

THE THIRD SPACE: THE MEETING OF JEW AND CHRISTIAN IN THE ACT OF
REMEMBERING, RESTORING AND RECONCILING - A CASE STUDY OF THE
MATZEVAH FOUNDATION

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by

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Unquestionably, I am a follower of Christ; I will not change my identity, nor hide it, as it would be disingenuous, as well as, being a violation of my character and integrity. In my work to this point with the Jewish community both in the US and Poland, I have disclosed my identity as a Baptist follower of Christ. To those Jews who know me from my time in Poland, I am known as a Baptist pastor, who lived and worked in Poland with the Baptist community of Poland to develop and strengthen churches. For the most part I am well received by the Polish Jewish community; however, some Jews in the US have been hesitant towards receiving me because they are looking for the “catch” as one Jewish leader said it. Honestly, some Christians seek to evangelize Jews; I do not. Instead, I seek dialogue with the Jewish community. For this reason, I have been effectively interacting with Jewish community for nearly eleven years.

I am the president and founder of The Matzevah Foundation (TMF), which is comprised of a group of Christians, who work with the Jewish community to care for and restore Jewish cemeteries in Poland. TMF is a tax-exempt, non-profit corporation recognized by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) as a public charity. The genesis of TMF began as an extension of the partnership that I established with the Polish Jewish community of Warsaw in 2005 to care for Jewish cemeteries in the Warsaw vicinity. My service to the Jewish community arose from my intellectual curiosity about Polish-Jewish history and from living and working in Poland for twelve years with the Baptist Union of Poland. Critically, I realize that in cooperating with the Jewish community especially as it relates to dealing with the aftermath of the Shoah in caring for and restoring Jewish cemeteries in Poland, I cannot, nor can allow our organization or anyone associated with it, proselytize. To this end, I have written a code of ethics for TMF stating that

we will not proselytize. I believe that by having this element in place it will help to prevent some fear and remove personal bias.

In leading TMF, I have been diligently developing and deepening my understanding of cross-cultural diversity issues concerning the Jewish worldview and issues related to Jewish and Christian interaction, so that I might become a more competent, cross-cultural leader. Through my work I have been ‘invited to the table’ in the dialogue of injustice with the Jewish community. At this table, I am not seeking to facilitate an interfaith dialogue with the Jewish community; although quite invaluable, such an explicit, focused ministry remains beyond the scope of my work. Instead, as a servant who leads a public charity, I am attempting to broaden and deepen the dialogue that I already have with the Jewish community so that TMF may effectively realize its two-fold mission: to educate the public about the Shoah and to care for and restore Jewish cemeteries in Poland. Through remembering and caring for desolate and forgotten Jewish cemeteries in Poland, I lead TMF and others to honor the memory and celebrate the lives of normal, everyday Polish Jews who lost their lives in the Shoah. It is my desire to work towards forgiveness and reconciliation, possibly restoring the broken relationship that exists between Jew and Christian.

Regarding conventions and terminology used in this paper, I will follow the Jewish practice suggested by Manosevitz (2010) of not pronouncing the “name of the Divine” and I will therefore “use the spelling G-d” (p. 55), unless quoted from a source, which uses “God.” The term “matzevah” (מצבה) is Hebrew and means a memorial stone or monument; a matzevah is erected in memory of a significant event or placed at the head of a grave. In Jewish cemeteries, the stone or matzevah signifies remembering and honoring the deceased and ensures that the

grave will not be desecrated. Cemeteries in Hebrew are referred to as *Beit Chaim* – “the house of the living” and are considered to be holy places by the Jewish community.

Unless citing a source which uses the term Holocaust, I will use the Hebrew term, *Shoah* (catastrophe or destruction) to define the events of what many refer to as the Holocaust. I make this distinction for two reasons. Firstly, as Manosevitz (2010) emphasizes, the term Shoah is “used by modern scholars in reference to that event” and secondly, the word, Holocaust, is a Greek word that means “burnt offering,” which according to Manosevitz extends some type of “religious significance” to the event, adding that “there was nothing religious about Hitler's ‘Final Solution’” (p. 55).

Background

The Shoah, as noted above, literally means destruction and it is one of the greatest moral and ethical failures in history. For Christians, it is difficult to deal with the destruction promulgated by the Shoah primarily because of the perception among many Jews that the Shoah was perpetrated by Christians. Indeed the context of the Shoah is important to consider. The Shoah occurred in Europe, where at the time nearly 90% of all Europeans considered themselves to be Christians. Germany certainly reflected this disproportionate majority, where “95% of Germans were baptized, tax-paying members of an established Christian church” (Waller, 2007, p. 140).

Important Jewish theologians “see a connection between Christianity and the Nazi ideology that created the Holocaust” (Porton, 2012, para. 5). Eliezer Berkovits, an Orthodox rabbi, stated that Christianity enabled the Nazis to execute the Holocaust. He argued, “Without the contempt and hatred for the Jews planted by Christianity in the hearts of the multitude of its followers, Nazism's crime against the Jewish people could never have been conceived, much less

executed” (Porton, 2012, para. 7). Richard L. Rubenstein, a Conservative rabbi, believes that Christians perpetrated a false image, a “mythological Jew,” which “provided the images and the models for the Nazis” to use in desensitizing the German population to Jews who then became more and more to be viewed “as the devil's surrogates, God-killers” producing “fertile ground for Nazi propaganda” (Porton, 2012, para. 8).

These stark Jewish views of Christianity and its role in the Shoah have been mitigated to some degree by developments in Jewish-Christian relations during the latter half of the twentieth century, and especially following World War II. The profound terrors of the Shoah justifiably led Jews and Christians to realize their need for dialogue. Consequently in 1947, a group of them met formally in Seelisberg, Switzerland so that they might mutually declare their collective anguish about the Shoah, their desire to confront anti-Semitism, and “their desire to foster stronger relationships between Jews and Christians” (Christians & Jews, 2009, p. 2). Their encounter produced the “Ten Points of Seelisberg,” calling for “Christian churches to reflect on and renew their understandings of Judaism and their relationship with Jews” (p. 2). Another outcome of this meeting was the establishment of the International Council of Christians and Jews (ICCJ), which continues “to pursue the dialogue [among Jews and Christians] in spite of difficulties” (p. 2). The ICCJ does not view Jewish-Christian relations as problematic requiring some sort of resolution; rather, they view Jewish-Christian relations as a “continuing process of learning and refinement” (p. 2).

Since the end of the Second World War, Jewish-Christian dialogue “has become commonplace” (Karpen, 2002, p. 4). Even though Jewish-Christian dialogue has become more common due to advances in Jewish-Christian relations, it is still challenging. Michael Kress (2012) views Jewish-Christian interaction as improving primarily because Christians have

completely re-evaluated their “attitude toward Jews and Judaism” (para. 1). The Christian re-evaluation of Judaism indeed has revolutionized the relationship between Jews and Christians. Kress further emphasizes that even though differences remain between them, contemporary Jews may reasonably expect for the first time in history “that these differences will be addressed through interfaith dialogue rather than the violence of the past” (para. 2). Moreover Kress points out that during the Shoah, Christians played the role of “rescuers – people whose faith led them to risk their lives by hiding or otherwise saving Jews” (para. 4). The brave acts of these Christians do undeniably provide a significant connection between Jew and Christian; “however, the role of Christians and Christianity in perpetuating the Shoah remains a point of contention between the two religions” (Kress, 2012, para. 4).

Interfaith dialogue among Jews and Christians is commonplace and ongoing; nonetheless, it remains strained and inhibited due to factors, such as the Shoah and the Christian response to it. Most importantly, it must be noted that the Scriptures reveal G-d to be the G-d of love, who is also the G-d of righteousness and justice. Scott (1984) indicates this G-d “is concerned about social justice, not mere private morality” (cited in, Du Preez, 1985, p. 38). Arthur F. Glasser (1983) echoes this point of view and concludes that G-d “is strongly moved by the cries of the oppressed, particularly when His people collectively make no effort to relieve their anguish” (cited in, Du Preez, 1985, p. 38). The people of G-d are not to be just morally upright people, but they are to be compassionate, showing concern for their neighbors – the people living around or among them, those people, who are oppressed by injustice. Innocent Jews were unjustly treated, persecuted and murdered, while their Christian neighbors stood by silently, effectively doing nothing.

In view of these considerations, therefore, if Christians wish to pursue dialogue with the Jewish community towards forgiveness and reconciliation, they must deal justly with past injustices, such as the legacy of anti-Semitism and the Shoah. Understandably, individuals within the Jewish community will need to determine to what degree they will interact with Christians regarding these issues. Nevertheless, some Christians are taking tangible steps towards reconciliation and are thereby actively opening a dialogue with the Jewish community. One such group of Christians is dealing with the Shoah today by caring for Jewish cemeteries in Poland. These Christians have been working with the Jewish community of Poland for more than ten years to overcome the evil of the past through what Scott Peck calls “loving acts” (Johnson, 2012, p. 127). They established The Matzevah Foundation in 2010 as a non-profit corporation and public charity, whose mission is to educate the public about the Shoah and to mobilize resources for facilitating Jewish cemetery restoration projects in Poland. Presently through Jewish cemetery restoration projects, TMF has broadened its dialogue and cooperation with the Jewish community by partnering with several Jewish organizations to remember, preserve, and honor the Jewish heritage of Poland.

Why is caring for the Jewish cemeteries of Poland important? To a Jew, based on the Torah and the *Halakhah*, caring for the dead is one of the highest expressions of love or loving-kindness, because the dead cannot repay you for your kindness shown to them. Caring in these terms is best expressed in Hebrew by “*chesed*” or sometimes “*chesed shel-emet*” or true loving-kindness. We understand this concept best by what we would term, *mercy*. Jewish understanding of loving-kindness is derived from G-d, who gave the Jews the pre-eminent example of what loving-kindness means when He buried Moses (Deuteronomy 34:5-6). Since the Shoah decimated 3.5 million Polish Jews, there are very few descendants currently remaining in Poland

to care for the 1,200 Jewish cemeteries. Estimates place the number of Jews today in Poland at roughly 20,000, at the most 30,000 people; therefore, caring for these cemeteries is an overwhelming task. Nevertheless, caring for the dead is a mitzvah – a religious requirement fulfilling the Torah and *Halakhah*; it is seen as being one of the highest mitzvahs for a Jew to perform.

I believe that Jews and Christians can come to terms with the past trauma brought about by long-term anti-Semitism and the Shoah through dealing with such evil today by means of “loving acts.” Scott Peck argues that “loving acts can overcome evil” (cited in, Johnson, 2012, p. 127). Forgiveness, I believe, may emerge through these loving acts, opening and enriching dialogue, which could possibly lead to reconciliation. Clearly the responsibility for breaking the cycle of evil falls upon Christians. Flannery (1997) supports this view and argues that Christians need to “adopt the Jewish agenda” and take a step toward reconciliation (p. 3). I believe that if Christians engage in a significant and loving act, such as caring for neglected Jewish cemeteries in Poland, they may embrace something uniquely Jewish. Hopefully this small step may lead one day to breaking the cycle of evil allowing forgiveness and reconciliation to emerge in the midst of Jewish and Christian communities.

Problem statement

Due to the long-standing tensions resulting from the Shoah and the remaining gulf that separates Jews and Christians concerning the person of Jesus Christ, a complex and difficult relationship exists between these two religious faith groups. Consequently, Jews and Christians struggle to engage each other in meaningful dialogue that could possibly lead to forgiveness and reconciliation.

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to describe the process of how acts of loving-kindness (mercy) as demonstrated and encountered through the work of The Matzevah Foundation in caring for and restoring Jewish cemeteries in Poland, have influenced dialogue (or lack thereof) among Jews and Christians. The study will explore mercy as the language of dialogue, and the organization that I lead, The Matzevah Foundation (TMF) will illustrate that dialogue. Mercy may be operationalized and understood in terms of what Scott Peck considers “loving acts” (as cited in, Johnson, 2012, p. 127); loving acts may be corroborated by humane orientation, concern for others or compassion, charity and altruism.

Research questions

In order to explore how those involved and those affected by the work of The Matzevah Foundation have developed in their relationship to one another, I will pursue the following research questions:

How have Jews and Christians responded to the work of The Matzevah Foundation?

In what ways do Jews and Christians learn how to dialogue through their mutual interaction within the context of the work of The Matzevah Foundation?

Rationale for the study

This study will be conducted as a case study of the work of the Matzevah Foundation. Through inquiry concerning the interaction of Jew and Christian within the construct [third space or liminal space] of the work of The Matzevah Foundation, I will seek to understand how *gemilut chesed* or acts of loving-kindness (mercy) influence attitudes and create mutual bridges of understanding as the underpinning for dialogue. Principally I will be studying the responses of

participants individually and corporately to open-ended questions about their experience in working with The Matzevah Foundation in its educational initiatives and its Jewish cemetery restoration projects in Poland. Focus groups will also be employed, which Moloney (2011) identifies as “sacred containers” (p. 71). These “sacred containers” function as transformative, liminal spaces in which Jew and Christian may interact and dialogue more freely about critical issues confronting them regarding the nature of their interaction.

Since the interaction among Jews and Christians is conflicted and strained, it would be essential to understand the nature of the broken relationship. To illustrate the problem, I would like to share a photograph (immediately below) that I took in a Jewish cemetery in Poland during the summer of 2006. I made the photograph of this matzevah shortly after it was discovered and overturned by a group of US high school students from a Baptist church in Georgia. This



photograph has come to symbolize and represent the work of The Matzevah Foundation – remembering, restoring, and reconciling. Several years ago, I presented this photograph to a rabbi serving in Poland, who is an American Jew of Polish descent. Upon receiving the photograph, he exclaimed, “Thank you. This photograph says it all.” And, I believe that it does.

I see brokenness in this photograph that was propagated by the plague of hatred. The plague did not begin in World War II but centuries earlier following the death of Christ when the hatred of Jews arose and spread across Christian Europe culminating in their systematic murder at the hands of their Christian neighbors during the Shoah. The matzevah captures this fracture – this brokenness and eloquently bears witness, speaking of the unspeakable horrors of the destruction. I also see hatred by those who willfully destroyed this standing memorial and thereby desecrated the honor and memory of the deceased. I also see the fact that because of the Shoah, there are no Jews virtually remaining in Poland to care for their ancestral heritage. Lastly, I see an opportunity. As a Christian, I am able to speak to the injustice of the Shoah by caring for these Jewish cemeteries as a means to honor the memory of the victims, who perished. More so, however, I see an opportunity to work towards reconciliation seeking to restore the broken relationship that remains among Jews and Christians.

Upon these considerations my study rests and will unfold hopefully discovering a means by which restoration may occur in the rift that separates Jew and Christian. In the Literature Review that follows in Chapter 2, I will demonstrate that there is a deficiency in the research that directly addresses a means of dealing with the conflicts and the challenges to dialogue that currently exists among Jew and Christian. In my examination and reading of the literature, I will begin from the shared Jewish and Christian perspective of their belief in the One True G-d; I will explore their accompanying moral teachings and ethical practices. I searched the literature for academic and theoretical parallels to these Jewish and Christian moral and ethical frameworks. Secondly, I will explore issues concerning anti-Semitism and how they factored into the development of Nazi ideology that advanced the Shoah. Finally, I will explore possible restorative paths, which may provide avenues to dialogue and possibly forgiveness and

reconciliation. Chapter 2 will capture the essence of my exploration of the literature and will summarize it around three primary, logical arguments: the construction (what should be), the destruction (what is) and the reconstruction (how to deal with what is).

Firstly, from biblical sources (e.g., Malachi 2:10) and in the literature (e.g. see, Telushkin, 2009; Weiman, 2008; Wolf, 2010s) it is argued that G-d reveals His character in every human being. Therefore, every man and woman is equal and worthy of dignity. For this reason men and women should treat each other as if they matter and as if they love each other. Nevertheless, many individuals reject such an idealistic view (e.g., Stenger, 2006) rather than embracing its practice (e.g., Purpel, 2008). Clearly, men and women often live in communities at odds with each other, at times divided deeply by embedded value and cultural differences, practices and beliefs. So, when considering what should be possible or expected in human interaction, does a common moral framework exist within which people may live their lives, understand each other, interrelate and resolve differences, so that they might live life with each other in peace? Wolf (2010s) points to the work of University of California anthropologist, Elvin Hatch, who delineated the concept of the “ubiquity of moral evaluation of behaviour (*sic*)” that exists across borders in global cultures (cited in, Wolf, 2010s, p. 9). Wolf views Hatch’s concept as “the core moral sense of humane human behavior” (p. 9).

Researchers and authors (e.g., Melé & Sánchez-Runde, 2013; Purpel, 2008; Stenger, 2006; Wolf, 2010a) indicate that there is a common, moral framework for humanity from which to live with our neighbors in the communities in which we live. The question becomes is there a standard moral code for humanity. Wolf (2010s) introduces an idea drawn from the work of Theodore Malloch, and establishes a model delineated by three virtues: faith, hope and charity. Instead of Wolf’s model of faith, charity, and hope, I see an ethical or moral template consisting

of justice, mercy and humility. Although some would question the source of these values, I argue that these moral values of Micah 6:8 are transcendent and universal and in themselves a moral standard. Therefore, I contend that the moral construction for life is to act justly/*justice*, to love mercy/*charity* and to walk humbly with God/*faithfulness*.

Secondly and in terms of dealing with the destruction of the Shoah today, Ash (2009) raises the question that we should ask ourselves about anti-Semitism in its run up to and in the aftermath of the Shoah: How will I respond? The genocide – the mass murder symbolized by Auschwitz did not arise overnight. It arose from long-standing conflict between Jews and Christians regarding the person of Jesus Christ (Bauer, 2001). During Hitler's rise to power, this issue along with other views of Jews was used to establish Nazi ideology, which ultimately led to the destruction of the Shoah. In contemporary parallel to the Shoah, Miroslav Volf (2000) asks: How could Christians in Rwanda "participate in or avert their eyes from . . . genocide" (p. 158) and additionally probes a similar question: "Why are Christians, the presumed agents of peace, at best impotent in the face of their people's conflicts and at worst perpetrators of the most heinous crimes" (p. 159)?

Furthermore, Waller (2007) examines the institutional church and how it and its agents shape a cultural climate "in which genocidal violence may occur;" he also addresses issues concerning how this culture "responds to such a culture both during and after the genocidal violence" (p. 139). Waller uses cases studies to examine these questions concerning genocide occurring in Christian cultures among which he addresses the Shoah. He notes that the Shoah or destruction occurred in Europe where at the time nearly 90% of Europeans considered themselves to be Christians and more so in Germany where "95% of Germans were baptized, taxpaying members of an established Christian church" (p. 140).

The Shoah was a tragic event that deeply impacted the Jewish community and significantly strained Jewish and Christian relations. It is difficult to understand completely why the Shoah occurred but it did. The question remains how should Christians respond? Karpen (2002) reasons that

In a sense, the slow pace of the Jewish-Christian dialogue has been due to the reluctance and inability of most Christians to recognize and understand the devastating extent of the rupture the Shoah created in the Christian faith. Christianity following the Shoah, even in Germany, attempted to pick up and continue as though no rupture had occurred and no transformation was required.

Christians cannot ignore the Shoah; they must remember and reconsider what should be their response. Remembering or the work of remembering is not cost-free, especially when we talk about mutually experienced trauma and collectively enacted wrongdoing, as in the Shoah. Judith Lewis Herman (cited in, Krondorfer, 2012, p. 308) writes that “remembering and telling the truth about terrible events are prerequisites both for the restoration of the social order and for the healing of individual victims.” I see a connection between her words and the Shoah, as it is one of the greatest tragic, moral and ethical failures in the history of humanity. I contend that remembering leads to action through dealing with the damage brought about by the oppressors. The scars still remain; nonetheless, restoration and healing may emerge.

Thirdly, confronting the injustice of the Shoah leads to what I call the construct of “reconstruction.” Karpen (2002) views ‘remembering’ as meaning “to put back together” (p. 9). I maintain that remembering is neither passive, nor reactive but remembering is a pro-active response to evil and its injustice. In other words, remembering leads to action as Krondorfer concludes, asserting that remembering should give birth to restoration and healing. Reconstruction requires us to remember the Shoah and confront its past by acting in the present, as a means to restore what was destroyed by the oppressors and thereby possibly bring healing.

Sadly, Christians are perceived by many Jews as oppressors, who have persecuted them since the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. I believe that Christians need to reconcile themselves with the fact of how they are perceived in the eyes of many Jews. Oftentimes, Christians do not think of reconciliation as coming to terms with their own personal response to the injustice of anti-Semitism or the tragedy of the Shoah. The Prophet Micah admonishes us to “act justly” (Micah 6:8), which is an indication that we are to respond to injustice by doing what is right or just – we cannot ignore injustice; we must confront it.

For this reason, I maintain that Christian response to the injustice of the Shoah should be to seek to restore their relationship with Jews. Weiman (2008) encourages us to fill “the void between and among us” with “the essential ingredient of hope” (p. 89). Restoration brings healing and hope by acting in such a way to do what is right by the Jewish community today. Reconstructing the broken relationship that exists among Jews and Christians should embrace forgiveness and to this end implies dialogue and cooperation. Shady and Larson (2010) point to the work of Martin Buber, who describes dialogue as a process, which allows a person to come to understand the position of another person, “while at the same time remaining rooted” in their own personal point of view (p. 82). According to Shady and Larson, Buber maintained that inclusion connects both the “interpersonal boundaries with the intellectual boundaries” (Shady & Larson, 2010, p. 82). In essence what Buber’s model does is to advocate “a shared reality where all partners in the dialogue come to understand each other’s position, even if they do not entirely agree with it” (Shady & Larson, 2010, p. 83).

Hoffman (2000) views Polish-Jewish interaction as “a kind of extended experiment in multiculturalism” and surmises “that some of the conflicts in Polish-Jewish history can be seen in terms of majority-minority tensions, rather than in terms of strong and specific anti-Semitism”

(p. 12). Mutual exclusion or “separateness” along with the inability “to create a common sphere of interests and concerns” seem to be major factors that impacted interaction between Jews and Christian Poles – Poles did not want to include Jews fully, while the majority of Jews desired to keep on being separate and maintain their identity as a “nation” (p. 17). Hoffman infers that Jew and Christian should work toward inclusion focusing upon the creation of a mutual “sphere of interests and concerns.” I advance the notion that this sphere of interaction may be termed as building a bridge of mercy or loving-kindness. It is through this bridge of mercy that Jew and Christian might join each other in committing acts of kindness that lead toward breaking the cycle of evil, leading to dialogue, forgiveness, and possibly reconciliation.

Conceptual and theoretical frameworks

Humanity lives on a planet devastated by evil, which may be exemplified by the total loss and horrors birthed through the Shoah. Consequently evil of such magnitude destroys relationships and builds walls or barriers creating a gulf, a chasm which separates men and women from each other. Clearly, such a gulf exists between Jews and Christians or among any group of people which has suffered an injustice at the hand of a neighbor or enemy in any ethnic conflict or strife. In order to navigate such an injustice and to explore in what ways is it possible to bridge the gap and bring Jew and Christian together, Micah 6:8 will serve as the conceptual framework for the study. Wolf (2010a) argues that the pattern of Micah 6:8 is “recognized as proper and good” (p. 122) throughout the world and throughout time by men and women irrespective of culture, ethnicity or tradition. It is grounded upon an unpretentious pattern of three verbs emphasizing “*doing, loving, and walking* – connected to three basic moral values – *justice, mercy, and humility*” (Hyman, 2005, p. 164). Although operationally mercy will be

explored in terms of loving acts (humane orientation, concern for others, compassion, charity and altruism), it will be mitigated to some degree by justice/*acting justly* or by doing what is right.

Wolf (2010a) argues that Micah 6:8 provides the “moral standard for humanity” (p. 14), while Andersen and Freedman (2000) consider this verse to be “rightly celebrated as the supreme definition of ethical religion” (cited in, Hyman, 2005, p. 157). Hyman also develops the concept that this verse contains “what should be the foundation of human behavior” (p. 164). Purpel (2008) surmises that people view Micah 6:8 and comparable “teachings as morally and pragmatically sound,” but points to evidence that people “have been extraordinarily unable – perhaps even unwilling – to act on them” in order to “make our world as loving and just as it needs to be” (p. 117).

The relevant connection that Micah 6:8 has to the work of The Matzevah Foundation in educating the public about the Shoah and caring for and restoring Jewish cemeteries in Poland, is that of mercy. The concept of mercy will be developed further in Chapter 2 (e.g., the Jewish concept of mercy and its academic expressions, such as humane orientation and altruism); nevertheless, what is important here is the Jewish understanding of mercy. In the original Hebrew the word for mercy that is found in Micah 6:8 is *chesed* and is translated as loving-kindness or simply caring (showing concern for others). To a Jew, based on the Torah and the *Halakhah*, caring for the dead is one of the highest expressions of love/mercy/loving-kindness because the dead cannot repay a person for their kindness shown to them (Telushkin, 2009). Therefore, for a Christian to demonstrate this type of mercy effectively builds a bridge to the Jewish community of principally Polish origin. Through the bridge of mercy, Christians may join Jews in a common mitzvah thereby fulfilling a religious requirement of the Torah and the *Halakhah*, which in this particular instance is seen as being one of the highest mitzvahs for a Jew

to perform. From Micah 6:8 and the Jewish concept of mercy, a moral construct emerges from which I may approach the Jewish community of Polish origins regarding dialogue.

Regarding the theoretical framework, this study will build on the work of Enright and other researchers, who have developed a four part model to assist “people [to] forgive” (cited in, Johnson, 2012, p. 130) and through loving acts break the cycle of evil which involves the following four phases: uncovering, decision, work, and deepening. Their theoretical construct may be modified and adapted to this study in the following ways:

Remembering (*uncovering*) means to recall or bring back to memory. It is important to remember the past and bring back to memory the history, heritage and culture of the Jewish people and the thousand year role that they have played in Polish and Jewish history. Through educating people about the Shoah, The Matzevah Foundation leads people to remember and then to act.

Restoring (*decision*) – by restoring Jewish cemeteries The Matzevah Foundation honors the past and impacts the present. As Christians we decide to deal with the painful past of the Shoah today seeking to bring Jew and Christian together in a common act of loving-kindness, a mitzvah to care for and restore Jewish cemeteries.

Forgiving (*work*) – in this stage the person who has suffered the injustice attempts to “understand (not condone) the victimizer’s background and motivation” (Johnson, 2012, p. 130). The key in this stage is absorbing pain. In a sense The Matzevah Foundation becomes intercessors between Jews – Jews of Polish descent and Christians. Even though Christians were not the initiators of the Shoah, they were neighbors in Poland (and other European countries), who were oftentimes anti-Semitic, ambivalent or unable to help their Jewish neighbors.

Understanding this complex situation is not easy; however, I find myself increasingly going to a place of suffering and "absorbing" the pain of the Shoah.

