

---

# forschung zur bibel

---

Steffen Jöris

## **The Use and Function of genea in the Gospel of Mark: New Light on Mk 13:30**

Echter Verlag

Forschung zur Bibel    Band 133

*Begründet von  
Rudolf Schnackenburg  
und Josef Schreiner  
Herausgegeben von  
Georg Fischer  
und Thomas Söding*

---

# forschung zur bibel

---

Steffen Jöris

## **The Use and Function of genea in the Gospel of Mark: New Light on Mk 13:30**

Echter Verlag

Bibliografische Information der Deutschen Nationalbibliothek

Die Deutsche Nationalbibliothek verzeichnet diese Publikation in der Deutschen Nationalbibliografie; detaillierte bibliografische Daten sind im Internet über <http://dnb.d-nb.de> abrufbar.

© 2015 Echter Verlag GmbH, Würzburg

[www.echter-verlag.de](http://www.echter-verlag.de)

Druck und Bindung: Friedrich Pustet, Regensburg

ISBN 978-3-429-03838-0 (Print)

978-3-429-04819-8 (PDF)

978-3-429-06236-1 (ePub)

## Preface

This book is a slightly revised version of my doctoral dissertation accepted at La Trobe University in 2014. There are many people I would like to thank for their continuous support over the years; only a few of those can be mentioned here. First of all, I am grateful to my examiners, Prof. Dr. Boris Repschinski and Prof. Dr. Keith Dyer, for their reports and helpful comments. I thank my various teachers, who have inspired me over the years, especially my early teachers Bernd Braken and Dr. Peter Reinders. Particular thanks go to Dr. Anne Gardner, without her guidance, this thesis would have never been completed and I would not have found my way into academia. I am also grateful to Dr. Adrian Jones for his assistance in the final steps of my thesis. The journey of a PhD is filled with many fellow companions, to the lively round of PhD candidates at La Trobe University, I say thank you, esp. to James Stacey, Nicole Scicluna, and Carina Donaldson. Thanks also go to the round of Ancient Historians, *viz.* Rachel Campbell, Jon Worthen, Tom Hull, Jen Ellis, and Megan Turton. Further, I want to mention my many Australian friends, who made studying and living abroad a wonderful experience, esp. Rumi Khan, Bradley Stringer, Ruth Lawlor, Helenna Mihailou, Matthew Body, Tim Tzara, Prof. Dr. Stefan Auer, and many others. To Prof. Dr. Imad Moosa, Dr. Wayne Geerling, and Dr. Liam Lenten, I will miss our Friday evenings. But also to my German friends, esp. André and Lissy Kohlen, Norman Jütten, Anne Scheffen, Bernd and Mary Zalek, and Jo and Eve Mühlenberg, Ingo, Michaela, Jonas and Theresa Lagerbauer, Christoph Erdweg, Christina Grab, Patrick Geiser and Katharina Köllmann, Sven and Anja Schmitz, Christina Grab, as well as Rolf Hannig, thank you for your friendship. After my time in Australia, I found my way as a young lecturer to the Catholic Theological Institute at RWTH Aachen University, where my new colleagues made me feel at home. For their ongoing support, I would like to particularly thank Prof. Dr. Simone Paganini, Prof. Dr. Susanne Gillmayr-Bucher, Dr. Annett Giercke-Ungermann, and my dear friend Dr. Patrick Becker. I am also grateful to Prof. Dr. Thomas Söding for accepting this work as part of the series *Forschung zur Bibel* and to the Bistum Aachen for financial assistance regarding printing costs. Further, I would like to thank my family for their support. To Wilhelm, Ruth, Simon, Imke, Hannah, Michel, Philip Jansen and Julia Schöbben as well as Christine Groß and Lutz Bethge, thank you. Amongst all the people, special thanks go to Julia Heidkamp, I am privileged to have found you here at Aachen. Lastly, I would like to thank my parents, Hans-Josef and Helga Jöris, who have always believed in me. I am proud to have such parents and it is to you that I dedicate this book.

## Table of Contents

<b>I. Introduction</b> .....	11
1.1 Scholarly views on Mark 13 .....	11
1.2 The Aim of this study .....	15
1.3 Scholarly views on Mk 13:30 .....	16
1.3.1 Meinertz, Lövestam, Mußner, and Philonenko on γενεά in Mk 13:30 .....	18
1.3.1.1 γενεά or ἡ γενεὰ αὐτῆ: Is there a terminus technicus? .....	22
1.4 The Methodology: Philology and Exegesis .....	23
1.4.1 Philology.....	23
1.4.1.1 Selected sources for the philological investigation .....	25
1.4.2 Exegesis .....	27
<b>II. Philological investigation of the term γενεά in ancient literature</b> .....	28
2.1 γενεά in (non-biblical) Greek literature .....	29
2.1.1 γενεά in pre-classical Greek literature (Homer and Hesiod).....	29
2.1.2 γενεά in classical Greek literature.....	34
2.1.2.1 Reference list of γενεά in classical Greek authors .....	39
2.1.3 γενεά in post-classical Greek literature.....	43
2.1.3.1 Reference list of γενεά in post-classical Greek authors .....	46
2.1.4 Note on the meanings of γενεά in Greek literature .....	49
2.2 γενεά in the Septuagint (LXX) .....	50
<i>Excursus</i> : The (עבד of the) suffering Servant of Isa 52:13-53:12 .....	59
2.2 γενεά in the Septuagint (LXX) (cont.).....	61
2.2.1 Conclusion for γενεά in the Septuagint (LXX).....	63
2.2.2 Note on the meanings of γενεά (and עבד) in the Old Testament.....	65
2.3 γενεά in the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament .....	67
2.3.1 The Wisdom of Jesus Ben Sira (Sirach or Ecclesiasticus).....	68

2.3.2 The Book of Tobit .....	69
2.3.3 The Book of Enoch (or 1 Enoch).....	70
2.3.4 Psalms of Solomon (18).....	71
2.3.5 The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs .....	72
2.3.6 The Sibylline Oracles .....	73
2.3.7 Other Pseudepigraphical and Apocryphal works.....	74
2.3.8 Conclusion for γενεά in the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament .....	78
2.4 דור / דר (γενεά) in the Dead Sea Scrolls .....	79
2.4.1 דור אחרון in the <i>Cairo Damascus Document</i> (CD) .....	82
<i>Excursus:</i> דורות in CD II, 8.....	85
2.4.2 דור אחרון in the <i>Habakkuk Pesher</i> (1QpHab) .....	85
2.4.3 דור אחרון in <i>1QPesher to Micah</i> (1QpMic or 1Q14).....	87
2.4.4 דור אחרון in 4Q177 ( <i>Catena A or Eschatological Commentary B</i> ).....	89
2.4.5 Conclusion about דור אחרון in the Dead Sea Scrolls .....	90
2.4.6 <i>1QRule of Benedictions</i> (1QSb or 1Q28b).....	92
2.4.7 <i>4QHosea Pesher<sup>a</sup></i> (4QpHos <sup>a</sup> and 4Q166) .....	92
2.4.8 <i>Apocryphon of Jeremiah</i> (C).....	93
2.4.9 <i>4QApocryphon of Levi<sup>b</sup></i> (?) ar (4Q541) .....	99
2.4.10 Conclusion for דור in the Dead Sea Scrolls .....	100
2.4.11 Note on the meanings of γενεά / דור in the intertestamental period .....	101
2.5 γενεά in the writings of Philo of Alexandria.....	101
2.5.1 Conclusion for γενεά in the writings of Philo of Alexandria.....	104
2.6 γενεά in the writings of Flavius Josephus .....	105
2.6.1 Conclusion for γενεά in the writings of Flavius Josephus .....	109
2.7 γενεά in the writings of the early apostolic fathers .....	109
2.7.1 Conclusion for γενεά in the writings of the early apostolic fathers .....	110

