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The Way According to Mark: A Transformative Symbol of Itinerant Discipleship

Summary: Using the symbolism of the way, the narrative of the Gospel according to Mark compels its reader to pursue a transformative itinerary in of identification with the narrative's main character, Jesus Christ. As the topic of the Markan "way" as a symbol of identification has received scarce scholarly attention, this study begins by defining the key concepts of the way and the symbol, followed by a textual inquiry that relies on a narrative analysis. The ensuing theological analysis finds that through its symbolic power, the "way" serves as both an appeal to comprehend the Lord's own way and an ethical calling to follow. The Markan "way" points to a disciple's ongoing quest of identification with Jesus as a transformative and self-effacing path to God who is Himself this way.

Keywords: Way, Symbol, Narrative, Identity, Gospel of Mark

1. Introducing - the Way

The narrative of the Gospel according to Mark compels its reader to pursue a transformative itinerary. Filled with symbolic significance, this itinerary consists of being on the way with Jesus Christ. By being "on the way" (Mk 8:27), the reader is induced to what some scholars have described the fundamental purpose of Mark:¹ to enter, as a disciple, in the identity of Jesus as "Son of God" and "Messiah – the Christ" (Mk 1:1; cf. 3:11, 5:7, 8:29).² In this itinerant identification process, the symbol of the "way" represents a theological prerequisite of Christlike discipleship.

The importance of the way in Mark is unequivocal. Immediately after describing the identity of its principal character (Mk 1:1), the narrative introduces the notion of the way by paraphrasing Isaiah's prophecy (Is 40:3) of a messenger, "who will prepare your way," and by calling the recipient to "prepare the way of the Lord, make

¹ D. E. Aune, *The New Testament in its Literary Environment*, Philadelphia 1987, p. 55.

² The author of the Gospel according to Mark gives no explicit statement of the purpose of his writing (unlike Luke 1:1-4 or John 20:30-31). It is on the reader to uncover the purpose of this narrative Christology, as becomes evident in the opening line. M.E. Boring forcefully states that Mark's teaching narrative is "aimed at helping the church clarify its understanding of the meaning of the Christ event and discipleship to Jesus in a threatening, confused and conflicted situation". M. E. Boring, *Mark: A Commentary*, Louisville 2006, p. 22.

his paths straight” (Mk 1:2b-3). In general, Mark’s spatial notions play an important role in both structuring the narrative and exercising a symbolic dimension. Moreover, the particular symbol of the way serves as a crucial means towards the adoption and the internalization of the gospel’s theology. The symbol of the way constitutes what this study claims to be the essence of a disciple’s transformative process of being identified with the narrative’s main character, Jesus Christ.

The topic of the “way” as a Markan symbol of identification with Christ has received scarce scholarly attention despite its emphatic use in the gospel. This is surprising since the notion of the way intrinsically accompanies the narrative from the beginning, by structuring both the text and its reception. This limited scholarly attention may be due to the potentially conflicting interpretations of Mark’s use of above-mentioned Isaiah’s passage in Mk 1:2-3. Some scholars read in the Isaian “way of the Lord” (Mk 1:3) an emphasis on the Lord’s own creation of a way. The way thus understood is the way of Jesus himself and only secondarily a calling to walk along that way.³ Other scholars see in Isaiah’s way an exclusive reference to the way a disciple is to prepare and follow, i.e., an ethical calling.⁴

Based on these research gaps and the divergent interpretations of the Markan way, the following questions arise. What is the role of the symbol of the way in Mark? What ideas and beliefs does it convey? Moreover, how does its use help the reader to set foot on an itinerary of identification with Christ? Finally, does Mark tell us something more general about symbolism in religious and social contexts as such by relying on the symbol of the way?

In order to address these questions, this study first defines the key concepts: the symbol and the way as used in Mark. The ensuing textual inquiry uses the narrative analysis, which relies on the Markan story as a whole as well as on two specific sections: the section of breads (6:6b-8:30) and on the section between Galilee and Jerusalem (8:22-10:52). The narrative approach and the textual scope then help to explore the theological import of the symbol of the way. The theological analysis finds that through its symbolic power, the “way” serves as an appeal to comprehend the Lord’s own way and as an ethical calling to follow. In other words, as a key Markan symbol, the “way” represents a disciple’s ongoing quest of identification with Jesus as a transformative path to God who is Himself this way.