Reconciling (*deepening*) – the outcomes of forgiveness are for the person, who forgives, would be a deeper understanding of suffering, their “own need for forgiveness” and an appreciation for support found among friends and institutions such as congregations. Ultimately Johnson (2012) concludes that the forgiving person “may develop a new purpose in life and find peace” (p. 132). Connecting to this conclusion another outcome could possibly be reconciliation.

Experientially in my work, I have observed Enright’s model in practice. For example, memory (*uncovering*) leads to restorative acts. Restoring occurs when we as Christians associated with TMF *decided* to act justly and demonstrate mercy, i.e. do acts of loving-kindness through restoring Jewish cemeteries, we displayed God's love. Theoretically according to Enright, forgiveness (*work*) should emerge. I have not yet seen forgiveness expressed on a large scale by Polish Jews to their neighbors, to the Germans, or to me as a Christian. Nevertheless, I have seen personally how I have entered into dialogue with a Jew, as Christian. I have been asked many times, “Why would you a Christian, do this for us as Jews?” My answer is simply: Love. One potential outcome of forgiveness is reconciliation (*deepening*). According to one rabbi, with whom I am in dialogue, reconciliation is a difficult concept for a Jew to understand and embrace. Nevertheless, if forgiveness emerges among Jews and Christians, reconciliation could potentially emerge as well. If reconciliation is a potential outcome of the work of TMF then Jew and Christian may be able to discover, as Johnson (2012) considers, “new purpose in life and peace” (p. 132) with each other.

Significance of the study

According to Dr. Marc H. Ellis (2011), forgiveness is revolutionary when “justice is at the heart of reconciliation” and he considers that when this type of forgiveness ensues “a new history is created” in which an offense of one neighbor becomes an offense “against both” (p. 14). From such an understanding of reconciliation, “history experiences a healing” and hope emerges (p. 14). The Torah admonishes us in Deuteronomy 16:20 to pursue justice: “Justice (*tzedeck*), justice (*tzedeck*) you shall pursue.” Justice is to be mitigated by love, which means that the people of G-d are to be not just or morally upright but they are to be compassionate and to show concern for their neighbors – those around them oppressed by injustice. The nature of Jewish-Christian dialogue is complex and at times difficult; it is influenced by distinct theological differences, history and racism, all of which cannot be ignored and must be addressed. The continuum of Jewish Christian dialogue ranges from the non-existent dialogue, to limited and finally to full dialogue, as understood within the construct of *Dabru Emet* (speak truth).

This study will advance Enright’s theory of forgiveness and use it as a model to address and possibly overcome the evil of the Shoah and its deep-rooted influence on Jewish and Christian relations. Research will explore how mercy or acts of loving-kindness positively or negatively influence Jewish Christian dialogue. This study will be of potential value to the Jewish and Christian communities in terms of determining and outlining potential steps in facilitating Jewish and Christian dialogue, forgiveness and reconciliation. In terms of real dialogue this study will demonstrate potentially how to move beyond formal interfaith dialogue to a more organic interpersonal dialogue which could possibly embrace forgiveness and reconciliation. The study should originate findings that may be transferable to other fields of study dealing with interpersonal conflict, trauma, or other acts of injustice.

Definitions of key terms

As noted in the purpose statement above, mercy may operationalized and understood in terms of what Scott Peck considers “loving acts” (cited in, Johnson, 2012, p. 127); loving acts may be seen in terms of humane orientation, concern for others or compassion, charity and altruism. Concerning dialogue, James Karpen (2002) regards dialogue occurring on two levels: theoretical or macro. Pointing to the work of Novak (1998) and Cunningham and Star (1998), Karpen posits that interfaith dialogue transpires commonly “either on the theoretical level,” which contemplates prospective or appropriate theological issues, or it focuses “on the macro level,” in which discussion is conducted “among religious elites or denominations” (p. 4). I conclude the former is as theological discussion and the latter as an institutional interfaith discussion.

To clarify the meaning of dialogue it is important to note what it is not. Dialogue is not a discussion and is not centered on “making a decision” by ruling out options, which leads to “closure and completion” (Isaacs, 1999, p. 45). According to Isaacs the root connotation of decision plainly means to “murder the alternative” (p. 45). Dialogue on the other hand does not rule out options. Instead dialogue seeks to discover new options, which provide insight and a means by which to reorder knowledge “particularly the taken-for-granted assumptions that people bring to the table” (Isaacs, 1999, p. 45). Subsequently, I will consider dialogue to mean in this study as “a shared inquiry, a way of thinking and reflecting together” (Isaacs, 1999, p. 9). In this light Isaacs views dialogue as occurring in terms of a relationship with someone else. He contends that dialogue is not about our “effort to make [that person] understand us;” it is about people coming “to a greater understanding about [themselves] and each other” (p. 9). This sort of

interchange leads to new possibilities and outcomes that would challenge the existing status quo of Jewish and Christian relations.

According to Shady and Larson (2010), an operational understanding of dialogue may be derived from the work of Martin Buber, who, saw dialogue as a process, in which one person comes to understand the position of another person – the other, “while at the same time remaining rooted” in their own personal point of view (p. 82). Essentially these authors conclude that Buber’s model advocates “a shared reality where all partners in the dialogue come to understand each other’s position, even if they do not entirely agree with it” (Shady & Larson, 2010, p. 83). Forgiveness may be best understood when one person decides to forgive an offense or to cancel a debt of some offender. According to Newman (1987) “forgiveness is essentially a restorative process, an attempt to repair a breach in the relationship between two parties” (p. 157). If forgiveness is a restorative act it should lead to reconciliation which by its very nature means to restore a relationship to its original state (Newman, 1987, p. 157).

An operational understanding of forgiveness may be understood by combining two slightly differing definitions. Baskin and Enright (2004) define forgiveness “as the willful giving up of resentment in the face of another's (or others') considerable injustice and responding with beneficence to the offender even though that offender has no right to the forgiver's moral goodness” (p. 80). Waldron and Kelly (2008) also view forgiveness as a “relational process whereby harmful conduct is acknowledged by one or both partners; the harmed partner extends undeserved mercy to the perceived transgressor; one or both partners experience a transformation from negative to positive psychological states, and the meaning of the relationship is renegotiated, with the possibility of reconciliation” (cited in, Ross, 2010, p. 164).

Miroslav Volf (2000) considers reconciliation to have more than a theological meaning which most Christian theologians understand as the “reconciliation of the individual and God” (p. 162). Nevertheless, Volf maintains that justice should be understood “as a dimension of the pursuit of reconciliation, whose ultimate goal is a community of love” (p. 163). Furthermore, he reasons correctly that reconciliation has a vertical dimension (between G-d and humanity) and a horizontal dimension (among men and women) and concludes that without this “horizontal dimension reconciliation would simply not exist” (p. 166).

Assumptions

As I began this dissertation project, I have three primary themes which I think have emerged from my life in the photographs that I have made related to Poland that I have made over the past twenty-seven years and from my work related to caring for and restoring Jewish cemeteries in Poland. I see these themes as being: remembering, restoration, and reconciliation (or dialogue which could possibly lead to forgiveness and reconciliation). Recently, in the course of my initial research and review of the literature, I encountered the theme of liminal space or liminality, which defines the space between conflict and people or what may be termed no-man’s land. I think that through the research associated with this study that these themes will be validated by that data I obtain from the diverse group of people who will respond to my research inquiries. I may connect remembering, mercy/loving-kindness/caring, and dialogue (leading in time to forgiveness and reconciliation) to the academic literature.

As I noted earlier, remembering is important. Memory work is not cost-free, especially when we talk about mutually experienced trauma and collectively enacted wrongdoing, as in the Shoah. Judith Lewis Herman (as cited in Krondorfer, 2012, p. 308) writes that “remembering and telling the truth about terrible events are prerequisites both for the restoration of the social order

and for the healing of individual victims.” Remembering should lead to a compassionate response which is seen academically as humane orientation and “is the degree to which individuals in organizations or societies encourage and reward individuals for being fair, altruistic, friendly, generous, caring, and kind to others” (Javidan & Dastmalchian, 2009). Kabaskal and Bodur (2004) explain further that “this dimension is manifested in the way people treat one another and in the social programs institutionalized within each society” (p. 569). Simply stated humane orientation is concerned with the welfare of humanity.

Moreover, Judaism, Islam and Christianity, see G-d as the “ultimate” source of “goodness” and requires “humane-orientated behaviors and doing good to others” (Kabaskal & Bodur, 2004, p. 565). I may link the concept of humane orientation with the Jewish concern for humanity as Soloveitchik (as cited in Wyschogrod, 1986, para. 10) postulates that Jews have always been part of humanity and are for this reason “committed to the general welfare and progress of mankind,” desiring to combat disease and “in alleviating human suffering, in protecting man's rights, in helping the needy, etcetera.” I would also like to connect humane orientation with the Jewish concept of mercy or *chesed* or *chesed shel-emet* (חסד של אמת) meaning literally "kindness of truth" or true loving-kindness (Sienna, 2006).

This type of kindness shows concern or care for others; furthermore, we understand this sort of kindness as compassion. The Jewish Talmud considers compassion to be “the hallmark of an ethical person” and it “is *the* defining characteristic of being a Jew” (Telushkin, 2006, p. 20). By being merciful or compassionate, we demonstrate that we care for what was important to someone else, which could be an injustice, a misdeed, or an emotional pain. The best way to show compassion is through a loving deed – an act of kindness in an attempt to make right what was wrong. In so doing, we are able to display the character and heart of G-d.

Healing emerges when we remember and enter into the pain of those who suffered an injustice. Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel wrote (as cited in Heschel, 2001, para. 5-6):

“There is immense silent agony in the world, and *the task of man is to be a voice for the plundered poor*, to prevent the desecration of the soul and the violation of our dream of honesty. The more deeply immersed I became in the thinking of the prophets, the more powerfully it became clear to me what *the lives of the Prophets sought to convey: that morally speaking, there is no limit to the concern one must feel for the suffering of human beings*, that *indifference to evil is worse than evil itself*, that in a free society, some are guilty, but all are responsible.”

We are responsible to deal with evil and its aftermath. One difficult issue that I have encountered in my work of caring for and restoring Jewish cemeteries in Poland is indifference. It is not an “indifference to evil” that Heschel has in mind; nevertheless, it is apathy or a lack of concern. I find indifference among Jews of Polish origins and Christians. To the Jew caring for the dead, which includes caring for a cemetery, is not optional. To do so is to obey the Torah and by so doing fulfill what is known as a mitzvah. According to Rabbi Heschel (as cited in Eckstein, 1984, p. 66), “the central issue in Judaism is the mitzvah, the sacred act.” So, Heschel is saying that “the task of man is to be a voice” for those who have no voice. The Jews who were exterminated during the Shoah have no voice, so where is the concern?

The Jewish Prophets, such as Micah and Hosea spoke about to the issue of mercy – literally the concern for others. The person of Jesus Christ, a Jewish rabbi, also unquestionably spoke to the importance of mercy. Jesus taught that keeping the Torah is important; however, he emphasized that observing it should be done without “neglecting the more important matters of the Law: justice, mercy and faithfulness” (Matthew 23:23). Jesus also pointed to what the Prophet Hosea (Hoshea) wrote of G-d, “For I desire mercy (loving-kindness), not sacrifice, and acknowledgment of G-d rather than burnt offerings (Hosea 6:6).” What I see here is a connection

between memory and concern; in my mind these two concepts are insuperably linked to each other. I cannot be a bystander when I see or recall an injustice; I must act compassionately.

I think that the Jewish concept of *Dabru Emet*, which means in Hebrew “speak the truth to one another” (Steinfels, 2000, para. 2) relates very well and positively to the dynamic of Jewish and Christian dialogue. *Dabru Emet* is a public declaration made “by more than 150 rabbis and Jewish scholars” representing “all branches of Judaism – Reform, Conservative, Orthodox and Reconstructionist” (Steinfels, 2000, para. 12); nevertheless, it is “not an official statement by any recognized Jewish body” (Karpen, 2002, p. 179). Through *Dabru Emet* some Jews acknowledge that “Nazism was not a Christian phenomenon” (“Dabru Emet: A Jewish statement on Christians and Christianity,” 2000, para. 5). I also encountered a remarkable statement:

Christians know and serve G-d through Jesus Christ and the Christian tradition. Jews know and serve G-d through Torah and the Jewish tradition. That difference will not be settled by one community insisting that it has interpreted Scripture more accurately than the other; nor by exercising political power over the other. Jews can respect Christians' faithfulness to their revelation just as we expect Christians to respect our faithfulness to our revelation. Neither Jew nor Christian should be pressed into affirming the teaching of the other community (“Dabru Emet: A Jewish statement on Christians and Christianity,” 2000, par. 6).

Lastly, I assume that dialogue among Jews and Christians is possible and will be a mutual exchange of truth based on Martin Buber’s concept of dialogue in which both parties may express their ideas about what is true to them and which will advocate “a shared reality where all partners in the dialogue come to understand each other’s position, even if they do not entirely agree with it” (Shady & Larson, 2010, p. 83). This dialogue will be facilitated by mercy or acts of loving-kindness which bridges the chasm between Jew and Christian allowing them to meet in a third space – a liminal space in which they may cooperate mutually in common mitzvah which is one of the highest expressions of mercy/care/charity/loving-kindness that a Jew may perform.

Methodology

This study will be conducted as a qualitative case study of the work of the Matzevah Foundation employing a purposeful sampling method which will select specific people who have interacted with or who have had contact with The Matzevah Foundation and its work in Poland or in the United States. The Matzevah Foundation embraces in its Jewish cemetery restoration projects a diverse group of volunteers including Polish Jews, Jews of Polish descent, Polish Catholics, Evangelical Christians and non-believers. Project participants are not just American but are international residing not only in Poland but are from countries such as Germany, Austria, the Ukraine and Israel. The Matzevah Foundation also works with community and governmental leaders in Poland and has developed collaborative partnerships with Jewish institutions in the United States and Poland. What connects this diverse group of people primarily is the work of caring for a neglected Jewish cemetery in Poland. Typically volunteers are involved in intensive week of work in which they experience first-hand the loss of the Shoah by cleaning or removing debris and restoring some aspect of the cemetery. Usually, volunteers spend free time together, such as going for coffee or in structured seminars where difficult issues are explored.

Sources of data for this case study will be derived from direct observations of participants, interviews, participant-observation, and documents/artifacts such as printed articles, TMF board minutes, photographs, TMF webpage, emails and lastly personal reflective journals. Ideally a case study should interview roughly twelve to fourteen people. I will interview four board members of The Matzevah Foundation along with two members of the advisory board. These six people, who are associated with The Matzevah Foundation, are all Christians. Since I am considering using the focus group as a means to interview a group, I would like to form one

focus group containing four participants. I see two possibilities. One possible focus group will consist of international, first-time participants, who will be new to the work of The Matzevah Foundation. More than likely, I will select a group of four Jewish partners who are leaders in the Jewish community and live in Warsaw and with whom I work most closely. Finally, I would like to interview two Jewish leaders individually: the Chief Rabb of Poland and the Chief Rabbi of The Temple in Atlanta, Georgia.

Through inquiry of the interaction of Jew and Christian within the construct [third space or liminal space] of the work of The Matzevah Foundation I will seek to understand how *gemilut chesed* or acts of loving-kindness (mercy) influence attitudes and create mutual bridges of understanding as the underpinning for dialogue. Principally I will be studying the responses of people individually and corporately to open-ended questions about their experience in working with The Matzevah Foundation in its educational initiatives and its Jewish cemetery restoration projects in Poland. Focus groups will be employed, which Moloney (2011) identifies as a “sacred container,” (p. 71) that functions as a transformative, liminal space in which Jew and Christian may interact and dialogue more freely about critical issues confronting them. Organic inquiry will be also utilized allowing the exploration of moral (ethical), spiritual or theological questions confronting Jews and Christians that directly impact their dialogue.

Limitations of the study

Primarily, the limitations of this study, which could potentially restrict the outcome of the study, will be:

1. The study is limited by the availability, transparency, and honesty of the participants.
2. Language and cultural issues may limit the study.
3. The study may be limited by my own personal bias.

First of all, this is a qualitative study, in which I will be using open-ended questions for the purpose of interviews individually and corporately. Since response of participants which will be reflective in nature, some responses may be irrelevant and obscure. Moreover, some participants may not be as forthcoming with their responses. Secondly, language and cultural barriers may be factors for participants due to the fact that some participants will be international students among whom English will not be their first language. Interview questions for individuals and/or focus groups will be prepared in English primarily. Nevertheless and if necessary for Polish participants, translations of interview questions will be provided in order to facilitate the interview and discussion process for the researcher. Differing cultural values may impact the operational understanding of mercy. Both language and cultural issues may also produce weak data or potentially the data could be suspect or may not be strong enough weakening the validity of the study.

Finally, as the researcher, I will be a participant observer and it must be noted that I am deeply involved in the work of TMF, as its president and chief executive officer. Consequently my personal bias may limit this study; nevertheless, I have taken several strategic steps to overcome my bias and thereby ensure the credibility and trustworthiness of this study. I will address bias issues and how I plan to overcome them more explicitly in Chapter 3, in the section titled: validation strategies.

Delimitations of the study

The delimitations for this study will be:

1. The Matzevah Foundation will be used as the case that I am exploring for this study.
2. Participants will be purposefully selected based on their knowledge of TMF and its work.

First of all, since I am the founder and president/CEO of TMF I have great knowledge of its history and activities. As I have shared previously, TMF grew out of my work with the Jewish community of Poland in caring for and restoring Jewish cemeteries. My formal cooperation with the Jewish community of Poland began in March of 2005. In December 2010, I established TMF with a group of Christians, with whom I had been cooperating in caring for and restoring Jewish cemeteries since 2005. Furthermore, due to my role I have developed considerable trust and credibility with the Jewish community of Poland. Consequently, I have direct access to the Jewish community and to the work of TMF. Nonetheless, my access will not be misused and I plan to secure formal consent from any individual that I plan to interview individually or corporately from the Jewish community or TMF.

Secondly, sampling for this case study will be purposeful meaning that I will choose specific Jews and Christians, who have interacted with the work of TMF in some capacity whether in Poland, the United States (US), or elsewhere, will be selected. The selection of these participants will be based on the criterion as to selecting the participants, who have the best information about TMF. Interviews and focus groups will be conducted in Poland and the US and will be conducted either in the context of a Jewish cemetery restoration project or in a church, synagogue or an institution with whom TMF interacts. Some participants will be selected for individual interviews, while other individuals will be interviewed within the construct of a focus group.

Summary

The Shoah and its evil undermined and stressed an already tense and difficult relationship between the Jewish and Christian communities. A means to bridge the gap and open a significant dialogue is needed that could lead to forgiveness and possibly reconciliation. This case study will

explore how Jews and Christians respond to the work of The Matzevah Foundation. By inquiry of the interaction of Jew and Christian within the construct of the work of The Matzevah Foundation and its work of caring for and restoring Jewish cemeteries in Poland, I will seek to understand how *gemilut chesed* or acts of mercy/loving-kindness influence attitudes and create mutual bridges of understanding, which may serve as the underpinning for dialogue. The Hebrew understanding of mercy as seen Micah 6:8 along with its concomitant academic counterparts will serve as the conceptual framework for the study. Additionally, this study will advance Enright's theory of forgiveness and use it as a model to address and possibly overcome the evil of the Shoah and its deep-rooted influence on Jewish and Christian relations.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The purpose of this literature review will be to demonstrate the lack of research, which currently exists directly addressing a means of dealing with the conflict and the challenging dialogue that exists between Jew and Christian presently. This literature review will explore issues surrounding the conflict and will explore concepts that might serve in bridging the rift in dialogue amid Jews and Christians. Conceptually, I see a relationship connecting my research problem with the literature; I will demonstrate this linkage by a three-fold construct: the construction/a moral standard (what should be), the deconstruction or destruction of the Shoah and its impact on Jewish-Christian dialogue (what is), and the reconstruction/a means to restore Jewish-Christian dialogue (how to deal with what is). Consequently, I will explore academic parallels to a moral standard seeking an ethical framework from which to address the rift in Jewish-Christian dialogue. Secondly, I will focus on factors, such as anti-Semitism and Nazi ideology that have contributed to the conflict in Jewish and Christian relations. Finally, I will explore paths of restoration, which could facilitate Jewish-Christian dialogue.

In my search of the literature, I discovered seven qualitative articles examining Jewish-Christian relations, one study addressing Jewish-Christian dialogue, and a dissertation that considered reconciliation. Additionally, I found three quantitative studies concerning Jewish-Christian relations. As viewed from an academic, Jewish, and Christian perspective, the literature review will be delimited primarily to the ethical consideration of a moral standard with regards to caring for others and as it directly relates to dialogue, forgiveness and reconciliation.

This review will examine and interpret factors that inhibit and/or promote Jewish-Christian dialogue such as the Shoah and the Christian response to it (including Anti-Semitism and its historical and contemporary versions), loving acts (mercy/loving-kindness), humane orientation (from GLOBE Study), altruism, , and the continuum of Jewish-Christian dialogue. The review will also consider in what ways liminality or liminal space creates a third space, a neutral zone facilitating dialogue and it will explore aspects of forgiveness along with a model for forgiveness, which might lead possibly to reconciliation or the potential for some type of healing in the rift amongst Jews and Christians allowing for significant and meaningful Jewish-Christian dialogue.

Purpose and organization

Jewish-Christian relations have been strained since the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. The events of the Shoah have only deepened and extended the chasm that exists between Jew and Christian. Some groups of Jews and Christians (e.g., Christians & Jews, 2009) have entered dialogue on a formal and primarily institutional level, as represented by the International Council of Christians and Jews (ICCCJ). Other groups have entered an interfaith dialogue more so locally via inter-congregational educational programs (e.g., Karpen, 2002; O'Keefe, 2010), while some individual Jews and Christians are pursuing dialogue (e.g., Karpen, 2002). By and large among many Jews the common perception is that Christians are somehow culpable for the injustice committed against them by Nazi Germany and as such, ostensibly have no desire to enter into to dialogue with Christians. How might Christians bridge this gulf and overcome such a perception and deal with the injustice of the Shoah? How might Christians open a dialogue with Jews which could possibly lead to forgiveness and reconciliation? These questions broadly frame the issue that I would like to explore in my study concerning Jewish-Christian dialogue.

Focusing more narrowly, my research embraces the question: How have Jews and Christians responded to the work of The Matzevah Foundation (TMF)? This question may apparently seem unconnected to the issue at hand; however, it is highly relevant. The research concerning TMF centers on a means of developing and enriching dialogue that could possibly lead to forgiveness and reconciliation amid these two dissimilar entities. I believe that Jews and Christians can come to terms with the past pain related to the Shoah by confronting, acknowledging and overcoming its evil through “loving acts.” Scott Peck argues that “loving acts can overcome evil” (cited in, Johnson, 2012, p. 127). As a result of intentional, overt actions of compassion and kindness, the possibility of forgiveness may emerge, ultimately leading to dialogue and possibly even reconciliation. My dissertation will explore the responses of Jews and Christians to mercy as the language that opens dialogue and the organization that I lead, TMF will illustrate that dialogue.

The review will present three primary arguments as the basis for the proposed study: the construction (what should be), the deconstruction/destruction (what is), and the reconstruction (how to deal with what is). Firstly the construction embraces Micah 6:8 as the moral standard and behavior pattern for humanity and is characterized by acting justly, loving mercy and walking humbly before G-d). Secondly, the deconstruction or the destruction of the Shoah deeply impacted the Jewish community and has significantly tainted the interaction of Jews and Christians. Consequently Christians should contemplate how they could respond to the injustice of the Shoah. Thirdly, remembering the injustice of the Shoah should lead to the compassionate act of restoration. The Christian response should act to restore their relationship with Jews seeking forgiveness and working towards the possibility of reconciliation.

Construction

It is my conviction that life on this planet has meaning and purpose. Jewish and Christian traditions share a common belief in the One True G-d and believe that He created humanity and placed men and women on this planet to live and work with each other towards forming and maintaining community. Rabbi Joseph Telushkin (2009) connects this understanding with the commandment to “love our neighbor” due to the fact that “*all* human beings are created by God” and for this reason human beings are interrelated as “one extended family” (p. 10). From the Talmud we read one of the questions the rabbis raised: “Why, when the world was created, did God create just one man and one woman?” Racelle Weiman (2008), in her article cites their answer: “So that humankind understands that we all come from a single union, to teach us that we are all sisters and brothers, and that no one is greater than any other” (p. 91). The Tanakh (Hebrew Bible or Old Testament) asks this question similarly in Malachi 2:10: “Have we not all one Father? Did not one God create us?”

On this unique sphere – this globe, we live as human beings in community, in a relationship with G-d and each other. For this reason, Weiman determines that we share a “common lineage,” in which each man and woman “is created in the divine image” and is an acknowledgment of the fact that “God's presence is illuminated in each individual” (p. 91). G-d reveals his character in every human being; therefore every man and woman is equal and worthy of dignity and for this reason we should treat each other as if we matter and as if we love one another. Nevertheless, such an idealistic view is rejected, not embraced or practiced.

We live in a broken world, one filled with war and conflict, pain and despair. Clearly this is evident especially as viewed in the aftermath of some of the most heinous crimes humanity has perpetrated against itself, such as the so called “ethnic cleansings” of Kosovo, or the genocides,

which occurred in Armenia in the course of the First World War, Europe during the Second World War, and Rwanda, late in the last century. In this world men and women live in communities at odds with each other oftentimes divided deeply by embedded value and cultural differences, practices and beliefs. Does a common moral ground exist by which people may live their lives, understand each other, interrelate and resolve differences, so that they might live life with each other in peace?

Weiman once more speaks to us encouraging us to fill “the void between and among us” with “the essential ingredient of hope” (Weiman, 2008, p. 89). Hope is not something fleeting or wishful thinking. It is an expectation, a confidence of better things to come. Since humanity lives life on this planet corporately, I believe embedded within us are a common set of moral values – literally a moral compass and guidance system, which assists us determine right from wrong in concert with determining appropriate actions or right behaviors. As will be demonstrated, the academic literature supports such a possibility. Although among researchers, there are disagreements and arguments as to its universality, subjectivity and its source or origins, it is clear from the literature that numerous, ubiquitous moral values are shared across cultures throughout the world.

