it would be their way of escaping from Russia. In August 1942, those civilians who signed as soldiers, and their relatives, left Russia with the Anders Army and reached Iran. The army became the Polish Second Corps and was put under British control. Later on, former Anders' soldiers found

refuge in many Western countries as their return to Poland wasn't possible because they were considered traitors by Communist authorities. Those survivors who found their way back to Poland (without joining the Anders' army) were discriminated against because of their past and deprived of higher education and better employment opportunities. Also, they were not allowed to discuss their experiences of deportation openly. This situation lasted until 1989, when the collapse of the Soviet Union took place. Notwithstanding, despite all the pre-and post-deportation horrors, this phenomenon is one of the most under-reported atrocities of contemporary history. It has resulted in perpetual wounds among its survivors and their families (Sword, 1996).

1.5. Theoretical perspectives on trauma

Trauma has been defined as 'a wound, a hurt or a defeat'. The word trauma has its origin in the Greek language, and it stands for 'a piercing of the skin, a breaking of the bodily envelope' (Garland, 2007, p.9).

It can be helpful to consider the experience of deportation and potential related trauma from different psychological and counselling perspectives. Trauma theory can be traced back to the foundation work of Sigmund Freud. According to Freud (1920/2001, p.29), the mind can also be wounded by difficult occurrences since 'being flooded with a large amount of stimulus…would cause a disturbance on a large scale'. Freud believed that this wound represents a breach in various experiences of the mind related to time, self, and the world; hence, the trauma has a significant impact on the interior self. Furthermore, Freud (1963, p.275) portrays trauma as an 'experience which within a short period presents the mind with an increased stimulus too powerful to be dealt with or worked off naturally, which must result in permanent disturbances of the way the energy operates.'

Moreover, Freud (1963) pointed out that 'repetitive compulsion' formed the basis for re-living traumatic events and claimed that fixation with trauma and avoidance to remember it occur alternatively. In addition, because of the overwhelming emotions following the occurrence of the traumatic event, the individual has difficulty controlling belated affects and at the same time struggles to incorporate the traumatic experience into their consciousness (Laplanche & Pontalis, 1968). However, despite all the perturbations, the individual feels the urgent desire to regain control over life, but they cannot deal with the intensity of the emotions.

On the one hand, following a traumatic event, the concept of time and the time-related memory function can be observed as dysfunctional, manifested in an intense sensation that the trauma did not occur long ago, it is repeatedly happening, every day (Laub & Auerhahn, 1993).

Following Van der Kolk's (1987) definition, trauma occurs when a person is deprived of a place of refuge, and processes the affects or experiences following a severely distressing event, resulting in a feeling of helplessness. Furthermore, according to Pavlov (1960), trauma is defined as long-lasting psychological damage within the brain structure. Following the traumatic experience, the central system of an individual relives that trauma again when exposed to another, a similar event that overwhelms, threatens the psyche and is entirely out of control. Exposure to trauma will also result in poor tolerance to an arousing situation (Krystal, 1978). However, Caruth (1996, p.4-5) categorises trauma as 'a response, sometimes delayed, to an overwhelming event or set of events, which takes the form of repeated, intrusive hallucinations, dreams, thoughts, or behaviours stemming from the event… the event, which is not assimilated or experienced fully at the time, but only belatedly in its repeated possession of the one who experienced it'.

Finally, the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (American Psychiatric Association, 2013 p.463) provides the following definition of trauma and stress-related disorders: 'Exposure to actual or threat of death, serious injury, or sexual violence, in one or more of the following ways: directly experiencing the traumatic event(s); witnessing it, in person or through an event(s) as it occurred to others, especially primary caregivers; learning that the traumatic event(s) occurred to a parent or caregiving figure; and experiencing repeated or extreme exposure to aversive details of such events.'

However, since this study is not concerned with anatomy (brain function) or with conceptualisations of the psyche (as it pertains to conscious and unconscious elements), a working and holistic definition of trauma which can encompass many different meanings and phenomena was chosen by Pearlman and Saakvitne (1995, p.60). 'Psychological trauma is the unique individual experience of an event or of enduring conditions in which the individual's ability to integrate his or her emotional experience is overwhelmed (i.e., his or her ability to stay present, understand what is happening, integrate the feelings, and make sense of the experience), or the individual experiences (subjectively) a threat to life, bodily integrity, or sanity'. This definition was chosen for its neutrality, broadness and harmony with the subjective values of Counselling Psychology. Moreover, this definition intentionally doesn't permit us to determine whether a particular event is traumatic; that is up to each survivor. It also provides us with a guideline for a better understanding of survivors' deportation experiences. However, this (together with other definitions of trauma) is understood as only one particular 'working' interpretation of trauma by the author, indeed, the construct of trauma can be understood from many different perspectives. We also need to remember that the

concept of trauma doesn't reflect global phenomenon or have universal validity. Trauma is a constructed category, and it can't be separated from various political beliefs, daily routines, institutional demands, technology etc., which simply comprise cultural life (Quosh & Gergen, 2008).

1.6. Collective psychological trauma

What may also be noteworthy to mention is that some consider deportation to the Soviet Union as a form of 'mass trauma' or 'collective trauma', which 'occurs as a result of a frightening, potentially life-threatening event that is experienced by a large number of people simultaneously' (Webb, 2004, p.4). In other words, the wounds of the mass trauma are shared in the group's collective memory. Some scholars consider mass deportations a crime against humanity (Polian, 2004; Davoliute, 2014). Other academics such as Raphael Lemkin (1944) go further and use the word 'genocide' to describe deportations. However, it is essential to remember that despite the mass character of deportation, each survivor experienced it uniquely and developed a distinctive approach towards adjustment and coping. Moreover, the individual response to the deportation might depend on the unique personality and the support character within each family or society and its cultural factors (Webb, 2004).

1.7. Literature review

This section critically considers a selection of literature relevant to deportation experiences. However, as studies related directly to the Soviet Union deportation are relatively scarce in Western psychology, only a few studies were found to connect directly to the experience of the Soviet Union deportation in Polish survivors. Due to this scarcity, I then have drawn more widely, touching on literature mainly associated with the Holocaust, as this type of experience shares several similarities with the deportation phenomenon- e.g., survivors being subjected to unspeakable horrors because of their nationalities or being perceived by Russians or Germans as 'undesirable elements' (Sword, 1996) or simply their enemies. This was done very carefully and, on a case-by-case basis. The volume of studies returned from the search concerned these survivors of the Holocaust and deportation- this helped supplement this body of research. Studies that looked at genocide and did not contain experiences of deportation were omitted.

Moreover, as the current body of research shifts its focus towards coping strategies that civilians adapted to survive the Holocaust and towards understanding the process of their adaptation, resilience and post-traumatic growth, several studies oscillating around these subjects were also included in the literature review. Additionally, the literature produced since

the 1960s and 1970s is considered. Since then, the research concerned with the psychological impact of the Holocaust began to appear in greater quantities. Until then, limited attention was paid to the psychological aspects of the Holocaust.

Search terms and selection criteria

Studies which were supposed to be included in the review were identified through the following electronic databases: City University Library, British Library, PePWeb, PsycINFO, Web of Science, PsycArticles, JSTOR, Wiley Online Library, Archives of Psychiatry & Psychotherapy, Psychiatria Polska and Przeglad Lekarski. Moreover, to conduct the literature search, the following parameters were used: deportation, deportation-related trauma, Siberian labour camps, traumatic experience, Holocaust-related trauma, concentration camps, Holocaust survivors, Stalin's oppressions, complex post-traumatic stress disorder, post-traumatic growth, resilience, survival coping strategies, testimony, war trauma, post-traumatic personality, survivor syndrome, genocide, the Cambodian genocide, Rwandan atrocity, Armenian genocide, mass trauma, collective trauma. In addition, translations of works published in Polish were sought. However, articles related to surgical trauma were removed, and only articles related to the psychological effects of deportation and/or the Holocaust were included. Moreover, the results of performed searches were reviewed via their title and/or abstract. If the title of the article appeared too broad, then the screening of the abstract was performed. If following a close examination of the title and the abstract, it was still doubtful whether a particular article should be included, the full paper was viewed to ensure that no relevant article was omitted.

Only a few studies were found to be the primary studies relating to the experience of the Soviet Union deportation in Polish survivors. These studies have attempted to capture the experience of deportation through retrospective accounts of participants. These accounts refer to the psychological impact of deportation, descriptions of the event and post-deportation life. However, most studies returned were concerned with survivors of the Holocaust and related trauma, which were used to supplement this body of research. These studies are further detailed below. Many studies were also quantitative, which were critiqued through a positivist lens (Yardley, 2000). Nevertheless, quantitative and qualitative studies produce different knowledge (Willig, 2013), which combine to inform this research.

1.7.1. *Experience of the Soviet Union deportation in Polish survivors*

In one of the few quantitative studies that has been conducted to explore the phenomena of Soviet Union deportation, Jackowska (2005) investigated the psychopathological consequences of this phenomenon among 100 Polish civilians. Participants were assessed with semi-structured interviews, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) Inventory and Geriatric and Depression scale (GDS). Findings revealed that most participants still experienced a range of PTSD symptoms, e.g., intrusive distressing recollection of the event, flashbacks, nightmares, emotional numbness and increased arousal (APA, 2013) following the exposure to traumatic events in the Soviet Union. Following the deportation event, other participants pointed out positive aspects of the deportation, such as becoming more 'resourceful' or 'hardened to stress'. Despite significant findings, the study was methodologically flawed by a lack of information on the sample selection procedure and the absence of a control group. Furthermore, the examined group of participants could not meet the psychiatric standard for PTSD syndrome, as the evaluation was only based on the deportees' self-report. Moreover, Jackowska focused only on psychopathological consequences of deportation without exploring others, perhaps suppressed, psychological sequelae and entirely omitting the lived experiences of its survivors.

In another study, Monieta and Anczurowski (2004) examined 40 deportees to the Soviet Union, using PTSD Interview (PTSD-I) to obtain their PTSD intensification and analyse the psychological consequences of extremely difficult and often threatening psychological consequences living conditions in exile. The findings of this study revealed a high level of PTSD intensification among survivors. They confirmed that suffering from highly distressing events in the early stage of development leaves an indelible stigma on the survivors' psyche. However, there are limitations to this study, such as the lack of a control group, a small and biased sample, which was recruited only from the clinical population. In addition, all participants belonged to the same organization of Siberian deportee survivors. Hence, these findings cannot be extrapolated beyond the sample group due to their methodological limitations.

What weaves these two studies together is the attempt to define and measure the phenomenon of deportation using only quantitative methodology. Furthermore, both studies suffer from severe methodological failings, as previously mentioned, which would need to be overcome when planning to carry out quantitative research. Thus, there is a strong need to explore survivors' lived experiences using qualitative methodology.

However, a qualitative study was carried out by Prot (2000), who explored the psychological problems of civilians deported to the Soviet Union during World War II with Holocaust survivors. Her findings were based on interviews and psychotherapy and suggested that *Sybiraks*' low self-worth was, in most cases, linked to a particular situation, e.g., feeling ashamed of not being well educated. Whereas, the Jewish survivors' low esteem seemed to be spread across all the areas of their existence. Both groups shared a high level of anticipation of imagined disaster. However, the 'Sybiraks' fears did not last beyond their return to Poland, whereas Jewish survivors never stopped being afraid. Unlike Holocaust survivors, deportees did not appear to mention omnipresent separation problems or difficulties in forming and maintain subsequent relationships.

Although survivors' guilt was present in both groups, the - '*Sybiraks'* guilt was usually linked to a specific event, and most of the time was about sharing food with relatives. In addition, the *'Sybiraks'* concealed their experience of deportation from the eyes of Communist dignitaries, whereas the identity of Jewish survivors tended to be hidden from everyone. Both groups spoke of experiencing symptoms of PTSD, such as nightmares and flashbacks. For the Jewish survivors, their experience tended to be silenced within the family to protect their offspring. On the contrary, deportees to the Soviet Union appeared to frequently talk about their lived experiences of deportation. Their hunger and poverty in exile became a frequent point of reference in family gatherings. Prot (2000) concluded that the consequences of the Holocaust impacted the Jewish survivors' personalities, which led to a change in their family life and social interactions.

On the other hand, the deportation seemed to have a more discrete impact on the '*Sybiraks*', connected to a particular experience, rather than impeding every area of their functioning. Overall, this study provides new interesting perspectives on the deportation, but it also has several limitations that need to be taken into consideration. Only limited information was provided on how the participants were recruited for the study and how they gave consent to take part in it. This is of particular importance because of the sensitivity of the subject matter being explored, the participants' prior engagement with psychological therapy and the dual roles of the therapist/ researcher. Generally, there was insufficient information provided about the design of the study for example in relation to the data collection and analysis processes. Therefore, it is difficult to assess the credibility of the findings.

1.7.2. *Experience of Holocaust in Jewish survivors*

Among others, depression, anxiety and paranoia are the most frequent symptoms experienced by Holocaust survivors. As McCann and Pearlman noticed (1990), these three symptoms are also common responses to other highly distressing events.

1.7.2.1. Depression

It has been observed that depression is one of the most common symptoms experienced by Holocaust survivors in the post-war era (Chodoff, 1963; Bergmann & Jucovy, 1990; Bower, 1994), which was frequently accompanied by guilt and sorrow. Nevertheless, their guilt was mainly linked to a specific event in the concentration camps and/or because they survived, while most family members perished. Others claimed that survivors' depressive states occurred regarding unresolved mourning concerning the death of relatives during the Holocaust (Steinberg, 1989). In addition, Porter (1981) claims that the severity of the depressive symptoms among Holocaust survivors is linked to their guilt, associated with losing immediate family members. It is vital to note that the occurrence of various psychosomatic symptoms masks depression.

1.7.2.2. Anxiety

Chodoff (1963) noticed that Holocaust survivors suffered from a severe state of anxiety. One of the most lasting imprints caused by this trauma. Anxiety manifested itself in apprehensiveness, hypervigilance and sleep disturbances, including nightmares and night terrors. Some survivors were also terrified by the recollection of persecutory experiences (Porter, 1981).

1.7.2.3. Survivor syndrome

After World War II, clinicians introduced the term 'survivor syndrome' (Niederland, 1968, 1981) or 'concentration camp syndrome' (Chodoff, 1963, Etinger, 1964, Matussek, 1975), called less popularly 'KZ- syndrome' (German: *Konzentrarionslagersyndrome*) or post-interment asthenia (Kepinski, 1972). These terms were created to define the psychopathological characteristics of Jewish Holocaust survivors as a direct response to the Holocaust. Even though Kepinski (1970) claimed that it was impossible to determine the essence of the 'concentration camp syndrome'. The following features of the syndrome were identified: depression; anxiety; somatization such as peptic ulcers, severe headaches, heart complaints, maturational-development disturbances. Sometimes psychotic disorders with delusional or semi-delusional symptomatology were present among the survivors (Williams, 1993). The last feature of the

syndrome was described as persistent guilt of surviving the Holocaust, keeping in mind that so many others perished. However, it was claimed by some scholars that even though many of the survivors experienced several symptoms of 'concentration camp syndrome', they have managed to lead very productive lives without any effect on their social functioning (Giberovitch, 1992). They adapted successfully to their new environments (Kahana, Kahana, Harel & Rosner, 1988). Nevertheless, Chadoff (1963) argued that Concentration Camp Syndrome differs from PTSD due to survival guilt and a depressive state.

1.7.2.4. Paranoia/ Further persecution scares

In addition, it was observed that Holocaust survivors experienced symptoms of paranoia (Kellerman, 2001; Krell, 1997; Niederland, 1988), which was linked to the fear of reliving persecution and their extreme suspiciousness (Davidson, 1980). More recent studies (Joffe et al., 2003) also revealed that Holocaust survivors' psychosocial functioning had been impacted, and the psychological effects of the Holocaust continue to be alive 80 years later. The following psychological problems were found among the survivors: depression and anxiety, problems with sleep, intrusive thoughts and nightmares, and somatic symptoms. However, a higher level of resistance was also present among Holocaust survivors, which could explain survivors' good functioning in society (Joffe et al., 2003).

1.7.2.5. Posttraumatic Stress Disorder symptoms

These early clinical descriptions gave way to what is currently defined as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). This syndrome is described by the configuration of various symptoms such as chronic sense of anxiety (De Graaf, 1975), depression (Niederland, 1968), feeling of 'survival guilt' facing the loss of family and friends (Chodoff, 1986), personality problems, emotional instability and cognitive impairment (Prager & Salomon, 1995). Development of those symptoms is created in response to a highly traumatic stressor such as death or severe injury (First, 1994). An individual responds to those stressors with fear, a state of helplessness, persistent mental reoccurrence of this event, and a strong avoidance of being reminded about it. Survivors can be diagnosed with PTSD when the combination of the three following symptoms occur: intrusion, avoidance, and hyperarousal. Intrusion refers to persistent re-experiencing of the traumatic event/s through dreams, images, thoughts and flashbacks. Avoidance is related to a long-lasting attempt to keep away from the stimuli that are linked to the trauma. Hyperarousal refers to persistent symptoms of increased arousal.

Furthermore, Lavie & Kaminer (1996) and Lev-Wiesel & Amir (2003) recognised avoidance and intrusion among survivors. They often experience intrusive dreams and flashbacks of their

traumatic experiences and the high avoidance of such stimuli that may trigger intrusions. Moreover, early Holocaust literature indicated survivors' poor physical health in terms of higher frequency of systemic infectious diseases and circulation or gastrointestinal disorders, which also impacted survivors' personal and social functioning (Witusik & Witusik, 1968; Chodoff, 1963). This research period was characterised as the immersion in silence (Bar-On, 1995), as many individuals did not want to acknowledge the cruelty of the Holocaust in a larger social context, which created a conspiracy of silence phenomena among Holocaust survivors and their societies (Danieli, 1984).

1.7.2.6. Dissociation

In addition, various clinical studies (Jaffe, 1989; Modai, 1994) revealed that extensive dissociation had been another recurrent symptom experienced by the victims of the Holocaust. Drawing on clinical case studies, Auerbach, Mirvis, Stern and Schwartz (2009) conducted qualitative research, during which they analysed 20 transcripts from the interviews with Holocaust survivors. The structural dissociation theory (Van der Haart, Nijenbuis, Steele, 2006) was used to investigate how Holocaust survivors managed to live a 'normal life' after their traumatic experiences. Thematic analysis was utilised, and 13 themes emerged in four stages: surviving the camps, post-war adjustment, developing a motivation to remember and creating a historical self. In the first stage, the theme was described as surviving the camps: forming highly distressing memories, participants reported numbing their affects to focus their entire energy on survival phenomena (theme 1). Participants also described holding onto their pre-war personality while dreaming about their liberation and establishing future post-war plans (theme 2). In the second stage, Post-War Adjustment, participants described feeling enormous pressure to search for normalcy (theme 3) and their efforts to prevent the re-experiencing of traumatic material to forget about the past (theme 4). However, despite all the effort to ignore the horrific past, highly distressing memories of the Holocaust survivors interfered with their attempts to recreate normalcy (theme 5), as most of them reported having re-experiencing symptoms in the form of frequent nightmares or flashbacks. Within the third stage, developing the motivation to remember, survivors verbalised the importance of social support to remember the past (theme 6). The confrontation with painful experiences took a more direct perspective, as a society stopped pressurising for a denial of Holocaust horrors. Survivors' ageing was another factor that helped them increase their motivation to remember the past and 'testify' their experiences before dying (theme 7). The survivors demonstrated a sense of moral obligations to bear witness to family and society, which in return motivated survivors to share their past (theme 8) to 'prevent the history from repeating itself' (p.397). In

the fourth stage of Creating a Historical Self, survivors reported integrating their experiences through accepting their past (theme 9) and establishing their perspective through the development of meaningful and coherent existence (theme 10). Survivors also integrated their experiences by connecting to a larger mission or focusing on a more profound goal: educational activities related to the Holocaust or fighting racism or prejudice (theme 11). This process of emotional recollection resulted in a decrease of trauma-related symptoms (theme 12). Lastly, most survivors noticed that their trauma would not be forgotten and regularly cause distress and interfere with their lives (theme 13). Auerbach et al. (2009) noticed that the participants' recollection of the trauma was very powerful, which allowed them to establish emotional and interpersonal connections. Sharing their Holocaust experiences emerged as an emotionally moving experience.

1.7.2.7. Intimacy and interpersonal trust

Another struggle of the Holocaust survivors has been linked to their limited ability to establish trust and intimacy in personal relationships. Those struggles have been identified as the most damaging by-products of survival (de Wind, 1995). Scholars noticed that because of the survivors' early object loss, they could not create secure attachments due to their sudden and often brutal separation from family members (Brom et al., 2002; Dasberg, 2001, Salomon, 2002). It was also argued that the fear of losing somebody else again is omnipresent; hence, they preferred to keep their distance to avoid potential additional losses. For some, to love again was equal to the betrayal of the previous relationships and lost partners. In addition, the establishment of satisfactory, new relationships was often impaired by survivors' persistent attempts to reconstruct non-existing previous marriages. It was overshadowed by the memory of unmourned partners and children.

1.7.2.8. Holocaust survivors' coping with extreme stress

There are signs that a profoundly distressing experience has a detrimental effect on people. However, there are also signs that adversity makes individuals stronger and better at coping in general (Harel, 1995). Various scholars also found that coping skills and strategies have been linked to the severity of the symptoms and recognised as crucial in post Holocaust adjustment (Aronoff, Stollack & Samford, 1998). Instrumental, affective and avoidant strategies have been distinguished empirically by Kahana, Kahana, Harel and Rosner (1988). Furthermore, several studies suggest that coping strategies, which involve avoidant tactics, can minimise symptoms like pain, anxiety and stress.

In contrast, active strategies can be more helpful in dealing with other symptoms (Suls & Flecher, 1985). Instrumental coping was also associated with psychological well-being, while escapist coping was linked to low psychological well-being (Kahana et al., 1988). Moreover, more specific strategies have been distinguished: focusing on the present tense, ability to remain hopeful despite constant hardship, a great desire to live, a strong sense of identity and self-respect and being able to overcome emotions of hostility and depression (Nardini, 1952). Such strategies included 'less ethical' coping behaviours: smuggling, stealing, bribery, feigning compliance, aggression towards inmates, manipulation of the system or escape (Kahana et al., 1988). The various coping strategies presented above facilitated both physical and psychological survival among prisoner-of-war camps. According to several studies (Bastians, 1982; Rose, 1986), there are two experiential phases under extreme stress conditions: initial and adaptation. According to some scholars, the initial stage is characterised by shock or disbelief. Specific coping strategies are utilised to block out the enormity of the threat. These include depersonalisation, dissociation and denial. During the second phase, individuals use much more diverse responses: emotional numbing, selective perception, identification with the aggressor, forming friendships or other strategies to enhance life (Wilson et al., 1988). However, it's important to remember that some individuals, despite demonstration of 'active mastery', have perished because of the non-specific selection process occurring in the concentration camps (Wilson et al., 1988). DesPres (1976) distinguished immobilisation as an initial stage, followed by the second stage of integration and recovery. Hence, according to DesPres, those individuals who successfully survived traumatic events reached a level of engagement and resistance following the phase of withdrawal and passivity.

Similarly, Chodoff (1986) suggests that some of the survivors experienced shock and terror upon arrival at concentration camps, accompanied by the stage of apathy and ultimately reaching more active coping and self-preservation strategies. Hence, the ability to move beyond the phase of immobilisation and collapse characterised those who survived. Moreover, coping strategies can be characterised by their functionality; this includes: changing the situation, changing the meaning of the situation and stress control or controlling the negative impact of the problem. Cognitive restructuring defines the process of changing the importance of a situation, and provides a way of getting by, under very extreme stress. An excellent example of this process occurs during starvation, as food is recategorised and inedible things from the past become edible in the current circumstances, such as grass, tree bark or pieces of furniture. Finally, strategies such as depersonalisation, denial, emotional numbing, or isolation of affect help individuals control the emotional response to the overwhelming threat.

Other coping strategies included: the ability to confide in somebody in case of a problem and the performance of meaningful activities such as escapism to the spiritual world (Yeheskel, 1995).

1.7.2.9. Strength of Holocaust survivors

Additionally, the strength of survivors was explored, which is a significant feature. It facilitated the survival following a harrowing event and the subsequent adaptation, allowing survivors to live a satisfactory existence. Salutogenesis has been the leading theory behind the concept of survival strength, which was proposed by Antonovsky (1987). He developed the idea of a sense of coherence with three personality features: comprehensibility, manageability, and meaningfulness, which are not only linked to individuals' responses to highly distressing events but also their fulfilled life after those events. Many studies on Holocaust survivors confirm that a strong sense of coherence shields them from symptoms of posttraumatic stress disorder (Van der Hal-van Raalte, van Ijzedoorn & Bakermans-Kranenburg, 2008). In addition, a significant example of adjustment to camp life was presented by Frankl (2004), which included the emotional numbing to the presence of dead bodies, escapism into a spiritual world, as a response to a constant threat to his own life, as well as imaginary dialogues with his wife.

1.7.2.10. Life-death paradigm following a profoundly distressing experience

Lifton (1993) developed a fascinating concept, which proposed ten fundamental principles affecting survivors' post-trauma responses based on the comprehension of death and continuity, called the life-death paradigm. The principles are as follow: life- death paradigm (the higher the focus on the end, the more effective individuals will be as responders); the concept of being a survivor (survival seen as an achievement, which can be used as a source of growth); the human connectedness of survivors (as part of the recovery process, survivors need to re-establish a sense of being in touch with broader humanity); post-traumatic stress disorder as a normal reaction to extreme stress (those responses can be perceived as a normal adaptive process taking into consideration the severe character of deeply distressing life circumstances); survival, guilt and self-condemnation (a sense of responsibility can be developed after failing to respond to highly disturbing experiences in a way that person would have wished to respond); psychosocial vitality and fragmentation of self (describes conflict between being able to feel and not being able to feel, i.e. standard defence mechanism; psychic numbing- discontinuity of self (this type of numbing prevents the symbolisation and formative processes from taking place, which are crucial to the recovery process); the search

for meaning; the moral dimensions of trauma; the transformation of the self (this process together with other responses is central to better understanding the concept of PTSD, as the recovery is perceived as 'how the experience transforms the self' (Gibson, 1991, p.57), which can be seen as a positive and negative transformation impacting future existence.

1.7.2.11. The resilience of Holocaust survivors

Many scholars consider resilience as a crucial survival element of Holocaust victims. The following three waves of resilience were identified (Richardson, 2002): resilient qualities (traits and environmental factors, which helped people to overcome adversity); resilient processes (that played a role in the recovery) and resilience related to the creative expressions, which promote healing and growth (Corley, 2010). According to Greene (2010b, p.413-414), resilience, one of the critical components of survivorship, can be defined in two terms. As: 'an adaptation to extraordinary circumstances (i.e., risks) and achievement of positive and unexpected outcomes in the face of adversity' (citing, Fraser, 1997), and as 'an ability to maintain competence across the life span' (citing Masten, 1994). Greene (2010a) suggested that Holocaust survivors engaged in various resilient behaviours, which took place during and after the Holocaust.

Moreover, the following survivors' traits, such as optimism, creativity and perseverance, contributed to their resilience. Therefore, during the Holocaust, survivors engaged in several adaptive/resilient behaviours such as resolving to live, bartering for goods, exchanging favours, tricking/ sabotaging guards or finding ways to get extra food. After the Holocaust, survivors' resilient behaviours were reflected in rebuilding their everyday lives. These behaviours included forming families, establishing careers, or participating in community services (Helmreich, 1992). Moreover, survivors also demonstrated their desire to return to normality through giving testimony, expressing their interest in the process of self-actualisation, engaging in creative endeavours or giving meaning which consisted of transforming the Holocaust experience into a positive dimension of coping (Corley, 2010). Also, for some survivors giving testimony was considered the best part of the survival (Greene, 2002) because of the inner obligation to preserve their stories (Canham et al., 2017). Many survivors choose consciously to live their life to the fullest, celebrate life, and look at themselves from a positive point of view (Greene, 2002). These processes have been consistent with Frankl's (2004) accounts, as he recognised camp prisoners' efforts to go beyond their misery to find meaning in their daily existence. Finally, for many, religion provided sense in their daily existential struggles and played a significant protective factor (Ellison, 1993). Therefore, there is no doubt that 'the resiliency process is a life-enriching model in that

it suggests that stressors and change provide growth and increased resilient qualities and protective factors' (Richardson, 2002 p319).

1.7.2.12. Post-traumatic growth

Post-Traumatic Growth (PTG) formed a new area of research within the trauma-related universe. It can be defined as 'positive psychological changes experienced due to the struggle with traumatic or highly challenging life circumstances' (Tedeschi, Shakespeare-Finch, Taku, Calhoun, 2018, p.1). According to Tedeschi (1999), the concept of PTG is regarded as a process and an outcome in which people bounce back from trauma, grow and develop (Tedeschi, Park & Calhoun, 1998). Moreover, PTG is focused on changes occurring in people following deeply distressing events rather than paying attention to the responses during an event (Tedeschi, Shakespeare-Finch, Taku & Calhoun, 2018). However, confronting such damages, several individuals can create new psychological constructs that embrace the trauma's opportunities and more beneficial ways of coping (Janoff-Bulman, 1992). Hence, it is claimed that post-traumatic growth can be perceived as the opposite of post-traumatic stress disorder (Greenberg, 1995). However, post-traumatic growth has been studied in various groups; until now, PTG has not been widely investigated in Holocaust survivors. Lev-Wiesel and Amir (2003) examined the relationship between posttraumatic symptomatology, perceived social and personal resources and posttraumatic growth in a sample of non-clinical Holocaust child survivors. Results of the study indicate positive relationships between adverse symptomatology and posttraumatic growth. Therefore, the findings demonstrated that in this non-clinical group PTSD and PTG coexist. In addition, the study revealed that social support from friends contributed positively to PTG. However, personal resources were negatively correlated with PTSD symptomatology. Wilson (2014), in his qualitative study, observed that the following factors played a part in post-traumatic growth: a good childhood, self-disclosure, social support and personal characteristics, which included: optimism, self-confidence and the capacity to restore a new post-war life. Nevertheless, further exploration is necessary to examine that relationship within the context of Holocaust survival and other survivors of highly distressing events such as deportation to the Soviet Union, which will be attempted in the present thesis.