³ Marcus suggests that the Isaian context of Mk 1:3 points primarily to “the way of the Lord” meaning Yahweh’s *own* way through the wilderness, his victory march: the center of attention is God’s own mighty demonstration of saving power. The ethical dimension flows from God as the source. J. Marcus, *The Way of the Lord*, London 2004 [1992], p. 29; M.E. Boring, *Mark: A Commentary*, Louisville 2006, p. 37.

⁴ Snodgrass claims that a Qumran interpretation of Is 40:3 informs the Synoptics’ use, at it views the community’s “right living in the wilderness as the means of preparation for the soon coming of God”. K. R. Snodgrass, “Streams of Tradition Emerging from Isaia 40: 1-5 and their Adaptation in the New Testament”, *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 2/8 (1980), p. 30.

2. Defining the Terms and Methods

In order to examine the Markan “way” as a transformative symbol of Christlike discipleship, symbolism and narrative approaches need to be clarified. Symbols can be defined as a means of complex communication that often have multiple levels of meaning.⁵ The complex nature of symbols, for example, separates them from signs, which represent only one meaning. Based on this distinction between signs and symbols, C. Jung provides the now classical definition of the symbol: “an indefinite expression with many meanings, pointing to something not easily defined and therefore not fully known”.⁶ Symbols contain and carry a plurality of meaning and therefore play the crucial role in figurative language.

Figurative language in narratives is characterized by what P. Ricoeur has called a *surplus de sens*, a surplus of meaning. This implies a recognition that something means more than it initially appears to mean. For example, a linguistic expression using figurative, nonliteral elements, such as a metaphor or a symbol, represents something else. However, unlike in metaphors (e.g., Plato’s cave), the surplus of meaning of the symbolic image appears in the text as a single item – such as the “way” – and thus, according to Ricoeur, possesses a greater nonlinguistic dimension than a metaphor.⁷ Moreover, the plurality of meaning of symbols’ single-item expression becomes manifest only in its interpretation, while at the same time the meaning of an interpretation surpasses that of the symbol.⁸ As a result, that for which a symbol stands or what it indicates must and can be filled in or “thrown in” (*sym-ballein*) by the recipient.⁹ A motif in a narrative can be only understood as a symbol by the reader.¹⁰

The reader-focused approach of narrative criticism occurred within the hermeneutical shift of the 20th century, most forcefully in late 1970s.¹¹ Narrative criticism broke with the monopoly of the monolithic historical-critical method and opened the possibility of the reader’s transformation in the narration process. This allowed scholars to apply the insights of the emerging literary theory to the gospel of Mark, leading D. Rhoads and D. Michie in their groundbreaking project *Mark as Story*¹²

⁵ M. Womack, *Symbols and Meaning: A Concise Introduction*, Walnut Creek 2005.

⁶ C.G. Jung, *Symbols of Transformation, Collected Works of C.G. Jung* 5. Vol. 20. London 1956, p. 124.

⁷ P. Ricoeur, *Interpretation Theory: Discourse and the Surplus of Meaning*, Fort Worth 1976, p. 59-61.

⁸ P. Ricoeur, *Du Texte à l’action, Essais d’herméneutique II.*, Paris 1986, p. 29-30.

⁹ E.E. Culpepper, *Philosophia in a Feminist Key: Revolt of the Symbols*. ThD Dissertation ed. Cambridge, 2009.

¹⁰ R. Zimmermann, *Symbolic Communication between John and His Reader: The Garden Symbolism in John 19-20*, in *Anatomies of Narrative Criticism: The Past, Present, and Futures of the Fourth Gospel as Literature*. eds. T. Thatcher – S.D. Moore. Atlanta 2008, p. 223.

¹¹ T.S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, Chicago 1962, p. 84; P. Rožič, *Dire Quelque Chose Qui Compte: De La Méthode d’immanence De Blondel a La Théologie Fondamentale De Lubac*. „Bogoslovskia Smotra (Theological Review)” 83/4 (2013), p. 743-762.

