A Catholic Reading of the Gospels of Mark and Matthew in the 20th Century

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1. Introduction

Catholic exegesis of the 20th century is marked programmatically by three official church statements in the beginning, middle, and end of the century. In 1893 the Bible encyclical "Deus Providentissimus" was promulgated by Leo XIII. After 50 years, in 1943, Pius XII proclaimed the Bible encyclical "Divino afflante Spiritu." Again after 50 years, in 1993, the International Pontifical Biblical Commission prepared a document entitled "The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church." The President of this Commission, Cardinal Josef Ratzinger, now Pope Benedict XVI, presented it to Pope John Paul II.[1] An "Address" (not translated into English) of John Paul II and a "Preface" by Cardinal Ratzinger explained the unusual, new rank of the document. Ratzinger declares in his Preface that this document is not an encyclical by the papal Magisterium, but a statement of the position of a commission:

The Pontifical Biblical Commission, in its new form after the Second Vatican Council, is not an organ of the teaching office, but rather a commission of scholars who, in their scientific and ecclesial responsibility as believing exegetes, take positions on important problems of Scriptural interpretation and know that for this task they enjoy the confidence of the teaching office.[2]

In the Address Pope John Paul II called the document a "help": "With this document, the interpretation of the Bible in the Church finds a new impetus for the good of the whole world."[3] Therefore the statements of the document are not without obligation. Between the Bible encyclical of 1943 and the document of 1993, the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965) promulgated the basic document on the Bible: "*Dei Verbum* (Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation)." In that regard, "Interpretation of the Bible in the Church" can rely on the previous

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[1] "The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church," presented by the Pontifical Biblical Commission to Pope John Paul II on April 23, 1993, 7 (http://catholic-resources.org/ChurchDocs/ PBC_Interp-FullText.htm); repr. *Origins* 23 (1994): 497, 499–524. German version (expanded) *Päpstliche Bibelkommission: Die Interpretation der Bibel in der Kirche: Ansprache seiner Heiligkeit Johannes Paul II. und Dokument der Päpstlichen Bibelkommission* (ed. Sekretariat der Deutschen Bischofskonferenz; 1993).

[2] "Interpretation of the Bible in the Church," (German) 24; repr. *Origins* 23 (1994): 499.

[3] "Interpretation of the Bible in the Church," (German) 18.

encyclicals of 1893 and 1945, and on *Dei Verbum*. The magisterial statements are binding, for example, against a "fundamentalist interpretation of the Scriptures."[4] The offer of aid instead of censure marks a basic change in the understanding of the exegesis of the papal Magisterium. This change will be outlined briefly below. Then the development of Catholic exegesis of the Gospel of Mark and the Gospel of Matthew will be presented.

2. The Change in the Papal Documents of Catholic Exegesis in the 20th Century

Chapter I of the papal Address to the document of 1993 has the title "From 'Providentissimus Deus' to 'afflante Spiritu Divino.'" John Paul II acknowledges that both documents have an "argumentative, or more precisely, apologetic part."[5] However, the argumentation differs between the documents. The Encyclical of 1893 "aims especially to protect the Catholic interpretation of the Bible against the attacks of rationalistic science,"[6] namely the "liberal exegesis," and recommends the study of scientific knowledge, especially of the ancient languages of the Orient; the encyclical of 1943, however, is directed against an internal enemy and its polemic against the "scientific study of the Bible."[7] In 1902 the Pontifical Biblical Commission was founded, and in 1909 the Pontifical Biblical Institute. In 1912 the Pontifical Biblical Commission declared "the external and internal evidence for the authenticity of Mark as mandatory and the objections to the authenticity of Mark's conclusion (16:9–20) as non-conclusive. The gospel was written before 70 and used the sermon of Peter and other sources and claims full historical credibility."[8] These affirmations contradicted the position of Protestant historical-critical research, in particular the literary-historical approach, according to which the authenticity of Peter's interpreter Mark "as the author" and the "historical credibility" of the record were denied due to the scholarly reconstruction of post-Easter literary and theological traditions in the Gospel.[9] Catholic commentators, who did not follow the affirmations of the Bible-Commission had to expect the refusal of the Church's imprimatur and other penalties. Earlier in 1907 the commentaries on the Synoptics by Alfred Loisy were set on the Index of Forbidden Books, and he himself was excommunicated in 1908.[10]

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[4] "Interpretation of the Bible in the Church," (German) 17.61–64; repr. *Origins* 23 (1994): 509–10.

[5] "Interpretation of the Bible in the Church," (German) 9.

[6] "Interpretation of the Bible in the Church," (German) 9.

[7] "Interpretation of the Bible in the Church," (German) 9.

[8] J. Schmid, *Das Evangelium nach Markus* (Regensburg: F. Pustet, 1938, 12; repr. 1954), 13.

[9] D. Dormeyer, *Evangelium als literarische und theologische Gattung* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1989), 26–76.

[10] A. Loisy, *Les Evangiles synoptiques* (2 vols.; Ceffonds: Près Montier-en-Der [Haute-Marne], 1907).

The encyclical of 1943 brought progress by recommendation of "the study of literary genres." "This recommendation intends to understand precisely and accurately the meaning of the text in its cultural and historical context."[11] Form criticism was to be incorporated into Catholic exegesis; this method permits historical-critical discourses and results. The theses of the Biblical Commission have not been revoked, but no longer hold any validity.

After WWII Catholic exegetes took part more and more in international, exegetical discourse. They extended the historical-critical method by working out the reading of Scripture by past and present listeners. The document of 1993 emphasizes the fact that there is latitude for interpretation of the Bible: "Not a single aspect of human language can be neglected. The recent progress in linguistic, literary and hermeneutic research have led to the addition of numerous other factors (rhetorical, narrative and structural) to the study of literary genres; other human sciences such as psychology and sociology have also made contributions."[12] In fact, Catholic exegetes were working in the development of redaction criticism, structuralism, narrative criticism, rhetorical criticism, reading theory, social history, and depth psychology. The labelling of the 1993 document as a "help" signals a farewell to the superiority of historical-critical exegesis. Textual criticism, literary criticism with the two-source theory, genre criticism, tradition criticism, and redaction criticism can indeed work out objective structures but still not produce the full meaning of the text for past and present readers. Rightly, the document of 1993 claims, "The goal of the historical-critical method is to determine, particularly in a diachronic manner, the meaning expressed by the biblical authors and editors."[13] However, the diachronic method should be completed by the synchronic theory of reception, so that meaning is created in a synchronic, text-pragmatic way. The new methods of literary analysis and hermeneutics of the human sciences work out the pragmatic dimension. It is not enough that Bultmann combines the diachronic method with existential analysis.[14] Social and religious life as a whole must be considered, according to the document of 1993. The Interpretation of the Bible in the life of the Church will, further, apply not only to the Catholic Church but to all churches.[15] The task of exegesis is to stimulate readers to a sufficient and true reading within the context in which they live.

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[11] "Interpretation of the Bible in the Church," (German) 12.

[12] "Interpretation of the Bible in the Church," (German) 12.

[13] "Interpretation of the Bible in the Church," (German) 36.

[14] R. Bultmann, *Theologie des Neuen Testaments* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1953; repr. 1977).

[15] "Interpretation of the Bible in the Church," (German) 111–4.

