RHETORICAL DIMENSIONS OF SPEECH REPRESENTATION: A STUDY OF THE SPEECHES OF JESUS IN THE GOSPEL OF MARK

BY

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ABSTRACT

This thesis argues that non-argumentational strategies of persuasion in the major-length speeches of Jesus in the Gospel of Mark account for a considerable part of the author's intended persuasive effect. Gospel criticism has typically read these speeches as deposits of possible authentic words of Jesus, as evidence of Christology or as links in the plot of Mark's narrative while rhetorical criticism of the Gospels has focused upon Jesus' shorter utterances as argumentation within episodes. However, the speeches are not consistently logical or argumentational and they stand out in the larger narrative as extended stretches of Jesus' voice.

Treating the four longest units of Jesus' speech as rhetorical units in their own right (Mk 4:11-32; 9:39-50; 12:1-11; 13:5-37), the thesis attempts to show how these texts might have worked to persuade Mark's audience towards change in action or attitude. Although neither argumentation at the rational-conceptual level nor the context of the narrative are denied, attention is focused on the rhetorical force of the speeches themselves and the features designed to affect the audience at the level of feeling or emotion. Persuasive goals are discernable in the speeches not only in what Jesus argues but also in the way he talks.

RÉSUMÉ

Cette thèse soutient que, dans l'Évangile de Marc, les stratégies de persuasion non-argumentatives utilisées dans les plus longs sermons de Jésus, jouent une part considérable dans l'effet persuasif recherché par l'auteur. La critique de l'Évangile considère typiquement ces sermons 1) comme une déposition des paroles possiblement authentiques de Jésus, 2) comme corpus en christologie ou 3) comme des liens de l'intrigue dans la narration de Marc. La critique rhétorique des Évangiles, pour sa part, a mis l'emphase sur les plus courts propos de Jésus, les considérant comme des argumentations à l'intérieur d'épisodes. Quoiqu'il en soit, ces sermons ne s'insèrent pas systématiquement dans une suite logique ou dans un argumentaire. Ils ressortent de la narration de Marc en laissant entendre plus longuement la voix de Jésus.

Considérant les quatre plus longs sermons de Jésus comme quatre unités rhétoriques en soi (Mc 4.11-32; 9.39-50; 12.1-11; 13.5-37), cette thèse veut démontrer comment ces textes s'articulent pour provoquer dans l'auditoire de Marc, des changements dans les façons de faire ou les attitudes. Bien que ni l'argumentation de niveau rationnel-conceptuel, ni le contexte de la narration ne soit nié, l'attention est portée sur la force rhétorique des sermons eux-mêmes et les techniques utilisées pour atteindre l'auditoire au niveau des sentiments ou des émotions. Le désir de convaincre est discernable dans les sermons de Jésus, non seulement dans ses arguments mais aussi dans sa façon de s'exprimer.

PREFACE

Through my connection with Bible translation as a member of SIL I was introduced to discourse analysis and its application to Hebrew and Greek Biblical texts. Through my study of the Gospel of Mark in the framework of rhetorical criticism I have been able to combine my interests in Biblical studies and discourse analysis. It had already seemed to me that in much discourse analysis related to Bible translation theory and procedure narrative features or logical connectedness in source texts are especially emphasized. Thus the Gospel of Mark is typically chosen as a first text for translation because of its obvious narrative form and the New Testament epistles are translated primarily as logical-cognitive communication. In this context my study is interesting and challenging in that I investigate the substantial *non*-narrative portions of the Gospel of Mark - Jesus' longer speeches - paying special attention to features of the text that effect persuasion not primarily at the level of logical argumentation.

I am indebted to Professor Ian Henderson who has not only introduced me to rhetorical criticism but has opened my eyes to the possibility of seeing the Biblical texts as tools of persuasion in the context of Greco-Roman rhetoric. In addition, I thank Professor Henderson for the encouragement he has been to me from the day he first heard of me until now. In particular, he cheerfully took on and faithfully carried out the role of supervisor for this thesis, generously offering critical insights and practical assistance along the way.

I express my thanks to Lyse Mongeau for translating the abstract into French, to Douglas Fast for taking my rough data and producing from it the graph in the appendix and to Frances Fast for the insights I gained from her in our discussions about literature and rhetoric.

I also acknowledge here the timely financial assistance from the Faculty of Religious Studies, McGill, from SIL International and from the Papua New Guinea Branch of SIL. In addition, I gratefully acknowledge the family members, friends and churches who have shown their willingness - financially and in other ways - to support me in this study program.

Finally, my wife Marianne Fast-Matzken has been a loyal friend and supporter to me in the joyful as well as the trying aspects of this project. To her I am especially grateful.

INTRODUCTION

This is a study of the major-length speeches of Jesus in the Gospel of Mark in which I essay an explanation of the features of their composition in terms of intended persuasive effect. As such this study should be seen as a rhetorical analysis of (parts of) an ancient Christian text. A rhetorical analysis of a text seeks to explain that text as a tool designed by its composer with the intention to persuade a real audience to do something or to assent to something.

I analyze the following four units of text in Mk[1] as major-length speeches: 1) Jesus addresses special insiders, telling them that they alone are given the "secret of the reign of God," after which he explains a parable and tells several other short parables without explaining them (4:11-32);[2] 2) Jesus addresses his disciples, warning them very strongly of the dire consequences of causing little ones to stumble (9:39-50); 3) Jesus addresses his opponents in the temple at Jerusalem by way of a dramatic story and a quotation from the scriptures (12:1-11); and, 4) in his longest speech Jesus addresses a special subset of his disciples, telling them of things to come (13:5-37).[3] The question I ask of these speeches is whether they can be understood as units of rhetorical composition in their

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[1] I use the abbreviation "Mk" to refer to the text of the Gospel and I reserve the term "Mark" to refer to the author.

[2] References to passages in Mk are given by chapter and verse number only. Verse numbers only are given in cases where the chapter in question is understood from the discussion. References to other books of the Bible are given with standard abbreviations for book names.

[3] The graph in the Appendix - which I discuss below in Section 3 - illustrates the relative length of these four speeches and their placement in the narrative.

own right. If this is the case, Mark did not conceive of them purely as reported speech integral to the progression of the narrative in which the content of what is said or argued is all that affects an audience; rather, he intended that his audience also be affected by the *way* his character said what he said and by what they believed to be true about that character. The rhetoric of early Christianity was significantly shaped by the assumption held by speakers/writers and hearers/readers that Jesus actually existed as a force outside the text in its readers' world.

The Gospels are best understood as texts originally designed with the intention that they be read out repeatedly and that they be persuasive to various readers/hearers at different times and places. I therefore treat Mk not as a piece of communication addressed to a specific "Markan community" and its "situation" but as a text that was composed with the hope that it would have a persuasive effect on successive groups of hearers.[4]

The author of Mk was educated up to a point in the Greco-Roman rhetorical curriculum. People who read out his text would have had a comparable educational background and significant numbers of people who heard it read out would have been familiar with at least the practise of rhetoric. Given these educational and societal aspects

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[4] There is a deep-seated consensus within NT scholarship that each Gospel was addressed to, or grew out of, a specific "community" (see a classic example in Howard Clark Kee, *Community of the New Age: Studies in Mark's Gospel* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1977)). This consensus has been challenged in Charles F.D. Moule, "The Function of the Synoptic Gospels," in *Glaube und Eschatologie: Festschrift für Werner Georg Kümmel zum 80. Geburtstag*, eds. E. Gräβer and O. Merk (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1985), 199-208 and, more recently, in *The Gospels for all Christians: Rethinking the Gospel Audiences*, ed. Richard Bauckham (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998) and in Dwight N. Peterson, *The Origins of Mark: The Markan Community in Current Debate* (Leiden: Brill, 2000).

of the context in which Mk was written and heard, it is reasonable to look for signs of Greek rhetorical composition in Mk and to ask how readers/hearers familiar with Greco-Roman rhetoric might have perceived these speeches.

The speeches of Jesus have generally not been understood as units of rhetorical communication in their own right, neither traditionally nor by scholars of the modern era.[5] Besides the traditional view that Jesus' words in the Gospels are purely oracular, form and redaction criticism have been mainly concerned with the composition of the forms by early Christians on the one hand and the theological purposes of the evangelists on the other. The strong element of narrative criticism in the more recent study of the Gospels has also kept attention away from the speeches as units of persuasive text in their own right.

In the 1980s New Testament scholars began to apply rhetorical criticism to the early Christian texts,[6] especially to the letters of Paul.[7] Some scholars have turned their

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[5] Recent exceptions are C. Clifton Black, "An Oration at Olivet: Some Rhetorical Dimensions of Mark 13," in *Persuasive Artistry: Studies in New Testament Rhetoric in Honor of George A. Kennedy*, Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series 50, ed. D.F. Watson (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1991), 66-92 and, notably, Ian H. Henderson, "'Salted with Fire' (Mark 9.42-50): Style, Oracles and (Socio)rhetorical Gospel Criticism," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 80 (2000): 44-65.

[6] The lead in rhetorical analysis of the New Testament was taken by George A. Kennedy, *Classical Rhetoric and its Christian and Secular Tradition from Ancient to Modern Times* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980) and *New Testament Interpretation through Rhetorical Criticism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984).

[7] Richard A. Burridge, "The Gospels and Acts," in *Handbook of Classical Rhetoric in the Hellenistic Period: 330 B.C. - A.D. 400*, ed. Stanley E. Porter (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 508-509. Because of their formal addressees and persuasive language Paul's letters have been compared with the classical composition techniques of Greco-Roman oratory. For examples of a vast literature see Hans Dieter Betz, *Galatians: A Commentary on Paul's*

attention to the Gospels as early-Christian rhetorical communication and these have concentrated on analytical comparison of units of text with the classical chreia[8] and on the argumentational strategies within those units.[9] The longer speeches of Jesus do not compare well with chreia argumentation and have therefore received little attention in these scholars' works.

Although it would be reasonable to analyse all the reported speech of Jesus in Mk from a rhetorical critical perspective, I single out the stretches of his reported speech that would most likely have been perceived by readers/hearers as representations of a speaker delivering a speech. This is not to say that Jesus' other, shorter utterances do not sound like they are intended to be persuasive; he forcefully, if not always very logically, addresses topics and presents arguments in short episodes, often in some kind of interaction with other figures in the narrative. It is also true that a few of his short utterances are salient in light of the whole work, not only within one episode (e.g.: 8:31; 9:31; 10:33-34; 14:22-25; 14:62).

Letter to the Churches in Galatia (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979); Samuel Byrskog, "Epistolography, Rhetoric, and Letter Prescript: Romans 1.1-7 as a Test Case," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 65 (1997): 27-46; Duane F. Watson, "A Rhetorical Analysis of Philippians and its Implications for the Unity Question," *Novum Testamentum* 30 (1988): 57-88. The argument commonly made that the authors of the NT epistles were consciously using classical oratory composition techniques has been increasingly challenged, notably by Carl Joachim Classen, "Zur rhetorischen Analyse der Paulusbriefe," *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft* 86 (1995): 120-121.

[8] The chreia is a speech or action attributed to a specific personage. See, for example, the extended treatment of the chreia in Quintilian's *Institutio Oratoria* (I.ix.4-5).

[9] Key works are Burton L. Mack and Vernon K. Robbins, *Patterns of Persuasion in the Gospels* (Sonoma: Polebridge Press, 1989), and Vernon K. Robbins, "Progymnastic Rhetorical Composition and Pre-Gospel Traditions: A New Approach," in *The Synoptic Gospels: Source Criticism and the New Literary Criticism*, ed. C. Focant (Leuven-Louvain: Leuven University Press, 1993), 111-147.

I define the four textual units as speeches for two reasons. Firstly, given the very many times Jesus speaks in very short utterances (80% of his utterances are one verse in length or shorter), the few places where Jesus is given the stage to speak for longer than a few sentences are of interest because of their unusual length. Secondly, because of the overall episodic nature of Mk, Jesus is most often portrayed as interacting in speech with other characters. Thus a large part of Mk is characterized by an intensity of character interaction. In contrast to such a characterization of Jesus speaking, if Mark has Jesus speak at some length he may be doing so in order to let his audience get a more concentrated measure of Jesus' voice. The fact itself of Jesus speaking then comes to the fore and at the same time the other characters become -for a while - less salient to the audience's perception as does the dominant voice of the narrator in the work as a whole. The longer speech therefore is a good vehicle for Mark to persuade his audience via the voice of Jesus.

Mark does not present Jesus' voice in these speeches in a uniform style. In Mk 4:11-32 Jesus seems to be stringing together short stories, neither logically connected nor containing overt argumentation to draw from them a main point. The speech in Mk 9:39-50 is, in large part, delivered in a heavily stylized, other-worldly voice of a prophet. In Mk 12:1-11 Jesus seems to dwell at disproportionate length on a dramatic story which apparently has significant figures, although he provides no explicit information as to their significance. Finally, in Mk 13:5-37 Jesus' speech is densely packed with imperatives and emphatic pronouns that accentuate his authority, but lacks carefully constructed argumentation to convince his addressees of that authority. Compared to the models of classical Greek speeches and the rhetorical handbooks that teach speech composition,

Jesus' speeches in Mark do not create the impression of a speaker who has carefully prepared himself or who uses well-chosen proofs and examples to logically argue his point. This leads to the question of whether Mark to some degree was composing Jesus' voice intentionally to sound like an oracle or prophetic pronouncement.

The study that now follows is ordered in two parts. In the first part I elaborate upon the points raised in this introduction: the emphases in Gospel scholarship which impinge upon my claim that a rhetorical analysis of the speeches of Jesus in Mk is a valid project within NT criticism (Section 1); the relationships among the author, the text and the audience which guide my understanding of how the speeches might have been conceived as tools to achieve a persuasive goal (Section 2). In Section 3 I set out the criteria by which I define these four units as "speeches," distinguishable as special within the represented speech of Jesus in Mk. Part II of the study is devoted to the analysis of the four text units delineated above (Sections 4-7). My treatment is primarily an analysis of the features of the text of the speeches and my aim is to show how the speeches might have been composed intentionally to achieve a persuasive goal on the part of Mark. In a final section I present the main conclusions to be drawn from the analyses of the speeches.

PART I LITERATURE AND METHODOLOGY

1 EMPHASES IN GOSPEL CRITICISM

In this section I survey briefly the main lines of Gospel criticism that impinge on the issue of Jesus' speeches as rhetorical compositions. I intend to show that the question I am asking of Jesus' speeches has typically not been asked by scholars and that there is therefore a platform upon which to put forward my thesis.

Traditionally, in early Christianity, the recorded words of Jesus were held to be utterances coming directly from God. The Greek word *logion* that Papias used to refer to the representations of Jesus' speech in the Gospels,[1] in its plain sense, means "oracle," i.e., a divine response or utterance.[2] As *logia*, therefore, Jesus' words represented in written form were not seen as being subject to rhetorical analysis; God (through Jesus' words) pronounces, declares and brings into being and therefore neither wishes to nor needs to persuade people.

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[1] The early church historian Eusebius (*Historia Ecclesiastica* III.xxxix.1) mentions five treatises of Papias of Hierapolis, *logiōn kuriakōn exēgeseōs* ("Exegesis of oracles of the Lord").

[2] Alexander Souter, *A Pocket Lexicon to the Greek New Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1916).

In the modern era Jesus' words have been of great interest to scholars in terms of their authenticity.[3] Of interest - though not in the realm of this study - is the historical question of how Jesus spoke in order to persuade his hearers, since this is related to how Mark represented his speech. If Mark had access to data about how Jesus spoke as distinct from, or in addition to, the content of what he said, he may have been trying to emulate that in his representation.[4] However, Gospel critics of the modern era have typically not understood Jesus' words - as represented in the Gospels - to be composed intentionally as persuasive. This is due to the strong influence on Gospel studies of classical form criticism. Form critics worked on the assumption that traditions about Jesus, including the so-called sayings, reflected a simple folk movement. Rudolph Bultmann stated that the larger units of the Gospels were formed by

> a quite primitive process of adding one small unit to another... [in which] the use of some catchword is the guiding principle. [In the] Synoptic Gospels [we do not have] speeches that are a real unity, dominated by a specific theme.[5]

Martin Dibelius held that the "composers [of the Gospels were] only to the smallest extent authors, they [were] primarily collectors, vehicles of traditions, editors."[6] It is significant that both Dibelius and Bultmann had received classical rhetorical training but deliberately ignored the elements in the Gospels that reflected conventional Greco-

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[3] For a thorough treatment of the issues in historical Jesus criticism and an extensive bibliography see Gerd Theissen and Annette Merz, *The Historical Jesus: A Comprehensive Guide*, trans. John Bowden (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1998).

[4] For a major treatment of Jesus' use of the gnome in his public speaking see Ian H. Henderson, *Jesus, Rhetoric and Law* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1996).

[5] Rudolf Bultmann, *The History of the Synoptic Tradition*, 2nd ed., trans. John Marsh (New York: Harper and Row, 1968), 322.

Roman rhetorical training which they surely recognized from their educational background.[7]

Redaction criticism, in response to the notion of Gospel writers as merely naive collectors of forms, sought to show that they were creative authors in their own right. They argued that each Evangelist was a skilful composer with his own unique theological perspective that he sought to advance. However, redaction critics looked past the speeches of Jesus and strongly emphasized the narrative arrangement itself as the communicative intent of the author. Thus Willi Marxsen, the founder of redaction criticism, saw the crucial question to be "whether the evangelist is seeking to express some particular message through the sequence as he depicts it."[8] Norman Perrin, another major redaction critic, delineates a basic two-part premise of redaction criticism, which is to

> analyse the constituent parts of the narrative, ...to see what they tell us of Mark as one who gathers, modifies, or creates tradition, and [to] *analyse the total narrative in terms of its overall purposes*, such as its setting in the framework of the Gospel as a whole, etc., to see what this will tell us about Mark as an evangelist.[9]

Hence it is a Gospel writer's arrangement of the narratives about Jesus that is seen as the essence of his communicative intent; that is, in the form of a narrative the redactor delivers a corrective "sermon" to his community regarding their beliefs about Jesus'

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[6] Martin Dibelius, *From Tradition to Gospel*, trans. Bertram Lee Woolf (Cambridge: James Clarke, 1971), 3.

[7] Henderson, *Jesus*, 76-78.

[8] Willi Marxsen, *Introduction to the New Testament: An Approach to its Problems*, trans. G. Buswell (Oxford: Blackwell, 1968), 121.

identity.[10] For redaction criticism the persuasiveness of a Gospel lies in the possibility of the audience being able to get the point of the *narrative*.

Many more recent readings of the Gospels invest heavily in the notion of the narrative having a communicative force.[11] Typical topics of interest in such treatments of Mk are the characterization of the disciples[12] and the development of conflict within the narrative.[13] These studies go beyond the redaction critical notion that the Gospels were composed primarily as theological treatises and study the effect that the narrative has on readers (often modern readers). However, studies such as these, by their nature, exclude the speeches of Jesus as foci of interest since longer speeches are, in one sense, anti-narrative.

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[9] Norman Perrin, *What is Redaction Criticism?* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971), 42, emphasis added.

[10] Perrin, for example, calls the larger section of Mark, 8:27-10:52 a "theological treatise ... in narrative form" (*Redaction Criticism*, 44). Marxsen argues that Mark wished his narrative as a whole to be understood as an "address" or a "proclamation" (Marxsen, *Introduction*, 138).

[11] Eg., David M. Rhoads and Donald Michie, *Mark as Story: An Introduction to the Narrative of a Gospel* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1982); Mark Allen Powell, "Toward a Narrative-Critical Understanding of Mark," in *Gospel Interpretation: Narrative-critical and Social-scientific Approaches*, ed. Jack Dean Kingsbury (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Trinity Press International, 1997), 65-70; Stephen H. Smith, *A Lion with Wings. A Narrative-critical Approach to Mark's Gospel* (Sheffield: Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Press, 1996); Burton L. Mack, *Myth of Innocence: Mark and Christian Origins* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988), 269-287.

[12] E.g., Ernest Best, *Following Jesus: Discipleship in the Gospel of Mark* (Sheffield: Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Press, 1981); C. Clifton Black, *The Disciples According to Mark: Markan Redaction in Current Debate* (Sheffield: Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Press, 1989).

[13] E.g., Jack Dean Kingsbury, *Conflict in Mark: Jesus, Authorities, Disciples* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989).

Mary Ann Tolbert, in her important 1989 monograph, is also concerned with the narrative of Mk, although her work is properly a literary analysis dealing with plot and characterization and the effect that a particular genre creates.[14] She correctly points out the problem with redaction criticism's notion of the narrative sermon or treatise: a narrative effectively "enlist[s] the sympathy of an audience on behalf of the hero," but it is not "an effective medium for directly challenging a community's practice or correcting its theological views."[15]

Tolbert recognizes the importance of the rhetorical environment in which Mk was composed and first heard, defining Mk as a popular novel based on her comparison of Mk with the production and reception of such works in Greco-Roman society.[16] Her study is firmly grounded in literary criticism and she therefore understands the plot of Mk to be of great importance to an understanding of the work as a whole. In particular, she analyses Mk as an expansion of two parables, the sower parable (4:3-8) and the tenants parable (12:1-9). With her emphases on the plot of Mk and the characterization of the disciples and other figures as outworking of what is forecast in the parables, Tolbert does not ask the reasonable question - from a rhetorical critical perspective - whether the speeches themselves might have been heard by readers/hearers as they would hear rhetorical performances of speeches in their everyday life.

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[14] Mary Ann Tolbert, *Sowing the Gospel: Mark's World in Literary-historical Perspective* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989).

[15] Tolbert, *Sowing the Gospel*, 303-304.

[16] Tolbert, *Sowing the Gospel*, 59-79.

Of the scholars that have recently given serious attention to the Gospels as early Christian rhetoric, Burton Mack and Vernon Robbins are most prominent. They have undertaken a large project of programmatically analyzing short narrative units in the Gospels in terms of their logical, argumentational features. To do this they have concentrated heavily on what some ancient Latin and Greek pedagogical treatises call the elaboration of the chreia. Chreiai were used by rhetors as material to fit into a speech in order to strengthen an argument. As part of the standard rhetorical training, pupils were taught how to shape them so that they were useable as building blocks for speeches. To state it much too simply, one aspect of shaping a chreia was to elaborate upon it, developing it so that it formed a complete argument. It is this elaboration that Mack and Robbins have focused on in their analyses of narrative units in the Gospels.[17]

Mack and Robbins are certainly correct to notice that the rhetorical textbooks treat chreia composition as part of basic rhetorical training. With their emphasis on this aspect of rhetorical composition, however, expressly concentrating on short stories about Jesus that highlight a saying of his, it is not surprising to find in their work hardly any treatment of the longer speeches of Jesus in Mk as units of persuasive speech.[18] If at all, they analyze a longer speech of Jesus as an argumentational extension of a short narrated

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[17] Burton L. Mack, "Elaboration of the Chreia in the Hellenistic School," in *Patterns of Persuasion in the Gospels* (Sonoma: Polebridge Press, 1989), 31-67, is intended as an introduction to the theory and practice of chreia elaboration in Greco-Roman rhetoric for the purpose of application to Gospel stories. It is the second chapter of *Patterns of Persuasion* and is followed by several studies in which Mack and Robbins examine short Gospel stories about Jesus to show that they exhibit argumentational strategies similar to the elaboration taught by the ancient rhetorical treatises.

[18] This heavy emphasis "has tended to canonize the chreia as *the* point of entry for rhetorical studies of Gospels" (Henderson, *Jesus*, 73-82, (73, emphasis in original)).

encounter.[19] Furthermore, since these scholars "tend to reduce rhetorical persuasion to formal argumentation,"[20] they do not sufficiently consider the use of other persuasive techniques found in Mark's compositions. In this context it is well to recall that

> "[i]n any rhetorical performance or text, persuasive effect depends on "ornamental" qualities of personality and mood (*ethos* and *pathos*) as well as on argumentative strategies (*logos*)."[21]

The main claim of my study is that the speeches of Jesus in Mk reveal a significant aspect of Mark's persuasive purpose. There is neither space, nor would it be fruitful, to fully critique Gospel scholarship here; what I hope to have done in this brief overview, is to point out that the main lines of criticism have, for various reasons, not treated the speeches as significant rhetorical compositions. With this I do not wish to say that the narrative form of Mk is not significant nor that there are no signs of chreia composition in Mk and certainly not that Jesus never engages in argumentational speech. What these emphases in scholarship do show, however, is that there is a place for my question: given the emphases I have pointed out and the resulting oversight of Jesus' speeches as rhetorical units in their own right, it is reasonable to ask if they should be read not only as parts of a larger narrative, and further, to ask whether they were composed intentionally with the aim of persuading an audience also by means other than logical, argumentational strategies.

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[19] Burton L. Mack, "Teaching in Parables: Elaboration in Mark 4:1-34," in *Patterns of Persuasion*, 143-160. See also Section 4 of this study.

[20] Henderson, *Jesus*, 47.

[21] Henderson, *Jesus*, 47.

2 AUTHOR, TEXT AND AUDIENCE

The points I address in this section are intended to form the background against which my subsequent investigation of the speeches of Jesus is to be understood. I work with the general assumption that Mk was designed to be heard as a rhetorical text; that is, it was composed and launched with a goal to persuade an audience. To explain adequately a long and multi-variated text like Mk in terms of its rhetoric would go well beyond the limits of a study such as this one. However, the complexity of the rhetoric of Mk must be kept in mind in the investigation of the stretches of text in which Jesus speaks at some length. This is necessary because, although for my purposes I treat the speeches as units of persuasion in their own right, they were meant to be heard within a larger co-text; the persuasive effect of the speeches was intended to take place in relation to the rhetoric of the whole of the work to some degree.

