

PThU

**THE EXORCISMS OF JESUS IN MARK AS SYMBOLIC
ACTIONS FOR POLITICAL LIBERATION: A CASE
STUDY ON MARK 5:1-20**

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Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
MASTER OF THEOLOGY (in depth)

PROTESTANT THEOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY, GRONINGEN

2018

PThU

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Approval Date: 13 July 2018

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My foremost gratitude goes to the Heavenly Father. Only by his Grace have I completed this thesis in the midst of many challenges.

First, I would like to express my deepest thanks to my supervisor, Prof. Annette Merz, well known as a German historical Jesus scholar for her excellent guidance and encouragement. I am very proud of writing this thesis under her supervision. I also give my thanks to Dr M.C.A. Korpel for being my second supervisor. I am deeply indebted to my friend Mark de Jager, student assistant of Prof. Merz, for his helpful comments on and corrections of my thesis. I am also very thankful to Mr Anthony Runia and Sybren Deuzeman for correcting my English.

Secondly, I extend my thanks to PThU for funding my study and all professors who taught me different courses during my study at PThU, international officer Albert Nijboer and his assistant Tirtsa Liefing.

Finally, I express my gratitude to my parents, my four siblings, my wife Ah Pa and my son Daan, who was born during my study in the Netherlands, and my international friends from Casa Mundo. I am also thankful to the Kachin community in the Netherlands for their warm love and prayer support.

ZUNG BAWM

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Student: ZUNG BAWM
Degree: Master of Theology (New Testament)
Advisor: Prof. dr. Annette Merz
Approval Date: 13 July 2018
Institution: Protestant Theological University, Groningen, the Netherlands.
Number of Pages: 59
Keywords: Exorcism, Political Reading, Political Liberation, Oppression, Intratextuality, Intertextuality, Roman anti-Imperial Sentiment, Legion, Gerasene demoniac

ABSTRACT

This thesis approaches Jesus' exorcisms in Mark as symbolic actions for political liberation, that is, liberation from religious, socio-economic and political oppression by both Jewish religious authorities and Roman imperial rule. The thesis consists of four chapters. First, the political readings of the Gospel of Mark as a whole by Ched Myers and Richard A. Horsley are presented, because their readings reveal the presence of politics in the Gospel of Mark. Secondly, the presence of anti-Roman sentiment in the Gospel of Mark is investigated by discussing the gospel's historical and socio-political setting. Thirdly, it is argued that four closely related intratexts of Mark 5:1-20, the political reading of the miracles in general, Mark's use of socio-political terminologies in Mark 5:1-20, Mark's description of the geographical area as "the land of the Gerasenes," and Mark's reference to "the sea" seem to support the interpretation of Jesus' exorcism in Mark 5:1-20 as a symbolic action for political liberation. Finally, I argue that Mark's probable intertextual references to the Exodus story, especially Exodus 14-15, in Mark 5:1-20 seem to add further evidential weight to this interpretation. It is argued that the connection between Jesus' exorcism story and the Exodus story in terms of political liberation is possibly underpinned by two non-biblical sources which independently make this connection.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS

CE	Common Era
cf.	confer (compare)
Dt	Deuteronomy
ed.	edition; editor
eds.	editors
e.g.	exempli gratia (for example)
Ex	Exodus
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
i.e.	that is; in other words; that is to say
KBC	Kachin Baptist Convention
KIA	Kachin Independent Army
LXX	Septuagint
MT	Masoretic Text
MBC	Myanmar Baptist Convention
mss	manuscripts
NLD	National League for Democracy
non vidi	I have not seen it
NT	New Testament
orig.	original
OT	Old Testament
Ps	Psalms

Introduction

0.1 Developing the Research Motivation, Questions and Problems

Ched Myers describes the ‘hermeneutic circle’ as follows: “Our life situation will necessarily determine the questions we bring to the text, and hence strongly influence what it says and means to us. At the same time, the text maintains its own integrity, and we owe it to ourselves and the text to try to enter into its world as much as possible. Then, if we are genuinely listening to the text, we will allow it to influence how we understand and what we do about our situation (it ‘interprets’ us).”¹ Along these lines I also structure my whole thesis, *context to text*, *text*, and *text to context*. First, I sketch my own context which has pushed me to engage with the text, Mark 5:1-20. Secondly, I extensively deal with the text and related texts so that I may understand the world of the text and the meaning of the text can affect how I understand and how I apply the text to my context.² Finally, I briefly reflect to my context with the outcomes from engaging with the text.

Let me begin with a brief discussion of my own context which has prompted me to undertake this thesis. Even though Aung San Suu Kyi’s³ NLD⁴-led democratic government has been in power, Myanmar still remains constitutionally under the control of the Myanmar military, known as the *Tatmadaw* in the Myanmar language. The 2008 constitution of Myanmar shows how the Myanmar military still influences the major affairs of the country, since in the Parliament twenty-five percent of the seats are still occupied by military representatives and “the *Tatmadaw* [Myanmar military] is not subject to civilian government.”⁵

So far, in Kachin State situated in the northern part of Myanmar where I come from and in the other states as well, the severe fighting between the ethnic armed groups, especially between the Kachin Independent Army and Myanmar government troops, has not abated. People around the world recognize the Rohingya people’s suffering in Rakhine State under the Myanmar military as one of the world’s most urgent issues. However, what is happening to the ethnic people oppressed by the

¹ Ched Myers, *Binding the Strong Man: A Political Reading of Mark’s Story of Jesus*, 20th ed. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 2008, p. 5.

² Myers, *Binding the Strong Man*, p. 5. See further Walter Wink, *The Bible in Human Transformation*, Philadelphia: Fortress, 1973, pp. 19ff.

³ Aung San Suu Kyi is currently the incumbent State Counselor and leader of the National League for Democracy (NLD). She is the daughter of General Aung San. She has won many awards, including the Nobel Peace Prize.

⁴ NLD stands for the National League for Democracy.

⁵ David C. Williams, *Analysis of the 2008 SPDC Constitution for Burma*, Center for Constitutional Democracy, 2010, p. 1, <http://www.burmapartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/04/David-Williams-Briefer-on-power-of-Burmes-military-under-the-2008-constitution1.pdf> (accessed April 5, 2017).

Myanmar military and power holders in the ethnic states of Myanmar has not yet received the full attention it deserves. Currently, the political conflict between my people (Kachins) and the Myanmar government armed forces is intense. Since 2011, many innocent Kachin people have been brutally tortured and murdered by the Myanmar military. More than 100,000 Kachin civilians have been displaced due to the attacks by the Myanmar military. Many women have been raped by Myanmar soldiers. Children, women and many innocent civilians have been deeply shaken by the inhuman, violent attacks and human rights violations of the Myanmar military such as the shelling and bombing by attack helicopters and heavy artillery, including chemical weapons, and the raping and killing of innocent civilians.⁶ It seems that the actions of the Myanmar military have turned into the genocide of the Kachin people.⁷ Nevertheless, this kind of critical news is rarely and then often erroneously described in the national news of Myanmar. The government of Aung San Su Kyi has also been silent about this critical situation and uncritical of human rights violations by the Myanmar military.⁸

In this critical situation, some politically uninformed Kachin Christians have condemned the Kachin Baptist Convention (KBC)⁹ for speaking on behalf of the suffering people who have been oppressed by the Myanmar military in the civil war. KBC has been insulted for its involvement and for raising a prophetic voice in the political conflicts on behalf of the voiceless or suffering people. Politically uninformed Christians among the Kachins hold that the church should stay away from socio-political issues because the Christian faith has nothing to do with politics. On the other hand, some Kachin Christians are extremely engaged in the current political situation. For instance, they think that people must be brave enough to fight with weapons for liberation. They consider that a country cannot be governed by radical discipleship or people cannot have freedom, justice and peace through radical discipleship. So, for them, they must fight with all their energy and weapons for liberation. In the midst of this kind of complicated political background, many questions came up in my mind, such as: how should Christians get involved in

⁶ Cf. Daniel Maxwell, 'Kachin State: Thousands of Civilians Unable to Escape Conflict,' Asian Correspondent: Asia's Leading Independent News, January 25, 2017, <https://asiancorrespondent.com/2017/01/kachin-state-thousands-civilians-unable-escape-conflict/> (accessed January 29, 2017). Burma Campaign UK, 'For a Rethink on Policy towards Burma's Army - OpEd,' *Eurasia Review: A Journal of Analysis and News*, December 16, 2016, <http://www.eurasiareview.com/16122016-time-for-a-rethink-on-policy-towards-burmas-military-oped/> (accessed January 29, 2017). See also Mikael Gravers, "Spiritual Politics, Political Religion, and Religious Freedom in Burma," *Review of Faith & International Affairs* 11, no. 2 (2013): 52.

⁷ Cf. Pum Za Mang, 'Separation of Church and State: A Case Study of Myanmar (Burma),' *Asia Journal of Theology* 25, no. 1 (2011): 42.

⁸ Cf. Burma Campaign UK, 'For a Rethink on Policy towards Burma's Military - OpEd,' *Eurasia Review: A Journal of Analysis and News*, 16 December 2016, <http://www.eurasiareview.com/16122016-time-for-a-rethink-on-policy-towards-burmas-military-oped/> (accessed January 29, 2017).

⁹ The Kachin Baptist Convention (KBC) is one of the members of the Myanmar Baptist Convention (MBC). It comprises over 400,000 members, 14 associations and over 300 churches. Its members practice the Baptist faith. KBC actively gets involved in a prophetic role, such as speaking for social justice in Kachin State.

resolving political conflicts? What does the gospel of Jesus Christ say about political conflicts?

The above critical circumstances and questions prompted me to ponder how I as a follower of Jesus can do something meaningful in resolving the current political conflicts in the light of his gospel. I considered writing about the Gospel of Mark from a socio-political viewpoint in order to investigate how Jesus dealt with politics and subsequently reflect to my context. However, as I am not able to engage with the whole Gospel of Mark, in this thesis I decided to write about a topic entitled ‘The Exorcisms of Jesus in Mark as Symbolic Actions for Political Liberation: A Case Study on Mark 5:1-20’, so that I may study the text and reflect the outcomes to my context. Let me now pay attention to the text and discuss how the text is disputed in New Testament scholarship.

When I began my studies, I realized that the topic I want to investigate is contested in NT scholarship. The socio-political reading of the Gospel of Mark as a whole and the political reading of Jesus’ exorcisms in Mark including Mark 5:1-20 have been disputed. However, since there are many New Testament scholars who disagree with a proposed political reading of the Gospel of Mark and particularly of the exorcisms of Jesus in Mark, it is impossible to provide a detailed overview of every controversy within the scope of this thesis. Therefore, I have only selected some NT scholars who represent counterpositions to the political reading of the Gospel of Mark and the miracles of Jesus. One of the leading Markan scholars, Adela Yarbro Collins, argues in her *Mark: A Commentary* that the Gospel of Mark is wholly apolitical, claiming that “there is [...] no theme of opposition to Rome in Mark.”¹⁰ According to her, Mark’s description of the confession of the Roman centurion that Jesus is the Son of God (cf. Mark 15:39) highlights a positive portrayal of Romans.¹¹ With regard to my chosen text for a case study, Mark 5:1-20, she contends that there may be only “a secondary political implication to the story of the Gerasene demoniac in Mark.”¹² She argues that Markan readers would have understood the Gerasene demoniac only in the light of the spiritual battle between Jesus and Satan rather than in the light of Jesus’ exorcism as a symbolic action for socio-political liberation.¹³ Moreover, Graham H. Twelftree¹⁴, who has done extensive work on Jesus’ exorcisms, is of the opinion that “Mark did not intend his readers to interpret the demonic as socio-political domination, or to see exorcism as symbolic of socio-political liberation.”¹⁵ Along the lines of Collins’ argument, Twelftree further argues that Mark

¹⁰ Adela Yarbro Collins, *Mark: A Commentary*, Hermeneia – A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible, Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007, p. 269.

¹¹ Cf. Collins, *Mark*, p. 269.

¹² Collins, *Mark*, p. 270.

¹³ Collins, *Mark*, pp. 269-270.

¹⁴ Cf. Graham H. Twelftree, *In the Name of Jesus: Exorcism Among Early Christians*, Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2007.

¹⁵ Twelftree, *In the Name of Jesus*, p. 111.

only intended his readers to interpret the exorcism of Jesus in connection with the theme of spiritual battle between Jesus and Satan.¹⁶

In scrutinizing the arguments of Collins and Twelftree, I will approach exorcism by Jesus in Mark from a political perspective and investigate whether a political interpretation of Jesus' exorcism in Mark 5:1-20 can be a suitable reading and whether the exorcism can be interpreted as a symbolic action for political liberation from economic and socio-political oppressive systems of both the Jewish authorities and Roman imperial rule. I do so by employing the arguments of Ched Myers¹⁷ and Richard A. Horsley¹⁸, who have done an extensive socio-political reading of the Gospel of Mark as a whole, and through my own critical exegetical study of Mark 5:1-20.

0.2 Overview of the Chapters and the Research Questions

In the introduction above, I sketched the background of why I am interested in conducting a political reading of Mark 5:1-20. I started with a brief introduction to the current political situation in my state called Kachin State which prompted me to engage in this research on the possibility of interpreting Mark 5:1-20 as a symbolic action for political liberation.

In the first chapter, as my reading is related to previous political readings of Mark, I provide a definition of political reading so that I can prepare for my ongoing discussion of the political reading of the Gospel of Mark. I discuss the political reading of the Gospel of Mark by presenting the two books of Myers and Horsley and comparisons between them.

Chapter 2 deals with the probable historical and socio-political setting of the Gospel of Mark. This part is important for the political interpretation of Jesus' exorcism in Mark 5:1-20 because it provides the framework for the overall presence of imperial politics and oppression in the Gospel of Mark.

Chapters 3 and 4 provide my in-depth case study of Jesus' exorcism in Mark 5:1-20 from various angles. Chapter 3 is divided into two parts. Part one includes basic exegetical approaches such as a translation and textual, structural and intratextual analysis of Mark 5:1-20. My focus is on the question of how these approaches contribute to the understanding of Mark 5 as well as to the political reading of Mark 5:1-20. The second part presents three different readings of the miracle stories in Mark in scholarship and addresses the legitimacy of the political interpretation of Mark 5:1-20 by discussing typical elements of Mark 5:1-20 which prompt a political reading. This part also includes the discussion of the counterarguments to a political reading and their refutation.

¹⁶ Twelftree, *In the Name of Jesus*, p. 111.

¹⁷ Cf. Ched Myers, *Binding the Strong Man: A Political Reading of Mark's Story of Jesus*, 20th ed. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 2008.

¹⁸ Cf. Richard A. Horsley, *Hearing the Whole Story: The Politics of Plot in Mark's Gospel*, Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001.

Chapter 4 discusses Jesus' exorcism in Mark 5:1-20 in the light of intertextuality. In this part I start with the definition of intertextuality and then provide an overview of Richard B. Hays' three categories of intertextual reference and Christopher B. Hays' criteria for recognizing "echoes." I employ them in detecting several probable intertextual allusions in Mark 5:1-20. I pay special attention to Exodus 14-15 as a main intertext for the political interpretation of Mark 5:1-20. I first argue that from the very beginning of the gospel Mark seems to politically echo the Exodus story. Then I investigate Exodus 14-15 as a main intertext by discussing some thematic and verbal elements shared between Mark 5:1-20 and Exodus 14-15. I end chapter 4 by discussing two non-biblical sources which help to connect the exorcism in Mark with the liberating Exodus story.

In conclusion, I summarize the main arguments of the whole thesis. Bearing in mind the research findings, I conclude my thesis by briefly reflecting to my context.

Chapter 1

Definition of Political Reading and the Political Reading of Mark

1.1 Introduction

In this introduction to the chapter, I discuss a short definition of political reading because the definition will be used in the background throughout the political reading of exorcism in Mark. Secondly, I will offer a brief presentation of the two books of Myers and Horsley, including an evaluation of their methods and some criticisms they received. I will also discuss similarities and differences between Myers and Horsley in terms of the methods they use. This chapter is important because it gives a glimpse of the presence of politics in the Gospel of Mark and informs how the Gospel of Mark as a whole has been read from a political perspective.

Let me start with a short definition of political reading. Generally speaking, political reading can be described as an approach which explores any text, both religious and secular texts, “with social, political, economic questions in mind.”¹⁹ Political readers often ask what a specific text reveals about justice and liberation from religious, social and political oppression. Political reading, as Myers understands it, not only exposes the evil of the status quo, the root causes of oppressive social structures, alienation and violence in subversive terms, but also demands engagement in the struggle for a better world in constructive terms.²⁰ In conducting political reading, several approaches based on different kinds of texts are employed, such as socio-literary analysis, historical analysis and socio-symbolic analysis, etc. All these methods are employed in the political reading of Myers and Horsley.

1.2 Myers’ *Binding the Strong Man: A Political Reading of Mark’s Story of Jesus*

First, I discuss Myers’ book *Binding the Strong Man: A Political Reading of Mark’s Story of Jesus*. The title of the book itself makes clear that Myers’ reading is a political reading. Myers tries to approach the Gospel of Mark as a document for social transformation since he argues that the Gospel of Mark should speak meaningfully to the present-day public domain and not simply to the spiritual sphere.²¹ One of Myers’ intentions in writing this book is “to challenge traditional spiritualized or dogmatic readings of the Gospel” of Mark.²² On the other hand, Elizabeth Struthers Malbon considers Myers’ approach to be “over-materializing certain elements” of Mark’s

¹⁹ Cf. Myers, *Binding*, 2008, p. 8.

²⁰ Cf. Myers, *Binding*, 2008, p. liii.

²¹ Myers, *Binding*, p. xxxiii.

²² Myers, *Binding*, p. xxxiii. Cf. Elizabeth Struthers Malbon, ‘Book review: Ched Myers’ *Binding the Strong Man: A Political Reading of Mark’s Story of Jesus*,’ *Theological Studies* 51 (1990): p. 331.

story.²³ But it seems to me that Myers explores what is “on the margins of the academy” or what spiritualized or dogmatic readers do not recognize in the Gospel of Mark.²⁴

Myers places the wider context of the Gospel of Mark as the Mediterranean world under Roman oppressive rule.²⁵ Myers argues that the Gospel of Mark was probably composed during the first Jewish-Roman war between 66-74 CE in Galilee, probably as a response to the political conflict of the Jewish war.²⁶ For Myers, Mark’s readers were possibly bearing “the exploitative weight of colonialism.”²⁷ In those times, Myers argues, Mark may have intended his community not to compromise either with the Roman colonizers or with Jewish violent revolutionary groups because the Markan Jesus rejects both the socio-economic and political oppression of Romans and “the means (military) and ends (restorationist) of the ‘liberation’ struggle” of Jewish resistant groups.²⁸

According to Myers, the Markan Jesus opposes the religious oppressive system of the Jewish authorities such as the Pharisees, scribes and Jewish insurgents who may have planned to overturn Roman domination with “revived nationalistic, Davidic monarchy centred on the urban-based Temple system.”²⁹ For Myers, “the political economy of the Second Temple in Jerusalem” also produced oppressive economic results.³⁰ Against this ideological background, according to Myers, the Gospel of Mark is also ideological because “hegemonic ideology can be combatted only with subversive ideology.”³¹ For Myers, this ideology is radical discipleship, that is, the way of the cross as an ultimate way of resistance to injustice and oppression by both the Jewish authorities and Roman imperial rule (cf. Mark 8:34-38). Throughout his book, Myers explicitly shows that his political reading is based on Mark’s portrayal of Jesus’ political view, which is comparable with “the Gandhian philosophy of nonviolence” for resisting the powers of oppression.³² For Myers, this kind of non-violent direction action should be applied in today’s world.³³ At the conclusion of his book, Myers argues that the Markan Jesus calls “for a non-violent strategy of resistance, which led him in the end to refuse to defend himself, his disciples, or the

²³ Malbon, ‘Book review,’ p. 331.

²⁴ Myers, *Binding*, p. xxxii.

²⁵ Myers, *Binding*, p. 6.

²⁶ Cf. Myers, *Binding*, p. 87; cf. Malbon, ‘Book review,’ p. 331.

²⁷ Myers, *Binding*, p.6.

²⁸ Cf. Myers, *Binding*, p. 87. Cf. Horsley, *Hearing the Whole Story*, p. 43.

²⁹ Cf. Myers, *Binding*, p. xxxiii. See also Dale B. Martin, ‘Book review: Ched Myers’ *Binding the Strong Man: A Political Reading of Mark’s Story of Jesus*, *Modern Theology* 6:4 (1990): p. 407.

³⁰ Cf. Myers, *Binding*, p. xxxiii. See also Malbon, ‘Book review: Ched Myers’ *Binding the Strong Man: A Political Reading of Mark’s Story of Jesus*, p. 331.

³¹ Myers, *Binding*, p. 20. Cf. Dale B. Martin, ‘Book review: Ched Myers’ *Binding the Strong Man: A Political Reading of Mark’s Story of Jesus*, *Modern Theology* 6 (1990): p. 408.

³² Cf. Myers, *Binding the Strong Man*, pp. 8, 470-472. Cf. David M. Rhoads, ‘Book review: Ched Myers’ *Binding the Strong Man: A Political Reading of Mark’s Story of Jesus*, *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 53 (1991): p. 336.