3. The Change of Catholic Exegesis of the Gospels of Mark and Matthew in the 20th Century

3.1 The Acceptance of Form and Redaction Criticism

The encyclical of 1893 had demanded particularly the learning and analyzing of the language of the Bible. In 1937 Maximilian Zerwick published a study of Mark's styles, which remains fundamental today.[16]

Then in 1938 Josef Schmid very carefully worked form criticism into his commentary *The Gospel according to Mark*;[17] in 1950 he published the 2nd revised edition and in 1954 the 3rd revised edition. Revised editions followed still in 1958 and 1963. Schmid cited at the end of his "Introduction" in the commentary of 1938 the "decision" of the Pontifical Biblical Commission from 1912 concerning Mark and adheres largely to it. According to early church tradition, Mark, the companion of Barnabas and of Paul, is the author of the second Gospel. After 63 C. E. he became the interpreter of the oral preaching of Peter, and he wrote the Gospel after the death of Peter ("in 64 at the earliest") between 65–69[18] and 70.[19] Mark adopted the different narrative style of the tradition. The narrative texts, especially the miracle stories, go back to eye-witnesses; they are not Greek genres. Therefore the Gospel of Mark deserves "our confidence in the loyalty of its historical representation."[20] A literary and theological character is hardly discernible because Mark follows the early Christian kerygma and the early Christian missionary preaching.[21] Schmid correctly recognized that Mark has a three-part structure: Introduction 1:1–13; 1st Main part 1:14–6:6; 2nd Main part 6:6b–10:52; 3rd Main part 11–15; End 16:1–8.[22] Matthew and Luke took over this structure.[23] Finally, Schmid clearly decided against the proposals of the Biblical Commission by the classification of the ending (16:9–20) as secondary.

In 1940 the Catholic exegete Eduard Schick discussed the basic authors, works, and methods of form criticism. Finally, he formulated three "principles" of form criticism and questioned them critically.

(1) "The Gospels are collections of small literary units … In the *application* of this important principle by the individual researchers themselves, differences arise which are due to the historical research and the researcher's philosophical attitude. You can assign attention

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[16] M. Zerwick, *Untersuchungen zum Markus-Stil: Ein Beitrag zur stilistischen Durcharbeitung des Neuen Testaments* (Rome: E Pontificio Instituto Biblico, 1937).

[17] Schmid, *Das Evangelium*, 1938.

[18] Schmid, *Das Evangelium*, 12.

[19] Schmid, *Das Evangelium*, repr. 1954, 13.

[20] Schmid, *Das Evangelium*, repr. 1954, 12 f.

[21] Schmid, *Das Evangelium*, 1938, 10; repr. 1954, 10 f.

[22] For the variants see, D. Dormeyer, *Das Markusevangelium: Synoptisches Problem, Methoden, Gattung, Theologie* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2005), 149–53.

[23] Schmid, *Das Evangelium*, 1938, 8–10; repr. 1954, 7–10.

to the redaction. This is the way of Bultmann."[24] Schick on the other hand emphasized the continuity of the Gospels with tradition and the pre-Easter Jesus. "The form-critical analysis of the isolated pieces destroys the impression of consistency throughout the whole tradition, and also the impression of the unity of a Gospel."[25] However, against Schick, the unity of a Gospel was not made by the unity of tradition, but by the work of the redactor as the literary-historical approach assumed and redaction criticism demonstrated. The tradition developed after Easter with a colorful array of Christological and literary additions, which permit a quest for the pre-Easter period. Schick's criticisms were marked by an outdated concept of the unity of traditions.

(2) The New Testament tradition is "popular literature."[26] In contrast, Schick emphasized the analogy supplied by early Judaism against the overvaluation of the early church: the apostles received a shaped tradition and handed it over.[27] This criticism is developed further.[28]

(3) "The individual pieces can be classified according to genre."[29] But Schick saw problems for the classification of genres. "A solid genre designation is not derived from the material itself; it is not fictional literature, but shaped from a living reality and bound by historical facts."[30] However, it must be remembered that literary historiography and historical quest are two different processes. The verbalization of an historical event can by analyzed by poetological, genre-standards. The analysis of the reference in terms of genre still permits the historical reconstruction of the event. The classification of a tradition as a genre does not decide whether the text is fiction or has an external reference.

Parallel to Schick's research, other Catholic scholars began form-critical investigations. In 1941 William Hillmann examined *Aufbau und Deutung der synoptischen Leidensberichte (Structure and Interpretation of the Synoptic Passions)*. He accepts the "collection" thesis of K. L. Schmidt.[31] In 1941 Karl Hermann Schelkle also completed his thesis on the Passion of Jesus. He analyzed the complete New Testament tradition of the Passion of Jesus in a form-critical fashion.[32] But he did not consider the 'gospel' genre and the origin of Mark.

In 1953 Alfred Wikenhauser published his *Einleitung in das Neue Testament (Introduction of the New Testament)*.[33] He referred to the decision of the Pontifical Biblical Commission of 1912 and followed closely the position of Schmid on St.

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[24] E. Schick, *Formgeschichte und Synoptikerexegese: Eine kritische Untersuchung über die Möglichkeit und die Genzen der formgeschichtlichen Methode* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1940), 253.

[25] Schick, *Formgeschichte*, 255 f.

[26] Schick, *Formgeschichte*, 257.

[27] Schick, *Formgeschichte*, 258 ff.

[28] H. Schürmann, "Die vorösterlichen Anfänge der Logientradition," in *Traditionsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen zu den synoptischen Evangelien* (Düsseldorf: Patmos, 1968), 51 f.

[29] Schick, *Formgeschichte*, 267.

[30] Schick, *Formgeschichte*, 267.

[31] W. Hillmann, *Aufbau und Deutung der synoptischen Leidensberichte: Ein Beitrag zur Kompositionstechnik und Sinndeutung der drei älteren Evangelien* (München: Herder, 1941), 105; K. L. Schmidt, *Die Stellung der Evangelien in der allgemeinen Literaturgeschichte* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1923), repr. in *Zur Formgeschichte des Evangeliums* (ed. F. Hahn; Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1985), 126–229.

[32] K. H. Schelkle, *Die Passion Jesu in der Verkündigung des Neuen Testamentes – Ein Beitrag zur Formgeschichte und zur Theologie des Neuen Testaments* (Heidelberg: Kerle, 1949).

[33] A. Wikenhauser, *Einleitung in das Neue Testament* (Freiburg: Herder, 1953).

Mark's Gospel: the three-part structure, the interpreter Mark as the author, the taking over of word genres from tradition, lack of narrative genres, early Christian sermon book, Rome as place of edition, date of composition between 65–70, and 16:9–20 as the "so-called Markan conclusion." Wikenhauser gave "language and style" special attention.[34] With regard to the date of Mark, he indicated his and Schmid's courage: "Many Catholic commentators place the origin of the gospel in the middle or second half of the fifties, because Luke's Gospel, written prior to 63 C.E., uses Mark. The predominant majority of Protestant commentators declare that Mark was written at the end of the sixties."[35] With Schmid, he agrees with the Protestant exegetes.