In an analysis such as the present one it is crucial to hold three interacting facets of persuasive communication in steady focus. The first is that the writer has an agenda, a persuasive goal. In addition, there are real readers/hearers whom the writer wishes to affect. Thirdly, the persuasion takes place via a tool, the text, which the writer has created for that purpose. Of particular interest in this study is the discrimination between linguistic output intended to affect readers/hearers at the cognitive, argumentational level and linguistic output designed to work at the level of feeling or emotion. These aspects of rhetoric will be treated in the course of the analyses of the four speeches; in this section I briefly introduce them with the help of illustrative material.

The author of Mk was educated up to a point in the curriculum typically taught to aspiring rhetors in Greco-Roman society. His education might have come about in the following way:

> After acquiring the rudiments of literacy, either at home or with an elementary teacher, [he] would have attended the school of a 'grammar' teacher (*grammatikos*), working on topics such as grammar, correctness of style and language, and metre. Literary texts, especially poetry, were studied closely. The language, content, moral import, and literary aspects of the text were expounded; careful attention was given to correct reading aloud (not easy [since] written texts had neither word-division nor punctuation); rote memorization was stressed. After some years with the grammarian, the boy would progress to the teacher of rhetoric (*rhētōr*). ... What the rhetoricians taught was a practical skill. The criterion of their success was [whether their pupils] could in fact speak persuasively. Hence the main focus of rhetorical education was on practical exercises.[1]

The practical exercises in which Mark would have been drilled were taught in two stages, the preliminary and the advanced. Several of the preliminary exercises (*progumnasmata*) are recognizable in the text of Mk: Mark knew how to retell a simple story (*muthos*); he had "the ability to present a clear, concise and plausible account of events" (*diēgēsis*); he could use a pithy saying set in an anecdote and develop from it an argument (*chreia* if the saying was attributed to someone, *gnōmē* if not attributed).[2] It is of course not possible to know exactly what Mark's education was like. However, given the presence in Mk of progymnasmatic examples such as the above and the fact that he was able to produce a

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[1] Malcolm Heath, *Hermogenes* On Issues: *Strategies of Argument in Later Greek Rhetoric* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 11-13.

[2] Heath, *Hermogenes* On Issues, 1-18 (13), affords a concise introduction to rhetoric, and describes the primary curriculum as well as the preliminary and advanced exercises of rhetoric proper. See also his references there to the modern discussions upon which he draws as well as to the treatment of rhetorical training by ancient writers. A more developed outline of classical rhetoric, including an extended treatment of the major primary texts, can be found in Brian Vickers, *In Defense of Rhetoric* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), 1-82.

fairly long, complex and yet coherent Greek text shows that he was competent up to a significant degree in rhetoric.

In addition to the manipulation of various exercises, rhetoricians taught their students to compose persuasive speeches keeping in mind that an audience can be affected at a rational level (logos), at the level of feeling or emotion (pathos) and at the level of character (ethos). Knowing when and how to persuade at these levels was of great importance to the success of their persuasive attempts. Character was to be genuine but could also be manufactured to some extent; it was important to have the skill of presenting oneself as credible. Students were also taught how to speak and write in varying styles so as to be appropriate to their subject matter and their audiences.[3]

Mark would have expected his work to be read out audibly for hearers. For the readers of Mk - i.e., people reading it out to audiences - to be able to do that competently, they would have had to be educated to a degree comparable to that of Mark's education. Mark also expected readers/hearers to be familiar enough with Greco-Roman literature to be able to appreciate his use of the language and the forms he had been taught in his own education. However, even uneducated people, familiar with their own oral society, on hearing a work like Mk would have had expectations that were shaped by their experience of speeches composed and delivered by trained or naturally gifted rhetors. In other words, people listening to readings of Mk did so with ears attuned to Greek rhetorical practice, if not theory.

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[3] The training of the rhetor is explicitly the subject of Quintilian's *Institutio oratoria* and is covered in its various aspects in other ancient rhetorical treatises. See modern scholarly discussions in George A. Kennedy, *A New History of Classical Rhetoric* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994); Brian Vickers, *In Defense of Rhetoric* , 52-

Although it has been tempting for Gospel scholars to create portrayals of the recipients of Mk based on what they see in the text,[4] for my purposes it is sufficient to presuppose only the general circumstances of author and readers/hearers as I have just outlined them. I treat Mk - more simply - as a Greek text composed by someone with a degree of training in rhetoric intended to be read out by people with a similar level of education and to be heard by people who could appreciate features in the text that reflected such a composition.

The relationships that exist in rhetorical communication among the text, the author and the audience can be complex. This is not the place for a full treatment of the issues; however, it will be useful to define the terms "audience" and "readers/hearers" and then to compare the rhetoric of Mk with two other situations. I have already made it clear that I assume Mark was not addressing a specific Markan community. His intended readership was broad; he expected that his work would be read out and heard by real groups of people in a variety of real locations and times. It is these real people that I have designated as readers/hearers. The notion of audience, however, lies within the sphere of Mark's rhetoric, his aim to have his text affect people. Thus Mark conceives of an audience, the

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82; M.L. Clarke, *Rhetoric at Rome: A Historical Survey*, 3rd ed (London; New York: Routledge, 1996), 81-82.

[4] See, e.g., Richard L. Rohrbaugh, "The Social Location of the Markan Audience," in *Gospel Interpretation: Narrative-critical & Social-scientific Approaches,* ed. Jack Dean Kingsbury (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Trinity Press International, 1997), 106-122 for a brief survey of scholarship and his own analysis of the audience of Mark's Gospel. Rohrbaugh uses the expression "the audience" as though Mark wrote to one particular group of people. He also seems to work on the assumption that the text of Mk somehow came about in a peasant setting ("the type of village in which Mark's Gospel may have originated," 107) rather than by the deliberate composition of one educated person.

person who is to pay attention to his text and be affected by it in the way he intends. In this study, therefore, the term "audience" should not be taken (as it often is in NT scholarship) to refer to a particular set of people in a specific time and place.

At the same time Mark differentiated between segments of his projected audience. There are various persuasive thrusts within Mk and although it seems likely that Mark's audience was mainly the Christian leadership, he did want the text to be heard by "ordinary" or "little" people also. This is analogous to Paul's rhetoric in Philemon; his primary audience was the person addressed in the opening of the letter but the other members of the group that met in his house, those under his leadership, were surely also meant to hear Paul addressing their leader since this would add a significant dimension to the force of the rhetoric.

Probably owing to redaction criticism's insistence on the evangelist's unique role as writer-theologian as well as the strong influence of the Pauline letters on NT studies the assumption is sometimes made that the text of Mk functions like Mark himself delivering a sermon, directing his words to a particular set of hearers in personal communication. Even Paul's letters, however, were not read out by himself to hearers and so he was essentially creating a representation of his own voice. It will be helpful to compare the issues involved in hypothetical first readings of Mk with two other situations. The first is that of a hypothetical public speaker in a Mediterranean village or town who delivers a prepared speech to an assembly of citizens. The speaker is physically present before his hearers and it is his voice that they hear consistently. Furthermore, the speaker bears immediate responsibility for what he says. The face-to-face aspect of this situation is a major factor in the success or failure of his attempt to persuade.

The second situation is that of a reading of one of Paul's letters. His letters probably came via envoys who may have had personal instructions on how to read them.[5] Although Paul is not physically present and it is therefore the voice of another that is audible, the hearers almost certainly take the audible performance *as if* it were Paul's voice and authority. The text is composed so as to invite such a hearing of it; the 'I-you' discourse is very prominent and therefore gives the impression that Paul is talking. The reader, therefore, is acting the part of Paul.[6] Crucial to the workings of such a rhetorical performance is the knowledge and trust that exists in the audience in regard to Paul. In terms of the success of the persuasive effort it is quite plausible that disputes over Paul's points could arise in any given reading. Any disputes, however, would have taken place in the context of Paul's words and authority.

The issues involved in a given reading of Mk are more complex than those in the two situations just described. Even though Mark may have initially presented his text to a few people he knew, it is most likely that he composed it intending that (eventually) others hear it.[7] Given a text that was more or less privately composed and then launched to the public, Mk was heard in large part as a piece of literature more than as a piece of particular communication. In contrast to the situations of Paul's letters the identity and the authority of the writer could hardly have mattered to the average hearer. Mark's voice was not discernable in the text, let alone audible physically - the few parenthetical comments

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[5] Harry Y. Gamble, *Books and Readers in the Early Church: A History of Early Christian Texts* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 95-97.

[6] It is quite plausible that readers would have interposed commentary of their own during the course of the reading. Such commentary, however, would intuitively have been marked by the speaker so as to distinguish it from Paul's voice.

[7] Gamble, *Books and Readers*, 102.

otwithstanding.[8] The identity of the real person Mark is hidden behind the voice of the arrator; Mark is not a rhetor before an assembly.

At the same time Mk contains a preponderance of Jesus' voice which is represented consistently as speaking with unassailable authority. It would not have occurred to readers/hearers to dispute with "the person who wrote the text" about the matters that are persuasively presented, like discipleship, leadership and sacrifice. This is so because the person and voice of Mark is so absent from the text.[9] It is the narrator and Jesus who speak persuasively on these topics. Such a representation composed by Mark suggests that he intended readers/hearers to hear Jesus' voice and authority, not his.

The text of Mk can thus be understood to be a constructed stimulus, not the text of someone's speech. The failure or success of this stimulus was not really the failure or success of Mark's rhetoric in the same way as that of the speaker in the first situation above, or even that of Paul who was absent physically from the communication events. Because of the text's literary nature and the distance between the author and the readers/hearers, Mark, unlike Paul, was not putting his own authority and reputation on the line. Rather, Mark purposely created his text so that a figure in the text (Jesus) did a significant amount of the persuading.

Where Mark wished to address issues that he knew to be current among Christians of his time, he did so through the voice of his character. Such a rhetoric could be expected to work if the character was thought by the readers/hearers to be "speaking" in their real

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[8] At one level it is true that the narrator's voice and argument is close to that of the author of the work, but this is not the same as a real-person relationship between writer and readers/hearers.

[9] This is not to say that some initial audiences could not have known the person who wrote the work and been affected by that.

world; that is, if they believed Jesus to be an existing current force in their life. In this sense the readers/hearers of Paul's letters and those of Mk were hearing these respective texts in a similar way: (the absent) Paul and (the absent) Jesus were believed to be current real voices in their lives.

A response on the part of Mark's audience can be broadly categorized as involving a greater or lesser degree of rational, cognitive effort. This is certainly a complex process and belongs properly in the field of psycho-linguistics;[10] it cannot be treated here as a topic in its own right. However, my purpose is to differentiate meaningfully between features of the text of Jesus' speeches which anticipate a response of feeling or emotion (i.e., not primarily a rational, conceptual response) and features of the text which anticipate primarily conceptual thought as the means of persuasion. The latter kind of text is concerned to argue a point rationally and the audience is expected to work out logical relationships and draw conclusions that could be stated in propositional form. This is the kind of persuasion that has received more attention in NT rhetorical criticism generally; i.e., argumentation theory.

Textual features of the former kind are not as easy to illustrate as logical argumentation. However, intuitively we recognize that such non-argumentational persuasion takes place within human communication and that it is often significant, i.e.,

[10] For a full discussion from the perspective of their "Relevance Theory" see Dan Sperber and Deirdre Wilson. *Relevance: Communication and Cognition* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986).

not merely decoration.[11] For the purposes of this study I roughly define two types of persuasive language as follows: language calculated to persuade

- primarily at the level of concept and rational thought;
- primarily at the level of feeling and emotion.

The two kinds of stimuli can, of course, coincide in one stretch of text. Since a significant part of my treatment of the speeches will focus on how the features of the text might have affected the audience, it will be sufficient here to illustrate the two kinds of persuasion with a simple example, a shorter utterance of Jesus in Mk. This is intended as a sample of my general practice in the analyses of the speeches.

In 10:42-45 Jesus addresses the twelve on the topic of leadership and service. Jesus' logical argument is quite clear; the twelve are to be persuaded that their leadership style should be different from the expected norm within their society. He presents propositions, expecting logical conclusions to be drawn from them and strengthens his point with an appeal to the son of man's style of behavior. This argumentation is primarily at the level of concept and rational thought.

However, Jesus' appeal to himself ("the son of man") is for the audience also significant in terms of their respect for his character and this is not best described as a logical relationship. Furthermore, the *way* Jesus says what he says, not just *what* he argues, adds its own element into the effect. Jesus repeats two sets of propositions using wording that is varied: this is not part of the argument itself even though such repetition may nuance or enhance the force of the argument. The two clauses beginning with *hoi* and

[11] "[T]he perceived sincerity and authority of a speaker may well and even rightly move us more than any cogency of speech analyzed as argumentation" (Ian H. Henderson, *Jesus, Rhetoric and Law* (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 47).

connected with *kai* in v. 42 and the two constructions beginning with *hos an thelē* in vv. 43-44 add a dimension to the sound of the way Jesus is talking. Besides adding emphasis to his point, this parallelism also makes Jesus sound like someone who can formulate a balanced-sounding illustration and prohibition, making it sound somewhat like poetry. It is a way of speaking, a stylistic feature that adds its own effect to the persuasive force of the address.

The purpose of this section has been to introduce the issues that will be addressed in the analyses of Jesus' speeches. That Mark conceived his text to some extent in terms of the rhetorical education and practice of his time is pertinent to the question of how he hoped his projected audience would respond. However, in contrast to the typical rhetor of his day, Mark designed his text not as a script for his own sermon to be delivered to a particular community but to function as a stimulus that would be heard by readers/hearers in a variety of places and settings. The stimulus to a large extent consists of the voice of Jesus. Mark wished to create and convince an audience via the voice of Jesus. Given a readership that venerated Jesus as their god, the speeches were designed to be taken as though spoken by that god. At the same time, by using techniques he had learned through his training or knew intuitively, Mark composed the speeches in such a way as to evoke responses both at the level of emotions or feelings as well as at the level of conceptual, rational thought. The language that makes up the speech contains elements which assist the achievement of those responses. As I have indicated already, my study will focus heavily though not exclusively on those elements of Jesus' speeches which were designed to affect Mark's audience at the level of feelings and emotion.

3 Defining the Speeches

In this section I provide a rationale for selecting the four units of text for analysis as peeches. The main criterion I use for identifying these units is their relative length. My :laim is that people hearing a performance of Mk would have perceived these text units, ımong all the represented speech of Jesus, as deliberate representations of a speaker lelivering a speech. I do not claim that only these four would have been perceived thus; ·ather, they constitute reasonable choices for analysis. After a brief survey of the types of ıtterances Jesus makes within the narrative I discuss the features of Mk that would have ıffected the perception of longer utterances.

The discussion in this section should be read in conjunction with an examination of the graph in the appendix. On this graph are plotted all the instances of grammatically marked direct speech of Jesus in Mk. The linear progression of the narrative is represented on the horizontal axis; chapter numbers are given and each tick on the horizontal axis represents one verse of the text. Each utterance of Jesus is represented by a vertical line placed at the verse in which the utterance begins. The vertical axis shows the length of the utterances in number of words. Shaded horizontal extensions have been added to the lines representing all utterances thirty words or more in length thus portraying to some extent the duration of the utterances.

In the course of the narrative of Mk Jesus is depicted speaking in a variety of encounters. employing a variety of ways of speaking: Jesus calls people to follow him

(1:17;[1] 2:14; 4:35); commands people to do something (3:3; 6:37; 10:2; 5:19; 14:22; 10:49; 6:31; 14:34; 14:32); exhorts people to believe, take heart, etc. (5:36; 6:50; 9:23); gives instructions to his disciples (6:10; 11:2; 14:13); performs exorcisms, healings and causes phenomena in nature (1:25, 41; 2:5, 11; 3:5; 4:39; 5:8, 34, 41; 7:29, 34; 9:25; 10:52; 11:14); makes predictions about his betrayal and death and about the temple (8:31; 9:31; 10:33, 39; 13:2; 14:18, 27, 30, 72); makes proclamations about the reign of God, himself or aspects of discipleship (1:15; 3:34; 8:34; 9:35; 10:14, 23, 42; 12:43; 14:24); asks questions in a challenging tone (3:4; 4:40; 5:39; 6:38; 8:17, 20, 8:21; 10:3, 38; 12:15, 16; 14:37, 41, 48); asks questions for information or as introduction to a point he wants to make (5:9, 30; 8:5, 23, 27, 29; 9:16, 21, 33; 10:36, 51); asks a question of despair (15:34); makes various replies to criticisms and challenges by objectors (1:38; 2:8, 17, 19, 25; 3:33; 6:4; 7:6; 8:12, 33; 9:19; 10:5, 24; 11:29, 33; 12:17, 24; 14:6, 62; 15:2); makes various replies to questions or observations calling for explanation (7:18, 27; 9:12, 29, 39; 10:11, 18, 27, 29; 11:22; 12:29; 13:2; 14:20); addresses God in prayer (14:36); delivers warnings regarding the scribes, Pharisees and Herod (8:15; 10:14; 12:38); delivers warnings to keep silent about him (1:44; 8:26); makes a statement of compassion (8:2); teaches or explains (regarding his authority, clean and unclean, his identity , producing fruit) (12:35; 7:14; 3:23; 4:3). This classification does not show the formal characteristics of Jesus' speech but is intended to give an impression of the number and variety of communicative activities in which Jesus engages.

[1] References are to the verse in which the utterance begins.

Almost the entire text of Mk consists of an even distribution of speech and arration (see graph). Only a few times is there a stretch of narrative in which the arrator's voice is predominant for any significant duration: the very opening of the work 1:1-14) and the narration of Jesus' trial and execution (15:3 - 16:8). In addition, the graph reveals that the sheer frequency of Jesus' utterances is very high and that the vast majority of the utterances are brief.

Readers/hearers of Mk would have been aware of the highly episodic nature of this work. There are about fifty-five unique characters (or character groups) in the narrative; this means that, on average, at every twelfth verse (every 150-200 words) a character is introduced for the first time. Signals of location and relative temporal markers also appear in dense concentration throughout the narrative. The motion verb *erchomai* occurs 96 times in the voice of the narrator. These features make for a steadily moving drama with many scene changes. A comparison with the Gospel of Matthew, for example, shows that its episodes are significantly longer than those in Mk: 250 words in length on average compared with only 170 words in Mk.[2]

A further notable feature of Mk is its focus on one character. None of the many characters in the narrative comes close to rivaling Jesus as central figure. At the same time, in the many episodes that make up Mk, Jesus interacts repeatedly with other figures: variously with the minor characters that appear only once; sometimes with his critics; and, frequently with his disciples. Most interaction involves speech; Jesus

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[2] The configuration of episodes in Lk is similar to that in Mt. Other comparable narrative works are Acts of the Apostles and Appolonius of Tyana in that the narrative moves at a much slower pace than in Mk due to the number and length of the speeches.

typically utters a short pronouncement of healing or exorcism or a statement of argumentation or refutation, often concerning his identity or authority.

Given these two features of Mk, that it is made up of many short episodes and that one character is continuously in the spotlight, it follows that readers/hearers would perceive a Jesus who speaks many times and whose utterances are short. From the perspective of the author's plan of composition, the relative brevity of the work allows no representation of Jesus speaking often at any great length. A word count of all Jesus' utterances reveals indeed that the vast majority are very brief; eighty per-cent are shorter than forty words in length, comprising only four clauses at most (see graph). From another perspective, about one-third of all the reported speech of Jesus is contained in the four text units of this study.

A significant visual impression the graph makes is that there is a small number of utterances that stand out as significantly longer than the average. Units of represented speech in a narrative that are relatively long take on a speech-like character by virtue of their length. In Mk, the longer a stretch of Jesus' speech is, the more impressive it is to readers/hearers in terms of the voice that they are aware of. In a dialogical episode the narrator's voice is perceived by readers/hearers as distinctly present. However, as a speech of one character goes on at some length, readers/hearers focus more fully on the voice of the character. In addition, longer units of speech in narrative are also perceived as special because of the way they stop the movement of the drama. For some time a character remains in one place and no other characters move or speak; the action comes to a stop. When this takes place relatively rarely in a narrative that is typically fast-moving, the speech-like nature of the unit is even more apparent.

Related to the perception of the sheer length of the speeches, there is the further question of how longer stretches of speech are perceived in relation to the movement of the narrative and the presence or absence of other characters. In a stage production, a character in a drama can physically turn to the spectators and, by means of gestures and eye-contact, make clear that she or he is speaking directly to them. If the salience of character interaction is high, the degree to which spectators perceive a character turning directly to them will be low. This soliloquy technique is, of course, most pronounced when all other actors are off-stage. When Jesus speaks in Mk he is never alone on stage. However, the cessation of inter-actor dynamics has a similar effect as the disappearance of characters. Such a cessation occurs to a considerable degree when Jesus speaks for some time, when the movement of the narrative ceases. Furthermore, when the narration creates a setting in which addressees are few or consist of a (semi-) private group, the effect of Jesus speaking to Mark's audience is also enhanced. Conversely, when Jesus is in dialogue with other characters, the presence of those characters is quite clearly perceptible and Jesus' voice is then perceived more as directed to the addressees on stage.

The text units of 4:11-32[3] and 13:5-37, in particular, stand out very clearly as the two long speeches of Jesus in Mk.[4] These two utterances are 524 and 357 words in

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[3] The speech of 4:11-32 is, strictly speaking, not unbroken speech since their are several short formulae used at various points. See the analysis of this speech in Section 4 for the reasons why I treat this speech nevertheless as a single rhetorical unit.

[4] Some scholars treat only these two as "speeches" by Jesus in Mk. Richard A. Horsley, "The Gospel According to Mark, Introduction," in *The New Oxford Annotated Bible*, 3rd ed., ed. Michael D. Coogan (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), writes, "The contents of the Gospel consist mostly of stories about Jesus' actions... including some of Jesus' sayings, with two speeches (one mostly of parables) that interrupt the rapid flow of the episodes" (57).

length respectively. For this study I have chosen also the two next longest utterances, 9:39-50 and 12:1-11 respectively, although they are not as clearly marked off from the several mid-length utterances of Jesus in Mk. These two utterances are 198 and 156 words in length. The next longest utterance, 8:34-9:1, is shorter by 34 words. This utterance as well as 3:23-29 (108 words) are both introduced in the narrative with a setting that implies a more developed, reasoned argument will follow; that is, Jesus specially calls people together and speaks in a special way. However, because of their shorter duration, I do not analyze these. The utterance beginning at 7:6, another of the mid-length utterances, is 115 words in length. This utterance is marked as a riposte in a dialogical exchange with its introduction using the typical exchange formula *ho de eipen autois* and thus sounds less like a prepared speech.

This brief analysis of several mid-length utterances shows that my classification is not iron-clad. It is not so much a question of either-or as a question of the gradation of the force of impression. At the high end of the scale Mk 13:5-37 is clearly a speech and at the lower end there are several utterances that might have been perceived more strongly as speeches than as dialogical exchanges. I have made a cutoff based most heavily on length and the setting created by the narration. In all four of the units I analyze the narration implies a situation in which Jesus is going to say something at length about an important topic.[5]

To say that the longer utterances of Jesus are marked as rhetorical units in their own right is not to say that there are not other, shorter utterances that are not of significance in

[5] There are several points in the narrative of Mk where there is an implication that a speech is forthcoming, the clearest of which is at Mk 4:1f.

terms of their intended persuasive effect. Jesus' very first utterance is marked by virtue of the fact that the main character is speaking for the first time in his first appearance in public. The three predictions made to his disciples that he will be killed and rise again (8:31; 9:31; 10:33-34) are surely intended to have a special effect on Mark's audience. Jesus' references to his body and blood and a covenant (14:22-25) are short utterances but highly significant in the overall representation of him in the work. A final example is Jesus' answer to the high priest in the highly dramatized trial scene (Mk 14:61-62); his answer is in response to a question loaded with significant concepts (*ho christos ho huios*) that have been especially emphasized at various points through the narrative from the very beginning.

Mk contains numerous episodes in which Jesus is engaged in speech activity but the text does not represent directly the words Jesus said. There are 23 such references made in the narrator's voice[6] and two made by characters in the narrative.[7] There are also two marked occurrences of Jesus refusing to say anything.[8] Of the 25 references where there is an implication of linguistic output by Jesus, in two-thirds of them the implication is there that Jesus is engaged in teaching or instruction. In a number of cases Jesus teaches (1:21, 22; 2:13; 4:1; 6:2, 6, 34; 8:31; 10:1; 14:49); in two cases he speaks the word (2:2; 4:33); he proclaims in an itinerant fashion (1:39); he commissions and instructs his apostles (3:14-15); he explains parables to his disciples (4:34). The next most frequent type of implied speech activity is that of ordering people to keep silent

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[6] 1:20, 21, 22, 35, 39; 2:2, 13; 3:12, 14; 4:1, 33, 34; 5:43; 6:2, 6, 34; 7:36; 8:31; 9:9; 10:1, 16; 14: 26, 39.

[7] 14:49 (Jesus); 16:07 (young man).

(3:12, 5:43, 7:36, 9:9). Jesus also calls (1:20), says (16:7), prays (1:35, 14:39), blesses (10:16) and sings (14:26). Thus, in the argument of the whole narrative, Jesus is certainly shown to be one who teaches, instructs, explains.

It is noteworthy that in so many cases Mark portrays Jesus in this way not by directly representing his words but by means of reference to the activity of speaking. These are all cases in the narrative where the writer could have composed speeches (of various lengths) for his character. In Mk, however, although Jesus is portrayed as one who engages in making public and semi-public speeches, the writer on only a few occasions provides a representation of a substantial sample of what he said.

