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THEOLOGICAL MEANING OF THE *ναός* IN THE SANHEDRIN TRIAL OF JESUS (MK 14,58)

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1. Introduction

St. Mark in his Gospel does not want to present Jesus' confrontation with the *ναός* but rather he refers to the *ἱερόν*. In his account of the Sanhedrin trial of Jesus (Mk 14,53-65) he includes false and contradicting evidence (*καί τινες ἀναστάντες ἐψευδομαρτύρουν κατ' αὐτοῦ λέγοντες* — Mk 14,57). The response of Jesus contains an ominous prediction for the Jerusalem sanctuary (Mk 13,14-23). He warns the Jews of what is coming and calls them up to repentance because of the imminent cessation of the temple era.

2. False and contradictory evidence in the trial of Jesus

The main point of accusation at the Sanhedrin trial of Jesus are the following words: *ὅτι Ἡμεῖς ἠκούσαμεν αὐτοῦ λέγοντος ὅτι Ἐγὼ καταλύσω τὸν ναὸν τοῦτον τὸν χειροποίητον καὶ διὰ τριῶν ἡμερῶν ἄλλον ἀχειροποίητον οἰκοδομήσω* (Mk 14,58). This is false and contradictory evidence (*καί τινες ἀναστάντες ἐψευδομαρτύρουν κατ' αὐτοῦ λέγοντες* — Mk 14,57).

The true and accurate account of the Sanhedrin trial of Jesus except for the introductory information about bringing Jesus up to the house of the high priest (*Καὶ ἀπήγαγον τὸν Ἰησοῦν πρὸς τὸν ἀρχιερέα, καὶ συνέρχονται πάντες οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ οἱ πρεσβύτεροι καὶ οἱ γραμματεῖς.* — Mk 14,53) and about a multitude of people demeaning and deriding Jesus after the trial (*Καὶ ἤρξαντό τινες ἐμπ-*

τύειν αὐτῷ καὶ περικαλύπτειν αὐτοῦ τὸ πρόσωπον καὶ κολαφίζειν αὐτὸν καὶ λέγειν αὐτῷ, Προφήτευσον, καὶ οἱ ὑπηρέται ῥαπίσμασιν αὐτὸν ἔλαβον. — Mk 14,65) is inserted between the two references to the death sentence for Jesus Christ:

- οἱ δὲ ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ ὅλον τὸ συνέδριον ἐζήτουν κατὰ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ μαρτυρίαν εἰς τὸ θανατώσαι αὐτόν, καὶ οὐχ ἠύρισκον· (Mk 14,55);
- ἠκούσατε τῆς βλασφημίας· τί ὑμῖν φαίνεται; οἱ δὲ πάντες κατέκριναν αὐτὸν ἔνοχον εἶναι θανάτου. (Mk 14,64).

These verses present these elements which helped the judges achieve their goal and which link the beginning and end of the trial from the narrative point of view (Mk 14,55.64).

- In Mk 14,55-59 the selected vocabulary helps to adequately describe the trial:
- μαρτυρία (“testimony”) — this noun is used three times (Mk 14,55.56.59);
 - ψευδομαρτυρέω („to testify falsely”, „to testify against truth”) — this verb is used twice (Mk 14,56.57).

In the narrative of Mk 14,55-59 the whole procedure of interrogating witnesses is presented. Witnesses are the members of the Sanhedrin. Their testimony is contradictory and incompatible [καὶ ἴσαι αἱ μαρτυρίαι οὐκ ἦσαν – “(...) but their witness agreed not together”] thus confirming the fact that the trial was not performed in a solemn and serious manner.

In Mk 14,60 the evangelist introduces the second phase of the trial (Mk 14,60-62), e.g. questioning of the Accused by the high priest (καὶ ἀναστάς ὁ ἀρχιερεὺς εἰς μέσον ἐπηρώτησεν τὸν Ἰησοῦν λέγων, Οὐκ ἀποκρίνη οὐδὲν τί οὗτοί σου καταμαρτυροῦσιν).

The lexis is dominated by the following expressions:

- words posing a question and query;
- words of reply and refutation;
- words pointing to perversity of the question.

The high priest questions Jesus twice urging him to reply (Mk 14,60). Jesus is silent and does not answer the first question: Οὐκ ἀποκρίνη οὐδὲν τί οὗτοί σου καταμαρτυροῦσιν (Mk 14,60b). But the high priest persistently continues his interrogation asking Jesus the second question: Σὺ εἶ ὁ Χριστὸς ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ εὐλογητοῦ (Mk 14,61c). Jesus answers his second question describing the vision of the Son of Man: ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν, Ἐγὼ εἰμι, καὶ ὄψεσθε τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐκ δεξιῶν καθημένον τῆς δυνάμεως καὶ ἐρχόμενον μετὰ τῶν νεφελῶν τοῦ οὐρανοῦ (Mk 14,62)¹ Mk 14,60 confirms the theme of the “testimony”

¹ Cf. Dn 7,13; Ps 110,1.