In 1959 Wolfgang Trilling published the dissertation *Das wahre Israel. Studien zur Theologie des Matthäus-Evangeliums* (*The True Israel: Studies on the Theology of Matthew's Gospel*).[36] He specifically adopted the methodology of redaction criticism, which had begun with the Protestant Conzelmann for the Gospel of Luke[37] and Marxsen for the Gospel of Mark.[38] Trilling's first sentence is programmatic: "A treatment of the Gospel of Matthew in monograph form, which attempts to highlight the Gospel's theological content and its interconnections, is – as far as I know – completely lacking on the Catholic side."[39] This was also missing on the "Protestant side," in contrast to research on the Gospel of Luke and Mark.[40] Trilling put the Israel-idea at the centre. With such an approach he could justify the "Catholic" preference for Matthew and still criticize it. The term *ekklēsia*, which occurs only twice (Matt 16:18; 18:17), is not the center; rather the center is Israel's rejection of Jesus' message of the kingdom of God and Jesus as the founder of the true Israel within his circle of disciples with a newly interpreted Torah. Trilling analyzed the tradition through form criticism, constructed a Sitz im Leben of a mixed community of Jewish and Gentile Christians, and determined the theology of the redaction.[41] He omitted the reconstruction of the historical Jesus and his "*ipsissima vox*."[42] Trilling opposed clearly the decision of the Pontifical Biblical Commission of 1912 and followed consistently the "Protestant" redaction criticism. His focus on the continuity of Israel and the Church, however, was directed against the Protestant trend to reduce Matthew's "thought patterns" and "theological solutions" to Paul's theology.[43] His purpose was not narrowly confessional,

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[34] Wikenhauser, *Einleitung*, 113–26.

[35] Wikenhauser, *Einleitung*, 125.

[36] W. Trilling, *Das wahre Israel: Studien zur Theologie des Matthäusevangeliums* (Leipzig: St. Benno, 1959; repr. 3rd ed. München, 1964).

[37] H. Conzelmann, *Die Mitte der Zeit: Studien zur Theologie des Lukas* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1954).

[38] W. Marxsen, *Der Evangelist Markus: Studien zur Redaktionsgeschichte des Evangeliums* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1956; repr. 1959).

[39] Trilling, *Das wahre Israel*, 11.

[40] Trilling, *Das wahre Israel*, 11 f.

[41] Trilling, *Das wahre Israel*, 222–4.

[42] Trilling, *Das wahre Israel*, 13.

[43] Trilling, *Das wahre Israel*, 15.

but rather to highlight Matthew as the "Church's book", while also recovering its redaction and specific community orientation.

In 1961 Joachim Gnilka published his habilitation thesis, *Die Verstockung Israels. Isaias 6,9–10 in der Theologie der Synoptiker* (*The Obduracy of Israel: Isaiah 6:9–10 in the Theology of the Synoptics*).[44] He specifically utilized redaction criticism and referred to Trilling. No word is heard about confessional orientation. Redaction criticism is even to be applied to the "Lord's words," which form the theme of the Gospel with Mark 4:11–12 at the center. "So the question arises, what the evangelist as the last editor of the Gospel and of its individual pericopes shaped, and what pre-Synoptic collectors and narrators formed."[45] The introduction at Mark 4:10 is redaction, and the isolated *logion* at Mark 4:11 f. originally excluded the parables.[46] Those "outside" (Mark 4:11) are, redactionally, the unbelieving Israel, or more precisely they are the Jews, who due to their rejection of Jesus gamble away their priviliged status;[47] they were hardened in disbelief. The parables function finally to refer the obduracy of "those outside" to the Jews in the time of the evangelists.[48] Then Gnilka attributed the Lord's word in Mark 4:11 f. to the historical Jesus and showed a continuity of meaning. The "mystery of the kingdom of God" refers to the coming of the kingdom in Jesus' deeds. The parables are the main expression of this mystery. "If these parables do not pronounce unmistakably the mystery of the kingdom of God (Jesus' Messiahship and the current coming of the kingdom), the otherwise observed reluctance of Jesus will explain this caution to proclaim publicly his Messiaship."[49] Mark continues to elaborate that everything that Jesus speaks and does "becomes a riddle for the people"; God's knowledge and rule of salvation are hidden. Mark emphasizes two thoughts through the wording and the outline of his Gospel: the human, culpable, and, therefore, punishable lack of understanding on the part of "the Jews," and the (Messianic) secret as well as the initiation of the disciples in this mystery.[50] It is critical to point out that the first thought is strongly determined by the then prevailing Protestant exegesis of Paul. Mark did not condemn the whole of Israel, (as, indeed, Rom 9–11 promised the rescue of "all Israel"), but only the former leaders of Israel (Mark 12:1–12). Gnilka described correctly the initiation of the disciples into the secrets of the kingdom. In this sense, the redaction of Mark produced continuity with the pre-Easter Jesus.

For Matthew, Gnilka argued that the plural "mysteries of the kingdom of heaven" conveys a broader sense of God-given knowledge.[51] The secrets include more evidently than in Mark all the words and deeds of Jesus. Subsequent works of

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[44] J. Gnilka, *Die Verstockung Israels: Isaias 6,9–10 in der Theologie der Synoptiker* (München: Kösel, 1961).

[45] Gnilka, *Die Verstockung Israels*, 18 f.

[46] Gnilka, *Die Verstockung Israels*, 23–8.

[47] Gnilka, *Die Verstockung Israels*, 85.

[48] Gnilka, *Die Verstockung Israels*, 47 f.

[49] Gnilka, *Die Verstockung Israels*, 197.

[50] Gnilka, *Die Verstockung Israels*, 197.

[51] Gnilka, *Die Verstockung Israels*, 198.

Catholic exegetes on Mark and Matthew build upon the foundation of form and redaction criticism. Meanwhile in 1965, the Second Vatican Council also promulgated the dogmatic constitution "Dei Verbum," so that Catholic exegetes no longer had to fear sanctions due to the application of historical-critical methodology.

In the 1960s and early 1970s monographs authored by Catholic exegetes treated the following topics:

1968: Rudolf Pesch, *Naherwartungen. Tradition und Redaktion in Mk 13* (*Near Expectations: Tradition and Redaction in Mark 13*); Ludger Schenke, *Auferstehungsverkündigung und leeres Grab. Eine traditionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung von Mk 16,1–8* (*Resurrection's Proclamation and Empty Grave*);

1969: Maria Horstmann, *Studien zur markinischen Christologie. Mk 8,27–9,13 als Zugang zum Christusbild des zweiten Evangeliums* (*Studies of Markan Christology*); Karl Georg Reploh, *Markus – Lehrer der Gemeinde* (*Mark – Teacher of the Community*);

1970: Karl Kertelge, *Die Wunder Jesu im Markusevangelium. Eine redaktionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung* (*The Miracles of Jesus in the Gospel of Mark*);

1971: Ludger Schenke, *Studien zur Passionsgeschichte des Markus. Tradition und Redaktion in Markus 14,1–42* (*Studies on Mark's Passion*); Armin Kretzer, *Die Herrschaft der Himmel und die Söhne des Reiches. Eine redaktionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung zum Basileiabegriff und Baisileiaverständnis im Matthäusevangelium* (*The Rule of the Heavens and the Sons of the Kingdom*); Anton Vögtle, *Das Evangelium und die Evangelien. Beiträge zur Evangelienforschung* (*The Gospel and the Gospels*);

1972: Klaus Berger, *Die Gesetzesauslegung Jesu. Ihr historischer Hintergrund im Judentum und im Alten Testament. Teil I: Markus und Parallelen* (*The Interpretation of the Law of Christ*); Ingo Broer, *Die Urgemeinde und das Grab Jesu. Eine Analyse der Grablegungsgeschichte im Neuen Testament* (*The Early Church and the Grave of Jesus*). These works are of fundamental importance for research on Mark and Matthew.[52]

Between 1976–1977 Rudolf Pesch published the two-volume commentary *Das Markus-Evangelium* (*The Gospel of Mark*).[53] Form and redaction criticism were fully incorporated. Pesch also emphasized the quest for the historical situation. For him the historical-critical method had come to a "dead end." Mark was a collector dependent on earlier material. In the second part of his Gospel Mark followed essentially a written traditional Jerusalem Passion-story; in the first part he took over several written collections; the historical narrative of Mark's Gospel grew, genetically, from historical traditions.[54]

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[52] For a discussion of the process of the interdenominational research of Mark, see Dormeyer, *Das Markusevangelium*, 82–226; for a discussion of Matthew, see A. Sand, *Das Matthäus-Evangelium* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1991).