1.7.3. *Holocaust child survivors*

Based on extensive studies on survivors of extreme catastrophes such as the Holocaust, Krystal (1978) claimed a significant difference between adult and childhood experiences of 'life-threatening powerlessness', linked to how individuals tolerate strong emotions in

response to extreme and prolonged threats. In infantile trauma, the child becomes flooded and overwhelmed by intolerable effects, and they cannot defend themselves against the danger (McCann & Pearlman, 1990). Therefore, following Kellermann's (2001) suggestion, it is essential to mention that surviving the war as a child (less than 16 years old) was a very different from experiencing survival as an adult, which was also the case for some deportation survivors. However, very little is mentioned concerning child survivors as a distinct group. Children experienced the war at several developmental stages. Children are also more vulnerable; they appear to suffer much more significant impairment during the long years following the horrors of the Holocaust. Hence, Kestenberg (1992) argues that child survivors suffer from depression, phobias and distorted self-images.

Furthermore, according to the psychodynamic approach, severe traumatisation in childhood (e.g., the loss of early attachment figures) significantly impacts survivors' lives (Bowlby, 1973, Nelson et al., 2007). However, children's' extraordinary survival strategies have been utilised to cope with the impact of traumatisation, as it spreads across their entire life span. Consequently, some scholars draw attention to children's' resilience (Barel et al., 2010). Many early strategies performed by young survivors have been maintained throughout their entire lives, which was done to 'reintegrate a profoundly shattered life' (Krell, 1984, p.380) and overcome some damages in their early development (Bafrel et al., 2010). For example, defence mechanisms such as repression of adverse early experiences or numbing feelings and splitting may ease long-lasting adaptation (Sigal & Weinfeld, 2001).

According to Kellermann (2001), the majority of the child survivors stressed the sense of loss of the typical childhood, as they needed to grow up fast to handle pre-mature responsibilities. It was claimed that the younger the survivor, the more significant the impact of the trauma was on their lives (Keilson, 1992). Hence child survivors are at greater risk in comparison to adult survivors.

Moreover, according to Kellermann (2001) child survivors find it challenging to deal with the following problems: learned helplessness (from an early age child survivors were aware that they didn't have any control over their lives, this led to the mind-set of a victim, also their sense of autonomy is disturbed, due to their lack of safety and the unpredictability of their lives); abandonment and isolation (following so many years after the trauma, the child survivors feel that they need to continue to hide, also conflicting feelings of guilt are often mixed with anger for not having a safe environment in which to grow); interrupted mourning of loss (multiple losses of immediate family members continue to haunt child survivors throughout their whole lives), identity related problems (arising as a result of taking on a fake identity in order to

survive the war); loss of memory (the absence of childhood memories generate a 'hole' in survivors' narratives of existence) and presence of primitive defences (appeared in response to an overwhelming pain and helplessness in order to keep child survivors emotionally alive, which often led to a state of absolute numbness). Kellermann (2001) also suggested that less dramatic survival strategies oscillated around invisibility, not attracting attention and keeping yourself quiet and 'good'. Survivors have used these strategies throughout adulthood, notwithstanding their perfect adjustment and almost perfect functioning in their day-to-day existence. However, despite their excellent adaptations to current life circumstances, they represent a very vulnerable group, which has been exposed to emotional instability and distress (Dasberg, 1987).

In addition, Bettleheim (1979) also pointed out that because children in the Holocaust weren't able to comprehend the most detrimental event of their lives, they were forced to hide the most painful affects. This process of repression was responsible for creating ongoing deep pain, which could not be relieved either in childhood or adult life (Gampel, 1988). However, most children who survived and adapted to post-war realities needed to keep their memories to maintain their defences and function in entirely new environments (Moskovitch, 1983). Furthermore, Krell (1985) noticed that child survivors are almost obsessively preoccupied with 'normality' and projecting themselves into the future, fearing being categorised as 'different' and keeping a low profile, so as not to be too visible. What is remarkable is that despite the most severe deprivation imaginable, this diverse group is marked by their affirmation of life and their ethical, spiritual involvement and their active compassion for others (Moskovitz, 1983). Additionally, it was found that survivors suffer less from PTSD and psychological distress if they have high personal resources, which may include: a sense of potency, self-identity and social support. A high level of individual resources contributes to survivors' better quality of life (Amir& Lev-Wiesel, 2001) and family life (Bar-On et al., 1998).

On the one hand, despite the critical implications of early Holocaust studies, certain drawbacks could be observed. These include the biased nature of the samples and recruitment of small and nonrepresentative pieces, the lack of accepted diagnostic criteria and the use of non-standardized instruments (Harel, 1995; Sadavoy, 1997). Overwhelming pathological emphasis was also present, as reports on the psychological impact of the Holocaust were mainly presented by the psychiatrists who treated survivors. Furthermore, since most researchers did not recruit control groups and drew generalizations concerning the entire survivor population primarily from the analysis of clinical cases, the generality of these findings is questionable. Moreover, conclusions about the consequences of the Holocaust have added

a significant burden on survivors and their descendants by labelling them as ‘damaged’ and emotionally and socially dysfunctional (Harel, 1995). Finally, most of these studies completely abandoned behavioural and social science perspectives drawing exclusively on psychoanalytic literature, which does not consider concentration camps’ environmental conditions and the social circumstances lived by Holocaust survivors in consecutive years after liberation.

On the other hand, similarly to early findings, some of the more recent and better-controlled studies revealed the presence of physical and psychological disturbances among Holocaust survivors (Nadler & Ben-Shushan, 1989; Joffe, Brodaty, Luscomble, & Ehrlich, 2003). These included lower quality of living (Amir & Lev-Wiesel, 2003), unresolved mourning, and guilt towards the dead (Sagi-Schwartz, Van IJzendoorn, Grossmann, Miri, Scharf et al., 2003). Furthermore, Nadler and Ben-Shushan’s (1989) findings suggested that the consequences of the Holocaust were still present four decades after liberation. The survivors considered themselves less emotionally stable, with low energy and self-control levels, along with feelings of worthlessness and difficulty with emotional expression. However, survivors who lived on a Kibbutz were in a favourable situation compared to those living in the city, which indicates that social support plays a significant role in coping with the consequences of the Holocaust. Moreover, Joffe et al. (2003) demonstrated that the more severe the scares experienced by the Holocaust survivors, the more significant their psychological morbidity, despite their normal social and daily functioning.

Regardless of substantial evidence indicating severe emotional and physical scars caused by the Holocaust, there is also considerable evidence to show that many of the survivors had adjusted well in their post-war lives. They had also demonstrated strength and resilience in dealing with life’s- misfortunes, together with reasonably good well-being and social functioning (Harel & Deimling, 1984; Kahana, Harel, & Kahana, 1988). Etinger and Major (1993) argued that the early pathology findings in Holocaust survivors were misinterpreted, especially that pathological reactions to trauma were permanent and unchangeable. Other investigations also demonstrated that Holocaust survivors score higher on self-esteem measures and have a greater sense of coherence than the control group (Cassel & Suedfeld, 2006). They also hoped for a better future (Carmil & Breznitz, 1991) and believed that the world was good (Cohen, Brom, & Dasberg, 2001). Following these findings, it can be observed that the focus of the research over the last two decades has moved from studying pathology towards emphasising strength, growth, and the ability to survive.

A few possible theoretical and methodological issues might contribute to presented inconsistent results. First, using different theoretical frameworks (psychodynamic vs non-psychodynamic) caused additional research questions that lead to other methods and outcomes. Additionally, in the mentioned inconsistency, the diversity of critical methodological features played a significant part. Such diversity included selecting the target population as the criteria for defining Holocaust survivors varied, the nature of sampling (clinical vs non-clinical), the use of different sampling methods (nonselective vs selective) and lack of control groups or control groups from the diverse ethnic and cultural background.

1.8. Concluding Summary

Throughout the last few decades, researchers and scholars have studied the experience of various horrifying events on the survivors and their families. Many have explored how different types of deeply distressing experiences continue to impact survivors and subsequent generations. However, this literature review suggests that past and current studies on collective suffering are not conclusive. There is no general agreement between clinical observation and empirical studies on the long-term psychological impact on survivors of different types of deeply disturbing experiences. Furthermore, victims' experience of deportation to the Soviet Union during World War II have been almost ignored within psychological literature, even though more than one million Polish civilians were deported to the Soviet Union because of their ethnic identity. A few quantitative studies address the impact of deportation on Polish civilian survivors. No studies explore the presence and potential impact of intergenerational transmission of deportation experiences on the survivors' descendants.

Moreover, current research on the Soviet Union deportee survivors focuses solely on psychopathological sequelae of deportation. This completely dismisses the lived experiences of its survivors, leaving aside its severe methodological limitations, which would enable the in-depth understanding of the deportation phenomenon. Consequently, given what is known about the deportation and the impact of different types of deeply disturbing events (e.g., the Holocaust) on their survivors and the absence of the individuals' voices, who have been impacted by post-deportation struggles, there is a need to explore the lived experiences of deportation on Polish civilian survivors. Hence, the present qualitative study explores the following research questions: how do survivors of mass deportation to the Soviet Union during World War II experience it today? How do survivors give meaning to it?

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1. Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to present a description and explanation of the different ways that I have endeavoured to answer the following research questions: How do the survivors of the Soviet Union deportation experience it today? How do they give meaning to it?

I begin by outlining my extensive ontological and epistemological positions, moving to more explicit procedural specifications, including the actions carried out to ensure the quality and validity criteria this study aims to fulfil. Yardley's (2000) four essential characteristics of qualitative research were acknowledged throughout this study's stages, which included: 'sensitivity to context', 'commitment and rigour', 'transparency and coherence' and 'impact and importance'.

2.2. Ontological and epistemological assumptions

'Ontology' is the theory of the nature of reality and being. It describes the relationship between the world and human interpretation and practices (Braun & Clarke, 2013), indicating whether the reality can be distinguished from human perception, or whether it exists independently from it. The variations within ontology range from realism - the confirmation that a reality, which can be known, exists independently of our conceptual scheme; to relativism - the view that a single reality does not exist and concepts of it are entirely constructed, depending on one's interpretation and knowledge. Realism aims to investigate the real-world empirically, relying on the assumption that phenomena are objectively real. Therefore, realism rarely informs qualitative research. In contrast, relativism acknowledges the construction of multiple realities rather than the existence of one mind-independent reality (Tebes, 2005) and the impossibility of going beyond these creations.

'Epistemology' is the theory of the nature of knowledge and aims to describe various ways humans have attempted to make sense of the surrounding world. In addition, it addresses the question of what it is possible to know. Epistemological assumptions also span a broad range. At one end of the spectrum lies positivism, which assumes that reality exists independently from the researcher and that it is possible to directly describe the truth and reality of the world through the objective collection of data. At the other end lies constructionism, which represents the view that the world's knowledge is socially and linguistically constructed, and a specific

context shapes our understanding of the world. This view means that there are various ways of creating truths.

My ontological and epistemological position falls somewhere between the theories mentioned above. Such a position is called critical realism, and nowadays, it is commonly adopted in qualitative research. Critical realism has arisen from Bhaskar's works (1977, 1979) and assumes that phenomena are perceived and experienced in fluid and subjective manners, strongly relying on individuals' assumptions and expectations (Bhaskar, 1977; Finlay, 2006a). Like critical realists, I acknowledge that an authentic reality exists (the deportation did happen). To some degree, we can create the knowledge that might bring significant changes (Stainton Rogers & Stainton Rogers, 1997). Hence, from an ontological point of view, I am a realist. However, since it is socially influenced, I also believe that this reality is experienced uniquely by each individual (in this study, the various ways of experiencing the deportation-related trauma by participants). Hence, there are different 'perspectives' on reality, yet it is impossible to gain direct access to them (Willig, 2008). For instance, I perceive each participant's account as a subjective reflection of their perception, bearing in mind that their experience can be only partially comprehended at a conscious level. This stance places me at the constructivist and relativist end regarding the epistemological position (Maxwell, 2012). This study aims to determine whether participants' accounts are 'true' or 'false', 'right' or 'wrong'. It will provide some insight into each participant's individual experience of reality, thus producing critical realist knowledge, given that an exact representation of participants' subjective experience cannot be created.

2.2.1. *A qualitative research perspective*

This study rejects the positivist paradigm, which assumes that an objective reality can be directly described and accessed through an unbiased collection of data. Post-positivism, the less refined version of positivism, is also excluded since it recognises and aims to know only a singular reality or truth.

On the contrary, anti-positivism or interpretivism typically adopts a qualitative approach and is concerned with an individual's experience and understanding and exploring its meaning rather than determining the relationship between variables using numbers and statistics. Hence, the mentioned position aligns with this study's aim: to provide a broader and deeper insight into the lived experience of deportation among its survivors and explore if, and how, survivors give a specific meaning to their experience. In addition, qualitative research underpins the

philosophy of counselling psychology and the importance of subjective human experience, rejecting the existence of objectively retrievable truth (Woolfe, Dryden & Strawbridge, 2003).

Qualitative research also provides an opportunity to explore the world of an individual while enabling a broader and deeper insight into their experience. Furthermore, in qualitative research, the meaning of a participant's experience is co-created with the researcher. The qualitative paradigm also sees research as a subjective process, where both researcher and participant bring their own perspectives and values to the research. Taking the subjective nature of research into account must occur through reflection and reflexivity (Finlay & Gough, 2003). Since the nature of this study is exploratory, it adequately fits in with an inductive approach. This means it is concerned with generating theories rather than testing them and generalising findings across the whole population to reach objective knowledge (McLeod, 2001), as implied by a deductive approach.

2.2.2. *Alternative methods within the qualitative paradigm*

This study did not have to take a phenomenological appraoch. One possible alternative taken into account was Grounded Theory. This well-known methodology was developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967) to study social processes and build up theories from the data. However, as Willig (2013) pointed out, this approach could be perceived as more of a sociological approach than a psychological one, aiming to generate a theoretical-level account of a particular phenomenon. It also requires relatively large samples. By contrast, Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) focuses on a smaller selection, is more psychological, and is concerned with understanding participants' lived experience and how they make sense of it, which fits this study's aims.

Discourse Analysis (DA) was considered as another alternative to a phenomenological approach. However, DA was also eliminated because its prime concern is constructing a social reality through the function of the language, rather than drawing as close as possible to the experience itself. Moreover, it rejects subjectivity and doubts accessibility to cognitions. IPA, by contrast, focuses on cognition and sense-creation of the specific lived experience, which also lies in my research interest.

Narrative Analysis could have been utilized as a further alternative approach for this study. Despite being another social constructionist approach concerned with creating meaning, this approach was not considered because 'narrative' is only one way of meaning-creation (others are discourse and metaphor).

Therefore, a phenomenological approach, such as IPA, was judged to be the most suitable. It enables the researcher to understand and portray the participants' lived experiences of a particular phenomenon and an opportunity to co-create new knowledge with them.

2.2.3. *Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis*

Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis developed by Jonathan Smith (1996) was chosen as a theoretical basis for the analysis and interpretation of data for three reasons:

Firstly, this methodology is compatible with the research aims: to examine how participants make sense of their experience and attempt to understand what it is like to be in their shoes to draw as close as possible to their lived experience (Langdridge, 2009). This qualitative research approach draws upon the fundamental principles of phenomenology (Husserl, 1970), which focuses on 'exploring experience in its terms rather than trying to degrade it to 'predefined or overly abstract categories' (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009, p.1). Hence, adopting a phenomenological attitude requires a reflexive shift towards subjective experiences 'in which we become 'conscious' of them as they 'appear', which is why they are defined as 'phenomena' (Husserl, 1927, p.1). For psychologists, the main significance of this is to attempt to 'bracket' as far as possible their 'natural attitude'- their own assumptions and influences- or put these to one side to adopt a 'phenomenological attitude' and enable the phenomenon to have its own life and voice. This philosophical approach was extended by existential followers of Husserl, such as Heidegger (1962). The latter was his student, and he ultimately moved away from a metaphysical, God-eye view of the world towards a more ontological approach to existence. This approach placed a more hermeneutic and existential emphasis on the world of phenomenology. In addition, Heidegger claimed that interpretation was an inseparable element of description, as any understanding had a context and that language was already an act of interpretation. As Cohen (1987) pointed out, the ideas of Heidegger were constructed within a strong tradition of interpretive/ hermeneutic research.

IPA is also based on the writings of Merleau-Ponty (1962). According to him, the sense of self and the 'lifeworld' of a human being are interlaced with their body. He described human beings' embodied stance to the world as follows: 'all my knowledge of the world, even my scientific knowledge, is gained from my particular point of view, as from some experience of the world without which the symbols of the science would be meaningless' (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, p.4). Additionally, Merleau-Ponty (1962) argued that, as *homo sapiens,* we perceive ourselves as different from our surroundings. Our role goes beyond being only in the world as we fully engage in observing.

Moreover, he suggested that our experience of the other always is created from one's own embodied stance. Hence, we can empathise with others, but we will never be able to share another person's experience because it belongs to their own embodied stance in the world. Sartre was another leading figure in phenomenological philosophy who continued the work of Heidegger. He suggested that human beings are involved in the projects of the world. Sartre (1948, p.26) also claimed that 'existence comes before essence'. For that reason, we always have a chance to become ourselves and that the concept of self cannot be previously discovered, but rather it ongoingly unfolds. Kierkegaard (1974, p.79) captures this concept as follows: 'An existing individual is constantly in the process of becoming.' In continuing Husserl's work further, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty and Sartre emphasize our existence's grounded and embodied character, which they perceived as arising within a situated context.

Secondly, despite IPA being a phenomenological approach, it is also a social constructionist approach. That involves interpretation and consideration of context while making sense of another's 'lifeworld' (Larkin, Watts and Clifton, 2006), making analysis richer and more comprehensive. Therefore, IPA is phenomenological and underpinned by hermeneutics, the theory of interpretation, which perceives human beings as sense-making and interpretative creatures. However, as Smith and Osborn (2003, p.53) pointed out, 'access to experience always depends on what participants tell us about their experience… The researcher needs to interpret that account to understand that experience'.

Moreover, the researcher must try to understand the participant's sense-making of lived experience, which in literature is described as 'double hermeneutic' (Smith & Osborn, 2003, p.53). The researcher and participant are different individuals, despite sharing the same perspective and world.

Thirdly, IPA relies upon a theoretical orientation called idiography, which also falls within the aims of this research. It is concerned with the particularity of phenomena and in-depth exploration of individual cases before examining similarities and differences across cases to produce more general statements. Therefore, IPA research typically involves a small number of samples, which are studied successively. Here, the main emphasis is placed on the particular rather than universal. However, Smith (2009, p.42) cites Warnock (1987), who suggests that 'delving deeper into particulars also takes us closer to the universal', contrary to a nomothetic approach concerned with establishing general laws and making predictions. The commitment to the particular functions at two levels: firstly, there is a commitment to detail and depth and secondly, commitment to making sense of how a particular phenomenon has been understood by specific people in a unique context (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009).

Within this theoretical perspective, a commitment to ideography meant that definitions of terms were generated primarily from the 'ground up'. Key terms such as trauma were conceptualised only as a concept that captures or encapsulates individual experiences and a collection of experiences in some cases. Although trauma has been defined in many different ways in popular culture, this study utilised a definition that was apt to the experiences that participants related.

2.3. Reflexivity

As Langdridge (2009) indicated, reflexivity is an essential element of qualitative research that, at times, is not taken seriously enough. It refers to 'the process in which researchers are conscious of and reflective about how their questions, methods, and very own subject position… might impact the psychological knowledge produced in a research study' (Langdridge, 2009, p.58). To put it another way: 'How does who I am, who I have been, who I think I am, and how I feel affect data collection and analysis?' (Pillow, 2003, p.176). This is because we cannot separate ourselves from our biases, assumptions and personalities (Sword, 1999). It is important to remember that reflexivity can also assist the researcher in understanding the participant's sense-making of lived experience (Finlay, 2011). Therefore, as a counselling psychologist trainee, I acknowledge the importance of developing and utilizing reflexivity in my clinical work, professional and personal life.

To encourage a more reflexive approach to my research, I attended several external IPA courses, which allowed me to engage in various activities developed purely to prompt reflexivity. These activities included my reflections on a series of questions posed by Langdridge (2009), which formed the five features described in this section.

2.3.1. *Researcher's stance as an 'outsider.'*

On the one hand, I was aware of being an 'outsider' to the lived experience of the participants in this study, as I have never experienced any major traumatic event, not to mention the trauma caused by the challenging, life-threatening conditions of living in exile. Therefore, if I were a survivor of the same trauma, this would have had a different impact on the participants. Nevertheless, studying unfamiliar circumstances provided me with some advantages. As a researcher who did not share the participants' experience, I attempted to approach it with a high level of openness and curiosity, which contributed to my self-discovery and enriched my understanding of the phenomena of mass deportation.

On the other hand, being a third-generation descendant of a Soviet Union deportee survivor brought me closer to the survivors' experience than an ordinary 'outsider'. Therefore, during

the interview process, I attempted to engage in reflexive scrutiny of my feelings and assumptions concerning the phenomena of mass deportation and its consequences. In qualitative research, this method is called 'bracketing' or 'cessation' (Moran, 2000, p.148), and by putting aside particular beliefs/feelings and perspectives, it aims to reduce potentially disadvantageous and damaging effects that might otherwise enter and remain within the participants' *'Lebenswelt'* (Husserl, 1970). This reflective scrutiny enabled me to reach a deeper level of reflections within and across all the stages of the research project (Tufford & Newman, 2010) and allowed the phenomena of deportation to speak for itself (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014).

As already described, there is a personal connection to this research topic linked to my family history. However, neither my grandfather nor any other family member has ever spoken openly about the specific details of the deportation, which somehow always remained a 'sacred mystery'. I recently learned that my grandfather always had a strong preference for farming activities rather than providing a narrative related to his lived experience of the Soviet Union deportation; his lack of communication could potentially suggest unresolved traumas (Danieli, 1998). Unfortunately, my grandfather's testimony on the deportation will never be known in detail, as he recently passed away following a long battle with dementia. I was also aware that despite not knowing any personal information regarding the deportation experience of my grandfather, the topic of this research is very emotional regardless of whether one has a survivor in the background. Therefore, throughout the research process, I was mindful of its potential psychological impact and how my resistance towards psychological distress might be challenged.

Consequently, during all the research stages, I was aware of various strong emotions I experienced, which included: enormous sadness, anger, mental and physical exhaustion, blockage and powerlessness. Mainly, I experienced powerful somatic reactions while engaging in the textual analysis. Often, I found it difficult to keep awake, and I was falling asleep while trying to get closer to participants' lived experiences of deportation. However, at each stage of the research paying attention to my embodied perspective was extremely important, drawing on the view of Merleau-Ponty (1962, p.146) 'the body is our general medium for having a world'. Finlay (2011) also claimed that paying attention to the researchers' embodied perspective can assist them in developing reflexive focus and be used as an embodied compass. Following Finlay's (2006b, p.22-27) suggestions, I made extensive notes and reflected on 'bodily empathy' after each interview. My reflections referred to the participants' movement, my (researcher) body responses- 'embodied self-awareness' and

what was happening ‘in-between’ myself (researcher) and the participants- ‘embodied inter-subjectivity’.

Furthermore, I also had very vivid dreams about the deportation, during which I was reconstructing scenes of the accounts the participants shared with me. Although I tried to contain my emotions, I was also familiar with the imperfections of the ‘bracketing’ process. Hence, I knew how crucial it was for me to remain reflexively aware and address potential challenges during my supervisor and therapist encounters. In particular, the bracketing process was highly challenging when it involved powerful emotions, which occurred in response to listening to the participants’ talk about their lived experiences of deportation. Thus, on a few occasions, I remained quiet and slightly withdrawn and, at the same time, missed an attempt to ask detailed questions about their experiences. In addition, I used the reflective journal as a tool to document and understand my thoughts and feelings about the deportation. The reflective journal was also used to explore the potential impact of my experience as a granddaughter of a deportee survivor on the research. This section will also outline the implications of being aware of my affects, thoughts, and bodily reactions.

2.3.2. *Impact of the theoretical context of the study*

The literature review demonstrated my familiarity with current theoretical and empirical knowledge of deportation and other deeply distressing events. However, the primary assumption of such studies is that the psychological consequences of the deportation experience on its survivors are severe and chronic. Nevertheless, I tried to remain open to the potential occurrence of positive psychological changes that can result for survivors of the deportation, such as post-traumatic growth (Joseph& Linley, 2008).
Furthermore, in endeavouring to understand the survivors’ experience of deportation, my theoretical framework needed to be constantly examined, for instance, through discussions with my colleagues and my supervisor, to assure that I heard and communicated what survivors shared with me rather than what I thought or believed (Berger, 2015).

2.3.3. *Reflexivity on interview 1*

This interview highlighted several ideas that I held about deportation. At the end of this interview, I was ‘amazed’ but at the same time disappointed because the participant seemed to transform every single negative experience of the exile into something positive and enlightening. He also seemed to be very cheerful while sharing his deportation narrative with me. I remained puzzled, as I could not comprehend different perspectives on the experience

of deportation. However, I realised that my expectations of hearing a very emotional account were not fulfilled. Instead, I had in front of me a man with a very positive outlook on every single experience that he faced in life, including those challenging ones during exile. It took me a while to start becoming used to the idea that post-traumatic growth can overtake the whole experience of deportation. I have begun to understand that trauma can take on many different forms and that not all of these are dark/negative. In addition, I believe that this interview allowed me to remain more open towards the narratives of deportation and held back my expectations of hearing only the negative aspects of the participants' experiences. However, I also kept in mind that 'positivity' could be the participants' way of coping with this complex trauma. Without a positive outlook on the past deportation, a post-deportation existence might be impossible.

2.3.4. *Reflexivity on the incomplete interview*

When I arrived at the house of the next participant, I felt trapped. However, I tried to ignore these feelings during the encounter, but when I explained the aims of my research, the participant seemed to pick up my feelings. She seemed frightened. It felt like I was the interviewee, not the interviewer; indeed, her style of questioning felt like and aggressive interrogation rather than an expression of curiosity in my research. I felt as if I was trapped in some sort of chaotic micro-space, from which there was no escape. Nothing was making sense, as every time I was trying to ask her one of my research questions, she looked amazed and simply continued her brief and general narrative. After one hour of this dynamic, I was longing for a quick escape. I could hear her saying that child survivors are like hollow oaks, empty inside, deprived of an everyday, happy life. Finally, I managed to leave the flat, and I ran outside gasping for air and shaking. It felt intense, it felt horrendously challenging, and most importantly, it felt terrifying. After making notes in my reflective journal, I thought that the intensity of the feelings experienced could indicate the vividness of the survivor's experience. However, at that moment, words were not required to reveal the participant's story of deportation. Her unspoken account, expressed in her body language, gestures and facial expressions, spoke louder than anything else. I remained slightly shocked and overwhelmed for the rest of my day as if I was picking up on the survivor's enormous fear and her reluctance to share her deportation account with me. Above all, I realised the complexity of the deportation phenomenon and its vividness even though over 80 years have passed since then. However, despite the richness of this encounter, the collected data couldn't be used in IPA analysis, as it mainly centred on non-verbal communication. Moreover, the participant did not consent to the recording of the interview.

2.3.5. *Reflexivity on the process of translation*

At the beginning of the analysis process, I considered translating only the sections of the interviews I required. However, after a brief period, I realised that the nature of the narratives I was trying to capture needed a holistic rather than a fragmented approach. In addition, I confronted my assumptions that translation is an uncomplicated process and, that my role as a translator, is simply translating from one language to another. After embarking on the endless translation journey, I realised that 'changing language involves translating lives rather than simply words' (Temple & Koterba, 2009, p.2). Also, I was required to pay extra attention while switching from one language to another.

Moreover, I felt often uncomfortable when I translated the survivors' narratives into English, as sometimes I simply found it challenging to choose the right words to capture the meaning of their profound experiences. Hence, I am aware that part of the rich meaning and cultural flavour was lost in translation. Some words of the deportation narratives carry a world of specific meanings within them and, consequently, cannot be conveyed in another linguistic-cultural context. It is because language is a process that involves more than a sum of words. For example, the term '*kombinowac'* doesn't have a direct equivalent in English but can be interpreted as 'trying to get by'. Special attention was also given to metaphors or proverbs, as they couldn't always be translated precisely from one language to another. Therefore, I needed to work much harder to assist readers outside Poland in making sense of the deportation experiences of the survivors. Additionally, I used quotes when the original words or phrases did not have an equivalent in English or were too difficult to translate or interpret.

While translating, I often asked myself what I was trying to capture and how far I could go with my translation to stay as close as possible to the original Polish language. I was trying to capture the language of the survivors' experience of deportation – a language that is, most importantly, their communication medium and an essential aspect of their identity and culture. Furthermore, to minimise potential limitations, I also tried to stay in the original language as long as possible before switching to English, which helped preserve the unique style of the narratives of some participants who took part in this research project. However, despite all the challenges, the translation process taught me that there is no final, correct translation of a text, as alternative words and concepts can always be chosen to rewrite narratives. By translating interviews into written English, I managed to 'freeze' a text in constant movement in its original form (Temple, Young, 2004). Finally, I should not forget to mention that after one consultation with a professional translator, I completely abandoned the idea of checking the 'correctness' of my work. According to him, my wish to keep as close as possible to the original language

was ‘incorrect’. However, I was determined to stay faithful to the original text and avoid losing all the linguistic subtleties, which simply made data richer.