In conclusion, I stress again that not only the four speeches I analyze are rhetorical units in Mk; rather, there is a scale along which the utterances of Jesus could be placed, some more, some less speech-like. Various factors contribute to how Mark's audience would have perceived them. Length is one factor, the one on which I rely most heavily for my demarcation. It is clear from the graph that Jesus speaks very many times and that there is a small group of utterances which are significant in their length. Other factors, which I have here briefly laid out, are the narrative introductions, their position in the episode – especially whether they are responses in a dialogue - and their salience in the work as a whole. Thus, although my four speeches are not the only examples of rhetoric by Jesus in Mk, I have chosen them because, overall, they could be expected to be perceived as composed speeches.

Analyzing these four speeches will be helpful in that they provide a varying sample upon which to base the study of my question. Such a sample should bring to light

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[8] 14:61; 15:5

fferent ways in which Mark characterizes Jesus through the representation of his)eech. In addition, as I have pointed out, it is the many shorter utterances of Jesus in .eir narrative contexts which have been of greater interest to Gospel critics, not the)nger utterances as speeches in their own right.

I have deliberately chosen Mk as the Gospel within which to investigate rhetorical)pects of speech representation. As such my study is a contribution not exclusively to Iarkan studies but also to Gospel studies as a whole. The speeches of Jesus in the)ospels of Matthew and Luke would be the intuitive choice for rhetorical analysis.[9] Iajor-length speeches of Jesus in these two Gospels are considerably greater in number)an in Mk - even proportionally - and greatly exceed them in length.[10] Because of its bvious episodic nature, Mk has been seen as a suitable text in which to investigate Jesus' horter sayings and their function within narrative episodes. Thus, my choice of Mk is, in act, counter-intuitive. Therefore, if I am able to demonstrate that Mark was doing omething persuasively with the speeches of Jesus as units of rhetoric in their own right - n a text that seems intuitively less rhetorical - I lend support for my case. My case hould show that the Gospels should not be treated only as narratives or theological reatises nor only as episodes in which Jesus argues with short utterances or exchanges.

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[9] Hans Dieter Betz, *Sermon on the Mount: A Commentary on the Sermon on the Mount, Including the Sermon on the Plain (Matthew 5:3-7:27 and Luke 6:20-49)*, ed. Adela Yarbro Collins (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995). This recent commanding work is a storehouse of literary and historical-exegetical insights but does not seriously address the question of what persuasive goal the writers (Matthew and Luke) had in representing Jesus speaking in this way.

[10] Direct speech of Jesus takes up 57 per-cent of Mt as compared to 29 per-cent of Mk.

PART II ANALYSIS OF THE SPEECHES

4 "INSIDE OR OUTSIDE?" (MK 4:11-32): JESUS' CALL FOR A DECISIVE RESPONSE TO THE WORD

I shall attempt to show in this section that the major-length speech in 4:11-32 was intended to bring into focus for Mark's audience a particular dilemma. The speech was conceived as a call to consider carefully whether they were hearing the word aright. This persuasive goal is worked out by having Jesus hold up a dilemma which contrasts insiders and outsiders. In Greco-Roman society "the primary quality of ... public speech [was] to persuade an audience toward seeing its social situation as a concrete dilemma and to convince the audience to choose one option."[1] For the Greco-Roman rhetor there were only two possible options from which an audience could choose regarding any given issue: the right option, that argued by himself, or the wrong option, any argument not in line with his. Thus, for example, the author of *Ad Herennium*, intending to persuade the reader of the value of his work, begins by setting himself solely against all Greek writers.[2] Given an acquaintance with rhetorical education on the part of Mark, it is reasonable to

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[1] Ian H. Henderson, *Jesus, Rhetoric and Law* (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 80.

[2] "They ... have gone in quest of notions irrelevant to the art... I, on the other hand, have treated those topics which seemed pertinent to the theory of public speaking. I have not been moved by hope of gain or desire for glory as the rest have been" (*Ad Herennium* I, 1). Many other examples could be cited. See, for example, Aristotle's "pregnant formulation which describes the action and purpose of each [of the three types of public speech]," quoted by Brian Vickers, *In Defense of Rhetoric* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), 21.

hink that he would have considered it an effective means of persuasion to represent his nain character as speaking with this same presupposition.

Within the whole of the work this speech serves at one level to include and identify :he audience as disciples; they are made privy to Jesus' explanation of parables and consequently feel they understand them at least better than the characters inside the story world do. At another level, as the audience perceives a persuasive focus directed at them, Jesus is not speaking so much didactically - i.e., simply explaining what God's reign is like - as he is making a statement about the function and significance of parables in relation to the secret of God's reign, as an indication of inclusion or exclusion. It is at this level that the speech is symbouleutic; Mark is trying to persuade his audience to think differently - more seriously - about how they are receiving and giving out the teaching of Jesus.

Jesus' discourse in 4:11-32 is starkly contrastive. His opening pronouncement (vv. 11-12) immediately contrasts the addressees with "those people outside."[3] Mark's Jesus does not see the world as containing several options of relative value; in his view people are either on the inside or on the outside.[4] By presenting the issue in this way Mark intended his audience to be persuaded that ambivalence towards the teaching of Jesus was dangerously like being on the outside. Mark has illustrated ambivalence towards Jesus' words thus far in the narrative especially through the characterization of the scribes who object when he pronounces forgiveness (2:6-11) and Jesus' family who wish to take him out of the public arena where he teaches crowds (3:20-21).

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[3] As we shall see, this contrast is present not only in the opening but also in the rest of the speech, even in the two parables at the end. Compare Mary Ann Beavis. *Mark's Audience: The literary and social setting of Mark 4.11-12*. Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series 33 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1989), 142.

[4] Compare 8:34; 9:40; 10:15, 24-25.

In contrast to such ambivalence, serious alignment with the Jesus movement for Mark's audience was to be understood as receiving aright the "speaking of the word" of Jesus. In Mk it is assumed that Jesus' activity includes "speaking the word."[5] In 4:11-32 there is an especially dense concentration of the expression *logos*, exclusively in the illumination of the seeds parable (vv. 14-20). Elsewhere in his work Mark uses the expression *logos* to refer to proclamations that are about Jesus, either made by Jesus himself or by others (especially 1:45; 8:32; 9:10; 10:22, 24; 13:31). For Mark the term *logos* is therefore not so much about a body of teaching as it is about these radical proclamations that Jesus makes about himself. In the course of the narrative of Mk Jesus proclaims the coming of the reign of God (1:15), he stresses self-sacrifice and servant leadership in his followers and he speaks of the initiation of a new covenant through his body and blood. These are topics that Mark would have expected his audience to hear aright and promote in their teaching and preaching.

The unit 4:11-32 is demarcated by a short narrative comment at its beginning and ending. Readers/hearers would have perceived a change of setting at v. 10; Jesus begins here to speak privately to a restricted set of addressees (*kata monas*, v. 10). The end of the unit is recognizable with the narrator's conclusion of the episode (vv. 33-34). Within the speech unit of 4:11-32 the narrator interjects a speech formula five times.[6] Since these formulae are very brief - referring only to speaker and addressees with pronouns - and do

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[5] Although this expression is used explicitly only in two episodes (here in Mk 4 and in the earlier similar episode at 2:1-2) the assumption is that this activity is usual for Jesus. There is also a narrative link with Jesus speaking significantly in settings by the sea (1:16-19; 2:13; 3:7ff; 4:1ff; 5:21).

[6] *kai legei autois* (4:13); *kai elegen autois* (4:21, 24); *kai elegen* (4:26, 30)

not mark episodic movement they could have been conceived as reminders to the audience that the speaker's voice is still to be kept in focus. The speech verb in each case except one is in the imperfect form, signaling emphasis rather than simply successive events.[7] In all other cases in Mk where a speech formula occurs in this way within a discourse of Jesus the imperfect *elegen* is used and it emphasizes a particular part of the discourse (2:27; 4:9; 6:10; 7:9, 20; 9:1). The tension between narration of speech activity and directly reported speech is present, for example, in 6:7-11 where a significant extract from Jesus' instructions to the twelve is given as direct discourse. Similarly, in 4:11-32 Mark is not presenting a collection of typical sayings; rather, he wishes to emphasize the duration of the long discourse and at the same time extract significant parts of it. These extracts then form the speech which the audience was to take as a unit logically connected in some way. The resulting composed speech is therefore significantly directed to Mark's audience, since in the world of the narrative the addressees heard all of what Jesus said.

In Gospel scholarship the episode 4:1-34 rather than the speech is typically taken as a unit for analysis.[8] A strong topical link is noticed between the seed parable proper and the mini-narratives (vv. 15-20) which spell out that parable.[9] The rest of the episode

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[7] Stanley E. Porter, *Idioms of the Greek New Testament* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1992), 31.

[8] Ben Witherington, *The Gospel of Mark: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001), 160-173, treats 4:1-34 as two units topically arranged and integral to the larger narrative. He makes no distinction between the narrator's voice and the speech proper. See also, for examples, Larry W. Hurtado, *Mark*, New International Biblical Commentaries 2 (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1989), 71-80 and Joel Marcus, *The Mystery of the Kingdom of God* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1986).

[9] Joel Marcus, *Mystery of the Kingdom*, explicitly treats the parable (vv. 3-9) and its interpretation (vv. 13-20) as one unit distinct from the other parts of the episode. A

receives much less attention and is often grouped under the heading "sayings of Jesus."[10] It is of course probable that Mark used pre-existing tradition but I wish to stress that the text was composed responsibly[11] with the intention of dramatizing a speech here. In any case, aural perceptions of 4:11-32 would not be affected by the *manner* in which Mark produced the text.

Two scholars have recently treated Mk 4 from the perspective of rhetorical criticism.[12] Burton Mack analyses this episode as an argumentation on a chreia composed to define and legitimize the existence and eventual growth of the Markan Jesus movement. The explanation of the seeds parable establishes that the reign of God is "a kind of new paideia"[13] which "stands to Mark's Christian community as paideia-culture does to the Greeks."[14] Mark allegedly argues subtly that this paideia is not like Jewish or Greek culture. According to Mack the main point of the argumentation is that this new

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question often considered is whether Mark imposed vv. 10-12 on a unified source thus separating an original unit that contained the seed parable followed by its explanation (see Michael D. Goulder, "Those Outside (Mk. 4:10-12)," *Novum Testamentum* 33 (1991): 289-302 and bibliography there).

[10] The analysis of Witherington, *The Gospel of Mark*, that "Mark has grouped together separate groups of sayings here, *presumably* because of some thematic connection" (169, emphasis added) is disappointing though typical.

[11] Goulder, "Those Outside," 291. In using Goulder's term "responsible" I do not rule out some "clumsiness" in Mark's composition. See John C. Meagher, *Clumsy Construction in Mark's Gospel: A Critique of Form- and Redaktionsgeschichte*, Toronto Studies in Theology Vol. 3 (New York: Edwin Mellen Press, 1973), especially106-137.

[12] Burton L. Mack, "Teaching in Parables: Elaboration in Mark 4:1-34", in *Patterns of Persuasion in the Gospels* (Sonoma, Calif.: Polebridge Press, 1989), 143-160; *Myth of Innocence: Mark and Christian Origins* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988), 161-165; Mary Ann Tolbert, *Sowing the Gospel: Mark's World in Literary-Historical Perspective* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989), 127-230.

[13] Mack, "Teaching in Parables," 156.

[14] Mack, "Teaching in Parables," 155.

tideia... is a movement in conflict with other cultures."[15] He suggests, for example, that parable of the small seed becoming "the greatest of all shrubs" (vv. 31-32) is an gument that the dominant culture Israel will be displaced.[16]

Mack's analysis is not surprising given his understanding that Mk is a text that eveals the process of group formation and social factors that may have been of gnificance for the imaginative construction of a group."[17] However, Mack's notion that idence for various Jesus movements can be seen in the Gospel texts as well as his ndamental argument that Mk was written as a myth that essentially created the eneration of Jesus have been shown to be lacking in credibility.[18] Furthermore, Mack's osorption with chreia elaboration in general[19] is unhelpful if it leads to seeing this kind of rgumentation behind every bush. For it is far from obvious that Mark composed this pisode with the strict model of an elaboration exercise in mind. It even seems unlikely to ne that Mark's audience would have taken it as a deftly created argumentation.[20]

Presumably, although he does not say as much, Mack would label 4:11-32 as mainly pideictic argumentation; the Markan readers were to be persuaded that their movement was admirable and valid *vis-à-vis* the dominant cultures and other Jesus movements.

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[15] Mack, "Teaching in Parables," 156.

[16] Mack, "Teaching in Parables," 158.

[17] Mack, *Myth of Innocence*, 21.

[18] Mack, *Myth of Innocence*, 15-16, 203-204. See the critique in Henderson, *Jesus*, 46-54, and in Larry W. Hurtado, "The Gospel of Mark: Evolutionary or Revolutionary Document?" *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 40 (1990): 15-32.

[19] Burton L. Mack, "The Elaboration of the Chreia." In *Patterns of Persuasion in the Gospels* (Sonoma: Polebridge Press, 1989), 31-67.

[20] Mack, "Teaching in Parables," 160. See also Witherington's critical evaluation of Mack's analysis of another episode in Mk (*The Gospel of Mark*, 13-14).

However, given the strongly individual ethos of discipleship in Mk as a whole[21] and the portrayal of an apparently weak group of leaders,[22] it seems unlikely that Mark's intent is to bolster a group in its existence. It seems more likely that Mk was written to persuade leaders to stop taking advantage of vulnerable people among them.[23]

Mary Ann Tolbert understands the parable of the seeds to be a "plot synopsis" of a large section of the Markan narrative. The parable offers a "typology of four different possible responses to hearing the word."[24] In the large narrative section following this episode (4:35-10:52)[25] various characters fulfill that typology according to how they respond to Jesus.[26] The speech for Tolbert, therefore, constitutes not a persuasive tool in its own right but an exposition and expansion of what these character groups are like, preparing readers for interpreting the rest of the narrative. When it becomes clear to readers that the first three types of soil are played out in the narrative and the last type is not, they are challenged to produce fruit. Thus Tolbert is dealing with the question of the

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[21] The narrative of Mk lauds individuals who believe in or follow Jesus or make a sacrifice on behalf of him (e.g.: 5:20; 5:34; 7:29-30; 10:52; 12:43-44; 14:8-9) and Jesus starkly challenges individuals to sacrifice themselves for him (e.g., 10:21; 10:43-44).

[22] The twelve are consistently portrayed as dysfunctional, especially in their betrayal of Jesus (Judas, 3:19; 14:10-11, 42-45), their desertion of him at his arrest ("they all fled" 14:50) and denial of him at his trial (Peter, 14:54-72)

[23] Ian H. Henderson, "Salted with Fire (Mark 9:42-50): Style, Oracles and (Socio-)rhetorical Gospel Criticism." *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 80 (2000): 44-65.

[24] Tolbert, *Sowing the Gospel*, 149-164 (131, 129). Tolbert argues that the two shorter parables at the end of the speech serve to give "an imagistic clarification of [the] productive, good earth" (161). However, I do not find her argument convincing that Mark is especially emphasizing the terms *gē* and *sporon* since it is difficult to speak of horticulture without using them.

[25] Tolbert, *Sowing the Gospel*, 311-313.

[26] Tolbert, *Sowing the Gospel*, 153-159, 161-164.

ructural purpose of the seed parable in Mk as a whole story. In an analysis of this unit of :xt as a speech, however, it needs to be asked what Jesus' persuasive goal is in answering ıe friendly, but real challenge to explain the parable. As I have already noted, the :rongly contrastive discourse into which Jesus launches as answer to the challenge is not est understood as simple clarification. As the story unfolds readers might well have ecognized the "plot synopsis" being fulfilled but at this point, listening to Jesus' reply, ıey would surely have understood that he was making a point about "inside" versus outside."

Attentive readers/hearers would have noticed that in the preceding narrative there ıre insiders and outsiders in relation to Jesus. Jesus appointed twelve special followers 3:13-19) who were to be with him and to do work just like his work (3:14). Their ;alience is marked by the complete list of their names and other details about them (3:16-19). In the narrative succeeding the speech these twelve, however, function as negative examples thus persuading Mark's audience not to respond to the word as they do.

In the episode prior to the speech (3:20-35) there is further strong emphasis on insiders and outsiders. The crowd that comes together and sits around Jesus (3:32) is contrasted with those outside (*exō stēkontes*, 3:31; *exō zētousin se*, 3:32) who are Jesus' relatives. Furthermore, Jesus speaks in parables to his detractors, the scribes from Jerusalem, concluding with a devastating pronouncement which excludes them from God's forgiveness (3:30). Consequently by the beginning of the teaching episode (4:1)

readers/hearers have been shown that the scribes from Jerusalem and Jesus' relatives are outsiders who cannot be forgiven and who do not do the will of God.[27]

Although he talks to outsiders in parables to counter opposition in some cases (3:23, 12:1-9) Jesus speaks here in Mk 4 to crowds who are receptive. He also extends general invitations for anyone to hear who wants to (4:9, 23). In this episode as in the rest of Mk the crowds are not equivalent to those outside.[28] Mark expected his audience to identify themselves as insiders, near Jesus, receptive to his teaching and doing God's will. The narrative has clearly privileged these as characters who are aligned with the hero figure of the book who, in turn, is unquestionably aligned with God.

There is an irony in this speech, however, in that Jesus is talking to insiders (in the story world) with a tone of voice that implies they are like outsiders. The fact that they need an explanation of a parable, in the first place, implies that they are not hearing aright. In addition, the scenarios in the explanation itself depicting failure to hear aright imply that the insiders are negligent precisely in the areas described. Equally, the warnings to hear and beware (vv. 23, 24) imply that insiders are not, in fact, hearing or being careful the way they should be. Furthermore, the implication in the measure gnome (vv. 24-25) is that something may well need to be taken away from the insiders.

Such a tone of voice represented in Jesus' speech, however, puts Mark at risk in terms of the success of his persuasive effort with his audience; irony is notorious for backfiring. The kinds of people Mark is hoping to persuade may be insulted by the implications. The two final parables which are less direct in tone may have been intended

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[27] Goulder, "Those Outside," 292; Tolbert, *Sowing*, 147-148.

[28] In Mk crowds are the object of Jesus' compassion (6:34) and they listen gladly to Jesus' teaching (1:22; 2:13; 6:6, 34; 10:1; 11:17-18; 12:37, 49).

to serve as a damper, helping to mollify anticipated rejection of the overall rhetoric of the speech.[29] Furthermore, the way the narrator blurs the definition of who is an insider could be meant to lessen the sharpness of the implications. The narrator's comment in v. 33 seems to assume that the speech is typical of Jesus' speech to crowds rather than only to the disciples. The speech sets up a dilemma of "inside" versus "outside" but at the same time this apparently strict boundary is blurred in that there seem to be grades of insiders (*hoi peri auton sun tois d deka*, v. 10) and in that the insiders do not, in fact, appear to have greater insight.

Although it is impossible to discern much regarding Mark's real readers/hearers from this speech there does seem to be a particular focus of persuasion directed toward leaders.[30] It seems reasonable to say that Mark conceived this speech as potentially creating a differential effect; that is, leaders were to be persuaded to perform their duty appropriately (hear the word aright and give it out aright) and his audience generally - including aspiring leaders - were to be persuaded of the legitimacy of such a style of leadership.

The forms which Mark used to compose this speech are several and varied. Jesus begins with a double pronouncement (*humin...* and *ekeinois tois ex ...*) that includes a purpose statement consisting of a quotation from Isaiah (vv. 11-12).[31] He asks two

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[29] Mary Ann Beavis, "The Power of Jesus' Parables: Where they Polemical or Irenic?" *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 82 (2001): 3-30, makes this case for the function of parables generally.

[30] Christopher M. Tuckett, "Mark," in *The Oxford Bible Commentary*, ed. John Barton and John Median (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 886-922 (896).

[31] Is 6:9-10.

leading questions (v. 13) and states the topic of what is to follow ("it is the word that the sower sows," v. 14). He then follows step-by-step the seed parable and tells a mini-narrative to illustrate each kind of reception of the word (vv. 15-20). This explanation is followed directly by a section of gnomic argumentation; one about lamps (v. 21) and the other about measuring out grain (v. 24). The first is in the form of two questions and the latter is cast in second-person plural form. Within the gnomic section Jesus also calls for attention from anyone prepared to hear (v. 23) and articulates the only overt warning of the speech (*blepete ti akouetō*, v. 24). Mark has Jesus end the speech with two parables (vv. 26-29; 31-32). The second parable is introduced with questions cast in first-person (inclusive) form. The configuration of the forms of this speech show Jesus to be talking in distinctly different ways within one speech.

The most marked pattern of repetition occurs in the four mini-narratives. Each consists of demonstrative + *eimi* + mini-narrative. The repetition of ...*hoi* ... *eisin hoi* is quite audible. This series of four mini-narratives takes up more than one-third of the speech. Also repetitive are the two parables in that they both begin with the expression *basileia tou theou* (picking up the reference to God's reign in v. 11) and they have in common the agricultural terms *gē* and *sporon*. The sizeable section of gnomic language, taking up about one-fifth of the speech, is most obviously in the style of argumentation; both gnomes are followed by generalizations which are argued from the gnome (vv. 22, 25) with the help of the conjunction *gar*, used only at these points in the speech. However, this section is also discordant in that each of the several forms is short and connected by simple juxtaposition creating the sound of improvised or oral speech.[32]

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[32] Henderson, *Jesus*, 253-254.

The propositional content of this speech is not all presented equally clearly. Since ıe forms of the speech are not tightly bound together it is up to the audience to make onnections. However, some of the logical connections implied are easier to make than thers. In a propositional display (below) I propose possible or probable connections in ırder to reveal the cognitive processes that might have been expected to take place within he audience. I have summarized some sub-units, combined some propositions, removed igurative language to a large extent, changed questions to statements and supplied (*in talics*) propositions and elements of propositions that may have been implied. However, t should be clear that I am not simply proposing a solution to what Mark's Jesus meant; ɔart of the purpose of the exercise is to illustrate how Mark did *not* have Jesus speak.

Γhe Propositions of 4:11-32

11a You have the secret of the Reign of God. *This means you have repented and have ˈorgiveness and you are doing God's will.*

11b Those outside have parables, *i.e., do not have the secret*

12 so that they are not forgiven.

Therefore you are inside.

13a You do not know the parable of the sower.

13b *Therefore* you are not able to learn from all the parables.[33]

14 *I will explain the parable so you will be able to learn.* The word is what the sower sows.[34]

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[33] Jesus does not clarify whether this parable is a typical example or the key parable from which they are to learn about parables.

[34] My translation of this sentence brings out the salience of the expression *ho logos* in the context of the previous seeds parable. There the sower is introduced as an entity assumed to be known universally (4:3) and reference to the identity of what he sows is conspicuously absent. I therefore do not concur with the argument of Joel Marcus, "Blanks and Gaps in the Markan Parable of the Sower," *Biblical Interpretation* 5 (1997): 247-262, that audiences would be led by this part of the speech to especially reflect on possible identities of the sower.

15 Some people hear the word but do not respond because Satan prevents them.

16-17 Some people hear the word but stumble because of hardships and persecution.

18-19 Some people hear the word but do not bear fruit because cares, riches and love of things prevent them.

20 Some people hear the word and accept it and bear fruit.

21a *In order to continue about the topic of having or not having the secret of the Reign of God I shall use an illustration: it is common knowledge that* lamps are not for the purpose of being hidden

21b but are for being revealed.

23 *Because the above is eschatologically decisive for all people*, audience members who are able to hear should hear.

24a *I warn you insiders* to be concerned about the word you hear.

24b *It is commonly known that* with the measure you measure out *something to other people* it will be measured out to you.

24c and you will also get an extra portion.

Thus you have a weighty responsibility to handle it aright.

25a *This is borne out by the truth commonly known that* the person who has something will be given more.

25b *I emphasize, however, that* the person who does not have *the word, i.e., has not heard aright*, even what he/she has will be taken away *and thus he/she will be on the outside.*

26-29 *Now I shall tell two parables about the Reign of God without explaining them so that whoever wishes may see if they can hear aright.* The Reign of God is *automatically and secretly* growing like a seed that is planted, grows, and matures *and it will come to a climax just* like the harvest.

30 Consider with me another comparison or parable that will illustrate how the Reign of God is *hidden now, but nonetheless sprouting.*

31-32 It is like the very smallest seed becoming a very large plant.

It seems likely that Mark's audience would have understood a few basic points that Jesus was making in this speech. They would have gotten these from the argumentation, either explicit or implied. They would have understood that Jesus was telling them that there is an inside and an outside with God and that Jesus is directly causing the choice of who is inside and who is outside because he has the ability to hide and reveal the secret of

e reign of God. In addition, when Jesus speaks the word it is typical that people fail to ar it aright and there are various causes in life that prevent people from hearing aright. rthermore, the audience would have understood that Jesus considers it important that ople hear and take seriously what he gives when he speaks the word to them. Finally, e audience would have been inclined to take some simple moral or truth from the final rables; perhaps that they should not be concerned that the reign of God is invisible just w.

It seems less likely that the audience would make a logical connection between the nomic material (vv. 21-25) and the issue of inside versus outside. Although the reference the topic of hidden and revealed in the lamp gnome might well be taken as a reference the opening pronouncement, the gist of the argumentation of vv. 21-25 is not easy to llow. The audience would likely catch a sense of urgency; the warning to heed and ossibly the implication of losing what they have. The composition of this section, erhaps deliberately stylized, makes it difficult to know what Jesus is arguing for.

