

JSNT Articles on Mark

Below are all the relevant articles on the Gospel of Mark from the Journal for the Study of the New Testament since its beginning in 1979. I have taken them from the Sage Journals website (they are doing free access until the end of the month – I don't know what it will cost after then!). The site is at <http://online.sagepub.com/>

I've listed them in reverse chronological order with their abstracts where available. Needles to say this is copyright material – but I don't think I am breaking any rules here.

The Incident of the Withered Fig Tree in Mark 11: A New Source and Redactional Explanation

Esler, Philip F.

Journal for the Study of the New Testament, Sep 2005; vol. 28: pp. 41-67

The two-stage incident of the fig tree in Mk 11.12-14 and 20-25 is almost always interpreted as a Markan redactional feature aimed at symbolising the coming fate of Israel and its Temple. The aim of this article is to challenge this view. Having first exposed the serious weaknesses in the dominant redactional explanation, I propose instead that Mark found the two stages of the incident (Jesus' cursing of the tree one day and the discovery of its withered condition the next) in an early Jerusalemite source he utilized in parts of Mk 11-14. This source probably formed the early part of one that Theissen, using local colour' arguments, has already detected underlying Mk 14-16. Mark has retained this difficult incident, probably because of its significance in relating the only miracle Jesus was believed to have worked in his last days, but has struggled in his redaction to make sense of it. He does so not in relation to judgment impending on Jerusalem and the Temple, but in line with his presentation elsewhere in the Gospel of Jesus' teaching on faith and prayer.

'To the Other Side': Construction of Evil and Fear of Liberation in Mark 5.1-20

Burdon, Christopher

Journal for the Study of the New Testament, Dec 2004; vol. 27: pp. 149-167

Narratives, like the establishment of identities, proceed by oppositions and the construction of what is other'. In the present global situation, alertness to such constructions and their dangers is vital, especially when they derive from canonical texts. After an examination of the case for Mark's Gospel as liberating story, the article analyses the construction of evil as foreignness in the story of the Gerasene demoniac and its subsequent subversion--first by the revelation of the demons' name and its political reference, then by the local people's rejection of Jesus, and finally by the healed man's proclamation. Jesus' crossing to the other side' is seen as a paradigm of his own and the implied readers' continuing transition to engagement with the Other.

Why the Daughter of Herodias Must Dance (Mark 6.14-29)

Janes, Regina

Journal for the Study of the New Testament, Jun 2006; vol. 28: pp. 443-467

To some modern scholars' disapproval, Mark's and Matthew's John the Baptist dies because of two women and a dance. Historically improbable, but theologically essential, the episode in Mark makes theology through narrative structure, juxtaposing the Baptist's death with the raising of Jairus's daughter through the dance of Herodias's daughter and paralleling Jairus's daughter's rising with Jesus' in Mark's original ending, 16.8. While the two daughters point to resurrection and Jesus' feeding the faithful, Herodias confirms John's identity as Elijah by acting the murderous Jezebel to Herod's sympathetic Ahab. Matthew and Luke embrace Mark's Elijanic identification of the Baptist but alter the Herod-Herodias story to accommodate different theological interests. Erasing the Herodian family altogether, John imitates Mark's structural placement of the Baptist as integral to the promise of resurrection.

Conflicting Mythologies: Mythical Narrative in the Gospel of Mark

Riches, John K.

Journal for the Study of the New Testament, Dec 2001; vol. 24: pp. 29-50

New Testament scholarship needs to think of mythical narratives like the Gospels as giving expression to sharply contrasting cosmological views. Such a view of mythical narratives is developed by Claude Levi-Strauss and supported by the presence of two very contrasting views of the origins of evil and its overcoming in Jewish literature of the turn of the era: one cosmological, the other forensic. Markan scholarship of the last 50 years has tended to construe Mark's cosmology in terms of one or other of these basic views: either Mark portrays Jesus as locked in cosmic struggle with Satan and his forces or, having bound Satan, as engaged in a battle for the hearts and wills of men and women. Mark, I argue, is concerned to give expression to both these different views of the world and to attempt to mediate between them.