2.3.6. *Reflexivity on the chaotic nature of the survivors’ narratives*

What struck me about the survivors’ narratives was their content and how they portrayed the lived experience of deportation. Often, I struggled to follow the survivors’ stories as their narratives were dominated by the sense of chaos and heaviness. I felt lost, disempowered, as if I was somehow trapped in their accounts, unable to make even simple sense of the survivors’ shared deportation experience. These experiences required further reflection, until I felt I had enough space and a greater ability to encounter their experience fully. After this, I experienced their narratives differently. I found that the survivors’ inability to share coherent stories of deportation revealed their struggle to understand their experience and their difficulty processing the past.

2.4. Validity

During the analysis process, the qualitative researcher might struggle to capture much of what there is, because of ‘wearing blinkers’ that derive from their subjective experience, their preconceptions and their over-involvement in the theoretical context of the study (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Therefore, a set of criteria has been established to minimise the researcher’s influence on findings produced through qualitative research and demonstrate its validity and transparency. Consequently, to advance the validity of this study, the procedures proposed by Yardley (2000) were adopted, as summarised in this section.

2.4.1. *Sensitivity to context*

This attitude was developed by researching and exploring the theoretical and empirical literature on deportation and other forms of deeply distressing events such as the Holocaust. Finally, an awareness of the perspective and socio-cultural context of the participants was demonstrated by carefully considering the possible impact of the characteristics of the researcher (e.g., coming from a middle-class background, being much younger and not being a survivor) on the participants. Secondly, a sensitivity to the participants’ perspective was shown by asking broad, presumption-free open-ended questions, enabling the participants to express their opinions without any constraints, and to talk about topics that were important to them, rather than about something that could potentially please the researcher (Yardley, 2015).

2.4.2. *Commitment and rigour*

The principles were respected by carefully recruiting participants who would be particularly suitable to the research questions addressed by this study. Furthermore, broader insight into the researched topic was achieved through in-depth micro-analysis of the participants' narratives. Moreover, it was also achieved through an extensive and thoughtful engagement with the participants, based on the researcher's familiarity with the subject through the experience of being a third-generation descendant of the Soviet Union deportee survivor.

2.4.3. *Transparency and coherence*

Transparency was guaranteed by distinctly defining the data analysis process to demonstrate to the reader how the data was collected and the analysis conducted. Reflexivity was also used throughout all phases of the research process to enable transparency (Ricoeur, 1981). Moreover, coherence was assured, by employing a qualitative epistemological perspective, the aims of the research and the methodology - IPA, which are compatible and consistent.

2.4.4. *Impact and importance*

These were guaranteed by demonstrating the meaningful theoretical contribution to the general knowledge of the deportation phenomenon in the Polish and worldwide context, resulting in a better understanding of its consequences. Furthermore, until today, research on the phenomenon of deportation experienced by Polish survivors has been scarce in psychological literature, and its primary focus remained on a quantitative methodology. Moreover, this study had a direct impact on its participants, as it enabled them to explore in-depth the subjective experience of living as the survivors of the deportation. Finally, it gave the participants a voice and helped them open up and share their memories about their deportation-related experiences.

2.5. Ethical considerations

According to the British Psychological Society (2009, p.6), ethics refers to ‘‘the science of morals or rules of behaviours’’. Therefore, as a qualitative researcher, counselling psychologist in training and a member of the British Psychological Society, I acknowledge the importance of adhering to the ethical norms of the ‘Code of Ethics and Conduct’ (BPS, 2009) as well as of the ‘Code of Human Research Ethics’ (BPS, 2010). These norms are based on the following four general principles: respect, competence, responsibility and integrity, which were taken into account throughout the research. More precisely, the following ethical principles as listed in the ‘Code of Human Research Ethics’ (BPS, 2010) were respected.

2.5.1. *Valid consent*

Verbal and written informed consents were obtained from all participants (Appendix 3).

2.5.2. *Deception*

Participants were informed about the purpose of the research. The role of the researcher was also explained and made clear. Furthermore, neither deception nor withholding information from the research subjects took place. Moreover, participants were assured that participation in this study was utterly optional (Refer to Appendix 2).

2.5.3. *Debriefing*

Participants were fully debriefed after the research and were offered access to a written copy of the study. Participants were also given contact details of a local counselling service regardless of whether emotional distress occurred (Appendix 6).

2.5.4. *Withdrawal from the research participation*

It was made clear from the first contact that participants could withdraw from the study at any time without the need for an explanation.

2.5.5. *Confidentiality*

Research participants were notified that all the information collected during this research would be kept strictly confidential. The participants' confidentiality was preserved by using codes for any identifiable information. The participants were also assured that research materials, including transcriptions, analyses and consent documents, would be kept secure during the project. Any data stored electronically (e.g., audio-recordings) during the project was password-protected, and only the researcher had access to it. Participants were also notified that upon completion of the project, the research data would be stored at the hard data storage of City, University of London and would be preserved permanently due to its historical value, to which the ethics committee agreed. In the future, this data might be used by those interested in the topic, including psychologists and historians or sociologists. This approach is consistent with City guidance on data storage. In addition, before the interview, participants were informed about the limitations of their confidentiality about protecting them from harm.

2.5.6. *Giving advice*

Participants were informed that giving advice on psychological conditions or other issues was beyond the researcher's capabilities. However, they were told that a referral for an assistant would be offered if such a request arose.

2.5.7. *Protection of research participants*

Substantial effort was made to keep the participants' potential risk of emotional distress to a minimum. However, it was possible that the participants might experience emotional pain during the interviews, as the questions might bring up memories of trauma. Therefore, measures were taken to provide appropriate help where necessary. Hence, before the interview, each participant received contact details of a local counselling service, which could have been contacted at any point during the research, or after the study, or if they decided to withdraw from it. In addition, the researcher was ready to help the participants make necessary referrals in case of any difficulty.

A risk assessment was also completed before the research commenced (Appendix 10)

2.5.8. *Obtaining ethical approval from adequate institutions*

Ethical permission to conduct the research was obtained from the City, University of London Psychology Department Research Ethics Committee (Appendix 8). Ethical approval was also granted by the Head of the Documentation Centre of Exiles, Expulsion and Resettlements - the responsible body of the Pedagogical University of Krakow, Poland (Appendix 7). In addition, the local branch of the Association of Soviet Union Deportees Survivors in Augustow, Poland, called - *'Zwiazek Sybirakow'*, gave verbal approval to recruit potential participants from their members to conduct interviews on their premises.

2.5.9. *Conducting interviews in the participants' home setting*

Advanced age and health-related problems of the participants prevented seven interviews from taking place in a public venue. These instead took place in participants private homes.

Before data collection, I visited the interviews' locations to assess possible risks associated with a built or social environment. If possible, I travelled with a companion and asked the person to wait outside the research location (participant's house) during the interview. A safety contact system was in place. A contact person was nominated, and details of the research plan were given. The safety contact person was also informed about the people who were due to be interviewed and the location(s) of the interview(s). Regular communication with team

members was maintained, and a fully charged mobile phone was always carried. I also familiarized myself with escape routes from participants' housing areas. If security was in doubt, I was prepared to rearrange alternative venues.

The Lone Worker Guidelines (from City, University of London) and BPS ethical guidelines (2009) Risk Assessment (see Appendix 10) was also adhered to demonstrate that the identified risks had been assessed and mitigation measures were put in place.

Several ethical and practical challenges were taken into consideration during data collection. Remaining sensitive to the distress of the participants during their recounting of their deportation experience was paramount. In about half of the interviews, participants became distressed. At these times, my experience and Counselling Psychology doctorate training was drawn upon to provide a measure of comfort and safety to participants. Participants were also invited to take a break or stop the interview altogether if they preferred. Three of the ten participants decided to take a break during a portion of the interview, then resume after a brief period. The discussion then proceeded sensitively and carefully, being mindful of the needs and limitations of each of the interviewees.

Although this was a challenge, it was also considered that having the interview based in the participants' homes allowed them to feel more comfortable and open to sharing their experiences. It was also thought that this would help balance the power dynamic between the researcher and the participant.

Following the interviews, it was, at times admittedly also essential for me to distance myself from the distressing circumstances of the participants as most interviews lasted around 2 hours.

2.6. Pilot interview

A pilot study was carried out with one female participant. She was a family member, who met the inclusion criteria of being a survivor of the Soviet Union deportation. A one-hour face-to-face interview was conducted to assess the efficiency of the planned interview schedule and expand my abilities in the field of qualitative research interviewing. Following the interview, the participant was asked for feedback on her interview participation, the questions, and the experience of the researcher as an interviewer. The outcome of the interview and the feedback provided a detailed description of the participant's lived experience of deportation. Moreover, the participant communicated that her engagement in the interview was profoundly moving and had its moral aspects. I also found that despite feeling comfortable in the role of a

researcher, I struggled to distance myself from my position as a therapist. In addition, the participant reported difficulty in answering the question 'How did you see yourself before and after the deportation?' As a result, I noted that this question should only be asked of those deported to the Soviet Union as teenagers rather than infants or toddlers. Nevertheless, despite the participant's rich description of her deportation related experience, it was decided that the pilot interview could not be included in the analysis since the participant was a family member, which could call into question the validity of the data.

2.7. Method

2.7.1. *The sample*

The non-clinical sample comprised ten participants, all volunteers. The sampling was purposive and homogenous, consistent with IPA requirements (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009) to access in-depth accounts of the participants' lived experiences and explore their similarities and differences. Hence, a larger number of participants was not considered because it would not permit the researcher to 'produce a sufficiently penetrating analysis' (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009, p.57).

2.7.2. *Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria*

There was no age or gender restriction. However, all the participants were adults over 18. The participants included those who survived Soviet Union deportation in childhood or early adolescence during World War II according to the inclusion criteria. Furthermore, good spoken command of Polish was essential, as interviews were planned to be conducted in Polish, the language of the participants' deportation experience. Moreover, a good memory of the deportation period was required and resulted in an in-depth description of the deportation experience. The exclusion criteria included: neurological and developmental disabilities and/ or severe mental health impairments, for example, psychosis, since the focus of this research was not on any resulting dysfunction, and required participants who could speak coherently about their experiences.

2.7.3. *Recruitment*

Participants were recruited through the local branch of the Polish Association of the Soviet Union Deportees Survivors, in short, the Association of Siberian Deportees – 'Zwiazek Sybirakow' in Augustow, Poland, based on the identification of the participants' history of

surviving the mass deportation to the Soviet Union during the World War II. The aims of the organisation are as follows: representing and defending the interests of its members, in particular obtaining their compensation and veterans' rights; assisting its members and Poles residing abroad, especially those staying in the territory of the former USSR; counteracting all manifestations of totalitarianism and intolerance that constitute a threat to human freedom and dignity; popularising and disseminating of knowledge about the deportation among young people, as well as promoting of patriotic and civic values, together with a respect for culture, nation and tradition; and documenting of the experience of the deportees for posterity.

2.7.4. *Participants*

The study comprised seven female and three male adult participants who survived deportation to the Soviet Union. Participants were all counterrevolutionary Polish and resided in Poland.

2.7.5. *Research materials*

A poster and an advert flyer were designed to advertise the study and recruit potential participants (Appendix 1). In addition, an information sheet, consent form, and debrief form with additional information regarding the research was created. A digital audio recorder was used to record the personal accounts of the participants.

An in-depth approach was assured by employing semi-structured, one-to-one interviews, during which prompts, probes and funnelling techniques were utilized. This method is relevant to the study objectives and involved a set of broad, presumption-free open-ended questions. These were used to guide, not dictate, the course of the interview (Eatough & Smith, 2011), at the same time as providing enough space and flexibility for unexpected issues and themes to emerge. This allowed for an in-depth exploration of the subjective experience of living as a survivor of the deportation. Questions were generated from relevant literature and discussions with my supervisor. The interview schedule (Appendix 5) was also revised with the supervisor to ensure the research questions' appropriateness.

2.7.6. *Data collection process*

The initial invitations to participate in this study were disseminated during the monthly meetings of the Association of Siberian Deportees - 'Zwiazek Sybirakow'. The researcher gave several talks about the study. Additionally, the association distributed a recruitment advert flyer to their members to recruit potential participants. The poster advertising the study was also displayed on the Association's premises.

Once potential interviewees expressed interest in voluntary participation in this study by phoning the researcher directly, they received an individual screening phone call after that. During this call, the researcher discussed the purpose of this study, whilst the participants were also allowed to ask questions. Participants were also screened for a history of cognitive and/or neurological and/or mental health impairment. Therefore, the researcher asked each participant a few questions about the presence of past or current difficulties related to their mental well-being and developmental history that potentially caused them to seek help from health professionals (Appendix 4). All ten participants, who contacted the researcher, were selected and recruited by the researcher based on inclusion/ exclusion criteria, the outcome of the screening questions and their willingness to participate in the study. The researcher also used her clinical judgment during the inclusion process.

The participants who satisfied the criteria were asked if they would like to participate in the study at a convenient time and place. Three semi-structured open-ended interviews were held in the local branch of the Association of Siberian Deportees - 'Zwiazek Sybirakow'. Due to their mobility problems, seven participants were interviewed in their homes, in which City's Lone Worker Guidelines were followed.

The study's aims were re-stated upon arrival at the interview, and participants were invited to ask further questions. They were also notified about confidentiality measures and their right to take a break or terminate the interview at any point. Individual interviews began after signing two copies of the consent form. In addition, contact details to local counselling services were provided to each participant. Interviews were conducted in Polish. Approximately one to up to three hours were allowed if the participants needed to talk for longer. In practice, interviews ranged from one to two and a half hours. Participants were invited to speak freely about their deportation-related experiences and how they experienced it today. The in-depth approach was assured by focusing on the interviewees' feelings and the significance and meanings they assigned to their memories and lived experiences related to the deportation. After the interviews were completed, the participants were provided with the debrief form. The form included a summary of the information mentioned above and the researcher's contact details, and her supervisor.

Interviews were recorded digitally, transcribed verbatim, including non-verbal materials (e.g., pauses, false starts) and then translated into English by the researcher. To ensure the translation's accuracy, it was reviewed by a professional translator. To protect the

confidentiality of the participants, the researcher used codes and omitted in any details that could identify the participants from the transcript.

2.7.7. *Introducing the participants*

The participants' pseudonyms were selected randomly. Some information provided by the participants will be outlined below to put them into context.

Wanda

I met with 95-year-old Wanda at her home due to her mobility problems. In February 1940, during the first wave of deportation, she was seventeen. She was taken to the Soviet Union, together with her mother, step-father and step-siblings, because her father was a settler who received a small plot of land for fighting against the Bolsheviks. Having another surname, Wanda could have avoided exile. However, as an act of solidarity with her family, she decided to join the deportees in this unknown journey. In addition to hard work in the forest and daily malnutrition, she was also imprisoned for a year for refusing Russian nationality. She lost her step-father somewhere in 'Siberia', and she reported struggling to grieve for him until now. Upon arrival to Poland, she settled down in her home village, where she has spent her entire life working on the farm and raising her children, with whom she openly shared her experience of deportation.

Leopold

I met 81-year-old Leopold at the local branch of the Association of Siberian Deportees – *'Zwiazek Sybirakow'*. He was deported to the Soviet Union as a 3-year-old child in February 1940 with his mother and grandparents. The deportation took place because his father was arrested since, as a civil servant, he was considered to be 'disturbing' by the Soviet system. In exile, he attended school, trying to 'orient' himself and performed his 'small' daily acts of resistance against the Soviet system. He was also 'doing his best to survive' by stealing food, performing art in exchange for food, and breaking prohibitions by planting potatoes. He reported owing his salvation to his and his family's common sense and ability to live and cope. He claimed that Poles left 'enormous culture' and taught locals many practical skills that were previously unknown. After returning to Poland, he could not attend military school because of his deportation past. However, he found other ways to succeed, and he graduated from a technical school. Later he set up his own company and has remained active in various associations, including the Association of Siberian Deportees and CECH cooperative.

Jadwiga

I met 80-year-old Jadwiga at her home. She was deported to the Soviet Union as a 3-year-old child with her mother in the last transport in June 1940. Deportation took place because the Soviets accused her father of being partisan. Her father was arrested before their deportation, and she has never seen him since. While in exile, she faced many difficulties including lack of food, an extreme climate, and the wildness of nature. Upon arriving in Poland, she encountered various problems getting into secondary school because of her past as a deportee. However, she has remained open about her past with her children and grandchildren. She is also passionate about giving her testimony to school children. She claimed owing her salvation to God and her mother's ability to organise herself. She holds considerable anger towards Russia for killing her father. In addition, she was terrified that the past could be repeated. Hence, she only participated in this study because of its foreign character.

Henryk

I met 85-year-old Henryk at his home. He was deported to the Soviet Union with his parents and his two sisters, in the most brutal wave of deportation, in February 1940 - 'the memorable year', because his father was a follower of Marshal Pilsudski – *'Pilsudczyk'*. He was seven years old. While in exile, he faced extreme weather conditions and starvation, which resulted in the death of his youngest sister, who remained 'there' forever. He stole food and ate 'whatever' was available to survive. He owned his survival to the force of his will, as well as his prayers. After returning to Poland, he remained an 'outcast of the society' because of his past. He also felt that he did not have a childhood because of his deportation experience.

Halina

I met 89-year-old Halina at her home. After her father's arrest, she was deported to Kazakhstan with her mother and brother, who was put in jail in Archangelsk. She was eleven years old. Her stay in the Soviet Union was tragic, as she lost her both parents there. Her mother died of cancer, and her father had a heart attack. Following her loss, she needed to look after her younger brother, which included fighting for survival by gathering whatever was available to eat and stealing food. She had a strong belief that God helped her survive deportation. In addition, she and her brother were adopted by their neighbour, which enabled them to return to Poland, where she settled down in her home village, worked on the farm and raised her children. Halina identified her family as a vital element of post-deportation life. She was open to sharing her experience of deportation with her closest family. However, they did

not want to hear more about it, as it was too painful. Despite all the hardships of the deportation experience, she has learned how to live independently.

Stefania

Stefania (78 years old) was interviewed at home. She was deported with her mother and grandmother in 1940 because her mother's brother was a policeman. She was two years old. She remained in the Soviet Union for six years. Her experience of deportation was not that different from her life in Poland, as, in both countries, she was able to play and had enough food to eat. She survived the deportation experience due to her mother's and grandmother's ability to organise themselves, including gathering food or exchanging goods for essential products. She had a carefree childhood, despite her experience of exile. Upon arrival in Poland, she remembered how adults talked secretively about the experience of deportation since open discussion about it was forbidden until 1989. Later in life, she shared her experience of deportation with her children as a way to preserve history.

Stanislawa

Stanislawa (87 years old) was interviewed at home. She was deported with her parents and six siblings in February 1940. She was ten years old. She attended a Russian school for two years; however, later on, she needed to give up her education to support the family by knitting sweaters, scarfs, and gloves in exchange for primary products. She faced extreme hunger. Under these circumstances, her mother wanted to send two of her siblings to an orphanage. The whole family, however, persuaded her to give up this idea. Stanislawa honoured her heritage as much as possible by celebrating national festivals and communicating in Polish. However, to this day she cannot comprehend why she and her family were deported to the Soviet Union. Upon returning to Poland, her family settled in another part of the country and only returned to their home village after a few years. She attended school, 'grew up, got married and raised her children', with whom she shared her deportation experience as a warning against their fussiness over food. She believed that God helped her survive deportation, as 'there wasn't anything to eat; hence it was destined for [them] to return'.

Stanislaw

I met 86-year-old Stanislaw at his home. He was deported in February 1940 together with his mother and two brothers, as initially, his father managed to escape, and he joined the family later. He was eight years old. Stanislaw's family was deported because his father was a member of a military organisation. In exile, he faced extreme hunger, poor sanitation, the loss

of his best friend, and being behind barbed wire, which entirely restricted his movements. However, he remembered also moments of joy over folk music that was performed by locals. He believed that 'it was some sort of destiny that [he] survived this deportation'. Upon arrival in Poland, he settled down in his home village, where he took over his family farm. He demonstrated his willingness to share his deportation experience with his children and grandchildren to keep the history alive.

Barbara

I met 79-year-old Barbara at the local branch of the Association of Siberian Deportees – '*Zwiazek Sybirakow'*. She was deported with her mother in June 1941 because of her father's resistance to the Soviet system. She was three years old. Above all, she remembered a scene of people very vividly; actually, skeletons harnessed to a wheelbarrow transporting goods for the Soviet authorities. After returning to Poland, her mother declared that she bore one family member without stating her name.

Consequently, later on, she had severe difficulties proving her veteran status. She owned her survival to her faith and the mother of God. She feels much resentment towards the Soviet system because her deportation prevented her from receiving higher education; instead, she had to gain financial independence and work. She has dedicated her whole life to protect and preserve the historical past of deportation. However, despite giving numerous testimonies, she has never talked with her son about her experience. She remained silent to protect him from the brutality of this event that she experienced. She declared herself an active member of the Association of Siberian deportees - '*Zwiazek Sybirakow'*, and another political organisation.

Anna

I met 87-year-old Anna at the local branch of the Association of Siberian Deportees – *'Zwiazek Sybirakow'*. She was deported with her mother and siblings in April 1940, following her father's arrest in 1939. She was nine years old. While in exile, she faced difficult living conditions and went against any morals she had learned earlier in life, since 'if you [didn't] steal, you [couldn't] have anything to live, you [couldn't] live'. Despite her young age, she showed strong resistance to the Soviet system by skipping school, refusing to learn Russian, and opposing local authorities, claiming she believed in God. Stealing as well as hope and belief in God were the main elements of her survival. Upon arrival in Poland, she attended secondary school. Still, she was devastated by learning she needed to hide the truth about deportation and 'hold [herself] back' to progress in her education and career. After 1989, she felt the enormous

satisfaction of being able to talk openly about her deportation experience. It felt as if she 'handed it on, that [she doesn't] need to keep a secret'. By giving her testimony, she wanted to preserve the history for other generations. She openly shared her deportation experience with her children and grandchildren, especially to warn against their food fussiness. In addition, she has found fulfilment in art-related activities such as singing in a local choir and painting.

2.8. Analytical procedure

Using IPA to analyse the data provides an essential advantage compared to some other qualitative methods since Smith and his colleagues have distinctly illustrated the analysis process over the last few decades. Therefore, the present study used the most recent guidelines outlined by Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009) to interpret transcripts. Six stages of analysis were conducted. The researcher's engagement with the data in all six steps is presented in this section.

2.8.1. *Reading and re-reading*

The existing IPA literature emphasises the importance of 'immersing oneself' in the original data as the crucial initial step of an IPA analysis (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009, p.82). In this study, my active engagement with the original data began with transcribing the data in its original language - Polish. As the written transcript was from the interview, I listened to the audio-recording while reading the transcript and re-reading it again. Furthermore, listening to the audio recordings and reading and re-reading the transcripts enabled me to become increasingly familiar with the original data to enter into the participant's world and familiarise myself with the interview experience and its process-related problems. Following this, the transcript was translated into English again by myself. When translating, a four-point scale approach (Flaherty et al., 1998) was used to ensure relevance to the content, which included: semantic (meaning similarity), technical (comparability of the method of data collection), criterion (the consistency of translated terms with the cultural norms), conceptual equivalence or cultural equivalence (having the same meaning in two different cultures).

Additionally, to ensure the accuracy of the translation, a professional translator was consulted. This process was carried out individually for each interview. In addition, a research diary was used to record my verbal and emotional recollections in response to the original text, the translated text and the interview experience itself. The diary usage allowed my focus to remain with the data to help me bracketing them off.

2.8.2. *Initial noting*

At this stage, the transcript was examined at an exploratory level. I endeavoured to remain open-minded and record anything of interest which emerged from the transcript, such as my thoughts, reflections and observations. Following a suggestion from Smith, Flowers & Larkin (2009), three exploratory comments - descriptive, linguistic and conceptual - were recorded by hand using different coloured pens in the wide margin on the right-hand side of the transcript. These comments provided a foundation for identifying emergent themes (Appendix 9, which illustrates each analysis step).

2.8.3. *Developing emergent themes*

My main objective at this stage involved reducing the volume of detail (contained in the transcript and the initial notes) whilst maintaining its complexity and depth by focusing on the most important and exciting data. Hence, I moved away from working directly with the transcript to the initial notes and focused on its discrete sections to identify emergent themes. Here, the transcript was also fragmented into parts. The fragmentation was done to bring it together in a synthesis at the end of the analysis. I kept in mind the reassurance from Smith and his colleagues (2009) that this process represents the manifestation of the hermeneutic circle and its dialectic, that is, 'the part is interpreted in relation to the whole and the whole is interpreted in relation to the part' (Smith & Shinebourne, 2012, p.77).

The emergent themes reflected not only the participant's narrative but also my interpretations. Therefore, reflexivity was employed to prevent imposing my worldview on the text.

2.8.4. *Searching for connections across emergent themes*

The emergent themes were arranged in chronological order, as they come up in the transcript. Afterwards, the connection and patterns between the themes were identified. They were grouped according to their similarities; each of these clusters was also labelled. The typed list of themes was printed out and cut up, which helped to visualise this process. Following the method suggested by Smith, Flowers & Larkin (2009), the floor was utilised to move the emergent themes around and observe how they relate to each other.

2.8.5. *Moving to the next case*

This stage involved moving to the next participant's transcript and repeating the whole process, utilising steps one to four.

2.8.6. *Looking for a pattern across cases*

Once the four stages of analysis were completed, themes from the different transcripts were arranged into meaningful clusters identifying common links; super-ordinate themes were also developed. Abstraction, subsumption, polarisation, numeration, contextualisation and function were the basic analytic strategies used at this stage. In the final step, a summary table of themes was produced with quotes illustrating each of them.

All stages of analysis were carried out separately for each case (interview). Once these stages had been completed, the researcher moved to another case analysis until the final table was created, showing all the research cases.

This research was conducted on a small sample. Hence it is acknowledged that the findings cannot be considered in terms of their 'transferability',

2.9. Methodological and procedural reflexivity

During data collection, transcription and analysis, a reflective diary was kept to record my observations and reflections regarding the text and each research interview experience itself. Using a reflective journal helped me improve the efficiency of the reflexive process. In addition, encounters with my supervisor, the therapist, and meetings with my IPA group were invaluable to gain guidance and address concerns that emerged during drawing closer to reassurance he participants' lived experiences of deportation and its phenomena.

2.10. Cost

The total economic cost of this research was £500, which included: printing and reading materials (periodicals, books, etc.), consultation with a professional translator, and travel to access participants and conduct interviews.

3. ANALYSIS

3.1. Introduction

Semi-structured interviews were used to explore the lived experiences of deportation to the Soviet Union during World War II among Polish civilian survivors. The Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis method was utilised to analyse participants' narratives. Most strikingly, participants described their experience of deportation at three different stages when they were deported, when they were in exile and when they returned to Poland. Therefore, using the analysis of the participants' accounts, three superordinate themes emerged from the data: the transition from one life to another, 'I was trying my best to survive', and, 'Who hasn't been there, will be, and those who have been there won't forget' – i.e., the long-lasting legacy of deportation. Those three themes provide a rich and enlightening insight into the complexity of the lived experiences of deportation by its survivors. In this analysis, I demonstrate my interpretation of participants interpretation of their own lived experiences. For validity, page and line numbers and the quotations from the relevant transcripts were used as a reference to support each theme. The final overview of the superordinate themes and their subthemes is outlined below.

Table 1 - Overview of superordinate themes.

1. The transition from one life to another	**2. 'I was trying my best to survive.'**	**3. 'Who hasn't been there, will be, and those who have been there won't forget' – i.e., the long-lasting legacy of the deportation**
Initial experience of the deportation	Resourcefulness in getting by (physical survival)	'The past is never dead. It's not even past.'
Threats to survival	Emotional survival	Post-deportation gains
Experience of hopeful moments	Resistance against the regime	Deportation-related communication with others
	Preservation of Polishness	Facing daily post deportation hardships/losses
	Relationship with the enemy	

This chapter outlines in detail each superordinate theme with its subthemes, using quotations from the participants' accounts and at the same time emphasising the convergences and divergences among participants. I also annotated [pause] to indicate participants' breaks and (…) to demonstrate unfinished sentences or missing words in the transcript. Capital letters were used to indicate when the participants increased the volume of their voice. Moreover, the letters R and P were used to indicate the origin of the language, which sequentially stands for Russian and Polish.

3.2. The transition from one life to another

This superordinate theme describes the participants' lived experiences of transition from one life to another - life before and during the deportation. The participants' experiences have been grouped into three main constituent themes: the initial experience of the deportation, threats to their survival, the experience of hopeful moments in exile.

3.2.1. *The initial experience of the deportation*

This subtheme outlines the participants' initial experiences of being captured by Russians, described by all of them as 'being taken'. The majority of the interviewed survivors also mentioned the dehumanisation process of being taken by Russian soldiers and then transported to the Soviet Union.

Stanislawa discusses how the Russian soldiers invaded her family home in the middle of the night, and then how she and her family were forcibly taken from their home:

'At night, they knocked on the window and said: 'Pack up and leave.' Mummy was distracted, and she cried because you know how the children are and what, they gave us maybe a few hours, maybe minutes, to pack up what we can, and we can get on the sledge (…) There was no talk that I would not go, or…only MUST, they would not even stay away from us, but we took what we had. I remember you have…mummy put a duvet on a sleigh and put us on it and covered with the other duvet because we were small children (…) And the frost was unbelievable back then.' (Stanislawa, p.1,2, 13-27)

Stanislawa's statement about the initial experience of the deportation implies that there was a strong sense of inevitability. It appears there was no choice, no negotiation, as the deportation was forced and couldn't be avoided or postponed; hence it needed to happen.

