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Mark as Peter's Testimony

The Narrator and the Witnesses in the Gospel of Mark

By
Oleksandr Bychkov

A Project Submitted to
the Faculty of Covenant Theological Seminary
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Theology

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Abstract

Traditionally the close connection between the origin of the Gospel of Mark and St. Peter was recognized in the Christian church, primarily due to Papias' witness. In the first half of the 20th century, this view was challenged and almost rejected due to the developments of so-called form criticism. Recently, several scholars argued for the validity of Papias' tradition and the importance of eyewitnesses' testimony, specifically Peter's, for the Gospel's origin. Thus, Richard Bauckham's recent *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses* produced an intensive discussion among scholars. Some asked the valid question: does the Gospel itself support the claim of its possible origin from Peter's (and others') eyewitness testimony?

This thesis seeks to answer this question and look for Mark's Gospel internal evidence, which may imply its connection to Peter. The methodology utilized is provided by narrative criticism. The main topic of the research is the exploration of the relationship between Mark's narrator and Peter as his possible key witness. Three features of Mark's narrative, namely the narrator's ability, point of view, and focalization, are put at the center of the investigation. Exploring these features allows drawing conclusions regarding the relationship between the narrator, Peter, and other disciples, and the implied reader in the spheres of knowledge, perception, psychology, and ideology.

The study of the narrator's ability revealed that it is possible to see the narrator as one with limited knowledge and dependent on the disciples in the sphere of knowledge. As the disciples had privileged access to Jesus, they were able to know him deeply. Jesus himself had exceptional knowledge abilities and openly revealed this knowledge in front

of his disciples. It is argued that the disciples can serve as a medium between Jesus and the narrator and transfer Jesus' knowledge to the latter.

The study of point of view demonstrated the ongoing ideological conflict between Jesus and the disciples. This conflict affected the relationship between Jesus and the disciples and was revealed in the difference between Jesus' and the disciples' understanding and perceiving things. The study of focalization showed that the narrator constantly emphasizes the disciples' perception, and both the narrator and the implied reader share their perception to a great extent. However, they are invited to learn Jesus' perception.

The conflict between the disciples and Jesus, if not resolved, would prevent them from right interpretation of the Gospel events, which is important for witnessing. It was shown that the conflict was resolved at the final point of Peter's presence in the Gospel (14:72). At this moment, he learned to see the Gospel story in Jesus' way.

Passages 1:29–39 and 14:72 make the Gospel's *inclusio*. This structure invites the implied reader to enter the Gospel story alongside Peter and then revisit it with him again after his vision is healed. Peter's level of awareness, the emphasis on his perception, his role in the disciples' conflict with Jesus, and its resolution make him an excellent candidate not only for Mark's narrator's key witness but that of Mark himself. Moreover, due to his experience in 14:72, the Gospel may be seen as Peter's confession and testimony.

To Ukraine

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Abbreviations

CF	Character-bound Focalizer
EF	External Focalizer
ESV	English Standard Version
IR	Implied Reader
NASB	New American Standard Bible
NT	New Testament
OF	Object of Focalization
OT	Old Testament

Chapter 1

Introduction

This introductory chapter explains the relevance, purpose and chosen methodology of this research. It contains a survey of the views on Mark's Gospel origin throughout its history. It will show that the Gospel's connection with Peter's eyewitness testimony, the main topic of this thesis, is an important and timely question. It will also explain why narrative criticism can be considered a valid methodology for the intended research.

Mark's Reception: From the Early Church to Form Criticism

Prior to Form Criticism

Traditionally, the Gospel of Mark has been viewed as being written by John Mark in close association with the apostle Peter. Therefore, it was believed to be based on the almost direct eyewitness account of the chief of Jesus' disciples. The well-known statement of the early church historian Papias evidences this belief of the church:

> τοῦθ᾽ ὁ πρεσβύτερος ἔλεγεν: Μάρκος μὲν ἑρμηνευτὴς Πέτρου γενόμενος, ὅσα ἐμνημόνευσεν, ἀκριβῶς ἔγραψεν, οὐ μέντοι τάξει, τὰ ὑπὸ τοῦ κυρίου ἢ λεχθέντα ἢ πραχθέντα. οὔτε γὰρ ἤκουσεν τοῦ κυρίου οὔτε παρηκολούθησεν αὐτῷ, ὕστερον δέ, ὡς ἔφην, Πέτρῳ: ὃς πρὸς τὰς χρείας ἐποιεῖτο τὰς διδασκαλίας, ἀλλ᾽ οὐχ ὥσπερ σύνταξιν τῶν κυριακῶν ποιούμενος λογίων, ὥστε οὐδὲν ἥμαρτεν Μάρκος οὕτως ἔνια γράψας ὡς ἀπεμνημόνευσεν. ἑνὸς γὰρ ἐποιήσατο πρόνοιαν, τοῦ μηδὲν ὧν ἤκουσεν παραλιπεῖν ἢ ψεύσασθαί τι ἐν αὐτοῖς.
>
> And the Presbyter used to say this, 'Mark became Peter's interpreter and wrote accurately all that he remembered, not, indeed, in order, of the things said or done by the Lord. For he had not heard the Lord, nor had he followed him, but later on, as I said, followed Peter, who used to give teachings as necessity demanded but not making, as it were, an arrangement of the Lord's oracles, so that Mark did nothing wrong in thus writing down single points as he remembered them. For to

> one thing he gave attention, to leave out nothing of what he had heard and to make no false statements in them.'[1]

Other fathers and historians of the early church confirmed this relation as well.[2] Thus, there was a common belief in the early church that Peter was the key source of the Gospel of Mark.[3] Despite such unanimity in the perception of the Gospel's origin, Mark seems to have been utilized less heavily than the other Gospels, especially Matthew, for a long time.[4] This lack of attention lasted until the 19th century when the so-called historical-critical approach to NT studies arose and raised the question of the primary sources used by the evangelists. Which documents are the closest to the historical Jesus and the Gospel events, and, accordingly, are the most reliable for historical research? This question relates to the so-called synoptic problem: the interdependence of Gospel documents. The need to solve this problem led to the development of source criticism. As a result of the work of source critics in the late 19th century, New Testament scholars established a consensual opinion regarding the Gospel of Mark's primacy.[5]

Thus, the Gospel of Mark has acquired the authority of a document that allows us to approach the historical Jesus as closely as possible. The degree of its proximity to

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[1] Eusebius of Caesarea, *The Ecclesiastical History*, 3.39.15.

[2] For the observation of the early church reception of Mark's dependence on Peter see Robert H. Stein, *Mark*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008), 3–4, eBook Collection (EBSCOhost); Herbert Morrison Gale, "The Validity of the Petrine Tradition in the Light of Modern Research," PhD diss., State University of Iowa (1939), 51–67.

[3] "The tradition that Peter was a key source for Mark's Gospel — indeed, that the Second Gospel was in many respects 'Peter's memoirs' — found, as far as we know, unanimous agreement in the early church." James R. Edwards, *The Gospel According to Mark*, Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2001), 5.

[4] Due to Augustine's suggestion (Augustine, *The Harmony of the Gospels*, I, ii, 4), Mark was even considered an abbreviated version of the Gospel of Matthew.

[5] For the discussion of the synoptic problem see Robert H. Stein, *The Synoptic Problem: An Introduction* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1987).

Jesus among scholars was similarly estimated as described by Papias, whose testimony confirmed the findings of the source critical research.[6] In addition, Mark's short and straightforward style and his vivid details indicated the Gospel's closeness to the actual events described by eyewitnesses.[7] Therefore, it was established that the Gospel of Mark is a reliable historical source. Its direct connection with eyewitness testimony, primarily Peter, was confirmed.

Form Criticism

In the early 20th century, the credibility of the Gospel of Mark as a historical source was seriously questioned. Several significant critical works by German biblical scholars were published then. Thus, in 1892, Martin Kähler argued that our Gospels did not provide enough details to construct the so-called "historical Jesus."[8] This book was followed by a series of publications by Julius Wellhausen,[9] where he presented the

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[6] R. H. Lightfoot, while discussing the views of the 19th century scholarship on Mark, claims that they were basically the same as Papias'. See R. H. Lightfoot, *History and Interpretation in the Gospels* (New York, NY: Harper and Brothers, 1934), 13–16.

[7] Ezra P. Gould explains how the same conclusions regarding the origin of the Gospel may be drawn from the church tradition and the textual characteristics of the Gospel: "Papias tells us also that Mark, having become Peter's interpreter, wrote down accurately all that he remembered, not however in order, both of the words and deeds of Christ. And tradition is consistent also in regard to this dependence of Mark on Peter. Moreover, this account agrees with the character of the second Gospel. It bears evident marks of the eye-witness in its vividness, and in the presence of those descriptive touches which reproduce for us not only the event, but the scene and surroundings as well." Ezra P. Gould, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to St. Mark*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh, UK: T. & T. Clark, 1896), xi.

[8] Martin Kähler, *Der sogenannte historische Jesus und der geschichtliche, biblische Christus* (Leipzig, Germany: A. Deichert, 1892).

[9] Julius Wellhausen, *Das Evangelium Marci: Übersetzt und erklärt* (Berlin, Germany: G. Reimer, 1903); Julius Wellhausen, *Das Evangelium Matthäi* (Berlin, Germany: G. Reimer, 1904); Julius Wellhausen, *Das Evangelium Lucae* (Berlin, Germany: G. Reimer, 1904); Julius Wellhausen, *Einleitung in die drei ersten Evangelien* (Berlin, Germany: G. Reimer, 1905).

principles that later formed the basis of the so-called form criticism.[10] In 1901, William Wrede published his landmark *Das Messiasgeheimnis in den Evangelien* (Engl. trans. *The Messianic Secret*).[11] The author argued that the Gospel of Mark is not a historical account but a theological one, rejecting any potential connection between the Gospel and eyewitnesses and emphasizing the evangelist's significant theological and apologetic interest.

In 1919, the book by Karl Schmidt *Der Rahmen der Geschichte Jesu* (Engl. trans. *The Framework of the Story of Jesus*)[12] was published. In the volume, the author argued that the Gospel cannot be regarded as a coherent biography of Jesus, and the biographical and chronological details found there are, at best, random and insignificant. In addition to Schmidt's work, two other classical publications laid the foundation for form criticism. The first one was Martin Dibelius' *Die Formgeschichte des Evangeliums* (Engl. trans. *From Tradition to Gospel*).[13] The second work was Rudolf Bultmann's *Die Geschichte der synoptischen Tradition* (Engl. trans. *The History of the Synoptic Tradition*).[14]

The early form critics saw only a more or less arbitrary collection by the evangelists, including Mark, of separate and independent traditional units in the Gospels. Dibelius and Bultmann raised the question of the origin of these traditions. They argued that the traditions were the product of a long and creative process of transmission and use

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[10] The excellent summary of Wellhausen's thought is given by Lightfoot. See Lightfoot, *History and Interpretation,* 23.

[11] William Wrede, *Das Messiasgeheimnis in den Evangelien* (Göttingen, Germany: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1901).

[12] Karl Schmidt, *Der Rahmen der Geschichte Jesu* (Berlin, Germany: Trowitzsch & Sohn, 1919).

[13] Martin Dibelius, *Die Formgeschichte des Evangeliums* (Tübingen, Germany: Mohr, 1919).

[14] Rudolf Bultmann, *Die Geschichte der synoptischen Tradition* (Göttingen, Germany: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1921).

by the early church. Thus, they rejected the existence of any direct connection between the text of the Gospels, including Mark, and eyewitnesses, such as Peter. They stated that eyewitness testimony is far removed from the existing text by the creative and uncontrolled transmission of Gospel traditions. Bultmann boldly claimed, "I do indeed think that we can now know almost nothing concerning the life and personality of Jesus, since the early Christian sources show no interest in either, are moreover fragmentary and often legendary; and other sources about Jesus do not exist."[15] While Dibeilius' opinion was more moderate,[16] Bultmann's claim became the starting point for subsequent views of form critics.

The English scholar Vincent Taylor challenged Bultmann's point of view.[17] Taylor pointed out that the consistent application of form critics' views on the origin of Gospel traditions was incompatible with any significant influence of eyewitnesses on the formation of traditions and could not be accurate. Here is his famous statement, which he made in the lectures on form criticism: "If the Form-Critics are right, the disciples must have been translated to heaven immediately after the Resurrection."[18] However, he accepted the form critics' paradigm to some degree and believed that the origin of the NT

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[15] Rudolf Bultmann, *Jesus and the Word*, trans. Louise Pettibone Smith and Erminie Huntress Lantero (New York, NY: Scribner, 1958), 8.

[16] Samuel Byrskog rightly notes that Dibelius' attitude toward eyewitness accounts is much more positive than Bultmann's and the one which is generally ascribed to early form critics. See Samuel Byrskog, *Story as History — History as Story: The Gospel Tradition in the Context of Ancient Oral History* (Boston, MA: Brill Academic Publishers, 2002), 34. Thus Dibelius points out that some characters of the Gospel of Mark, including Peter in the denial episode, may well be the original eyewitnesses. See Martin Dibelius, *From Tradition to Gospel,* trans. Bertram Lee Wolf (New York, NY: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1935), 182–83, 214–15. Moreover, Dibelius points out that the form of so-called paradigms in their origin is close to eyewitnesses. Ibid., 60.

[17] Byrskog asserts that Taylor's polemic was primarily directed against Bultmann. See Byrskog, *Story as History*, 37.

[18] Vincent Taylor, *The Formation of the Gospel Tradition* (London, UK: Macmillan, 1933), 41.

traditions is due to both the testimony and influence of eyewitnesses and the processes form critics suggested.[19]

Denis Nineham, responding to Vincent Taylor,[20] points out that Taylor tried to combine these two approaches, which is hardly justifiable. Thus, Nineham argues that the consistent application of the form critic approach is hardly compatible with any significant eyewitness influence. However, he argues that Taylor's *a priori* position on the role of eyewitnesses is not supported by the Gospel text. On the contrary, the approach of form critics explains the form of the existing Gospel in the best possible way.[21] He argues that this approach should be accepted as *a posteriori* and that the form of the Gospel traditions supports the methodology proposed by form critics rather than relying on the accounts of eyewitnesses. The author proposes that the importance of eyewitnesses in the NT is emphasized at a later stage of its formation. It highlights the apologetic purposes of Christian communities who sought to legitimize their beliefs. However, the Gospel traditions were developed within "enthusiastic" communities of the early church and did not require eyewitness validation.

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[19] Taylor suggests that "their [eyewitnesses - O.B.] actual recollection comes as a disturbing element to the smooth working of the theory." His *The Formation of the Gospel Tradition*, 41.

[20] D. E. Nineham, "Eyewitness Testimony and the Gospel Tradition, I," *Journal of Theological Studies* 9, no. 2 (April 1958): 13–25; D. E. Nineham, "Eyewitness Testimony and the Gospel Tradition, II," *Journal of Theological Studies* 9, no. 2 (October 1958): 243–52; D. E. Nineham, "Eyewitness Testimony and the Gospel Tradition, III," *Journal of Theological Studies* 11, no. 2 (October 1960): 253–64.

[21] "The formal, stereotyped character of the separate sections, suggestive of long use, the absence of particular, individual details such as would be irrelevant to community edification, the conventional character of the connecting summaries, all these point to a development which was controlled by the impersonal needs and forces of the community and not immediately by the personal recollections and interests of the individual eye-witness." Nineham, "Eyewitness Testimony and the Gospel Tradition, I," 13.

After Form Criticism

Subsequent NT scholars accepted the claims of form criticism regarding the origin of Gospel traditions.[22] Thus, Willi Marxsen, one of the founders of redaction criticism, in his classic volume *Der Evangelist Markus: Studien zur Redaktionsgeschichte des Evangeliums*[23] (Engl. trans. *Mark the Evangelist: Studies on the Redaction History of the Gospel*) agrees with form critics regarding the history of the Gospel traditions and their anonymous origin but insists on a more important role for Mark. According to Marxsen, Mark should be perceived not merely as a compiler of traditions but as a full-fledged author with his theological purposes.[24] Narrative criticism, the methodology utilized in this study, considers authorial creativity in creating the Gospels even more significant than does redaction criticism.[25] Although the narrative criticism approach focuses on the study of "the formal features of narrative in the texts of the Gospels"[26] and does not raise questions of historiography, it still affirms the form critics' convictions regarding the origin of the Gospel traditions and denies any direct connection between the Gospel and eyewitnesses.[27]

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[22] This of course does not mean that form critical suggestions were accepted immediately and unanimously by the scholarship. For example, see how Herbert Gale defends Petrine tradition even in face of the form critical developments, in his "The Validity of the Petrine Tradition in the Light of Modern Research."

[23] Willi Marxsen, *Der Evangelist Markus. Studien zur Redaktionsgeschichte des Evangeliums* (Göttingen, Germany: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1956).

[24] See Willi Marxsen, *Mark the Evangelist: Studies on the Redaction History of the Gospel* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1969), 16–17.

[25] "The author has not simply collected traditions, organized them, made connections between them, and added summaries; the author has told a story." David Rhoads, "Narrative Criticism and the Gospel of Mark," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 50, no. 3 (September 1982): 413.

[26] David Rhoads, "Narrative Criticism," 411.

[27] See David Rhoads, Joanna Dewey, and Donald Michie, *Mark as Story: An Introduction to the Narrative of a Gospel*, 3rd ed. (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2012), 2.

Contemporary commentaries and other scholarly writings generally share the same beliefs of form critics, although their degree of skepticism about the Gospel's dependence on eyewitnesses may significantly vary. Some authors declare their adherence to the view of form critics and, using their arguments, or arguments similar to those expressed by Nineham, deny the direct influence of eyewitnesses on the text. Quite typical is Francis Moloney's statement, "Papias's insistence upon Mark's accuracy (ἀκριβῶς), and his having written the Gospel in its entirety on the basis of Peter's account of Jesus' story, although not in order (οὐ μέντοι τάξει), flies in the face of the form critics' conclusions that the work is the result of a process of editing and that the various pericopes originated in different times and places."[28] Papias' statement is usually considered as made out of apologetic reasons and, therefore, hardly trustworthy.[29]

Other authors deny the connection between Mark and Peter or other possible eyewitnesses based on internal evidence of the Gospel. One of the typical arguments against Markan dependence on Peter is drawn from analyzing Peter's image and role in the Gospel. For example, Joel Marcus takes a moderate approach on form criticism arguments, but when discussing Mark's presentation of Peter still states, "The truth is that, were it not for Papias, one would never suspect that the Second Gospel was particularly Petrine."[30]

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[28] Francis J. Moloney, *The Gospel of Mark: A Commentary* (2002; repr., Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2012), 11, eBook Collection (EBSCOhost). See also M. Eugene Boring, *Mark: A Commentary*, New Testament Library (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2014), 9–13, eBook Collection (EBSCOhost); Morna Hooker, *The Gospel According to Saint Mark* (1991; repr., Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009), 7; Robert A. Guelich, *Mark 1–8:26*, Word Biblical Commentary 34a (1989; repr., Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 2015), xxxii–xxxiv.

[29] See Boring, *Mark*, 11; Kurt Niederwimmer, "Johannes Markus und die Frage nach dem Verfasser des zweiten Evangeliums," *ZNW* 58 (1967): 172–188**.**

[30] See Joel Marcus, *Mark 1–8*: *A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary,* Anchor Yale Bible Commentaries 27 (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2000), 24.

Not all commentators are so pessimistic. Some well-known commentaries assert a clear connection between the Gospel of Mark and Peter and positively evaluate the testimony of Papias, although they do not limit Mark's sources to Peter's testimony solely.[31] So, according to James Edwards, "The Gospel has numerous characteristics of an eyewitness account, and we shall have repeated occasion in the commentary to show where Mark's story plausibly relies on Peter's testimony."[32] Martin Hengel's research is often cited as a strong defense for Papias.[33] Other commentators point out that there is no way to determine with certainty whether Mark was dependent on Peter or not.[34]

The most common argument that purportedly confirms eyewitness evidence in the Gospel of Mark is vivid details in the text, especially if they are not directly relevant to the narrative. Such details distinguish Mark's Gospel from other Synoptics, which was

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[31] Vincent Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark* (London, UK: Melbourne Macmillan, 1966), 89. See also William L. Lane, *The Gospel of Mark,* New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1974), 26–28; C. E. B. Cranfield, *The Gospel According to Saint Mark*, Cambridge Greek Testament Commentary (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1959), 5; Edwards, *The Gospel According to Mark,* 6; R. T. France, *The Gospel of Mark: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 2002), 35–41; C. S. Mann, *Mark: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary,* Anchor Bible (New York, NY: Doubleday & Co, 1986), 80.

[32] Edwards, *The Gospel According to Mark,* 6.

[33] Martin Hengel, *Studies in the Gospel of Mark* (London, UK: SCM, 1985). See also Robert H. Gundry, *Mark. A Commentary on His Apology for the Cross* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1993), 1026–45.

[34] See C. Clifton Black, *The Disciples According to Mark: Markan Redaction in Current Debate*, 2nd ed., Journal for the Study of the New Testament, Supplement Series (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2012), 205.

R. Alan Culpepper believes that Mark's Gospel has eyewitness features but is unlikely to go back to Peter. See his *Mark*, Smyth & Helwys Bible Commentary (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2007), 5, eBook Collection (EBSCOhost).

Robert Stein observes a trend in presuppositions of commentators approaching the Gospel concerning affirming or denying the connection between its author, Mark, and St. Peter. If he or she initially rejects the possibility of supernatural events or miracles, they will also deny the connection of the author of the Gospel with eyewitnesses. On the contrary, if the author admits such a possibility, then he or she will positively assess the influence of eyewitnesses on the text. See his *Mark*, 7.

noted as early as 1860 by Brooke Westcott.[35] Vincent Taylor[36] and other researchers[37] placed much emphasis on them as well. Other indicators of the possible origin of the Gospel or its parts from Peter's eyewitness account include Mark's frequent use of "historical present,"[38] the number of references to Peter,[39] as well as his unflattering image in the Gospel,[40] especially compared to other two synoptic Gospels.[41] In a recent monograph on the emotional life of Christ,[42] Stephen Voorwinde points out that of all Gospels, Mark's reveals the emotional life of Christ most clearly. The author suggests that this may indicate a connection between the Gospel and the reminiscences of Peter.[43]

Although the form-critical paradigm for developing the Gospel traditions has been accepted by Gospel scholarship and incorporated into contemporary research, there is little agreement among Mark's scholars on either the form-critical or eyewitness origin

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[35] "There is perhaps not one narrative which he gives in common with St Matthew and St Luke to which he does not contribute some special feature…The details point clearly to the impression produced upon an eye-witness, and are not such as would suggest themselves to the imagination of a chronicler." Brooke Foss Westcott, *An Introduction to the Study of the Gospels*, 6th ed. (Cambridge, UK: Macmillan, 1881), 366.

[36] Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 135.

[37] See Mann, *Mark*, 251, 274, 284; Edwards, *The Gospel According to Mark,* 147; Lane, *The Gospel of Mark,* 175, 180.

[38] See Edwards, *The Gospel According to Mark,* 74, 224; Henry Barclay Swete, *The Gospel According to St Mark: The Greek Text with Introduction Notes and Indices*, 3rd ed. (London, UK: Macmillan, 1913), l; Lane, *The Gospel of Mark,* 26.

[39] Stein, *Mark*, 5.

[40] See Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark,* 551; James D. G Dunn, *Jesus Remembered,* Christianity in the Making 1 (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2003), 774. However, the opponents of eyewitness origin also refer to the negative image of Peter and the apostles, arguing the impossibility of Mark's direct dependence on Peter. See Culpepper, *Mark*, 5; Marcus, *Mark 1–8,* 24.

[41] Hans Bayer asserts: "The tendency is clear: where Peter occupies a praiseworthy or prominent position, Mark's account is clearly more muted than that of Matthew or Luke." Hans F. Bayer, *Apostolic Bedrock: Christology, Identity, and Character Formation According to Peter's Canonical Testimony*, Paternoster Biblical Monographs (Milton Keynes, UK: Authentic Media, 2016), 111.

[42] Stephen Voorwinde, *Jesus' Emotions in the Gospels* (London, UK: T&T Clark, 2011), eBook Collection (EBSCOhost).

[43] See Voorwinde, *Jesus' Emotions*, 59.

theories. Only a limited number of scholars are willing to discard relying on eyewitness accounts entirely. The complexity of the matter is highlighted by recent heavy disapproval against form criticism.[44] Now, we will refer to two ground-breaking volumes published by New Testament scholars at the beginning of our century in which the case for eyewitness testimony was made.

Case for Eyewitness Testimony

In 2002, Samuel Byrskog's book *Story as History — History as Story* was published. In the volume, the author examines the role of eyewitness testimony (autopsy) in the ancient world. He shows that sight and autopsy were central to the writings of ancient historians, such as Herodotus, Thucydides, Polybius, Josephus, and Tacitus. It is the exact environment in which the Evangelists and other NT authors worked. Therefore, the eyewitness accounts must have also been crucially important for them. Examining the NT evidence, Byrskog points out that not only the disciples of Jesus but ordinary local people undoubtedly played the role of eyewitnesses and spread the word about Jesus in their neighborhoods. At the same time, specific individuals, primarily Peter, female witnesses of the Easter events, and the family of Jesus, enjoyed the unique role of eyewitnesses and informants of the Gospel tradition. Thus, Byrskog points out that eyewitnesses were essential to the Gospel tradition and were authorized to be tradition

[44] See Christopher Tuckett, "Form Criticism," in *Jesus in Memory: Traditions in Oral and Scribal Perspectives,* ed. Werner H. Kelber and Samuel Byrskog (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2009), 21–38.

carriers. On the contrary, Nineham's and the form critics' assertions about the early Christians' lack of interest in eyewitness testimony cannot be accurate.[45] Byrskog asserts:

> The general perspective that we have gained makes it indeed very difficult to assume that the references to eyewitness testimony had no basis whatsoever in the past history of the early Christian authors. ... autopsy was an extremely common phenomenon in contexts where people were eager to find out things about the past, … several individuals around Jesus are likely to have informed others of what they had seen — the local people, Peter, some women, Jesus' closest relatives.[46]

Concerning Papias' tradition, Byrskog dismisses suspicions that he was pursuing purely apologetic interests and argues that his assertion is ideally in line with the belief and practice of early historians and must be taken seriously.[47] Thus, Byrskog shows that eyewitness testimony played an active part in the formation of the Gospel traditions and claims that connection between Mark, the author of the Gospel, and Peter is difficult to deny.[48] Papias' assertion that Peter gave his teaching to Mark in the form of a *chreia* (see Papias' quote above)[49] must also be taken seriously. However, Byrskog argues that "only a minority of the Markan chreiai go back directly to Peter."[50]

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[45] See Byrskog's argument against Nineham in his *Story as History,* 133–34, 247–48, 274–75; and against form criticism ibid.*,* 101–3.

[46] Byrskog, *Story as History*, 247–48.

[47] Byrskog, *Story as History*, 274.

[48] After considering the attention Peter enjoys in the Gospel, Byrskog claims, "It is difficult to find a plausible explanation of this characteristic picture of Peter without assuming some kind of particular extrafictional circumstance." Byrskog, *Story as History*, 283.

[49] Byrskog explains what Papias probably meant: "Papias probably indicates that Peter taught in the form of chreiai, that he told anecdotes which Mark wrote down from memory as faithfully as possible." His *Story as History*, 288–92.

[50] Byrskog, *Story as History*, 291.

Byrskog's approach was developed by Richard Bauckham in his monograph *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses*, published in 2006[51] and republished with two additional chapters ten years later.[52] The author argues that the Gospels are essentially the written testimonies of eyewitnesses. They were written either directly by eyewitnesses or as a result of direct interaction with eyewitnesses. Following Byrskog,[53] Bauckham shows the connection of the Christian authors' methodology, namely, Papias, to the one of ancient historiography, when eyewitness accounts were preferably used as the primary sources.[54] The approach of the evangelists was similar.

Bauckham pays special attention to the Gospel of Mark, defending the role of eyewitnesses in its writing. He discusses the role of minor characters, whose names are mentioned by Mark.[55] He describes the role of the Twelve as an "official body of witnesses."[56] Nevertheless, Bauckham dedicates special attention to Peter. He supports the statement of Papias regarding Mark's connection with Peter as reliable.[57] Bauckham also uses various internal Gospel pieces of evidence pointing to Peter as its possible primary source. One is Mark's use of the literary device *inclusio*, or the framing of the Gospel with references to Peter (Mark 1:16; 16:7). Another is the frequency of references

[51] Richard Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses: The Gospels as Eyewitness Testimony* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2006).

[52] Richard Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses: The Gospels as Eyewitness Testimony*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2017).

[53] For Byrskog's review of Bauckham's book, see Samuel Byrskog, "When Eyewitness Testimony and Oral Tradition Become Written Text," *Swedish Exegetical Yearbook* 74 (2009): 41–53.

[54] Richard Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses*, 2nd ed., 12–38.

[55] Richard Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses*, 2nd ed., 39–66.

[56] Richard Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses*, 2nd ed., 299. See also Birger Gerhardsson, *Memory and Manuscript: Oral Tradition and Written Transmission in Rabbinic Judaism and Early Christianity,* Acta Seminarii Neotestamentici Upsaliensis 22 (Uppsala, Sweden: Almqvist & Wiksells, 1961), 280–88.

[57] Richard Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses*, 2nd ed., 202–39.

to Peter in the Gospel. Still another is the complexity of his portrait, not typical for any other character besides Jesus, and so on.[58]

Bauckham's work provoked an extended discussion. Some researchers found his argumentation to be quite convincing.[59] However, other scholars were critical of his work.[60] It seems that the main objection to Bauckham's view is by no means a new argument concerning the very nature of the Gospel text. This objection goes back to Nineham's claims, which we discussed above.[61] Reflecting on the controversy, I. Howard Marshall makes an insightful assertion that "It is therefore crucial to ask the two related questions: is Nineham's account of the process of handing down tradition plausible, and does Bauckham's account of the matter do better justice to the actual phenomena in the Gospels?"[62]

Purpose and Method of this Study

As can be seen from our survey above, the question of connection between eyewitnesses and the Gospel of Mark is quite relevant and timely. On the one hand, we

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[58] Richard Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses*, 2nd ed., 155–82.

[59] See I. Howard Marshall, "A New Consensus on Oral Tradition? A Review of Richard Bauckham's *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses*," *Journal for the Study of the Historical Jesus* 6 (2008): 182–93. Also, Hans F. Bayer, review of *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses: The Gospels as Eyewitness Testimony* (Second Edition), by Richard Bauckham, *Presbyterion* 44, no. 1 (Spring 2018): 142–50.

[60] See David Catchpole, "On Proving Too Much: Critical Hesitations about Richard Bauckham's *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses*," *Journal for the Study of the Historical Jesus* 6 (2008): 169–81; also, Stephen J. Patterson, "Can You Trust a Gospel? A Review of Richard Bauckham's *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses*," *Journal for the Study of the Historical Jesus* 6 (2008): 194–210.

[61] It is worth noting that Bauckham denies the legitimacy of form-critical claims regarding the Gospel phenomena. He believes those features in the Gospel text form critics usually insist on do not require the long process of forming and transmitting traditions. For example, the discrepancies between the versions of the same tradition in different Gospels can well be explained within the framework of Bauckham's model, based on the role of eyewitness testimony. Bauckham confidently declares that the era of form criticism has come to an end. See his *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses*, 2nd ed., 593–603.

[62] Marshall, "A New Consensus on Oral Tradition," 188.

have a long, unanimous tradition that suggests a direct connection between the evangelist Mark and Peter. On the other hand, since the start of the 20th century, the majority of NT scholarship accepted the proposals of form critics and rejected the possibility of such a connection. However, in the works of some modern Markan scholars we still find statements that confirm the connection between Mark and Peter.[63] Other scholars believe that we can neither establish nor disprove the possibility of such a relationship. The landmark and well-argued volumes of such celebrated scholars as Byrskog and Bauckham cannot help disturbing this delicate balance.

There is no need to return to discussing the validity of form criticism and its presuppositions. Both Byrskog and Bauckham have taken sufficient care to present evidence of the old form-critical ideas inconsistency. Of course, only a few are ready to abandon the methodology altogether, and yet there are not many voices to defend it as well.[64] The so-called criteria of authenticity, which were utilized for verifying the historical reliability of specific traditions, is also questionable.[65] A fresh approach to the matter is needed. Where can we get it? Marshall's question on the importance of studying Gospel phenomena can guide us in the right direction. It is essential to study the very text

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[63] Several monographies on Peter were published recently with quite a positive evaluation of his connection with Mark. See Martin Hengel, *Saint Peter: The Underestimated Apostle* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2010), 36–47; Markus N. A. Bockmuehl, *Simon Peter in Scripture and Memory: The New Testament Apostle in the Early Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2012), 131–41, eBook Collection (EBSCOhost); Hans F. Bayer, *Apostolic Bedrock*, 103–11.

[64] One of the two chapters, which Bauckham added to the second edition of his book is eloquently entitled "The End of Form Criticism (Confirmed)," suggests very relevant discussion for the current state of the discipline. See Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses,* 2nd ed., 155–82.

[65] If Chris Keith's claim that such criteria are nothing but the outcome of form criticism is correct, then there is little point in utilizing them after discrediting the latter. See his "The Indebtedness of the Criteria Approach to Form Criticism and Recent Attempts to Rehabilitate the Search for an Authentic Jesus," in *Jesus, Criteria, and the Demise of Authenticity,* ed. Chris Keith and Anthony Le Donne (London, UK: T&T Clark, 2012), 44–67, eBook Collection (EBSCOhost).

of the Gospel of Mark. Is there internal evidence in the Gospel for its origin from or connection with eyewitnesses?

Of course, there is nothing new about this suggestion. As we saw above, scholars discussing specific passages of the Gospel of Mark sometimes claim that they have some "characteristics" of eyewitness testimony. Both Byrskog and Bauckham also call for internal evidence of the Gospel. Moreover, some opponents of eyewitness theory refer to the Gospels' textual features. Form critics themselves claimed to do it as well. However, this study of the Gospel "features" needs to be undertaken freshly and coherently. As it was mentioned, there is a discipline focusing on studying the literary "features" of the Gospel narrative, and it is called narrative criticism.[66]

Indeed, those features of the Gospel, which researchers identify as characteristics of eyewitness testimony, can be described well with narrative criticism terminology. Thus, for example, the "vivid details," often considered the hallmark of eyewitness accounts, can be presented as a "distance," a term used by narrative critics. Researchers use the term "point of view," which is one of the main concepts of narrative criticism. Some commentators directly use the categories of narrative criticism, discussing the possible connection of the Gospel with eyewitnesses. Bauckham dedicates a chapter to "The Petrine Perspective in the Gospel of Mark"[67] to support his case for the closeness of

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[66] This methodology was introduced into the Gospel studies in the 1980s in connection with the work of such scholars as David Rhoads, Jack Dean Kingsbury, R. Alan Culpepper and Robert Tannehill. See David Rhoads and Donald Michie, *Mark as Story: An Introduction to the Narrative of a Gospel* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1982); Jack Dean Kingsbury, *Matthew as Story* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1986); R. Alan Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A Study in Literary Design* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1987); Robert Tannehill, *The Narrative Unity of Luke–Acts: A Literary Interpretation,* vol. 1: *The Gospel According to Luke* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1991); Robert Tannehill, *The Narrative Unity of Luke–Acts: A Literary Interpretation,* vol. 2: *The Acts of the Apostles* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1989).

[67] See Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses,* 2nd ed., 593–603.

the Gospel to eyewitness testimony, primarily Peter's. Among other things he explores Mark's usage of point of view. He uses this approach in the more recent work dedicated to blind Bartimaeus' passage (Mark 10:46–52).[68] There were other attempts to use narrative criticism and point of view to indicate the possible eyewitness origin of the Gospel traditions.[69]

However, a more or less consistent study of the Gospel of Mark to verify or falsify its possible eyewitness origin with narrative critical methodology has hardly been produced. This comes as no surprise for two distinct reasons. First, questions of historiography are not raised by narrative critics. We can say that narrative criticism is self-excluded from historical-critical research.[70] Second, narrative critics accept the views of form critics regarding the formation of tradition while endowing the Gospel writers with even more creativity than the preceding schools of form and redaction criticism. So they tend to divorce the story from history.[71]

Nonetheless, we can point to at least one influential article in Markan studies that utilizes narrative criticism and raises the question of a possible connection between the story and the real world and between the literary features of the Gospel and its origin. It is an essay by Norman Petersen, "'Point of View' in Mark's Narrative."[72] In the paper, the author explores the concepts of point of view and narrator in the Gospel. He concludes

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[68] See Richard Bauckham, "Eyewitnesses and Healing Miracles in the Gospel of Mark," *BibAn* 10, no. 3 (2020): 341–54.

[69] See my own paper, Oleksandr Bychkov, "Eyewitnesses of his Majesty: Point of View in Mark 9:1–29," *Presbyterion* 48, no. 2 (Fall 2022): 13–31.

[70] This does not mean, though, that it cannot be utilized for historical-critical purposes to some degree. See Mark Powell, *What is Narrative Criticism?* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1990), 97.

[71] And they are correctly criticized for such a tendency by Byrskog. See Byrskog, *Story as History*, 266.

[72] See Norman R. Petersen, "'Point of View' in Mark's Narrative," *Semeia* 12 (1978): 97–121.

that Mark utilized an "omniscient point of view"[73]; therefore, "Mark's rhetoric is the rhetoric of fiction, and it provides the most compelling evidence that his Gospel is a bona fide literary composition." Moreover, "Wrede, Schmidt, and others long ago provided literary evidence that there is no direct correspondence"[74] between Mark's narrative and the real world. Thus, Petersen's conclusions reject the possibility of an eyewitness origin of the Gospel and are at odds with Byrskog and Bauckham's views.

So, it seems essential to study the Gospel of Mark using the methodology of narrative criticism to verify its possible eyewitness origin. At present, narratology is actively used to analyze the works of ancient historians[75] and also the so-called reportage literature.[76] Therefore, it can be applied not only to the study of fiction but also to historical works and works based on eyewitness accounts. It is challenging to perform a comprehensive comparative analysis of the Gospel of Mark and the texts based on eyewitness accounts. Nevertheless, it may be possible to gain valuable insights from scholars who do apply narrative criticism methodology to such texts.

Therefore, the aim of this thesis is to determine whether certain features of Mark's Gospel narrative can be consistently and clearly perceived as signs of eyewitness accounts. Namely, we will study the narrator of the Gospel of Mark and his characteristics, such as knowledge and point of view. Can a correlation between the

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[73] Petersen, "'Point of View' in Mark's Narrative," 105.

[74] Petersen, "'Point of View' in Mark's Narrative," 115.

[75] See René Nünlist, Angus M Bowie, and Irene de Jong, eds., *Narrators, Narratees, and Narratives in Ancient Greek Literature: Studies in Ancient Greek Narrative* 1 (Boston, MA: Brill Academic Publishers, 2004).

[76] See Nora Berning, *Narrative Means to Journalistic Ends: A Narratological Analysis of Selected Journalistic Reportages* (Wiesbaden, Germany: Springer Fachmedien, 2011); Cecilia Aare, "A Narratological Investigation of Eyewitness Reporting: How a Journalistic Mission Affects Narrative Structures of the Text," *Brazilian Journalism Research* 14, no. 3 (December 2018), 676–99.

narrator's knowledge and point of view and the potential eyewitnesses whom Mark may have used as sources be established? Is there a relationship between those narrative features and the Twelve as the "official body of witnesses," as Bauckham calls them? As the Papias tradition suggests, is there such a connection directly with Peter, the primary source? These questions will be central to this thesis.

Chapter 2

The Narrator and Eyewitness Testimony

This chapter is dedicated to the narratological terms and categories which will be utilized in this study. Special attention will be paid to the narrator and his ability, namely the opposition between the omniscient and limited-in-knowledge narrators. Two other important and related categories of point of view and focalization will be disclosed. The narratological characteristics of the eyewitness reporting will be listed. Finally the general discussion of Mark's narrator will be undertaken with regard to the Gospel's possible origin based on Peter's eyewitness testimony. Keeping in mind the narratological characteristics of eyewitness reporting, what kind of the narrator can we expect if the Gospel is indeed based on the testimony? How may the narrator's dependence on eyewitness testimony be verified?

The Narrator

One of the main concepts of narratology is the narrator. In the narrative genre, a narrator is a literary device the author uses to convey his or her story to the reader. Mark Powell defines it as follows: "A narrator is the voice that the implied author uses to tell the story."[77] The narrator is not a part of the real world, the world of the author and the reader. He is a part of the narrative itself. His task is to describe the narrative world and the events to the listener or his narratee. Therefore, the implied author does not communicate to his reader directly, but through the narrator who tells the story to an

[77] Powell, *What is Narrative Criticism?*, 25.

imaginary narratee. Here is a classic diagram that describes the different levels of narrative communication, suggested by Seymour Chatman:[78]

	Narrative	
Real Author →	Implied Author → (Narrator) → (Narratee) → Implied Reader	→ Real Reader

Figure 1. Levels of Narrative Communication

There are different ways to tell the story. There are various types of the narrator as well. Wolf Schmid suggests a helpful approach to narrator typology. He lists a set of varying criteria.[79] For each criterion, he suggests the opposition between two different narrator types. According to various criteria, a narrator can be categorized into multiple types. Some criteria and corresponding pairs of narrator types important to this study will be listed below.

Narrators differ in the mode of presentation. Namely, they can be explicit or implicit, also called overt or covert. In the first case, a narrator freely reveals himself, for example, directly commenting on the story. In the second case, he will describe the scene most objectively. Of course, there is an entire spectrum of narrators or narratorial modes with different levels of explicity or implicity.

An additional criterion to mention is diegetic status. A narrator can be diegetic, present in the story as a character. In this case, the narrator is included in the story. The opposite type is non-diegetic, meaning there is no such character in the plot. Also, narrators differ in their reliability. A reliable narrator can be trusted. On the contrary,

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[78] Seymour Chatman, *Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1980), 151.

[79] Wolf Schmid, *Narratology: An Introduction,* trans. Alexander Starrit, De Gruyter Textbook (Berlin, Germany: De Gruyter, 2010), 65–67.

unreliable narrators cannot. A narrator can be anthropomorphic and subject to the same limitations as an ordinary human. Alternatively, a narrator can be a God-like entity.

When one of the story characters tells another story, which is embedded into the main narrative, this character becomes a second-level (intradiegetic) narrator, and those characters who listen to this character turn into second-level (intradiegetic) narratees. The first-level narrator in this case may be called extradiegetic narrator. If we have such instances of embedded narratives, then this pair of a second-level narrator and narratees must be put between a first-level (extradiegetic) narrator and narratee. The implied reader in this case will depend not only on a first-level narratee, but on that character or characters who serve as second-level narratees.[80]

Now we can come to exploring one particular criterion which is crucial for this research. This criteria can be called ability. Thus, the narrator can be omniscient or limited in knowledge. It is precisely the pair that Norman Petersen addresses in his essay, which we will discuss in the next chapter. He concludes that Mark's narrator is omniscient. Furthermore, the narrator's alleged omniscience contradicts the Gospel's origin from the eyewitness accounts, because by its nature it is a mark of fictionality. This is why it is necessary to elaborate on the ability of a narrator.