2.7.2 Note on the meanings of γενεά in Philo, Josephus, and the apostolic fathers .....	111
2.8 γενεά in the New Testament .....	111
2.8.1 Conclusion for γενεά in the New Testament.....	117
2.8.2 Note on the meanings of γενεά in the New Testament .....	118
2.9 Conclusion of the philological analysis of γενεά and implications for Mark ..	119
<b>III. Exegesis of γενεά in the Gospel of Mark.....</b>	<b>121</b>
3.1 Exegesis of γενεά in Mk 8:12 .....	121
3.1.1 Establishing the pericope .....	121
3.1.2 The structure and form of Mk 8:10-13 .....	122
3.1.3 The setting of Mk 8:10-13 within the Markan narrative.....	123
3.1.4 Commentary on Mk 8:10-13 .....	125
3.1.4.1 The purpose and depiction of the Pharisees in Mark .....	126
3.1.4 Commentary on Mk 8:10-13 (cont.).....	130
<i>Excursus: The ‘sign of Jonah’ .....</i>	<i>137</i>
3.1.4 Commentary on Mk 8:10-13 (cont.).....	139
3.1.5 The identity and function of γενεά within Mk 8:10-13.....	139
3.2 Exegesis of γενεά in Mk 8:38 .....	141
3.2.1 Establishing the pericope .....	141
3.2.2 The structure and form of Mk 8:34-9:1 .....	143
3.2.3 The setting of Mk 8:34-9:1 within the Markan narrative.....	144
3.2.4 Commentary on Mk 8:34-9:1 .....	145
3.2.4.1 εὐαγγέλιον in Mark.....	149
3.2.4 Commentary on Mk 8:34-9:1 (cont.).....	150
3.2.4.2 The meaning of ἐπιποχύνομαι in the LXX and the NT .....	154
3.2.4 Commentary on Mk 8:34-9:1 (cont.).....	156



3.2.4.3 The ‘son of man (ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου)’ figure in the Gospel of Mark and its occurrence in Mk 8:38 and 13:26 .....	158
3.2.4 Commentary on Mk 8:34-9:1 (cont.).....	160
<i>Excursus:</i> A possible reading of Mk 9:1 and ‘taste of death’ in light of Heb 2:5-11?.....	169
3.2.5 The identity and function of γενεά in Mk 8:34-9:1.....	172
3.3 Exegesis of γενεά in Mk 9:19 .....	173
3.3.1 Establishing the pericope.....	173
3.3.2 The structure and form of Mk 9:14-29 .....	175
3.3.3 The setting of Mk 9:14-29 within the Markan narrative.....	177
3.3.4 Commentary on Mk 9:14-29 .....	178
3.3.4.1 The purpose and depiction of the Scribes in Mark .....	179
3.3.4 Commentary on Mk 9:14-29 (cont.).....	183
3.3.4.2 The use of προσευχή and προσεύχομαι in Mark .....	202
3.3.4 Commentary on Mk 9:14-29 (cont.).....	203
3.3.5 The identity and function of γενεά within Mk 9:14-29.....	203
3.4 Exegesis of γενεά in Mk 13:30 .....	205
3.4.1 Establishing the pericope.....	205
3.4.1.1 The Pericopae within Mark 13: Some structural, genre, and exegetical remarks .....	206
3.4.1.1.1 The structure of Mark 13 .....	209
3.4.1.1.2 The setting of Mark 13 within the Markan narrative .....	212
3.4.1 Establishing the pericope (cont.) .....	213
3.4.2 The structure and form of Mk 13:28-37 .....	214
3.4.3 The setting of Mk 13:28-37 within the speech (Mk 13:5b-37) in Mark 13 ...	215
3.4.4 Commentary on Mk 13:28-37.....	215
3.4.4.1 The similarity between Mk 9:1 and Mk 13:30.....	223
3.4.4 Commentary on Mk 13:28-37 (cont.).....	224
3.4.4.2 Jesus’ λόγοι in Mk 13:31.....	226

3.4.4 Commentary on Mk 13:28-37 (cont.).....	227
3.4.5 The identity and function of γενεά within Mk 13:28-37.....	236
<b>IV. Conclusion and final remarks</b> .....	<b>238</b>
Bibliography .....	241
Index of Ancient Sources.....	266
Index of Authors.....	285

## I. Introduction

Mark 13 has long fascinated readers of the gospel, since it presents one of the most puzzling chapters, prophesying the doom of the Jerusalem temple, various other horrific events, and even depicting cosmic upheavals and the coming of the son of man. This imagery is bewildering to the modern reader and many studies have attempted to interpret this enigmatic chapter. By now the scholarly literature has become a swamp that is difficult to navigate. Instead of adding to this vast amount of literature, the purpose of the present study is to investigate one key aspect of Mark 13, which has largely been misunderstood hitherto. This aspect is to uncover the correct meaning of the term γενεά in Mk 13:30 and to understand its function within the Gospel of Mark, which will have larger implications for a proper understanding of Mark 13 and the gospel as a whole. Before discussing this task and the particular aims of the present study further, the scholarship on Mark 13 needs to be outlined to demonstrate where the present work fits in and to better demonstrate which gap it intends to fill within the larger body of research on Mark 13. However, it is by no means possible to engage with all the previous works on this chapter. What follows is a selected overview of some particularly influential scholarly studies which provide different approaches to the text.

### 1.1 Scholarly views on Mark 13

Many studies on the Gospel of Mark refer to Mark 13 because this chapter appears crucial to fundamental questions, such as the place or dating of the gospel text. An exegesis of this chapter is found in almost every general study on Mark. However, the text of Mark 13 has been interpreted in many different ways with varying outcomes. Thus, in terms of dating the gospel, scholars have used Mark 13 to argue that it was written shortly before<sup>1</sup> or in the aftermath<sup>2</sup> of the destruction of the Jerusalem temple in 70 CE, which happened during the Jewish Revolt against Rome (66-73 CE). This already reflects the scholarly differences one can observe in the secondary literature on this chapter.

Most scholars agree that the prophesied doom of the temple in Mk 13:2 somehow refers to the events surrounding its destruction in 70 CE. Thus many locate the historical context within the Jewish war. Hengel has produced a notable historical

---

<sup>1</sup> Robert A. Guelich, *Mark 1:8:26*, Word Biblical Commentary Volume 34A, Dallas, Word Books, 1989, pp. xxxi-xxxii.