¹² D. Rhoads, J. Dewey, *Mark as Story: An Introduction to the Narrative of a Gospel*, Philadelphia

to shift the emphasis from the world *behind* the Markan text to the story world *of* the Markan text.¹³ Since then, narrative criticism has helped the broader field of exegesis, and Markan studies in particular, “to discern how the implied reader of a narrative would be expected to respond to the text” allowing for discernment of “polyvalence within parameters”.¹⁴ Relying on such parameters and meanings, the narrative approach has taken the study of symbols to a new level.

Based on these methodological developments, the use of symbols in a narrative can be seen as enabling the reader to interpret the meaning of both the particular word and the larger context. Words understood as symbols allow the reader to enter into a world of interpretations, suitable to one’s own initial position. The polyvalence of symbols allows the interpretation be done in a number of ways while keeping the elusive but transformative nature of symbols intact. One of the main components of a narrative text using symbols is its power to evoke ambiguities or unresolved details and help make inferences. Willingham has found that narratives evoke puzzles, which are sufficiently challenging to keep the puzzle-doer occupied, yet at the level of difficulty does not discourage its solution.¹⁵ Moreover, in the “logic” of symbols, contradiction is powerful because it invites the observer to transcend ordinary conceptual categories¹⁶ in order to resolve such contradictions.

By adding symbols, which are by their nature multi-meaning and potentially ambiguous, the narrative helps the reader to activate personal and prior knowledge as well as engage in active processing and transformation.¹⁷ In this sense, storytelling, story analysis, and narrative writing have been shown as important tools of personal and professional development¹⁸ as narratives and symbols share an important point. Narratives build upon a human need to “make meaning and to forge connections between seeming disparate bits of knowledge and experience”.¹⁹ Like symbols, narratives involve the readers by drawing them and making them a part of their world or vision a reality.²⁰

The task for this research is to see how exactly the “way” in the Markan narrative

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¹³ C.W. Skinner, *Telling the Story: The Appearance and Impact of Mark as Story*, in *Mark as Story. Retrospect and Prospect*. eds. K.R. Iverson – C.W. Skinner, Atlanta 2011, p. 4.

¹⁴ M.A. Powell, *Narrative Criticism: The Emergence of a Prominent Reading Strategy*, in *Mark as Story. Retrospect and Prospect*. eds. K.R. Iverson – C.W. Skinner, Atlanta 2011, p. 23-24.

¹⁵ D.T. Willingham, *Ask the Cognitive Scientist the Privileged Status of Story*, „American Educator” 28 (2004), p. 44-45.

¹⁶ M. Womack, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

¹⁷ A.C. Graesser – C.L. McMahan, *Anomalous Information Triggers Questions when Adults Solve Quantitative Problems and Comprehend Stories*, „Journal of Educational Psychology” 85/1 (1993), p. 136-151.

¹⁸ S. Nathanson, *Harnessing the Power of Story: Using Narrative Reading and Writing Across Content Areas*, „Reading Horizons” 47/1 (2006), p. 1-26.

¹⁹ N. Blyler – J. Perkins, *Culture and the Power of Narrative*, „Journal of Business and Technical Communication” 13/3 (1999), p. 245.

²⁰ C. Kelly – M. Zak, *Narrativity and Professional Communication Folktales and Community*

functions as a symbol that is conducive to such a transformation. Based on narrative criticism, the following section examines the conditions under which the Markan “way” can be understood as a transformative symbol. These conditions emerge from the study on the “how” of the story, on its component parts, and on how they contribute to meaning.

3. Narrative Analysis of the Markan Way

Translated as the “path,” “road,” “journey” and “way,” the word *hodos* appears 16 times in the Gospel according to Mark from the opening Isaian epigraph (1 3; 2:23; 4:4, 15; 6:8; 8:3, 27; 9:33, 34; 10:17, 32, 46, 52; 12:14). Among these, two appear in the literal sense (2:23; 8:3) while the rest carry the symbolic and theological overtones of the narrative. The Markan narrator’s consistent use of *hodos* in singular additionally underlines the world of interpretations behind the word itself. Differently put, Mark provides specific “asides” and settings of the symbol of the “way” that contain important information for the reader in order to help the reader to enter the gospel’s theology through its coherent narrative.