Since human beings do not live in a vacuum but are interrelated, love or concern for others is a fundamental expression of humanity. University of Hawaii professor, Dr. Victor Stenger (2006) is one who rejects the notion that moral values can only originate from G-d. He accurately affirms that even across diverse cultures and beliefs humanity agrees “on a common set of moral standards;” even though differences are evident, he concludes that “universal norms seem to exist” (p. 2). Dr. Thom Wolf (2010s) in his article regarding change in progress-prone and progress-resistant cultures, echoes Stenger’s conclusion and points to the work of University

of California anthropologist, Elvin Hatch, who delineated the concept of the “ubiquity of moral evaluation of behavior (sic)” that exists across borders in global cultures (cited in, Wolf, 2010s, p. 9). Wolf views Hatch’s concept as “the core moral sense of humane human behavior” (p. 9). Moreover, Wolf employs Hatch’s four dimensions regarding change across cultures as a basis for constructing his template of social change and development. Two of Wolf’s conclusions regarding Hatch’s (cited in, Wolf, 2010s, p. 9) dimensions are valuable with regards to establishing a common moral standard. Wolf concludes (p. 9):

1. There is a humanistic standard, a generally approved set of normative human principles for life and societal flourishing. These normative principles yield a, “humanistic standard” for humane conduct: health not illness, prosperity not poverty, peace not conflict, dignity not disrespect, truthfulness not deceit, integrity not corruption.
2. There is considerable agreement on the core dimensions of a moral society. There is, as Hatch points out, a “considerable portion” of humanity which agrees to this basic moral standard.

Beyond the common moral core, Wolf (2010s) introduces the concept of the “J-shaped spiritual capital” (p. 8), which is an idea drawn from the work of Theodore Malloch, a professor at Yale University. Wolf states (p. 8):

[Malloch] argues that historically, the spiritual capital of Protestant business persons focuses on the three virtues of faith, hope, and charity. The Jesus-shaped *worshipview*, says Malloch, yields a worldview triad of leadership discipline (faith), social compassion (charity), and persevering justice (hope).

Instead of a Wolf’s worldview triad of faith, charity, and hope, I see mirrored in these values, an ethical or moral template consisting of justice, mercy and humility, which are clearly evident and expressed in Micah 6:8. Although some would question the source of these values, I believe that these three values and their associated behaviors are transcendent and ubiquitous. The Jewish prophet Micah conveys G-d’s requirements for moral life – how life should be lived on this earth. In Micah 6:8, we discover:

He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.

Therefore, I contend that the moral construction for life is to act justly/*justice*, to love mercy/*charity* and to walk humbly with G-d/*faithfulness*. From Matthew 23:23, we see how Jesus Christ echoes this moral understanding in his interpretation of what he describes as by living in this manner, we may focus upon “the more important matters of the Law.”

What G-d requires

As stated and by what will be demonstrated in this review, I postulate that Micah 6:8 is the moral construction for life. The pattern of the construct is to act justly, love mercy and walk humbly; it is a means by which we may live morally and be ethical in our dealings with each other. I think that this moral construct provides the critical element for us in our journey of understanding and developing an ethical or moral standard for our lives and offers us a template to address the injustice of anti-Semitism and the destruction of the Shoah. Ethics are not simply theoretical or abstract concepts to guide living; ethics provide practical principles, which should inform our behavior, i.e. what we actually do. I am certain that Micah 6:8 declares what G-d requires of us. My premise is that we are to act justly – do what is right no matter what; however, our ethic should be transformed by what we believe, by our worship and adoration of G-d, especially by how we live our lives in relationship to others.

Jeremiah, the Jewish prophet interprets and applies the moral principles found in Micah 6:8 to life quite practically. Jeremiah declares in Chapter 7, verses 5-7:

If you really change your ways and your actions and deal with each other justly, if you do not oppress the alien, the fatherless or the widow and do not shed innocent blood in this place, and if you do not follow other gods to your own harm, then I will let you live in this place, in the land I gave your forefathers for ever and ever.

We may conclude that the moral principles delineated above are:

1. Do not live as you are; change your ways and actions and deal with each other justly.
2. Do not oppress the weak, or shed innocent blood; show mercy, care/love for others.
3. Do not follow other gods; let your walk be faithful to the One True G-d.

A tripartite pattern for morality

When considering the scope and range of issues contained in the Bible, this simple verse found in Micah 6:8 has been a source of inspiration to the world for nearly 3,000 years.

Subsequently, Hyman (2005) echoes this conclusion by asserting that “many people regard this verse as a high point in religious and moral thought” (p. 157). Andersen and Freedman (2000) consider Micah 6:8 to be “rightly celebrated as the supreme definition of ethical religion” (cited in, Hyman, 2005, p. 157). Hyman also advances the notion in his article that this verse contains “what should be the foundation of human behavior” (p. 164). Wolf (2010a), on the other hand, categorically argues that this verse provides the “moral standard for humanity” (p. 14).

Hyman (2005) states that the rabbis, who wrote the Talmud, determined that Micah 6:8 “by virtue of its three principles of doing justice, loving mercy, and walking humbly with God,” captured the essence of the 613 commandments in the *Halakhah* (p. 157). Wolf (2010a) traces the etymology of the Hebrew word, *halakhah* (also transliterated as *halakah* and *halakoth*) stating that it originates from the Hebrew root, *halakot* means “ways of the oral tradition” and is associated with the word *halak*, which describes “how one should walk;” furthermore, Wolf explains that the purpose of the *halakhah* “was to define Jewish identity in contrast to the surrounding nations” (p. 32). According to Hyman (2005) the core of Micah 6:8 is based on a tripartite pattern of a simple string of three verbs emphasizing “*doing, loving, and walking* – connected to three basic moral values – *justice, mercy, and humility*,” which “make it comprehensible and easy to remember” (p. 164). Hyman concludes:

The three verbs indicate deliberate human actions and are different from verbs that represent involuntary actions such as breathing, crying, and sneezing. The series of three pairs of ‘a verb tied to a moral value’ creates an appealing poetic rhythm. Together, they constitute a series that is a moral guideline for behavior among humans; a goal worth striving for (p. 164).

In his dissertation, Wolf (2010a) traces the development and transmission of this tripartite pattern of teaching established upon the core values of Micah 6:8, which he terms as “threefold prophetic moral standard for humanity” (p. 119). Based on the work of Seeberg (1903), Carrington (1940) and Bultman (1942/1995) he postulates that the early Christian Church received such a pattern from its Jewish roots and elaborates further on this pattern:

The beginning place to look into the pattern of teaching of the primitive church for Carrington (1940) is the spiritual instruction/*torah* among the Jews, an instruction connected not with theological or speculative knowledge, but with the Law of God/*torah*, with the wisdom/*hokmah* that comes from fearing the Lord, the God Most High, and with commendable behavior or walking/*halakhah* (p. 3). *Torah* was oral, traditional, and semi-ritual. Its teachers were fathers to their sons, or those who were as spiritual fathers: elders or rabbis who professed a spiritual genealogical descent or succession and exercised divine authority (as cited in, Wolf, 2010a, p. 49).

Wolf again moves deeper into pursuing the origins of this pattern of teaching based on justice, mercy and humility, which “David Wenham (1995), Oxford University, designates as ‘creation standards’ (p. 222; see also Balch, 1992; Bock, 1974; Brown, 1991; Demarest, 1982; Dewick, 1953)” (as cited in, Wolf, 2010a, p. 119). Wolf traces the “creations standards” – this seminal code or pattern back to Rabbi Simon Justus (ca. 200 B.C.). In the *Pirke Aboth* (*Ethics of the Fathers*) Rabbi Justus would say, “On three things the world is stayed: on the *torah*, and on worship, and on the bestowal of kindness” (1:2) (cited in, Wolf, 2010a, p. 120). According to Wolf, Selwyn (1946) made an important discovery and revealed an important clue linking the Jewish pattern of Torah instruction to the Jewish-Christian pattern of instruction to the New Testament. Wolf quotes Selwyn’s statement completely:

The principle of Doctrine–Worship–Good Works had been enunciated long before by the celebrated Rabbi Simon Justus, who used to say “On three things the world is stayed; on the *torah*, and on the Worship, and on the bestowal of Kindness”; and it is the clue to much that we find in the New Testament epistles (as cited in, Wolf, 2010a, p. 120).

Selwyn’s pattern of doctrine, worship and good works is a reformulation of Rabbi Justus’ “affirmation that on the three things of the *torah*, the worship, and the bestowal of kindness, the world is grounded” (cited in, Wolf, 2010a, p. 120); as Selwyn (1946) stated above, “it is the clue to much that we find in the New Testament epistles” (cited in, Wolf, 2010a, p. 122).

What is important here for us to consider is the conceptual link situated in the tripartite template, which connects Judaism with Christianity. The moral standard or “creation pattern” is evident in Rabbi Justus’ concept of *torah*, worship, and the bestowal of kindness; it is evident in the teaching of Jesus regarding Micah 6:8: justice, mercy, and humility and it is apparent in the teaching of the New Testament epistles, composed by Paul, Peter and James. The continuity of the tripartite pattern linking Judaism and Christianity is beyond the scope of this study; nevertheless, what is essential here for us to consider, is that Jesus, who was also a rabbi, positioned “Micah’s moral mark as the central weighty valuation of life” (Wolf, 2010a, p. 122). According to Wolf, Jesus’ teaching in Matthew 23:23 captures the essence of a moral standard expressed by Micah 6:8.

Without naysaying the value of tithing, Jesus unqualifiedly gave the overriding heaviest weight to the threefold creation standard, not the tithed seed kernels. The religious leaders had neglected and Jesus repositioned the “heavier/more important things of the *torah*” (Matt 23:23; Bromiley, 1985, pp. 95-96). To Jesus, justice, mercy, and faithfulness before God always carry weight.

For those of us, who are Christians – who are followers of Jesus, this moral connection that Jesus made is vital for us to keep in view because he advances the tripartite moral pattern of Judaic thought and teaching and connects it with Christianity. Christianity may be rooted

therefore in Judaism. This common Jewish-Christian moral pattern could serve as a basis for dealing with the destruction of the Shoah.

Tripartite pattern: toward a just and humane society

One thing is clear in the aftermath of the Shoah, the Christian church was deeply dismayed by the horrible evils and mass murder committed by Nazi Germany “against Jews in Christian-dominated Europe” (Christians & Jews, 2009, p. 2). How could the mass murder of the Jews and other innocent people take place in a primarily Christian culture predicated upon the Two Great Commandments: love of G-d and love of neighbor? This question will be addressed further in the following section titled: Destruction, page #. But what is important here to realize that something was morally amiss among the majority of Christians, which allowed them to stand by idly and do nothing. By their implicit approval and inaction, they enabled Hitler and his government to carry out systematically their schemes of persecution, destruction, and extermination of their Jewish neighbors. Despite the mass and benign complicity, some Christians intervened and at great risk rescued their Jewish neighbors. Why?

In their article, International Council of Christians and Jews (2009) conclude that from studies of the rescuers “during the Shoah” indicate that people need “moral education” (p. 16). More so, people need to be instructed morally beginning at an early age principally in the context of a family, so that “concern for the other must become a deeply ingrained, natural response” (p. 16). I may infer, therefore, and argue that what was lacking amid the Christian culture of Europe was concern for others, which allowed Hitler to manipulate the Christian masses in such a manner that they tacitly allowed him nearly to exterminate European Jewry. Hence, I may conclude that what is missing in societies around the globe today in which hatred, racism, and

genocide arises is an ubiquitous moral pattern that would ensure, inhibit, or even eliminate such maladies along with the unjust treatment of the other.

Purpel (2008) addresses the “hidden curriculum” found in education as conveyed in “the implicit values and attitudes that are being communicated to students” (p. 115). He argues that society’s pursuit of excellence leads to a fixation on competitive outcomes, consumerism and hierarchal struggles which only serve the individual’s goals in the pursuit of social status and economic gains. Purpel contrasts such educational views with those advanced by the Prophet Micah, who “urges us to seek justice, loving-kindness, reverence, and joy,” which leads ultimately to an educational experience that develops “students, who are morally responsible, dwell in community, seek justice, and care for others” (p. 115). What is salient here is not reforming the educational system of schools in the United States and other countries. Instead, what is significant is how the values of Micah 6:8 lead to the pursuit of excellence and what is best for society.

Consequently, Purpel asks us to consider the question, underlying Micah 6:8: “What is the moral good and how are we to act morally” (p. 116)? Micah does not actually ask this question; nonetheless, he provides an answer stating that men and women are to act justly, love mercy and walk humbly before G-d. Such a view of morality is contested by other ideas concerning what determines or defines the values of justice, mercy and humility.

Purpel raises two issues regarding the practical application of the values and behaviors of Micah 6:8. Firstly, it is possible to work “toward a society permeated with loving-kindness, justice, and humility” (p. 117). Secondly, some people embrace the basic moral construct of the teaching of Micah “but reject it because it seems impossible to achieve or (even more troubling) because they deny its validity, implicitly or otherwise” (p. 117). Purpel concludes that although

throughout history numerous people generally acknowledge the teachings of Micah 6:8 and those similar to it as being sound and pragmatic moral teachings. Nevertheless, according to him, the evidence suggests that people have been either incapable or reluctant to put these values and behaviors into action concluding that “we have been taught a very good lesson, but we have not learned it very well” (p. 117).

Contemporary expressions of moral standards

Ethics and morals are closely related concepts. Ethics are defined classically as judging or determining “whether human behavior is right or wrong” (Johnson, 2012, p. xxi). Ethics are principles that guide and govern human behavior. Morals on the other hand are “specific standards of right and wrong” (Johnson, 2012, p. xxi). How do we determine whether our moral or ethical behavior is right or wrong? Although we can recognize good and bad behavior around us, we cannot subjectively determine what is right or wrong. Globally we see what is considered taboo in one country may be accepted practice in another. In the literature do we encounter a moral or ethical standard? If so, how are judgments made about right and wrong behavior?

Cultural diversity and universal ethics

In their article Melé and Sánchez-Runde (2013) present arguments for developing universal global ethics for business in a culturally diverse world. They note initially that Donaldson (1996), Jhingran (2001), Frederick (2002), Vendemiati (2008) and others consider differences in moral judgments and perceptions throughout world cultures. These differences produce tension between what they term “moral universalism” and “moral cultural relativism” (cited in, Melé & Sánchez-Runde, 2013, p. 681). Moral universalism is seen in terms of “universal ethical principles or standards,” while moral cultural relativism is viewed as “local or

cultural ethical norms” as being “the exclusive source of ethical standards” (p. 681). Krausz (1989) contends that moral relativism is favored among some ethicists whereas other ethicists reject a relativistic morality and embrace moral universalism (as cited in, Melé & Sánchez-Runde, 2013, p. 682). Donaldson (1996) and Gowans (2012) represent a third group of ethicists, who advocate a balanced position between these ethical view points and propose “a set of basic ethical values or principles, and particular cultural norms;” on the other hand, other ethicists within this third group such as Küng (1998) and ITC (2009) wish to discover an “empirical or philosophical bases to promote global ethics” (cited in, Melé & Sánchez-Runde, 2013, p. 682).

A critical need for common ethical core values exists. According to Bok (2002) if nations desire to develop a common basis creating cross-cultural dialogue and consider global issues, then it is imperative to determine, “which basic values can be shared across cultural boundaries” (cited in, Melé & Sánchez-Runde, 2013, p. 682). Bok is not alone in advocating common values as The International Theological Commission (ITC) (2009) promotes common ethical values and praises those, who seek them, noting that “only the recognition and promotion of these ethical values can contribute to the construction of a more human world” (cited in, Melé & Sánchez-Runde, 2013, p. 682). Furthermore the ITC advocates that successful efforts toward developing common values globally must rely upon establishing a sound rudimentary agreement concerning “the goods and values that represent the most profound aspirations” of humanity (cited in, Melé & Sánchez-Runde, 2013, p. 682).

Melé and Sánchez-Runde (2013) outline and examine in their article five papers concerning universal ethics and cultural diversity presented at a symposium covering the topic: “Universal Ethics, Cultural Diversity, and Globalization” (p. 682). The authors selected these papers because they deal with moral diversity as an argument for moral relativism, the presence

of globally shared values, the validity of universal ethical theories in a developing global world, natural law from a global perspective and human rights as an argument for proposing global business standards. They begin with the statement that moral diversity is universally endorsed while moral relativism is rejected by many. Moral relativists argue against ethical objectivity and universal ethical standards and believe that the “only source of truth for morality is each cultural context” (p. 682). The view of moral relativists, according to Gowans (2012), is that “the truth or falsity of moral judgments, or their justification, is not absolute or universal, but is relative to the traditions, convictions, or practices of a group of persons” (cited in, Melé & Sánchez-Runde, 2013, p. 682).

Secondly, Melé and Sánchez-Runde indicate that although there is some value agreement among cultures throughout world, these agreements are offset by significant differences. Authors such as Bowie (1990), Walzer (1994) and Bok (2002) state that at the very least there is a minimal or basic universal morality despite “whatever other moral differences” may exist (cited in, Melé & Sánchez-Runde, 2013, p. 683). Additionally according to Bok (2002) societies have had to formulate a specific set of basic values in order for them to survive collectively and accordingly have produced a basic set of values, which are recognizable “across societal and other boundaries” (cited in, Melé & Sánchez-Runde, 2013, p. 683). Empirical research validates this basic set of values or principles and indicates that these values are found globally among various religious traditions. Lewis (1987), Wattles (1996), Moses (2001), Terry (2011) and Tullberg (2011) have all documented a number of “foundational principles shared by all religions,” such as the Golden Rule (cited in, Melé & Sánchez-Runde, 2013, p. 683). Finally Dahlsgaard and others (2005) identified a common “set of core virtues” among various world religions and cultures demonstrating “that there is convergence across time, place and

intellectual tradition about certain core virtues: wisdom, justice, courage, temperance, humanity, and transcendence” (cited in, Melé & Sánchez-Runde, 2013, p. 683). Peterson and Seligman (2004) see these as universal values, while Finance (1991) indicates that these values are not far from Plato’s so called “cardinal virtues.” Other authors have added: “prudence (practical wisdom), justice, fortitude (courage), and temperance (moderation or self-control)” (cited in, Melé & Sánchez-Runde, 2013, p. 683).

Thirdly, Melé and Sánchez-Runde indicate that moral universalism stands opposed to moral relativism and within its framework right and wrong behaviors are determined objectively and independently of social norms, customs or personal views or values. The construct of moral universalism has two aspects which may be or may not be seen as absolute morality, or what is known as moral absolutism. Absolute universal morality, according to Bowie (1999) is Kantian Ethics and upholds “the position that the morality of some actions is independent of context or consequences” (cited in, Melé & Sánchez-Runde, 2013, p. 684). According to Snoeyenbos and Humber (2002) non-absolute moral universalism is expressed in Consequentialism and Utilitarianism; Donaldson and Dunfee (1999) contend that non-absolute universal morality is articulated by Integrative Social Contracts Theory, which embraces “both universal norms and local norms to evaluate the morality of an action” (cited in, Melé & Sánchez-Runde, 2013, p. 684). Such universal ethical or moral theories encompass sound principles for developing ethical or moral standards; however, these theories conflict with each other due to differences in the self-evident principles employed in comprising their theory rationale.

Fourthly, Melé and Sánchez-Runde deliberate universal ethics in terms of natural moral law proposed by Murphy (2011) whose origins are found in the concept of natural law advanced by philosophers of ancient Greece and Rome, such as Cicero and during the Middle Ages by

Thomas Aquinas. Natural law is not an unfamiliar notion as it is expressed in the Bible where it is evidently understandable to non-believers; the Apostle Paul argues in Romans 2:14-15 that such natural law is “written on their hearts [of men and women]” even to the point that “their consciences” bear witness to them and “their thoughts sometimes accusing them and at other times defending them.” Corso de Estrada (2008) points out that Cicero identified “the existence of a Reason (*mens*, in Latin) that rules the whole world;” it is “nature law” (*lex naturae*), which is “fully superior and divine, not mediated” and is “universal, absolutely primal, invariable and eternal, which humans should try to know and apply in their lives” (cited in, Melé & Sánchez-Runde, 2013, p. 684). Cicero, according to Horsley (1978), aligned himself other Stoic moral philosophers in their belief of natural law and is demonstrated by his statement that “living according to nature consists in living according to the dictates of right reason, which is quite clearly thought of as the common or universal law” (cited in, Melé & Sánchez-Runde, 2013, p. 684).

Finally the authors turn their attention to the to the United Nation’s, Universal Declaration of Human Right (UDHR) (1948), which has been amended and updated several times to include “an exhaustive list of rights” for labor along with the UN Global Compact with its “ten ethical principles for business” (Melé & Sánchez-Runde, 2013, p. 685). According to Article 1 of UDHR, “All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act toward one another in a spirit of brotherhood” (cited in, Melé & Sánchez-Runde, 2013, p. 685). This statement ideally is powerful; however, it raises theoretical and practical issues. Firstly, theoretically it raises the issue of foundational human rights, which is borne out by the statement of the Declaration of the Parliament of the World’s Religions (1993), which argues any human right “without morality

cannot long endure” meaning that “without a solid [moral] foundation, any claim supported by strong lobbies can eventually be presented as a human right” (p. 685). Secondly, the practical issue raised speaks to the question of what part should business play in the implementation of human rights.

Connecting academic theories with the moral and ethical values

In dictionary terms, mercy means to be “compassionate or kindly forbearance shown toward an offender, an enemy, or other person in one's power; *also*: lenient or compassionate treatment <begged for *mercy*>” (Meriam-Webster, 2012). Compassion is “an orientation that puts others ahead of self;” more so, this type of orientation focusing on others distinguishes “ethical leaders from their unethical colleagues” (Johnson, 2012, p. 89). When we care for others around us in our community or demonstrate compassion towards our community, we express the ethical ideas of altruism and communitarianism.

We may conclude that compassionate treatment of others is an ethic of care, which is known as altruism. Altruism demonstrates care toward people in need and generally does not expect anything in return. Since altruism is caring for other people, it is akin to love of neighbor. We can see that altruism closely mirrors loving mercy or loving-kindness from Micah 6:8. In Psalm 86:5, we read, “For You, Lord, are good, and ready to forgive, and abundant in loving-kindness [mercy] to all who call upon You.” Notice that G-d is good, ready to forgive because of his “abundant” loving-kindness. Once more, we see that G-d’s mercy is loving-kindness. When considering altruism or love of neighbor, Johnson (2012) emphasizes this ethical consideration as “the ultimate ethical standard” (p. 170). I agree with Johnson’s conclusion; nevertheless, I would take into consideration the Jewish view of *tzedakah* (charity) and *gemilut chesed* (acts of

loving-kindness), which I will address shortly in the section, titled: The Jewish Concept of Mercy, on page 24.

Communitarianism or caring for community is seen when members of the community “shoulder their responsibility and seek the common good” by sharing concern for “their fellow citizens” (Johnson, 2012, p. 164). Members of the community must in turn care, show concern for or “have significant obligations to their fellow citizens” (Johnson, 2012, p. 164).

Communitarianism is somewhat controversial, because it looks at society – what is best for the community and does not consider solely what is best for the needs of the individual. The communitarianism ethical theory is related to the Jewish understanding of social or collective responsibility. Much of what Jews understand about ethics and morality is derived from their understanding of G-d. Since they believe that G-d created the world and “*all* human beings,” (Telushkin, 2009, p. 10) we live in His creation – not alone but with G-d and each other. What this means is that we are to be concerned for each other and “care for other people in the same way as we care about ourselves” (Delcau, 2012, p. 9). This is our social responsibility because “All Jews are responsible for one another” (*Kol Yisrael arevim zeh lazeh*) (*Babylonian Talmud Shavuot 39a*) (cited in, Telushkin, 1994, p. 91).

We see this ethic expressed or understood by Jews taking care of each other collectively or socially due to the fact that the Hebrew word for “responsible,” *ah-reivin/areyvut*, which “literally means ‘surety,’ one who makes himself responsible for another” (Telushkin, 1994, p. 91). Social responsibility is an integral component of the Jewish community; therefore, with this understanding in mind, we must “be kind and generous to everyone, especially [to] people who do not have as much as we have” (Delcau, 2012, p. 9). If we understand our social responsibility, we will act justly toward one another and do the right thing. The Jewish people draw their

understanding of social responsibility from the Babylonian Talmud (Ta'anit 11a), where it declares: "When the community is in trouble a person should not say, 'I will go home and eat and drink and be at peace with myself'" (Telushkin, 1994, p. 94). The implications of this statement for the Jew is to be involved in the distress of the community, as was Moses (Exodus 27:12), "who took upon himself his community's pain;" the Talmud elaborates further, "one who shares in the distress of a community will merit to witness its deliverance" (Telushkin, 1994, p. 94).

Additionally, we may consider the imperative from the Torah: "Do not stand idly by the blood of your neighbor" (Leviticus 19:16), which does not only have in view murder, but social responsibility to act when someone is in need. Jews understand this verse to mean that we should not just stand "idly" by and be observers while something is happening to another person. It is our obligation to act and do something in order to help. Nevertheless, and quite interestingly, the Jewish understanding of this particular law does not require a person "to put his or her own life at risk to save another" (Telushkin, 2000, p. 121), or "sacrifice our life for another" (Telushkin, 2009, p. 356). We often condemn Christians for not doing more for their Jewish neighbors during the Shoah. If we follow this line of reasoning when applying the law, we may excuse Christians for not assisting their Jewish neighbors, because, for example, under the Nazi occupation of Poland, people were under the threat of death if they assisted Jews in any way. Despite this threat, some Polish Christians did not stand idly by, but assisted their Jewish neighbors.

Kant's categorical imperative of doing what is right no matter what, appears to be grounded in the Jewish ethic from Micah 6:8 of "acting justly," which means doing the right thing. At times acting justly is costly for us personally when considering our personal interests

versus the needs of others. As noted in Johnson (2012, p. 160), some disagree with the universal nature of Kant's argument because he asserts that "there are universal principles that should be followed in every situation." I think that Kant's ethical strategy is grounded in justice or righteousness (justice – doing what is right) that is required of G-d. This sort of righteousness demonstrates integrity of character, which I believe is also described in Micah 6:8 by "walking humbly." The way we "walk" or live our lives reveals our character. Integrity is best seen by truthfulness in our dealings. When leaders accept bribes, do what is best for them or lie or mislead, we see a lack of integrity. I believe that people universally desire to see right actions in corrupt times.

Humane orientation

R. House, Javidan, Hanges, and Dorfman (2002) outline the parameters of the GLOBE (Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness) Study, which is a multi-country/culture case study of nine dimensions of leadership and culture in 62 nations. These dimensions are: performance orientation, future orientation, assertiveness, power distance, humane orientation, institutional collectivism, in-group collectivism, uncertainty avoidance and gender egalitarianism. Humane orientation may be defined as "the degree to which individuals in organizations or societies encourage and reward individuals for being fair, altruistic, friendly, generous, caring, and kind to others" (Javidan & Dastmalchian, 2009). Kabaskal and Bodur (2004) explain further that "this dimension is manifested in the way people treat one another and in the social programs institutionalized within each society" (p. 569). Simply stated humane orientation is concerned with the welfare of humanity.

Descriptions of humane behavior are not new but have existed since antiquity and "ideas and values" related to this dimension may be found among "classic Greek philosophers" and "in

the teachings of many of the major religions of the world” (Kabaskal & Bodur, 2004, p. 565).