[80] For the discussion of the embedded narratives see Gerard Genette, *Narrative Discourse: An Essay in Method* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1972), 227–34.

The Narrator's Ability

The Narrator's Ability in Narratology

Petersen[81] refers to the definition of an omniscient narrator,[82] given by *A Glossary of Literary Terms*:[83]

> This is a common term for the many and varied works of fiction written in accord with the convention that the narrator knows everything that needs to be known about the agents, actions, and events, and has privileged access to the characters' thoughts, feelings, and motives; also that the narrator is free to move at will in time and place, to shift from character to character, and to report (or conceal) their speech, doings, and states of consciousness.[84]

According to this definition, the main characteristic of the omniscient narrator is the scope of his knowledge in the fictional world and how this knowledge was obtained. There are two dimensions of this knowledge. First, this knowledge is not limited in terms of space and time. The narrator is not tied to one specific character or set of characters but can move in time and space independently and freely. Thus, he is aware of the events which happen in different parts of the narrative world. In other words, he is omnipresent. Second, he has the "privilege" to enter into the inner being of any character he chooses

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[81] Petersen, "'Point of View' in Mark's Narrative," 105–106.

[82] Although the glossary chooses to give the definition of "the omniscient point of view" rather than "omniscient narrator," in the definition itself we can see that it really speaks of the omniscient narrator. For Petersen, as well as for the glossary, the terms "the omniscient point of view" and "omniscient narrator" are closely related. For simplicity we will not use the term "the omniscient point of view," but rather will discuss the omniscience of the narrator, as it is generally accepted.

[83] Petersen refers to M. H. Abrams, *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, 3rd ed. (New York, NY: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1971). However, I will use M. H. Abrams, *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, 7th ed. (Boston, MA: Heinle & Heinle, 1999). There are no big differences in the definitions, so I use the newer edition.

[84] M. H. Abrams, *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, 7th ed., 232.

without restriction and thus can describe what they experience in emotional or mental terms.[85]

The glossary opposes the omniscient narrator with the narrator who is limited in knowledge,[86] who "tells the story in the third person, but stays inside the confines of what is perceived, thought, remembered and felt by a single character (or at most by very few characters) within the story." Thus, in his knowledge and experience, this narrator is connected to just one or a few characters.

These concepts, omniscient narrator and limited-in-knowledge narrator, describe two different narrator types concerning the narrator's ability. While there is a spectrum of modes between these two extremes, definitions help demonstrate the basic meaning of narratorial omniscience. Thus, according to the glossary, the omniscient narrator is not restricted to following one specific character (or set of characters) and to perceiving, thinking, or feeling whatever this character perceives, thinks, or feels. He is privileged to freely move in space, time, and his characters' "souls" without restriction.

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[85] Lately there is a tendency to use the term "omniscience" only in the latter meaning. For example, Rhoads and Michie in the first edition of *Mark as Story* use the term "omniscient narrator" in a more general sense, namely omnipresence is included in omniscience. But in the third edition they tend to describe two concepts separately (see Rhoads, Dewey, and Michie, *Mark as Story,* 3rd ed., 41). Gary Yamasaki refers to omniscience only under discussion of the psychological plane of point of view, and does not even mention it in the context of informational or spatial planes. See his *Perspective Criticism* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2012), 51–52, Kindle.

Thus when critics speak of the possibility of the narrator to travel freely within fictional space and time, he is usually called "omnipresent." And when they discuss his ability to see inside different characters, they call him "omniscient." I, however, will unite both of these capacities under one term "omniscient narrator," just as the glossary suggests. The literary conception of omniscience is really a way to describe the narrator's knowledge which is not limited by whatever possibly could have been known realistically. Thus, the possibility to see directly inside characters and to move freely in space/time will be an evidence for such an unrealistic position of the narrator. It is this opposition between unrealistic and realistic positions of the narrator that I am concerned with. Therefore, in this thesis I will use the term "omniscience" in this more general (and classical) way.

[86] The glossary calls it "limited point of view." Abrams, *A Glossary of Literary Terms,* 7th ed., 233.

Classical works of narratologists contain essential qualifications for omniscience and limitation concepts. Wayne C. Booth gives a helpful definition of the narrator's omniscience in fiction:

> Observers and narrator-agents, whether self-conscious or not, reliable or not, commenting or silent, isolated or supported, can be either privileged to know what could not be learned by strictly natural means or limited to realistic vision and inference. Complete privilege is what we usually call omniscience. But there are many kinds of privilege, and very few "omniscient" narrators are allowed to know or show as much as their authors know.[87]

In this definition, we meet the same two concepts as in the glossary definition, the concepts of "privilege" and "limit." However, here, we can better understand their meaning and connection. The narrator has a privilege not only to know something, but to know something that he would not be able to know strictly by "natural means." The privileged knowledge is the knowledge that goes beyond the limit of "realistic vision and inference." The omniscient narrator is the one who has and uses this privilege. In contrast, the limited-in-knowledge narrator lacks this privilege. The scope of his knowledge seems limited to the fictional reality's boundaries.

Therefore, this limitation is the extent of knowledge an anthropomorphic narrator can possess in the fictional world. According to the glossary definitions, the limited-in-knowledge narrator is restricted to what a character (or a few characters) could know strictly by natural means. This character can be called the narrative "center of consciousness." We can also call this character a narrative "source of knowledge."[88] Even

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[87] Wayne C. Booth, *The Rhetoric of Fiction,* 2nd ed. (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1983), 160.

[88] Boris Uspensky raises the question about the sources of an author's knowledge in his discussion on the plane of psychology (see his *A Poetics of Composition: The Structure of the Artistic Text and Typology of a Compositional Form*, trans. and ed. Valentina Zavarin and Susan Wittig [Berkeley, Los Angeles & London: University of California Press, 1974], 98–99).

I introduce the term "source of knowledge" for the character related to the limited-in-knowledge narrator because it has a more specific meaning compared to "center of consciousness." Indeed,

the non-diegetic narrator, who is not present as a specific character in the fictional world, can operate in this mode.

Now, let's clarify the nature of "the privilege" literature critics refer to when defining a narrator's omniscience. Schmid summarizes this privilege as follows: "The omniscience of the author is a privilege and a mark of fiction, for in reality, it is not knowledge, but free invention."[89] The omniscient narrator's privilege in literature is not about the knowledge but the fictionality or imagination. In narratology, the omniscient narrator's presence confirms the fictional nature of the literary work. If an omniscient narrator tells the story, it cannot be considered the "real story" with references to actual people and events. However, the latter is possible with the limited-in-knowledge narrator. Therefore, the narrative omniscience cannot be compatible with the eyewitness origin of the narrative.

This essential understanding of privilege and limits helps clarify the glossary definitions' meaning. The omniscient narrator possesses knowledge beyond the limitations of space, time, and human ordinary mental capacities. Unlike a limited-in-knowledge narrator, who is restricted to only what they can observe through

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consciousness is more than mere knowledge. It also implies the character's feelings, reflections and point of view concerning the story world and events. However, when we talk about a narrator's ability, we can restrict ourselves only within the realm of knowledge. The knowledge of the character, not their other characteristics, is crucial to evaluate the narrator's ability. Other characteristics, especially feelings and reflections, of the character may be important not *per se*, but as possible means of obtaining the knowledge. Scholars often use the term "informant," which is appropriate if we understand such a character as the narrator's and not the author's source of information. The term "source of knowledge" allows me to emphasize that I am staying within the narrative and avoid any possible confusion with the real world. Proving that the Peter-character was Mark's narrator's source of knowledge does not mean that the real Peter was Mark's informant. It is the next step to be made.

However, the "center of consciousness" is helpful if we want to understand the type of narrator in terms of his ability and to show that the connection between the narrator and this character is more complex, for example, the character's perspective is prevailing in the narrative, their mental and emotional processes are clearly recorded. In this case, it would be certainly right to describe such a character as the narrator's "center of consciousness."

[89] Schmid, *Narratology*, 28.

natural means, an omniscient narrator can access all the knowledge they need. Nevertheless, even a limited-in-knowledge narrator can still report scenes where he is not present and offer psychological insights into other characters, as long as it falls within the bounds of "realistic vision and inference."

Indeed, according to the definition of omniscience, the ability to provide inside views or report on events the narrator cannot witness does not necessarily equate to omniscience. The entire question rests on the means which provide this ability. What exactly makes the narrator capable of providing inside views of his characters? There are two options. The narrator can have these insights while staying within the limits of natural means. In other words, there can be some realistic and rational explanations for the narrator's comprehension of a character's mind or feelings. For example, he (or the character who serves as his source of knowledge) can see some external manifestation of the described emotion and, therefore, claim that a character feels some emotion. Alternatively, he can deduce the intentions or motives of a character based on their behavior. Just like humans do, the narrator can have insightful thoughts, especially if he knows the characters and events, which is particularly true given the knowledge is retrospective. The narrator's ability to tell what happens in the different parts of the story world is the same. The narrator can describe a scene even if he did not witness it firsthand but learned about it through other means. He can piece together what happened using secondary evidence, just like people would.

Thus, the first option of obtaining the narrator's knowledge allows some realistic explanation. The second option does not allow such reasoning. Instead, the privilege of omniscience is the source for providing inside views or reporting various scenes. The

omniscient narrator does not need any natural means to get the knowledge because he, or rather the implied author, can invent whatever pleases.

Another important note about the knowledge and the limited narrator is that a specific character's comprehension, which restricts the narrator, is not static; it typically increases as the story unfolds. Gerard Genette and other literature critics[90] warn us to recognize that "the narrator almost always 'knows' more than the hero, even if he himself is the hero."[91] The diegetic narrator knows more than his character in a particular moment of the story because the narrative is almost always retrospective. Thus, to determine if the limited-in-knowledge narrator told a story, we need to consider not only the source-of-knowledge character's current knowledge but also the knowledge he could have received later. An outstanding example is Saint Augustine's *Confessions*, where "the narrator does not simply know more, empirically, than the hero; he knows in the absolute sense, he understands the Truth."[92]

Biblical Narrator's Ability

Biblical narrative critics generally perceive the omniscient narrator like literature critics. For example, Shimon Bar-Efrat opposes two kinds of narrators. The first one can be identified as the omniscient narrator:

> Narrators who know everything about the characters and are present everywhere, as opposed to narrators whose knowledge is limited. The former see through solid

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[90] Thus, Uspensky notes how retrospective knowledge may provide post factum explanation for inside views of the narrator: "On the other hand, his position in many cases may be interpreted as retrospective: it is as if he narrates experiences which took place some time ago, and has since had time to puzzle things out post factum, and can reconstruct the internal state of the people, imagining what they must have experienced." Uspensky, *Poetics of Composition*, 96.

[91] Genette, *Narrative Discourse*, 194.

[92] Genette, *Narrative Discourse*, 253.

> walls into secret corners, even penetrating the hidden recesses of people's minds. The latter observe things from the outside, seeing what people do and hearing what they say, leaving it to us to draw conclusions about their inner lives.[93]

For him, omniscience includes internal knowledge of characters, the ability to provide inside views, and omnipresence, which is implied by omniscience.[94] On the contrary, the narrator, limited in knowledge, remains outside. Bar-Efrat also insists that "these distinctions represent the extremes, and in actual fact the viewpoint of a narrative may be found anywhere between them." Also, "it is not obligatory for a certain point of view to be maintained consistently throughout a narrative."[95] Most of the biblical narratives appear to be "omniscient, able to see actions undertaken in secret and to hear conversations conducted in seclusion, familiar with the internal workings of the characters and displaying their innermost thoughts to us."[96]

This statement should be qualified precisely as was the glossary definition above. Bar-Efrat suggests that omniscience cannot provide inside views but the one "given separately and independently, that is, without any record of actions or speech from which they could be inferred."[97] In the historians' books, one can meet the inside views into characters that look similar to those made by an omniscient narrator. However, "in a historical treatise the reader accepts, by convention, that these are merely interpretations or assumptions made by the author on the basis of the known, external actions, while this

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[93] Shimon Bar-Efrat, *Narrative Art in the Bible*, trans. Dorothea Shefer-Vanson, 2nd ed. (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 14.

[94] Bar-Efrat, *Narrative Art in the Bible*, 17.

[95] Bar-Efrat, *Narrative Art in the Bible*, 15.

[96] Bar-Efrat, *Narrative Art in the Bible*, 17.

[97] Bar-Efrat, *Narrative Art in the Bible*, 18.

is not the case with a work of literature."[98] Therefore, it is unclear how to tell a historical treatise from a piece of fiction based on the type of narrator's ability. Bar-Efrat seemingly suggests that one should approach the narrative with certain assumptions of its nature to tell the difference.

Biblical narrative critics usually say that it is an omniscient narrator who primarily provides biblical narratives. Meir Sternberg explains that such a stance of the narrator guarantees his authority.[99] The narrator speaks on behalf of omniscient God and thus conveys God's authority. The narrator must also possess God's omniscience to speak with his authority. Therefore, the narrator must claim not simply human knowledge but inspired or given from above. In biblical literature, the omniscient narrator and its associated privilege result from inspiration,[100] rendering it incompatible with eyewitness testimony.

Sternberg notes that while the omniscient narrator is prevalent in the Bible, there are exceptions. One of them is the book of Ezra-Nehemiah,[101] which, at least for the most

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[98] Bar-Efrat, *Narrative Art in the Bible*, 18.

[99] See Meir Sternberg, *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1987), 12.

[100] It is important to note that here, the term "inspiration" is not used in theological meaning. For example, Reformed theologians may mean the agency of both God and human author by inspiration. This agency will result in the inspired, that is, infallible text. Therefore, the human author is active in his access to and investigations of the sources, which may include eyewitnesses. Based on those sources, the final text is produced under God's careful guidance. See, for example, Archibald Hodge and Benjamin Warfield, "Inspiration," *The Presbyterian Review* 6 (April 1881): 225–60. But for narratologists, "inspiration" means the absence of any available means for receiving information, but only the one which is supposed to be directly revealed by God. In this thesis, the conception of alleged omniscience in Mark will be addressed and questioned, if not completely rejected. But the investigation of the biblical narrator's supposed omniscience in other biblical books, especially in the OT, with relation to the traditional idea of inspiration, as it is accepted in Reformed theology, would be an interesting and important task for research.

[101] I affirm the consensual view that Ezra and Nehemiah should be considered as one coherent literature composition, namely, as one book and not two. See H. G. M. Williamson, *Ezra-Nehemiah*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 16 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1985), xxi.

part, assumes "the form of eyewitness narrative."[102] Indeed, significant parts of Ezra-Nehemiah are narrated in the first person either by Ezra or Nehemiah. In other parts, they can serve as a center of consciousness. Sternberg aptly points out that Ezra-Nehemiah contains passages where the narrator can cross spatial boundaries and intervene in other characters' thoughts, which could be interpreted as evidence of omniscience. For example, after three days of praying and fasting, Ezra concludes that "he (God) listened to our entreaty" (8:23). Even though this statement can be taken as a note from omniscience, Sternberg believes, it is certainly not:

> How does he know? In suddenly ascending to heaven, does he not usurp the privilege of omniscient narration? Certainly not. Ezra tells his story in retrospect, with that journey far behind him; and, since all the anticipated perils have failed to materialize, he piously infers (rather than directly "knows") that God has smoothed his way.[103]

Sternberg also lists examples of inside views, which Nehemiah makes into his enemies: "It displeased them greatly that someone had come to seek the welfare of the children of Israel" (2:10); "He was angry and greatly enraged" (4:1); "They intended to do me harm" (6:2). However, there is nothing supernatural about those views. Nehemiah remains perfectly within the limits of "realistic version and inference." Sternberg explains, "Note how shallow they are, how acceptable to a partisan audience, how passable by the rules of evidence in the human marketplace. Nehemiah simply derives the opposition's thoughts from their vested interests and manifest behavior."[104]

In this example, it is essential to show that one coherent piece of literature can be compiled as a collection of eyewitness narratives from more than one person. Both Ezra

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[102] Sternberg, *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative*, 13.

[103] Sternberg, *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative*, 86.

[104] Sternberg, *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative*, 87.

and Nehemiah in the book are presented as eyewitness sources. The story of the first wave of returnees, in its nature, does not differ from their accounts and, therefore, can be taken as an anonymous eyewitness account. Furthermore, it is still one narrative with the narrator, who is limited in knowledge. Ezra-Nehemiah can exemplify a narrative with multiple center-of-consciousness' characters.

What Ezra and Nehemiah do in the episodes mentioned by Sternberg is similar to the exercises historians are involved in. They supply missing links, make causal connections, and suggest the personal motives of other characters. Historians cannot avoid such practices, "To develop chronicle into history, after all, the historian must supply a great many missing links — causal connections, national drives, personal motives and characteristics — and the imaginative gap-filling will remain acceptable if it operates within the limits of whatever counts as the rules of evidence."[105]

Point of View

Point of view is another critical concept in narratology. A story should be told from a particular position, just like in filmmaking, the camera is put in a particular spot. This position of narrating is usually called "point of view." For this research, point of view is essential as this thesis aims to determine the possibility of identifying the possible eyewitnesses in Mark. Boris Uspensky contributed significantly to the theory of point of view. In his volume *A Poetics of Composition: The Structure of the Artistic Text and Typology of a Compositional Form*, Uspensky proposed considering point of view in four planes: spatio-temporal, psychological, ideological, and phraseological.

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[105] Sternberg, *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative*, 29.

It is helpful to distinguish between external and internal points of view. The external point of view is associated with the narrator. It is the position in time and space he holds and conducts his narration from. In this case, we speak about a temporal and spatial point of view. The narrator's psychological position or point of view conveys his psycho-emotional perception of the story. An ideological point of view is used to evaluate the events and characters of the story the narrator tells.

By the internal point of view, we may mean the one associated with a specific character in the story. Any character has their own point of view. Indeed, he or she occupies a particular position in space and time from which one can perceive the scene. They also have their own psychological and ideological perceptions of the story. That is, the internal point of view describes a scene as experienced by a character. The narrator can convey the point of view of one of his characters or put himself in the character's shoes to a certain extent without mentioning it. In any case, if the narrator's and character's points of view overlap, we speak about the internal point of view. It should be emphasized that it is still the narrator's point of view even though it coincides with the character's. In the same narrative, the narrator's point of view can be different, both internal and external, for different planes. Also, the point of view can be shifted from one character to another.

In biblical studies, Uspensky's approach was highly valued and generally accepted.[106] Recently, it was adopted by Gary Yamasaki,[107] who adds another

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[106] See Adele Berlin, *Poetics and Interpretation of Biblical Narrative* (Sheffield, UK: Almond Press, 1983), 56–57; Powell, *What is Narrative Criticism?*, 53–54.

[107] Yamasaki, *Perspective Criticism*.

informational plane to Uspensky's classification.[108] It implies the degree of the narrator's awareness and its correlation with the reader's and other characters. Thus every agent can receive their place on the so-called "informational axis," the concept introduced by Sternberg.[109]

Focalization

Another important and generally used concept related to point of view is "focalization,"[110] suggested by Gerard Genette. Focalization answers questions like: "*Who is the character whose point of view orients the narrative perspective?*" (italic original),[111] or even *Who sees?* If the narrative is told from the inside or from the position of a specific character, then the focalization is internal. Alternatively, you can tell the story "from the outside." The narrator, as an external observer, describes the scene without taking the position of any characters. It is external focalization. Genette suggests that the story can also be told from behind or directly from the position of an omniscient narrator. It is zero-focalization. For Genette, focalization directly connects with the narrator's knowledge. Internal focalization speaks of the narrator's knowledge coinciding with the character's, while external one means the narrator knows less than the character. Zero-focalization implies that the narrator knows more than any character in the scene. He is omniscient.

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[108] Yamasaki, *Perspective Criticism*, 54–68.

[109] It should be noted that Yamasaki actually focuses on measuring the character's awareness in comparison to the reader's. However, the "information axis" he discusses is borrowed from Meir Sternberg who includes the narrator in the measuring system as well. See Sternberg, *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative,* 512.

[110] See Genette, *Narrative Discourse*, 188–89.

[111] Genette, *Narrative Discourse*, 186.

Genette's classification is helpful, and scholars of the Gospel of Mark sometimes use it.[112] At the same time, it is worth mentioning that his classification has significant problems, mainly because he confuses different concepts, namely, knowledge and perspective.[113] Indeed, the crucial connection between focalization and point of view is asserted even in Genette's question quoted above: the focalization correlates with point of view, which "orients the narrative perspective." Thus, its critical connection with point of view or perspective is asserted. Genette's insistence on "seeing" suggests that it is not even a point of view in its fullness (like Uspensky describes it) but only the perception that is relevant. However, when Genette suggests specific ways to identify the types of focalization, he refers to knowledge in a way that focalization may be seen as equal to "restriction of field."[114] Therefore, the focalization through the character is really the narration restriction to what this character may know in this particular moment of the story. In this way, perspective and knowledge are confused. However, it is far from evident that one "who sees" should be the same as one "who knows."[115] It is not strange

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[112] Joanna Dewey, "Point of View and the Disciples in Mark," in *Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers* 21, ed. Kent Harold Richards (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1982), 97–106; Scott S. Elliott, "Time and Focalization in the Gospel According to Mark," in *The Oxford Handbook of Biblical Narrative*, ed. Danna Nolan Fewel (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2015), 296–306.

[113] For the discussion of Genette classification and its problems see Schmid, *Narratology*, 91–95.

[114] Genette, *Narrative Discourse,* 189.

[115] In Genette's defense it should be said that he is not the only one who relates point of view to knowledge. We have seen in the discussion above, that Abrams in his *Glossary of Literary Terms* also directly relates point of view to the knowledge. He did not simply discuss the omniscient and limited-in-knowledge narrators, but omniscient and limited-in-knowledge points of view! Meir Sternberg introduces "informational axis" in his discussion of point of view (Sternberg, *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative,* 512), and Gary Yamasaki makes from this axis the additional plane to Uspensky classification. See Yamasaki, *Perspective Criticism,* 54–68. Even Uspensky himself raises the questions of the narrator's knowledge and its sources. See his *Poetics of Composition*, 98–99. Therefore, the matter of relationship between point of view and knowledge is far from being clear.

that Genette's followers tried to clarify what he meant, and while doing so, went in different directions.[116]

It is essential to address the problem of identifying the so-called zero-focalization with the narrator's omniscience for this study. It needs to be clarified whether Genette's non-focalized omniscience aligns with the omniscience accepted in narratology. Genette's non-focalized omniscience is the narrator's knowledge of the scene, which is superior to the character's. While classic understanding of omniscience is usually identified as opposed to realistic limitation; its principal characteristic is privilege use. However, it is possible to describe the scene with the knowledge that exceeds the character's and without using privilege. For example, the character's knowledge may be retrospective. Sternberg suggests calling the narrator in so-called "zero-focused scenes" omni-communicative, which does not equal omniscience.[117] There is a difference in how the knowledge is obtained and how it is conveyed.[118] So, it is hard to agree with identifying the narrator of non-focalized scenes with the omniscient one. This identification is misleading.[119]

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[116] For example, Konstantin Nazarov in his recent PhD thesis (see his "Focalization in the Old Testament Narratives with Specific Examples from the Book of Ruth," [PhD thesis, University of Chester, 2018], https://core.ac.uk/reader/189160740) insisted on understanding Genette's focalization specifically in terms of restriction independently from point of view.

[117] See Meir Sternberg, "Omniscience in Narrative Construction: Old Challenges and New," *Poetics Today* 28, no.4 (Winter 2007), 755.

[118] I will discuss this difference in the next chapter, while introducing my own model for Mark's narrator.

[119] I suppose that Genette himself used the term "omniscient narrator" for describing what he called "zero-focalization" quite conventionally. What is important for him is knowledge restriction which is given in the text in a particular moment, and not how it was obtained. This restriction is absolutely applicable even for the first-person account, therefore, the retrospective knowledge is intentionally excluded. In Genette's own words: "The narrator almost always 'knows' more than the hero, even if he himself is the hero, and therefore for the narrator focalization through the hero is a restriction of field just as artificial in the first person as in the third." Genette, *Narrative Discourse,* 194.

Mieke Bal follows Genette, discussing the phenomenon of focalization.[120] She also distinguishes between external and internal focalization.[121] However, she dissented from his idea of knowledge restriction and focused on perception instead. The internal focalization, as understood by Bal, may be seen as almost identical to the internal point of view, as it was described above.[122] She introduces a helpful term, "focalizer," which is "the point from which the elements are viewed."[123] There are two kinds of focalizers — external focalizer (EF) and character-bound focalizer (CF). She aptly notes that external focalization is always present in the text, while internal one may or may not be present. An EF can temporarily delegate focalization to a CF, or an EF can look as if from behind the CF's back. Bal also discusses the cases of multi-leveled focalization, namely, when one character "sees" another character "seeing."[124]

When the terms related to focalization will be introduced in this thesis, they will be expressed similarly to Bal's line of development of Genette's thought. Basically, the focalization will reveal the subject, who "perceives," and internal focalization will be aligned with an internal point of view, with particular emphasis on perception.

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[120] Mieke Bal, *Narratology: Introduction to the Theory of Narrative*, 4th ed. (Toronto, Canada: University of Toronto Press, 2017), 132–53.

[121] Mieke Bal's suggestions have their own problems. See Schmid, *Narratology*, 94–95.

[122] "With that, focalization denotes a dichotomy of possible perspectives, which are no longer essentially different from the traditional dichotomy internal vs. external point of view." Schmid, *Narratology*, 95.

[123] Bal, *Narratology,* 135.

[124] It should be noted that Bal does not use the term "zero-focalization" and avoids using the concept of an omniscient narrator altogether. She (her *Narratology*, 62) refers to Culler's paper. See Jonathan Culler, "Omniscience," in *The Literary in Theory* (Stanford, UK: Stanford University Press, 2007), 183–204.

Space and Time

For purposes of this research, it is also important to briefly explore two concepts related to the time and space of the narrative. As for space, distance is essential to us. How close is the scene to the implied reader? How well can he or she see it? In other words, how thoroughly is the scene being described? In narratology, distance refers to how a story is presented, directly or indirectly. The first case describes the story "just as it happened." It resembles a play, with simple descriptions or verbal illustrations of events and direct discourses. The less obvious narrator's activity is detected, and the narrator's presence is covert. Such a narrative imitates or "mimics" reality, so this mode of narrative representation is called *mimesis*. In terms of distance, this type of narrative is closer to the story being told. The opposite mode is called a "pure narrative" when the narrator is active in the story. According to Genette, this type of narrative has two distinct features: indirectness and condensation. The narrator's presence is emphasized as he approaches a scene, which adds to their authority and the authenticity of the narration.[125]

Regarding the time in the narrative, we are especially interested in duration. How long does a story event last in terms of narrative time? For example, it may be known that an event in the story occurred over a long period of time. At the same time, the narrator describes it briefly, dedicating only a small part of the story to this particular incident. In this case, narrative time goes faster than storytime. The narrative length of another event may be proportional to its duration in the story. The first example can be called summary, and the second one would be scene.[126]

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[125] This is a brief retelling of the discussion of distance given by Genette. See Genette, *Narrative Discourse,* 162–64.

[126] See Genette, *Narrative Discourse,* 94–95.

Narratological Characteristics of Eyewitness Reporting

Narratology is actively applied to so-called reportage literature. So, it is possible to undertake a narratological analysis of eyewitness accounts. Cecilia Aare lists the following four narrative features as marks of eyewitness reporting.[127]

Eyewitness Aesthetics

The scene and events are described in mimetic form, just as they happen or are experienced by the reporter. The distance between the implied reader and the narrated events is close, and the narrator is missing or overt.

Narrative Perspective of Witnessing

The "position of the witness" can be detected in the narrative. It can also be called an "internal" or "afferent" perspective. Thus, not only is a scene described, but it is described from the perspective or from the point of view of the actual witness who was present there. This is of course, directly related to the conceptions of internal point of view and focalization, described above.

The Reality Effect

The reader or narratee is invited to experience the scene by describing the scrutinized environmental details. This description reinforces a so-called "journalistic author-reader contract." Namely, by mentioning specific and not necessarily essential

[127] See Cecilia Aare, "A Narratological Investigation of Eyewitness Reporting: How a Journalistic Mission Affects Narrative Structures of the Text," *Brazilian Journalism Research* 14, no. 3 (December 2018): 676–699.

details, the reader is invited to believe the reporter who was there and experienced the described events.

Simultaneity

In the eyewitness accounts, it is essential to create "the illusion of simultaneity." Thus, the witnessing position of the narrator is supported by the use of the "historical present." The events that happened in the past are described as if they were happening now while the reader reads the texts. This illusion is also created by consonance between the reporter and the character.

Mark's Narrator and Eyewitness Testimony

Mark's Narrator and a Key Witness

What kind of narrator should we expect to see in the Gospel of Mark, if we assume it is based on eyewitness testimony? Our expectations will be determined by the number of individuals who could inform Mark. Therefore, if the author has used a significant number of informants with relatively equal impact levels, establishing the correspondence between the narrator and the Gospel origin becomes difficult. There are two procedures we could perform to do it. The first one is to answer the question if there is direct evidence of the usage of privilege by the narrator. The task would be challenging if there are many potential informants, some of whom may remain anonymous. As Bar-Efrat suggested, we would need to rely more on external than internal evidence for a final decision related to the text's nature and the origin in this case.[128] The second one is a

[128] See Bar-Efrat, *Narrative Art in the Bible,* 18.

question if there are narratological characteristics similar to those Aare listed.[129] However, just their presence in the text may not be convincing enough, as many of these narratological features have been listed in the past as evidence of eyewitness origin of the Gospel. We saw it in the survey in the previous chapter. So, it would be hard to add something new to this matter. R. T. France may be correct, saying, "Much of the graphic detail in Mark's storytelling may derive simply from his imaginative skill as a recounter. Even what are often claimed as 'eyewitness touches' could be due to the storyteller's creativity rather than to personal memory or tradition."[130] Thus, at best, we may conclude if the Gospel is compatible with eyewitness testimony.

The matter is different if we assume that Mark had one or few key witnesses, as Petrine tradition[131] has suggested. In this case, there should be some level of coincidence between Mark's narrator and these key witnesses in knowledge. It is possible to expect a particular manifestation of these witnesses' points of view in the narrative as a possible "position of the witness," although with significant reservations, which will be discussed below. Suppose such coincidences of knowledge and point of view can be detected in the

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[129] Is it proper to identify "eyewitness testimony," the category we intend to explore in this study, with "eyewitness reporting," as it is described by Aare? The helpful definition of eyewitness testimony, which we will later utilize, is given by Byrskog: "Eyewitness testimony is the outcome of an integrated act of visual observation *and* interpretation. It is not only observation of what actually happened; and it is not only interpretation" (italic original). Samuel Byrskog, "From Orality to Textuality: The Emergence of a New Form-Critical Paradigm," *Estudios Bíblicos* 69 (2011): 42. If we compare this definition with eyewitness reporting, as characterized by Aare, we may see that those narratological characteristics mostly relate to the visual observation part, but still clearly relevant. Therefore, for eyewitness reporting, the interpretation part seems to be less significant. We need to stress though that it is impossible not only to report, but even to see without some interpretation.

[130] France, *The Gospel of Mark,* 17.

[131] Under "Petrine tradition," I mean the traditional view of the church regarding Peter as a key source of Mark Gospel, which was described in chapter 1 of this thesis.

Gospel. In that case, along with the existing external evidence,[132] it would present compelling evidence for the Gospel as eyewitness testimony. At the very least, these occurrences would demand a thorough explanation.

In this thesis, the second assumption will be tested. Therefore, let us discuss what Mark's narrator's ability and point of view we can expect if he indeed was informed by one or few key witnesses.

Ability

Let us assume that the disciples (male and female)[133] collectively or Peter individually are the primary sources of Mark. In this case, we can expect some overlap in knowledge of the disciples or Peter and the narrator. If Mark's Gospel contains much of their testimony, then the extent of knowledge demonstrated by its narrator must reflect his dependence on that testimony. Then, the narrator of Mark cannot be omniscient, but he must be a narrator with some restriction in knowledge. The narrator's "center of consciousness" or "source of knowledge" would be Peter or the disciples collectively. They also can be called "informants" or "key witnesses." According to Yamasaki's informational axis, this character (Peter or the disciples collectively) should be the most informed.

It is important to make three points regarding this knowledge. First, the limitation of the narrator's knowledge of the key source does not imply that Mark's narrator should be unaware of anything the key witness could know. He may have other characters as

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[132] Such evidence is suggested by Byrskog and Bauckham, whose suggestions I discussed in chapter 1 of this thesis, 10–13.

[133] A lot of my argument will be relevant not specifically to Peter but to the disciples collectively. I will also discuss the special role of female followers of Jesus in the next chapter.

informants. For example, in the book of Ezra-Nehemiah, several characters took turns performing this role. Mark might have other other informants besides the key one.

Second, Mark, like Ezra and Nehemiah in examples, described above, or like the authors of historical treatises, could and probably did have filled in the gaps in the narrative by making logical connections and assumptions at some points. Moreover, the key witnesses themselves could make assumptions and fill in the gaps in the narrative, passing it on to the narrator of Mark. The question is the level of this gap-filling. How "imaginative" is the narrator in this process?

Third, it is essential to remember the fundamentally retrospective nature of the narrative. Therefore, the knowledge of informant characters is not necessarily limited to the knowledge they had during the described events. In other words, the knowledge of Peter or other disciples as witnesses exceeds their knowledge as characters.[134] Just because Peter-character did not know or understood something does not mean Peter-witness did not know it.

However, if Peter or the disciples are considered the primary source of knowledge, the narrator's knowledge should manifest it, and we need to be able to detect this manifestation. We will use two ways to verify this. First, we will assess the narrator's and his key witnesses' competence and their correspondence level. The scope of the narrator's knowledge is not the only factor in question but also the source of that knowledge. Has he received it from his key witnesses while staying within the realistic limits? Is there any evidence that key witnesses have provided the knowledge to the narrator? Second, we will evaluate the evident limitations of the narrator's knowledge.

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[134] See the discussion of "Experiencing Reporter" and "Narrating Reporter" Aare, "A Narratological Investigation of Eyewitness Reporting," 679.

Are there positive signs of the limitations of his knowledge? Is this limitation due to the lack of his key witnesses' knowledge?

In other words, it boils down to two questions. When the narrator knows something, could it be derived from his key witnesses? And, when the narrator does not know something,[135] could there be the same reason?

Point of View

There are more features the narrator may possess in case the Gospel is based on eyewitness accounts. We mentioned that we can expect to find the narrative characteristics of eyewitness reporting in the Gospel if it exemplifies the eyewitness testimony. Indeed, we have already seen that the historical present, eyewitness aesthetics, and the reality effect (using vivid details) had been traditionally referred to as Mark's narrative characteristics, which may serve as evidence of its eyewitness origin. If the Gospel is based on testimony, we can expect a more detailed and direct, "mimetic" description of the scenes seen by witnesses. Thus, the distance in such passages must also be closer. Story events that narrator informants did not witness directly should be described briefly and indirectly. Their description should be more concise, like a summary, compared to a scene in duration terms.

We will focus, though, on narrative perspective or point of view study. There were attempts, especially by Bauckham, to use point of view to verify the eyewitness origin of the Gospel. However, I am unaware of any thorough study on the topic. This thesis will investigate the point of view as a possible "position of the witness" in Mark's Gospel.

[135] I admit, that strictly speaking, there is no way to tell for sure that the narrator does not know something. When I speak of the lack of narrator's knowledge I really mean that there is no indication of narrator's awareness in a certain sphere.

Suppose we expect that the character – the source of knowledge of the narrator – is an actual eyewitness. In that case, we can anticipate that his point of view is represented in the narrative to a certain degree. As we have seen, Aare cites the internal perspective as one of the characteristics of eyewitness testimony. Therefore, a special interest will be given to the presence of an internal point of view in Mark's Gospel. It will help determine if the disciples' point of view aligns with the "position of the witness."

However, we have to be cautious regarding the possible alignment between the internal point of view and the "position of the witness." The overlap of points of view regarding information (if utilizing Yamasaki's classification) is an obligatory factor for a limited-in-knowledge narrator. In other planes, the coincidence of points of view may not be strict. We must remember that there is no claim for a direct eyewitness report in the tradition or the text. Mark's narrator is a non-diegetic one. Thus, he has no obligation to keep a specific internal point of view continuously. In retelling a report that initially could have been told in the first person, the narrator may adopt an external point of view or switch between different characters' points of view depending on the narrative goals. Moreover, the disciple-witness in his report may adopt different points of view, as individuals frequently do.[136]

The level of coincidence may be different for different planes. In a narrative like the Gospel, the ideological plane is a perfect example of a divergence of perspective. Consider the example of Augustine's *Confessions*. Augustine-narrator constantly judges, evaluates, and condemns Augustine-character. Their ideological points of view do not

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[136] Uspensky describes a lot of different cases of the combination of different points of views in the discussion of the phraseological plane. He concludes: "The combination of different points of views – in particular, the point of view of the speaker and the listener – are often encountered in oral speech." See Uspensky, *Poetics of Composition*, 38.

coincide at all. There is more dissonance between them than consonance.[137] Nevertheless, we cannot deny that the book reflects Augustine's personal or eyewitness experience. We may meet something similar in the Gospel.[138]

Focalization

As this thesis is concerned with eyewitness testimony, special attention should be definitely given to perception. Character's perception is deeply connected to point of view. It may be well described under the psychological plane as it considers the processes that happen inside the characters. It also may be connected with the spatial plane, as the spatial position of the character may suggest their horizon and direction of perceiving. The Gospel of Mark, as it will be shown, is also profoundly connected to the ideology. Still, the perceptual point of view is sometimes separated from others.[139] For this thesis's declared purposes, it would make sense to consider it separately. Whose perception is emphasized by the narrator?

However, to establish the "position of the witness," it is not enough only to find the narrator's emphasis on the perception of a particular character. The narrator's own perception should also be investigated. This investigation directly relates to the question of focalization, even internal focalization. Indeed, the main task of focalization is to answer the question: *Who sees?* More precisely, *Who perceives?* If it is internal focalization, then the question will concern "vision with" a character, which may be

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[137] For a discussion of consonance and dissonance between "narrated self" and "narrating self" see Aare, *"*A Narratological Investigation of Eyewitness Reporting*,"* 688–92.

[138] There is a big ideological distance between the disciples as characters and the disciples as witnesses. I will explore it in chapter 4.

[139] See Schmid, *Narratology*, 104.

called CF. Therefore, the question of identifying the "position of the witness" is the same question of identifying the character according to whose vision the narrator orients his narrative and with whose vision or perception the reader is invited to perceive the story. If the Gospel is connected to eyewitness testimony of the disciples or Peter, then they should be identified as CF. It is together with their vision that the reader should perceive the story, and the narrator should orient his narrative or reveal his story. Of course, the story does not need to be narrated with only one particular CF or even with one type of focalization. However, still, to tell that the Gospel is related to eyewitness testimony of a particular character, we may expect that that character's perception is emphasized and may be considered as CF (even if not the only one) in the Gospel.

Therefore, we seek a limited-in-knowledge narrator with Peter or the disciples as his key informants. Such a narrator is compatible with the eyewitness theory described in the Petrine tradition. Proving it is necessary to assume that the Gospel is based on eyewitness testimony, where one or few persons played a crucial role. We also expect Peter's and the disciples' points of view to be reflected in the narrative and to coincide with the narrator's to some degree. Lastly, we expect to see Peter or the disciples as CF in the Gospel. It will make eyewitness origin of the Gospel more plausible. We will look for other narrative features, such as those listed by Aare, which can confirm the eyewitness origin.

In the following three chapters, the narrator's ability, point of view, and focalization in Mark's Gospel will be explored. Does Mark's narrator correspond to those assumptions, we listed above? Those three chapters will be primarily concerned with the

disciples as the group. The final chapter will be dedicated specifically to Peter as the Gospel's CF.

Chapter 3

Narrator's Ability in the Gospel of Mark

This chapter is dedicated to the discussion of Mark's narrator ability. In the second chapter the two opposite types of narrator, namely omniscient and limited-in-knowledge narrator were discussed. It was suggested that if the Petrine tradition related to the Gospel origin has empirical grounds, then Mark's narrator should demonstrate some discernible limitation. In this chapter the crucial questions of the scope of the narrator's knowledge and his means to access it will be answered. The brief survey of scholars' typical views on the narrator and the grounds for those views will be undertaken. While Markan scholarship consensually regards the narrator as omniscient, some criticisms of this view will be suggested. After that a case for the limited-in-knowledge narrator, which is compatible with the Gospel's possible eyewitness origin, will be made. It will be suggested that the narrator is dependent on the disciples and also on Jesus. However, the dependence on Jesus is mediated via the disciples. Jesus' disciples, along with his female followers, could have directly witnessed most of the Gospel story. We will also discuss the gradation among the disciples based on their knowing Jesus and awareness about Gospel events. Particularly, we will attempt to demonstrate that Peter's level of awareness to a large degree coincides with the narrator's.

Is the Narrator of Mark's Gospel Omniscient?

Mark's Narrator According to Narrative Critics

In this section, we will briefly overview some of the most important writings of Markan scholarship in the field of narrative criticism concerning their understanding of Mark's narrator ability. What is their opinion on Mark's narrator, and what is its basis? We will refer to such influential and recognized scholars in Markan narrative criticism as David Rhoads and Donald Michie, Robert Fowler, Elizabeth Malbon, Mary Ann Tolbert, and Joanna Dewey.[140]

Rhoads and Michie, in their pioneering Markan narrative criticism work *Mark as Story*, give the following definition of the Markan narrator:

> The salient features of Mark's narrator are these: the narrator does not figure in the events of the story; speaks in the third person; is not bound by time or space in the telling of the story; is an implied invisible presence in every scene, capable of being anywhere to "recount" the action; displays full omniscience by narrating the thoughts, feelings, or sensory experiences of many characters; often turns from the story to give direct "asides" to the reader, explaining a custom or translating a word or commenting on the story; and narrates the story from one overarching ideological point of view.[141]

The authors view the narrator as omniscient. In order to explain the meaning of "unlimited omniscience," they propose the opposition between the omniscient position of

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[140] I will review the following books and articles by these scholars: David Rhoads and Donald Michie, *Mark as Story*; David Rhoads, "Narrative Criticism and the Gospel of Mark," 411–434; Robert M. Fowler, *Let the Reader Understand: Reader-Response Criticism and the Gospel of Mark* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1996); Elizabeth Struthers Malbon, "Narrative Criticism: How Does the Story Mean?" in *Mark and Method: New Approaches in Biblical Studies,* ed. Janice Capel Anderson and Stephen D. Moore (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1992), 23–49; Mary Ann Tolbert, *Sowing the Gospel: Mark's World in Literary-Historical Perspective* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1989); Joanna Dewey, "Point of View."

It may be not absolutely correct to call all those scholars narrative critics. Thus, the work of Fowler is mostly dedicated to reader-response criticism. Dewey is mostly concerned with performance criticism. Nevertheless, all of them utilize and develop narrative criticism in their research concerning the Gospel of Mark.