³³ Cf. Myers, *Binding*, p. 470. Cf. Malbon, ‘Book review,’ p. 331.

oppressed poor he served against the violence of Jewish overlords and the Roman imperialists.”³⁴

Myers’ political reading seems to develop from a postcolonial reading based on a Marxist critique of imperialism.³⁵ Concerning critique of empire, Myers addresses two themes, *repentance* and *resistance*. First, *repentance* does not simply mean a transformation of heart but “a concrete process of turning away from empire, its distractions and seductions, its hubris and iniquity.”³⁶ Secondly, *resistance* means “shaking off the powerful sedation of a society that rewards ignorance and trivializes everything political, in order to discern and take concrete stands in our historical moment and to find a commitment to ‘impede imperial progress.’”³⁷ Both repentance and resistance call for non-violent direct action.³⁸ Myers’ political reading is different from Horsley’s reading from a postcolonial perspective since Horsley does not explicitly mention a non-violent strategy of resistance in his book.

With regard to the miracles of Mark, Myers approaches them as symbolic actions in the Markan Jesus’ mission of liberation into the Kingdom of God.³⁹ However, he does not deny the reality of Jesus’ miracles. He claims that “by symbolic action I do not mean action that was merely metaphorical, devoid of concrete, historical character. Quite the contrary: I mean action whose fundamental significance, indeed power, lies relative to the symbolic order in which they occurred.”⁴⁰

David M. Rhoads criticizes Myers’ interpretation of the miracles of Mark. Rhoads says that “by allegorizing the miracles, Myers has misread the concreteness of Mark’s narrative and thereby misconstrued the nature of power in Mark’s narrative.”⁴¹ Rhoads is critical of Myers’ symbolic interpretations of the miracles, such as Myers’s interpretation of Jesus’ stilling the storm in Mark 4 as Jesus’ power over political oppression, Jesus’ two feeding miracles as “economics of sharing” in Mark 6:33-44; 8:1-9 which contradicts the economics of Roman imperialism,⁴² demons as a representation of “the influence of the ideology of the dominant classes” and exorcisms as Jesus’ confrontation of oppressive political powers.⁴³ Nevertheless, I think Rhoads’ criticism is not convincing because Myers does not deny the realities of the miracles. Moreover, it can be argued that Mark was engaged “in the war of myth.”⁴⁴ For Myers, “political discourse is always embedded in cultural metaphors

³⁴ Myers, *Binding*, p. 470.

³⁵ Myers, *Binding*, p. xxxii.

³⁶ Myers, *Binding*, p. 8.

³⁷ Myers, *Binding*, p. 8.

³⁸ Myers, *Binding*, p. 8.

³⁹ Myers, *Binding*, pp. 146, 190-191. I will elaborate how Myers approaches the miracles of Jesus including exorcisms as symbolic actions in chapter 3.

⁴⁰ Myers, *Binding*, p. 146.

⁴¹ Rhoads, ‘Book review,’ p. 337.

⁴² Myers, *Binding*, pp. 205-206.

⁴³ Rhoads, ‘Book review,’ p. 337.

⁴⁴ Myers, *Binding*, p. 20.

and symbols,” and “the war of myth is expressed through symbolic action.”⁴⁵ Myers asserts that “myth functions as political discourse in antiquity and today.”⁴⁶ In addition, Myers employs the historical and socio-political context of the Gospel of Mark as windows through which to engage with the miracles of Mark. At the same time, Myers’ method itself is to explore the political oppression in the texts of the Gospel of Mark. Furthermore, there is no doubt that hearers of Mark would reflect the miracles to their own political situation, as in first-century CE religion and politics were not detached from each other.⁴⁷ Mark may intend not simply to give information about the miracles of Jesus but to provide symbolic meanings of the miracles by which his readers could relate to their socio-economic-political situation under Jewish religious oppressive systems and Roman imperial rule. Methodologically, in order to conduct his political reading Myers employs several methods, such as socio-economic and symbolic analysis, historical criticism and narrative analysis (also known as literary criticism). In terms of content, Myers’ emphasis on radical discipleship or non-violent resistance in proposing a political reading of the Gospel of Mark is significant.

1.3 Horsley’s *Hearing the Whole Story: The Politics of Plot in Mark’s Gospel*

Secondly, I discuss Horsley’s *Hearing the Whole Story: The Politics of Plot in Mark’s Gospel*. Horsley’s work is considered to be a reading from a postcolonial perspective by the leading Markan scholar Adela Yarbro Collins.⁴⁸ Horsley puts the Gospel of Mark in the setting of the “colonized” world under Roman imperial rule and approaches Judeans and Galileans “as people subjected to empire.”⁴⁹ Similarly to Myers, it can be argued for Horsley that the “reading site for the Gospel of Mark is empire, *locus imperium*.”⁵⁰ According to Horsley, Mark seems to address “ordinary Greek-speaking village people”, not specifically in Galilee, that is, the surrounding villages of Galilee or one of the eastern provinces of Roman Empire, because the Markan Jesus actively worked in the villages, and the gospel was written in ordinary Greek not in the Aramaic of Galilee.⁵¹

Throughout his book, Horsley presents the Markan Jesus as a prophet figure like Moses and Elijah, protesting against the exploitative and oppressive economics, politics, and culture of Galilee, Jerusalem and Roman imperial rulers.⁵² This shows how Horsley’s approach is somehow different from that of Myers, since Myers does

⁴⁵ Myers, *Binding*, p. 15.

⁴⁶ Myers, *Binding*, p. 17.

⁴⁷ Gerd Theissen, *Miracle Stories of the Early Christian Tradition*, Minneapolis: Fortress Press 2007, p. 255.

⁴⁸ Cf. Horsley, *Hearing*, on the back of the book (recommendation by Collins).

⁴⁹ Horsley, *Hearing*, p. 30.

⁵⁰ Myers, *Binding*, p. 5.

⁵¹ Horsley, *Hearing*, pp. 44, 51.

⁵² Horsley, *Hearing*, pp. 103-108. Cf. Tat-siong Benny Liew, ‘Book Review: Richard A. Horsley’s *Hearing the Whole Story: The Politics of Plot in Mark’s Gospel*,’ *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 64 (2002): p. 576.

not explicitly engage with the Markan Jesus as a prophet figure. Horsley argues that the Markan Jesus as a prophet figure built up a movement of renewal based on village communities and announced the liberating good news of the Kingdom of God by performing healings and exorcisms.⁵³ In this renewal movement the Markan Jesus opposes and announces God's judgment on the oppressive rulers and institutions (cf. Mark 11:15-18; 12:1-2; 13:1-2).⁵⁴ For Horsley, it can be argued that the purpose of this movement is to launch more egalitarian village communities anchored in Mosaic Law. Horsley's proposal of the Markan Jesus' egalitarian village communities can be justified by the Markan Jesus' special interest in Galilee, its surrounding villages and his negative response to the power request of James and John in Mark 10:35.

I proceed to discuss how Horsley's approach is criticized. Especially his book is criticized on two significant points: his *de-emphasizing* of Christology and his *overemphasizing* of the economic dimension of the Gospel of Mark. First, Robert H. Gundry argues against Horsley that "Horsley lays down Christology."⁵⁵ Similarly, Richard B. Hays criticizes that Horsley minimizes Mark's Christology.⁵⁶ I also think that Horsley seems to approach Mark from a socio-political perspective by regarding Jesus only as a prophet figure, not as Christ and Son of God. According to Horsley, there is no Christology in Mark. Horsley claims that "whatever theological doctrine is supposedly found in Mark [...] is the creation of theologians. The Gospel of Mark itself can now be recognized as a story, full of conflicts, ostensibly about historical events in ancient Galilee and Judea under Roman imperial rule."⁵⁷ I do agree with Horsley in considering Mark to be a story. Nevertheless, unlike Horsley, I agree with Gundry that the Gospel of Mark as a narrative or story can still contain theology or Christology.⁵⁸ This means that Mark's being a narrative or story does not do away with Christology or theology in the Gospel of Mark.

Horsley's negation of Christology in Mark includes his equation of the Markan Jesus with the Old Testament prophets, especially with Moses and Elijah. He argues that just as Moses liberated the Israelites from the foreign oppressive rule of Pharaoh and just as Elijah led resistance to the oppressive rule of King Ahab, the Markan Jesus as a prophet figure led a renewal movement based on village communities.⁵⁹ Like Horsley, I am of the opinion that how Moses liberated the Israelites from foreign oppressive rule is comparable to how the Markan Jesus liberated those who were oppressed by demons and oppressive authorities. Yet, Horsley's identification of Jesus with prophets like Moses and Elijah is questionable for the following reasons. According to Horsley, Jesus rebukes Peter for his confession of Jesus as "messiah" or

⁵³ Horsley, *Hearing*, p. 40.

⁵⁴ Horsley, *Hearing*, p. 41.

⁵⁵ Robert H. Gundry, 'Richard A. Horsley's Hearing the Whole Story: A Critical Review of its Postcolonial Slant,' *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 26 (2003): p. 132.

⁵⁶ Hays, *Echoes*, p. 98.

⁵⁷ Horsley, *Hearing*, p. x.

⁵⁸ Gundry, 'Richard A. Horsley's Hearing,' p. 133.

⁵⁹ Cf. Horsley, *Hearing*, p. 102-103.

Christ.⁶⁰ However, the text clearly indicates that Jesus rebukes Peter because Peter does not want to accept the way Jesus as messiah will die, not because of Peter's confession of Jesus as "messiah."⁶¹ Moreover, Horsley contends that the Roman centurion's confession of Jesus as Son of God is mockery or ironic and that this confession does not reflect the messiahship/divine sonship of Jesus.⁶² However, Horsley seems to be wrong, since from the very beginning of the gospel Mark portrays Jesus as messiah or Christ, Son of God in Mark 1:1 and beloved Son of God at his baptism and at his transfiguration in Mark 1:11, 9:7. Thus, it is obvious that what Mark wants to convey is Jesus as Christ, the Son of God. In my opinion, Mark sees Jesus in a line with the prophets, but according to him recognition of Jesus only as a prophet is not a sufficient characterization.

Horsley identifies the Markan Jesus with the Old Testament prophets such as Moses and Elijah from the implication of transfiguration. For Horsley, Peter's willingness to make three tents highlights that Jesus is equal to Moses and Elijah.⁶³ Here Horsley seems to de-emphasize the heavenly declaration of Jesus' divine sonship that makes Jesus different from Moses and Elijah. Moreover, Mark clearly indicates that recognition of Jesus only as a prophet like Moses and Elijah is an insufficient realization of his Christhood, possibly even a wrong identification (cf. Mark 6:14-16; 8:28).⁶⁴ In my opinion, without diminishing Mark's Christology, Horsley could still achieve his purpose, that is, to approach Mark from a political perspective.⁶⁵

Secondly, Gundry criticizes Horsley's approach as too economic a reading.⁶⁶ For instance, Gundry is critical of how Horsley argues that the Markan Jesus rejects "the Roman-imposed political economic" through the confrontation with the rich man in Mark 10:17-25, who may have co-operated with the oppressive economic system of Roman imperial rulers.⁶⁷ Moreover, according to Horsley, when Pharisean representatives of Jerusalem rulers and Herodian representatives of Herod Antipas entrapped the Markan Jesus on the issue of paying taxes to Caesar, Jesus indirectly rejects Roman imperial rule because the statement "give to the emperor the things that are the emperor's and to God the things that are God's"⁶⁸ entails a rejection of paying taxes to Roman rule, as Mosaic law states that "everything belongs to God."⁶⁹ But Gundry considers Horsley's approach too economic. In my opinion, it is true that Horsley engages in a political reading of Mark in terms of economics. However, I

⁶⁰ Horsley, *Hearing*, p. 92. Cf. Mark 8:29ff.

⁶¹ Cf. Mark 8:32ff. Gundry, 'Richard A. Horsley's Hearing,' p. 133.

⁶² Horsley, *Hearing*, p. 252.

⁶³ Horsley, *Hearing*, p. 107.

⁶⁴ Gundry, 'Richard A. Horsley's Hearing,' p. 134.

⁶⁵ I think Richard B. Hays provides a good example of doing a socio-political reading of the Gospel of Mark without diminishing Mark's Christology in 'The Gospel of Mark: Herald of Mystery,' pp. 14-103, in *Echoes of Scripture in the Gospels*, Waco, Texas: Baylor University Press, 2016 .

⁶⁶ Gundry, 'Richard A. Horsley's Hearing,' p. 132.

⁶⁷ Horsley, *Hearing*, p. 43.

⁶⁸ Cf. Mark 12:17 NRSV.

⁶⁹ Horsley, *Hearing*, p. 43.

think Horsley may be right, because when I defined political reading in section 1:1, I argued that political reading also includes exploring economic oppression in the text. So, approaching Mark politically may include considering the oppressive economic dimension of the text.

1.4 Parallels and Differences between Myers and Horsley

This subchapter reflects on the parallels and differences between Myers and Horsley. Both Myers' political reading and Horsley's reading from a postcolonial perspective seems to develop from the Marxist critique of imperialism.⁷⁰ In other words, postcolonial criticism or "analysis of imperialism" is decisively employed in both Horsley and Myers' reading of the Gospel of Mark.⁷¹ It can be argued that the reading of both Horsley and Myers as a whole is based on "the critique of empire."⁷² Horsley argues that from the very beginning of the gospel the Markan Jesus' announcement that the Kingdom of God is at hand implies the end of Roman oppressive rule.⁷³ In addition, Horsley argues that "the Romans executed him [the Markan Jesus] by crucifixion, the form of execution by torture that the Romans used for rebels against the imperial order."⁷⁴

Myers is quite categorical about the dating of the Gospel of Mark during the first Jewish-Roman war. On the other hand, despite his uncertainty about the dating of the Gospel of Mark, Horsley argues that the presence of Roman troops in Jerusalem at Passover – which commemorates the political liberation from Pharaoh's oppressive foreign rule, the form of Jesus' crucifixion and the order of crucifixion at the command of the Roman governor indicate the situation of Israel under oppressive Roman imperial rule.⁷⁵ Their political readings of the Gospel of Mark seem to be justified by their agreement with Theissen on the close relationship between religion and politics in the first century CE.⁷⁶

Methodologically, they use methods such as historical criticism, socio-political analysis, literary analysis, socio-symbolic analysis, etc. One of the most significant methods they use is socio-political analysis. Socio-political analysis derives "from Marxist cultural criticism and its concerns to find determinate social factors involved in the production of texts as well as social meaning within the text."⁷⁷ Both Myers and Horsley employ this method of sociology of literature in their political reading of Mark. They analyze the way in which the Markan Jesus reveals how oppressive the dominant social, economic and political powers were and how the Markan Jesus offered an alternative constructive system/ideology. This is reconstructed as a renewal

⁷⁰ Myers, *Binding*, p. xxxii.

⁷¹ Myers, *Binding*, p. xxxii.

⁷² Myers, *Binding*, p. liii.

⁷³ Horsley, *Hearing*, p. 28. See also Horsley, *Jesus and the Politics*, p. 102.

⁷⁴ Horsley, *Hearing*, p. 42.

⁷⁵ Horsley, *Hearing*, p. 31.

⁷⁶ Horsley, *Hearing*, pp. 39-40. Theissen, *Miracle Stories*, p. 255.

⁷⁷ Myers, *Binding*, p. 26.

movement based on Mosaic Law by Horsley and as radical discipleship or non-violent resistance for dealing with the oppressive socio-economic and political powers by Myers.

Myers repeatedly makes clear how the Markan Jesus proclaims his non-violent social movement in terms of radical discipleship (cf. Mark 8). According to Myers, the Markan Jesus insists that the cross is “the ultimate expression of nonviolent resistance.”⁷⁸ For Myers, the Markan Jesus calls for radical discipleship which rejects oppression of the poor and restores justice to the poor or oppressed (cf. Mark 10:21). Myers approaches economic justice in the light of “the economics of sharing” or radical discipleship, whereas Horsley does so in terms of what he calls Mosaic Law or the egalitarian society (cf. Mark 7:1ff).⁷⁹ Horsley argues that the Markan Jesus promotes “Mosaic covenant as the only guide for people’s socio-economic life.”⁸⁰ For instance, the rich man in Mark 10 may have violated Mosaic Law: “you shall not defraud.”⁸¹ But here Horsley seems to ignore that the text makes clear that the rich man did not defraud (cf. Mark 10:20).

Methodologically, what makes Horsley’s approach significantly different from that of Myers is Horsley’s “hearing Mark as Oral Performance.”⁸² By employing this theory, Horsley argues that “the larger communication context of the performance of Mark must have been communities of a first-century social political movement that had spread beyond Galilee” and engaged in “relations with the broader political-economic-religious structure as well as internal affairs and the broader purpose of the movement” and in “how to deal with political repression by the rulers.”⁸³ How these politically conscious hearers of Mark as oral performance would reflect when they heard that “Legion was drowned in the sea” will be discussed in the third chapter.

1.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have discussed the definition of political reading, which is: the exposure of socio-economic and political oppression in the text.

I have discussed the two books of Myers and Horsley. Myers studies the Gospel of Mark as a document for socio-economic and political transformation. According to Myers, the Gospel of Mark was composed during the first Jewish-Roman war in response to the political conflict of the Jewish war. Myers’s political reading is based on the ideology of the Markan Jesus, non-violent resistance, which is comparable with the Gandhian way of resistance to oppressive powers. With regard to the miracles, he sees them as liberating symbolic actions of the Markan Jesus. Myer is criticized for his over-materializing of some elements in the texts of Mark.

⁷⁸ Myers, *Binding*, p. xxxii.

⁷⁹ Horsley, *Hearing*, pp. 42-43. Cf. Myers, *Binding*, p. 206.

⁸⁰ Horsley, *Hearing*, p. 43.

⁸¹ Horsley, *Hearing*, p. 43. Cf. Leviticus 19:13.

⁸² Horsley, *Hearing*, pp. 53-78.

⁸³ Horsley, *Hearing*, p. 65.

According to Horsley, the Gospel of Mark was addressed to ordinary Greek-speaking village communities subjected to empire. Horsley presents the Markan Jesus as a prophet protesting against socio-economic and political oppression, leading egalitarian village communities based on Mosaic Law, realizing the Kingdom of God through healings and exorcisms. Horsley is criticized for minimizing Christology and overemphasizing the economic dimension of the text.

For Myers, “economics of sharing” and radical discipleship are very important for socio-economic and political justice, whereas for Horsley, Mosaic Law is the ultimate standard. Methodologically, Horsley’s approaches to Mark as Oral Performance and to the Markan audience as politically conscious hearers are significant.

Chapter 2

Historical and Socio-Political Setting of the Gospel of Mark

2.1 Introduction

This chapter investigates the probable historical and socio-political setting of Mark by analyzing some socio-literary inferences from the Gospel of Mark itself and some related texts of Josephus' *The Jewish War*. Discussing the historical and socio-political setting of Mark includes the probable dating, the location of Mark and the supposed presence of opposition to Roman imperialism in the Gospel of Mark. This will produce important background information in support of the political interpretation of Mark 5:1-20 that will be discussed in chapter 3.

2.2 The Probable Dating of Mark

It can be argued that the author of the Gospel of Mark was a Greek-speaking author since the gospel was composed in Greek.⁸⁴ Most scholars argue that some elements of Mark 13 reflect the historical context of the first Jewish-Roman war, which lasted from 66 to 74 CE.⁸⁵ For instance, the motifs and messianic pretenders in Mark 13:5-6, 12, 21-22 seem to reflect the incidents of the first Roman-Jewish war and probably refer to messianic pretenders who were active during the Jewish-Roman wars such as Menahem the son of Judas and Simon bar Giora.⁸⁶ Nevertheless, the dating of the writing of Mark is disputed: it was written before or after the Jerusalem Temple was destroyed in 70 CE.⁸⁷ Collins and Marcus as well as Myers argue that Mark dates from before 70 CE,⁸⁸ whereas Theissen argues that Mark dates after 70 CE.⁸⁹

A pre-70 CE dating is justified by the following arguments. First, Myers argues that if Mark was composed after the destruction of the Temple in 70 CE, "Mark's vigorous criticism of the temple state and its political economy" in Mark 11:15-19 would not be needed.⁹⁰ Secondly, Mark would have mentioned catastrophic fire if the

⁸⁴ Bart D. Ehrman, *The New Testament: A Historical Introduction to the Early Christian Writings*, 4th ed., New York: Oxford University Press, 2008, pp. 75, 90. I will not deal with the authorship of Mark in depth, see for further discussion Theissen, *Gospel*, p. 9. Ehrman, *The New Testament*, pp. 75-76. David Arthur DeSilva, *An Introduction to the New Testament: Contexts, Methods and Ministry Formation*, Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2004, pp. 194-195.

⁸⁵ Cf. Marcus, *Mark 1-8*, p. 37. Collins, *Mark*, p. 11. Throughout this chapter I will discuss how some elements of Mark 13 reflect the first Jewish-Roman war.

⁸⁶ Collins, *Mark*, p. 57. See also Myers, *Binding*, p. 84. Cf. Josephus, *Jewish War*, 2.475-476. See also Josephus, *Jewish War*, 7.45-53. Cf. Collins, *Mark*, pp. 12-13.

⁸⁷ Collins, *Mark*, p. 11.

