

# “Jedna Noga Tutaj i Jedna Noga Tam”: The Polish Population in Ireland and Identity Formation in an Expanding European Union

Ella Iacoviello

Augustana College, Rock Island Illinois

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## Introduction

The first time I met the city of Dublin was in 2016. I was studying abroad and knew nothing about Ireland except for the stereotypical images drilled into me through the false American imagination. As the ten weeks went on, what I remember most was the melting pot of it all: from the abundance of Thai restaurants to Brazilian convenience stores, “Irish” seemed to get a lot more complicated as a perceived identity. Above all, though, I remember noting the uncanny representation of Polish people. In Dublin, everywhere I turned there seemed to be a Polish grocery store, a Polish pharmacy, people saying “Czesc” into phones and shouting “Nie rob tak!” to children shuffling in strollers. As we moved into smaller towns and into the countryside, other signs of multiculturalism would fade, but Polish representation remained strong. As a daughter of a Polish immigrant, I wrote it off as my own internal bias, but as time went on I realized my observations were more than personal: they were palpable.

Simple preliminary research taught me how and why there were such multitudes of Polish people in Ireland -- Google introduced me to ideas of job migration, economic mobility, and the Polish inclusion into the European Union (or EU), the political union between specific European states. But what I failed to find from my questions and search terms was the answer to questions that my entire life had been previously built on: questions of immigrant and hyphenated identity and questions on how to navigate that identity when you are not fully immersed in one culture or the other. My parents are both immigrants from Europe, one Polish, one Italian. They speak English, they celebrate Thanksgiving, they have children that have lived their lives from birth on the soil of America. But at the same time, they still don't hold citizenships. They still have family living in other countries. They still identify as American, but

also Italian, also Polish. Is there a way to be all of these? Do they mix like food coloring into water, or sit on top of each other like oil on water?

The Polish population living in Ireland seemed the perfect community among whom to explore these complications in a way that accounted for my personal experience, but at the same time was not blinded by it. So, with the support of the Augustana College Summer Research Fellowship, I spent 21 days in June of 2017 in Dublin and Cork studying the Polish population living in Ireland. I conducted 12 recorded interviews with 17 Polish people and spent the rest of my time performing both participant observation and casual interviews that went unrecorded. Throughout my time, I found more questions and more answers that revolved around anthropological issues of immigration, identity, and the transaction between “Irishness” and “Polishness”.

I found through my research that the nature of immigration has changed: the creation of the European Union has formed a new world of cultural identity and belonging that makes it more prevalent, but more complicated, to have to perform a negotiation between two different European cultures. From what I saw, the process of making Ireland home was a long and difficult one, but a personal version of “home” always seemed to be created. Their cultural identities, though, existed in a diverse array. I found that the relationship between “Polishness” and “Irishness” worked against any model or category that I could propose. The negotiation between the two cultures seemed to be dependent on a level of cultural involvement that determined the way Polish people perceived Ireland and their position within it. Some people were still, after more than a decade of living there, almost completely immersed in their Polish culture. These people mostly saw Ireland as just a place to work and exist, a place where they were still fully Polish, just living somewhere else. I was also introduced to families whose

experience in Ireland was influenced by their Polish roots, but not entirely ruled by them. Polish culture had significant influence in their everyday lives, but they still considered Ireland their permanent home. And then there were the people whose newfound Irishness seemed to take a hold of them: though they would still consider themselves ethnically Polish, they delved into Irish culture and either saw Ireland as a land of opportunity or as a “trampoline” to the rest of the West.

In this paper I will exemplify and explain these identities through the lens of the European Union, which acts as a force of change in immigration style and identity formation. In the book “The Anthropology of the European Union” by Thomas Wilson and Irene Bellier, it is theorized that the EU (a deterritorialized Europe, a virtual Europe) does not change people’s identity, but brings them to a completely new perspective on their own traditions (Bellier and Wilson 2000). I propose, using my research as evidence, that this is not a conclusive or all-encompassing way to view identities within the European Union. Through the Polish community in Ireland, it becomes clear that there is no one theory that can describe this variety of newly created cultural identity. Because of the complexity of the situation, I write against theory in the style of Anna Tsing and Sharon MacDonald (2000; 1993) described later in the paper. I start by first giving an overview of what the European Union and immigration within it means for Polish citizens in Ireland, and then exemplify and examine the various experiences and stories I have the privilege to tell.

I would like to first make some preliminary remarks: though this paper deals with the concept of identity, it mimics MacDonald’s idea where identity is neither defined nor theorized in order to let the participants of the study define it for themselves (1993). Identity is addressed simply as a way that people understand themselves and are understood by those around them. In

this sense, they serve as their own theoreticians (MacDonald 1993; Ardener 1989). I will also be using the terms immigration, migration, and mobility interchangeably, all referring to the same concept of movement between EU states. The study was limited to city environments and only 12 interviews were fully recorded -- because of this, it is important to realize this study is not the essentialization of the Polish immigrant experience.

### Literature Review

It was not until the 1950s and 1960s that anthropology delved into immigration as a serious area of study, rejecting the previous notion of culture as an unbounded and unchanging unit (Brettell 2000). Emphasis was soon drawn to adaptation and change, and theorists focused on how people responded to global processes through typologies that differentiated between forms of migration (Brettell 2000; Gonzalez 1961; Margolis 1995). Attention soon shifted to transnationalism in the 90's, a process whereby migrants create social fields that cross national boundaries (Basch et al 1994; Kearney 1995; Mintz 1998; Vertovek 1999). Anthropologists started to look at how global movements changed cultural identities (Friedman 1994; Hall and Werbner 2006; Kearney 1995). As immigrants in a transnational world navigated between two states, identities became blurred, negotiated, and constructed, and the immigrant experience was placed on transcending borders and remaining ties to one's homeland, even in the country of resettlement (Brettell 2000; Horevitz 2009). A transnational world was also associated with the idea of cosmopolitanism, a theory of world citizenship that also challenges views of contained cultures (Appadurai 2001; Kahn 2003; Hall and Werbner 2006; Cheah and Robbins 1998).