[141] Rhoads and Michie, *Mark as Story*, 36.

the narrator and the narrator who can be associated with a specific character. The latter will be limited in knowledge to what his character could have known. The authors suggest an exercise to reveal the omniscience of the Markan narrator. In the scenes where Jesus interacts with other characters, the reader is claimed to be able to read them from both sides. Also, "it reveals the unlimited knowledge of the omniscient narrator because no character has enough knowledge of other characters or events to be able to tell the whole story as the omniscient narrator has told it."[142]

Below is their description of the narrator's omnipresence:

> The narrator knows what happens in every place, unlike a character-narrator who would have to be present or hear about an event indirectly in order to be able to recount it realistically. Thus, the omniscient narrator can depict not only public events but also what happens privately in houses or in the desert — not only when Jesus is with someone, but also when he is alone. The narrator depicts mostly scenes in which Jesus is present, but can also shift to other settings instantaneously to depict the high priests plotting against Jesus, or Peter denying Jesus.[143]

This definition stresses the significant opposition between an omnipresent narrator, who "knows what happens in every place," and "a character-narrator who would have to be present or hear about an event indirectly in order to be able to recount it realistically." The narrator's ability to depict Jesus in public and alone reveals his omnipresence, namely, that his knowledge is not limited to "a character-narrator." It is implied that the ability to depict Jesus alone could not come from anyone but Jesus himself. However, this narrator can also depict other events where Jesus is absent. Thus, Jesus could not be "a character-narrator" as well. The narrator has to be omnipresent.

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[142] Rhoads and Michie, *Mark as Story*, 36.

[143] Rhoads and Michie, *Mark as Story*, 37.

As for the narrator's ability to see inside characters, they assert he knows his characters' minds and "innermost feelings."[144] It is curious, though, that in the third edition, they (joined now by Joanna Dewey) had to soften their rhetoric somewhat. They changed "innermost feelings" to simply "inner feelings" and added quite a significant remark: "Mark's inside views are brief and underdeveloped, yet clearly show the unlimited omniscience of the narrator."[145]

While discussing the narrator's omniscience, the authors direct their reader "especially" to an essay "'Point of View' in Mark's Narrative" by Norman Petersen of 1978. In the third edition of Rhoads and Michie's book, published in 2012, they call Petersen's essay "ground-breaking," stressing its enduring relevance.[146] David Rhoads also refers to this essay in his article "Narrative Criticism and the Gospel of Mark."[147]

Robert Fowler follows Rhoads and Michie, asserting that in Mark, there "is an omniscient, intrusive, third-person narrator," referring to their description of the narrator. In his footnote, he stresses that they rely on Petersen's "ground-breaking essay on this subject."[148] Fowler emphasizes, "Not even Jesus knows as much as our narrator; we may wonder whether God knows more."[149] The narrator in the Gospel has a special connection

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[144] Rhoads and Michie, *Mark as Story*, 37.

[145] Rhoads, Dewey, and Michie, *Mark as Story,* 3rd ed.*,* 41.

[146] Rhoads, Dewey, and Michie, *Mark as Story,* 3rd ed.*,* 174.

[147] See Rhoads, "Narrative Criticism and the Gospel of Mark," 420.

[148] He prefers terms "unlimited" and "unrestricted" to "omniscient" and "omnipresent," still assuming that the Markan narrator knows everything, but he just may choose not to reveal everything he knows to his reader. See Fowler, *Let the Reader Understand,* 64.

[149] Fowler, *Let the Reader Understand,* 65.

to Jesus because he is the only character "with whom the omniscient narrator shares this mind-reading power."[150]

Elizabeth Malbon states that the Gospel's narrator should be considered omniscient, omnipresent, or unlimited as he "...is able to narrate events involving any character or group of characters, including Jesus when alone."[151] Mary Ann Tolbert also talks about "the third-person omniscient narrator," referencing Petersen's essay.[152] She opposes the supposedly unlimited knowledge of the narrator to "strikingly limited" one of the characters.[153] In her essay "Point of View and the Disciples in Mark," Joanna Dewey also refers to Petersen in the first footnote, making the same claim about the Markan omniscient narrator.[154] Following Petersen, she declares the Markan narrator omnipresent and omniscient.[155]

Let us draw some conclusions from this brief survey. All of the discussed authors declare that the Markan narrator is omniscient. They contrast this narrator with "a

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[150] Fowler, *Let the Reader Understand,* 73.

[151] Malbon, "How Does the Story Mean?," 28.

[152] Tolbert, *Sowing the Gospel,* 51.

[153] "The Markan narrator knows everything: the past and the future, the internal thoughts of characters (e.g., 2:6–7), decisions made away from the main action (e.g. 3:6), the words of the heavenly voice to Jesus (e.g. 1:11), the private words of Jesus (e.g., 14:35–36), the motivations for actions (e.g., 9:6; 11:18; 15:10), and the true identity of Jesus (1:1); and all these things the public narrator communicates to the implied reader. On the other hand, characters in the story hear only what is given in the second degree of narration; their knowledge, when compared to that of the narrator or implied reader, is strikingly limited." Tolbert, *Sowing the Gospel,* 93–94.

[154] Dewey, "Point of View," 97.

[155] For Dewey, there seems to be another reason to regard the narrator as omniscient. In her essay, she utilizes Genette's classification of focalization. Most scenes of Mark's narrative are considered not to have a clear character-focalizer (CF) and to be zero-focalized. Her "Point of View," 97. Thus, those episodes are narrated from the "omniscient" perspective. In chapter 2 of this thesis (p. 34), it was explained that this identification is wrong. Suppose the story can be told from the perspective of two characters. In that case, it does not necessarily mean that the narrator has more knowledge than either of them, especially when considering retrospective knowledge. It says more about how the knowledge is conveyed to the reader than how the narrator accessed it.

character-narrator" whose knowledge is "strikingly limited." The narrator knows even more than Jesus. This omniscience is revealed in his omnipresence, the narrator's ability to describe scenes with various characters. Depicting Jesus in public, alone, and when absent, and providing inside views into different characters, demonstrate this ability explicitly. These capabilities exceed those of a single-character narrator to tell the story realistically.

The authors summarized above have not provided a detailed examination of the Gospel to prove that the narrator is omniscient. Furthermore, to my knowledge, they have not made the case for their claim elsewhere. They merely state that the narrator is omniscient and give a few examples to support their claim without providing any substantial evidence to back it up. They may believe that the evidence of omniscience in Mark is so apparent that a brief discussion is sufficient to support their case. Alternatively, they may assume that Petersen's "ground-breaking" essay has established a solid foundation for their claim. Therefore, it is necessary to refer to Petersen's essay to understand his definition of the Markan narrator and the grounds for his assertion.

Petersen's essay

To establish the omniscient nature of the Markan narrator, Petersen employed Uspensky's four-fold classification to analyze the use of point of view in Mark. Let's consider the extended quotes from Petersen's discussion of spatio-temporal and psychological planes, which are most relevant for us.

Spatio-Temporal:

> We have already seen that the owner of the constant third person voice governing Mark's narrative spatially hovers over every episode, able to see them all from a distance, in both space and time, yet free to descend at will into the action of an episode, locating himself as an invisible observer even in the most private councils, be they in houses, boats, banquets, synagogues, or "court rooms." Indeed, the narrator is "with" Jesus even when no other actors are present or capable of knowing what Jesus experienced (1:10–11; 6:46–48; 7:33–34; 14:35–36). As a result of the orientation of his plot to Jesus, viewing all actions in relation to him, the narrator's location moves with Jesus's.[156]

Psychological:

> As narrator, he is in one and the same scene both external and internal to his actors; he is both objective and subjective; the characters are described both from the "outside" and from the "inside." The story of the paralytic is typical, and it reflects the further fact that in Mark's narrative the psychological plane of perception is expressed on the phraseological plane. The narrator openly tells us what the characters were thinking or feeling… Indeed, he does so frequently enough to produce the impression that he always has this mind-reading capability but uses it at will.[157]

Then, he lists almost thirty textual facts from Mark's Gospel, where the narrator tells his listener what different characters (Jesus, the disciples, Peter, Pharisees, Herod, Pilate) felt or thought. For Petersen, evidence from two of these planes provides a solid and unquestionable ground to claim that Mark's narrator is omniscient, per the glossary definition.[158] He does not attempt to analyze any of the provided textual facts. The accumulation of these claims appears to support the argument that Mark's narrator possesses omniscient power, allowing him to be present wherever he desires and access his characters' consciousness at will.

After establishing the omniscience of the narrator, Petersen questions his possible participation in real-world events and the nature of his knowledge: "*The historical*

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[156] Petersen, "'Point of View' in Mark's Narrative," 112.

[157] Petersen, "'Point of View' in Mark's Narrative," 116.

[158] See this thesis, 21.

question posed by these intrusively omniscient features is whether or not our narrator participated in real-world events underlying his scenes, and whether or not he enjoyed the mind-reading powers implicitly claimed by his narrative"[159] (italic original). According to Petersen, the omniscient narrator's presence in real-world events is improbable as it is solely rhetorical, and his knowledge is unlikely factual. Therefore, Petersen insists, "*Mark's rhetoric is the rhetoric of fiction, and it provides the most compelling evidence that his Gospel is a bona fide literary composition*"[160] (italic original). Therefore, the scholar believes that the narrator's omniscient nature in the Gospel proves that it is a work of fiction. The rhetoric that implies the narrator's omniscience is typical of fiction. Therefore, it is at odds with the possible eyewitness origin of the Gospel.

Need for an Alternative Model of Mark's Narrator

Based on the analysis of omniscience in literary criticism, biblical criticism, and Markan narrative critical scholarship, it is reasonable to suggest the need of re-evaluation of our understanding of the narrator's type in Mark's Gospel concerning his ability. Some of the arguments of narrative critics are weak *per se*. In contrast, others must be qualified based on the literary critics' discussion of the narrator's possible omniscience. In their assessment of the narrator's knowledge, Markan scholarship never considered the unique nature of Mark's protagonist and his relationship with his associates. In this regard, it will be demonstrated that these two features and the retrospectiveness of Mark's narrative may play a crucial role in understanding the nature of the narrator's knowledge.

[159] Petersen, "'Point of View' in Mark's Narrative," 114.

[160] Petersen, "'Point of View' in Mark's Narrative," 115.

Furthermore, it will be argued that, with some essential qualifications, the Markan narrator can be described as the one with limited knowledge.

First, Petersen and others overstate the supposed omnipresence of Mark's narrator. The detailed discussion will be undertaken in a minute. However, for now, it is enough to quote Joanna Dewey: "Even in those passages in which the disciples are not explicitly present, they may be assumed to be there since the disciples accompanied Jesus continuously from 1:16 to 14:50 except for 6:12–29."[161] Ole Davidsen is entirely correct, asserting that the constant presence of the disciples beside Jesus in Mark suggests their role as observers.[162] The narrator's omnipresence should be questioned if, in the narrative, we have the observer-character whose presence is comprehensive.

Second, there was no attempt to examine the narrator's ability to provide inside views while remaining within the limits of "realistic vision." As we have seen in the previous chapter,[163] this is a crucial requirement for accepting the narrator's omniscience.[164] It was mentioned above that in the third edition of *Mark as Story*, the description of the narrator's mind-reading abilities became much more moderate compared to the first one. The authors still claim that the narrator is "clearly omniscient." However, the way they described the narrator's inside views as "brief and

[161] Dewey, "Point of View," 102.

[162] See Ole Davidsen, "The Narrative Jesus: A Semiotic Reading of Mark's Gospel," Doctoral Thesis, Aarhus University, 1993, 46, 188–89.

[163] See this thesis, 21–26.

[164] In my critique of Markan scholarship views on the narrator, I do not claim they completely missed the point. It seems that they are not really interested in how the narrator accesses the knowledge but only in the scope of his knowledge, how he opens it, and how this knowledge establishes his and Jesus' authority and reliability. I completely share those views. To my knowledge, Petersen is the only one who claimed that the "omniscient narrator" of Mark is a sign of its fictionality and implied the absence of any direct dependence on eyewitnesses. Others seem indifferent to the relationship between the narrative and possible eyewitnesses; they simply accept form-critical presuppositions. For my purposes, it is still important to clarify the meaning of omniscience and the way it is used by Markan scholars.

underdeveloped" recalls Sternberg's description of Nehemiah's insights with regard to his enemies, "how shallow they are…"[165] This similarity raises a question of Mark's narrator ability: is it really appropriate to see him as an omniscient one?

Petersen brings a list of almost 30 cases, demonstrating the narrator's omniscient abilities to know the minds and hearts of his characters. He stresses that 2:1–12 "is typical, and it reflects the further fact that in Mark's narrative the psychological plane of perception is expressed on the phraseological plane. The narrator openly tells us what the characters were thinking or feeling."[166] However, it is possible to show that the knowledge demonstrated by the narrator in this scene can be explained by a combination of three factors clearly present in the Gospel. First of them is the uniqueness of his protagonist. Second is the closeness of his associates who, namely, are his disciples. The third is the retrospective nature of the narrator's knowledge (see 3:17).[167] Those factors can explain most of the inside views provided by the narrator. Also, we have to remember the narrator's need of simply filling gaps and creating logical connections in order to build a coherent narrative. This explanation provides grounds to explain the narrator's ability while allowing him to remain in a "realistic vision."

Therefore, contrary to the consensus view of Markan scholarship, it is possible to make a case for Mark's narrator remaining within the limits of a "realistic vision and inference," with the disciples as his primary source of knowledge. Such a narrator is compatible with the possible eyewitness origin of the Gospel. It seems plausible given the overwhelming presence of the disciples in the Gospel story, their close relationship with

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[165] See this thesis, 29.

[166] Petersen, "'Point of View' in Mark's Narrative," 116.

[167] For the retrospective nature of Mark's Gospel see Fowler, *Let the Reader Understand*, 65, 137, 262.

Jesus, and the uniqueness of Jesus as the protagonist. The Markan narrator's ability in the realm of knowledge is not independent. Rather, to a large extent, he received his mind-reading power from Jesus with the medium of the disciples. In the next section, an alternative model of Mark's narrator will be suggested.

Case for a Limited-in-Knowledge Narrator

In chapter 2, we discussed the nature of the omniscience privilege, which is often regarded as the principal mark of fictionality.[168] In order to suggest an alternative model of Mark's narrator, we need to introduce an alternative type of privilege. This privilege would be characteristic of a narrator with limited knowledge or keep him within the boundaries of a "realistic vision and inference." Thus, it will explain the possibility of the Markan narrator having insights into the mind of his protagonist, Jesus, along with quite impressive knowledge of the story world. At the same time, this narrator will be perceived as the one with his source-of-knowledge character, or as such as dependent on one (or few) of his characters in knowledge.

We will call it "the privilege of omniscience's companionship." This privilege implies a close relationship between the protagonist, who possesses unique capacities in the knowledge realm, and the narrator's source-of-knowledge character and the latter's involvement in events where the former is an active participant. This relationship and involvement can adequately explain the inside views given into the protagonist's inner life. The same closeness and companionship, along with the protagonist's unique

[168] See this thesis, 24–26.

capacities, can explain the narrator's profound knowledge of the story world as a whole, including the inner lives of other characters.

In literature, we can find examples of a narrator with this privilege. One illustration can be found in the books about Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. A diegetic narrator, Dr. Watson, narrates almost all the events in the stories. As a long-term friend, colleague, neighbor, and even mentee of the great detective, Dr. Watson is a prime example of a narrator with the privilege of companionship. This privilege is especially powerful due to the uniqueness of the protagonist, Holmes. Let's discuss two episodes where Dr. Watson describes Holmes, which would immediately make him omniscient if he were not a narrator with an omniscience's companionship privilege.

> One night—it was on the twentieth of March, 1888—I was returning from a journey to a patient (for I had now returned to civil practice), when my way led me through Baker Street. As I passed the well-remembered door, which must always be associated in my mind with my wooing, and with the dark incidents of the Study in Scarlet, I was seized with a keen desire to see Holmes again, and to know how he was employing his extraordinary powers. His rooms were brilliantly lit, and, even as I looked up, I saw his tall, spare figure pass twice in a dark silhouette against the blind. He was pacing the room swiftly, eagerly, with his head sunk upon his chest and his hands clasped behind him. *To me, who knew his every mood and habit, his attitude and manner told their own story.*[169] He was at work again. He had risen out of his drug-created dreams and was hot upon the scent of some new problem. I rang the bell and was shown up to the chamber which had formerly been in part my own.[170]

Suppose Conan Doyle was not so careful to keep the narration mode within the limits of "realistic vision and inference," which is evident in his revealing of the means to access the knowledge. In this case this account could easily be read as told by the omniscient and omnipresent narrator. We can see Holmes alone in his room behind the

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[169] Here and below in Doyle's quotes, italics is mine.

[170] Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, "A Scandal in Bohemia," in *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* (London, UK: George Newnes, Limited, Southampton Street and Exeter Street, Strand, 1892), 2.

window with curtains down as he walks around, thinking through the critical problem after a long and destructive break. The narrator would have been omniscient indeed if he had not shared this room with Holmes for many years, watched the detective working in his unique manner, and learned his habits perfectly. He would be omnipresent if he were not standing in front of this window right now, as he came to visit his friend. Please note how Watson describes his ability to read inside his character (the sentence marked with italics). We can almost feel his pride in his unique access to such a great man. It is nothing but a privilege, a privilege of companionship.

Let us now turn to the second example:

> It was ten o'clock before we reached Baker Street again. A brougham was waiting at our door.
>
> "Hum! A doctor's—general practitioner, I perceive," said Holmes. "Not been long in practice, but has had a good deal to do. Come to consult us, I fancy! Lucky we came back!"
>
> *I was sufficiently conversant with Holmes's methods to be able to follow his reasoning*, and to see that the nature and state of the various medical instruments in the wicker basket which hung in the lamplight inside the brougham had given him the data for his swift deduction. The light in our window above showed that this late visit was indeed intended for us. With some curiosity as to what could have sent a brother medico to us at such an hour, I followed Holmes into our sanctum.[171]

If we only have a superficial look into Holmes' mind in the first description, we are given a profound inside view here. Such insight could be given on account of the omniscience privilege. However, that is difference here.[172] This inside view is a product

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[171] Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, "The Resident Patient," in *The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes* (London, UK: George Newnes, Limited, Southampton Street and Exeter Street, Strand, 1894), 171–72.

[172] In both cases, Dr. Watson does not only share his observations regarding Holmes, but also explains the means by which he accessed those observations. In this way, he tries to keep some convention, so that we, the readers, can understand that he is still within the strictly realistic boundaries. However, he did not have to do it in either of the cases. Even if he just reported his observations, they should not be explained by the privilege of omniscience. Note, that Holmes simply stated that it was the doctor who visited them. He did it because of his method and not omniscient privilege. We would still trust his capacities to understand that. In the same way, Dr. Watson did not have to explain at any particular moment how he accesses any information about his friend. We would still have to trust his knowledge based on the privilege of companionship.

of an attentive companion's or diligent mentee's privilege who managed to learn both the method of Holmes and Holmes himself. The narrator (Watson) did it well enough to read and voice Holmes' thoughts. Since the detective's thoughts concern another character in the story world, the narrator can also receive much information about that character.

Thus, we can see that Dr. Watson is exceptionally qualified. He knows his friends' habits profoundly and can recognize what exactly puzzles Holmes at a particular moment. He also knows Holmes' method well enough, so sometimes he can even reconstruct how his friend arrived at some conclusions. This same method allows him to understand things about other characters and events in the story world. Nevertheless, Dr. Watson in the story usually knows much less than the main character, who has almost superhuman capacities in the knowledge realm. Therefore, the character Dr. Watson is often surprised by Holmes and events and even looks silly. However, there is another Dr. Watson, the narrator, and his knowledge is different.[173] Indeed, the narrator Watson knows much more than the character Watson, but he chooses to share his knowledge in line with the character Watson.[174] How else could he tell a story if he had not known it beforehand? Two facts can explain the knowledge the narrator Watson possesses. First, the source of this knowledge is his interaction with his superhuman character, Holmes. Second, this is retrospective knowledge, as the story is told retrospectively.

Mark's narrator's knowledge can largely be explained by the same privilege of an omniscience's companionship. Even though there is no diegetic narrator following Jesus,

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[173] This is the literary case where we can clearly differentiate between the "experiencing self" and "narrating self." See Aare, "A Narratological Investigation of Eyewitness Reporting," 679.

[174] Let's recall Genette's insightful note with regard to the restriction of the field in first-person narratives: "The narrator almost always 'knows' more than the hero, even if he himself is the hero, and therefore for the narrator focalization through the hero is a restriction of field just as artificial in the first person as in the third." Genette, *Narrative Discourse,* 194.

we have his disciples, who collectively can be regarded as the narrator's source-of-knowledge character. They were always with Jesus, even during his most intimate moments, which will be shown below. Therefore, they knew a lot about Jesus and the events he was involved in. Jesus was not just a simple character but had omniscient abilities, making him a perfect source of knowledge for the disciples. In their turn, the disciples might serve as the narrator's perfect source of knowledge. Now, just as the narrator Watson knows much more than the character Watson, Mark's narrator's knowledge is also much superior to the knowledge possessed by the disciples, who are a part of his narrative. Their problems with correct understanding of the story events and Jesus' teaching are clearly revealed. Nevertheless, this does not necessarily disqualify the disciples because this knowledge is retrospective. We need to assume, of course, that at some point their understanding was fixed. In this case, the disciples can ideally be the source of retrospective knowledge.

Even though the narrator Watson possesses more knowledge than the character Watson, he chooses to share it with the reader in line with the character Watson. He does it to create an illusion of reality and maintain the specific genre of detective stories. This gradual revelation of knowledge does not mean he does not have it and cannot give it to his reader immediately without explaining how he obtained it. Sternberg refers to this latter mode of revealing knowledge as omni-communicativeness.[175]

The Markan narrator is not restricted by the same considerations as Watson. His goal is not to gradually reveal his knowledge but to establish his authority and the

[175] See Meir Sternberg, "Omniscience in Narrative Construction," 754–55.

uniqueness of his character.[176] Therefore, Mark's narrator does not have to conceal his knowledge but can freely showcase it whenever he wants. After all, he does not narrate a detective story, so he does not have to follow the literary convention of providing means for his knowledge. However, this does not imply there are none as they can be identified through an analysis of his narrative. The narrator is even concerned with revealing the source or sources of his knowledge.[177]

Thus, we are establishing the model of Mark's narrator knowledge, which involves the privilege of omniscience's companionship, where Jesus is the omniscient figure, the disciples are his associates, and the narrator's knowledge derives from the disciples' retrospective knowledge. In order to show that it is indeed may be applied to the Gospel of Mark and explain the narrator's knowledge, we will:

1. Discuss the role and competence of Jesus' disciples as his companions and observers. The narrator's dependence on them in his access to Jesus will be demonstrated. In this way, we will provide evidence for the narrator's limitation in knowledge and make a case for the disciples as his collective source-of-knowledge character.
2. Discuss the disciples' privileged access to Jesus providing knowledge about his inner life and unique powers.
3. Show the narrator's dependence on Jesus' omniscience and how the disciples could have served as a medium between Jesus and the narrator because of their privileged access to Jesus.

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[176] This is the opinion of most narrative critics, which I share. See Fowler, *Let the Reader Understand,* 65; Meir Sternberg, *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative*, 12; Moloney, *The Gospel of Mark*, 29–30.

[177] For example, Bauckham makes the case for Mark's use of *inclusio* device to indicate Peter as his primary source. See Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses,* 2nd ed., 124–27.

The Disciples as a Source-of-Knowledge Character

According to some researchers, the disciples in Mark's Gospel function as observers or informants and can be called Jesus' companions. In this section, it will be argued that the narrator indeed assumes their role as observers in Mark's narrative.[178] Then, we will discuss their general competence in the informational realm. Are they competent enough to serve as the narrator's source-of-knowledge character, at least when it comes to the general or external knowledge of Mark's story? We will not discuss the ability to provide inside views yet, as this will be addressed later. The competence level of different individuals or subgroups within the disciples' group will be evaluated. Is it possible to view not only the disciples collectively but Peter individually[179] as the narrator's source-of-knowledge character? Finally, it will be demonstrated that there is positive evidence of the narrator's reliance on the disciples in the sphere of knowledge, especially concerning his access to Jesus.

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[178] I do not mean, of course, that their narrative role is limited to being observers. There are a few fine studies of the disciples-character in Mark's Gospel, which mainly focus on their exemplifying of Jesus' followers, the possible identification with the Gospel's listener/reader, and their relationship with Jesus-character. Robert Tannehill (his "The Disciples in Mark: The Function of a Narrative Role," *Journal of Religion* 57, no. 4 [October 1977], 386–405), who pioneered the studying of their narrative role, concludes that Mark leads the reader to be associated with the disciples not only in their privileged position as Jesus' companions but in their struggles to follow Jesus. Patrick J. Hartin (his "The Role of the Disciples in the Jesus Story Communicated by Mark," *Koers* 58, no. 1 [1993]), shows their shift from "the insiders" to "the outsiders" and suggests that the reader should make their own choice to follow Jesus. Dewey (her "Point of View") shows that Mark intended the reader to be identified sometimes with the disciples and sometimes with Jesus. Rhoads and Michie (their *Mark as Story*, 1st ed., 89–100) emphasizes their conflict with Jesus. Malbon follows Tannehill and describes the disciples as Jesus' "fallible followers." See Elizabeth Struthers Malbon, "Fallible Followers: Women and Men in the Gospel of Mark," *Semeia* 28 (1983): 29–48.

[179] Peter is often considered as a "typical" disciple, the disciples' "spokesman" or "representative." In this case, there is hardly any point in differentiating between Peter as an individual and the disciples as a group. In our discussion of Peter below it will be shown that such a differentiation is valid. For now, it is enough to mention the study of Timothy Wiarda, where he has persuasively shown that Peter in Mark has his own role as an individual character. See his "Peter as Peter in the Gospel of Mark," *New Testament Studies* 45 (1999): 19–37.

The Disciples as Observers in Mark's Gospel

Joanna Dewey correctly claims that "Even in those passages in which the disciples are not explicitly present, they may be assumed to be there since the disciples accompanied Jesus continuously from 1:16 to 14:50 except for 6:12–29."[180] We will call this part of the Gospel "the disciples material."[181] Within this part of the Gospel, we have a few minor episodes where they are absent. This material can be divided into two almost equal parts. The first one describes the public ministry of Jesus. In those events, random people were involved: crowds, recipients of Jesus' healings, and his opposition. The second part is about Jesus and disciples only.[182] Thus, Mark dedicates half of the disciples' material and more than 40% of his Gospel exclusively to the disciples. Sometimes, one or a few random characters are present in those scenes (5:40–43). In the Gospel portions dedicated to Jesus' public ministry, at least since the moment of the

[180] Dewey, "Point of View," 102.

[181] The disciples' material is constituted by all the episodes of the Gospel, where the presence of at least one of the Twelve may be reasonably suggested. I will end it with 14:72, the last moment of Peter's actual presence in the narrative.

[182] 1:16–20, 35–39; 4:10–20, 34, 35–41; 6:7–13, 30, 45–52; 7:17–23; 8:1–5, 13–21, 27–33; 9:2–13, 28–29, 30–32, 33–50; 10:23–31, 32–34, 35–41, 42–45; 11:12–14, 20–26; 12:41–44; 13:1–37; 14:3–9, 12–25, 26–31, 32–42, 66–72. More passages where few casual characters are present as well may be added to this list: 1:29–31; 5:37–43; 7:24–30, 33–35; 8:22–26.

disciples' public calling (3:13–19),[183] we usually expect to meet the disciples as a group.[184] We may even treat them as one character.[185]

The level of disciples' involvement within those two parts of the Gospel is different. They are not active participants in Jesus' public ministry. Usually, their role as disciples is hardly significant, and yet their presence is indicated. For example, in the episode with the Gerasene demoniac, the presence of the disciples is indicated (5:1), though they are not mentioned afterward. The same is valid for his preaching in Capernaum (1:21–29). The disciples are specifically mentioned when Jesus visits his hometown but are absent in the following story (6:1–6). So even though they do not play any active role, their presence in several episodes is indicated and may be assumed in others.

Therefore, the disciples' presence in the Gospel is essential to the narrator. The Gospels are written as ancient *Bioi*, so they should focus on one person,[186] and Mark's Gospel does (1:1).[187] The Gospel is the account of Jesus. However, because of the

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[183] It is hard to tell whether Mark intended to indicate the absence of most of the Twelve prior to this point. We know that Levi was called in 2:14. Other disciples could have also been present prior to 3:13 as part of the crowd that followed Jesus. Nevertheless, the frequent mentioning of Peter, Andrew, James, and John in Mark 1 leads us to assume that this group exclusively formed the body of the disciples at least until 1:39.

[184] I need to mention that the term "disciples" in Mark's Gospel does not necessarily equate to "the Twelve." Hartin rightly asserts: "In the narrative the term disciples refers chiefly to twelve people whom Jesus called to follow him," (his "Role of the Disciples," 38) and yet, the group is not limited to those twelve people (4:10). See also Tannehill, "The Disciples in Mark," 388. So for me "the disciples" are the Twelve or the part of the Twelve which can be joined by other close followers of Jesus.

[185] In Mark's narrative criticism, it is appropriate to consider the disciples group as a single character. For example, Hartin asserts: "While a character is normally seen as an individual, a group can also function in this particular way… I wish to examine one particular group, namely the disciples, by giving attention to the character-role they play within one particular New Testament writing, namely the Gospel of Mark." Hartin, "The Role of the Disciples," 38.

[186] Richard A. Burridge, *What Are the Gospels? A Comparison with Græco-Roman Biography* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

[187] Some scholars even consider 1:1 as a heading of the whole book, highlighting that the hero of the Gospel is no one but Jesus Christ, the Son of God. See France, *The Gospel of Mark,* 49.

disciples' presence, the Gospel is not about *mere* Jesus but about Jesus followed by his disciples.[188]

Though disciples are not active participants in many scenes, they are still observers of the Gospel events. There are parts where Jesus' disciples are hardly mentioned, but they appear later as the ones who reflect on Jesus' words, actions, and encounters with different people. Consider the rich young man coming to Jesus (10:17–31). Although he left after a conversation in frustration, this case allowed Jesus to teach his disciples about wealth and salvation. As a result, he engaged them in an extended discussion on the topic. In the same chapter, we see a conversation between Jesus and Pharisees about the divorce issue.[189] We do not receive any of the Pharisees' feedback on what Jesus said. Instead, the disciples express their dissatisfaction and ask for clarification from Jesus. When Jesus teaches parables to crowds, the disciples ask him for explanations privately (4:10; 7:17). The crowd's reaction is usually expressed in general terms (1:27; 5:15–17). However, the disciples, and not the crowds, are active learners.[190] They reflect on Jesus' words and actions, even if they are not directly related

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[188] M. Eugene Boring has expressed a similar observation, "The Markan narrative is a narrative about Jesus, who appears in almost every scene. Yet as a narrative about Jesus, it is a narrative about Jesus-in-relationship-to-the-disciples." However, he wanted to stress the importance of those relations in order for Jesus to occupy a certain role, namely "to be truly the Christ." See M. Eugene Boring, "The Christology of Mark: Hermeneutical Issues for Systematic Theology," *Semeia* 30 (1984), 143. I want to stress the Markan narrator's dependence on the disciples in his access to Jesus.

[189] "The debate comes to an abrupt end, as the real interest of the storyteller does not lie with the Pharisees, but with the disciples. Jesus uses debate over divorce to further instruct his disciples on receptivity and service (see 9:35–37). As is now customary, 'the house' is the place for this private teaching (3:20; 7:17; 9:33). The disciples ask for further clarification on the debate they have just witnessed." Moloney, *The Gospel of Mark,* 195.

[190] Malbon shows, though, that there is not only difference but also similarity between the disciples and the crowd in Mark. See Elizabeth Struthers Malbon, "Disciples/Crowds/Whoever: Markan Characters and Readers," *Novum Testamentum* XXVIII, no. 2 (1986): 104–30.

to them.[191] Definitely, they need to have observed those at first, in order to reflect on them.

Why do we see genuine disciples' interest in Jesus and the Gospel story? It is because they are who they are called to be. They are his pupils. They should follow Jesus literally. Disciples should be his companions, as they were called ἵνα ὦσιν μετ᾽ αὐτοῦ ("so that they might be with him," 3:14b).[192] Thus, they are always around Jesus to know him, learn from him, and be trained and transformed by him. It puts them in a privileged position of constant Jesus' followers and engaged observers of Gospel events.[193]

The calling of the disciples necessitates active observation, as confirmed in the Gospel's depiction of their fulfilling this duty. However, Mark's depiction of the group of disciples and especially Peter is not entirely favorable, and his relatively critical stance regarding the disciples here was correctly recognized long ago.[194] Patrick Hartin aptly explains how the narrative moves the disciples from the position of the insiders (4:11) to that of outsiders, who are described as ὀφθαλμοὺς ἔχοντες οὐ βλέπετε, καὶ ὦτα ἔχοντες οὐκ ἀκούετε; καὶ οὐ μνημονεύετε; ("Having eyes do you not see, and having ears do you not hear? And do you not remember?," 8:18). He states, "The disciples are privileged

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[191] The discussions between Jesus and the disciples related to the events that happened and words that were said in the course of Jesus' public ministry are nothing but retrospective analysis.

[192] It seems that in the goal of the discipleship calling (3:14–15), Mark emphasizes precisely the "so that they might be with him" part. There is little attention in Mark's Gospel to two other parts of the calling, which could be called "missional." Their mission was almost exclusively limited to 6:7–13. As far as the disciples are concerned, everything else in the Gospel can be seen as a fulfillment of the "so that they might be with him" part.

[193] Ole Davidsen notes that the disciples being observers "is closely linked to their role as disciples." Davidsen, "The Narrative Jesus," 46.

[194] The fact that Mark is not particularly fond of the disciples has long been recognized. For example, Theodore Weeden goes as far as claiming that the Mark's Gospel was written as a polemic against Peter and his supporters. See Theodore J. Weeden, *Mark-traditions in Conflict* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1971). See also Werner H. Kelber, "Mark and Oral tradition," *Semeia* 16 (1979): 7–55.

witnesses, who begin as part of the insiders. But, ultimately they reject this privileged position."[195] We are yet to see whether this statement is correct. We need to stress, though, that the temporal (in story time) "blindness" and "deafness" do not disqualify them from being observers.[196] This description refers to their ideological stance, which will be discussed in detail in the next chapter. For now, it is enough to mention that they still possess the story's general (external) information (8:19–21), even though, at this particular point, they do not understand its meaning fully. Moreover, as it will be shown below, Jesus' frustration with his disciples does not indicate his decision to distance himself from them. Quite the opposite, starting with 8:22, he pays more attention to the discipleship program. Most of the disciples-only material is contained in the Gospel's second part. We see them reflecting on the Gospel events and Jesus' words more.[197] For now, let's assume that their ability to "see" was finally restored.[198] We will address this question in detail in the following chapters.

The Disciples' Competence

We have seen that the disciples' role in the Gospel is close to that of observers, and, as a group, they have a significant level of presence in the Gospel narrative

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[195] Hartin, "Role of the Disciples," 42.

[196] "Blindness" and "deafness" here are, of course, used in figurative meaning. See Bayer, *Apostolic Bedrock*, 158.

[197] Sometimes, scholars emphasize the discipleship training after the discipleship crisis (8:22) in their Gospel outlines. Thus, Karl Schmidt calls 8:27–10:45 "Jesus and His Disciples, The Approaching Passion." See Karl Schmidt, *The Framework of the Story of Jesus: Literary-Critical Investigations of the Earliest Jesus Tradition*, trans. and ed. Byron M. McCane (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2021), 220, Kindle. Boring specifically calls 10:1–31 "Discipleship, Family, Society." See his *Mark*, 284.

[198] Ernest Best, regarding Peter's ability to "see," suggests that "16:7 implies final acceptance and not rejection. It is after the resurrection that Peter receives his full sight." Ernest Best, "Peter in the Gospel According to Mark," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 40, no. 4 (October 1978), 550. In this thesis it will be argued that 14:72 can be seen as evidence of Peter's sight restoration.

(1:16–14:72, except 6:14–29). However, in the episodes mainly dedicated to the disciples, we can differentiate within the group. Namely, not all the disciples are present in all the scenes. Below is the list of passages where only some of the disciples are present:

Table 1. The Inner-Circle-Related Material in Mark

Passage	Characters (Disciples)
1:16–18	Peter, Andrew
1:19–20	Peter, Andrew, James, John
1:29–31	Peter, Andrew, James, John
1:35–39	Peter and those who were with him
5:37–43	Peter, James, John
8:32b–33	Peter
9:2–13	Peter, James, John
10:35–40	James, John
11:1–6	Two disciples
13:3–37	Peter, Andrew, James, John
14:13–16	Two disciples (Peter and John? – Luke 22:8)
14:32–42	Peter, James, John

14:54 (55–65?)[199]	Peter
14:66–72	Peter

Only four names are mentioned in the episodes listed in Table 1. Those are Peter, James, John, and Andrew.[200] However, Andrew is primarily present in Mark 1, in the initial stage of the Gospel. Besides that, he is mentioned only once (13:3). Others (Peter, James, and John) form the so-called inner circle of Jesus. It may sound surprising, but this inner-circle material constitutes about 40% of disciples-only sections in the Gospel. There is a significant part of the material where most of the disciples could not be present and were not involved.

Thus, there is a clear differentiation within the disciples' group regarding presence, awareness, and involvement in the Gospel story. However, if we look at Table 1

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[199] Commentators may reasonably exclude 14:55–65 from what could have possibly been witnessed not only by other disciples, but by Peter as well. Indeed, while he followed Jesus "right into the courtyard of the high priest," "the Sanhedrin was assembled as a body in one of the upstairs rooms". See Lane, *The Gospel of Mark*, 530. It is even assumed that Jesus' trial and Peter's denials are described as simultaneous events. Tom Shepherd, however, convincingly argues against this possibility (see his "The Definition and Function of Markan Intercalation as Illustrated in a Narrative Analysis of Six Passages" [PhD diss., Andrews University: Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, 1991], 273–74). In any case, they still took some time, at least two hours, as indicated by the cock crowings (see Lane, *The Gospel of Mark*, 543). During those events, Peter was present just nearby the trial location. And the trial itself was hardly a strictly private event. The servants, who stayed with Peter in the courtyard, should have been discussing what was happening upstairs. So Peter should have been well aware of the process itself. But did Mark intend to indicate Peter's presence or not? I believe the answer should be positive. This presence is intentionally remote, but is still indicated not only by the sandwich technique (14:54, 66–72), but by the very fact of Peter's arrival on the scene. In the next chapter, I will show that it is the disciples' arrival on the scene that really matters for Mark. Thus, Peter still entered the scene, his presence, even though distant, is still indicated, and he is still mentioned at its end. Let us also note that Luke in his account asserts that the distance between Jesus and Peter did not exclude the possibility of a witness (Luke 22:61).

[200] There are two passages (11:1–6; 14:13–16) without given specific names. Only two anonymous disciples are mentioned there. However, provided the other nine disciples are not named in these two passages, nor in the passages with a limited number of disciples, there is no reason to assume that Mark gives us positive evidence of the presence of any other disciple except for the inner circle. Given the constant presence of Peter and two Zebedee brothers, the mentioned passages cannot prove their absence. Luke suggests that it was Peter and John in 14:13–16. The reason why they are unnamed in Mark may be due to "the atmosphere of danger and protective secrecy that Mark's passion narrative conjures." Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses*, 2nd ed., 187. Of course, Luke's suggestion might not be seen as a decisive evidence, yet suggesting that in both episodes, Peter and one of the brothers were present, or that Mark intended to imply their presence, is fairly reasonable.

again, we will also see a differentiation within the inner-circle group, namely, a dominant presence of Peter.[201] There is only one episode where James and John were active participants while Peter was absent. However, this episode cannot be viewed as strictly private. Other disciples, including Peter, were aware of this request and could still be indirectly involved (10:41). This cannot be said about the significant passage (14:66–72), which is focused on Peter specifically. No other disciples were involved in this crucial scene. Mark 8:32b–33 is also private.[202]

This difference in the presence within the story between Peter and the Zebedee brothers seems less significant than that between a larger group of disciples and the inner circle, but it is still essential. We may note that the disciples' material starts with Peter as the first mentioned disciple called to follow Jesus (1:16). Surprisingly, he is also the last to leave the story (14:66–72). Thus, the disciples' material starts with the calling of Peter and ends with Peter's denial. It forms the *inclusio* brackets for the entire section, which was identified as the disciples' material. Going beyond it, we will see Peter appearing at the end of Mark's Gospel (16:7), where he is mentioned explicitly among other disciples. Moreover, he is suddenly put in the last place: εἴπατε τοῖς μαθηταῖς αὐτοῦ καὶ τῷ Πέτρῳ ("tell his disciples and Peter"), while everywhere else, he is mentioned before others. It also could be considered as *inclusio* for the entire Gospel. Bauckham claims that Mark

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[201] I am conducting here an exercise similar to one suggested by Markus Bockmuehl: "To appreciate the Synoptic profile of Peter, it is an interesting exercise to consider where the Synoptic evangelists' 'narrative camera' goes and what it sees. Doing that for Peter shows that he is present on all the occasions when only a small inner circle of disciples is gathered, including episodes like the raising of Jairus's daughter (Mark 5:37//Luke 8:51), the transfiguration (Mark 9:2–10//Matt. 17:1–8//Luke 9:28–36), the eschatological discourse in Mark (Mark 13:3), and the agony in the garden (Mark 14:33–36//Matt. 26:37–39; cf. Luke 22:41–44)." Bockmuehl, *Simon Peter*, 25.

[202] Vincent Taylor asserts that 8:32–33 came from Peter's testimony: "Peter's attitude is presumptuous, if not patronizing (cf. 1:37), and needless to say, is life. Only original testimony can account for the story." Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark,* 379.

indicates Peter as his prime eyewitness source in this way.[203] The special attention he receives in the climactic passage 8:27–33 is also very important.[204]

The disciples' material ends with Peter's exit, and we still have two more chapters of the Gospel left (15, 16). However, we meet female disciples of Jesus, who, along with Mark's particular attention, receive their names and clear eyewitness roles in that part of the Gospel (15:40; 16:7). Ole Davidsen explains that "the disciples are not observers of Jesus' death, but are represented by some women who looked on from a distance (15,40)... It is these women who are the first to hear the message of his resurrection (16,6) whose actual recipients are the disciples and Peter: 'But go, tell ... ' (16, 7)."[205] Women-observers' appearance at this point confirms the disciples' position in the narrative. It has been long recognized that the women in Mark 15–16 play a crucial role in testifying the events.[206] It is reasonable to assume that they were introduced as observers/witnesses only in this part of the Gospel because they were not needed in such a role before. It is because the disciples played the role, just as Davidsen suggests.

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[203] Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses*, 2nd ed., 124–27.

[204] "The instances where Mark mentions Peter come at consciously identified scenes of importance: once at the beginning, when he is called; then in the middle, when he confesses Jesus to be Messiah, when the coming sufferings are announced, and when the transfiguration takes place, which provides the climax; and finally at the end in Gethsemane, and when he denies that he knows Jesus. Peter thus is central in the three most important theological highpoints in the work." Martin Hengel, *Saint Peter: The Underestimated Apostle* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2010), 40.

[205] Davidsen, "The Narrative Jesus," 189.