A significant aspect of the persuasive effect that this speech would have had on Mark's audience is not measurable primarily by propositional content or by how readers/hearers, through cognitive processes, comprehend a logical argument. There is, first of all, an effect created by the pervasive contrastive language. By using expressions that allude to the issue of inside versus outside the speaker is making an implicit call to consider this issue and choose the option for which he is arguing.

The inside pole of the dilemma is signaled by numerous expressions: "to you the secret is given" (v. 11); "hear the word" (vv. 15, 16, 18, 20); "accept... and bear fruit" (v.

20); "lamp.... upon the lampstand" (v. 21); "manifest, come to light" (v. 22); "given to you" (v. 24); "have... more will be given" (v. 25); "earth produces, grain is ripe" (vv. 28-29); "greatest of all shrubs" (v. 32). The outside pole of the dilemma, on the other hand, is characterized by several opposite expressions: "those outside... in parables" (v. 11); "not know" (v. 13); "Satan takes away..." (v. 15); "stumble" (v. 17); "become unfruitful" (v. 19); "under a bushel... bed" (v. 21); "hidden/secret" (v. 22); "not have... taken away from" (v. 25); "sickle, harvest has come" (v. 29).

In addition to the pervasive inside-outside terminology Jesus' character and his capabilities are evident in the way Mark represents him. Mack plays down the difference between the typical elaboration of a chreia in which the rhetor would do the arguing and the representation created by Mark in which the famous person himself (Jesus) does the arguing.[35] This difference is significant, however, since Mark does not argue overtly in the whole of his work as a rhetor typically would do in a speech;[36] rather, he argues in significant degree via Jesus' voice.[37] This is surely because Mark believed that represented words and deeds of the pre-Easter Jesus were to have a persuasive effect on his audience who venerated the post-Easter Jesus. Mack does not note a connection

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[35] Mack, "Teaching in Parables."

[36] Robert M. Fowler, *Let the Reader Understand: Reader-Response Criticism and the Gospel of Mark* (Minneapolis : Fortress Press, 1991), 73-80, makes a similar point from the perspective of readers processing a narrative.

[37] Mark also argues through his own anonymous narrative and framing comments, but these often bring into focus Jesus' own implicit motives (e.g., 4:10, 33-34).

between the identity of who is speaking and the effect this could have had on the audience.[38]

On the contrary, there are several ways in which Jesus' character is significant in relation to the effect of his speech. In the mini-narratives he speaks as one who knows all about the life of a person aligned to the Jesus movement but prone to failure for various reasons. Jesus is clearly presented as one who has access to knowledge about God's reign which ordinary humans do not. He is able to reveal or withhold the secret of God's reign. In addition Jesus has the authority of a revered ancient prophet and is able to speak with his words as well as in his authoritative voice (v. 12). Even for readers/hearers without much knowledge of Isaiah this stretch of Jesus' speech would sound like an allusion to the voice of someone understood to be an authoritative figure. However, the fact that Jesus takes on that voice himself shows how he considers himself to be speaking prophetically the thoughts of God. Finally, in part of the speech, Jesus sounds especially like he is speaking an oracle, thereby highlighting, by the effect this creates, that he is directly connected with God (vv. 21-25, esp. vv. 22, 25). On the surface, in terms of Mark's compositional effort, this section could be heard as clumsy composition. However, because Jesus is speaking about hidden and revealed matters and because he has the power to make things hidden by speaking mysteriously, the effect of such a style accomplishes in part his agenda of making things mysterious for outsiders.[39] Of course the narrator creates an impression of a Jesus with such authority and insight and as the speech progresses the

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[38] In his discussion of this episode Mack, "Teaching in Parables", does not speak of Jesus' voice being represented. His article contains curious terminology, e.g.: "now the discourse can use direct address"; "the discourse has chosen a mustard seed" (157, 158).

[39] Henderson, *Jesus*, 253-255.

audience also comes to know the things Jesus does. Rhetorically the question for Mark is whether his representation will be taken to be near enough to what his audience believes the (post-Easter) Jesus has to say and thus persuasive.

A further effect in the speech not adequately explained as primarily conceptual-argumentational is created by the mini-narratives. Jesus depicts three failures and one success. Ben Witherington recognizes that this terminology "seems to reflect the language of the early church" but he does not suggest how the use of this terminology would persuade members of the early church toward some thought or action.[40] To say that these descriptions are "appropriate" for Christian congregations because they depict their situation[41] is different from suggesting how they would actually be affected in that situation when they heard the speech. Mark's audience would recognize their situation most clearly in the content of the second and third mini-narratives, particularly in the expressions *genomenēs thlipseōs ē diōgmou... skandalizontai* and *merimnai tou aiōnos, hē apatē tou ploutou, hai peri ta loipa* (vv. 17, 19). In his work as a whole Mark restricts the term *skandalizō* exclusively to Jesus' words to the twelve: the stern warnings against causing "little ones" to stumble (9:42-48); the prediction that they will all stumble (14:27-31). These phrases therefore probably reflect conventional terminology that all Christians contemporary to Mark would have used to speak of leadership or teaching which leads others to apostasy.

The mini-narratives are just that, narratives. Jesus makes no overt judgment as to whether people who fail thus are insiders or outsiders. The members of Mark's audience

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[40] Witherington, *The Gospel of Mark*, 168-169 (168).

[41] Witherington, *The Gospel of Mark*, 168.

e left to consider for themselves whether their ability to identify these causes of failure . their lives means that they are outsiders. Because Jesus does not specify where they fit ıto these scenarios and because there is a range of things that can cause lack of fruit, they ·ould suspect that these mini-narratives were not simply descriptions of their (lack of) lignment with the Jesus movement but that there was reason for uneasiness about their tatus. In other words, Jesus is trying to tell them something indirectly.[42]

A further effect at the level of feeling or emotions is that Jesus ends the speech with wo stories about horticulture (vv. 26-32) *without* explaining them. Jesus explicitly :onnects both these stories with the reign of God and thus the speech proper begins and :nds with this concept. However, neither Jesus nor the narrator add any moral or ıpplication to be gotten from these short parables. Mary Ann Beavis has recently argued :onvincingly that for Greco-Roman readers/hearers the synoptic parables would have resembled a popular literary and pre-rhetorical genre, the fable, and they would have expected "a moral application to sum up [their] meaning."[43] As Beavis notes well, a number of Lukan and Matthean accounts of parables include a *pro-* or *epithymia* that supplies precisely such a moral or application.[44] The fact that Mark provides hardly any such applications (perhaps only one, 12:9-11) coincides significantly with his

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[42] Tolbert, *Sowing the Gospel*, sees merely a general reference to unfruitfulness in the first three mini-narratives (161).

[43] Mary Ann Beavis, "Parable and Fable," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 52 (1990): 473-498, especially 494, 496 (496). Beavis is influenced by Klaus Berger, "Hellenistische Gattungen im Neuen Testament," in *Aufstieg und Niedergang der Römische Welt* II.25.2, eds. H. Tempering and W. Haze (Berlin: de Grunter, 1986), 1110-1124 and Mary Ann Tolbert, *Perspectives on the Parables* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979), 27-28, 42-43.

[44] These are conveniently displayed in an appendix in Beavis, "Parable and Fable," 497-498.

characterization of Jesus' speech in the story world as confusing and difficult for his followers to understand. However, according to the evidence laid out by Beavis, the audience of 4:26-32 would have been inclined to supply an application and would thus be challenged to put into practice a proper reception of the word. Heard in this way the closing parables would constitute an oblique and gentle reference to the dilemma, an encouraging rather than a threatening reference.[45]

In addition to the persuasive effects thus far considered, I wish to point out that in 4:11-32 the moments at which Jesus addresses directly the insiders of the story are marked by their urgency regarding inside versus outside. There are three significant parts of the speech in which Mark has Jesus use second-person forms (*humin* (vv. 11); *oidate, gnōsesthe* (v. 13); *blepete, akouete, metreite, humin, humin* (v. 24)) thus directing his words explicitly to the addressees. These portions of the speech create a tone of urgency that enhances the salience of the dilemma of inside versus outside. The urgency is most clearly noticeable in Jesus' double pronouncement at the very beginning of the speech (vv. 11-12) but also in the questions directed to the addressees (v. 13) and the overt warning, *blepete*, with its accompanying argumentation (vv. 24-25).

The insiders are told they have the secret of God's reign and, from the preceding narrative, this implies that they have repented, that they believe the gospel (1:15) and do God's will (3:35). However, this positive pronouncement is not stressed as forcefully as

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[45] In a subsequent article Beavis has challenged the way NT scholars have typically made extravagant claims about the "alleged, earth-shattering qualities" of the parable and has demonstrated with the use of several comparable social settings that parables, even for Jesus' first hearers, would have been perceived as "opaque" rather than "earth-shattering" (see Beavis, "The Power of Jesus' Parables," (4, 30)).

the following negative pronouncement concerning those outside. The heavy stress on the negative creates a mood of uneasiness. Insiders do not get long to consider themselves fortunate. The second part of the pronouncement is more than three times as long as the first and is dominated by the damning oracle of a major, unnamed prophet. Whether or not Mark's audience has considered previously its alignment regarding the dilemma, here it is urged by the sheer effect of the pronounced emphasis to consider whether it truly is on the inside.

The quotation of Isaiah enforces the urgency of the dilemma. Jesus is appealing to a worthy character from the past whose word is to be regarded as highly authoritative. Isaiah's voice here is saying much the same thing as Jesus has said earlier in the larger episode to his detractors. Those outsiders from Jerusalem, the scribes, say Jesus has an unclean spirit and Jesus tells them that the one who blasphemes thus "will not have forgiveness in the age hereafter" (3:29). In addition, Mark has aligned himself strongly with Isaiah from the beginning of his work by quoting him. Here he has Jesus quote him as if his words are his own words. Thus the appeal to Isaiah's voice implies that any position other than the speaker's regarding this issue is completely in the wrong.

In addition, Jesus claims that it is the parabolic form of his teaching that is critical for preventing the outsiders from seeing and hearing aright. This leads to an uneasiness in the audience since the implication is that it might not be as easy to understand Jesus' teaching as was thought. Although there is an assurance from Jesus that insiders have been given the secret, at the same time the overall tone and import of the double pronouncement would leave Mark's audience uneasy about its status. This undefined hint of warning is also evident in the pair of questions (v. 13) by which Jesus implies that

because they do not know one important parable they will not be able to learn from all the other parables. Insiders are like outsiders insofar as they too cannot know the parables, they have to have Jesus explain the parables for them. This opens the possibility of being on the outside. Jesus holds a grip on them in that not only is he the only person who speaks in parables but he knows the parables well whereas they do not. The explanation in the form of four mini-narratives is in large part an emphasized illustration of the fact that Jesus understands parables but they need to be told. It is true that members of the audience might be inclined to contrast themselves with the addressees of the story claiming that they can indeed understand the parables. However, a degree of unease is created by the fact that Jesus gives no overt reassurance for the insider audience. This is, in effect, persuasion toward checking for ambivalence nonetheless.

Jesus' somewhat oxymoronic command to "watch out what you hear" (v. 24) is the only universal imperative in this speech. Together with the more obliquely stated warning of v. 23 it constitutes the only warning in this speech. But these warnings are not followed by a definition of the content of what is to be heard; rather, Jesus presents a series of arguments that do not refer to the words in the command. The connection between "measuring out" and "receiving more" and the warning to "watch out" implies that there is an urgency regarding the word that is heard and is to be proclaimed. Leaders responsible for teaching - Mark's projected audience here - were to consider seriously the responsibility they had as followers of Jesus since they, like him, were to "proclaim."[46]

Mark represents Jesus' voice in this argumentation, however, not as one that makes a clear argument; rather, Jesus expresses a "hidden" utterance, one that requires

consideration and probing to be understood aright. This is borne out by the construction of the gnomic argumentation concerning "measuring" which leaves hanging the question of what it means to have something "taken away." There is a symmetrical relationship between the two parts of the argumentation of vv. 24-25 except for the last part (v. 25b). The idea of having something taken away does not have its counterpart in the first half of the argumentation. This can be illustrated in a chart as follows:

Gnomic argumentation (vv. 24-25)

	Given/ (not) having	More given	Taken away (emphasized)
Direct address	*en h ... humin*	*prosteth setai humin*	--
Generalization (*gar*)	*hos gar echei*	*doth setai aut*	--
Non-fit	*kai hos ouk echei*	---	*kai hos echei... arth setai ap' autou*

Thus the last phrase of the argumentation is stressed both by its final position as well as by the imbalance of the structure. In addition there is some confusion created by the emphasis placed on the expression *ouk echei* (v. 25b) because it is difficult to fit with *ar th setai*; if one has nothing to begin with, surely nothing can be taken away. There is thus a warning note sounded in this oblique argumentation, but its consequences are not precisely defined. Mark's audience would be left with the uncanny feeling of being outside because possession of the word is not to be taken for granted.

In a hearing of 4:11-32 as a whole, but especially at the points in the speech where Jesus addresses his words directly to the insiders of the story, the audience is not free to be at ease about its understanding of Jesus' teaching: the speech is persuading people to

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[46] This duty given to the twelve can be seen in Mk by comparing the contexts around the term *k russ* "proclaim" (1:14-15; 3:14; 6:12).

consider that being outside is a fearful predicament; they are reminded that if Jesus does not explain his hidden discourse to them they are unable to understand it aright; and, having received the word, they are being persuaded to take seriously their responsibility in measuring it out to others.

In this section I have directed attention to 4:11-32 rather than the whole narrative unit (4:1-34). While not denying the persuasive force of narrative episodes my purpose has been to investigate the text of the speech itself for persuasive elements. I hope to have shown that there is a significant persuasive element in the fact that Mark has Jesus hold up a dilemma for his audience. The dilemma is not overtly argued as such, however; rather, Mark composed a speech in which a range of effects work together to bring across the urgency of this dilemma. To be sure, Mark has logical things to say about election, the reception of the word and the reign of God and he expects his audience to think with him about these topics. However, I have argued here that a significant part of Mark's persuasive technique was to have Jesus speak in a way that would make people feel an uneasiness regarding the issue of whether they were on the inside with God. Although this speech - in the course of the whole of Mk - was to be heard by Christian readers/hearers generally, Mark seems to be focusing in parts of the speech more sharply on leaders in the Christian movement. The fact that the definition of who is inside is not clearly set out, neither by the narrator nor by Jesus, probably served to put Mark's audience of leaders at unease regarding how they measured up to the call of this speech.

I have noted the marked way in which a contrast is presented at the beginning of the speech, with special focus on the negative side of the inside versus outside issue. There is

a considerable amount of terminology in the speech which reinforces this dilemma. Furthermore, Mark does not have Jesus argue extensively in explicit propositional forms; a whole array of forms is strung together. Jesus portrays in mini-narratives what apostasy is like, he argues opaquely using gnomic language sounding at moments as though he is getting his words directly from revelation and he speaks in parables without explanation. In the speech there are highlighted sections in which Jesus' voice carries a special urgency. It is in these words that the note of warning regarding ambivalence is most clearly heard. Both the reception of the word and the responsibility that comes with having received it are points about which Mark is persuading his audience.

In the speech there is a marked absence of any explicit argumentation from Jesus for the audience to make sure which side it is on. Because of the ethical force of the speaker, however, this cannot be taken as carelessness on the part of the speaker; rather, Jesus must be speaking in this manner in a calculated way. Thus, although audience members would most likely attempt to supply the content of what is implied, it is reasonable to say that Mark intended for them to feel uneasy regarding which side of the issue they are on. This is in effect a strategy to persuade people to consider their ambivalence and to change their thinking.

5 LEADERS AND "LITTLE ONES" (MK 9:39-50): JESUS' SPEECH ABOUT SERVANT LEADERSHIP

The speech delivered by Jesus in Capernaum to his twelve disciples in a semi-private setting (*en tē oikia*, 9:33) is characterized by a preponderance of material which was intended as persuasion not primarily at the level of concept and rational thought.[1] Although Jesus does argue rationally in this speech, a significant part of it consists of a series of threats which contain gruesome references to self-mutilation and infernal punishment (vv. 42-48). In terms of the definitions in Section 2 above, therefore, a significant part of Mark's goal was to persuade his audience at the level of feeling or emotion. At the same time, the speech is clearly composed as a single rhetorical unit within the narrative episode of 9:33-50; it constitutes Jesus' reply to an observation made by one of the twelve. Although the narrative introduction, *ho de Iēsous eipen*, (v. 39), is typical of dialogical exchanges and as such does not suggest that a speech of any length is forthcoming this unit of text would have been heard as a major speech; Jesus' voice continues for an extended unbroken stretch[2] in which it takes on a unique style of its own.

In a recent study which focuses on the extended latter part of the speech (vv. 42-50) Ian Henderson has argued that the persuasive force of this speech is to be found largely in the way Mark characterizes Jesus' voice. Jesus speaks in the style of a prophetic oracle by which he places "Mark's readers under a curse of office as leaders" thereby "trying to convince leaders... to identify practically with Jesus' model of anointed leadership as

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[1] See the discussion in Section 2 above.

[2] See the graph in the appendix.

servanthood and self-sacrifice."[3] Mark is hoping to persuade leaders to change the way they lead; the disunity among them is causing harm to the "little people" whom they are leading. Given the well-grounded conclusion of that study, rather than putting forward a fresh analysis of Mark's rhetorical purpose, my purpose here is to focus on certain surface features of Mark's composition and to suggest how these function as part of his persuasive tool. I therefore begin by introducing the speech, after which I mention briefly the scholarship pertinent to this study. I then examine the text of the speech itself: the recognizably argumentational opening section of the speech (vv. 39-41); then the linking statement about "little ones" (v. 42); and, in some more detail, five features of the text which would have affected Mark's audience persuasively not primarily at the level of concept and rational thought.

As I have noted, the addressees of this speech are the twelve, a group marked as special in the narrative of Mk. For readers/hearers in Mark's day, these were the apostolic (or post-apostolic) leaders of churches. In this context, and because of the way Jesus places emphasis on the "little ones" and their stumbling, it is most likely that Mark intended leaders to take this speech (indeed, the whole narrative episode) as directed towards them in particular.[4] Jesus begins his speech as a reply to a question posed by one

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[3] Ian H. Henderson, "Salted with Fire (Mark 9.42-50): Style, Oracles and (Socio)rhetorical Criticism," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 80 (2000): 44-65, (65, 55).

[4] It is common for critics to treat this episode, speech included, as written for the edification of any and every "disciple" of Jesus. This section is often referred to as "sayings" or "discourse" on the topic of discipleship in general. See Urban von Wahlde, "Mark 9:33-50: Discipleship: The Authority that Serves," *Biblische Zeitschrift*, 29 (1985): 49-67 (59); Harry Fleddermann, "The Discipleship Discourse (Mark 9:33-50),"

of the twelve (vv. 39-40) concerning group membership. He then refers back - by implication, through word associations (vv. 41-42) - to the topic of receiving a child, a topic which he addressed earlier in the episode (vv. 35-37). At this point Jesus utters a series of three dire injunctions to amputate various body parts rather than have them be the cause of stumbling. These gloomy words form a major portion of the speech (vv. 43-48). Jesus ends the speech with some short, pithy statements about fire and salt (vv. 49-50a), finally giving a clear exhortation to "be at peace among yourselves" (v. 50b). Only the very first and the very last clauses of this speech are unambiguous commands given by the speaker: "do not forbid him" (v. 39); "be at peace among yourselves" (v. 50). The speech as a whole, in contrast, is characterized rather by ambiguity. Not only does Jesus utter a lengthy repetitive tirade but even in the more recognizably argumentational sections (vv. 39-41; 49-50) he uses expressions or phrases that invite non-literal interpretations (e.g., "whoever gives you a cup of water..." (v. 41), "have salt in yourselves" (v. 50)) or speculation about how they are to be connected logically.

Modern Gospel critics, with their interest in the authenticity of Jesus' words and Markan redaction, have seen in this episode (Mk 9:33-50) signs of catchword composition; the passage is understood to be a group of disparate sayings linked by a few words they have in common.[5] Some scholars have argued more recently that Mark's

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Catholic Biblical Quarterly 43 (1981), 57-75 (71); Christopher Bryan, *A Preface to Mark: Notes on the Gospel and its Literary and Cultural Settings* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993): "the *community* must be gentle with its weakest members... (9:42-50)" (61, emphasis added). However, "the narrative context of Mark 9 makes clear that Jesus is not talking to everyone;" rather, Mark "is seeking to persuade an audience of actual or potential leaders" (Henderson, "'Salted with Fire,'" 52-54 (52, 54).

[5] See Fleddermann, "The Discipleship Discourse," 57 and bibliography there. See also Christopher M. Tuckett, "Mark," in *The Oxford Bible Commentary*, eds. John Barton

redaction was more purposeful than that and claim that there is (theo)logical sense to be made out of the narrative episode and Jesus' words within that episode.[6] Studies such as these do not treat the speech as a unit of persuasive communication in its own right; rather, the narrative together with the sayings are taken as a piece of didactic material by which members of the Markan community were to monitor their conduct.[7] As a speech 9:39-50, however, does not sound like teaching; "Jesus' voice [is] argumentative, rather than instructive."[8]

If the speech is not didactic, neither does it measure up to an argumentational elaboration of a chreia.[9] For it to be such, the longer section of the speech (vv. 42-50) should serve to develop in a rational way the short anecdote of Jesus' interaction with his disciples regarding greatness (vv. 33-37) or exorcism (v. 38). Jesus begins the speech by ostensibly addressing a case to be considered, how to handle people who are not members

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and John Muddiman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 886-922 (905-906); Ben Witherington, *The Gospel of Mark: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001), 272. C.F.D. Moule, *The Gospel According to Mark* (Cambridge: University Press, 1965), 73-81, entitles all of 9:33-10:1 as "various sayings." For a convenient summary of earlier scholarship see von Wahlde, "Discipleship," 49-50.

[6] von Wahlde, "Discipleship," has recently taken such an approach, claiming that "the complexity of the passage and the skill and art with which it has been arranged still has [sic] not been fully elucidated" (50). He cites Fleddermann, "Discipleship Discourse," as a significant attempt.

[7] von Wahlde, "Discipleship," 67.

[8] Henderson, "Salted with Fire," 54-55 (54).

[9] Henderson, "Salted with fire," in reference to Burton L. Mack and Vernon K. Robbins, *Patterns of Persuasion in the Gospels* (Sonoma: Polebridge Press, 1989), notes that the speech "does not nearly measure up to the formal units of 'complete argumentation' which [these scholars] have detected elsewhere in the Gospels" (48). Mack and Robbins, perhaps significantly, have not treated this episode or speech in their extensive work.

of the movement. As such, this constitutes argumentation following upon a chreia. However, because of the long stretch of material that follows, which is more like repetitive poetry than like argumentation, and which is not overtly on the topics of the chreia, it is difficult to see how this could be an argumentational elaboration of the case being considered. Jesus begins by addressing an issue but the bulk of his speech sounds like purposefully unclear speech rather than clear argumentation. So much so, in fact, that the last, very short command - clear as it is on its own - seems to come out of nowhere.

Further, because of the topics raised in the larger narrative of Mk regarding discipleship (i.e., 8:27 - 10:45) there is an expectation created that when Jesus is given the chance to speak at some length, he will offer some teaching or arguments on those topics.[10] Jesus, however, sounds scary with his series of unnervingly graphic descriptions of amputation and somewhat confusing with his short ambiguous statements at the end of the speech. Thus the narrative expectation of teaching on obviously important topics is not fulfilled. As I have noted earlier, Jesus is depicted at several points in the Markan narrative as teaching publicly with effect.[11] If Jesus is really a teacher in Mk, then this

[10] The whole central section of the Gospel presents topics advocating discipleship as imitation of Jesus through suffering and death: self-sacrifice (8:34-37); childhood, littleness, servanthood (9:33-37; 10:13-16; 10:35-45); voluntary poverty (10:17-31). Therefore "we are richly entitled to expect a major expression of Mark's Jesus on discipleship, sacrifice and leadership" (Henderson, "'Salted with Fire,'" 48).

[11] See Section 3 of this study.

stretch of his voice is not representative of what Mark's narrative descriptions elsewhere imply.[12]

The first part of the speech (vv. 39-41) is composed of several propositions connected with the particle *gar* (vv. 39b, 40a, 41a). This argumentational way of speaking by Jesus is not unfamiliar to the readers/hearers.[13] Jesus' command, *mē kōluete auton*, is the part of the speech most clearly connected to John's observation ("Teacher, we saw someone exorcising demons in your name, and we forbade him, because he was not following us," v. 38). With the succeeding statements, introduced by *oudeis gar* and *hos gar*, Jesus gives the reason why the twelve should not forbid the man. The first of these statements is associated with John's case through repetition of phrases and ideas from John's comment; *epi tō onomati mou* is a repeat of John's *en onomati sou* and *poiēsei dunamin* refers to John's *ekballonta daimonia.*

The second reason Jesus gives is more general (v. 40); it now includes anyone like this man. Jesus thus argues that the man is *huper hēmōn.* He does so indirectly not by actually referring to the man again (as with the expression *auton* in v. 39) but by speaking generally, using the expression *hos.* Jesus thus seems to be arguing from a specific case to a general exhortation that people like this man, because of their connection with him, are to be considered part of the group.

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[12] "Mark systematically invokes the possibility of an instructional text, but avoids actually attributing such texts to Jesus" (Henderson, "'Salted with Fire,'" 54).

[13] Jesus has used the connective eleven times previously in Mk (1:38; 3:35; 4:22, 25; 7:10, 21, 27; 8:35, 36, 37, 38).