The theoretical movement towards transnationalism reconstructed Europe as a subject of study (see Bellier and Wilson 2000; McDonald 2005; Wilkin 2012). Historically, the

anthropology of Europe was tied to villages and rural life, but this was critiqued by later anthropologists as tribalizing Europe, fetishizing village life, and omitting the larger narrative (MacDonald 1993; Boissevain 1975, Cole 1977, Davis 1977; Gilmore 1980; Caglar 1997). European integration has made Europe become relatively borderless in some ways, and because of the movement and migration within the continent, anthropologists have defined a “new Europe”: one that is multicultural and exists because of the creation of the European Union and the end of the Cold War (Modood 1997; Bellier and Wilson 2000; Collyer 2012; Borneman and Fowler 1997; Bruter 2004). Though the integration of Europe existed as a political and economic move, it later became a subject of identity and cultural reconstruction (Bruter 2004; Powell 1999; MacDonald 1993; White 2011): how does a nation change without concrete boundaries to define it? How does cultural identity morph with the newness of a multicultural state?

Ireland is a country that is far from being exempt from Europe’s multiculturalism and EU mobility. Recent transformations such as the accession into the EU in 1973 and Ireland’s economic expansion in the 1990’s stimulated a more liberal, diverse, and cosmopolitan society (Wilson and Hastings 2006; Laffan and O’Mahony 2008). Since globalization, the anthropology of Ireland has focused on what exactly “Irishness” is, who gets to claim it, and how it is negotiated in a transnational space (Wilson and Hastings 2006; Graham 2002; Lentin 2001; Connolly 2002). That negotiation takes many forms, but during the multicultural and integrated time of Europeanization, a focus can be put on immigrant groups currently residing in Ireland.

Polish communities have dominated Ireland since Poland’s inclusion into the EU on May 1st, 2004 (Szmytkowska 2011). Because of their size and visibility, research has since dedicated itself to understanding the demographics of Poles in Ireland as well as when, why, and how they came to exist during the 2004 immigration rush (see Krings et al 2012; Komito and Bates 2009;

Scheibner and Morrison 2009; Bell and Domecka 2017; Grabowski 2005; Kropiwek 2006; Bell 2016). Anthropologists honed in on this community to theorize subjects ranging from the social construction of home to the effectiveness of job migration, the community as a case of European mobility, Polish lived religiosity, and generational acclimation techniques (Gallagher and Trzebiatowska 2016; Krings et al 2012; Smith 2013; Roder and Lubbers 2016; Sokolowska 2012). Though researchers pay attention to quantifying this community and even thoroughly commits itself to understanding the Polish experience in Ireland after the influx of immigration, a gap still exists in understanding it after Ireland's economic downturn. Years after the economic - - and therefore immigrant -- boom, how and why do Polish people currently exist in Ireland in the multitudes that they do?

### A New Ireland

There were many factors that led to the rise of Polish immigration after 1989, the year that the communist regime in Poland collapsed (The World Bank). The economic and political transition in Poland resulted in lower living standards and rising unemployment (Roeder 7). Post-communist youth in Poland attended college at much higher levels than before, but there was no room for them and their skill sets in the work sector, leaving young graduates disillusioned with the lack of opportunity (Dustmann and Frattini 2011:5; Kropiwek 2006:28; Roeder 7). The introduction of a market economy created large economic disparity, leaving wider gaps between the country's poor and rich (The World Bank; White 2011:28). Unemployment was high -- 20.6% the day Poland joined the EU -- but even when Poles were employed, they were often dissatisfied with the wages they were earning as well as with the employer driven market, where everything was determined by the employer and jobs felt fragile and easy to lose (White

2011:27; Kropiweic 2006:28). Many of my informants reiterated previous studies and statistics by profusely complaining about the work environment in Poland: “To get a job in Poland, you *have* to have connections. Neither of us would have gotten jobs if it weren’t for people our parents knew,” said Jakub, one of my participants that immigrated in 2005 with his wife Kamila when he was offered a job.

When Poland joined the European Union, they were offered freedom of movement to all EU countries, but immediate access to the labor market of just a few of those countries. Ireland was one of them, and it was amidst what was termed the “Celtic Tiger”, or their economic boom that generally lasted from 1997-2007 (Dorgan 2006:5). Ireland, then, became a beacon of economic hope. Because of the favorable economic climate at the time, the opportunity to improve English skills, and the absence of overt anti-immigrant backlash, it seemed to many a perfect place for the dissatisfied Polish immigrants to rise above their stations (Roeder 7). The economic situation and opportunities met by Polish immigrants were borderline shocking to my participants. Once again, a quote from Jakub explains the situation: “I saw my first paycheck and was shocked. My *parents* didn’t even make that much in a month, and that was only two weeks of work!” Throughout the interview he and his wife sporadically expressed their shock and gratitude for their newfound economic comfort. “We never had a situation like this. I can buy a 40 inch TV! I can buy a laptop! I can buy a bicycle! Albert wouldn’t have as many toys, Carrie wouldn’t be in ballet classes...” they interjected while describing differences between their pre- and post-immigration lives.

Because of the enhanced economy and EU accession, more than 90% of Polish immigration to Ireland happened after 2004 (Roeder 8). Immigration peaked in 2006 and steadily declined after the crash of the Celtic Tiger and the relative rise of the Polish economy, but there



is still a substantial community living in Ireland today: according to the Central Statistics Office, 122,515 Poles still remain. Other than UK immigrants, Poles make up Ireland's largest immigrant group and are the only immigrant group to exist in every single Irish town (CSO). After English, Polish is Ireland's most spoken language, taking precedent even over Irish. "There are Poles everywhere," one of my participants, Jan, affirmed. "I go to work with Polish people in my office, I said goodbye to my Polish coworkers and a Polish security guard. Then I went to the store and there's a Polish clerk. And then, I have to come home to my Polish wife!"

### The Nature of Immigration

*"This acculturation journey...this journey never ends" -Beata*

At the beginning, the difficulties of acculturation were inevitable. The foreignness of the language, the beginning lack of Polish resources, and the initial homesickness and cultural shock all proved to be barriers of the success and comfort they were trying to achieve. One participant, Beata, had moved to Ireland intentionally in 2006. She didn't move because of economic force, but on the simple premise that she wanted to live in another country: she did research, she visited Ireland and mapped out her family's future life, she sold her house and said goodbye to Poland confidently. More than anyone I talked to, she was the most prepared for change. But more than anyone I talked to, she was most shocked by the difficulties immigration brought. She described it, sighing and pausing frequently, accrediting most of the difficulty to the language barrier:

"The first few months it was stressful. There were tears. It was difficult. I completely underestimated the impact it would have on my family. I knew it would be challenging, but I underestimated just how much...the girls would come home from school, crying, crying saying 'We're stupid, mom. We're stupid. We can't express ourselves.' It was like living in hell. I was so tired I couldn't help that there were tears, there were frustrations. I was a failure. I failed. We just...we failed."