In Mk 14,63-64 the final phase of the trial of Jesus is presented. St. Mark defines the alleged crime of Jesus: *Τί ἔτι χρεῖαν ἔχομεν μαρτύρων; Τί ἔτι χρεῖαν ἔχομεν μαρτύρων;* — Mk 14,63b-64b. In such circumstances, after such a trial Jesus is sentenced to death (*οἱ δὲ πάντες κατέκριναν αὐτὸν ἔνοχον εἶναι θανάτου.* — Mk 14,64c). Is it not an ironic and paradoxical trial where false and contradictory evidence of Jesus' "crime" is presented and where the high priest and other members of the Sanhedrin are both witnesses and at the same time judges pronouncing a sentence?

Accusations of false witnesses and judges are of different importance. Their testimony concerns the Jerusalem temple although the evangelist does not present it clearly. Their evidence is contradictory. False witnesses accuse Jesus of usurping the right to the messianic mission as the Son of the Blessed One (Mk 14,61-62). The result of the trial is the death sentence.

Of two questions which constitute the accusation of Jesus it seems that only the first one *Οὐκ ἀποκρίνη οὐδὲν τί οὗτοί σου καταμαρτυροῦσιν;* (Mk 14,60b) refers to witnesses' testimony. Jesus refuses to answer the question by remaining silent (*ὁ δὲ ἐσιώπα καὶ οὐκ ἀπεκρίνατο οὐδέν.* — Mk,61a) which causes the high priest to leave the matter raised by false witnesses and to raise a new, and as it turns out, major accusation against Jesus. His question: *Σὺ εἶ ὁ Χριστὸς ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ εὐλογητοῦ;* (Mk 14,61c) allegedly marks a new beginning of the trial. But the structure of the whole narrative of Mk 14,55-64 does not confirm the existence of a dividing line in the interrogation:

- Mk 14,55-59 — looking for and questioning witnesses (participants: witnesses and the Sanhedrin members);
- Mk 14,60-62 — questioning of the Accused (participants: the high priest and Jesus);
- Mk 14,63-64 — court's sentence (participants: the high priest and members of the Sanhedrin).

The form of two parallel questions of the high priest proves that there is a link between false accusations of witnesses and accusations of the high priest concerning the messianic claim of Jesus. By asking a question: "What [is it which] these witness against thee?" (Mk 14,60b) the high priest does not want to learn what the accusers testify against Jesus because the accusation of false witnesses contains the answer to this question. The high priest's question: *τί οὗτοί σου καταμαρτυροῦσιν;* actually means: "Why are they testifying against you?"²

² Cf. W. Bauer, *Griechisch-Deutsches Wörterbuch zu den Schriften des Neuen Testaments und der übrigen urchristlichen Literatur*, Berlin – New York 1971, p. 1621.

We can refer here to:

- an earlier teaching of Jesus in Capernaum where he healed a demon possessed man [Τί ἐστὶν τοῦτο; (...) καὶ τοῖς πνεύμασι τοῖς ἀκαθάρτοις ἐπιτάσσει, καὶ ὑπακούουσιν αὐτῷ. — Mk 1,27];
- Jesus' great wisdom admired by the inhabitants of Nazareth where he taught in the synagogue on Sabbath (τίς ἡ σοφία ἢ δοθεῖσα τούτῳ — Mk 6,2).

During the trial Jesus is demanded to explain his challenge against the temple. But Jesus remains silent. The high priest does not give up. He continues the investigation and asks the second time: πάλιν ἐπηρώτα αὐτόν. These words cannot be paraphrased in a sense: "He asked him another, different question"

The structure of the questioning of Jesus by the high priest can be summarised in the following way:

Mk 14,60-61a:

- Introduction: καὶ ἀναστὰς ὁ ἀρχιερεὺς εἰς μέσον ἐπηρώτησεν τὸν Ἰησοῦν λέγων, (Mk 14,60a);
- The high priest's question: Οὐκ ἀποκρίνη οὐδὲν τί οὗτοί σου καταμαρτυροῦσιν; (Mk 14,60b);
- Jesus' response: ὁ δὲ ἐσιώπα καὶ οὐκ ἀπεκρίνατο οὐδέν. (Mk 14,61a).

Mk 14,61b-62:

- Introduction: πάλιν ὁ ἀρχιερεὺς ἐπηρώτα αὐτόν καὶ λέγει αὐτῷ, (Mk 14,61b);
- The high priest's question: Σὺ εἶ ὁ Χριστὸς ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ εὐλογητοῦ; (Mk 14,62a);
- Jesus' response: ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν, Ἐγὼ εἰμι, (Mk 14,62b).

The second question is a repetition of what Jesus has been already asked in the first question.