The Charge of Blasphemy in Mark 14.64

Collins, Adela Yarbro

Journal for the Study of the New Testament, Jun 2004; vol. 26: pp. 379-401

The teaching of m. Sanh. 7.5, that the blasphemer' is not culpable unless he pronounces the Name itself, is attested by Josephus and the Community Rule from Qumran. The Markan Jesus, however, does not pronounce the divine name. Philo provides evidence for a broader understanding of blasphemy, namely, claims to be divine or to possess divine power. The relevant passages are analogous to the Markan Jesus' claims that he would be enthroned at the right hand of God and that he would come with the clouds of heaven'. Both claims imply divine status, authority and power. The chief priests, as Sadducees, probably subscribed to a definition of blasphemy like that of Philo. Like other Jews of the time, they advocated the death penalty for blasphemy, but were more likely to carry it out. Mark did not wish to deny that Jesus blasphemed from the point of view of the chief priests. The narrative is ironic in the sense that what is blasphemy from the point of view of the council is true from the perspective of the implied audience.

Tyranny, Boundary and Might: Colonial Mimicry in Mark's Gospel

Benny Liew, Tat-siong

Journal for the Study of the New Testament, Jan 1999; vol. 21: pp. 7-31

Reading the Gospel of Mark with a 'diasporic consciousness' that refuses to idealize anything, I question many liberational readings that present Mark in purely positive terms. Rather than dismissing the anti-colonial elements within the Gospel, I proceed to probe Mark for traces of 'colonial mimicry'. I argue in this essay that Mark reinscribes colonial domination by attributing absolute authority to Jesus, pre-serving the 'insider-outsider binarism and understanding authority as power. Despite Mark's declaration of an apocalypse, it embraces recurring themes of 'empire' like tyranny, boundary and might.

Halakah and Mark 7.4: '...and beds'

Crossley, James G.

Journal for the Study of the New Testament, Jun 2003; vol. 25: pp. 433-447

This article argues that the textually problematic κλιῶν in Mk 7.4 reflects a first-century Jewish practice of immersing dining couches. This practice was not based on the beds' described in Lev. 15. The immersion of dining couches is attested in rabbinic literature and was based on passages that mention the immersion of impure objects (Lev. 11.32; 15.12). This is shown through a discussion of various words used for bed' in the relevant literature in Greek, Hebrew, Aramaic and Syriac. Some consideration is given to text-critical issues concluding that κλιῶν is the original reading. As Mark accurately reflects a Jewish practice, it is suggested that the traditional view of the author of Mark as lacking in knowledge of Jewish practices ought to be abandoned and the view that the author of Mark was a Jew absorbed in the intricacies of Jewish Law ought to be taken very seriously.

A Woman's Touch: Feminist Encounters with the Hemorrhaging Woman in Mark 5.24-34

Haber, Susan

Journal for the Study of the New Testament, Dec 2003; vol. 26: pp. 171-192

The hemorrhaging woman of Mk 5.24-34 has recently been the subject of scholarly dispute, with some feminist scholars interpreting the narrative as a critique of Jewish purity laws and others contending that purity issues are totally irrelevant. This study assesses the extent to which purity issues are essential to the narrative. Central to this investigation are two questions: (1) What is the significance of the woman's flow of blood? (2) How does Mark's representation of the hemorrhaging women serve his rhetorical agenda? These issues are addressed through an investigation of the pertinent biblical purity legislation, an analysis of the language in Mk 5.24-34 and an examination of Mark's portrayal of the woman in the context of his rhetorical agenda. This inquiry suggests that it is the woman's health that is the primary concern of the miracle story, and not her ritual impurity. The significance of her impurity cannot, however, be ignored. It remains an integral part of the narrative in so far as it is a consequence of her medical condition. But the point of the story, not least for feminist criticism, does not lie in any supposed critique or abrogation of the purity laws.

A Note on Mark 8.38 and Q 12.8-9

Lambrecht, Jan

Journal for the Study of the New Testament, Mar 2002; vol. 24: pp. 117-125

With the help of an analysis of Mk 8.38 Paul Hoffmann's presentation of Q 12.8-9 is critically discussed. The majority opinion is confirmed: the absence of the Son of man' in 12.8b as well as in 12.9b cannot be accepted. Moreover, a number of other data in the Markan verse (and its context) may assist specialists in their reconstruction of this double saying of Q, e.g., as to the active meaning of the personal verb and the presence of the angels of God'in Q 12.9b. A fourfold methodological reflection is offered in between: on hypothetical reasoning, on the distinction between Rezeption (by Q or Mark) and Redaktion (by Matthew or Luke), on the insignificance of the authenticity question here and on the value of Markan overlap texts for the reconstruction of Q.