⁸⁸ Cf. Myers, *Binding*, p. 41.

⁸⁹ Cf. Theissen, *Gospel Writing*, pp. 16-17

⁹⁰ Myers, *Binding*, p. 41.

Temple had already been destroyed by fire at the date of writing.⁹¹ Thirdly, a post-70 CE dating contradicts Mark 13:2: “There will be left here (ἔδῃ) not one stone upon another; all will be thrown away.” Marcus argues that “even after the destruction of the temple in 70 CE there were still some stones left standing upon other stones in the temple compound.”⁹² Thus, for some scholars, Mark was most probably written before 70 CE.⁹³

By contrast, Theissen defends his post-70 CE dating by arguing that the word ‘here’ (ἔδῃ) in 13:2 restricts “the destruction of stones to the buildings on top of platform” and does not refer to the temple’s foundation wall.⁹⁴ On this point Marcus and Collins disagree with Theissen that ‘here’ (ἔδῃ) in 13:2 should be understood as “all the stones belonging to the Temple compound”,⁹⁵ since the text does not clearly “distinguish between buildings and foundations.”⁹⁶ Based on the above arguments, it seems to me that the Gospel of Mark was possibly written before 70 CE. Nevertheless, regardless of whether the gospel was written before or after 70 CE, “the proximity of war” is significant in Mark, as Theissen suggests.⁹⁷

2.2 Mark’s Place of Composition and His Community

Some scholars argue that Mark was probably composed in Galilee during the first Jewish-Roman war.⁹⁸ The argument for Galilee is often justified by Mark’s emphasis on Galilee and his uses of Aramaisms. However, Mark’s translation of Aramaic words and Jewish customs do not seem to support Mark’s origin in Galilee (cf. Mark 3:17, 5:41, 7:3-4). Marcus also argues against Mark’s origin in Galilee because of the explicit absence of “persecution of Christians in the Jewish War.”⁹⁹ He argues that in Galilee there were mainly Jewish communities and there were probably no resources and time to compose a gospel in the midst of war.¹⁰⁰ Horsley also argues that Mark seems to address “ordinary Greek-speaking people outside of Galilee,” because the Gospel of Mark was not written in the Aramaic of Galilee.¹⁰¹

Some scholars relate persecution motifs from Mark 8:34-38 and 13:9-13 to Christians in Rome persecuted by Emperor Nero between 54 and 68 CE. The implication is that Mark was written in Rome and for Christians in Rome.¹⁰² This

⁹¹ Josephus, *The Jewish War* 6.250-287, translated by H. St. J. Thackeray in Loeb Classical Library. See also Marcus, *Mark*, p. 38. Theissen, *Gospel Writing*, p. 17.

⁹² Marcus, *Mark*, p. 38. See also Josephus, *The Jewish War* 7.1-3. See also Collins, *Mark*, p. 11.

⁹³ Cf. DeSilva, *An Introduction*, p. 196.

⁹⁴ Theissen, *Gospel Writing*, p. 17.

⁹⁵ Marcus, *Mark*, p. 38.

⁹⁶ Collins, *Mark*, p. 11.

⁹⁷ Theissen, *Gospel Writing*, p. 17.

⁹⁸ Myers, *Binding*, p. 41. See also DeSilva, *An Introduction*, p. 196.

⁹⁹ Marcus, *Mark*, p. 34.

¹⁰⁰ Marcus, *Mark*, p. 36. See also Collins, *Mark*, p. 101.

¹⁰¹ Horsley, *Hearing*, p. 44.

¹⁰² Collins, *Mark*, p. 12.

argument is often supported by the presence of Latinisms in Mark.¹⁰³ However, according to Myers, the presence of Latinisms can also be viewed as “linguistic penetration” in the eastern part of the Roman Empire.¹⁰⁴ For instance, Mark’s use of lepta coins in terms of Roman copper coin κοδράντης in Mark 12:42 can also be understood to mean that in the East, local coins were possibly interpreted “in terms of Roman denominations.”¹⁰⁵ Thus, from the internal linguistic arguments, it should not be concluded that Mark was written in Rome.

In addition, the hypothesis of Mark’s origin in Rome comes from the traditional presupposition of the relationship between Mark and the apostle Peter’s presence in Rome. However, this argument is not that convincing because Galatians 2:11-14 presupposes the presence of Peter in Antioch, where both “a large Aramaic-speaking and also a Jewish community” lived.¹⁰⁶ The pro-Antioch assumption would explain Mark’s use of Aramaic words in the Gospel of Mark.¹⁰⁷ It should also be considered that the description τὴν θάλασσαν τῆς Γαλιλαίας does not reflect the normal Greek and Latin names for the Lake of Galilee.¹⁰⁸ Consequently, if the location of Mark is set in Antioch, it would explain not only Mark’s use of Aramaic words but also Mark’s use of Latinisms, because “Antioch had been the capital of the Roman province of Syria since the time of Pompey.”¹⁰⁹

Concerning persecution motifs in Mark such as 10:30-34, 13:9-13, Mark’s community was probably facing persecution or at least expecting persecution.¹¹⁰ Richard B. Hays, in considering the probable intertextual reference to Daniel 12:1 in Mark 13:19, argues that the Gospel of Mark was possibly addressed to a community which was “a powerless, oppressed people suffering under oppressive foreign rule and experiencing the pain of frustrated hopes for deliverance.”¹¹¹ When the persecution motifs in Mark are considered in the light of Mark’s place of composition, it can be argued that persecutions were not limited to the Christians in Rome, since many Jews were imprisoned and persecuted in most cities of Syria and there were other possible persecutions in the East during the first Jewish-Roman war.¹¹² These persecutions probably had a great impact on Christian communities, since there were many similarities between Judaism and Christ-believing communities.¹¹³ Moreover, as

¹⁰³ Cf. DeSilva, *An Introduction*, p. 196. Cf. λεγεών in 5:9; κοδράντης in 12:42; πραιτώριον in 15:16, etc.

¹⁰⁴ Myers, *Binding*, p. 41.

¹⁰⁵ Collins, *Mark*, p. 10.

¹⁰⁶ Collins, *Mark*, p. 101. Citing A. H. M. Jones, Henri Seyrig, W. Liebeschuetz, Susan Sherwin-White, ‘Antioch,’ *OCD*: p. 107.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. Talihtacum in 5:41; Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani in 15:34.

¹⁰⁸ Collins, *Mark*, p. 8. Cf. Theissen also argues that in Rome the Lake of Galilee may not be considered as a sea (θάλασσα). Theissen, *Gospel*, p. 12.

¹⁰⁹ Collins, *Mark*, p. 101.

¹¹⁰ Marcus, *Mark*, pp. 28-29.

¹¹¹ Hays, *Echoes*, p. 88.

¹¹² Josephus, *Jewish War*, 18.457-480. See also Collins, *Mark*, p. 12.

¹¹³ Collins, *Mark*, p. 12.

mentioned earlier, the motifs of Mark 13:12 seem to reflect incidents from the first Jewish-Roman war in the East.¹¹⁴

Consequently, it may be justly concluded that Mark seems to address an “ordinary Greek speaking community outside of Galilee” in one of the provinces of the East, perhaps in Antioch, but even Rome cannot be excluded.¹¹⁵ This community was oppressed and suffered under oppressive foreign rule and hoped for liberation (cf. Mark 13:19, 24-27).

2.3 Mark’s Gospel as Anti-Imperial Gospel in the Socio-Political Context of the Roman Empire

Now I turn to investigate the presence of anti-Roman sentiment in the Gospel of Mark. By looking from the broader perspective of the Roman Empire, Theissen views the Gospel of Mark as “an anti-Gospel to the good messages of the emperors.”¹¹⁶ Similarly, Richard B. Hays argues that Mark’s opening line (“The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God”) would clash with “the propaganda of the *Pax Romana* and the emperor cult,” for the proclamations and birthdays of Roman emperors were often considered the beginning of the good news (εὐαγγέλιον) of the Roman empire and the epithet God’s son was also often used for the titles of Roman emperors.¹¹⁷ Moreover, in the Old Testament the word εὐαγγελίζω often occurs “in contexts describing the announcement of a military victory.”¹¹⁸ In addition, Mark’s portrayal of Jesus as messiah also challenges Roman imperial rule because the prophecy about the future messiah is related to “the future king of Israel, who would deliver God’s people from their oppressors and establish a sovereign state in Israel through God’s power.”¹¹⁹ I will proceed to argue how the terms ‘εὐαγγέλιον,’ ‘Son of God,’ and ‘messiah or Christ’ are also used as political terms in connection with Vespasian.

Theissen argues that Mark’s counterclaims regarding the gospel (εὐαγγέλιον) of Jesus and Jesus as messiah or Christ/God’s Son and Mark’s description of messianic pretenders in Mark 13 seem to challenge Vespasian as a messianic figure. Interestingly, Vespasian’s prophecies and healing miracles were told in order to justify his throne as approved by the gods.¹²⁰ This argument seems to reflect Mark 13:22: “false messiahs will [...] produce signs.” Theissen argues that in Egypt Vespasian was claimed to be “the son of god (Ammon).”¹²¹ More interestingly, Josephus stated that Vespasian would become Caesar, i.e., a son of god, since Roman emperors were often considered sons of gods. Josephus translated Jewish messianic

¹¹⁴ Josephus, *Jewish War*, 2.475-476. See also Josephus, *Jewish War*, 7.45-53. Cf. Collins, *Mark*, pp. 12-13.

¹¹⁵ Horsley, *Hearing*, p. 44. See also Collins, *Mark*, p. 10. Cf. DeSilva, *An Introduction*, p. 137.

¹¹⁶ Theissen, *Gospel*, pp. 16, 20.

¹¹⁷ Hays, *Echoes*, p. 92.

¹¹⁸ Hays, *Echoes*, p. 30. Cf. 2 Samuel 18:31, Isaiah 40:9.

¹¹⁹ Ehrman, *The New Testament*, p. 76.

¹²⁰ Theissen, *Gospel*, p. 18.

¹²¹ Theissen, *Gospel*, p. 18.

prophecies into a global messianic prophecy that Vespasian would become a messianic world ruler coming out of Palestine due to the fact that he was fighting in Galilee.¹²² Comparable to Mark's use of εὐαγγέλιον, Josephus also writes how the term εὐαγγέλιον was also used in the Roman imperial context: "On reaching Alexandria Vespasian was greeted by the good news (εὐαγγέλιον) from Rome and by embassies of congratulation from every quarter of the world."¹²³

The historical and political setting of Vespasian coincided with the first Jewish-Roman war. Vespasian was the one who fought and was proclaimed Caesar in Galilee and his son Titus was the one who destroyed the Jerusalem Temple in 70 CE. In this context, the good news (εὐαγγέλιον) for the Roman Empire or Vespasian derived from the violent military victory and the oppression of humans. Moreover, the motifs of Mark 13 such as "wars, nation against nation, and kingdom against kingdom [...]" also seem to reflect the civil wars between Vespasian and the power struggle among three emperors and the violent victory of Vespasian."¹²⁴ But in regard to Jesus as Messiah, he was approved as Son of God by God himself from heaven at his baptism and transfiguration. Jesus' good news concerns non-violence, suffering discipleship, realizing the Kingdom of God by healing and liberating people from demonic oppression.

2.4 Conclusion

I have argued that the Gospel of Mark was addressed to a community outside of Galilee, perhaps in Antioch during the Jewish-Roman war in 66-74 CE. It can be concluded that Mark's community was suffering under foreign oppressive rule. Mark encourages his community through the good news (εὐαγγέλιον) of Jesus Christ, which is related to the Markan Jesus' liberating mission of the Kingdom of God through healings and exorcisms. The motifs from Mark 13 seem to reflect the incidents of the first Jewish Roman war. Moreover, the anti-Roman stance seems to be justified by Mark's opening counterclaims such as the good news (εὐαγγέλιον) of Jesus and Jesus as Christ and Son of God. More importantly, the motifs and messianic pretenders of Mark 13 seem to reflect the socio-political setting of Vespasian, since Josephus interpreted him as a messianic world ruler.

¹²² Josephus, *Jewish War*, 3:400-4002; 6:312-313. See also Theissen, *Gospel*, p. 18.

¹²³ Josephus, *Jewish War*, 4.656.

¹²⁴ Theissen, *Gospel*, p. 16.

Chapter 3

A Case Study on Jesus' Exorcism in Mark 5:1–20: the Text in its Markan Context

Introduction

After considering the probable presence of imperial politics and oppression in the Gospel of Mark as a whole in chapter 2, I now turn to a case study on Jesus' exorcism in Mark 5:1-20. The first part (3.1) of the chapter deals with more technical things such as a translation and a textual, structural and intratextual analysis of Mark 5:1-20. The second part (3.2) deals with the political interpretation of Jesus' exorcism in Mark 5:1-20 by discussing three different readings of the miracles in general, Mark's use of socio-political terminologies in Mark 5:1-20, Mark's description of the geographical area of exorcism as a marker for political interpretation and Mark's reference to "sea" as a marker for political interpretation.

3.1 Translation, Textual, Structural and Intratextual Analysis of Mark 5:1-20

3.1.1 Translation with Comments

5:1 And they¹²⁵ came to the other side of the sea to the land¹²⁶ of the Gerasenes.¹²⁷
2 And having gone out of the boat, immediately¹²⁸ a man out of the tombs with an unclean spirit met him. 3 His dwelling was in the tombs and even with a chain no one was able to bind him. 4 Although he had often been bound with shackles and chains, the chains had been torn apart by him, shackles had been broken into pieces, and no one had strength to subdue him; 5 and all night and day in the tombs and on the mountains he was crying and wounding himself with stones. 6. After having seen Jesus from distance, he ran, bowed down before him 7 and cried

¹²⁵ ἦλθον [they came] has an alternative reading, a singular reading ἦλθεν, in some manuscripts. I agree with the text [Nestle-Aland 28] in favor of a plural reading for two reasons. First, the plural reading seems to be more original because it is most attested by more reliable external witnesses, such as the original scribe of Codex Sinaiticus (4th century), Vaticanus (4th century) and the Western witness Codex Bezae (5th century). Secondly, the plural reading is in line with Mark's writing style, as Collins contends: "the use of the plural in describing the coming and going of Jesus and the disciples, followed at once by the singular in reference to Jesus alone is typical Markan style." Collins, *Mark*, p. 263. Cf. Mark 1:21-22.

¹²⁶ I translate χώρα in Mark 1:1, 10 as "land." Cf. Franco Montanari, Madeleine Goh, Chad Matthew Schroeder, Gregory Nagy, and Leonard Charles Muellner, *The Brill Dictionary of Ancient Greek*, Leiden: Brill, 2015, p. 2391.

¹²⁷ A comprehensive discussion of Γερασηνῶν (Gerasenes) is provided in the section on textual criticism.

¹²⁸ εὐθὺς, some manuscripts omit this. But older and more reliable textual witnesses, i.e., Sinaiticus and Vaticanus, keep it. The more than 41 occurrences of εὐθὺς in Mark may reflect the oral tradition of Mark.

with a loud voice, and he said, “What have you to do with me, Jesus Son of the Most High God? I adjure you by God that you would not torment me.” 8 For he had said to him, “come, unclean spirit, out of the man.” 9 And he asked him, “What is your name?” And he said to him, “My name is Legion,¹²⁹ because we are many.” 10. He begged him many times that he would not send¹³⁰ them outside the land. 11 And there on the hill a great herd of swine was feeding; 12 and they begged him, saying, “Send us into the swine that we enter them.” 13 He permitted them and after having gone out, the unclean spirits entered the swine; and the herd of about two thousand rushed down the steep bank into the sea and they were drowned in the sea. 14 And those feeding them fled and they announced¹³¹ it in the city and in the field;¹³² and they went out to see what it was that had happened. 15 And they came to Jesus and saw the former demoniac who had had the legion sitting, clothed and with a sober mind, and they were terrified. 16. Those who had seen it described to them what had happened to the former demoniac and the swine. 17. And they began to beg him to go away from their boundary.¹³³ 18 After he had got into the boat, the former demoniac begged him to be with him. 19. And he did not allow him, but he said to him, “Go to your house towards your own people¹³⁴ and announce to them how much the Lord has done for you and had mercy on you.” 20 And he went away and began to proclaim in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him and all wondered.

3.1.2 Textual criticism: the land of the Gerasenes (Γερασηνῶν)

Among many textual variants of Mark 5:1-20, one textual variant, the land of the Gerasenes (Γερασηνῶν) from Mark 5:1 is chosen for textual analysis because the location of Jesus’ exorcism seems to be important for a political reading of Jesus’ exorcism in Mark 5:1-20, as I will argue below.

The land of the Gerasenes (Γερασηνῶν) has three alternative readings: Gadarenes (Γαδαρηνῶν) (in Matthew and some important manuscripts), Gergesenes (Γεργεσηνῶν) and Gergustenes (Γεργυστηνῶν). The land of the Gerasenes (Γερασηνῶν) is favored by more dependable textual witnesses from the Alexandrian text, the original hand of Codex Sinaiticus (4th century), Vaticanus (4th century), all Latin witnesses, and Coptic versions such as Sahidic[sa]. The Gerasenes were people

¹²⁹ Λεγιῶν (cf. the original scribe of Sinaiticus and that of Vaticanus). But some mss read Λεγεῶν (cf. the Byzantine majority text, second corrector of Sinaiticus (4th century), Alexandrinus (5th century), and the second corrector of Vaticanus). The different spellings Λεγιῶν and Λεγεῶν do not affect the original meaning of the terminology.

¹³⁰ I prefer to translate “he would not send” because of the aorist subjunctive. The Alexandrian Vaticanus reads αὐτὰ ἀποστείλῃ; the Byzantine majority text and Codex Bezae have αὐτοὺς ἀποστείλῃ; Sinaiticus retains αὐτον ἀποστείλῃ. Nestle-Aland 28 prefers plural neuter to conform with the immediate context of “because we are many.”

¹³¹ I translate ἀπαγγέλλω both in verse 14 and 19 as “announce.” Cf. ἀπαγγέλλω, in Montanari, *The Brill Dictionary of Ancient Greek*, p. 220.

¹³² Cf. ἀγρός, in Montanari, *The Brill Dictionary*, p. 22.

¹³³ Cf. Montanari, *The Brill Dictionary*, p. 1484.

¹³⁴ Cf. Marcus, *Mark*, p. 341.

living in Gerasa (modern Jerash), a city of the Decapolis situated around 35 miles southeast of the Sea of Galilee.¹³⁵ In contrast to Matthew, both Mark and Luke read Gerasenes (Γερασηνῶν). The problem is that if Gerasa was around 35 miles away from the Sea of Galilee, it is not logical to imagine around 2000 pigs drowning in the Sea of Galilee.

Some manuscripts such as Codex Alexandrinus (5th century), Ephraemi Syri Rescriptus (5th century), many Byzantine manuscripts (the majority text) and family 13 (13th century) read the land of the Gadarenes (Γαδαρηνῶν), as Matthew 8:28 also reads. Perhaps these witnesses attested this reading so that it assimilates with the reading of Matthew 8:28. Gadara (modern Um Qeis) was a city of the Decapolis around 5 miles southeast of the Sea of Galilee. Collins argues that Gadara's border possibly extended to the Sea of Galilee.¹³⁶ Concerning the distance for the pigs to be drowned in the sea, Gadara 5 miles away from the sea is more likely to be the site Gerasa around 35 miles from the sea. It seems that Matthew uses Gadarenes (Γαδαρηνῶν) for that reason. However, the problem, as Stein argues, is that Gadara has no steep banks for the 2000 pigs to be drowned from.¹³⁷

The reading Gergesenes (Γεργεσηνῶν) is preferred by the second corrector of Sinaiticus, Koridethianus Q and family 1 (12th century) and Origen (2nd century). The least likely reading is Gergustenes (Γεργυστηνῶν), which is only attested by Washington Codex (the so-called Freer Gospels). In accordance with Origen, a possible site of the exorcism would fit with Gergesa as the land of the Gergesenes (modern El Kursi), "for it is located nearby a steep bank on the eastern side of Sea of Galilee."¹³⁸ It is said that Origen had been to Gergesa and the local people told him that the swine possessed by demons were drowned in that place.¹³⁹ However, Origen's argument is supported only by weak textual witnesses.

I have chosen the decision of Nestle-Aland 28 to read Gerasenes (Γερασηνῶν) because it is based on both strong textual evidence and convincing criteria. For instance, one of the standard criteria is that the most difficult reading is the most probable reading. If the above criterion is applied, Gerasenes (Γερασηνῶν) is the most probable reading as it is more difficult than the others.¹⁴⁰ On the basis of this reading, scholars have even argued against the origin of Mark in Galilee or Palestine. If Gerasenes is Mark's original intention, one may suspect geographical ignorance on Mark's part. For Gerasa is around 35 miles away from the Sea of Galilee. So, it can be assumed that Mark, if he wrote in Palestine, would choose a nearer site for this story, such as Gadara (5 miles), as Matthew has, and Gergesa with its steep bank, as Origen proposed. However, this geographical ignorance on Mark's part may indicate that he

¹³⁵ Cf. Collins, *Mark*, p. 263. See also Robert H. Stein, *Mark*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2008, p. 250.

¹³⁶ Collins, *Mark*, p. 263.

¹³⁷ Stein, *Mark*, p. 250.