<sup>2</sup> H.N. Roskam, *The Purpose of the Gospel of Mark in its Historical and Social Context*, Supplements to Novum Testamentum 114, Leiden, Brill, 2004, pp. 84-94. See especially the extensive list of scholars referenced for either side of the argument on p. 82.

study that situates Mark 13 (and the whole of Mark) somewhere in the year 69 CE by relating the textual evidence to historical events and thus situating the creation of the chapter before the destruction of the temple.<sup>3</sup> In contrast to Hengel, Incigneri and Such opt for identifying Titus as the ‘abomination of desolation’ (Mk 13:14); Incigneri argues for a date after the destruction of the temple, more precisely “in the latter months of 71 [CE]”.<sup>4</sup> This view that Mark 13 is related to the first Jewish-Roman War is echoed by several scholars, who interpret Mark 13 in the light of the prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem that happened in 70 CE.<sup>5</sup> Thus Evans comments that Mark’s readers were aware “that General Titus had besieged the city of Jerusalem and that therefore Jesus’ doleful prophecy of the doom of the city of Jerusalem and its famous temple were on the verge of literal fulfillment”.<sup>6</sup> This view is subsequently adopted by Balabanski, who points out that there are heightened expectations in the Markan community “fuelled by the destruction of the temple”.<sup>7</sup> Likewise Moore’s postcolonial investigation describes Rome as “merely God’s instrument, his scourge, which he employs to punish the indigenous Judean elites” with the destruction of the temple.<sup>8</sup> Yet another interesting theory is Kloppenborg’s reading of Mark 13:1-2 “as a historiographic effort to provide a retrospective account of the dual fates of Jesus and the temple”.<sup>9</sup> He assumes a post-70 CE date by demonstrating how the Roman ritual of *evocatio* is alluded to in the Markan text.<sup>10</sup> Some studies have even tried to reduce the whole of Mark 13 to simply refer to the

---

<sup>3</sup> Martin Hengel, ‘Entstehungszeit und Situation des Markusevangeliums’, in H. Cancik (ed.), *Markus-Philologie: Historische, literargeschichtliche und stilistische Untersuchungen zum zweiten Evangelium*, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 33, Tübingen, J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1984, pp. 1-46.

<sup>4</sup> Brian J. Incigneri, *The Gospel to the Romans: The Setting and Rhetoric of Mark’s Gospel*, Leiden, Brill, 2003, pp. 116-155 and W.A. Such, *The Abomination of Desolation in the Gospel of Mark: Its Historical Reference in Mark 13:14 and its Impact in the Gospel*, Oxford, University Press of America, 1999, pp. 92-101.

<sup>5</sup> Regarding the creation of Mark 13, Müller argues that its basis was written in the disturbances of the Jewish War, while Mark uses this *Vorlage* and composes the chapter after the war, see U.B. Müller, ‘Apokalyptische Stroemungen’, in U.B. Müller (ed.), *Christologie und Apokalyptik*, Leipzig, Evangelische Verlagsanstalt Leipzig, 2003, p. 245 and U.B. Müller, ‘Apokalyptik im Neuen Testament’, in U.B. Müller (ed.), *Christologie und Apokalyptik*, Leipzig, Evangelische Verlagsanstalt Leipzig, 2003, p. 277-279.

<sup>6</sup> Craig A. Evans, *Mark 8:27-16:20*, Word Biblical Commentary Volume 34B, Nashville, Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2001, p. 337.

<sup>7</sup> V. Balabanski, *Eschatology in the making, Mark, Matthew and the Didache*, R. Bauckham (ed.), Society for New Testament Studies, Monograph Series 97, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1997, p. 100.

<sup>8</sup> S.D. Moore, *Empire and Apocalypse, Postcolonialism and the New Testament*, Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2006, p. 35.

<sup>9</sup> John S. Kloppenborg, ‘Evocatio Deorum and the Date of Mark’, *Journal of Biblical Literature*, vol. 124, no. 3, (2005), pp. 419-450, p. 450.

<sup>10</sup> Kloppenborg, ‘Evocatio Deorum and the Date of Mark’, pp. 419-450.

destruction of the temple and the subsequent doom of the city.<sup>11</sup> Adams has opposed this view, analysing how the use of OT passages in Mk 13:24-25 points to the eschaton.<sup>12</sup> Apart from these attempts to connect Mark 13 with the Jewish-Roman War, Theissen has developed another impressive attempt at placing Mark 13 into a historical context. He believes in a substantial *Vorlage* for Mark 13 that existed for decades before Mark edited his thirteenth chapter and identifies the ‘beginning of birth pangs’ (Mk 13:8) as related to the years 36-37 CE, while the ‘abomination of desolation’ (Mk 13:14) and the description of the impending doom of the temple (Mk 13:2) refer to the events of the years 39-40 CE. These years are associated with the ‘Caligula Crisis’, when the emperor Caligula intended to deify himself in the Jerusalem Temple by erecting a statue.<sup>13</sup>

Needless to say, there is a whole gamut of further secondary literature dealing with the question of dating the gospel by using some form of the historical-critical method. Different interpretations of Mark 13 are then regularly used to uphold different answers along the lines outlined above.<sup>14</sup> Most of the studies that have traditionally dealt with the issue of understanding Mark 13 in the last few decades follow a redaction-critical approach. They try to discern the original author’s contributions as distinct from older traditions incorporated into the chapter. Two famous German studies that use a redaction-critical approach on Mark 13 stem from Lambrecht<sup>15</sup> and Pesch<sup>16</sup>. The former comes to the conclusion that “*der redaktionelle Gehalt von Mk 13 ... sehr gross [ist]*”.<sup>17</sup> He acknowledges that there are pieces of older tradi-

---

<sup>11</sup> For example the view that Mk 13:24-27 solely refers to the destruction of the temple is taken by R.T. France, *The Gospel of Mark: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, Michigan, William B. Eerdmans, 2002, p. 533. Also see N.T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, Christian Origins and the Question of God 2, London, SPCK, 1996, pp. 339-368.

<sup>12</sup> Edward Adams, *The Stars Will Fall From Heaven, Cosmic Catastrophe in the New Testament and its World*, M. Goodrace (ed.), Library of New Testament Studies 347, London, T&T Clark, 2007, pp. 153-157.

<sup>13</sup> Gerd Theissen, ‘The Great Eschatological Discourse and the Threat to the Jerusalem Temple in 40 C.E.’, in G. Theissen (ed.), L.M. Maloney (tr.), *The Gospels in Context: Social and Political History in the Synoptic Tradition*, Minneapolis, Fortress Press, 1991, pp. 125-165. On this approach, also see N.H. Taylor, ‘Palestinian Christianity and the Caligula Crisis. Part II. The Markan Eschatological Discourse’, *Journal for the Study of the New Testament*, vol. 18, no. 62, (1996), pp. 13-40.

<sup>14</sup> An interesting approach is Müller’s analysis of the temporal markers in Mark 13, see Peter Müller, ‘Zeitvorstellungen in Markus 13’, *Novum Testamentum*, vol. 40, no. 2, (1998), pp. 209-230. For a good overview of past scholarly interpretations of Mark 13 until the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, see George R. Beasley-Murray, *Jesus and the Last Days: The Interpretation of the Olivet Discourse*, Peabody, Hendrickson, 1993.

<sup>15</sup> Jan Lambrecht, *Die Redaktion der Markus-Apokalypse: Literarische Analyse und Strukturuntersuchung*, Rom, Päpstliches Bibelinstitut, 1967.

<sup>16</sup> Rudolf Pesch, *Naherwartungen: Tradition und Redaktion in Mk 13*, Düsseldorf, Patmos-Verlag, 1968.