Jesus claimed that he had authority over the temple and thus he confirmed that he was the anticipated Messiah³ Testimony of false witnesses though contra-dic

³ Some authors negate the possibility of linking the temple theme and the question asked by the high priest. They maintain that the authority to destroy and rebuilt the temple has been never attributed to the Messiah; cf. L. GASTON, *No Stone on Another. Studies in the Significance of the Fall of Jerusalem in the Synoptic Gospels*, (Supplements to Novum Testamentum 23), Leiden 1970, p. 102–112. In a few heatedly debated and carefully analysed texts the act of destroying the temple is enumerated as one of the Works of the Messiah. A role of the future builder of the temple has not been certified in any Jewish text. Cf. also E. LINNEMANN, *Studien zur Passionsgeschichte*, in: FRLANT 102 (1970), p. 127: the destruction and building of a new temple has never been seen as an eschatological event; also: D. JUEL, *Messiah and Temple. The Trial of Jesus in the Gospel of Mark*, Missoula – Montana 1977, p. 117–215: He points to a relationship between the Messiah and the destruction of the temple and claims that this question is best explained on the basis of editorial efforts of St. Mark in Mk 14,58-62. He believes that tradition does not exist in a pure form but is born and passed on assuming various forms in different situations; according to J. Jeul St. Mark or someone before him could have developed such Jewish tradition of general character, i. e. accounting for a unique experience of the Church as a Christian fellowship; common tradition

tory was not necessarily doomed to fail because of the implications. As a matter of fact the point was to prepare the next question, to find a pretext to the high priest's inquiry. He was going to demand from Jesus to openly say whether he was *Σὺ εἶ ὁ Χριστὸς ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ εὐλογητοῦ*; (Mk 14,61c).

Jesus answers only the second question. He seems to be reluctant to accept the titles quoted in the questions. Only in St. Mark's account is his answer explicitly confirmatory.

According to St. Mark and other synoptics in the next part of his answer to the high priest's question Jesus "corrects" and thus reinforces the meaning of the title ascribed to him by the high priest. He does it by replacing *Σὺ εἶ ὁ Χριστὸς ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ εὐλογητοῦ*; (Mk 14,61c) with *τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου* (Mk 14,62c).

Thus we may infer that the title Jesus is asked about by the high priest should be interpreted according to the Sanhedrin's understanding: that it would be true of Jesus only if others see him as "the Son of Man" This interpretation refers to and expounds on Jesus' words spoken against the *ναός* quoted by false witnesses during the trial.

If truly the high priest accepts false accusations of witnesses then the fact that Jesus breaks the silence is well-grounded. In his response Jesus exposes falsehood of their claims that he accepts messianic titles he is being asked about provided that the interpretation of the Sanhedrin is accepted. Jesus claims he has authority over the temple and demands the right understanding of his mission as the Messiah. The Sanhedrin's interpretation of Jesus' words reveals their hypocrisy, slyness and falseness. Their thinking is cunning and devious.

Analogically we can refer to the episode of the first announcement of Jesus' Passion and Resurrection in Caesarea (Mk 8,31-33). Jesus rebuked Peter for his way of thinking: *ὁ δὲ ἐπιστραφεὶς καὶ ἰδὼν τοὺς μαθητὰς αὐτοῦ ἐπετίμησεν Πέτρῳ καὶ λέγει, "Ὑπαγε ὀπίσω μου, Σατανᾶ, ὅτι οὐ φρονεῖς τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ ἀλλὰ τὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων.* (Mk 8,33) to which Peter responded *Σὺ εἶ ὁ Χριστὸς.* (Mk 8,29)⁴. If we compare the two excerpts we can explain Jesus' amendment to the Jewish understanding of his words on the *ναός* and the titles: "Christ the Messiah" and "the Son of the Blessed One"

concerning the temple has been experienced and expressed in Qumran in a different way than it has been in the Jewish circles.

⁴ Cf. B. PRETE, *Formazione e storicità del detto di Gesù sul tempio secondo Mc 14,58*, in: „Bibbia e Oriente” 27 (1985), p. 9–12; G. BISOLI, *Tempio e „falsa testimonianza” in Marco*, in: „Liber Annus” 35 (1985), p. 36; A. VÖGTLE, *Das markinische Versändnis der Tempelworte*, in: „Die Mitte des Neuen Testaments”, Göttingen 1983, p. 366; D. SENIOR, *The Passion of Jesus in the Gospel of Mark*, Wilmington – Delaware 1984, p. 91–93.

The messianic concept from Caesarea and the Sanhedrin's understanding is correct:

- in Caesarea Peter opposes the necessity of the suffering the “Christ — the Messiah — the Son of the Blessed One”;
- the Sanhedrin and Judaism properly understand the Messiah's authority; Jesus' response to the high priest's question proves that indeed “the Son of Man sits on the right hand side” of God and therefore he shares the authority and rule of YHWH God. Jesus does not use his name but says of him: “Almighty – Mighty” (Δύναμις); and also τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου (...) ἐρχόμενον μετὰ τῶν νεφελῶν τοῦ οὐρανοῦ. (Mk 14,62c) just as in Mk 13,26: καὶ τότε ὄψονται τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐρχόμενον ἐν νεφέλαις μετὰ δυνάμεως πολλῆς καὶ δόξης.⁵ Jesus is “the Son of Man sitting on the right hand” as in Mk 12,36 where his is not only “the son of David” but also Κύριος (Lord) like YHWH God.