The major idea embedded in the classical Greek understanding concerning this human attribute is reciprocal as well as mutual love found in friendship. Humans are interrelated and connected to each other; therefore, love or concern for others is a fundamental expression of humanity.

Humane orientation is expressed differently across cultures along a continuum from high to low humane orientation in societies and institutions. Briefly, the concept of humane orientation is not unique; it is related to what Hofstede and Bond (1988) called “Kind Heartedness.” It is also related to the work of Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961) regarding “Human Nature Is Good vs. Human Nature Is Bad.” We also see a connection with the work of Putnam, Leonardi, and Nanetti (1993) regarding their treatment of “the Civic Society” and from McClelland (1985) and his concepts concerning “the affiliative motive.” Furthermore, Price (1989), Dover (1980) and Ferrari (1987) looked at how classical Greek philosophers of Plato, Aristotle and Socrates viewed interpersonal relationships. Triandis (1995) addressed culture theory and said that “altruism, benevolence, kindness, love and generosity” are important factors to consider with regards to social behaviors of people (cited in, Warner-Söderholm, 2012, p. 6).

Yousif and Korte (1995) – examine “social contact, help exchanges and attitudes toward helpfulness” in urbanized and smaller towns in England and Sudan. Yousif and Korte (1995) analyze what they term “urban un-helpfulness” or “lower levels of helpfulness” in urban and non-urban settings in England and the Sudan (p. 474). The instrument that they used was a questionnaire and men and women were randomly surveyed in the center of cities in four locations located in the two countries. What the study found significant is that “the urban un-helpfulness effect is very robust across quite diverse cultural variations and that it is not reducible simply to an attitudinal or normative explanation” (Yousif & Korte, 1995, p. 488).

The GLOBE Study acknowledges the role of religion in shaping our understanding of what humane behavior is. In Judaism, Islam and Christianity, G-d is seen as the “ultimate” source of “goodness” and requires “humane-orientated behaviors and doing good to others,” while Eastern Religions such as Buddhism and Taoism, “there is no God that gives orders in the direction of goodness;” instead, individuals must “harmonize” themselves with the “cosmic rhythm” and do what is “good” (Kabaskal & Bodur, 2004, p. 565).

The GLOBE Study also addresses dominant social practices such as altruism and generosity and the role of the family in shaping human behavior. Kabaskal and Bodur (2004) also trace the development of human rights and humane orientation as seen in the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights issues by the United Nations in 1948. One interesting fact emerged from the GLOBE Study concerning Humane Orientation in relationship to Power Distance. These two dimensions share a significant negative correlation ($r = -.42, p < .01$) along with a significant positive correlation ($r = .35, p < .01$) with assertive practices. The authors conclude that the above findings indicate that in societies "that value humane orientation" they "seek to reduce power distance and use assertive practices possibly to fight injustice" (Kabaskal & Bodur, 2004, p. 574), which echoes "tenderness and concern for others."

Schlösser et al. (2013) contradicts the original findings of the GLOBE Study (R. J. House, 2004). In a quantitative study using “a multicountry construct validation study” examined students from 25 countries, who expressed a high or low human orientation ($N = 876$) and considered the relationship of the scores to “the traditional GLOBE scale and other cultural-level measures” (p. 536). Schlösser et al. criticize the GLOBE Study’s treatment of humane orientation and state that it is “ambivalence toward this concept;” they delineate the treatment of

humane orientation with regards to members of “in-group” and “out-group” and point to a study by Bond et al. (2004):

[They] identified a positive relation of humane orientation with ‘dynamic externality’ (a measure of a naive belief in a just world with authoritarian streaks) and a combination of high religiosity and superstitious beliefs” (Schlösser et al., 2013, p. 536).

The findings demonstrated “a strong correlation between humane orientation and agreeableness, welfare state score, and religiosity” (p. 536).

I may link the concept of humane orientation with the Jewish concern for humanity as Soloveitchik (as cited in Wyschogrod, 1986, para. 10) postulates that Jews have always been part of humanity and are for this reason “committed to the general welfare and progress of mankind,” desiring to combat disease and “in alleviating human suffering, in protecting man's rights, in helping the needy, etcetera.” I would also like to connect humane orientation with the Jewish concept of mercy or *chesed* or *chesed shel-emet* (חסד של אמת) meaning literally "kindness of truth" or true loving-kindness (Sienna, 2006).

Jewish concept of mercy

In the Micah 6:8, we see that mercy is derived from the Hebrew work, *chesed*, which means treating others with kindness, literally loving-kindness. This type of kindness shows concern or care for others; furthermore, we understand this sort of kindness as compassion. The Jewish Talmud considers compassion to be “the hallmark of an ethical person” and it “is *the* defining characteristic of being a Jew” (Telushkin, 2006, p. 20). By being merciful or compassionate, we demonstrate that we care for what was important to someone else, which could be an injustice, a misdeed, or an emotional pain. The best way to show compassion is through a loving deed – an act of kindness in an attempt to make right what was wrong. In so doing, we are able to display the character and heart of G-d. Recall from Scripture that G-d

“saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of His mercy” (Titus 3:5) – his kindness toward us.

The understanding of charity begins in the Bible and expressed to us through the Jewish people. The Hebrew word, *tzedakah* (charity) is derived from the word *tzadik*, “meaning righteousness, fairness or justice” and “refers to the religious obligation to perform charity, and philanthropic acts, which Judaism emphasizes, are important parts of living a spiritual life” (“Tzedakah,” 2012) (see also, Telushkin, 2009, pp. 156-157). We see that this ethical consideration is mirrored in altruism. However, the Jewish concept of *gemilut chesed* (sometimes rendered *khesed* or *chasadim*) expresses a much deeper concern for those around us through acts of loving-kindness. Telushkin (2001) explains that *gemilut chesed* “usually refers to a special type of *mitzvah*, one that is performed with no expectation of reward” (p. 596). Many Jews understand this word to mean, “good deed;” however, it really means “commandment” (Telushkin, 2001, p. 553). Telushkin goes on to elaborate the subtle difference albeit major difference between these two concepts by explaining that a good deed “implies a voluntary act,” while commandment infers “an obligatory” act (p. 553). He clarifies this difference by stating that Western cultures view voluntary acts “to be on a higher plane than an obligatory one;” however, the Talmud (*Kiddushin 31a*) considers this issue differently: “Greater is he who is commanded and carries out an act, than he who is not commanded, and carries it out” (cited in, Telushkin, 2001, p. 553). Finally, he directs us to the Babylonian Talmud (*Sukkot 49b*) where we read that “Our Rabbis taught that *gemilut chesed* (acts of loving kindness) is greater than *tzedakah* (charity) in three ways (Telushkin, 1994, p. 24):

1. Charity is done with one’s money, while loving-kindness may be done with one’s money or with one’s person [e.g., spending time with a sick person].
2. Charity is given only to the poor, while loving-kindness may be given both to the poor and the rich [e.g., consoling one who is in mourning or depressed].

3. Charity is given only to the living, while loving-kindness may be shown to both the living and the dead [e.g., by arranging a proper burial for a person who died indigent].

The major difference, as Jews view the difference, between charity and acts of loving-kindness rests on the concept of repayment. When considering the burial of the dead *gemilut chesed* (loving-kindness) it is viewed as “par excellence because it necessarily is done without any hope that the ‘recipient’ will repay the good deed” (Telushkin, 1994, p. 25). Furthermore, Telushkin (1994) indicates that a rabbi, Haffetz Hayyim, considered *gemilut chesed* as “any good deed that one does for another without getting something in return (*Ahavat Chesed*)” (Telushkin, 1994, p. 25).

While reading *The Diary of Anne Frank*, Telushkin (2009) realized another distinction between charity and kindness. Charity may be done whenever “an opportunity presents itself, while kindness can be done at any time” (p. 138), when in 1944 Anne Frank writes in her diary,

How lovely to think that no one need wait a moment before making the world better. We can start now slowly changing the world! . . . You can always, always, always give something, even if it is only kindness. Give, give again, don't lose courage. Keep it up and go on giving. No one has ever become poor from giving.

Anne Frank was a young Jewish girl, who lived in the Netherlands near Amsterdam and, who was a victim of the Shoah. Anne hid with her family from the Nazi occupiers in a secret room eventually being betrayed and transported to a German concentration camp toward the end of the Second World War. Sadly, Anne died of typhus in March 1945, a few months prior to the end of the war. Considering Anne's words about kindness and giving as a means to make the world a better place, it is clear that even as a young teenager she had a good moral or ethical foundation.

In light of the considerations presented, I would say that instead of altruism, I would follow the Jewish ethical idea or understanding of *gemilut chasadim* and practice loving-kindness or compassion as my ethical construct to make decisions because it keeps us from

expecting to be repaid for our kindness. By understanding this type of kindness, we are able to understand G-d's compassion for us and thereby direct this kind of compassion (loving-kindness) toward others in our community. Wolf (2010s) calls this "social compassion," which means to me that I am to be concerned about the plight of my neighbor – the injustices that they may encounter. I am not to turn a blind eye and ignore what is going on around me; I am to be socially engaged and be concerned for people living around me.

Applying mercy to life

As a Christian, I must be concerned about the injustice that occurred to the Jewish people as a result of the Shoah. I cannot stand idly by and do nothing. I must act compassionately towards the Jews by standing with them and thereby speak to the injustice of the Shoah today. I think by so doing that I am building a bridge of loving-kindness (mercy) that expresses my concern for them. By so doing, I think that I will open the way (and I have experienced an opening of the way) for dialogue.

Summary of the construction

We may summarize these above concepts in Table 1, Summary of the Moral Standard (immediately below):

Table 1: Summary of the Moral Standard

Micah 6:8	Jeremiah 7:5-7	Matthew 23:23	Ethical Concept	Ethical Worldview (Wolf, 2010s)
Act justly	Do not live as you are; change your ways and actions and deal with each other justly	Justice	Kant's "Do what is right"	"Preserving justice (hope)" Social responsibility
Love mercy	Do not oppress the weak or shed innocent blood; show mercy, care/love for others	Mercy	Altruism Communitarianism	"Social compassion (charity)"

Walk humbly	Do not follow other gods; be faithful to the One True G-d	Faithfulness	Humility Integrity	Integrity having “leadership discipline (faith)”
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Understanding the cross-cultural importance of humane orientation – concern for others, along with Jewish views regarding the Torah and its application, allow me to accentuate and amplify the mission of TMF. Hence from Micah 6:8 and the Jewish understanding of mercy (loving-kindness), a ubiquitous and culturally appropriate template becomes apparent from which allows me to approach the Jewish community of Polish origins regarding dialogue or interaction. Consequently, I conclude that the bridge of mercy (loving-kindness) is a means for a Christian to approach the Jewish community and seek to restore potentially the broken relationship that exists among Jews and Christians. Once the bridge of mercy is constructed, the possibility of dialogue emerges; I am able to begin traveling along the road of dialogue, which is a road that is always under construction.

Deconstruction

Auschwitz is a museum today, visited by millions of people annually; however, the event it represents – the Shoah, still cries out, demanding justice for innocent victims murdered in its gas chambers. Ash (2009) raises an interesting question that we should ask ourselves about anti-Semitism in its run up to and in the aftermath of the Shoah: How will I respond? I have visited Auschwitz on numerous occasions. Every time I visit, I stand in silence surveying what remains and ask myself, “Why?” By not being Jewish many Christians have great difficulty grasping completely in its fullest and most realistic sense the meaning of Shoah – it is utter destruction as their world was nearly completely destroyed, dismantled, or deconstructed. We can never completely understand why the Holocaust occurred. But it did occur. And, it must be faced. On

May 7, 1944 Anne Frank wrote in her diary: “What is done cannot be undone, but one can prevent it happening again” (cited in, Molloy, 2015).

Factors leading to the Shoah

The seeds of destruction were sown long before the unfolding of the mass murder of millions of innocent Jews. The first kernel of destruction centered on the Jewish figure of Jesus Christ, which according to Bauer (2001) produced the “false myth” that “the Jews” murdered Jesus, which produced “one of the most destructive and murderous legends in human history” (p. 20). Christian anti-Semites embraced this false myth and promulgated it over the centuries whipping “up passion and aggressions against a whole people and their civilization” (p. 20), meaning the Jews. In modern times this false myth has been repudiated by the Roman Catholic Church (1965), who “declared that ‘the Jews’ of Jesus’s time could not be held responsible for the crucifixion” (p. 20); nevertheless the false myth persistently remains even to today. The second seed of destruction was that of pogroms – organized massacres of particularly Jews (Merriam-Webster, 2012) executed upon the Jews of Europe during the Middle Ages as they “wandered from place to place in Christendom in search of a haven,” but only found sanctuary in Poland as they “were brutally expelled” from all other countries (p. 23). Massacres of Jews occurred in Germany in 1196, England in 1290, and “throughout Europe during the Black Death epidemic in 1347 – 50” (p. 23).

In response to their persecution at the hands of their Christian neighbors, Bauer determines that Jews turned inwardly concentrating on prayer, studying Torah and traditions and “developing the richness of the interpretative moral story (sing., *midrash*; pl., *midrashim*)” along with an increasing concern “with political life” (p. 23). Bauer concludes that such an inward turn that enriched “the spiritual and social life of the [Jewish] community, was probably the salvation

of the Jews,” as it produced a “rich social and intellectual inner world” allowing the Jews “to face hostile external reality” (p. 24). The third seed of destruction arose from the advent of Islam and the Moslem campaign to conquer and convert Europe to Islam. To their Moslem conquerors, Christians and Jews were considered not as pagans but as “People of the Book” and were consequently seen “as a notch higher than the pagans;” nonetheless, the war raged against them to convert to Islam (p. 25). Jews were also massacred “under Moslem rule” in Spain (1010, 1013, and 1066), Yemen (1627 – 29), in Iran (1826) and “under Turkish rule in Damascus in 1840” (p. 25).

The fourth seed of destruction was the collapse of Christendom and its division into Catholic and Protestant factions, which as Bauer concludes “did not aid the Jews,” as Protestant Lutherans were “rabidly hostile” toward the Jews because they would not “accept their new religion” (p. 33). One leader of the Protestant Reformation, Martin Luther, advocated that Jewish synagogues should be burned, Jewish homes should be “broken down and destroyed,” Jewish prayer books and Talmuds should be confiscated and finally that “their rabbis must be forbidden under threat of death to teach anymore” (as cited in, Axel, 1979, p. 129; and in, Bauer, 2001, p. 33). Against such a backdrop, there later emerged the philosophical age of enlightenment in which philosophers such as Francois-Marie de Voltaire expressed an anti-Jewish philosophy which “did not differ materially from the extreme anti-Jewishness of St. John Chrysostom” (p. 35).

Expressions of anti-Semitism

Traditional Christian anti-Judaism perceives Jewish difficulties as punishment for rejecting Jesus Christ as the Messiah and for murdering him. Bauer (2001) also considers that this traditional view incorporates into its myth the element of “economic misbehavior” by the

Jews and “in more extreme cases the myth of the Jew’s ‘desire to control the world’” (p. 48). Such a traditional anti-Semitic view is stereotypical and rests upon “resentment and hatred” focusing on Jews generally and not specifically on actual Jewish people living in Jewish communities (p. 48). Summarizing the traditional view of Christian anti-Judaism, Bauer concludes that “as only a people possessed by the Devil could have killed God, Jews and Judaism were often seen as the work or the symbol of Satan” (p. 48). Against the traditional views of anti-Semitism espoused by Christian anti-Judaism, Bauer outlines four major constructs of modern anti-Semitism:

1. Jews were excluded from the Romantic Movement during the first half of the Nineteenth Century. This movement exalted “folkways” and emphasized “the purity of the national tradition” – a more romantic past of “legends of knights, chivalry, and endless strife and wars” (p. 49). The movement excluded those who did not share in an “idealized past,” and since “Jews were strangers,” they did not live as “quite-equal citizens” in European countries (p. 49).
2. Modern capitalism produced class antagonism producing “an extreme stand” among such “socialist and anarchist thinkers as Charles Fourier, Pierre Proudhon, Michael Bakunin, and Karl Marx,” who accused “Jews of initiating capitalism” (p. 49). Marx himself “equated Judaism with the ideology and practice of capitalism” and advocated that by defeating capitalism, “Judaism and Jews would vanish” (p. 49). Such theories Bauer concludes “would later light genocidal fires” (p. 49).
3. Social Darwinism contributed to the development of modern anti-Semitism. In 1850, the Englishman, Herbert Spencer, advanced the theory of “constant struggle between humans in which the strongest would win” – it was not the survival of the “fittest” as Darwin later postulated but the survival of the “strongest” (p. 49).
4. Anti-Semitism progressed to racism via the linguistic research of Christian Lassen, who postulated in the 1840s that “Semites” spoke in “a variety of tongues” and “were egotistical and exclusive,” while Indo-Europeans “were tolerant and altruistic” due to the fact that their “languages stemmed from a common origin” (p. 50).

In Bauer (2001), we see that these four streams converge producing the idea of the “Aryan” race, a concept introduced in 1854 by Count Arthur Joseph de Gobineau in his book, *Inequality of the Human Races*. The traits of the Aryan race are that of being “blond, tall, blue-eyed – a superior, culture-bearing people in line with Social Darwinism thought” (p. 50).

Gobineau did not apply his theorem to the Jewish people; nonetheless, later philosophers would make this connection. Rather prophetically the French anthropologist, Vacher-de-Lafouge, who agreed with the Aryan philosophy stated, “I am convinced that in the course of the next century millions of people will kill each other because of a one-degree difference in their skull-index” (p. 50). He correctly foreshadowed the racial prejudices underpinning Nazi Germany’s racist policies, which ultimately led to World War II and the Shoah.

As an proponent of the racial differences theory, Bauer points to Richard Wagner, who espoused a “German nationalistic terminology called *völkisch* (people-integral nationalistic);” Wagner also advocated German “emancipation from Judaism and Christianity,” which led him in due course to compose music glorifying “a Germanic religion based on pagan elements” (p. 50). Philosophers such as Eugen Duehring and Paul de Lagarde connected the racial differences theory to the anti-Christian and anti-Judaic factors advanced by Gobineau earlier. Race and later blood became the determining factors in a person’s identity – blood was the vehicle transmitting “the characteristics of race and was the both the symbol and the content of purity or lack of it;” when applied to the prevalent contemporary theories of hereditary, this line of reasoning would logically produce the thinking that “no amount of baptismal water could change a Jew” (p. 50).

Lastly in 1878 or 1879, Bauer discusses Wilhem Marr, who introduced the term anti-Semitism. Prior to its introduction the concept of anti-Semitism was expressed by using terms “inherited from the Christian period;” the two terms were: Judenhass (Jew-hatred) and Judeophobia (p. 51). Problematically German society was becoming more secularized and did not believe in Jesus, so the question of who killed Jesus became increasingly irrelevant, which led Marr, Duehring, de Lagarde and other such racists to develop new language that was more

scientific, modern and that did not contain “the word Jew” to express their racist, anti-Jewish views (p. 51). Anti-Semitism became that word.

According to Bauer, George L. Mosse, a historian, studied the development of relations between the Jews and Germans in the run up to the nineteenth century and concludes that “German anti-Semitism is a part of German intellectual history” (cited in, Bauer, 2001, p. 54). Mosse also embraces the treatment of the Jew in German popular literature and sees stereotypical views of Jews emerge portraying the Jew as an outcast, the alien and as one, who could never be considered as one of them – “as the *Volk*” (cited in, Bauer, 2001, p. 54). In German literature, Jews were presented as “the eternal ‘other,’ the symbol of foreignness, of dark and evil forces, forever polluting the purity of the German people” (p. 55). As illustrations of these portrayals, Mosse points to the authors Felix Kahn and Gustav Freytag and how they treat the German and the Jews. For Kahn the German people are the protagonists, while the Jew is the villain, “a traitor,” who “speaks a foreign language” and commits “destructive acts” (cited in, Bauer, 2001, p. 55). Freytag presents the German hero as “old, honest, pure, the German ideal of the middle classes,” while on the other hand he presents the Jewish antagonist as “puny pale, has red curly hair, is poor and slovenly in dress” (cited in, Bauer, 2001, p. 55).

Lastly, Bauer details the rise of political anti-Semitism as a factor in Germany with the publication of Heinrich von Treitschke “series of antisemitic articles in the prestigious *Preussische Jahrbücher* in 1879” (Bauer, 2001, p. 55), which led to changes being made in the German government’s policies toward Jews and ultimately to become a lethal force in Nazi policy. However Bauer notes that “while antisemitism, including its radical and potentially lethal manifestations, became influential among the German intellectual and power elites, it was far from endemic in German society” (p. 56). Bauer argues that it is a mistake to claim that Germans

have within their genetic makeup “an inclination toward Jew-hatred from the Middle Ages” forward as researchers such as Daniel J. Goldhagen have postulated (p. 56). Bauer concludes that German society was not “pre-ordained” nor “pre-determined” to identify with the Nazi program of liquidating the Jews (p. 56).

Nazi anti-Semitism

Anti-Semitism was not the primary focus of Nazi propaganda between 1929 and 1933 albeit it was present; instead, their propaganda entailed concerns for “unemployment, social security . . . Germany’s status among nations and the territories it [Germany] lost in World War I” (p. 97). Bauer states “the Nazis did not add any new elements to antisemitism – except their determination to implement it;” nevertheless, Nazi anti-Semitic ideology developed eventually combining elements of traditional anti-Semitism and “pseudoscientific nineteenth-century antisemitism” (p. 97). Bauer outlines five basic components of Nazi anti-Semitic policy:

1. The Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion, which contained the Jewish world-conspiracy theory, “were adopted as an article of faith” (p. 97).
2. The ideology of the Nazi Party appropriated the traditional Christian symbol of the Jew being “possessed by the Devil” and “viewed the Jew as the Devil himself,” transforming the former traditional Christian symbol “into content: the Jew *was* the Devil, in Nazi eyes” (p. 97).
3. According to the Nazi party a Jewish world government existed. Throughout the Shoah the Nazis diligently searched for elements of this Jewish government believing that Jews control “the Western ‘plutocracies’ and Russian bolshevism” (p. 97).
4. The racist ideologies, developed in the nineteenth-century postulating that one race was superior to another, were consistent Nazi ideology.
5. Jews were believed to be “non-humans” and seen by Hitler “as a kind of anti-race,” which led to the segregation of Jews from the German society so that it would eliminate contact and thereby “corrupt German blood and culture” (p. 97). It is not difficult to envision the next logical step in the Nazi progression for “the possibility of annihilation,” which naturally progressed from traditional Christian stereotypes of the Jews as being the “Other,” being different and “somehow inherently dangerous” – Jews were a “parasitic force” that “would ultimately destroy the cultures of their host nations” (p. 97).

In the end the Nazis concluded that Aryan Germans were to “rule the world” and “not the Jews,” which became “the central pillar in their [Nazi] world view” embracing anti-Semitism (p. 97).

Bauer argues firstly that Nazi policies regarding the Jewish question were not well defined and were not worked out until “*after* Kristallnacht” – the night of broken glass, which occurred on the night of 9-10 November 1938, and concludes that this “pogrom itself can hardly be considered as a way-station to the Holocaust in terms of a planned policy” (p. 117). Secondly, the Jews had to pay an enormous fine to the Nazi party as result of the death Ernst vom Rath, a German embassy official in Paris, who was shot on 7 November 1938 by Herschel Grynszpan. Grynszpan, a Polish Jew and whose parents were deported from Germany to Poland, acted in retribution against the deportation by the Gestapo in October 1938 of non-German Jews, who were Polish nationals. Thirdly, the Jews were “finally and totally evicted from German economic life” after Kristallnacht effectively eliminating the employment of Jews (p. 117) opening the way for the Nazis to develop the final solution to the Jewish question.

Nazi policies and Christian dissent

The Nazi ideologies and subsequent policies of Germany according to Bauer (2001) led to an anti-Christian movement, which denied “the brotherhood of man” and denied “the Fatherhood of God;” Nazism “promoted a *volk* community that would be free of the influences of churches (p. 142). Hitler as the Führer was the “secular authority” and the “messenger of God” and as such was “the interpreter of the scriptures” (p. 142). A mainstream view of German Protestantism was “*Cuius regio, eius religio* (whoever rules determines the religion),” which advocated submission to “secular Christian authority” unless it was contradictory to “scriptural commandments” (p. 142). The implications of such a frame of reference led to the establishment

effectively of a Reich Church or the “so-called German Christian Church” as the representative of the Protestant Church to the Nazi government, which embraced Hitler’s “national revival” and enabled it to engage in “the fight against pacifism, socialism, Freemasonry and the Jews” (p. 142).

According to Bauer, opponents to the Reich Church or the German Christian Church were persecuted and “by February 1934 some seventy pastors had been sent to concentration camps” (p. 142). The Christian dissidents to the Reich were led by Martin Niemöller, who was a “German nationalist, commander of a submarine in World War I and a national hero” and he accepted the new status quo of Nazi Germany initially but later “he refused to recognize the right of secular authorities to determine matters of conscience for individuals and denied the state’s claims of supremacy over Christians” (pp. 142-143). In 1934, a group of traditional pastors established the Confessing Church (Bekennende Kirche, BK) and in a statement written largely authored by Karl Barth, the Protestant theologian, the BK committed itself to the Gospel of Jesus Christ as “the inviolable foundation of the German Evangelical Church” (p. 143). The Barmen declaration rejected the Nazi ideology of the Führer as a special ruler and it also rejected the idea that the State is able to order and control human life.

Bauer lastly points to several key Christian dissidents who courageously opposed the Reich. Bishop Theophil Wurm opposed “mercy killing (euthanasia)” and spoke out against Jewish persecution; Ludwig Steil “defended the Jews and died in a Nazi camp” (p. 143). Pastor Heinrich Grüber endured life in a concentration camp for assisting “both converted and non-converted Jews” and following the war he testified at the trial of Adolf Eichmann in 1961 (p. 143). Bauer reasons that “of the thousands of pastors and church leaders who were imprisoned about 500 died” and of this number was Dietrich Bonhoeffer who “was murdered in a Nazi

prison as an anti-Nazi resistor” (p. 144). Although Bonhoeffer like many of his contemporary pastors espoused the separation of Jews from German society along with other racial ideas regarding the Jews as “legitimate,” he reasoned that the central Nazi viewpoint regarding the Jewish question was “paganism” and consequently concluded that “only he who cries out for the Jews may sing the Gregorian chant” (p. 144).