The Ambiguous Pronouncement of the Centurion and the Shrouding of Meaning in Mark

Shiner, Whitney T.

Journal for the Study of the New Testament, Jan 2000; vol. 22: pp. 3-22

The pronouncement of the centurion in Mk 15.39 is commonly understood as the end of the messianic secret in Mark's narrative. This paper challenges that interpretation on the basis of the syntax of the pronouncement, the connection of the pronouncement with the portents surrounding Jesus' death, and the audience's expectation that can be assumed from the literary parallels. As the narrative continues we see continuing confusion in the reaction to Jesus' death and resurrection. The pronouncement is intentionally ambiguous and is used by Mark to allow his audience to hear a deeper meaning while leaving the veil of secrecy, an essential part of Mark's religious world view, intact.

Engagement, Disengagement and Obstruction: Jesus' Defense Strategies in Mark's Trial and Execution Scenes (14.53-64; 15.1-39)

Campbell, William Sanger

Journal for the Study of the New Testament, Mar 2004; vol. 26: pp. 283-300

This culturally cued literary study of Mark's trial and execution scenes (14.53-64; 15.1-39) argues that Jesus does not passively acquiesce in the injustice that is perpetrated against him, as is the usual view of commentators on these narratives. Instead, Jesus alternately engages in and resists the judicial proceedings in which he becomes embroiled. Initially, he welcomes and participates in the proceedings before the Jewish council and, subsequently, before Pilate. He disengages, however, when the prosecution dissolves into a series of false allegations established by perjured testimony. Once the verdict is rendered, Jesus actively obstructs the discharge of the sentence by refusing to carry his cross as required and balking at being paraded to Golgotha.

'Concerning the Loaves' Comprehending Incomprehension in Mark 6.45-52

Henderson, Suzanne Watts

Journal for the Study of the New Testament, Sep 2001; vol. 24: pp. 3-26

Students of the second Gospel have long been puzzled by the cryptic assertion, in Mark 6.52, that the disciples did not understand concerning the loaves...! Through an exegetical study of Mk 6.45-52, this essay proposes that what the disciples have misconstrued is their own active participation in the inbreaking, eschatological kingdom that Jesus inaugurates. Relying mainly on narrative-critical insights, the study first surveys the disciples' function to this point in the Markan story, a function featuring companionship with Jesus as well as empowerment by him. Against this backdrop, the second sea-crossing story depicts the disciples' failure to exercise their authority over the sea already given to them by Jesus. In turn, this reading considers as central to the passage not only the identity of Jesus (the traditional christological understanding) but also the empowered discipleship that is central to his kingdom proclamation.

The Motif of Wonder in the Gospel of Mark

Dwyer, Timothy

Journal for the Study of the New Testament, Jan 1995; vol. 17: pp. 49-59**The Narrative Rhetoric of Mark's Ambiguous Characterization of the Disciples**

Danove, Paul

Journal for the Study of the New Testament, Jan 1998; vol. 20: pp. 21-37

The article investigates the manner in which the evocation of narrative frames in Mark permits the construction of a complex and ambiguous characterization of Jesus' disciples and inquires into the narrative function of this characterization. The discussion first examines the nature of the implied reader's pre-existent knowledge and beliefs about the disciples. Analysis of the narrative rhetoric of the Gospel then reveals that the narration builds on the reader's pre-existent positive esteem for the disciples by encouraging certain positive aspects of their characterization while introducing negative elements into other aspects. The discussion concludes with a proposal concerning the narrative function of the disciples' characterization within Mark.

'It Was Out of Envy That They Handed Jesus Over' (Mark 15.10): the Anatomy of Envy and the Gospel of Mark

Hagedorn, Anselm C., Neyrey, Jerome H.

Journal for the Study of the New Testament, Jan 1998; vol. 20: pp. 15-56

The article aims to explain why Jesus was crucified. Rather than using traditional approaches into the investigation of the 'theology of the cross' etc., the remark in Mk 15.10, 'it was out of envy that they handed Jesus over', is used as a starting point. Using a model from cultural anthropology supplemented by a close look at ancient sources dealing with envy, a full 'anatomy of envy' is developed to indicate how pervasive and culturally plausible envy is in a document of conflict such as Mark's Gospel. Knowledge of the full 'anatomy of envy' offers then a systemic model of a common social phenomenon in

biblical times. As such the 'anatomy of envy' makes it more culturally plausible why Jesus was handed over and killed: He was envied unto death.