¹³⁸ Stein, *Mark*, p. 250. Collins, *Mark*, p. 264. Citing Origen, *Commentary on John*, chapter 27.

¹³⁹ Collins, *Mark*, p. 264. Citing Tjitze Baarda, 'Gadarenes, Gerasenes, Gergesenes and the 'Diatessaron' Traditions,' *Neotestamentica et Semitica*, pp. 181-197.

¹⁴⁰ Collins, *Mark*, p. 264.

had never been to that place or he assumed that his audience would know Gerasa, as it was the most famous city among the ten cities of the Decapolis in the Roman Empire (cf. Mark 5:20).¹⁴¹ Moreover, as Stein writes, the Gerasenes (Γερασηνῶν) reading can still be argued because the land of Gerasa could extend to the Sea of Galilee, where the pigs were drowned.¹⁴² In addition, if the theory of Mark as an oral performance is applied, it is probable that the narrator simply told that the exorcism “took place in [one of the cities of] Decapolis (cf. v.20).”¹⁴³ Mark then went on to add the land of the Gerasenes (Γερασηνῶν) as the location for the exorcism.¹⁴⁴

In addition, Collins argues that Mark’s use of the name of God “the Most High God” (ὁ Θεὸς ὁ Ὑψίστος) in the mouth of the demon seemingly highlights the original setting of the story in Gerasa since ὁ Ὑψίστος in non-Jewish and outside Christian Greek texts is equivalent to a divine name for Zeus. She finds out that the presence of a temple and cult of Zeus Olympius in Gerasa is confirmed by an inscription of 25 CE.¹⁴⁵ Finally, the name ‘Gerasa’ corresponds with the Hebrew word גָּרַשׁ garash (to cast out, drive out). Possibly, Mark places this exorcism in Gerasa because the name of the location is, in its literal meaning at least, symbolically related to the meaning of expulsion or exorcism.¹⁴⁶ Consequently, there are several reasons to assume that the reading “land of the Gerasenes” (Γερασηνῶν) provides the original setting for the exorcism of Mark 5:1-20. More importantly, the Gerasenes reading is also applicable to the political reading of Jesus’ exorcism, as will be discussed further in 3.2.3.

3.1.3 Intratextual Relations and the Interpretation of Mark 5:1-20

This section investigates the structural features and intratextual connections of Mark 5:1-20. Let me begin with the definition of “an intratext.” An intratext can be described as a particular text’s preceding or succeeding text that relates to the text in terms of structure, theme, key words and verbal agreement.¹⁴⁷ To engage with the meaning of a certain text, intratext has crucial value. Annette Merz argues for the importance of intratext as follows: “The meaning of a specific textual passage in the totality of the text is determined primarily by its intratextual position, i.e., by its links to the preceding and the following words and sentences, by the semantic trajectories

¹⁴¹ Collins, *Mark*, p. 8.

¹⁴² Stein, *Mark*, p. 250.

¹⁴³ Collins, *Mark*, p. 266.

¹⁴⁴ Collins, *Mark*, p. 266. Cf. Horsley, *Hearing*, pp. 53-78.

¹⁴⁵ Collins, *Mark*, p. 268. See further Carl H. Kraeling, ed., *Gerasa: City of the Decapolis*, New Haven American School of Oriental Research, 1938, pp. 373-374.

¹⁴⁶ Ludwig Köhler, Walter Baumgartner, Johann Jakob Stamm, and Benedikt Hartmann, *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*, Leiden: Brill, 2001, p. 204. Cf. Marcus, *Mark*, p. 342. Cf. Collins, *Mark*, p. 267.

¹⁴⁷ Cf. Annette Merz, ‘The Fictitious Self-Exposition of Paul: How Might Intertextual Theory Suggest a Reformation of the Hermeneutics of Pseudepigraphy?’, in T. L. Brodie, D. R. MacDonald and S. E. Porter, eds., *The Intertextuality of the Epistles. Explorations of Theory and Practice* Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2006, p. 117.

of meaning in the text, by repetitions, etc.”¹⁴⁸ In other words, she is of the opinion that both the wider and nearer context of a specific text have crucial value in understanding the text.¹⁴⁹ I employ her definition in engaging with structures and intratexts which are useful for interpreting Mark 5:1-20.

I select four intratexts for Mark 5:1-20, namely the wider structure of Mark 5:1-20 as intratext, the first exorcism in the synagogue in Mark 1:21-28, the controversy on exorcism in Mark 3:22-27 and Jesus’ stilling the storm in Mark 4:35-41. These are all interrelated to the text of Mark 5:1-20 thematically, structurally and verbally.

3.1.3.1 The Surrounding Structure of Mark 5:1-20 as an Intratext

It is likely that the literary unit of the story fits within a concentric structure as follows:

A: Pharisees conspired with *Herodians*¹⁵⁰ to **destroy** (ἀπόλλυμι) Jesus because Jesus says, “It is not **lawful** (ἔξεστιν) to **kill** (ἀποκτείνω) on the Sabbath.” 3:1-6

B: Jesus **cured** (θεραπεύω/πολύς) many and *unclean spirits* realize that Jesus is the Son of God 3:7-12

C: Jesus **appoints** (ποιέω) 12 disciples to proclaim, to have **authority** (ἐξουσία), to **cast out demons** (ἐκβάλλω) 3:13-19

D: Jesus *is rejected* in Galilee as if he is possessed by Beelzebul 3:19-35 [his family tried to *restrain* him]

E: Jesus **teaches** (διδάσκω) about the Kingdom of God beside the sea in parables 4:1-34

F: Deeds in miracles [nature, unclean spirits/*demons*, human suffering] 4:35 – 5:43

E+ Jesus **teaches** (διδάσκω) in his hometown in wisdom and deeds 6:1-2

D+ Jesus *is rejected* in his hometown [Nazarene people took *offense* at him] 6:3-6

C+ Jesus **sends** (ἀποστέλλω) 12 disciples and gives them **authority** (ἐξουσία) over unclean spirits 6:7-12

B+ Disciples **cured many** (θεραπεύω/πολύς) and **cast out** demons (ἐκβάλλω) 6:13
A+ *Herod* beheaded John for *Herodias* wanted to **kill** (ἀποκτείνω) John because John says, “It is not **lawful** (ἔξεστιν) to take a brother’s wife 6:14-29

Through this structure, it can be argued that exorcisms can be seen as the realization of the Kingdom of God taught in parables.¹⁵¹ Joshua Garroway extensively argues the peaceful realization of the Kingdom of God taught in the preceding parables through

¹⁴⁸ Merz, ‘The Fictitious,’ p. 117.

¹⁴⁹ Merz, ‘The Fictitious,’ p. 117.

¹⁵⁰ Herodians were supporters of Herod, who was appointed by the Roman imperial rulers.

¹⁵¹ Horsley, *Jesus and the Politics*, p. 105.

the exorcism and the former demoniac's peaceful extension of the message of the Kingdom of God.¹⁵² Most interestingly, Mark's use of the Kingdom of God seems to have a political meaning. For instance, Richard B. Hays argues that "Israel was awaiting the coming 'Kingdom of God,' not some sort of otherworldly postmodern existence, but a concrete historical reality in which God would reassert kingly sovereignty over Israel in order to bring healing and justice."¹⁵³

The fact that the exorcism is framed between Jesus' dealings with the disciples, such as appointing/sending disciples and giving them authority over demons indicates exorcism as a significant role of the disciples. Having considered the above structure, three kinds of Jesus' miracles (with exorcism at the center) can be seen sandwiched between Jesus' teachings. Similarly, the first exorcism of Mark 1:21-28 is also placed between Jesus' teachings, as will be shown in the next subsection.

3.1.3.2 Mark 1:21-28 as an Intratext for Mark 5:1-20

Mark 1:21-28 can also be considered an intratext of Mark 5:1-20 because of the structural parallelism. It seems that the literary construction/context of the exorcism of Mark 5 that I have shown in the above is comparable with the first exorcism of Mark 1:21-28 as follows:

1:14-16 Jesus *proclaims* (κηρύσσω) good news, i.e., the Kingdom of God has come near

1:16-20 Jesus calls the first **disciples**, Peter, Andrew, James, and John to fish people

1: 21-22 Jesus *teaches* (διδάσκω) with **authority** (ἐξουσία) in the synagogue

1:23-26 Jesus' exorcism in the synagogue

1:27 people acclaim Jesus' new *teaching* (διδασχῆ) with **authority** (ἐξουσία)

1:28-34 Jesus enters house of **Peter**/ Andrew [with James and John to perform healing miracles and cast out demons]

1:35-39 Jesus *proclaims* (κηρύσσω) and casts out demons

In view of this structure, it can be argued that, from the beginning of the gospel, Mark considers Jesus' exorcisms to be key elements for Jesus' Kingdom of God mission announced at the beginning of Jesus' Galilean ministry in 1:15. After Jesus proclaimed the coming Kingdom of God in Mark 1:15, unlike the scribes Jesus taught and exorcized with authority (ἐξουσία). In a similar way, in Mark 5, after teaching the Kingdom of God in the preceding parables, Jesus exorcizes as a realization of the Kingdom of God mission. Both Myers and Horsley even call the first exorcism in the public place of the synagogue "Jesus' inaugural public action."¹⁵⁴ Thus, it can be

¹⁵² See for an extensive discussion, Joshua Garroway, 'The Invasion of a Mustard Seed: A Reading of Mark 5:1-20,' *JSNT* 32.1 (2009): pp. 57-75.

¹⁵³ Hays, *Echoes*, p. 19.

¹⁵⁴ Myers, *Binding*, p. 190. See also Horsley, *Hearing*, p. 146.

argued that Jesus' exorcism is related to "authority" (ἐξουσία) and "public" as he teaches, acts with authority and exorcizes publicly in the public space.

Structurally, the sandwich or concentric position of Mark 5:1-20 and that of Mark 1:23-26 between teachings also signals that we should consider Mark 1:23-26 to be an intratext for Mark 5. Both exorcisms are placed between Jesus' teaching activities. Both exorcisms are placed between Jesus' dealings with the disciples such as calling/sending disciples, appointing disciples, and entering the houses of disciples. Imperatives, for instance, "come out of him," which are often used when Jesus performs miracles, appear in both exorcisms. In both stories the responses are comparable. Just as people in Mark 1:27 were astonished (Θαμβέω), in Mark 5:20 people marveled (θαυμάζω). In both stories demons realize the superiority and divinity of Jesus. The demoniac's challenge to Jesus and the description of the demoniac as "a man with an unclean spirit" are comparable in both stories.¹⁵⁵

Thematically, in both exorcisms Jesus confronts the authorities. In Mark 1:21-28, Jesus is set against the scribal authorities, since the audience positively compares Jesus' teaching with authority (ἐξουσία) to scribes, who "represent authorities/power holders."¹⁵⁶ Similarly, in Mark 5:1-20, Jesus is set against Roman authorities, at least in a symbolic way.¹⁵⁷ Horsley argues that Jesus' first synagogue exorcism is also a "conflict with the representatives of Jerusalem rulers."¹⁵⁸ In this case, Horsley may be correct even though the text does not clearly reveal that the scribes in Mark 1:22 come from Jerusalem. For Collins argues that "historically speaking, in the first century CE, the scribes of Jerusalem were officials, and those of Galilean villages were copyists and low-level officials."¹⁵⁹ In Mark 3:22, Mark's description of scribes coming down from Jerusalem might imply how intense the clash is between the Markan Jesus and the religious authorities, i.e., the scribes.

3.1.3.3 Mark 3:22-27 as an Intratext for Mark 5:1-20

If we look at the following structure, it can be argued that Jesus' confrontation with the authorities both in Mark 1:16-28 and Mark 3:22-30 fits within a concentric structure and is framed between the disciples and a family/home setting.

1:16-20 Jesus calls first **disciples** [Peter, Andrew, James, John] to fish people

1: 21-28 **Jesus' indirect confrontation with scribes over exorcism**

1:28-34 Jesus entered the **house** of Peter/ Andrew [with James and John to perform healing miracles and **cast out demons**]

3:13–19 Jesus *appoints 12 disciples* to proclaim and to *have authority to cast out demons*

¹⁵⁵ Cf. Myers, *Binding*, p. 193.

¹⁵⁶ Horsley, *Jesus and the Politics*, p. 105.

¹⁵⁷ Myers, *Binding*, pp. 141-142, 194.

¹⁵⁸ Horsley, *Hearing*, p. 146.

¹⁵⁹ Collins, *Mark*, p. 164.

3:22-30 Jesus' **direct confrontation** with scribes from Jerusalem
through exorcism controversy
3:20-21; 31-35 Jesus went **home** and clashed with his family¹⁶⁰

I will proceed to discover the way Mark 3:22-27 is related to Mark 5:1-20. Some elements of Mark 3:22-27 indicate Mark 3:22-27 to be an intratext of Mark 5:1-20. The phrases “no one was able to bind him (οὐδεὶς/δύναμαι/δέω)” and “no one had strength to subdue him (οὐδεὶς/ἰσχύω)” in Mark 5:3-4 are linguistically and thematically connected to Mark 3:27 “no one (οὐδεὶς) can enter a strong man’s house (ἰσχυρός) and plunder his property without first binding the strong man (δέω/ἰσχυρός); then indeed the house can be plundered.”¹⁶¹ Linguistically, in both texts (οὐδεὶς) is employed to describe the superpower of Satan/the demoniac. In addition, “binding” (δέω) appears in both texts, i.e., binding the strong Man or Satan in Mark 3:27 and binding the demoniac in Mark 5:3. Moreover, the term ἰσχύω in Mark 5:4 might link the description of the strong man called Satan with ἰσχυρός in Mark 3:27. Jesus’ statement “one cannot plunder the strong man’s goods or property without first tying the strong man” implies that through exorcisms Jesus is ‘plundering the strong man’s goods/vessels,’ i.e., Satan’s demons.”¹⁶² The thematic relation between Mark 3 and Mark 5 can be supported through linguistic similarities. For instance, by observing the linguistic similarities between Mark 3 and Mark 5, such as “no one was strong enough to bind/subdue him,” it can be argued that Jesus’ exorcism in Mark is also another “Jesus-the stronger-one’s struggle to bind the strong man,” since Mark uses the same Greek word (ἰσχυρός) when he portrays Jesus as the stronger one (ἰσχυρότερός) in Mark 1:7.¹⁶³ Mark uses the same root ἰσχυρός in order to describe both the power of Satan and the power of Jesus. Here Jesus is portrayed as the stronger one (ἰσχυρότερός). It can be argued that Satan as the ruler of the demons from Mark 3 and the unclean spirits/demons mentioned in Mark 5:1-20 are on the same level in the Markan Jesus’ struggle.

3.1.3.4 Mark 4:35-41 as an Intratext

It can be argued that the preceding miracle (Mark 4:35-41) is also thematically related to the miracle of the Gerasene demoniac (Mark 5:1-20) in that in both miracles “Jesus exercises divine power over dangerous and destructive forces to bring about God’s rule.”¹⁶⁴ Linguistically, the special term ἐπιτιμάω used in Jesus’ overcoming of unclean spirits in Mark 1:25 and Mark 9:25 also appears in Mark 4:35-41 when Jesus rebukes the wind.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶⁰ Myers, *Binding*, p. 138.

¹⁶¹ Marcus, *Mark*, pp. 342, 350

¹⁶² Horsley, *Hearing*, p. 139.

¹⁶³ Myers, *Binding*, p. 194.

¹⁶⁴ Cf. Horsley, *Hearing*, p. 138.

¹⁶⁵ Cf. Mark 1:25; 9:25.

I will elaborate on the term ἐπιτιμάω despite its absence in Mark 5 because it seems to have political overtones. Horsley argues that the term denotes not simply “rebuke” but “conquer” or “subject” or “condemn or punish” and supports this view with other OT texts.¹⁶⁶ For instance, in Psalms the Psalmist often uses the term ἐπιτιμάω to refer “God as a Warrior coming in judgment against foreign nations or imperial regimes who conquer and take spoil from Israel (e.g., Ps 9:6; 68:31; 80:16).”¹⁶⁷ In addition, the term ἐπιτιμάω is also used when God defeats (ἐπιτιμάω) Satan (cf. Zechariah 3:2, LXX).¹⁶⁸ More surprising is that the term is employed in the liberating Exodus story, when God rebuked (ἐπιτιμάω) the Red Sea in order to provide complete liberation to Israel from the foreign oppressive rule of Pharaoh (cf. Psalms 106:9, LXX).¹⁶⁹ Here ἐπιτιμάω seems to be translated from the Hebrew word גָּאַר *ga`ar* in MT. Richard B. Hays also supports the above argument that “the image of God’s rebuking of the primal chaos is superimposed upon the events of the exodus, demonstrating that the creator God is the same God who delivered Israel from bondage in Egypt.”¹⁷⁰ Consequently, Mark’s use of ἐπιτιμάω may mean more than rebuking. It can be argued that Mark already intends political implications in the preceding miracle of Mark 5:1-20 when using the special term ἐπιτιμάω, which Mark often uses for Jesus’ struggle with unclean spirits. After dealing with the intratextual links of Mark 5:1-20, the following section underlines the political interpretation of Mark 5:1-20.

3.2 Interpretation of Mark 5:1-20

In this section I deal with the political interpretation of Jesus’ exorcism in Mark 5:1-20 by discussing three different readings of the miracles (3.2.1), Mark’s use of socio-political terminologies in Mark 5:1-20 (3.2.2), Mark’s description of the location (3.2.3) and “the sea” (3.2.4) as markers for political interpretation.

3.2.1 The Political Reading of Mark 5:1-20 among Different Readings of Miracles

Before I conduct an analysis of the particularities of the exorcism of Mark 5:1-20, I will look at it from the perspective of miracle stories in general. I will present three different readings of miracle stories that have been identified by scholars as major purposes of the early Christian usage of the genre. These are the Christological purpose, that is, to reveal the identity of Jesus, the missionary purpose, and the political agenda, that is, to use them as documents for political liberation.

First, I will argue that even though miracles in Mark seem to be told/read for their Christological significance, a Christological reading is not the only reading

¹⁶⁶ Cf. Montanari, *The Brill Dictionary*, p. 798. Cf. Horsley, *Hearing*, p. 137.

¹⁶⁷ Cf. Horsley, *Hearing*, pp. 136-137.

¹⁶⁸ Horsley, *Hearing*, p. 137.

¹⁶⁹ Cf. Myers, *Binding*, p. 196.

¹⁷⁰ Hays, *Echoes*, p. 68.

strategy for the miracles. It has been shown that the miracles of Jesus in Mark in general and Jesus' exorcism in Mark 5:1-20 in particular were intended to be read from a Christological perspective. As in 1:24 and 3:11, where unclean spirits or demons acknowledged who Jesus is, in Mark 5 the unclean spirits are also aware of the identity of Jesus. The unclean spirit from the Jewish land identifies Jesus as "the Holy One of God" (cf. Mark 1:24), whereas in Mark 5 the demoniac from the Gentile land acknowledges Jesus as "Son of the Most High God." Richard Dormandy argues that the demon's acknowledgement of Jesus as "Son of the Most High" has political implications by showing that the epithet 'Son of the Most High' is "evocative of Daniel 3:26 and 4:2, in which Yahweh is shown to be sovereign over the kings of Babylon."¹⁷¹ Moreover, in the preceding miracle (Jesus stilling the storm), the identity of Jesus is revealed by the rhetorical question, "who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?" In Mark 6:52, it can be argued that Jesus criticizes his disciples for their inability to realize the divinity of Jesus.¹⁷² This argument is supported by external evidence. It is known that "in antiquity the capacity to walk on water was regarded as a sign of the divine power."¹⁷³ Somewhat along the lines of the Christological interpretation of the miracles, some scholars such as Collins and Twelftree contend that the first readers of Mark were likely to read the miracles of the so-called exorcisms in the light of the spiritual battle between Jesus and Satan.¹⁷⁴ However, in my opinion, the implications of the miracles relate not only to spiritual factors but also to the political domain, as Theissen states: "political and religious factors did not exist separately in the first century CE."¹⁷⁵ Thus, it can be argued that a Christological interpretation of the miracles is not the only reading strategy.

Secondly, I present that the miracles in general (including exorcisms) seem to be told for missionary purposes in primitive Christianity. Theissen argues for the missionary intent of miracle stories in general: "the missionary use of miracle stories is confirmed further by an analogical reconstruction of their *Sitz im Leben*."¹⁷⁶ It is argued that in the primitive Christian community the miracle stories were used for missionary purposes, that is, to win new members in Christ.¹⁷⁷ This idea may be true in regard to the exorcism of Mark 5 as well. Several indicators of a usage for missionary purposes can be found in Mark 5:1-20. For example, the Gentile setting of the exorcism (Gerasa, unclean spirits, tombs and pigs),¹⁷⁸ the Gentile character of the demoniac, the missionary proclamation of the former demoniac in the Decapolis, and the literary structure of the exorcism embedded between appointing and sending disciples to cast out demons seem to indicate a Gentile missionary purpose in Mark

¹⁷¹ Richard Dormandy, 'The Expulsion of Legion: A Political Reading of Mark 5:1-20,' *The Expository Times* 111 (2000), p. 337.

¹⁷² Theissen, *The Historical Jesus*, p. 295.