[53] R. Pesch, *Das Markusevangelium* (2 vols.; Freiburg: Herder, 1976–1977).

[54] R. Pesch, *Das Markusevangelium*, 1:48–63; 2:1 ff.

Between 1978–1979 Joachim Gnilka published the two-volume commentary *Das Evangelium nach Markus (Gospel to Mark)* in the new series "Evangelical Catholic Commentary on the New Testament."[55] The ecumenical editors of the series indicated that Catholic exegesis had reached the standard of Protestant exegesis. For Gnilka the Gospel of Mark was the result of a conscious collection process. The Evangelist created a chronological plot with historical and kerygmatic traditions. "Mark can be presented as a theological historian, not as a literary historian."[56] Between 1986–1988 Gnilka published *Das Matthäus-Evangelium (The Gospel of Matthew)*[57] in "Herder's Theological Commentary on the New Testament." He accepted the thesis of Frankemölle:[58] "Mt writes the history of Jesus Christ as the history of God's people." But Gnilka stressed more the similarity to Mark: on the one hand, Matthew took over the kerygmatic treatment of the Jesus material by the Gospel of Mark, and on the other hand, he told "the story of the people of God, the way from Israel to the universal Church."[59]

Two trends can be identified in the development of Protestant redaction criticism: 1) the Gospel as proclamation[60] and as commentary on the proclamation,[61] and 2) the Gospel as the presentation of history.[62] The over-emphasis on theology as a creative literary power opposed a recognition of the interaction between the literary and the theological. Catholic exegetes have related to the second trend and developed an abundance of contributions to the understanding of the genres, styles, theological priorities, and possibilities of the historical quest. While the first works of redaction criticism took the additions and the selections of the redactors as their beginning point, subsequent work began to include analysis of the inherent structures. The comparable structure of ancient literary works and the original, incomparable Christology now became more sharply visible.

At the same time it became increasingly difficult to define this dual nature of the Gospel because the literary analogizing was sometimes strictly rejected due to claims regarding Christological originality. For the literary form, any name could be chosen, as long as it conformed to pre-conceived theological views. "The many names indicate difficulty, but also a certain embarrassment."[63] Yet, an unclarified relationship between the literary and theological shape allowed the arbitrary presentation of the reference to the hearers (the 3rd Sitz im Leben) as the main princi-

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[55] J. Gnilka, *Das Evangelium nach Markus* (2 vols.; Zürich: Einsiedeln, 1978–79).

[56] Gnilka, *Das Evangelium nach Markus,* 1:24.

[57] J. Gnilka, *Das Matthäus-Evangelium* (2 vols.; Freiburg: Herder, 1986–88).

[58] H. Frankemölle, *Jahwebund und Kirche Christi. Studien zur Form- und Traditionsgeschichte des "Evangeliums" nach Matthäus* (2nd ed.; Münster: Aschendorff, 1984).

[59] Gnilka, *Das Matthäus-Evangelium,* 2:529 f.

[60] Marxsen, *Der Evangelist Markus*; G. Bornkamm, "Die Sturmstillung im Matthäus-Evangelium, Wort und Dienst 1948," in *Überlieferung und Auslegung im Matthäusevangelium* (ed. G. Bornkamm, G. Barth, and H. J. Held; Neukirchen: Neukirchener Verlag, 1960), 48–54.

[61] Conzelmann, *Die Mitte der Zeit.*

[62] J. M. Robinson, *Das Geschichtsverständnis des Markus-Evangeliums* (Zürich: Zwingli, 1956).

[63] Gnilka, *Das Evangelium nach Markus,* 1:23; see Dormeyer, *Das Markusevangelium,* 63–82.

ple of literary and theological form.[64] In the 1980 and 1990s further development of redaction criticism led to claims of Mark as an autonomous redactor, writer, and biographer, and yet assigned him to an individual historical community.[65]

The question was whether it was possible for the relationship of narrative text, author, and hearer to undergo a less arbitrary analysis. Historical-critical exegesis could no longer be reduced to a few clear standards with binding objective results, and the reading habits and preconceptions of past and present readers needed to be considered in exegesis.[66]

3.2 Linguistic Turn from 1970

In the early 70s of the last century, the so-called "linguistic turn" was established, which led to an explosion of methodological issues and new approaches.[67] The methodological approaches of related disciplines caused a revision of form and redaction criticism. Form criticism was influenced by the research on popular literature (*Volkspoesie* in Germany), sociology of religion, and science of religion; redaction criticism was influenced by the literary sciences yet again. New approaches were stimulated by linguistics, communication theory, psychology, and social history.

3.2.1 Narrative Text Analysis and Text Theory

In 1970 the Protestant exegete Erhardt Güttgemanns tried to integrate linguistics with form and redaction criticism and raised "open questions."[68] In 1974 Detlev Dormeyer published *Die Passion Jesu als Verhaltensmodel. Literarische und theologische Analyse der Traditions- und Redaktionsgeschichte der Markuspassion* (*The Passion of Jesus as a Model of Behavior: Literary and Theological Analysis of the History of Traditions and Redaction of Mark's Passion*),[69] and Hubert Frankemölle published *Jahwe-Bund und Kirche Christ. Studien zur Form- und Traditionsgeschichte des "Evangeliums" nach Matthäus* (*The Covenant of Yahweh and the Church of Christ: Studies in the Forms- and Tradition-History of the "Gospel" according to*

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[64] See Dormeyer, *Das Markusevangelium*, 63–82.

[65] T. Söding, *Glaube bei Markus: Glaube an das Evangelium, Gebetsglaube und Wunderglaube im Kontext der markinischen Basileiatheologie und Christologie* (Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1985); *Der Evangelist als Theologe: Studien zum Markusevangelium* (Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1995); see Dormeyer, *Das Markusevangelium*, 153–9.

[66] "Interpretation of the Bible in the Church," repr. *Origins* 23 (1994): 497, 499–524; see also the Protestant exegete E. V. McKnight, *Post-Modern Use of the Bible: The Emergence of Reader-Oriented Criticism* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1988), 115–263.

[67] E.-M. Becker, *Das Markus-Evangelium im Rahmen antiker Historiographie* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006), 54–6.

[68] E. Güttgemanns, *Offene Fragen zur Formgeschichte des Evangeliums: Eine methodologische Skizze der Grundlagenproblematik der Form- und Redaktionsgeschichte* (München: C. Kaiser, 1970).

[69] D. Dormeyer, *Die Passion Jesu als Verhaltensmodell: Literarische und theologische Analyse der Traditions- und Redaktionsgeschichte der Markuspassion* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1974).