Major events of the Shoah

In January 1933, Adolf Hitler became the Chancellor of Germany and began the radical transformation of Germany. His plan was simple: nullify the undesirables – concentration camps for political prisoners and mentally ill, multiply the desirables – *Lebensborn* – maternity homes run by the SS (Kampf, 2013, p. 23) relying upon eugenics for biologically and racially pure Aryan traits, and finally liquidate the barriers (thus, discriminatory actions against Jews, considered the primary hindrances to pure Aryan racial development) in order to establish German supremacy in Europe. In September 1939, Hitler invaded Poland and unleashed his attack not only upon a military enemy but innocent people principally, who were Jews. He began by progressively reducing the rights and freedom of the Jewish population and then finally herded them into ghettos. In the summer of 1941, Hitler invaded the Soviet Union and began the systemic extermination of Jews through the use of *Einsatzgruppen* or mobile killing units (Bauer, 2001, p. 210), which in the end proved to be ineffective and costly. For this reason, Hitler ordered the development of a plan to answer the Jewish question or what is known as the Final Solution. *Aktion Reinhard* was the code name for the plan to eliminate European Jews (Bauer, 2001, pp. 226-230).

Hitler’s Aktion plan called for the development of an efficient method to execute large numbers of Jews. The Chełmno extermination camp (originally called the Kulmhof

concentration camp), near Łódź, Poland, was the first concentration camp that was used to perfect the method for the mass murder and disposal of Jews. What developed out of this experimentation was the construction of three extermination camps in Nazi occupied Poland: Treblinka, Sobibor and Belżec. These “death camps” were built not to profit from slave labor like German concentration camps but were designed to liquidate the lives of the Jewish people.

The ultimate purpose of these death camps was the mass extermination of Jews upon arrival. Between 1942 and 1943 nearly one and a half million Jews perished in these three death camps. The Nazis advanced their methods from the lessons learned at Chelmno and the Aktion camps and applied them at the Majdanek and Auschwitz concentration camps. At Auschwitz the Nazi system was perfected culminating in the systematic and effective mass murder of innocent people. Estimates place the death toll at Auschwitz between 1.1 and 1.5 million people with the overwhelming majority of them being European Jews. In the end Hitler’s solution to the Jewish question resulted in what we know today as the Shoah and the extermination of six million European Jews of which more than half were Jews from Poland.

Trauma from the Shoah

World War II in Europe was a political and economic trauma for the Jews. But more so than that, it was a spiritual devastation – literally destruction to which Jews refer today as the Shoah. Of the 11 million European civilians, who died during the Second World War, six million people died simply because they were Jewish; the number of deaths is staggering when considering the fact that eighty percent of the European Jewish population perished or was exterminated at the hands of the Nazis within the six year period of the war (Krysińska & Lester, 2006, p. 141). It is difficult to understand the scale and depth of the collective trauma suffered by the Jews during the Shoah. Researchers, such as Krysińska and Lester (2006), have examined

“empirical research and clinical observations concerning the long-term consequences” arising from the trauma of the Shoah suffered by European Jews (p. 142). These researchers note the gross injustice committed by Nazi Germany against an innocent group of people – the Jews. Furthermore, European Jews had suffered persecution at the hand of their neighbor for centuries; however, during the era of the Second World War and the Shoah, the Jewish people endured at the hands of the Nazis “the most severe and unprecedented oppression and terror” in their history (Krysińska & Lester, 2006, p. 142).

The authors also report that secondary trauma has been seen among “professionals working with trauma survivors” and concluded that the transmission of the trauma “does not necessarily require direct contact with survivors” but may arise from merely “working with documents, movies, photographs and other objects connected with trauma” resulting in traumatization vicariously (p. 147). They examined research concerning the long-term effects of the “KZ/survivor syndrome” (Konzentrationslager or concentration camp syndrome) which expressed itself somatically in physical maladies (headaches, chest pains, digestive problems), psychologically in mental disorders, cogitatively in mental impairment, and socially in the breakdown of social and interpersonal functions, such as “withdrawal and alienation” (p. 143). The authors point out that research into this area focused primarily on “problems and weaknesses” of individuals and for this reason researchers looked the adaption skills of survivors, who as they said, had to survive in the most difficult circumstances imaginable, yet found ways to find “meaning for life,” which ultimately enabled them to survive (p. 146).

They next turn their attention to Second Generation issues found among the children of Shoah survivors. They characterized these issues as “secondary” or “vicarious traumatization,” which they noted result in extended “changes in the individuals’ attitudes towards the world” and

those around them (p. 147). Interestingly, the most extensive section of Krysińska's and Lester's article deals with "attempted and committed suicide" by Jews across five distinct phases of the Shoah: persecution, deportation, life in ghettos and concentration camps, and among survivors following the war (pp. 149-154). Lastly, the authors address the issue of what psychological help is available for the survivors of the Shoah and to their children (pp. 154-155).

I found that this article presented a great deal of research concerning the psychological aspects of the Shoah that I have not yet considered academically. I have read a great deal of biographies and history regarding the Shoah and at times I have seen and felt the trauma vicariously. Now I understand how secondary trauma functions which gives me greater understanding. It is perhaps for this reason that I have embarked upon my journey to speak to the injustice of the Shoah today. Judith Lewis Herman describes I believe what I am doing in this way; she writes, "remembering and telling the truth about terrible events are prerequisites both for the restoration of the social order and for the healing of individual victims" (cited in, Krondorfer, 2012, p. 308). For me I see in the quote what has become my life purpose.

Polish context of the Shoah

The context of Poland is important as is the relationship that Jews and Poles have shared over their long history, which at times has been strained and embittered. The events of the Shoah – the Nazi Final Solution – only worked to exacerbate the difficulty in their relations even further. Common belief is that the Nazi regime chose Poland for the setting of the Final Solution because of Polish anti-Semitism; however, this is not the case. The Nazis chose Poland strategically "as their gigantic laboratory for mass murder" simply for the reason that Poland was the home to the largest Jewish population in Europe (Zimmerman, 2003c, p. 3). Louise Steinman (2013), the daughter of Polish Jewish mother and Ukrainian Jewish father, describes the

contemporary relationship that Jews and Poles share. There is emptiness in the space of her family's history prior to the Shoah. She concludes that the relationship between Jews and Poles is complicated and difficult even though they share a common past. According to Steinman "most [Jews] harbored more bitterness toward Poland than they did toward Germany" even though they were once "part of Poland's body and soul, but they'd been excised, cast out" (p. xi).

Although the Shoah was not conceived by Poles, it "had tainted Polish soil forever" (Zimmerman, 2003c, p. 6). Dealing with the aftermath of such a tragic event would require cleansing Poland and its people from this "terrible burden of history" by allowing the Polish people to see themselves and their country "in the light of truth" (Zimmerman, 2003c, p. 6). The Shoah, as such "is the tragedy of the Poles" because during dark days of the Nazi extermination of the Jews, Poles "were exposed to an unprecedented moral trial" through which it would be difficult to say if anyone else "would have come through it better" (Zimmerman, 2003c, p. 7). Moreover, Poles were eyewitnesses and saw firsthand the events of the Shoah and the plight of their Jewish neighbors. At times Poles were noble and assisted their neighbors under the threat of execution and on other occasions, they were slightly more than bystanders doing little or nothing to protect their Jewish neighbors from the Nazi brutality.

Nonetheless on at least one occasion, Poles became participants of barbarism, rounding up and brutally murdering their Jewish neighbors in a pogrom. Jewish perception of the role of Poles in the Shoah often conflicts with the historical record. Both Poles and Jews suffered, albeit disproportionately, at the hands of their Nazi oppressors. With the permission of Nazi officials, Polish residents of Jedwabne, Poland brutally murdered 1,600 of their Jewish neighbors on a hot summer's day in July 1941. Jews were rounded up and humiliated, then were beaten, clubbed or hacked to death; however, most of those who died were eventually herded into a barn and burned

alive. This occurrence was extreme and not the norm; however, it occurred and Poles took part in the murder of Jews. Nevertheless, this event has not been examined historically due to the fact that many historians discounted the grim eyewitness testimony of the Jewish survivors of the event as being too incredible to be true.

Jan Gross points clearly to the fact that it appears that journalists and historians have taken “sedatives” and did not address the “mass murder of Jedwabne Jews” for decades believing that the Germans were the only ones who murdered Jews in Poland (Zimmerman, 2003c, p. 77). Furthermore, Gross challenges the status quo of historians of this period and urges them to revise “the approach to sources . . .” arguing that “we must take literally all fragments of information at our disposal” and realize that what the Jewish community truly experienced during the Holocaust “can only be more tragic than the existing representation of events based on surviving evidence” (Zimmerman, 2003c, pp. 78-79).

Legacy of anti-Semitism

Salzborn, Brosig, and Schmidt (2011) addressed anti-Semitism and how shifts are occurring in German anti-Semitic attitudes articulated in the German population. Their research considers four sub-dimensions of hatred directed toward Jews in Germany: “(a) the anti-Judaism related to the Christian religion, (b) the biologically argued racial antisemitism, (c) secondary antisemitism, and (d) antisemitism presented as antizionism” (p. 1201). Researchers in this study wanted to understand “the structures, contexts, and dynamics of antisemitism and to focus on aspects of political psychology” and addressed primarily “collective identification, defense, and projection patterns” (p. 1201). They wanted to examine the structure of anti-Semitism beneath its surface in order to “to decipher its political-psychological dynamics, and to elaborate its associative contexts” (p. 1201).

Findings demonstrate that the participants in the study brought up the topic of Judaism on their own accord discussing a broad range of themes ranging from the “Jewish faith, the behavior of Jews in Germany or in international politics or, which is especially surprising considering the given subject, also verbally attacking Israel” (p. 1212). Secondly, participants had no reason to reject Judaism other than their own feelings and influences; they had no real knowledge. Thirdly, participants were not knowledgeable of their own past including family and German history especially in light of National Socialism. “Probably, the most important result of this study, however, is that the results of the empirical social research done in the past with regard to the pervasiveness of antisemitism in Germany will have to be qualified and put into context. To date, quantitative research surveys have assumed a percentage of antisemites in Germany of around 15–20%. According to the results of the study presented here, however, these numbers are too low” (p. 1214). The authors conclude that “latent antisemitism in Germany is more pronounced than has been ascertained in previous quantitative studies” (p. 1214).

Anti-Semitism and Polish-Jewish relations

Sulek (2012) addresses in his article the issue of anti-Semitism among Poles by examining sociological, qualitative research conducted over a forty year period (from 1967 to 2010) in which researchers from numerous government and academic investigators examined the Polish population’s view of their relationship with Jews following World War II and the Shoah. The primary purpose of the article was not focused on the long-standing history of Polish Roman Catholics and their Polish Jewish neighbors but on the perception of Polish Jewish relations in the mind of Poles. The author outline “the changes in attitudes [by Poles] towards Jews based precisely upon survey research” (p. 426). The outcome of his analysis points to the fact that Poles have “a general nonacceptance of strangers” but more so have a “specific type of anti-

Semitism” (p. 425) throughout their society. Jews have a perceived presence among Poles, who for the most part, are ignorant of the actual numbers of Jews residing in the country. Poles generally have negative emotions towards Jews even though they are barely visible in contemporary Poland. Jews number approximately 20,000 people; however, it is worth noting that prior to the war the Polish Jewish population approached 3.5 million people. Consequently, Poles view Jews symbolically as a “collective entity and a construct of the collective imagination” (p. 425) because Jews are for the most part a lingering mist of a painful albeit distant past.

First of all, Sulek carries forward his argument by pointing to the fact that being unaware of the Jewish presence in Poland could signify that the question of the Jewish presence is unimportant for the average Pole. Nevertheless, he considers that the real problem is “false knowledge” (p. 427) about the actual Jewish presence in Poland, which may lead to “inflated guesses” (p. 427) about the numbers of Jews and the threat that they represent. The perception that Jews are a threat revolves around the anti-Semitic worldview that “Jews are numerous, stick together, and secretly rule the world” (p. 427). Notwithstanding, this worldview is quite remarkable in light of the fact that Poles are able to assess accurately “the magnitude of the prewar Jewish population and that Poles are “well aware of what happened to this population” (p. 427). In short, Jews live on like a so called “phantom pain” in the collective minds of the people despite the reality of their near total annihilation (p. 428).

Secondly, Sulek looks at the feelings of Poles toward Jews, principally sympathy and antipathy. Antipathy means “a natural, basic, or habitual repugnance; aversion . . . an opposition in feeling . . . or habitual dislike” (Dictionary.com, 2012). Emotions are passed down collectively by the social order and in Poland, he observed that most Poles tended to express “antipathy more

than sympathy” (p. 428). Surprisingly, since the collapse of communism the Polish attitude toward Jews have become “mostly positive” (p. 430). Researchers nevertheless concluded when comparing Poland’s attitudes towards Jews with other European countries that the dominant attitude among them all is “ambivalence” (p. 430).

Sulek addresses shifts in the perceived “social distance,” in the third section of his analysis, in which he concludes that the social distance is narrowing and indicates that “feelings about Jews are warming” (p. 431). He identifies factors that are related to social distance such as having Jews as hypothetical neighbors, advising against marrying a Jew, not voting for a Jew, not accepting a blood transfusion from a Jew and that “Jews are our older brothers in the faith” (p. 431). He goes on to point out that these factors of social distance regarding Jews in Poland indicate a “strong component of general distrust towards others” (p. 432) among Poles. When considering the issue of being a good neighbor, Poles prefer to see themselves “as good neighbors and the Jews as bad ones” (p. 432).

Fourthly, Sulek tackles directly the issue of anti-Semitism and describes it as a way to see and understand the world. Politically speaking anti-Semitism is the belief that “Jews exert a great, inordinate, and undesirable influence” on public institutions and a conviction that Jews “rule the world” (p. 434). He points out that the reason that there is a large degree of anti-Semitism in the Central Europe countries is due to two factors: the homogenous “domination of Catholicism” and “the lack of a tradition of liberal democracy;” Sulek concludes that under such conditions a “culture of tolerance” cannot be created (p. 436).

Sulek ends his analysis with his fifth section in which he surmises that the modern, political form of anti-Semitism is “an obsession focused on ‘Jewish control’” rather than that of the “traditional” religious view (p. 439). Sulek identifies three concepts advanced by Greenwald

(1980) as a vocabulary of the collective memory and ego, which are: “egocentricity, beneffectance and cognitive conservatism” (p. 439). Egocentricity concerns the occurrence of a social group remembering the past from their own perspective. Bene-effectance concerns the “collective memory work” that rests upon the “attribution of causal instrumentality” referring to concepts such as good things that happen to you, while bad things that occur to you are “attributed to others/circumstances” (p. 440). The final concept of cognitive conservatism resists “cognitive changes,” which in the case at hand concerns beliefs centering on Polish and Jewish history to be “highly resistant to change” (p. 441). Sulek concludes that the attitudes of Poles towards Jews are shifting in a positive direction which is indicated by an increase in the manifestations of “feelings of closeness” and a decrease in “disapproving cognitive schemes” (p. 425). Changes in the future will rest upon how well Poland rebuilds its national identity and the public discourse concerning “Polish-Jewish relations past and present” (p. 425).

Christian response to genocide and the Shoah

Miroslav Volf (2000) of the Yale Divinity School asks: How could Christians in Rwanda “participate in or avert their eyes from . . . genocide” (p. 158)? Additionally he probes a similar question: “Why are Christians, the presumed agents of peace, at best impotent in the face of their people's conflicts and at worst perpetrators of the most heinous crimes” (p. 159)? He discusses the complicity of Rwandan Christians (Roman Catholics) in the genocide of their neighbors and ponders the “idolatrous shift of loyalty” of the adherents of Christianity in Rwanda. He reasons that Christians should give explicit allegiance and ultimate loyalty to Jesus Christ; however, they do not. He observes that (p. 159):

Many Christians in fact seem to have an overriding commitment to their respective culture, ethnic group, or nation. In conflict situations, they tend to fight on the side of their group and are tempted to employ faith as a weapon in the struggle.

James E. Waller (2007) of Whitworth University examines the institutional church and how it and its agents shape a cultural climate “in which genocidal violence may occur;” it also addresses issues concerning how this culture “responds to such a culture both during and after the genocidal violence” (p. 139). Waller uses cases studies to examine these questions concerning genocide occurring in Christian cultures among which he addresses the Holocaust (Shoah); the Shoah or destruction occurred in Europe where at the time nearly 90% of Europeans considered themselves to be Christians and more so in Germany where “95% of Germans were baptized, taxpaying members of an established Christian church” (p. 140). Waller outlines the “stages of institutional Christian response to genocide” by three stages (pp. 141-149): pre-genocidal responses, genocidal responses and post-genocidal responses. Pre-genocidal responses are comprised of “the fusion of religious belief systems with ethnic, national, and political identities that provide theological justifications for ‘us-them’ thinking by constricting the churches’ universe of moral obligation” (p. 141). Implications for the institutional church in Christian Germany and Europe were to maintain its status quo position and influence in society. Essentially this meant that the institutional church did not choose “justice” – do the right thing by the Jews, but chose to do what was pragmatic or expedient.

The choice of the institutional church in the run up to the Shoah allowed the Jews to become marginalized and remain “entirely outside the realm of moral obligation for perpetrators” (Waller, 2007, p. 149). Waller concludes that “ultimately, the product of such mythologies and ideologies” define the institutional Christian church culture as being defined by “us” and “them,” which leads to victims being excommunicated and removed “from the perpetrators’ moral universe” (p. 143). According to Sells (as cited in, Waller, 2007, p. 143):

Religions in their ideological manifestations have traditionally been strong at promoting an interior identity in opposition to the religious other than in affirming identity in affirmation of the other.

This type of “moral exclusion” is backed by a theological rationale which can frequently lead to “disastrous consequences,” as Helen Fein notes (cited in, Waller, 2007, p. 143):

A church holding out the possibility of conversion to all must assume a common humanity, and therefore may not sanction unlimited violence. But a doctrine that assumes people do not belong to a common species knows no limits inhibiting the magnitude of permissible crime.

Genocidal responses are considered to be the “sins of omission (silence and denial) as well as sins of commission (active participation in killings)” (Waller, 2007, p. 141). Considering the “sins of omission” during the Shoah, the institutional church looked out for its own interests principally and its leadership worked to protect “their own institutional autonomy within a totalitarian state. Such interests were best advanced by silence, rather than by protest or heroism” (p. 144). On the other hand “sins of commission” are demonstrated by the active participation of “individual actors, laity and clergy of Christian institutions” even organizing “the killings.” During the Shoah members of the clergy were found to be members of the Nazi “*Einsatzgruppen* [mobile] killing units,” who carried out mass murder in the killing of Jews (p. 144). Although not mentioned in Waller’s study, in Poland there is evidence of complicity of the Polish Christian population with regards to the death of their Jewish neighbors. It is historically confirmed by Zimmerman (2003a) and Gross (2002) that several pogroms occurred during war and immediately following the war in Poland. The worst of which that occurred during the war took place in the village of Jedwabne in northeast Poland.

Post-genocidal responses represent the “accentuation of the church’s persecution and resistance (marked by the appropriation of the victim groups’ suffering as well as the glorification of individual heroes and martyrs) and official declarations of contrition that avoid

direct acknowledgment of institutional guilt” (Waller, 2007, p. 141). Waller cites the story of Corrie ten Boom and her devout Protestant family’s efforts to save 800 Jews during the Shoah. Christian’s also suffered under the persecution of Hitler and Nazi Germany; however, it was disproportionate and collateral to the massive suffering of the Jews. Waller concludes (p. 146):

What matters is the representation of an event, rather than the event itself, and the representation of the Holocaust as an event of Christian suffering to generations of Christian readers is problematic – particularly to Jews, the targeted group of the Nazi extermination policies.

Waller also points to the self-appropriated sufferings of the Roman Catholic Church as a victim during the Shoah following the war; instead of addressing its role “in self-critical analysis of their institutional response (which many have described as complicity) to the Nazi process of destruction, the Vatican’s primary response was to appropriate the Jewish victims’ suffering by taking quick steps to ensure that the Nuremberg Trials also included the persecution of the Christian church, particularly the Catholic Church in Germany and the Nazi-occupied territories” (p. 146). In conclusion, Waller references David Gushee (as cited in, Waller, 2007, p. 149), who argues that the presence of a Christian church “guarantees nothing” and further states:

The self-identification of people with the Christian faith guarantees nothing. All of the clerical garb and regalia, all of the structures of religious accountability, all of the Christian vocabulary and books, all of the schools and seminaries and parish houses and Bible studies, all of the religious titles and educational degrees – they guarantee nothing”.

Waller closes his paper with three recommendations regarding how Christian institutions might respond differently in the face of genocide (p. 149):

1. The Christian church should not function as an institution in the face of genocide.
2. In the face of genocide like the Shoah, Christians should be able to “learn from the challenge of the *exceptions* of Christian defiance and resistance in the face of mass murder.”
3. The leadership of Jewish and Christian institutions should be function globally in such a way as to “foster interfaith dialogue.”

Summary

The Shoah was a tragic event that deeply impacted the Jewish community. We cannot understand completely why the Shoah occurred but we can see from the above discussion factors that contributed to the Destruction such as the false myth that the Jews killed Jesus, numerous pogroms promulgated against the Jews of Europe and the Middle East, the rise of Islam and the division of Christendom all of which led to an elemental form of Jewish hatred and the antecedents of modern anti-Semitism. Modern expressions of anti-Semitism primarily espouse the exclusion of Jews from mainstream society because they are foreigners or others. Political ideologists such as Karl Marx saw them as agents of capitalism and for this reason to be overthrown. The theory of Social Darwinism theorized the survival of the strongest while linguistic researchers concluded that Jews “were egotistical and exclusive,” while Indo-Europeans “were tolerant and altruistic” due to the fact that their “languages stemmed from a common origin” (Bauer, 2001, p. 50). These streams converged in Wagner, who glorified German paganism and popular German literature prior to World War II, which presented stereotypes and caricatures of Jews. Ultimately these modern expressions of anti-Semitism found their way into official Nazi ideology and policy leading to the events of the Shoah.

Reconstruction

Confronting the injustice of the Shoah leads to what I call the construct of “reconstruction.” Karpen (2002) views remembering as meaning “to put back together” (p. 9). I maintain that remembering is neither passive, nor reactive but remembering is a pro-active response to evil and its injustice. In other words, remembering leads to action. Judith Lewis

Herman echoes my conclusion and states, “remembering and telling the truth about terrible events are prerequisites both for the restoration of the social order and for the healing of individual victims” (cited in Krondorfer, 2012, p. 308). Herman asserts that remembering should give birth to restoration and healing. Reconstruction requires us to remember the Shoah and confront its past by acting in the present, as a means to restore what was destroyed by the oppressors and thereby possibly bring healing.

Sadly, Christians are perceived by many Jews as oppressors, who have persecuted them since the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. This should not be. I believe that Christians need to reconcile themselves with the fact of how they are perceived in the eyes of many Jews. Oftentimes, Christians do not think of reconciliation as coming to terms with their own personal response to the injustice of anti-Semitism or the tragedy of the Shoah. The Prophet Micah admonishes us to “act justly” (Micah 6:8), which is an indication that we are to respond to injustice by doing what is right or just – we cannot ignore injustice; we must confront it.

Remembering is important. Memory work is not cost-free, especially when we talk about mutually experienced trauma and collectively enacted wrongdoing, as in the Shoah. Undoubtedly, the Shoah was one of the greatest tragic, moral and ethical failures in the history of humanity. I believe that one way to act justly in the face of such a moral failure as a Christian has been to seek reconciliation with the Jewish community of Polish origins. My experience has taught me, as a Baptist pastor working in Poland and now as a leader of The Matzevah Foundation (TMF), an institution established by a group of Christians, that it is important to recognize the tragedy of the Shoah and how Christians did not act justly and intervene on behalf of their Jewish neighbors. I have said to the leaders of the Polish Jewish community, on several

occasions that I/we are standing with you, alongside of you today speaking to the injustice of the Shoah. We remember and honor the lives of those who perished.

As noted in the previous section (pp. 45- 48), Waller (2007) raises issues that are relevant for me to consider as a leader of a Christian non-profit organization, TMF. We should not seek to preserve our own well-being but act in such a way to do what is right by the Jewish community today. It is for this reason that we act and care for and restore Jewish cemeteries in Poland. By our willingness and actions to swim against the flow as a group of Christians, we have entered into a dialogue with the global Jewish community of Jewish descent. This dialogue is difficult and filled with tension. It is my hope that G-d may grant us continued favor as we seek to recognize injustice and mercifully love others as we serve both the Polish and Polish-Jewish community.

Tragic history of mutual exclusion

It is difficult to grasp the complex and at times tragic history of Jews in Poland. Jewish history in Poland is more than just the history of the Shoah. Jewish history in Poland is lengthy and rich, frequently characterized by both good and strained relations between Jew and Christian. It is important to realize that in Poland, Jews found a haven, a sanctuary in which to flourish and live their lives for more than 800 years. Jews were free to be Jews for the most part in Poland, becoming “significant, highly visible and not entirely powerless minority” (Hoffman, 2000, p. 12). In sheer terms of numbers, Poland for centuries was the home to “the largest Jewish population of any country in the world,” with the Jewish population comprising “between ten and thirteen percent of the total population” (Hoffman, 2000, p. 12).

According to Hoffman (2000), Polish Jewish history is “one of the longest examples of cross-ethnic and cross-religious coexistence, relevant not only for Jewish self-understanding, but

to our broader contemporary situation” (p. 12). As such, Hoffman views Polish-Jewish interaction as “a kind of extended experiment in multiculturalism” and believes “that some of the conflicts in Polish-Jewish history can be seen in terms of majority-minority tensions, rather than in terms of strong and specific anti-Semitism” (p. 12). Mutual exclusion or “separateness” along with the inability “to create a common sphere of interests and concerns” seem to be major factors that impacted interaction between Jews and Christian Poles – Poles did not want to include Jews fully, while the majority of Jews desired to keep on being separate and maintain their identity as a “nation” (p. 17).

I believe, as Hoffman infers, that instead of mutual exclusion, Jew and Christian should work toward inclusion focusing upon the creation of a mutual “sphere of interests and concerns.” I term this sphere of interaction, building a bridge of mercy – mercy based on the Jewish understanding of *chesed shel-emet*, “true loving-kindness” along with *gemilut chasadim*, “the giving of loving-kindness.” It is through this bridge of mercy that we might join each other in committing acts of kindness that lead toward breaking the cycle of evil, forgiveness, dialogue and ultimately reconciliation.