¹⁷³ Theissen, *The Historical Jesus*, p. 295. Cf. Dio Chrysostom, 3. 30.

¹⁷⁴ Collins, *Mark*, p. 270.

¹⁷⁵ Theissen, *Miracle Stories*, p.255.

¹⁷⁶ Theissen, *Miracle Stories*, p.260.

¹⁷⁷ Theissen, *Miracle Stories*, p. 261.

¹⁷⁸ Marcus, *Mark 1- 8*, p. 342.

5:1-20.¹⁷⁹ The argument of “missionary use of the miracles” might be supported by the significant Markan element of “Jesus’ missionary activities from Jewish land to Gentile land.” Mark clearly highlights Jesus’ activity beyond Israel with the statement “let us go across to the other side 4:35” and the fulfillment remark that they “came to the other side of the sea, to the land of Gerasenes 5:1.” I will now go on to argue that besides Christological and missionary purposes in the miracle narratives, there are political agendas in the miracle stories.

Thirdly, therefore, before I conduct a case study on Jesus’ exorcism in Mark 5:1-20 in more detail, I want to argue that the miracles seem to be written and told for political purposes. Myers and Horsley can be considered the most significant scholars who explored political purposes in the miracles of Mark, but both are dependent on Gerhard Theissen’s socio-cultural and literary reading of miracles.¹⁸⁰ Theissen, in his turn, built up his political reading of exorcism based on W. E. Muhlmann’s findings. Around the 1960s, Muhlmann argued that “oppression by a ruling people” can be described in terms of “possession by a foreign spirit.”¹⁸¹ Muhlmann’s findings have been validated in many recent researches, such as those of Frantz Fanon and Fritz W. Kramer.¹⁸² Based on the cross-cultural anthropological research done by the above scholars, Theissen, Horsley and Myers contend that the Markan Jesus challenges both the Jewish authorities and the Roman imperial powers in the light of his confrontation with demonic spirits.¹⁸³ Horsley argues that “exorcism is, like the exodus of old, a liberation from alien forces.”¹⁸⁴

I want to underline how important Theissen’s findings are for engaging in a political reading of the miracles. Theissen was the first to point out that the miracles, including exorcisms, can be considered powerful symbolic actions in the liberating mission of Jesus. Theissen reads the miracles from the perspective of oppressed people, sometimes called a perspective “from below.”¹⁸⁵ He finds that the belief in miracle workers is “a reaction of subjugated Hellenistic and eastern cultures: the politically inferior proclaims and propagates his superiority on the level of miraculous activity.”¹⁸⁶ This idea, that miracles are told for subjugated people, also fits with what we saw Horsley arguing in chapter 1, that the Gospel of Mark was addressed to the community subjected to empire.¹⁸⁷ Moreover, the method of Myers and Horsley’s

¹⁷⁹ Collins argues that the exorcism in Mark 5:1-20 was possibly used for missionary purposes in the social context of primitive Christianity, cf. Collins, *Mark*, p. 266.

¹⁸⁰ Cf. Myers, *Binding*, p. 149.

¹⁸¹ Theissen, *Miracle Stories*, p. 256. Citing Muhlmann, *Chiliasmus und Nativismus*, 1961, p. 252 (non vidi).

¹⁸² For further discussion of the relation between demonic possession and foreign political oppression, see Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, New York: Grove Press, 1968. Fritz W. Kramer, *The Red Fez: Art and Spirit Possession in Africa*, New York: Verso, 1993; orig. German ed., 1987 (cited by Horsley).

¹⁸³ Cf. Theissen, *Miracle Stories*, p. 256. Myers, *Binding*, p. 194. Horsley, *Hearing*, p. 121.

¹⁸⁴ Horsley, *Hearing*, p. 106.

¹⁸⁵ Theissen, Merz, *Historical Jesus*, p. 313.

¹⁸⁶ Theissen, *Miracle Stories*, p. 257.

¹⁸⁷ Horsley, *Hearing*, p. 51.

political reading of the miracles includes symbolic analysis of the miracles in such a way that “specific characters and narrative elements” of the miracles are “socio-symbolic representations” for a political reading.¹⁸⁸

Furthermore, for a political reading of the miracles of Mark, including exorcisms, I have used Bernd Kollmann’s article ‘Miracles as Images of Hope’ to build up my argument.¹⁸⁹ According to his theory, miracles offer “the material for critique of the present situation and the impetus for revolution.”¹⁹⁰ Kollmann, also inspired by Theissen, argues that miracles can be understood as “collective symbolic actions of lower social classes.”¹⁹¹ Kollmann’s argument derives from Theissen and Merz’s argument, the reading of miracles “from below.”¹⁹² Moreover, Kollmann argues that miracles emphasize the crossing of boundaries.¹⁹³ If we bear in mind Kollmann’s theory, Mark seems to place Jesus’ exorcism in Mark 5 in order to communicate a liberation message.¹⁹⁴ In Mark 5, the fact that the Gentile demoniac in the Gentile area is liberated shows the inclusive liberation by Jesus, i.e., hope for Gentiles. As “Jesus’ transition from Jewish soil to Gentile soil”¹⁹⁵ is a Markan element, Mark seems to construct the exorcism of Mark 5:1-20 in such a way that Jesus crosses the border (crosses to the other side of the sea) to liberate the demoniac from demonic forces.

Moreover, it is worthy of notice how miracles in antiquity were also written for political purposes. In the first century CE, in the time that the Gospel of Mark was composed, the miracles of Vespasian were written to justify his title as being sanctioned by the gods.¹⁹⁶ Similarly, in the second and third centuries CE, Philostratus also made use of Apollonius’ miracles, including exorcisms,¹⁹⁷ to make propaganda for the holy man Apollonius and his teachings.¹⁹⁸ More relevant to my argument is that Philostratus, according to Erkki Koskenniemi, employs the miracles of Apollonius for revolutionary or political aims.¹⁹⁹ Koskenniemi argues that one of the serious messages of the miracles stories about Apollonius told by Philostratus is to argue that “a philosopher stands above a tyrant, and even an overwhelming power cannot defeat him [the philosopher].”²⁰⁰ The implication is that the use of miracle stories outside biblical texts was also political.

¹⁸⁸ Myers, *Binding*, p. 146.

¹⁸⁸ Cf. Myers, *Binding*, p. 149. Horsley, *Hearing*, p. 39.

¹⁸⁹ Kollmann, ‘Images of Hope,’ pp. 244-264.

¹⁹⁰ Kollmann, ‘Images of Hope,’ p. 252.

¹⁹¹ Kollmann, *Images of Hope*, p. 253.

¹⁹² Theissen, *Historical Jesus*, p. 313.

¹⁹³ Cf. Kollmann, ‘Images of Hope,’ p. 253.

¹⁹⁴ Cf. Kollmann, ‘Images of Hope,’ pp. 252-253.

¹⁹⁵ Oyen, *Markan Miracle*, p. 96.

¹⁹⁶ Theissen, *Gospel Writing*, p. 18.

¹⁹⁷ Philostratus wrote about four exorcistic miracles by Apollonius. Cf. Philostratus, *Life of Apollonius of Tyana*, 4:20; 3:38; 1:19; 4:44.

¹⁹⁸ Theissen, *Miracle Stories*, p. 261.

¹⁹⁹ Erkki Koskenniemi, ‘The Function of the Miracle Stories in Philostratus’ *Vita Apollonii Tyanensis*,’ in: M. Labahn & B. J. Lietaert Peerbolte, eds., *Wonders Never Cease*, London 2006, p. 74.

²⁰⁰ Koskenniemi, ‘The Function,’ p. 82.

I have argued in the above that the miracles in the early centuries CE both in Christianity and in contemporary non-Christian texts were written/told not simply for missionary purposes and Christological purposes but also for political purposes, i.e., miracles as stories for liberation. After engaging with different readings of the miracles including exorcisms, the next section focuses on Jesus' exorcism in Mark 5:1-20 and presents how specific elements of Mark 5:1-20 give impetus to a political reading.

3.2.2 Mark's Use of Political Terminologies in Mark 5:1-20

In this section, I argue that Mark's use of socio-political terminologies in Mark 5:1-20 seems to signify political implications in the exorcism.

Horsley observes that the following terms have military overtones:

- ἀγέλη in 5:11,
- ἐπιτρέπω in 5:13, and
- ὀρμάω in 5:13.

He contends that these significant terms should be considered in connection with the concrete historical and socio-political setting of the Roman imperial rule of the first century CE.²⁰¹ ἀγέλη can mean a herd, a flock. Interestingly, the term ἀγέλη was also used in a military context as "military troop."²⁰² Garroway also argues that the term ἀγέλη in 5:11 is not commonly used to refer to a group of pigs in Greek because "pigs are independent bunch. They [pigs] tend to scatter when frightened rather than stampede. This is no longer a herd of pigs, but an army marching together."²⁰³ ἐπιτρέπω in 5:13 literally means "to permit, dismiss, leave and entrust." The term was also used to convey the sense of military permission or order and of militarily entrusted ranks.²⁰⁴ ὀρμάω in 5:13 denotes "to set into motion, move, or rush." The term was also used to signify military troops rushing/marching into battle.²⁰⁵ For instance, Josephus used the term to describe the rushing (ὀρμάω) of Pharaoh's troops.²⁰⁶ In addition, Derrett argues that the "two thousand swine in 5:13" can also be understood as a military unit since "a 'thousand' is a military unit in ancient Hebrew idiom."²⁰⁷ But critics such as Twelftree argue against the military overtones of the above vocabularies by pointing out that these words do not necessarily carry military

²⁰¹ Horsley, *Hearing*, p. 141.

²⁰² Montanari, *The Brill Dictionary*, 2015, p. 11. Cf. Euripides, *Bacchae* 1022, which talks about a troop of maenads (ἀγέλη). Cf. 4 Maccabees 5:4, where Eleazer is mentioned as leader of a flock (ἀγέλη). Cf. Horsley, *Hearing*, p. 141.

²⁰³ Garroway, 'The Invasion,' p. 66. See also John Duncan Martin Derrett, "Contributions to the Study of the Gerasene Démoniac," *JSNT* 3 (1978), p. 6. Horsley, *Hearing*, p. 141.

²⁰⁴ Montanari, *The Brill Dictionary*, 2015, p. 799. For instance, Xenophon, *Historia Graeca* 6.3.9 reads, "you did not permit the Thebans themselves to be independent."

²⁰⁵ Cf. Montanari, *The Brill Dictionary*, 2015, p. 1485. For instance, Herodotus 8.106.1 reads, "he was preparing to march (ὀρμάω) the army against Athens. Cf. Horsley, *Hearing*, p. 141.

²⁰⁶ Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities*, 2. 340.

²⁰⁷ Derrett, 'Contributions,' p. 6.

implications, since Mark may be unaware of “the social habits of pigs.”²⁰⁸ Nevertheless, in my opinion, if one considers these terminologies in connection with the concrete historical and political circumstances, as Horsley observes in the above, it is likely that the terms bear political overtones. If Mark did not want to convey political overtones through these words, he could have chosen other non-military Greek terms. Not only the above words but also the Latin military word ‘Legion’ which Mark employs in the exorcism is likely to bear political implications. The next section extensively discusses this Latin term for the probable political implications in the exorcism of Mark 5:1-20. According to Horsley, when Jesus reveals the name of the demon as Legion and drowns it in the sea, it becomes clearer that “Jesus’ struggle is really against Roman imperial rule.”²⁰⁹ However, the term Legion (appearing twice, 5:5, 15) is a significant as well as disputed terminology for the political interpretation of the exorcism. Mark makes use of Legion not only in the mouth of the demoniac but also in the narrator’s comment after the exorcism (in v. 15, “the one who had had *the legion*”) in order to make clear that the man was certainly oppressed by the legion.

I will now briefly discuss the term Legion and its military connotations. It can be argued that in the first century CE, at the time when the Gospel of Mark was composed, there were between 3,000 and 6,000 soldiers in a Roman legion. Many scholars agree that the term Legion has a military origin and the main meaning denotes a military unit of several thousand soldiers.²¹⁰

Concerning Mark’s use of Legion, it is important to discuss whether the term Legion merely signifies “the vast number of invading spirits – that is, a legion’s worth” or is a hidden reference to the actual Roman legions of the first century CE or a symbolic reference to Roman imperial oppression.²¹¹ In NT scholarship it is controversial since some scholars argue for identity (legion as symbolic of Roman imperial domination) and others argue for quantity, i.e., a huge number of demons.

Some NT scholars such as Robert Gundry and Twelftree argue that Mark’s use of Legion does not have political implications. For them, the term Legion (Λεγιών) simply denotes the quantity of the demons; they take v. 9 “because we are many (πολύς)” as an argument for the meaning that the demons were numerous. Gundry states: “since the text explicitly associates Legion with numerousness, we have no reason to think of a covert reference to the occupation of Palestine by Roman legions.”²¹²

²⁰⁸ See also Twelftree, *In the Name of Jesus*, p. 110. Cf. Garroway, ‘The Invasion,’ p. 66.

²⁰⁹ Horsley, *Hearing*, p. 147.

²¹⁰ Cf. Montanari, *The Brill Dictionary*, p. 1219. Collins, *Mark*, p. 270. Marcus, *Mark*, pp. 344, 351. In Rabbinic Hebrew the word legion (taken over from Greek but written in Hebrew) is used in a military context to convey an army. Cf. Hermann L. Strack and Paul Billerbeck, *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch*, vol. 2, Facsimile Publisher, 2016, p. 9. (I owe thanks to Dr Korpel for providing this reference.) Even if the man was possessed by the legion or the army of Satan, in the first century CE the presence of actual political overtones of the Latin word Legion would prevail.

²¹¹ Garroway, ‘The Invasion,’ p. 61.

²¹² Robert H. Gundry, *Mark: A Commentary on His Apology for the Cross*, Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1993, p. 260. Cited by Garroway, ‘The Invasion,’ p. 61.

Nevertheless, even though Collins argues that there is no anti-Roman sentiment in the Gospel of Mark, in regard to Mark's use of Legion she assumes that when one thinks of the concrete historical and political context of the Gospel of Mark, Mark may have had knowledge of the tenth legion of the Roman Empire (*Legio X Fretensis*) and its representative logo, the boar. She argues that the tenth legion "took part in the first Jewish War and was subsequently stationed in Jerusalem."²¹³ Therefore, in Mark 5:1-20, if the concrete historical and political circumstances are taken into account, it makes sense that the "Roman legion becomes identified with swine,"²¹⁴ for swine can be considered a type of boar. Marcus also suggests that "the demons' self-identification may also have a political nuance, since 'legion' was a military term and the narrative may have originally been a satire on the Roman military presence in the east. The demonic, unclean Romans, like imperialists everywhere, do not want to be dislodged from the land they have occupied (5:10), and 'the story symbolically satisfies the desire to drive them into the sea like pigs.'"²¹⁵ Horsley also argues that politically conscious hearers of Mark, when hearing the term Legion, would reflect on their suffering lives under the Roman troops occupying their villages violently, persecuting their families and plundering their houses.²¹⁶

Twelftree argues against political implications of the word Legion by pointing out that Mark is not the only evangelist to use the term legion. He argues that Matthew uses 'twelve *legions* of angels' in Matthew 26:53 without political intention. He contends that Matthew does not use the term *legion* to be interpreted socio-politically but as an indicator of numerousness, just as Mark signals the vast quantity of demons when he employs the term Legion.²¹⁷ However, some arguments can be made against his observations. It seems to me that Matthew's reference to twelve legions of angels also has political implications. First, Matthew employs 'twelve legions of angles' in the context of Jesus' crucifixion, which was without doubt a political act. Secondly, and more importantly, Matthew's reference to angels by a Latin military term seems in itself to have political implications. For instance, 4 Maccabees 4:10 describes the military intervention of angels from heaven with flashing weapons. Similarly, Daniel 10:13 mentions how Daniel was helped by the military intervention of Michael, one of the archangels, when Daniel was opposed by the foreign prince of the kingdom of Persia.²¹⁸ Further, John Nolland also argues that the military intervention of angels was well-known in the "Jewish tradition."²¹⁹ 2 Kings 19:35 and 2 Maccabees 15:22 also show the military intervention of the angel of the Lord for Hezekiah king of Judah. Both texts mention how the angel killed one

²¹³ Collins, *Mark*, p. 269. Cf. Garroway, 'The Invasion,' p. 65.

²¹⁴ Horsley, *Hearing*, p. 141.

²¹⁵ Marcus, *Mark 8-16*, p. 351. Citing Theissen, *Miracle Stories*, p. 255.

²¹⁶ Horsley, *Hearing*, pp. 64, 140. Cf. Garroway, 'The Invasion,' p. 61.

²¹⁷ Twelftree, *In the Name of Jesus*, p. 109.

²¹⁸ Cf. John Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, The New International Greek Testament Commentary, Grand Rapids, Michigan: William .B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, p. 1114. Cf. Collins, *Mark*, p. 270.

²¹⁹ Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew*, p. 1114.

hundred and eighty-five thousand men from the foreign oppressive army of king Sennacherib of Assyria.²²⁰ This kind of tradition, the military intervention of angels, may have been known by Matthew and his community. Moreover, for Matthew, as for Mark, it can be argued that he would not have referred to angels using the Latin military term legion if he did not intend to convey political implications. With regard to Matthew 26:53, Ulrich Luz also cites as an argument for Jesus' political power that in Matthew 26:53 "Jesus is seen as an all-powerful person who through his heavenly father can do everything," as he is given all authority in heaven and earth.²²¹ For the first-century readers of both Mark and Matthew, Mark's use of Legion in the exorcism story and Matthew's use of twelve legions of angels have political implications. So, it can be argued against Twelftree's reading of Matthew 26:53 that it is too literal and does not pay enough attention to Matthew's carefully chosen words to convey a political message.

Moreover, Twelftree objects to a political interpretation of the exorcism that Legion's entering 2000 swine does not make sense if Legion is literally considered to be made up of three to six thousands soldiers.²²² What Twelftree does not realize is how Mark may not intend to interpret Legion literally but symbolically, as a symbol of a vast number of aggressive Roman troops or a symbol of Roman oppression. Mark was perhaps unaware of the number of soldiers in a legion, which people today know from ancient sources. Mark 15:16 also indicates that Mark may have been ignorant of how many soldiers made up a cohort or a legion.²²³ It is plausible that Mark's purpose is just to convey the political message, which is "the longed-for expulsion of Roman power and liberation of the demoniac," by calculating the most probable number of soldiers in a legion, either 3000 or 2000.²²⁴ In other words, Mark may intend Legion in a symbolic way, "indicating that the Roman army is the cause of the possessed man's violent and destructive behavior, but the man also is symbolic of the whole society that is possessed by the demonic imperial violence to their persons and communities."²²⁵ Thus, in regard to Mark's use of Legion, it is likely that Mark may intend Legion to have political implications for his audience. If he just means to communicate the vast number of demons, he could choose other Greek military or non-military terms which are usual for first-century authors (e.g., Josephus),²²⁶ such

²²⁰ 2 Kings 19:35 and 2 Maccabees 15:22 Cf. Ulrich Luz, *Matthew 21-28: A Commentary*, translated by James E. Crouch, Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2005, p. 420.

²²¹ Ulrich Luz, *Matthew 21-28: A Commentary*, translated by James E. Crouch, Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2005, pp. 420-421.

²²² Cf. Twelftree, *In the Name of Jesus*, p. 109.

²²³ Garroay, "The Invasion," p. 62. Garroay argues that Mark's use of a whole cohort comprised of 600 soldiers to describe how the Roman soldiers harassed Jesus represents too large a number (cf. Mark 15:16).

²²⁴ Marcus, *Mark 1-8*, pp. 351-352.

²²⁵ Horsley, *Hearing*, p. 140.

²²⁶ The term *τάγμα* is often employed by Josephus. Cf. Josephus, *The Jewish War*, 5.67, 69, 96, 97; 4.445. *τάγμα* means military company, band of soldiers in the Roman army. Cf. Montanari, *The Brill Dictionary*, p. 2077.

as the Greek terms *πολλά* and *τάγμα*.²²⁷ Mark's use of Latinisms therefore seems to signify military implications, as Theissen states: "The allusion to Roman occupation is unmistakable."²²⁸

In addition, Mark's lengthy illustration of the aggressive demoniac occupied by 'Legion' between vv. 3-5 "as violent, uncontrollable, unconquerable, destructive" seemingly corresponds with the behavior of actual Roman legions of the first century CE.²²⁹ Moreover, in v. 15, Mark confirms that the demoniac is none other than the one who had been oppressed by the Roman legion.