<sup>17</sup> Lambrecht, *Die Redaktion der Markus-Apokalypse*, p. 256

tions woven into the Markan redaction, but states that Mark follows his own composition and adjusts the speech according to his desires.<sup>18</sup> Pesch agrees Mark heavily edited a pre-Markan source, but Pesch further argues this must have been an *apokalyptisches Flugblatt* (apocalyptic pamphlet) the evangelist redacted.<sup>19</sup> These redaction-critical studies are still quite popular amongst scholars who tackle issues surrounding this chapter.<sup>20</sup> In contrast to these redaction-critical studies, however, there has been a recent attempt by Pitre to identify material in Mark 13 that goes back to the historical Jesus. He finds good grounds for three parts of the discourse (Mk 13:5-8; 9-13; 14-27) to be traced back to the historical Jesus.<sup>21</sup>

Despite these purely redaction (or source) critical approaches, there are several studies investigating the influence of the OT and other intertestamental texts on Mark 13. Two of the most influential representatives are Hartman<sup>22</sup> and Brandenburger<sup>23</sup>. Hartman analyses the OT references in Mark 13 and concludes that the chapter is based on a “midrash” of the Book of Daniel.<sup>24</sup> Brandenburger concentrates more on the individual themes in the Markan chapter and their origins and use of OT or intertestamental texts. For example, he shows how Mk 13:24-27 is no simple reference to Daniel, but also reflects the motif of a theophany, as taken from several OT and intertestamental sources.<sup>25</sup> Whether one agrees with the details and outcomes of such studies, they have demonstrated the impact of these older texts on Mark 13 and brought them to the forefront again. Most of these studies use a diachronic approach to the text, since they are concerned with uncovering the original form, its original *Sitz im Leben* or at least the *Vorlage* that has been used in creating the current, redactional text of Mark 13.

Recently, there have been attempts to use a synchronic approach. One notable way is the application of narrative theory to the text. Gray’s work stands out in this

---

<sup>18</sup> Lambrecht, *Die Redaktion der Markus-Apokalypse*, pp. 256-257. Pesch (*Naherwartungen*, pp. 43-44) criticises Lambrecht for missing the motives behind the Markan redaction and thus states that a literary and structural analysis, such as performed by Lambrecht, can become arbitrary.

<sup>19</sup> Pesch, *Naherwartungen*, pp. 203-244.

<sup>20</sup> As such Roskam (*The Purpose of the Gospel of Mark in its Historical and Social Context*, pp. 55-72), in a more recent study, attempts to show that Mk 13:9-13 is based on traditional material from Q and that Mark’s redacted material is intended to emphasise the persecution of the Markan community by Jewish and non-Jewish authorities.

<sup>21</sup> Brant Pitre, *Jesus, the Tribulation, and the End of the Exile: Restoration Eschatology and the Origin of the Atonement*, Tübingen, Mohr Siebeck, 2005, pp. 219-377.

<sup>22</sup> Lars Hartman, *Prophecy interpreted: The Formation of some Jewish Apocalyptic Texts and of the Eschatological Discourse Mark 13 Par.*, Lund, CWK Gleerup, 1966.

<sup>23</sup> Egon Brandenburger, *Markus 13 und die Apokalyptik*, Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1984.

<sup>24</sup> Hartman, *Prophecy interpreted*, pp. 145-177, 206-247.

<sup>25</sup> Brandenburger, *Markus 13 und die Apokalyptik*, pp. 54-65.

regard not only for its application of narrative theory, but for recognising the important intertextual elements that are incorporated. He asserts Mark portrays Jesus as the new temple and with the demise of the old temple in Jerusalem signals the beginning of the end.<sup>26</sup> Gray points out continuously the many deeply intertwined intertextual references<sup>27</sup> in the individual parts of Mark 13 and lets his interpretations be guided by these references.<sup>28</sup> Gray's fine study reflects not only a certain reading of the narrative structure of Mark 13, but also emphasises the importance of OT and other Jewish references. Regardless of whether one agrees with Gray, these references are deeply intertwined into the Markan text. Just consider, for instance, the Danielic references to the 'abomination of desolation' (Mk 13:14) or 'the coming of the Son of Man' (Mk 13:26).<sup>29</sup> Therefore, it is prudent to understand Mark 13 against the backdrop of older Jewish literature.

## 1.2 The Aim of this study

While all these previous studies furthered the discussion and contributed to a better understanding of Mark 13, the scholarly debate is now in a state of stagnation. In order to try to move the discussion forward, this study attempts a different approach. It does not intend to pose the grand (synchronic and diachronic) questions some of these previous studies have attempted upfront (such as: What is the *Sitz im Leben* of Mark 13? How does Mark 13 fit into the rest of the gospel narrative? What *Vorlage* did Mark use? What has been redacted by Mark and why? *etc.*). Instead it tries a different approach of investigating a small puzzle in Mark 13. This new line of enquiry in turn provides new questions and answers.

The small puzzle is the enigmatic verse of Mk 13:30, which has proven to be a stumbling block for many scholars. Towards the end of Jesus' long speech, after the extensive descriptions of the tribulations (Mk 13:5b-23), the coming of the Son of

---

<sup>26</sup> Timothy C. Gray, *The Temple in the Gospel of Mark: A Study in Its Narrative Role*, Tübingen, Mohr Siebeck, 2008, pp. 94-155.

<sup>27</sup> Gray shows at great length how certain terminology in Mark 13 is borrowed from OT sources. For example he demonstrates that 'birth pangs' are common in OT imagery and point to the 'day of the Lord', see Gray, *The Temple in the Gospel of Mark*, pp. 117-120.

<sup>28</sup> A complex example is the short phrase 'let the reader understand' in Mk 13:14, where he opts for an understanding that takes into account "the intertextual echoes from Daniel and Isaiah, along with the intratextual echoes of the disciples' failure to understand", see Gray, *The Temple in the Gospel of Mark*, pp. 130-133.

<sup>29</sup> On the topic also see David S. du Toit, 'Die Danielrezeption in Markus 13', in K. Bracht and D.S. du Toit (eds.), *Die Geschichte der Daniel-Auslegung in Judentum, Christentum und Islam: Studien zur Kommentierung des Danielbuches in Literatur und Kunst*, Berlin, Walter de Gruyter, 2007, pp. 55-76.

Man (Mk 13:24-27), and the enigmatic parable of the fig tree (Mk 13:28-29), Mark has Jesus uttering the saying,

Amen I tell you that this generation (γενεά) shall not pass away until all these things shall come to pass (Mk 13:30).

The meaning of this saying has puzzled scholars for a long time. Who or what is this γενεά? What does it mean that this γενεά shall not pass away? What are ‘all these things’ and does this verse provide any indication about the (timing of the) Parousia? Is it just another typical example of the imminence (*Naherwartung*) of the Parousia? Answers to these crucial questions help us understand the rest of Mark 13. This study attempts to uncover the meaning behind this cryptic verse which rests on the interpretation of the term γενεά. Before outlining the methodological approach adopted in this study, a short review of common scholarly opinions about this verse will be given in order to demonstrate the differing views.

### 1.3 Scholarly views on Mk 13:30

The key to this verse lies in the interpretation of γενεά. Several attempts have been made to uncover the meaning (and identity) of this term in Mk 13:30. Lane voices the popular scholarly view that γενεά “clearly designates the contemporaries of Jesus”.<sup>30</sup> More recent studies follow this train of thought. Ehrmann interprets Mk 13:30 (and Mark 13 in general) as an assurance to the “hearers that all these things will take place within their own generation”.<sup>31</sup> Similarly, Price states that Mk 13:28-30 “must mean what it obviously means: the Parousia will bring history to a sudden end in the lifetime of Jesus’ contemporaries”.<sup>32</sup> Collins follows this line of thought; she remarks that “The saying of v. 30 confirms imminent expectation of the return of the Son of Man in a way analogous to the saying of 9:1”.<sup>33</sup> Moloney reaffirms this understanding of the imminent end due to Mk 13:30 and states that “Attempts to

---

<sup>30</sup> William Lane, *The Gospel According To Mark*, Michigan, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1974, p. 480. Several scholars follow this train of thought, e.g. Ezra P. Gould, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, International Critical Commentary, Edinburgh, T.&T. Clark, 1983 [1896], p. 253; Eduard Schweizer, *Das Evangelium nach Markus*, NTD1, Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1968, pp. 161-162.