The third argument that Jesus puts forward also begins with the expression *hos gar* (v. 41). It forms a climax to the reasons for not forbidding the exorcist; it is again connected to the previous thoughts with the expression *en onomati* and it includes the climactic *amēn legō humin*. If the sense of the particle *gar* in its use here is taken to be "in fact," then this is an example of a deed that, in contrast to the exorcism, is a small deed but is actually more important than that "great" deed. Although this is in line with the previous discussion about greatness and the example of the child, the fact that Jesus begins by explicitly answering John's topic about forbidding someone makes it difficult to connect it to the topic of greatness in this way. In these first few lines of his speech Jesus is engaged in argumentational persuasion, but he is just not doing so very clearly. Two topics seem to be taken on at once and the relation between the two is not clearly spelled out. Although the basic argument might well have been caught (see directly below), I think that Mark's audience would have experienced some degree of confusion with the swiftly changing implications in these few lines of the speech.

Mark's audience of leaders were to conclude from this first stretch of argumentation that the "little people" within their midst whom they were to be serving authentically were indeed just as vitally connected to Jesus as they were - if not more so. Such a conclusion could have been drawn by leaders if they made these appropriate logical connections themselves since Jesus does not spell this out in so many words. Further, it could be persuasive if they recognized Jesus' words as intentionally composed so as to be applied to themselves as leaders, not simply a depiction of Jesus' historical ministry. Mark cannot have Jesus teach or argue directly to a situation historically current to the

time of his audience[14] because he is committed to the form of a historical account and - quite likely - because he wishes to make a point obliquely so that hearers of his work can arrive on their own at a realization of needed change. Further, Mark does not have Jesus speak only to the issue of the episode; rather, he has him widen and generalize the referents so that the audience can make a connection between the argument of the episode and his own argument through Jesus' voice.

The words of v. 42 are pivotal in this speech. On the one hand Jesus here continues on the topic of little ones (*mikroi*) and, indeed, stresses it to a great degree. On the other hand he now introduces the new topic of causing to stumble (*hos an skandalisē*) and launches the series of statements about consequences of causing to stumble, all beginning with the expression *kalon estin*. Although it is not surprising that commentaries, articles and translations almost universally make a break at v. 42,[15] the aural as well as logical connections to v. 41 and to the earlier topic of littleness are sufficiently noticeable to imply that this is a continuation of the argumentation and not an entirely new unit. The two beginning sounds of vv. 41 and 42 (*hos an ...isē*) as well as the parallel forms of vv. 42 and 43 in particular suggest continuation of argument.

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[14] How a purported historical account functions as persuasion is not unlike the communication that is envisioned by authors of pseudepigraphal literature of an epistle genre. See the discussion in Richard Bauckham, "Pseudo-Apostolic Letters," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 107 (1988): 469-494 and in my "The Epistle of Jude: Authentic or Pseudepigraphal?" (University of Manitoba: Unpublished Ms., 1995).

[15] I have found only one translation (Goodspeed, 1948) that graphically presents Jesus' speech (9:39-50) as a unit.

However, at the same time, although the long noun phrase referring to the little ones (*hena tōn mikrōn toutōn tōn pisteuontōn eis eme*, v. 42a) is surely a heavily marked topic, it is unclear whether this deictic phrase signals that Jesus is here gesturing to the child he embraced moments ago or whether Mark is primarily intending his audience to take this as a reference to vulnerable little people (*mikroi*) in their midst. In addition, the apparently new topic of giving a drink of water (just introduced, v. 41) is not developed within this new topic of *skandalizō*. Furthermore, given the great stress on *mikroi* in the first half of the speech, it is puzzling that such an important topic is not further mentioned in the remaining part of the speech. Still further, the last injunction of the speech, *eirēneuete en allēlois*, the clearest speech unit of all, is not connected to the major topic of causing little ones to stumble. If there was a logical connection intended by Mark in all of this, his audience has to infer it with difficulty.

In the first half of this speech (vv. 39-42) Mark has created an impression of Jesus speaking logically on a topic. The argumentation is grounded in the narrative episode but also goes beyond it by generalizing the topic. V. 42 seems to continue the immediate topic of group membership as well as to refer back to the topic of little ones, a topic already strongly emphasized in the narrative of vv. 36-37. Especially noticeable are the two phrases that refer to "one of these children/little ones" (vv. 37, 42). Jesus has answered briefly the challenge made by John regarding group membership while at the same time he has managed to turn the argument back to the previous - for him more important - topic of little ones. This return back to a previous topic serves to put down the leaders in the story world in favor of the child which he set in their midst. Mark's audience may have followed this implication in the turn of the narrative and speech. If it

was perceived that Jesus was intent on talking about little ones, the continuation of the speech could have been taken then as directed to leaders and their relation to the "little people" whom they were to serve. It is this next section of the speech to which I now turn.

Following Henderson's study, I have already stressed that this speech of Jesus includes an especially noticeable series of menacing statements (vv. 43-48). These statements are repetitious and gruesome in their content. Rhetorical force is not simply measurable as text, as if to say that certain words or expressions represent rational argumentation while certain other words create an effect of a non-argumentational nature. Nevertheless, there is a link between linguistic output on the one hand and the way in which an audience is affected on the other. As I have mentioned, this part of the speech is not best understood as primarily intended to persuade at the level of concept and rational thought. Accordingly, in the remaining part of this section, I examine the features of the text which are better described as affecting an audience persuasively at the level of feeling or emotion. The features I examine can be organized into four sub-sections as follows: the repetition itself; the allusion to traditional material (a Biblical quotation as well as the use of a non-Greek word); the graphic portrayal of gruesome things; the language similar to imprecation. Since these features are obvious on the surface of the text they provide good material for analyzing the way Mark composed his tool, the text, and what he hoped to achieve with it.

The degree of actual repetition of words in this section of the speech is immediately noticeable, even without a formal word count. A comparison shows that in this stretch of

the speech the ratio of total words to unique words is 95/37 (about 5 to 2), whereas in the rest of the speech this ratio is much smaller: 103/65 (about 3 to 2). The larger the ratio, the more words are repeated. The repetition is achieved not simply by words repeated at random; rather, the three parallel constructions are themselves a form of repetition, and more perceptible to readers/hearers. The considerable amount of common form in these parallel constructions can be represented as follows:

> if body part scandalizes you, remove it
> better with maimed body to go to reward,
> than with whole body to go to torment

All this Jesus says three times in succession. The only essential variation are the names of the body parts: *cheir, pous, ophthalmos*.

By repeating something a speaker (or writer) is not primarily developing or strengthening a point. That is, the repetition itself does not add new propositions to be processed in the context of propositions already presented. To be sure, speakers often combine some degree of repetition with the presentation of new material. In this way a speaker can nuance a thought that is already in the argument. However, repetition itself is often used to create an effect on the feelings of the audience. Although it does serve to effect emphasis and enhance memory, thus involving some degree of logical thought, it is not primarily a series of logically connected parts of an argument.

The mention of body parts in this speech has been taken to refer to sources of temptation in general for the disciple.[16] Treating the passage in this way allows readers to bypass its gruesome nature and turn it into something that is more like logical thought. It seems more likely, however, that such a rational understanding of the body parts

[16] von Wahlde, "Discipleship," 58-59.

developed as a result of the difficulty of the passage rather than that Mark wrote it originally as material "for exhorting avoidance of temptation in a *variety of situations*."[17] Rather, in the repetition of 9:43-48, the argument which Jesus makes in the first of the three parallel forms is not significantly developed by the fact that different body parts are named in each succeeding unit. The tongue, for example, could plausibly have been mentioned and thus a fourth unit could have been added. However, although this would have widened somewhat the scope of the inferences to be made about "causing to stumble," it would not have significantly influenced Mark's audience to draw further logical conclusions. In large part the mention of body parts and especially their amputation or mutilation serves to enhance the vividness of the gruesome prospect of the consequences of causing little ones to stumble.[18]

The literature of Hebrew prophetic oracles provides examples of repetition of a similar character. Within the oracle of Habakkuk there is a large section in which each of several stanzas begins with the interjection "alas for you!" These stanzas consist of pronouncements (Hab 2:6ff), descriptions of evil done (2:9ff), taunts and declarations about Yahweh (2:12ff; 2:19ff), each differing in content. The fact of the repetition creates the effect of reproach amassing on the people who are being addressed. In a similar way Matthew portrays Jesus pronouncing woes on three towns (Mt 11:21-24).[19] The repetition there, though not as extended, creates a similar effect of a tirade being

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[17] von Wahlde, "Discipleship," 59, emphasis added.

[18] Although the discourse involving body parts and their removal is highly prominent in this speech Witherington almost entirely avoids mention of this element of the speech in his discussion of vv. 42-50, notwithstanding his brief reference to "drastic remedies" (see Witherington, *The Gospel of Mark*, 272-274 (272)).

delivered. Similarly, the classic, short parallelisms in Hebrew poetry are not always logical developments one upon the other (e. g., "The very stones will cry out from the wall, and the beams will respond from the woodwork," Hab 2:11); rather, the figures often vary in the second parallel form but express the same logical thought.

I am not saying that there is no logical argumentation going on in Habakkuk's series of stanzas or in the Matthean repetitive speech of Jesus; my point is that the effect created by repetition is not best understood as logical argumentation. If persuasion takes place through these effects, it is primarily at the level of emotion or feeling. In the case of the repetition in Jesus' speech in 9:43-48 the effect is oppressive, a relentless pounding of the same point.

A further notable feature of this part of Jesus' speech is the sheer weight of the horrors of bodily mutilation and destruction that are portrayed. Throughout this passage the physical body is in focus. This is so in the commands to cut off or remove body parts (*akopson autēn* (v. 43), *akopson auton* (v. 45), *ekbale auton* (v. 47)), in the mention of the mutilated body (*kullon* (v. 43), *chōlon* (v. 45), *monophthalmon* (v. 47)) and in the implications of bodies burning and rotting (*eis tēn geennan... asbeston* (v. 43), *eis tēn geennan* (v. 45), *hopou ho skōlēx... ou sbennutai* (v. 48)). The description of details with the intent of affecting the feelings of the audience is an important topic for ancient rhetoricians.[20] Mark has Jesus speak in this way for the same reason. He intended his

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[19] The parallel passage in Lk 10:13-15 does not have the full repetition that Mt has.

[20] See, for example, Quintilian's extended discussion (*Institutio Oratoria* VI.ii.1-36).

audience to feel horror at the prospect of self-mutilation or the gruesome ordeal of infernal punishment.

The non-Greek word *geenna* is used by Jesus three times in the speech, naming the place of punishment. At its first occurrence the word is followed by a phrase which defines it as "the unquenchable fire" (v. 43). The phrase *eis tēn geennan* corresponds to the earlier expression *eis tēn thalassan* (v. 42). At its second occurrence it stands on its own (v. 45). The final occurrence of *geenna* is accompanied by two modifying, subordinated clauses which again, in more detail, describe what goes on in that place.

This latter description is taken almost word for word from Greek Isaiah.[21] The plural pronoun *autōn* which Mark keeps from Isaiah is grammatically slightly jarring in this context, since Jesus has been relentlessly reiterating the singular forms *se* and *sou* (nine times in the space of three verses). It is partly this grammatical non-fit that makes the unidentified quotation sound as though Jesus is echoing another's voice, taking it from another context and fitting it - somewhat indiscriminately - into his speech.

According to Harry Fledderman Mark used the sentence from Isaiah as convenient material to explain an unknown term to readers/hearers for whom the expression "gehenna" was not familiar.[22] Mark glosses non-Greek expressions elsewhere in his Gospel and makes it clear that he is doing so by inserting a phrase something like "which

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[21] The LXX at Is 66:24 has the sentence *ho gar skōlēx autōn ou teleutēsei kai to pur autōn ou sbesthēsetai* whereas Mark wrote *hopou ho skōlēx autōn ou teleuta kai to pur ou sbennutai* (v. 48).

[22] Fleddermann. "Discipleship Discourse." 69.

is translated."[23] It may be, however, that Mark is using an expression known to his audience but wishes to amplify its gruesome overtones with even more gruesome details.[24] In this case, Mark was not simply working practically with a quotation from Isaiah that served as a gloss, arbitrarily inserting it with the first and third use of *geenna*; rather, he used the longer descriptive material at the end to create a climax. At the same time, by using a near-exact quotation and thus leaving it in its original style, he gave Jesus' voice the sound of a prophet's voice. Thus, as elsewhere in Mk, "Jesus speaks [here] with peculiar solemnity in the voice, not just the words, of biblical oracle."[25]

It seems likely that Mark would have been aware of more than one possible way audience members could hear the excerpt from Isaiah. It is useful to list a few possible perceptions along a continuum (formulated as a hearer's hypothetical thought process):

> 1. This is not Jesus speaking, it is Isaiah speaking. I need to recognize that the writer has bracketed off this little stretch from Jesus' speech.
>
> 2. This is Jesus speaking using Isaiah's words. I need to recognize that Jesus is using Isaiah's words in order to say what he wants to say.
>
> 3. This is Jesus speaking in what sounds like the voice of one of God's prophets of old. I need to know that Jesus has that same sound and authority.
>
> 4. This is Jesus speaking and he is coining this phrase as he speaks; there is no relation to any other voice or authority.

It is not likely that Mark expected all hearers to perceive these words on one point along the continuum. I think the greater number of audience members would have perceived

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[23] *ho estin methermēneuomenon* at 5:41 and 15:34 and *ho estin* at 7:34. He has Jesus use the term *abba* once and glosses it appositionally as *ho patēr* (14:36). Further, Mark does not gloss any of Jesus' thirteen uses of the non-Greek term *amēn*.

[24] Elsewhere in Mk non-Greek words also create a special effect in Jesus' voice (5:41; 7:34; 15:34).

[25] Henderson, "'Salted with Fire,'" 57.

the words nearer to 4 than to 1, although Mark optimistically might have hoped for somewhere between 2 and 3. A few audience members might have recognized Isaiah and tried to apply the argument of that context to Jesus' speech (option 1), but this would have required them to re-read Mk (i.e., not hearing it read) and be on the lookout for allusions, given their recollection of 1:2 and other references to Isaiah as well as quotations that Jesus does explicitly identify elsewhere. It also seems unlikely that readers/hearers would not suspect any allusion at all (option 4) since the phrase does sound spooky and like something from a Jewish prophet. In terms of the created effect, therefore, Mark most likely did not wish to make an argumentational connection with what the prophet said; rather he wished to give Jesus' voice a style or quality that matched the graphic and gruesome details of the consequences of causing to stumble.

Within the series of repeated speech units beginning with *kalon estin*, the second half of each unit (vv. 43b, 45b, 47b) sounds somewhat like an imprecation. In form they are, of course, not imprecations since they constitute the grounds for the commands to remove body parts. However, the context in which they are used is conducive to imagining them as such. That is, by changing them slightly into the form of a wish or prayer, they become imprecations; e.g., "May you go to *geenna* for causing to stumble" or, spoken in the first person and more likely along the lines of what Mark was hoping for in terms of effect on his audience, "Oh, that I were maimed so that I might not cause stumbling with my hand." In other words, by implying that such an action would be required of a leader who, like Jesus, was willing to be harmed for the sake of little ones,

Mark hopes to affect the feelings of his audience. The effect created is one of repugnance at the gravity of causing someone to stumble.

Language of imprecation can be meant literally as a curse, wishing evil on someone. However, it can - and often is - used in a way so as to persuade an audience of sincerity or of deep feeling. In the book of Ruth, the imprecation that the Moabitess Ruth makes, calling upon Yahweh to harm her if she is not speaking sincerely (Rth 1:17), is meant to persuade her mother-in-law Naomi to change her previously held opinion. Ruth is employing the imprecation to affect the feelings of Naomi; she is looking for the strongest possible terms with which to persuade Naomi to believe something. Her rhetoric works: "when Naomi saw that she was determined to go with her, she said no more to her" (Rth 1:18). In the NT Paul's wish to be accursed for his people's sake is well known (Rm 9:3).

The persuasive effect of cases like these is not like a logical equation; the speaker's intent is not for his or her wish to be carried out. At the same time, the whole of Mk takes for granted that physical suffering and death is what disciples should be willing, like Jesus, to endure. Thus Mark has created a scary, vague threat of punishment. It is one thing to shrug off a figure of speech as non-literal; it is another thing to be unsure about whether Jesus may actually be serious here, especially given his repeated references within the Markan narrative to his own upcoming suffering and death.

The fact that a significant section of this speech has an imprecatory character, that it sounds like a tirade describing gruesome bodily damage and that it has an oracular character enhanced by non-Greek terminology and an allusion to Isaiah creates an overall

impression of a scary or spooky-sounding Jesus. Jesus also speaks forcefully in an argumentational style about servant leadership but his argumentation does not leave the impression of something having been settled; rather, it leaves the impression that an implication has been made about how leaders are to relate to "little ones." Within the narrative of Mk there is a marked difference between the typical effect of Jesus' public speaking - amazement, approval, joy, etc[26] - and the effect that this speech would have made on hearers. Perhaps significantly Mark narrates no reaction at all to this speech; a new episode begins immediately at 10:1. As such, Mark's audience of leaders who heard themselves being addressed, though removed from Jesus' rhetoric to some degree by virtue of their role as readers/hearers of the narrative, would have felt a significant degree of unease at this speech, not only the unease on behalf of characters in a story. It is the combination of this unease and the recognition that Jesus is talking about their leadership in relation to "little" Christians that creates the potential of a persuasive effect being realized. It is, of course, impossible to know whether Jesus' voice characterized in this way actually caused leaders to see the gravity of their disunity and persuaded them to change. Perhaps this stretch of text was from the very beginning avoided because it was either too difficult to follow or because it made readers/hearers too uncomfortable.[27]

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[26] 1:21-22; 2:2, 13; 4:1, 2, 33; 6:2-3 (amazed, though offended), 6, 34; 10:1; and, especially 12:35-37 "And the large crowd heard him gladly" (v. 37).

[27] The reception of two early known readers of Mk, that of Matthew and Luke, is evidence that Mark's rhetoric did not succeed: both of these Gospel writers were interested in bits of this speech but did not keep it intact in their own works (Henderson, "'Salted with Fire,'" 47, 49). For an analysis of an example of failed rhetoric from the modern era see the recent study of Michael J. Hostetler, "The Enigmatic Ends of Rhetoric: Churchill's Fulton Address as Great Art and Failed Persuasion," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 83 (1997): 416-28.

6 THE SON AND THE STONE (MK 12:1-11): JESUS' SPEECH ABOUT REJECTION AND REINSTATEMENT

Of the speeches within the ambit of this study, 12:1-11 is perhaps least recognizable as a speech by which Mark addresses issues current to his readers/hearers. A major part of the speech consists simply of a self-contained story about the tenants of a vineyard who kill the owner's son in order to get possession of the vineyard. Added to this story is a quotation from scripture which contains no explicit reference to the story. No doubt this lack of overt argumentation is the reason that critics have not analyzed this text as a persuasive speech. Gospel scholarship has typically understood this speech as a reply of Jesus within a dialogue and within the larger narrative unit. Thus 12:1-11 is viewed as a narrative device which accentuates the conflict between Jesus and his opponents.[1] Such a reading cannot be denied for this is a reply and the plot of Mk is indeed thick with the conflict between Jesus and his opponents. The episode within which Jesus makes this speech (11:27-12:11) is perhaps the starkest portrayal of conflict in Mk. However, to point out a growing conflict in the narrative is not an answer to the question of how this

[1] E.g., Burton L. Mack, *Myth of Innocence: Mark and Christian Origins* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988), 204-207. Ben Witherington, *The Gospel of Mark: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001), 318-336, labels the whole of 11:27-12:44 as "honor challenges." Christopher M. Tuckett, "Mark," in *The Oxford Bible Commentary*, eds. John Barton and John Muddiman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 886-922, calls the larger narrative context of this speech a "story of mounting hostility" (909-912 (910)). See also David M. Rhoads and Donald Michie, *Mark as Story: An Introduction to the Narrative of a Gospel* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1982), 74-89.

speech was intended to persuade an audience.[2] Furthermore, scholarship has been concerned with the first part of the speech (vv. 1-9) and generally much interest has been generated by the "parable of the tenants" per se rather than by the speech as a whole.[3] Although "parable of the tenants" may be a handy title for this passage (12:1-11) it is a misrepresentation since the speech goes considerably beyond the parable proper.

The parable has been of interest in terms of its literary relationship to the scriptural passage which it resembles on some points (Isaiah 5:1ff). The reference in that poetic passage to the people of Israel as a vineyard has invited comparison with Jesus' use of vineyard imagery[4] and this, in turn, seems to have led scholars to link the vineyard theme of inheritance with the formation of the Gentile church (see discussion below). Studies of this parable also quite regularly deal with questions of authenticity; that is, whether the

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[2] Witherington's "rhetorical" commentary is therefore not satisfying in that he does not answer that question regarding this unbroken speech of considerable length (see Witherington, *The Gospel of Mark*, 318-336).

[3] Articles of the last three decades reflect this focus of interest: John Dominic Crossan, "The Parable of the Wicked Husbandmen," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 90, (1971): 451-465; Craig A. Evans, "On the Vineyard Parables of Isaiah 5 and Mark 12," *Biblische Zeitschrift* 28, (1984): 82-86; Aaron Milavec, "The Identity of 'the Son' and 'the Others': Mark's Parable of the Wicked Husbandmen Reconsidered," *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 20 (1990): 30-37; James D. Hester, "Socio-Rhetorical Criticism and the Parable of the Tenants," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 45 (1992): 27-57; Edward H. Horne, "The Parable of the Tenants as Indictment," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 71 (1998): 111-116; Mary Ann Beavis, "The Power of Jesus' Parables: Were they Polemical or Irenic?" *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 82 (2001): 3-30.

[4] Evans, "Vineyard Parables;" Ulrich Mell, *Die "anderen" Winzer: eine exegetische Studie zur Vollmacht Jesu Christi nach Markus 11,27-12,34*, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 77 (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1994), 74-117. However, it seems unlikely that recognition of vineyard symbolism or indeed of scriptural allusion is critical to the audience's understanding of this story. Milavec, "The Identity of 'the Son' and 'the Others,'" for example, attaches considerable importance to such a recognition. However, see the well-founded arguments in favor of a more conservative view of writers' expectations with regard to allusions and quotations in Christopher M. Tuckett, "Paul, Scripture and Ethics: Some Reflections," *New Testament Studies* 46 (2000): 403-424.

historical Jesus actually told this story or, more commonly, which version of it is closest to what he actually said.[5]

In line with the purpose of this study, however, I wish to examine the speech as a composition designed to achieve a persuasive goal of its own. I shall attempt to show that with this speech Mark wished to persuade his audience that the Jesus they venerated would surely be reinstated by God and that therefore they too would yet be vindicated for their own present suffering. Mark attempted this persuasion by composing a speech in which a reinstatement pronouncement is prominently cast in the voice of Jesus speaking past the addressees of the story world to Mark's audience. Accordingly, the purpose of this section is to explain how the composition of this speech could have achieved such a persuasive goal.

In the telling of the parable within the world of the Markan narrative Jesus is speaking polemically. He is not so much trying to persuade his addressees that their objection to him is misguided as to attack them in their own eyes.[6] This is typical of the prophetic rhetoric of the Hebrew scriptures in which a prophet expresses God's charge

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[5] Scholars attempt to find the original form of the parable from a cross examination of the synoptic versions and the Gospel of Thomas version. See, for examples, W.G. Morrice, "The Parable of the Tenants and the Gospel of Thomas," *Expository Times* 98, (1987): 104-107; John A.T. Robinson, "The Parable of the Wicked Husbandmen: A Test of Synoptic Relationships," in *Twelve More New Testament Studies*, ed. J.A.T. Robinson (London: SCM Press, 1984), 12-34; Crossan, "The Parable of the Wicked Husbandmen;" Ulrich Mell, *Die "anderen" Winzer*, 117-131. On the historical Jesus' use of parables in general see Gerd Theissen and Annette Merz, *The Historical Jesus: A Comprehensive Guide*, trans. John Bowden (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1998), 316-346 and extensive bibliography there.

[6] See the recent noteworthy article by Beavis, "The Power of Jesus' Parables" in which 11:27-12:12 is viewed as "a problematic [original] social situation into which [the] parable [of the tenants] is interposed in order to restore equilibrium" (26-29 (26)).

against the people. Jesus' attack, however, is delivered in an opaque manner, in the form of a story. From the narrator's cue (v. 12) it is clear that the addressees understood aright the attack. As expected, they continue their planned course of action, eventually bringing it to completion with Jesus' public execution.

At the level of Markan rhetoric - in terms of what this speech was designed to accomplish persuasively - the argumentation is symbouleutic; Mark is urging his audience to take a certain course of action or thought. In their circumstance of suffering, doubting their vindication, they are to (re-)affirm their belief that God will surely reinstate the rejected Jesus and so also vindicate his rejected, suffering followers. Mark appeals to God's character and to the writings of Israel which are known to declare God's words. If God is known to approve thoroughly of his son then he can be counted on to reinstate him. This argumentation is, of course, mostly by implication; Mark does not have Jesus explicitly exhort a contemporary audience. However, as I shall argue, the dramatic and narrative construction of the story and the quotation would likely have caused Mark's audience to take the pronouncement "have you not read...?" (vv. 10-11) as directed primarily towards them rather than to the characters in the narrative.