St. Mark discusses the nature of messianic authority of Jesus. He wants to specify whether it is a “theocratic – Davidic” type of authority or rather a “heavenly – transcendental” authority. Jesus asked about the authority he claims over the ναός responds in the same way he did when he demanded authority over the ἱερόν. He claims that his authority comes from the heaven, from God the Father – YHWH and not from people. Jesus reveals that it is him as the Κύριος (Lord) and not a “theocratic – Davidic” descendent who will destroy the Jerusalem temple together with YHWH God.

We can conclude that in Mk 14,58 the temple theme is presented by St. Mark once again as a question to be resolved by the reader because the evangelist warns us against the insufficiency of Jewish institutions and their vision of the Messiah.

3. Jesus and two sanctuaries

The ναός mentioned in false witness against Jesus is the Jerusalem temple. The unfortunate fate of the sanctuary confirms the reproachful and hostile attitude of Jesus towards the temple. It is also a reprimand for the temple. The Sanhedrin members do not remain indifferent. They begin to defend themselves as the spiritual leaders of the chosen nation. One should analyse correctly the verb forms in the utterances where Jesus announces his action: Ἐγὼ καταλύσω τὸν ναὸν τοῦτον τὸν χειροποίητον καὶ διὰ τριῶν ἡμερῶν ἄλλον ἀχειροποίητον οἰκοδομήσω (Mk 14,58). These are two verbs: καταλύσω and οἰκοδομήσω which have:

⁵ Cf. Dn 7,13.

- the initial ἐγώ as the only subject on one hand;
- the ναός as the object on the other hand.

Thus we can conclude that Jesus has a special relationship with the temple:

- when it is the ἱερὸν in Mk 11-13; 14,48-49;
- when it is the ναός in Mk 14,58.

First of all Jesus is the one who will destroy the Jewish ναός where a ritual of offering incense is carried out daily and a ritual of an offering for sins is carried out every year. Jesus is the subject demolishing the ναός. The same καταλύειν verb is used by the evangelist in Mk 13,2 in the prophetic announcement of Jesus about the destruction the ἱερὸν of but in the passive voice which grammatical form cannot be interpreted as a theological passive form. Καταλύειν is presented in a form of a paraphrase οὐ μὴ ἀφελθῆ ὧδε λίθος ἐπὶ λίθον (Mk 13,2c). Writing about the destruction of the temple St. Mark does not suggest that it will be a miraculous event, instantaneous and unusual, but rather it will be “a blow after a blow and a stone after a stone”. Jesus’ speech after Mk 13,2 announces war unrest, suffering almost beyond human endurance which only God will be able to shorten (Mk 13,5-13). And finally the speech on the “abomination of desolation” in the temple (Mk 13,14) points to people as perpetrators of the destruction of the ἱερὸν. The evangelist seems to be using not a theologically passive voice but rather an impersonal passive voice. In this impersonal passive voice the prime mover is unspecified due to the complexity of action and prophetic genre used by Jesus. In Mk 14,58a Jesus presents himself as the author of the destruction of the ναός which may give us an impression that he himself is going to carry out this negative action. It is not so. Jesus is also the builder of another ναός: (...) καὶ διὰ τριῶν ἡμερῶν ἄλλον ἀχειροποίητον οἰκοδομήσω (Mk 14,58b).

So we conclude that also the second part of Jesus’ speech (Mk 14,58) can be described as positive because of the announcement of rebuilding the temple “not made with human hands” We do not find lexical items of this type referring to the ἱερὸν in Mk 11–13. An idea of another ἱερὸν predicted in advance is found in several testimonies of western tradition in which a phrase καὶ διὰ τριῶν ἡμερῶν ἄλλος ἀναστήσεται ἄνευ χειρῶν⁶ is added after Mk 13,2. The context of this editorial interference shows that masculine gender of ἄλλος can only agree with λίθος. But there would be no sense of talking about future appearance of a “stone” in the place of the destroyed ἱερὸν. St. Mark using the masculine gender is announcing a new temple in resurrected Jesus. This conclusion is based on the verb used in the text ruled by ἄλλος which is not οἰκοδομέω as in Mk 14,58 but traditionally refers

⁶ This logion is found in *Beza* and *Washington Codices* as well as in Latin version called *Itala* with the exception of three manuscripts.

to resurrection ἄλλος ἀναστήσεται. Then the meaning of Mk 14,58 can be represented in the following way: “And in three days another (Jesus will built a new ἱερὸν) will build (a work) without hands (with no human input)”

The context does not confirm that Jesus and the temple were supposedly to reappear three days after the destruction of the Jerusalem temple. Mk 11–13 does not mention a new ἱερὸν and that Jesus is to be its builder.