[206] For the further discussion of the women as witnesses see also Byrskog, *Story as History*, 73–81; Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses*, 2nd ed., 520–24. While the presence of women as eyewitnesses is evident in the most important Gospel events (the crucifixion, burial and empty tomb scenes), it is not so for other events in Mark 15. Probably due to this reason combined with the importance of those events and with the absence of the Twelve, Mark also introduces other possible eyewitnesses in this chapter. Simon of Cyrene, the father of Alexander and Rufus, is often regarded as an eyewitness, as it was mentioned in chapter 1 of this thesis. Joseph of Arimathea can also be seen as one. See Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses*, 2nd ed., 45–47; Raymond E. Brown, *The Death of the Messiah: From Gethsemane to the Grave. A Commentary on the Passion Narratives in the Four Gospels* (New York, NY: Doubleday, 1994), 1223–24.

How qualified are Mark's characters in terms of knowledge? Is it possible to measure them against the informational axis, as suggested by Sternberg and Yamasaki? If we apply such a measure, we can see some apparent gradation among Mark's characters based on their presence in the story and general awareness of the events (Figure 2). The disciples are significantly more informed than the crowd and random characters. Along with the female disciples, they could have witnessed almost the entire story, except 1:1–15 and 6:14–29. Furthermore, among the other disciples there is still informational distribution. The inner circle is more informed than the other disciples. As observers, they are even more privileged with special access to Jesus and Gospel events.[207] Within this inner circle group, it is Peter who possesses the most story knowledge.

Suppose we do not consider the narrator's ability to see inside the characters, which will be discussed below. In that case, the narrator's knowledge largely coincides with what the disciples, along with female disciples, could have known as a group. Moreover, Peter, as an individual, could have witnessed most of the events, and some of them could have been reported to him (16:7).[208] Therefore, at least concerning this external information, the disciples' group (or Peter) and female disciples could be considered as Mark's narrator source-of-knowledge characters (Figure 3, Figure 4). When one of them (the disciples) leaves the stage, the second (the women) takes it. Moreover, if we acknowledge that women fulfilled the order in 16:7, then Peter could have possibly

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[207] "Being in the company of Andrew, John and James furthermore signals his membership of an inner group of the followers who are privileged to accompany Jesus on very private occasions (cf. 5:37; 14:33) and to observe and hear things from which other characters are excluded (cf. 9:2; 13:3ff.)." W. S. Vorster, "Characterization of Peter in the Gospel of Mark," *Neotestamentica* 21, no. 1 (1987): 66.

[208] The events related to the baptism of John were well known to Peter and the disciples and they might even have been present there in one or another way (Acts 1:22). See also Peter's sermon in Acts 10:34–43 which, according to Bayer, "mirrors, *in nuce*, the narrative sequence and framework of the Gospel of Mark." Bayer, *Apostolic Bedrock*, 86.

been the medium even for the crucifixion, burial, and empty tomb scenes. In this case, though, his witness would not be first-hand.

Therefore, we can hardly affirm the narrator's omnipresence in Mark's narrative, despite the preponderance of this view in Markan scholarship. Petersen and others, affirming the narrator's omnipresence, imply that no character-observer could have been present in all the scenes and reported them to the narrator. However, for some reason, they never explicitly addressed the issue of disciples' constant presence in the Gospel narrative and its incompatibility with their claim. Instead, they usually list scenes where the disciples are supposed to be absent. The latter can seem convincing if we do not consider the presence of the disciples almost everywhere in the Gospel and do not examine this list more closely. Nevertheless, their contention, as we have shown, is not convincing. It is even possible to show that there is positive evidence for the narrator's knowledge limitation. Namely, the narrator shows unawareness of the events and scenes that his source-of-knowledge characters could not corroborate. This becomes especially relevant concerning Jesus himself, as it will be shown further.

Figure 2. The Levels of Informational Awareness of Mark's Characters

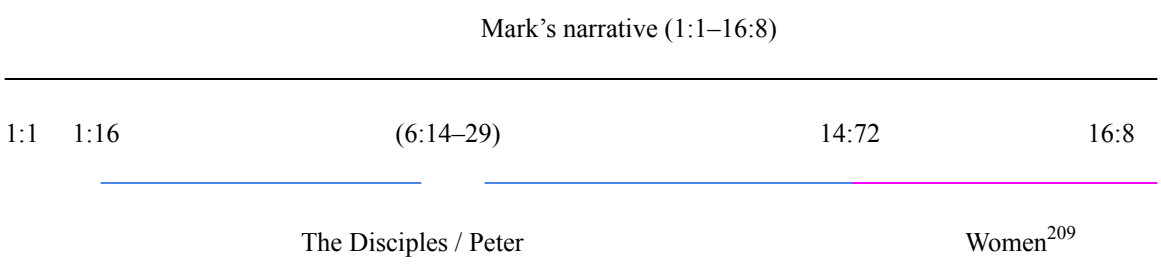

Figure 3. The Disciples and Women as Possible Sources of Knowledge

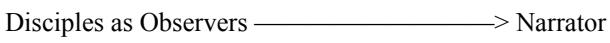

Figure 4. General (External) Knowledge Flow

The Narrator's Access to Jesus

Petersen points out that there are four instances in which Jesus is supposed to be alone: "Indeed, the narrator is 'with' Jesus even when no other actors are present or capable of knowing what Jesus experienced (1:10–11; 6:46–48; 7:33–34; 14:35–36)."[210] Even reading Petersen himself, we can conclude that there is not much information about Jesus alone. This list shows that Petersen implicitly tries to disqualify the idea of the disciples as possible observers. It is clear that in two of the passages (1:10–11; 7:33–34), Jesus is not alone, yet Petersen includes them. He does it because he attempts to show

[209] While the male disciples are absent in 15:1–16:8, and therefore it is appropriate to call the witness group "women" in that part of the narrative, it is not so for 1:16–14:72. The women could and indeed were present in many sections of that part as well. So they do not always have to be excluded from "the disciples" group.

[210] Petersen, "'Point of View' in Mark's Narrative," 112.

that Jesus is without disciples, so he describes Jesus as being on his own. However, he is hardly successful in doing so. First, provided the disciples are present everywhere else, this list is not impressive. Second, in two of four episodes, the presence of the disciples (7:33–34; 14:35–36) can be reasonably suggested.[211]

There are also other scenes that narrative critics use to demonstrate the absence of the disciples and prove the omnipresence of the narrator. However, in most cases, these scenes are just summary statements about the developing plot against Jesus (3:6; 14:1–2) that disciples could have learned afterward, as mentioned in Acts 1:15–19. Alternatively, they are related to the outcome of Jesus' miracles (1:45; 5:20). Besides those, there is only one major episode where Jesus and his disciples are absent (6:14–29). However, this is clearly an exception, not the rule.

The 6:14–29 scene, or better its placement in Mark, serves perfectly against the assumption of omnipresence and testifies to the narrator's restriction in terms of knowledge. Why were Herod's banquet and the death of the Baptist placed in the middle of the narrative about Jesus? Some argue that this placement[212] was to give space for the

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[211] "Privately" in 7:33 should not mean "privately from the disciples," provided the disciples were allowed into the most private scenes, like in 5:40. Besides this, 7:31–37 is paralleled to 8:22–26, and both of those passages may serve to stress the blindness and deafness of the disciples (see Tannehill, "The Disciples in Mark," 399). As for the clear didactic purpose of 8:22–26, it is reasonable to assume that the disciples, or at least the inner circle, were present in both 8:22–26 and 7:31–37. See Hans F. Bayer, *A Theology of Mark: The Dynamic Between Christology and Authentic Discipleship* (New Jersey, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2012), 69; Bayer, *Apostolic Bedrock*, 157–59; Best, "Peter in the Gospel According to Mark," 549. We should also note the plural in Jesus' command in 7:36.

As for 14:35–36, the fact that Jesus found the disciples sleeping three times does not mean that they were sleeping all the time, and were not able to hear him praying nearby. He woke them up, after all! Provided the level of Jesus' emotions, demonstrated in front of the disciples (14:33–34), we can assume that the prayer was an audible one. It is indicated that he prayed nearby (14:35) and prayed for some time. Therefore, it is absolutely reasonable to suggest that the disciples still heard it.

[212] In narratological terms the break of the story between 6:13 and 6:30 can be called ellipsis. The placement of the banquet itself (6:17–29) is "internal homodiegetic completing analepsis." Shepherd, "The Definition and Function of Markan Intercalation," 196.

disciples to carry out their mission.[213] Why not continue with Jesus' activity, which should have happened meanwhile? Because the disciples were out![214] Therefore, we are not allowed to see Jesus while the disciples were not around. How can we call such a narrator omnipresent if he cannot see Jesus while the disciples are away?

We have very little, if any, information about Jesus without disciples. Even when he is described as being κατὰ μόνας ("alone"), like in 4:10, he is really with his disciples.[215] However, in the section that was called "the disciples material," there are a few brief episodes about solitary Jesus. For instance, we know that Jesus went to pray in the morning (1:35), but nothing else about it. Similarly, we only know that Jesus stayed on the shore to pray and saw the disciples in the storm (6:46, 48a). That is not that much.[216] Therefore, we may conclude that the narrator in his access to Jesus depends on the disciples, particularly on Peter. Martin Hengel asserts: "Mark cannot describe any

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[213] Morna Hooker's opinion is quite common: "Between the account of the sending out of the Twelve and that of their return, Mark inserts an account of Herod's reaction to the rumors about Jesus, together with the story of his beheading of John the Baptist. There seems no logical connection between the two themes, but the somewhat artificial insertion provides an interlude for the disciples to complete their mission." Morna Hooker, *The Gospel According to Saint Mark*, 1991 (Reprint, Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009), 158.

[214] It is noted by Davidsen: "In the light of 1,35ff (6,46, 14,32ff), where it is explicitly said that Jesus is alone, it must in fact be assumed that the disciples are at Jesus' side unless otherwise stated. It is in this context not unimportant to note that nothing is said about Jesus' activities in this period during which the disciples were sent out. The story of the Baptist's execution, 6,14–29, is told between the dispatch in 6,7–13 and the return home in 6,30." Davidsen, "The Narrative Jesus," 87–88.

[215] This is noted by Malbon: "It becomes immediately clear that when Jesus was 'alone' means when the large crows had left, not when he was solitary." Malbon, "How Does the Story Mean?," 36.

[216] Besides that, we have a summary of Jesus in the desert 1:12–13, where he is all alone; there is a scene of his baptism (1:9–11), where the presence of the disciples does not have to be assumed, though it is not private either; and the Jesus with Pilate scene (15:2–5), which is definitely private from the disciples and may be private from women as well. But all of them are outside of the section I call "the disciples material." Even if we take those passages into account and consider the Gospel as a whole, this is a fairly small amount of material. For the discussion of 14:55–65 see footnote 199 above.

activity of Jesus without disciples — more specifically, without singling out the by far most important disciple."[217]

There is other evidence of the narrator's limitation in terms of space, which is not related to Jesus but suggests his dependence on the inner-circle disciples specifically. This conclusion can be supported by briefly examining the Transfiguration account (9:2–13) and the subsequent difficult exorcism (9:14–29). We will investigate those passages later, but for now, it is enough to note that while Jesus and the inner circle were on the mountain, something intriguing happened with the other disciples. We, however, can see them with a demon-possessed boy, his father, and crowds only after Jesus and the inner circle return from the mountain. The narrative follows the inner circle and only involves the other disciples when they are joined by this small group, even though the event with them is significant to the narrator. The narrator uses the father's discourse to describe the unsuccessful healing to both Jesus and the readers instead of providing a direct account of the event.

Thus, the narrator depends on the disciples, especially the inner circle, in his access to Jesus. However, he also demonstrates the dependence on the inner circle (which is now with Jesus) in his access to other disciples (9:2–29). If we are looking for a source-of-knowledge character who can inform the narrator of these scenes, he has to belong to this inner-circle group. Taking 14:66–72 into account, we have only one possibility. It is solely Peter who can serve as the narrator' source-of-knowledge character.

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[217] Hengel, *Saint Peter,* 41.

Jesus as the Object of Knowledge

In the previous section, it was shown that the disciples are competent in general awareness of the Gospel story. They were constant companions of Jesus and could listen to his teaching and observe his actions as the Gospel narrative developed. In this section, we will discuss their awareness of Jesus' personality and inner world.

The Gospel of Mark provides the most detailed account of Jesus' emotions of all the Gospels.[218] Stephen Voorwinde suggests that the abundance of such information may be due to the Gospel's possible connection with the apostle Peter.[219] However, narrative critics often use the depiction of Jesus' inner experiences, feelings, thoughts, and motives as evidence of the narrator's omniscience. The aim of this section is to determine whether the emotional coloring and other inner experiences of Jesus in the Gospel imply the narrator's omniscience or whether it can be explained through the "realistic vision" framework, for example, due to his closeness to the disciples. First, it will be argued that the disciples, who were close companions of Jesus, could know and describe his inner experiences due to their privileged position. Second, there are enough external manifestations of Jesus' emotions and motives that they would be able to recognize them. Third, we will address some cases where Jesus' inner experiences are directly named without mentioning their external manifestations.

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[218] Voorwinde, in his study of Jesus' emotions in all four Gospels, asserts: "No Gospel writer allows us to gaze more deeply into Jesus' soul than Mark." Voorwinde, *Jesus' Emotions*, 59.

[219] See Voorwinde, *Jesus' Emotions*, 59.

Knowing Jesus via External Observation

As Jesus' constant companions, disciples could witness the outward manifestation of his various inner experiences, especially emotions, in different situations. In the Gospel, Jesus' emotions are demonstrated in his words, deeds and gestures. It is quite natural for an emotion to be manifested externally.[220]

They were able to see how Jesus' emotions were manifested toward different people and situations. For example, we see Jesus' clear expression of indignation in 11:14 when he curses the fig tree and in 11:15–17 when Jesus cleanses the temple. Jesus' words and deeds undoubtedly testify to his anger in a particular situation. We see anger and indignation in 1:43[221] when Jesus warns a former leper not to tell anyone about the healing. Commentators note that ἐμβριμησάμενος means not just a "severe" warning but an evident expression of anger.[222]

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[220] For example, anger by its very nature is manifested in a person's body language. Namely, to call a person "angry" in a particular situation usually means that he or she expressed a behavior that can be characterized as anger. Note how F. Scott Spencer, discussing Aristotle's views on justified anger, really speaks about the expression of anger: "While Aristotle agrees that some anger erupts for no good reason, he asserts there are proper times and targets of anger: when, how, and to whom it ought to be *expressed* (2.2.1–2[1378a–b])" (italic original). F. Scott Spencer, *Passions of the Christ: The Emotional Life of Jesus in the Gospels* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2021), 43–44. Voorwinde suggests that anger is an outward emotion as well. See Voorwinde, *Jesus' Emotions,* 79.

Spencer also mentions Darwin's identification of surprise emotion (which is also mentioned in Mark's Gospel – 6:6) through its primarily external manifestation: "Across cultures, Darwin discovered remarkably similar physiognomic expressions of surprise, such as wide eyes, gaped mouth, upraised palm-outfacing hands, and splayed fingers–all signs, Darwin theorized, of 'a desire to display surprise in a conspicuous manner,' reflecting open alertness to the new, unexpected situation." Spencer, *Passions of the Christ*, 156.

[221] It is often explained by the future behavior of the former leper. Namely, he would disobey Jesus' order and tell everyone about what had happened. If that is the case, then this passage may be seen as an example when Jesus' knowledge is in some sense superior to the narrator's. Jesus foresees and reveals things which were not yet discussed by the narrator and they did not even happen in the narrative world so far. See Voorwinde, *Jesus' Emotions,* 72–73; Lane, *The Gospel of Mark*, 87. Spencer argues against this interpretation and proposes seeing Jesus' strong negative emotions in the entire episode as the reaction against the leper's doubt in Jesus' willingness to cure him and therefore restore life. See Spencer, *Passions of the Christ*, 49–50.

[222] "In Greek the language sounds quite harsh. The verb 'sent away' is the same word that is commonly used elsewhere for the casting out of demons. Although the verb may be used in a weakened sense here,

Jesus' emotions were manifested in his body language, such as sighs and looks. In two episodes (7:34 and 8:12), Jesus' sighs show his emotions. In 7:34 (καὶ ἀναβλέψας εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν ἐστέναξεν), he may be trying to say something to the deaf-mute, although perhaps he sighs because of his poor condition. Thus, it is an expression of Jesus' compassion.[223] In 8:12, his sigh (Καὶ ἀναστενάξας τῷ πνεύματι αὐτοῦ) is caused by grief at the request of the scribes and Pharisees, which shows the unbelief of the whole generation. It is clearly an emotionally motivated sigh.

Another external means for articulating Jesus' emotions in Mark is Jesus' look at people. In 3:5, Jesus looks at the scribes περιβλεψάμενος αὐτοὺς μετ᾽ ὀργῆς, συνλυπούμενος ἐπὶ τῇ πωρώσει τῆς καρδίας αὐτῶν ("with wrath, grieving for the hardness of their hearts"). Here again, the anger of Jesus is described outwardly, referring to the look. In 10:21, we see the narrator's statement that Jesus ἠγάπησεν αὐτόν ("loved him"). Perhaps he showed his love visibly, as the NASB translation suggests.[224] Even if not, the disciples still had the opportunity to see Jesus' affection in one way or the other or assume it. Thus, we may note how Mark mentions Jesus' looking at him before stating that he "loved him." In a few verses below, we see the same look given to the disciples, whom Jesus called τέκνα ("children") (10:23–24, 27). This look of Jesus might have had some significant meaning, which would have been well known to Jesus' disciples. Let us also note the use of περιβλεψάμενος ("looked around," 10:23) and Ἐμβλέψας ("looked,"

Jesus is hardly treating the man gently. He sends him packing" (Voorwinde, *Jesus' Emotions,* 72). See also Lane, *The Gospel of Mark*, 87.

[223] See Spencer, *Passions of the Christ*, 192.

[224] "Looking at him, Jesus showed love to him" (10:21a, NASB).

10:27) by Mark, which still keeps the narrator external toward Jesus, even while explaining his inner mood.[225]

In some cases, the disciples knew Jesus' emotions because he told them how he felt. An important example is his openly sharing his deepest feelings with his inner-circle disciples in Gethsemane (14:34). Another example is his compassion for the crowd (σπλαγχνίζομαι ἐπὶ τὸν ὄχλον), which he shared with the disciples and also explained, that it is ὅτι ἤδη ἡμέραι τρεῖς προσμένουσίν μοι καὶ οὐκ ἔχουσιν τί φάγωσιν ("because they have been with me now three days and have nothing to eat," 8:2).

Knowing Jesus in Personal Relationship

As Jesus' chosen followers, the disciples had the privilege of personal and deep knowledge of Jesus' personality. This knowledge could have been obtained through Jesus' close emotional involvement with his disciples, especially those of the inner circle. In Mark, we see Jesus, who shows tenderness, love, rigor, and even anger towards his disciples. It is possible to suggest that this mixture of opposite feelings reveals the emotional closeness between Jesus and his disciples.

A significant part of Jesus' interaction with the disciples contains rebukes, probably uttered with a varying degree of emotional intensity. We also see that the emotions, namely irritation of Jesus with his disciples, increase up to their possible peak in Mark 8. It grows with the manifestation of the disciples' failures in the discipleship program.

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[225] The opposition between "look" (βλέπω) and "see" (ὁράω) is a classical example of the demonstration of external and internal positions of the narrator. See Bar-Efrat, *Narrative Art in the Bible*, 21.

We see the first reproach as early as in 4:13 when Jesus expresses his surprise that the disciples did not understand the sower and seed parable. It is reproach undoubtedly. However, it seems to be expressed without significant emotional overtones. In addition, it is balanced by emphasizing the privileged position of the disciples (4:11–12). Three episodes at the sea follow. In 4:40, a rather extreme setting, Jesus rebukes the disciples for fearfulness and unbelief. In 6:50, on the contrary, we see an encouraging appeal to the disciples, which, however, is balanced by the narrator's negative comment about their hardened hearts (6:52). In 8:17–21, Jesus describes the disciples in highly negative terms, in the same way that he previously described "outsiders."[226]

In 9:19, Jesus seems to include the disciples in his soulful exclamation: Ὁ δὲ ἀποκριθεὶς αὐτοῖς λέγει· ὦ γενεὰ ἄπιστος, ἕως πότε πρὸς ὑμᾶς ἔσομαι, ἕως πότε ἀνέξομαι ὑμῶν ("O faithless generation, how long am I to be with you? How long am I to bear with you?"). The rebuke indicates a significant emotional expression.[227] In 10:14, we read that Jesus was ἠγανάκτησεν ("indignant") at the disciples who prevented bringing children to Jesus.[228] This indignation, in addition to the reproach itself, had a clear outward expression. We see another rebuke in 14:6. In Mark 14:37–38, 40–41 Jesus rebukes Peter, who, along with John and James, was sleeping at a critical moment. Given the tragedy and emotionality of the scene, it can be assumed that this reproach was also very emotional.

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[226] Bayer points "especially to four text clusters in Mark 7 and 8, in which Jesus pursues the (disciples' – O.B.) crisis of self-perception." Those clusters are 7:14–23; 7:31–37 and 8:22–26; 8:17–21; 8:15 (the order is the author's). See Bayer, *Apostolic Bedrock*, 157–59.

[227] "Jesus' emotional response expresses his exasperation and disappointment with the disciples." Culpepper, *Mark,* 304.

[228] For the reasons for this "indignation" see Spencer, *Passions of the Christ*, 64. Voorwinde notices the complexity of Jesus' emotionality in his "indignation" toward the disciples and loving the young ruler (10:21). See Voorwinde, *Jesus' Emotions,* 60.

This increase in irritation, along with its clear external manifestation, may be seen as a sign of certain emotional distance between Jesus and the disciples. However, it also may be a sign of increasing emotional closeness. Let us note that we hear the harshest words from Jesus, depicted in the Gospel, precisely toward Peter as the closest of his disciples.[229] His privileged access to Jesus is hard to deny.[230] It will be shown below that Jesus' irritation, even if it indicated some distance between him and the disciples, did not mean Jesus' desire to distance himself from them; it is quite the opposite.

Of course, Mark's Jesus loves his disciples. His love in general is expressed in the fact that he called them to be with him and dedicated himself to them. However, we do not see much overt display of warm emotions towards the disciples in Mark. It certainly does not mean that there were none. We find such a manifestation in 10:24, where Jesus calls his disciples by the warm and affectionate epithet τέκνα ("children").[231] Let us note how this warm name appears not long after Jesus' "indignation" with the disciples in 10:14. So, Jesus' irritation and warm love for the disciples go side by side.

We find the peak of demonstration of his love at the Last Supper (14:17–25). It is a highly intimate and emotional meeting, indicating a profound intimacy between the disciples and their Master. An even deeper emotional openness of Jesus toward his inner-circle disciples is displayed in the scene in Gethsemane where he took Peter, John, and James with him. This scene is highly private to Jesus. He had to struggle with himself and spend time with his Father. However, he took his closest disciples with him καὶ

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[229] Vorster makes this point: "There is a very close relationship between Jesus and Peter, although Peter is also rejected with very harsh words." Vorster, "Characterization of Peter in the Gospel of Mark," 65.

[230] See Bockmuehl, *Simon Peter*, 132–36.

[231] "His address to the disciples as τέκνα is unique in Mark… and is best understood as a colloquial and affectionate epithet for his close companions, 'lads.'" France, *The Gospel of Mark*, 404.

ἤρξατο ἐκθαμβεῖσθαι καὶ ἀδημονεῖν ("and began to be greatly distressed and troubled," 14:33) in their presence. He even told the disciples: περίλυπός ἐστιν ἡ ψυχή μου ἕως θανάτου ("My soul is very sorrowful, even to death," 14:34). He was willing to disclose even the deepest emotions to the disciples. Thus, the three disciples shared perhaps the most intimate moment of Jesus' life.

Of course, right after the Last Supper, the disciples did not show their best side. In Gethsemane (14:33–34), they were hardly model companions. We can see Jesus' frustration with them, which still comports with his determination to be as closely connected to them as possible. So, Jesus' frustration with his disciples here and earlier is undoubtedly motivated by his closeness to them and their unique status as his close companions. Jesus deliberately decided to spend time with them and reveal himself to them to help them know him better. It was the goal of their discipleship program. Even if they did not understand Jesus in the moment or in general because of their hardened hearts (6:52), they could realize it retrospectively.

So, we see that Jesus was very close and emotionally open to his disciples. They experienced his tender love, obvious disappointment, and even anger. They were privileged to witness profoundly intimate and emotionally charged Jesus' moments. As his constant companions, they saw how he expressed his emotions externally and shared them with his disciples. Jesus' disciples witnessed his love, compassion, anger, severity, disappointment, indignation, sorrow, fear, and agony. He chose them to follow him, giving them the most intimate knowledge of his personality. It is this knowledge, along with the disciples' knowledge of the external behavior and attitudes of Jesus, that can

allow the disciples to understand what is happening in their Master's heart in a particular situation. It is especially true about the inner-circle disciples.

The Alleged Omniscience in Knowing Jesus

Now we can discuss the direct inside views, which the narrator provides with regard to Jesus, namely those usually seen as a result of his omniscience privilege. Keeping in mind the discussion above, we aim to show that we can explain those inside views while keeping the narrator within the realistic limits. There are three types of the inside views: the ability to describe emotions, motivations, and thoughts. Here Jesus' emotions and motivations will be discussed. The narrator's ability to read Jesus' mind will be addressed in the next section.

There are cases when Jesus' emotions are described solely from an inward perspective, without any indication of external manifestations. It is important to note that this does not necessarily mean there were no external manifestations but rather that the narrator could omit them. Anyway, his disciples' deep knowledge of Jesus would be a sufficient reason to suggest how he felt in a particular situation. Provided Mark's "inside views are brief and underdeveloped," contrary to Rhoads and others, most of those related to Jesus do not require omniscience on the narrator's side if we assume his dependence on the disciples. In this section, we do not intend to provide exhaustive explanations of all cases where the narrator mentioned Jesus' emotions or motivations. Rather, the aim is to show that such an explanation is possible and can be reasonably suggested if we accept the level of closeness between Jesus and his disciples and their constant following him. Let us consider two cases where the narrator tells us how Jesus feels.

At the end of the sixth chapter, we read that Jesus εἶδεν πολὺν ὄχλον καὶ ἐσπλαγχνίσθη ἐπ᾽ αὐτοὺς ὅτι ἦσαν ὡς πρόβατα μὴ ἔχοντα ποιμένα ("saw a great crowd, and he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd," 6:34). While the second clause (the ὡς πρόβατα ["like sheep"] metaphor) will be discussed below, we need to consider the explicit comment of the narrator about Jesus having "compassion on them" (ἐσπλαγχνίσθη ἐπ᾽ αὐτούς). By mentioning Jesus' feelings, the narrator explains the motivation that compelled Jesus to teach the people many things and then perform a miracle and feed the crowd. It is important to note that the context of 8:2, where Jesus directly named his feeling (σπλαγχνίζομαι), is very similar. Therefore, there is no reason to suspect that the narrator had or would need the privilege of omniscience in order to claim that Jesus was moved by compassion (ἐσπλαγχνίσθη). The same motivation, namely compassion, was openly expressed by Jesus in similar circumstances later. The disciples had no problem retrospectively understanding that Jesus was moved with compassion in 6:34, understanding his motivation in 8:2. There is a possibility that the narrator just retells Jesus' own words as he could have told the disciples how he felt.

Let us return to Jesus' look at 3:5. Here, Jesus looks at the scribes μετ᾽ ὀργῆς, συνλυπούμενος ἐπὶ τῇ πωρώσει τῆς καρδίας αὐτῶν ("with wrath, grieving for the hardness of their hearts"). In addition to anger, the narrator refers to his inner grief.[232] Let us note that besides this passage, the narrator mentions the hardening of hearts only concerning the disciples (6:52; 8:17).[233] If later the disciples became aware of their

[232] Voorwinde points out that anger is an outward emotion that can be seen as a manifestation of inward grief. See his *Jesus' Emotions in the Gospels*, 79.

[233] This is often noticed by the commentators. See France, *The Gospel of Mark*, 150–151; Stein, *Mark,* 156; Hooker, *The Gospel According to Saint Mark*, 170.

hardness of hearts and understood Jesus' feelings for them, they could retrospectively project similar grief onto the Pharisees. Even if not, they could have sufficient grounds for this assumption.

Thus, in the Gospel, we saw that many of Jesus' emotions were manifested outwardly. There are also a few cases when his emotions are described solely internally. The Gospel portrays Jesus' relationship with his disciples in a way that allows them to deeply know his emotional state and understand his emotions in different situations. So, there is hardly any reason to say that the narrator has used his privilege of omniscience when describing the emotions of Jesus. The relationship between Jesus and his disciples can be a reasonable explanation for the narrator's inside views referring to Jesus' emotions. This explanation keeps the narrator's knowledge within realistic limits.

The narrator has one more ability to describe Jesus' motivations. In some cases, the motivation of Jesus could be explained retrospectively. Otherwise, we may assume that he directly voiced it. Consider, for example, the passage about the election of the Twelve: ἵνα ὦσιν μετ᾽ αὐτοῦ καὶ ἵνα ἀποστέλλῃ αὐτοὺς κηρύσσειν καὶ ἔχειν ἐξουσίαν ἐκβάλλειν τὰ δαιμόνια ("so that they might be with him and he might send them out to preach and to have authority to cast out demons," 3:14). Jesus' motivation is plainly indicated here. However, it is unlikely that anyone can attribute this indication to the narrator's omniscience. Of course, the story demonstrates that Jesus called the disciples precisely so they would constantly accompany him, be sent to preach and have authority (6:6b–13). In addition, Jesus could well indicate the reason for their call. Instead of citing the direct speech of Jesus, the narrator conveyed it in his own words. The reason Jesus οὐκ ἤφιεν λαλεῖν τὰ δαιμόνια ὅτι ᾔδεισαν αὐτόν ("would not permit the demons to speak,

because they knew him," 1:34) can be easily explained in light of 1:24; 3:11–12. Also, we see Jesus' motivation for action in 9:25 when he cast out the demon, ἰδὼν δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς ὅτι ἐπισυντρέχει ὄχλος ("and Jesus, seeing that the people were gathering"). Omniscience is not required to understand this motivation as well. A simple insight and assessment of the situation could be enough to understand Jesus' haste.[234]

Of course, a few episodes are more suitable to be attributed to the privilege of omniscience. However, they can be explained without it as well. One is Jesus' view of the people as sheep without a shepherd, where the understanding of Jesus' motivation is more profound than in other cases. In the metaphor that characterizes people as sheep without a shepherd (6:34), the usage of ὅτι (because) may signal that the clause serves as the explicit comment of the narrator.[235] The narrator's goal could be describing people's poor condition rather than Jesus' motivation. Alternatively, this may also be part of the disciples' knowledge of how Jesus perceived people. Another episode is Jesus forgiving a paralytic' sins as he "saw their faith" (ἰδὼν ὁ Ἰησοῦς τὴν πίστιν αὐτῶν, 2:5). Two points could have helped the disciples realize Jesus' motive. First, τὴν πίστιν αὐτῶν ("their faith") was manifested externally. Second, the disciples retrospectively knew the emphasis Jesus made on faith (10:22–25).

Thus, we can see that the disciples, especially those of the inner circle, were privileged to have a profound knowledge of Jesus' personality and witness the outward manifestation of his inner attitudes. Their knowledge, supported by their attentiveness to

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[234] France explains: "Either the crowd of v. 14 is still growing as new spectators arrive, or perhaps Jesus' consultation with the father and his son has been aside from the crowd, and now people are closing in on them again, so that it is time to act." France, *The Gospel of Mark*, 368.

[235] For the ways Mark's narrator signals his explicit comments, see Fowler, *Let the Reader Understand,* 92–116.

the scenes described by Mark's narrator and the retrospective character of the Gospel narrative, would make them sufficiently competent to serve as the narrator's source-of-knowledge character with regard to Jesus' inner experiences. This explanation does not imply the narrator's use of the omniscient privilege.

The curious fact which can support this claim is that the vivid description of Jesus' personality presented to the reader in Gethsemane is the last place in the Gospel where his inner life is being revealed. There are no inside views into Jesus after Gethsemane at all. Once his companions lose their privileged position right next to him, the narrator loses his ability to see inside Jesus as well. Peter followed Jesus ἀπὸ μακρόθεν ("at a distance," 14:54) and the women were looking ἀπὸ μακρόθεν as well (15:40). Just like Peter and the women, the narrator describes Jesus from a distance, exclusively externally, in this most important, and probably emotionally intense, part of the Gospel.

Disciples as Jesus' Companions ——————————> Narrator

Figure 5. Knowledge of Jesus Flow

Jesus as the Source of Knowledge

An essential characteristic of an omniscient narrator is his ability to read minds. In the Gospel of Mark, not only the narrator but also his main character, Jesus, at least sometimes can read minds. We can explore the interdependence between the narrator and Jesus' ability to access the information. In a survey above, we quoted Fowler, who asserts that "the omniscient narrator shares this mind-reading power" with Jesus. He explains how sharing happens: the same information in a scene is provided by the narrator and by

Jesus or vice versa (e.g., 2:6–8; 12:13–15). Fowler states that in such a way, the narrator establishes both Jesus' and his own authority and calls the reader to trust Jesus.[236] This reasoning may be correct, but let's point out two important features that can reveal the direction of the interdependence between Jesus' and the narrator's ability.

The first observation to be made concerns the connection between the narrator's ability to access Jesus' and the other characters' consciousnesses. Mark's narrator indeed has some power to read the minds of his characters. Sometimes, he can also access Jesus' mind, as he directly tells his reader what Jesus thinks and knows. However, let us note that the narrator's ability to know Jesus' and other characters' thoughts is connected in a fascinating way. In most of the cases when Jesus' thoughts are revealed, they represent Jesus' "supernatural power of discernment" (2:6–8; 5:30; 12:15; cf. 12:34).[237] So usually, when the narrator looks inside Jesus' mind, Jesus sees in the minds of others. This interesting fact gives us a clue to the narrator's intentional and instrumental use of Jesus' capacities. It is possible that in some cases the narrator simply creates links (12:34). But it is also possible to see that in this way he signals that he "borrows" this power of discernment from Jesus. He needs to see inside Jesus precisely because this is how he can see inside others.

And second, when Jesus and the narrator share the same knowledge, it is usually revealed to observers through Jesus' direct speech in some way. Therefore, the attentive observer may obtain the knowledge and, perhaps, even understand how Jesus acquired it. This understanding allows explaining the narrator's knowledge within realistic limits,

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[236] Fowler explains: "Rhetorically, verse 8 reveals to the reader that Jesus knows something the reader already knows; if Jesus knows what the reader already knows, then what reader would not accept Jesus as a reliable, authoritative figure, worthy of the reader's trust?" Fowler, *Let the Reader Understand*, 74.

[237] This is the expression of R. T. France. See his *The Gospel of Mark*, 126.

which otherwise should be seen as omniscient. This suggestion is reasonable since we know about the constant presence of Jesus' disciples as observers and their awareness of Jesus' abilities to see inside people.

Indeed, the disciples had the opportunity to directly experience their Master's ability to know things not intended for him to know. We see an example of such a revelation in 9:33 when Jesus asks the disciples about their conversation on the way, which embarrasses them (9:34). Perhaps Jesus heard their conversation, somehow guessed it, or became aware of it supernaturally.[238] In any case, Jesus demonstrated his ability to know what he was not supposed to know. Jesus' mind-reading powers were not limited to a single instance, as he demonstrated this capability to his disciples on multiple occasions. When περιβλεψάμενος ("having looked around," 10:23), Jesus talked to his disciples about the problematic entrance into the Kingdom of God for rich people, he answered their implicit questions.[239] They had personally experienced Jesus' remarkable, if not supernatural, perspicacity. By looking back on past events and considering any external clues, they could recognize instances where Jesus had demonstrated his ability to read others' minds and hearts. It was evident when he answered not only his disciples' questions and accusations but also those of other characters.

Those two observations allow us to suggest that it is the narrator who depends on Jesus. Let us consider how this dependence can be seen in the "typical," according to Petersen, story about the paralytic (2:1–12). Fowler also discussed this story, making his

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[238] Jesus may have overheard it just as in 2:17 or 5:36, where we see that not all knowledge of others' talks should be necessarily obtained by Jesus in a supernatural way. Just as he was able to hear things, the disciples, who followed him step by step, were also able to. There are other options as well. See France, *The Gospel of Mark*, 373; Boring, *Mark*, 280.

[239] "Jesus's 'looking around' (περιβλεψάμενος, *periblepsamenos*) indicates that what he is about to say is a response to the unspoken thoughts of the disciples." Stein, *Mark,* 471.

point regarding the interplay between the narrator's and Jesus' awareness.[240] However, it is hard to agree with its description as "typical." France correctly notices that the mind-reading power of Jesus is rarely mentioned in Mark, compared to the other Gospels.[241] Actually, 2:6–8 is the most explicit demonstration of this power in the whole Gospel. Therefore, the story cannot be "typical." This emphasizing of Jesus' abilities in such an early stage of the Gospel should be intentional. The reader should be aware of Jesus' "supernatural power of discernment," and with the development of the Gospel story, this very power should be seen as a source of different discernments provided both by the narrator and Jesus.

Let us turn to the story itself. In v. 5, Jesus proclaimed the forgiveness of the paralytic's sins. Then, in vv. 6–7, the narrator tells us that the scribes were questioning Jesus' authority to forgive sins in their hearts. The narrator asserts this was their implicit question, not expressed verbally. In v. 8, we see Jesus' reaction to this unspoken but revealed by the narrator question. First, the narrator indicates how Jesus had accessed the scribes' question — through ἐπιγνοὺς τῷ πνεύματι αὐτοῦ ("perceiving in his spirit"). Therefore, the narrator asserts Jesus' omniscience. Second, we have Jesus' direct discourse, where his same omniscience is expressed to the observers. When Jesus asks his opponents: τί ταῦτα διαλογίζεσθε ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ὑμῶν; ("Why do you question these things in your hearts?"), he openly claims to have omniscient power. There are no other cases in the Gospel when Jesus' omniscience is expressed and highlighted so

[240] Fowler, *Let the Reader Understand*, 74.

[241] See France, *The Gospel of Mark*, 126.

clearly. This omniscience should be assumed in the course of the entire further narrative.[242]

The question mentally raised by the scribes is at least partially revealed in Jesus' subsequent discourse. It is also displayed by the context, namely the preceding forgiveness of the paralytic's sins. It would be apparent to an attentive observer who knows and trusts Jesus that the scribes had a question in their heart regarding the forgiveness of sins. It would also be evident that Jesus had direct access to this question. He was able to read it in his opponents' minds. Thus, there is little information in the narrator's "omniscient" comments in vv. 6–7 that the observer would have not already known through Jesus' direct discourse and the scene itself. The only part of the scribes' reasoning which was not expressed concerns the explanation for their irritation: τίς δύναται ἀφιέναι ἁμαρτίας εἰ μὴ εἷς ὁ θεός; ("Who can forgive sins but God alone?"). However, understanding that reasoning was not complicated for the observer (Jesus' disciples). If Jesus' pronouncement regarding the forgiveness of sins "was clearly ambiguous,"[243] the disciples themselves could have shared the scribes' perplexity and asked the same question in their hearts.

Based on our discussions, let us clarify the ability of the narrator and Jesus and their relationship. As long as we stay within the narrative limits, we can assert that Jesus' access to the scribes' minds was provided by his ability to "perceive in his spirit." Thus, this ability of Jesus is independent of the narrator. "Sharing" of mind-reading power

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[242] If we accept Markan priority, then the fact that Matthew and Luke refer to Jesus' omniscience more often than Mark can confirm this assumption. Namely, Matthew (12:25) and Luke (6:8; 9:47; 11:17) indeed regarded Jesus' omniscience as a source of the knowledge assumed by the Markan narrator. They name Jesus' mind-reading directly in order to fill would-be logical gaps inside the scenes, and in this way to make them more clear (compare Mark 3:23 and Matt. 12:25; Mark 3:3–4 and Luke 6:8).

[243] Lane, *The Gospel of Mark*, 95.

between the narrator and Jesus should not be understood in the way that the narrator provides Jesus with the information or the ability to access it. It is quite reasonable to suggest the opposite, namely, the narrator's dependence on Jesus in the realm of knowledge and ability. Indeed, while Jesus possesses this ability, we have no reason to assume the same for the narrator. Given the precise coincidence between Jesus' and the narrator's knowledge and that Jesus' knowledge was clearly expressed, it seems reasonable to suggest that the narrator depends on Jesus in his knowledge. Moreover, he depends on Jesus' openly revealing this knowledge in front of the observers.

Thus the narrator provides us with the means for accessing knowledge. Why would we consider him omniscient in this case? As we remember, omniscience is not about how knowledge is being conveyed but how it is accessed. In the paralytic passage, we see the means of accessing knowledge — it is Jesus' mind-reading power, or his omniscience. It does not really matter how the narrator presents this information to his reader. The fact that he decides to tell it directly first (2:6–7) and later to indicate the means of accessing it tells more about his communicative decisions than his ability to access information. He may operate in omni-communicative mode, but not necessarily be omniscient.[244]

We can suppose that the narrator depends on Jesus in his "privileged" knowledge of the narrative world. Therefore, we can even call Jesus the narrator's source of

[244] Besides the ability to read the characters' minds, there is another reason to consider the narrator's omniscience despite the means indicated in the narrative. It is when to access knowledge, the narrator uses means that do not fit into realistic limits. Namely, the means in the Gospel is Jesus and his omniscience, which may not fit our understanding of what could be real. However, regardless of our position on the possibility of supernatural phenomena, we must remember that they are possible in Mark's story. In Mark's story, Jesus' omniscience is indeed real. Therefore, Mark's narrator's reliance on this omniscience still keeps him ideally within realistic limits as the story itself defines what is real and what is not.

knowledge. However, this dependence is not direct.[245] We still can assume another observer-character to be the medium in providing this knowledge to the narrator. The disciples can do it quite well, provided there is enough open information, including Jesus' direct discourse, from which this knowledge can be retrieved.[246]

Let us briefly discuss a few other passages where we see the interplay between Jesus' and the narrator's knowledge and where the narrator's omniscience can be alleged. In 3:2, the narrator opens the hostile plan of Jesus' opponents. Further, we see that Jesus was aware of that plan and revealed it to the public so observers also can know it. However, in this case, perhaps even ordinary insight,[247] understanding the scribes' views and hostility towards Jesus, would be enough to discover his opponents' minds.[248] Later

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[245] Why we cannot view Jesus himself as the narrator's direct center-of-consciousness character is an important question. The narrator is non-diegetic, and Jesus dies at the end of the narrative. However, he also rises afterward, and his communication with the characters continues (16:7; cf. Acts 1:3). We cannot exclude the possibility of the direct interaction between risen Jesus and the narrator based on only Mark's Gospel. However, to some degree, I *assume* that this has not happened. I believe the sum of evidence in this thesis suggests that the medium of the disciples provides the narrator's access to knowing Jesus.

[246] For this thesis' declared purposes, it is important to discuss another question related to those narrative features that could possibly align this story with eyewitness reporting. The direct description of the scribes' and even Jesus' mind processes indicates a more explicit involvement of the narrator, making the story less mimetic. This storytelling approach takes it somewhat closer to "pure narrative" and moves away from *mimesis*, the important characteristic of eyewitness reporting. However, something more than this move is needed to disqualify the story from the category of possible eyewitness accounts for two reasons.