The language barrier and consequential lack of immersion into Irish communities made immigrants at the beginning stick more to their fellow Poles. Iwona, a woman who is now

insistent on her distance from Polish culture and personality, said that at the beginning even she felt like she needed to join Polish communities to have a social life. “Yeah, I met up with Polish girls in Cork once a week on Sundays. But I stopped because I didn’t need that anymore when I found friends and settled in,” she explained. This idea was repeated by Samanta, a woman who is closer to her Polish roots than Irish surroundings. “At the beginning it was easier to be in Polish environments because I didn’t know English. Now I know English, I can go anywhere and speak with everybody,” she said. The lack of Polish resources were also mentioned as a difference at the beginning of immigration versus current immigrant life. Jakub and Kamila, a couple that immigrated in 2005 for work, said that homesickness arose because of the lack of Polish spaces and shops. “There were no Polish shops in 2005. We used to bring bread and food all the way from Poland,” they said, a notion that was reiterated by many participants. “Before, we’d have to travel to Poland to get vodka, beer, sausage, bread...now you can get those anywhere,” mentioned another Polish couple, Piotr and Bozena.

More than anything, though, people cited homesickness and missing family as reasons for beginning difficulties. Jola, a mother whose daughters later moved to Ireland -- and now permanently live there with their families -- said that the most difficult part was to be away from her daughters. Krystyna, a woman who had been living in Ireland for 33 years, said that to this day she misses her family the most. “I miss Poland even more now than ever before,” she admitted. Jakub and Kamila, though praising their newfound economic freedom and easy lifestyle, described the beginning as extremely difficult because of the lack of family.

“Sometimes it’s hard. There was a situation where Kamila had to go to the hospital when she was pregnant with Albert, but we didn’t know what to do with Carrie [their daughter]. Of course we had friends that said they’d help, but still. It’s not family,” Jakub said. But now, the state of

their lives is different. Things got easier -- language was acquired, Polish shops and spaces were created, and immigration as a concept seemed to change entirely.

*“It’s not immigration” -Piotr*

The idea of immigration shifts completely when taking into account the advancement of technology and the project of the EU. When masses of Poles flocked to Ireland, a demand was created for more flights. Many participants said that while it was hard at the beginning to secure cheap flights to Poland whenever they wanted to go back, now there’s 50 budget flights a week they have to choose from. One young man living in Dublin, Kristof, said, “There’s no reason to go back to Poland because it’s so close. It’s a 3 hour plane ride. If I lived in a big city in Poland, it would take longer to get to my hometown by bus or train.” Jakub and Kamila thank technology for its ability to create and maintain relationships between their family back home and their children. “Albert [their infant son] recognizes my family. He knows them. That couldn’t have happened even just a few years back,” they said gratefully. They also take advantage of budget airlines, saying that they can reach Poland as often or as little as they want to. Piotr, a middle aged man living in Cork, was passionate about the subject of immigration. Again and again through our interview he repeated the phrase, “It’s not immigration.” He explained, “It’s so close and easy to travel. No visas, nothing. In the U.S., that’s immigration. Here in Europe, it’s not. We’re just three hours from home.” No matter how many times the subject was changed, he kept going back to that idea. “We don’t feel like immigrants. If something happens and you need to be in Poland, you buy a ticket and you’re there. There’s not much difference between being there and here.”

The creation of a semi-borderless Europe is a point of research analysis for many scholars. In an article titled, “Polish Migration to Ireland: ‘Free Movers’ in the New European Mobility Space”, the language of immigration is entirely discarded to make room for a new conversation where migrants become “free movers” and the European Union becomes a “mobile space” (Krings et al 2012:88). Krings introduces readers to a new, fully mobile European generation where multidirectional and transient moves blur the lines between migration and other forms of movement, like tourism or commuting (Krings et al 2012:89). In a conversation unrelated to this topic, but one that becomes somehow related in this context, Iwona blurred the lines between these types of migration by saying, “We’re neither here nor there. We don’t have to be involved in politics, divisions. It’s like we’re on vacation basically.” This becomes the essence of European citizenship -- the freedom of movement that ties you not to just one nation, but an assemblage of nations under one larger project. East to West migration, a pattern not new or limited to the European Union, becomes transformed because of its new transient nature, circular migration tactics, frequent border crossings, and short term mobility (Krings et al 2012:90). This fluidity of movement was once seen as “elite migration” that only appealed to the wealthy, but because of the EU, the opportunity stretched to middle and lower class European citizens wishing to enhance their economic or social capital (T. Krings et al 2012:89).

*“Home is Europe” -Monika*

The Treaty of Maasricht in 1993 defined the European Union explicitly as a political union, but it has often since been defined as a “project” (Abeles 2000:39). This word implies something that is continuously being built and imagined, not as something realized and completed. Because of this, many questions are asked about the nature and future of the project

itself. Europe, then, has to be studied as a process, not a product (Abeles 2000:39). The process of binding together the once disparate nations is often referred to as Europeanization, and many attempts at the EU level have been made to clarify and promote the notion of a common European identity (Bellier and Wilson 2000:1). Some of these attempts include EU passports, licenses, flags, and anthems (Krings et al 2012:89).

The very nature of the EU has transformed the nature of nationality, citizenship, and borders. EU members are considered “citizens of the Union” and are able to move and reside freely within the larger community as well as vote in both local and grander European elections (Neveu 2000:124). As borders weaken and people are increasingly exposed to the impact of Europe by travelling, living abroad, and the EU’s political salience, people have the opportunity to begin to feel more wholly European (Bruter 2004:36).

It is not a simple project where identity is essentialized in a purely “European” form, however. As Marc Abeles points out, “Complexity, ambiguity, and ambivalence are constitutive features of the European political culture [...] and the melting pot of national cultures are sometimes very contrasting (Abeles 2000:47). It is helpful to think of the European Union as an effort not of complete unification, but of an attempt at harmonization (Abeles 2000:50). The European Union, because of its existence as a constant project, is less of a territory than a method, idea, or virtual object (Abeles 2000:39). But how does this virtual object construct peoples’ national and cultural identities? Does it have the power to do so? Though it doesn’t seem to have the power to create an essentialized European identity and culture, there was much proof in its ability to affect and complicate identity seen through my participants.