According to some scholars there is no promise of a new ναός in Mark’s Gospel. For some unexplained reason they omit and do not notice the role of the meaning of καὶ ἄλλον In their opinion in Mk 14,58 Jesus “is going to destroy and rebuilt the same temple”⁷. Still another group interprets Mk 14,58b in the same way but takes into consideration all possibilities. According to them both the old and new temples will always remain the same Jerusalem sanctuary. This rebuilt temple will actually be another (ἄλλος) if only its renovation is going to be deep enough.

But this interpretation of ἄλλος is problematic from the lexical point of view. For St. Mark the adjective ἄλλος never means “the same identity but of different quality”. It always means “different in quantity”. In classical Greek quite often the adjective has the meaning “a different one of many”⁸. Sometimes ἄλλος is used in the sense of ἕτερος, i.e. „a different one of the two”⁹. If Mk 14,58 were to predict the reconstruction of the Jerusalem sanctuary it would be contradictory to the eschatological picture presented in Mk 13,14. It is there where St. Mark describes the fate of the temple as “abomination of desolation”

Jesus who visited the ἱερὸν as the Messiah in Mk 11–13 could not see any positive results of his teaching. Christ announced the destruction of the ἱερὸν and it is confirmed by the witnesses before the high priest and the Sanhedrin. He himself will destroy the holiest part of the ἱερὸν i.e. its ναός to build another sanctuary in its place, a sanctuary which will not be made with human hands but will be the work of the spirit.

4. The “man-made temple” (χειροποίητος) and “not made by man” (ἀχειροποίητος)

Right now in our study we are going to explain the reason why both ναοί will be objects of contradictory actions of Jesus. St. Mark presents them as contrary:

⁷ Cf. R.W. TAYLOR, *The Gospel according to St Mark*, London 1966, p. 566.

⁸ See: the teaching of Jesus: *the parable of the sower; the goal of the parable; the explanation of the parable; the storm on the lake; the parable of the tenants* (Mk 4,5-7.8.18.36; 12,5).

⁹ See: the teaching of Jesus on *indissolubility of marriage; the parable of the tenants* (Mk 10,11.12; 12,4).

χειροποίητος “as the first” and ἀχειροποίητος “as the second”. I would like to stress that it is of utmost importance to combine both “precise meaning” and “theological scope” of the two adjectives in order to be able to understand correctly the phrase in Mk 14,58 and its logic¹⁰.

Χειροποίητος cannot have the same meaning as it does in extra biblical Greek. There the adjective in question means “something that is artificial and not made by nature”:

- for Herodotus χειροποίητος is an artificial lake Meris in Egypt;
- for Thucydides χειροποίητος is a fire started in order to conquer a city;
- for Plato χειροποίητος is a ditch around the plateau of Atlantis which channelled water to the sea;
- for Josephus Flavius χειροποίητος is an artificial hill of Erodion¹¹.

When St. Mark uses the adjective χειροποίητος he does not seem to exclude the possibility of the fact that the *ναός* in Jerusalem is a natural place of refuge. It is a fact that in Mk 14,58 as well as in other five usages of the term in the New Testament it refers to the popular meaning of the adjective but in the LXX translation.

The Greek Bible uses the adjective χειροποίητος sixteen times (Lev 26,13; Is 2,18; 10,11; 16,12; 19,1; 21,9; 31,7f; 46,6; Wis 14,8; Dan 5,4.23; 6,28; Jud 8,18) and it describes negative features of pagan idols which are no more than wood and metal shaped by a craftsman. In Dn 5,23 (in the LXX) those pagan idols are “gods” (εἰδῶλα χειροποίητα) “made of silver and gold, copper and iron, wood and stone, who cannot see nor hear, nor understand”. In the LXX the term is used in a religious sense or to be more precise an apologetic sense to express contempt for idols — pagan gods.

In the Old Testament (in the LXX) χειροποίητος is used polemically against the idolatrous practices of gentile peoples. Its function changes in the New Testament. Christian theologians direct their charge of χειροποίητος against Israel and its institutions. Especially Acts 7,48, Hbr 9,11.24 and our text of Mk 14,58 the adjective χειροποίητος in the LXX used of the idols are directed against the Jerusalem *ναός*. According to Eph 2,11 the Israelites are the “circumcised” or “the ones who define themselves as circumcised” but they are circumcised χειροποίητος because they are circumcised in body only.

¹⁰ There are numerous and varied opinions on interpretation of these two adjectives: χειροποίητος “as the first one” and ἀχειροποίητος “as the second one”. I am going to quote only some of them which in my opinion are the most useful in our study of Mk 14,58: G. BIGUZZI, *Mk 14,58: Un tempio χειροποίητος*, in: „Rivista Biblica” 26 (1978), p. 225–240; F. LEFEVRE, *De Tempelpolemik in de Redactie van Marcus*, Leuven 1975, p. 574–577; E. LOHSE, χειροποίητος, ἀχειροποίητος, in: TWNT, vol. IX, Stuttgart 1973, p. 425–426; B. PRETE, *Formazione e storicità del detto di Gesù sul tempio secondo Mc 14,58*, in: „Bibbia e Oriente” 27 (1985), p. 3–16.