First, the episode still possesses sufficient characteristics of eyewitness reporting. Even though "eyewitness aesthetics" is less significant than in Mark's other scenes, the episode is still told mainly in a mimetic way. Indeed, we hear direct speeches, and most of the events are described "as they happened." The historical present is used in some cases (λέγει "say", διαλογίζονται "are questioning"). Several vivid details are provided (especially 2:4). Thus, the story is still told in Mark's usual style.

Second, this narrator's explicit activity is challenging to avoid due to the nature of the described events. If we stay within the story boundaries, we accept that Jesus' mind-reading power is real and central to the scene. Without understanding this power and revealing the information it accessed, it would be challenging to describe the scene meaningfully. Mark intends to tell us the story in a way we can understand without confusion. This need to briefly and clearly describe a scene with crucial elements hidden in the characters' minds can explain the narrator's rhetorical choices.

[247] France insightfully suggests, commenting on v. 1, that because of the prior series of controversies "the atmosphere was already charged." France, *The Gospel of Mark*, 148.

[248] By the way, the words of Jesus "to kill," in combination with retrospective knowledge of the events, could well have prompted the narrator about the further initiative of the Pharisees to "destroy Him." Stein

in the same chapter, we see the scribes who came from Jerusalem saying Βεελζεβοὺλ ἔχει καὶ ὅτι ἐν τῷ ἄρχοντι τῶν δαιμονίων ἐκβάλλει τὰ δαιμόνια ("he is possessed by Beelzebub" and "by the prince of demons he casts out the demons", 3:22). The narrator mentions the two statements of the scribes, suggesting that this was the open case accusing Jesus of being an exorcist and possibly a healer.[249] At least Jesus himself knew their accusations and responded to them publicly.[250]

In the episode of the bleeding woman's touch, the narrator points out that Jesus ἐπιγνοὺς ἐν ἑαυτῷ τὴν ἐξ αὐτοῦ δύναμιν ἐξελθοῦσαν ("perceiving in himself that power had gone out from him," 5:30).[251] Later, in a conversation with his disciples, Jesus insisted that someone had touched him, although the crowd surrounded him. Therefore, an attentive observer could conclude that Jesus had experienced an extraordinary touch. Then, the woman also told her testimony, which revealed her story and motivation, namely, her trust in Jesus. This testimony also revealed the effect this touch has produced in the women's body. Thus it was an extraordinary one indeed.

In 8:11, the narrator tells us that the Pharisees questioned Jesus πειράζοντες αὐτόν ("to test him," cf. 10:2). Therefore, the narrator explains their motivation for approaching Jesus. This motivation is easy to understand, given their constant and escalating hostility

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aptly notes that "doing evil and killing referred to his opponents' seeking to hinder Jesus's healing ministry and to their plotting on that Sabbath to kill him (3:6)." Stein, *Mark*, 155.

[249] See B. Harvie Branscomb, *The Gospel of Mark*, Moffatt New Testament Commentary (New York, NY: Hodder and Stoughton, 1937), 70–71.

[250] For the sake of space, I do not address the inside view that the narrator provides into Jesus' neighbors (family) in the "outer" story (3:21) of the intercalation 3:20–35. Shepherd calls the narrator in that scene omniscient due to this very inside view, while in the rest of the story, he acts in "reporter-like" mode. See Shepherd, "The Definition and Function of Markan Intercalation," 133. We, however, need to remember the family's later arrival and calling Jesus. Jesus did not react until he was informed of their arrival, which may suggest that the disciples, his assistants, could have been made aware of the family's motives.

[251] This is another common example referred to in order to claim the narrator's omniscience. See Shepherd, "The Definition and Function of Markan Intercalation," 165; Fowler, *Let the Reader Understand,* 94.

toward Jesus, of which the disciples were aware. In a later story (12:13–17), Jesus himself (v. 15) reveals the Pharisees' motives (v. 13). Thus, retrospectively, the disciples could understand and reconstruct Jesus' opponents intentions in 8:11–13 and 10:2–9 in the light of 12:13–17.

We can see that after describing Jesus' powerful mind-reading abilities in 2:6–8, the narrator does not need to reveal them explicitly because the reader already knows them. However, they are still either briefly mentioned or assumed. In some cases (12:15 and, especially, 5:30), the narrator may mention those abilities to explain the behavior of other characters. In contrast, in others (3:2–5, 20–27), Jesus' words are enough to reveal their hidden motives and intentions. In both cases, Jesus' knowledge, revealed in his words and, sometimes, also inner experiences, are quite aligned with the narrator's explanations of other characters' thoughts, intentions, or motives.

At this point, we can state that Jesus' omniscient power, which is clearly emphasized by the narrator as early as in 2:6–8, combined with the present observer-character, who is aware of this power, close and attentive enough to the events and Jesus, can explain many inside views we meet in Mark's narrative. Jesus' disciples were indeed aware of such a power of Jesus. They were close enough to Jesus for a significant amount of time to be able to see how and when he used this power. In addition, the stories containing these inside views were detailed enough for the attentive observer to reconstruct the motivations and even thoughts of the characters. The disciples' awareness regarding Jesus' abilities, his open words and actions, and other characters' words and actions could have allowed them to fill the necessary gaps and reconstruct the stories in a way that made sense.

Jesus' omniscience ————> Disciples ————> Narrator————>Narratee/Reader

Figure 6. Special Knowledge Flow

The Disciples as a Medium between the Narrator and Jesus

The interplay between the special information related to the thoughts and motives of other characters provided by the narrator and Jesus may suggest the narrator's dependence on Jesus. The disciples' presence may suggest them as a medium for transferring this information. A particular case helps us understand that they not only could but probably did provide the knowledge to the narrator (Figure 7).

In 9:9–10, we see Jesus' prediction of the future[252] (revealing his hidden knowledge) and are told that the disciples, having heard this prediction, τὸν λόγον ἐκράτησαν πρὸς ἑαυτούς ("kept the matter to themselves"). Of course, they did not yet understand the whole meaning of Jesus' words. However, they paid attention and remembered them. We can see it as the indication of the knowledge flow from Jesus to the narrator, which could have happened with the disciples as a medium. Indeed, the comment "kept the matter to themselves" points ahead of the story time, beyond the narrative, probably to the moment the three disciples or one of them met the narrator and told him τὸν λόγον ("the matter").[253] This could take place when there was no more reason to keep it a secret, namely, after Jesus' resurrection. Moreover, only in this way,

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[252] In nearly all the cases when the predictions in the Gospel of Mark are made, Jesus makes them. The narrator can only confirm their fulfillment in the course of the narrative. Fowler explains that in this way, the narrator may confirm Jesus' authority, but I am not sure that is correct, provided most of the predictions happen or are being fulfilled at the end of the Gospel, when Jesus' authority has already been established. See Fowler, *Let the Reader Understand*, 75.

[253] This is one of few cases in Mark when the characters' experience, which goes beyond the story timeline, is clearly described. Another possible case is 16:7. Malbon explains, quite in line with what I suggest related to 9:10: "It would appear that the narrator assumes that the hearer/reader assumes that the women did tell the disciples about the resurrection, because later someone surely told the narrator who now tells the hearer/reader!" Malbon, "Fallible Followers," 45.

from the disciples, the narrator could have learned "the matter" and the fact that "they kept the matter to themselves." Therefore, we can perceive the disciples here as a direct bridge between the scene with the prediction and the narrator. In this case, the narrator explicitly comments on the experience of his characters, which exceeds the story timeline. This comment deals with the disciples' knowledge, which they received directly from Jesus during the story, kept "to themselves," and disclosed once the story was over.

The narrator would have met with all or one of the inner-circle disciples to learn from them about "the matter" and their attitude towards it. It is quite reasonable to assume that these disciples are different from those who had received the revelation initially. Indeed, they already have experienced Jesus' arrest, death, and resurrection and learned the truthfulness of his words. They also learned quite a bit about themselves and about Jesus. Thus, those latter disciples' understanding would be superior to the former.[254] We are yet to return to this important differentiation between the "observing" disciples and the "reporting" disciples in the following chapters.

[254] Hengel also stresses the importance of the Easter experience, which helped the disciples finally get the proper understanding and make an analysis of what they remembered. He asserts: "These 'shadow sides' are based neither on a later polemical construction, which is directed against the Jewish Christians in Jerusalem, nor on a messianic secret à la Wrede, but in the final analysis on the remembrance, specifically that of Peter and the other disciples, that they *could not understand* Jesus' actions and path before Easter and were guilty over against him. In this matter as well, Mark has a lively witness of Peter as his source, one that is theologically stylized and dramatically described. The hearts of the disciples did not understand and were hardened before Easter, and the situation could be overcome only when the Resurrected One appeared and gave them the experience of the forgiveness of the guilt." Hengel, *Saint Peter*, 43.

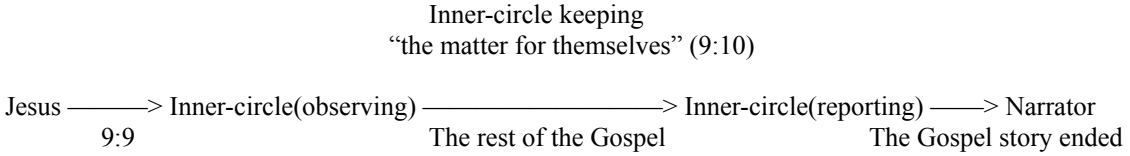

Figure 7. "The Matter" Revelation

Conclusions

According to narrative critics, there is a consensus that Mark's narrator possesses omniscient abilities. He can freely move between the scenes and intervene in the minds and consciousness of his characters whenever he pleases without any natural means. This stance of the narrator is hardly compatible with the possible eyewitness origin of the Gospel. When narrative critics discuss the narrator's ability, they treat his omniscience almost as self-evident. Scholars also acknowledge that the disciples' presence in the Gospel is comprehensive, and their narrative role is close to that of observers. However, the consensual view related to the narrator's supposed omniscience has never been challenged. In this chapter, it was shown that it is possible to perceive Mark's narrator as one with limited knowledge. Namely, in his knowledge he depends on Jesus' disciples and, in a certain way, on Jesus himself.

Given the substantial amount of content centered around the disciples in the Gospel, which here was dubbed as "the disciples material" (from 1:16 to 14:72, except for 6:14–29), and accounting for the significance of women's testimony in chapters 15–16, it is highly improbable that the narrator in Mark's Gospel ought to be regarded as omniscient. Rather, the disciples and the women are justifiably viewed as two of his consequent source-of-knowledge characters. The disciples were not merely present in most of the Gospel but active in their observing role. Mark presents them as observers or even witnesses, which is shown by the intention of their calling and introducing female

disciples when the Twelve were absent. Throughout the Gospel, we can see them diligently doing what they were called to, namely, they watched and listened. They got to know their Master and reflected on his words and deeds. They are qualified to be observers.

There is a striking and obvious limitation of the narrator's awareness of Jesus himself. Namely, in the text, there is almost no Jesus which the disciples cannot witness. This phenomenon should be explained, given that Jesus is the Gospel's protagonist. We can even tell that the Gospel is the story not merely about Jesus but about Jesus as he is followed (and witnessed) by his disciples.

An alternative model for the narrator's ability was introduced in order to explain Mark's narrator's power of entering into his characters' consciousnesses, including Jesus. The narrator can appear omniscient concerning the characters' inner lives. However, explaining the narrator's ability without using the omniscient privilege is still possible and reasonable. Mark's narrator indeed possesses a certain privilege. It was suggested naming it the "privilege of omniscience's companionship." Basically, it was argued that the narrator's insightfulness related to his characters' inner world, thoughts, and emotions can be obtained from his unique super-human protagonist with the medium of the disciples as his close associates and constant companions. Since they are close to Jesus, they can get to know him very well. Since he has and demonstrates unique abilities, they can receive much information that informs and appears as part of the story world.

Indeed, Mark's main character, Jesus, is clearly omniscient. He can sometimes display interior knowledge of his interlocutors' minds and hearts. He is also aware of the future. However, he does not keep this knowledge to himself. In many cases, he openly

shares it with those around, so that "he who has ears to hear, let him hear" (4:9). The disciples generally exercise this hearing. They are excellent candidates to be the source-of-knowledge character for Mark's narrator. It is true that in Mark's narrative the disciples are obviously inferior to Jesus. However, Dr. Watson, the character in Arthur Conan Doyle's novels, was also much inferior to his great friend. This inferiority did not prevent Dr. Watson, the narrator, from being competent enough to tell us mysterious stories, including not only the problems but also the solutions. Why should it be different with regard to the disciples? Indeed, we have overwhelming evidence of the disciples' attentiveness in the Gospel. In addition, we should remember that the narrative is being told retrospectively after the disciples' possible transformation, the matter which is yet to be discussed.

We have observed the narrator's dependence on Jesus' omniscience. Jesus' mind-reading powers are accentuated as early as in the Mark 2 and may be assumed afterwards. The narrator's own ability to provide inside views is indicated once Jesus demonstrates mind-reading powers and obtains the information. It is usually also provided by Jesus' direct discourse and/or can be easily reconstructed by events. Thus, this information can be available to the external observer if they are attentive and know Jesus well. Some indications allow us to consider the flow of unique knowledge provided by Jesus to the narrator, with the disciples as the medium, as probable. The clearest example is 9:10. The narrator is dependent on Jesus for his knowledge, but access to Jesus is provided through the disciples' medium.

The disciples are fairly competent as observers (they could have witnessed the events) and even informants (they could have informed the narrator). However, there is

an intriguing knowledge distribution between the disciples, with Peter at the very top of the informational hierarchy. Peter not only possesses more knowledge than others but could have directly witnessed most of the events. Except for 6:14–29, there is hardly anything he would have been unaware of. There is evidence of the narrator's knowledge limitation related to other disciples but not Peter (14:66–72). He is the closest companion of Jesus and is privileged to know him even deeper than others.

If an individual observer-character, present throughout most of the narrative, can be identified, then there is no reason to claim the narrator's omnipresence. This character is Peter, at least for the section from 1:16 to 14:72. Similarly, if we can identify the character possessing the most narrative information, including the interior knowledge of other characters' minds and hearts, then the narrator's omniscience must be denied. Again, Peter is a strong candidate for this role, as he not only possesses the most information related to Jesus and the Gospel story. He is also the one to be responsible for conveying this information to the narrator. Indeed, he belongs to the small group of the disciples mentioned in 9:9–10 and he "remembers" (11:21; 14:72).

Therefore, the case for the limited-in-knowledge narrator in Mark's Gospel may be made. The narrator is fairly competent, especially in mind-reading, and his ability is striking. Nevertheless, he is limited in two ways. In his exceptional knowledge of his characters' minds or the future, he is dependent on Jesus. However, in his access to Jesus, he depends on the disciples, particularly Peter. In the next chapter, we will investigate Mark's usage of point of view in order to explore other possible connections between Jesus, the disciples, and the narrator.

Chapter 4

Point of View in Mark's Gospel

In chapter 3, we have shown that the disciples, particularly Peter, can be seen as the narrator's source of knowledge. Now we need to spend some time discussing the point of view in Mark's narrative according to Uspensky's classification. Specifically the spatio-temporal, psychological, and ideological planes will be explored. The general discussion of phraseology will be left aside in this study.[255] The discussion of those planes is relevant to our purposes because it will help us to explore the possible interconnection between the narrator, Jesus, and his disciples in the sphere of space and time, ideology, and psychology. We have found that there are critical connections and dependence between those three agents in the realm of knowledge. That also can be called an informational plane of point of view, as Yamasaki suggested.[256] Therefore, we need to identify this interrelationship in the other three planes as well.

This discussion will be relevant to our search for the possible witnesses of the events described in the Gospel, or the so-called "position of the witness." Exploring the spatio-temporal plane may show that the possible Gospel witness belongs to Jesus' group. Namely the story is narrated in such a way as though witnessed from within this group. If we suppose that the disciples were implied as Jesus' witnesses we may expect some evidence in the sphere of psychology and ideology as well. Thus, the disciples may

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[255] It is hard to tell how the coherent study of the phraseological plane with its relation to the "position of the witness" may be conducted. That is an acceptable omission, as Yamasaki asserts: "the phraseological plane is clearly the least important of the five, only occasionally coming into play in biblical narrators' crafting of their narratives." Yamasaki, *Perspective Criticism*, 91. However, in the following chapters, I will mention a few cases when phraseology helps.

[256] Yamasaki, *Perspective Criticism*, 54–68.

be more interested in his psychology than in their own. Therefore, if Jesus' psychology is highlighted and admired, that can be expected. The disciples' own psychology should reveal their interest in Jesus and show their reaction to him. In the sphere of ideology we may see some coincidence, but also something which potentially could have compelled the disciples to witness.

Spatio-Temporal Plane

If we are looking for the possible witness, or the "position of the witness," in Mark, the first thing to discuss is the narrator's spatial and temporal position. If the narrator behaves as a reporter "as if he were reporting directly from the field of action,"[257] then his spatial position should be fixed and coincide with the "position of the witness" we are looking for. This point, of course, is deeply connected with our discussion in the previous chapter regarding the limitation of the narrator in spatial terms. Contrary to the claims of most narrative critics, Mark's narrator is not omnipresent since the disciples, who can be seen as a source-of-knowledge character for the narrator, are almost constantly present in the story.

We still need to elaborate on this to show that the "narrative camera"[258] follows their group continually and coherently. In this case, we can confidently claim that the "position of the witness" is in the midst of Jesus' group indeed. As the story progresses, the narrative camera always follows them. This is especially visible if we consider three

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[257] Uspensky, *Poetics of Composition*, 91.

[258] Biblical narrative critics often use terms like "narrative camera" or "camera eye technique" with regard to spatial changes with the course of narrative. We can express the same idea by talking about the narrator's alleged movement. See Berlin, *Poetics and Interpretation of Biblical Narrative,* 44–45; Bar-Efrat, *Narrative Art in the Bible,* 15. Gary Yamasaki consistently uses the term "camera" in his *Perspective Criticism*.

features of Mark's narrative units. How does Mark unite those units in one sequence? How are the specific scenes opened and closed? How does he introduce new characters into his story?

Mark often uses the group's movement from one location to another to connect different scenes in a story. Thus, the narrative camera stays with the group even between subsequent scenes. For instance, in 1:19, we see Jesus moving from the place of the calling of the first couple of brothers to the place where he met the second couple in the next scene. Similarly, in 5:1–2, we see Jesus stepping out of the boat after coming εἰς τὸ πέραν τῆς θαλάσσης ("to the other side of the sea"), and only then does the episode begin with the demoniac's arrival. In 7:31, we get a more detailed description of Jesus' route: Καὶ πάλιν ἐξελθὼν ἐκ τῶν ὁρίων Τύρου ἦλθεν διὰ Σιδῶνος εἰς τὴν θάλασσαν τῆς Γαλιλαίας ἀνὰ μέσον τῶν ὁρίων Δεκαπόλεως ("Then he returned from the region of Tyre and went through Sidon to the Sea of Galilee, in the region of the Decapolis"). For other cases see 1:29; 2:1, 13–14; 5:21; 6:53; 7:24; 10:1, 17, 46; 11:20, 27.

The second feature is related to the first one and discusses how scenes in the narrative are typically introduced and concluded.[259] It deals with how the camera's focus shifts to or away from a particular scene. There are generally two ways in which a scene opens up. In the first type, Jesus and his group are already present when the scene comes into focus. For instance, in 1:40, a leper approaches Jesus, who is already present on the scene. In 2:15, we see Jesus reclining at a table in Levi's house, and in 6:45, Jesus is urging his disciples to get into the boat. The second type involves Jesus and his group

[259] Shepherd utilizes Robert Funk's terms "focalizer" and "defocalizer" with regard to the moment of start and end of scenes. See Shepherd, "The Definition and Function of Markan Intercalation," 65. See also Robert Walter Funk, *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative* (Sonoma, CA: Polebridge Press, 1988), 99–132. I, however, cannot utilize those terms here, as I use the terms "focalizer" and "focalization" with Genette's and Bal's meaning.

entering the scene and the camera entering with them. Examples of this include Jesus entering a synagogue (1:21; 3:1), a house (2:1; 3:20; 7:24), a town (6:1; 8:22), or the other side of the sea (5:1; 6:53), among others.

So once a scene is introduced, Jesus' group presence is always indicated. Usually, Jesus is present throughout the scene till the very end. In some cases, a camera leaves the scene and Jesus to highlight the result or the consequences of the encounter between Jesus and other characters. At other times, the camera pauses for a moment in order to give some information related to the outcome of the scene. So Jesus is still on the scene, and the reader is provided with the consequences or results of Jesus' actions (1:28, 45; 3:6; 5:20).[260] Those consequences are usually described in a form that is closer to "pure narrative" then to *mimesis*. So, there is no sense of the witness or the narrator's "presence." Instead, the narrator's awareness of those results or consequences is provided to the reader.

The third feature is concerned with how the new characters are introduced in the story. They are already present on the stage before Jesus' group arrives and come into focus once Jesus arrives, or they come to Jesus while he is already on stage. In most cases, we have little knowledge about them before they appear. They suddenly and unexpectedly show up in the story where Jesus and his group are already present. Their situation and background are introduced after they appear, mainly through direct discourse or the narrator's comment. In some cases, the situation of the character is

[260] I use David Noble's terminology. He calls those closing parts of the narrative units "result statement" and "consequence statement," that highlights their textual, rather visual nature. See David Franklin Noble, "An Examination of the Structure of St. Mark's Gospel" (PhD thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1972), 103–19, http://hdl.handle.net/1842/30586.

described in more detail, but the narrator does this once the character is already present on the stage (5:3–5, 26). There are very few cases where this rule is not followed (3:21).

So, we can conclude that in the spatio-temporal plane, the "position of the witness" belongs within Jesus' group, as the narrative camera coherently follows this group. It is safe to call this group a character-focalizer for the entire journey, narrated in Mark's Gospel.

Psychological Plane

In this section, we will focus on the discussion of the psychological point of view of the disciples with its relation to Jesus and the narrator. We already covered Jesus' psychology to a large extent in a previous chapter. The narrator's psychology is hardly revealed openly, but we can make some conclusions about the perception of his characters, particularly with the means of the inside views of the characters.

In the previous chapter, we delved into Jesus' psychology in detail, so there is no need to repeat it here. However, it is worth emphasizing that his psychology reveals the depth of his personality in relation to all other characters in the story, including God. The psychological point of view of Jesus' group, which comprises Jesus and his disciples, is mentioned in more than half of all cases where psychological viewpoints are discussed. I counted approximately 50 instances of Jesus' group (22 for Jesus and 27 for the disciples).[261] On the other hand, most of the other characters have slightly more than 30

[261] Jesus' — 1:41; 2:5, 8; 3:13; 5:30, 32, 36; 6:6a, 34, 48; 7:24; 8:17, 33; 9:25, 30; 10:14, 21; 11:12, 13a; 12:15, 34a; 14:33. The disciples' — 4:41; 5:42; 6:49, 50, 51b, 52; 9:6, 8, 10, 14, 32, 34; 10:24, 26, 32, 41; 11:14, 20, 21; 14:4, 19, 31, 40, 72; 15:47; 16:4, 8. For Dewey's list see her "Point of View," 101. She includes there the disciples' psychology mentioned by Jesus, which makes sense (e. g. 4:40; 8:18).

instances,[262] but they are often shallow and of the same type.[263] In contrast, the psychology of Jesus and his disciples is described as both more profound and more diverse. Therefore, let us now turn to the discussion of the psychological point of view of the disciples.

Interestingly, most of the disciples' psychology would be described as "negative" The narrator emphasizes their amazement, astonishment, fear, confusion, and sorrow. Usually, they manifest their reaction to Jesus, his actions, some of his teachings, and questions. They were ἐφοβήθησαν φόβον μέγαν ("filled with great fear", 4:41) and λίαν ἐν ἑαυτοῖς ἐξίσταντο ("utterly astounded," 6:51) after experiencing Jesus' extraordinary power to calm the storm (4:41; 6:51). However, there are also reactions to natural or supernatural phenomena. They feared and were terrified due to the storm and a sea spirit they mistook Jesus for (4:40; 6:49). They were criticized for their fear and astonishment by both Jesus and the narrator (4:40; 6:52). We are aware of the disciples' psychology with regard to their interrelationship. Their confusion in 9:34 is related to their competing with each other. In 10:41, we read of ἀκούσαντες ("hearing") and consequent indignation of the Ten about the two brothers' request. We also read about the indignation of some of the disciples due to the woman's anointing of Jesus (14:4).

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[262] 1:22, 27; 2:6, 12; 3:2; 5:6, 15, 20, 28, 29; 6:2–3, 33, 54; 7:2, 37; 8:25; 9:15; 10:2, 22, 47; 11:18, 31–2; 12:12, 13, 17; 14:10, 67, 69; 15:5, 10, 15, 39, 44.

[263] Almost all psychological points of view of the crowd are related to their astonishment or amazement as reactions to Jesus (1:22, 27; 2:12; 5:20; 9:15; 12:17); the religious leaders who are Jesus' opponents almost always are motivated by their enmity toward Jesus (2:6–7; 3:2; 10:2; 11:18; 12:12–13). There are a few cases when the psychology of the recipients of Jesus' healing is mentioned. The most striking is, of course, the psychology of the hemorrhaging woman (5:28–29). A few petitioners only "see" or "hear" Jesus (5:6; 10:47). In one passage seeing serves as a confirmation of the result of healing (8:25). There are other cases when minor characters "see" (14:67, 69; 15:39). Relatively complex is the rich man's interior description (10:22) as well as the exceptional scribe's (12:28–34). The psychological description of Pilate is relatively significant, especially considering the small amount of narrative space where he is present (15:1–15, 43–45).

In the account of Transfiguration, there are three complex psychological points of view. They demonstrated fear and confusion (9:6). Then the disciples ἐξάπινα περιβλεψάμενοι οὐκέτι οὐδένα εἶδον ("are looking around and not seeing," 9:8), which is unique in Mark's writing, as he usually tells what characters see, not what they do not see. Τὸν λόγον ἐκράτησαν πρὸς ἑαυτοὺς ("keeping the matter to themselves," 9:10) is a psychological description that is unique in its temporal dimension. The narrator describes the confusion, amazement, and fear that the disciples experienced on the way to Jerusalem. These negative feelings were reactions to Jesus' prophecy about his fate in Jerusalem, which they did not understand and were afraid to ask about (9:32; 10:32).

In 9:34, disciples' confusion as a response to Jesus' question due to inappropriate discussion is mentioned. They ἤρξαντο λυπεῖσθαι ("began to be sorrowful," 14:19) to learn that they would leave Jesus. It is important to note that there are a few instances when the disciples were directly disappointed with Jesus and revealed this disappointment. During the first sea trip, the way the disciples woke up and addressed Jesus seemed harsh: διδάσκαλε, οὐ μέλει σοι ὅτι ἀπολλύμεθα; ("Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?" 4:38). They were still respectful (διδάσκαλε, teacher) but did not hide their irritation.[264] The second case is connected to Peter's rebuking of Jesus for the way he chose to follow (8:32, see also 5:31; 6:37).[265]

The narrator seems to have a keen interest in portraying the disciples' psychology in a negative light for some reason. The majority of their negative emotions and reactions

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[264] "The rudeness of Mark's wording reflects the way frustrated and desperate people speak (cf. Luke 10:40) and is probably a verbatim reminiscence of the disciples' response in the crisis. A later editor is not likely to have made Jesus the object of such a reproof." Edwards, *The Gospel According to Mark,* 149.

[265] "Peter's attitude is presumptuous, if not patronizing (cf. 1:37), and needless to say, is life. Only original testimony can account for the story." Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark,* 379.

are linked to Jesus, his teachings, particularly on suffering, and questioning. However, some of their negative feelings are related to natural or supernatural occurrences, while others are directed towards their fellow disciples or other individuals.

That is a surprising finding which requires some explanation. It may sound that the disciples' attitude to Jesus and his teaching is negative. However, there is more to say about the matter. Even though the narrator almost never explicitly commends the disciples' inner attitude toward Jesus, as well as their emotions, their deep appreciation of their Master is nevertheless implied. Their fear during the first sea trip pushed them to ask the right questions about Jesus' personality (4:41).[266] When they were terrified seeing Jesus walking on the sea, their terror was caused by the imaginary spirit and not by Jesus. Jesus himself comforts them with the words: θαρσεῖτε, ἐγώ εἰμι, μὴ φοβεῖσθε ("Take heart; it is I. Do not be afraid," 6:50). Those words, of course, imply that their typical reaction to Jesus was positive. The sorrow expressed by the disciples after Jesus predicted that they would leave him (14:19) is a testimony of their deep commitment to him. Their silent confusion when Jesus overheard their inappropriate discussion (9:34) shows their respect for him as their Master.[267] Even Peter's rebuke of Jesus (8:32) was likely motivated by his sincere concern for Jesus' well-being.[268]

We may conclude that despite the narrator highlighting their negative emotions and even their open discontent with Jesus, it is essential to note that they still hold a deep

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[266] Malbon insightfully asserts: "The conclusion of a large section of Mark (4:1–8:21) with Jesus' questioning of the disciples (8:14–21) suggests that Jesus' disciples are distinguished from his opponents not by possessing the right answers but by being possessed by the right question: not 'Why does he not perform a sign from heaven?' (see 8:11), but 'Who then is this…?' (4:41)." Malbon, "How Does the Story Mean?," 46.

[267] That, however, may be objected to due to the silent reaction on Jesus by his opponents (3:4; 12:34).

[268] See Wiarda, "Peter as Peter in the Gospel of Mark," 29–30.

appreciation for their Master. This finding recalls a discussion of Jesus' own emotions toward the disciples, which implies deep love and tenderness toward them, but usually, his negative emotions are explicitly emphasized and expressed. Let us note that the disciples usually do not object to Jesus' criticisms. We are aware of one case when they disagreed with Jesus' evaluation (14:27–31), only to realize later that Jesus was right (14:72).

Another interesting observation with regard to the narrator's mentioning of the disciples' psychology is that it tends to create some sympathy toward the disciples and a sense of identification with them within the implied reader.[269] That is the expected effect of internal focalization, which allows the reader to experience the story as the CF would. However, the narrator's intention of mentioning the disciples' psychology is worth noting, given the general negative nature of the described emotions. The narrator seems to provide excuses for the disciples' behavior in some instances, such as the inappropriate proposal on the mountain of Transfiguration (9:6)[270] and the inner-circle disciples sleeping in Gethsemane (14:40). Despite this somewhat critical stance, there is no hostility between the narrator and the disciples, and the narrator expresses some

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[269] See especially Tannehill, "The Disciples in Mark"; Malbon, "Fallible Followers"; Dewey, "Point of View."

[270] "These narrative comments beginning with *gar* are typical of Mark's use of this form. They are consistently used to explain a puzzle or surprise that has been created for his audience by the previous statement (e.g., 1:16, 22; 2:15; 3:21; 5:8, 28, 42; 6:17,18, 20, 31, 48; 9:34; 10:22; 11:13; 14:2, 40, 56; 15:10; 16:4, 8). In this instance, these comments apparently explain why Peter was so nervous and why he said such an inept and inappropriate thing. The explanation is thoroughly sympathetic and is clearly an appeal for identification with Peter whose feelings are presented as the way any person would feel in such company. In the technical terms of narrative analysis, this is a narrative comment to the audience which gives an inside view into Peter's internal thoughts and feelings. And the norms of judgment are wholly sympathetic and humanly understandable." Thomas E. Boomershine, "Peter's Denial as Polemic or Confession: The Implications of Media Criticism for Biblical Hermeneutics," *Semeia* 39 (1987): 57.

sympathy toward them. The narrator is not interested in commending the disciples or their feelings, nor is he interested in provoking hostility toward them.

Peter's psychology is explicitly emphasized, as well as the level of his presence in the narrative. Of course, he is included in most of the cases where the disciples' psychology is discussed, but much more can be said of him personally. First, it is worthy of mentioning that the inner-circle disciples' point of view in the Transfiguration scene is really Peter's, as it is his suggestion explained by the narrator (9:5–6), so his inner experience is highlighted. Interestingly, even though the scene with the two brothers' request (10:35–40) is dedicated to them, the psychological point of view is that of the Ten, where Peter now belongs (10:41). While everyone is sorrowful about their leaving Jesus, Peter denies such a possibility ἐκπερισσῶς ("emphatically," 14:31), which not only testifies to his overconfidence but also to his commitment to Jesus.

Peter is the only disciple whose point of view is often mentioned concerning the obtaining and handling of the information concerning Jesus. It is the "keeping of the matter," which we discussed (9:10).[271] The disciples ἤκουον ("heard," 11:14) Jesus cursing the fig tree and then εἶδον ("saw," 11:20) it withered, but it is Peter who ἀναμνησθεὶς ("remembered," 11:21) Jesus cursing. This implies that it was Peter who heard, saw, and then remembered it. Also, Peter remembered Jesus' prophecy of his denial and cried (14:72), which we will discuss in detail in chapter 6. It is important to stress that there are no negative connotations attached to the psychological insights of the narrator. Therefore, Peter's "remembering" or "keeping the matter" is not portrayed in a

[271] France (*The Gospel of Mark,* 354) notes a "sense of privilege" in Peter's suggestion (9:5). Peter and his two fellow disciples were privileged indeed to witness Jesus in glory and two other great figures. I suggest giving the same sense of privilege to the disciples "keeping the matter to themselves" (9:10). Now Peter, James, and John became carriers of the special privileged knowledge, and they became fully aware of the importance of this knowledge itself and the very fact that they became its carriers.

negative light. On the contrary, it is highlighted that after Jesus rebuked the disciples for not correctly remembering two feeding incidents (8:18), he finally "remembers" and does it twice.[272]

The only other character whose obtaining and dealing with information is emphasized is the women witnesses. Their point of view in two cases is described as their looking (θεωρέω, 15:40, 47; 16:4), which is not surprising, given their role. Mark 16:8 depicts a rather complex women's psychological response to the young man's revelation. They were not simply astonished, but εἶχεν γὰρ αὐτὰς τρόμος καὶ ἔκστασις ("trembling and astonishment had seized them"), that is why they did not say anything to anyone, ἐφοβοῦντο γάρ ("for they were afraid").

At times, the psychological point of view of Jesus merges with that of his disciples. In fact, it dominates their point of view, as it influences the whole group. Sometimes, it is clearly evident, as the narrator mentions, that both the disciples and Jesus saw someone or something (9:14; 11:20). At other times, this dominance is implied. For example, in 9:30, we learn that Jesus οὐκ ἤθελεν ἵνα τίς γνοῖ ("did not want anyone to know") about his presence in the region. This desire of Jesus impacted the entire group, the way they chose their path, and how they behaved on the path. Once the scenes are described, and Jesus is the protagonist, the disciples stand by him and are able to see what he sees. They belong to his team, so his point of view becomes their point of view. Thus, in some instances, the disciples not only understand Jesus' psychological point of view but, to some extent, adopt it as their own.

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[272] See Agustí Borrell, *The Good News of Peter's Denial: A Narrative and Rhetorical Reading of Mark 14:54.66–72* (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1998), 80–81.

Therefore, we find a few important points that help us map the relationship between the narrator, Jesus and the disciples in the sphere of psychology and confirm their possible witness role:

1. The psychology of most of the disciples revolves around Jesus.
2. The disciples' general perception of Jesus is positive, just like the narrator's.
3. Disciples' negative emotions, which are their central characteristic, may imply their awareness of the necessity to change, which is revealed by their encounter with Jesus. The narrator may intend to emphasize this point.
4. The narrator's implied sympathy for the disciples is intended to avoid exaggerating the distance between the narrator, his reader, and the disciples. The narrator wants to create a significant sense of identification between the disciples and the reader, as he has some closeness with them as well.
5. The narrator mentions the positive mindset of the disciples (Peter) concerning accessing and handling information.
6. Sometimes, Jesus' and the disciples' psychologies are merged.

Ideological Plane

In Gospel narrative criticism, the ideological point of view is often called an "evaluative" point of view. Often, the term "point of view" is used in this very meaning.[273] Petersen suggests that there are two main evaluative points of view among Markan characters: "thinking the things of God" and "thinking of things of men."[274] The

[273] See Powell, *What is Narrative Criticism?*, 23–24. See also Uspensky, *Poetics of Composition*, 16.

[274] See Petersen, "'Point of View' in Mark's Narrative," 107–8; 111–12; Rhoads, Dewey, and Michie, *Mark as Story*, 3rd ed., 44–45; Malbon, "How Does the Story Mean?," 30.

narrator's ideology would be the former. It is, of course, shared by Jesus and by God himself. Therefore, the Markan narrative "thinking the things of God" should be considered a normative ideology. The ideology of other characters should be evaluated in relation to this standard. It is Jesus who teaches "the things of God" and even embodies them. Therefore, the ideological positions or points of view of different characters should be evaluated in their relation to Jesus and his teaching.

Following the literary critic E. M. Forster, Elizabeth Malbon suggests dividing Mark's characters into two types.[275] According to her, most of Mark's characters are "flat," namely simple, consistent, and predictable. Other characters are "round," complex, or dynamic. Jesus himself is a round character because he is complex. His personality is rich and deep. Malbon suggests that the only other round character in Mark is the disciples.[276]

The division between flat and round characters in Mark is connected to their ideological positions. If "thinking the things of God" is the correct position, and Jesus and his teaching is its embodiment, then other characters' "flatness" or "roundness" can be evaluated based on their response to Jesus. The religious leaders of Israel, who are Jesus' opponents, are flat because they consistently reject his teachings and are hostile

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[275] See Malbon, "How Does the Story Mean?," 29–30.

[276] There is an excellent description of the "roundness" of Jesus' disciples by Malbon: "Jesus and… the disciples are the only 'round' characters in the Markan narrative. The other characters are 'flat': the unclean spirits are always evil; the Pharisees are always conspiring. The disciples change. They respond to Jesus' call; they follow and listen to him; they teach and cast out demons on his authority; they question him; they misunderstand him; they question themselves; they still follow him. Jesus suggests that they will be scattered like sheep whose shepherd is struck down (14:27), but that, later, they will be 'gathered' from the ends of the earth and heaven (13:27). They do scatter. One betrays him; one denies him; all abandon him—but he does not abandon them; he is going before them to Galilee, as he told them (14:28; 16:7). The dynamic portrayal of the disciples in their relation to Jesus is one of the reasons the implied audience is most drawn into their conflict." Elizabeth Struthers Malbon, "'Reflected Christology': An Aspect of Narrative 'Christology' in the Gospel of Mark," *Perspectives in Religious Studies* 26, no. 2 (Summer 1999): 133.

towards him.[277] Most of the petitioners are flat as well. They are usually sympathetic toward Jesus and, in some cases, demonstrate obedience and trust in him, which would align them with him and his ideological position. However, it is difficult to determine the depth and consistency of their alignment as the narrator does not provide enough information for us to judge. Still, some are clearly flat and positive.[278]

The collective character of the disciples is round, and their ideology is complex and dynamic. The dynamics are implied by their very calling to follow Jesus, as they are supposed to follow and learn from him. Learning does always mean change. If Jesus' teaching primarily concerns his unique ideology, then learning from him implies a change of ideology. The complexity and dynamics are evident as early as in Mark 4. In 4:10–13, the disciples are both acknowledged and critiqued by Jesus. He recognizes their privileged position as the "insiders" and confirms that they are the direct addressees of his teaching, open to them. However, immediately, their lack of understanding is pointed out as well. They are in a privileged position, so they should learn, but there is a lot to be understood! At the end of this chapter, the disciples do not demonstrate faith as they are supposed to, so Jesus rebukes them. At least, they ask the right question, namely: τίς ἄρα οὗτός ἐστιν ὅτι καὶ ὁ ἄνεμος καὶ ἡ θάλασσα ὑπακούει αὐτῷ; ("Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?" 4:41). They do not comprehend Jesus yet but are willing to know who he is.

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[277] See Malbon, "How Does the Story Mean?," 29.

[278] We can especially mention Bartimaeus (10:46–52), μία χήρα πτωχή (one poor widow, 12:41–44), εἷς τῶν γραμματέων (one of the scribes, 12:28–34), and Joseph of Arimathea. For the discussion of minor characters in Mark's narrative, see Elizabeth Struthers Malbon, "The Major Importance of the Minor Characters in Mark," in *The New Literary Criticism and the New Testament*, ed. Elizabeth Struthers Malbon and Edgar V. McKnight (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994), 58–86. See also Malbon's discussion of the crowd character, her "Disciples/Crowds/Whoever," 104–30.

In 8:18, Jesus harshly rebuked disciples for their lack of understanding and used the same terminology previously used to describe the "outsiders."[279] However, the last clause, καὶ μὴ συνιῶσιν μήποτε ἐπιστρέψωσιν καὶ ἀφεθῇ αὐτοῖς ("and not understand lest they should turn and be forgiven," 4:12), is not mentioned now. This signals that the door for them to change and to understand Jesus and his teaching is still open.[280] The usage of two parable-like miracles (7:31–37; 8:22–26)[281] shows that the disciples are not to be rejected by Jesus but to be healed. Malbon suggests that it is Peter who has the problem of "half-sight/half-blindness."[282]

The tension between Jesus and his disciples is constantly growing, and their inner crisis is growing as well. Disciples' loyalty to Jesus develops much faster than their understanding of his true identity and mission. They are willing to follow him with extraordinary dedication and sacrifice, yet they do not meet the requirements of true discipleship set by Jesus.

This tension is evident in, perhaps, the central Markan pericope with regard to Peter (8:27–8:33). Now he finally acknowledges Jesus as Christ (8:29). This is a proper understanding of Jesus, as the narrator informed the reader about Jesus' identity right in

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[279] Hartin, "The Role of the Disciples," 44.

[280] See Jonathan P. Coody, "The Motif of Hearing and Seeing in Mark 4–8: Contributions to a Missional Reading of the Second Gospel," (master's thesis, Covenant Theological Seminary, 2011), 105, https://covenantlibrary.org/etd/2011/Coody_Jonathan_ThM_2011.pdf.

[281] I owe the expression "parable-like miracles" to Coody. See Coody, "The Motif of Hearing and Seeing in Mark 4–8," 113. He explains: "In Mark, as in the other Synoptics, miracles often function like parables, and as such, they are not always readily understood. That is, if parables function either to reveal or conceal, then so do miracles, for they are often presented in a parabolic sense." Ibid. 102. I will elaborate more on those passages in the next chapter.

[282] "The half-sight/half-blindness of the Bethsaida man as he sees persons as trees walking is immediately paralleled by Peter's half-sight/half-blindness as he sees Jesus as only a powerful Christ and not also a suffering servant." Malbon, "The Major Importance of the Minor Characters in Mark," 211. She also notes the second blind man (10:46–52) as a sign of a future Peter's full healing (13:8; 14:68; 16:7).