“Home is Europe”, the wife of Piotr said when asked whether she considered Ireland or Poland home. This feeling of a larger and more widespread home was reiterated in other

interviews. Jan, when talking about his family's mobility through Europe, talked about Europe as another United States, about how migration through it is now just as natural. And though a newfound Europeanness created by EU borderlessness is a facet of this new mobile Polish identity, it is just a part of it. It exists in harmony, like Abeles claims, with other parts of the identity of these migrants, parts that can't be reduced to just this analysis, but must be spread out and wholly examined. Just like the EU has to be described as a process and not a final product, so too do the identities of its citizens. Because of the changing structures in terms of politics, geography, and citizenship, the structure of their own identities is constantly changing and evolving. As the world around them is being reformulated, they themselves reformulate the meaning of their lives. There were new options, new narratives, new selves being created, and these all existed in complexities I am not quite capable of definitively explaining. Instead of conquering the questions, I found comfort in the confusion. It is the struggle, the frustrations, and the overt complications of identity and belonging that interest me the most about my research. My participants, from their processual considerations, seemed to feel the same.

### The Complexity of Identity

*"I am 100% Polish. I miss it now more than ever..." -Krystyna*

I met all of the people who still felt and acted fully Polish through Polish organizations and institutions. Most were involved somehow in either POSK (Dublin's Polish cultural house) or IPS (Dublin's Irish Polish Society). POSK was where I first met Krystyna, an older Polish woman who had been living in Ireland for 33 years when her now husband asked her to follow him back to Ireland. I met her inside of Dublin's only Polish cultural house, an unassuming place hidden behind one of the many red Georgian doors of the brick complex it belonged to. She was

a frantic woman. She spoke quickly, talking over even herself sometimes. She rushed me around the house, showing off what they've done to it. The upright piano, the small kitchen, the worn out carpets, the room with an old dining room table and dim lighting -- she was proud of all of it, because they did it themselves through volunteer work and their own money. After 33 years she still spoke with a thick Polish accent, and the majority of the interview was done in a mixture of both Polish and English.

She spoke of Poland with such reverence for a country she left so long ago. "People really have the best life and full potential when you live on your own grounds and speak your own language. Real satisfaction you can only have when you live in your own country and you understand the culture, the history, the language..." she said when talking about the concept of home. She played a big role in this Polish institution, dedicating her life to its betterment. She still eats Polish meals, she goes to Polish mass, she celebrates Polish holidays. She, like others in this relative "category", held religion as a high value and was quick to judge and condemn Dublin's more liberal inclinations. When asked about government funding, she said they shy away from it because they want the house to remain intact with Polish traditions, Polish culture, and Polish groups. "We are independent this way. We can put what we want up," she said, pointing to the prominent portrait of Pope John Paul II. When asked about non-Polish membership in the institution, she said, "We are open for other groups, but not the completely revolutionary or completely liberal tendencies." As the interview came to an end, she apologized for the lack of time and the POSK meeting she had to now attend. People saying "Czesc" and dotting each others' cheeks with kisses came flocking through the doors, asking if I speak Polish and asking about my project. It was through this that I met Andrew, another Polish person heavily involved in POSK and Polish lifestyles and traditions.

If Krystyna hinted at traditional Polish aversion to more liberal and secular environments, it was Andrew who emphasized it. He was a loud speaking man who sat me down in the kitchen and told me he only had 5 minutes until he had a POSK meeting. Wearing an old Coca-Cola shirt and jeans with paint stains on them, he told me about his random, almost accidental, journey to Ireland and his immediate plans to move back to Poland. Poland, he said, is more suitable for living because of the government. “Dublin is not the same as it used to be. The mainstream is going left, and people aren’t really good at talking about important issues,” he said. He also accredited his return to Catholicism as another reason he wanted to go back. He cited his kids as his main motivation for moving, though.

“Poland is better for raising kids. We don’t have populations like blowing themselves up on the streets. There’s less drugs, less alcohol. Here they forbid -- what’s it called? -- corporal punishment, which is just like...teachers can’t even hit kids when they’re throwing a fit, they’re afraid to give examples when they misbehave. I want my kids to be raised with certain values. Here, kids grow up too fast and they have no respect. In the UK and Ireland kids are raping each other because they’re allowed to watch porn. Since our society is a bit behind the way western culture kind of is extremely liberal, I’m hoping my kids won’t be.”

After our allotted -- but not followed -- five minute time slot was up, Krystyna and Andrew introduced me to Kristof, a man they contacted for me from the Irish-Polish Society to interview. “We have to do our interview walking, if that’s okay,” he said. “I have another event for another organization to go to.” (The event we ended up going to, strangely enough, was a greyhound dog race.) We walked quickly through Dublin as he told me about his new life that was filled with participation in various organizations, usually either Polish ones or Irish ones where he works in Polish branches. There was Localized, a volunteer organization started 10 years ago that was “mostly for Polish people”. There was IPS, an organization focused on Irish and Polish integration where he focused on English language development with Polish people. There was POSK, the cultural institute previously described. And there was his involvement in the Polish



church, which acts as not only a place of religious comfort but a venue for all of the events he puts on.

Because of his involvement, he knows a wide array of Polish people in Ireland. “Some people I know,” he said, “just watch Polish tv and shop in Polish stores. They only speak Polish because they work in construction with all Polish people. There’s no need to change anything.” Though he wasn’t like that -- he was the only Polish person at the event we went to and had no plans or wishes to move back -- his involvement definitely places him in a world where he interacts with people who are. He differentiated himself immediately from the masses of other Polish people by saying, when hearing my topic and research questions, “I don’t know if I would be good for that. I am strange maybe, because I’m in lots of organizations.” This involvement in Polish culture, then, was self admittedly “strange”, and not typical for Polish immigrants during this time period.

Samanta was another person I met through POSK. I interviewed Samanta in her apartment, a building that was part of a Catholic convent that housed only Catholic women. It was beautiful, old, and almost unnervingly quiet. She took me into her living room, cluttered with books and movies and art, and offered me tea. Samanta came here partly because of personal reasons but mostly for economic reasons. She immigrated in 2005 for a job, but she had no emotional attachments to Ireland as a place. “I not stay for all my life in Ireland, but I am here now,” she said. When asked why she stayed in Ireland so long, she said, “To be honest, I don’t know.” Her life didn’t have much connection to any land, I found out as the interview progressed: “I don’t feel connection with Ireland, and I don’t feel connection with Poland. I don’t have nothing would keep me here, but I don’t have nothing as well that would taking me to Poland.”