<sup>31</sup> B.D. Ehrmann, *Jesus: Apocalyptic prophet of the new millennium*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1999, p. 214. Also see Hugh Anderson, *The Gospel of Mark*, London, Oliphants, 1976, p. 300.

<sup>32</sup> R.M. Price, *Apocalypse, How the Christian Church Was Left Behind*, New York, Prometheus Books, 2007, p. 160. Another recent support of this view is found by Adams, who states “‘this generation’ means the generation living at the time of utterance. The time frame in this verse is thus the lifetime of Jesus’ own contemporaries”, see Adams, *The Stars Will Fall From Heaven*, p. 164.

<sup>33</sup> Adela Yarbro Collins, *Mark: A Commentary*, Hermeneia – A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible, Minneapolis, Fortress Press, 2007, p. 616.



avoid the obvious meaning of ‘this generation’ are not convincing”.<sup>34</sup> Lührmann stresses that Mk 13:30 keeps the “Naherwartung” alive, even after the Jewish War.<sup>35</sup> For Mann, this verse reflects the view of the historical Jesus that “his death/vindication would initiate the Reign of God” in the imminent future (*this generation*).<sup>36</sup> Dschulnigg remains vague, maintaining the γενεά signifies the current generation, but then admitting there is no precise temporal indication and concluding that it belongs to the *Naherwartungsworten* (words of the imminent parousia).<sup>37</sup>

All these interpretations share the assumption that γενεά refers to (the time-span of) a single generation.<sup>38</sup> The dispute simply lies in which generation is meant, i.e. either Jesus’ or Mark’s ‘generation’.<sup>39</sup> Obvious questions, such as who actually belongs to this γενεά, are commonly avoided. Does the γενεά encompass the disciples, all of Jesus’ followers, the Jewish people, or just the next 30-40 years in general? The lack of engagement with this question is striking. Another question altogether appears to have dropped from the critical enquiry: does γενεά really mean ‘generation’ in the context of Mk 13:30? What about other meanings of the word? Fewer and fewer commentators include other interpretations of the term in their discussion of this verse.<sup>40</sup> This is connected to the fact that there have been surprisingly few thorough investigations into the meaning and connotations of γενεά. Yet it is my view, as argued in this study, that this verse holds a key to the puzzle of

---

<sup>34</sup> Francis J. Moloney, S.D.B., *The Gospel of Mark: A Commentary*, United States of America, Hendrickson Publishers, 2002, p. 268.

<sup>35</sup> Dieter Lührmann, *Das Markusevangelium*, Tübingen, J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1987, p. 225.

<sup>36</sup> C.S. Mann, *Mark*, The Anchor Bible Vol. 27, New York, Doubleday & Company, 1986, p. 537.

<sup>37</sup> Peter Dschulnigg, *Das Markusevangelium*, Theologischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament 2, Stuttgart, W. Kohlhammer, 2007, p. 348.

<sup>38</sup> This is best reflected by Adams’ statement, “A generation covers roughly a period of 40 years”, see Adams, *The Stars Will Fall From Heaven*, p. 164. As Beasley-Murray (*Jesus and the Last Days*, pp. 443-444) explains, the view that γενεά simply means ‘generation’ has been introduced by Reimarus during the enlightenment, who “drew the corollary that if the saying [of Mk 13:30] relates to the parousia, it sets the end time within the bounds of the first-generation church”.

<sup>39</sup> This is also in accord with philological studies, such as Büchsel’s article on γενεά, where he regards it as denoting a “*Zeitgenossenschaft*”, reflecting a temporal understanding of the term, see Friedrich Büchsel, ‘γενεά, γενεαλογία, γενεαλογέω, ἀγενεαλόγητος’, in G. Kittel (ed.), *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament: Erster Band A–Γ*, Stuttgart, W. Kohlhammer, 1933, pp. 660-663.

<sup>40</sup> Some of the older interpretations that date back to the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century are mentioned in C.E.B. Cranfield, *The Gospel According to Saint Mark*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1985 [1959], pp. 408-409. Beasley-Murray explains that Calvin’s influence has led many to interpret it in light of the destruction of the Jerusalem temple in 70 CE. He further states that Reimarus “drew attention to the illegitimacy of interpreting *genea* in these ways [as “generation of the church”, Jewish nation, or human-kind in general]”, see Beasley-Murray, *Jesus and the Last Days*, p. 443. A thorough overview of the exegesis of Mk 13:30 from the early church to modern interpretations is provided in Martin Künzi, *Das Naherwartungslogion Markus 9,1 par: Geschichte seiner Auslegung mit einem Nachwort zur Auslegungsgeschichte von Markus 13,30 par*, Tübingen, J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1977, pp. 213-224.

Mark 13, which, to a large extent, rests on the correct interpretation of this term. Before commencing some methodological considerations on how to approach the issue of γενεά (in Mk 13:30), the few studies once devoted to this particular problem now deserve a more thorough review.

### 1.3.1 Meinertz, Lövestam, Mußner, and Philonenko on γενεά in Mk 13:30

There are four short studies that have specifically investigated the meaning and implications of γενεά in Mk 13:30, and the NT in general. In 1957 Max Meinertz published an article that identified the expression “Dieses Geschlecht” or αὕτη ἡ γενεά as a *terminus technicus*.<sup>41</sup> He suggested the term is employed throughout the NT in a negative, accusatory sense.<sup>42</sup> Meinertz asserted that due to other words describing the term in the NT, it refers back to the OT, namely Deut 32:5, which he briefly explained as a general reference to the sinfulness of Israel.<sup>43</sup> He then surveyed other OT passages that describe αὕτη ἡ γενεά in moral terms (*viz.* Deut 32:5; Num 13:28; Ps 23:6; Ps 111:2; Wisdom 3:19) and concluded that, in the NT, the expression denotes a moral characteristic as opposed to a chronological one.<sup>44</sup> In regards to Mk 13:30, he points out that αὕτη ἡ γενεά cannot give a temporal answer to the time of the Parousia, since it is said to be unknown (cf. Mk 13:32) and thus he summed up “Darum wird man Mk 13, 30 auch von hier aus αὕτη ἡ γενεά nicht zeitlich von der lebenden Generation verstehen, sondern muß es auf das sündige Volk der Juden deuten”.<sup>45</sup> Although Meinertz’s study reveals another train of thought on the exegesis of γενεά in Mk 13:30, there are some problems understanding the verse in the light of his statement that “aus literarkritischen Gesichtspunkten die einzelnen Abschnitte der Parusierede keine Gedankeneinheit aufweisen und darum gegenseitig sich nicht erklären müssen”.<sup>46</sup> Such a diachronic statement is problematic, if the interpretation rests on the unity of Mk 13:30-32. Also, Meinertz’s proposal is now far from mainstream scholarly opinion.

The second, and more extensive,<sup>47</sup> study requiring review is Evald Lövestam’s monograph on ἡ γενεά αὕτη.<sup>48</sup> He sees ἡ γενεά αὕτη as a rendering for the Semit-

---

<sup>41</sup> Max Meinertz, ‘„Dieses Geschlecht” im Neuen Testament’, *Biblische Zeitschrift*, vol. 1, (1957), pp. 283-289, p. 285.