From the perspective of narrative criticism, the “way” serves as a specific spatial setting internal to the narrative. As such, it does not necessarily rely on, or convey, the history and traditions behind the text. As a number of scholars have shown instead, settings in general, and the “way” in particular, are key to the Markan narrative.²¹ As a categorial setting, the “way” aggregates and organizes the narrative’s meanings and interpretations under several groups that constitute the Markan spatial order. This spatial order is central to the narrative because of the Markan pattern of Jesus’ movement. As shown by Tolmie, “Jesus changes setting more than forty times in the narrative – therefore underscoring the urgency of his message, his success and the bigger goal that he has in mind”.²²

Analyzing the “way” of Jesus’ movement, three categories of the Markan spatial order emerge: geopolitical, topographical and architectural. Firstly, in geopolitical terms, the “way” connects two main regions that stand out in opposition to one another. While Galilee is the place of Jesus’ initial proclamation and figure of power, Jerusalem is a place where Jesus becomes progressively more powerless.²³ Also, Markan Jesus travels outside of these two Jewish areas into regions such as Decapolis and the Transjordan. Figure 1 schematizes geopolitically these opposing sides.²⁴

Meaning, „Journal of Business and Technical Communication” 13/3 (1999), p. 297-317.

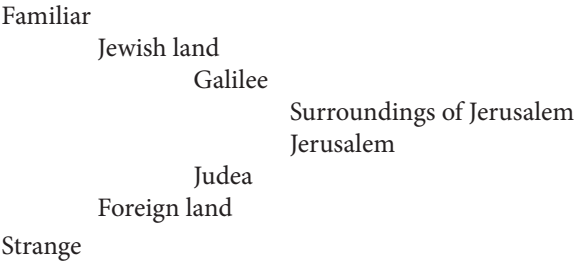
²¹ M.E. Boring, *op. cit.*; E.S. Malbon, *Narrative Space and Mythic Meaning in Mark*. Vol. 13., San Francisco 1986; E.K. Wefald, *The Separate Gentile Mission in Mark: A Narrative Explanation of Markan Geography, the Two Feeding Accounts and Exorcisms*, „Journal for the Study of the New Testament” 18/60 (1996), p. 3-26.

²² F. Tolmie, *Narratology and Biblical Narratives: A Practical Guide*. Eugene 2012, p. 112.

²³ J.R. Donahue – D.J. Harrington, *The Gospel of Mark*. Vol. 2, Collegeville 2002, p. 21-22.

²⁴ E.S. Malbon, *Narrative Space and Mythic Meaning in Mark*. Vol. 13., San Francisco 1986.

Figure 1. Markan Geopolitical Settings



Secondly, in topographical terms, the narrative provides settings such as the Jordan, the desert, or the sea. In Mark, Jesus often crosses, or walks by, the Sea of Galilee, which represents the barrier between Jewish and Gentile territory.²⁵ The former points to the promise of Israel and the later to a menacing location with demoniacs and pagans. On the way, Jesus performs miracles in both territories, as is particularly evident in sections on the bread (Mk 6:30-44 and 8:1-10, cf. below). Thirdly, in architectural terms, Mark provides opposing settings of the “house” and the “synagogue.” In the former, sacred place, Jesus meets stern opposition. The latter, a more profane location of the house, is more welcoming.

Combining the insights provided by the study of Markan settings geopolitics, topography and architecture, specific opposing pairs emerge (Figure 2). They help to compose a view of the fundamental spatial oppositions, on which the Markan narrative rests.