Her revealed lack of connection to her home country contrasted with the lifestyle she led in Ireland, however. She was heavily involved in Polish organizations: she worked for POSK as someone who marketed arts and theatre, she wrote for Dublin's Polish newspaper (a fully Polish newspaper that advised on how to find jobs, advertised for Polish companies, and kept immigrants up to date on the happenings of their homeland), she works for an art therapy business where the majority of her patients are Polish, and she helps organize Dublin's largest Polish film festival. She seemed to take great pride in her hard work, using it as an example of the larger Polish population and an imperative part of their identity. "Polish people much hard workers," she said, "One time a girl [Irish girl] called into work because she was on her period, or because they have hangover -- Polish people can be sick and spending whole night with crying child, but they still come to work!"

Samanta had moved back to Poland in 2008 to finish her masters degree, and then moved back to Ireland two years later. What changed between those two times, she said, was her religious involvement. Like Andrew, her new proclivity towards Catholicism put her at odds with the general, more secular, Dublin population. "People say they are Catholic, but they do not live in a Catholic way," she said of Ireland. Lucas, a young man I talked to who was the priest of Dublin's biggest Polish Catholic church, St. Audoens, tended to agree. Lucas' attachment to his Polishness was different from most: he has no reason to try to shift his identity or acculturate into Irish culture because he was placed here for a maximum time frame of two years by his congregation. Because of this, Irishness is far away from him and Ireland serves as a temporary place. His whole life was placed in a Polish church and he said he surrounded himself with virtually only Polish people. He described his church: it's an all Polish church that was acquired 10 years ago for the Polish community because the Bishop noticed that it was needed. He said

attendance is always high (something I noticed when I went to a few of the Polish masses), and it gets “absolutely crazy” during Christmas and Easter, especially during the Polish tradition of blessing Easter baskets. When asked if he thought immigration for Poles was easier due to a common religion, he firmly responded, “Ireland isn’t Catholic. It’s Catholic dominated, but they aren’t Catholic. Poland is Catholic.” He said the Irish, as he’s experienced, don’t have Catholic values -- something echoed by Samanta, Krystyna, and Andrew. They only go to baptisms and funerals, and they do this (according to Lucas) “not out of faith, but fear.”

These people all hold a strong Polish identity, and their lives and traditions seem to be relatively uncompromised by their new location. Roder and Lubbers, in their article “After Migration: Acculturation of attitudes towards homosexuality among Polish Immigrants”, address the different types of cultural attitude shifts according to different type of immigrants. A migrant who intends to spend only a short amount of time in a host country is less likely to orient themselves towards the host society, even if they end up staying longer than they intended (2016:265). This was seen in people like Samanta, Andrew, and Lucas, who in their own differing ways saw Ireland as a place of impermanence. Their disconnect to Irish culture can also be seen in the different public opinion and national policy between the two countries. Migrants from Poland to western Europe often face radically different public opinions, something that drove some people to feel disconnected (like Krystyna or Samanta) and drove others to plan on leaving completely (like Andrew). Poland is a country run by a national-conservative and Catholic political party called the Law and Justice party (in Polish Prawo i Sprawiedliwosc, or PiS) -- and while a country’s political affiliation is not an absolute determinant of one’s identity, the fact that Poland is a democratic nation and chose this party is an indicator of these people’s

political and social inclinations, especially taking into account the interview quotes above (Erlanger and Santora 2018).

One woman I talked to, Agata, was a woman I met briefly while visiting the Polish library in Dublin. Though I didn't get a formal interview, I distinctly remember her talking about one of the main reasons she moved to Ireland, other than financial reasons, was the opportunity to raise her gay son in a more open and inclusive environment. Her fears of discrimination in Poland are factually bound: in Roder and Lubbers' article, research found that Polish people are less tolerant of homosexuality than people in Ireland. Many Eastern European countries lack institutional support for minority rights as they live in the shadow of a recent communist regime and present conservative presidency (Roder and Lubbers 2016:262). In Poland, the Catholic Church and family structures are the main socializing agents, and these familial, patriarchal, and hierarchical structures often influence public opinion (Gallagher and Trzebiatowska 2016:433). Again, this is seen in Krystyna and Andrews' comments on shying away from Dublin's open and liberal tendencies, and Lucas' proclamation of Ireland as a non-Catholic country. Catholicism as both a political and social factor in Poland seemed to have a role in dictating these peoples' immigration experiences and level of acculturation. Polish identity for ages has rested on an intrinsic Catholicism, and a strong link still exists between Catholicism and national identity and pride (Gallagher and Trzebiatoska 2016:433).

Catholicism and a relative form of conservatism seem to form a strong basis for what stereotypical Polishness is. In a study performed by the Institute of Public Affairs called "European Values System", Polish people self identified as religious, patriotic, and pro-family (Janiska-Kania and Marody 2004:231). And though "Polishness" as a concept is an ideological construct and these values exist only in the collective imagination of the Polish community,

Polishness still exists in the consciousness of Poles, and this ideological concept still has real life implications. To feel Polish and to connect with Polish roots, as seen through their collective imagination, is to be religious, to be patriotic, and to be pro-family. Some immigrants, as showcased, hold onto these values in a way to hold onto their Polishness, their loyalty to their home country, and their past. Krystyna has lived in Ireland for 33 years, but her lack of acclimation into Irish culture and her constant immersion in Polish environments is her way of enacting her Polishness. Andrew, through his loudly and overtly expressed anti-liberal opinions and religiosity that are influencing him to move back to Poland, enacts his Polishness in a different way. And as we weave through the tapestry of this community, people find new, but equally valid, way of expressing their identities both in a Polish context, an Irish context, a European context, and a global context.

*“We are not strictly Polish...but not strictly Irish either...” -Beata*

I also met a variety of people who still participated in a lot of their Polish identifiers (they ate Polish meals, kept in touch with traditions, and still spoke Polish a lot at home), but at the same time found ways to distance themselves from the parts of Polishness they deemed unfit for their new lifestyles. To these people, Ireland seemed to fill a hole. It opened up a world to them they didn't know could exist. This world, as was mentioned in multiple interviews, made them more conscious about what their Polishness means to them and which parts of it they are happy to part from and happy to keep. It was like they created their own perfect cocktail of the two cultures: they could participate in as much Polishness as they wanted without the pressure of actual Polish society, and they could enact as much Irishness as they felt they needed to balance themselves out.