1:1. So the disciples are seemingly making progress. However, the conflict between Peter's and Jesus' ideologies is immediately revealed. First, Jesus does not allow them to tell anyone about him (8:30), which might indicate that they do not fully understand his true identity and mission. Second, he ἤρξατο διδάσκειν ("began to teach," 8:31) them about his mission and fate, that is, to reveal his true identity. At this point, in the private scene between Jesus and Peter, the clash of ideologies happens. Peter rebukes Jesus, probably out of the sincere care of Jesus, as Timothy Wiarda points out.[283] Jesus, however, severely rebukes Peter, who is οὐ φρονεῖς τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ ἀλλὰ τὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ("not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man," 8:33). His look at other disciples suggests that they share the same attitude as Peter.[284] Right after this, Jesus started teaching the Twelve and all the crowd true discipleship, which suggests that they not only misunderstood the true identity and mission of Christ but also the nature and demands of true discipleship.

It is clear at this point that this ideological conflict causes the psychological tension that we see between Jesus and his disciples. Peter rebuked Jesus because he was not prepared to accept Jesus' true identity and mission, which is "thinking of things of God." Jesus rebuked Peter and called him σατανᾶ ("Satan," 8:33) due to his "thinking of things of men." When the disciples showed their irritation with Jesus in the midst of the storm, it was because he was able to sleep calmly, as he had faith. At the same time, they did not have it and were full of fear instead. In most of the other cases, Jesus was angry

[283] Wiarda, "Peter as Peter in the Gospel of Mark," 29–30.

[284] "That look does suggest, however, that Jesus thinks the disciples, too, are likely to be affected by the kind of thinking Peter has evidenced, and perhaps that Jesus intends them to overhear what he says to Peter." Wiarda, "Peter as Peter in the Gospel of Mark," 29.

with his disciples due to their lack of understanding, which revealed their wrong ideology.

The narrator focuses on the same conflict between Jesus and the disciples' ideologies when discussing their relationship ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ ("on the way") to Jerusalem (9:30–32, 33–37; 10:32–34, 35–45). However, even though the disciples are not prepared to accept Jesus' teaching on his fate and mission and their discipleship, they still do not rebel against it. Moreover, they continue following Jesus even to Jerusalem. He patiently teaches them, and his perseverance in teaching implies his ultimate positive assessment of their discipleship. This is especially evident in 10:28–31.

Personal loyalty, perhaps along with other motives (10:37), leads most of Jesus' disciples to the point of Jesus' arrest. Their shameful fleeing is vividly illustrated in the unnamed naked youth (14:51–52).[285] Women's loyalty led them all the way to the empty tomb. Peter's loyalty led him to the chief priest's courtyard, where he denied Jesus according to his prediction (14:30). While the scene of the denial will be discussed in detail later, one thing is worth noting now. The fact that this denial was a deeply personal tragedy for Peter is proved in the emotional scene described in v. 72 — the last place in Mark's narrative where we see Peter himself.

However, even though the disciples left Jesus and Peter denied him, their loyalty to him did not end at this point. Rather, their loyalty was not enough to help them to follow Jesus to the end. The fact that Peter cried in v. 72 does not mean he ceased to love Jesus. Instead, he realized that his love was not sufficient to empower his following Jesus

[285] Sometimes it is claimed that this is Mark himself. It is far from being certain, though. See Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses,* 2nd ed., 184–87.

to the point of death, to make him a faithful follower.[286] Thus, he finally learned something important about his true self that would be a step toward the change of his ideology. Jesus was right, and he was wrong. Peter did not just understand this truth intellectually, he experienced it. Let us remember, though, that in spite of knowing about his future denial, Jesus still foresaw their meeting in Galilee (14:28), as the young man repeated in 16:7. Malbon correctly notes that Markan Jesus never gives up on his disciples.[287]

We may question whether Peter and other disciples finally completely embraced Jesus' ideology, which is normative for Mark's narrative. What we can tell for sure, though, is that Peter was disappointed with his own ideology. He had to abandon his ideology, and there is evidence that all disciples struggled to accept and understand Jesus' ideology. In any way the disciples underwent the process of ideological shift, and this made their ideology both complex and dynamic.

This ideological shift makes Peter and other disciples good candidates to be witnesses, especially in the realm of Jesus' teaching and identity. They really struggled with it, and they went through the process of ideological shift themselves. Therefore, they could testify about it. If finally, they indeed abandoned their way of thinking and embraced Jesus', and it happened in such a painful way, they would be both qualified and willing to testify about it.

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[286] "Despite the tragedy of the moment, there is hope as Peter recalls the prophetic words of Jesus and recognizes his role in its fulfillment. With profound sorrow and tears, not arrogance, Peter leaves the scene. He may not reappear in person within the confines of Mark 1:1–16:8, but the reader has good reason to suspect that the last word in Peter's story has not been said (see 16:7)." Moloney, *The Gospel of Mark,* 309.

[287] "But neither the Markan narrator nor the Markan Jesus (nor his messenger at the empty tomb) gives up on the disciples." Malbon, "How Does the Story Mean?," 46.

People are willing to witness or give their testimony about the thing that is essential. If they are genuinely involved with something, they are both attentive and willing to share about it.[288] Most recipients of Jesus' healing were willing to share their experiences with others, even in the course of the Gospel itself. Some of them could have done it afterward so they would become Jesus' eyewitnesses on the account of their healing. However, Peter and the disciples have experienced very personal and dramatic healing of their spiritual sight and hearing, namely, their ideology. Of course, they would be willing to testify to this miraculous healing and its outstanding provider. They do not differ much from a hemorrhaging woman who told all the truth, including her shameful condition, once healed (5:33). They could do the same, just like this woman or St. Augustine.

This will match well with our findings from the discussion on the psychological point of view. Why is most of their psychology described in negative terms? Because this psychology is deeply connected with their wrong ideology, which they had to abandon. Why is there still empathy towards the disciples? Because people usually accept themselves rather than hate. Therefore we can suggest a coincidence between the narrator's psychological depiction of the disciples with their own point of view after the Gospel story was over.

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[288] Bauckham compares the Gospel story to the Holocaust. Both are "uniquely unique events" (this is Paul Ricouer's expression) and are known mostly through eyewitness testimony, which the witnesses felt compelled to share: "Despite the difficulty of communication, participant witnesses in both events have felt the imperative to communicate, to bear witness." Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses,* 2nd ed., 501.

Conclusions

We have found that in all three planes, there is a close connection between the narrator and Jesus' group, that is, Jesus and his disciples. In the spatio-temporal plane it is safe to say that the "position of the witness" belongs to Jesus' group. This finding will be developed in the next chapter. With regard to psychology, Jesus' and the disciples' point of view dominates within the story, which implies a unique connection of the narrator with this group. However, while Jesus' psychology is highlighted for its own sake, the disciples' psychology, in most cases, reveals their reaction to Jesus, his actions and words, which aligns well with the eyewitness role. There are situations when the psychological dynamic with regard to the group's interrelations is highlighted.

The ideological point of view of Jesus coincides with that of the narrator and indicates "thinking of things of God." The disciples' ideology, along with the progress of Mark's narrative, is being shifted from "thinking of things of men" to "thinking of things of God." This shift is a painful and life-changing process that involves recovering from heart illness. We can assume that at some point, the disciples' ideological position would become the same as that of the narrator and Jesus. That shifting in ideology would provide them with a reason to witness. If we suppose that they became witnesses after the story was over, it will be easy to imagine that they witnessed from their new ideological perspective, namely, that of Jesus and the narrator.

The relationship between psychology and ideology is fascinating. Although the disciples' attitude towards Jesus is generally positive, there are emphasized instances where they react negatively to his teachings and actions. This can be attributed to differences in their ideologies. Similarly, Jesus' attitude towards the disciples implies his

love, but negative emotions are highlighted. However, the narrator shows sympathy towards both Jesus and the disciples, often providing excuses for the latter's behavior. This sympathy towards the disciples may suggest the narrator's reliance on their testimony to reveal their final change and regret regarding their shortcomings. If the narrator relies on the disciples' testimony, this testimony could be seen as their confession, which is intended to produce both sympathy towards the confessing person and a realization of their wrongdoings. The way the disciples' psychology is described shows this combination of criticism, sympathy, and even a sense of identification. In the next chapter, we will delve into the discussion of focalization in Mark's narrative.

Chapter 5

Focalization in Mark's Gospel

We have shown that the disciples, particularly Peter, can be seen as the narrator's source of knowledge. We have also discussed the relationship between the narrator, Jesus, and the disciples in spatio-temporal, psychological, and ideological planes of point of view. This and the following chapters are dedicated to the detailed discussion of focalization in Mark's Gospel. As Peter and the disciples provided the narrator with knowledge, could they also provide him with "seeing?" Is it possible to say that he perceives the story, narrated in Mark's Gospel, as the disciples do?

In chapter 2, it was mentioned that the existence of the "position of the witness" is one of the essential features of reportage literature.[289] Therefore, to provide evidence for the eyewitness origin of Mark's Gospel, we need to establish the "position of the witness." We already have seen that it should belong to Jesus' group. But can we be more specific than that? The "position of the witness" in narratology directly relates to the question of focalization, even internal focalization. Focalization intends to provide an answer to the question: *Who sees?* Internal focalization talks about the coincidence of the narrator's and the character's views. It also may be recognized as an invitation of the implied reader (IR) to share the same view.

In this chapter, it will be explained why we need to ask not only *Who sees?* but also *Who hears?* in order to identify focalization in Mark. We will examine Mark 4:1–41 and 7:31–8:26, where themes of hearing and seeing are prominent. It will be shown that

[289] See this thesis, 36.

the disciples are the primary addressees of Jesus' teaching, and their experience on the story level is to be aligned with Mark's implied audience on the discourse level.[290] Therefore, they can be recognized as focalizers. We will also examine the relationship between the disciples' and Jesus' seeing, as well as between seeing and ideology.

Means for Internal Focalization in Mark's Gospel

The concept of focalization is not broadly discussed in Markan studies. It is addressed in one well-known paper by Joanna Dewey called "Point of View and the Disciples in Mark," which was already mentioned. According to her, the internal focalization in Mark's Gospel is relatively rare. Dewey claims: "The markan narrative is almost entirely non-focalized — presented directly by an omniscient and omnipresent narrator."[291] Probably, that claim is one of the reasons why the category of focalization is rarely utilized in Markan studies. Dewey notes that 9:2–8 can be seen as an exceptional case, namely, the internal focalization through the inner circle is clearly evident in this passage. Besides that, the disciples can be recognized as a character-focalizer (CF) in the stilling of the storm scene (4:36–41).[292] She also lists several other passages where, in her

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[290] For the discussion of the differentiation between story and discourse in Mark's Gospel see David Rhoads, "Narrative Criticism and the Gospel of Mark," 414–26. The communication between the implied author and the implied reader belongs to the discourse.

[291] Dewey, "Point of View," 101.

[292] "The transfiguration scene, however, is visualized or focalized through the disciples. The narrator tells the story, constantly noting the disciples. Jesus takes Peter, James, and John and takes *them* up the mountain *alone by themselves*; Jesus was transfigured before *them*; Elijah and Moses appeared to *them*; Peter speaks; *they* were afraid; a cloud overshadows *them* and finally *they* no longer see anyone but Jesus (9:2–8). The implied reader sees what the disciples see, hears what they hear, and is conscious of their inner state, and thus is brought into close alignment with them. In addition, the scene of the stilling of the storm is focalized through the disciples (4:36–41)." Dewey, "Point of View," 101–2.

opinion, the internal focalization can be identified,[293] and concludes: "Focalization, then, in the markan narrative does not appear to be a means of stressing any particular character since it occurs only rarely and scattered among various major and minor characters."[294]

Dewey's conclusion is acceptable[295] provided we recognize certain restrictions implied in her discussion of internal focalization. First, she tried to find specific passages where internal focalization is clear and coherently present throughout the entire scene. However, in the previous chapter, we concluded that the Markan narrative, considered in its fullness, is focalized through Jesus' group. Therefore, we do not need to limit ourselves to the concrete scenes but also consider how Mark unites them into the complete narrative. Moreover, Mark also creates a sense of focalization in the moments of scenes opening. It is often made with the usage of the plural-to-singular device, the

[293] "Focalization through other characters also occurs occasionally in the narrative. Focalization through Jesus occurs in 1:9–12, 16–20; 11:12–14, 15–17; 12:41–44 and 14:33–42. In addition 5:2–13 is focalized through the Gerasene demoniac, 5:25–29 through the woman with a flow of blood, 15:16–24 through the soldiers, and finally 16:1–5 through the women at the empty tomb. All the rest of the narrative is unfocalized." Dewey, "Point of View," 102. I find it hard to understand her reasoning concerning the selection of those passages. For example, I guess that 11:15–17 is included only because Jesus seems to be a solo actor there and is moving around the scene. There are no signals of particular Jesus' perception in the passage. Why then does she not consider two disciples as CF in the preceding pericope (11:4–7) on the same ground?

[294] Dewey, "Point of View," 102.

[295] Focalization is a difficult concept which is still being developed. Dewey was the first among Markan scholars to call attention to the concept in relatively early stages of its development. Therefore, of course, further research regarding the focalization in Mark's narrative is required. Research in the vein she suggested, namely looking for particular cases of establishing focalizers in specific passages, would be helpful. However, it should be done with some carefully set and coherently applied methodology. This has yet to occur, probably with regard to other NT books as well. There is an excellent recent thesis on focalization in the OT, specifically the Book of Ruth, published by Konstantin Nazarov ("Focalization in the Old Testament Narratives"). In this work, Nazarov attempted to study Genette's concept of focalization in the context of his overall narrative theory and provided examples of different focalization types. He conducts a helpful survey of the treatment of focalization concepts by Biblical narratologists. He concludes that "the idea of focalization was largely overlooked by most Old Testament scholars" (ibid., 68). Then, he studied the further developments of the concept made by other scholars. The ideas suggested by two of them (Wolf Schmid and Valeri Tjupa) were set as the basis for a concrete methodology that Nazarov applied to studying the passages in the Book of Ruth. Something similar to Nazarov's endeavor should be undertaken for Mark's Gospel as well.

technique we will discuss in a minute. It creates an impression of arriving on the scene with the disciples and observing it together with them. But Mark also frequently uses a kind of "follow-up," or retrospective analysis of scenes, where we can look back on the same scene with the disciples and Jesus. We will discuss this technique as well. Both those techniques create a strong impression of observing the scene with the disciples, which is basically what internal focalization means.

Second, Dewey identified the focalization with visualization (she asserts: "The transfiguration scene, however, is visualized or focalized through the disciples"),[296] excluding other ways of establishing focalization. However, in his later developments, Genette warned against such a restriction. He suggested replacing the question *Who sees?* with *Who perceives?* to escape the excessive accent on visualization.[297]

The Gospel stories are usually brief and schematized. We can tell that most scenes are "flat"; usually there is no third dimension in them. It is not surprising that we do not find a lot of evidence of internal focalization in the scenes, as modern literature or classical narratologists would describe. The implied author shows lack of interest in detailed visual descriptions, except for the most general details. An episode that is an exception to this is 9:2–8, probably due to its nature, dedicated to the visual appearance of Jesus. Therefore, there is more accent on visual description. Nonetheless, it is possible to confidently show that the disciples play a significant focalizing role in many scenes of the Gospel, which is crucial for the entire Gospel. We just need to ask two basic questions

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[296] Dewey, "Point of View," 101.

[297] "There would have been no point in taking great pains to replace point of view with focalization if I was only going to fall right back into the same old rut; so obviously we must replace *who sees*? with the broader question of *who perceives*?" Gérard Genette, *Narrative Discourse Revisited,* trans. Jane E. Levin (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1988), 64.

identifying the focalizer: *Who sees? Who hears?*[298] Once those are answered, then it is clear who the focalizers are.

A considerable part of the Gospel of Mark is composed of Jesus' direct speeches. This is not surprising, as he is the Teacher, so he is supposed to teach.[299] And he indeed teaches a lot. There are large portions of the Gospel which are comprised of a few elements — some elementary settings, Jesus as a teacher or narrator, and his listeners or narratees. The most significant part of those portions is Jesus' teaching, which may be also called second-level narratives. Thus, in Mark 4, Jesus teaches from the boat, and most of the chapter is parables. In Mark 13, we have Jesus with four inner-circle disciples sitting opposite the temple. Almost the entire chapter contains the apocalyptic teaching of Jesus. In 7:1–23, we see Jesus' teaching on traditions and sources of defilement after the Pharisees accused his disciples of not following the elders' traditions. Most of Mark 12 (12:1–40) contains Jesus' polemics against the Judean religious leaders, which takes

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[298] In her essay Dewey's goal is to establish the ways which are used in the Gospel of Mark in order to help the reader to identify with the disciples and Jesus. She proposed utilizing Genette's categories of perspective and voice. Perspective is one of two subcategories of the mood and answers the question *Who sees?* And voice — *Who speaks?* Dewey discusses focalization under the subheading of perspective and comes to the conclusion that the internal focalization in Mark's Gospel is relatively rare ("Point of View," 101). Then she proceeds with the discussion of the voice category. There she concentrates on the narrative levels and notices that the significant part of Mark's Gospel is second-level narrative narrated by Jesus, who becomes second-level narrator. The disciples became second-level narratees. She concludes that for the IR, who themselves are termed an "extradiegetic narratee," it would be easy to identify with the disciples as the second-level narratees. See ibid., 102–3. I agree with most of her excellent argumentation and conclusions. I am just not sure why we need to exclude the disciples as Jesus' narratees from the category of "focalizers," and discuss them under the category of "voice," which is the primary category of the narrator, and is supposed answer the question "who speaks?" If we are to choose between perspective and voice, we need to place the second-level narratees, who are first-level narrative characters, in the first category. The character-focalizer, if we limit that character to only one function, namely that of seeing, is a medium through which the narrator "shows" the story world to the IR. The narratee-character, the one who hears, is the medium between the second-level narrator, who is a part of the story world, and the IR as well. So basically both the CF and narratee-character share the same role — one of medium between the IR and the story world. Now, I believe that the division I just introduced (between the character-focalizer and character-narratee) is really unnecessary, and we can delegate both functions (that of seeing and hearing) to the same character, which is confirmed by Genette himself. See footnote 296 above.

[299] Hooker, *The Gospel According to Saint Mark*, 119.

place in the temple. And, of course, there are many smaller units where the central element is Jesus' teaching.[300]

How do we determine the "position of the witness" in the teaching episodes? It definitely belongs to those who hear Jesus. Therefore, the focalizing in the Gospel of Mark should not only answer the question *Who sees?* but also *Who hears?* It is easy to identify the CF in these episodes. It is not Jesus, as he is the teacher or the narrator himself. He cannot "speak" and "hear" at the same time. We may consider him as an object of focalization (OF). The CF should be among his naratees or listeners. However, even in passages where Jesus speaks, it is not just hearing that is important but seeing as well, as it will be shown in a minute. Therefore, when we look for a focalizer in Mark's Gospel, seeing should be understood in a broader sense, including other ways of perceiving, especially hearing.

The themes of hearing and seeing are essential for the Gospel, and at the same time, they are deeply interconnected. Their importance and internal connection are especially prominent in two sections, 4:1–41 and 7:31–8:26.[301] Those two passages are of crucial importance in the following discussion. We will discuss the disciples' calling to see, their actual seeing in the Gospel, their sight problems, and, finally, the implied healing of those problems. The disciples' experience will be compared with the IR's experience in order to show that the latter is called to perceive the Gospel story quite in

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[300] Form critics would call such units "exhortations" or "sayings." See Dibelius, *From Tradition to Gospel*, 233–65; Taylor, *The Formation of the Gospel Tradition*, 88–118; Rudolf Bultmann, *The History of the Synoptic Tradition*, 2nd ed., trans. John Marsh (New York, NY: Harper & Row, 1963), 69–208.

[301] Numerous scholars have recognized the importance of hearing and seeing in those two sections of the Gospel. I will particularly rely on Coody, "The Motif of Hearing and Seeing in Mark 4–8." See also Hartin, "The Role of the Disciples"; Malbon, "How Does the Story Mean?," 45–47; Ernest Best, *Mark: The Gospel as Story* (Edinburgh, UK: T&T Clark, 1983), 44–50; Bayer, *Apostolic Bedrock*, 156–60; Werner H. Kelber, *Mark's Story of Jesus* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1979), 30–42.

line with the disciples and usually with their mediation. So, the disciples may justifiably be regarded as the CF.

Calling to See (4:1–41)

In the third chapter, it was claimed that the disciples' calling implies their role as observers.[302] However, there is much more to be said on this matter. The calling to discipleship in Mark is really a calling to see. This becomes evident as early as in Mark 4, right after the calling of the Twelve in Mark 3. To be more precise, the disciples are called to perceive, which includes both seeing and hearing, as well as reflecting and understanding. But, as we will see, seeing and hearing are closely connected activities in Mark. Moreover, seeing can have a symbolic meaning of understanding or even having the right ideology. Therefore, it is appropriate to use the verb "see" in the meaning which exceeds physical seeing. Mark 4 and 8 will help us to understand the essence of this calling.

We will start with Mark 4, which is mainly dedicated to Jesus' teaching in parables. Seeing and hearing are constantly mentioned concurrently in the chapter. The first and probably the most important parable of Jesus[303] starts with his call: Ἀκούετε! Ἰδού (Listen! Look!, 4:3). So, literally, those around Jesus are called to do both — to hear the parable and to see it as well.[304] He wants them to give all their senses to comprehend the parable. Ἰδού, of course, may be understood in the meaning "pay attention." And yet

[302] See this thesis, 61–65.

[303] The crucial importance of the parable of the sower with its relevance for the entire Gospel is shown by Mary Ann Tolbert in her *Sowing the Gospel.*

[304] Marcus states that the "audience must exert both their sense of sight and their sense of sound in order to take it in." Marcus, *Mark 1–8*, 292. See also Coody, "The Motif of Hearing and Seeing in Mark 4–8," 56–57.

the basic meaning of the verb is "look," and therefore, the call is deeply connected with sight, even if not entirely literally. The style Jesus uses in the parable of the sower, as well as in other parables, is essential. He does not teach via propositions, but his language is full of visual imagery.[305] He seems to draw masterful paintings in front of his narratees. Thus, their hearing experience is very close to seeing experience. Even though they do not literally see the story, they still are called to activate their imagination and visualize the pictures Jesus wants to communicate. So, the call ἰδού is indeed relevant.

After the parable is presented, the crowd leaves Jesus, but the Twelve, along with some other people, come to Jesus for clarification. This was their regular practice. Jonathan Coody notes the usage of the imperfect verb ἠρώτων ("asked") and plural in παραβολάς ("parables").[306] It is also confirmed by 4:34. Therefore, the disciples revealed that they were attentive to Jesus' teaching. And he confirmed that they are its primary addressees:

> ὑμῖν τὸ μυστήριον δέδοται τῆς βασιλείας τοῦ θεοῦ,
> ἐκείνοις δὲ τοῖς ἔξω ἐν παραβολαῖς τὰ πάντα γείνεται
> ἵνα βλέποντες βλέπωσιν καὶ μὴ ἴδωσιν
> καὶ ἀκούοντες ἀκούωσιν καὶ μὴ συνιῶσιν
> μήποτε ἐπιστρέψωσιν καὶ ἀφεθῇ αὐτοῖς.
>
> To you has been given the secret of the kingdom of God, but for those outside
> everything is in parables, so that
> "they may indeed see but not perceive,
> and may indeed hear but not understand,
> lest they should turn and be forgiven." (4:11–12)

Once again, we see here how hearing and seeing are going side by side. Those two exercises are relevant not only for understanding Jesus' parables but for

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[305] Bas M. F. van Iersel asserts that Jesus' teaching by parables is the same as "by the way of metaphors or by images." His *Mark: A Reader-Response Commentary,* Library of New Testament Studies (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 176.

[306] See Coody, "The Motif of Hearing and Seeing in Mark 4–8," 63.

comprehending all of his ministry, as Jesus emphasizes that ἐν παραβολαῖς τὰ πάντα ("everything is in parables"). The same attitude is required for both listening to Jesus' teaching and observing his activities. Hearing and seeing have their goal — they should lead a person to perceiving and understanding. Otherwise, they are in vain. And yet, one needs first to see and hear in order to understand finally. As the disciples are the primary addressees of Jesus' teaching, they are supposed to see and perceive, to hear and understand. Thus, it is their call, which for the sake of brevity can be shortened to the call to see.

The importance of hearing and seeing is confirmed once Jesus explains the parable of the sower (4:14–20). We become aware that it is really about the word and how people react to it. So, it is basically about hearing and understanding. Hearing is necessary, but it should lead a listener to the proper reaction to the word so the word would become fruitful. By this explanation, Jesus confirmed that his disciples are his primary audience, who should very actively exercise their hearing and their seeing. We can positively add seeing here precisely due to Jesus' comment, placed between the parable and its explanation, forming one of the Markan intercalations or so-called "sandwiches." This central part is the key to understanding the whole "sandwich."[307] If the parable is to be applied to Jesus and his activity, then it undoubtedly means both hearing and seeing as he teaches the word and acts it out. This will become more evident when we turn to the study of 7:31–8:26.

The next parable and Jesus' commentary on it (4:21–25) are fascinating in their relevance to hearing and seeing.[308] The parable is about the lamp, which should be put on

[307] See Edwards, "Markan Sandwiches."

[308] See Coody, "The Motif of Hearing and Seeing in Mark 4–8," 75.

a stand (v. 21). It is a vivid call to the listeners' imagination, clearly referring to Jesus and his actions, that should be accessible for everyone to observe. In v. 23, we hear the same call: εἴ τις ἔχει ὦτα ἀκούειν ἀκουέτω ("if anyone has ears to hear, let him hear"). Jesus unites hearing and seeing (v. 24) in his exhortation: Βλέπετε τί ἀκούετε (see what you hear). Jesus' followers should be very attentive to both what they hear and what they see. Their hearing and seeing should be active exercises.

The call to see and hear attentively becomes even more significant when we turn to the last words in Jesus' address to the disciples in 4:10–13. In 4:10, Jesus confirmed the privileged status of the disciples, but in 4:13, he expressed surprise at their inability to understand the parable of the sower. It was expected that they understood it probably due to its fundamental importance, but the disciples failed to comprehend it, revealing some basic problems in proper understanding. They are to understand a lot of parables! So, their privilege does not imply their perfection, but it instead serves as a starting point in this endeavor of understanding Jesus' parables. Therefore, they are to be attentive to what and how they see and hear!

Coody draws attention to how hearing, seeing, and understanding are practiced by the Twelve in the last pericope of chapter 4. After Jesus calmed the storm, the disciples asked the question: τίς ἄρα οὗτός ἐστιν ὅτι καὶ ὁ ἄνεμος καὶ ἡ θάλασσα ὑπακούει αὐτῷ; ("Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?" 4:41). Coody asserts: "In this, they are listening and looking, paying attention to what they hear and see (4:24)."[309] Indeed, they did not understand the truth about Jesus yet, but, as Malbon puts it, they became "possessed by the right question,"[310] which is a step in the right direction.

[309] Coody, "The Motif of Hearing and Seeing in Mark 4–8," 80.

[310] Malbon, "How Does the Story Mean?," 46.

Thus far, we have seen the deep connection between seeing and hearing and their relevance to the disciples' calling. We need now to switch from the story to the discourse level of our investigation. What was the expected experience of the implied readers or, rather, listeners? Let's mention that according to many modern scholars, Mark's Gospel was intended to be read out loud or even performed in the settings of the first century Christian congregations.[311] Suppose the Gospel was intended to be performed. In that case, once Jesus turns into a narrator to tell his parables, he and the first-level narrator (Mark's narrator) are merged into the person of the Gospel's performer. Just as Jesus calls his naratees to listen and look, the performer makes the same appeal to his audience. The call itself can be regarded as one belonging to both — the story and the discourse. In this case, the call to "look" receives additional meaning. It urges the audience not only to enable their imagination but also to literally see the performer who would perform the parable in front of their eyes. Their experience would be aligned with Jesus' audience, who saw Jesus performing.[312]

Therefore, this experience already implies significant identification between the present listeners and Jesus' audience. However, we need to remember that in 4:10, the crowd leaves Jesus while the Twelve and some other people who collectively may be called "Jesus' disciples" remain by Jesus to ask him about the parable. Those around the present performer also remain. And the crowd is not simply dismissed, that is, let go, but

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[311] See Joanna Dewey, "The Gospel of Mark, Orality Studies and Performance Criticism," in *Religion & Theology* 25 (2018), 350–93; Boomershine, "Peter's Denial," 51–55; David Rhoads, "Narrative Criticism: Practices and Prospects," in *Characterization in Gospels: Reconceiving of Narrative Criticism*, ed. David Rhoads and Kary Syreeni, JSNTSup 184 (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 276–77.

[312] Dewey agrees with this suggestion: "The close relationship between the omniscient narrator and the second-level narrator, Jesus, suggests the possibility of a close relationship between the two narratees." Dewey, "Point of View," 103.

it receives the unpleasant characterization from Jesus (as well as from the performer). They are called τοῖς ἔξω ("those outside"), and the disciples are commended as those to whom τὸ μυστήριον δέδοται τῆς βασιλείας τοῦ θεοῦ ("has been given the secret of the kingdom of God"). So, by now, the audience should know quite clearly with whom they should identify and have the same experience with the Gospel story. They feel the same privilege as the disciples in the story.

Now, let us turn to the parable of the sower and its explanation. The listeners' hearing and seeing experience on the discourse level is to be aligned with the disciples' seeing and hearing in the story. Indeed, just as the sower sows the word so that listeners shall hear and become fruitful, the present performer reads the Gospel so his listeners can hear and become fruitful. This Gospel reading is really sowing the word of Jesus, sharing his story. So, listeners should be very attentive to what they hear, activating all their senses in order to comprehend the preached. The disciples should do the same on the story level. They should carefully watch as well as listen to what is happening and being taught in the story.

The listeners should not only practice hearing and seeing in a manner similar to the disciples. They are involved in the same dynamics regarding their seeing and hearing as Jesus' disciples. Right in 4:13, the disciples are rebuked for the lack of understanding, and the audience should be cautious concerning their understanding as well. Of course, the audience is more privileged than the disciples are (since they have 1:1), and yet, at this point, they should have found themselves in the same ignorance as the disciples with regard to the parable understanding. Indeed, if the parable of the sower were easy to understand, we would not need an explanation! As the IR is provided with the

explanation of the parable, they seem to be in the same position of learners as Jesus' disciples. Therefore, Jesus' story-level call to the disciples to Βλέπετε τί ἀκούετε (see what they hear, 4:24) is a discourse call to the implied reader or listener. They should be no less attentive to the story than the disciples. They share both the disciples' privilege and their ignorance. The starting position is the same for both the disciples and narratees. The call to see, to see and understand, is no less to them than to the disciples.

It is appropriate to call the disciples the CF because they are called to see the Gospel story. The Gospel story is displayed for their sake. But the IR has the same calling. They are called to hear (see) the Gospel, which is told (shown) for their sake, and are put in the same position as the disciples.

Seeing

Now, we are aware that both the disciples and the narratees have the same calling to see and hear the Gospel story. Not only do they have such a calling, but they actually see. The narratees see it along with the disciples.

Arriving at a Scene

The narrator who conveys the story to his narratees arrives at a scene along with the disciples, namely with Jesus' group. But there is more to be said on this topic, especially if we consider the usage of the plural in the moments of the scene opening. Usually, when the scene is opened, the plural is either directly applied to the subject character or may be assumed. Namely, when Jesus' group enters the scene, the reader is aware of the presence of the disciples with Jesus. However, after the scene is focused, the disciples usually disappear. Jesus, meanwhile, takes his place as Mark's only hero. From

the entire group only he remains in the narrator's focus. Therefore, after the whole group enters the scene, it is divided as Jesus and his disciples perform different roles. While Jesus becomes the main character and takes the central place on the stage, the disciples are put in the shadows and occupy their role as observers.

Bauckham makes this point by explaining how Mark uses the so-called plural-to-singular device. While discussing "Petrine perspective" in *Jesus and the Eyewitness*,[313] Bauckham pays attention to Turner's discussion[314] of Mark's unusual depiction of Jesus' and his disciples' movements, highlighted in 21 cases.[315] Those passages contain an atypical combination of plural and singular verbs and nouns. Bauckham explains that in those passages, "a plural verb (or more than one plural verb), without an explicit subject, is used to describe the movements of Jesus and the disciples, followed immediately by a singular verb of pronoun to Jesus alone."[316] Here are two examples:

> Καὶ ἔρχονται εἰς Βηθσαϊδάν. καὶ φέρουσιν αὐτῷ τυφλὸν καὶ παρακαλοῦσιν αὐτὸν ἵνα αὐτοῦ ἅψηται. (8:22)
>
> And they came to Bethsaida. And some people brought to him a blind man and begged him to touch him. (8:22)
>
> Καὶ τῇ ἐπαύριον ἐξελθόντων αὐτῶν ἀπὸ Βηθανίας ἐπείνασεν. (11:12)
>
> On the following day, when they came from Bethany, he was hungry. (11:12)

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[313] Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses,* 2nd ed., 156–164.

[314] C. H. Turner, "Marcan Usage: Notes Critical and Exegetical, on the Second Gospel V. The Movements of Jesus and His Disciples and the Crowd," *Journal of Theological Studies* 26, no. 2 (April 1925), 225–40.

[315] For the full list see Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses,* 2nd ed., 182.

[316] Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses,* 2nd ed., 156.

Turner sees it as evidence of the direct influence of eyewitnesses (Peter) on Mark's story. Namely, it is easy to paraphrase such phrases with "we" as a subject.[317] Bauckham, however, suggests that such constructions serve as an intentional literary approach of Mark. It can serve as a means for creating a sense of internal focalization, which "enables the readers to view the incident that follows from the perspective of the disciples who have arrived on the scene with Jesus."[318] He basically makes the same point as was made above. The disciples arrive at the scene together with Jesus, but right after their arrival, solely Jesus is brought into focus. Then, the new scene with its settings and characters is introduced. The disciples are still there, but their primary function is to observe both Jesus and the scene.

This way of scenes' introduction is an excellent instance of internal focalization in its most rigorous form which, according to Genette, is rare. Recalling Jean Pouillon, this is how he described "vision with" the CF: "...we apprehend him as we apprehend ourselves in our immediate awareness of things, our attitudes with respect to what surrounds us—what surrounds us and is not within us."[319] We see that in many Gospel scenes, especially those describing Jesus' public ministry, through the way those scenes are introduced. We know that the disciples are there due to the usage of a verb in the plural. But they are not even mentioned! So, they are behind "the camera." Their job is to see what is around them, and not themselves.

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[317] "In one passage in particular, 1:29, 'they left the synagogue and came into the house of Simon and Andrew with James and John,' the hypothesis that the third person plural of Mark represents a first person plural of Peter makes what as it stands is a curiously awkward phrase into a phrase which is quite easy and coherent. 'We left the synagogue and came into our house with our fellow-disciples James and John. My mother-in-law was in bed with fever, and he is told about her.'" Turner, "Marcan Usage," 226.

[318] Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses,* 2nd ed., 163.

[319] Genette, *Narrative Discourse*, 193.

Looking Back on a Scene

Even though the disciples are mainly in shadows, we know that they are present, actively seeing and trying to make sense of the scene. In a number of passages, we see retrospective discussions between Jesus and his disciples.[320] Those discussions usually relate directly to the scene which just ended. In some rare cases, the teaching is given not exclusively to the disciples (7:14–16; 12:38–40). However, the disciples and Jesus are mostly alone, often in "the house" settings (7:17–23; 9:28–29; 10:10–12),[321] yet not necessarily (4:10–20). Sometimes, the discussed scene is not the one immediately preceding the discussion but rather removed in the narrative time (11:20–25).

Usually, the disciples simply observe those scenes, occasionally becoming active participants (9:28–29). They state their opinion related to this scene in the form of a question or assertion. After the disciples express their perspective, Jesus reacts to it. He usually either answers their question or corrects their perspective. Rarely, Jesus himself may initiate such a discussion, and then the disciples reveal their point of view (8:14–21; 10:23–31). Most of them are rather limited to only discussing preceding scenes (9:28–29; 10:10–12), while occasionally, Jesus gives relatively extended teaching (13:3–37). There

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[320] 4:10–20, 34; 7:14–16, 17–23; 8:13–21; 9:11–13, 28–29; 10:10–12, 23–31; 11:20–26; 12:38–40; 13:3–37; 14:72.

[321] Scholars often note Jesus' custom of teaching disciples in house. For example, R. Alan Culpepper asserts with regard to 7:17–23: "Entering into a house (v. 17) is a typical Markan transition that introduces a scene in which Jesus gives the disciples private instruction concerning his public teaching (see 3:20; 9:28, 33; 10:10)." Culpepper, *Mark*, 235. "The story closes with Jesus gathered privately in a house with the disciples. In Mark's Gospel, private gatherings in houses are typically settings of further instruction and revelation for the benefit of disciples." Edwards, *The Gospel According to Mark,* 281. Thus Moloney notes with regard to the divorce discussion (10:1–12) how the private teaching to the disciples is really an interest of both Jesus and the narrator: "The debate comes to an abrupt end, as the real interest of the storyteller does not lie with the Pharisees, but with the disciples. Jesus uses debate over divorce to further instruct his disciples on receptivity and service (see 9:35–37). As is now customary, 'the house' is the place for this private teaching (3:20; 7:17; 9:33). The disciples ask for further clarification on the debate they have just witnessed." Moloney, *The Gospel of Mark,* 195. Note how Moloney uses the verb "witness" with regard to the dialog with Pharisees. This confirms my claim of the close relationship between "witnessing" and "hearing" in the Gospel of Mark.

is one exceptional case of retrospective discussion, which for our purposes, perhaps, is the most significant in the whole Gospel. This discussion happens in Peter's head in the form of remembering Jesus' words (14:72).

Seemingly, these cases are nothing but the retrospective analysis of what just happened between Jesus and other characters (sometimes, even the disciples) and was observed by the disciples. As readers, we are invited to share their observations and attitudes toward what was observed. Not only are we aware that they indeed observed the scene, but also involved in their retrospective (often ideological) evaluation and reevaluation of the scene. In other words, we think through the scene together with them. According to Genette, internal focalization is about seeing through and seeing "with" a character. So, these are nothing but internal focalization cases. We view the scene with the disciples, react with them, and see how Jesus corrects this reaction. Even though the initial scene may be described from the perspective of an EF, at those "follow-up" moments we clearly have the internal focalization through the disciples.

Therefore, we not only arrive at the scene with the disciples, as evidenced by the use of the plural at the beginning of many scenes, but we also observe those scenes from their perspective. Together with them, we look around to reflect on what we have just observed. We may note that the plural-to-singular device and retrospective observing are not often applied to the same episodes (9:14–29; 11:12, 20–25; 14:26–27, 72). However, the frequency of both of those approaches suggests that they are embedded into the Gospel composition. The IR is expected to arrive on the scene with the disciples and then look back over their shoulders. This pattern creates a strong effect of internal focalization.

Seeing and Hearing Together

As we arrive at the scene and look back on it with the disciples, we actually see and experience it together. This is quite clear when Jesus teaches (most parts of chapters 4, 7, 13). We have already seen that the experience of two narrators on two different levels (story and discourse) is very similar. As Jesus narrates and the present performer reads the Gospel, the disciples and narratees listen to him. This similarity is relevant for other scenes where the disciples are not actively involved as well. Indeed, most of Mark's scenes are "flat" dialogues. The audience's experience of them would be comparable to the scenes where Jesus is the solo narrator. For the listener, there is not much difference if they listen to Jesus' parable of the sower (4:2–8), his encounter with the Pharisees (10:1–9), or with the rich young man (10:17–22). They both hear and see those scenes.

The disciples usually do just the same on their level. In the story world, they are near Jesus; they see and hear him acting and teaching. Extensive retrospective analysis relates to both types of scenes as well. The disciples see and hear Jesus teaching in parables and then ask questions. Then, they see and hear Jesus' encounter with the Pharisees or the rich young man and ask questions. Thus, both the audience and the disciples share the same experience of seeing and hearing Jesus' teaching and acting, just on different narrative levels or in different worlds. The disciples should be regarded as the CF for most of Jesus' ministry: when they see it, we see it with them.

When we hear or "watch" the Gospel stories, it is like going to the cinema. We are there with other people, but we barely notice them. Once the lights go off, we are focused solely on what is on the screen. It is just the movie and us. We may be aware of other people's presence, but it does not really matter. However, once the movie ends, the lights

come back on, and we suddenly notice others. They may discuss what they have just seen, and we realize that we have all had the same experience. This is how we can see our experience with the Gospel stories where the disciples are present. We started the journey together, but then we forgot about them. We watched, and they watched, as that is our mutual calling. When the story ended, the discussion began. Then, we realize that we were next to the disciples, observing the same scene, and we silently engage in their discussion. This creates a strong impression of internal focalization or "seeing with" the disciples.

In the Gospel of Mark, the IR is closely connected to the disciples. Both the reader and the disciples hear and see the teachings of Jesus, creating a fundamental dependency of the reader on the disciples. This relationship is similar to the idea of embedded narrations described by Genette, as Dewey helpfully refers.[322] The dependence of the reader on the disciples is particularly evident in the scenes where Jesus narrates. The first-level (or extradiegetic) narratees cannot listen to the second-level (intradiegetic) narrator except through the second-level (intradiegetic) narratees, who, in this case, are the disciples. However, as hearing and seeing in Mark are fundamentally interrelated and basically identical for both groups of the narratees, it would be reasonable to assert that the IR is dependent on the disciples not only to hear Jesus but also to see him in action.

Inability to See (7:31–8:26)

The theme of seeing and hearing is central in 7:31–8:26. In 7:31–37, the mute person is healed. In 8:22–26, the blind person receives his sight. There are a lot of

[322] See footnote 298 above.

connections between the two miracles.[323] In 8:18, we hear Jesus' heartfelt rebuke: ὀφθαλμοὺς ἔχοντες οὐ βλέπετε, καὶ ὦτα ἔχοντες οὐκ ἀκούετε; καὶ οὐ μνημονεύετε; ("Having eyes do you not see, and having ears do you not hear? And do you not remember?"). This call implies that two healing scenes, which can also be called parable-like miracles, were "shown" to the disciples so they could see them (along with the reader). The disciples witnessed these two healing scenes yet had their ability to perceive questioned by Jesus despite having both eyes and ears. These miracles had to help them recognize the need for healing and hope for recovery. The second miracle is especially significant, namely the two-step healing of the blind man. Many scholars, specifically narrative critics, acknowledge that the unusual method used to restore the sight of the blind man serves as an example of how serious the spiritual illness of the disciples was, as well as Jesus' strategy for healing them.[324] Anyway, both miracles were performed for the disciples' sake.[325]

The immediate context of 8:18 is the scene in the boat when the disciples forgot to take bread and were preoccupied with this oversight. In v. 15, Jesus warns them: βλέπετε ἀπὸ τῆς ζύμης τῶν Φαρισαίων καὶ τῆς ζύμης Ἡρώδου ("watch out; beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod"). This call is obviously connected to the preceding scene (8:11–13). The disciples were supposed to see it and reflect on it. With Jesus' assistance, they had to derive specific implications from the scene. However, they did not understand Jesus' warning due to their concerns about the absence of food. It is

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[323] See Malbon, "How Does the Story Mean?," 47; France, *The Gospel of Mark*, 300–304, 322.

[324] Malbon, "Narrative Criticism," 47; Bayer, *Apostolic Bedrock*, 157–59; Best, "Peter in the Gospel According to Mark," 549.