The Separate Gentile Mission in Mark: a Narrative Explanation of Markan Geography, the Two Feeding Accounts and Exorcisms

Wefald, Eric K.

Journal for the Study of the New Testament, Jan 1996; vol. 18: pp. 3-26

Various explanations for the apparent disregard for the continuity of the story line and geography within Mark's Gospel have centered on the question of redaction. This article proposes a straightforward narrative understanding, and assumes that geographical references in Mark have meaning, especially within a narrative informed by Jewish thought patterns of the time period of Mark's first audience. Further, this article posits that meaningful geographical references reveal a geographically and chronologically separate mission by Jesus in his exorcistic activity, the two feeding accounts, and the bread conversations, which flesh out a clear narrative of parallel yet different missions to the Jews and non-Jews. The separate Gentile mission is necessary for Jesus, for although neither Jews nor non-Jews knew who Jesus was at the start, the Jewish people already worshipped Yahweh, while the Gentile people did not know Yahweh and were still engaged in worship of heathen demons and idols.

Challenged At the Boundaries: a Conservative Jesus in Mark's Tradition

Loader, William

Journal for the Study of the New Testament, Jan 1997; vol. 19: pp. 45-61

The tradition preserved in Mk 7.24-31 reflects an understanding of Jesus which portrays him as beginning from a conservative stance in relation to issues of Law relating to boundaries. Other traditions preserved in Mark also appear to reflect a similar conservatism. Many acknowledge that Mk 1.39-45 reflects Torah faithful ness in the way it portrays Jesus' instruction that the leper present himself to the priests. The anger of Jesus in this pericope has baffled exegetes. The paper examines the possibility that Mark's tradition was assuming a conservative response on the part of Jesus to the leper's approach. Boundary issues are also present in Mk 5.1-20 and 21-43. The passages considered appear to preserve traces of conservatism which may reflect Jesus' background, although in each case he moves beyond its norms.

Jesus' Wilderness Temptation According to Mark

Gibson, Jeffrey B.

Journal for the Study of the New Testament, Jan 1994; vol. 16: pp. 3-34

This paper challenges the critical consensus that Mark's version of the story of Jesus' wilderness temptation (here taken to include Mk 1.9-11) says nothing concerning that temptation's nature, content or outcome. While Mark's version is admittedly brief and spare of detail, its brevity should not be confused with vacuity nor its relative lack of detail taken as an indication that Mark was content to assert only the fact that Jesus was tempted. When read against the background of the religious and cultural assumptions of the milieu in which Mark wrote, the details contained within the story are both sufficient

in number and sufficiently resonant descriptively to give the information purportedly not contained there. Mark was indeed intent at Mk 1.9-13 to speak concretely about the nature, content and outcome of Jesus' wilderness temptation. An unwarranted and methodologically unsound concentration on what is not in Mark has prevented this from being seen.

Promise and Fulfilment: Reader-Response To Mark 1.1-15

Sankey, P.J.

Journal for the Study of the New Testament, Jan 1995; vol. 17: pp. 3-18

This study considers how the dynamic of promise and fulfilment affects the reader's response to Mk 1.1-15. The opening of Mark's Gospel makes a number of statements bearing on the future which stimulate contrasting expectations of judgment and salvation. These expectations influence the reader's understanding of the text but are at the same time constantly under review. First, expectations are constantly subject to change, being reinforced, modified or undermined. Secondly, fulfilment is never quite as expected. In particular, Jesus' coming is anti-climatic and enigmatic. The result is a tendency to reinterpret past expectations. Thirdly, fulfilment is ultimately deferred to the future, casting the reader's mind ever forward. The effect is a highly creative tension which engages readers, forcing them to assume an active role in interpreting and participating in the mysterious presence of God's reign.

Dramatic Inconclusion: Irony and the Narrative Rhetoric of the Ending of Mark

Hester, J. David

Journal for the Study of the New Testament, Jan 1995; vol. 17: pp. 61-86

Jesus the Nazarene: Narrative Strategy and Christological Imagery in the Gospel of Mark

Broadhead, Edwin K.

Journal for the Study of the New Testament, Jan 1993; vol. 16: pp. 3-18

Christology as Polemic and Apologetic: the Priestly Portrait of Jesus in the Gospel of Mark

Broadhead, Edwin K.