Defining justice

We learn from Telushkin (2006) that the prophet Micah teaches us that “God’s primary demand of human beings is to act righteously [or justly]” (p. 14). Telushkin expounds and says that G-d does not require from us sacrifices or religious rituals; “rather, God’s most significant demands are justice, compassion, and humility” (p. 14). What is justice? Justice (Dictionary.com, n.d.) is:

1. The quality of being fair and reasonable.
2. The quality of being just; righteousness, equitableness, or moral rightness: *to uphold the justice of a cause.*

3. The principle or ideal of just dealing or right action. Conformity to this principle or ideal: righteousness.

The Torah teaches us that justice is focused upon our actions toward others. According to Telushkin (2001) the Hebrew word *tzedaka* is literally translated as justice or righteousness and “it is usually translated, somewhat inaccurately as charity” (p. 573). He elaborates further by stating that acting justly “is perhaps the most important obligation Judaism imposes on the Jew” (p. 573). The Torah admonishes us in Deuteronomy 16:20 to pursue justice: “Justice (*tzedek*), justice you shall pursue.” Later we learn from the Talmud: “*Tzedaka* is equal to all the other commandments combined (Bava Bathra 9b)” (cited in, Telushkin, 2001, p. 573). The giving of *tzedaka* is viewed in Judaism as acting justly. By extension justice means that we are to be fair in how we deal with other people. We are not lie, cheat or steal. Additionally the Torah (Deuteronomy 16:18-20) instructs:

Appoint judges and officials for each of your tribes in every town the Lord your God is giving you, and they shall judge the people fairly. Do not pervert justice or show partiality. Do not accept a bribe, for a bribe blinds the eyes of the wise and twists the words of the righteous. Follow justice and justice alone, so that you may live and possess the land the Lord your God is giving you.

If we seek justice, we help others, the oppressed and care for orphans and widows. In writings of the Prophet Isaiah 1:16b-17, we hear the admonition to Israel: “Stop doing wrong, learn to do right! Seek justice, encourage the oppressed. Defend the cause of the fatherless, plead the case of the widow.” The Bible characterizes God as just and righteous and connects these attributes to his mercy. He is just (righteous) and acts mercifully on our behalf. Once more in Isaiah 56:1, we read: “This is what the Lord says: ‘Maintain justice and do what is right, for my salvation is close at hand and my righteousness will soon be revealed.’” The Prophet Jeremiah proclaims in Jeremiah 9:23-24 that God delights in mercy, justice, and righteousness. We see:

Let not the wise man boast of his wisdom or the strong man boast of his strength or the rich man boast of his riches, but let him who boasts boast about this: that he understands and knows me, that I am the Lord, who exercises kindness (or loving-kindness), justice and righteousness on earth, for in these I delight, declares the Lord.

We also perceive in Hosea 6:6 that God is not pleased by sacrifices but kindness, “For I desire mercy (kindness), not sacrifice, and acknowledgment of God rather than burnt offerings.”

Justice mitigated by love

Du Preez (1985) discusses in his article G-d’s concern for those treated unjustly. By doing what is right toward one’s neighbor, the love, the loving-kindness of G-d is revealed. According to D. J. Bosch (cited in, Du Preez, 1985, pp. 45-46), we learn that justice is central to the gospel of Matthew, which illustrates the fact that the G-d of love is the G-d of justice or right. DuPreez connects these two dimensions of G-d to each other forming a concept he describes as “*justice-love*” and links it to the kingdom of G-d. He believes that this construct is valid in both the Old and New Testaments. The Bible reveals G-d, as the G-d of love, who is also the G-d of righteous and justice and as Scott (1984) indicates this G-d, “is concerned about social justice, not mere private morality” (cited in, Du Preez, 1985, p. 38). Arthur F. Glasser (1983) echoes this point of view and concludes that G-d, “is strongly moved by the cries of the oppressed, particularly when his people collectively make no effort to relieve their anguish” (cited in, Du Preez, 1985, p. 38). The relevance of these two statements is that the people of G-d are to be not just morally upright but they are to be compassionate and to show concern for their neighbors – those around them oppressed by injustice.

Jesus summarized the Torah (the Law) into two basic statements: love of G-d and love of neighbor and declared that the entirety of the Law and the Prophets rest on these two commandments (Matt. 22:40). Jesus does not merely have in view for those, who follow him

simply to obey a series of “moral or ceremonial rules;” obviously he is being “quite concrete” and stating that loving G-d is “revealed in doing what is right towards one's neighbour (sic)” (Du Preez, 1985, p. 45). Doing what is right because of love for neighbor is what DuPreez equates with his concept of justice-love. The justice that Jesus has in view is clarified further in the so called “Sermon on the Mount” (found in Matthew 5:21-47). In his teaching, Jesus illuminates the concept of G-d’s justice “in terms of a number of pithy contrasts in which the keyword is *love* that wishes to do right to one's neighbour (sic),” which by so doing demonstrates “love towards the hostile fellow-man, through which the pupil of the kingdom of God would be ‘perfect’ as his heavenly Father is perfect” (Du Preez, 1985, p. 45). In other words, this type of justice and love would reveal the character of G-d in a person.

Jewish-Christian dialogue

First of all, I will define dialogue what it is not. Dialogue is not a discussion and is not centered on “making a decision” by ruling out options, which leads to “closure and completion” (Isaacs, 1999, p. 45). According to Isaacs the root connotation of decision plainly means to “murder the alternative” (p. 45). Dialogue on the other hand does not rule out options. Instead dialogue seeks to discover new options, which provide insight and a means by which to reorder knowledge “particularly the taken-for-granted assumptions that people bring to the table” (Isaacs, 1999, p. 45). Subsequently, I will consider dialogue to mean in this study as “a shared inquiry, a way of thinking and reflecting together” (Isaacs, 1999, p. 9). In this light Isaacs views dialogue as occurring in terms of a relationship with someone else. He contends that dialogue is not about our “effort to make [that person] understand us;” it is about people coming “to a greater understanding about [themselves] and each other” (p. 9). This sort of interchange leads to

new possibilities and outcomes that would challenge the existing status quo of Jewish and Christian relations.

Theresa O'Keefe (2010) of Boston College does not explicitly define what she means by interfaith dialogue, but infers primarily its meaning as a discussion among Jews and Christians. She rightly contends that formal interfaith dialogue at the institutional level has done much “to improve relations among Christians and Jews over the past seventy years” (p. 2). Nevertheless, she views that advances “have not been made” in interfaith dialogue at the level of local Jewish and Christian inter-congregational interaction (p. 2). Moreover, she argues that “building relationships” between Jews and Christians individually “should be central to an educational agenda for members of local congregations” (p. 2). Lastly, she believes that

Interfaith relationships serve as a motivator of care and understanding for congregants, just as they do for leaders in dialogue. Direct engagement between congregants results in greater self-awareness and commitment to improve relations between the two religious communities (p. 2).

Generally, I would agree with O'Keefe that building individual relationships among Jew and Christian is a key consideration and highly needful; however, I contend that pursuing an educational approach within an institutional framework, even if it involves individual interaction, would still be too formal and not foster true face-to-face interaction. I am not interested in pursuing a formal interfaith dialogue at any level. I believe that interfaith dialogue is important and an essential element of the healing process as it relates to Jewish-Christian relations. Nonetheless, I desire to move beyond formal interfaith dialogue to a more organic interpersonal dialogue, which is more in line with the understanding that Isaac posits. In my view, dialogue that is based on a shared inquiry could lead to new possibilities and outcomes in Jewish-Christian relations. What would it look like if individual Jews and Christians collectively challenged the existing status quo of Jewish and Christian relations? I believe that it will take this

type of dialogue to open possibly new pathways that would embrace forgiveness and reconciliation.

The continuum of Jewish-Christian dialogue

When I began my journey toward reconciliation with the Jewish community, I had no idea as to how to go about interacting with a Jew. Even though, I was living and working cross-culturally in Poland, I was interacting with Polish Christians. I did not really have any idea about Judaism or Jewish customs in Poland. I had an academic understanding of the Shoah but I did not truly know its horrors or what those horrors meant for the Jewish community. Therefore, I approached everything that I did with sensitivity, caution and humility. I have learned much experientially over the past ten years regarding my interaction with the Jewish community. Two years ago, I began to the question of how to best go about interacting or dialoguing with the Jewish community. First of all, I must address the question: “What is the nature of Jewish-Christian dialogue?” Briefly, I will consider Jewish and Christian efforts towards dialogue and then I will consider Jewish views of dialogue with Christians. When considering the Jewish perspective of dialogue, I have encountered primarily three distinct perspectives held by religious Jews toward dialogue with Christians: no dialogue, limited dialogue and full dialogue.

No dialogue

The Orthodox Jewish community has been strongly influenced by the Torah and by past experience including the Shoah. Consequently the Jewish community in principle does not wish or see the need to interact with the Christian community. Their rationale is based upon the teaching of the Torah (for example, Numbers 23:9) and their perception that the Shoah was perpetrated by Christians. Important Jewish Orthodox theologians “see a connection between

Christianity and the Nazi ideology that created the Shoah” (Porton, 2012). Eliezer Berkovits, an Orthodox rabbi, stated that Christianity enabled the Nazis to execute the Shoah. He argued, "Without the contempt and hatred for the Jews planted by Christianity in the hearts of the multitude of its followers, Nazism's crime against the Jewish people could never have been conceived, much less executed" (Porton, 2012).

Richard L. Rubenstein, a Conservative rabbi, believes that Christians perpetrated a false image, a "mythological Jew," which “provided the images and the models for the Nazis” to use in desensitizing the German population to Jews who then became more and more seen “as the devil's surrogates, God-killers” producing “fertile ground for Nazi propaganda” (Porton, 2012). Rabbi Raymond Apple summarizes the Orthodox theological positions regarding Jewish-Christian interaction in this manner: “Somewhere in the consciousness of most Jews would be an equation like this: gentiles = persecutors: just leave us alone and don’t talk of dialogues. ‘Give us neither your honey nor your sting’ (Numbers 20:10)” (Apple, 2010, para. 13).

Post-Shoah developments in Jewish-Christian relations over the latter half of the Twentieth Century have mitigated to some degree Jewish views of Christianity and its role in the Shoah. In his article, *Jewish-Christian Relations*, Michael Kress (2012) maintains that the interaction between Jews and Christians is improving primarily because Christians have completely re-evaluated their “attitude toward Jews and Judaism,” which has revolutionized the relationship between these two religious groups. Kress further emphasizes that even though differences remain between them, contemporary Jews may reasonably expect for the first time in history “that these differences will be addressed through interfaith dialogue rather than the violence of the past.” Moreover Kress points out that during the Shoah, Christians played the role of “rescuers – people whose faith led them to risk their lives by hiding or otherwise saving

Jews.” The brave acts of these Christians do indeed provide a significant connection between Jew and Christian; “however, the role of Christians and Christianity in perpetuating the Shoah remains a point of contention between the two religions.”

Limited dialogue

The second Jewish perspective of dialogue regarding Jewish-Christian relations emerges in the framework of a post-Shoah world in which dialogue is limited; nonetheless dialogue is possible albeit strained due to Jewish perceptions toward Christians and their role in the Shoah. In his paper Dr. Michael Wyschogrod (1986) outlines historical developments in Jewish-Christian interaction prior to and following the Second World War and states that Modern Orthodoxy, centered around Yeshiva University, “does not reject all dialogue with Christian organizations, only theological dialogue” and dialogue may occur that is centered on “social and ethical issues such as poverty, war,” as well as issues related to “justice and international relations” (Wyschogrod, 1986, para. 5). However, religious or theological dialogue is not permissible. The rationale for this position is justified by a journal article written by Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik titled: *Confrontation*.

Soloveitchik (as cited in Wyschogrod, 1986, para. 10) postulates that Jews have always been part of humanity and are for this reason “committed to the general welfare and progress of mankind,” desiring to combat disease and “in alleviating human suffering, in protecting man's rights, in helping the needy, etcetera.” Dialogue therefore is permissible and limited for theological reasons, which Soloveitchik (as cited in Wyschogrod, 1986, para. 11) views faith as reflecting “the intimate, the private, the paradoxically inexpressible cravings of the individual for and his linking up with the Maker.” Ultimately Wyschogrod (1986) concludes that Soloveitchik’s postulates “have not prevented theological dialogue” (para. 17) with Christians,

stating that “Jews who meet religious Christians emerge strengthened in their faith and grateful for the righteous gentiles who, through Christianity, have approached the God of Israel” (para. 21).

Soloveitchik’s construct of confrontation

Soloveitchik (an Orthodox Rabbi) argues for “confrontation” in that we as human beings have been placed on this earth and thereby should or have the responsibility to “confront the world around us” (p. 213). Through confronting the world around us human beings develop and “enables us to rise to our potential” much as Adam confronts the natural world in order to “control and master this world” (p. 213). Accordingly the man confronted with difficulty must rely on the resources within his reach as a means to overcome this world. In a similar manner men and women must confront each other, which for Soloveitchik occurs within “the covenant or faith community” (p. 214). What this means for the Jew that he or she confronts common issues that impact society (common good) but not on a theological level. In other words Soloveitchik postulates that Jewish-Christian dialogue may occur within the context of the arena for the common good of “secular humanity” concerning “all fields of constructive human endeavor” (as cited in, Rashkover, 2000, p. 214).

According to Rashkover, Novak contradicts Soloveitchik position by pointing out that “neither Jew nor Christian can interchangeably assume a faith-position and then a nonfaith position” (p. 215). His conclusion is that such a dialogue between Jew and Christian cannot be genuine by limiting it to the “secular realm” (p. 215). Novak proposes two conditions in order for Jewish-Christian dialogue to occur (p. 215):

1. It must flow from “the believers’ respective theological belief systems.”
2. As with Soloveitchik, Novak believes that the dialogue must be limited and avoid discussing “either tradition’s particular experience of revelation.”

Both groups have a common understanding of Creation before the revelation occurred “spoken by God to particular communities” (p. 216).

Full dialogue

Wyschogrod’s conclusion leads to the third Jewish perspective regarding Jewish-Christian dialogue. Kress (2012) points out that Jews “have not ignored the changes in Christianity” and in 2000 a group of “Jewish rabbinic and academic leaders issued a statement called *Dabru Emet*,” meaning “Speak the Truth” (para. 8). In *Dabru Emet* the group recognized the work of the Christian “to improve interfaith relations and called on Jews to learn about and likewise affirm the positive changes” (para. 8). *Dabru Emet* is a vital statement in Jewish-Christian relations; it makes eight statements upon which “Jews and Christians could base dialogue” (para. 8). Below, please find the list (“*Dabru Emet: A Jewish statement on Christians and Christianity*,” 2000):

1. Jews and Christians worship the same G-d.
2. Jews and Christians seek authority from the same book — the Bible (what Jews call “Tanakh” and Christians call the “Old Testament”).
3. Christians can respect the claim of the Jewish people upon the land of Israel.
4. Jews and Christians accept the moral principles of Torah.
5. Nazism was not a Christian phenomenon.
6. The humanly irreconcilable difference between Jews and Christians will not be settled until G-d redeems the entire world as promised in Scripture.
7. A new relationship between Jews and Christians will not weaken Jewish practice.
8. Jews and Christians must work together for justice and peace.

Martin Buber’s theory of dialogue

In contemporary American society religious pluralism unquestionably is an integral part of daily life. By nature therefore America is comprised of diverse religious groups creating, as

President Barak Obama declared in his 2009 inaugural address, a “patchwork heritage” of religious diversity, which he stated was “a strength, not a weakness” and asserted that “we are a nation of Christians and Muslims, Jews and Hindus – and non-believers” (Obama, 2009). Shady and Larson (2010) ask a series of questions: How do educators deal with the challenges that religious diversity presents in the classroom? What will it take for teachers to prepare their pupils to engage in the discourse regarding “competing religious truths? Should tolerance be our final goal, or is a deeper sense of mutual understanding possible” (p. 81)?

Tippett (2007) asked, “It is possible to be a believer and a listener at the same time, to be both fervent and searching, to nurture a vital identity and to wonder at the identities of others?” Shady and Larson (2010) pick up on this statement and juxtapose it with the question: “How do I balance my own belief commitments with my responsibility to be genuinely open to and challenged by the other’s perspective” (p. 82)? They consider this question in their paper as a means “to explore how we can help our students (and ourselves)” understand issues related to religious diversity in the classroom in terms of “proper intellectual boundaries” (p. 82). Furthermore they postulate in their paper that Martin Buber’s work concerning difference in religion, “holds fruitful answers to the challenging questions of diversity in the twenty-first century” (p. 82).

Shady and Larson (2010) describe the “process of dialogue,” which allows someone to come to understand the position of another person, “while at the same time remaining rooted” in their own personal point of view. Additionally they point out that Buber maintained that inclusion connects both the “interpersonal boundaries with the intellectual boundaries” (Shady & Larson, 2010, p. 82) and he considered “the relation in education is one of pure dialogue” (Buber, 1957, p. 98). In essence what Buber’s model does is to advocate “a shared reality where

all partners in the dialogue come to understand each other's position, even if they do not entirely agree with it" (Shady & Larson, 2010, p. 83). The authors go on to explain components and philosophies of Buber's educational theory, identifying what Buber termed, "Between." Between is an "ontological category where the 'meeting' occurs," which Buber defined as "the narrow ridge between subjective and objective;" it is at this point that true inclusion occurs and "genuine dialogue" begins (Shady & Larson, 2010, pp. 84-85).

Consequently, Shady and Larson (2010) dismiss the educational practices of tolerance and empathy as being inadequate methods of dealing with religious diversity in the classroom. As an alternative they consider Buber's concept of inclusion, which "seeks to break down boundaries and develop deep relations with other people and with things that others have created" (p. 88). Furthermore, Shady and Larson (2010) argue that an exclusive approach of education advances knowledge and intellectual development as it does not promote inclusiveness through a dialogue or an exchange of ideas regarding a particular subject; "learning is both cognitive and affective, involving the whole person" (p. 90). The authors advance several examples of what educational inclusion might look like and for example, consider Karen Armstrong (a British historian and theologian) and how her views education are similar to Buber's:

"She [Armstrong] shows that education is not merely cognitive but is also necessarily affective and even spiritual. She shows that inclusion is marked by a willingness to open oneself to new ideas and perspectives – perhaps even being changed by them – but doing so without losing sight of oneself" (Shady & Larson, 2010, p. 92).

Liminal space

Halina Birenbaum, a survivor of the Warsaw Ghetto and the Shoah, wrote that when she was interned at Majdanek, she volunteered along with other women to weed the grass between

the electrified fences that encompassed and divided the Nazi concentration and death camp. She said of her experience (Birenbaum, 1996, pp. 88-89),

[No guard, overseer or *Capo*] dared come between these wires, so no one urged us on, or struck or rushed us. We could sit and rest, picking at the weeds and grass. I preferred this work to any other. Here I had the peace that I longed for.

Much like Halina, I find myself “between . . . wires” – in the middle space; however, I am not between such electrified fences in a death camp. I am between the Jew and the Gentile-Christian.

Liminality is a concept that describes being between or in the middle of two spaces, literally in-between the two; it is like the front porch of a house, which separates the home from the front yard or the street. Franks and Meteyard (2007) state that liminality is derived from the Latin word for threshold; it is “the state of being betwixt and between where the old world has been left behind but we have not yet arrived at what is to come” (p. 215). The authors consider Richard Rohr’s suggestion that the only escape for a person entrapped in “normalcy, the way things are,” is to enter into a “sacred space,” frequently termed *liminality* (from the Latin *limen*), where it is possible to encounter “genuine transformation” (as cited in, Franks & Meteyard, 2007, p. 215).

Andrea Ciccarelli (2012) of Indiana University, views the idea of liminal space as a barrier or border and addresses the border at the level of “cultural, linguistic, philosophical and existential” elements (p. 342). Ciccarelli’s focus is on “the image of the border as a barrier and a bridge, and on the poetics of ‘the other side’” (p. 342); she considers liminal space as a position in which people face “a perennial border, with its intuitive and unconscious representation of the *other*” (p. 347). The concept of the other or being a foreigner in a new situation places people out of sorts with their new space. Nic Beech (2011) of University of St Andrews in the United Kingdom, considers identity construction and identity change (or change process) in terms of an

individual moving from one identity to another from an individual “self-identity” to a “social-identity” (p. 285). Furthermore, Beech reasons that social contexts “frame the possibilities that people have for creating and recognizing meaning in their interactions” (p. 290). I take this to mean that people choose how they interpret their interactions with other people in the social construct and daily narrative of life.

Moloney (2011) conducts a qualitative case study utilizing organic inquiry piloted among Australian women. Major focus was the treatment of focus groups as transformative space for spiritual encounters (liminal space as seen in terms of a focus group). Moloney concludes that the focus group is a “sacred container” that possibly signifies “the hope that as human nature evolves it can transform itself into its greater spiritual potential” (p. 71). She introduced me to the value of focus groups in qualitative research and how I might employ them as liminal space in which Jews and Christians might interact dialoguing more freely about critical issues confronting them. Focus groups allow people to explore “the construction and negotiation of meanings” (p. 58).

Leslie Sharpe (2006) examines the “shifting or indeterminate kind of public space – liminal spaces, haunted space, and spaces and zones that are often 'misread' by locative technologies - referred to here as 'grey zones’” (p. 1). She defines these so-called “grey zones” as spaces or places of alterity (being other or different). These spaces “could be Michel Foucault's 'heterotopias', or Marc Augé's 'non-places', or Edward Soja's 'thirdspace’” (p. 1). In such a space, “there is another aspect of non-place implied here: the place of border-crossing. This is a place of longing – particularly the longing to cross into that space that is beyond the edge of the horizon” (p. 2).

Although Auton-Cuff and Gruenhage (2014) focus their attention on educational issues, I believe the authors' treatment of liminality presents a theoretical construct as a lens to conduct their study. I am looking for a similar theoretical lens or construct by which to conduct my future research. I could not find any research associated with Jewish Christian dialogue and the concept of liminality. My understanding of what I am doing in my work is that I have constructed a liminal space through the work of the non-profit foundation that I lead in which Jew and Christian may interact. One of the conclusions that the Auton-Cuff and Gruenhage make is: "When we live and work within a liminal space, change is very possible" (p. 6). I resonate with their conclusion because I see the possibility of changing perceptions and the possibility of opening a deeper dialogue between the Jewish and Christian communities.

Breaking the cycle of evil

I believe that breaking the cycle of evil rests in doing a loving act that will lead to forgiveness and potentially reconciliation amongst Jews and Christians. In their article regarding intervention studies on forgiveness, Baskin and Enright (2004) define forgiveness "as the willful giving up of resentment in the face of another's (or others') considerable injustice and responding with *beneficence* to the offender even though that offender has no right to the forgiver's moral goodness" (p. 80). *Beneficence* is a form of charity, an expression of goodness or kindness. Moreover, they conclude that forgiveness is a conscious act "freely chosen by the forgiver" and it is not to be confused with "condoning and excusing, reconciling and forgetting" (p. 80). Elaborating further, they contend that reconciliation encompasses the restoration of a relationship between two people "in mutual trust" (p. 80). Subsequently, reconciliation cannot transpire without trust being re-established amid the two parties. Also, forgiveness may occur apart from

reconciliation. Nonetheless, it is difficult for people to forget “traumatic events, but on forgiving, a person may remember in new ways – not continuing to harbor the deeply held anger” (p. 80).

In their book, *Communicating Forgiveness*, Waldron and Kelly (2008) remarkably define forgiveness as a “relational process whereby harmful conduct is acknowledged by one or both partners; the harmed partner *extends undeserved mercy* to the perceived transgressor; one or both partners experience a transformation from negative to positive psychological states, and the meaning of the relationship is renegotiated, with the possibility of reconciliation” (cited in, Ross, 2010, p. 164). What I find interesting in Waldron’s and Kelly’s definition is its inclusion of “underserved mercy,” which is an extension of loving-kindness to the offender, to the one, who transgressed. In view of this definition, reconciliation may occur as a result of a renegotiated relationship based upon coming to terms with the offense.

Alternatively, Neblett (1974) postulates that forgiveness may be viewed as a cognitive decision, in which the forgiver determines to forgive and proclaims: “I forgive you” (cited in, Baskin & Enright, 2004, p. 80). When the decision to forgive is made the forgiver crosses a barrier and thereby decides to move “from a position of resentment to one of not letting the resentment dominate the interaction” (Baskin & Enright, 2004, pp. 80-81). Secondly, by their proclamation and decision the forgiver “is consciously aware of his or her new position” (Baskin & Enright, 2004, p. 81). The decision to forgive does not mean that the forgiver forgets; it means that the forgiver recognizes their identity as the one, who forgives and extends forgiveness to the offender, who is “worthy of respect” (Baskin & Enright, 2004, p. 81).

Enright and other researchers (e.g., Rique, Freedman, and North) have developed a four part model to assist “people forgive” (cited in, Johnson, 2012, p. 130); the model consists of four phases: “Uncovering, Decision, Work, and Deepening” (Baskin & Enright, 2004, p. 80). I

believe that their model is a helpful construct by which to approach forgiveness; nevertheless, for the purpose of this study and in order to build upon this model, I would like to modify it accordingly.

Remembering (*uncovering*) means to recall or bring back to memory. It is important to remember the past and bring back to memory the history, heritage and culture of the Jewish people and the thousand year role that they have played in Polish and Jewish history. Through educating people about the Shoah, The Matzevah Foundation leads people to remember and then to act.

Restoring (*decision*) – by restoring Jewish cemeteries The Matzevah Foundation honors the past and impacts the present. As Christians we decide to deal with the painful past of the Shoah today seeking to bring Jew and Christian together in a common act of loving-kindness, a mitzvah to care for and restore Jewish cemeteries.

Forgiving (*work*) – in this stage the person who has suffered the injustice attempts to “understand (not condone) the victimizer’s background and motivation” (Johnson, 2012, p. 130). The key in this stage is absorbing pain. In a sense The Matzevah Foundation becomes intercessors between Jews – Jews of Polish descent and Christians. Even though Christians were not the initiators of the Shoah, they were neighbors in Poland (and other European countries), who were oftentimes anti-Semitic, ambivalent or unable to help their Jewish neighbors. Understanding this complex situation is not easy; however, I find myself increasingly going to a place of suffering and "absorbing" the pain of the Shoah.

Reconciling (*deepening*) – the outcomes of forgiveness are for the person, who forgives, would be a deeper understanding of suffering, their “own need for forgiveness” and an appreciation for support found among friends and institutions such as congregations. Ultimately

Johnson (2012) concludes that the forgiving person “may develop a new purpose in life and find peace” (p. 132). Connecting to this conclusion another outcome could possibly be reconciliation.

Enright postulates that by absorbing suffering, “the forgiver decides to endure suffering, rather than pass it on thereby breaking the cycle of evil” and when considered in this manner “forgiveness is a gift of mercy to the wrongdoer” (as cited in, Johnson, 2012, p. 130). I am convinced that as we bring mercy (caring acts through restoration of Jewish cemeteries) we display God's love, which allows forgiveness to emerge. I have not yet seen forgiveness expressed on a large scale by Polish Jews to their neighbors or to the Germans, I have seen personally how I have entered into this dialogue as Christian. I have been asked many times, “Why would you a Christian, do this for us as Jews?” My answer is simply love.