I work with the assumption that a basic passion narrative was more or less known by Mark's audience.[7] Mark's purpose therefore was not to recount the events for the sake of informing his audience of what happened. Rather, Mark composed the passion narrative so as to let Jesus' voice be heard within the context of the known events of his arrest, trial

[7] Although we have very little evidence about early Christian missionary discourse, Paul's references to Jesus' passion (1Co 11:23-24; 15:3), albeit very sketchy, suggest that some details were assumed to be known generally.

and execution. It is therefore reasonable to ask what Jesus says about rejection and reinstatement.

Besides the first explicit reference to his suffering (8:31) there are several further references in the course of the passion narrative to the imminent and necessary rejection of Jesus other than the actual narration of the events themselves (9:12, 31; 10:33-34, 45; 11:18; 12:7-8; 14:8, 27), some more explicit than others. In the final long speech on Olivet Jesus also speaks of the sufferings of his followers (13:9, 11-13). With the same frequency Mark makes reference to Jesus' reinstatement. There are references to Jesus "rising from the dead" (8:31; 9:31; 10:34), to his being seated in power (12:36), and to his coming "with power and glory" (8:38; 13:26; 14:62). Clearly one of the main topics about which Mark wishes to have Jesus speak is that of rejection and reinstatement; rejection is imminent and necessary and reinstatement is sure. Whatever else Mark wished to accomplish with the lengthy passion narrative, it would seem that he wished to represent Jesus as speaking on this topic. Jesus' speech in 12:1-11 constitutes the heaviest sustained argument on this topic and it is highly dramatized.

If the passion events for Mark's audience are events on which they look back in time, any potential events of vindication are future. Even Jesus' resurrection is for them future in the sense that they have not directly experienced it (see 16:7, 8). As such this topic would likely have caused doubt within adherents of the early Jesus movement. I am not speaking here about a particular community that Mark knows to have doubts about their vindication; I think that because of the nature of the social situation of Christians Mark could realistically have expected any group of readers/hearers to be wrestling with this issue. There are enough references in Mk to the persecution, suffering and death of Jesus' followers to safely draw the conclusion that this was an issue universal among Christians

of the Mediterranean region in the second half of the first century C.E. Therefore I am assuming that Mark would have hoped that his work to be heard (repeatedly?) so that his audience would keep alive (or renew) their belief in Jesus' reinstatement and thus also in their own vindication.[8]

The speech is not unlike other (shorter) utterances that Jesus makes in earlier parts of Mk in that he is responding to those who question his identity and authority.[9] In particular, there is one other point in Mk at which Jesus speaks *en parabolais* in reply to criticism (3:23ff); his opponents accuse him of exorcising demons by Beelzeboul. However, in 12:1-11, the issue of the criticism is not explicitly reiterated as it is in the earlier exchange. In 3:22-23 the authority by which Jesus performs exorcisms (*ekballō*) is clearly the issue (3:22).[10] Significantly Jesus uses the same expression (*ekballō*) in the first short question of his reply.[11] In the speech of 12:1-11, on the other hand, Jesus has silenced his opponents by using their own term (*exousia*, 11:29, 33) and he then launches directly into the story of the vineyard in which there is no explicit reference to *exousia* nor is the connection to that issue obvious. This speech is significant, therefore, in that, although it has preceding and following markers making it cohere to the narrative, the

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[8] I differ here from Mack, *Myth*, who implies that the parable of the tenant (by which he means the whole narrative episode) would function as a confirmation to the Markan Jesus movement that their movement was legitimate. He claims that such confirmation would have been achieved by their "imagining Jesus' foreknowledge and prediction of events and their consequences" (168).

[9] E.g., 2:8-11; 2:16-17; 2:23-28; 7:5-13

[10] The opponents were saying "by the leader of the demons he casts out the demons" (3:22).

[11] *pōs dunatai satanas satanan ekballein* (3:23)

speaker does not engage the issue of conflict in such a clear manner as in other argumentative exchanges. That is to say, in this speech there is a relatively long stretch of parabolic speech, a simple story, in which textual connections to the immediately preceding arguments are not present. It would not have been easily clear to the audience that a story about an absentee landlord and his problems with collecting produce would be relevant to the issue of Jesus' authority.

This speech would have been heard as having two parts. The first part of the speech, much the longer of the two, is a story about a vineyard. However, the vineyard with its associated horticultural and business topics actually form a backdrop against which the plot is played out. What happens to the beloved son of the owner is the heart of the story. The second part of the speech is the recitation of a scriptural quotation (*graphē)* about a stone and something that is done to it. The story has the characteristics of a well-told tale; there is a setting established, characters are clearly introduced, a simple plot is developed in which there is an increase in tension until the problem is solved in a climactic ending. The *graphē* is clearly demarcated in style from the narrative; it is a pronouncement. The pronouncement is introduced with a question which functions as a signal to the audience that this pronouncement ought to be familiar and understood. The two parts of the speech are arranged so that the much longer part is heard first. This means that the attention of the audience is on the vineyard for a much longer time than on the stone. The *graphē* about the stone, however, is in the final position and thus, even though brief, would sound like the most crucial part of the speech as a whole.

The speech contains only one very brief linguistic signal that Jesus is speaking to someone; the expression *anegnōte* (v. 10) alone refers – on the surface - to the addressees.

Neither does Jesus assert his voice in an assessment or verdict.[12] Thus neither the character of the speaker nor the relationship between the speaker and addressees is in the forefront except in the pivotal second-person plural expression. Within the drama of the Markan narrative Jesus' voice is veiled behind the story and the *graphē*. In addition, almost the entire speech consists of figurative language. That is, Jesus does not say plainly that figure A represents entity or event B. Although the story is obviously meant to be taken figuratively, it is not explained in terms of what it means in the real life of Mark's audience; rather, it is followed by another figure taken from the topic of house-building. If audience members are to interpret correctly what Jesus is arguing they must do so from implications coming out of the speech together with what they know or believe to be true outside the literary construct of Mk.

The story about the beloved son is composed so that some entities and actions are highlighted. The man who plants the vineyard is clearly the one figure whose presence and power is felt throughout the story. He is the first character introduced, he sends slaves again and again, then he sends his son and finally it is he who has the power to act decisively and solve the dilemma of the vineyard. The tenants are also present and active throughout almost the entire story. The man and the tenants do not, however, interact or confront each other until the very end, when the man handily disposes of the tenants. Although they have much power over the slaves and the son, they do not get a word of self-defense in the presence of the lord of the vineyard.

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[12] This is in contrast to assertions in other utterances of Jesus in Mk where he stresses his own authority by using the expression *amēn legō humin* (3:28; 8:12; 9:1, 41; 10:15, 29; 11:23; 12:43; 13:30; 14:9, 18, 25, 30).

The beloved son is made salient in the story by his mention as the last in a series of slaves. The first mention of slave is indefinite; "a slave" was sent (12:2). The implication at that point in the story is, of course, that he will be the one who returns with the produce. There follows, however, a series of slaves because that slave did not return with produce as expected. The number of slaves increases, each one faring badly and some not returning, until they are not listed anymore by the narrator.[13] This marks the end of available slaves. It is at this point that the beloved son is first mentioned. In terms of composition and listening time, the entire first half of the story is devoted to creating and heightening an expectation. Through the repetition of mini-episodes of slaves the expectation is heightened and thus the beloved son becomes highly salient in the story as a whole. When he is mentioned the term *huios* is repeated so as to heighten the awareness of his importance. Since the expression *huion agapēton* has just been mentioned by the narrator (v. 6) the vineyard owner's words could have been shortened to *entrapēsontai auton*, but the fact that he repeats the phrase *ton huion mou* and the fact that it is said by the father rather than the narrator (*huion mou*) greatly increase the prominence of the beloved son figure.

Not only does the composition of this story itself highlight the beloved son, he has already been made salient in the earlier larger narrative of Mk. In the very opening of the Gospel a first prominent connection is made by equating Jesus with *huios theou* (1:1). At two other points in the narrative Jesus is called *huios agapētos* and both times in a dramatic setting in which a voice from heaven utters the expression, not the narrator. Not only is the beloved son's salience heightened by the way the story is composed, he comes to the story already salient from the preceding narrative of Mk.

[13] *kai pollous allous*, 12:5.

The actions of the tenants to the various slaves and finally the son do not follow a clear progression from least grave to most grave. The actions seem to be randomly chosen acts of violence and disrespect.[14] The actions also receive approximately the same dramatization. When the son, however, is killed the action of killing is significantly dramatized. Firstly, the action of the narrative is slowed down; in dealing with the slaves no deliberation is narrated but in the case of the son the tenants speak to each other at some length. This slowing of the narrative, together with its final position in a series of similar actions, creates the dramatic effect that of all the acts of violence, this one is by far the most significant. Further, the action of killing the son is followed by another action in which there is an emphasis on doing away with the body. In addition, the spatial movement (*exō tou ampelōnos*) and forceful action of throwing (*exebalon*) make this last killing more prominent than the previous ones.

I understand the dramatization of the tenants' discussion (v. 7) to be a narrative device drawing attention to the action of killing. It is often asserted that the idea of inheritance is central to this parable. Witherington, for example, sumarizes the main point of the parable thus: "The vineyard owner will... reject [the] tenants [i. e., the leaders of Israel] and give the vineyard to others, among whom Mark's audience would have presumably seen themselves."[15] The idea of inheritance, however, is not developed as part

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[14] Although there is a progression from beating (v. 3) to killing (v. 5) the conclusion of the episode of the slaves, *kai pollous allous, hous men derontes hous de apokteinan* (v. 5) leaves the final impression that the progression is not significant.

[15] Witherington, *The Gospel of Mark*, 320, 321. See also Robert H. Gundry, *Mark: A Commentary on his Apology for the Cross* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), 664; Morna D. Hooker, *A Commentary on the Gospel According to St. Mark* (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1993), 275; Joel Marcus, *The Mystery of the Kingdom of God* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1986), 116; James M. Robinson, *The Problem of History in Mark and other Marcan Studies* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1982), 114. Part of Milavec's aim ("The Identity of 'the Son' and 'the Others'") is to dismantle the hostilities that have

of the plot; the expression is not repeated at the coming of the lord of the vineyard as would be expected nor is there any development at all of the identity of the "others." Rather, the notion of inheritance - along with vineyard, tenants, produce, slaves - forms part of the conventional setting of this horticultural business topic. The plot of the story is dominated by the killing of the son.

The sequence of question and answer at the end of the story (v. 9) has been understood as Jesus pointedly addressing his opponents in the story world. Such a reading is useful for supporting the notion of a Markan community in conflict with Judaism.[16] It seems to me more reasonable, however, that the question and answer constitutes a conventional oral-style technique used to slow down the action at the end of the story. The point is to draw attention to the decisiveness and finality of the restorative action of the lord of the vineyard. The actions of destroying the tenants and giving the vineyard to others, when viewed as a conclusion of the plot, serve in effect to dramatize the force by which the lord performs retribution.

Reading the question and answer as a punch-line is correct. The restorative action of the lord does conclude a major conflict in the plot of the story; the wicked tenants are dealt with. However, since the son's body is still lying shamefully outside the vineyard, the answer to the question is only partially satisfying. The landlord's action is too late to help his son. Thus the parable itself (the narrative of vv. 1-9) does not answer the weightier issue of how the fate of the beloved son is solved. Understood in this way, the question

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developed between Christians and Jews because of such an interpretation later brought to this parable.

[16] Mack, *Myth*, 85, 168, 195-198; Howard Clark Kee, *Community of the New Age: Studies in Mark's Gospel* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1977), 113; Rudolf Pesch, *Naherwartungen: Tradition und Redaktion in Mk 13* (Düsseldorf: Patmos-Verlag, 1968), 230-235.

and answer serve to stress that the speech is still in progress. Because of this partial solution to the conflict and because of the high salience of the son in the story, the continuation of the speech after the story could be expected to speak to the issue of the son's reinstatement.[17] Furthermore, the fact that the landlord's restorative action is too late to help his son leads to the expectation that the question of how God acts on behalf of Jesus or his followers will also need to be addressed.

The second part of the speech consists of a scripture proof which is grammatically one long question (vv. 10-11). The opening of the question, a formulaic introduction to the quoted *graphē*, implies that the concluding point of the speech will now be forthcoming. The argumentational force of the *graphē* is not spelled out nor is it obvious by implication. This little part of the speech has the sound of logical argumentation but it is rather imprecise.

The formulaic question is similar to the one at 2:25 (*oude.. ... anegnōte*) where what follows, though not a quoted *graphē*, also appeals to scriptural material. In that utterance, Jesus begins speaking with a question and does so in dialogue, directly replying to a challenge. This *graphē* (12:10) does not sound like a reply to the question of Jesus' authority in the earlier part of the episode (11:27-33) since it is too far removed in time and the question of authority was already dealt with by Jesus with his riposte in 11:33b (*oude legō humin...*).

[17] Perhaps because of his focus on the increasing conflict in the narrative episode, Witherington, *The Gospel of Mark*, 323, does not see vv. 10-12 as a point about restoration but rather simply a point about Jesus' rejection.

The insertion of the formula could also have been intended, in part, to signal a break in the speech; the narration of the story has ended and the speaker now turns to another form, switching to a different style. Thus this break marks what follows as material not in continuation with the story. In this way it has the effect of switching the audience's attention from the voice of Jesus the narrator of a short story to Jesus the figure in the larger narrative of Mk. The use of the second-person plural form *anegnōte* complements this effect.

That Jesus the figure in the narrative should now say something that is logically connected to the story would be expected. At the same time, the audience has been prepared to some degree to listen for Jesus' voice rather than the voice of the narrator of the story. This voice, as I shall argue below, is at a different level than the level of interaction between Jesus and his opponents in the temple. The audience would also make such a shift in awareness without any formula physically inserted into the speech; the topic of the *graphē* - *lithon hon apedokimasan* - is, on the surface, different from anything in the parable. The effect of the formulaic question at this point is to highlight the switch to Jesus' own, more usual, authoritative voice. It is in this voice that he makes the pronouncement about the stone. Thus, not only does Jesus appeal to a *graphē* for the final punch of his speech, his voice at a meta-narrative level is here more clearly audible.

In order to make any logical connections between the *graphē* and the rest of the speech Mark's audience must rely on what is implied rather than on formal argumentation. In the course of the pronouncement of the *graphē* it becomes clear that there is a logical connection to be made. There are two sets of corresponding figures in the story and *graphē* connected logically in a fairly obvious way: the tenants and the builders; the

beloved son and the stone. That the tenants correspond to the builders is clear in that both of them reject something or someone.[18] That the beloved son corresponds to the stone is clear in the same way; they are the two corresponding entities that suffer rejection.

To make further logical connections the audience would have to recall the larger narrative of Mk. It would not be difficult for an attentive audience to recall that Jesus' opponents (high priests, scribes and elders) had only very recently in the Markan narrative sought to destroy Jesus (11:18), that Jesus had privately predicted that they would do so (8:31; 9:31; 10:33-34) and that they had been pretty consistently characterized - the scribes especially - as sharply critical of and hostile towards Jesus. Significantly, the term *apodokimazein* (reject) would likely be recalled;[19] although, because of Jesus' private use of it, the opponents in the world of the narrative do not share this awareness. The identity of the beloved son, as I pointed out above, would have been recognized very easily as Jesus.[20] Thus, from a hearing of the narrative, the audience would, on the one hand, connect Jesus with God's son and, on the other hand, the stone and Jesus' opponents with the tenants and the builders respectively.

Given this neat correspondence between certain entities in the parable and the *graphē* it is striking that there is not such a correspondence between the actions that these entities perform or undergo. On the one hand, because of the relation between the stone

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[18] In the *graphē* the expression *apedokimasan* is used while the story uses the expressions *apekteinan* and *exebalon* (see vv. 10 and 8 respectively).

[19] The term *apodokimazein* occurs elsewhere in Mk at 8:31, however the rejection is implicit also at 9:31 and 10:33-34.

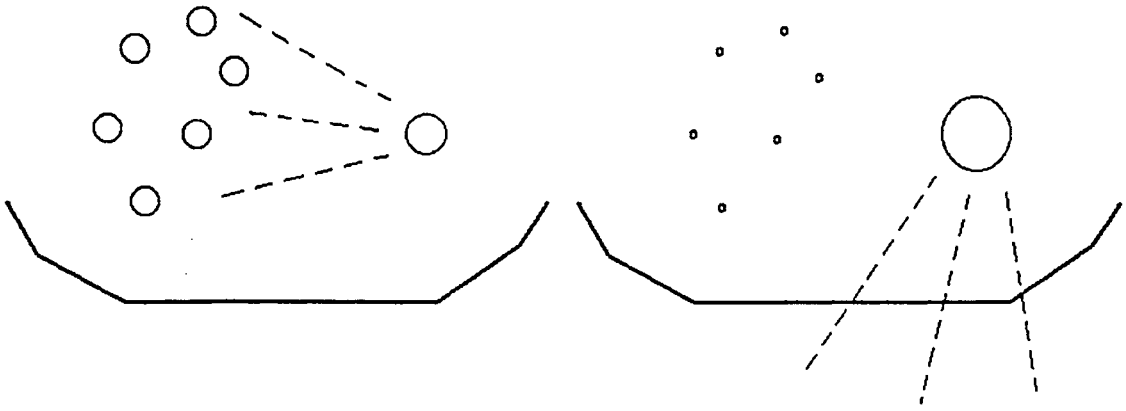
[20] Mary Ann Tolbert, *Sowing the Gospel: Mark's World in Literary-Historical Perspective* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989), 236. The claim made by Milavec ("The Identity of 'the Son' and 'the Others,'" 32-33) that the Markan readers would not have associated Jesus with "the son" is very puzzling indeed.

and the son, it is quite clear that the rejection of the stone and the killing of the son refer to the same event. However, on the other hand, and quite conspicuously, the emphasized reinstatement of the stone has no corresponding counterpart in the parable. The beloved son at the end of the story has not been restored. When the lord arrives he deals with the tenants and does what is done to a vineyard that has lost its tenants; he gives it to other tenants. But the son's dead body is left lying offstage. In striking contrast to a dead body, the stone is dramatically reinstated, given a central importance and this is done to the amazement of onlookers.

I noted near the beginning of this section that the notions of rejection and reinstatement are treated in the thematic content of Mk. The topic of rejection is treated by narrating the criticism and hostility of Jesus' opponents. The scribes (of the Pharisees) especially are critical of Jesus regarding legalities at the beginning of Mk (2:6-7; 2:16; 2:24; 3:2, 5). Criticism becomes hostility and then an intention to destroy Jesus (11:18). The topic of reinstatement, in contrast, has only been treated in settings where Jesus speaks to his close associates. At the level of the narrative the opponents are portrayed as being unaware of this topic generally and in their attention to the speech in 12:1-11 they do not know that Jesus is aware of it. Thus, if the narrative has been followed it is clear that the opponents are reacting to the things Jesus says about the killing of the son, not to the pronouncement about the reinstatement of the son. That is to say, the addressees of the speech - the opponents of Jesus - react to the parable, not to the content of the *graph* . This is, in fact, how Mark narrates the subsequent action (v. 12). It seems that his use of the term *parabol* (v. 12) is intended to switch the focus back from the *graph* to the larger narrative in which the parable makes sense. It is therefore critical to note that the opponents of Jesus want to arrest him not because of what he implies about his

reinstatement but because of his prediction of how they will treat him. In this little part of the speech the figure Jesus is, in effect, speaking past the addressees.

At the same time, because of the salience of the topic of reinstatement in the speech as a whole, Mark's audience might perceive a two-level phenomenon; if they perceive that the topic is not relevant to the addressees they may understand it as doubly relevant for themselves. In dramatic terms, the figure Jesus here changes his voice to a voice that is above the narrative. Because Jesus is saying something of which narrative figures are unaware the audience attuned to this dramatic device can experience that voice speaking directly to them. In terms of Mark's composition, it could have been a calculated device; the "playwright" of this "drama" presents the post-Easter Jesus' voice here in order to rouse in the audience a feeling that their absent lord is actually nearby. If a trained, well-prepared reader of the text of Mk wished, he could have made alterations in his voice or used body movement to accentuate such a dramatic effect. If this was Mark's persuasive intent he had to accomplish it through a narrative figure's speech. However, if the effect were caught by the audience it would allow them to hear more clearly for this part of the larger narrative of Mk the Jesus who for them was outside the literary construct of the text. The shift of Jesus' voice from addressing actors on stage to addressing the audience can be illustrated as in the figure below.



Audience as spectators of episode
Mk 12:1b-9

Audience hearing Jesus' voice to them
Mk 12:10-11

Figure: Narrative, dramatic and rhetorical aspects of 12:1-11

The left side of the figure represents the voice of the narrative figure speaking to other narrative figures; Jesus' voice is projected to the opponents in the temple. This is portrayed by the relative size of the figures in the narrative and the direction of Jesus' voice. All the action is on stage and the audience has the role of spectators. On the right side of the figure, although the narration at one level continues, it is as though the figure Jesus turns to the audience and projects his voice to them. The sizes of the figures relative to each other has been altered to show the greater prominence of Jesus for the audience. Jesus now speaks as God's beloved son, the reinstated head of the corner and his voice is directed to the audience.

For this kind of rhetoric to work, Mark would have had to depend on his audience's belief that there existed a real, present force/person outside the literary construct. For the duration of this short part of the speech Mark's audience could suspend - for the moment - their attention to the progressing narrative and listen to the speech of a character *as if* it were being spoken to them.

Given the salience of the topic of reinstatement in the attention of the audience as distinct from the attention of depicted addressees, it is here that any rhetoric of Mark should be sought since rhetorical analysis must address the question of a real author intending to produce an effect on a real audience. To focus either on the implied logical arguments of this speech or the depicted build-up of tension between Jesus and his opponents is only partially explanatory. On the one hand, the speech is obviously not a polished well-composed argumentational speech; on the other hand, the story of the passion of the Jesus of a generation ago was, for Mark's audience, not new information. A narrative account of Jesus' interactions with opponents in conflict could serve as material that gave readers/hearers an opportunity to laud the hero-figure of their religion. However, a significant part of the persuasive force of the speech for Mark's audience lies in the possibility of an electrifying realization that they are to take these words as if coming from the Jesus they venerate as god.

Mark's goal in this speech is to have his audience hear Jesus himself speak on the issue of how history for them will be culminated, how their mistreatment will be righted. I have argued that Mark attempted to achieve this by having Jesus tell a story about himself to which he adds a climactic pronouncement about reinstatement. In the dramatic story the figure of the son and his murder is made salient. However, because Jesus' opponents in the narrative are not attuned to the topic of reinstatement, the audience are invited to hear the pronouncement as though projected past the narrative to themselves. Jesus says to them in effect that surely they must remember that he has been reinstated. If Mark's audience were experiencing arrests and executions as described or implied in other parts of Mk, this pronouncement from Jesus, speaking as their already reinstated god, could indeed persuade them to re-affirm their belief in an imminent and sure vindication for themselves.

7 "I HAVE TOLD YOU ALL THINGS BEFOREHAND" (MK 13:5-37): JESUS SPEAKS TO THE SITUATION OF A TIME YET TO COME

This speech is by far the longest of the speeches of Jesus in Mk (see appendix). As such it constitutes *the* example of Jesus making a speech in this Gospel. Among the speeches of Jesus in Mk this speech is unique not only for its length; it is the only major discussion of life in the time of "the end" (vv. 7, 13) and the culmination of history (v. 26).[1] The immediate narrative context of the speech is a dialogue with his disciples concerning the magnificent buildings of the temple. After Jesus' prediction that these will come to ruin, his four close disciples ask him, "Tell us when these things will be and what is the sign when all these things are about to be fulfilled" (v. 4). However, the readership of Mk should "have been forewarned by Jesus' exasperated rejection of the Pharisees' request for a sign ('I tell you, no sign will be given to this generation!' 8:11-12) to realize that the disciples are asking an inappropriate question."[2] Jesus speaks past their question, giving them neither a time nor a sign. In fact, he warns them to be on the alert for false sign-givers (vv. 5-6; 21-23) and exhorts them at length to remain watchful since the time of the return of the son of man cannot be calculated (vv. 28-37).

Because of its unique topic and considerable length this speech has been a favorite hunting ground for scholars who look for original words of Jesus and Mark's redactional

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[1] See the brief but dramatically powerful statement of Jesus in 14:62. The comment of the young man at the grave (16:7) could be a reference back to the speech in Mk 13 and that subsequent statement.

[2] Richard A. Horsley, *Hearing the Whole Story: The Politics of Plot in Mark's Gospel* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001), 135.

activity.[3] In addition, because the references in the speech are taken to refer to events of the first century C.E., this speech has also been of great interest for the question of dating Mk.[4] In the field of rhetorical criticism, C. Clifton Black has made an assessment of this speech in terms of the quality of its rhetoric compared with what is found in classical rhetorical handbooks, focusing on classical rhetorical figures.[5] Although he finds an impressive number and variety of figures - and this confirms that Mark was a fairly competent writer of Greek - his study does not address the more crucial question of how these figures helped to achieve Mark's persuasive goal.

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[3] Most scholars would hold that the speech consists of both traditional as well as composed or redactional material with some "sayings" going back to the historical Jesus: Robert H. Stein, "The Proper Methodology for Ascertaining a Markan Redaction History," *Novum Testamentum* 13 (1971): 181-198; Jan Lambrecht, "Die Logia-Quellen von Markus 13," *Biblica* 47 (1966): 321-360; Willi Marxsen, *Mark the Evangelist: Studies in the Redaction History of the Gospel*, trans. James Boyce, Donald Juel, William Poehlmann with Roy A. Harrisville (Nashville: Abingdon, 1969), 161-189; Rudolf Pesch, *Naherwartungen: Tradition und Redaktion in Mk 13* (Düsseldorf: Patmos-Verlag, 1968); Lars Hartman, *Prophecy Interpreted: The Formation of Some Jewish Apocalyptic Texts and of the Eschatological Discourse Mark 13 par*, Coniectanea biblica. New Testament series 1 (Lund: Gleerup, 1966). Robert H. Gundry, *Mark: A Commentary on his Apology for the Cross* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), 751, recently defends this whole speech as a record of Jesus' actual words. See also George Beasley-Murray, *A Commentary on Mark Thirteen* (London; New York: Macmillan, 1957).