Intriguingly, Horsley offers an important insight into how demonic possession is related to political oppression. He observes that one of the methods of social control in a colonial or imperial world is "the belief in demons as a way of ignoring the worst features of concrete domination and avoiding direct confrontation with the colonizers or rulers."²³⁰ So, he argues that in a colonized or imperial society, when oppressed people feel sick, they attribute the sickness to demons. Instead of blaming real political-economic oppressors, oppressed people blame outside evil forces or demons for their suffering and oppression.²³¹ Horsley argues that "(t)he effects of Roman military violence and economic exploitation were often attributed to demon possession."²³² Only when Jesus can elicit the identity of the demonic forces as Legion (Roman political domination) does it become transparent for the hearers of Mark that what Jesus has really been struggling against is Roman imperial oppression and that Jesus' drowning of Legion by sending the pigs into the sea leads to the demoniac's liberation from Roman imperial oppression.²³³

In sum, having considered Mark 5:1-20 at the concrete socio-political and historical level, the mindset of "the audience of performed narrative,"²³⁴ it can be argued that Mark may not simply intend Jesus' exorcism to be interpreted in the light of the spiritual battle between Jesus and demonic forces, but as a symbolic action for socio-political liberation from Roman imperial oppression. Therefore, Twelftree's one-sided interpretation of Jesus' exorcism in Mark 5:1-20 in terms of only a spiritual battle between Jesus and demonic forces might be an overly narrow interpretation.²³⁵

3.2.3 Location of the Exorcism as a Possible Marker for Political Interpretation of Mark 5

A political interpretation of Jesus' exorcism in Mark 5:1-20 is apparently justified by the geographical setting of the exorcism in Gerasa (the land of the Gerasenes) and its

²²⁷ Garroway, 'The Invasion,' p. 63.

²²⁸ Theissen, *Miracle Stories*, p. 255. Cited by Garroway, 'The Invasion,' p. 63.

²²⁹ Garroway, 'The Invasion,' p. 63.

²³⁰ Horsley, *Hearing*, p. 144.

²³¹ Horsley, *Hearing*, p. 145.

²³² Horsley, *Hearing*, p. 146. Cf. John, *The Meaning*, p. 86.

²³³ Horsley, *Hearing*, p. 147. See also Horsley, *Jesus and the Politics*, p. 102.

²³⁴ Horsley, *Hearing*, p. 64.

²³⁵ Cf. Twelftree, *In the Name of Jesus*, pp. 111, 127.

historical time.²³⁶ Gerasa was a significant location of Jewish revolt around 67 CE, as Josephus writes: “[Vespasian] also sent Lucius Annius to Gerasa with a squadron of cavalry and a considerable body of infantry. Annius, having carried the city by assault, put to the sword a thousand of the youth [...] gave his soldiers license to plunder the property, and then set fire to the houses and advanced against the surrounding villages.”²³⁷ In this case, Mark may have chosen Gerasa “as a site of symbolic confrontation with the legions” or a site of symbolic liberation of the demoniac from Roman oppressive powers because Gerasa had been a significant place where Roman imperial soldiers achieved violent victory.²³⁸

Yet, Twelftree argues against a political connotation of the geographical area of the exorcism by stating that “from such a setting [Gerasa, Gentile territory], Mark’s readers are unlikely to hear a story about Jewish liberation.”²³⁹ However, Twelftree’s counterarguments can be criticized in three ways. First, as Collins observes, “the Gentile character of Gerasa in particular and the Decapolis in general should not be overemphasized” because there are some archaeological findings which show the probable presence of “Semitic religion and practice, including Judaism” or Jewish remains in Gerasa.²⁴⁰ Secondly, it can be argued that God’s liberation of Israel from oppressive foreign rule also happened in Egypt, so that the Passover event in Egypt symbolized God’s deliverance of Israel in Egypt. At the same time, in the Red Sea, and not in Judea or Galilee, the Israelites were completely liberated from the oppression by Egyptians. Thus, the location of God’s deliverance of Israel is not limited to Judea or Galilee only. On the other hand, it can be still argued against Twelftree’s view that Jesus in Gerasa could extend his liberation to Gentiles as well because not only Jews needed liberation from Roman oppression, but every community oppressed by Roman imperial rule.

3.2.4 Mark’s Use of “the Sea” as a Marker for Political Interpretation

I will argue in this section that Mark’s use of “the sea” (θάλασσα) in Mark 5:1-20 seems to have political implications. Mark emphatically uses “the sea” two times in order to describe the destruction of the swine possessed by demons. Mark 5:13 reads, “about two thousand, rushed down the steep bank into the sea (θάλασσα) and drowned in the sea (θάλασσα).”²⁴¹ Horsley contends that ‘sea’ is not a common term for referring to the freshwater lake between Galilee and the Decapolis.²⁴² Therefore, it

²³⁶ I have discussed ‘Gerasa’ as the original location in the section on textual criticism.

²³⁷ Josephus, *The Jewish War*, 4.486-489. Cited by Myers, *Binding*, p. 191; John, *The Meaning*, p. 85-86.

²³⁸ Myers, *Binding*, p. 191.

²³⁹ Twelftree, *In the Name of Jesus*, p. 110.

²⁴⁰ Collins, *Mark*, p. 267. Citing Eri M. Meyers, “Jesus and His Galilean Context,” in Douglas R. Edwards and C. Thomas McCollough, eds., *Archaeology and the Galilee: Texts and Context in the Graeco-Roman and Byzantine Periods* [SFSHJ] 143; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1997, pp. 57-66.

²⁴¹ Luke uses only λίμνην instead of θάλασσα (cf. Luke 8: 6-39); Matthew mentions ‘the sea’ only one time (cf. Matthew 8:28-34).

²⁴² Horsley, *Hearing*, p. 141.

is likely that Mark may have a reason for employing ‘the sea’ to refer to the inland lake. According to Myers, Mark uses ‘the sea’ to denote ‘the sea’ as “chaos, threat and danger” by reflecting ‘the sea’ from the Old Testament scriptures.²⁴³ Myers argues that “the wind and the sea as obstacles derive from the ancient Semitic mythic personification of cosmic forces of chaos and destruction (as in 5:13; 9:42; 11:23).”²⁴⁴

Quite differently from Myers, Horsley argues that Mark’s use of ‘sea’ reflects “the Mediterranean Sea, across which the Roman legions had come to conquer the countries of Syria and Palestine.”²⁴⁵ Horsley’s observation seems to be convincing if the concrete historical and political circumstances of the first century CE are taken into account. The hearers of Mark may have related ‘the sea’ to the Mediterranean Sea, where legions crossed to occupy their land violently, plunder their property and enslave them. Probably, the hearers had enough competence to relate Mark’s use of ‘sea’ with the Mediterranean Sea. In addition, in accordance with Horsley, Mark’s reference to the inland lake as ‘sea,’ like the great Mediterranean Sea, may echo the Red Sea, where the mighty soldiers of Pharaoh were drowned. Moreover, for him, Mark’s rhetorical question in the preceding miracle of Mark 5:1-20, “who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?,” reflects God’s mastery over the sea through Moses in Exodus 14:21-28.²⁴⁶ How Mark’s deliberate use of ‘sea’ seems to allude to the Red Sea, where God drowned the mighty soldiers of Pharaoh in order to liberate the Israelites from the foreign oppressive rule of Pharaoh, will be further discussed in the next chapter.

3.3 Conclusion

In this chapter Mark 5:1-20 has been explored from different angles, including a translation, a textual analysis and a study of its intratextual links. The political reading proper began with a study of the political dimension of miracle stories in general and concluded with the investigation of terminologies in Mark 5:1-20 that indicate Mark’s political agenda, including the possible political implications of the two main localities, Gerasa and the sea. A more detailed summary of this chapter can be found in the main conclusion.

²⁴³ Myers, *Binding*, p. 196.

²⁴⁴ Myers, *Binding*, p. 197.

²⁴⁵ Horsley, *Hearing*, p. 141.

²⁴⁶ Horsley, *Hearing*, p. 105.

Chapter 4

Intertextuality and the Political Interpretation of Mark 5:1-20

Introduction

After dealing with the intratextual links of Mark 5:1-20 and the significant elements of Mark 5:1-20 which seem to support a political interpretation of Mark 5:1-20, in this chapter I discuss Mark 5:1-20 in the light of intertextuality and explore how Jesus' exorcism in Mark 5:1-20 politically echoes the Old Testament scriptures.

First, I discuss a short definition of intertextuality, Richard B. Hays' three categories of intertextual references and Christopher B. Hays' seven criteria for recognizing echoes in order to investigate the possible intertexts of Mark 5. Secondly, I briefly present some possible intertexts of Mark 5:1-20. Thirdly, I extensively deal with Exodus 14-15, which according to Joel Marcus contains "the most pervasive echoes," for the political interpretation of Mark 5:1-20.²⁴⁷ I will end with a discussion of two external sources that help to connect Jesus' exorcism story with the Exodus story because they show how contemporary authors dealt with the Exodus story.

4.1 Definition of Intertextuality

An intertext is an external text of a specific text, what Merz calls "text in the text," which is related to the text in terms of theme, key words, structure and verbal agreement. An intertext can color the meaning of the text.²⁴⁸ In my opinion, intertextual analysis can be described as consideration of the external text of a specific text in order to investigate how it illuminates the meaning of the text, by discussing similarities as well as differences between text and intertext.

Nielson argues that not only meanings intended by the author but also meanings derived from the dialogue with the intertexts are important for "responsible exegesis."²⁴⁹ Here Nielson points out that not all intertexts are authorially intended. Nonetheless, I think some intertexts are intended by the authors and open to detection. For instance, Mark explicitly shows his expectation of intertextual competence of readers in Mark 1:2-3 by indicating, "as it is written in the prophet Isaiah." Here Mark expects his readers to follow his explicit intertextual reference to Isaiah and translate the meaning of Mark 1:2-3 in connection with the intertext, i.e., Isaiah. On the other hand, some possible intertextual references are not obvious. In Mark 1:2, Mark seems to cite Exodus 23:20 ("I send my messenger before your face"). However, Mark does

²⁴⁷ Cf. Marcus, *Mark*, p. 348. See also John, *The Meaning*, pp. 87-88.

²⁴⁸ Merz, 'The Fictitious,' p. 117.

²⁴⁹ Kirsten Nielsen, 'Intertextuality and Hebrew Bible,' in *Supplements to Vetus Testamentum*, vol. 80, Congress Volume: Oslo 1998 ed., André Lemaire and Magne Sæbø, eds., Leiden: Brill, 2000, p. 31.

not say, “as it is written in Exodus.” In this case, readers are supposed to make an intertextual connection by themselves. Careful intertextual study will show how Mark seems to cite Exodus 23:20 through a consideration of verbal and thematic similarities between Mark 1:2 and Exodus 23:20 (see below in section 4.4.2).

4.1.1 Richard B. Hays’ Three Forms of Intertextual References

In order to discover explicit and implicit intertexts, Richard B. Hays proposes three forms of intertextual references: “quotation, allusion and echo.”²⁵⁰ In regard to quotation, readers can discern intertextual references through citation formulas, such as “as it is written” in Mark 1:2, or through “the verbatim reproduction of an extended chain of words, often a sentence or more, from the source of text.”²⁵¹ An allusion occurs when a text contains many words from the intertext “or it at least in some way explicitly mentions notable characters or events that signal the reader to make intertextual connection.”²⁵² Concerning echo, this form is sometimes difficult to detect. Compared to Matthew, Mark more often creates implicit echoes throughout his gospel which do not consist of clearly identifiable words and phrases.²⁵³ An echo, according to Hays, “may involve the inclusion of only a word or phrase that evokes, for the alert reader, a reminiscence of an earlier text.”²⁵⁴

I will not elaborate on quotation, as it is easy to distinguish. Concerning allusion and echo, interpreters can investigate these by using different methods, such as the consideration of repeated references,²⁵⁵ structural patterns, one word or one phrase that recalls external texts, etc. But sometimes the biblical authors may have been unconscious of allusions and echoes when they wrote their texts. Therefore, an interpreter is free to make intertextual connections to the text he or she is dealing with.

With regard to allusion and echo, I think it is important to have some criteria for interpreters to investigate to what extent a specific text echoes/alludes to another intertext and how that intertext can add meaning to the specific text in dealing with both authorially intended and unintended allusions/echoes detected by the interpreter. For identifying allusions and echoes, I give an overview of Christopher B. Hays’ seven criteria to be employed for intertextual reading of Mark 5:1-20.

4.1.2 Christopher B. Hays’ Seven Criteria for Recognizing Allusions or Echoes

Christopher B. Hays provides seven criteria for recognizing allusions and echoes and for measuring the level of intertextuality: *availability, volume, recurrence or clustering, thematic coherence, historical plausibility, history of interpretation, and*

²⁵⁰ Hays, *Echoes*, p. 10.

²⁵¹ Hays, *Echoes*, p. 10.

²⁵² Hays, *Echoes*, p. 10.

²⁵³ Hays, *Echoes*, p. 15.

²⁵⁴ Hays, *Echoes*, p. 10.

²⁵⁵ Cf. Nielsen, ‘Intertextuality,’ p. 25.

satisfaction.²⁵⁶ First, *availability* asks questions like: did the author and his audiences have opportunity to access the supposed source of echo? For instance, did Mark and his community have access to the Exodus story if I detect Mark's probable intertextual reference to Exodus 14-15 in Mark 5:1-20? Secondly, *volume* is concerned with how explicit or implicit the echo/allusion is.²⁵⁷ Here Richard B. Hays' three categories of intertextual references would help to distinguish how much, explicitly and implicitly, the text echoes the intertext at the level of either quotation or echo.²⁵⁸ Thirdly, *recurrence* or *clustering* treats the question, "how often does the author cite or allude to the same text?"²⁵⁹ For instance, how often does Mark echo the Exodus story in the Gospel of Mark? If only Mark 5:1-20 echoes the Exodus story, it might not be convincing. However, if Mark often echoes Exodus throughout his gospel, it can be argued that Mark's intertextual reference to the Exodus story becomes more convincing.

Fourthly, *thematic coherence* deals with the question, "how well does the alleged echo fit into the line of argument of the passage in question? Does the proposed precursor text fit together with the point the author is making?"²⁶⁰ For instance, how well does the theme of the text, e.g. Mark 5:1-20, fit with the theme of the intertext, e.g. Exodus 14-15? Fifthly, *historically plausibility* deals with the question, "could an author in fact have intended the alleged meaning effect of any proposed allusion, and could contemporaneous readers have understood it?"²⁶¹ For instance, could Mark have intended a political liberation message through Jesus' exorcism in Mark 5:1-20 by echoing Exodus 14-15? And would Mark's community be able to translate his political liberation message and relate Jesus' exorcism in Mark 5 to the story in Exodus 14-15? Sixthly, *history of interpretation* concerns the question, "have other readers in the tradition heard the same echoes that we now think that we hear?"²⁶² For instance, did early church fathers or other scholars also recognize Mark's probable intertextual references to Exodus 14-15? And are there other ancient sources which make an explicit or implicit connection between the story of Jesus' exorcism in Mark 5:1-20 and Exodus 14-15? The final criterion is related to "*satisfaction*: does the proposed intertextual reading illuminate the surrounding discourse and make some larger sense of the author's argument as a whole? Do we find ourselves saying, oh, so that is what the author means?"²⁶³ For instance, does the meaning derived from linking up with Mark's intertextual reference to Exodus 14-15

²⁵⁶ Christopher B. Hays, 'Echoes of the Ancient Near East? Intertextuality and the Comparative Study of the Old Testament,' in *The Word Leaps the Gap*, Richard B. Hays and J. Ross Wagner, eds., Grand Rapids: W. B. Eerdmans, 2008, pp. 57-63.

²⁵⁷ Hays, 'Echoes of the Ancient Near East?,' pp. 58-59.

²⁵⁸ Hays, *Echoes*, p. 10.

²⁵⁹ Hays, 'Echoes of the Ancient Near East?,' pp. 59-60.

²⁶⁰ Hays, 'Echoes of the Ancient Near East?,' p. 60.

²⁶¹ Hays, 'Echoes of the Ancient Near East?,' pp. 61-62.

²⁶² Hays, 'Echoes of the Ancient Near East?,' pp. 62-64.

²⁶³ Hays, 'Echoes of the Ancient Near East?,' pp. 58-63.

illuminate the surrounding text of Mark 5 and how does this meaning fit with Mark's argument in the Gospel of Mark as a whole?

Through the above criteria, Hays shows that "intertextuality would be understood not only as a literary theory but as a historical and contextual one."²⁶⁴ I will employ these criteria in discussing Exodus 14-15 as an intertext for positing a political liberation message in Mark 5:1-20 and in detecting the probable intertexts of Mark 5. Following Hays I will also deal with Mark's intertextual references to Exodus 14-15 not just on the level of literacy but also on the level of the historical and contextual nature of the dialogue between Jesus' exorcism and Exodus 14-15.

4.2 Some Possible Intertexts for Mark 5:1-20

Before I turn to Exodus 14-15, I survey some other possible intertexts of Mark 5:1-20. Scholars identify several intertexts, such as Isaiah 65:1-7, Psalms 67:7 LXX, Psalms 65:7-8.²⁶⁵ I will not go into detail here because this part is not directly relevant to my main argument.

John argues that the two stories, i.e., the preceding nature miracle of Jesus' stilling the storm in Mark 4:35-41 and Jesus' exorcism in Mark 5:1-20, might echo Ps 65:2-7, in which the Psalmist talks about God's silencing of nature and the madness of the people.²⁶⁶ He argues that Mark intentionally frames the two miracle stories together so that they reflect the "double fulfilment of Psalms 65:7."²⁶⁷ In this case, John may mean that Jesus in the preceding miracle fulfils Ps 65:7a, "you silence the roaring of the seas and the roaring of the waves," and Jesus in Mark 5:1-20 fulfils Ps 65:7b, "you silence the madness of the nations." In a similar way to Ps 65:7a, Jesus stills the storm and the sea in the preceding miracle of Mark 5. John contends that even though in the context of Ps 65 the Psalmist condemns the madness of Gentile powers which threaten Israel, he still expresses hope for the Gentiles. In a similar way, Mark 5 also indicates Gentile mission and inclusion of Gentiles in the liberating ministry of Jesus.²⁶⁸ Nevertheless, as God's power over the sea/storms appear in several OT texts, such as Isaiah 25:1, 12, Job 26:12, and Exodus 14-15 and Jonah 1:4-17, etc., Ps 65:7b should not be regarded as the only intertext for the miracle preceding Mark 5:1-20.

Furthermore, the vivid descriptions of the demoniac, especially from Mark 5:2, 19, may echo the descriptions of Ps 67:7 LXX "God settles solitary ones into a home,

²⁶⁴ Hays, 'Echoes of the Ancient Near East?', p. 64.

²⁶⁵ See further Marcus, *Mark*, p. 348. John, *The Meaning*, pp. 87-88. Richard Thomas France, *The Gospel of Mark: A Commentary On the Greek Text*, The New International Greek Testament Commentary, Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans, 2002, p. 227.

²⁶⁶ Cf. Marcus, *Mark*, p. 348. See also John, *The Meaning*, pp. 87-88.

²⁶⁷ John, *The Meaning*, pp. 87-88.

²⁶⁸ John, *The Meaning*, p. 88.

leading out prisoners with manliness, likewise those who embitter them that live in tombs (τάφοι).”²⁶⁹ Similarly to Ps 67:7, where God liberated solitary ones living in tombs, in Mark 5 Jesus liberates the demoniac, i.e., the solitary one living in tombs (μνημεῖον) and speaking and acting aggressively, so that he can go home. In addition to Ps 68:6, scholars observe that the detailed descriptions of the demoniac seem to echo Isaiah 65:1-7.²⁷⁰ Many typical elements of Mark 5:1-20 reflect the motifs of Isaiah 65:1-7, phrases such as “those who did not ask,” “those who did not seek me,” “a rebellious people,” “who sit in tombs (μνημεῖον), and spend the night in secret places,” “who eat pig’s flesh (κρέα ὕεια).” In Mark 5 also, the demoniac can be seen as the one who did not ask and seek Jesus, who lived in tombs and spent day and night (νύξ) in tombs (μνημεῖον). The inclusion of swine in the story may also reflect the people from Gerasa eating pork or the Gentile character of Gerasa.

However, in regard to Mark’s possible intertextual references to Ps 67:7, Isaiah 65:1-7, and Exodus 14-15, Stein views them as “unconvincing due to the lack of clear terminological agreement.”²⁷¹ In my opinion, Stein’s argument may not be defensible because he reads too literally and does not pay enough attention to the thematic, historical and contextual nature of the dialogue between the intertexts and texts. In any case, if Richard B. Hays’ three categories of intertextuality are applied, the above three intertexts should be at least regarded as possible “echoes,” because they still share a few thematic, verbal agreements with Mark 5:1-20. The above possible intertexts can be seen as missionary intertexts rather than political intertexts. Now I pay attention to the main intertext Exodus 14-15 for supporting the political interpretation of Mark 5:1-20.

4.3 Exodus 14-15 as an Important Intertext for the Political Interpretation of Mark 5:1-20

Before I discuss Exodus 14-15 as the main intertext, I will argue on the basis of Hays’ criteria how Mark’s gospel often uses the Exodus story as an intertext for his interpretation of Jesus’ story and how Mark uses Exodus 20:23 in a political vein at the very beginning of the gospel.

4.3.1 The Exodus Story as an Intertext for the Gospel of Mark

First, I argue that Mark’s echoing of the Exodus story meets the first and the third criteria of Hays, *availability* and *recurrence*. Hays argues that the New Testament

²⁶⁹ Albert Pietersma and Benjamin G. Wright, eds., *A New English Translation of the Septuagint*, Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2007, p. 579; similarly C.J. den Heyer, *Marcus (Tekst en toelichting)*, vol. 1, Uitgeverij Kok: Kampen, 1985, p. 118.

²⁷⁰ Cf. France, *The Gospel of Mark*, p. 227. Cf. Marcus, *Mark*, p. 348. John, *The Meaning*, p. 88.