Figure 2. Narrative Spatial Settings as Oppositions

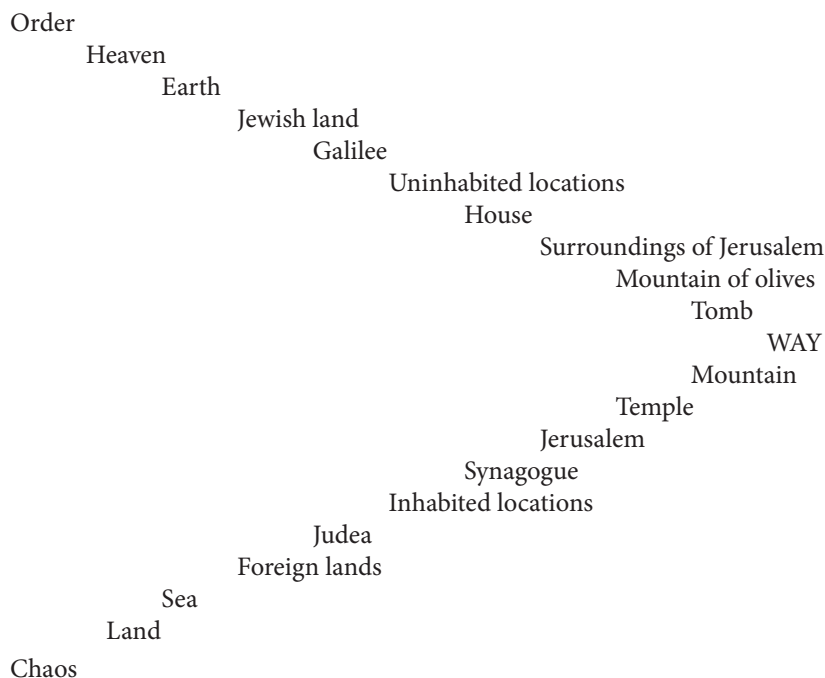
SPATIAL	geopolitical	topographical	architectural
ORDER	familiar	promise	profane
vs.	vs.	vs.	vs.
CHAOS	strange/foreign	threat	sacred

From this logic of oppositions within the narrative’s spatial settings, a nuanced structure of the spatial order emerges, as shown in Figure 3.²⁶ The combination of the three spatial categories demonstrate that the notion of the “way” plays the central and connecting role.

²⁵ J.R. Donahue – D. J. Harrington, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

²⁶ E.S. Malbon, *op. cit.*

Figure 3. Overall Spatial Settings



Within the logical hierarchy of opposing sides behind the spatial order, the “way” plays not only a literal but also symbolic role of mediation. For example, the literal way of Jesus to Jerusalem (Mk 8:22-10:52) provides a symbolic connection between the opposing geopolitical settings between Galilee and Judea as Jesus announces his suffering in Jerusalem. Next, his ways along and across the sea provide a symbolic connection between the opposing topographical settings as Jesus feeds both the Jews and the gentiles there (6:6b-8:30). Finally, Jesus’s way between the opposing architectural settings provides a connection between the sacred but threatening synagogues and the profane but welcoming homes.

4. The Way as Symbolic Mediation

The symbolically mediating role of Jesus’ “way” is particularly visible in the section of the breads (6:6b-8:30). Jesus’ two feeding accounts and the bread conversations rely on meaningful geographical references, mostly particularly on the “way.” They reveal a geographically and chronologically separate itinerant mission of Jesus, fleshing out a clear narrative of parallel missions to the Jews and non-Jews.²⁷ The two missions are connected into one by the way Jesus takes within and between

²⁷ E.K. Wefald, *The Separate Gentile Mission in Mark: A Narrative Explanation of Markan Geography, the Two Feeding Accounts and Exorcisms*, „Journal for the Study of the New Testament” 18/60 (1996), p. 3-26.

them from literal and symbolic perspectives.

Literally, the section of the breads begins and ends with a movement “on the way,” made by Jesus and his disciples (6:6b; 8:27). The beginning of the passage provides Jesus’s itinerant program: “Then he went about among the villages teaching” and missioning the twelve (6:6b). In this program, however, the Markan *hodos* connotes not only his own and literal journey but also that journey of the disciples (6:8) as well as a symbolic “way of discipleship.” Jesus’ instructions for the journey are not simply traveling instructions, they are primarily symbolic of the demands of discipleship.²⁸ Jesus and the disciples are on the move both literally and symbolically when the teaching occurs at the outset of the section of the breads (cf. 6:6b).

The same is true of the pivotal passage that concludes the section of the breads – the Confession of Peter (8:27-30). They were “on the way” when Peter confesses the identity of Jesus. This latter event points to the core of the narrative – the question of Jesus’ identity – and sends the reader to the beginning and to the end of the narrative. First, the narrative returns to the initial question of who the one from Mk 1:1 is. It thus returns to the “way of the Lord,” indicating symbolically the mediating way of not only the main character but also the reader and the reader’s identification with Jesus. Second, the narrative points to the end of the Markan narrative. Mark’s Gospel ends in an open-ended manner, puzzling many a reader. As D. Tovey²⁹ maintains, such a closing puzzle is part of the narrative’s strategy to raise questions about who Jesus is and what it means to follow Jesus. In short, the quest for Jesus’s identity appears forcefully as a way for the reader to examine, assume and follow at the outset, the midpoint and the end of the Markan narrative.