[4] Adela Yarbro Collins, "The Apocalyptic Rhetoric of Mark 13 in Historical Context," *Biblical Research* 41 (1996): 5-36; Martin Hengel, "The Gospel of Mark: Time of Origin and Situation," in *Studies in the Gospel of Mark*, trans. John Bowden (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985), 1-30 (16-28); Christopher M. Tuckett, "Mark," in *The Oxford Bible Commentary*, eds. John Barton and John Muddiman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 886-922 (914); Edward Adams, "Historical Crisis and Cosmic Crisis in Mark 13 and Lucan's *Civil War*," *Tyndale Bulletin* 42 (1997): 329-344.

[5] C. Clifton Black, "An Oration at Olivet: Some Rhetorical Dimensions of Mark 13," in *Persuasive Artistry: Studies in New Testament Rhetoric in Honor of George A. Kennedy*, ed. Duane F. Watson, Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series 50 (Sheffield: Sheffield University Press, 1991), 66-92.

However, a more crucial question regarding this speech's persuasive potential is how a speech so obviously styled as prediction could have been intended to persuade an audience. Intuitively, prediction serves to impart information; in the story world this is the impression created given the simple content question put to Jesus, although he does not directly answer the "when" and the "what" of that question. In literary terms, the fact that the speech is placed just before the arrest, trial and execution of Jesus has led Mary Ann Tolbert more recently to note that it foreshadows the events to come in the plot of the narrative; in particular, it foreshadows Jesus' suffering and the disciples' sluggishness in Gethsemane. This speech functions thus at one level as a reminder to readers that Jesus' patience in suffering is an example to them in their own current suffering.[6]

In this speech there is a dense distribution of verbs in the future tense and the expressions *hotan* and *tote* are employed repeatedly. The strong impression thus created that Jesus is forecasting events has led scholars to see in this speech also a schedule of events, a chronological progression with one event or set of events following another. Morna D. Hooker, for example, speaks of a "carefully structured order of events in vv. 5-31."[7] Rhetorical criticism should then ask how a guide to the events of the end time could serve to persuade an audience of something.

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[6] Mary Ann Tolbert, *Sowing the Gospel: Mark's World in Literary-historical Perspective*, (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989), 261-262. "[T]he descriptions [in the succeeding narrative] of how [Jesus] 'endures to the end' (13:13)... can function as [a] positive example to all who are willing to take up their crosses and follow" (262). See also A.E. Gardner, "The End of the Age: The Coming of Christ, Jesus' Death, Resurrection and Wisdom Thinking," *Encounter* 60 (1999): 73-96.

[7] Morna D. Hooker, *A Commentary on the Gospel According to St. Mark* (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1993), 301.

The narrative of Mk describes events that took place about a generation before the time of the writing. Here in Mk 13, however, Jesus predicts events that are to happen beyond the time frame of the Markan narrative. Within the literary-narrative construct of the work the speech has therefore been seen as simple prediction in the sense of telling people what they should expect. Ben Witherington, for example, sees the goal of this speech primarily as Jesus persuading his disciples (or Mark's audience) how to prepare for the end time. He writes that the speech focuses "on the future and on what sort of behavior will be useful and beneficial for the audience if they are to be prepared for the future."[8] The events described in the speech are then the signs which will guide the audience to know what to expect.[9]

In a different vein, Tolbert maintains that the predictions of this episode (13:1-37) should be understood in the light of other predictions of Jesus in Mk. Jesus has made short predictions of his imminent and necessary passion which find precise fulfillment in the subsequent narrative itself. Thus readers are shown that Jesus' predictions are reliable. Tolbert points out that there are two short stories just before and after the speech of Mk 13 in which Jesus makes intricate predictions and these are immediately fulfilled. In 11:1-11 Jesus gives two disciples intricate directions concerning where they will find a colt (11:2-3). The fulfillment of his predictions are narrated explicitly in the immediately following lines (11:4-6). Similarly, in 14:12-16 Jesus gives intricate instructions

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[8] Ben Witherington, *The Gospel of Mark: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001), 338. Pesch, *Naherwartungen*, understands Mk 13 to function as instruction for how to recognize the end time and as exhortation for the Church to leave Judaism (72).

[9] Hooker, *Commentary*, 301.

regarding the place for preparing the Passover meal, and "the disciples... found it as he had told them" (14:16). Thus, according to Tolbert, a significant purpose of these intricate prediction and fulfillment stories is to convince readers that Jesus' predictions of matters "the fulfillment of which lies outside the Gospel narrative" are equally reliable. "[O]nly to the degree that Jesus has been shown as reliable in the story world can the audience grant plausibility to his forecasts beyond that world."[10]

Vernon K. Robbins, in his recent study on Mk 13[11] also understands this speech of Jesus to function as a prediction. He claims that it establishes for the disciples "four periods of the end time" and that in each of these periods they will be using different parts of their body to live out the holy which Jesus, by making this speech, has placed into them. In this way Robbins understands the speech to be a ritual performance. However, he leaves aside the question of how the prediction language in the speech would be understood by Mark's actual readers.

Robbins does not explicitly address the issue of Markan rhetoric outside the world of the text and thus the issue of the speech's effect on Mark's audience is rather vague in his discussion. Perhaps he implies that they would take the literary construct as something that could empower them in a similar way the disciples of the story world were meant to be empowered by the ritual. However, although the language used in ritual can be persuasive to an extent, the primary function of such language is to cause

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[10] Tolbert, *Sowing the Gospel*, 257-257 (259).

[11] Vernon K. Robbins, "Rhetorical Ritual: Apocalyptic discourse in Mark 13," in *Vision and Persuasion: Rhetorical Dimensions of Apocalyptic Discourse*, eds. Greg Carey and L. Gregory Bloomquist (St. Louis: Chalice Press, 1999), 95-121. In his conclusion Robbins conveniently summarizes what he understands to be "an elaborate system of understanding about the end time" (118-119 (118)).

something to happen rather than to persuade people to do something. Given the striking preponderance of exhortations and graphic details in this speech it seems unlikely that Mark intended his audience to understand Jesus' words as ritual.

Precisely because Jesus is characterized in this speech as forecasting events, the question of how Mark expects such a characterization to be taken by his contemporary readership is crucial. At the level of plot the speech can be taken as being a prediction of events. However, if Mark intended this stretch of text to function as a rhetorical unit on its own, that is, if he expected his audience to take it as Jesus' voice speaking to them in their current situation, the persuasive force of the speech must be sought elsewhere. As prediction and thus reassurance that Jesus is reliable the speech might work if the audience did not recognize the events described as those which they were currently experiencing. Then they could take the speech as a portrayal of events for which they needed to be prepared. In other words, Jesus' reliability is relevant if the events are future for the audience and if there is some doubt as to whether the events will actually take place.

An examination of the speech shows that Jesus' voice is unquestionably authoritative. This is stressed with regularity and intensity. In the course of the speech, Mark employs a considerable number of imperative verb forms, some together with a negative. Out of roughly 80 clauses in the whole speech, 18 clauses have an imperative verb form. This means that, on average, every fourth or fifth thought that Jesus presents is either commanding or forbidding something. Not only are imperative forms frequent on average, they occur roughly evenly distributed throughout the speech. Thus the

audience is never hearing extended speech without being reminded of the authority of the speaker and the warning and forbidding tone that he has.

A further impression created by imperatives is that the very first and the very last sounds that the audience hear are imperatives: *blepete* ... (13:5) is the first speech sound; *grēgoreite* (13:37) is the last. Thus, in terms of the organization of the speech, the beginning and ending are clearly marked by the way they sound, by their imperative tone; the lasting aural impression created is that of warning: the warning not to be led astray (13:5); the warning not to be caught sleeping (13:37). This frequency, density and strategic placement of imperative forms creates above all the effect of an authoritative speech. Any group of readers/hearers listening to this speech would be aware that Jesus' authority is being presented forcefully.

Interestingly, the fact that Jesus' is portrayed very strongly as speaking with an authoritative voice shows that Mark is not seeking to convince people of Jesus' reliability. Such a persuasive purpose would better be achieved by directly presenting arguments in favor of Jesus, not by having him speak authoritatively himself. A speaker who wishes to persuade an audience of his good character cannot do so effectively by means of forceful proclamations and authoritative statements. For an audience *needing* to be persuaded such language would more likely have the opposite effect. Mark assumes rather that his audience are in a state where they are willing and ready to be persuaded by an authoritative Jesus. From the way Mark represents Jesus speaking it is evident that he assumes a prior relationship of trust in this speaker on the part of his audience. The issue for Mark is not whether his audience are convinced that Jesus has authority. The

persuasion is meant to take place through what Jesus is urging his followers to do or to think currently.

If Mark wished to have Jesus speak to the situation of his audience he had to have a way of achieving this and still keep Jesus within the bounds of the time frame of the narrative. Jewish and Christian authors of the pseudepigraphal letters of the Hellenistic period were aware of this problem. Their problem was to have a letter attributed to a figure of the past speak to a contemporary readership. Richard Bauckham has made a careful analysis of the literature of this era and genre. His study shows that

> pseudepigraphal letters are addressed to supposed addressees living in the past, contemporaries of the supposed author. ... [and in many cases] relevance to the real readers is achieved... by describing the situation of the supposed addressees in such terms as to make it analogous to that of the real readers.[12]

I suggest that in this composed speech Jesus' references to events were not meant to be heard as predictions but rather functioned in a similar way as the analogous situations which Bauckham detects in pseudepigraphal epistles.

The language of Jesus in this speech is indeed similar to that found in some of these epistles. The text of the speech could quite handily be taken over verbatim and cast as a letter from the pen of an apostle; only minor editorial changes would be needed in the phrases where Jesus refers to himself or his words (vv. 6, 9, 13, 31). The writer of 2 Peter, for example, in parts of his letter has the apostle speak in a similar vein as Jesus when he talks of the things to come in the future.[13] 2 Peter, written a (half) generation

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[12] Richard Bauckham, "Pseudo-Apostolic Letters," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 107 (1988): 469-494 (487).

[13] 2 Pe 2:1-22; 3:3-7, 10.

after the apostle Peter, was composed as though the apostle is speaking but the content of the epistle actually addresses situations current to the writer and his readership. Thus the writer uses a representation of the apostle's voice - a voice in which he predicts things that are still in the future - in order to speak persuasively to an audience of his contemporaries.

Richard Horsley has recently argued persuasively that the events of which Jesus speaks in vv. 5-23 are indeed all current for Christians generally in the first generation after Jesus.[14] The events to which vv. 5-23 refer would have been recognizable by Christians in a fairly wide area and time span. That Jesus is represented as speaking to their situation is quite evident from the way he describes what they are currently undergoing (vv. 5-22): "Jesus focuses on the extreme difficulties his followers [are experiencing] at the hands of the Roman imperial military rulers."[15] Scholars have typically understood the details of these verses to be referring to the great revolt of the few years leading up to 70 C.E.[16] However, Horsley has shown that "they all can equally well refer to events and figures regularly experienced by people in Palestine during the three previous decades, particularly the crisis touched off by Gaius and its aftermath."[17]

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[14] Horsley, *Hearing the Whole Story*, 129-131. Peter Müller, "Zeitvorstellungen in Markus 13," *Novum Testamentum* 40 (1998): 209-230, has also recognized that "die Ankündigen [weisen] ingesamt auf eine schon mögliche Zukunft hin," and though a number of events are described this does not mean that the passage points to "neue und eindeutig abgrenzbare Perioden der Endzeitereignisse" (220).

[15] Horsley, *Hearing the Whole Story*, 135.

[16] Recently Adams, "Historical Crisis."

[17] Horsley, *Hearing the Whole Story*, 133. In "39-40 C.E. emperor Gaius (Caligula) ordered that a statue of himself as the god Jupiter be installed in the Jerusalem Temple and sent a large Roman army to implement the order" (132).

"[T]he numerous movements and conflicts of the 40s, 50s and early 60s offer other possibilities for the events and figures to which particular motifs in Mark 13 may be referring."[18]

Thus, although at the level of plot this speech is a prediction, at the level of Markan rhetoric the predictions would be taken as a literary construct designed to bring Jesus' voice to the present time. This means that Mark's audience should be listening for what Jesus - the lord they venerate- was saying to them in their current situation. In view of this Mark's rhetoric is not an exhortation to get ready for what is being predicted; rather, he is counting on his audience to recognize that Jesus' voice is current and urgent for them.

There is a further reason for understanding this speech not as prediction or persuasion towards preparation for future events but as directed to Mark's contemporaries. This can be found in the way Mark has Jesus talk about certain entities or concepts in the speech. On closer inspection, it becomes clear that this speech contains content that is not best understood as being given to the four disciples of the story world or to readers/hearers who know only the literary construct of the text of Mk. I wish to examine here briefly one such topic.

Within the narrative of Mk neither Jesus nor the narrator has sufficiently taught his various addressees about his identity for them to catch the significance of how he speaks about himself. This same lack of knowledge is the case for any group of readers/hearers that is hearing Mk strictly as a literary construct since they have only the information

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[18] See the well-founded arguments from historical data that Horsley presents regarding "wars," "famines," "Roman devastation" and "false Messiahs and false prophets" (*Hearing the Whole Story*, 132-133).

about Jesus that the text provides. This phenomenon is instructive for ascertaining the difference between the addressees of the story world on the one hand and the people Mark expected would read his work on the other. The clearest example of this is the way Jesus is introduced (1:1) without any background information to situate him in the narrative. To be sure, there are hints along the way and some more obvious statements are made in Mk, but there is no well-constructed, logically persuasive speech in which Jesus or the narrator explains what the audience should know about this main figure.

In the course of the speech Jesus refers to the holy spirit: "It is not you speaking, but the holy spirit" (v. 11). This is an important part of the speech in that Jesus is urging his followers to witness boldly in perilous circumstances. Thus the expression "holy spirit" is somehow significant to the success of their witness. However, for the addressees in the story world the term holy spirit is almost unknown. They would not be able to know from what they have heard Jesus say in Mk why this term is significant. Indeed, a few times in the narrative the spirit interacts with Jesus as a distinct figure. Thus it would not be obvious at all to them that this reference to holy spirit was meant as a reference in some way to Jesus. This holds true for readers/hearers who know only the text of Mk. Tolbert seems to have in mind such readers/hearers when she stresses that Mk was conceived in the style of a popular novel. However, people who are hearing the content of Mk for the first time would lack sufficient knowledge to be able to know why the holy spirit was significant here.

Near the beginning of the narrative John the Baptist predicts that Jesus will baptize people with the holy spirit (1:8) but this prediction is not narrated or further mentioned. Instead, Jesus receives the holy spirit as a distinct entity (he came down on him like a

dove, 1:10) and the spirit directs Jesus into the wilderness, (1:12). The reference that Jesus makes to the holy spirit in the case where he talks of blasphemy (3:28-30) could perhaps have been taken as a reference to himself in some way if speaking against Jesus is equated with blasphemy against the holy spirit. But this is not nearly a clear explanation nor an indication that if the holy spirit is in - or equivalent to - Jesus the same will be true of his followers. The addressees in the story world have not been taught this and so could not be expected to get much from the reference in 13:11, let alone receive an encouragement from it. Clearly this reference is meant for people who have some knowledge and firm belief about the relationship between Jesus and the holy spirit.

Furthermore, the clause in 13:11 introduced with *gar* is a supportive proposition to the injunction not to fear and the implication that the holy spirit gives words to people. Jesus says this in a way that implies the audience are supposed to know considerable information about the holy spirit. Robbins' claim that Jesus is a teacher in Mk does not account for the lack of teaching on this seemingly important topic.[19] The fact that the holy spirit will give people words to speak when on trial for their beliefs is not easily understood from the text of Mk. The rhetoric of Mk relies heavily on what his audience (of Christians) were expected to know about Jesus and the holy spirit. In this way it seems clear that Mark is representing Jesus' speech as that of someone who is currently being preached about and worshiped.

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[19] Vernon K. Robbins, *Jesus the Teacher: A Socio-Rhetorical Interpretation of Mark* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984); "Rhetorical Ritual," 102.

Robbins claims that throughout the speech Jesus embodies and enacts the role of teacher. Jesus "creates pictures of future situations and introduces instructions for the purpose of controlling the disciples' actions, thoughts and emotions in those situations."[20] In general Robbins paints a picture of Jesus as calm and measured in his talking. All his words are precisely calculated to effect the desired results in his disciples. For example: "the bodies of the disciples become places where thoughts, actions and emotions are *organized as carefully* as geographical and temporal space."[21] Robbins understands 13:7-8 as Jesus arguing in order to convince the disciples that there is a logical connection between the wars and the end time. Robbins devotes considerable space to these few verses.[22] Indeed, Robbins' whole article is heavily devoted to examining the argumentation within this speech. His analysis of Mk 13 is that it is

> a rhetorical elaboration of a thesis that in order for the end time to occur, it is necessary for destructive events to grow to a point that provokes God to ... [bring] an end to the distress.[23]

On this view the issue at stake is whether or not Mark's readers believe or are aware that events around them are eschatologically significant; the issue is not how to behave but what to believe.

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[20] Robbins, "Rhetorical Ritual," 102.

[21] Robbins, "Rhetorical Ritual," 107, emphasis added.

[22] Robbins, "Rhetorical Ritual," 103-107. "An entire syllogism of reasoning underlies the statements in Mark 13. Out of this reasoning, Mark 13:7-8 makes assertions about the necessity of certain things happening" (103).

[23] Robbins, "Rhetorical Ritual," 119. Although Robbins' study is ostensibly about ritual he does not explain how ritual might work as persuasion; instead, he focuses primarily on the parts of the speech which are recognizably argumentational in nature and lays out in some detail how the argument is structured ("Rhetorical Ritual," 102-110, 113-114, 118-119).

Although Mark's audience were experiencing "distress" and "destructive events" it seems unlikely that Mark would think they needed a lengthy argumentation to convince them of why these were necessary. There is certainly some rationale in Jesus' speech; however, this cannot be the main goal of Mark's persuasive effort. What the speech is intended to do is to give the audience the strength to witness boldly and to resist false teachers. Robbins does say that Jesus' speech somehow prepares the disciples. However, his insistence that the whole of the speech is an elaboration of a thesis and that all parts of the speech fit into that argument clouds over a significant aspect of how the speech persuades.

What I wish to do here is to point out in brief four of the features of this speech which reveal persuasive techniques of a non-argumentational nature. Each of these could be topics for further study but my aim is to provide a counter-balance to the claims usually made about this speech. An analysis that sees this speech as the prediction of a schedule of events or as basically an elaboration of a thesis does not account for significant aspects of the speech.

Jesus uses an array of expressions that put before the audience mental images that are emotive in content. The density of these graphic descriptions within the whole of the first half of the speech is striking: wars and rumors of wars (v. 7); earthquakes (v. 8); famines (v. 8); birth-pangs (v. 8); deliver up to councils (v. 9); beaten in synagogues (v. 9); stand before governors and kings (v. 9); bring you to trial and deliver you up (v. 11); brother will deliver up brother to death.. father ... child... rise against parents ... have them put to death (v. 12); flee to the mountains (v. 14); on the housetop (v. 15); in the field (v. 16); mantle (v. 16); with child (v. 17); give suck (v. 17); in winter (v. 18). As Horsley

has shown, these expressions need not be intended to point to specific, known happenings. Certainly the cumulative effect for the audience would be a sense of the magnitude of difficulty within which they (or other Christians) live. This is not the same as simple prediction, or primarily proof that the prediction of Jesus is reliable. Furthermore, a purely rational treatment of the subject of this speech could do without many of these expressions; the effect, however, would be substantially different. In addition, if, as I have suggested, these images are part of the technique of creating an analogous situation to what the audience are experiencing, and if the descriptions were understood in that way, they are not best described as predictions.

Another feature of this speech is that it contains a considerable number of allusions and quotations. Scholars typically analyze this phenomenon by comparing text with text. Accordingly the concern has been to compare this speech with the Hebrew Bible and the Septuagint and propose what constitutes an allusion and what constitutes a quotation. Different scholars vary in their assessments which can be seen, for example, by comparing critical editions of the Greek NT. More Biblical phrases could be added to the lists found there since these are based partly on intuitive judgment of Biblical material that contains similar words or phrases or material where there is a similarity of topic. It is essentially a comparison of extant texts.

What is lost in this kind of analysis is the notion that a writer can creatively stylize a character's speech with the use of allusions. A speaker who alludes to scriptural topics or uses Biblical phrases sounds different than a speaker who does not. The effect produced when a speaker states what is quoted and for what argumentative purpose is different from the effect of unmarked allusions or quotations. To allude is to "refer

covertly... or indirectly to something assumed known" (*The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English*, 6th ed.). The act of alluding is thus an intentional act of communication.

The alleged references to Biblical material in this speech are numerous and some are disputed.[24] The most obvious one for the audience would probably have been the description of the cosmic collapse at the time of the coming of the son of man (vv. 24-27). It seems most probable that the poetic lines predicting astronomical events (vv. 24-25) and the phrase *ton uion tou anthrōpou erchomenon en nephalais* (v. 26) were consciously gleaned from Biblical passages or tradition.[25] Whether the audience would have recognized their origin or attached logical significance to such an association is not likely. What they would have noticed is that Jesus here is speaking in a different style. In the composition of the speech these phrases and lines are unmarked as to origin. The voice speaking is Jesus' voice, not Daniel's voice or the voice of a particular Biblical prophet. Rather, Mark might have hoped to create an effect something like: "this *sounds* like the voice of a prophet speaking."

In this same vein it is helpful to note the difference between Mark's and Matthew's references to the notoriously difficult expression *to bdelugma tēs erēmōseōs* (v. 14; Mt 24:15). In Mk Jesus uses this phrase as though it is his own. Mark's audience may have

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[24] The following lists of references are taken from the marginal notes of UBSGNT[3] and NA[27] [references in square parentheses are those found only in NA[27]]: Mk 13:7 ([Dn 2:28]); Mk 13:8 (2 Chr 15:6, Is [8:21, 13:13], 19:2, [4Esr 13:30-32]); Mk 13:12 (Mic 7:6); Mk 13:13 ([Dn 12:12; 4Esr 6:25]); Mk 13:14 (Dn 9:27; 11:31; 12:11; 1 Macc 1:54; [Ez 7:12-16]); Mk 13:19 (Dn 12:1; [Jl 2:2; Ex 9:18; Dt 4:32]); Mk 13:22 (Dt 13:1-3, [6, Jr 6:13]); Mk 13:24-25 (Is 13:10, 34:4, Ez 32:7-8, Jl 2:10; 2:31); Mk 13:26 (Dn 7:13-14); Mk 13:27 (Zch 2:6,10, Dt 30:4); Mk 13:31 ([Is 51:6]).

[25] Is 13:10; 34:4; Dn 7:13.

recognized an allusion but, again, the effect created is that Jesus' voice has the sound of traditional Biblical material. In contrast, Matthew's Jesus explains where he got the phrase by adding *to rēthen dia Daniēl* (Mt 24:15). This "improvement" on Mark's version brings in an element of rationality not present in the Markan Jesus' speech.

I referred earlier to Jesus' use of imperative verb forms thus giving his whole speech an air or authority. Jesus not only employs imperatives but he also uses expressions by which he refers to himself. Apart from the salience created simply by having a figure in the narrative speak directly this speech contains a dense distribution of explicit references to Jesus' person and voice. These expressions are used in a way that implies the audience should be aware of the weight of authority he attaches to them. In this speech as elsewhere in Mk Jesus is conscious of the high significance he has for his followers. Mark has represented Jesus in this way not primarily to show that Jesus is a reliable support for his argument; rather, the effect created is that Jesus' personal connection with his followers is crucial in their life of witnessing, resisting false teachers and vigilantly waiting for their vindication at his return. This connection with Jesus can be seen in the way his references to himself are related to his exhortations in this speech.

Jesus uses a dramatic reference to himself with the expression *egō eimi* (v. 5) by echoing those who will try to deceive his followers. At three places he refers to himself using a verbal form, in each case talking about his speech: *proeirēka* (v. 23); *legō* (v. 30); *legō ...legō* (v. 37). When a person is speaking the sound of the voice itself is sufficient to let hearers know who is talking. In the case of Jesus, he stresses several times that he is talking. Furthermore, each of these three speech verbs occurs in an expression that is constructed so as to enhance its intensification: the expression *legō* occurs once with the

solemn *amēn* (v. 30) and in a double construction dramatically at the end of the speech (*ho de humin legō pasin legō*, v. 37); the expression *proeirēka* occurs in a phrase that is syntactically and phonologically set off from the surrounding speech.

Further, at five important points in the speech Jesus uses a possessive pronoun expression to refer to himself thus stressing his identity, reputation and authority. The first is connected with a warning to be alert for deceivers. People who come to deceive will do so in his name (*epi tō onoma mou*, v. 6). Secondly Jesus' followers will be arrested and tried for his sake (*heneken mou*, v. 9). In this connection Jesus tells them not to be anxious when beaten or arrested but to witness boldly (vv. 9-11). The reference to preaching the gospel to all nations is not very clearly connected but by association is part of this exhortation to witness. Jesus also refers to himself covertly with the expression holy spirit. As I argued above, Mark is relying on his audience to know that this is a reference to Jesus. It is noteworthy that in relation to these painful things coming upon them Jesus does not give a rationale for why they are happening.