<sup>42</sup> Meinertz, ‘„Dieses Geschlecht” im Neuen Testament’, p. 285.

<sup>43</sup> Meinertz, ‘„Dieses Geschlecht” im Neuen Testament’, p. 285. He does however mention that this is addressed to Moses’ contemporaries.

<sup>44</sup> Meinertz, ‘„Dieses Geschlecht” im Neuen Testament’, p. 286.

<sup>45</sup> Meinertz, ‘„Dieses Geschlecht” im Neuen Testament’, pp. 287-288.

<sup>46</sup> Meinertz, ‘„Dieses Geschlecht” im Neuen Testament’, p. 287.

<sup>47</sup> It should be pointed out here that this is the most comprehensive attempt of a thorough study of the term in the NT.

ic הַדּוֹר הַזֶּה and locates its roots in the OT and “early Jewish world ideas”.<sup>49</sup> Lövestam is in agreement with Meinertz that ἡ γενεὰ αὕτη is a *terminus technicus* and that the OT is important for understanding the term.<sup>50</sup> His main emphasis lies on linking its use in the NT to the generation of the flood (Gen 7:1) and the generation of the wilderness (Deut 1:35) in the OT.<sup>51</sup> However, he does not regard ἡ γενεὰ αὕτη as a (sole) reference to a limited period of time, but emphasises the sinful relationship of the γενεά with God.<sup>52</sup> Lövestam appears to distinguish between the generation of the flood and the generation of the wilderness. He comments that the former can extend “backwards in time” and encompasses Cain’s murder of Abel and even the actions of the “sons of God” (cf. Gen 6:2), while the latter “existed for a limited period of time”.<sup>53</sup> Nevertheless, he stresses that “It is their [i.e. the generation of the wilderness’] faithless and mutinous behaviour towards the Lord and his instrument (Moses) at the exodus and the following punishment that are at the centre of interest”.<sup>54</sup> Lövestam tries to strengthen this point further by identifying “that the *dorot* [γενεαί] in question are treated as homogenous units eschatologically”, because certain rabbinic literature discusses their fate in the eschaton.<sup>55</sup> Nevertheless, it remains ambiguous as to how this conclusion about the eschatological understanding affects the use of γενεά in the NT. Surprisingly Lövestam mentions certain applications “of the last *dor/genea*”, particularly in the Dead Sea Scrolls, but simply states that “The vital background information on the ‘this *genea*’ terminology in the New Testament is, however, not to be found here either”.<sup>56</sup> As far as the interpretation of Mk 13:30 is concerned, Lövestam’s explanations become a little confusing. He spends most of the relevant chapter on reviewing older scholarship, rejecting some Dead Sea Scrolls passages since the exact wording of “the final *dor/genea*” does not occur verbatim in the NT, and using the generation of the flood as interpret-

---

<sup>48</sup> Evald Lövestam, *Jesus and ‘this Generation’: A New Testament Study*, Coniectanea Biblica, New Testament Series 25, Stockholm, Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1995. Part of his research was previously published in Evald Lövestam, ‘The ἡ γενεὰ αὕτη Eschatology in Mk 13,30 parr.’, in J. Lambrecht (ed.), *L’Apocalypse Johannique Et L’Apocalyptique Dans Le Nouveau Testament*, Bibliotheca Ephemeridum theologicarum Lovaniensium 53, Gembloux, Leuven University Press, 1980, pp. 403-413.

<sup>49</sup> Lövestam, *Jesus and ‘this Generation’*, p. 8.

<sup>50</sup> Although he seems to be careful in identifying ἡ γενεὰ αὕτη as a *terminus technicus* with absolute certainty (note the word “almost” in Lövestam, *Jesus and ‘this Generation’*, p. 8), he treats it as such in his study (e.g. see the phrase “‘this *genea* terminology” on Lövestam, *Jesus and ‘this Generation’*, p. 10).

<sup>51</sup> Lövestam, *Jesus and ‘this Generation’*, pp. 18-20.

<sup>52</sup> Lövestam, *Jesus and ‘this Generation’*, pp. 14-15.

<sup>53</sup> Lövestam, *Jesus and ‘this Generation’*, pp. 14-15.

<sup>54</sup> Lövestam, *Jesus and ‘this Generation’*, p. 15.

<sup>55</sup> Lövestam, *Jesus and ‘this Generation’*, p. 16.

<sup>56</sup> Lövestam, *Jesus and ‘this Generation’*, p. 10.

ing ἡ γενεὰ αὕτη.<sup>57</sup> Nevertheless, he continues to state that ἡ γενεὰ αὕτη (in Mk 13:30) “is not like the ‘*dor* of the Flood’ and ‘the *dor* of the Wilderness’ which were removed from the face of the earth and after which life continued”.<sup>58</sup> His idea is that “It is the ‘*genea*’ of the fulfilment in a salvation-historical sense, on its way towards ‘the second end’ of the world with its radical judgment”.<sup>59</sup> Lövestam does not clarify, however, how γενεὰ is to be understood in precise terms within his definition. It appears that Lövestam understands γενεὰ as a generic term alluding to the generation of the flood and exhibiting an eschatological outlook. Nonetheless, it remains unclear who or what is meant by the γενεὰ. It was just stated that the generation of the flood extends back in time,<sup>60</sup> but no enquiry was made about whether it encompasses the future also. As Powery says in his review, “In the ‘Little Apocalypse’ (Mark 13 parr.), Lövestam faces his most difficult task for maintaining a consistent meaning for ἡ γενεὰ”.<sup>61</sup>

A subsequent study<sup>62</sup> on the precise problem of understanding γενεὰ in Mk 13:30 stems from the hand of Franz Mußner, who published an article in 1987 that identifies the γενεὰ as a reference to the Jewish people.<sup>63</sup> His conclusions diverge on several levels from those of Meinertz and Lövestam. Mußner does not identify the γενεὰ as evil, nor does he rely on OT references such as the generation of the flood or the wilderness. Against the pejorative understanding of γενεὰ, although he makes no reference to Meinertz, Mußner argues that there is no adjective that qualifies it as evil in Mk 13:30.<sup>64</sup> Further Mußner asserts that the γενεὰ does not refer to a generation of 30 years, since its ‘passing away’ (as described in Mk 13:30) will not happen until the Parousia.<sup>65</sup> As for the pronoun αὕτη (‘this’), which has falsely been interpreted as a sign of an imminent parousia, he explains that this interpretation stems from a scholarly *circulus vitiosus*. Scholars have taken it for granted that αὕτη points to the near future as a reference to a particular generation, because of the use

<sup>57</sup> Lövestam, *Jesus and ‘this Generation’*, pp. 81-87.

<sup>58</sup> Lövestam, *Jesus and ‘this Generation’*, p. 86.

<sup>59</sup> Lövestam, *Jesus and ‘this Generation’*, p. 86.

<sup>60</sup> Lövestam, *Jesus and ‘this Generation’*, p. 14.

<sup>61</sup> Emerson B. Powery, review of Evald Lövestam, ‘Jesus and “this Generation”: A New Testament Study’, *Review of Biblical Literature* [<http://www.bookreviews.org>] (2000).

<sup>62</sup> Although Lövestam’s monograph appeared later, Mußner referred to Lövestam’s article, which tackled the issue of γενεὰ in Mk 13:30.