¹¹ Cf. J. FLAWIUSZ, *Starożytności żydowskie* (15,9,4); and: *O wojnie żydowskiej*, (1,21,10).

But the meaning of the term χειροποίητος in St. Mark's Gospel is not the same as in the Greek Bible where it is used interchangeably with the notion of "idol" Χειροποίητος circumcision or temple is not necessarily an idolatrous temple or idolatrous circumcision.

And it is so because the meaning of the adjective in these three different contexts is defined by contrasting entities. For extra biblical authors it describes the things which are artificial as opposed to those which are naturally made. Thucydides for example contrasts χειροποίητος fire with spontaneous fire. The fire started by the Peloponnese legion on the walls of Plateia is compared to the column of fire which lit on its own (ἀπὸ ταύτομάτου) in a forest and was kindled by winds.

In the LXX χειροποίητος is a contemptuous adjective whose aim is to disparage "idols" in the eyes of those who worship them. Idols should not be adored because they are a product of human hands and are much lower than man. The most characteristic text here is Is 46,6 where gods who are worshipped by bowing before them are in fact artefacts made by a goldsmith paid to do so ("They lavish gold out of the bag, and weigh silver in the balance, [and] hire a goldsmith; and he maketh it a god: they fall down, yea, they worship").

And finally in the New Testament χειροποίητος is contrasted with its antithesis ἀχειροποίητος. This adjective is used for the first time in the New Testament in our text of Mk 14,58 (2 Cor 5,1; Col 2,11-12). Apart from the new ναός which Jesus is going to "rebuild" (Mk 14,58) there is ἀχειροποίητος.

In the expression διὰ τριῶν ἡμερῶν Mk 14,58 specifies what temple is not a work of human hands. The three days in which the temple will be rebuilt and the three days of the Passion and resurrection of Jesus Christ are identical¹² for some commentators.

But the phrase διὰ τριῶν ἡμερῶν from Mk 14,58 is not the same as the one in Mk 8,31; 9,31; 20,34: μετὰ τρεῖς ἡμέρας. The latter can be translated as „after three days" (so on „the fourth day") which makes it different not only because of τῆ τρίτη ἡμέρα (cf. Mt 16,21; 17,23; 20,19; Lk 9,22; 18,33; 24,7.24). The expression διὰ τριῶν ἡμερῶν is characteristic for St. Mark. If we assume that διὰ with a genitive may also mean "after" as we see in διὰ δεκατεσσάρων ἔτων from Ga 2,1 then I dare say we must exclude a possibility of such meaning in Mk 14,58. We also read about building the ναός and the three days in Mk 15,29. In Mk 14,58 the evangelist interprets and clarifies the ambiguity of the phrase ἐν τρισὶν ἡμέραις (which in this context is unambiguous). In St. Mark's account the resurrection will take place "after" three days and so the sanctuary will be built in three days.

¹² Please compare with the texts of the authors who have studied the text in question; cf. E. NIE-NEHAM, *Saint Mark*, London 1963, p. 407.

If we analyse the phrase ἐν τρισὶν ἡμέραις the third interpretation seems to be the most accurate. Some biblical scholars remark that there is no equivalent of our terms dividing “time” in the Aramaic language so the meaning is conveyed by the term “day” Aramaic also lacks equivalents of indefinite pronouns such as “several, many (days)” and an expression “three (days)” is used instead. Consequently a phrase “three days” does not necessarily mean three actual days in a calendar but has a more indefinite sense of “soon, shortly”¹³. And in particular *διὰ τριῶν ἡμερῶν* from Mk 14,58 does not convey any precise date but like the adjective ἀχειροποίητος it stresses the wonderful character of the work and its divine origin.

5. Structural analysis of Mk 14,58

Mk 14,58 juxtaposes the Jerusalem temple with a new temple, the ἱερόν with the *ναός*, the demolishing of the existing system with building a new order. The same logic inspires Mk 14,58. Because the ἱερόν cannot be changed to establish the *ναός* there is only one solution left: to demolish the ἱερόν.

Despite a possible narrow parallelism between the ἱερόν and the *ναός* they do not have opposite equivalents. First of all the initial ἐγώ is the unchanged subject of the negative part (“demolishing”) as well as the positive part (“building”). In the former case the subject is expressed, in the latter it is an implied one. Thanks to this pronoun Jesus, who is a judge of the *ναός* and a maker of another one, dominates the whole of Mk 14,58.

On the other hand neither *διὰ τριῶν ἡμερῶν* is repeated nor does it have an implied equivalent. *Διὰ τριῶν ἡμερῶν* is preceded by καί which specifies it as belonging to the second element: “three days” are the period of time necessary for the second work to be completed as soon as the first one is finished. As we have noticed before it is the supplementary element in which the superiority of the new *ναός* over the old *ναός* is stated.

This absence of the central element differentiates the “chiastic structure” from the “concentric one”. Indeed the central element of the “concentric structure” has a decisive value.