[325] Coody, "The Motif of Hearing and Seeing in Mark 4–8," 123–24.

these worries that made Jesus rebuke them earnestly (v. 18). In vv. 19–20, he asked them about two episodes with the feeding of the crowds with a few loaves of bread and fish (6:34–44; 8:1–10). The disciples were supposed to observe those miracles, reflect on them, and draw necessary conclusions regarding Jesus and the bread. If they did, they would not be preoccupied with the bread to that extent.

The hearing and seeing mentioned in v. 18 hold a figurative meaning.[326] It does not mean that the disciples were not able to see and hear literally. But they needed to change the way they saw Jesus, God, and themselves. They had to learn to trust Jesus. So, hearing and seeing here are primarily related to the disciples' ideology. However, as Jesus uses the events that the disciples observed, we can tell that this figurative hearing and seeing are inextricably connected to and depend on their physical seeing and hearing. In order to realize what Jesus wanted them to learn, they first had to observe what happened in the Gospel narrative carefully. We see in the response of the Twelve that they did observe what had occurred. The problem was their (lack of) understanding, and for this, Jesus rebuked them.

We see how 8:18 is related to 4:11–12, as well as how 7:31–8:26 is related to Mark 4. In that chapter, the disciples are primary addressees of Jesus' teaching and miracles. They are supposed to be observant in order to understand what he is saying and doing. So, calling them "focalizers" not only for Jesus' teachings but also for his performances is relevant. They must "see what they hear" and pay close attention so that they can learn everything Jesus wants to teach them through what they see and hear.

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[326] See Bayer, *Apostolic Bedrock*, 158.

It is now apparent, however, that they could not have done it on their own. Namely, even though they were able to see and hear, they had problems with proper understanding. Those problems were revealed as early as in 4:13 and became even clearer by Mark 8, as Jesus admitted in 8:18. Sometimes, they at least ask the right questions (4:41), but often they miss the point altogether. So we can conclude that they are unable to see correctly, even though they are called to.

It was mentioned that the disciples' seeing and hearing in 8:18 are figurative. Robert Fowler, however, draws attention to more literal manifestations of the disciples' sight deficiency. In 6:48–49, we see an interplay between Jesus' and the disciples' seeing.[327] Jesus saw the disciples in trouble and walked to them on the water. The disciples saw Jesus walking on water and mistook him for a sea ghost. So, there is an issue with the way they see things. Another good example is 5:31–32. The disciples called Jesus to see the crowd pressing around him. But Jesus disagreed with their explanation. He knew that someone, in particular, touched him and περιεβλέπετο ἰδεῖν τὴν τοῦτο ποιήσασαν ("looked around to see who had done it," 5:32).[328] Fowler diagnoses the way they see things as "defective," which is undoubtedly correct. The normative, proper way to see things, of course, is Jesus' way of seeing.

Based on this observation, Fowler concludes that in this way, the narrator creates a certain distance between the IR and the disciples. When the reader is presented with the disciples' perspective of the story world, he or she will not accept it. As the IR is more

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[327] Fowler, *Let the Reader Understand*, 68–70.

[328] Fowler also refers to 6:35–37 and 8:1–3; 9:33–37 and 10:13–16. See Fowler, *Let the Reader Understand*, 69–70.

informed than the disciples, the former would line up with Jesus against the disciples.[329] In other words, as it is revealed that the disciples' seeing is defective, the reader will keep themselves away from the disciples' way of seeing things. Even though the reader will start with a certain level of sympathy toward the disciples (4:35–41),[330] in the end, they will not be able to identify with them. Hartin makes a similar conclusion, showing how the disciples move from the privileged position of "insiders" to that of "outsiders."[331]

Fowler's argument, that the narrator not only allowed Jesus to identify the disciples' seeing and hearing ailments through direct discourse in 8:18 but also prepared the reader for this conclusion by providing evidence of their perception problems, is correct. Furthermore, it is clear that their perception issues were not instantly resolved. And yet, it would be wrong to say that there is a fundamental mistrust of disciples seeing. That can be shown in the critical scene of the Transfiguration (9:2–8), where we do not have other eyes to observe it but Peter's. Even though Peter makes wrong suggestions (9:5), we see the same Jesus Peter sees. So, the reader still has no choice but to witness Jesus together with Peter and, therefore, should trust Peter's seeing.

The reader should not completely distrust what the disciples see but should be aware that they may make errors in interpreting what they see. Extreme cases like 6:49 serve to illustrate this problem before the diagnosis is made in 8:18. Malbon suggests that in the second part of the Gospel, the disciples' ability to see is gradually recovered, just

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[329] "As a result of having read the first sea story and the first feeding story, the reader cannot adopt the disciples' defective perceptual point of view when it is offered in a second sea or feeding story." Fowler, *Let the Reader Understand*, 70.

[330] Fowler affirms that usage of internal focalization in the first sea trip, brought the reader close with the disciples. Fowler, *Let the Reader Understand*, 67.

[331] Hartin, "The Role of the Disciples," 42–46.

as the blind man in 8:22–26 was healed in two steps.[332] If that indeed happened in Mark's narrative, we are yet to see it.

The purpose of 8:18 is not only to reveal the disciples' problems with seeing, but the same problem of the audience as well. As Malbon asserts, it is not only the disciples but the implied reader who requires healing.[333] When the disciples are rebuked in 8:18, not only them, but the audience as well should recall the stories they just heard and make sure they did not miss the point. We already saw in Mark 4 that the audience was intentionally put in the same position as the disciples. That includes not only privilege but also a certain level of ignorance. Therefore, they need to be aware of their potential understanding issues. In the next section it will be shown that the readers should be involved in the same process of seeing and hearing restoration along with the disciples as well.[334]

Learning how to See

We previously discussed how the disciples were called to witness and understand the story of Jesus, but they were unable to do so on their own due to their defective perception. However, their inability to grasp the story independently does not mean that they cannot understand it at all. They simply require Jesus' assistance to gain a proper understanding. They need Jesus to help them hear and see more clearly and to provide

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[332] See Malbon, "How Does the Story Mean?," 47.

[333] See Malbon, "How Does the Story Mean?," 47.

[334] The position of this thesis is similar to those scholars who suggest that the readers should identify with the disciples and align their experience with them. See Tannehill, "The Disciples in Mark"; Malbon, "Fallible Followers"; Dewey, "Point of View."

them with a thorough comprehension of his teachings. Thankfully, Jesus is always willing to help them.

Actually, the very scene in 8:14–21 can be viewed as not only indicating the disciples' disease but a way to heal it as well. Thus, in 8:15, Jesus intended to help the disciples to correctly see the Pharisees they just met and beware of them. At this time this attempt was clearly unsuccessful (8:16). Jesus did not give up though, but in 8:19–21 he called their attention once again to the feeding scenes, so they would be finally able to get a spiritual lesson from it. All the "retrospective analysis" scenes discussed above are nothing else but the procedures applied for correcting or healing the disciples' seeing. Those sessions became more frequent and intensive right after the recognition of the disciples' poor condition in 8:18.[335] Thus, he is willing to help the disciples see correctly.

What does it mean for the disciples to see correctly? To see correctly obviously means to see things like Jesus sees them. There is a profound link between one's ideology and their seeing in the Gospel. Jesus' ideology sets the standard, and hence, his perception does too. In the same way, the disciples' ideology is expected to align with Jesus', and so should their perception. Therefore, Jesus' impact on the retrospective analysis sessions is crucial. The disciples are aware that it is his perception that they have to learn and align their perception accordingly. Jesus wants to teach them nothing but to see things in his way.

There are three fascinating scenes in and by Jerusalem where we see how Jesus explicitly deals with the disciples' seeing, helping them to see in his correct way.

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[335] Moloney observes that "on the way" to Jerusalem, the trip three times is interrupted by other characters (9:14–27; 10:2–9, 17–22). And all of those encounters end with Jesus' lessons for the disciples (9:28–29; 10:10–12, 23–31). See his *The Gospel of Mark,* 172.

The first example is fig tree cursing (11:12–14, 20–26). Jesus is hungry; he sees the fig tree from a distance and comes up to it, looking for fruits. Finding none, he curses the tree in disappointment. The disciples hear it. As it is indicated they hear the cursing, it is reasonable to suggest they also see Jesus acting. We should remember that hearing and seeing in the Gospel are interrelated activities. When the group returned to the same tree, Peter was able to recognize it. They saw the tree, and Peter drew Jesus' attention to it: ῥαββεί, ἴδε (Rabbi, look!). Then Jesus gave him and others lessons on the faith in God.

What happened was Jesus saw and cursed the tree, and the disciples also saw and called Jesus to see with them. Yet, Jesus enriched their perception of the event with his explanations. The disciples' hearing and seeing are emphasized. They do just what they are supposed to; namely, they watch what they hear (4:24). The IR joins them in seeing, hearing, and learning from Jesus how to perceive the event accurately.

This passage is a good example of multi-leveled focalization.[336] In 11:12–14, Jesus is CF. However, the disciples are present and witness Jesus cursing the fig tree. They become CF for this scene which is already observed by Jesus, or they focalize the scene where Jesus is CF. Then, in 11:20, the disciples, particularly Peter, notice that the fig tree has withered. Peter speaks up and brings Jesus' attention to the tree, thus becoming the new CF. By remembering the scene of Jesus cursing the fig tree, Peter also becomes CF for verses 11:12–14. Ultimately, the final focalizer in this scene is Peter.

In 12:41–44, we see Jesus, who καθίσας κατέναντι τοῦ γαζοφυλακίου ἐθεώρει πῶς ὁ ὄχλος βάλλει χαλκὸν εἰς τὸ γαζοφυλάκιον ("sat down opposite the treasury and watched the people putting money into the offering box," v. 41). It was Jesus who

[336] For the discussion of the multi-leveled focalization, see Bal, *Narratology*, 141–48.

observed. Then, he called his disciples and drew their attention to what was happening so they could also see it. Afterward, he explained to the disciples how exactly they needed to see it or what they needed to focus on. He observed and then helped the disciples to see the scene in his way. Two parties are watching, namely, Jesus and the disciples. They both can be seen as CF. However, Jesus' perception is normative. He directs the disciples' vision to be adjusted according to this standard. The same exercise is, of course, suggested to the IR. They have no option but to learn from Jesus to see the offering in the right way, just as the disciples do and together with the disciples.

In the next episode (13:1–2) we see a similar situation. In this case, it was a disciple who initiated the discussion. The disciple saw οταποὶ λίθοι καὶ ποταπαὶ οἰκοδομαί ("wonderful stones" and "wonderful buildings") and called to his Master to look at them as well (διδάσκαλε, ἴδε; "Look, Teacher") and to share his attitude, namely admiration. The highly visual manner of this description, of course, invites the implied reader to share that admiration also.[337] Thus, it is a clear case of internal focalization. However, it immediately turned out that the disciple's perception was not normative. Jesus disapproved of this admiration. Instead, he insisted that the way the disciple saw τὰς μεγάλας οἰκοδομάς ("these great buildings") should be changed: be aware that they would be destroyed. Let us note, however, that even though it was Jesus speaking in 13:2, the disciple still was the focalizer. Jesus asked: "Do you see these great buildings?" He seemingly accepted the disciple's invitation to share his point of view and indeed employed it.[338] Then he declared the future of those "great buildings." In this way, Jesus

[337] That is noticed by van Iersel: "The unnamed disciples draw Jesus' attention — and the reader's as well — to the large stones and large Temple buildings." Iersel, *Mark: A Reader-Response Commentary,* 387.

[338] Nazarov mentions that "in the course of the narrative, the opinions of one character about another verbalized in direct speech can be considered as internal focalization." Nazarov, "Focalization in the Old

dealt explicitly with the disciple's perception, correcting it from within. Through the same means of internal focalization, the narrator deals with the implied reader's sight as well. Thus, we see the scene along with the disciple, employing his seeing, and only then the way we see is directly and suddenly challenged by Jesus.

Right after 13:1–2, we see the disciples interacting with Jesus, who corrected one of them, and looking for Jesus' further instructions. Therefore, 13:3–37 is an extended episode that at the same time can be identified as a "retrospective discussion," as it was initiated as a reflection on the dialogue in 13:1–2. Jesus καθημένου αὐτοῦ εἰς τὸ ὄρος τῶν ἐλαιῶν κατέναντι τοῦ ἱεροῦ ("sat on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple," 13:3). The position implies his seeing the temple, the fate of which was being predicted. The addition of κατέναντι τοῦ ἱεροῦ emphasizes that seeing activity.[339] Then, four inner-circle disciples came to him to ask ἰδίαν ("privately") for further clarification of the recent prediction. They sat alongside Jesus opposite the temple and were involved in the same temple-seeing activity. But now they perceived the temple along with Jesus. Jesus, meanwhile, spoke about future events in a highly imaginative way. So they have to listen and see the images of the future as well. They learned to see a temple and the future just as Jesus saw them. As readers, we join them in this endeavor. As it is here, we meet the famous note: ὁ ἀναγινώσκων νοείτω ("let the reader understand!", 13:14).[340] That note

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Testament Narratives," 35. In 13:1–2, we clearly see that the internal focalization can be created with the means of a character's dialogue.

[339] "For readers unfamiliar with the site he adds that Jesus faces the Temple." Iersel, *Mark: A Reader-Response Commentary,* 389.

[340] Dewey explains: "The omniscient narrator intrudes into the speech of the second-level narrator in order to address the actual reader directly. The effect of the violation of level is not the merging of the first- and second-level narratees, but rather the placing of them side by side listening to Jesus. One would have to say either that the implied reader has become a character internal to the narrative world or the narrative world has been extended to include reality external to it." Dewey, "Point of View," 103.

clearly implies that listeners are present there and see the future that Jesus shows to the disciples.

Thus, Jesus constantly helps his disciples to see things his way. Interestingly, the process of healing or teaching is always emphasized, but we are almost never aware of the outcome for the disciples. Namely, we know that the disciples are challenged and taught to see (and we are to share their experience), but we do not know how they react to this teaching. Jesus would provide his teaching, and that is it. Have they really learned their lesson? Usually, we are not directly informed of this.[341] The narrator seems to be interested in revealing their failures, not their success stories. There is only one significant exception to this rule, which we have yet to discuss. There is a reason, however, to suggest that at some point, they learned what they were supposed to. The very fact that the Gospel scenes are described this way by the narrator along with Jesus' necessary explanations may serve as evidence of the disciples' final success.

Now, what is the reader's experience in those passages where the disciples' vision is corrected? Do they share Jesus' perspective and immediately grasp everything, so they can only wonder at the disciples' supposed foolishness? Is that the intention of the implied author? Of course not! Why would he bother with writing such a story in this case? He wants to instruct the IR, and the present performer wants to teach his audience to see things in Jesus' way, just as Jesus teaches his disciples. The reader's need for instruction was highlighted relatively early (Mark 4). The danger of moving from inside to outside was shown in Mark 8. So they need to learn. In the Gospel, the only way to

[341] Nonetheless, sometimes, their positive reaction may be implied. Thus, in 13:1–2, we may suppose that the disciples reacted positively to Jesus' correction, as in 13:3, they came to ask about the temple's future; they accepted his point of view on the temple and were willing to learn more about it.

learn from Jesus is to accompany the disciples and experience things almost as they did, as demonstrated in 13:1–2. Usually, we are invited to see and hear Jesus' teachings and actions in the same way as his disciples did. By doing so, we can learn how to perceive things in Jesus' way throughout the Gospel. This is expected of us at almost every point in the Gospel.

Conclusions

In the Gospel of Mark, discipleship may be defined as a continuous process of learning how to perceive things accurately. The disciples are expected to see and hear everything that happens and is taught in the story and to be attentive to how they do it. However, they usually fail to draw the correct conclusions based on their observations. Therefore, Jesus constantly helps them and corrects the way they see things so that they can align their vision with his. This process is emphasized throughout the Gospel in many different ways. The disciples are meant to see and learn how to see in Jesus' way. If we are looking for a "position of the witness" in the Gospel, the constant emphasis on the disciples' seeing makes them perfect candidates for this role.

Now, let us summarize the relationship between the disciples' and Jesus' seeing. There is a constant interplay between those two ways to see the story world. In this process, the disciples are continually challenged to adopt Jesus' way of viewing things, as well as adopt his ideology. So, if we understand the focalization as "seeing with," then we can tell that Jesus is the so-called focalizer for the disciples, as they are supposed to see the story world from his point of view.

The Gospel implies that the reader is involved in the same process as the disciples in correcting their ability to see and hear. Chapter 4 and several other passages make this

clear. In many cases, the reader is to identify with the disciples and learn alongside them how to see and hear from Jesus. The disciples are referred to as the constant CF in the Gospel. However, the Gospel is constructed in a way that emphasizes the defectiveness of the disciples' sight and the normativity of Jesus' vision. The reader's ultimate goal is to align their vision with that of Jesus, not with the disciples. Therefore, on the discourse level, the reader may align their vision with Jesus, just as the disciples are supposed to do on the story level. These processes are parallel to each other; the disciples learn in the story, and the implied reader learns in the discourse.

The parallel nature of the processes is stressed in the portion of the discourse that emphasizes the disciples' inability to see. There, we see the most considerable distance between the implied reader and the disciples (6:49–52; 8:17–21). The IR is supposed to learn from Jesus independently, without relying on the disciples' progress. Jesus is the sole teacher for the IR, and his seeing is the norm to align with. The IR should learn to see with Jesus, just as the disciples do. By doing so, Jesus becomes the final focalizer for the reader.

However, the reader is not to part with the disciples. They are not to depend on the disciples' progress but not to be independent from them either. There is no way to be independent in learning from Jesus in the Gospel of Mark, as all the learning is provided through the disciples! Therefore, the IR is supposed to adopt Jesus' seeing together with disciples and, often, even with the medium of the disciples. They started together in Mark 4. Further, the disciples' seeing defectiveness is constantly emphasized, but we have no way to diagnose the IR's own seeing conditions. It is probably their job. However, in the Gospel, we see Jesus correcting the disciples' seeing, which is emphasized after 8:18.

And if the IR wants to correct their vision, there is no way but to join the disciples in this process. Their progress does not have to be indicated. There may be reasons for the absence of that progress or, rather, the narrator's silence on that matter. What is essential for the reader is to be in the same process as the disciples are.

The Gospel emphasizes two related ways of seeing things: the disciples' and Jesus'. Although the disciples are called to adopt Jesus' vision, for now we can not tell whether they finally do. Suppose we assume that they ultimately adopt Jesus' perspective and return to the question of the relationship between the narrator and the disciples' testimony. In that case, we can conclude that the narrator might rely on them for both ways of seeing he employs — Jesus' and the disciples'. They would be aware of their way of seeing things as well as Jesus', as they have finally adopted it. We should not forget the instances of multi-leveled focalization where the disciples hear how Jesus sees (11:12–14, 20)! They could have witnessed both their hearing and Jesus' seeing. In the next chapter, we will discuss Peter as a character-focalizer in Mark's narrative.

Chapter 6

Peter as a Focalizer

In the previous chapter, we have focused on the crucial importance of the disciples' vision. It was shown that seeing the disciples as a character-focalizer (CF) in Mark's narrative is accurate and that the IR's experience has a lot of similarities with that of the disciples. This final chapter is dedicated to discussing Peter. Specifically, three important passages (1:29–39; 9:1–29; 14:66–72) will be considered, where Peter can be seen as a CF. The first and the third passages create the internal focalization *inclusio* for that Gospel portion where Peter was continually present. The second passage uses Peter as a CF in one of the most dramatic moments of the Gospel, confirming the inextricably close connection between the narrator and Peter. These passages indicate that Peter is the primary CF and key witness in Mark's Gospel. As a result, it is plausible to consider the Gospel as his personal testimony and confession.

The Day in Capernaum (1:29–39)

Scholars often refer to Peter's *inclusio* as evidence of the Gospel's eyewitness origin, with Peter as its primary source.[342] They usually note how Peter appears early as the first disciple in the story (1:16) and then is mentioned as the last of the disciples at the very end of the Gospel (16:7). Martin Hengel particularly recognizes Peter's appearance

[342] Bauckham asserts that Mark (as well as Luke and John) "make use of the historiographic principle that the most authoritative eyewitness is the one who was present at the events from their beginning to their end and can therefore vouch for the overall shape of the story as well as for specific key events." *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses,* 2nd ed., 146. See his discussion on *inclusio* in Mark at ibid., 124–27. See also Hengel, *Saint Peter*, 40; Bockmuehl, *Simon Peter*, 132.

in 16:7 as his signature.[343] It is also paramount that he is last to disappear before Jesus' official trial and the following Passion (14:72).[344] Thus, he is the last character in the significant part of the Gospel, where the disciples' presence is indicated. Bauckham pointed out that in the Gospel of Mark, the plural-to-singular device is mainly used in the part between Peter's introduction to the story (namely, Mark 1) and his exit from the stage (Mark 14). The frequency of its usage is aligned with the mentions of Peter by Mark.[345] So, the use of plural-to-singular devices also forms *inclusio*.

If Bauckham's reasoning related to the importance of the *inclusio* is correct, then Mark's usage of internal focalization can support his case. It will be shown that right after Peter's arrival we have cases (1:29–39) of alignment between his and the narrator's point of view, which implies internal focalization. The last story point where Peter is present (14:72) is a very significant case of focalization with Peter as a CF. In the middle of the narrative, there is another example (9:1–29) where the discussion of internal focalization can reveal implications that are important for the whole narrative.

Before diving into the discussion of the passages which form the *inclusio*, we need to pause for a moment and admit that Peter as a character and Peter as a focalizer appears later than Jesus. He is not only mentioned as the Gospel's protagonist in 1:1 but

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[343] "In my view, this completely unnecessary statement καὶ τῷ Πέτρῳ, and its connection with the first mention of the disciple in 1:16, is a signature, by means of which Mark indicates the one who for him is the most important guarantor of the tradition, an individual who at the same time was the most authoritative disciple of Jesus." Hengel, *Saint Peter*, 42.

[344] The meeting in the chief priest's house was not intended to be an official trial; it was rather a "preliminary session" in order to agree on Jesus' accusation in front of Pilate. Edwards explains: "Mark's description of the trial resembles such a session, for it does not read like a formal sitting of the Sanhedrin but rather a preliminary hearing, like a grand jury driving for an incrimination." Edwards, *The Gospel According to Mark,* 443–44.

[345] See Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses,* 2nd ed., 182.

enjoys the narrator's sole attention in a relatively short section 1:9–15. Jesus is a CF in the baptism (1:9–11) and the calling episode (1:16–20).[346]

The disciples are introduced later than Jesus, and Peter's perspective appears shortly as well. The narrator has good reasons for organizing the story in such a way. First, it makes perfect sense in terms of the story development. Of course, Jesus first had to start the ministry, and only then could he call the disciples. Another, not less important, reason for this organization is to ensure that the IR understands the central issue. Who is the protagonist? Who is the reader supposed to follow throughout the narrative? If Peter appeared first, and Jesus were to be introduced afterwards, then at least for some time, the reader would have been confused at this crucial point.[347] However, the fact that Peter and his perspective appear so early, providing very limited space in the narrative for Jesus to get through the preparatory procedures (1:9–11, 12–13)[348] and a summary statement at the beginning of his ministry (1:14–15), testifies to the paramount importance of this appearance. The IR is supposed to follow Jesus, but she or he has to accomplish this aim together with Peter.[349]

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[346] Those are among few passages where internal focalization is recognized by Dewey. See her "Point of View," 102.

[347] Yamasaki discusses the different ways of how the empathy to a particular character is created in the narrative and concludes: "Though these various options may appear at first glance to be quite distinct from each other, they all have one thing in common: each involves the viewers being draw to one particular character before encountering any of the other characters. And when this happens, the viewers will be inclined to perceive the secondary characters through the perspective of the primary character." Yamasaki, *Perspective Criticism*, 24.

[348] I call Jesus' baptism and temptation "preparing procedures," as they resemble initiation which Jesus had to go through before starting the ministry. Those are the only passages (beside Jesus' Passions) where Jesus is passive, and things happen to him. Everywhere else he is an active agent. Stein asserts (note his emphasis on the verbs in passive voice): "Along with 1:1–11 the present account portrays Jesus Christ, the Son of God as *announced* by John the Baptist (1:2–8), *anointed* by the Spirit (1:10), *acknowledged* by the divine voice from heaven (1:11), *approved* by testing in the wilderness (1:12–13), and now prepared for his ministry and mission (1:14–16:8)." Stein, *Mark*, 66.

[349] In the opening verses of the Gospel, John the Baptist, of course, is the main figure. But his role is clearly stated as that of preparation for Jesus, who comes after him (1:7–8). Moreover, Jesus' ministry starts only

So, let us consider two short passages where the narration is likely to be given from Peter's point of view and, therefore, is internally focalized.[350] They are found in the passage known as "the Day in Capernaum" (1:21–39). It is the first day in Mark's Gospel where Jesus' ministry is described in detail. This day comes right after the calling of the first disciples (1:16–20). After preaching and an exorcism in Capernaum's synagogue (1:21–28), they went to Peter's house, where his mother-in-law was healed. In 1:29 we read: Καὶ εὐθὺς ἐκ τῆς συναγωγῆς ἐξελθόντες ἦλθον εἰς τὴν οἰκίαν Σίμωνος καὶ Ἀνδρέου μετὰ Ἰακώβου καὶ Ἰωάννου ("And immediately he left the synagogue and entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John"). The phraseology here, the addition of μετὰ Ἰακώβου καὶ Ἰωάννου, implies Peter's point of view, as it is easy to paraphrase the sentence from the first person.[351] The person healed is not merely a woman, but πενθερὰ Σίμωνος ("Simon's mother-in-law"), and this healing happened in Peter's house. Those who λέγουσιν αὐτῷ περὶ αὐτῆς ("told him about her") also may include Peter.

The second scene happens the next morning when Jesus goes out alone for prayer (1:35–39). The CF there is Peter as well. The initial scene obviously happens in Peter's house. Early in the morning, Jesus departs from the house to ἔρημον τόπον ("a desolate place") to pray. He just goes out of the house, but we do not really have any specific details about his being out, such as the content of his prayer. We are simply aware that he prays in a desolate place. The second thing happening is the fact that πάντες ζητοῦσίν

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when John is arrested (1:14). So the implied author undertook a significant effort to introduce John with a clear purpose to be Christ's forerunner, so the IR would not be confused.

[350] Byrskog sees 1:29–31 and 1:35–39 as two *chreiai* which may trace back directly to Peter because of the usage of point of view. See Byrskog, *History as Story*, 288–91.

[351] See the paraphrasing suggested by Turner: "'We left the synagogue and came into our house with our fellow-disciples James and John. My mother-in-law was in bed with fever, and he is told about her.'" Turner, "Marcan Usage," 226.

("everyone is looking for") Jesus. However, we are aware of that based on Peter's words. Peter and his companions stayed home and were disturbed by those πάντες ("everyone") who looked for Jesus.

Third, Peter and οἱ μετ' αὐτοῦ ("those who were with him") went out to search for Jesus. It is interesting to note that they did not simply εὗρον αὐτόν ("found him") but, first, κατεδίωξεν αὐτόν. Only then did they find him and report that Πάντες ζητοῦσίν σε ("Everyone is looking for you"). The verb καταδιώκω is used only once in the NT. France suggested that "here it presumably express the eager (and concerned, even disgruntled?) search of the disciples; they 'tracked him down.'"[352] All of that suggests the internal focalization with Peter. The narration is told not only from his spatial position and is limited by his knowledge but also reveals his interest in getting Jesus back to his home, where everyone was looking for him. Thus, the witness position should be aligned with Peter.[353]

It is important to note that while the narrator aligns his spatial point of view with Peter, the difference between Peter's and Jesus' ideological points of view is emphasized. Peter's expectations and Jesus' sense of mission are opposite.[354] At this early stage of the Gospel, when not many characters are introduced yet, this stress on Peter's point of view is of particular importance as we start following Jesus along with him.

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[352] See France, *The Gospel of Mark,* 112.

[353] "The narration of the story continues through Peter's point of view, lending weight to the theory that the 'Petrine' material in Mark came to Mark from Peter's preaching." Culpepper, *Mark*, 60. Also Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 102. "The awkward and redundant opening of 1:35 in Greek (*kai prōi ennycha lian*; NIV: 'Very early in the morning, while it was still dark') sounds more colloquial than literary, perhaps reflecting a reminiscence of Peter." Edwards, *The Gospel According to Mark,* 65.

[354] See France, *The Gospel of Mark,* 111.

The Transfiguration and the Difficult Exorcism (9:1–29)

The second passage to be discussed is Mark 9:1–29.[355] Scholars often notice that 9:2–8 is narrated from the disciples' perspective or that the disciples can be seen as CF there.[356] Sometimes, it is also recognized that once Jesus and the three disciples are back, the meeting of two groups is described from their perspective.[357] It will be shown that the usage of point of view, particularly in 9:1–29, has a profound meaning for the understanding of the "position of the witness" in the entire Gospel. On the one hand, it may be considered typical; namely, the patterns we see in this passage can also be seen in other parts of the Gospel as well, and we have discussed those patterns in previous chapters. On the other hand, it is a unique passage, as two or even more episodes are clearly united together in one coherent narrative sequence.

In v. 1, we see a group of Jesus and the Twelve that splits into two in v. 2. While the larger group stays out of sight of the narrative camera, the narrator obviously follows the smaller group of Jesus and three disciples. The "position of the witness" is placed within this smaller group. In vv. 2–13, the dominant point of view belongs to the disciples. They clearly serve as CF. Jesus led αὐτοὺς… κατ᾽ ἰδίαν μόνους ("them … by themselves," 9:2), he μετεμορφώθη ἔμπροσθεν αὐτῶν ("transfigured before them," 9:2), Elijah with Moses appeared to them (v. 4), a cloud overshadowed them (v. 7), and a voice from heaven was directed to the disciples (v. 7). Finally, it was they who περιβλεψάμενοι οὐκέτι οὐδένα εἶδον ἀλλὰ τὸν Ἰησοῦν μόνον μεθ᾽ ἑαυτῶν ("looking around, ... no longer

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[355] For the detailed discussion, see Bychkov, "Eyewitnesses of his Majesty," 19–31.

[356] Besides Dewey see also Edwards, *The Gospel According to Mark*, 269; France, *The Gospel of Mark*, 346.

[357] "The impression conveyed is that the episode has been reported from the point of view of one of the disciples who returned with Jesus from the mountain." Lane, *The Gospel of Mark*, 329.

saw anyone with them but Jesus only," 9:8). We also hear Peter's reaction to the event given both verbally and through his (and others') inner feeling about this unusual experience (v. 5). Then, the narrator provides the explanatory comment for this.

In vv. 9–10, the point of view is still aligned with the disciples. First, the narrator tells us about their inner attitude to the revelation, namely τὸν λόγον ἐκράτησαν πρὸς ἑαυτούς ("kept the matter to themselves," 9:9). This attitude exceeds the narrative timeline. In v. 10, we can feel that the group is somewhat separated, as the disciples were συνζητοῦντες τί ἐστιν τὸ ἐκ νεκρῶν ἀναστῆναι ("questioning what this rising from the dead might mean," 9:10). It is not likely that this συνζητοῦντες ("questioning") could have happened in the direct presence of Jesus. In v. 11, they came to Jesus with a question concerning both the experience on the mountain and Jesus' revelation of "the matter" in v. 9. As v. 10 somewhat separates vv. 11–13 from the preceding, the latter can be seen as retrospective discussion, initiated by the disciples on their own. So, the "position of the witness," as well as a focalizer in vv. 2–13, could be set within the three disciples' group. Provided the emphasized role of Peter, who speaks and whose inner perception of the scene is described, it seems reasonable to even align the "position of the witness" with Peter. We can perceive him as a solo CF.

Peter being a solo CF is significant because the group is in constant motion in this small episode. It can be divided into a few scenes according to the spatial location:

- going up the mountain (v. 2a);
- the transfiguration (vv. 2b–8);
- "the matter" revelation (v. 9);
- the disciples' questioning among themselves (v. 10b);

- the following retrospective discussion (vv. 11–13).

In all of those scenes, the CF is coherently identified with the disciples and not with Jesus.

When two groups meet in vv. 14–15, the "position of the witness" remains within the smaller group. The most significant evidence is that we are not allowed to see the second, larger group before the first one approaches close enough to see it, not even to hear it yet.[358] The second group literally appears in front of the narrative camera only when the first one is able to see them. So, the "position of the witness" is within the first group. It is suggested that in verses 2–13, the "position of the witness" referred to only three disciples. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that these three disciples are the witnesses also in verses 14–15.[359] When Jesus and the three disciples came together as a single group again in verses 14–15, the "position of the witness" became the characteristic of the entire group. However, the whole group can witness only because the initial "witness" is now part of the group.

It is worth noting that the author uses a plural-to-singular device to indicate the presence of the disciples with Jesus and to emphasize their point of view at the moment of meeting. At the same time, this technique highlights Jesus as the solo hero for the next scene. In v. 14, the participle (ἐλθόντες, coming) and the verb (εἶδον, saw) are used in the plural,[360] but in v. 15, the disciples disappear, and the crowd reacts solely to Jesus' arrival

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[358] Yamasaki uses Mark 9:14 as an example of "silent scene" technique; see Yamasaki, *Perspective Criticism*, 32. For more on this, see Uspensky, *Poetics of Composition*, 65.

[359] "The circumstances of their sojourn at the base of the mountain are obscured until the moment they are rejoined by Jesus and the three disciples—a circumstance that is explainable if Peter, who was absent from them, is Mark's source for the story." Edwards, *The Gospel According to Mark*, 276.

[360] Schmidt pointed out that there is textual support for usage singular in 9:14. Namely in a number of manuscripts ('ς reads along with A C D Γ') instead of ἐλθόντες . . . εἶδον is found ἐλθὼν . . . εἶδεν (he came and saw). That is why he concluded that 9:2–13 and 9:14–29 were originally independent. See his *The*

(ἰδόντες αὐτόν, seeing him; ἠσπάζοντο αὐτόν, greeted him). Provided the fixed position of the witness or focalizer among the disciples in vv. 2–13, it is even more reasonable to suggest that vv. 14–15 are narrated from their perspective as well. Therefore, Turner's and Bauckham's position, as well as the one accepted in this thesis, on the connection of the plural-to-singular device with the disciples' point of view is confirmed. Moreover, it may be explicitly connected with the inner-circle disciples or even with Peter.

In vv. 16–27, the focalization is primarily external; thus, it is not possible to determine CF. However, it is feasible to indicate the possible "position of the witness." It is located somewhere close to Jesus. Indeed, after the arrival of the small group and merging with the large group, all the events happen in close proximity to Jesus. Only at one point do we see that the stage is extended (v. 25a). Jesus sees the crowd gathering, and this compels him to finish the job. The "position of the witness" is close to Jesus, so it is convenient to observe Jesus himself, his dialog with the father, the poor boy's seizure, and the exorcism itself. It is close enough so that when the stage is extended, it is possible to see the crowd and Jesus, who is seeing.[361] If we do not consider our previous discussion, it is not easy to provide any further specifics here. However, if we do take it into account, it seems reasonable to view the "position of the witness" as being aligned with the inner-circle disciples. Likely, they are close to Jesus as they came into this scene with him. Moreover, provided other disciples' failure, those may stand further.

Framework of the Story of Jesus, 229. However, the plural is confirmed more in line with Mark's style. See Taylor, *The Gospel According to St Mark*, 396. Bauckham suggests that it is precisely the awkwardness of the plural-to-singular device employed here which may force some of scribes to "correct" it, similarly to what later Matthew and Luke did, who in most cases omitted the way Mark introduces his scenes. See his *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses,* 2nd ed., 158.

[361] See the discussion of different levels of focalization in 11:12–14 and 11:20–26 in this thesis, 145.

Scholars sometimes note the correspondence between the inner-circle disciples' question about the resurrection (v. 10) and the description of the exorcism, where the boy appeared dead (v. 26) and then arose (v. 27).[362] The way the exorcism happened suggests that this was a parable-like miracle performed not only for the father's and boy's sake but in order to instruct the disciples, specifically those of the inner circle. Their seeing of the miracle is necessary. It is even possible that the narrator deliberately uses their phraseology, reflecting their point of view.

The disciples' perspective on the scene is emphasized in vv. 28–29. We see Jesus and his disciples alone, with a clear partition between Jesus and his disciples. So three inner-circle disciples now are on the disciples' side and not Jesus'. We are provided with the retrospective question from the disciples as a whole group.

Mark 9:16–27 can be considered a typical Markan scene that describes the public ministry of Jesus, where the disciples are present but put in the shadows, with a sole focus on Jesus. Here, the focalization can be considered as dominantly external. However, it is unique in the sense that it is connected to a distinct episode (9:2–13), and the connection is made unusually. Mark 9:2–13 is not typical because there is no other unit in the Gospel when the internal focalization is highlighted so clearly. The connection between 9:2–13 and 9:16–27 is also solid and implies temporal, spatial, characters, and plot coherence. Even the point of view is clearly coherent and therefore indicates the strong internal interconnection within 9:2–29. This combination of typicality and uniqueness of 9:16–27 makes it significant for our purposes of finding out the "position

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[362] "The disciples have just asked what it means to be raised from the dead (v. 10). In the raising and restoring of the catatonic boy Jesus provides the first object lesson on the meaning of his own death and resurrection." Edwards, *The Gospel According to Mark*, 280.

of the witness" in Mark's Gospel. Given its unique connection to 9:2–13 through 9:14–15, it is reasonable to suggest that the "position of the witness" in 9:16–27 belongs to three disciples or even Peter. But due to its typicity, it is reasonable to suggest that the same disciples occupy the "position of the witness" not only in 9:16–27 but in other similar scenes. Just as Peter (with James and John) enters 9:16–27 and takes his witness role, he also may enter other similar scenes and take the witness role there as well.

The whole episode may be naturally read as a single passage narrated by the reporter "as if he were reporting directly from the field of action."[363] That reporter would belong to the inner-circle group and can be easily identified with Peter. Other disciples are naturally excluded (with the exception of 9:28–29) from the possible individual or collective character-focalizer. On the other hand, we have discussed many features of the Gospel so far, specifically:

1. The disciples are in the privileged position of closeness to Jesus.
2. When Jesus and the disciples are separated from other characters, the "position of the witness" tends to be among the disciples, so it is they who see.
3. Their psychology is highlighted as reactions to Jesus and his teaching.
4. The narrator provides explanatory comments regarding their mistakes.
5. When Jesus arrives at the scene, the disciples' presence and their perspective are indicated with the plural-to-singular device.
6. Once Jesus' group is on the scene, the focus is put on Jesus, and the disciples, actively present before, are put in the shadows.
7. The story miracle is performed for the sake of the disciples.

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[363] Uspensky, *Poetics of Composition*, 91.

8. We have the retrospective discussions (9:11–13, 28–29).

However, now all of that (with the exception of #8) can be naturally applied to Peter with James and John, and the other nine disciples seem to be naturally excluded from the object of those points. Moreover, among the three, Peter's perspective is obviously highlighted. Therefore, suggesting that the same patterns, which usually refer to the disciples as a group in the course of the Gospel, are really applied either to the inner circle or solely to Peter makes sense.

There is another reason that makes this passage, especially 9:2–10, very important for this study. The narrator clearly brought the IR in a close connection with Peter, as he started following Jesus in Mark 1, with the means of internal focalization. In chapter 5, it was argued that Mark 4 created a strong sense of the IR's identification with the disciples.[364] However, till Mark 8, this sense of identification could be damaged, and some distance might be put between the IR and the disciples due to the defectiveness of their sight. Peter should not be excluded from the disciples in terms of his ability to see. The conflict between him and Jesus (8:32–33) highlighted his perception problem, as well as 8:29 highlighted his progress. Mark 9:1 clearly unites 8:27–38 with 9:2f, where Peter's perspective is the only one available.

Mark 9:2–8 is one of the climatic moments of the Gospel. We need to remember that there is no clear description of Jesus' resurrection in Mark's Gospel, therefore only in 9:2–8 Jesus is shown in his glory.[365] This dramatic moment happens right after the

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[364] See this thesis, 126–32.

[365] Due to the absence of the Resurrection account in Mark it was even suggested that the Transfiguration is a misplaced Resurrection. For the observation of the scholarship who took this view, as well as for the debunking of such a claim, see Robert H. Stein, "Is the Transfiguration (Mark 9:2–8) a Misplaced Resurrection-Account?" *Journal of Biblical Literature* 95, no. 1 (March 1976): 79–96.

highlighting of the disciples' vision problems and with close temporal (9:2a) linkage to it. As readers, we go up the mountain and, finally, see Jesus in his true, glorious image on the way to his sufferings in Jerusalem. How do we do it? We do it together with Peter, and all our experience is gained through him. So, we are united with Peter in seeing Jesus in this dramatic momentum when his glory is clearly revealed. Moreover, this event is strictly private, which is emphasized several times (9:1, 2, 9). Therefore, participation in the event is of the highest privilege. Peter sensed this privilege clearly (9:5, 10). We, as readers, feel it as well. This privilege further strengthens our connection with Peter and his two companions during their journey.

As readers, we cannot simply detach ourselves from Peter's perspective in the narrative, contrary to what some suggest. Even if we manage to do so by Mark 8, specifically by verses 8:18 or 8:33, we are quickly reminded that we have no other option but to see and follow Jesus through Peter's eyes. Thus, we, too, are his sojourners. Jesus is with Peter, and Peter is privileged to witness and follow him. The narrator is following Peter's account, and so are we.

Peter's Denial (14:54, 66–72)

The last passage, where we meet Peter (14:66–72), has a clearly identified CF, who is Peter himself.[366]

Peter is the central figure in this passage. He moves through the scene, and the narrative camera always follows him. He entered the high priest's courtyard and was

[366] In my analysis of the internal focalization in Peter's denial I significantly rely on Borrell, *The Good News of Peter's Denial* and Boomershine, "Peter's Denial."

sitting there with the guards (v. 54).[367] Then a servant girl came up and, having recognized him, accused Peter of association with Jesus. After the first denial, Peter tried to escape this disclosure and moved to the gateway. However, the girl once again appeared out of nowhere. She must have followed Peter, but her move is not recorded; she just appeared once again near Peter in order to disclose him in front of bystanders. Then, after Peter's second denial, she disappeared, and μετὰ μικρόν ("after a little while," 14:70), the bystanders started accusing Peter, causing him to deny Jesus for the third time. Thus, he moved throughout the scene to secure himself and still be close to Jesus, and people appeared by him to cause him to deny Jesus. Even though, in this significant part of the scene, the narrator keeps himself external to Peter, he closely follows him.

Moreover, by following Peter's movements throughout the scene, the narrator does not only record his denials of Jesus but also his attempts to follow him. He went out to the gateway indeed but did not leave this dangerous place. We should not overlook Peter's inner struggle even though it is recorded mostly externally at this point. The narrator shows a great interest in this struggle.

Let us now come to v. 72, the last verse in the Gospel, where we meet Peter in person.

> καὶ εὐθὺς ἐκ δευτέρου ἀλέκτωρ ἐφώνησεν, καὶ ἀνεμνήσθη ὁ Πέτρος τὸ ῥῆμα ὡς εἶπεν αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς ὅτι πρὶν ἀλέκτορα φωνῆσαι δίς, τρίς με ἀπαρνήσῃ. καὶ ἐπιβαλὼν ἔκλαιεν.
>
> And immediately the rooster crowed a second time. And Peter remembered how Jesus had said to him, "Before the rooster crows twice, you will deny me three times." And he broke down and wept.