The mediating and itinerant role of the Markan symbolism of way within the text is further visible in the narrative structure in terms of Christological emphases. While Jesus is identified as the Christ in the opening line of the gospel, it is only halfway through that a human being recognizes Jesus’s true identity – when Peter confesses Jesus to be the Christ (8:27-29). Scholars rightly see in this passage a clear turning point of the story. This is supported by the fact that after 8:30, the main character reveals his own identity as a Son of Man, who will suffer, die and be raised by God. This leads many to affirm a bipartite structure of the narrative (1:1-8:21 and 11:1-16:8). According to such a structure, the section between Galilee and Jerusalem (8:22-10:52) plays a transitional role³⁰ and relies on the mediating symbolism of the way by opening several possibilities for a theological interpretation.

5. Theological Settings of Transformation

The transitional role of 8:22-10:52 reveals a particular theology of the symbol of the way. The “way of the Lord” (1:2-3) leads from Galilee to the cross. As becomes

²⁸ J.R. Donahue – D.J. Harrington, *op. cit.*, p. 190.

²⁹ D. Tovey, *Read Mark and Learn: Following Mark’s Jesus*, Eugene 2014.

³⁰ M.E. Boring, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

apparent in this section, Jesus calls people to follow him on a way of self-denial that leads to the cross. Through this call, the way of the Lord modulates into the way of the reader. The importance of such a way becomes fully apparent in the scene of 8:27-38. Seven of Mark's fourteen theological uses of the term "way" are concentrated in this transitional section and the section is bracketed by the being "in the way" and "on the road".³¹ The main protagonist is commissioned to walk this way that leads to rejection, suffering, and death.

It is through the way of the cross that the Markan theme becomes most visible: The triumph of God joyfully promised by Isaiah will be realized only in Jesus's way to the cross. For Jesus, and consequently for his followers, this is a way of suffering, death and, ultimately, triumphal end.³² Jesus's call consists of following behind him in the path he himself walked. The "way" is thus not only literarily rooted in the lives of Jesus and his disciples but also symbolically indicative of Markan way that as a symbol points beyond itself. As a symbol of Christlike discipleship, it points to the transformative power of the process of identification with Jesus Christ.

The symbol of the way is theologically inseparable from Mark's wider point on the identity of Jesus and of his disciples. The question of identity comes to the forefront in the above-examined passage of the breads (Mk 6:6b-8:30), and particularly in 8:26-30. In Mk 6:6b, Jesus "went about the villages" – setting foot on an itinerant mission of teaching. Subsequent pericopes in the section of the breads present Jesus as continuing to go and walk "on" (8:27a). Then, at the villages of Caesarea Philippi, he asks his disciples, while "on the way" (8:27b) "Who do people say I am?" (8:27c). This latter passage on Peter's confession sends the reader back to question of identity in the introducing lines of the gospel, namely that Jesus is the one whose paths are to be prepared: the Christ, the Son of God.

While there is little agreement on the precise meaning of Mark's way and the overall structure of the Markan narrative,³³ most scholars agree on a break at the passage of Peter's confession, at 8:30, as it is closely connected to the question of Jesus' way and his disciples' journey. At 8:31, the narrative moves by and large from Galilee to Judea and from miracles and teaching the crowds to hardly any miracles and teaching the disciples. This shift makes the passage of Peter's confession the seminal and turning point of the gospel,³⁴ a fact that additionally underlines Markan symbolism of the way. In this watershed of the gospel, the way becomes a crucial symbol, helping a disciple understand the kind of discipleship and itinerary the reader of Mark is invited to. Verse 8:31 announces a destabilizing yet necessary path of discipleship: "the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 38.

³³ G.H. Twelftree, *Jesus the Miracle Worker: A Historical and Theological Study*. Grove 1999, p. 68.

³⁴ R.A. Cole, *The Gospel According to Mark: An Introduction and Commentary*. 2nd ed. Vol. 2. Grand Rapids [1961] 1989, p. 86.

again.” The identity of Jesus is similarly uncovered by another parallel between this passage and the beginning. Just as the Baptizer at the outset of the gospel prepares the way by washing away the sin, so at the turning and central point in Mk 8, the identity of Jesus as Christ is revealed as inseparably connected to Paschal mystery, fully revealed at the end of the gospel.