Therefore analysing expressive force of different literary structures one can add that if a “concentric structure” is suitable for didactic organization according to hierarchic value or if a “linear structure” is appropriate for story-telling, then combining these strands expresses comparison, contrast, and antithesis. The verse from the second Gospel — Mk 14,58 — is a typical example of this and its confirmation.

¹³ Cf. J. JEREMIAS, *Die Drei-Tage-Worte der Evangelien*, in: *Tradition und Glaube. Das frühe Christentum in seiner Umwelt*, Göttingen 1971, p. 226–229.

6. Comparing Mk 14,58 with Matt 26,61 in context of J 2,19

Mk 14,58 can be also compared with other texts of the New Testament in other contexts and with different emphasis e.g. Matt 26,61 and J 2,19 (see also Matt 27,40; Mk 15,29). Such a comparison with different versions and especially with St. Matthew's version helps us to notice the uniqueness of our text (Mk 14,58).

In Matt 26,61 Jesus Christ also expresses his readiness to destroy the temple and rebuild it (Matt 26,61c). In St. John's Gospel his attitude is different. According to the evangelist the Jews provoked by Jesus are to demolish the temple and then he will rebuild it (J 2,19).

I would like to demonstrate that Matt 26,61 differs considerably from Mk 14,58 in three aspects:

- In Matt 26,61 instead of the indicative mood (expressing the future) as in Mk 14,58 we find a verb δύναμαι followed by an infinitive καταλύω and οἰκοδομέω. It means that both Mark and Matthew do speak of destroying and rebuilding the temple but only hypothetically. In this context according to Matt 26,53 Jesus could ask God the Father to send the hosts of angels to defend him (ἢ δοκεῖς ὅτι οὐ δύναμαι παρακαλέσαι τὸν πατέρα μου). But it is not what Jesus intends to do, just as it is not his plan to destroy the temple because it is not in God's plans and therefore it is not going to be fulfilled.
- On the other hand the ναός is presented quite differently by St. Matthew. The ναός is not only presented as made with human hands but also as a dwelling place of Jahwe God (ναός τοῦ Θεοῦ).
- And finally according to Matt 26,61 Jesus would destroy and rebuild the same temple. The lack of ἄλλος occurring in Mk 14,58 in Matt 26,61 is replaced by a contrast between the two different ναοί. Mk 14,58 focuses on the ναός; at the same time it disperses the threat of the second ναός replacing the first ναός

Two versions of Jesus' logion in Matt 26,61 and Mk 14,58 go in two different directions. According to St. Matthew (Matt 26,61) Jesus does not question the need of the Jerusalem temple. He does not announce its destruction or its reform. The ναός is not an object of Jesus' action but only an example, a hypothesis proposed by the evangelist.

As far as the Mk 14,58 version is concerned it does not confirm Jesus' power as it were but heralds his specific intervention into the history of Judaism. What Matt 26,61 presents as a purely hypothetical possibility in Mark is a sure reality. Therefore the scope of Christ's logion according to Mk 14,58 is broader than that of Matt 26,61. Mk 14,58 does more than just present a statement on Jesus (as in Matt 26,61) — It contains a statement about the temple and its temporariness.

7. The testimony of false witnesses (Mk 14,58) during the Sanhedrin trial of Jesus

The last words spoken by Pilate during the trial of Jesus declare the innocence of the Son of God: “Why, what evil hath he done?” (Mk 15,14ab). The death of Jesus on the cross has no other logical explanation than that one: Jesus was supposed to die to be proclaimed the Messiah and the Son of the Blessed One during the Sanhedrin trial. The testimony of false witnesses allegedly quoting the statement of Jesus against the institution of *ναός* is the point of departure for the whole judicial component of the Passion narrative up to the execution of the death sentence.

It is not any point of departure, randomly chosen or to be replaced by any other. The Jerusalem *ναός* is the most sacred thing for the Jews; it defines Judaism and constitutes the essence of its religious and national life. On the other hand the claim of Jesus and the fact that he stresses his power over the *ναός* lays the question open of whether Jesus is the Messiah.

Therefore we posit that in Mark’s account of the Sanhedrin trial of Jesus (Mk 14,53-65) the question of the temple just as in the preceding chapters of Mk 11–13 cannot be interpreted in isolation from the central questions of the Gospel according to St. Mark. At the trial of Jesus the temple issues are closely connected with questions concerning Judaism and the Messiah. Utilizing the question of the temple St. Mark demonstrates profound differences between Judaic and Christian understanding of messianism.

In St. Mark’s narrative the problem is more realistically presented than in the Gospel according to St. Matthew. The first evangelist presents the high priest’s question concerning the messianic identity of Jesus as independent of the testimony of the witnesses and thus does not stress Jesus’ polemics against the temple but becomes a rather theoretical speculation on the power of the Messiah. Mk 14,58 is a solemn (not only hypothetical) warning. Reading St. Mark’s account one may expect the realisation of this threat. The question of the *ναός* in Mk 14,58 introduces the final chapters in which the evangelist develops his *ναός* theology.