Jakub and Kamila, the couple aforementioned who were shocked about their new financial fortitude, were a couple I lived with for a few days while in Dublin. I walked in, greeted with welcoming smiles and unmatched hospitality, to a home that smelled indescribably but very distinctly Polish. Their two small children, Albert and Carrie (named, the couple was insistent on reminding me, after Carrie Fisher), spoke a mixture of Polish and English, and the food we ate was a toss up between traditionally Polish and traditionally Irish. They were a perfect example of this middle ground of combined cultural identity. They had migrated in 2005 because of Poland's difficult economic climate and an opportunity that sprung up in Ireland. They were highly encouraged to leave, their parents almost pushing them out of Poland's borders because it was such a "big opportunity". Though they are extremely grateful and welcoming of the opportunity that became their new life, they still hold onto their Polish roots with loosely closed fists. They got married in Poland, for example, as well as had both their children's christenings in Poland. They visit often, or invite their family to Ireland whenever it's feasible. They still celebrate Christmas and Easter the "Polish way". They talked later about retaining some of what they called Polish habits. In the case of this particular conversation, they spoke of having very judgmental, untrusting, and gossip-driven outlooks on people around them. "When something happens in the estate, we're like two meerkats," they laughed, "Or when people ask to borrow things. Sometimes I still get pissed. It's just a habit I still have from Poland." This was the end to an extremely long discourse on what parts of Polishness they decided to cut out of their lives, and which parts they still chose to infiltrate within them.

In terms of what they didn't like, that gossipy and judgemental nature they said was concomitant with Poland was what they focused on. The culture in Ireland, they described, is open more to difference and less to judgement, and they both appreciate that and try to mimic it.

“Here people don’t judge you for every little thing. The people are laid back and don’t worry and stress like in Poland. They don’t constantly think about the future, they go out and do things all the time, everyone’s always traveling -- things that used to be beyond us,” they said. On the note of judgement, they talked about the “calling a guy” culture they found in Ireland, where there is no shame in asking for help. “Here, you call a guy. In Poland, you never call a guy. You fix it yourself. In Poland, if we paid someone to clean our windows like we do here, it’d be the center of gossip. It would be embarrassing,” Kamila said. Asking for help and the community values they found, versus what they called individualistic and strictly familial values in Poland, was also a welcome change for the couple. “People are always helping each other out here. You can say hi to complete strangers here, but if you say hello to someone in Poland it’s like ‘What the fuck do you want?’” Jakub said, Kamila laughing in affirmation. They described their neighborhood chat rooms on Facebook, where people in the neighborhood will post lost pets they found or ask to borrow things like lawnmowers. Kamila and Jakub were shocked by the responses people get, how people are so willing to share their things and help each other out with no reward promised other than the opportunity to be a good neighbor. It’s things like these that make Jakub and Kamila want to be more “Irish” -- they want to hone in on the values they find that can better them as people.

But, even though they loved and appreciated so much about Irish culture, they still found ways to appreciate and enact their Polishness. With Jakub and Kamila, this was usually concomitant with their complaints about the Irish. Their complaints seemed to insinuate a pride for the exact opposite traits they found in their native culture. When they complained about Irish timekeeping and organization, they seemed to miss the organization and punctuality of Poland, saying that they will never “become Irish” in that aspect. When they complained about Irish

excitement and contentment over the mediocre and half-finished, they seemed to exalt Polish skills of hard work and contentment only with perfection. These are traits that they chose to hold on to and continue to implement in their lives, forming a seemingly healthy marriage between the two cultures. “Ireland is a very good country for us,” Kamila ended the interview. “We’ve been lucky so far. We never had any problems, we were lucky for that. It feels like this is our place. Like it was meant to be.”

Beata, another person who enacted her Polishness only in the ways she wanted to, was a middle aged Polish woman who I also previously wrote about -- she was the one who struggled immensely in the beginning to make a home out of Ireland. But now 12 years after she originally immigrated, she has found a pride and a comfort in her hybrid cultural identity, an identity she often contemplates and wrestles with. “It’s difficult to pin down,” she said, “We’re not strictly Irish, but we’re not strictly Polish either. Here, everyone will know we are immigrants, we are foreigners. But when we go back to Poland, we aren’t recognized as being Poles anymore.”

Beata wrote her PhD dissertation on acculturation of teenage Poles in Ireland -- and even with all of that knowledge, all of that research, her identity and belonging remained unclear. Like Jakub and Kamila, she had her own version of a cultural cocktail to sip on. And just like Jakub and Kamila’s, I gathered her recipe through her complaints and her compliments of Ireland. Some of the comments Beata made seemed to be an almost direct carbon copy of theirs: “In Poland if you say hi to someone, they’re like, ‘What’s wrong with you?’” or “In Poland people will judge you. In Ireland, you don’t feel constant pressure to be somebody because you need to conform. You don’t feel judged or labeled immediately when you’re different, which was an easy thing to adjust to.”



The easiness and openness that came with Ireland was what Beata called a “welcome change”, but there were some parts of her Polishness that she still held close. “Young people in Ireland have this idea that they’re entitled to everything. In Poland, you clean up. You give your seat to the older person on the bus. You respect your parents. You respect your teachers. You honor and respect your parents, even if you don’t agree with them,” she said when talking about her two teenagers daughters and how being Polish makes them different. She raises her daughters with these values, values that she accredits to Poland: “The kids navigate between two different cultures, they have to live with this. But they have a very strong identity of who they are. They retain a lot of Polish values instilled in them through the way they were brought up,” she explained. In these ways, she enacts a sort of “cafeteria culture” -- she picks what she wants, and she skips what she doesn’t. Beata, more than anyone I talked to, wrestled with and reflected upon her new creation of identity.

As seen in her earlier quote, Beata was keen on the idea that she will never again be fully either Polish or Irish:

“There’s a very strong hold to identity. There’s an Irish lifestyle but inside, you’re still a Pole. We still feel Polish. But everything is in English for us now. We laugh at Irish jokes, grasp Irish humor...But we are very aware that we are Polish and we are proud of that Polish. I’m never moving back, but I am still Polish. We speak English, read English, go to cinema and watch English, we eat Irish food, observe Irish holidays...but that doesn’t change that we are Polish inside.”