Journal for the Study of the New Testament, Jan 1992; vol. 15: pp. 21-34

Reading Mark 4 as Midrash

Sabin, Marie

Journal for the Study of the New Testament, Jan 1992; vol. 14: pp. 3-26

Midrash is a way of juxtaposing one scriptural perspective with another so as to draw contemporary meaning out of the ancient biblical text. It is a hermeneutic which imitates and continues the dialogical patterns of the Hebrew Scripture; within Jewish tradition this mode of interpretation becomes itself a form of revelation. This sacred tradition is relevant to the composition of Mark 4. The focus of Mark 4 is on ways of hearing and understanding, that is, interpreting, the Word of God. Its verbal arrangements are

reflective of midrashic strategies for reopening the scriptural text. Reading Mark 4 as midrash reveals both a literary and a theological design that other methods have not disclosed. Jesus is portrayed as a midrashic teacher speaking in parables, the prototypical form of midrashic narrative. Reworking the biblical trope of sower and seed, he reinterprets End-time traditions by placing them in the context of Genesis.

The Historical Setting of Mark's Gospel: Problems and Possibilities

Botha, Pieter J.J.

Journal for the Study of the New Testament, Jan 1993; vol. 16: pp. 27-55

Some proposals for the setting of Mark's Gospel are reviewed, highlighting the complexities of identifying a particular Markan community. Mark's Gospel provides very little indication of its supposed immediate context. To explain this fact it is suggested that the Gospel should be approached as oral-traditional literature, such as was performed in many contexts before various audiences: a story told by an itinerant radical teacher. Possible role models for such an itinerant storyteller are discussed to show the historical possibility and plausibility of an oral performer (storyteller) with links to a written text. Some methodological and theoretical issues are elaborated, emphasizing the interrelationship of contents (the story), the linguistic characteristics of the text (its 'texture') and context.

The Quest of Mark the Redactor: Why Has It Been Pursued, and What Has It Taught Us?

Clifton Black, C.

Journal for the Study of the New Testament, Jan 1988; vol. 10: pp. 19-39

Is Mark 15.39 the Key to Mark's Christology?

Johnson, Earl S., JR

Journal for the Study of the New Testament, Jan 1987; vol. 10: pp. 3-22

The Prologue as the Interpretative Key to Mark's Gospel

Matera, Frank J.

Journal for the Study of the New Testament, Jan 1988; vol. 11: pp. 3-20

Mark's Narrative Technique

Best, Ernest

Journal for the Study of the New Testament, Jan 1989; vol. 12: pp. 43-58

Mark's Christological Paradox

Davis, Philip G.

Journal for the Study of the New Testament, Jan 1989; vol. 11: pp. 3-18

Jesus' Teaching On Divorce in the Gospel of Mark

Green, Barbara

Journal for the Study of the New Testament, Jan 1990; vol. 12: pp. 67-75

Jesus and the Food Laws: Reflections on Mark 7.15

Raisanen, Heikki

Journal for the Study of the New Testament, Jan 1982; vol. 5: pp. 79-100**The Social Function of Mark's Secrecy Theme**

Watson, Francis

Journal for the Study of the New Testament, Jan 1985; vol. 7: pp. 49-69**Mark 3:17 BONEPETEM and Popular Etymology**

Buth, Randall

Journal for the Study of the New Testament, Jan 1981; vol. 3: pp. 29-33**Mark 9:1 Seeing the Kingdom in Power**

Brower, Kent

Journal for the Study of the New Testament, Jan 1979; vol. 2: pp. 17-41**The Alarm to Peter in Mark's Gospel**

Brady, David

Journal for the Study of the New Testament, Jan 1979; vol. 2: pp. 42-57**Resurrection and Hermeneutics: On Exodus 3.6 in Mark 12.26**

Janzen, J. Gerald

Journal for the Study of the New Testament, Jan 1985; vol. 7: pp. 43-58**The Disciples in Mark and the Maskilim in Daniel. a Comparison**

Freyne, Sean

Journal for the Study of the New Testament, Jan 1982; vol. 5: pp. 7-23**The Rebuke of the Disciples in Mark 8.14-21**

Gibson, Jeffrey B.

Journal for the Study of the New Testament, Jan 1986; vol. 9: pp. 31-47**Text and Context in Mark 10:2,10**

Ellingworth, Paul

Journal for the Study of the New Testament, Jan 1979; vol. 2: pp. 63-66