<sup>63</sup> Franz Mußner, ‘Wer ist „Dieses Geschlecht“ in Mk 13,30 Parr.?’ , *Kairos: Zeitschrift für Religionswissenschaft und Theologie*, vol. 29, (1987), pp. 23-28. This was reprinted in Franz Mußner, *Dieses Geschlecht wird nicht vergehen: Judentum und Kirche*, Freiburg, Herder, 1991, pp. 21-28.

<sup>64</sup> Mußner, *Dieses Geschlecht wird nicht vergehen: Judentum und Kirche*, p. 22.

<sup>65</sup> Mußner reaches this conclusion by identifying the importance of the marker ταῦτα in Mark 13, a theme that will be explored more fully later.

of the phrase in the OT. However, Mußner shows that this creates a circular argument which relies on the interpretation of ἡ γενεὰ αὕτη in the first place.<sup>66</sup> In terms of the timing of the Parousia, Mußner simply points to the statement that the day and hour of the eschaton is unknown as specified in Mk 13:32 and therefore he decides that there is no implication of an imminent parousia in Mk 13:30.<sup>67</sup> As regards the identity of the γενεά, he arrives at the conclusion that the Jewish people are in view, citing how the apocalyptic speech in Mark 13 starts with Jesus addressing some of his disciples while sitting on the Mount of Olives overlooking the temple.<sup>68</sup> Additionally, Mark 13 includes geographical specifications, such as Judaea and the mountains surrounding Jerusalem (Mk 13:14), which, according to Mußner, strengthen the fact that the Jewish people are meant by the γενεά.<sup>69</sup> Although Mußner provides an interesting approach to the issue, the scope of his article does not allow for a more thorough investigation of the term and the way it is employed in other relevant literature or even in the Gospel of Mark.

The last study dealing with the expression ἡ γενεὰ αὕτη is a short article by Marc Philonenko.<sup>70</sup> He agrees that the expression ἡ γενεὰ αὕτη stems from the Hebrew הַגֵּוֹל הַזֶּה and the Aramaic ܗܪܘܟܢܐ ܕܗܝܘܡܝܢܐ and notes that the Hebrew points to Noah's ܕܘܪ in particular.<sup>71</sup> Furthermore, he stresses the importance of the intertestamental literature, but is unsuccessful in finding any definite parallels.<sup>72</sup> Nevertheless, he attempts to establish a connection between the Book of Jubilees, the suffering servant figure from Isa 53:8 with its depiction of ܕܘܪ, and Jesus' relationship to the ἡ γενεὰ αὕτη. In the end, he states

Jesus a cru qu'il était, à l'image du Serviteur de Yahve (*Esaïe* 53,12), venu donner sa vie 'pour beaucoup' (*Marc* 14, 24). Il reste cependant dans le cadre de la

---

<sup>66</sup> Mußner (*Dieses Geschlecht wird nicht vergehen: Judentum und Kirche*, pp. 23-24.) points to Gnilka, who argues that "Für sich genommen, bezeugt das Wort [αὕτη] eine intensive Naherwartung", however, Gnilka's evidence is then based on the Old Testament phrase "this generation". See Joachim Gnilka, *Das Evangelium nach Markus: 2. Teilband Mk 8,27-16,20*, Köln, Benziger Verlag, 1979, 206.

<sup>67</sup> Mußner, *Dieses Geschlecht wird nicht vergehen: Judentum und Kirche*, p. 24.

<sup>68</sup> Mußner, *Dieses Geschlecht wird nicht vergehen: Judentum und Kirche*, p. 26.

<sup>69</sup> Mußner, *Dieses Geschlecht wird nicht vergehen: Judentum und Kirche*, p. 26.

<sup>70</sup> Marc Philonenko, 'Les paroles de Jesus contre cette generation et la tradition qoumranienne', in Hubert Cancik, Hermann Lichtenberger, and Peter Schäfer (eds.), *Geschichte – Tradition – Reflexion: Festschrift für Martin Hengel zum 70. Geburtstag*, Tübingen, J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1996, pp. 89-96. He does not refer to Lövestam or Mußner.

<sup>71</sup> Philonenko, 'Les paroles de Jesus contre cette generation et la tradition qoumranienne', p. 90. However, he does not label it a *terminus technicus*.

<sup>72</sup> For example he points to 1 Enoch 93:9, see Philonenko, 'Les paroles de Jesus contre cette generation et la tradition qoumranienne', pp. 90-91. However, this passage only survives in the Ethiopic and not in the original Aramaic nor in the Greek. While this passage, amongst others from 1 Enoch, will be discussed in the next chapter, the evidence for Philonenko's argument remains circumstantial.

question rhétorique posée en *Esaie* 53,8 et paraît n'avoir entretenu aucune illusion sur 'cette génération'.<sup>73</sup>

While this surely is an interesting proposition, the evidence is rather circumstantial and relies on several other interpretations and suggested connections with these other texts.

One has to conclude, therefore, that the debate about Mk 13:30 and its use of *γενεά* is in need of a fresh investigation. So far four relatively short studies have been devoted to the problem, all producing slightly different results. Worse, most commentaries or other secondary literature on Mark 13 (and Mark as a whole) hardly notice these four studies and keep interpreting Mk 13:30 as a reference to a particular generation (whether Jesus' contemporaries or the 70 CE community) without even stating who is in view (the disciples, all of Jesus' followers, the Jewish people, *etc.*). Therefore, this study offers a fresh investigation into the meaning and intention of *γενεά* in this puzzling and cryptic part of Mark 13.

### 1.3.1.1 *γενεά* or *ἡ γενεὰ αὐτή*: Is there a *terminus technicus*?

My first step is to consider whether the phrase *ἡ γενεὰ αὐτή* can indeed be regarded as a *terminus technicus* (as proposed by Meinertz and Lövestam). The response to this first question determines whether the phrase has to be studied separately from *γενεά*. As regards the two already reviewed studies that agree on a *terminus technicus*, Meinertz distinguishes between *γενεά* and *γενεά* (singular and plural), for he only concentrates on the evil uses of *γενεά* as it appears in the singular in the synoptic gospels.<sup>74</sup> He asserts that most of these singular uses of *γενεά* are employed in a pejorative way in the expression *ἡ γενεὰ αὐτή* (as evident from the context and accompanying adjectives), with Lk 16:8 and Acts 8:33 as exceptions to this rule.<sup>75</sup> Meinertz lists Matt 17:17 and with it Lk 9:41 and Mk 9:19 as being within the rule, although they do not include the phrase *ἡ γενεὰ αὐτή*.<sup>76</sup> Similarly, he includes Phil 2:15 which features the term in a negative sense but without the use of *αὐτή*.<sup>77</sup> His reasoning is that the "whole way of expression [of *γενεά* in these passages] clearly reflects that the relevant statements also belong in this category [of the evil *ἡ γενεὰ αὐτή*]." <sup>78</sup> This reasoning represents another *circulus vitiosus*, which relies on the

---

<sup>73</sup> Philonenko, 'Les paroles de Jesus contre cette generation et la tradition qoumranienne', p. 95.

<sup>74</sup> Meinertz, '„Dieses Geschlecht“ im Neuen Testament', pp. 283-284.

<sup>75</sup> Meinertz, '„Dieses Geschlecht“ im Neuen Testament', p. 284.

<sup>76</sup> Meinertz, '„Dieses Geschlecht“ im Neuen Testament', p. 285.