On the other hand, Anna discusses the dehumanising conditions of the train ride to the Soviet Union and how the train was used to deport human- beings in conditions meant for livestock:

'(…) because they [Russian soldiers] brought the rest [of the people] and were loading us into wagons. Then, and here I was impacted by it all the time, horribly DIRTY wagons [says with disgust] a lot of those various insects and those smelly ones and they loaded us [pause] and closed the doors and sealed and then [pause] we are waiting for what will be with us next, what will it be? (…) this train started running, and we all started crying horribly, that we are leaving Poland, leaving.' (Anna, p.2, 31-37)

Here, it appears that Anna was simply humiliated by the initial moments of her deportation experience, as her narrative suggests that she was treated as livestock rather than a human-being. She reflects how much she was impacted by those early moments of deportation. Anna's statement also suggests a lot of uncertainty linked to her early experiences of the deportation, as together with her family, she did not know what to expect. In addition, there is a powerful sense of sadness. Anna articulates this feeling towards the end of her statement, as a completely unknown part of her life was about to unfold. The repeated use of the word 'we' is striking. The usage of this word might suggest the collectivism of her experience, as she was not alone in experiencing the hardships of the reality of deportation.

'(…) Three days, neither water nor food, nothing, nothing, absolu(…) nowhere to go to the toilet, nothing. No toilet, nothing, so after three days, my brothers, because mum was provident, they took saw and axe in the trunk, so they made such a hole [shows the size of the hole], covered with what they had, sheets, so, and there we were defecating in this way.' (Anna, p.3, 58-63)

I am struck that despite the inhumanity of the initial moments of the deportation, Anna appears to be focused on the resourcefulness of her family during those times. Therefore, there is no sense of helplessness and powerlessness; on the contrary, it appears that there is a sense of strength and determination to be ingenious to survive.

Furthermore, Anna later goes on to describe one of the few traumatic events she faced on the train ride to the Soviet Union:

'And only after three days, they gave us hot, hot 'kipyotoch' (R: boiling water), water, hot for a tea, but this also affected me a lot, because when the train started running, everyone had something in a mug, I couldn't drink this hot water [laughs] when the train STARTED RUNNING, JERKED, once, twice, thrice, so everything, this hot water, poured on the face, here, I started screaming. But then, I realised that this was on purpose, to oppress us, so we would not drink this water and were really thirsty. Hmmm, and in that way, and that's how they

were TRANSPORTING US. Transporting, transporting, they let us go ONLY when we reach the Urals, the Urals.' (Anna, p.3, 65-74)

Anna appears to be expressing her sorrow towards Russians for humiliating her by offering the boiled water, which she could not drink for obvious reasons. This incident makes me believe that these are difficult memories of an upsetting past, which she is belittling by laughing it off. Her humour may have helped to distance and protect herself from the harrowing experiences Anna described at the time. What strikes me here is also Anna's shift from 'I' to 'us', as if she is moving from an individual to a collective experience, which can indicate being part of something bigger, which lies outside of an individual experience.

On the contrary, Wanda's initial experiences of deportation were completely different:

I: And how did you feel when you were going there?

W: (…) It felt that it looked beautiful; it seemed beautiful. And that will be all this. Somehow, it was still such a child's mind.' (Wanda, p.1, 24-26)

Wanda communicates the astonishment of her early moments of the deportation experience. It seems she was waiting for a big adventure, a journey to an unknown, almost exotic land.

3.2.2. *Threats to survival*

This subtheme describes the participants' daily challenges, which seriously threatened their survival. Regularly, they were exposed to food shortages and hunger. They also faced primitive living conditions, forced labour, the severity of the climate, and various traumatic events, e.g., life-threatening moments or the death of family members and friends.

Wanda describes her fear of dying and remaining forever in the Soviet Union while suffering from malaria:

'The worst feeling was when I was ill, if I DIE, everyone will go and leave me on the top of the mountain (…) I had already this fear. I had malaria. (…) Somehow it happened that I slept and dreamed that everyone would leave, and I will stay up there [pause]. Because I was not fit for LIFE. Before we knew which disease it was. Oh! And then [pause], but that's it [pause]. And I?! I just remembered how I remember today that I was afraid that EVERYONE would leave and leave ME there behind the river. Because it was there, usually they have been burying there, if somebody dies there somewhere, on the side of the mountain. Oh! It was terrifying.' (Wanda, p.6, 7, 191-222)

Wanda reports her fear of remaining in the Soviet Union forever due to her illness. She appears terrified, almost paralysed by the prospect of dying and being left behind in the foreign land. There is a strong sense that a constant fear of death overtook Wanda's life in exile. It appears as if death was waiting at every corner of her deportation existence. Wanda spoke, mixing past and present tenses, which might suggest that her experience of deportation is still alive. Wanda also uses very vivid language for her description; hence, you have the strong impression of being there next to her.

For Anna, another challenging experience was to face difficult living conditions in exile:

'(…) those Kazakhs took us. And in their dugout. Oh my God! Such beds (…) but when night came, going to sleep, ah such insects, such bugs were under those beds. And I got affected by it at night, I wonder, what is burning and shout to mum: 'something crawls on me' (…), and I cry and shiver. It was a horrible experience. Mum lighten this 'kopcialka' (P: sort of an oil lamp) (…) and sees I am covered with bugs. And mum took me outside (…) she got rid of all the clothes. She put warm clothes on me and rubbed me down with alcohol, and it burned, but after a moment, stopped. So, I did not sleep in this dugout; mum took out a pillow and duvet, so I slept on the ground, on the steppe's grass, and I slept like that. How do they live that they had so many bugs? These bugs, so HORRIBLE. They are horrible insects.' (Anna, p.6, 149-165)

Anna describes her shock in response to new living conditions in exile and mentions that she was affected by it enormously. Her narrative indicates that it was challenging for her to adapt to a new reality. The repetition of the words 'horrible bugs/insects' also suggests it was a harrowing experience to face. However, there is a strong sense that the presence of her mother made unbearable living conditions more bearable, as she provided immediate relief and remedy for her wounds, as well as providing a sense of safety.

Jadwiga mentions her trauma of facing extreme weather conditions:

'(…) I am saying: I will go to my aunt to collect clothes because she is sewing so that we will make dolls. And I run. And it was winter. COLD winter. Ah, because winters there were below - 40 Celsius degrees. And then it was snowing. I arrived there. (…) And I was knocking, knocking but it was WINTER, windows were closed there, they didn't hear (…) Anyway, I started to freeze. But as I say with the frost, a human being is falling asleep. And it was so cold, I curled up, and sat under this gate, and I was sitting, I froze already, simply I froze already. And the aunt's daughter was walking (…) and sees 'kurhanek' (P: a kind of grave in a shape of a mound) (…) when it was kicked, snow blow and I was under the snow (…) took

me in her arms and now screams: 'O God, Jadzia die(…) got frozen (…) This Russian lady when she saw, that she is screaming and is carrying me, and no, not home. Only strip me naked on the snow, and right now, everyone was rubbing every part of the body. Rubbing until I started to blush.' (Jadwiga, p. 17, 18, 499-524)

Jadwiga refers to her near death experience caused by the harsh climate. It appears that her life was highly fragile in those living circumstances and would have been lost if she had not been accidentally discovered by her cousin.

3.2.3. *Experience of hopeful moments*

For some survivors, life in exile did not only consist of moments of struggles and pain, but it was also a carefree time, with moments of joy, and happiness. It appears that joyful moments were fostered as a way of gaining control over otherwise completely uncontrollable circumstances. Those moments also brought some normality to such a strange world.

Stefania articulates her carefree childhood in exile:

'I only know from my memories that I was playing; the Ukrainian boys were doing piggyback (…) they were on the four limbs, and I was sitting on them, and we were playing in that way— burning the fire and scaring, ah! That's how children were playing. Children didn't care. For children only to get food and… Father was sending parcels because there was no sugar, there was a lack of salt (…). Hmm, dusk arrived, and they were putting us to bed, and that's it. Covered to be warm when there was winter.' (Stefania, p.10, 253-270)

She continues to reassure her carefree reality:

'There was enough to eat, where to sleep, where to play, with whom to play. There were fairy tales. Polish girls were coming. Organising plays. A person [as herself] was watching.' (Stefania, p.12, 303-305)

Stefania also points out that there was almost no difference between the life she led before and after deportation:

'Hmm, I was playing there, and I was playing here. LIKE A CHILD! What had I to do? Playing on the streets.' (Stefania, p.15, 403-404)

Stefania appears to have experienced carefree moments while in exile. Hence, there is a strong sense that her early life was full of joy and bliss, which gave her an ersatz sense of normality. It appears as though she was able to keep her spirits up, as all her basic needs were met, and procuring food did not seem to be a problem. However, generalised terms in

her narrative, using ‘we’ or ‘a person’ instead of ‘I’, can be considered a functional strategy; her way of keeping herself at arm’s length from her experience, despite confirming that nothing horrible happened to her in exile. Additionally, Stefania is convinced that there was no difference in her reality before and after the deportation, as she could immerse herself in playing different games.

Whereas, Anna reports ‘better moments’, which she also calls ‘funny’ and ‘humoresques’:

‘But there were funny moments. Though the funniest we wrote with the sister. We had hens, and a hen was always coming on the bed to lay an egg. She entered through the door or entered through the window, and mum had a ‘kilim’ (P: a pileless woven rug of intricate design made in the Middle East), and she [the hen] always jumped there and sat down. She makes a hole in this kilim. Mum took this kilim because she didn’t have anything to wear, the last skirt was torn, so she made out of this kilim skirt for herself, and the kilim wasn’t lying on this bed. This hen rebelled, how she started shouting, how she started cackling, jumps on the bed, off the bed, gets outside, returns and cackling and cackling. So, mum needed to take off the skirt and put it on the bed; then she laid an egg [laughs]. But such hen’s rebellion, obviously she must have this, because it was here, she felt that it is her, that she has here her place to lay an egg.’ (Anna, p. 36, 993-1006)

Through this humorous scene, Anna is uncovering a powerful sense of carefree moments. Moments during which she was allowed to laugh and be a child, who for a split-second could position herself far away from the daily struggles of battling for survival.

Stanislaw describes moments when he could appreciate local music and arts:

‘When milkmaids were going to milk cows on the ‘pasiolek’ (R: in the USSR 1939-41 special farms intended for the settlement of deportees, sometimes equipped with livestock and agricultural tools, but often not satisfying the basic needs of the deportees), do you know how they were singing wonderfully? [becomes emotional] ah ah ah Katyusha and non-Katyusha, have you heard Katyusha? (…) and this one and another song [says few words from the song]. Should I continue? [laughs and starts singing a Russian song] Ah, these sorts of songs, those parts. These milkmaids, these women, they are singing, ah, ah, ah (…) And when the EVENING COMES, it was the so-called ‘plaszczatka’, they called it, this floor was made like a stage, here covered wall and here ‘plaszczatka’ on the stumps o! Also, when they gather, these ladies, so they SING, DANCE the whole evening, ah, ah, ah. Take their ‘balalaika’ (R: type of guitar); this was a rectangle guitar, yes and this ‘balalaika’. It had 12 strings, two strings near each other. Oh! This Russian boy called Cola taught me how to play on this ‘balalaika’,

but when I returned here, I already forgot it. Ah, they are singing; I am saying that they are really humans, here it can vary. Is it there because of this poverty? Or what, that everything is so TOGETHER [pause], one helps another, well this IS there. SUPPORT. But here, well…oh!' (Stanislaw, p.16,17, 431-461)

Stanislaw describes his enjoyment of Russian folklore. His solid emotional response towards this memory might be linked to his appreciation of the local arts and his enjoyment of carefree moments in general. In addition, Stanislaw often spoke in Russian, which can be considered his way of getting closer to his experience and allowing me to get closer to it as well. Here, he also conveys the humanity of Russian people, perhaps something that he was struggling to find among his fellow Poles. Like other participants, he is mixing past and present tenses in his narrative, suggesting the vividness of his experience.

Barbara also reflects on her 'nice memories':

'And there are nice memories, and I have, for example, nice memories, memories of a grandma, who was giving water, giving water, you were giving some sort of card, and she was giving water. But I always got more of this water [laughs]. She ordered to enter inside and drink this water there, or she gave. So, [laughs] there are also nice memories, grandma, grandma, liked me and there, like a child, moving around.' (Barbara, p.31, 828-834)

Barbara appears to be highlighting the way humane behaviour brought about hopeful moments in her experience of the deportation. However, she is laughing here, which might suggest her struggle to believe those good moments were part of her deportation past.

Also, Jadwiga remembers better moments in exile:

'I am saying THERE WAS HUNGER, COLD, but it was cheerful. There was a system, that when they were coming from the kolkhoz, they were hungry as hell, but I remember Wanka 'na harmoszczce prygrajet' (R: was playing the harmonica), and they dance this Cossack (Russian folk dance) But not in pairs, like here in pairs, just singly. One dance. And when we lived at Sciura's place, we flattened the ground with those dances, those legs, in front of the window. Everyone barefoot. Summer arrives. AND ME always, I am small, but they come: 'Luba daj nam Niurka, Luba daj nam Niurka' (R: Luba gives us Niurka [the way Jadwiga was called by Russians], Luba gives us Niurka). They grab me there, stroke me, but I was dancing Cossack like a master. They taught me this Cossack. So, a kid like a kid, and if anyone gives a bit to eat, it was pretty GOOD. So, this is my curriculum.' (Jadwiga, p.35, 1024-1036)

Jadwiga appears to be highlighting her involvement in something beyond suffering, her celebration of moments with music and dancing. It seems as though there was a parallel reality to the struggles of daily life. Consequently, there is a sense that these joyful moments made up for the more difficult ones, as well as providing brief glimpses of normality and a worry-free childhood. Jadwiga gives a strong impression that she was not bothered by anything as long as she was not hungry. However, her narrative of a child trapped by the reality of deportation indicates that the past is still alive since she often mixes past and present tenses.

3.3. 'I was trying my best to survive.'

All the participants related their or their families' remarkable determination to survive, revealing a high level of persistency and creativity. This superordinate theme, developed from Leopold's quote, comprises five subthemes: resourcefulness in getting by (physical survival), emotional survival, resistance against the regime, preservation of Polishness, and relationship with the enemy. The connection of these subthemes reveals the strength of the participants and their families and their determination to overcome day-to-day hardships to survive both physically and emotionally.

3.3.1. *Resourcefulness in getting by*

The participants described several different resourceful means of getting by to survive. Here, the survivors' focus centered mainly on various ways of procuring food, as it would have been impossible for them to live on the tiny amount of food that was available. Hence, they all described experiences of malnutrition: '… it was such [pause] a HUNGER…' (Leopold, p.12, 386). However, some use the word hunger very broadly, almost as if it did not apply to them. The usage of this word might indicate their struggle to reconnect with such a harrowing experience.

Leopold proudly talked about his resourcefulness in getting by. This is reflected by the way he and his family members successfully dealt with food shortages and omnipresent hunger:

'…it was not allowed to plant potatoes…with my grandmother, we planted them er…, as there is a peel, then every sprout from this peel we put into the soil…and under every plant, such extra-sized eight or ten tubers appeared. They [Russians] were afraid of doing this…We did it somehow; it was what it was.' (Leopold, p.16, 515-522)

He also shared another example of his resourcefulness in getting food:

'…BUT THE BEST SITUATION WAS THAT when they [Russians] had their Passover, they [Russians] would carry these Easter buns to the cemetery, there would be other pastries. And weeee boys… we are just like that putting them into the bags or something else. And just when they left, we cleared the food [laughs] to take home…' (Leopold, p.7, 213-219)

Here it appears that for Leopold, his resourcefulness and ingenuity were the most critical components in determining his and his family survival. However, very often, as described above, his resourcefulness turns into desperation accompanied by severe risk-taking behaviour, e.g., planting potatoes, which was strictly prohibited, or stealing food (please refer to the excerpt above). Nevertheless, his desire to live was more robust than any prohibitions. I also noticed that he was laughing whilst sharing this experience with me, which might reveal his disbelief that 'such a hunger' forced him to steal food offerings, which would be considered unacceptable in 'normal' life circumstances.

Henryk emphasises a constant food shortage and hunger that constitutes a crucial thematic thread linking together the profoundly harrowing experiences of exile, his struggles to gain the food and his ways of trying to get by:

'FOOD! OH! Where we were going, we were walking, because we lived on the Irkutsk coast, on the fields, it was good in the summer, because it was possible to get 'luk', 'luk', 'luk', 'luk', the largest by all means, do you know what is 'luk' (P: wild onions)? [laughs] (…) It's like a kind of saying, oh onion, just growing wild. It is delicious and caloric. Well, that's what you do, and then you dig the sorrel (…) picked up the sorrel! And in the fields, after the winter, you went to the fields most often, because it is known where they were, that PGRs- Polskie Gospodarstwa Rolne (P: collective farms), these potatoes, all this as if unexcavated, found in the winter and they were left in the ground. You go, you dig, well yes [laughs], and that's what you eat. Obviously, that kind of potato is frozen, but. Or if it was nothing, somewhere in the garden, because they breed [grew?] it, it means, you come, just to pick up the potato and eat like that. TO SURVIVE. NO!!!! I will tell you honestly that if I recall it all [becomes emotional], IT'S SICKENING.' (Henryk, p.5, 129-146)

Here, Henryk reveals his daily struggles of procuring food. However, it seems as though Henryk did everything in his power to survive; this included picking and preparing edible plants from nature such as, for example, *'luk'*, which provided valuable sustenance against hunger. There is a strong sense that Henryk's survival can be attributed to his capacity of eating anything, which ensured physical survival. Henryk's description of his hunger experience as

'sickening' can be interpreted as evidence of suffering and coping with the severe consequences of deportation. Furthermore, his laugh here may suggest some sort of disbelief that he was even eating wild onions. Still, it may have helped him distance and protect himself from this harsh and potentially traumatic experience.

Towards the end of the transcripts, Henryk returned to discuss the omnipresent hunger and his ways of dealing with it:

'But that's how a man [himself] when you describe it, you get annoyed, EXPERIENCES. You will remind yourself how much hunger there was. (…) and children as children ALONE. Well, it's obvious there was crying, and this, and one sister and the other one, it's obvious that I was the oldest. Then you will go somewhere; you will look somewhere for something; you had to STEAL. Well, what would you do to survive? And you return, you have something, you share it with the younger ones with the older one, and ALONE I do not eat sometimes. EXCUSE ME! [pause] When a human being [himself] reminds, I am telling you [pause] it's hard, okay, we will leave this topic.' (Henryk, p.9, 281-295)

Henryk goes on to report 'stealing' as his primary means of survival. However, his narrative also emphasises that resorting to such means was triggered by extreme food shortage and hunger. Other participants also benefited from this act as part of the survival process. The act of stealing positions the participant as an active agent, as only through such actions was Henryk able to survive this harrowing experience. Henryk often spoke in generalised terms, using the plural, third person 'human being' rather than I, and like others, this serves as a functional strategy to create distance between himself and his traumatic experiences. It also appears that his desire to stop talking about the implications of hunger reveals a harrowing and traumatic experience.

Also, Halina openly talked about stealing as her way of getting food to survive:

'It was necessary to collect ears of grain and (laughs) to steal somewhere this grain, from some sort of prism, where the grain was stored. But it was difficult. God forbids they would catch you; they will take you to prison. Hmm. Then… on the field, on the plain, on the grass they put it, the big prism of this grain. But to go and get (laughs with disbelief) some sack of it and bring it home… God forbids; they catch you and put you into prison. Cannot. It can rot, but you can't take it.' (Halina, p.6, 142-149)

Halina admits that stealing became a norm in her life as a deportee. However, her laugh might suggest that she does not feel proud about it, even though she didn't have a choice, as stealing

was the only way to survive. There is also a sense of an unyielding determination in Halina's attempts to procure the food and do her 'best to survive', which often turned into life-threatening behaviour and infringing prohibitions set up by the regime. In addition, Halina strongly emphasised the absurdity of the Soviet system, which didn't allow people to fulfil their basic needs, despite the widespread availability of essential goods.

Like Halina, Anna talked about stealing as the central aspect of survival:

'THERE IF YOU STOLE, YOU LIVED…IT WAS NECESSARY TO STEAL… And that's how we got this miracle. BUT only because of that we survived that WE NEEDED TO STEAL. If we didn't steal, we would not have survived FOR SURE! It would be the end.' (Anna, p.14., 571-579)

Anna believes that she owes her life to her ability to steal. Her way of pronouncing these sentences suggests her only option was stealing to survive. However, there is no sense of embarrassment or regret for doing something socially unacceptable. On the contrary, it appears that there is a sense of determination and an acceptance of dishonest actions, because this was what saved her life, as if Anna is trying to convince me that stealing was justified. Furthermore, her actions demonstrated a lack of passiveness and a strong determination to achieve control, which most likely gave her a sense of hope and freedom in such a restricted environment under Russian authority. In addition, her use of the word 'miracle' appears to acknowledge that it was almost impossible to survive. She and her family were able to achieve, something usually reserved for a divine power, indicating their enormous determination to survive.

Wanda named her experience of getting by as '*kombinowac'*, which can be translated as trying to cheat the system:

'…but we were trying to 'kombinowac', like doing something somewhere. When they threshed the grain, they placed it in sacks and on the ground; it also lays in the fields. Everybody was trying to get something somewhere, whoever is smarter, bolder, they will go at night, will fill up the sack, and it's theirs already. And if not this, then you collected ears of grain in the fields. We were drying and wiping it, and it was possible already… the little seeds were so small, and we baked bread.' (Wanda, p.2, 59-68)

Wanda's narrative indicates that she was doing everything in her power to survive. Hence, we can deduct from her transcript that her acts of determination also included behaviours that would be unacceptable in the 'normal' life circumstances, such as stealing. However, she does

not use the word ‘stealing’ to describe her way of acquiring food and instead, she uses the term *‘kombinowac’*, which can be understood as what might typically be a criminal act. From Wanda’s narrative, we also get a strong sense that only the smartest and boldest were able to survive, as they were aware of how to cheat the system. Moreover, Wanda spoke here in generalised terms, using the pronoun ‘they’ rather than ‘I’, which I recognised as her functional strategy. These generalised terms perhaps enabled Wanda to create a distance between herself and her harrowing experiences.

Wanda also articulated her ability to cope with the struggles of her daily life as a deportee by cooking and eating whatever was available:

‘(…) OH! And there we learned how to cook nettle and cook and eat pigweed. And raw potatoes [pause]. We ate.’ (Wanda, p.7, 236-237)

Severe starvation forced Wanda and her family to eat whatever was available to survive. At the same time, we can sense a robust level of perseverance and ingenuity in her and her family’s actions.

However, acts of getting by did not only include the procurement of food. For example, Leopold described his way of getting fuel for winter, which demonstrated his ingenuity and ability to create something out of nothing:

‘…you had to go in the steppe where cows grazed, then collect thiiis [pause] dung. They are dried and so on. We brought it and burned it in the stove… it was a supply for the whole winter.’ (Leopold, p.16, 522-526)

As he gave his account, Leopold appeared to be very proud of his ways of getting by. There was a sense of victory that he and his family could cope well with the horrendous living conditions compared to those from a privileged background.

This theme illustrates the complexity of the survival process and the participants’ determination and creativity to remain alive.

3.3.2. *Emotional survival*

Participants discussed their various emotional reactions against perishing. They vividly described what helped them emotionally survive the adversity of the deportation.

Henryk describes his experience of the survival process, which depended not only on his willpower but also on his faith:

‘(interrupts) THE WILLPOWER is the first one! And the second one is the PRAYERS. PRAYERS, they were, that we were praying to Our Lady, and that’s FREQUENTLY. Not only, every day! And that we could come back, only thanks to this, just. And Our Lady indeed is, hmmm as we called in Russia ‘Sybirajskaya’ (R: lady of all the people who were deported to Siberia) [he becomes tearful]. Such a painting, there was a painter, he painted it. And we prayed. And because of that, we came back. Not everyone, but we came back.’ (Henryk, p.7, 217-225)

On the one hand, Henryk was, like Leopold, an active agent in the process of keeping himself alive. On the other, Henryk claims that he owed his survival to ‘something’ beyond his willpower, his faith. Henryk’s praying can also be seen as his way of maintaining his cultural heritage and resisting the Soviet system. I am struck by the fact that Henryk shouted the first sentence, which might suggest his enormous strength and the effort he needed to exert to keep himself alive. Additionally, there is a strong sense of collectivism in his experience, as he uses ‘our’ and, ‘we’ rather than ‘mine’, and ‘I’, which suggest that he didn’t go through survival alone.

Jadwiga also mentions God as the main factor of her survival:

‘Simply, I survived. DO I KNOW WHY? WELL, WE SURVIVED. WE SIMPLY SURVIVED, somehow. I say, only the divine power saved us, because with such HUNGER, with such COLDNESS, because just according to a sober human concept, it’s IMPOSSIBLE. And yet it was possible! AND YET WE SURVIVED.’ (Jadwiga, p.37, 1088-1092)

It appears that Jadwiga didn’t spend much time thinking about the existential aspects of her survival. However, she reports that a divine power helped her survive the hardship of deportation. Hence, there is a sense of gratitude towards something more significant than a man’s power for making it through. In addition, she spoke using the term ‘we’ rather than ‘I’, which can also be understood as a way to emphasises the collective nature of their survival experience.

Alternatively, ‘hope’ helped Wanda keep herself alive:

‘(interrupts) HOPE [pause]. They say that HOPE is the mother of the stupid, but only and always hope, just a little bit, and maybe something will CHANGE. WE ONLY LIVED ON HOPE [pause]. Then the ‘Abroad’ [a foreign charity organisation] helped us later. It sent flour for them, rice [pause], they gave it away to POLES. It got already been better for US. You could survive somehow. And that’s how life was.’ (Wanda, p.4, 118-123)

Wanda describes hope as a crucial factor for keeping her alive. She shouts the word ‘hope’, which might suggest its power and significance. There is a strong sense that hope enabled her to work things out. At the same time, survival is portrayed as ‘something’ that was only partly under her control, since it also depended on the support, she received from a foreign charity organisation. It is essential to reflect on her narrative, and her shift from using ‘I’ to ‘them’ or ‘Poles’, which signifies a distance from her experience. She talks about it very generally, as if it happened to somebody else rather than herself. Hence, perhaps her words represent her underlying struggles to get in touch with some of the complicated feelings accompanying this experience.

Leopold articulates what was for him the most crucial buffer between surviving and dying:

‘(…) C-O-M-M-O-N S-E-N-S-E! Above all and the ability to live and cope. One was encouraging each other. One (…) Everyone believed that we would return [pause].’ (Leopold, p.13, 410-412)

Here, Leopold appears to be articulating the way his survival experience interacted with different abilities such as his common sense and the ability to live and cope. It is crucial to notice that he spells out the word common sense, underlining its importance. There is also a strong sense of unity and mutual support: ‘one was encouraging another’. At the same time, Leopold generalises his experience, saying ‘everyone believed’, which, as previously noted, can be considered as a functional strategy, a way of creating distance between himself and his experience. In addition, Leopold portrays survival as an active process, which positions Leopold as an active agent, whose survival depended purely on his willingness to cope with the adversity of deportation.

3.3.3. *Resistance against regime*

The participants spoke of witnessing the resistance capacities of their families and being part of acts of resistance organised by other Poles or performing them by themselves. Opposition was portrayed not only as a practical coping strategy to deal with existential struggles. It was also shown as a source of ‘hope’ and freedom, which stimulated their senses of a better life in the future: ‘it felt [whilst listening to forbidden Polish patriotic melodies] that something is in front of me that can be achieved. It was for us [boys and girls] … it was something good to achieve’ (Leopold, p.9, 271-275).

Leopold revealed the importance of performing his own 'innocent' acts of everyday resistance:

'…in the third grade we sing the anthem of the Soviet Union [pause], and we sang, and I say: 'Ja znaju drugije slowa' (R: 'And I know the other version') [He sings in Russian the song taught by his grandfather about Stalin making a lot of children with a beautiful lady under a clean duvet] … The silence fell, I thought he [a director of the kolkhoz] would shoot me…' (Leopold, p.14, 444-450)

Leopold's narrative gives us a strong sense that for him as well as for his family members, 'to resist was to exist'. Hence, to remain alive physically and spiritually and 'find his place in all of this', it was necessary to fight against the Soviet regime.

Anna also communicated her early acts of resistance, which mainly centered around a rebellion against Russian school:

A: 'Because it was in the beginning, I wasn't attending the school (…).'

I: 'So, can you tell me why you didn't want to attend the school?'

A: 'Aaah, because I felt such sorrow that they harmed us, and I need to learn their language. I DON'T WANT TO KNOW IT. I DON'T WANT TO KNOW (she raises her voice). I don't want to know Russia; I don't want to know the language. They arrested my father because they harm us a lot. I felt horrible harm was done, and that was my sorrow, such a REVENGE, that I will not attend school.' (Anna, p.8,9, 211-221)

Anna expressed her early acts of resistance as revenge for all the harm she and her family faced because of the Soviet Union. It appears that Anna had a good grasp of what was going on around her from an early age. Therefore, Anna's resistance could reflect a sense of strength and a determination to preserve her values and beliefs. In addition, observing the language she used, it appears that she felt enormous resentment and pain towards the Soviet regime for being harmed by it. Hence the only way she could get some inner sense of control and freedom was to rebel against the enemy.

Anna goes on to describe her strong resistance against Soviet propaganda that claimed God did not exist:

'Because they were normally teaching since childhood, from the first grade, that Stalin is God, that he is my God, that he is our chief, that Russia is good for us, that he needs to be respected and they were saying that and they were brainwashing. And [pause] the educational lesson was every week [pause]. And another teacher came, I don't know from where…and says that

and explains that God does not exist, that this is hypocrisy, that God is Stalin…This was such hypocrisy. Everything is! Not there; nobody wanted to believe it. But he says: 'Listen, I will prove it, but the first answer is there a God?' And everyone says that there is. 'No, God doesn't exist. I will show you if God exists and God is Stalin, I will prove it'. And he brought a bag of candies…and says: 'Shout, God, please give us candies. God, please give us candies.' Everyone is shouting, and I am observing, frightened. I am thinking; I don't know how to behave. I also got scared. And I watch what will come next. 'God, please give us candies, and you see. God is not giving sweets. And right now, shout Stalin, please give candies.