Summary, implications and discussion

From biblical sources (e.g., Malachi 2:10) and in the literature (e.g. see, Telushkin, 2009; Weiman, 2008; Wolf, 2010s) I have argued that G-d reveals His character in every human being. As a result, every man and woman is equal and worthy of dignity. And accordingly should be treated with care or concern. Certainly, conflict exists and influences interaction. Consequently, in order to mitigate conflict, I have argued for a moral standard, which is based on Micah 6:8 consisting of three values (justice, mercy, and humility) and three actions: do justice, love mercy and walk humbly. I have discussed primarily the value of mercy in terms of loving-kindness or expressing concern for others. The literature supports my premise and echoes it in theories such as humane orientation and altruism. Such concern for others is ubiquitous and is encountered globally throughout various groups of people and cultures. Humane orientation or concern of others parallels the biblical concepts seen in mercy or love for neighbor.

Jewish-Christian tension is long-standing and unique from the perspective that Judaism and Christianity share a common belief in the One True G-d. Despite their common heritage the Jewish community has drifted apart especially in the face of prejudice, hatred and persecution. The Shoah was a terrible chapter in the history of humanity in which European Christians stood for the most part silent and idle, while Hitler unleashed his Final Solution to the Jewish question. Christian passivity in the face of mass murder, allowed evil to prevail. What should be the Christian response? I contend that Christians should remember and take proactive steps toward restoring their relationship with the Jewish community. The work of remembering and restoration embrace reconciliation. Such work is a process and not an end in and of itself.

On the other hand, restoration brings healing and hope by acting in such a way to do what is right by the Jewish community today. This is my task as the leader of TMF and my purpose as a follower of Christ. Hoffman views the primary difficulty between Polish Catholic and Jew is that of mutual exclusion. Coupled with the inability “to create a common sphere of interests and concerns” both aspects appear to be major factors that impacted interaction between Jews and Christian Poles – Poles did not want to include Jews fully, while the majority of Jews desired to keep on being separate and maintain their identity as a “nation” (Hoffman, 2000, p. 17). In such a pattern of mutual exclusion, I believe, as Hoffman infers, that instead of excluding each other, Jew and Christian should embrace each other and thereby work toward inclusion focusing upon the creation of a mutual “sphere of interests and concerns.” I term this sphere of interaction, building a bridge of mercy – mercy based on the Jewish understanding of *chesed shel-emet*, “true loving-kindness” along with *gemilut chasadim*, “the giving of loving-kindness.”

The Torah admonishes us in Deuteronomy 16:20 to pursue justice: “Justice (*tzedek*), justice you shall pursue.” Justice is to be mitigated by love, which means that the people of G-d

are to be not just or morally upright but they are to compassionate and to show concern for their neighbors – those around them oppressed by injustice. The nature of Jewish-Christian dialogue is complex and at times difficult; it is influenced by distinct theological differences, history and racism, all of which cannot be ignored and must be addressed. The continuum of Jewish Christian dialogue ranges from the non-existent dialogue, to limited and finally to full dialogue within the construct of *Dabru Emet* (speak truth). I am not seeking to open an interfaith dialogue with the Jewish community; although quite invaluable, it is beyond the scope of my work. Instead, as a servant who leads, a public charity, I am attempting to broaden and deepen the dialogue that I already have with the Jewish community so that TMF may effectively realize its two-fold mission: to educate the public about the Shoah and to care for and restore Jewish cemeteries in Poland.

Like Halina, I find myself in the middle space; however, I am not between the electrified fences. I am between the Jew and the Gentile-Christian. I have come to understand that neither group understands me. I live between two cultures, a third culture, but I am neither. I see myself as a hybrid. I have elements of both within me. Sometimes, I am misunderstood, so I work to understand and reconcile the two. I am learning about myself and who I am. I am also learning about the work of reconciliation through remembering the Shoah and its victims by caring and leading others to restore Jewish cemeteries in Poland. I do not have an answer regarding how this is all to work out because what I am doing is emerging and unfixed. However, I find peace in what I am doing. And even in the most difficult of circumstances that I find myself in leading a Christian non-profit working with the Polish Jewish community, I persevere because, I have learned to remember that G-d is with me as I walk humbly with him.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODS

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to describe how acts of loving-kindness (mercy) as demonstrated and encountered through the work of The Matzevah Foundation (TMF) in caring for and restoring Jewish cemeteries in Poland, have influenced dialogue (or lack there-of) among Jews and Christians. The study will explore mercy as the language of dialogue and the organization that I lead, TMF, will illustrate that dialogue. In order to explore how those involved and those affected by the work of The Matzevah Foundation have developed in their relationship to one another, I will pursue the following research questions: How have Jews and Christians responded to the work of TMF? In what ways do Jews and Christians learn how to dialogue through their mutual interaction within the context of the work of TMF? This chapter is organized according to the following sections: case study design, self as the research instrument, research sample, data collection methods, data analysis, issues of trustworthiness, generalizability, ethical considerations, and chapter summary.

Case study design

This study will be conducted as a qualitative case study of the work of TMF. I believe the case study method of inquiry is best because it involves the study of a case – The Matzevah Foundation and its work within the framework of “real-life, contemporary context or setting,” which is defined “within a bounded system” such as “time and place” (Creswell, 2013, p. 97). Through inquiry of the interaction of Jew and Christian within the construct [third space or liminal space] of the work of TMF. I will seek to understand how *gemilut chesed* or acts of

loving-kindness (mercy) influence attitudes and create mutual bridges of understanding as the underpinning for dialogue. Principally I will be studying the responses of people individually and corporately to open-ended questions about their experience in working with TMF in its educational initiatives and its Jewish cemetery restoration projects in Poland.

The research site will be the work of TMF and consequentially, I will provide a brief historical synopsis of TMF. Since 2005, a group of Baptist Christians has been working with the Jewish Community of Poland in restoring Jewish cemeteries, which are known in Hebrew as *Beit Chaim* – “the house of the living” and are considered to holy places by the Jewish community. TMF grew out of this relationship, advancing it today as a non-profit, public charity, which primarily serves the Jewish community of Poland and cooperates with the global Jewish community of Polish origins to care for and restore Jewish Cemeteries in Poland. The vision of TMF is to remember and honor the Jewish heritage of Poland by restoring Jewish cemeteries and reconciling Jews and Christians through participating in a common mitzvah. Stated simply we remember, restore and reconcile. The mission of the Matzevah Foundation is twofold. Firstly, it mobilizes human and financial resources to care for and preserve the Jewish heritage of Poland by restoring Jewish cemeteries. Secondly, it will educate the public regarding anti-Semitism and the history of Polish Jews prior to, during, and following the Shoah in Poland.

Self as the research instrument

In light of the fact that in qualitative inquiries, the researcher is the primary instrument for gathering and analyzing data, I think that I should share a few things about myself that have impacted me personally and have given direction to my research. I will look at six major periods of my development as a researcher from being a photojournalist (an observer), the parallels of

photojournalism and qualitative research, documenting my journey, becoming a participant observer, becoming an activist, and that of an emerging researcher.

Photojournalist

The first major component of my life that is relevant to my role as a researcher is that of being a photojournalist. Intrinsicly, I have been a professional observer for most of my adult life. I constantly view the world around me oftentimes recording what I see in photographs. The difference between life, as it is, and capturing life in photographs is frequently selective; it is the same in qualitative research. One key element that I have learned about selective photography is capturing what is present without trying to understand what is going on necessarily before my lens. I believe that observation of course leads to interpretation but this is after the fact. If I wish to add my pre-conceptions or prejudices to how I photograph a particular subject I would lose my objectivity and become an editor, who interprets and editorializes about what is being seen. If I were to editorialize the photographic process, I would be looking for a photograph that fits my narrative. I believe that the same could be true for researchers as observers.

Parallels of photojournalism and qualitative research

It is important to note that I was not formally trained as a photojournalist; however, after I earned my bachelor's degree, I did take a few photography courses and several masters' level courses in journalism and photojournalism. For the most part, I realized that I was a photographer, who desired to document life in a journalistic fashion. When I was first beginning to work as a photojournalist in 1984 at a small, daily newspaper in East Texas, I began to grow and develop as a photojournalist. I taught myself the basics of photojournalism by reading newspapers and magazines and studying the work of other photojournalists. I would ponder their

compositions, analyzing the lens selection, point of view and technical acumen of noteworthy photographs. I did this not to emulate their work but to understand their frame of reference and approach to photojournalism.

In qualitative research, Creswell (2013) echoes the tenets of my practice as a means to “learn how to write a qualitative study” by reading published articles and studies and then “looking closely at the way they [are] composed” (p. 111). As a photojournalist I had to learn to be an observer, who assessed and tried to bring meaning to events that I covered. I had to make declarative statements about what I saw through my lens, which at times allowed me to interject my own personal bias, or how I saw and interpreted unfolding events. Most of the time I was objective and I captured events as they unfolded; however, at other times, I was able to be interpretive in how I photographed the events that I covered. Generally, photojournalists do not interact with, nor try to influence their subjects in any way. We do this so that we might capture or photograph our subjects *in situ* – as is, and not stage photographs. This of course is the practice of a purist, who desires to be ethical and capture life as it is; however, the discipline is and has been at times compromised much like research by bias and unethical attempts to skew data toward more favorable results.

It is difficult for photojournalists to step from behind the lens normally and become involved in what they see. Doing so hampers the thinking and seeing process; nonetheless, it is possible and by so doing a photojournalist may become an activist advocating and participating in a particular cause, much like an ethnographer might do in qualitative research. For me personally, one thing that I had to do was to move from one documenting real life to someone, who was engaging compassionately in life. I could no longer be an observer but I had to become a participant, who had to learn how to mobilize, lead and equip people for engaging life and

dealing with its concerns. I became an activist – a partisan so to speak as one of my Polish-Jewish friends views it, when I began to work with the Jewish community of Poland to restore neglected and abandoned Jewish cemeteries. As a qualitative researcher, I have become more directly involved with the process of observation and I see that my role is more in line with that of being both a participant and a participant observer.

Documenting my journey

When I first journeyed to Poland in December of 1988, I did not have any idea about Jewish cemeteries, or that I would become involved in them. I knew that Poland was a country behind the Iron Curtain and it had suffered and lost much in World War II. I also knew that Poland lost much of its Jewish population at the hand of Hitler and his systematic liquidation of six million European Jews in the Nazi death camps of occupied Poland. I went to Poland with a group of Baptist men who were to visit Baptist churches in Poland and the former Soviet Union. I of course went to document our journey and to write a few stories. On the day of my arrival nearly fifty years after the war, I saw the physical scars that remained in several building along the way to the place where I was to be staying. I saw bombed out shells of apartment buildings, still in ruins, haphazardly nestled among the many, gray, and starkly standing post-war communist bloc apartments scattered along the route. I was troubled by what I saw but I did not understand its significance.

All the while in Poland the thought was in my mind that the Jews, G-d's people were annihilated here in this place. The thought was like a lurking mist that would not melt away completely from the confines of my mind. While in Białystok, Poland, our group visited a synagogue in Tykocin not far from Białystok. Tykocin had once been home to a large Jewish community. All that remained now of that community was the synagogue and it had become a

museum – no longer an active synagogue. The misty, shadowy thought resurfaced. The Jews were gone; only traces of them remained. I made a few photographs of the interior of the synagogue, mostly of the walls and the apparent Hebrew inscriptions. I did not understand the inscriptions but they spoke to me of what was lost as a result of the Shoah. I felt its weight but the events of the Shoah were still abstract to me.

Once we returned to Warsaw, I took a train with our group to Lublin, Poland, where the Nazi Death Camp, Majdanek, is located. For the first time while in Poland, the mist – the murkiness of the Shoah began to ebb away and its reality emerged. I saw traces of the Shoah first-hand and I understood the reality of its horror, when I walked across the cold and broad expanse of the Majdanek Death Camp. As I walked, I made several photographs of the camp along the way concentrating on the fences and guard towers. My journey ended at a large memorial urn – something that looked like a domed stadium only smaller. I did not have much



time but I made a few photographs of what I saw. The urn contained a mound of human remains consumed in the ovens of the crematoria. What remained were the ashes of thousands, if not hundreds of thousands of Jewish and Polish victims, who were murdered in the gas chambers, or died in hard labor at the camp. While at the urn, I also made a photograph of a matzevah for the first time. I did not make the connection of these events with the symbolic meaning of a matzevah until much, much later in my life; however, one other event played a significant role in my journey of understanding.

Becoming a participant observer

Between 1999 and 2001, I became involved in the on-going humanitarian relief effort during and following the war in Kosovo. One day, I was invited to a ceremony honoring the memory of the 41 Albanian Muslim men, who were murdered at the hand of their Serbian Orthodox neighbors. Serbian paramilitary militiamen entered the village of *Qyshkut* on 14 May 2000, and rounded up the men and placed them in three houses. The militiamen executed



the men and then set the houses on fire; one man in each house managed to survive the ordeal. Upon the one year anniversary of the massacre on 14 May 2000 the community gathered for an unveiling ceremony of a large matzevah. This was the *second* time that I photographed the unveiling of a matzevah following a tragic event. The first time that I photographed such a memorial – a matzevah was on the first anniversary of the Luby's Cafeteria Massacre, which occurred on 16 October 1992 in Killeen, Texas. At the time, I was a photojournalist covering the story. In Kosovo, I was a participant observer, who took part in the raising of funds to secure the matzevah and I was an observer, who documented the unveiling ceremony. On the day of the ceremony, I realized that it was a public expression of grief and the large stone – the matzevah was a way for the villagers to honor the memory of the men and loved ones, who were murdered.



Becoming an activist

In May 2001, one year later following the unveiling of the *Qyshkut* memorial, I once more returned to Warsaw, Poland with my wife and children to live and work. Prior to our

return, I was in the Warsaw on my way to meet my wife for dinner. Along the way, I stumbled upon the only surviving synagogue in Warsaw following World War II and the Shoah. I knew what I observed was important but I did not understand what I was seeing or why I stopped. As I stood there, I pondered what I was seeing for the first time. In a sense the synagogue spoke silently to me. I did not understand completely; nevertheless, I began to connect my experience in Kosovo to what I was seeing in Warsaw in front of this synagogue. In Kosovo, I had heard frequently first-hand witness testimony from people, who lost neighbors and loved ones to the crimes of hatred and genocide. I realized in Warsaw that this synagogue was significant – it represented a remnant of the Shoah; however, I did not fully grasp the significance of these two events (in Kosovo and now in Warsaw) and how they were connected until much, much later.

In June 2004, my understanding changed almost immediately, when I had a conversation with a waitress named “Beata” in a restaurant in Otwock (a city just outside of Warsaw). I was working with a Polish Baptist church in this community doing community work with a group of young Baptist college students from the US. Beata was interested in me and what I was doing with this group of young college students in her city. She asked me every day a great many questions at every meal concerning our activities and what we are doing and why. Beata was very pleased with our work and the good that we were doing for her city. One morning quite unexpectedly, she suggested that I take these young people to visit the Jewish cemetery not far from where we were staying. “There is a Jewish cemetery here?” I asked curiously. “Yes,” she said and added, “There are many Jews here, who live in hiding.” Being culturally aware, I then asked her very politely this question: “*Czy ma Pani pochodzenie Żydowskie*” (Madam, are you of Jewish descent)? She simply replied, “Yes.”

I later took the group to see the Jewish cemetery in the middle of a forest. And, I began to consider from my encounter with Beata a series of questions:

1. What was significant about that Jewish cemetery to Beata?
2. What was the meaning of a cemetery to a Jew or someone, who had Jewish heritage?
3. What would I do in the face of the aftermath of the Shoah?

An emerging researcher

Answering these questions led to a significant change in my life. I became a researcher and I began to develop my knowledge base and my understanding of the importance of Jewish cemeteries, the history of World War II, and the Shoah. On a personal level from my research and my experience, I became aware of the troubled history of the two largest communities of Poland: the Roman Catholic community and the Jewish community. And, I realized that I was not part of either of these two communities. I was not part of either the Roman Catholic community or the Jewish community. In fact the Polish government placed me in a third category, a third community: the Baptist Christian community. If you yourself are not familiar with the difference between the Roman Catholic Christian and the Baptist Christian, I will repeat for you what I told a Jewish woman one Tuesday evening in Warsaw. She asked me, “I know that you are a Christian, but tell me who you are as a Baptist.” I told her that we gather to worship the One True G-d, we study Scripture, we pray and someone teaches. In other words, Baptist Christians are not like Roman Catholics, who pray to the saints and have images, priests and ceremonies. Our practice is based on what we learned from the Jewish community. We follow the simple pattern of synagogue worship.

When I lived in Poland, it was not difficult to find evidence of World War II; it is evident in the lives of nearly every single, living person and through the pot-marks of bullets or shell fragments, as their scars are engraved on the exterior walls of numerous buildings throughout the

country, but more so in Warsaw, the Polish capital. I lived in Warsaw for about eight years. Our youngest son was born in Warsaw on 15 October 1997 and we returned home to live and work in the US on his birthday in 2008. While I lived in Warsaw, I made photographs of the city of places associated with the war or with the Shoah. I also read a great many books on these two subjects. In my efforts to research and understand the war and the Shoah, several themes emerged and caught my attention:

- The anti-Semitism of Polish and Jewish relations prior to, during and following the War
- The social change in village Poland as people moved to the cities
- Adolf Hitler's invasion of Poland
- *Aktion Reinhard* (Operation Reinhard) – Hitler's plan for death camps to exterminate Jews upon arrival. *Aktion's* three extermination camps were all in Poland: Treblinka, Sobibor and Belzec.
- Auschwitz and its culminating role in what we now know as the Shoah

As the magnitude of the Shoah began to weigh on me, I tried to grasp the scope and the scale of the tragedy; nevertheless, I could not even begin to wrap my mind around what had happened and why. Eventually my inquiry led me not to contemplate and write, but to act. Consequently, I approached the Jewish community with a simple question: Could I bring Baptist (Christian) volunteers to care for this apparently neglected Jewish cemetery in the middle of a forest outside of Otwock, Poland? When the Chief Rabbi of Poland's representative asked me why I would want to do such a thing, I simply responded with one word, *pojednanie*, which means in English reconciliation. He said, "Ok." With that one word, I began a new path towards reconciliation by caring for and restoring Jewish cemeteries in Poland. Ultimately my journey led me to form The Matzevah Foundation in late 2010.

I believe that it is important to close this section with a quote from Michael Gawenda (2014), an Australian Jew of Polish ancestry, who wrote a story about his journey to Poland and his efforts to trace his family's past. Reflecting upon his journey, he wrote:

The past is never settled, but nor can it be denied. Poland will always be a place of darkness for Jews, especially Jews of Polish origin. But on this mild Polish late autumn day, with the lukewarm rays of the sun illuminating the glass panels, the museum felt like a place of fragile but determined optimism. Standing there in front of the museum, I thought of the children of Sandomierz and I thought of Zuzanna and her campaign against the bookshop in the basement of her church, and I thought of Jakub, who referred to me as a fellow *landsmann* of Lowicz, and I thought about how the story of a thousand years of Polish Jewish history did not have to end in a cemetery (para. 76-77).

As Gawenda concludes, I do not want the story of my journey to end in a forgotten Jewish cemetery. Instead, I wonder: What if a new story began?

Research sample

Qualitative research relies upon the purposeful selection of the participants; Patton (1990, 2001) terms the selection of the research sample in this manner purposeful, while Merriam (1998, 2009) views this selection as purposive sampling (cited in, Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012, p. 104). The rationale behind these concepts is to select “information-rich cases, with the objective or yielding insight and understanding of the phenomenon under investigation” (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012, p. 104). Furthermore, Creswell (2012) reminds us that qualitative researchers are to “develop and in-depth exploration of a central phenomenon” and for this reason, it is best for the researcher to select purposefully individuals and sites to be studied (p. 206). Consequently, I will select specific participants (and sites) primarily for this study using Patton's criterion as to whether or not participants are “information rich” (cited in, Creswell, 2012, p. 206) and have knowledge of and experience with the work of TMF in the United States or Poland. Participants in this study will therefore be derived from eighteen individuals, who have had, or who will have

interaction for the first time with the work of TMF. Twelve individuals have had direct association and interaction with me personally, or in some capacity of my leadership of TMF. Four individuals will be selected from a summer camp whose participants will be joining TMF volunteers and board members in a project this summer in Poland.

The work of TMF embraces a diverse group of volunteers including Polish Jews, Jews of Polish descent, Polish Catholics and Evangelicals, US Evangelical Christians and non-believers. Project participants are not just American but are international residing not only in Poland but are from countries such as Germany, Austria, the Ukraine and Israel. TMF also works with community and governmental leaders in Poland and has developed collaborative partnerships with Jewish institutions in the United States and Poland. What connects this diverse group of people primarily is the work of caring for a neglected Jewish cemetery in Poland. Typically volunteers are involved in intensive week of work in which they experience first-hand the loss of the Shoah by cleaning or removing debris and restoring some aspect of the Jewish cemetery. Usually, volunteers spend free time together, such as going for coffee, or in structured seminars where difficult issues are explored.

Data collection will involve developing unique perspectives of the case that I am studying (TMF). Primarily my data collection will rely upon employing two sampling strategies: maximal variation sampling and homogeneous sampling. According to Creswell (2012), maximum variation sampling presents “multiple perspectives of individuals to represent the complexity of our world;” likewise, it is a sampling strategy that allows researchers to explore differences “on some characteristic or trait” amongst individuals and sites (pp. 207-208). What I find appealing in the use of the maximum variation strategy is that it allows me to develop numerous perspectives of how participants view acts of loving-kindness (mercy) as experienced

in the work of TMF. Individual participants “differ on some characteristic or trait” (Creswell, 2012, pp. 207-208) and in my case study, I will purposefully select Jewish, Christian, and somewhat neutral participants (may be neutrally religious or secular). The trait (or characteristic) of interest to me is the primarily religious views of the participants, and to what degree does that particular religious viewpoint factor into the participant’s understanding of love of neighbor, mercy or caring compassionately for others?

An alternative sampling strategy for my case study could be that of homogeneous sampling, which focuses upon the selection of participants “because they possess a similar trait or characteristic” (Creswell, 2012, p. 208). The participants in my study are derived primarily from the Jewish and Christian communities; however, one group as I noted above will be selected from a group of European students, who may be religiously neutral or secular. According to Creswell (2013) selecting participants based on the homogeneous sampling method “facilitates group interviewing” (p. 158). Since I am planning to conduct at least two focus groups, one of these groups will be homogenous comprised of European university students and the other focus group will not be homogeneous per se but will be comprised of Christians and Jews, who have interacted with the work of TMF for at least three years.

Data collection

Creswell (2013) considers that there are four basic approaches to data collection: observations, interviews, documents, and audiovisual materials (p. 160). Concerning observation, I found it interesting how he categorizes the observer into four types (Creswell, 2013, p. 166):

1. Complete participant – the researcher is “fully engaged” with the process of observation
2. Participant as observer – the researcher participates in the activity, which enables him or her to “gain insider views and subjective data”
3. Nonparticipant/observer as participant – the researcher participates with those being observed as an outsider, “watching and taking notes from a distance” without direct interaction
4. Complete observer – the researcher is not visible or “noticed” by the people being studied

As a former photojournalist, I functioned primarily as a complete observer when I interacted with and photographed an unfolding news event. At times I had to interact with a subject when shooting a portrait or an illustration for a story explaining telling them what I need them to do (directive work, providing direction for subject). Now that I am considering my role as a researcher, I see that due to the nature of work with TMF, I am more directly involved with the process of observation and see that my role as an observer is more in line with that of being both participant and participant observer.

Sources of data

Sources of data for this case study will be derived from direct observations of participants, interviews, participant-observation, and documents/artifacts such as printed articles, TMF board minutes, photographs, TMF webpage, emails and lastly personal reflective journals.

Focus groups

When researching focus groups, I discovered the work of Moloney (2011). She conducts a qualitative case study among Australian women. The major focus of her study was the treatment of focus groups as a transformative space for spiritual encounters (liminal space as seen in terms of a focus group). Moloney concludes that the focus group is a “sacred container” that possibly signifies “the hope that as human nature evolves it can transform itself into its

greater spiritual potential” (p. 71). She introduced me to the value of focus groups in qualitative research and how I might employ them as a type of liminal space in which Jews and Christians might interact dialoguing more freely about critical issues confronting them. Focus groups allow people to explore “the construction and negotiation of meanings” (p. 58).

As encountered in the review of the literature, liminality (or liminal space) is a concept that describes being between or in the middle of two spaces, literally in-between the two. Liminality may be compared to the front porch of a house, which is literally a threshold space that allows people to transition from the outside of a house to the inside, or vice versa. Based on Moloney’s view of the focus group, I maintain that it allows me to explore the in-between space, a liminal space in which positive change in the relationship between Jew and Christian may emerge. Beech (2011) echoes my conclusion when he considers Watson’s (2009) notion of an individual’s “self-identity (their own notion of who they are)” and their communal or “social-identity (the notion of that person in external discourses, institutions and culture)” (cited in, Beech, 2011, p. 285). Beech (2011) reasons that social contexts “frame the possibilities that people have for creating and recognizing meaning in their interactions” (p. 290). I take this to mean that people choose how they interpret their interactions with other people in the social construct and daily narrative of life.

For this reason, I think that the focus group functions as a powerful liminal space in which individuals may transform their individual and collective viewpoints regarding Jewish-Christian dialogue. As such, the focus group enables me to explore potential issues of spiritual or religious identity among Jews and Christians and would allow Jews and Christians to share deeply what troubles them in their souls regarding the gulf that separates them. Such an undertaking would not be done for the purpose of conversion but for the purpose of dialogue and

mutual understanding. Although Jews and Christians share a similar religious heritage or foundational faith – the belief in the One True G-d, religious Jews view dialogue with Christians differently depending upon their particular tradition of Judaism: no dialogue, limited dialogue and full dialogue. Interestingly these Jewish dialogue positions are formulated from the Torah (be separate from the Gentile), from the long-standing Jewish experience with anti-Semitism (2,000 year history of Jewish-Christian interaction) and from the Shoah. As a Christian leader and in my case, dialogue with Jews occurs within a very specific context of the liminal space created by The Matzevah Foundation and its work into which both Jew and Christian must selectively choose to enter.

TMF will be working this summer in the Oświęcim Jewish cemetery. Participants in the project will be staying at a local hostel and educational center. Therefore, I plan to conduct focus group interviews at the hostel in a public meeting room. Since I am using the focus group as a means to interview a several people at once, I plan form two focus groups in Oświęcim comprised four participants each. The first focus group will be a somewhat neutral group of individuals consisting of four European students, who will be first-time participants in a TMF Jewish cemtery restoration project. The second focus group will be more closely associated with the work of TMF and will be comprised of four individuals: a long-standing Jewish friend, two American-Christian TMF board members and one Polish-Evangelical Christian TMF advisory board memberrt. I intend to conduct these two focus group interveiws separetely and as indicated this summer in Oświęcim, Poland during a week-long, TMF Jewish cemetery restoration project.