Thirdly, followers of Jesus will be hated because of his name (*dia to onoma mou*, v. 13). Through hearing this expression in the context of the tragic events of betrayal and consequent execution the audience know their connection to Jesus is thus highlighted. Jesus' exhortation to persist faithfully is by implication: "the one who endures... will be saved" (v. 13). Further, in a warning similar but more detailed than the one in the opening of the speech, Jesus refers to himself obliquely as *ho christos* (v. 21). By casting the deceivers' speech as short exclamations in direct speech, Jesus' is dramatically highlighting these false prophets. At the same time, by having them refer to himself as *ho christos* he is sharply contrasting himself with them. From the warning and

declaration in v. 23 it is not clear whether Jesus is referring to the danger of false prophets only or to all the preceding speech. In any case, this statement again connects Jesus to the audience in that it states who is talking (*proeir ka*, v. 23).

Finally, Jesus emphatically connects his own authority to his declaration that the son of man will come and gather the elect (vv. 24-31). With the parable of the tree and its leaves he argues that his coming and the vindication are sure. But to this argument he adds his own authoritative statement using the solemn phrase *am n leg humin* (v. 30), declaring that his words (*hoi logoi mou...*, v. 31) will not pass away. By doing so he is implying that there is no stronger guarantee than that of his word. For an audience in the midst of tribulation, this is surely a strong implication that their connection with Jesus is vital.

The above references to Jesus - in the form of self-reference - are placed in this relatively long speech at regular intervals and thus the entire speech is affected by the connection that Jesus is forging with his followers in tribulation. Mark, through Jesus' voice, particularly urges Christians in this speech on two points: they should be wary of prophets and teachers; they should witness aggressively in spite of difficulty. A lengthy portion of the speech is devoted to exhorting them to live with the knowledge that their vindication is sure and that the return of the son can happen at any time.

Typically this speech has been taken as persuasion in that Jesus is somehow preparing his disciples to face what still lies ahead - although it is not always clear whether the narrative figures or a later generation of Christians are in view. In this

section I have examined the speech as composed in a similar way to that of pseudepigraphal letters like 2 Peter. By a literary technique Mark brings forward the voice of Jesus and makes him speak (as if) directly to the audience who are contemporary with himself. This same persuasion could have been attempted, for example, with an account of a vision of the risen Jesus and his words spoken in that way. Mark, however, chose to have Jesus speak from the context of his earthly ministry - directly before his suffering and death - but in the form of a speech in which he looks ahead to times and situations in which Mark's contemporaries find themselves.

Richard Horsley argues that the main goal of this speech is to "exhort... [Jesus' followers] not to be deterred from aggressively witnessing to repressive rulers,"[26] On the other hand, Larry W. Hurtado, for example, lays the stress on the warning against deception. He writes that

> the dominant theme of the whole [of Mk 13] is a warning against being deceived by false claims about the end being near and by individuals who will try to pass themselves off as prophets or [the Christ].[27]

Mark's rhetoric included both of these persuasive goals; in this speech Jesus is concerned to warn against deceit as well as to exhort hearers to speak or preach in the face of oppression.

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[26] Horsley, *Hearing the Whole Story*, 129.

[27] Larry W. Hurtado, *Mark*. New International Biblical Commentaries 2, Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1989, 212.

CONCLUSION

A recent assessment of the state of Markan studies claims that "narrative criticism has all but replaced redaction criticism in many circles as the dominant methodology for the study of Mark's Gospel."[1] Scholars who take a narrative-critical approach to Mk

> [attempt] to enter the world of Mark's story and to investigate such narrative features as plot, character, settings...[etc.]. For narrative criticism the "meaning" of Mark's Gospel is... to be understood in terms of the effect that *the story* is expected to have on its readers.[2]

Although narrative critics' typical assessment of the effectiveness of the story is more optimistic than could realistically be expected for hearers of the text, the basic premise that readers/hearers are affected in certain ways by a story is valid. Modern hearers of a performance of Mk report that they are impressed with the way Jesus is continually in the spotlight. Above all they say that this is a story about Jesus. They notice also that Jesus' interactions with other characters are numerous and that the disciples are in the picture throughout. The proportionally long account of the arrest, trial and execution of Jesus cannot be missed by any hearer. However, they also notice that Jesus speaks a few times at some length, especially about parables and about things to come in the future.[3]

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[1] Mark Allan Powell, "Toward a Narrative-Critical Understanding of Mark," in *Gospel Interpretation: Narrative-critical & Social-scientific Approaches,* edited by Jack Dean Kingsbury (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 1997), 65-70 (66).

[2] Powell, "Narrative-Critical Understanding," 65-66, 69, emphasis added.

[3] These observations are based on my recent informal survey of a group of people who had just listened to a performance of Mk. The effect of the story which they reported did not match the optimistic claims often made in narrative-critical studies of Mk. I assume, however, that their impressions would be typical of most modern hearers.

Near the beginning of this study I stated that the complexity of the rhetoric of Mk must be kept in mind in the investigation of the stretches of text in which Jesus speaks at some length. The speeches were meant to be heard within a larger co-text; the persuasive effect of the speeches was intended to take place in relation to the rhetoric of the whole of the work to some degree. Neither narrative critical studies in general nor this study of mine, however, have engaged the interesting question of that relationship. Though obviously important for an adequate understanding of Mk, this question is beyond the scope of my more restricted purpose. Narrative critical studies, with their heavy emphasis on "such narrative features as plot, character, settings..." etc, have tended to overlook the fact that "Jesus speaks a few times at some length" in Mk. My study, on the other hand, has been an attempt in part to provide a counter-balance to the strong emphases on narrative features in Gospel studies precisely by paying special attention to those few speeches of Jesus. Because of their relative length in a work strongly characterized by episodes, the speeches serve to highlight the fact itself of Jesus speaking. At the same time, for the duration of a speech, the other characters and the dominant voice of the narrator become less salient to the audience's perception.

Given the central assumption of this study that the major-length speeches of Jesus in Mk are rhetorical units in their own right, I have attempted to show that at one level they were intended to be heard as the voice of Jesus speaking independently of the narrative as a whole. That is, Mark composed the speeches in part to have Jesus address issues current to his audience. My analysis of 13:5-37, for example, shows that what is prediction at the level of the story world is better understood in rhetorical terms as a technique by which Mark brings forward the voice of Jesus to speak to the current

struggles that his audience were facing under Roman oppression. Seen in that way Jesus' predictions of false prophets and arrests and trials are the vehicle by which Mark attempts to persuade his audience toward watchfulness and boldness in witnessing.[4]

When narrative features like plot, character, point of view, etc are in focus any speech reported in a story is seen primarily in relation to these features. The content of a character's speech is then analyzed, for example, in terms of how it functions to develop the plot (e.g., Jesus' interactions with his opponents in the build-up of conflict in the story, 11:27-12:44). What I have done in this study is to read the longer speeches of Jesus as persuasive in their own right. That is, without denying that Mk is a story or that the recognition of narrative features is important to an adequate understanding of it, I claim that Mark's audience was inclined to hear a stretch of Jesus' voice as a speech spoken to them in their context. For Mark's audience the question "What is Jesus saying in this speech?" functioned at a different level than for readers/hearers listening primarily to the development of the plot of a story. This was so because they were attuned to the centrality of the public speech in Greco-Roman persuasion and also because Jesus was for them more than a character in a narrative.

Rhetorical critics of the Gospels of the last two decades or so have been concerned to analyze the pronouncement stories - episodes which centre around a saying of Jesus - as compositions primarily designed to argue a thesis. Much emphasis has been placed on

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[4] For David Rhoads, "Losing Life for Others in the Face of Death: Mark's Standards of Judgment," in *Gospel Interpretation*, ed. Kingsbury, 83-94, it is through the "tightly woven narrative" as a whole that Mk leads readers to face persecution and preach boldly (83).

what some ancient rhetorical treatises call the elaboration of the chreia.[5] With such an emphasis on short narrative units, however, the longer speeches of Jesus in Mk have not received the attention they deserve as units of persuasive speech in their own right. Furthermore, in their concentration on the elaboration of the chreia they have tended to see rhetorical persuasion primarily as formal argumentation and thus largely failed to account for other, non-argumentational techniques in Mark's compositions. My study, however, is based on the premise that the persuasive effect of a rhetorical text can depend to a significant degree on how an audience is affected by features of the text which are intended to educe a response of feeling or emotion. Accordingly my analyses have attempted to show that there are indeed features of the text of Jesus' speeches which anticipate such a response. In persuasion where the main concern is to argue a point rationally (i.e., primarily at the level of rational, conceptual thought) an audience is expected to work out logical relationships and draw conclusions that could be stated in propositional form. This is the kind of persuasion that has received the bulk of NT rhetorical criticism's attention.

My analysis of Jesus' speech in 4:11-32, for example, shows that this speech does indeed contain units of propositional content connected to some extent to form argumentation, either explicit or implicit. At the rational-conceptual level Mark's audience was to understand that there is an inside and an outside with God, that it is important for people to hear and take seriously what Jesus gives when he speaks the word to them and that they should not be concerned that the reign of God is invisible just now.

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[5] For an example of an analysis of a pronouncement story that follows closely the work of Burton Mack and Vernon Robbins see Rod Parrott, "Conflict and Rhetoric in Mk 2:23-28," *Semeia* 64 (1993): 117-137.

At the same time I have shown that a significant part of Mark's persuasive technique was to have Jesus speak in a way that would make people feel an uneasiness regarding the issue of whether they were on the inside with God. In parts of the speech in 4:11-32, as elsewhere in Mk, Jesus' voice seems to be focused sharply on leaders in the Christian movement. The lack of clear definition on Jesus' part of who is inside and who is not was intended to cause them some anxiety regarding how they measured up to their duty of receiving and giving out the word to those who were under their leadership.

A significant aspect of Jesus' speeches is that Mark represents him speaking not only in one style. Within the one speech of 4:11-32, for example, Jesus speaks in one section of gnomic language in an argumentational style marked by an opacity of logic - internally connected by simple juxtaposition creating the sound of improvised speech. In another part of the speech he tells a series of mini-narratives that are quite easy to follow, but he also tells two short parables without stating any moral or lesson to be learned from them. In my investigation of Jesus' speech in 9:39-50 I noted the sound of prophetic oracle which characterizes a large portion of that speech. A particularly striking example of this is the near-exact quotation of a passage from Isaiah describing gruesome details of infernal punishment. By leaving the quotation in its original style, Mark gives Jesus' voice the sound of a prophet's voice. As an effect, this style switch enhances the passage of imprecatory language by which Jesus is warning Mark's audience of leaders of the gravity of causing "little people" under their leadership to stumble.

Mark designed his text not as a script for his own "sermon" to be delivered to a particular community but to function as a stimulus that would be heard by readers/hearers

in a variety of places and settings. A large portion of the narrative - about one-third - consists of a representation of Jesus' speech. Thus Mark wished to create and convince an audience to a significant extent via the voice of Jesus. The representation of Jesus' voice is closely related to what I have emphasized in the analyses of the speeches, that Mark assumed that his audience venerated Jesus as their god, a real force in their life that existed outside the literary construct of the narrative. On this point my understanding of Mk differs sharply from Burton Mack and Vernon Robbins' notion of a Jesus movement that created the text in order to nurture its own subculture and that with the text it "*created* a teacher whose authority no one could question."[6]

I think I have been able to show in my analyses that Jesus' speeches were intended to affect an audience who rather assumed the existence of an exalted Christ. This significant aspect of a speech's persuasive force - not typically addressed in scholarly work - is not best explained by an appeal to argumentation theory. My examination of Jesus' speech in 12:1-11 is one example. This speech is composed of a simple though dramatic story and a scriptural quotation; it is not a polished, well-composed argumentational speech. However, its persuasive force lies in the fact that the audience is led to understand the pronouncement about reinstatement - contained in the quotation - as though coming from the Jesus they believe to exist as a real force outside the construct of the narrative. Mark accomplishes this persuasive effect by having Jesus' voice project past the opponents of the story world. Although the son and his murder are salient in the

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[6] See, e.g., Vernon K. Robbins, "Progymnastic Rhetorical Composition and Pre-Gospel Traditions: A New Approach," in *The Synoptic Gospels: Source Criticism and the New Literary Criticism*, edited by C. Focant (Leuven-Louvain: Leuven University Press, 1993), 146-147; Burton L. Mack and Vernon K. Robbins, *Patterns of Persuasion in the Gospels* (Sonoma: Polebridge Press, 1989), 203-208 (208, emphasis added).

story - at the level of the narrative this constitutes a passion prediction on the part of the narrative figure Jesus - the opponents in the narrative are not attuned to the topic of reinstatement. Mark's audience, people who themselves are doubtful of their own vindication in their current suffering, are thus invited to hear the pronouncement as though projected past the narrative to themselves. Mark has created an effect by which the Jesus they venerate as their god is saying to them in effect that surely they must remember that he has been reinstated. If, as is assumed in Mk, the audience were experiencing arrests and executions this pronouncement from Jesus - speaking as their already reinstated god - could indeed persuade them to reaffirm their belief in an imminent and sure vindication for themselves.

Finally, insofar as this is a rhetorical-critical study I have intentionally investigated the features of Jesus' speeches which are noticeable on the surface of the text with an aim to uncover the relationship between these features and the effect they might practically be expected to have on an audience.[7] Mk is a complex text in terms of its intended rhetorical effect. It portrays various voices that speak persuasively: the voice of the narrator, of Scripture, of Jesus.

> It remains a profound challenge to explain rhetorically... how the argument of Mark, its intended persuasive impact, is variously couched in its large-scale narrative structure, its particular narrated episodes and its occasional formal argumentations in various voices.[8]

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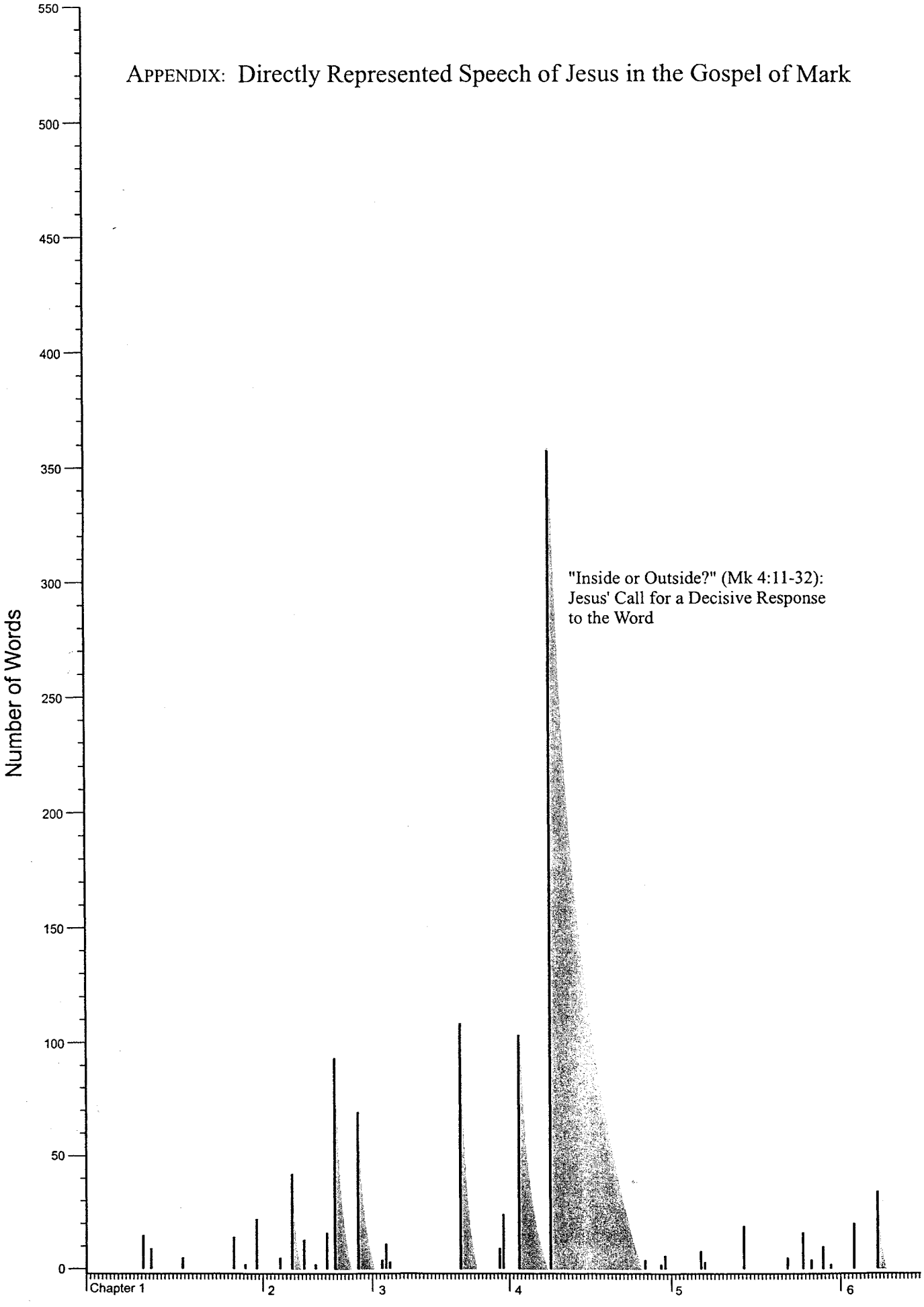
[7] Ian H. Henderson, "'Salted with Fire' (Mark 9:42-50): Style, Oracles and (Socio-)rhetorical Gospel Criticism," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 80 (2000): 44-65 (58).

[8] Henderson, "'Salted with Fire,'" 46.

I have examined a part of one of these voices that speaks within the complexity of Mk, Jesus speaking several times at some length. By taking seriously Mark's purposeful representation of Jesus as making persuasive speeches and by addressing the question of how Mark used these speeches for his own rhetorical goals I hope that this study offers a meaningful contribution toward such an explanation.

APPENDIX: Directly Represented Speech of Jesus in the Gospel of Mark



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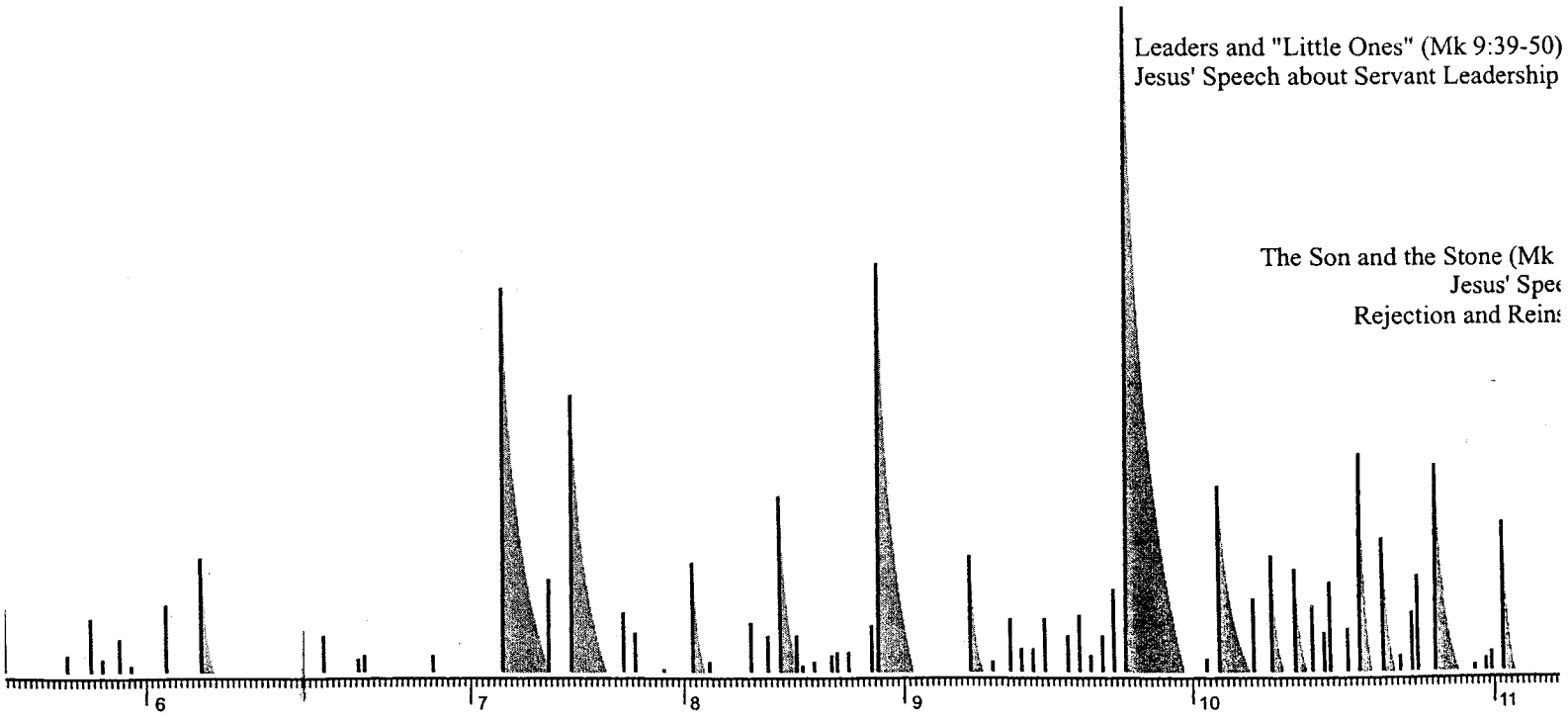

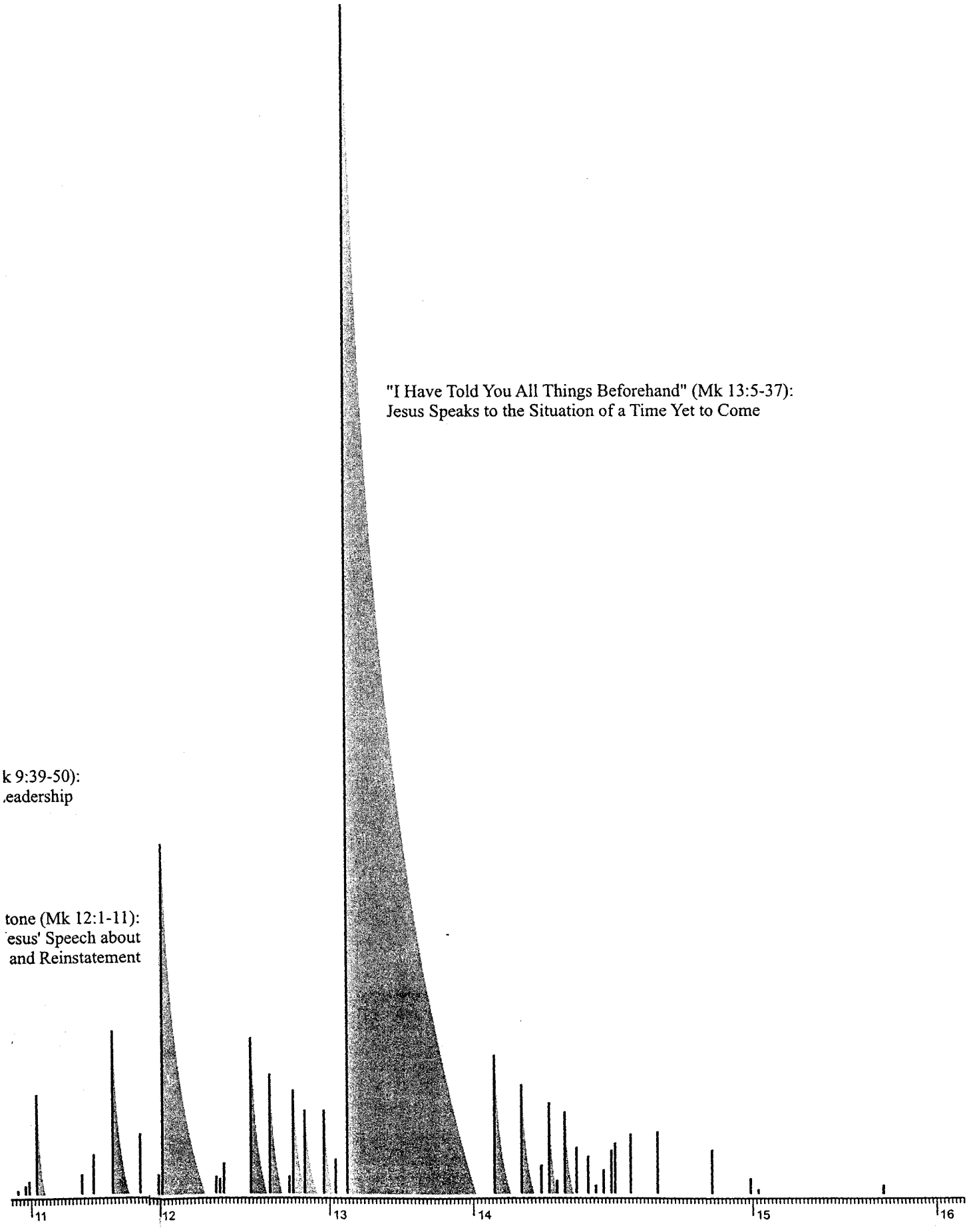
"I Have Told You All Things Beforehand" (Mk 13:5-37):
Jesus Speaks to the Situation of a Time Yet to Come
k 9:39-50):
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