Matthew).[70] Narrative analysis was integrated into exegesis. On the one hand, Dormeyer was still working with redaction criticism and divided the text into three layers; on the other hand, he searched for a genre that could encompass the three stages of the Passion story.[71]

The Markan passion story shows a three-part structure that is particularly affected by the exitus literature (Mark 14:1–42 par. John 13:1–17:26), by the hellenistic martyr act (Mark 14:43–15:20 par. John 18:1–19, 16a), and by Jewish martyrdom narratives (Mark 15:20b–41 par. John 19:16–30). These genres formed three separate parts, with each also subtly influencing the others. Within the Markan tradition the parts were combined. Mark dispensed with the variable structure of the traditional "martyr acts" and favor that of the exitus genre. He constructed the narrative cycle of the Passover meal before Jesus' capture (Mark 14:12–31), created an introduction to the isolated *chreia* of the anointing (Mark 14:1–11), and formed a *chreia* of prayer from an old isolated tradition (Mark 14:32–42; cf. Heb 2:18; 5:7). The form and structure of the martyr act remained open for setting new priorities and for incorporating further memories of the Passion of Jesus. In addition, the exitus-literature was open for autonomous literary and theological thoughts. Therefore the evangelist used it for the creation of an independent introduction (cf. Mark 6:17b–27a) and set it before the martyr acts of Jesus' death (Mark 14:43–15:41).[72] The framework of "Gospel" (Mark 1:1) determines the interpretation of the final chapter. Jesus and the disciples remain "typological models," i.e., "behavior models" for each community and each reader.

Frankemölle, like Dormeyer, did not analyze the socio-historical Sitz im Leben, but began with the Gospel of Matthew itself as the base in order to define the major theological themes and the literary genre of the Gospel. The question of the faithfulness of God in history with his people Israel is the basic problem. The evangelist goes back to the Old Testament covenant and the historical theology of the Deuteronomic books and Chronicles. The Gospel has the literary form of a "book of the history of Jesus Christ" (Matt 1:1), which continues the Old Testament; in this book "a new era of universal history begins with Jesus Christ."[73]

In 1978 Hans-Josef Klauck compared the literature of the New Testament with ancient literature and developed a differentiated generic idea in terms of ancient poetry.[74] Parable, allegory, and allegorese should be distinguished carefully. In 1979 Dormeyer introduced *Der Sinn des Leidens Jesu. Historisch-kritische und text-pragmatische Analysen zur Markuspassion* (*The Meaning of the Suffering of Jesus: Historical-critical and Text-pragmatic Analysis of the Markan Passion Narrative*). Text pragmatics are used here to describe the identification of the reader with the

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[70] Frankemölle, *Jahwebund und Kirche Christi*.

[71] Dormeyer, *Die Passion Jesu als Verhaltensmodell*, 50–7.

[72] Dormeyer, *Die Passion Jesu als Verhaltensmodell*, 238–86.

[73] Frankemölle, *Jahwebund und Kirche Christi*, 365.

[74] H. J. Klauck, *Allegorie und Allegorese in synoptischen Gleichnissen* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1978).

narrative roles hero, enemies, and helpers, such as they are present in Mark's Passion Narrative.[75] According to Weinrich's analysis, the speech attitudes of telling and discussing are differentiated.[76] In addition, Dormeyer introduced structural narrative sequences and role analysis. In the narrative sequence, the story is distinguished from the discussion by the fact that 1) active characters appear, 2) an event or sequence of actions occurs, and 3) the story prefers the past, while the discussion prefers the present.

The smallest unit of the series of events is the sequence or the single event.[77] In the sequence, the attention of the listener and reader is directed to each action-oriented verb. With the actors, a verb produces the plot. Three states form an event: 1) state in virtuality with beginning change of the state, 2) action as a counteraction or change of action, and 3) new state.[78] The major categories that shape a framework for action are space and time and circumstances. They form a fictional world. Other elements are ensemble of roles (actants) and semantic fields.

Functions of speech (storytelling or discussing), sequence, roles, fictional world, semantic opposition, and semantic field make the rules visible, according to which the text universe is constructed. Biblical texts can be compared to former and present texts without reducing, overlooking, or even destroying their linguistic form. The genres ensure that determined motives, actors, and sentences are connected to roles in the narrative texts, which offer the most prominent possibilities for reader self-identification.[79] Roles in the arguments form only the background of the relationship between the addressee and addressant. According a model centering the sender, communication does not run directly between author and reader. The real author provides multiple opportunities for the reader to identify with characters, with implicit characterization of roles, both positive and negative. In Mark's Passion the ensemble of roles is related to a realistic world.

So far, redaction criticism had demonstrated only that the disciples were the role models in the Gospels.[80] But the identification of role models can be more extensive. The appeal of the biblical narratives is that the reader fills every role – disciple, Jesus, opponents – with his experience. In 1983, Hubert Frankemölle published *Biblische Handlungsanweisungen. Beispiele pragmatischer Exegese* (*Biblical Instructions: Examples of Pragmatic Exegesis*).[81] The "examples" are mainly from the Gospel of Matthew. Each text is an element of communicative action between author and addressee. The historical-critical method tries to describe the inten-

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[75] D. Dormeyer, *Der Sinn des Leidens Jesu: Historisch-kritische und textpragmatische Analysen zur Markuspassion* (Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1979), 102–11.

[76] H. Weinrich, *Tempus: Besprochene und erzählte Welt* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1971), 18 ff.

[77] Dormeyer, *Der Sinn des Leidens Jesu*, 90–102.

[78] C. Bremond, "Die Erzählnachricht," in *Literaturwissenschaft und Linguistik 3* (ed. J. Ihwe; 3 vols.; Frankfurt: Athenäum Verlag, 1972), 201 f.

[79] W. Iser, *Der Akt des Lesens* (München: Wilhelm Fink, 1976), 204 f.

[80] K. G. Reploh, *Markus – Lehrer der Gemeinde* (Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1969).

[81] H. Frankemölle, *Biblische Handlungsweisen: Beispiele pragmatischer Exegese* (Mainz: Matthias-Grünewald, 1983).

tion of the author. But pragmatic exegesis adds the analysis of the intention of the recipient with the goal to describe the whole historical process of communication. Synchronous form criticism and diachronic genre criticism play a central role.[82] In 1987 the study of Wilhelm Egger appeared: *Methodenlehre zum Neuen Testament. Einführung in linguistische und historisch-kritische Methoden* (*Methodology of the New Testament: Introduction to Linguistic and Historical Critical Methods*).[83] It is a foundational work that is still relevant.[84]

The 1980s and 1990s saw an explosion of monographs and commentaries on the Gospels of Mark and Matthew employing the new methods of exegesis in almost all denominations. The branches of the historical-critical method spread to form a wide-ranging network. From the standpoint of an objectivist approach these branches are possible "dead ends," but from the standpoint of intersubjective reading theory they represent the fertile acceptance of variation of form, breadth of meaning and reader orientation, which the historical-critical method has not yet achieved.[85] As exegetes now write independently of confessional ties within an international scientific discourse, there are limitations in identifying a specifically Catholic exegesis.[86]

3.2.2 Language and Style in the Gospel of Mark

The valuation of the language of the Gospel of Mark is an extremely controversial topic. Literary-historical comparison and form and redaction criticism were thought to entail a negative judgment on its literary style for opposite reasons. Some thought the style popular. Others declared it clumsy, because the Evangelist was made dependent either upon traditions or upon his theological program. Dschulnigg now problematized the stylistic separation between redaction and traditional language.[87] For "inquiry into the language features of Mark"[88] shows that they cannot be restricted to redactional revisions and new formations[89] but extend to the entire text. "The theology of the redactor cannot be separated from the popular tradition, but must be determined in and with the tradition. The author of Mark's Gospel is a user and interpreter of traditions, which he linguistically and formally orders and integrates into the totality of his Gospel."[90] For this result

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[82] Frankemölle, *Biblische Handlungsweisen*, 11–50.