Everyone is shouting…AND I AM NOT. I am sitting and not moving, neither for those candies nor for anything else. And this teacher…he says to me: 'And you, why you are not doing anything? Tell me, is there a God?' And I said, 'there is, there is. So, he told me that I need to leave the classroom and says as follow: 'listen, there is no God, and you can't say that there is and YOU NEVER SAY THAT, because we will take you to the children's care home, 'dziet dom' and you will never see your mom, and you will never see your family.' (Anna, p.10, 11, 258-296)

For Anna, resistance towards the system seems like a vital aspect of her early existence and appears to be a significant part of her survival process. Anna took big risks to protect her values and beliefs and to preserve her identity and as a Pole. Furthermore, Anna's statement confirming the existence of God suggests her enormous inner strength and loyalty towards her own beliefs. What also emerges from Anna's transcript is her mixing of the past and present tenses, which can indicate the vividness of the described scene and the fact that, most likely, her experience of deportation still remains alive.

Wanda also described acts of resistance by her and her family:

'…we had such a person who we could trust. At some point, they were giving us a passport. The passport of their citizenship [Russian] [pause]. But we were informed by our COUNTRY that they would be handing it [Russian passports] out but DO NOT TAKE IT (…) The man, he received this message. They will imprison us, so go, but I will not remain there for long. But it turned out differently because, at that time, they destroyed SIKORSKI [Polish military and a political leader]. And how long you stayed, you stayed. I only stayed for a year. After only one year, my mother did not recognise me when I was released.' (Wanda, p.6, 180-189)

She highlighted the importance of guidance from a person she and her family could trust. The acceptance of the Russian passport meant giving up her Polish citizenship and remaining in Russia forever. Therefore, Anna's narrative indicates the strength of her will to preserve her

Polishness, even though she paid an enormous price for it, by being imprisoned for a year. Furthermore, she emphasises its importance by repeating her unwillingness to accept the Russian passport a few times throughout the interview. She also tries to convey how little time it took - 'only one year' of imprisonment - for her to become unrecognisable to her mother, showing how bad the situation was.

This subtheme relates to the participants' various ways of rebelling against the Soviet authority, which emphasised their high determination to survive physically and morally, and in doing so preserving their identity, values, and beliefs.

3.3.4. *Preservation of Polishness*

This subtheme describes the tendency of several participants to talk about the importance of preserving their 'Polishness' - the Polish language, tradition, and religion. It appears that despite the severe consequences of cultivating their culture and tradition, they all risked their lives to keep the Polish spirit alive. Therefore, all the participants emphasised their efforts- big or small- to maintain Polishness while in exile, even at a great distance from their homeland- '*ojczyzna*'. This reveals the importance of physical survival and the psychological continuity of their lives.

Leopold stressed the great significance of preserving 'Polishness':

'…Mrs Jonkajtysowa taught us children Polish on the devotee's prayer book…it could not be revealed…it was in hiding, she did it, but 'Polishness' remained. After all, we were all speaking Polish…Everybody was praying in Polish; there was no such a grouping, buuut we spoke Polish.' (Leopold, p.5, 152-159)

Here, Leopold describes all the risky efforts that people made to keep their Polishness alive. His narrative also suggests that the preservation of Polish identity was a genuinely collective experience. Therefore, he was not alone in trying to retain his Polishness. It can be assumed that Polishness also took an extraordinary role in 'standing for' a past life- often the joyful, carefree everyday existence of a child or a teenager.

He continued articulating the importance of keeping his Polishness alive:

'…As Poles, we were trying to cultivate a spirit that Poland was Polish, that all our festivals…somehow it was worshipped, it was preserved…it was…not officially, but everyone celebrated it.' (Leopold, p.6 182-185)

Leopold mentions the importance of preserving a sense of Polishness, which in the face of isolation in a foreign land played a significant role in strengthening and keeping the Polish spirit alive. Despite the imprisonment of his body, it appears as if he regarded his soul as free, reflecting his perceived invincibility.

Like Leopold, Anna discussed the significance of keeping her Polishness alive:

'Maybe these are better moments. Teachers were deported, so teachers were teaching Polish secretly. Later, we could study when the pact was signed with Sikorski [Polish military and a political leader]. Various plays. (…), she was a teacher before the war. And she also wrote various [patriotic] plays, staging them, everything. And this was the best for us! Ah, that we can study and practise and watch those plays, such patriotic ones. But the best was this, that we were gathering, youth were gathering into one group, that every time here, here, here, once at this place, once at the other place we were gathering, and there were various humorous moments. We played cards; there were different games: 'pomidor', 'dupniak', how they called everything. So, it was like that.' (Anna, p.35, 966-977)

Here, Anna recognises the collective experience of preserving Polish culture and tradition, which she describes as the best moment in exile and an opportunity to stick together. It can be supposed that togetherness may have helped her distance herself and protect herself from all the difficult moments she described in her testimony. In addition, togetherness gave Anna glimpses of a more standard and carefree adolescence, one which she was simply denied as a deportee.

Anna also communicated what keeping her Polishness alive meant to her:

'Ah, what did it mean? Ah, this was HOPE (becomes vivid). HOPE and a human being [herself] felt well. Felt patriot! Oh, I am a patriot because patriotic plays are being staged and everything. And some rise of some sort of strength was occurring. Because when a human being [herself] felt patriotism, this inner STRENGTH was such that nothing is threatening me because I am a patriot. I am strong, and I can resist. These were the feelings. But people from kolkhoz were coming and watching our plays. They liked them, and we were singing various patriotic songs' (…) (Anna, p.37, 1035-1042)

It appears that for Anna keeping her Polishness alive gave her inner strength to resist the brutality of the Soviet system. Furthermore, it seems that cultivating patriotism gave her a feeling of being indestructible. There is also a sense that the preservation of her Polishness

enabled her to connect with people from other nations. Moreover, Polishness provided her with a substitute for freedom in such a constrained environment under Russian authority.

Finally, Anna describes the significant role of religion in the process of her survival, which she cultivated despite strict prohibition:

'There they [Russians] didn't allow to pray, because when 'precidaciel' (R: chief of the kolkhoz) saw they were walking near the window and were listening, so then they were arresting because it wasn't allowed to pray. But they knew nothing!' (Anna, p.18, 474-477)

Anna further talks and explains how praying and belief in God gave her hope she would return to her homeland:

'Just what was keeping a human being [herself] going was a prayer. Prayer and hope. When a human being [herself] was praying, believed in God, believed that God would save us one day and we will return to Poland.' (Anna, p.27, 734-737)

Anna's narrative indicates how her religion played a significant role in helping her stay alive. However, there is a strong sense that she did not have much control over her survival. Instead, her existence depended entirely on her faith in and the mercy of God. Interestingly, in her narrative, she spoke in generalised terms, using the plural, third person, 'human being' rather than 'I', as if she was creating an enormous gap between herself and her challenging lived experience of deportation.

Likewise, Halina indicates how the preservation of prohibited religious acts such as believing in God and praying helped her survive:

'Well (laughs) God allowed [to survive], believe in God. I was also praying, I was still young, but I was praying all the time, for everything, to survive, that somehow God would help.' (Halina, p.8, 215-218)

Even though she is describing how important her religion was to her survival, Halina laughs at the beginning of this description. Perhaps, her laugh indicates how utterly powerless she felt in the face of the complex and challenging survival process. Indeed, her laugh might reflect her struggle to exert any control over her life in exile.

On the other side Stanislawa described how she and her family were keeping the tradition alive by decorating a Christmas tree:

'Festivals, whether there is a Christmas tree or something else, and we were making some garlands from newspapers, and it was like that. If we had an onion, we were hanging it instead

of an apple. And we did not see any candies at all. And that was my youth life.' [becomes nostalgic] (Stanislawa, p.14, 326-330)

Stanislawa describes her ingenuity in sustaining the tradition of decorating a Christmas tree. Her narrative not only appears to be shaped by a determination to preserve a significant part of Polishness, but also by cultivating a glimpse of normality in her life as a child. There is also a strong sense of enjoyment of this carefree moment. As previously noted, Stanislawa also mixes the past and the present tenses, indicating the vividness of her deportation experience. In addition, Stanislawa becomes nostalgic at the end of this description, showing her sentimental yearning for the happiness of that moment.

The subtheme described above highlights the significance of how the participants kept their sense of Polishness alive, even in the face of total isolation in the landscape of the Siberian steppe. Several survivors articulated how preserving their culture, religion, tradition, and language played an essential role in their resistance against the Soviet regime, which in turn paved the way for their survival. In addition, as they shared their lived experiences of preserving their Polishness with me, the participants mixed past and present tenses, which can indicate the presence of a long-lasting post-deportation struggle.

3.3.5. *Relationship with the enemy*

Almost all the participants discussed their relationship with the enemy. They vividly described feelings of anger and resentment towards those Russians linked to the system, such as soldiers, politicians, etc., to deprive them of their childhood/ youth and loved ones. However, they also related human-to-human connections with ordinary Russians, finding a way to empathise with them and feel their sorrow. The participants' good relationship with ordinary Russians can also be recognised as part of their adaptation process, which crucially influenced their chances of survival.

Jadwiga names Russians pejoratively as 'Ruskie', holding at the same time lots of anger towards them for the loss of her father:

'And when RUSSIANS, well RUSSIANS [says Ruskie] I am not going to declare their greatness [says slightly irritated] …And until today, when they say something to me. That we are FRIENDS, so immediately here [points at her throat] FRIENDS? Yes, right, nothing like that. Well, because if father were still there, it would not hurt me so much, but because they [Russian soldiers] took FATHER for one hour, one HOUR lasts until today.' (p.44, 1293-1297)

Here Jadwiga reveals her resentment towards the people of the Soviet Union for the loss of her beloved father. She also indicates that her grieving has never ended, and her father's death has not been processed ('swallowed') until today, as reflected by her gesture when she points to the throat.

However, despite experiencing all this pain, Jadwiga was able to recognise and point out the intense level of humanity in ordinary Russians:

'But practically speaking, those Russian people weren't mean. They were as poor as we were. They there, they there, if this, that is, what they had, they shared. IT was like that when we lived with the grandma [Russian one], so this grandma what she had, she shared immediately. It was good for mummy, as mummy left with a grandma, so she was sure that this child [herself] has some care. And she was able to cook and to feed, and that was helping.' (Jadwiga, p.7, 180-186)

Here it appears that Jadwiga felt a strong level of solidarity towards ordinary Russians, as they were suffering as much as her fellow Poles. Her narrative also indicates a sense of gratitude towards the Russians for their usefulness and genuine hospitality. Interestingly, Jadwiga uses the plural, third person, 'child' rather than 'I' in her narrative, perhaps as a way of distancing herself from the complicated feelings associated with these memories.

Anna, like Jadwiga, describes human-to-human connections with the Russian people:

'And all in all, I will say it, I will say it that when it comes to the nation, the nation wasn't bad. Even if it was necessary to help, they helped, hmm or give something to eat, or give a bucket of grain or something; the nation was sharing; it was so compassionate and sharing. The worst was the authority. THE AUTHORITY WAS HORRIBLE; THE AUTHORITY WAS HORRIBLE. What to do? You can't persuade authority. But they were cheating this authority how they could. (…) So, as a nation, it cannot be complained about. It was a good nation. And it was sharing our experiences. They were saying that they are experiencing the same as we do; they were experiencing the same. Though we were living well with those people from kolkhoz, with this nation.' (Anna, p.38, 1043-1065)

Here, Anna communicates the positive aspects of the Russian people, and there is a strong sense of human-to-human connection which perhaps made her experience of deportation more manageable.

Similarly, Leopold describes his experience of building a deep relationship and 'sharing the culture' with ordinary Russians despite all the divisions:

'…because of the culture that we took there, they [Russians] just started to live differently. They did not know many things [pause]. For example, they could, like my grandmother, use [unclear name of the particular herb]'. She made soup from it. Only then they saw that it was possible. Such things.' (Leopold, p.16, 610-614)

Leopold statement reveals another face of the deportation. It appears that Poles brought several innovations into the life of ordinary Russians, which Leopold grandly names as a 'culture'.

He continues later in the interview to articulate his deep human-to-human connection with Russians:

'As we were leaving, we knew that we were returning to Poland when the Russians were escorting us, some of them were crying, some were saying goodbyes and wished us that we would be successful in our lives [says with nostalgia]. But why? Because we gave them a ray of life. WE HAVE GIVEN, hmmm, our CULTURE. We could pray. They saw it. There was no orthodox church or anything. Well, they lived as they lived, but they saw that [pause] we could create something out of nothing. And we left it so to speak, our good deed, which may still be remembered today (…)' (Leopold, p.21, 663-671)

Here Leopold appears to be articulating the act of leaving something very precious behind, a life-living legacy, something progressive but straightforward, which gives a sense of a new life. He also gives a sense that he wishes to be remembered for the 'good deeds' he and others performed. It is essential to reflect on the nostalgic tone of his statement; this might suggest the vividness of the experience and its importance. In his narrative, Leopold spoke in generalised terms, using the plural 'we' rather than 'I', which in this context might suggest the collectivism of his experience- going through something similar, with others, as one organism.

3.4. 'Who hasn't been there, will be, and those who have been there won't forget'- Long-lasting legacy of the deportation.

This superordinate theme developed from Wanda's quotation describes the long-lasting legacy of the deportation and contains four sub-themes: facing post-deportation hardships/losses; The past is never dead. It's not even past'; deportation related communication with others; post deportation gains. These sub-themes emerge from the participants' lived experiences.

3.4.1. *'The past is never dead. It's not even past'.*

The title of this sub-theme comes from a quotation by William Faulkner (1951, p.286). It was chosen, because it captures the vividness of the participants' lived experiences of deportation. In addition, the participants often spoke mixing the past and present tense, suggesting their experiences of deportation remain alive to this day.

Anna describes how some memories of the deportation continue to haunt her, and how unpleasant that feels:

'Hmm, this is HORRIBLE! This is HORRIBLE! When you have in memory when I look, this ABYSS OF STEPPE. HORRIBLE ABYSS [says sadly]. There is not even one tree. Sun is burning, temperature high hmm and it was necessary to protect yourself from the sun. Mostly we were sitting at home. And when at this moment I look at this abyss, so this ABYSS IS HELD IN MY MEMORY. I see this steppe, I see this [?] [unclear word] how is swaying, this high grass and so on. And we were going, oh I have THIS in front of my eyes. How I, how I was going into the steppe, catching owls, so we were eating those owls, were catching these 'sousliks' [a short-tailed ground squirrel native to Eurasia and the Arctic], they were on their legs, those sousliks. There were such big FROGS, we were catching those frogs, we were bringing them home, and we were eating everything. And there were roots, so we were digging those roots from the soil; it was so sweet, like saccharin, such a sweet taste. And otherwise, sorrel, we were picking it, because sorrel was growing there, hmm also wild onion was there, there was garlic, so we were gaining out of this steppe. Hmm, and right now I look, and I see how the sun goes down on this steppe, how this grass is swaying [lowers her voice]. But this looked like waves of water, sea; this was not the grass, only sea. SEA, WATER and in that way, it was swaying.' (Anna, p. 22, 590-609)

I: (…) When does this image return?

'This is returning on its own. Unexpectedly. (…) It appears without knowing when. It is not known when! Even dreams are such, oh DREAMS. Recently I don't have them somehow. But such dreams were appearing, that I am in Siberia, that I am searching for my dugout, I can't find it, that I am walking on the streets, and searching for friends, but they are not there. I search for neighbours. And I am so tired. I walk around this kolkhoz, I walked on these streets, and I wake up. And then I feel so sorry, such a recall, that almost makes me cry a bit. I cry. Is it not enough that I was there? This remains for the whole life. No one can remove this. NEVER IN LIFE!' (Anna, p.23, 615-628)

She continues questioning the presence of these memories:

'I am very sorry because everything was returning, hmmm these MEMORIES. For what are those memories? They are not needed! But they haunt the human being [herself], and for that reason, it's very upsetting.' (Anna, p.23, 630-632)

Anna relates her recurring memories of the deportation and their unbearable nature- this demonstrates the ongoing impact of the deportation on her daily existence. The vividness of her narrative suggests that her experience of the deportation keeps haunting her, causing considerable disturbance and sorrow. Her usage of the word 'human being' indicates an underlying difficulty in connecting with some of the feelings accompanying this experience.

Halina articulates her recurring experience of the deportation as follows:

H: (…) when I sit and do nothing, I think all the time. And that's how I think. Yes.

I: And what do you think about then?

H: 'I return to this time like I was there, I experience I was there like I am there. Not once I experience that, hmmm, what to do?

I: But to what do you return?

H: [lively] Sometimes when I sit, I close my eyes, and everything returns, such images return. The whole experience returns that I go when mum stayed in the hospital, through those steppes, on these, barefoot, on these 'prickly' roads. It pricks, it pricks, those feet later [pause], I arrive and soak them in water and heal all those pricked wounds. Because there, there was no footwear, we walked barefoot on this steppe. On those pricy roads, stones. Ah, I survived everything difficult! Oh!' (Halina, p.9, 10, 249-263)

Halina describes the experience of deportation as 'surviving everything difficult'. There is a strong sense she is preserving something unimaginable, something that she struggles to put into words, calling it 'everything'. Perhaps her generalisation springs from an underlying difficulty in connecting with some of the feelings linked to this challenging experience. This causes Halina to talk about it in a very general way. Like other participants, Halina mixes the past and present tense to describe what she went through. It seems as though she doesn't feel any closure, since the past continues to chip into the present moment, keeping painful memories on the surface of her consciousness.

Similarly, for Jadwiga the past cannot be forgotten:

'As they say, a human being survived on his OWN [pause]. And this Siberia, what Johnny learns, how I repeated, what a child remembers is remembered. Today, I might not remember what I had for breakfast, BUT I REMEMBER WHAT I ATE THERE. How everything is tasty'. (Jadwiga, p.47, 1387-1391)

Jadwiga appears to highlight the vividness of her experience in exile. She states that whatever she went through during her childhood cannot ever be forgotten. There is a sense of the memory of her deportation to the Soviet Union is everlasting. As previously noted in her narrative Jadwiga spoke in generalised terms, using the word 'human being' rather than 'I'. Perhaps this suggests an underlying struggle to get closer to some of her challenging feelings accompanying this experience. This leads Jadwiga to talk about her experience generally, as if it had happened to another person, not herself.

Furthermore, Jadwiga articulates how she relives her experience:

'Until today, the RED colour acts on me like a bull's red cape. And until today, I have had such a reaction; I went to Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia last year. We arrived in Estonia, and the tour guide says that the whole coast is full of tanks. Putin sent those tanks because there are manoeuvres. When she said that, the electric shock arrived in my heels. And immediately, the deportation stood in front of my eyes; God helps us leave this place faster because I cannot remain here again. I wasn't feeling like that when I was in Russia. I was too young! Only when I came back here.' (Jadwiga, p.43, 1275-1283)

3.4.2. *Post-deportation gains*

Many of the participants' narratives also appeared to focus on post-deportation growth. This growth arose in various aspects of their post-deportation lives, such as the ability to cope with any type of circumstances in life, learning how to live, respecting others, and appreciating food.

Leopold articulates his post-deportation growth and its gain in the following ways:

'(…) I experienced everything and, I grew up in poverty so to speak and now I can cope with everything today' (Leopold, p.18, 559-570)

A strong sense of strength and determination emerge from Leopold's account of the deportation. His lived experience toughened him up and prepared him well for any post-

deportation challenges. To put it more simply, there is nothing in this world with which he could not cope.

He continues:

'Also, hmmm [pause]. I learned, so to speak, how to live among others. I take more with a smile than with sadness (laughs), and so it goes. […] Someone can deduce that I went through a lot in one way or another, that (…) but I have learned how to live! I learned how to live, I learned how to respect others, well aaaaand [pause], and that's how it remained for me.' (Leopold, p.19, 598-600)

For Leopold, the experience of deportation provided other gains, as it taught him the most profound life lessons - how to live, how to live among others and how to show his respect for them. However, it is also important to acknowledge that Leopold did not want his experience to be perceived as one that was full of difficulties. Focusing on positive aspects of his experience may have helped protect him from the struggles he went through.

In contrast, Jadwiga focuses on her experience of learning to be grateful for food, especially bread.

'I HAVE UNTIL TODAY. When I walk through the city near the refuse dump, when I see BREAD, so it [shows her throat] it gets so tight. Immediately, I have Russia and hunger in front of my eyes. I don't waste anything. If bread is left or anything, I will collect that. Even crumbs I sweep into a box and will place into a feeder for birds. And bread the same, I will cut, will cut, I will take it to the birds - so crows can eat it - not to WASTE it.' (Jadwiga, p.40, 1176-1183)

Jadwiga articulates how the experience of deportation taught her to respect food and treat bread as almost something sacred. There is also a sense that her experience of hunger and starvation is still vivid and keeps returning when Jadwiga sees wasted food.

Halina reflects on her post-deportation gains in the following way:

'I can't say, maybe bad, maybe good? But changed for good, as I learned about LIFE, an independent one. I don't know how life would have gone on if I were if I were here. I don't know, do I?' (Halina, p.10, 283-285)

Like Leopold, Halina discusses her ability to learn how to live and live independently following her experience of deportation. However, it appears that she needed to grow up very quickly and start her independent life. Hence there was no time to enjoy her youth.

Wanda also describes what deportation taught her:

'So, I say, maybe I learned how to live, I already learned such a REAL LIFE. Because before that, I was still young… [pause], it's like a youngster who thinks differently, that everything must always be good, that everything is good, and then… [pause] I had already learned.' (Wanda, p.12, 378-382)

For Wanda, deportation provided a chance to learn how to live and live in a real way, without a naïve expectation- that life will be exclusively positive. Indeed, it appears that Wanda learned another side of life, a real one, but she does not elaborate on this, and we can only speculate about it. This might indicate her inner struggle to connect with specific affects accompanying this experience.

3.4.3. *Deportation-related communication with others*

Almost all the participants discussed the importance of sharing their lived experiences of deportation with other family members. They described sharing their experience as a way of warning their relatives and a sense of satisfaction, because it meant that history would never be forgotten.

Anna describes explicitly how she used her deportation experience as a warning to her grandchildren, and how much satisfaction she gained from sharing her 'story' with others:

A: 'Yes, yes, yes. Yes, I spoke, yes, hmm [laughs] even in this way. Grandchildren are fussy; everyone will eat something else, one will not eat this or that, and they are fussy. And I say, listen, guys, be grateful to God that you have something to eat. There is no need to be fussy about it because God can punish you. If not, if you don't like the food, go to Siberia, you will see how there a human being desires to eat, but how there is no food. And then, I tell them how it was and so on. So right now, in my presence, they do not say that they will not eat something. No'.

I: And how much it meant to you that you were able to talk about your experience with your children…?

A: '[interrupts] A lot. It was a satisfaction for me, that I handed it on, that I don't, I don't, I don't keep any secret, that I tell everything to my children. And they know everything. So, I don't keep this as a secret [pause]. And for that reason, I feel satisfaction for this, that I already handed it on, it went further, this history will exist.' (Anna, p.28, 29, 764-781)

Anna's narrative, makes clear that she does not want her experience to fade away or be forgotten. It appears that Anna feels a sense of accomplishment for passing on her story to other generations so that it will never be forgotten and will remain alive forever. She also uses her experience of deportation as a warning, to encourage her grandchildren to be less capricious about food. However, she laughs as soon as she mentions it. This behaviour might indicate a disbelief that her experience could have been used in this way. Additionally, her humour may have helped her to distance and protect herself from the experience of everlasting hunger.

For Stanislaw, the wish to share his story also appears to be important:

'It is important, it is important, why? Do I know why? This is the story that maybe somebody would remember, maybe will know about it, maybe it will share with somebody else. So, this is the only thing.' (Stanislaw, p.19, 511-513)

Similarly, Stanislaw articulates the importance of sharing his 'story' with others. He expresses a desire that his story will be remembered and, kept vivid. Nevertheless, it is crucial to reflect on the generalisation that Stanislaw uses in his statement; he uses the word 'thing' to describe his experience, which might indicate an underlying will to distance himself from his experience due to its 'heaviness'.

Likewise, Halina did not hesitate to share her lived experience of deportation with her children:

'Of course, I spoke, I spoke a lot, I was telling everyone, all these experiences [breaths heavily] Right now, lots of my children live abroad in Canada (…) So, my children wanted to know, when I told them all my experiences, they don't want to hear more about it. Because it is very painful. Hmmm, all the time to talk about it. Everyone knows how it was, how it took place, how life was. And right now, they are not mentioning it because they don't talk about it; it's so pathetic and heavy. They don't mention now [pause for 20 seconds].' (Halina, p.9, 235-249)

It appears Halina faced a challenging time in exile, as also indicated by her heavy breathing. Her children do not want to listen to her deportation stories; even Halina herself considers them 'pathetic and heavy'.

3.4.4. *Facing daily post deportation hardships/losses*

Almost every participant told me about their post-deportation struggles and the loss of opportunities they experienced as a consequence of their past. The participants also discussed how their experiences of deportation affected their concept of self.

Barbara explains how her experience of deportation deprived her of opportunities for higher education:

'Yes, there was oppression all the time. Well, mum's and dad's arguments, when they didn't admit me to the school when we came from Grajewo. I am hearing: I told you that I would take her to Lodz, where she will blend in, but here they will destroy her [pause]. This is the fact, we 'Sybiraks' (P: people who were deported to Siberia, the Soviet Union), we are not educated here, here the people from 'Sybiraks' are not educated. This is the world as it is, and they ['Sybiraks' from abroad] are surprised [says with slight contempt]. And why are you surprised? Well, why are you surprised when I am the example that I couldn't study. Well, schools were open, and you could study nonsense. You could study because you didn't get back to your hometown, you get back here and there, they don't know you, and you didn't talk about anything, you didn't write anything, nobody knew you, and here they know you from grandfather, great-grandfather, they know you.' (Barbara, p.28 746-759)

Barbara describes how she felt her past deprived her of opportunities. It appears that Barbara feels enormous resentment towards the system for the losses caused by the stains on her past. There is a strong sense that the past haunts Barbara on many different levels and aspects of her life.

Leopold reports discrimination upon his return to Poland, and how lots of doors were shut because people know about his past deportation:

L: 'Well, in the country too, I have been repressed the whole time. We had these (…) I was still unaware, going to scho(…), I went to school, for example, to some of those that I wanted to get in, but I inadvertently wrote that I had been in the USSR for several years. Those who were there and didn't write that in a cover letter, they somehow managed. For example, I had [pause] wanted to get into an officer cadet school [pause] and in hmmm, and I wanted to study aeroplane construction. I passed exams somehow, but when I went to WKR (P: departmental recruitment commission), this officer told me, 'You can get in, but you will only get into the infantry officers' school. You can go', and I ask 'Why?' And he replied: 'your father was in the Anders Army, and you were in Siberia'. And there you go; the barrier was up.'

I: And what did you feel as a young boy, because you wanted obviously…

L: [interrupts] Well, what can you feel? [with resentment in his voice] WEEEEL CLOSED DOORS! [pause]. You have to look for another way out. I finished a vocational school; I took up a job, worked in state-owned companies, was doing very well later, opened up my

business, and somehow managed that. Well, I retired and so on [laughs].' (Leopold, p.12, 13, 398-406)

Leopold reflects on how his dreams could not come true because of his ties with Russia. He appears to feel intense anger towards the system for missed opportunities, shouting that phrase. However, at the same time, Leopold reveals a sense of strength for not being at the mercy of destiny. He was able to take a solid agency in his own life, finding other ways to succeed, as indicated by his achievements despite the 'stains' on his history.

Similarly, Jadwiga reports struggling with maintaining silence and secrecy about her deportation, as imposed on her by the communist system:

'It is this handicap that was felt, how they handicapped us. I was going to secondary school, so I wrote my curriculum vitae. Like a biography (…) during this and during that period, my father was arrested; during that time, they deported us to Siberia. I was in Siberia for five years. I was in Siberia. I spent my childhood in Siberia with my mum. I didn't mention this HUNGER, well NO!! But Siberia alone, everyone knew what this SIBERIA means (…) I didn't write that there was HUNGER (…) because they said do not write anything bad about the Soviet Union, only everything good. Well, I didn't even write that I was in Russia or Siberia, only in the Soviet Union. Well! That I was with mum, well, yes as the TOURISTS [says with irony]. 'No child! Do not write that you were in the Soviet Union. Just write that you spent your childhood with your parents'. It didn't cross my mind! Cross my mind; I COULDN'T WRITE THIS. HOW WITH PARENTS? That I don't know my father. For me to WRITE this sentence, I probably sat there, while I couldn't construct THIS SENTENCE [says with resentment] (…) And I had to write that way! And I wrote in that way. And they admitted me to school, and I graduated.' (Jadwiga, p. 40, 41, 42, 1195-1242)

It appears as though Jadwiga feels a sense of anger and resentment towards the Soviet system, as the truth about her deportation was silenced. As a result, she ended up having a blank page in her 'curriculum vitae'. There is also a sense of underlying rage because she was forced to collaborate with the system and lie to move on during her semi-adult life. However, here lying can be considered as part of a post-deportation survival. She did not have a choice and had to lie to survive.