She struggled to pin down what exactly she was feeling, figuring out different ways to word her experience:

“Here, everyone will know that we are immigrants, we are foreigners. But when we go to Poland, we are not recognized as being Poles. Now, we use their [Irish] language, the way they behave, their approach to things. In Poland people would think, ‘Why do you behave this way? Why do you say these things? Why do you dress that way?’”

Later in the interview, she repeated this same sentiment in a different context. Going back to judgement and conformity, she was talking about how being in Ireland made her and her

family more open to difference, and how that almost felt like a point of disconnect when they visited Poland:

“If you cut your hair weird, that’s fine. If you wear PJs to the shop, that’s fine! No one would say anything. In Poland that was *unthinkable* [...] Being different in the Polish context is not welcome, it’s wrong. There’s a much higher level of acceptance to differences in Ireland. [...] And when people bring this new way of life back with them to Poland, it’s not as welcome in Poland because things are taken very seriously. You immediately draw attention from people in a negative way.”

This difference from the people they used to be took Beata a long time to notice and come to terms with. “I didn’t even know what ‘Polish’ was until I was a foreigner in another place. You compare naturally and soon you become very aware of that Polishness you have,” she said at the very end of the interview. Whether that Polishness ensues traits to be proud of or values to quickly part from, that Polishness will always be there -- it was now simply layered with other things. When asked what her life would be like in Poland, she answered in a beautiful passage about what Ireland has added to her life. “My life would be less colorful. It would be dull, conforming, kind of grey. Here it’s different, and we are lucky to have this now. We have all the colors. I didn’t realize it when I was growing up in Poland, this is just by comparison. Ireland is certainly a country of opportunity.”

*“Ireland definitely opened the door to the world for us...” -Iwona*

The third prominent group I spoke to were those who saw their time in Ireland as eye opening enough to break away from their Polish borders and fit themselves within the confines of cosmopolitanism. Iwona and Jan were a couple I lived with while in Cork. Iwona was a college friend of my aunt’s: she was talkative, she was welcoming, she had an accent that was beautiful mixture of both Polish and Irish. She planned an entire weekend of interviews for me and told me her own experience with such precise detail and deep contemplation. She and her

husband migrated to Ireland in 2005 simply on the premise that they wanted to move, just like Beata and her family. While some people brought Polish traditions with them, Iwona said that they only participated in local activities and traditions to acclimate their kids to the new environment. This full absorption of Irish culture and custom changed them in immutable ways. When asked how it changed them, Iwona immediately answered, “More open. More open, definitely more open.”

After a brief pause filled with silent nods, Jan chimed in with, “Less afraid of going to see different places.” And there was a worldliness to them I hadn’t seen with other participants -- we ate paella for dinner and drank wine they got from Italy as they reminisced on their brief time in South Africa and told me about their dreams of going to New Zealand. They both shouted “NO” in response to whether or not they’d go back to Poland, followed by, “Not because we dislike Poland, we can’t see ourselves staying in Ireland forever either. We want to move somewhere else, and now it’s more opportunity to do so.” I asked if that mindset came from living here, and he responded, “Yes, that mindset came from moving here. Because of the experience, but also because of the culture.” They said that this longing for the rest of the world came from Irish values and culture, citing Irish “openness”, “carefreeness”, “lack of judgement”, “exposure to diversity”, and “positivity” as reasons for this new cosmopolitan identity and open mindset, as well as the very nature of the EU explained earlier in this paper. “The EU became more like the states -- when we moved here, it became so much easier to go to other countries as well. So we traveled more and saw that you can communicate with people and interact and it’s easier than we thought, so we can move to another country with ease now,” Jan clarified.

“You can become Irish,” Iwona said when asked what Irishness is. I asked her to explain. “People here go the extra stretch to help you. When you drive, you stop for people, you let

people go in front of you. You give people directions. And the more you experience those random acts of kindness, you become more willing to give it back,” she said. She said that their new garnered Irishness can sometimes evoke a disconnect back in Poland, the same way that Beata did earlier. “Going back to Poland, sometimes we feel a little disconnected,” she said slowly, “People can look at you like, ‘What’s wrong with you?’” Their life in Ireland, though carried out in similar ways as previous participants and for similar amounts of time, made them deviate slightly from their roots. “Living here has definitely made us feel less Polish,” they admitted. “Ireland definitely opened the door to the world for us.”

The next day, Iwona introduced me to one of her friends Pawel. Pawel moved here with his three daughters in 2006 because of an economic opportunity and no plans to stay. Twelve years later, they reflected on how they were altered by Ireland. Though Pawel said that his identity still feels Polish because of the accent, the citizenship, and the passport, his daughters interjected that they didn’t feel Polish at all. His one nineteen year old daughter, Justyna, spoke on behalf of the sister trinity: “Well, we feel Irish. When I picture where our lives end up, it’s Ireland.” Pawel agreed: “We’re not going to go back permanently, no. There is no Poland on the horizon.” Pawel and his daughters, like Iwona’s family, strayed a little farther from Polish traditions than other participants seemed to. They didn’t go to Polish stores, didn’t go to Polish school, don’t eat Polish food except at big family events, don’t bless the baskets for Easter, the daughters don’t hang out with Polish people, and they celebrate holidays with some Polish influence, but mostly Irish traditions. “I feel like we’re definitely further away from Polish culture than a lot of Polish people here, yeah,” said Justyna. “We just connect more to Irish culture.” While the girls were quick to answer how Ireland changed them (“More open, definitely more open minded”), Pawel mulled over the question, uncertain if his changes were

due to time or place. Later in the interview, he snapped his fingers and exclaimed, “You know what, you were asking how Ireland helped me with my development. And I have to say that now, I am a proclaimed atheist.” I asked him, “Because of Ireland?” He nodded and the girls said, laughing, “Well, we’re like undercover atheists. When we visit Poland all of a sudden we’re Catholic again.”