²⁷¹ Stein, *Mark*, p. 251. See further Gundry, *Mark*, pp. 258-259.

writers (as well as their readers) certainly had access to OT scriptures (mostly LXX) when they wrote, read and heard the New Testament writings. So, the implication is that we can assume that the author of Mark as well as the readers of Mark had access to the Exodus story and in principle knew the Exodus story.²⁷² I think this argument can be justified by Mark's description of Moses at Jesus' transfiguration in Mark 9:4, Mark's description of the commandments when Jesus deals with the rich man in Mark 10:19, and Mark's description in Mark 14:1 of the Passover, which commemorates Israel's liberation from the oppressive rule of the Egyptians.²⁷³

Moreover, I would argue that Mark's repeated description of the "misunderstanding" by the disciples (cf. Mark 6:53, 4:12; 8:17) echoes the misunderstanding or complaint of Israel in the wilderness in Exodus (cf. Ex 16:2-3, Ex 17:2-3). The pattern is quite similar in a way, in that as in the wilderness Israel complains to or misunderstands God even after they have seen many miracles, while in Mark the disciples/crowd do not understand Jesus even after Jesus has performed many miracles.

More intriguingly, Richard B. Hays argues that Jesus' response to the scribes "so that you may know [...] has authority on earth (*ἵνα δὲ εἰδῆτε ὅτι* ἐξουσίαν [...] ἐπὶ *τῆς γῆς*)" in Mark 2:10 seems to echo Moses' confrontation with Pharaoh, "so that you may know [...] on earth (*ἵνα εἰδῆς ὅτι* [...] ἐν πάσῃ *τῇ γῆ*·)" in Exodus 9:13-14, 8:10, 22.²⁷³ Here both stories share similarities not simply in terms of phrase or word but also in terms of theme. This argument may accord with Richard B. Hays' intertextual level of allusion or echo and fit Christopher B. Hays' second and fourth criteria, *volume* and *thematic coherence*. Exodus 9:13-14 says, "Then the LORD said to Moses, 'Rise up early in the morning and present yourself before Pharaoh, and say to him, [...] I will send all my plagues upon you yourself, and upon your officials, and upon your people, *so that you may know* that there is no one like me in all *the earth* (*ἵνα εἰδῆς ὅτι* [...] ἐν πάσῃ *τῇ γῆ*·).'" Here we find word or phrase parallels between the two stories. Moreover, the theme of exodus in the Exodus story seems to correspond with the theme of Mark 2:10. It can be argued that the phrase "*so that you may know ... in all the earth* (*ἵνα δὲ εἰδῆτε ὅτι* ἐξουσίαν [...] ἐπὶ *τῆς γῆς*) is seen in the liberating context of when the God of Israel as more sovereign and powerful than Pharaoh is going to perform the seventh miracle to liberate his people from the oppressive rule of Pharaoh. Similarly, Mark employs the phrase when he portrays Jesus as the one who has sovereign authority (ἐξουσία) on earth to liberate the paralytic. Consequently, it can be argued that Mark echoes the Exodus traditions to decide questions of disputed authority (ἐξουσία) with the religious leaders, that is, Jesus has authority (ἐξουσία) on this earth to liberate those who are oppressed by sins, diseases and demons, just as the liberating God of Israel in Exodus has sovereign

²⁷² Hays, 'Echoes of the Ancient Near East?', p. 58.

²⁷³ Cf. Horsley, *Hearing*, p. 110.

authority to liberate his people from foreign oppression.²⁷⁴ Moreover, just as Pharaoh's heart was hardened, the hearts of religious leaders such as scribes or Pharisees were hardened (cf. Mark 3:5). Hays argues that just as Pharaoh encountered God's judgment for his hardened heart, religious leaders would encounter God's judgment for their hardened hearts, i.e., "for their resistance to the power of God."²⁷⁵

Horsley also argues how Mark often echoes the Exodus story. For instance, he contends that the two feeding stories in Mark echo the Exodus feeding story of manna in the wilderness (cf. Exodus 16) that is narrated straight after the complete political liberation from the Egyptians in Exodus 14-15. For him, the twelve baskets of leftovers in the first feeding story represent, in the Jewish setting, twelve tribes of Israel, and sitting in groups of hundreds and fifties reflects "the traditional organization of the people with the exodus-wilderness narratives (see Exodus 18:21, 25, military formation, Numbers 31:14)."²⁷⁶ Interestingly, according to Joel Marcus, Mark even seems to mirror the sequence of events in Exodus. In Exodus, the feeding story of manna (Exodus 16) and the story of crossing the Red Sea (Exodus 14-15) are placed next to each other. Similarly, in Mark 6:51-52, the feeding story is intended to be interpreted in connection with Jesus' walking on the water because of the close physical link between Jesus' walking on the water and the feeding story ("then he got into the boat with them and the wind ceased [...] for they did not understand about the loaves, but their hearts were hardened"). Here Mark seems to follow the structure of the Exodus story so that readers can connect the two stories. Marcus argues that "the Passover Haggadah (*Dayyenu* section) and later rabbinic texts closely connect the gift of manna with the Israelites' crossing the sea."²⁷⁷ Thematically, just as the Israelites' sea crossing takes place in the morning (Exodus 14:24), Jesus' walking on the sea occurs in the morning (Mark 6:48).

In addition, according to Marcus, Mark's description of Jesus' self-identification as "I am (ἐγώ εἰμι)" in Mark 6:50 seems to echo the name of the liberating God in the Passover Haggadah, i.e., "I, the Lord, I Am and no other"²⁷⁸ and the name of the liberating God of Israel (ἐγώ εἰμι) when God reveals himself to Moses in order to assign Moses to the liberating mission from the oppressive rule of the Egyptians in Exodus 3:9, 14.²⁷⁹ I will continue to discuss how, from the very beginning, the Gospel of Mark seems to politically echo the Exodus story. This argument is important because it seems to illuminate the political interpretation of Mark 5:1-20.

²⁷⁴ Horsley, *Jesus and the Politics*, p. 101.

²⁷⁵ Hays, *Echoes*, pp. 65-66.

²⁷⁶ Horsley, *Hearing*, p. 104.

²⁷⁷ Marcus, *Mark*, p. 431.

²⁷⁸ Marcus, *Mark*, p. 431. Cf. Exodus 12:12-13.

²⁷⁹ Cf. Collins, *Mark*, p. 335. Marcus, *Mark*, p. 432. Stein, *Mark*, p. 326.

4.3.2 Mark's Use of Exodus 23:20, Malachi 3:1 and Isaiah 40: 3 as Intertexts for the Political Interpretation of Mark 5:1-20

In this part, I will show that, from the beginning of the gospel, Mark seems to echo Exodus 23:20 and expect intertextual competence of his readers. It is significant that Mark begins his gospel with intertextual citation. More importantly, I will argue that Mark's intertextual citation in Mark 1:2-3 has probable political overtones. Some might argue that in his opening citation Mark does not echo the Exodus story but Isaiah 40:3 only, because of the citation formula "as it is written in the prophet Isaiah." However, careful intertextual reading shows that Mark does not simply cite Isaiah 40:3 but is providing a composite citation in Mark 1:2-3, as the table below shows. Moreover, early church fathers such as Origen and Jerome already realized that the citation in Mark 1:2-3 is composite. For them, in Mark 1:2-3, besides Isaiah 40:3, Malachi 3:1 was a probable source for Mark.²⁸⁰ This argument seems to meet Christopher B. Hays' sixth criterion, *history of interpretation*, for Mark's composite intertextual references to Isaiah and Malachi in Mark 1:2-3 were picked up by some church fathers.²⁸¹ Mark's probable intertextual reference to Malachi 3:1 is often interpreted in the light of John the Baptist's announcement of judgment as a preparation for the coming of the Lord, since Malachi 3 concerns God's judgment.²⁸²

However, as the table below shows, in addition to Isaiah 40:3 and Malachi 3:1, Exodus 23:20 LXX can also be considered one of the intertexts for Mark 1:2.²⁸³ For if Mark echoes Malachi 3:1 in Mark 1:2, there is no doubt that, in turn, Malachi cites Exodus 23:20 directly or indirectly. Horsley argues that the messenger in Malachi 3:1 is also "the messenger of the Israelite/Mosaic covenant," i.e., the Exodus tradition.²⁸⁴ This shows how prominent the Exodus story was and how often it was reinterpreted. In what follows I will continue my argument that Mark 1:2 seems to politically echo Exodus 23:20. If in Mark 1:2-3 Mark is providing a composite citation, the first part of Mark 1:2 cites Exodus 23:20 and the second part of Mark 1:3 cites Isaiah 40:3 with a few words changed. Horsley argues that "such a composite recitation comes from popular cultivation of Israelite prophetic tradition."²⁸⁵

Exodus 23:20	Malachi 3:1	Isaiah 40:3	Mark 1:2-3
Behold, <i>I send my messenger before your face</i> to guard you on the way and to bring you to the place that I	Behold, I send my messenger, and <i>he will prepare the way before me.</i>	A voice cries out: "in the wilderness <i>prepare the way of the Lord,</i> make <i>straight</i> in the desert a highway for	2 As it is written in Isaiah the prophet, "Behold, I send my messenger before your

²⁸⁰ Cf. Origen, *Commentary on John* 6:24; Jerome, *Letters to Pammachius* 57:9. Cited by Hays, *Echoes*, p. 22.

²⁸¹ Hays, "Echoes of the Ancient Near East?," pp. 62-63.

²⁸² Cf. Malachi 3:1, see also Hays, *Echoes*, pp. 22-23.

²⁸³ Cf. Hays, *Echoes*, p. 22.

²⁸⁴ Horsley, *Hearing*, p. 102.

²⁸⁵ Cf. Horsley, *Hearing*, p. 60.

<p>have prepared.</p> <p>καὶ <i>ἰδοὺ</i> ἐγὼ <i>ἀποστέλλω</i> τὸν <i>ἄγγελόν μου πρὸ</i> <i>προσώπου σου</i> ἵνα φυλάξῃ σε ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ ὅπως εἰσαγάγῃ σε εἰς τὴν γῆν ἣν ἡτοίμασά σοι (LXX)</p>	<p><i>ἰδοὺ</i> ἐγὼ <i>ἐξαποστέλλω</i> <i>τὸν ἄγγελόν μου</i> καὶ ἐπιβλέψεται αὐτὸν ὁδὸν <i>πρὸ προσώπου</i> <i>μου</i></p>	<p>our God. φωνὴ βοῶντος ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ ἐτοιμάσατε τὴν ὁδὸν κυρίου εὐθείας ποιεῖτε τὰς τρίβους τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν</p>	<p>face, who will prepare your way, 3 the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: <i>prepare the</i> <i>way of the Lord, make</i> <i>his paths straight.</i>” Καθὼς γέγραπται ἐν τῷ Ἡσαΐα τῷ προφήτῃ <i>Ἰδοὺ ἀποστέλλω</i> τὸν <i>ἄγγελόν μου πρὸ</i> <i>προσώπου σου</i>, ὃς κατασκευάσει τὴν ὁδὸν σου.</p>
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The intertextual reference of Mark 1:2 to Exodus 23:20 is likely to have political overtones when the context of Exodus 23 is considered. In the context of Exodus 23, God promised to send his angel (*ἄγγελός*) to protect Israel and to prepare the way for Israel in order to conquer the promised land of Canaan.²⁸⁶ The citation phrase “I send my messenger before your face” in the context of Exodus denotes “a word of promise, signifying protection, victory, and the end of wilderness wandering.”²⁸⁷ So, in Mark 1:2, it is probable that Mark echoes Exodus 23:20 to make his point that John as a type of *ἄγγελός* sent by God in Exodus 23 was the messenger sent by God to be the stronger one’s forerunner of “the new exodus and the restoration of Israel.”²⁸⁸ It therefore seems that Mark’s probable intertextual linkage to the conquest of the promised land in Exodus 23:20 in his opening citation has political overtones, since Jesus in Mark is seen as the one who will lead a new exodus and liberation of Israel through his defeat of demonic forces occupying people. That is why Mark begins with the good news of Jesus Christ who will lead a new exodus and liberation from foreign oppression.

In addition, Mark’s intertextual reference in Mark 1:3 to Isaiah 40:3 also recalls the prophet Isaiah’s second exodus liberation message, that the liberating God of Israel or Exodus will once again liberate his people from the Babylonian exile.²⁸⁹ According to Horsley, Mark’s intertextual reference to “the way of the Lord” from Isaiah 40:3 in Mark 1:3 should be interpreted as “a new exodus.”²⁹⁰ Mark is citing/echoing the liberating texts Exodus 23:20 and Isaiah 40:3, which recall the liberating actions of the God of Israel, in order to introduce a political liberation message, that the liberating actions of the God of Exodus and Isaiah are fulfilled in

²⁸⁶ Cf. Hays, *Echoes*, pp. 22-23.

²⁸⁷ Hays, *Echoes*, p. 23.

²⁸⁸ Hays, *Echoes*, p. 63.

²⁸⁹ Horsley, *Hearing*, p. 102. Hays, *Echoes*, p. 23.

²⁹⁰ Horsley, *Hearing*, p. 102.

Jesus, who will lead “a new exodus, that is a liberation of Israel from foreign domination.”²⁹¹ Thus, from the beginning of the gospel we may glimpse the political message from Mark’s opening composite intertextual work that “the story of Jesus is to be interpreted in terms of a vision of new exodus/end of exile that is found in Isaiah 40 [and Exodus 23, Z. Bawm], [and] it follows that the community of Jesus’ followers would be encouraged by this imagery to understand themselves as set free from bondage to the rulers that previously held them captive.”²⁹² Moreover, Mark’s opening counterclaim regarding the εὐαγγέλιον of Jesus Christ can also be understood in the light of Mark’s intertextual reference to Isaiah 40: 9, where the term εὐαγγελίζω occurs twice.²⁹³ It means that the εὐαγγέλιον of Jesus Christ should also be understood in terms of “Isaiah’s prophetic vision,” which is God’s restoration of Israel from the foreign oppressive rule of the Babylonians.²⁹⁴ The liberation from bondage to the rulers or God’s liberation from foreign oppressive rule in the Gospel of Mark becomes transparent in Jesus’ exorcism in Mark 5:1-20, when Jesus reveals the name of the demons as Legion and drowns them in the Sea and liberates the demoniac from demonic exile so that he could go home.

What I have argued so far is to show that, from the very beginning of the gospel, Mark already starts to politically use the Exodus story as an intertext to convey a political message, that God’s liberation has come through Jesus Christ. After considering how Mark’s gospel often echoes the Exodus story and how Mark seems to politically echo Exodus 23:20 from the very beginning of the gospel, in the next section I will discuss Exodus 14-15 as the main intertext for the political interpretation of Mark 5:1-20.

4.3.3 Exodus 14-15 as Main Intertext for the Political Interpretation of Mark

Now I turn to discuss how Mark 5:1-20 echoes Exodus 14-15, how it can be used as a strong intertext for the political interpretation of Mark 5:1-20 and how loud the echo is, i.e., Hays’ second criterion, *volume*.²⁹⁵ As Marcus argues, the level of intertextual reference to Exodus 14-15 in Mark 5:1-20 can be considered an “echo” rather than quotation or allusion because there are just a few words and thematic (political) parallels between the two stories.²⁹⁶ The following chart, which is based on Marcus’ table, shows how Mark 5 seems to verbally echo Exodus 14-15 LXX.²⁹⁷ This chart is used in discussing intertextual parallels between Mark 5:1-20 and Exodus 14-15.

²⁹¹ Hays, *Echoes*, p. 23.

²⁹² Hays, *Echoes*, p. 92.

²⁹³ Cf. the discussion in chapter 2 on Mark’s use of opening counterclaims regarding the εὐαγγέλιον of Jesus Christ and Jesus as God’s son.

²⁹⁴ Hays, *Echoes*, pp. 21-22.

²⁹⁵ Cf. Hays, ‘Echoes of the Ancient Near East?’, p. 58.

²⁹⁶ Cf. Marcus, *Mark*, p. 348.

²⁹⁷ Marcus, *Mark*, p. 349.

Mark 5:1-20	Exodus 14-16 LXX
1: Καὶ ἤλθον εἰς τὸ πέραν τῆς θαλάσσης Mark's use of inland lake as sea	14:22: καὶ εἰσῆλθον οἱ υἱοὶ Ἰσραὴλ εἰς μέσον τῆς θαλάσσης
3-4: no one was able to bind him οὐδείς ἐδύνατο αὐτὸν δῆσαι no one had the strength to subdue him καὶ οὐδείς ἴσχυεν αὐτὸν δαμάσαι	14:28; 15:4, 6, 13: ἄρματα Φαραῶ καὶ τὴν δύναμιν the dynamis of Pharaoh; the ischys[strength] of God ἰσχύϊ σου εἰς κατάλυμα ἁγίον σου.
7: Son of the Most High Ἰησοῦ Υἱὲ τοῦ Θεοῦ τοῦ Ὑψίστου	15:2: my Father God, I will exalt him ὕψώσω αὐτόν
5:13: swine possessed by unclean spirits were drowned in the sea ἐπνίγοντο ἐν τῇ θαλάσῃ ὄρμαῶ ὄρμησεν /πνίγω	14:28-30; 15:19: the entire army of Pharaoh was drowned in the sea, not one of them remained ὅτι εἰσῆλθεν ἵππος Φαραῶ σὺν ἄρμασι καὶ ἀναβάταις εἰς θάλασσαν
5:15, 17: they were afraid and begged Jesus to go away Φοβέομαι	14:31: They feared the Lord ἐφοβήθη δὲ ὁ λαὸς τὸν Κύριον 15:14-15, 16: when the people have heard they tremble: trembling and fear fall upon them ἐπιπέσοι ἐπ' αὐτοὺς τρόμος καὶ φόβος
5:19: go and <i>proclaim</i> what the Lord has done ἀπαγγεῖλον αὐτοῖς ὅσα ὁ Κύριός σοι πεποίηκεν	14:31: Israel saw the great hand that the Lord did against the Egyptians. ἃ ἐποίησε Κύριος τοῖς Αἰγυπτίοις 9:16: to show you my power so that my name may be <i>proclaimed</i> ἀπαγγέλλω in all the earth

According to Derrett and Marcus, some concepts or themes of Jesus' exorcism in Mark 5:1-20 reflect the political overtones of Exodus 14-15 LXX, where the mighty army of Pharaoh was drowned in the Red Sea.²⁹⁸ This argument is related to Hays' fourth criterion, *thematic coherence*. In my opinion also, there are comparable features in the two stories, even though not all features of the two stories match each other. Let me describe some comparable features/themes of both texts. Both the entire

²⁹⁸ Cf. Marcus, *Mark*, p. 348. Derrett, 'Contributions,' pp. 6-8. Stein's objection to Mark's probable intertextual reference to Exodus 14-15 is not convincing since he does pay enough attention to the thematic similarities and verbal agreements between the two stories. See further for Stein's objections, Stein, *Mark*, p. 251.

army of Pharaoh and the swine went into the sea.²⁹⁹ Both the entire mighty army of Pharaoh and the swine were drowned.³⁰⁰ Both stories use the terms δύναμαι and ισχύω to describe the might of the demoniac oppressed by demons called Legion and the might of Pharaoh, and the strength of God. In Exodus the might or strength (ισχύω) of God (cf. Ex 15:6, 13) overcame the might (δύναμαι) of Pharaoh (cf. 14:28) in order to liberate Israel. Similarly, in Mark 5, Jesus as the stronger one (ισχυρός, cf. Mark 1:7) conquers the demons called Legion whom no was able (δύναμαι) to bind and no one had strength (ισχύω) to subdue in order to liberate the demoniac.

In a similar way, in Mark 5 Jesus as Son of the Most High God drowns the swine possessed by the demons in the sea so that he liberates the demoniac from the demons called Legion, just as God drowned Pharaoh's mighty military army in the sea for Israel's political liberation from Egypt.³⁰¹ And just as God drowned the mighty army of Pharaoh to lead Israel home from exile, the promised land of Canaan, so Jesus liberated the demoniac from foreign demonic exile to lead him home.³⁰² The demon's recognition of Jesus as Son of the Most High God also seems to have political implications, since in Daniel 3:26, 4:2 the epithet the Most High God indicates the sovereignty of God "over the kings of Babylon."³⁰³ Thus, the Most High God of Exodus (ὑψιστος, cf. Ex 15:2) drowned the mighty army of the Egyptians to liberate his people from foreign oppressive rule, just as Jesus as Son of the Most High God (ὑψιστος, cf. Mark 5:7) drowns the swine possessed by Legion to liberate the demoniac from the oppression of demons. In a symbolic way, Jesus' drowning of the swine possessed by demons reflects Jesus' struggle against the destructive power of the Roman legions, that is, Roman imperialism.³⁰⁴ At the same time, just as Israel's miraculous political liberation from slavery and the oppression of Pharaoh is often related to submission to God by proclaiming (ἀπαγγέλλω) the mighty acts of God among nations (cf. Exodus 9:16, 14:31), the demoniac's liberation from demons possessed by Legion is connected to submission to Jesus by proclaiming (ἀπαγγέλλω) the mighty deeds of Jesus, i.e., the liberating action of Jesus and his mercy in his home and in the Decapolis.³⁰⁵ In addition, the reaction of the people in Exodus 14-15 (φόβος) is comparable with the reaction of the people in Mark 5 (φοβέομαι). Consequently, what I have argued above can be seen in the light of Hays' fourth criterion, *thematic coherence*, and also Merz's criterion of verbal agreement, since the themes of Exodus 14-15 seems to fit with the line of Mark's argument in Mark 5:1-20 and there are verbal agreements between the two stories.