[83] W. Egger, *Methodenlehre zum Neuen Testament: Einführung in linguistische und historisch-kritische Methoden* (Freiburg: Herder, 1987; 6th ed., Freiburg: Herder, 2011).

[84] Egger, *Methodenlehre zum Neuen Testament* (6th ed., 2011).

[85] E. V. McKnight, *Reading the Bible Today: A 21st-Century Appreciation of Scripture* (Macon: Smyth & Helwys, 2003), 135–50.

[86] For the international linguistic structural exegesis of Mark, see Dormeyer, *Das Markusevangelium*, 159–62.

[87] P. Dschulnigg, *Sprache, Redaktion und Intention des Markus-Evangeliums: Eigentümlichkeiten der Sprache des Markus-Evangeliums und ihre Bedeutung für die Redaktionskritik* (Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1984), 60–73, 317–53.

[88] Dschulnigg, *Sprache, Redaktion und Intention*, 73–258.

[89] Dschulnigg, *Sprache, Redaktion und Intention*, 259–98.

[90] Dschulnigg, *Sprache, Redaktion und Intention*, 297 f.

Dschulnigg worked out a statistical analysis of "linguistic features." From the accumulation of foreign Jewish words and from the "uncultivated" Greek language, Dschulnigg concluded that the mother-language of the author was the Jewish language.[91]

The work of Reiser appearing in the same year made the exact opposite argument with regard to the literary style of Mark: "And it is primarily the tradition of ancient Greek and Hellenistic folk literature that the oldest evangelist displays in syntax and style."[92] The works of Dschulnigg and Reiser complement and correct each other. In the tradition of Catholic exegesis, they engage in neglected research and provide the analytical basis for overcoming the narrowness of redaction criticism and for showing the literary and theological unity of the Gospel of Mark. The evangelist created a new narrative language and new metaphors; he created a lively, vivid style, which Longinus (first century) and the rhetorical teacher Demetrios (first century) named the *genus subtilis*, the simple style.[93] After 1984 a broad-interconfessional discussion began over the language and style of the Gospel of Mark.[94]

The succeeding evangelists Matthew and Luke then adjusted the language of the Gospel of Mark closer to their language of high literary Koine, and thereby weakened the fictional orality of Mark's language. Nevertheless, they took over most of the structure in space, time, and sequences of action. Mark's and Matthew's Gospels, in their language, scene design, and genre of "biography Gospel" remain at the level of a subtle, simple literature.

3.2.3 Analysis of Historical Genre: The Gospels of Mark and of Matthew as Lives

The 1993 document calls for a combination of diachronic historical research with synchronic methods. The genre is the interface of synchrony with diachrony. The question of the genre of the Gospels of Mark and Matthew is still under discussion. Proposals based on literary analogy include almost all the known genera of the Greco-Roman and Jewish narrative literature at the time. The influence of aretalogie, drama, and novel upon the Gospel of Mark will not be discussed here.[95] As current consensus maintains that the Gospels are not pure poetic and theological fictions, but a form of ancient history,[96] which was very open to new genres and

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[91] Dschulnigg, *Sprache, Redaktion und Intention*, 274 ff.

[92] M. Reiser, *Syntax und Stil des Markusevangeliums im Licht der hellenistischen Volksliteratur* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1984), 168.

[93] D. Dormeyer, *The New Testament among the Writings of Antiquity* (trans. R. Kossov; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998); repr. and trans. of *Das Neue Testament im Rahmen der antiken Literaturgeschichte: Eine Einführung* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1993), 29–62; Reiser, *Syntax und Stil*, 62.

[94] Dormeyer, *Das Markusevangelium*, 153–85.

[95] See Dormeyer, *Das Markusevangelium*, 109–12.

[96] D. S. Toit, *Der abwesende Herr: Strategien im Markusevangelium zur Bewältigung der Abwesenheit des Auferstandenen* (Neukirchen: Neukirchener Verlag, 2006), 21 f.; Becker, *Das Markus-Evangelium*, 16–53.

mixing of styles,[97] I want to report briefly the development of the hypothesis that their genre is biography.

In 1983–1984 studies on the New Testament Gospels as ancient biographies were independently published by the Protestant exegete Schenk (1983), the scholar of Greek literature Cancik (1984), and the Catholic exegetes Berger (1984) and Dormeyer/Frankemölle (1984). There were different accents, but a surprising consensus. With many convincing arguments the Gospels were attributed to the ancient genre biography, while according to the prevailing consensus they formed an original, special literature. In 1989 Dormeyer issued a research report in which he represented the Gospel as a literary and theological genre from its beginnings in antique time to the present.[98] Parallel Anglo-American research beginning in 1915 concerning the Gospels as biography was incorporated.

But, surprisingly, the classification of the Gospels as biography found little acceptance in the German region in contrast to Anglo-American research. The Protestant exegete Frickenschmidt demonstrated that in the period from 1984–1994 the biography thesis was either completely ignored by German researchers or appeared only as an unlikely possibility.[99]

There are several reasons for this hesitation. For Greek literature the independence of the genre biography was controversial for a long time. Currently a consensus is forming that it is necessary to differentiate biographical narration in Homer and in ancient Near Eastern parallels, such as the Old Testament or the Egyptian literature, from the biography genre, per se. The classic work of Leo is rightly followed: the genre biography was initiated by the Peripatetic school of Aristotle.[100] The peripatetic biography arose from the fact that the earlier encomium, the rhetorical praise of curriculum vitae, was connected with the dramatic structure of classical tragedy. But biography is not drama, despite the dramatic narration, but belongs rather to the prose of history. Encomiums and biographies were produced only for prominent persons, like the Spartan king Agesilaus or the Cypriot king Euagoras or other important persons of philosophy, religion, or medical science, who had historical rank.[101] Unfortunately, the early Peripatetic biographies are lost or preserved only in fragments. Only from the titles and the few fragments can it be determined that these biographies were mainly about

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[97] K. Backhaus and G. Haefner, *Historiographie und fiktionales Erzählen: Zur Konstruktivität in Geschichtstheorie und Exegese* (Neukirchen: Neukirchener Verlag, 2007), 1–30; T. Schmeller, *Historiographie und Biographie im Neuen Testament und seiner Umwelt* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2009), 1–155.

[98] Dormeyer, *Evangelium als literarische und theologische Gattung.*

[99] D. Frickenschmidt, *Evangelium als Biographie: Die vier Evangelien im Rahmen antiker Erzählkunst* (Tübingen: Francke, 1997), 69–76; for more details, see Dormeyer, *Das Markusevangelium*, 112–38, 166–71.

[100] F. Leo, *Die griechisch-römische Biographie nach ihrer litterarischen Form* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1901), 85–118.

[101] H. Sonnabend, *Geschichte der antiken Biographie: Von Isokrates bis zur Historia Augusta* (2nd ed.; Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2003).

philosophers and poets.[102] However, the triumph of Alexander the Great made it possible that a ruler could became the preferred character of a biography. The literary highlight of late Hellenistic biography was Plutarch (45–120 C. E.), whose status remains uncontested since antiquity. His comprehensive work in comparative parallel biographies has been almost completely transmitted in 22 pairs of biographies.