Pawel and his daughters were admittedly further away from their Polish roots than most others seemed to be, but they, like Iwona and Jan, had the same cosmopolitan mindset. “When you live in a different country and you’re not living in your own, you feel more international. You feel that you can go more places,” Pawel almost mimicked Iwona’s earlier words with, “You feel cosmopolitan.” Iwona chipped in at that word and said, “I would say European.” The girls felt this way too, as was common with most of the children of my participants. Though I didn’t get a chance to talk to the children themselves, most of the parents said the same thing. Even Polish-rooted people like Krystyna said with a sigh, “My own daughters feel Irish, you know. Well, Irish or international.” Beata described it more explicitly:

“Sometimes I think of Ireland as a portal. I think that’s the way of thinking more for younger people. It would be used as a trampoline now to end up in a different country where English is also the spoken language. I can only say for myself I wouldn’t. I’m happy in Ireland, I want to stay in Ireland. But it’s a high probability that one of my daughters will go to Canada or USA or whatever, somewhere where she could capitalize on what she learned and acquired in Ireland”

Iwona licensed that same path of thought to her children. “The kids paths in life are different now. They’re exposed to two language. Switching between Polish and English is natural, and now they want to learn even more languages.” Jola, a woman living in Dublin who ran the Polish school district there, had two now-adult daughters who enacted this same attitude. “My kids never felt Irish or Polish. Being here, they felt international. Here, they could express themselves more. They had more opportunity, more options to choose from.”

This openness, this sense of opportunity, this idea Beata expressed of Ireland being a trampoline to the rest of the West; all of these things profoundly influenced the identities of these people. The openness they acquired lay not just in personal values but there was a newfound openness to the rest of the world -- whereas in Poland they felt trapped within the confines of their borders, Ireland seemed to unfold to them the rest of the world. Moving abroad was a part of something larger than simple economics -- as Krings et al puts it in their article on Polish immigration, it's also become a project of self-realization and personal self-development (Krings et al 2012). The migration experience has a transformative influence on their lives by the sheer experience of mobility that makes them more self-reliant, reflective, and open to new experiences (Krings et al 2012). Participants in Krings' research showed similar symptoms of cosmopolitan attitudes that reached beyond Europe after the immigration to Ireland opened up a new world of mobility and travel. "Home" as a concept becomes ambiguous: some people saw Europe as home, some people saw the world as their home. This extension into the world was Ireland's gift to them. Some people who now felt more of the world still considered Ireland home, though. "Home is where the heart is," Jola said, "and now, my heart is here."

*"We're different from a lot of Polish people here..." -Justyna*

\_\_\_\_\_A sentiment that was reiterated in multiple interviews was the idea of being "strange" or "different" in comparison to the rest of the Polish community. And in each case, they were right: no one had the same experience and no one negotiated their cultural identity in quite the same way. Kristof thought he was strange for being so involved in Polish organizations. Andrew said he could bring me a different perspective because he was leaving. Iwona and Jan said they were different because they came here and immediately participated in only local traditions. Beata

admitted she might not fit in with my research because of her intentional plans to move to Ireland and start a new life. Justyna, in the title quote, addresses how her and her sisters act and think differently compared to all the other Polish teenagers they interact with.

Their feelings of difference are well understood in the sense that *every* person I talked to had a different experience. Though this paper deals with the community in relative “categories” or “groupings” based on similarities I found, those categories are in no way definitive and strictly bordered. People like Krystyna and Samanta were written about in the same category of holding their Polishness close, but they enacted it in different ways: Krystyna, though she longed for Poland always, lived her entire life in Ireland and had no plans to leave, was different from Samanta, who had no attachment to either place and would be just as satisfied living in Poland as she was living in Ireland. In the same way, Iwona and Jan were different from Pawel. Iwona and Jan still used the Polish language, still felt very Polish, and still listened to the Polish news -- they just felt that they wanted to spend their lives in the rest of the world. Pawel had no plans to live anywhere else: Ireland became his home, and Poland became far away from him. I make this point to offer the idea that although these categories are used as separated parts in this paper, that is not how they exist in real life.

A model cannot be made to neatly pack these people's lives and identities into digestible categories; an overarching and reified theory of human behavior cannot explain the differences, the nuances, and the various constructions of self that were shown to me during my research. It was Anna Tsing who used the word “seductive” when describing theoretical terminology (in her case, referring to globalization). “Globalization becomes institutionalized as a program,” she says, prompting Anthropology to focus on what these forces *do* to the world (Tsing 2007:69). We often get too caught up in trying to make sense of things, and abandon the lived importance

of them. “[Globalization] draws us inside its rhetoric until we take its claims for true descriptions,” Tsing critiques (2007:69). Sharon MacDonald shares this critique of reifying theory in her introduction to the book “Inside European Identities”, where -- as aforementioned -- she abandons the definitive concept of “identity”. “We begin from the premise that the people themselves play the part of theoreticians in this field,” she says, “Our concern is with the ways and circumstances people define themselves and are defined by others,” (MacDonald 1993:6). MacDonald emphasized the dangers of rhetoric, just as Tsing did: “The rhetoric of ethnic identity often alludes to its ‘real’ or ‘essentialized’ nature [...] Identities don’t exist outside their making,” (MacDonald 1993:6). I want to emphasize this same idea. I cannot explain my participants’ identities for them: their identities were fluid, they were partial, they were in process. Their own constructions of their identity is the subject of my research, not an object for me to study and theorize. It is not in my interest to limit them to previously drawn ideas of cosmopolitanism or transnationalism or hyphenated identity. Though those ideas themselves are important and have merit, my ethnography showed me that they are not wholly relevant to my study because of the widespread difference of lived experience that are not conducive to only one frame of reference.

## Conclusion

In this paper I have welcomed the voices of a variety of Polish people living in Ireland in an attempt to conceptualize identity formation in an expanding European Union. I have proudly failed to do this: throughout my research experience and writing process, it became increasingly clear that the absence of a clear and bordered concept of identity was more important than trying to find one. Pushing these people into a theoretical box would have done them a great injustice. I



found that Ireland seemed to present itself as a contradiction between the complete opposite of Polish culture and a perfect counterpart. With similar histories, cuisines, and familial and traditional values, Ireland and Poland seemed to function as sister nations. But many an interview made it clear that there were stark differences in value and identity, differences that complicated their personal views and versions of their new selves even more. From Krystyna, longing for her homeland 33 years later, to people like Pawel and his daughters, who are nearly detached from their roots, there's a range of cultural identity that has no single explanation or theory. The European Union provides an endless amount of further research opportunity, and as it continues to expand and understand itself as a project, it will be accompanied by the construction and reconstruction of European identities. Agata, during our conversation about balancing Ireland and Poland as homes, said with confusion and exasperation, "Ja mam jedna noga tutaj i jedna noga tam" ("I have one leg here and one leg there"). These complications, these frustrations, these unsolvable puzzles of home, belonging, identity, self -- they are what make this field of study interesting. They are what make it important.