Individual interviews

As McMillan and Schumacher (2010) indicates qualitative researchers use interviews as a common strategy in data collection because it allows them to ask “open-response questions” that

allow the researcher to obtain data regarding “how individuals conceive of their world and how they explain or make sense of important events in their lives” (p. 355). Creswell (2012) states that qualitative researchers use “general, open-ended questions” and record participant responses as a means to explore a central phenomenon with “one or more participants” (p. 217). Participant responses are accordingly also open-ended allowing participants “to create the options for responding” (Creswell, 2012, p. 218). According to Rudestam and Newton (2007) the interview itself functions primarily as a lens by which “to focus discussion on the research questions of the study” (p. 109). Consequently, Rudestam and Newton conclude that open ended interview questions are tools used to lead participants in the study “to reflect on experience and its implications in his or her life” (p. 109). Furthermore, they state that questions along these lines encourage the participants “to focus on the incident or the phenomenon” as a means to “describe the experience” relating their actions, comments, feelings and thoughts (p. 110). By using follow-up questions Rudestam and Newton (2007) suggest that researchers may “encourage the interviewee to dig deeper and reflect on the meaning of the experience” (p. 110).

Ideally Creswell (2013) suggests that in a case study design the researcher should interview “a few individuals” without giving a specific total number of individuals to be interviewed (p. 51). When gathering data from participants in a qualitative study, the key principle to keep in view is what is termed as useable data. According to Morse (2000) an inverse relationship exists amongst the quantity of “useable data obtained from each participant and the number of participants” (p. 4). What this means, according to Morse, is that the greater the quantity of “useable data obtained from each person, the fewer the number of participants” (p. 4) are needed for the study. Rich data emerges from information rich sources, which ultimately means that the number of participants and the associated number of interviews is

fewer – “perhaps only 6 to 10” (p. 5). According to Curtis et al. (2000), Walsh and Downe (2006), rich or dense data focuses on the research question allowing “the researcher to provide a convincing account of the phenomenon (cited in, Cleary, Horsfall, & Hayter, 2014, p. 473).

As I consider the number of participants for interviews that I plan to conduct, I will select individuals, who have had contact, or who have on-going contact with me and the work of TMF. These individuals will be selected from the following groupings:

1. *Jewish perspective*: an American rabbi and a female Jewish journalist
2. *Polish-Jewish perspective*: a Jewish leader living in Warsaw and a Jewish student living in Israel
3. *Polish-Christian perspective*: a Polish Catholic and a Polish Evangelical Christian
4. *Christian perspective*: four members of the Board of Directors of TMF

Photographs

Since 1988, I have been photographing aspects of life that I encountered in my life while living in Poland primarily but also while living in Kosovo. In the spring of 2014, I began to process my experiences in the context of my work and experiences with the Polish Jewish community through photographic data that I have amassed over the years. I surveyed hundreds of negatives, slides and digital images that I produced over a twenty-seven year period related to my journey. While surveying these photographs, I asked myself questions such as these: Why did I photograph that particular subject? Or, what was going on in the scene that captured my interest? My aim was to recollect and see how my photographs have shaped my experience. I concentrated on photographs that I made specifically related to the Shoah, genocide, terrorism, Polish Jewish cemeteries, and memorial ceremonies.

One alternative approach to the use of photographs as data is to employ a data collection technique termed “photo elicitation” (Creswell, 2013, p. 161). Essentially this technique is

founded upon the researcher using photographs to elicit responses of participants. Creswell explains that the researcher may use their own photographs or use the photographs of the participants. The researcher asks the participants to “discuss the contents of the pictures” as in Wang’s and Burris’ (1994) use of Photovoice (p. 161). I see this as a distinct possibility for my study in that I could use photographs as the basis of a focus group interview.

Observations

Marshall McLuhan, a Canadian philosopher once said, “I wouldn't have seen it, if I hadn't believed it” (cited in, Kraig, 2012). How can a researcher be sure he/she has “seen” what they think they've seen? I have been a professional observer – a photojournalist for most of my adult life as I constantly view the world around me oftentimes as photographs. The difference between life and capturing life in photographs is frequently selective; it is the same in qualitative research. One key element that I have learned about selective photography is capturing what is present without trying to understand what is going on necessarily before my lens. I believe that observation of course leads to interpretation but this is after the fact. If I wish to add my pre-conceptions or prejudices to how I photograph a particular subject I would lose my objectivity and become an editor, who interprets and editorializes about what is being seen. I would be looking for a photograph that fits my narrative.

I believe that the same could be true for researchers as observers. Being certain of what is being observed needs to be weighed against what the purpose of the research is. Am I, as a researcher, seeking to see what I am observing as fitting my narrative, or am I being objective in what I am seeing allowing the scene unfold before and tell its own story? I believe that this may possibly be the greatest risk facing researchers today. I would ask in light of this reality a simple question: Am I capturing what is there through my observations or am I seeking to “editorialize”

selectively seeing what is present? I believe that interpretation of what is unfolding is secondary to observation. Observation relies upon describing what is present and asks informational questions such as to who, what, and when? Interpretation goes to meaning by asking why, or how did this come to be?

I will be observing the response of people (American Christians, Polish Christians/Catholics/Protestants and Polish Jews) who are interacting with each other in a Jewish cemetery project in Poland. I will be looking for how they interact with each other in terms of cross-cultural cooperation. I will also look for those who have questions about the importance of a Jewish cemetery or why TMF is working in a Jewish cemetery.

Journals

Since 2004, several individuals have kept journals while they were working in a Jewish cemetery restoration project in Poland. Since this is pre-existing data is relevant, I plan to access and review these journals in order to determine if they are appropriate sources of data that will assist me explore how acts of loving-kindness bridge the gap of Jewish-Christian dialogue. I have also kept a running journal of sorts in my email communication with project participants, orientation materials and writings that I have produced concerning Jewish-Christian interaction since 2004.

Other artifacts

TMF recently (January 2015) launched its new website (<http://www.matzevah.org/>) and has using Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/matzevah?ref=hl>) since January 2011 as means to engage and communicate with potential participants and donors for its projects. Several

articles have been published in magazines and on websites since 2012 in both Polish and English. I have also delivered a paper at a conference in India in 2012 speaking about mercy.

Data collection procedures

Creswell (2013) discusses data collection and clarifies what data collection is; it is the process of “gaining permissions, conducting a good qualitative sampling strategy, developing means for recording information . . . , storing the data, and anticipating ethical issues that may arise” (p. 145). Furthermore he emphasizes that data collection is more than “interviews and observations” but it encompasses “an every expanding array of qualitative sources of data” (Creswell, 2013, p. 145). Creswell indicates that data collection is a process of working through several related steps focused upon collecting useful data as a means to answer an evolving research question. I will expound upon the following data collecting activities: locating the site, gaining access, recording information, resolving issues in the field, and data storage (Creswell, 2013, p. 146).

Locating site

Since I am the CEO and President of The Matzevah Foundation, I have direct access to the Board of Directors. I have had informal board approval to conduct research of TMF since my entrance into the Andrews University’s PhD program. Most recently at our March 2015 Board Meeting, I acquainted them with the fact that I am nearing the completion of my dissertation proposal and if permissions are secured, I hope to begin research soon. I presented my dissertation prospectus and asked them to consider approving my research request. Once I begin the formal internal review board (IRB) process with Andrews University, I will secure formal permission from the board to conduct research of TMF and its participants in the US and Poland.

Secondly, I plan to obtain consent from the hostel and educational center with whom we are partnering in caring for and restoring the Jewish cemetery in Oświęcim, Poland. I have been working with them for three years and they know of my PhD work. I have not formally requested consent or permission from their board to conduct research; nevertheless, I plan to secure it once I begin the formal internal review board process.

Gaining access

I have been developing my relationship with the Jewish community of Poland over the past ten years. I have developed good rapport with many Jewish leaders in Poland and for the most part, I think that I have greater access to the Jewish community in Poland than I do in the US. Since 2008, I have been working to establish and develop relationships within the US Jewish community. I have not been as successful in the US as I have been in Poland; nonetheless, since 2012 the access that I have developed with the Jewish community in the US is significant. I meet quarterly with an influential rabbi in Atlanta, Georgia, where I live. He is very interested in our work and has proactively connected me with several of members of the Jewish community in Atlanta. Through him, I met a journalist, who wrote a story about our work; I have met with this journalist frequently. I plan to interview both of these individuals.

If I gain IRB approval to begin my research, I plan to conduct interviews in Poland this summer (2015) in association with TMF's Jewish cemetery restoration projects. Where possible, I intend conduct face-to-face interviews while in Poland with specific interviewees. I will interview five people: an American rabbi, a CEO of a Jewish non-profit, a Polish Catholic, a Polish Evangelical Christian and a Jewish friend. These five individuals have interacted with me and my work for several years; one has worked with me for ten years. I plan to ask a Jewish university student living in Israel if I could interview him. If I have the funds and I am able, I

plan to travel to Israel while I am in Poland this summer in order to interview him. If not, I will use Skype to conduct my interview with him.

As I indicated above, the principle site for conducting my research this summer will be Oświęcim, Poland. Both focus groups and some of the interviews will occur in Oświęcim during a TMF Jewish cemetery restoration project. I will interview two TMF board in Oświęcim. All other interviews will be conducted in the US. I will interview the remaining four TMF board members, which I will interview either face-to-face, or by phone depending upon their availability. As noted previously interviews in the US will include the rabbi and journalist living in Atlanta, Georgia.

Recording information

Based on the work of Kvale and Brinkmann (2009), Creswell (2013) recommends that researchers “design and use of an interview protocol or interview guide” in order to record information accurately during the interview process (p. 164). The interview guide should have some basic information about the interview (e.g., date, location, name of interviewer and interviewee), brief project description, “five to seven open-ended interview questions,” and space for recording participant responses; it should be about four or five pages long (p. 164). The interview protocol allows the researcher to record the responses of the interviewee during the interview and assists the researcher to “organize thoughts” regarding the interview process (p. 168). Furthermore, a researcher may use “an observational protocol to record information” during the process of observation (p. 169). Such a protocol would allow a researcher to record information such as notes about activities and then their reflective responses.

The key component of recording information is that of what Lofland and Lofland (1995) as “logging data” (cited in Creswell, 2013, p. 169), which entails recording notes, write-ups,

photograph, video or sound recordings, and documents. With these factors in view, I plan to design and develop an interview protocol for the interview process, so that I can note responses. However, to be more thorough and accurate, I plan to video tape all focus groups and interviews as a means to record data.

Field issues

The primary issue that I face in the field is the amount of qualitative data that will be collected via interviews and focus groups. Presently, I plan to conduct two focus group interviews which will have four participants each and I will conduct sixteen individual interviews. I may need to reduce this number; however, this is what I am planning to do presently. Creswell (2013) recommends that beginning researchers “with limited data collection” experience, as Sampson (2004) suggests, conduct “a pilot project to gain some initial experiences” (cited in, Creswell, 2013, p. 171). In the context of this study, I do not plan to do such a pilot project due to the fact that I have some experience in conducting qualitative research. Within the past year, I conducted my first qualitative research project based photo elicitation. I used several of my photographs to generate discussion and capture responses from a focus group and select individuals. For the independent analysis of the photographs in this research project, I used two sets of questions as a means to identify “a set of comprehensive themes” from the photographic data (Creswell, 2013, p. 45).

Nonetheless, I believe that I will face difficulty in the amount of data that I will be collecting for this study of TMF. I will also issues with making observations with regards to my role as primarily as a participant observer. It will be difficult for me to remain independent at times based on my subjective involvement with the work of TMF. However, I believe with my experience as a photojournalist, I think that I will be able to step between roles of observer and

participant observer somewhat easily. Conducting interviews may present problems for me; nevertheless, I have learned to conduct interviews as a photojournalist and from my work in Poland. I have a great deal of experience in asking open-ended questions, listening closely, and determining primary issues over the course of an interview.

Data storage

The storage (and protection) of data cannot be emphasized enough in qualitative research. Large amounts of data in the form of notes, documents, recordings, transcripts, etc. will be generated and must be stored and protected. According to Davidson (1996), the key practice that must be kept in view for qualitative researchers is that of backing up collected data frequently (cited in, Creswell, 2013, p. 175). Creswell provides several principles regarding data storage that are pertinent for consideration. Other than backing up data, he recommends that quality materials be used to record the data, researchers develop a “master list” of materials collected, protect anonymity of participants, and develop a visual means to locate and identify data (Creswell, 2013, p. 175).

In view of these principles, I plan to use highly quality SD cards for storing video and audio recordings. I will transfer audio and visual recordings to local storage on an external hard drive, which will be backed up continuously. I also plan to copy and store this type of data in a folder using a cloud service such as DropBox. All other types of data (documents, photographs, field notes, transcripts, etc.) will be treated in the same manner meaning that all data locally will be stored and backed up locally along with cloud based storage. The only other issue that I envision presently is that of the transcription of interviews. I do not know of anyone presently who could assist me transcribe audio data into searchable text.

Data analysis

Creswell (2013) highlights the complexity of textual analysis and the analysis of “other forms of data” involved in qualitative inquiries (p. 179). He outlines what is involved with data analysis by comparing it and interconnected “spiral of activities” (Creswell, 2013, pp. 179; 182-188), which involve:

1. Organizing data
2. Conducting a preliminary read-through of the database
3. Coding and organizing themes
4. Representing the data
5. Forming an interpretation of the data

In the case study approach of particular interest to me in the process of data analysis is the concept of coding: “coding involves aggregating the text or visual data into small categories of information,” then the researcher seeks “evidence for the code from different databases being used in the study and then assigning a label to the code” (Creswell, 2013, p. 184). What coding really means is a narrowing down of data or refining and thereby removes unnecessary or superfluous data. At this point, I lack an experiential understanding of what coding is; nevertheless I understand the basic tenants of coding and wish to employ this method of data analysis to my research inquiry. An analysis of a case study begins with crafting “a detailed description of the case and its setting;” in case study research, Stake (as cited in, Creswell, 2013, p. 199) calls for four types of interpretation and data analysis:

1. In categorical aggregation the researcher looks “for a collection of instances from the data.”
2. Direct interpretation relates to a researcher addressing only “a single instance” and deconstructing and reconstructing the data so that it is more meaningful.
3. Patterns are determined by the researcher in which he or she “looks for correspondence between two or more categories.”

4. Naturalistic generalizations emerge from the data as the researcher analyzes it providing “generalizations that people can learn from the case.”

Interestingly, computer programs are available for qualitative inquiries, which are essentially for data storage and organization assisting the researcher locate data more effortlessly. The process is simple in that a researcher “identifies a text segment or image segment, assigns a code label, and develops a printout of the text segments” having the same code label (Creswell, 2013, p. 201). It appears as with quantitative research data entry is required by the researcher. Disadvantages includes learning how to use the program (always a steep learning curve), form a barrier between the researcher and the data, lack of information regarding the program’s use, or may lack specific features that a researcher needs. I plan to use the QSR NVivo program (<http://www.qsrinternational.com>), which assists researchers “analyze, manage, shape and analyze qualitative data” (Creswell, 2013, p. 204).

Trustworthiness – validity issues

Regarding the validity of the study, Creswell (2013) addresses validity or validation along with the evaluation of a qualitative study and states that there are many different perspectives of validity, pointing to LeCompte and Goetz (1982), Lincoln and Guba (1985), Eisner (1991), Lather (1993), Wolcott (1994b), Angen (2000), Whittenmore, Chase, and Mandle (2001), and Richardson and St. Pierre (2005), and Lincoln, Lynham, and Guba (2011). Furthermore, LeCompte and Goetz (1982) adhere to quantitative equivalents for validation and argue that qualitative inquiry has been criticized by the scientific community for not adhering “to canons of reliability and validation” (p. 31). On the other hand, Lincoln and Guba establish “trustworthiness” for an inquiry by using naturalistic research equivalents “such as credibility,

authenticity, transferability, dependability, and confirmability” as substitutes for “internal validation, external validation, reliability and objectivity” (cited in Creswell, 2013, p. 246).

Credibility of study

Eisner uses the term credibility for qualitative research instead of validation by seeking “a confluence of evidence” that yields credibility and thereby allows the researcher “to feel confident about [their] observations, interpretations and conclusions” (cited in Creswell, 2013, p. 246). Other researchers, such as Wolcott (1990), set aside the concept of validation. He puts forward the notion that validation “neither guides nor informs;” therefore, his purpose is to discover “critical elements” and develop “plausible interpretations for them” which leads to what he terms “understanding” (as cited in Creswell, 2013, pp. 247-248).

Validation strategies

Creswell (2013) defines validation in qualitative research as “an attempt to assess the ‘accuracy’ of the findings, as best described by the researcher and the participants” (pp. 249-250). I will employ several validation strategies as a means to increase the trustworthiness of my study. First of all, Creswell (2013) points the “prolonged engagement and persistent observation” of the researcher in the field as a validation strategy (p. 250). Such field based considerations allow the qualitative researcher to build trust, learn culture and determine the validity of information. I have been involved in Jewish cemetery restoration projects for more than ten years. I have gained a great deal of trust and credibility with both the Polish and Jewish communities in Poland. I speak Polish well (some would say, “fluently”) and I understand the culture perfectly. Both of these attributes allow me to check for any distortions that may emerge from my involvement or with the involvement of the participants.

Secondly, I will use triangulation, which is a practice in which researchers use “multiple and different sources, methods, investigators, and theories to provide corroborating evidence” (Creswell, 2013, p. 251). According to Golafshani (2003) triangulation is a means by which researchers may test “the validity and reliability of research or evaluation of findings” (p. 603). Furthermore, Patton (2001) points out that “triangulation strengthens a study by combining methods” – different types of “methods or data, including using both quantitative and qualitative approaches” (cited in, Golafshani, 2003, p. 603). Barbour (1998) challenges this concept because it causes problems related to philosophical assumptions in “terms of theoretical frameworks we bring to bear on our research” (cited in, Golafshani, 2003, p. 603). It is my plan to corroborate the evidence by providing multiple sources of data, two primary methods of data collection, member checking, and auditing just to name a few (some of these concepts will be discussed further in the next paragraph).

Thirdly, I will employ “peer review or debriefing,” which ensures “a check of the research.” Regarding conducting a peer review, Pyrczak (2013) suggests that qualitative researchers seek an independent analysis by “two or more individuals” (p. 111), while Galvan (2013) advises qualitative researchers consult “outside experts as a peer review” (p. 58). Moreover, Pryczak advises that researchers should consult independent experts such as an “auditor,” who will be able to provide feedback as a means to “ensure trustworthiness” (pp. 112-113). Creswell (2013) relays that “external audits” provide for an auditor, someone, who is independent and “an external consultant,” who will “examine both the process and the product of the account assessing their accuracy” (p. 252). The use of external consultants or experts will ensure more dependable or credible results, which will raise the level of confidence in the study. At this point, I am uncertain as to how I might consult an expert or conduct a peer review

especially as it relates to coding. Nonetheless, I plan to seek outside input as a means to verify my results.

Fourthly, I plan to use “member checking,” which seeks participant feedback and as such, I will be better able to ensure “the credibility of the findings” (Creswell, 2013, p. 252). Likewise, Galvan (2013) indicates that member checking occurs when participants or members of the study check the accuracy of the results; by allowing member checking the researcher will ensure “that the results reflect the realities as perceived by the participants” (p. 58). Lastly, Creswell (2013) suggestst that by providing “rich, thick description,” researchers may ensure that the readers of the study may “make decisions regarding transferability” due to the fact that the author of the study provides a detailed description of the “participants or setting under study,” allowing for findings to “be transferred” to other circumstances “because of shared characteristics” (p. 252). In light of this fact, Galvan (2013) suggests that qualitative researchers should provide demographic information regarding the participants, so that they may be seen by the readers, which allows the readers to “make judgements on the adequacy of the sample” (p. 60). Consequently, I plan to include descriptive statistics concerning the demographics of the participants.

Lastly, Creswell (2013) indicates that researchers need to “clarifying” their bias and thereby inform the reader of the researcher’s views or positions, biases or assumptions (p. 251). I take this to mean that every researcher makes judgments regarding what he or she considers being important or not; identifying personal bias, as well as, the bias of others is also important. At times honestly, I struggle with my own bias in what I am doing. I know that I am a follower of Christ, but I am also a public servant, who leads a public charity. I must express my personal bias, but I must not allow it to hamper my exploration and research regarding what I have been

doing with the global Jewish community of Polish heritage. I believe that all researchers, who are interested in cross-cultural dialogue, should consider their own biases.

Expanding somewhat on the point of personal bias in conducting this study, I recognize that I will be the primary research instrument, who will be primarily analyzing my interactions with the Jewish community as a Christian. I am researching my case, and my story, with which I have been intimately involved in cooperation with the Jewish community since 2004. In a sense, I am embedded into this reality, like a journalist embedded in a military operation. My purpose is to question, observe, collect data, develop themes, analyze and report. My report should bring understanding to the matter of Jewish-Christian interaction at the level of bettering or improving human relations, or even more so improving Jewish-Christian dialogue with regards to long-standing conflict and mutual distrust. In order to arrive at such an outcome, I must listen to, study, and understand the Jewish perspective. Hopefully my research will achieve this goal. By so doing, I believe that the Jewish community might better understand that some Christians really do care, that they are not anti-Semitic, and that they simply do not wish by their actions to convert them to Christianity.

With these concepts of validity in mind, I believe that I will be able to ensure the credibility or trustworthiness of the findings of my study as they relate to determining whether or not acts of loving-kindness, as seen in the work of TMF, narrow the gap between Jews and Christians allowing them to engage in meaningful dialogue possibly leading to forgiveness and reconciliation..

Generalizability

Generalization according to Eisner (1991) means a transference of “what has been learned from one situation or task to another” (p. 198). He considers that in life we generalize

what we learn in “skills, images, and ideas” (p. 199) and apply these generalized learnings or generalizations to our actions in similar situations. In research, an expectation of generalization is that it would “allow us to make predictions,” or have some idea about future outcomes (p. 200), and ultimately lead to “a good theory that provides an explanation of why [the generalizations] work” (p. 201). In qualitative case studies, Eisner believes that a researcher can make generalizations; however, he states that “the readers will determine whether the research findings fit the situation in which they work” (p. 204).

Lincoln (2002) considers that postmodern critique has resulted in two outcomes: “all knowledge is partial, incomplete, standpoint-determined, and therefore, suspect in its claims to universality” and that “some knowledges . . . are more equal than others (p. 8). Lincoln argues that since we “have given up in an assumed universality” and for it substituted generalizability, “we have gained in richness, texture, flavor, vicarious experience and deeper understanding of lives lived differently from our own” (pp. 8-9). Furthermore, there are multiple views regarding the “nature of evidence” and what it is; hence, “what we can consider, within any given scientific community, what is valid, reliable, and worthwhile of acceptance” (p. 9). The hallmarks of qualitative studies are twofold: “findings must be grounded in the situation examined, and if possible, comparisons will be created, and findings from one study should be” transferable to or generalized for other studies, which may share similar contexts; nevertheless, “they rarely exhibit a one-to-one correspondence with each other” (p. 12).

Additionally, Eisner (1997) shifts focus away from traditional research methods (statistical analysis, correlation and experimental designs) to that which he calls the “new frontier” that arose from discontent or restraints of traditional methodology; furthermore, he points to the Aristotle’s three sources of knowledge: theoretical, practical, and productive

knowledge and concludes (based on Schwab's 1969 work) that "knowledge need not be defined solely in the positivistic terms" (p. 2). Eisner believes that contemporary American educational research "displays a remarkable degree of exploratory inclinations" which is driving change and allowing researchers to develop "new forms" of conducting research that are "better suited for studying the educational worlds" for which they are concerned (Eisner, 1997, p. 3).

Eisner sees a "much greater acceptance" of qualitative research by the broader educational research community, whose members are embracing the method as being "more than a methodological choice," but as "a reflection of a personality disposition" (Eisner, 1997, p. 7). Eisner hopes that "the field will develop hybrid forms of research" that will include different methods "within the same study" and welcomes "pluralism" within educational research and within the studies themselves (Eisner, 1997, p. 7).

Ultimately as Eisner reasons, the reader is the one who will make generalizations about my research. It is possible that anyone who is interested in the deeper levels of dialogue across any given community will be able to generalize ideas, or develop skills about how to approach dialogue from my study.

Ethics – IRB issues

The primary ethical issues that I must deal with here is how I plan to protect or safeguard "the rights of participants," communicate or disclosure the purpose of study and thereby provide "informed consent" to the participants, along with "protecting participants from harm, and ensuring confidentiality" (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012, p. 111). In order to protect the identity of the participants in this study, all interview responses will be anonymous and will rely upon pseudonyms for identifying participants. Additionally Bloomberg and Volpe recommend that researchers must be mindful during their study of the relationship between themselves and the

participants, “which is determined by roles, status and cultural norms” (p. 112). The latter consideration presents me with a challenging cross-cultural scenario in which I must be aware of differences in Jewish-Christian religious culture, American-Polish culture, and American-German or European culture as well as, language differences.

Summary

My study will be conducted as a qualitative case study of the work of TMF. I believe the case study method of inquiry is best suited for this study because it involves the study of a case – The Matzevah Foundation and its work within the framework of life as it is experienced. I will seek to understand how acts of loving-kindness (mercy) influence attitudes and create mutual bridges of understanding as the underpinning for dialogue. I will purposefully select the participants of this study; the rationale for selecting specific individuals purposefully is to select “information-rich cases, with the objective or yielding insight and understanding of the phenomenon under investigation” (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012, p. 104). Consequently, I will select specific participants using Patton’s criterion, who are “information rich” (cited in, Creswell, 2012, p. 206) and have knowledge of and experience with the work of TMF. Principally I will be studying the responses of people individually and corporately to open-ended questions about their experience in working with TMF in its educational initiatives and its Jewish cemetery restoration projects in Poland. In order to gather data, I will use two focus groups and interview ten individuals as means to explore the interaction of Jew and Christian within the construct [third space or liminal space] of the work of TMF.

I often find that qualitative studies “bend” reality, meaning that the studies that I have read employ a postmodern hermeneutic and deconstructive approach. Truth seems to be subjective more so than absolute. I believe that there are indeed moral and ethical absolutes;

however, they are relatively and subjectively applied by our choice to do so. What I do in my work is bound to and driven by Micah 6:8 – “*Mankind, He has told you what is good and what it is the LORD requires of you: to act justly, to love faithfulness, and to walk humbly with your God.*” We have a relative choice in applying truth. Truth in my mind is not relative but revealed. Doing what is right is not subjective but demonstrates what is true and real and that which people long to see in a corrupt world. Personally, I have come to realize from what I have been reading in the literature that I am not so much an academician, as I am a practitioner, who wants to understand what I have come to be doing intuitively through TMF. I am looking to determine what principles lie at the foundation of what I am doing. Does research support them and how might that may be transferable to other contexts?

Academic statement of authorship

As a member of the academic community of Andrews University I pledge that I have not received, used, or given any unauthorized assistance on this assignment.

Your signature (Type name and last name): Steven D. Reece

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