It has been ascertained that the three-part structure of 1) Preparation for public performance, 2) Public appearance, and 3) Death, shapes biographical narration as well as the biography genre proper.[103] Part 1 does not have to begin with the narration of conception, birth, and childhood. The majority of the Latin biographies written by Cornelius Nepos started with narratives about the young man, as did the Greek biographies of Plutarch and the *Res Gestae* of Augustus.[104] Birth stories with miracles are rather the exception, and they go back to late Egyptian influences.[105] These three elements exist in biographical narrations about prophets, judges, and kings in the Old Testament as well as in the Gospels of the New Testament, in the biographies of Plutarch, and in apocalyptic history.[106] In addition, Protestant exegetes showed that individual motifs of these parts are shared between Hellenistic biography as well as the Gospels.[107] The biographies of Plutarch have on average the same lengths as the Gospels.

But the question is still unsolved whether Mark's Gospel created a new genre, remained in the normative Greek biography, or in the normative history of the Old Testament. In 1975 the Protestant exegete Baltzer proposed the genre "ideal biography" of the Old Testament sections; this genre determined Mark's Gospel.[108] But the disparate biographical narrations of the Old Testament share only common elements, not a common genre. The Gospel as biography does not depend totally upon the Old Testament.[109] But the term "ideal biography" is right. In the Old and New Testaments prophetic and royal founders do not have mixed characters, but

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[102] K. Berger, "Hellenistische Gattungen im Neuen Testament," *ANRW* 25.2:1031–1432, esp. 1231–45.

[103] Dormeyer, *Evangelium als literarische und theologische Gattung*, 59 f.; Frickenschmidt, *Evangelium als Biographie*, 160–94, 192–210.

[104] A. Dawson, *Freedom as Liberating Power: A Socio-political Reading of the exousia Texts in the Gospel of Mark* (Freiburg: Universitätsverlag, 2000).

[105] Frickenschmidt, *Evangelium als Biographie*, 253 ff.; J. Kügler, *Pharao und Christus? Religionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung zur Frage einer Verbindung zwischen alltägyptischer Königstheologie und neutestamentlicher Christologie im Lukasevangelium* (Bodenheim: Philo, 1997), 133–85.

[106] A. Yarbro Collins, *The Beginning of the Gospel: Probings of Mark in Context* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992).

[107] R. A. Burridge, *What are the Gospels? A Comparison with Graeco-Roman Biography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 168; Frickenschmidt, *Evangelium als Biographie*, 351–501; Becker, *Das Markus-Evangelium*, 253–301.

[108] K. Baltzer, *Die Biographie der Propheten* (Neukirchen: Neukirchener Verlag, 1975), 19–23, 184–93.

[109] D. Dormeyer, *Das Markusevangelium als Idealbiographie von Jesus Christus, dem Nazarener* (2nd ed.; Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 2002), 31–9; *Das Markusevangelium*, 119–24.

are rather ideal figures. They can sin against God and they can repent every time and again follow God's will.[110]

In 1999 Dormeyer expanded on his earlier work with the publication of *Das Markusevangelium als Idealbiographie von Jesus Christus, dem Nazarener* (*Mark's Gospel as Ideal Biography of Jesus Christ of Nazareth*). Mark's Gospel is an anti-biography of philosophical ruler biography. It demands identification from every reader with the new eschatological portrait of Christ, which breaks the ruling portraits of the philosophical emperor and the political eschatological Messiah.[111]

The Gospel became a special branch of biography. The Gospel relates to both the Hellenistic biography and the ideal biographical narrations of the Old Testament.[112] But tensions between Gospel and Hellenistic biography remain. So exegetes of all backgrounds continue to discuss whether the Gospel is a myth-story,[113] a pre-history,[114] or an apocalyptic history.[115]

3.2.4 Reading as Interaction between the Gospel and Readers: Semiotics, Liberation Theology, Feminist and Materialist Reading, and Depth Psychology

Jean Delorme worked like Güttgemanns with deep structural narrative analysis. But the surface text was the base of his interpretation. Delorme studied the elements in the text that lead the reading process. Structural principles such as the *Aktantenmodell* were connected with surface information such as topography or various roles. But the problem of the contemporary genre "gospel" remained. The Gospel of Mark has three "organizations:" 1) selon l'espace (according to space: Galilee-Jerusalem), 2) selon le development du drame (according to the development of drama: Who is Jesus), and 3) selon les rapports entre les personnes (according to the relationship between persons): Jesus and his disciples, people, opponents.[116] In the triangle Jesus, disciples, people, the disciples symbolize the view of spirituality ("vue de la catéchèses") for the reader.[117] But will every reader recognize this structure?

Liberation theology and materialistic interpretation of Scripture considered the situation of the reader. In 1976 Ernesto Cardenal showed with his collection of deliberations, *Das Evangelium der Bauern von Solentinname* (*The Gospel of the Peasants of Solentinname*), how the peasants of Solentinname were engaged by discussions about biblical texts. The leader of the Eucharist read aloud sections of

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[110] Mark 3:35.

[111] Dormeyer, *Das Markusevangelium als Idealbiographie.*

[112] Schmeller, *Historiographie und Biographie,* 1–155.

[113] P.-G. Klumbies, *Der Mythos bei Markus* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2001); L. Schenke, *Das Markusevangelium: Literarische Eigenart – Text und Kommentierung* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2005), 8–21; W. Fritzen, *Von Gott verlassen? Das Markusevangelium als Kommunikationsangebot für bedrängte Christen* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2008), 19–46.

[114] Becker, *Das Markus-Evangelium,* 410 f.

[115] A. Yarbro Collins, *Mark: A Commentary* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007), 15–53.

[116] J. Delorme, *Lecture de l'evangile selon Saint Marc* (Paris: du Cerf, 1972), 33.

[117] Delorme, *Lecture de l'evangile,* 32.

a Gospel, and the participants expressed themselves spontaneously. In 1973 Carlos Mesters published a Bible course in Portuguese: *From Life to the Bible – from the Bible to Life*. The purpose is the "reading of the text in the life" of the less educated and sometimes illiterate people.[118] Texts from the Old Testament and the Gospels are treated.

Leonardo Boff explained this action-oriented reading of the Folk Church by the sociological term "symbol production:"

With its own symbolic world of the people, its own language, and its own grammar, Folk Catholicism is a different kind of formation than the official Roman hierarchy. Therefore, Folk Catholicism must not be considered a deviation from official Catholicism. Rather, it is another, separate system that translates Christianity in concrete conditions of human life. Its language is based on unconventional thinking, and its grammar follows the logical mechanisms of the unconscious. Those who want to understand Folk Catholicism need adequate tools which must be different from those appropriate for the reflected and logical clarity of doctrinal systematization with which official Catholicism deals.[119]

The tension between the piety of an impoverished, barely literate class and the official theology is certainly a major reason why Catholic exegetes of Latin America and other countries were the almost exclusive elaborators of Bible reading for the people.[120] In 2005 Ralf Huning drew preliminary conclusions: *Bibelwissenschaft im Dienste popularer Bibellektüre* (*Biblical scholarship in the Service of Popular Bible Reading*).[121]

The title of Mester's Bible courses, *From Life to the Bible – from the Bible to Life* can also highlight the feminist Bible reading and its relation to liberation theologies. In the women's movement a model of Bible reading was successful that depends upon the tradition of liberation theology and feminist movements in North America, especially the four hermeneutical steps of Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza.[122] In 1989 Monika Fander published *Die Stellung der Frau im Markusevangelium* (*The Position of the Woman in Mark's Gospel*).