For Henryk, deportation and misjudgement of others post-deportation had an enormous impact on his self-worth, the cause of a life-long struggle:

'I remember now, it is already in Poland, I am on the beach, they are passing: 'Oh, look a bandit'. Well, because of the scars [he has scars because of the ulcers caused by malnutrition experienced while in exile], bandit. Just so, a human being [himself] turned away; I looked at him [says with resentment], I think to myself what should I do? Well, because you see how people are, how it hurts if scares mean you are a BANDIT [says angrily]. (…) Now I am, it's obvious, I am just an outcast of society. Well, why is it that people, one to another, are in this way oh? Just like this. I met. I meant, because it is known, they know that I am 'Sybirak' (P: name of a person who was deported to the Soviet Union), that in a shop, he says: 'Hello 'Sybirak''. And I say: Why do you call me in that way?' (Henryk, p.6, 171-185)

Henryk appears to be very angry for being taken as a bandit as a result of his past. There is a strong sense of injustice. Furthermore, it seems Henryk does not want to be called 'Sybirak', as he finds the name insulting and a synonym of 'subhuman', which he explains in another part his narrative.

He continues, describing how Communism treated him and other survivors:

'(…) For Communism, we were not humans, just super…sub-humans! That was the truth. And what more can I say here?' (Henryk, p.7, 197-199)

Henryk uses powerful words to describe how he was treated in the post-deportation world, revealing his underlying resentment and anger. His strong emotions may suggest he has not processed his past. There is also a sense that deportation had a powerfully negative impact on the way he perceives himself. In addition, like other participants, he frequently uses 'we' when attempting to describe his lived deportation experience. In my opinion, this word highlights the collective nature of his experience, which is transformed into a set of ordeals overcame by a group of people.

3.5. Summary

This chapter has presented an Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis of the interview transcripts of the ten survivors of deportation to the Soviet Union during World War II. The themes, which emerge suggest how the determination and resourcefulness of the participants helped them survive the hardship of deportation and at the same time regain a sense of control over completely uncontrollable circumstances. Such themes also provide an insight into the factors that enabled the participants to survive deportation.

4. DISCUSSION

4.1. Overview

The present study had an exploratory character and was designed to investigate ten survivors' lived experiences of deportation. The researcher was interested in the survivors' ways of experiencing this phenomenon and its meaning. As most studies described the deportation experience through a lens of pathology and symptomology, this discussion only draws on these studies in a limited way. This gap was addressed by an in-depth exploration of the deportation to the Soviet Union during World War II and its long-term consequences. The participants' interviews were transcribed into text to be analysed. IPA methodology was utilised, as it allowed a deeper comprehension of the survivors' subjective experience (Smith & Osborn, 2010), consistent with the ethos of counselling psychology (Woolfe et al., 2003). The findings based on the participants' accounts revealed three superordinate themes. However, as common links have been observed among those themes, the discussion will be structured around the experience of deportation and post-deportation life.

This chapter summarises the analysis findings and how they relate to the existing theory and broader literature and their implications for training and clinical practice. Then the summary is followed by a critical reflection on the quality of the research study, which including the strengths and limitations of the design and analysis method. Recommendations for future research are also discussed. In addition, personal and epistemological reflexivity, which considers the role of the researcher engaging in this research, is presented. This chapter ends with conclusions.

4.2. Summary of the findings

The presented research is the first of its kind to give a voice and explore the lived experience of the deportation of ten Polish survivors from a phenomenological perspective rather than a pathological one, as it was done in the past. Analysis of the participants' accounts revealed unique experiences grounded in the deportation and post-deportation life. As mentioned above, the results of this study showed three superordinate themes. The first theme - '*Transition from one life to another'*- broadened knowledge and provided insight into the phenomenon of deportation, which included the survivors' initial experiences and later threats to their survival, along with some 'better' moments during the exile. The second theme - '*I was trying my best to survive*' - provided a new insight into the survivors' specific coping strategies, which contributed to their physical and emotional survival, including their ability to

'kombinowac', which can be translated into trying to cheat the system. The final theme - '*Who hasn't been there, will be, and those who have been there won't forget- a long-lasting legacy of the deportation*', shed some insight into the long-lasting legacy and consequences of the deportation and the participants' experience of survival in their post-deportation lives. In addition, all the participants directly or indirectly talked about the vividness of the past experiences of deportation, confirming and further building on existing literature which discusses collective trauma and providing further insight into the sense of unbearable heaviness that accompanies memories of these lived experiences.

The discussion was structured around the experience of deportation and post- deportation life. This structure was chosen for its coherence and because it would be easy to follow. Areas of discussion and links with existing research are categorised below into three subheadings: 1) living through the deportation event, 2) life following the deportation and 3) understating trauma processing. These subheadings give a closer look at how participants ascribed meaning to the deportation event and significant aspects of post-deportation life. As most studies focused on pathology and symptomology, links with existing literature (excluding commentaries, books etc.) were primarily drawn upon in discussing 2) and 3). New features which emerged as part of living through the event included: coping with survival, resilience and relationship with the enemy.

4.2.1. *Living through the deportation event*

4.2.1.1. Coping with survival (keeping yourself alive)

This study provided an insight into the phenomenon of coping and surviving in life-threatening conditions. Like the Nardini (1952) and Kahana (1988) studies, which investigate the Holocaust, these strategies included maintaining the ability to be hopeful, a strong sense of identity and self-respect. Also, less ethical coping behaviours were highlighted, such as smuggling, stealing, manipulating the system, or escaping.

All the participants reflected on, the need to be resourceful in order to get by – acts performed both by themselves and by family members. Their lives and humanity directly depended on their active works, described by some participants as - '*kombinowac'.* Previous studies have highlighted the turbulent and challenging nature of coping during the experience of deportation (Prot, 2004). This study expands on existing findings by emphasising that these activities kept them alive in their bodies and in their deep natures, or '*duchowy*', which was interpreted as a religious, spiritual experience, one that allowed participants to draw on hope in the future and that propelled them through their daily struggles. These struggles also involved participants

taking actions and using their companies to engineer solutions to the various problems they faced.

For instance, most participants described stealing as a norm in their lives as deportees and 'nothing less than the way of life' (Des Pres 1976, p.111). In the Soviet Union, cheating was universal and 'it could not be called dishonesty: it was simply a fight for life at any price' (Ekart, 1954, p.204).

Furthermore, in the context, stealing allowed them to be active agents in the process of their survival, as remaining passive was automatically equal to death. In other words, deportees did not accept their doomed reality, deciding to take control instead of submitting to it passively. These findings resonate with Des Pres' (1976) concept of 'organizing': according to survivors of the Holocaust, organizing meant performing any kind of illegal activities undertaken to remain alive. Therefore, to 'organize' meant to steal, buy, exchange, and obtain anything that would allow you to sustain your life. To 'organize' in the language of political prisoners meant: 'to acquire a thing you need without wronging another prisoner' (Szmaglewska, 1947, p.66-67). The deportees' determination to survive by taking part in various immoral activities was also in line with the findings of the research conducted by Kahana et al. (1988), according to which survivors depended on 'less ethical' coping behaviours, which included smuggling, stealing, bribery, manipulating the system, and even escaping. As Soviet regulations were designed to make life impossible, the only hope of survival lay in the deportees' resistance, as manifested by the performance of these less ethical 'underworld' activities. Des Pres (1976) observed that concentration camp prisoners motivated by constant hunger and deplorable living conditions became masters of invention, a phenomenon which resonates with the findings of this study. All the participants described how their ingenuity and resourcefulness were crucial components in determining their survival. Several different means and creative practices (planting potatoes peel, making pancakes 'lepjoty' out of potato peels, foraging wild plants such as nettle and goutweed, creating fuel from cow's dung) were employed. These practices were utilised to cope with their situation and constituted crucial practical and emotional strategies for their survival.

4.2.1.2. Resilience

For the purpose of this study, psychological resilience is defined as 'the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats or significant sources of stress' (APA, 2012).

Consistent with Greene's (2010b) finding, the participants, like Holocaust survivors, engaged in various resilient behaviours during and after their deportation. In exile, the survivors' resilience was manifested by the following behaviours: resolving to live, bartering for goods, displaying creativity in order to obtain extra food and other items such as fuel, forming solid relationships with locals. After the deportation, survivors demonstrated their resilient behaviours through the establishment of 'normality', which included pursuing education, establishing families, building careers, taking an active role in the '*Sybiraks*' association, giving testimonies, as well as engaging in creative endeavours such as participating in the local choir. Like the Holocaust studies, the study of deportation has demonstrated that some survivors have reconstructed their post-deportation lives in remarkable ways (Krystal, 2007). This reconstruction has included pursuing their careers, establishing their own companies, and building large families to ensure their testimony could be passed down by future generations.

This is further reinforced by Greene's (2002) research, which confirms that most survivors decided to live their lives to the fullest. They appreciated every moment, showing gratitude for their survival and looking at their lives from a positive point of view despite going through many horrendous experiences. These findings have been consistent with Frankl's observations (2004), as he recognised efforts by himself and other camp survivors to rise above their misery and other difficult situations and finding specific meaning in their lives at any given moment.

4.2.1.3. Relationship with the enemy

Unlike the studies on Holocaust survivors (Abramovitch, 1986; Kestenberg & Brenner, 1986; Danieli, 1998), in which the relationship with the enemy is barely discussed, this study provides new insight into the survivors' connection with the enemy. Polish survivors addressed their relationship with the enemy at length in recounting their lived experiences of the deportation event. There is no doubt that those directly linked to the Soviet system were the object of the survivors' anger and resentment; they were held responsible for the survivors' loss of their childhood, youth, and loved ones. However, the survivors also pointed out the human-to-human connections they made with ordinary Russians, connections which brought them gratitude, joy, and hope in humanity. Focusing on the positive aspects of these interactions confirmed the survivors' over-powering adaptability, leading to their survival. Moreover, the importance of the survivors' relationship with ordinary Russians was manifested by their almost 'childlike' curiosity in 'those peoples' fate'. Throughout their interviews, they wondered what had happened to them and what course their lives had taken.

4.2.2. *Life following the deportation*

4.2.2.1. 'Survivor syndrome'

This qualitative study has shown that the consequences of the deportation to the Soviet Union during World War II on Polish survivors can be compared with studies of Jewish Holocaust survivors. These findings harmonise with the various commonalities found in previous studies: these features, include depression, anxiety, guilt, memory impairment, sleep disturbance, anhedonia, and vulnerability, as well as struggles in personal functioning, which were accompanied by unresolved grief and mourning over the loss of relatives (Niederland 1968, 1981; Krysinska & Lester, 2006; Sagi-Schwartz et al., 2003; Chodoff, 1963; Etiger, 1964; Matussek, 1975). In addition, like the study by Monieta and Anczurowski (2004), the participants' accounts described feelings of numbness and being overwhelmed, which they needed to cope with. Moreover, all the survivors of deportation directly or indirectly reported enormous sadness, impairment in memory and unresolved mourning following the event. Furthermore, feelings of hatred and bitterness towards the perpetrators, of their long-lasting suffering, could not simply be put aside. They also feared a repetition of their tragic history. Some also reported a great sense of injustice about what had happened to them. Additionally, the survivors highlighted the vividness of their deportation-related experiences and the way these impacted their daily existence. This vividness manifested itself in a daily sense of sorrow, long-lasting unexplained melancholia, uncanny feelings of guilt, never-ending grief over the loss of loved ones, nightmares, and flashbacks, which have accompanied them throughout their entire life after deportation.

Past research shows that the photographic associations and memories of the deeply imprinted horrendous experiences related to the deportation are also noted as a critical element in the symptomatology of survivor syndrome. Vivid recall of the deportation is typical among survivors, and it is linked to their hypermnesia. Hypermnesia is the opposite of amnesia and is characterised by over clear, distinct memories of hardships and terror experienced during traumatic events such as the Holocaust persecutions (Braham, 1988); this condition is in line with current findings. Therefore, for some participants, such as Jadwiga, hypermnesia had completely taken over their lives. Despite a prolonged normalisation process and a relatively successful adaptation into post-deportation life, the over-detailed memory of deportation could not ever be forgotten or completely erased from their consciousness. Jadwiga expressed that whatever she went through in her childhood while in exile will forever be remembered by her adult self. Hence, the survivors' inability to forget about their deportation-related experiences reveals the overpowering consequences of the deportation.

4.2.2.2. Dissociation

Surprisingly, some of the survivors' narratives appeared to be completely emotionless. They could recall the deportation and post-deportation related events in an extraordinarily detailed and factual manner, without significantly expressing their associated emotions. In addition, their narratives were not always very coherent, with a proper beginning, middle and end. These findings resonate with the study of Bekes, Perry and Starrs (2017), which suggests that survivors are unable to experience the emotional and cognitive components of an experience concurrently because affective elements remain outside of their consciousness. This process has been called *dissociation* or, more commonly, isolation of affect (Perry, 1990). It is a defence mechanism that protects the person from reliving the emotional pain associated with psychological trauma. Hence, the survivors' 'emotionless' recollections of their deportation experiences signified a failure to make contact with a harrowing past. However, throughout the interviews, almost all the participants experienced uncontrollable waves of extreme emotions, which they were struggling to hide under masks of omnipresent strength. Despite their unwillingness to show any type of affects and strong desire to have 'everything' under control, certain emotions were more potent than any defence mechanisms they have been utilising throughout their entire deportation and post-deportation lives.

The survivors kept their deportation related experiences out of their consciousness to protect themselves from the overflow of difficult emotions, which is recognised as a common symptom of trauma survivors (Pearlman & Saakvitne, 1995). This outcome aligns with various studies, revealing extensive dissociation in Holocaust survivors (Jaffe, 1989; Modai, 1994; Auerbach, Mirvis, Stern and Schwartz, 2009). For example, on several occasions, while attempting to recollect nuances of their deportation experiences, Stanislawa (p. 23, 545-546) said: 'I don't want to remember about this Russia (…)'. Henryk- another survivor, stated: 'Okay, we will leave this topic' (p.9, 295). One survivor conveyed her firm belief that she did not experience any struggles, either during the deportation or after the war, which is consistent with Stern's (1997) concept of defensively motivated unformulated experience, which he recognises as a crucial element of post-survival living. Stern (2003) perceives this concept as a 'familiar chaos' - 'a state of mind cultivated and perpetuated in the service of conservative intention to observe, think, and feel only in well-worn channels – in the service, actually of the wish not to think' (p.51). Therefore, an individual keeps specific experiences in an unformulated state to remain unaware of them. He utilises the term chaos to describe a natural formation of an underdeveloped thought. Stern (2003) claims that 'experience maintained in this state can

carry a comforting sense of familiarity with it. It may be bad and unquestioned, but it feels like one's own interpretation is avoided; familiarity is in camouflage' (p.51).

4.2.2.3. 'Death of time and language'

What struck me the most was the survivors' way of talking about their past experiences, which sounded as acute and as lively as if they had just happened. This outcome is consistent with existing qualitative research on Holocaust survivors, which reports their constant reliving of the past (Van der Haart, Nijenbuis, Steele, 2006). This study also provides insight into the survivors' narratives, which could be characterised by the 'death of time and language' paradigm (Wiesel, 1975, p.314-315). The 'death of time' refers to the survivors' experience of the discontinuity between past, present and future. According to Kijak and Funtowicz (1982), dissociation in temporality experienced by survivors of extreme situations results in 'the simultaneous coexistence of two aspects of the ego; one part of this ego continues 'living' in the death camp [exile] stripped of all its defences; the other part, 'adapted' to the new reality, behaves… as if it were able to love, to hate, to struggle, to work, making projects or becoming ill (p.30)'. This phenomenon has been captured insightfully by the Spanish writer Jorge Semprun (1997), a survivor of Buchenwald, who wrote: [It is as if] 'I never left, despite all appearances, and that I would never leave, despite the masquerades and make-believe or life' (p. 153). Hence, some of those who survived such severe and sustained deportation experiences are haunted and will continue to be haunted by them throughout their existence, leaving various unhealed wounds forever.

4.2.2.4. Meaning-making in survivorship

Most participants in this study talked about their ongoing struggle to understand the deportation phenomenon and what had happened to them. These results are coherent with suggestions of meaning-making theorists (e.g., Davis et al., 2000, Park & Folkman, 1997, Thompson& Janigian, 1988). According to these theorists, people who have suffered highly distressing experiences may be the most likely to search for meaning and the least successful in finding it (Armour, 2010).

The present study provides new insights into the survivors' profound search for meaning across their entire lifespan. During deportation, their primary battle was to remain human beings, retain their dignity, and remain physically and emotionally alive. Consequently, the participants' pure process of meaning-making was substituted by various activities contributing to their survival. Those activities included: refusal of death consideration; escaping to a 'better' past; contemplating the beauty of local nature; cheating the Soviet

system and its comrades; stealing and following a strict philosophy of autonomy. However, these activities also included seeing the good side of 'togetherness' with other Poles and the native people, including Russians. In addition, humour was often utilised as another weapon in the fight for survival. Survivors also kept hope alive through their strong belief in freedom, which was linked to their fantasies about returning to Poland and imagining family reunions. Furthermore, keeping their Polishness alive by secretly cultivating their culture and language was another tool for self-preservation and meaning-making. Moreover, for most of the survivors, religion and religious customs played an essential part in finding meaning in their daily struggles in exile.

After returning to Poland, the survivors focused on their post-deportation survival in different way: adjusting to their 'new' lives by establishing a sense of stability and control by striving for education and family; having children; building careers; propagating firstly privately and, after 1989, publicly the 'truth' about deportation; focusing on the future; and cultivating proactive attitudes such as gratitude for being alive and having constant access to food. Nowadays, as older adults, the survivors' main worry is focused on their daily survival. It is manifested in their desires to maintain good health, and to keep the 'historical truth' of deportation alive by sharing their experiences with others, including family members and strangers such as school children. Furthermore, a few of the survivors found active engagement in the *'Sybiraks'* association compelling and meaningful, mainly because it offered them a chance to preserve the past and propagate the 'historical truth' about the deportation. For others, participation in local folklore initiatives gives additional meaning to their daily existence. Additionally, some survivors believe that the deportation experience was nothing else but post-deportation 'destiny'. There was not anything that they or others could have done to control and change the course of their lives, which is in line with the idea of inevitability as a way of making sense of highly distressing events in general (Herman, 2015; van der Kolk, 2014).

4.2.2.5. Bearing witness

However, at the same time, over-detailed memories of the lived experiences of deportation can be linked to the fact that most survivors felt it was their moral duty to remember and bear witness to the circumstances of their exile. Their act of remembering is associated with a mission to keep the historical truth of deportation alive, in both national and international contexts. These findings echo the existing literature on Holocaust survivors, which suggest that for some survivors giving testimony was the best part of their survival (Greene, 2002), highly linked to their inner obligation to keep their lived experiences alive (Canham et al., 2017). Moreover, the survivors often felt that by bearing witness, they would build a

commemorative monument to their wasted childhood or youth, their dead relatives, friends, and communities in general (Lee, 1988). As Des Pres (1976) states: 'Without the past, we [survivors] have nothing to stand on, no context from which to organize the energies of moral vision. Against such possibilities, survivors do what they can. Facing man-made horror, their need becomes strong to remember and record- to ensure, through their survival or the survival of their world, that out of horror's very midst (from where else can it come?) the truth shall emerge' (p.35).

Furthermore, a unique characteristic of this study is that unlike most of the research on survivors (Abramovitch, 1986; Kestenberg & Brenner, 1986; Danieli, 1998), almost all the participants (except one) talked about the importance of having intra-familial conversations and sharing deportation experiences with other family members, especially their children and grandchildren. Sharing their experience was done, not only to alert their relatives of the traumatic past of their parents or grandparents, but also to promote 'historical truth', in the hope that it would prevent another genocide against the Polish nation from taking place in the future. Establishing the 'historical truth', first among relatives, and the wider public also helped counter former Soviet and current Russian denial of the harm of deportation. It's notable that the survivors shared stories of their deportation before 1989, despite the repressive Soviet-era and the strict prohibition of public or private discussion about it. This reveals the survivors' enormous strength and resistance in their post-deportation lives. One of their goals was to keep the memory of their lived experiences of deportation alive. Therefore, unlike some Holocaust survivors, keeping silent about the past was not an option for survivors of the deportation, as this silence would have a detrimental effect on humankind (Mandelstam, 1970/1999). Moreover, by sharing their deportation-related experiences with family members, survivors were able to preserve their personal histories and, most likely, process their past.

4.2.2.6. Post-deportation growth

'Post-deportation growth' was identified as another one of the subthemes. It highlighted the survivors' post-deportation gains, as several participants focused their discussion on hopeful changes that occurred in response to highly challenging circumstances in exile. Deportation taught them how to live independently without naivety, respect food, and cope with any occasion. The results are consistent with Janoff-Bulman's (1992) study, which suggests that specific individuals can create a new psychological construct that embraces the trauma's opportunities and offers a more constructive way of dealing with highly distressing events in general. Moreover, this study shows that post-deportation growth could occur because of the survivors' good childhoods, their willingness to give testimony and their broad social support

networks, together with the survivors' personal characteristics such as their overall optimism, strength and the ability to lead successful lives post deportation. These findings also resonate with Wilson's (2014) study.

4.2.2.7. Survivors' work ethos

It is essential to stress that for the survivors, 'to work' was to survive. They worked extremely hard, physically and emotionally, to keep themselves alive. They refused to acclimatise to the new Communist Poland they faced upon returning from exile. Even if they couldn't create lives, they felt proud of, they never gave up, surviving the deportation and life after the deportation with their dignity intact. However, their strong work ethos also played a big part in their suffering post deportation: work became a punishing too, a weary way of living. During the deportation, survivors engaged in various illegal activities such as stealing in the fight for self-preservation. Once in Poland, they needed to work twice as hard as 'normal' inhabitants because of the stains left by the deportation on their curriculum vitae. They often needed to attempt a task several times before they succeeded. For these survivors, work meant freedom, which intensified their way of dealing with the horrific consequences of deportation since the work camouflaged the difficulties survivors experienced and are still experiencing. For them, surviving involved both making it through the actual brutality of their past and surviving the post-deportation years; even as they created 'normality' they constantly felt the presence of their deportation experiences. This was ultimately both blessing and a curse, which is consistent with the existing literature on instrumental coping in the process of survival (Kahana et al., 1988).

4.2.3. Understanding the processing of potential deportation trauma

As stated previously, 'trauma' was understood as a construct that encapsulates the overwhelming nature of the deportation experience and the survivors' attempts to process it further. The degree to which participants processed these experiences was idiosyncratic, based on their retrospective reflections on the event. Similar to previous studies discussing Holocaust trauma (Chodoff, 1963; Etiger, 1964; Niederland, 1968; Matussek, 1975; Sagi-Schwartz et al., 2003; Krysinska & Lester, 2006), the participants described feelings of anxiety, sadness, guilt, sleep disturbances and unresolved mourning.

What is especially noteworthy in this domain was the language the participants used, an ongoing mixture of past and present tenses, revealing the brutality of the participants' lived experiences. This process made the survivors recall of the deportation feel constantly alive, as the past chipped into present moments, always keeping painful memories on the surface

of their consciousness. The participants' narratives suggested the 'death of language' or a 'world without metaphor' (Herzog, 1982, p.114), which to a certain extent deprived the survivors of the ability to think imaginatively. This inability resulted from the survivors' life under the Soviet regime, the long-lasting physical deprivation, the constant threat of extinction and the deliberate process of dehumanization. Therefore, the linguistic aspect of the deportationexperience is manifested by the *concretism* and *factualisation* of the survivors' narratives. These results are also consistent with the research of Van der Kolk (2014). This study confirms the survivors' difficulty articulating highly distressing events because 'all trauma is preverbal…and by nature drives us to the edge of comprehension, cutting us off from language based on common experience or imaginable past' (p.43).

Even to this day, the survivors display powerful physical reactions, such as rage and terror when they re-live the deportation. Despite the strength of these reactions, they continue to find it almost impossible to describe these affects in words. At the same time, I constantly asked myself how it would be possible to talk fully about this experience? As Wiesel stated: '…those who have [lived through the experience] will never tell; not really, not completely. The past belongs to the dead, and the survivor does not recognize himself in the images and ideas which presumably depict him. Auschwitz means death, total absolute death - of man and all people, of language and imagination, time and spirit…The survivor knows' (p.314-316). The research findings of this study are also in line with Grubrich-Simitis's (1984) research. In this research, particular characteristics of the survivors' speech occurred in response to living in a senseless, unexplainable reality, which at the same time 'undermined the metaphorical and non-metaphorical use of speech as well as the structuring of time in past, present and future' (p.307).

One model that can further shed light on how the participants attempted to process the impact of deportation is the Working Model for Processing a Traumatic Event (Green, Wilson, Lindy, 1985). The authors theorised this model as a way to help assess the intensity of a highly distressing event and speculate its impact on an individual person. Several factors outlined in this model will be drawn upon to elucidate the impact of deportation experience on those in this study. The model was also chosen because it can capture critical features of survivorship, including the *structure of the trauma, the survivor's role in the trauma*, the *traumatic event as experienced alone, with others* or *as an entire community.* Another key included *the recovery environment:* support networks, societal attitudes, cultural rituals for recovery, and displacement from the original community. I would also like to include as an additional factor, the *rationalisation of the deportation.*

Survivors of the deportation were frequently exposed to death threats or other forms of physical harm towards themselves and family members. Some were frequently exposed to the loss of family members or others, as well as being exposed to the risk/ threat of death or severe physical harm; they were also exposed to the sudden, violent loss of family members witnessing death and violence against others, including close relatives.

4.2.3.1. The structure of the deportation

Solnit and Kris (1967) distinguished two types of structure that can define highly distressing events. The first one is called ‘shock trauma’, which represents a ‘sudden peril to life’ and stems from a single event: natural disasters, terrorist attacks, or rape. The other category of trauma is called ‘strain trauma’, which continues for an extended time and puts the person under strain. A ‘strain trauma’ is viewed as more detrimental to an individual’s psyche than a ‘shock trauma’, because the person cannot see an end to their suffering. It is likely that ‘strain trauma’ was experienced by some of the deportee survivors, as they were unable to see an end to their prolonged suffering. The prolonged duration of distressing experiences associated with the deportation, combined with a daily uncertainty and unpredictability made it difficult for the survivors to defend themselves from this event psychologically. As a result, its scars remained until today.

4.2.3.2. Active or passive roles within the deportation

There is a long-standing debate on the subject of active versus passive roles in highly distressing events, arguing that the former could minimise its impact. According to Sigal and Adler (1976) Canadian veterans, who played an active fighting role demonstrated better adjustment after the war than Jewish concentration camp survivors. On the one hand, it can be argued that the deportation survivors did not take an active role in the harrowing events of their lives because they obeyed their perpetrators and allowed themselves, for example, to be deported. On the other hand, most survivors also found ways to rebel against the Soviet system, playing an active role within the highly distressing events of their lives. The rebellion took the form of ‘small’ acts of resistance by the survivors, such as the cultivation of their faith and culture, the singing of patriotic songs, the refusal of Russian citizenship, hatred towards the enemy, and their unwillingness to study in Russian. Acts of resistance also included disobeying of the prohibitions imposed on them, such as refusing to accept the poor food rations. These mentioned findings align with the second superordinate theme: ‘I was trying my best to survive’.

4.2.3.3. The rationalisation of the deportation

The deportation of Polish civilians was an act of the ethnic cleansing and the Soviet system's desire to eliminate ''undesirable elements'' (Sword, 1996, p.13). Deportees were accused of plotting against the Soviet Union because of their opposition, for being part of the local intelligentsia or their family wealth. However, in most cases, the survivors were arrested and displaced to far-flung parts of the Soviet Union simply because of their nationality. As a result, those survivors whose families were actually in opposition found it easier to comprehend their experience. By contrast, those who were deported purely because of their race found it harder to understand their deportation experience. For example, one deportee loudly asked herself what sins caused her and her family to be deported; she struggled to make sense of the reasons behind her deportation.

4.2.3.4. Life after deportation

The survivors' ability to adjust after the deportation was also determined by the way they were treated by others, including relatives and society. Green (1993) demonstrated that social support within a survivor's community is crucial to their long-lasting recovery. A person's connection to the community is also linked to overall higher contentment (Davidson& Cotter, 1991). However, after the survivors returned to their homeland, they encountered a mixed response from the community. On the one hand, survivors could return to their family and friends, who were aware (from various sources) of what had happened to them in exile, providing support which would help them heal their past wounds. On the other, the survivors returned to Communist Poland, where the authorities imposed a regime of silence and secrecy. They faced a period of latency and suppression, unable to talk openly about their past experiences until 1989. This period could be described as like living behind a curtain of silence (Jucovy, 1992). The communist system also considered them enemies of the state for having fought against the Soviets.

4.3. Implications for counselling psychology practice, training & beyond

4.3.1. *Implications for psychologists*

One of the most important implications of this study is that it will draw the attention of psychologists to the experience and deportation of Polish civilians during World War II. This is something they might not have come across before, either in their professional or their personal lives. It is crucial to stress that during the participants' interviews, some of them pointed out there was an almost total lack of awareness of the Polish deportation and among

the international public. Therefore, drawing attention to this phenomenon has an important moral function; since the population of survivors is rapidly diminishing, only limited time remains for us to bear witness to their lived experiences.

In addition, this study demonstrates that for the survivors, the experience of deportation remains very much alive for them. This is all the more notable because of the restrictions imposed on them by the Communist regime for several decades: the historical denial, the lack of acknowledgement, or simply the insistence the survivors of remain silent about the phenomenon of deportation (Sword, 1996. These restrictions significantly affected the participants' life world. Moreover, this study broadens our socio-political understanding and, most importantly, it underlines the psychological implications of mass suffering, or suffering with others, and the consequences of long-lasting silence and the impact this has on survivors. Furthermore, we cannot forget that we live in very challenging times in which trauma occurs every day; this impacts the way survivors experience therapeutic relationships and, importantly, calls for our acute awareness. Hence, it is essential that we psychologists learn from the experience of the Soviet Union deportation survivors and utilise this knowledge as a guideline in assisting and supporting survivors of more recent mass traumas.