²⁹⁹ Marcus, *Mark*, pp. 348-349. See also Andrew Burrow, 'Bargaining with Jesus: Irony in Mark 5:1-20,' *Biblical Interpretation* 25 (2017): p. 248.

³⁰⁰ Marcus, *Mark*, pp. 348-350. Cf. Exodus 14:28.

³⁰¹ Cf. Garroway, 'The Invasion,' p. 66.

³⁰² Cf. Myers, *Binding*, p. liii.

³⁰³ Dormandy, 'The Expulsion of Legion,' p. 337.

³⁰⁴ Dormandy, 'The Expulsion of Legion,' p. 335.

³⁰⁵ Cf. Garroway, 'The Invasion,' p. 58.

Importantly, the phrase from Exodus 14:31, “Israel saw the great work that the Lord (ὁ Κύριος) *did* against the Egyptians (ὃ ἐποίησε Κύριος τοῖς Αἰγυπτίοις),” may echo the phrase, “how much the Lord (ὁ Κύριος) has done for you (ὅσα ὁ Κύριός σοι *πεποίηκεν*)” in Mark 5:19. Both stories use the same title (ὁ Κύριος) and the same verb (ποιέω) to describe the liberating action of God in Exodus and of Jesus (or God?) in Mark. Here what the Lord (ὁ Κύριος) did (ποιέω) against the Egyptians to liberate his people Israel reflects what Jesus as the Lord (ὁ Κύριος) did (ποιέω) against the demons possessed by Legion to liberate the demoniac. Moreover, when Mark politically cites Isaiah 40:3 in Mark 1:3, “Prepare the way of the Lord (ὁ Κύριος), make his paths straight,” the epithet the Lord (ὁ Κύριος) has political implications since in the context of Isaiah 40, “the Lord is the Lord God of Israel who will return to Zion to set things right, and ‘the way of the Lord’ refers to the path that God will make through the desert, leading the triumphant procession of returning exiles.”³⁰⁶ Thus, as I have argued, the epithet ὁ Κύριος both in Exodus 14 and in Isaiah 40 is likely related to the God who liberates from political oppression. In Mark 5, Mark seems to communicate that Jesus is the embodiment or representative of this liberating God in that he liberates the demoniac who was oppressed by foreign demonic powers. This argument also seems to meet Hays’ third criterion, *thematic coherence*, as well as the fifth criterion, *historical plausibility*, because Markan readers could have heard the epithet ‘the Lord’ as the liberating God of Israel in Jesus by hearing what Jesus as the Lord did for the demoniac to liberate him from demonic oppression, especially if they were alert to the echo of intertextual links between Mark 5 and Exodus 14-15 in the background. In this case, in my opinion, Horsley would also argue that Markan hearers would mirror what Jesus as the Lord did for the demoniac with what the liberating God of Israel as the Lord did against the Egyptians for Israel’s political liberation.³⁰⁷

Intriguingly, Derrett also connects the motifs shared between the two stories by stating that legions are involved in both stories. Derrett writes: “The guardian angel of Egypt, called Mizraim, prepared to do battle with Gabriel and Michael, and legions of angels assembled. The Egyptians wanted to bury the Israelites in the Sea.”³⁰⁸ In this point, in my opinion, Derrett goes too far, since his arguments are not justified by external sources and the text itself. Exodus 14:19 simply indicates the intervention of only one angel of God against the background of God’s liberation of Israel from the Egyptians (cf. Exodus 14:19). In Mark 5, it is transparent that the name of the demon is Legion. So, I think the involvement of legions in both stories may not be convincing.

Furthermore, Derrett observes that both the mighty army of Pharaoh and the swine in Mark 5 “were inspired by the demons for the Jews visualized the gods of the

³⁰⁶ Hays, *Echoes*, p. 63.

³⁰⁷ Horsley, *Hearing*, p. 141.

³⁰⁸ Derrett, ‘Contributions,’ p. 7.

heathens as demons.”³⁰⁹ Derrett argues that while the Israelites cried out to the Lord because of the Egyptians advancing on them, “Pharaoh went to Baal-Zephon [the temple of Baal-Zephon, the last idol in Egypt, cf. Exodus 14:1, 9] and sacrificed to it. The idol encouraged his scheme of driving the Israelites into *the Sea*.”³¹⁰ Possibly, from this observation, Derrett assumes that the mighty army of Pharaoh drowned in the Red Sea was inspired by the demons because the Israelites may have considered the gods or idols of the Egyptians to be demons.³¹¹ However, I think the text does not make clear whether Pharaoh went to Baal-Zaphon for the intervention or not. But the presupposition that the mighty army of Pharaoh may have been inspired by demons, since in Jewish eyes other gods except the God of Israel could be considered demons is a possible argument, in my view. Theissen seems to support Derrett’s argument by arguing that the Israelites considered the gods of foreigners to be demons and idols.³¹² In addition, Theissen observes that Mark’s use of Legion in the mouth of the demoniac is an “allusion to Roman occupation,” and “Roman occupation, like any foreign rule, had from the outset a religious aspect: with the foreigners came their gods. Judaism could see in them only idols and demons (Dt 32:17, Ps 96:5).”³¹³ Theissen argues that Roman oppression can be understood “as a threat from a demonic power for all the Romans’ tolerance in religion and politics.”³¹⁴ Consequently, Jesus’ exorcism brings liberation from Roman oppression that derives from demonic power, at least in a symbolic way. In my opinion, Derrett may mean that there are demonic powers behind the foreign political powers of the Egyptians in the context of Exodus, and Theissen may mean that there are Roman political oppression or powers behind the demonic powers in Mark 5, for Mark’s use of Legion in the mouth of the demoniac signifies political oppression behind demonic oppression.³¹⁵ In this way, we can see the connection between the Exodus story and Jesus’ exorcism in Mark 5:1-20 by observing that both stories have demons. The connection also seems to support the political interpretation of Jesus’ exorcism in Mark 5:1-20.

In the last part of this section, I will discuss two external sources (Josephus and Papyri Graecae Magicae PGM) that may help to connect Jesus’ exorcism story with the Exodus story because they show how contemporary authors dealt with the Exodus story.

First, I discuss the connection between Jesus’ exorcism story and the Exodus story by investigating how Josephus’ description of the destruction of the Egyptians echoes Mark’s narration of the destruction of the swine in Mark 5. Mark’s description of the destruction of the swine in Mark 5:13 parallels Josephus’ take on the

³⁰⁹ Derrett, ‘Contributions,’ p. 7. I think the text means Baal-Zaphon as a location.

³¹⁰ Derrett, ‘Contributions,’ p. 7.

³¹¹ Derrett, ‘Contributions,’ p. 7.

³¹² Theissen, *The Miracles Stories*, p. 255.

³¹³ Theissen, *The Miracles Stories*, p. 255. Cf. 1 Corinthians 10:19-20.

³¹⁴ Theissen, *The Miracles Stories*, p. 255.

³¹⁵ Cf. John, *The Meanings*, p. 86.

destruction of Egyptians from the Exodus story, “the Egyptians at first deemed them *mad*, thus *rushing* (ὀρμάω) to a certain death,” for both employ the same verb ὀρμάω.³¹⁶ In this case, Derrett would consider that the rushing (ὀρμάω) of the swine into the Sea of Galilee (θάλασσα) echoes the rushing of Pharaoh’s mighty army into the Red Sea.³¹⁷ Similarly to Horsley,³¹⁸ Derrett even suggests that “the Sea of Galilee is a surrogate for the Red Sea.”³¹⁹ Consequently, Mark’s purposeful substitution of ‘the sea’ for the inland lake seems to evoke the image of the Red Sea in the Exodus story, where the Lord did mighty deeds against the Egyptians in order to liberate his people from their foreign oppressive rule. Thus, when Mark 5 is read in the light of Old Testament intertextual references to Exodus 14-15, as Derrett, Horsley and Marcus propose, the Sea of Galilee where the swine possessed by demons were drowned may echo the Red Sea, where the mighty army of Pharaoh was drowned.

Secondly, it is interesting how one of the Papyri Graecae Magicae (PGM) texts also connects exorcism with the liberating Exodus story. Its connection is comparable with the Jesus exorcism story in Mark 5:1-20. Papyri Graecae Magicae 4.3034-36 uses exorcistic language which is similar to Mark 5:7b. It reads as follows: “I conjure you by the one who appeared to Osrael [Israel] in a shining pillar and a cloud by day, who saved his (*sic*) people from the Pharaoh and the ten plagues because of his disobedience. I adjure you, every demonic spirit, to tell whatever sort you may be, because I conjure you [...].”³²⁰ This exorcistic spell in the name of the liberating God of Exodus in PGM seems to relate exorcism to the Exodus story. Thus, in my opinion, the possibility that the Jesus exorcism story in Mark 5:1-20 could politically echo the Exodus story is probable since even non-biblical texts also relate exorcistic language to the political texts of the Exodus story and describe the destruction of the Egyptians for Israel’s political liberation in language similar to that used in Mark 5.

4.4 Conclusion

In this chapter I have shown that intertextuality has crucial value in engaging with Mark 5:1-20 since it supports the political interpretation of Mark 5:1-20. Christopher B. Hays’ seven criteria for recognizing echoes are helpful in detecting the probable intertexts for Mark 5:1-20. The investigation of Exodus 14-15 as the main intertext for the political interpretation of Mark 5:1-20 has shown that the latter text seems to meet many of Hays’ criteria. By employing Richard B. Hays’ theory, I have demonstrated that Mark’s intertextual references to Exodus 14-15 can be seen on the level of echo

³¹⁶ Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities*, 2. 340. Cited by Andrew Burrow, ‘Bargaining with Jesus,’ p. 248. Cf. Philo, *Moses* 2.254-255.

³¹⁷ Derrett, ‘Contributions,’ p. 6.

³¹⁸ Horsley, *Hearing*, p. 105.

³¹⁹ Derrett, ‘Contributions,’ p. 8.

³²⁰ Papyri Graecae Magicae 4.3034-36. Andrew Burrow cites the translations of Edward O’Neil, *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986. Cf. Marcus, *Mark*, p. 348.

rather than allusion and quotation because no long sentences or phrases are shared between the two stories.

By using Christopher B. Hays' criteria, I have argued that from the very beginning of the gospel Mark already cites the Exodus story in order to communicate a political liberation message, namely that the liberating action of the God of Israel has been fulfilled in Jesus. Moreover, I have discussed Mark's several intertextual references to the Exodus story to show that Mark often echoes the Exodus story. I have shown many possible motifs are shared between Mark 5:1-20 and Exodus 14-15. These shared motifs too signify the probable presence of a political message in Jesus' exorcism in Mark 5:1-20. In addition, the argument that Jesus' exorcism in Mark 5:1-20 (politically) echoes the Exodus story is strengthened by the fact that even non-biblical sources help to connect the exorcism with the liberating Exodus story. Above all, as I have argued, it seems that Jesus' exorcism in Mark 5:1-20 makes use of echoes of the Exodus story to bolster the political subtext of the story.

Conclusion and Practical Reflection

In this final conclusion, I offer a summary of the main arguments of the entire thesis and reflect the research findings to my context.

In the introduction, I sketched the motivation behind writing this thesis, which is about the political injustice in Kachin State under Myanmar military oppression. In this part, I showed how the political interpretation of Jesus' exorcism in Mark is disputed. The structure of the whole thesis was presented.

In chapter 1, I discussed a short definition of political reading, i.e., a reading that explores any text from a social, economic and political point of view. In the main section, I explored the two political readings by Myers and Horsley. With regard to Myers' book, I argued that his political reading is anchored in the Markan Jesus' political concept of "non-violence" in resisting the powers of economic and socio-political oppression. I argued that Myers engages with the miracles as liberating symbolic actions of the Markan Jesus. With regard to Horsley's work, I explained Horsley portrays the Markan Jesus as a prophet like Moses and Elijah, liberating Israel from the economic and political oppression of both Jewish and Roman imperial rule. I argued that Horsley's approach of *de-emphasizing Christology* is not that convincing, but his *emphasizing* the economic dimension of the texts of the Gospel of Mark seems to be defensible. I showed that both Myers and Horsley employ a "Marxist critique of imperialism." Horsley approaches Mosaic Law as the ultimate yardstick for socio-economic and political justice. On the other hand, according to Myers, ideologies such as "radical discipleship" and "economics of sharing" are important for economic and socio-political life. Methodologically, I presented that Horsley's approaches to "Mark as oral performance" and to the Markan audience as politically conscious hearers are unique.

In chapter 2, I argued that there are glimpses of opposition to Roman imperialism in the Gospel of Mark. I showed that the Gospel of Mark was probably written during the first Jewish-Roman war between 66-74 CE, because the motifs and messianic pretenders from Mark 13 correspond with the incidents of the first Roman-Jewish War and the messianic pretenders of the Jewish-Roman wars. I argued that the Gospel of Mark was possibly addressed to a persecuted community suffering under foreign oppressive rule. In this context, Mark encourages his community through the good news (εὐαγγέλιον) of Jesus Christ who leads "a new exodus" by realizing the Kingdom of God through exorcisms. I argued that the anti-Roman stance seems to be indicated by Mark's opening counterclaims, such as the good news (εὐαγγέλιον) of Jesus and Jesus as Christ and God's Son. I argued that the motifs and messianic pretenders of Mark 13 and Mark's opening counterclaims also reflect the socio-

political setting of four emperors, especially Vespasian, since Josephus prophesied that Vespasian would become a messianic world ruler.

In chapter 3, I showed that some important intratexts of Mark 5:1-20 seem to support the political interpretation of Mark 5:1-20. I began the political interpretation of Jesus' exorcism in Mark 5:1-20 with a discussion of three different readings of the miracles, namely a Christological reading, a missionary reading and a political reading. With regard to the political reading of miracles, I argued that the miracle stories in general seem to be told for political purposes by discussing Theissen's theory that "the miracle stories need always to be read 'from below' as a protest against human suffering."³²¹ I showed that the political reading of the miracles in general is possible since the contemporary sources of Mark also point to the probable political use of miracles, i.e., the political use of Vespasian's miracles and Philostratus' political use of Apollonius' miracles, including exorcisms.

I argued that Mark's use of socio-political terminologies such as ἀγέλη/(military troop), ἐπιτρέπω/(military permission or order), ὀρμάω/(military troops rushing/marching into battle) seem to bear political overtones when the terms are considered in close connection with the concrete historical and political setting of Mark. More importantly, I extensively argued that Mark's use of the Latin term Legion contains stronger political connotations if the concrete historical and political circumstances are taken into account. I argued that the term Legion would remind Mark's hearers of their suffering and oppression under Roman legions. I put it that Mark could have chosen other non-military Greek terminologies if he did not intend to convey political overtones through the term Legion. In addition, I showed that Mark's portrayal of the violent demoniac possessed by Legion corresponds with the violent behavior of Roman legions in the first century CE. I argued that Twelftree's objection to a political interpretation of Mark's use of Legion with reference to Matthew's use of twelve legions of angels is not convincing because his reading is too literal and does not seriously deal with Matthew's use of political terminologies and with the probable socio-political context of Matthew. I showed that Matthew's use of twelve legions of angels also carries political implications by discussing the context of Matthew 26:53 and the military interventions of angels in Old Testament texts, which were likely to be known by people in the later Jewish tradition. I discussed how political and economic oppression, including physical and mental sickness, were the effects of Roman imperial rule, but were often regarded as being caused by demons. Only after Jesus revealed the identity of the demon as Legion did Mark's politically conscious hearers become aware of the Markan Jesus' confrontation with the Roman imperial powers. I argued that Jesus' drowning of the pigs possessed by Legion in the sea denotes, at least in a symbolic way, the liberation of the demoniac from Roman imperial oppression.

I argued that Mark's description of Gerasa supports the political interpretation of Mark 5:1-20 when the historical and political context of Gerasa during the Roman-

³²¹ Theissen and Merz, *Historical Jesus*, p. 313.

Jewish wars is taken into account. Finally, I contended that Mark's use of "sea" for an inland lake also seems to support the political interpretation of Mark 5:1-20 by discussing Horsley's argument that Mark's use of "sea" points to the Mediterranean Sea, from which Roman legions embarked to occupy the land of Israel, to oppress and to enslave people. Having looked at the concrete socio-political and historical level of the Gospel of Mark, the mindset of politically conscious hearers of Mark, Mark's use of socio-political terminologies, Mark's description of the location of the exorcism as the land of the Gerasenes and Mark's use of "sea," it can be argued that Mark intends Jesus' exorcism in Mark 5:1-20 to be interpreted as a symbolic action for socio-political liberation from both Jewish and Roman oppressive powers.

In chapter 4, I argued that the intertextual study of Mark 5:1-20 supports the political interpretation of Jesus' exorcism in Mark 5:1-20. I dealt with Mark 5:1-20 in the light of its intertextual references to the OT scriptures by employing Richard B. Hays' three categories of intertextual reference and Christopher B. Hays' seven criteria for recognizing echoes. Among many possible intertexts, I discussed Exodus 14-15 as a main intertext for the political interpretation. I showed that Mark's several intertextual references to the Exodus story also seem to have political implications. I argued that from the beginning of the gospel Mark already cites Exodus 23:20 in a political vein. I argued that Jesus' exorcism in Mark 5:1-20 politically reflects Exodus 14-15 at the level of echo rather than allusion and citation because there are only thematic and barely verbal agreements between the two stories. Even though not all features of Mark 5 correspond with the elements of Exodus 14-15, many thematic and verbal agreements between two stories seem to support the political interpretation of Mark 5:1-20. I contended that the political connection between Jesus' exorcism in Mark 5:1-20 and Exodus 14-15 is probable because even non-biblical sources indicate the connection between exorcism and the liberating Exodus story.

To sum up, taking into consideration all the arguments, it can be concluded that the Gospel of Mark seems to have a political message which challenges religious, economic and political oppression by both Jewish and Roman powers. In my opinion, Collins' view of the absence of anti-Roman sentiment in Mark should be reconsidered. In fact, it can be cogently argued that the exorcisms of Jesus in Mark, especially Jesus' exorcism in Mark 5, have political implications. As a result, the church should not simply read Jesus' exorcisms in terms of a spiritual battle between Jesus and demons, as Twelftree argues, but Jesus' exorcisms should also be heard and read in the light of Jesus' confrontation with the oppressive political powers and liberation from the oppressive powers of both Jewish and Roman rule.

Practical Reflection

As a practical reflection of this thesis to my context mentioned in the introduction, in my opinion, the Kachin churches should also read and apply Jesus' exorcisms in Mark as documents for raising prophetic voices for political liberation in the midst of political problems in Kachin State, where the human rights abuses and inhumanity of

the Myanmar military are often ignored, because both the actions and the messages of the Markan Jesus are not apolitical. I argued that Mark's politically conscious hearers were reminded of their oppression under Roman Legions when they heard the term Legion. Similarly, I am sure that when the ethnic people in Myanmar hear the name of the Myanmar military known as *Tatmadaw*, they, and especially the Kachins, will surely recall how the Myanmar military deals with the Rohingya, how they systematically planned to commit genocide against the ethnic people by raping women, killing innocent civilians, plundering the property of civilians and torturing people.

In my view, the separation between church and state does not work in the Kachin context since the Kachin people urgently need to be liberated from the current political oppression. Of course, the primary function of the Kachin churches is to share the gospel outside the church and within the church. This is true. Nevertheless, the Kachin churches should also keep in mind that the Markan Jesus' message of the Kingdom of God liberated people who were oppressed by the system, powers and demonic forces. Consequently, what the Kachin churches preach and do should also lead to liberation from every kind of oppression.

If the Kachin churches leave injustice and human rights abuses to be handled by politicians, and if the churches are not bold enough to expose the political injustices, and if the Kachin churches depoliticize, the injustice and inhumane actions of the Myanmar military in the Kachin State will never end. Instead, the situation will deteriorate. I believe that the Kachin churches should not be neutral, but they should exercise their faith in regard to public affairs and participate in finding solutions to the political problems by imitating how the Markan Jesus publicly liberated people oppressed by demons and ruling powers. More importantly, the Kachin churches should not ignore the oppression coming from within the Kachin people themselves, since the Markan Jesus in his Kingdom of God mission did not simply expose the oppression coming from the Roman imperial rule "outside" but also the oppression coming from the Jewish authorities "within."

In my opinion, the Markan Jesus' non-violent way of resistance as the ultimate way of resisting oppressive powers should be the yardstick for dealing with the oppression coming from both "outside" and "within." By adhering to the Markan Jesus' non-violent way of resistance, the Kachin people as authentic citizens of the Kingdom of God should get constructively involved in the current political conflicts by raising prophetic and public voices for the voiceless and oppressed in order to build justice, peace and reconciliation. In the midst of political conflicts, the churches should be places where help can be provided for finding solutions. To sum up, now is the most critical time for the Kachin churches to speak up for the victims of violence, to become public voices for the voiceless.

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