Mark 14:66–71 is primarily an external (and also mimetic) record, though we can tell that at least to some degree it is focalized through Peter as the narrative camera

[367] For Peter's movement in the denial episode, see Borrell, *The Good News of Peter's Denial*, 105–7.

follows him. In v. 72, we are given a clue of Peter's experience in 14:66–71. Indeed, in v. 72a δευτέρου ἀλέκτωρ ἐφώνησεν ("the rooster crowed a second time"). This rooster crow is directly related to the following, namely, Peter's remembrance of Jesus' prediction relating his denials to rooster crowing. The fact that Peter remembered it means he had forgotten it before; he did not keep this prediction in mind. When the rooster crowed for the second time, he remembered the prediction. Why did Peter remember? Because he heard the rooster crowing. Even though his hearing is not claimed explicitly, it is implied, as this crow triggered his memory. This also may imply that he did hear the first crow (v. 68b).

Although Peter's internal experience is explicitly mentioned only in v. 72, it implies his internal experience of what preceded as well (vv. 66–72a).[368] Namely, he was able to put together two rooster crows with his three denials. Even though vv. 66–71 is described externally, v. 72 implies his inner experience during the scene (he heard the rooster, he did not remember Jesus' prediction during the scene, he was not conscious of his denials). Also, it communicates his reception of what just happened to him (he had denied Jesus three times before two rooster crows).

Let us focus on Peter's remembering. He actually remembered Jesus' prediction of his triple denial (14:30). Not only did he remember the prediction itself, but also how Jesus did it. So, probably, he remembered the scene of this prediction being made (14:26–31). Jesus predicted his disciples' future desertion, which they objected to. Peter especially objected to the possibility of his own deserting Jesus. He did it twice (14:29, 31). Jesus predicted that Peter would deny him three times, but Peter vehemently denied

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[368] "The recall of Peter only takes place when an external factor, the cockcrow, shakes him and forces him to react." Borrell, *The Good News of Peter's Denial*, 107.

it. So, the scene that Peter remembered was the one with probably the most evident conflict between Jesus and his disciples, particularly with Peter (with the possible exception of 8:32–33). Indeed, they openly disagreed with Jesus, and Peter did that "emphatically." It became clear that all the disciples left Jesus, and Peter denied him just as he had predicted. Therefore, Jesus was right, and Peter was wrong. As Peter remembers the scene, he has no choice but to recognize and accept both of those facts. We may conclude that in this remembering, Peter (who now remembers) sided with Jesus against prior Peter (who objected to Jesus and was unwilling to accept his predictions). Therefore, Peter changed sides in the conflict, which started from the very beginning (1:37–38).

Jesus, however, was right not only when he predicted Peter's denial. Obviously, he was right when he predicted his fate in Jerusalem, which Peter should have remembered, recognized, and accepted. As Agustí Borrell puts it: "In a very pronounced way, the recollection of the denial prophecy must bring to mind (both for Peter and for the reader), the other pronouncements, made by Jesus in connection with it."[369] Peter would side with Jesus in other cases when he made those predictions, which Peter was not willing to understand and accept, and to which he even actively objected (8:32). Therefore, this remembering would eventually lead to the complete revaluation of the entire story. He would now side with Jesus.

We may say that Peter's vision at this moment was finally restored. We remember from the previous discussion that in the Gospel of Mark, to see correctly means to see things as Jesus does.[370] That is the goal of the discipleship call in Mark, and the disciples

[369] Borrell, *The Good News of Peter's Denial*, 81.

[370] See this thesis, 145.

had a continuous problem with that. However, now, when Peter remembers, he begins seeing the story, at least what happened previously, in Jesus' way. Therefore, he begins seeing clearly. At least at this moment, his vision is fully restored (cf. 8:22–26).

However, Jesus' point in 14:26–31 was not limited to the prediction of Peter's and the disciples' denial. It seems that his intention was to communicate the plans for a future meeting after his resurrection: ἀλλὰ μετὰ τὸ ἐγερθῆναί με προάξω ὑμᾶς εἰς τὴν Γαλιλαίαν ("But after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee," 14:28). That is a significant and positive prediction. So when Jesus predicts Peter's denial and others' scattering, he also implies their future restoration and his willingness to embrace Peter and others even after they leave him. So, the same Jesus who predicted Peter's denial announced their future reconciliation. Jesus' prediction was not his giving up on the disciples or distancing from them, but rather the expression of their acceptance, made in advance. Therefore, the overall attitude of this prediction is positive or at least includes this positive note regarding their future restoration and acceptance. When Peter remembered the prediction, he must have remembered Jesus' attitude as well. Indeed, it is impossible to remember τὸ ῥῆμα (the word) Jesus told him without remembering Jesus, who said this word, and how he said it.

The phrase ἀνεμνήσθη ὁ Πέτρος ("Peter remembered") holds great significance. It implies that Peter recalled and reevaluated events that went beyond the scene of his denial. In fact, his recollection covers an essential part, if not the entirety, of the Gospel story. Soon the reader will say goodbye to Peter in Mark's story. However, the Peter the reader is leaving here is the Peter who remembers.[371]

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[371] With regard to this note of Peter's remembering, it is not irrelevant to recall Papias' two notes of "remembering" (ἐμνημόνευσεν, ἀπεμνημόνευσεν). Eusebius of Caesarea, *Historia ecclesiastica*, 3.39.15.

Those circumstances, along with the memories, provoked Peter's intense emotional response: καὶ ἐπιβαλὼν ἔκλαιεν ("broke down and wept").[372] Weeping was Peter's profoundly emotional response to realizing his failure and the truthfulness of Jesus' words. This emotional response indicates the crucial importance of the scene and, perhaps, the whole preceding story, which is highly personal and meaningful to Peter. Borrell also suggests that "after remembering the words of Jesus, [he] becomes conscious of the whole process that led him to the denial."[373] Thus, the Gospel turns into an account of Peter's following Jesus, which eventually led him to this situation of breaking down and weeping.

Weeping in this scene is an expression of sorrow and grief, highly negative emotions. We saw in chapter 4 that most of the disciples' psychology is described in negative terms.[374] Mainly, their reaction to Jesus provoked that negativity. Now, Peter wept because he remembered Jesus' prediction of his denial. However, Peter's tears were not caused by Jesus' prediction but rather by the fact that he fulfilled it. So, the reason for this negative emotion was not Jesus but Peter himself. He wept not because he disagreed with Jesus but because he finally agreed with him. At this moment, he experienced an emotional revolution. From now on he would have a clearer comprehension of Jesus'

Grammatically, of course, the subject for both may be either Peter or Mark. Bauckham defends the first option. See his *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses,* 2nd ed., 203, 210–14. Is it simply coincidence that the last Peter we see in the Gospel is one who remembers, and Papias insisted on his (?) remembering?

[372] Those circumstances, along with the memories, provoked Peter's intense emotional response: καὶ ἐπιβαλὼν ἔκλαιεν. While the second verb, ἔκλαιεν, has a precise meaning, "weep," the first one, ἐπιβαλὼν, is different. Boomershine suggests that ἐπιβαλὼν is better translated as "beating on himself," thereby intending "to express Peter's realization of his failure and his grief as deeply and graphically as possible." His "Peter's Denial," 59. However, Borrell asserts that ἐπιβαλὼν should mean "fixing one's attention on" or "becoming aware of." His *The Good News of Peter's Denial*, 111–12. Peter remembered Jesus' prediction and became conscious of it. His newly obtained sight is being fixed.

[373] Borrell, *The Good News of Peter's Denial*, 111.

[374] See this thesis, 106.

continuous irritation with himself and other disciples. He would probably even overemphasize it. Indeed, not only did he realize that Jesus was right and he was wrong, but he sincerely accepted the fairness of Jesus' frustration with them and even felt it himself.

Therefore, in 14:72, we have a deep inside view of Peter. The presence of an inside view does not necessarily imply internal focalization. Describing a scene or an event as the character would psychologically experience it is different from describing what is going on inside the character during the scene.[375] Only in the former the IR is invited to share that experience, and therefore, the internal focalization is present. It is not always obvious how to tell the intention of the narrator in providing inside views in the narrative. However, here we are told that Peter "remembered how Jesus…" We are told of his psychological stance on the preceding scene or, perhaps, even the whole story. We are invited to "remember" it with Peter, as Borrell claimed in the quote above. Peter directs his eyes to Jesus, predicting his denial and the IR has no option but to turn their eyes on Jesus as well. So, it is nothing but internal focalization, not limited to immediate context but to the significant part of the Gospel. Together with Peter, we now see the

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[375] Literature critics often note this difference. Thus, Schmid insists: "Access to a character's interior and the taking on of the character's perceptual perspective, no matter how often they are mixed in theories of perspective (as indicated above), are two entirely separate things. In the first case, the character or, more specifically, his or her consciousness, is the object of the narrator's perception; in the second, it is the subject or the prism of perception through which the narrator sees the narrated world." Schmid, *Narratology,* 104. See also Uspensky, *Poetics of Composition*, 83; Genette, *Narrative Discourse*, 193.

Consider the narrator's description of the disciples' poor heart condition in 6:52. The narrator evidently sees inside the disciples. However, this view has nothing to do with the way the reader is supposed to see the storm scene. This is a pure criticism of the disciples and nothing more.

Gospel as his story with Jesus, which ended up with his denial and fulfillment of Jesus' prediction.[376]

What is the purpose of such an inside view? It is clearly given in order to help the audience to identify with Peter in this crucial last point of his presence in the narrative, and thereby to make the audience sympathize with Peter. The wider story of Peter's denial is shockingly straightforward. There is no attempt to soften it or to justify Peter in some way. As the story progresses, the narrator keeps himself distanced from Peter and simply describes his agony in trying to follow Jesus and keep his own safety at the same time. The words Peter uses to deny his relationship with Jesus, who is intended to be loved and adored by the audience by this moment, could not but shock the reader. This is especially so if we compare Peter's behavior with Jesus' (14:54–65), which we clearly should do due to the Markan intercalation technique. However, at the final point, the narrator approaches Peter as close as possible. He identifies himself with Peter and invites the reader to do the same. We have an interesting combination of points of view — external and internal. With the means of external focalization, Peter is clearly criticized, but in the final point, the reader is called to sympathize and identify with Peter.[377]

Thus, we see both a very "true" account of Peter's denial as well as a very "true" account of his realizing his own failure. We are called to witness Peter's denial and then to feel it along with him. This is a strange combination unless we recognize that this

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[376] Boomershine correctly asserts about v. 72: "Mark concludes the story with the most extensive and poignant inside view in his entire narrative. He invites the audience literally to enter Peter's mind as he remembers, somewhat inaccurately, Jesus' prophecy. And the climax of the story is an invitation to witness and share Peter's grief." Boomershine, "Peter's Denial," 58.

[377] This interesting combination is mentioned by Schmid. See his *Narratology*, 169.

account is intended to be Peter's confession.[378] Peter did wrong; he realizes it, regrets it, and confesses it. As he confesses, he does it so people may trust him. The best Peter can do to confess and gain the trust is to be truthful. And he obviously is.[379] Everything else is up to the one who hears. Would the listener trust his confession?

As Peter confesses, he cannot but testify to Christ. He does not simply remember the prediction of his denial but that Jesus made this prediction. Jesus, whom Peter remembers, predicted his denial and also implied his future restoration and acceptance. When Peter was wrong, Jesus was right. Peter denied Jesus, but Jesus did not deny him. Those are two sides of the coin. His confession implies his testimony, and his testimony implies his confession. If one is to believe his confession, which, as James Dunn put it, "is too shameful to be contrived,"[380] then he or she should believe in his testimony to Christ as well. There is no better way to win the trust into testimony than to connect it with one's confession. If someone looks for a signature in a Gospel, why not consider 14:66–72?[381]

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[378] Boomershine asserts: "What is the spirit of men who would tell such stories about themselves? They are the stories of men who have experienced the forgiveness and power of God to overcome their weaknesses and failures. How does one tell such a story? One tells such a story as a confession and as an invitation to others who have the same feelings to identify with the story and make it their own." Boomershine, "Peter's Denial," 60–61.

[379] This passage is one the most common examples of an application of the so-called criterion of embarrassment in order to verify the authenticity of the Gospel traditions. The helpful definition is given by John P. Meier: "The criterion of 'embarrassment' (so Schillebeeckx) or 'contradiction' (so Meyer) focuses on actions or sayings of Jesus that would have embarrassed or created difficulty for the early Church…" John P. Meier, *A Marginal Jew: Rethinking the Historical Jesus,* vol. 1: *The Roots of the Problem and the Person* (New York, NY: Doubleday, 1991), 168. Taylor expresses the certainty of Peter's testimony as lying under this tradition: "Only as dependent on the testimony of Peter himself is a story so damaging for his reputation and to that of all the disciples conceivable." Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark,* 551.

[380] Dunn, *Jesus Remembered*, 774.

[381] I affirm that Hengel's claim (his *Saint Peter*, 42) regarding 16:7 as Peter's signature in Mark is an insightful suggestion. But I believe that according to this analysis, 14:66–72 fits the role of signature even better.

Conclusions

We have three stories with Peter as a CF in crucial moments. One is almost at the beginning of the Gospel, not far from his first introduction into the Gospel story. The second is the Transfiguration and the challenging exorcism. The third one is when we meet Peter for the last time, closer to the Gospel's end.

The story in the middle of the Gospel (9:1–29) is significant not only because Peter can naturally be seen as the original witness of 9:2–8. It is also because it confirms once again the witnessing role of the disciples in those scenes when they are put in the shadows. Moreover, as most of the Gospel features related to the point of view and focalization are relevant for the possible eyewitnessing, they can be directly applied not only to the disciples as a group but to Peter as an individual. At the same time, other disciples (at least nine of them) are excluded from the witnessing experience in most of 9:1–29.

The first and the third stories form *inclusio*, which may lead us to think that Peter was not only present in the Gospel story but the story was focalized through him. Not only his early presence is indicated, but his point of view in following Jesus is revealed. The first instances of the usage of plural-to-singular devices are indicated by referring to Peter (1:21, 29–30). So his perspective is established from the very beginning, it is highlighted in the middle (9:2–10), and then it is emphasized at the very end. All of that helps the reader follow not only in the steps of Jesus but do it together with Peter. As readers, we might be tempted to distance ourselves from Peter due to emphasis on his, as well as other disciples', defective vision, their flawed "seeing." However, the narrator does not allow us to do this and brings us back to Peter at this crucial point. Quite the

same is our experience at the final point of Peter's presence. We may want to distance ourselves from him. The narrator, to some degree, pushes us to do it, but it is only to identify with Peter in 14:72 so we can recall the entire story together with him.

Therefore, the same framing, present in many places inside the narrative, with the disciples arriving on the scene and then looking back to it, is evident in the whole narrative (or at least the part where the disciples are present — 1:16–14:72). However, in this latter case, the focalization framing is explicitly done with Peter, who is a CF. The second significant difference is that in the closing frame (14:72), Peter is alone, and the "retrospective analysis" is done in his head in the form of remembering Jesus and his words. The third difference is the depth of this retrospective analysis. It may refer to the whole of Peter's experience with Jesus, thus, to the entire story. The fourth difference is that we have Peter's reaction recorded. When Jesus teaches his disciples to see things in the right way, we almost never know of the results. However, this is an exceptional case. Peter finally learned his lesson; he clearly saw Jesus and himself and obviously sided with Jesus against his old self in the scene he remembered and, perhaps, in the entire Gospel as well.

Chapter 7

Synthesis and Implications

This final chapter is dedicated to the synthesis of the findings and general conclusion of this thesis concerning the explored themes of ability, focalization, and point of view. Our study of the narrator's ability reveals the connection between the narrator's and the disciples' knowledge. The study of focalization allows us to draw conclusions regarding perception. The study of point of view shows the essential topic of the conflict and its resolution, which is relevant for both knowledge and perception. Therefore, the synthesis will be made with regard to those three topics: knowledge, perception, and conflict and its resolution. We will discuss the narrator's relationship with the disciples and his relationship with Peter separately. After the synthesis is completed, we will be able to draw the final conclusion of the thesis, namely that the study of selected categories of narrative theory allows perceiving the Gospel of Mark as Peter's testimony.

Synthesis: The Narrator and the Disciples

Knowledge

The Markan narrator is usually regarded as omniscient. According to the influential essay of Norman Petersen, such a narrator is hardly compatible with the possible eyewitness origin of the Gospel. The traditional understanding of omniscience accepted among literature critics supports the claim of incompatibility of the omnisciently privileged narrator and possible eyewitness testimony. However, in this

thesis, it was demonstrated that regarding the Markan narrator as one operating within realistic limits is possible.

The limitation of the narrator's knowledge, especially about Jesus, is evidently connected to the disciples who follow Jesus during the considerable part of the narrative (1:16–14:72). They are absent only in the very beginning (1:1–15), so the narrator might introduce, although very briefly, his main character. Mark 6:14–29 is an exceptional passage where neither disciples nor Jesus are present. However, its placement testifies to the narrator's limitation in his access to Jesus precisely because, at this point in narrative time, Jesus and the disciples parted. At the end of the Gospel, once Peter and the Twelve were absent, the narrator introduced female disciples as witnesses. In this way, he consistently maintains his source-of-knowledge persona, particularly when it comes to accessing Jesus. The constant presence of the disciples excludes the narrator's omnipresence. Instead, it suggests a fixed and, therefore, realistic narrator's position in spatial terms, which coincided with the disciples.

Besides the supposed omnipresence of the Markan narrator, there is another reason he is considered omniscient. This is his ability to access the thoughts and emotions of the characters. In other words, the narrator is able to provide inside views of his characters. However, most of them are related to the disciples and Jesus. If we accept the narrator's dependence on the disciples, then we do not have to explain the narrator's awareness of their inner world. His access to some of Jesus' emotions, motivations, and even thought processes may be adequately explained by the disciples' privileged position as his companions. They not only followed Jesus but were invited to know his personality, which he was willing to reveal to them. We constantly see Jesus

demonstrating the whole spectrum of his emotions in front of his disciples. That is especially evident in the most emotionally intense scene at Gethsemane (14:32–42).

The disciples' closeness to Jesus is sufficient to provide the narrator with the ability to know, to a certain degree, Jesus' inner life. With few exceptions (2:7; 5:28–29), the inside views of other characters, except for Jesus and the disciples, are shallow. Moreover, Jesus can be seen as the source of such narrator's knowledge, conveyed through the disciples. Indeed, the narrator reveals Jesus' omniscience in 2:8 and makes it clear to his disciples through his direct speech.

The disciples are suggested to act as a medium between the narrator and Jesus. The inside view that exceeds the story timeline and demonstrates the disciples' attitude towards Jesus' words testifies to that (9:10). The only other case where the inside view refers to the story knowledge and may exceed the storytime is one of the female disciples in 16:8.

Therefore, the narrator's ability to access special information in the story can be explained without referring to his omniscience privilege. In this thesis, an alternative kind of privilege was introduced to explain the narrator's ability within realistic limits. Through the disciples' attentiveness and Jesus' omniscient capacities, revealed in their presence, the disciples would have a significant level of story knowledge to provide to the narrator after the story was over. The continuous practice of retrospective discussions implies the disciples' attentiveness to and reflection on the story. So we can identify them as the holders of story information. The Gospel clearly indicates the disciples' inability to understand correctly (6:52; 8:21). The acts of revisiting the story retrospectively, however, imply the gradual growth of their knowledge or, rather, understanding.

Perception

The narrator in the Gospel not only constantly follows Jesus' group but also perceives the story world from their perspective. Consequently, he intentionally limits his perception to theirs. Since the narrative comprises separate scenes, the narrator's perceiving experience tends to be aligned precisely with the disciples'. This is evidenced by two repeating patterns: the way the narrator enters the scene and how he looks back on it. In this manner, he conveys his narration so that it would be consistent with the disciples' perspective. We can recognize the significant level of the narrator's "seeing with" the disciples.

Emphasis is put on the disciples' experience, inviting the reader to share it. The disciples are called to see the Gospel story. We may assert that they are primary addressees of both Jesus' teaching and actions, including his miracles, which is especially evident in Mark 4. But the IR has the same calling as well. So, the implied author puts these two groups side by side as two parallel groups of primary addressees of the Gospel story. We know that the disciples were indeed attentive, and Jesus intended them to observe his teachings and miracles.

The disciples were not only called to see but to learn to see in Jesus' way. Of course, they often failed. The defectiveness of their vision was revealed by the narrator (6:49–52) and diagnosed by Jesus (4:13; 8:18). They were called to be Jesus' disciples and to learn to see correctly (4:24). The IR shares the same calling and issue with their perception (4:13, 24). That is why they need to hear the Gospel story and learn to see things correctly, namely, in Jesus' way. Indeed, why else would they need to hear the

Gospel at all? So, both the disciples and the IR have the same calling; they are to share the same experience and have the same problems.

Now, the difference between the IR and the disciples is that the IR is not a part of the story world while the disciples are. The disciples can react to what they see and hear. They can share their opinions, ask questions, and be challenged, corrected, encouraged, and instructed by Jesus. The IR has no such option apart from the disciples. He or she is supposed to follow the disciples in their learning process. Therefore, the reader depends on the disciples heavily and not vice versa. So, if the disciples were not called to observe the story in the story world, there would not be such a call for a reader as well. There would not be a model for the reader to follow. Finally, if there were no disciples as the primary addressees of the Gospel story, which Jesus intended to "show" them, there would not be even a story in the first place.

So, the IR is invited to see the story with the disciples, and both the disciples and the IR are invited to learn to see from Jesus. That is the ultimate call for both parties. But the access to Jesus "who sees" is provided in the same way as to Jesus "who speaks" and Jesus "who knows," namely, through the disciples. Therefore, it is possible to recognize the "position of the witness" in the Gospel, and to assert that the disciples hold this position.

Conflict

There is much coincidence between the narrator's and disciples' knowledge of the story world and Jesus; he is dependent on them as the holders of this information. We see the significance of the disciples' perception and the narrator's dependence on their perception in many ways. However, we also saw the disciples' problems with both

knowledge and perception. Even though they see and know a lot, their perception is defective, and they have problems with proper understanding.

The improper understanding and perception reflect the wrong ideology of the disciples. They were called to follow Jesus and answered that call wholeheartedly. Their personal loyalty to and deep appreciation of Jesus were developed based on the calling. However, their ideology, namely the way they perceive things in the story world, including Jesus, God, and themselves, was wrong and had to be changed. They had to learn how to see things in Jesus' way, that is, according to his ideology.

Jesus called them so they might learn his ideology, which equals seeing correctly. He was intentional in challenging their wrong ideology so they might abandon it and learn his instead. However, that was not an easy endeavor. It was a complex and painful process, which is likened to recovering from deafness and blindness in a parabolic way (7:31–37; 8:22–26). The difference in the two parties' ideology could not but cause ideological conflict between them, as the disciples were not willing (or even not able) to abandon their wrong ideology and adopt Jesus'. Jesus and the disciples were on different sides in this conflict.

The conflict became evident as early as in 1:37–38, where the difference between Peter's (and those with him) expectations from Jesus and his sense of mission appeared first. Then, it reached its peak in a direct (though private) confrontation between Peter and Jesus in 8:32–33, as Peter was not willing to accept Jesus' identity and mission. Perhaps the most open clash of ideologies happened in 14:27–31 when Jesus predicted their scattering and Peter's denial, and they were not willing to accept his words. Peter

objected to them "emphatically." So, their self-perception differed from Jesus' almost till the end.

This conflict was reflected on the psychological level. As wrong ideology prevented the disciples from correctly seeing the story world, it also produced misunderstanding between them and Jesus. Indeed, the initial and ongoing ideological difference between Jesus and the disciples is vast and the only factor disturbing Jesus' group. This is revealed in the continuous emotional tensions between Jesus and the disciples, as the narrator emphasizes. Even though deep appreciation of Jesus by his disciples is always implied, as well as his tender love toward them, the narrator often highlights Jesus' frustration with them and their inability to understand him and his ideological presuppositions, which sometimes even leads to open discontent toward Jesus.

We can see that the narrator's ideological position is aligned with Jesus from the very beginning. Therefore, he continually supports Jesus in the conflict between him and the disciples. He consistently follows Jesus' perspective and approach to comprehending things. In the psychological realm, he shares both Jesus' irritation and sympathy toward the disciples. At the same time, he cannot endorse the disciples' discontent with Jesus and condemns it both implicitly and explicitly. Therefore there is a significant difference between the narrator and the disciples as we see them in the Gospel story.

Synthesis: The Narrator and Peter

Conflict and Resolution

Although the group of disciples was involved in the conflict with Jesus, Peter played the central role in it. His wrong expectation was highlighted in 1:37–38. Peter also played a central role in the conflict peak (8:32–33). Even though Jesus' look toward the other disciples suggested their sharing Peter's position, the clash was initiated by Peter and was personal. Moreover, in 14:27–31 Peter was the most vocal in his "emphatic" objection to Jesus' prediction.

Peter's conflict with Jesus was growing or, instead, being clearly revealed with the course of the Gospel. However, Peter made some progress in his learning. There are two signs of his progress, which Mark seems to unify intentionally. Namely, the author describes the two-step healing of the blind man (8:22–26), which is immediately followed by Peter's confession of Jesus (8:29), along with his clash with Jesus (8:32–33). Peter is half-blinded indeed! That may be seen as both positive (can see something) and negative (still can not see clearly). While the narrator seems to emphasize the negative aspect, we cannot deny the positive either.[382]

The fact that the blind man was finally healed implies that the disciples, and especially Peter, would be finally healed at a certain point. Did their complete healing actually happen in the Gospel? Sometimes, it is claimed never to happen. For example, Patrick Hartin asserts that it is impossible to see the disciples' healing in the Gospel, as they never demonstrated the change in their behavior.[383] However, our discussion of

[382] "Peter 'sees' that Jesus is the Messiah, the Christ. But he fails to 'see' that, as the Christ, Jesus must suffer." Malbon, "How Does the Story Mean?," 47.

[383] See Hartin, "The Role of the Disciples," 44–47.

14:72 shows that at least Peter's healing actually happened. The moment of the highest apparent deviation, denying Jesus, was strangely the eye-opening moment for Peter. Indeed, after recognizing own failure, he remembered his conflict and prediction of Jesus and sided with the Master.

In this way, the conflict was resolved. Peter clearly realized and probably forsook his ideological position, held previously during the entire narrative, and agreed with Jesus. We do not know precisely what happened to Markan Peter after 14:72, though we can reasonably assume that he met Jesus and was restored by him (14:28; 16:7). We may agree with Hartin that the effective change of Peter or other disciples is never demonstrated in the Gospel. However, what we do know is that at this point of 14:72, Peter sided with Jesus. He endorsed Jesus for the second time (cf. 8:29; 11:21).

As the ideological conflict has been resolved, the psychological disturbance between Jesus and Peter and the difference in their vision have been eliminated. All of that happened in the last scene of Peter's presence in the Gospel, namely in 14:72. At this point, while remembering, Peter:

1. sided with Jesus against his previous self in the story's conflict,
2. saw the preceding events just like Jesus did,
3. felt resentment against himself and not against Jesus.

Perception

Peter can be distinguished from other disciples with regard to his perception. Of course, everything which is relevant to the perception of the disciples as a group and which was summed up above is relevant to Peter as well. However, this thesis has revealed that Peter's perception is highlighted in the Gospel compared to other disciples.

Scholars often recognize the importance of *inclusio*, which is created by mentioning Peter in 1:16 and 16:7. Bauckham also pointed out that *inclusio* is created by the frequency of the plural-to-singular device at the beginning of the Gospel and closer to the end of it. This frequency matches the frequency of mentioning Peter. In this thesis, it was demonstrated that internal focalization with Peter as focalizer, or one who perceives, also creates *inclusio*. As the IR is invited to enter a particular scene together with the disciples via the plural-to-singular device and then turn back to it in the moment of retrospective analysis, they also enter and look back to the whole story along with Peter specifically (1:29–39; 14:72).

In the middle of the story, in 9:1–29, Peter's perception is emphasized. This is an exceptional case of internal focalization, where the perception of the three disciples, especially Peter, is constantly emphasized. They are privileged to witness Jesus' transfiguration and to lend their sight to the narrator for this significant scene. Therefore, the narrator and the reader are critically dependent on Peter's seeing. The constant perspective throughout the episode highlights Peter's importance as a witness and his potential responsibility for other cases when plural-to-singular is used. It also helps to describe the public scenes.

Peter is the only disciple whose perception is being healed in the course of the narrative. Borrell correctly connects the two cases of Peter's remembering to Jesus' diagnosing of the disciples' blindness or half-blindness (8:18; 8:22–26). Jesus explained their inability to see clearly by their inability to remember two cases of the crowd's feeding (8:18–20). Peter's recalling in 11:21 is clearly connected to seeing and hearing, so it already indicates the progress of his perceiving. In 14:72, as clearly shown, his

remembering is directly connected to his newly-found ability to see things in Jesus' way; that is, his seeing was healed.

Knowledge

Replacing the group of disciples with Peter individually would not result in any loss of narrative knowledge about Jesus in the Gospel. This is because there is no information in the Gospel that other disciples witnessed and not Peter. Peter witnessed much more than the other disciples, either with James and John or sometimes on his own (8:32–33; 14:66–72). As a result, he was very well-informed. In addition, Peter, along with James and John, had the opportunity to witness and know Jesus during critical moments that were not available to others. For instance, the moment of Jesus' glory was a significant but secret scene that was shared with only three disciples, including Peter (9:2–8). Jesus' agony and prayer in Gethsemane were also specifically shared with Peter and two of his companions (14:32–42). Hence, Peter exceeds the other disciples in terms of information, including both the general awareness of the story and personal knowledge of Jesus. Furthermore, 9:1–29 shows that the other nine disciples could not provide independent witness. Even though James and John are also well-informed, Peter still surpasses them.

Another significant distinction of Peter is that he is the only disciple and the only character whose thought processes about the story information, keeping and handling it, were described by the narrator. We have two notes of Peter's "remembering" Jesus' actions and words (11:14, 21; 14:72). The most significant is the second case of recalling (14:72), as this remembering implies siding with Jesus in their ideological conflict. It was the eye-opening moment for Peter and, therefore, made him reevaluate the whole story

from new (Jesus') perspective. In this way, he becomes a suitable and qualified informant. Indeed, he not only knows the Gospel events but also gains a new perspective and understanding of them, having abandoned his previous way of thinking and aligned himself with Jesus' teachings. Additionally, his eyesight has been healed, allowing him to see with newfound clarity.

The note of "keeping the matter for themselves" (9:10) refers to Peter in the first place due to his specific description in the connected episode 9:2–8. This makes him the perfect candidate to communicate "the matter," possibly along with other things related to Jesus, to the narrator. This transfer would happen only after Jesus' arrest, death, and resurrection. Peter experienced his transformation related to those events and specifically revealed in 14:72 also before this transfer. The new Peter, with clear eyesight and understanding of the story, could convey the information.

Implications: The Gospel as Peter's Testimony

The Gospel as Eyewitness Testimony

Samuel Byrskog gives a helpful definition of eyewitness testimony: "Eyewitness testimony is the outcome of an integrated act of visual observation and interpretation. It is not only observation of what actually happened; and it is not only interpretation."[384] According to this definition, there are two crucial components of eyewitness testimony: visual observation and interpretation. To be an eyewitness means not only to observe or to receive information about the witnessed events through the sense organs but also to

[384] Samuel Byrskog, "From Orality to Textuality," 42.

interpret what is observed. According to this understanding of eyewitness testimony, is it possible to see the Gospel as the disciples' and/or Peter's eyewitness testimony?

Byrskog's definition strikingly calls to mind two important assertions of Jesus which were discussed in this thesis, namely 4:11–12 and 8:18. Jesus asserts that his true disciples should not only see and hear but also perceive and understand. Namely, they also need to interpret things correctly. The Gospel never questions the disciples' ability to see and hear. Even their mistaking Jesus for the sea ghost (6:49) at the end reveals their wrong interpretation of what they saw. According to our discussion above, they were able to see, hear, and, hence, be informed of nearly everything in the Gospel story, including Jesus, other characters, and the Gospel events. Very often, they can be directly seen as holding the "position of the witness," and the narrator emphasizes their perception. However, they continually had serious problems with their interpretation, which was stressed by Jesus himself (8:18). Due to their continuous ideological distinction not only from Jesus but also from the narrator, they often were not able to interpret the events in the same way as the narrator interprets them.

Therefore, if we only consider the observing disciples as the Gospel story interpreters, then it would be hard to see the Gospel as their eyewitness testimony, precisely due to the difference between them and Jesus with the narrator. They still can be seen as the narrator's informants with regard to some basic facts of their observation. However, if the narrator used them as informants, indeed, he should have reinterpreted what he heard from them. The importance of the disciples as eyewitnesses, in this case, could not be a crucial one, as the correct interpretation is not of less significance for eyewitness testimony than the essential awareness of the story.

However, we need to take into consideration the differentiation between the observing self and reporting self, and the retrospective nature of testimony. If there are two selves, there may be two different acts of interpretation. The first act is made by observing self in the moment of observation, and the second one by reporting self when the information is being reported. That is why it is essential to consider not only the understanding of the observing disciples but also of the disciples in the implied moment of their reporting. Has their understanding changed enough so their new interpretation of the Gospel may become reliable for the narrator?

The practice of revisiting the story retrospectively, frequently mentioned in the Gospel, the disciples' active learning, and Jesus' determination in teaching them point to the dynamics of the disciples' understanding. We may reasonably assume some growth in their comprehension. As the disciples kept revisiting the same scenes, they might have gradually learned to understand them according to Jesus' way of seeing things. However, speaking of the disciples as a group, it is hard to identify for sure the significance of their progress.

With Peter, however, it is different. In 14:72, his newly obtained ability to see, that is, to interpret the story correctly, was clearly indicated by the narrator. Mark 9:10 suggested that reporting should have happened after Jesus' resurrection and, therefore, after Peter's eye-opening moment in 14:72. The interpretation of the story by the reporting Peter may be reliable, as he learned to see it along with Jesus and the narrator. This crucial fact, along with Peter's distinguished awareness, emphasized perception, and highlighted psychology, makes it reasonable to see the Gospel as Peter's eyewitness testimony. Moreover, this healing of Peter's vision may even compel him to witness. Just

like the woman who had hemorrhage provided her testimony after being healed (5:33), Peter also may have given his testimony after recovering from a significant illness.

Therefore, it is reasonable to argue that the Gospel can be read as Peter's testimony. That Peter, though, should not necessarily be the real historical Peter, but the Peter who belongs to Mark's narrative. This Peter is Mark's character and may be very well regarded as the Gospel narrator's informant, or key witness. We may reasonably claim that Mark's narrator, in return, told his story as Peter's testimony or close to it. The task of this thesis was to explore the connection between the narrator and Peter's testimony. This was accomplished with regard to Peter-character.

Why is there such a relationship between Mark's narrator and Peter-character in Mark's narrative? It is possible to see this relationship as a projection of the relationship between the real Mark and the real Peter, his key witness, just as Petrine tradition suggests. Perhaps the most important implication of this thesis is that the Gospel itself, if considered as a narrative, does not contain anything that would prevent us from making such a projection. Indeed, the narrator, who operates within realistic limits, allows us to make such a projection. Just as Peter of the Gospel may be seen as the narrator's key witness, the real Peter may be seen as Mark's primary witness source, and Mark's dependence on him is highly probable. Therefore, the Gospel itself, if studied from a narratological perspective, according to this thesis' findings, supports the Petrine tradition.

We may make a few more suggestions regarding Mark's Gospel and eyewitnesses. Peter may be seen as Mark's key witness, but there is no reason to suggest him as the only witness. The Passion story witnessed by the women proves that. There

are other episodes (6:14–29) which Peter could not have witnessed. We may also suggest that Mark incorporated other people's testimonies into the Gospel, like the hemorrhaging woman (due to the significant inside view — 5:25–34), the former demoniac (due to the extended description of his life — 5:3–5), and blind Bartimaeus (due to employing his point of view — 10:46–52). However, Mark preferred including in his Gospel the stories confirmed by Peter, or, rather, the Twelve.

Indeed, even though Peter's role is crucial and he may be regarded as Mark's key witness, the Twelve are not to be neglected. Bauckham may very well be correct in calling them the "official body of witnesses."[385] We may note that there are only two Gospel passages with Peter and not other disciples. Both of them depict Peter in a way that we hardly need additional witnesses due to the nature of the described events (8:32–33; 14:66–72). Those two passages deal with his conflict with Jesus and its final resolution. Everywhere else, we see either the Twelve as the group or at least James and John, or Andrew (1:16–18) along with Peter. Therefore, we may suggest that even though Peter's witness is central, in most cases it had to be affirmed by other disciples.

Still, the Gospel is a literary composition. Petersen is wrong when claiming that due to the presence of the "*intrusively omniscient features,*" the Markan account cannot be based on any real experiences. In this thesis, significant effort was expended in order to show that the Markan narrator can operate within realistic limits. But he is correct in his claim that the presence of the Markan narrator in the Gospel suggests that it is "a bona fide literary composition."[386] We may agree that the presence of such a narrator (even though we would not call him omniscient, rather omni-communicative) testifies that the

[385] Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses*, 299.

[386] Petersen, "'Point of View' in Mark's Narrative," 114–15.

Gospel is a literary composition. The testimony, which is composed retrospectively, and is presented from the point of view of the new self, who already experienced the event and was changed, enlightened and enriched by it, can also be considered as a literary composition with its own literal approaches and ideological purposes. That is precisely what we see in the Gospel of Mark with regard to the relationship between Peter, the narrator, and Jesus.

There is no reason to deny Mark's full-fledged authorship as well. Bauckham correctly asserts that "Mark is an author in full control of his sources."[387] Namely, he is faithful to his sources but uses them in a way that serves his purposes.[388] Even if Mark received a lot of his material directly from Peter, as the Petrine tradition suggests, he did not simply retell it. The way he begins his Gospel proves it. He did not start with Peter but with Jesus. This beginning serves his overall purpose — to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ. However, introducing Peter as early as in 1:16 suggests that Jesus Christ, whom Mark wants to proclaim, is Jesus whom Peter witnessed.

The Gospel as Peter's Confession and Testimony

At this point, it is clear that there is justification for regarding the Gospel as Peter's testimony. Now, what kind of testimony do we have in the Gospel of Mark? We saw the crucial importance of 14:72 for regarding it as Peter's testimony. At this point, we identify with Peter, who remembers Jesus' prediction of his denial and accepts it. He

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[387] Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses*, 170.

[388] Or like Byrskog concludes: "While a Petrine influence behind the Markan narrative is likely, in my view, *the evangelist, in accordance with the ancient practice, incorporated Peter's oral history into his story by means of a subtle interchange between the eyewitness testimony and other traditional material available to him, on the one hand, and his personal, selective and interpretative perspective, on the other hand, at the end thus narrativizing his own existence by presenting history as story.*" (italic original) Byrskog, *Story as History*, 292.

agrees with Jesus, but this agreement leads him to breaking down and weeping. However, as Peter remembers and cries, he does not only agree with Jesus' prediction of his denial, but also with the narrator's depiction of him denying Jesus. His act of remembering, breaking down, and weeping proves it. Thus he was able to see himself in the moment of the denial clearly — just as Jesus had predicted and just as the narrator described it.

However, we cannot limit the meaning of Peter's act of remembering, breaking down, and weeping only to the denial itself. Still, those actions were caused by and related to the whole process of following Jesus. Indeed, not only Peter's refusal to accept Jesus' prediction of his denial led him to fulfill it and weep, but preceding events, namely

- his sleeping in Gethsemane (14:32–42);
- unwillingness and inability to understand Jesus' words about his fate in Jerusalem (9:32);
- engaging into the battle for power instead of listening to Jesus (9:33–34; 10:35–41);
- rebuking Jesus for his willingness to suffer and die (8:32);
- being blind or half-blind at that point and previously (8:18, 22–26);
- inability to understand Jesus' miracles and words.

All of that led Peter to a moment of denial, remembering, breaking down, and weeping. Therefore, as he was able to see clearly and deeply regret his denial, he would be able to see clearly all that process as well. Now he would understand Jesus, who was continuously rebuking him and other disciples and line up with the narrator in his description of their following (e.g., 6:51–52).

Therefore, we can tell that as far as Peter is concerned, the Gospel became the story of his following Jesus, which revealed his blindness and led him to denial. In the final point, 14:72, he realized his poor spiritual condition and improper following. Boomershine is correct in characterizing 14:66–72 as Peter's confession. Describing the entire Gospel as Peter's confession as well is proper. Indeed, if Peter would describe the Gospel story as his relationship with Jesus, he would likely do it similarly to the narrator, namely as a story which led him to denial. That is why we may regard the Gospel as his confession, as it is given in the form that honestly describes his continuous failing. We know that at the end of the way, he became conscious of this failure.

No less, the Gospel is also Peter's testimony to Jesus. Probably, we may tell that at 14:72, Peter would be focused on regretting his failures. However, even this moment of realization and regret is deeply connected to Jesus. Indeed:

- Peter remembers Jesus' prediction of his denial;
- he must have remembered Jesus who predicted it, and how he has predicted it;
- it was Jesus, whom Peter denied and followed improperly all the way;
- at the very moment of Peter's denial, Jesus stood before Sanhedrin's trial, of which Peter must have been aware.

While recounting his past mistakes, Peter must have remembered Jesus, namely:

- when Peter was sleeping, Jesus prayed and rebuked him for sleeping (14:32–42);
- when Peter was unwilling and unable to accept Jesus' fate in Jerusalem, Jesus insisted that he was going to suffer and die and decisively made his way to this fate (8:31; 9:30–31; 10:32–34);

- when Peter rebuked Jesus for his willingness to suffer and die, Jesus rebuked Peter for setting his mind on things of men (8:33);
- when Peter and others were not able to grasp the meaning of miracles, Jesus performed them and rebuked the disciples for this understanding inability (8:18);
- when Peter and others were surprised and amazed, it was because of Jesus.

Therefore, we cannot view the Gospel as Peter's confession alone; it is also his testimony about Jesus. We can even refer to Jesus in the Gospel of Mark as "Jesus of Peter's testimony," for Peter would describe him similarly to how the narrator does.

We may call the Gospel of Mark Peter's confession and his testimony about Christ. Let's stress that the Gospel is not the testimony of Peter's change by Jesus but of Jesus who opened Peter's eyes so Peter would be able to see correctly. Therefore, the Gospel as the confession is the story of Peter's blindness, which had to be healed. The Gospel as the testimony, however, is the story of Jesus, whom Peter was able to see (and remember) with his healed eyes.

It would be wrong to search the Gospel's evidence of an external manifestation of Peter's change, as the narrator is not focused on portraying such a change. It is important to note that even if there was a change in Peter's character, emphasizing it would go against the nature of the Gospel. We claim that the Gospel can be called Peter's testimony, yet this testimony is not about himself. Speaking of Peter, the Gospel should be regarded as his confession. Therefore, it is the story that led him to break down and weep with no need to emphasize his behavioral change. But as Peter's testimony, the Gospel is about Jesus, who opened his eyes so Peter could truly see him and testify about him.

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