4.3.2. *Treatment implications*

The findings of this study reveal to psychologists the fundamental aspects of the deportation experience. There is a high probability that survivors of deportation to the Soviet Union may not discuss the hardships they experienced during the deportation. This inability might be due to negative perceptions and the stigma attached to being considered ‘weak’, ‘incapable of coping’, or simply because they do not want to be treated as ‘mentally sick’ individuals. In addition, some survivors have never talked to their descendants about their lived experiences, often to protect them from the hardship of this event. In some cases, this created an intergenerational bond of silence, potentially leading to intergenerational trauma.

Therefore, psychologists need to remember that the survivors of deportation to the Soviet Union might not show signs of willingness/readiness to discuss their lived experiences unless directly questioned. As a result, depending on their own experience of deportation, the survivors might deny, dissociate, or minimise the impact deportation had on their post-deportation lives. Consequently, these survivors are unlikely to seek any form of psychological help, despite the ‘invisible’ imprint of their deportation experience on their daily existence. This imprint may be manifested by the following symptoms: deportation-related flashbacks and nightmares, memory impairment, the presence of enormous sadness and a great sense of

injustice, and long-lasting grief concerning the loss of loved ones. Furthermore, survivors who are already engaged in the process of therapy might object to opening old wounds and re-experience the pain. This attitude might be linked to their troubles verbalising horrific memories, as Elie Wiesel (1978, p.236) stated: 'How is one to speak of such things and not lose one's mind and not beat one's fists against the wall? It is impossible to speak of them and not to speak of them'. However, as Freud (1958) suggested, the process of verbalising traumatic memories and translating feeling into words may help reorganize lived experiences and make them more digestible.

4.3.2.1. Process of translating deportation experiences

Some people who experience horrific events may be willing to talk about or explore these experiences in therapy. A key challenge for clinicians working with such groups is to help clients *translate* their experiences of deportation into words; this was something the participants appeared to struggle with in this study. Klein (1987) believed that one of the essential therapeutic aims for deportee survivors should be 'not to forget'. The psychologist must constantly bear in mind the omitted word to fill the voids of post-traumatic memory (Mazor, Gampel, Enright & Orenstein, 1990). It was felt that this was especially important for this particular client group as the experience of deportation was a collection of different experiences relating to their personal life story and history.

The experience of deportation was also very overwhelming for most of the participants in this study. Because of this, clinicians will want to reflect carefully on their responses to the deportation in the therapy room itself. Participants in this study often disconnected from their experience by speaking in the third person or by talking from a psychological distance. With this in mind, we might want to reflect on our need for distance from our clients' pain and may want to reflect this back to the clients, so their experiences can be digested into a more translatable experience (Bion, 1962). A more explorative psychotherapeutic approach might also be suggested to work through (if required) some of the challenging affects, thoughts and physical sensations of the deportation experience.

Furthermore, 'the process of moving back and forth between grief/sadness and anger/fear stands at the centre of therapy of trauma' (Shoshan, 1989, p.193). I sensed that some participants in this study might never find resolutions to certain deportation-related traumas. For them intense affects such as anger, sorrow, fear, or yearning for another reality will always be strongly present. However, these feelings and a sense of loss and guilt for being still alive

can also be a crucial way to help those suffering gain a better understanding of themselves as survivors.

The outlook exhibited by the survivors in this study can help inform therapeutic practices by increasing awareness that the recovery process, no longer needs to focus on being symptom-free, rather the ultimate aim should be to construct a liveable narrative from the struggles they experienced during the deportation (Valent, 1998). The participants' experiences of deportation in this study appeared to be muted, deep, and challenging to grasp and explore. Exploring this experience through the narrative of the interview can be compared in some ways to a therapeutic encounter where the clinician may also have to grapple with a sense that these experiences are difficult to reach or talk about.

4.3.2.2. Working with the participants' strengths

Depending on the stance of the clinician, some clinicians may want to highlight the strengths and enormous skills survivors demonstrated to 'indirectly' process their deportation experience. This process can be manifested in their highly effective functioning, creating strong connections with their family members, successful professional careers, and a general satisfaction in their personal-lives. For that reason, it is crucial to recognise and contemplate their resilience and make these survival skills part of their clinical treatment (if required). This outcome is aligned with Lomranz's (1998) concept of 'aintegration' and a person's ability to glimpse integration without fully integrating their painful experiences and affects. In particular, survivors of the deportation developed the ability to tolerate thoughts, emotions, behaviours, and events that appear to be in conflict with either personal or social dimensions; they could do this while keeping their balance, without showing signs of disturbance or fragmentation. 'Aintegration' enables survivors to experience various forms of contradiction separately without destroying their sense of self-continuity.

Moreover, these findings support some previous claims (Gampel, 1988; Shamai & Levin-Megged, 2006) concerning the survivors' needs to separate their whole life story from their narratives of highly distressing events. This separation enabled the survivors to achieve a sense of well-being by separating their narrative of the deportation from other parts of their lives. This process is in contrast with the common trend in therapy, which leans towards the full integration of the deportation narrative into the survivors' life stories. Existentially oriented clinicians may want to explore their clients' relationship to living, including the meaning of survival, death, and, if applicable, their own answer to the question 'why to live' (Frankl, 2004 p.109).

4.3.2.3. Participants' age concerns

Another issue that clinicians will want to keep in mind is that the population of deportees is ageing. The participants' age in this study ranged between 78 – 95, and this is certainly not uncommon for those involved in the deportation to the Soviet Union. In working with this ageing client group, psychologists would need to be particularly careful about opening up each client's response to deportation, something which might not be helpful at this stage in their lives. For the participants in this study, it appeared as though a significant part of the encounter, and the way they processed challenging emotions, was by talking without using emotion-laden or, at times, leaving silences, doing without words altogether. As a result, one helpful clinical consideration might be to allow a space in which clients can relate to their experience without using specific questions which pressure them to access their feelings. This includes questions such as, 'How did you feel about being deported?' which may elicit a lack of response or a muted response. Instead, it may be helpful to invite clients to access their experience in their own words or terms. Another suggestion related to this is to offer a sensitive invitation to the client to talk about that experience (i.e., talking about the talking). The participants in this study also related a desire to 'keep going', and thus, we would want to be sensitive to these needs, as implicitly stated by this client group. This desire is partly due to the nature of their experiences; as they work through them, they need to retain a sense of normality and keep their horrendous experiences or 'past' at an appropriate psychological distance. However, it is important to acknowledge that not all survivors will react and recover from deportation-related experiences in the same way. Hence, each case needs to be treated individually, by asking clients if they are prepared to discuss a particular subject, however brief or extended this may be. This process is partly to help survivors alleviate of the wounds left behind by the deportation. However, it is also helpful to mitigate the anxieties caused by the survivors' advanced age and help resolve problems related to their retirement and inactivity, together with dependency on others and further issues associated with facing end of their lives.

4.3.3. *Implications beyond therapy and academia*

More broadly, the commemoration of the deportation and the acknowledgment of its legacy are undoubtedly critical elements of this collective work. Indeed, we as psychologists are enshrined with carrying out a vital function in educating the public about the nature of the deportation as a lived experience, at the same time hoping that more will be done to stop and prevent the occurrence of future traumas especially as a collective group. Sadly, more recent traumas in Cambodia, the former Yugoslavia or Rwanda are evidence that collective traumas

are pervasive and ubiquitous, highlighting the need for clinicians to be aware of the themes and challenges of working with such a client group.

This study goes beyond the psychology of an individual as it raises awareness of the socio-political, cultural, and historical contexts that creating environments in which the participants' experience of deportation could occur. Soviet ideology believed Polish deportees were 'socially undesirable' (Sword, 1996, p.13). More recently, similar way of thinking has led to other deeply distressing incidents in countries such as Bosnia, Rwanda, or Sudan. Despite the tragic implications of diverse, deeply distressing experiences, there are millions of victims in today's world who continue to suffer for racial, ethnic, or religious reasons. This raises the question how brutal systems, past and present play a part in creating socio-political environments that are willing to accept collective trauma. Learning about the lived experiences of deportation to the Soviet Union during World War II, widens our comprehension of the psychological and socio-political implications of this phenomenon on the survivors. After taking this into account, it is crucial to acknowledge the consequences of social and psychological actions. Equally, after learning about how deportees were prevented from talking about their experiences, we need to recognise how damaging silence can be, and how important it is not be imprisoned by it. It is hoped that further research on the implications of the experience of deportation will broaden our knowledge of those who are persecuted, their oppressors and eyewitnesses who stand up against injustice and oppression in all forms.

4.4. Strengths, limitations and implications for future research

4.4.1. *Strengths of the study*

As mentioned earlier, one of the main criticisms of the previously limited research on deportation is the complete reliance on quantitative methods that focus mainly on the pathological aspects of deportation-related experiences. Therefore, this qualitative study contributes to research on the deportation phenomenon by analysing and broadly exploring survivors' lived experiences. The findings of this study consider various implications on clinical work with the survivors (including my work) and trauma-related training.

This study contributes to the research of the deportation phenomenon by exploring the experiences of deportation from the perspective of its survivors. IPA and its idiographic nature allowed for an in-depth exploration of the participants' deportation-related experiences. This study also contributes to the development of the field of psychology by offering further insight into the long-term consequences of deportation. Moreover, the findings contribute to the existing body of research on mass trauma. It provides insight into the survivors' coping

strategies, and the different forms of resilience they adopted to make it through, while facing daily hardship in exile, as well as their post-deportation lives. This study also captures the strength of the survivors' spirit, which they displayed by overcoming the most terrible events, as well as their drive to lead successful professional and personal lives. Furthermore, this study takes a moral stance. A critical aspect of history has been captured and preserved by interviewing the survivors of the deportation to the Soviet Union, reducing the risk that these narratives will be silenced ever again.

4.4.2. *Limitations of the study*

Admittedly, this research has a few limitations. First, as mentioned earlier, I am a semi-insider to the survivors' experience due to my family's connections to the community of Soviet Union deportee survivors. This connection has both positive and negative effects that are important to acknowledge. On the one hand, being a semi-insider helped me carry out many of the formalities of this study without much difficulty (e.g., quick recruitment of participants). On the other hand, as a third-generation survivor, I am also affected by this aspect of my family history, this have impacted my way of approaching and comprehending the participants' lived experiences and my data interpretation process, as further discussed in the section on reflexivity. Another notable limitation of this study is its small scale, but the small sample allowed more focus on each individual subject, delivering a richer dataset. For this reason, it was arguably unnecessary to generate more data.

According to some scholars, qualitative research aims to guarantee that the participants' experiences are accurately represented, especially when reporting their narrative in their language. However, as the interviews were conducted in the participants' own language of deportation experiences- Polish, they required translation into English. There are certain facets of the survivors' lived experiences embedded in the nuances of the Polish language, and despite even the best efforts, these could not be captured in English. Consequently, some things were irrevocably lost in translation.

Additionally, the Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis method was utilised in this study. It was the most appropriate tool to answer the research questions and it helped to capture my meaning-making of the deportation and the lived experiences of its survivors. However, despite all the benefits of IPA and its growing popularity, researchers carrying out qualitative studies continue to question the validity of this method.

Willig (2001) states three main challenges linked to the IPA method. To have a better comprehension of these, they will be discussed concerning this research. Willig reports that

IPA researchers attribute representational validity to language. Language enables participants to conceptualise and describe their lived experiences. This method presumes that language is sufficient to capture the lived experiences of the participants. However, at times the participants struggled to express their experiences in words. Instead, they used gestures, mimics, moments of silence, as well as showing family photographs or personal accounts of the deportation written by their relatives. These non-verbal ways of communicating demonstrate the survivors' difficulties in describing their lived deportation experiences. Indeed, one might ask if words can possibly describe the horrors of deportation just in words? Can language alone capture their lived experiences?

Willig (2001) also draws attention to the suitability of the participants' accounts and their ability to communicate the rich texture of their experiences to the researcher. She points out that participants who are not used to expressing their emotions, perceptions and thoughts might find it impossible to communicate the subtleties and nuances of their experiences. However, at the same time, I was impressed by the vividness of the participants' accounts and, at times, the incredibly emotional descriptions they have of their deportation-related experiences.

Furthermore, Willig (2001) identifies the difference between describing and exploring an experience. She emphasises the importance of revealing how we experience the world from our perspective, which undermines the attempt to 'further our understanding of why such experiences take place and why there may be differences between individuals' phenomenological representations' (Willig, 2001, p.64). Hence, phenomenological research describes participants' lived experiences, but it fails to explain them. Moreover, she points out that going beyond the practice of sharing experiences to build the comprehension of both participants and clients, we need to build an awareness of the conditions that gave life experiences, like past events, histories, or social structures. In response to that, she claims that phenomenology lacks this option. However, this study went a step further, gaining insight into the participants' lived experience and moving beyond their descriptions by utilising a conceptual and theoretical framework.

4.4.3. *Implications for future research*

It has been over 80 years since the deportation to the Soviet Union, yet this study's findings revealed that the deportation phenomenon remains alive. However, until today this is the only study that has explored the lived experiences of Polish civilians and their deportation during World War II. Therefore, given the literature gap, particularly the gap in phenomenological research studies of deportation-related experiences, there is a scope for additional research.

Further research will examine this phenomenon in greater depth before the chance to interview more survivors is lost forever as their population rapidly decreases.

Moreover, the findings of this study indicate several areas for future research. Firstly, as has already been mentioned, some of the survivors pointed out that the general public lacks awareness of the deportation, both in Poland and abroad. Future research may explore this lack of public awareness has had on the survivors. Secondly, few of the survivors mentioned the loss of childhood. Therefore, the implications of this loss could also be explored. Thirdly, as participants talked about sharing, or not sharing, their lived experiences of deportation with their children and grandchildren, the intergenerational transmission of trauma (or lack thereof) could be investigated, as well as its implications on the family dynamic.

Furthermore, the range of information regarding the deportation communicated to the survivors' children and grandchildren can be examined, as well as the impact of this knowledge on second and third generation survivors. Moreover, active versus passive stances during the deportation and their impact on the survivors' post-deportation lives could be investigated. Finally, implications of the deportation, on survivors who after World War II emigrated to other countries, rather than returning to Poland, would provide insight into the influence of different environmental settings, and their role on the determinants of mass trauma. Similar research could be applied to other populations such as Germans, Jews or different Eastern European nationalities, who alongside Polish civilians, were deported to the Soviet Union during World War II.

It is also important to mention that only a few men participated in this study. Men's lack of participation might result from the fact that women live longer than men and the common stereotype that men should not talk extensively about their emotions or acknowledge any form of struggle around lived experiences. Hence it is strongly recommended to carry out a similar study with more male participants. Comparing similarities and differences between those two groups might produce much valuable material for further analysis, providing a deeper insight into a broader range of deportation lived experiences.

Additionally, many participants struggled to communicate the subtleties and nuances of their experience verbally. However, their accounts were full of vivid images of deportation-related experiences. Therefore, imagery or other visual methods could be used with this population.

4.5. Reflexivity

4.5.1. *Managing the process of analysis*

As an undergraduate student, my focus was only on quantitative research, which dominates psychology in Poland. Therefore, occasionally using IPA, I found it challenging to immerse myself in the rich data gathered from the interviews, even though the IPA method resonates fully with my epistemological standpoint. However, IPA gave me freedom to use some probes, like typing and cutting out words, spreading them on a big sheet of paper and utilising a mind-map to find links between themes. For that reason, the usage of the Smith's (2013) IPA guidance was, for me, a general guide rather than an instruction book. I used it with freedom, and improvisation. Furthermore, the reliance on supervision, peer support, and personal therapy sessions were indispensable in the analysis process. They helped me find an answer to dilemmas that at first seemed unsolvable and to overcome the moments of stagnation.

Moreover, I found the more I immersed myself in the data, by repeatedly listening to recordings and reading transcripts in their original language – Polish, and then in English, the more I was able to explore the meaning of the lived experiences of deportation. Finally, my extensive dedication of time and resources allowed me to reach another level of comprehension of survivors' lived experiences. I found the journey of utilising IPA fascinating and transforming despite all the issues that arose during this rich and fully absorbing qualitative encounter.

4.5.2. *Reflections of my impact on the research: my position as a semi-insider*

I am convinced that my position as a semi-insider to the experience of the survivors had a substantial impact on the data collection and my analysis. I also believe that, to a certain extent, it enabled me to gain a deeper insight into the survivors' experiences. However, it also made the 'bracketing off' process more challenging. At times, I struggled to distance myself from certain assumptions built into the response to my family history and linked to the deportation-related experience itself. This difficulty sometimes disturbed my way of interviewing the survivors. For example, I was able to refrain from asking certain questions because I felt confident with the material and because I had a sense of 'knowing how it was in exile'- thanks to my family's past- and my thorough interrogation of the transcript throughout the analysis process.

Furthermore, being a third-generation survivor could have had effects on the data that I was able to gather. For instance, some survivors knowing my family history and its commonality with their past, may have assumed that I could fully understand them and their experiences;

therefore, sometimes additional questions were perceived as awkward. Other survivors could have believed that I knew their story indirectly; therefore, extensive sharing of their deportation experiences was unnecessary. They could have shared only a 'comfortable' edit of their experiences. Despite keeping an open-minded position, I frequently compared the interviews of the survivors with the limited accounts of my grandfather. At times, when survivors were sharing their accounts with me, I struggled not to wonder about my grandfather's life and his deportation experience, questioning if he went through the same hardship as others.

During the interview process, I also noticed I was sometimes confused, distracted, and even overwhelmed by the chaotic nature of the narratives. This highlights the intensity of participants' lived experiences of deportation. I left some of these interviews feeling as though I could not make sense of what had happened. It was genuinely touching and incredibly moving to hear these accounts, and as a result I paid special attention as I transcribed and analysed the data; I wanted to make sure I accurately reflected the participants' experiences.

Throughout the research process, I was aware that bearing witness to the deportation-related accounts evoked intense feelings. These reactions included overbearing sadness, a feeling which often accompanied me in my encounters with the survivors. Despite being aware of the importance of containing my intense feelings through the bracketing process and having 'an ongoing conversation about the experience while simultaneously living in the moment' (Hertz, 1997, p. viii), sometimes I found it extremely difficult to bracket out such strong emotions and, on some occasions, it was impossible to hold back my tears. However, it is important to stress that I engaged in various forms of reflexivity throughout all the stages of this research. This activity was done to remain 'open-minded and flexible and be able to enter into and respond to, the participants' world' (Smith et al., 2009, p. 55), and to be mindful of how my subjective stances might influence different stages of the research process as well as its outcomes. Therefore, being conscious of my subjectivity, I tried to bracket my own experience out while concluding that the complex process of bracketing 'everything' out is simply impossible to achieve. However, I realised that what deepened my reflexivity was not only my engagement in various activities that stimulated the act of being reflexive (e.g. keeping a reflexive diary, participating in one-to-one as well as peer supervisions, exploring of various research-related dilemmas during personal therapy, attending of phenomenological workshops and lectures) but it was also the process of 'dancing between bracketing pre-understandings and exploiting them as a source of insight' (Finley, 2008, p.29).

4.5.3. *Epistemological reflexivity- the art of interpretation and its ethics*

According to Willig (2013), the act of interpretation contains various ethical challenges as it requires a susceptible transformational process. Through their interpretation, the researcher gives a new meaning to the material, taking the opportunity to shape its content. However, the power of transforming meaning involves responsibility, since the researchers need to pay attention to how they influence the data, and how the data is approached to make sense of it. It is important to mention that those researchers who have not experienced the issues studied, or do not belong to the same community as their subjects, run the risk of misinterpreting the phenomena and constructing outcomes that mimic their research stance, i.e., as an outsider. This approach provides the basis for a hurtful, damaging, and questionable interpretation, which harms the entire social group through the construction of the Other (Willig, 2012). Teo (2010) classifies this as an act of 'epistemological violence' (EV), which he defines as 'theoretical interpretations regarding empirical results [which] implicitly or explicitly construct the Other as inferior or problematic, even though alternative interpretations, equally viable based on the data, are available' (Teo, 2010, p.298). The by-products of EV include silencing the participants' voices, imposing ideas of inferiority, and can even involve extreme violations of their rights by enacting harmful practices and/or policies (Willing, 2012). Therefore, I became aware that as a researcher, I hold the 'epistemological responsibility' to reflect meaningfully on my interpretations, which are not only 'adding something to what is already there' (Willig, 2013, p.278). However, most importantly, it was my objective to 'get closer to the intended meaning of a text' and 'elucidate meaning that is implicit in the data' (Willig, 2013, p.278). As I aimed to get as close to the participants' experiences of deportation as possible, 'empathic interpretations' were used to acquire a broader comprehension of what was expressed. Therefore, I tried to refrain from using 'suspicious interpretations' as my objective was not to second-guess or undermine the survivors' accounts. Managing the tension between both types of interpretations was not always easy. This struggle was present because, during my clinical practice, I tend to work mainly in the psychodynamic modality, often utilising 'suspicious interpretations', which aim to reveal a hidden meaning by 'interpreting the clues contained within the text' (Willig, 2013, p.278).

Both my epistemological stance and my role as a semi-insider to the phenomenon under investigation confirm the importance of paying attention to how this research met the ethical challenges associated with interpretation. Therefore, three vital, relevant strategies, which were defined by Willig (2012), will be outlined below:

- *Keeping the research question in mind and at the same time being modest about what the research can reveal*

This study aspires to posit a precise aim regarding the survivors' lived experiences of deportation to the Soviet Union during World War II. It has done so by firstly presenting and then re-examining broad, empirical literature related to the Holocaust in the introduction. Secondly, this study has identified its ontological and epistemological stances, and demonstrated a reasoning for the method that was selected. Although this study only throws light on a tiny fragment of the phenomenon of deportation, it is hoped that by exploring and scrutinising its strengths and limitations, other pieces of the deportation experience, which may have been missed, will be highlighted. This hope agrees with Willig's criteria, according to which 'no one reading can provide an answer to all the questions we might have about the phenomenon' (Willig, 2012, p.57).

- *Ensuring that participant's voice is not lost*

Kvale (2003) urges that a scientific attitude co-exists with an ethical one, allowing participants to be fully involved in creating knowledge, and as 'objects of research to object to what is said about them' (Willig, 2012, p.58). In pursuance of this recommendation, the ethical reflections of this research have been taken into careful consideration. Also, this study adhered to BPS guidelines on researching with human participants. In addition, the participants were asked to provide feedback towards the end of each interview to reflect on the interview process and capture some potential losses or gains concerning their role. Although I was fully aware that the interpretations of the data belonged entirely to me, I intended to investigate the layers of meaning associated with each participant's account of their experience, 'without claiming that [I] know what the participant's account 'really' means' (Willig, 2012, p. 59).

- *Remaining open to alternative interpretations*

Following suggestions made by Willig (2012), I was aware of the need to minimise the chance of creating closed interpretations instead of open meaning. Consequently, a reflective journal was used to minimise this and, thus, remain open to alternative perspectives. Moreover, I kept a contextualised and narrativized perspective to have a better comprehension of the data. A contextualised perspective considers the context within which an individual's account is being said or done. In contrast, a narrativized view sees each account as a fragment of a bigger whole (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2008). Taking into consideration these perspectives gave me a chance to engage in 'careful examination of textual material', hence minimising the risk of ''top

down' assertions of expert knowledge' as well as preventing the researcher from falling into the trap of further misunderstanding and distortions (Frosh & Emerson, 2005, p. 322).

4.5.4. *Reflective statement*

I have realized that my intense engagement in this research topic has had a significant impact on me not only as a researcher but more profoundly as a person. During my first year of training at the doctorate counselling programme, I became aware of the saying: 'Each research is me search'. This did not fully resonate with me at the time, and it felt slightly inadequate in describing the early stages of my research. However, later my choice of research topic very much confirmed the truth of this saying: the experience of interviewing the survivors of the deportation to the Soviet Union brought me closer to my family history, which for years had seemed obscured by a big blurry cloud. Unexpectedly, I found indirect answers to some unanswered questions about my grandfather's life – as a survivor of the deportation. This experience also gave me a space to reflect on and get in contact with my newly discovered identity of being a third-generation deportation survivor. Learning my family history and being more in touch with my roots gave me a chance to connect to myself differently. I also noticed that the unexplained, 'rootless' melancholy, which I most likely unconsciously picked up from my grandfather and which accompanied me for years, finally faded away.

Hence, reflecting on this experience in my therapy also allowed me to establish connections and build my strength and resilience. Furthermore, by acknowledging and processing the silenced aspects of my family history, I gained a stronger sense of my 'intergenerational' self, as 'one thread alone is weak but woven into something larger, surrounded by other threads, it is more difficult to unravel' (Walters, 2017, p.111). Furthermore, through my life, I have strongly wished, like the participants in the study, to endeavour to 'push forward', 'succeed', 'do better', 'aim higher'. I had never understood the source of this inner drive, which remained more potent than anything else, even though it had such a primitive character. Nevertheless, by hearing the survivors' accounts, I was able to understand the significance of this drive, because it allowed them (including my grandfather) to 'strive for a life with every fibre of their being' (DesPres, 1971, p.79), and in the end it led to their physical and emotional survival. In addition, from my participants' experiences I have learned the importance of willpower and human strength. In the case of the survivors, these attributes were activated in the context of the most challenging situations. It cannot be forgotten that this research study also contributed to my professional development by enabling me to broaden my knowledge of the consequences of the deportation phenomenon in its general sense, and to learn how to utilise the IPA method. Finally, my experience of completing this thesis felt demanding and laborious,

but at the same time it was also inspiring and absorbing, a duality that has also mirrored my professional journey of becoming a counselling psychologist.

4.6. Conclusions

Ten participants provided their accounts of their subjective experiences of deportation to the Soviet Union during World War II. The participants shared how deportation has shaped their past and current lives. Hence, they mentioned not only its horrific, reverberating impact but also its effect on their post-traumatic growth. Although some limitations of this study have been identified, it is nevertheless hoped that it provides answers to the initially stated research questions. Furthermore, these findings offer new and interesting insights into the deportation phenomenon and contribute to a better understanding of its long-lasting impact. The outcome of this research also enables significant considerations for the future therapy of this population, with broader therapeutic implications. Whilst immersing ourselves in the participants' rich, subjective experience of the deportation, we should ask ourselves the following:

'The first question: How could it happen? We respond with guilty silence and the last one: Could it happen again? We nod in shame' (Kellerman, 2006, p.30).

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6. Appendices

The first eight attached appendices were translated into Polish

Appendix 1: Recruitment add

Department of Psychology

City, University of London

PARTICIPANTS NEEDED FOR RESEARCH IN PSYCHOLOGY

We are looking for volunteers to take part in a study on 'experience of deportation to the Soviet Union during World War II among Polish civilian survivors'

In this research, you would be asked to tell us about your deportation experience to the Soviet Union during World War II.

Your participation would involve one-in-depth interview with the researcher which will last approximately 60- 90 minutes.

For more information about this study, or to take part, please contact:

Urszula Szmygiel
[redacted]

This study has been reviewed by, and received ethics clearance through the Psychology Research Ethics Committee, City, University of London [*PSYETH (P/F 17/18 84)*] and Head of Documentation Centre of Exiles, Expulsion and Resettlements, Pedagogical University of Krakow.

If you would like to complain about any aspect of the study, please contact the Secretary to the University's Senate Research Ethics Committee on [redacted] or via email: [redacted]

Appendix 2: Participant information sheet

Title of study: **Experience of deportation to the Soviet Union during World War II among Polish civilian survivors**

We would like to invite you to take part in a research study. Before you decide whether you would like to take part, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it would involve for you. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask us if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information.

What is the purpose of the study?

The aim of the study is to explore how you experience deportation today. Another aim is to gain an insight into how you make meaning of it. The study is undertaken as part of a Professional Doctorate in Counselling Psychology degree programme. Ultimately, this research may be published or presented at professional conferences.

Why have I been invited?
You, together with 5-7 other participants, have been chosen as possible participants because during World War II, you have survived deportation to the Soviet Union as a child or adolescent, and you had lived in exile for a few years. Your experience is what the research project is interested in exploring.

Do I have to take part?
Participation in the project is voluntary, and you can choose not to participate in the project. You can withdraw at any stage of the project without being penalized or disadvantaged in any way.

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part, you will be asked to sign a consent form. If you decide to take part, you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason.

What will happen if I take part?

If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to tell the researcher about your experience of deportation to the Soviet Union during World War II. The interview will last between 1 hour to 1.5 hours. It will be held in the local branch of the Association of Soviet Union Deportees Survivors called 'Zwiazek Sybirakow' in Augustow or at the place convenient to you. Your interview will be audio-recorded, then transcribed the same words you used originally and translated into English. All the data will be analysed in the written form. You may also be invited for a further interview to say more about your experience. However, it is entirely up to you whether or not you wish to do so.

Expenses and Payments (if applicable)

I am unable to offer any financial payment for your participation.

What do I have to do?
Upon expressing your interest in participating in this study, you will receive a phone call from the researcher to discuss this study further. You will also have an opportunity to ask questions regarding this study. Moreover, the researcher will ask you a few questions about the past or current difficulties related to your mental well-being and developmental history. Based on the outcome of this telephone conversation, and if you still want to participate, you will be asked to meet with the researcher for a one-to-one in-depth interview about your experience of deportation to the Soviet Union during World War II. As the researcher is interested in your experience from your point of view, there are no right or wrong answers. The interview will last between 1 hour to 1.5 hours. It will be held in the local branch of the Association of Soviet Union Deportees Survivors called 'Zwiazek Sybirakow' in Augustow or at the place convenient to you. You are also entitled to withdraw from the interview at any point. At the end of the interview, you will have an opportunity to ask the researcher any questions related to this study or anything discussed during the interview.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?
The proposed study has some risk of participation because it might cause distress to you during the interviews, as the questions may bring up difficult memories of deportation. Therefore, measures will be taken to provide appropriate help where necessary. Before the interview, you will receive details of the local counselling service, which can be contacted at any point while taking part in the research, after taking part or if you decide to withdraw from it. In case of any difficulty, the researcher will help you to make the required referral.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?
By participating in the research, you will have an opportunity to share your today's experience of the involuntary mass deportation to the Soviet Union during World War II.
Your shared experience will contribute to the general knowledge of the potential impact of deportation in the Polish, European and worldwide context and help people to better understand its perception. Ultimately, the findings will assist counselling psychologists in helping individuals and families with this type of background recognise and work through their experiences.