The question of the way becomes increasingly more difficult for the disciples as Jesus sets foot on the way to Jerusalem, where he will accept death and experience resurrection. The conditions that Jesus sets forth immediately after confirming his identity are demanding. “If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me” (8:34). The teacher, who had been performing miracles and been seen as a prophet, has now more clearly revealed His way as the way of the cross. The cross is not only a way of belittlement, shame and death for the person suffering it but also a scandal and a cause of fear for many.³⁵ The announcement of such a way shocks the disciples. This is particularly true of the Apostle Peter who had – just moments prior to Jesus’s announcement of death – confessed his Teacher as the Christ. Moreover, as disciples now know who Jesus is, and what his way to Jerusalem consists of, Jesus reveals what true discipleship is.³⁶ In order to be a disciple, the person needs to share in the Teacher’s path of carrying the cross. The Markan demand to deny one’s self points to the need of a radical transformation of the reader – something what J. Williams sees as not only physical but also spiritual martyrdom. In 8:34 Jesus points to “the critical moment of transformation that is necessary for all followers. [...] It is] in the psychic death and rebirth that makes a human being a disciple. The life of the follower must be characterized by a radical transformation in which the psyche perishes in order that the Child of Humanity can be born”.³⁷

Concluding Remarks

This article has argued that the way of Jesus represents the central and symbolic itinerary of the Gospel narrative that a disciple is to follow. The identity of Jesus is closely connected to the path Jesus takes. On this path, the Markan narrative underlines the importance of the “way: as a literal and symbolically spiritual experience of a disciple. The way according to Mark represents a spatial, symbolic and transformative category. It consists of a way from death to life (8:34-9:1), destabilizing and

³⁵ M. Matjaž, *The Disciples in Mark’s Gospel between Incomprehension, Fear and Faith*, „Bogoslovska Smotra” 80/4 (2010), p. 1015-1031; M. Matjaž, Pavlova »beseda o Križu«, v *1 Kor 1–2 Kot Izziv Krščanske Hermenevtike in Etike, The »Word on the Cross« by Paul in 1 Cor 1–2 as a Challenge of Christian Hermeneutics and Ethics*, „Bogoslovni Vestnik – Theological Quarterly” 75/1 (2015), p. 65-78.

³⁶ I. Platovnjak, *Izzivi krščanske duhovnosti danes, Challenges of today’s Christian spirituality*, „Bogoslovni vestnik – Theological Quarterly”, 75/1 (2015), p. 7-17.

³⁷ J. Williams, *Mark, The Gospel Of Radical Transformation*, „The Bible and Interpretation” 2008, URL: <http://www.bibleinterp.com/articles/williams.shtml>, [12 May 2015].

transforming the reader through the complexity of the story that is paradoxical and ironic. The way becomes a category that is primarily existential and spiritual. It is only by being on the "way," i.e., being Christlike, that the Markan reader discovers progressively how Jesus makes possible a disciple's permanent initiation. Following the way according to Mark represents a symbolic investiture, which involves transformative events that change the person into a Christlike disciple.

Notes

If not noted otherwise, the NRSV translation/text of the Bible is used.

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Droga według Marka: Transformacyjny symbol wędrownego uczniostwa

Streszczenie: Poprzez symbolikę drogi narracja Ewangelii według św. Marka zmusza jej czytelnika do podjęcia transformacyjnej wędrówki w identyfikacji z głównym bohaterem narracji, Jezusem Chrystusem. Ponieważ temat Markowej „drogi” jako symbol identyfikacji nie doczekał się wielkiej uwagi ze strony naukowców, prezentowane studium definiuje najpierw kluczowe koncepcje drogi i symbolu, a następnie bada tekst w oparciu o analizę narracyjną. Przeprowadzona w dalszej kolejności analiza teologiczna pozwala stwierdzić, że „droga”, dzięki swej symbolice, służy zarówno jako wezwanie do zrozumienia drogi Jezusa jak i etyczny apel do naśladowania. Markowa „droga” wskazuje na trwałe dążenie ucznia do identyfikacji z Jezusem, który jest transformującą i skromną drogą do Boga.

Słowa kluczowe: droga, symbol, narracja, tożsamość, Ewangelia według św. Marka