In 1980 Fernando Belo used narrative criticism for his program of a materialistic reading of Mark's Gospel.[123] In contrast to text-immanent structural analysis,

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[118] C. Mesters, *Vom Leben zur Bibel – von der Bibel zum Leser: Ein Bibelkurs aus Brasilien für uns* (2 vols.; München: Kaiser, 1983), 1:19.

[119] L. Boff, *Kirche: Charisma und Macht: Studien zu einer streitbaren Ekklesiologie* (Düsseldorf: Patmos, 1985), 106 f.

[120] D. Dormeyer, *Die Bibel antwortet: Einführung in die interaktionale Bibelauslegung* (München: J. Pfeiffer, 1978); J. Lehnen, *Interaktionale Bibelauslegung im Religionsunterricht* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2006).

[121] R. Huning, *Bibelwissenschaft im Dienste popularer Bibellektüre: Bausteine einer Theorie der Bibellektüre aus dem Werk von Carlos Mesters* (Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 2005).

[122] L. Schottroff, S. Schroer, and M. T. Wacker, *Feministische Exegese: Forschungserträge zur Bibel aus der Perspektive von Frauen* (Darmstadt: Primus, 1995), 22; E. Schüssler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her: A Feminist Theological Reconstruction of Christian Origins* (10th ed.; New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1988); *Bread Not Stone: The Challenge of Feminist Biblical Interpretation* (2nd ed.; Boston: Beacon, 1995).

[123] F. Belo, *Das Markusevangelium materialistisch gelesen* (Stuttgart: Alektor, 1980), 121–30.

the materialist analysis of the economic, political, and ideological production and reception of the text requires a historical knowledge of the original conditions and the effect of the text. Belo intended to establish an action-oriented community.

In 1988 Ched Myers published *A Political Reading of Mark's Story of Jesus.*[124] He took over the concept of a materialistic, socio-political reading, but criticized the universalized, structural method of Belo.[125] Instead he followed narrative criticism and combined it with the materialistic "social analysis" of readers of the first century C. E.[126] He saw in the literary texts not a direct reflection of the situation at the time, but "windows" and "mirrors" that allow only a partial and ambiguous reconstruction.[127]

Maria Kassel introduced a deep-level psychological interpretation following C. G Jung.[128] The characters of the narrative world are archetypal expressions of individuation and they are accepted as an aid for the finding of identity.[129] Biblical stories, including Mark and Matthew, provide irreplaceable archetypes for the making of symbols.[130] While Kassel accepts the historical-critical exegesis for the text surface, Drewermann questions radically the literary power of this method.[131] Not preaching, but the dream is the beginning of the New Testament tradition.[132] For the archetype (dream) is the center for the genres "myth, legend, sage, fairy tales."[133] Sermon, paradigm, short story, gospel are determined by these genres.[134] In 1987–88 Drewermann edited meditations on the Gospel of Mark.[135]

In 1986 Bas van Iersel wrote a reader-oriented commentary on Mark's Gospel. The implicit and informed reader, not the historical audience, is the addressee.[136] The Gospel of Mark is a unit of episodes, an episodic chain with narrative roles.[137] A historical genre analysis is not undertaken. The narrative space determines the outline, which has five obvious parts.[138] In 1998, a detailed commentary by Bas van Iersel followed: *Mark: A Reader-Response Commentary.*[139] In 1988 Ludger Schenke

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[124] C. Myers, *Binding the Strong Man: A Political Reading of Mark's Story of Jesus* (New York: Orbis, 1988).

[125] Myers, *Binding the Strong Man*, 12–21, 467–9.

[126] Myers, *Binding the Strong Man*, 31–5.

[127] Myers, *Binding the Strong Man*, 21–8.

[128] M. Kassel, *Biblische Urbilder: Tiefenpsychologische Auslegung nach C. G. Jung* (München: J. Pfeiffer, 1980).

[129] Kassel, *Biblische Urbilder*, 89–208.

[130] Kassel, *Biblische Urbilder*, 208–80; *Sei, der du werden sollst: Tiefenpsychologische Impulse aus der Bibel* (München: J. Pfeiffer, 1982), 102–46.

[131] E. Drewermann, *Tiefenpsychologie und Exegese, Bd. 1., Die Wahrheit der Formen: Traum, Mythos, Märchen, Sage und Legende* (Freiburg: Walter, 1984).

[132] Drewermann, *Tiefenpsychologie und Exegese*, 99 f.

[133] Drewermann, *Tiefenpsychologie und Exegese*, 151 ff.

[134] Drewermann, *Tiefenpsychologie und Exegese*, 99 f.

[135] E. Drewermann, *Das Markusevangelium* (2 vols.; Freiberg: Walter, 1987–88).

[136] B. van Iersel, *Markus: Kommentar* (Düsseldorf: Patmos, 1993), 57 f.

[137] Iersel, *Markus*, 48 f., 62.

[138] Iersel, *Markus*, 68.

[139] B. Van Iersel, *Mark: A Reader-Response Commentary* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

published a narrative analysis of Mark's Gospel. He maintained consistently the position of synchrony. The "text-elements of Mark's Gospel" can indeed be differentiated, but can not be related to tradition.[140] In 1989 Reinhold Zwick combined film aesthetics with narrative criticism.[141]

In 1998 Fritzleo Lentzen-Deis published *Das Markus-Evangelium. Ein Kommentar für die Praxis* (*The Gospel of Mark: A Commentary for Practice*)Each reader should be influenced by the method of pragma-linguistics, or action orientation. This new "pragma-linguistic" approach is reflected in a three-step methodology: 1) Each sequence is introduced with its "structure (syntactic)," that is, its form. 2) "The explanation of the text" follows. "Semantics" of each text is explored within the context of the Gospel and other contexts. 3) The third part contains "action impulses" (pragmatics). The text offers features and patterns of identification and of models of action.

It seems to me that the "reading" of Mark and Matthew has been developed mainly by Catholic exegetes. Parallel to this development, however, similar approaches including narrative criticism, reader-response criticism, and poststructural perspectives were introduced in North America, especially by Protestant exegetes.[142] The papal document of 1993 may indeed be said to reflect much of the current international discourses of Catholic and Protestant exegetes, including evangelical exegesis.

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[140] L. Schenke, *Das Markusevangelium* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1988), 52 f.

[141] R. Zwick, *Montage im Markusevangelium: Studien zur narrativen Organisation der ältesten Jesuserzählung* (Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1989).

[142] McKnight, *Post-Modern Use of the Bible*, 115–273; Dormeyer, *Das Markusevangelium*, 162–6. Cf. also: *Die Interpretation der Bibel in der Kirche: Das Dokument der Päpstlichen Bibelkommission vom 23.4.1993 mit einer kommentierenden Einführung von L. Ruppert und Würdigung durch H.-J. Klauck* (Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1995); I. Broer, "Gebremste Exegese: Katholische Neutestamentler in der ersten Hälfte des 20. Jahrhunderts," in *Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft nach 1945: Hauptvertreter der deutschsprachigen Exegese in der Darstellung ihrer Schüler* (ed. C. Breytenbach and R. Hoppe; Neukirchen: Neukirchener Verlag, 2008), 59–113. Many thanks to Edgar McKnight for critically reading the manuscript.