Will my taking part in the study be kept confidential?
All the information we collect about you and your experience during the research will be kept strictly confidential. You will not be identified in any reports or publications from this study. Research materials, including transcriptions, analyses and consent documents, will be stored in a secure location during the project. Any data stored electronically (e.g., audio-recordings) will be stored online in a form protected by passwords and other relevant security processes and technologies. After completing the research, data will be preserved permanently and securely, per City University's guidelines on storing data of historical value.

What will happen to the results of the research study?
In the case of publication, you and other participants will not be identified in any report or possible future publications. If you would like to be given a copy of your audio recording or publication/ summary of the results, please ask us to receive it once the study is completed.

What will happen if I don't want to carry on with the study?
You may withdraw without explanation at any time during the study if you choose not to continue for any reason. There will be no penalty for withdrawal from participation in this research.

What if there is a problem?
Suppose you have any problems, concerns or questions about this study. In that case, you should contact Urszula Szmygiel (the researcher), who will address your queries in consultation with professor Marina Gulina (counselling psychologist and the research supervisor of this research at City, University of London). The researcher's contact details are provided at the end of this information sheet.

If you remain unhappy and wish to complain formally, you can contact the Head of Documentation Centre of Exiles, Expulsion and Resettlements, the Pedagogical University of Krakow at:
[redacted]
Fort Skotniki, ul. Kozienicka 24
30-397 Krakow, Poland
[redacted]

You can also make a formal complaint through the University complaints procedure. To complain about the study, you need to phone [redacted] You can then ask to speak to the Secretary to Senate Research Ethics Committee and inform them that the name of the project is:

You could also write to the Secretary at:
[redacted]
Secretary to Senate Research Ethics Committee
Research Office, E214
City, University of London
Northampton Square
London
EC1V 0HB
Email: [redacted]

City University London holds insurance policies which apply to this study. If you feel you have been harmed or injured by taking part in this study, you may claim compensation. This does not affect your legal rights to seek compensation. If you are harmed due to someone's negligence, then you may have grounds for legal action.

Who has reviewed the study?
The City, University of London Research Ethics Committee approved this study, [insert ethics approval code here] and Head of Documentation Centre of Exiles and Resettlements, and the Pedagogical University of Krakow.

Further information and contact details

Urszula Szmygiel, Trainee Counselling Psychologist, [redacted]

[redacted]

Professor Marina Gulina, [redacted]

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet

Appendix 3: Participant consent form

Title of Study: Experience of deportation to the Soviet Union among Polish civilian survivors

Ethics approval code: [*PSYETH (P/F 17/18 84*]

Please tick the initial box

1.	I agree to take part in the above City, University of London research project. I have had the project explained to me, and I have read the participant information sheet, which I may keep for my records. I understand this will involve: • being interviewed by the researcher • allowing the interview to be audiotaped • making myself available for a further interview should that be required	
2.	This information will be held and processed for the following purpose(s): *'To answer the research questions - how do the participants experience their deportation today.'* I understand that any information I provide is confidential. No information that could lead to the identification of any individual will be disclosed in any reports on the project or to any other party. No identifiable personal data will be published. The identifiable data will not be shared with any other organisation. I consent to the use of sections of the audiotapes in publications.	
3.	I understand that my participation is voluntary, that I can choose not to participate in part or all of the project, and that I can withdraw at any stage of the project without being penalized or disadvantaged in any way.	

4.	I agree with the City, University of London recording and processing this information about me. I understand that this information will be used only for the purpose(s) set out in this statement. My consent is conditional on the University complying with its duties and obligations under the Data Protection Act 1998.	
5.	I agree to take part in the above study.	
6.	Would you please let us know how you would like us to treat your data (auto-recordings transcriptions and analyses) if the project continues beyond your death? Or you can provide details of your next of kin.	

Name of Participant	Signature	Date
Name of Researcher	Signature	Date

When completed, 1 copy for participant; 1 copy for researcher file.

Note to researcher: to ensure anonymity, consent forms should NOT include participant numbers and should be stored separately from data.

Appendix 4: Screening Questions

To ensure your safety, I would like to ask you a few questions. You are not obliged to answer these questions if you don't want to.

Have you ever experienced or have you been experiencing any difficulties that caused you to seek help from a psychologist or any other mental health professional?
(prompt) If yes, please tell me more about that?

Have you ever been diagnosed with a developmental disorder, e.g., autism spectrum disorder? (prompt) If yes, please tell me more about that?

Appendix 5: Provisional Interview Schedule

Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed about your experience of the deportation to the Soviet Union. I would like to let you know that there is no right or wrong answer, as I am interested in your individual experience related to deportation. However, do not feel obliged to answer any questions if you do not want to do so.

Can you tell me what made you decide to take part in this research?

Can you tell me about your deportation experience?

What did it mean to you to survive?

*What helped you survive?

Describe how did you see yourself before and after the deportation?

Have you shared your experience with your descendants? If yes: How was it for you to share that experience? If no: How was it for you not to share it?

*Did your attitude towards others change after the deportation?

Is there anything else that you would like to share with me?

Thank you for your time and effort.

*****Questions were adapted from those used by Gulina (2013) in her study on the Siege of Leningrad survivors.

Appendix 6: Debrief

Experience of deportation to the Soviet Union among Polish civilian survivors

DEBRIEF INFORMATION

Thank you for taking part in this study. Now that it's finished, we'd like to tell you a bit more about it.

This study aimed to explore how survivors experience their deportation today and gain insight into how survivors make meaning of it.

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The findings of the study will contribute to the general knowledge of the potential impact of deportation in the Polish, European and worldwide context and help people to better understand its perception. Ultimately, the findings will assist counselling psychologists in helping individuals and families with this type of background recognise and work through their experiences.

If the participation in the study has caused any form of distress and you would like to talk to someone about it, please don't hesitate to contact the following local counselling service:

Poradnia Psychologiczna-Pedagogiczna

Mlynska 52, 16-300 Augustow

[redacted]

We hope you found the study interesting. If you have any other questions, please do not hesitate to contact us at the following:

Urszula Szmygiel

Trainee Counselling Psychologist

[redacted]

Professor Marina Gulina

[redacted]

Ethics approval code: *[PSYETH (P/F 17/18 84)*

Appendix 7: Polish Ethics Approval

This content has been removed for data protection reasons.

Appendix 8: City, University of London Ethics Approval

Psychology Research Ethics Committee

School of Arts and Social Sciences

City University London

London EC1R 0JD

1st February 2018

Dear Urszula, Marina and Jacqui

Reference: PSYETH (P/F 17/18 84)

Project title: ***Experience of trauma and its transmission among Polish civilian survivors of deportation to the Soviet Union during World War II***

I am writing to confirm that the research proposal detailed above has been granted approval by the City University London Psychology Department Research Ethics Committee.

Period of approval

Approval is valid for a period of three years from the date of this letter. If data collection runs beyond this period you will need to apply for an extension using the Amendments Form.

Project amendments

You will also need to submit an Amendments Form if you want to make any of the following changes to your research:

(a) Recruit a new category of participants

(b) Change, or add to, the research method employed

(c) Collect additional types of data

(d) Change the researchers involved in the project

Adverse events

You will need to submit an Adverse Events Form, copied to the Secretary of the Senate Research Ethics Committee ([redacted]), in the event of any of the following:

(a) Adverse events

(b) Breaches of confidentiality

(c) Safeguarding issues relating to children and vulnerable adults

(d) Incidents that affect the personal safety of a participant or researcher

Issues (a) and (b) should be reported as soon as possible and no later than 5 days after the event. Issues (c) and (d) should be reported immediately. Where appropriate the researcher should also report adverse events to other relevant institutions such as the police or social services.

Should you have any further queries then please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Kind regards

Jay Leighton

Ethics committee Secretary

Email: [redacted]

Sophie Lind

Chair

Email: [redacted]

Appendix 9: Stages of Analysis Process

The exemplar of stages two and three of analysis process. The below table illustrates initial noting and emergent themes on a section of Wanda's interview transcript.

Emergent themes	**Interview Transcript**	**Initial Noting** Descriptive comments - Normal text Linguistic comments - Underlined *text* *Conceptual comments - Italic text*
Amazement by Russian nature Hardships of being in Russia	Yes, beautiful memories. Because as in Siberia it is plain and in the Urals mountains, forests and a river. BEAUTIFUL LANDSCAPE. Only LIFE is miserable.	Beautiful nature as part of W's memory Lauder tone of voice while pronouncing beautiful landscape *Is she trying to convince me or herself? Or does she truly perceive the mentioned landscape with amusement?* Recognising difficulty of being in the Soviet Union She talks about her experience in a very general way *Depersonalisation? Distancing? Sense as if those events happened to somebody else.*
	Hmmm, and how is this life ... Maybe we will start how did the family ended up there?	
Sense of inevitability of deportation 'Lack of control' Sense of the end of the world	(pause) They deported us as settlers. My father was a settler and they forcibly deported us THERE. And they took us all the way to the Urals. This, 'Kurganskaja oblosc' 'Kurganskaia oblast' (Russian: Kurganskaia oblast'- the place of the deportation, she is misspelling the name), the train did not go any further, (pause) the railway ended. The railway line ended and then on 'wolokuszy' (Russian: 'volokushe' a popular flat-bottomed sledge in the east) and for three days they were relocating us to kolkhozes (Russian: collective farms). It wasn't really a sled, nothing, just so-called 'wolokuszy'. Two birch brunches only bent and a box on top of them that you sat on. Mothers with children, they sat, and the rest walked. They had stops	Uses word 'there' rather than Russia or the Soviet Union Uses word 'us' rather than me. *Sense of strong collective experience. She wasn't alone in those struggles.* Describes why and how deportation happened. *There is a sense of inevitability of and sense of being completely out of control- 'they took us all the way to the Ural'.* Uses Russian name of the place where she was deported. *Does she want me to get closer to her experience? Or does she want to remain close to it by herself?* The long and complex journey of the 'final destination'. Uses very descriptive language. *Is she trying to help me imagine everything as vividly as possible?* Uses pronoun 'they' -*As if those events happened to somebody else, distancing?* Uses pronoun 'we'- *Does she want to emphasise the collectivism of her experience?* Shifts from 'they' to 'we'- *Is she trying to stay in and out of her experience?* Describes very vividly her experience. *Sense as if you are there standing and observing described scene.*

	only to rest, we walked for THREE DAYS to the place where they were taking us (pause). There were places already allocated. And they took us there, I mean those, food, buckets they brought to the wagon and then they distributed it. Later, depending on how many people were on the wagon, that's how it came out. They distributed it.	Shouts word 'three days'- *Does she want to emphasise the struggle that she went through?* Describes distribution of the food on the way to the Soviet Union. *Strong sense that there wasn't enough food. Was that her first struggle with food? Sense of being under somebody's mercy?*
	And how did you feel when you were going there? Because how old were you?	
Initial feelings of deportation Child's feel- naïve and idealistic	I guess 17, or… and I do not know if I was a little younger, but that's how… It was a feeling that it looked beautiful, it seemed beautiful. And that will be all this, somehow, it was still such a child's mind. Well, when they brought us there (pause). Wait, you see and I forgot.	Describes initial feelings upon arrival to the Soviet Union. Describes the feeling as if something that doesn't belong to her. Talks about the feeling in a very general way. *Is there underlying difficulty to talk about it?* 'child's mind'- *depersonalisation, distancing, as if it is a mind of somebody's else.*
	It's not a problem, you can take a break	
	And then already (pause) we were in the Urals, and they took us to the Urals. Then after some time, we could go to another place. Then you could still go to Siberia. And there was a man you could trust, because it was probably 70 families, all of us together, taken here from Jastrzębna (village in Eastern Poland where W. lived before deportation), from the station. And then in 'kolkhozes' (Russian: collective farms). In those kolkhozes, like on the farm, things varied from day to day. And in the field or	Importance of having somebody who 'they'/ she could trust. *A way of cultivating Polishness?* *Strong sense of togetherness, as if she wasn't alone in those struggles.* 'things varied from day to day'- *sense of unpredictability, nothing seemed to be constant*

	feeding the cattle, it was like that until we had to leave. That's how they worked there. And when we were supposed to leave (pause), then we had already resigned from work because we had to be released, it was necessary to have a certificate that we were working, and we were going back home then (talks in an old-fashioned plural form, which can be perceived as they).	usage of pronoun 'they'- *is she struggling to personalise this experience? Sense as if this part of her life doesn't belong to her. Sense of strong distance towards what she is describing.* Complexity of gaining the freedom back, which occurs as a bureaucratic labyrinth. Again, usage of pronoun 'they'- *is she trying to emphasise collectivism of her experience?*
	Home?	
	Yes, to Poland (…)	
	And what is your worst memory of this time?	
'kombinowac' 'Getting by' Ability to cope (sense of strength) Resourcefulness in getting food	(Long Pause) Yes, a memory?! I guess it was like that, maybe one day better, it depends. It's better in the summer and it's not like winter. Only that the frosts there are quite strong, but nothing like we have here! Milder ones. And just like a work in the kolkhoz (pause). That's where (pause) where, who has better in the field, and with the cattle (pause). And they paid us at the end of the year. For the first three months, they probably only paid monthly, and then it's like a year end, how they calculate how much grain is left there and all that, then they divided it into kolkhozes, for collective farmers. This, I mean, it depends on how much you worked out. But we were trying to 'kombinowac' (Polish: trying to beat the system, trying to get by), like doing something somewhere. They when they threshed the grain, in stacks and on the ground, it lay in the field. Everybody was	Talks in present tense- *sense of vividness of her experience, as if it's happening right now, right here* Amount of food strictly linked to the amount of work you did. 'kombinowac'- trying to get by- *Trying to survive no matter what and do everything in her power to beat the Soviet system.*

Bread as a main source of survival Desire to return home in order to eat and be full Positive perception of Russians	trying to get something somewhere, whoever is smarter, bolder, they will go at night, will fill out the sack and it's theirs already. And if not this, then you gathered the grain ears in the fields. We were drying and wiping and it was possible already, the little seeds were so small, and we baked a bread. Labor like a labor, worst of all, it was the worst with alimentation. Because if you earned more, you got more bread, but mostly everything was on bread. There, little potatoes were cultivated and there were only a few. VERY LITTLE. We just wanted to get home and eat potatoes. Yes, we desired that, because it is obvious that at home it has always been. And there (pause). And work, well, where we were, the Russians dealt with us well. It can even be said very well. They sympathized with us (pause). It's also just that something bad is not there. It was worse in one kolkhoz. There, there was such a great communist, it was so terribly demanding, and just like my sister she worked with pigs, or what, as a reward, she got two piglets. Somehow it was in autumn, they breed them on weed. On weed, because there was nothing more there (she whispers it). And they killed them. And the labor is just like a labor. In winter usually in transportation, to transport hay, to bring tree logs, somewhere else, next to the cattle, depends were in which kolkhoz. Only when they learned that we would	'Everybody'- talks about getting by as a general matter- *is she finding difficult to be more specific?* Survival linked the specific aspects of the character Ability to cope with difficult living conditions and shortage of food – *strong sense of inner strength and resilience* Bread as a main source of survival Describing hunger Desire to be full – Is that n*ostalgia towards her 'old' life?* Sudden change of life circumstances, from being full to not having enough to eat. The importance of eating potatoes- *Is eating potatoes remaining her of being at home and living her 'old' life?* Strong sense of humanity Sense of solidarity and empathy from Russians. *Perhaps she feels slightly surprised by their attitude?* She contradicts herself by saying that nothing bad happened there and few lines after and before she talks about difficult living conditions and starvation. *Is she finding difficult to comes to terms with her experience?* Hard work was paid off- *only by being strong you could make it.* *'There was nothing more there' -she whispers those words- Is she finding difficult to believe that she went through this experience? Sense of disbelief that it happened.* *Sense of acceptance that the labour was what it was.* Talks about labour in present tense- *Is this experience still alive?*

	go home, was it was a great joy then. Wow! And they again envied us that they say: 'there is someone to take care of you and it's good for you. And we, as we suffered this blight, we will continue to suffer."	Uses pronoun 'they'- *Strong sense that this experience didn't happen to her. Is she trying to depersonalise, distance herself from her past?* Happiness of possibility to return home. *Sense of being fortunate in comparison to them- Russians. Sense of being looked after by 'someone'.* Russians as 'they'- *Is she finding difficult to use word Russians in this context?* Uses dialogues in her speech- *Strong sense of vividness of her experience.*
	We?	
Russians as the victims of the same system.	Russians. They were starving. They just starved. Who, had a cow, it was there where the hay was made (pause) by the kolkhozes, there somewhere all in such corps, the kolkhoz did not reach it there, they did it? They did and they breed it. They had milk (pause). They were selling milk and sour cream, they sold it, just to survive. And for us again, UNRRA (United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration) as they called it was sending. Abroad.	Russians- victims of the same system. *Sense of solidarity and sympathy towards them.* *Your survival was strictly related to your ability to get by.* Doing everything in her power to survive. Having somebody external to look after her- *Sense that her survival dependent on external help.* Uses pronoun 'they'- *Is she trying to distance herself from her experience? Depersonalisation? Does she find difficult to talk about it, hence she is using word 'they' rather than I?*

Exemplar of stage four of analysis. Table illustrates cluster themes from Wanda's interview, with associated emergent themes and line and page references.

Cluster themes	Emergent themes	Line number/ Page
Initial experience of deportation	Amazement by Russian nature	2/1
	Sense of inevitability of deportation 'Lack of control'	7/1
	Sense of the end of the world	10/1
	Initial idealistic way of perceiving deportation	25/1
Resourcefulness in getting by	**'**Kombinowac'- the ability to get by	56/2
	Ability to cope Resourcefulness of getting food	63/2, 236/7, 241/8
	Bread as a main source of survival	65/2
	Stealing as a way of survival	98/3
	Being forced to do things in order to survive	289/9
Relationship with the enemy	Perceiving Russians as the victims of the same system	83/3
	Positive perception of Russians	69/3
	Perceiving equal level of suffering with Russians	354/11
	Experience of living among Russians	272/8
Threats to survival	Hardships of survivorship	107/4
	Hardships of deportation	159/5, 195/6, 262/8
	Fear of dying and remaining in the Soviet Union	191/6
	Fear of being left alone in the Soviet Union	201/6, 219/7
	Awareness of her poor health condition	217/7
	'Life on a dried bread'	264/8
	Loneliness of being among Russians	325/10
	Difficulty to survive	331/10
Emotional survival	Hope as an element of survival	145/5, 147/5, 156/5, 178/6 210/4
	Hoping to return home	224/7
	Hope for liberation and for being looked after by somebody	251/8
Preservation of Polishness	Preserving 'Polishness'	146/5
	Remaining in close contact with Poland	182/6
	Remaining in a close contact with the country of her origin	252/8
Resistance against the regime	Resistance in not accepting Russian citizenship	182/6
	Resistance against regime	412/13

Deportation-related communication with others	Unwillingness to talk about her memories	332/10
	Desire for her children to know how Russians used to live during the Soviet Union regime	355/11
'The past is never dead. It's not even past'	Disbelief of surviving deportation	292/9
	Experiencing past in present time	333/10
	Questioning how her deportation world will look like today	342/11
	Desire to return to her place of deportation	362/11
	Willingness to find out how Russians have been continuing living	383/12
	Awareness of her experience	390/12
	Vividness of the death of her father	394/12
Facing daily post-deportation hardships/losses	Struggle of facing death of a family member	299/9
	Difficulty processing death of her father	386/12, 396/12
Experience of hopeful moments	Receiving good advices from Russians	268/8
	Joy of knowing that she will return home	334/10
	Missing her freedom which she had in Poland	229/7
Post deportation gains	Unchanged attitude towards others	372/11
	Gains from deportation	379/12

Exemplar of stage six of analysis. Table illustrates super-ordinate themes and its cluster themes for individual participants. Relevant quotes, line and page references for these quotes are included.

Super-ordinate themes	Cluster themes	Participant	Quote (page/line number)
Transition from one life to another	Initial experience of the deportation	Anna	'(…) because they [Russian soldiers] brought the rest [of the people] and were loading us into wagons. Then, and here I was impacted by it all the time, horribly DIRTY wagons [says with disgust] a lot of those various insects and those smelly ones and they loaded us [pause] and closed the doors and sealed and then [pause] we are waiting for what will be with us next, what will it be? (…) this train started running and we all started crying horribly, that we are leaving Poland, leaving.' (p2 31-37)
	Threats to survival	Wanda	'The worst feeling was when I was ill, that I DIE, everyone will go and leave me on the top of the mountain (…) I had already this fear. I had malaria. (…) Somehow it happened that I slept and dreamed that everyone would leave, and I will stay up there [pause]. Because I was not fit for LIFE. Before we knew which disease, it was. Oh! And then [pause], but that's it [pause]. And I?! I just remembered; it is how I remember today that I was afraid that EVERYONE would leave, and will

			leave ME there behind the river. Because it was there, usually they have been burying there, if somebody dies there somewhere, on the side of the mountain. Oh! It was terrifying.' (p6/7, 191-222)
	Experience of hopeful moments	Barbara	'And there are nice memories and I have for example nice memories, memories of a grandma, who was giving water, giving water, you were giving some sort of card and she was giving water. But I always got more of this water [laughs]. She ordered to enter inside and drink this water there or she gave. So, [laughs] there are also nice memories, grandma, grandma liked me and there, like a child, moving around.' (p31, 828-834)
'I was trying my best to survive'	Resourcefulness in getting by (physical survival)	Leopold	'…it was not allowed to plant potatoes…with my grandmother we planted them er…, as there is a peel, then every sprout from this peel we put into the soil…and under every plant, such extra-sized eight or ten tuber appeared. They [Russians] were afraid of doing this…We did it somehow, it was what it was.' (p16, 515-522)
	Emotional survival	Henryk	'(interrupts) THE WILLPOWER is the first one! And the second one is the PRAYERS. PRAYERS, they were, that we were praying to Our Lady, and that's

			FREQUENTLY. Not only, everyday! And that we could come back, only thanks to this, just. And it is true that Our Lady is, hmmm as we called in Russia 'Sybirajskaya' (R: lady of all the people who were deported to Siberia) [he becomes tearful]. Such a painting, there was a painter, he painted it. And we prayed. And because of that we came back. Not everyone, but we came back.' (p7, 217-225)
	Resistance against the regime	Wanda	'…we had such a person who we could trust. At some point, they were giving us passport. The passport of their citizenship [Russian] [pause]. But we were informed by our COUNTRY that they will be handing it [Russian passports] out but DO NOT TAKE IT (…) The man, he received this message. They will imprison us, so go, but I will not remain there for long. But it turned out differently, because at that time they destroyed SIKORSKI [Polish military and political leader]. And how long you stayed, you stayed. I only stayed for a year. After only one year, my mother did not recognize me when I was released.' (p6, 180-189)
	Preservation of Polishness	Stanislawa	'Festivals, whether there is a Christmas tree or something else,

			and we were making some garlands from newspapers and it was like that. If we had an onion, we were hanging it instead of an apple. And we did not see any candies at all. And that was my youth life.' [becomes nostalgic] (p14, 326-330)
	Relationship with the enemy	Jadwiga	And when RUSSIANS, well RUSSIANS [says Ruskie] I am not going to declare their greatness [says slightly irritated] …And until today, when they say something to me. That we are FRIENDS, so immediately here [points at her throat] FRIENDS? Yes right, nothing like that. Well, because if father were still there, it would not hurt me so much, but because they [Russian soldiers] took FATHER for one hour, one HOUR lasts until today.' (44, 1293-1297)
'Who hasn't been there, will be, and those who have been there won't forget' – i.e., long-lasting legacy of the deportation	'The past is never dead. It's not even past'	Halina	Sometimes when I sit, I close my eyes, and everything returns, such images return. The whole experience returns, that I go when mum stayed in the hospital, through those steppes, on these, barefoot, on these 'prickly' roads. It pricks, it pricks, those feet later [pause], I arrive and soak them in water and heal all those pricked wounds. Because there, there was no footwear, we walked barefoot on this steppe. On those pricy roads, stones. Ah I survived everything

			difficult! Oh!' (p9/10, 249-263)
	Post-deportation gains	Leopold	'Also, hmmm [pause]. I learned, so to speak, how to live among others. I take more with a smile, than with sadness (laughs) and so it goes. […] Someone can deduce in one way or another that I went through a lot, that (…) but I have learned how to live! I learned how to live, I learned how to respect others, well aaaaand [pause] and that's how it remained for me.' (p19, 598-600)
	Deportation-related communication with others	Halina	'Of course, I spoke, I spoke a lot, I was telling everyone, all these experiences [breaths heavily] Right now, lots of my children live abroad in Canada (…) So, my children wanted to know, when I told them all my experiences, they don't want to hear more about it. Because it is very painful. Hmmm, all the time to talk about it. Everyone knows how it was, how it took place. How the life was. And right now, they are not mentioning it, because they don't talk about it, it's so pathetic and heavy. They don't mention now [pause for 20 seconds].' (p9, 235-249)
	Facing daily post deportation hardships/losses	Leopold	Well in the country too, I have been repressed the whole time. We had these (…) I was still unaware, going to scho(…), I went to

			school, for example, to some of those that I wanted to get in, but I did inadvertently write that I had been in the USSR for several years. Those who were there and didn't write that in a cover letter, they somehow managed. For example, I had [pause] I wanted to get into an officer cadet school [pause] and in hmmm, and I wanted to study airplane construction. I passed exams somehow, but when I went to WKR (P: departmental recruitment commission), this officer told me, 'You can get in, but you will only get into the infantry officers' school. You can go' and I ask 'Why?' And he replied: 'your father was in the Anders Army, and you were in Siberia'. And there you go; the barrier was closing.' (p12/13, 398-401)

Appendix 10: Psychology Department Risk Assessment Form

Please note that it is the responsibility of the PI or supervisor to ensure that risks have been assessed appropriately.

Date of assessment:

Assessor(s): Marina Gulina, Jacqui Farrants

Activity: Research Fieldwork

Date of next review (if applicable):

Hazard	**Type of injury or harm**	**People affected and any specific considerations**	**Current Control Measures already in place**	**Risk level** Med High Low	**Further Control Measures required**	**Implementation date &** **Person responsible**	**Completed**
Travel risk to and from research location -Road/rail accident	-Physical injury -Psych. harm	Researcher	-Valid International Health insurance coverage - Familiarisation with Guidelines for Health and Safety in Research	Low	-Travel with a companion and ask the person to wait outside the research location during the interview -Ensure safe travel to and from the site by using private transport or licensed and reliable public transport -Awareness of timetables if using public transport -If using private transport- to have a cover and be familiar	Before the start of research & Researcher	

					with local Car Roadside & Recovery (RAC) Services in the event of a car breakdown -Plan a route in advance and always carry a fully charged mobile phone -Familiarisation with health and safety procedures of research location, for example of fire bells, fire alarms & evacuation exits - Report any incident that occurs to Research Ethics Panel		
Data collection in private homes of participants	-Physical injury -Psych. Distress	Researcher	-Valid International Health insurance coverage - Awareness and familiarisation with City University Psychology Department Lone Worker Guidelines to know what to do if a researcher finds herself alone in participants' homes and feeling vulnerable	Medium	- Visit the location before data collection to assess possible risks associated with a built or social environment -If possible, travel with a companion and ask the person to wait outside the research location (participant's house) during the interview -in case of lone working- to consider whether it is necessary to collect data in participants' home, in case of no other option safety contact system must be in place (nomination of safety contact, e.g. supervisor or	During the research & Researcher/ Buddy/ Supervisor	

					another research team member; details of research plan given to safety contact and/or another team member, who must also be informed about person or persons planned to be interviewed and the location(s) of the interview(s); regular contact with team members must be maintained and fully charged mobile phone must always be carried) - Familiarisation with escape routes from housing areas -Rearrange alternative venues if security is in doubt		
Discussion of a sensitive topic	Psych. Distress	Participants Researcher	Awareness and familiarisation with HSE Risk Assessment Guidelines as well as City University Guidelines for Health and Safety in Research	Medium	Participants: - Offer empathy and, if necessary, cease the interview - Signpost to local counselling service Researcher:	During the research & researcher	

					-to debrief with supervisor, colleagues and access counselling service if needed		
Whistle-blowing	Emotional distress from disclosing the event	Participants	Familiarisation with Safeguarding Protocol	Low	-Before the interview, inform participants about limitations of confidentiality and, at the time of disclosure, cease the interview - Identify person/ Safeguarding organisation to whom the disclosure can be reported	Prior and during the research & Research and Safeguarding organisation	
Participants in danger of harm to self or others and from others	Physical or psychological self-harm or harm	Participants/ Others	Familiarisation with Risk Assessment Guidelines	Low	- Before the interview, inform participants about limitations of confidentiality - If participants' risk of harm to self or others and from others is identified- Immediate response from the researcher is needed, per Risk Assessment Guidelines	During the research	

Contacts

School Safety Liaison Officer: [redacted]

University Safety Manager: [redacted]

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SECTION B: Publishable journal article

‘THE PAST IS NEVER DEAD. IT’S NOT EVEN PAST’- the long-lasting legacy of the deportation to the Soviet Union during World War II.

This publishable journal article has been redacted for publication purposes.

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SECTION C: Combined case study and process report

‘I know I can’t hide from it forever’- working with the client’s wounded self

This combined case study and process report has been redacted as it contains confidential information.