8. Final conclusions concerning the *ναός* theology in Mk 14,58

On reading the Gospel according to St. Mark and Mk 14,58 in particular we see the *ναός* in the context of the account of the Sanhedrin trial of Jesus or, to be more precise, in the context of the presentation of the main charge levelled against Jesus. The testimony of false witnesses points to alleged negative attitude of Jesus towards the Jerusalem sanctuary. But this narrative means is used by the author only to

increase suspense and to present a contrast between the accusers who represent Judaism and who become Jewish heroes of the account and Jesus.

But it is rather the Mk 14,53-65 pericope than the narrative excerpt that reveals the true identity of Jesus Christ. In my opinion Mk 14,53-65 is just one of many elements which built the climax of the Gospel according to St. Mark. Mk 14,53-65 is the height of Mark's Gospel in which the messianic character of Jesus Christ and his supernatural, divine identity are revealed. But during the Sanhedrin trial of Jesus [(Mk 14,53-65) and especially Mk 14,58] his identity and rank are disregarded and rejected only to be later humbly accepted at Calvary. But his rank and messianic identity are nevertheless presented during the trial in a covert way. They are disclosed in the question of the nature and value of the Jerusalem ναός. We learn from Mk 14,58 that the ναός is the work of humans not of God and also that Jesus — the King and the Messiah — is going to destroy the ναός and replace it with the everlasting temple of his body.

In Mk 14,58 the subject of ναός is emphasised very strongly. The editorial defects of the text are not of great importance here because they result from initial assumptions: to present an inevitable fall of the present Jerusalem sanctuary and an emergence of the opposite and completely new ναός which is going to replace the former temple. But everything stays in the state of limbo — we are waiting for the coming of a new reality. In Mk 14,58 the details of the time and manner of transition from the Jewish ναός to eschatological ναός remain undisclosed.

At the trial Jesus corrects the titles used by the high priest: *Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?* (Mk 14,61c) not because they are wrong but because they sound ambiguously. The high priest interprets them from the Jewish point of view as Davidic and theocratic titles. And in my opinion this allows us to suppose that the evangelist wants to draw our attention to the ναός.

St. Mark undertakes the problem of ναός in a slightly problematic way just as he does with the central theme of his Gospel: namely the revelation of Jesus Christ. Namely he compiles right and wrong opinions without any comments and then he ascribes them at random to the disciples and the opponents, to the demons and the multitude. In the next stage little by little he takes correct definitions out of the mouths of evangelical characters who disagree with them and puts them into the mouths of more proper persons to thus present evangelical truth in accordance with God's idea.

The Gospel according to St. Mark in its comprehensive presentation of the plan of salvation of man as well as in the analytical and detailed account of different evangelical truths is also a theological and educational work (showing the way of salvation and teaching about it). I am deeply convinced that it is “a perfectly structured, sophisticatedly didactic, apt story”

Teologiczne znaczenie świątyni (ναός) w procesie Jezusa przed Sanhedrynem (Mk 14,58)

Streszczenie

Autor zamierza ukazać w artykule, że św. Marek nie usiłuje przedstawić konfrontacji Jezusa z ναός, lecz odnosi się w tym kontekście do ἱερὸν. W relacji z procesu Jezusa przed Sanhedrynem (Mk 14,53-65) zawarte są fałszywe i niezgodne świadectwa (καί τινες ἀναστάιντες ἐψευδομαρτύρουν κατ' αὐτοῦ λέγοντες — Mk 14,57). Odpowiedź Jezusa stanowi szczególnie groźną perspektywę dotyczącą sanktuarium jerozolimskiego (Mk13,14-23). Słowa te są przestrogą dla Żydów oraz wezwaniem do opamiętania się, że nadchodzi dla świątyni koniec jej czasów. W Mk 14,58 temat ναός jest wyakcentowany w sposób szczególny i bardzo wyrazisty. Nie rażą wynikające z istoty tejże relacji braki będące rezultatem jego programowych założeń ewangelicznych, a także (co wyakcentował w sposób szczególny nieunikniony i konsekwentnie, zbliżający się upadek aktualnego sanktuarium jerozolimskiego) kwalifikacje diametralnie przeciwstawne nowego ναός, które zastąpi poprzedzającą je świątynię. Autor opracowania podkreśla (jak wynika z kontekstu relacji ewangelicznej), że wszystko pozostaje jakby w oczekiwaniu na nadejście „nowej rzeczywistości”. Nie tylko w Mk 14,58 nie są wyjawione („odsłonięte”) czasy i sposób przejścia od ναός żydowskiego do ναός eschatologicznego, ale również słowa Jezusa odnośnie tej kwestii odnoszą się w sposób wyjątkowy do Sanhedrynu, a także w znaczeniu ponadczasowym do wszystkich, poddających lekturze i studium tekst procesu Jezusa przed Sanhedrynem w szczególności werset: Mk 14,58, czyli fragment relacji przedstawiający m.in. (wspominane już powyżej) zeznanie fałszywych świadków.