<sup>77</sup> Meinertz, '„Dieses Geschlecht“ im Neuen Testament', p. 283.

<sup>78</sup> Meinertz, '„Dieses Geschlecht“ im Neuen Testament', p. 284.

presupposition that ἡ γενεὰ αὕτη lies behind all the pejorative uses of γενεά in the NT. Lövestam seems even more confident about identifying ἡ γενεὰ αὕτη as a *terminus technicus*. He traces it back to the Semitic expression הַדּוֹר הַזֶּה and connects it to the generation of the flood and the generation of the wilderness.<sup>79</sup> Initially, this seems to be compelling; however, the actual term הַדּוֹר הַזֶּה is rather rare in the OT and only occurs in Gen 7:1 and Deut 1:35.<sup>80</sup> In the respective narratives of the generation of the flood and the generation of the wilderness, it is only used once in each instance: Gen 7:1 (generation of the flood) and Deut 1:35 (generation of the wilderness).<sup>81</sup> The phrase does not even feature for the generation of the wilderness in Deut 32:5, 20. This leaves a significant level of doubt about whether the expression is a *terminus technicus*. The evidence is not compelling. This suggests that a thorough investigation should concentrate on the term γενεά as opposed to just singling out ἡ γενεὰ αὕτη.<sup>82</sup>

#### 1.4 The Methodology: Philology and Exegesis

The last step towards setting the scene for this study is a discussion of my methodological approach. This study is divided into two major parts: philology and exegesis. Both aim at developing a thorough understanding of the term γενεά in Mark. In the first part, a philological investigation into the semantics of γενεά is attempted to contrast the way the term is employed in the Gospel of Mark. This is necessary, because for many modern commentators the word has simply been equated with the English word ‘generation’ in the sense that it denotes a group of people in a time-span of 30-40 odd years. I question this reading for Mark.

##### 1.4.1 Philology

Needless to say, γενεά represents a Greek word that is employed by Mark who writes in *Koine* Greek, the common Greek language especially dominant throughout (the eastern part of) the Roman Empire.<sup>83</sup> This obvious remark presents its own

<sup>79</sup> Lövestam, *Jesus and ‘this Generation’*, pp. 8, 18.

<sup>80</sup> As will be seen later, the LXX does not feature it as a *terminus technicus* either since the only occurrence (ἐν τῇ γενεᾷ ταύτῃ) is found in Gen 7:1 LXX.

<sup>81</sup> Gen 7:1 really concentrates on Noah and describes him as righteous in ‘this γενεά’, thus only implying the wickedness by contrast.

<sup>82</sup> Even if the NT does use the latter as a *terminus technicus*, it still needs to be investigated what implication the term γενεά has, as the expression ἡ γενεὰ αὕτη is surely based on the connotation of γενεά, given that there was no such (common) *terminus technicus* before the NT.

<sup>83</sup> For simplicity, the author is referred to as ‘Mark’, although it is not disputed that the gospel might have been written by several authors or even a community.

difficulties. Rather than taking the meaning of γενεά for granted, it needs to be investigated how this word was used and employed in Mark's time and which possible semantic range the word might have encompassed. Then it is possible to determine how it needed to be employed in order to express a certain meaning. To reconstruct this possible semantic range from which Mark could choose when employing the term, there is a need to consider the author's cultural influences. For example, Mark is not simply a Greek who writes and speaks *Koine* Greek, but he is also heavily influenced by Hebrew culture and thought.<sup>84</sup> At the same time, he would have been influenced by Hellenistic thought. Barr touches on this point, when he remarks that

Between us today and the men of the Bible, and between the men of the New Testament and those of the Old, there was a problem therefore not only of translation but of transculturation.<sup>85</sup>

My agenda is how to overcome these differences in order to judge with the highest degree of certainty what Mark actually meant when he employed γενεά in his gospel. All of a sudden the task of translating γενεά accurately in order to preserve its original meaning becomes more difficult. If these problems are taken seriously, a proper investigation into the meaning of γενεά by means of a philological study must be performed.<sup>86</sup> This philological study requires analyses of ancient texts featuring the word in question or an equivalent word from another relevant language, if this equivalent is deemed to have a possible influence on the use of the word in the gospel text. Therefore, it is prudent to include the OT in this investigation, but it is not necessary to look at later Latin sources as it is doubtful they influenced Mark. On the other hand, it would be unwise to exclude all non-biblical texts, just because Mark presents a biblical source. Again Barr touches on this point, when he comments:

And this raises the greater question of principle, whether a procedure that isolates a group of one or two words, on the grounds that they form a cohesive group within NT and LXX usage, but does not examine the Greek non-biblical system to see with what groups the words belong there and in what ways, and which then relates the contrasts thus formed to a developed system of thought

---

<sup>84</sup> This is already evident by his many references to the OT.

<sup>85</sup> James Barr, *The Semantics of Biblical Language*, London, SCM, 1987 [1961], p. 4.

<sup>86</sup> Such a philological study has often been labelled a 'word study'. For a good introduction to the history of earlier 'word studies' in biblical texts, see Peter Cotterell and Max Turner, *Linguistics & Biblical Interpretation*, London, SPCK, 1989, pp. 106-128.



contrasts, is not simply arranging the material in a way which is certain to produce the predicted result.<sup>87</sup>

Therefore, the selected ancient texts for this philological study require some justification.

#### 1.4.1.1 Selected sources for the philological investigation

The origin of  $\gamma\upsilon\nu\epsilon\acute{\alpha}$  can be traced back through ancient Greek literature. It is well preserved in the Homeric writings of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* and in Hesiod, which all belong to pre-classical Greek literature. While this corpus of Homeric writings and Hesiod does not necessarily have a direct influence on Mark or the NT, it presents the oldest source for  $\gamma\upsilon\nu\epsilon\acute{\alpha}$  and by analysing its application in these sources it is possible to ascertain if the word acquired different meanings over time. According to this train of thought, the next logical corpus of texts is classical Greek literature, followed by texts from the post-classical Greek period. However, this last corpus is not confined to non-biblical texts, because biblical and extra-biblical writings, such as the LXX, Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, Philo, Josephus, and the early apostolic fathers are translated into or written in Greek and fall within the time period.<sup>88</sup> The analysis also needs to take into account relevant Hebrew and Aramaic texts. The style of the Greek in Mark reflects a certain Semitic influence and thus “Mark” himself is likely to have either been a Semitic speaker or at least was influenced by Semitic thought.<sup>89</sup> As such, the meaning of the Hebrew and/or Aramaic equivalent of  $\gamma\upsilon\nu\epsilon\acute{\alpha}$  would have been in his consciousness. Further, the Dead Sea Scrolls and some of the Apocryphal and Pseudepigraphical texts that were written (shortly) before or around the time of Mark should not be neglected. Given that these texts often draw upon the earlier works of the Hebrew Bible, they provide another reason why the Hebrew equivalent of  $\gamma\upsilon\nu\epsilon\acute{\alpha}$  in the Hebrew Bible itself should be consid-

---

<sup>87</sup> Barr, *The Semantics of Biblical Language*, p. 37.

<sup>88</sup> These texts are considered in their own sub-chapters, see 2.2, 2.3, 2.5, 2.6, and 2.7.

<sup>89</sup> Doudna identifies several peculiar uses in the Markan Greek, labelled as ‘Markisims’, some of which he regards as Semitisms, see John Charles Doudna, *The Greek of the Gospel of Mark*, SBL Monographs 12, Philadelphia, Society of Biblical Literature and Exegesis, 1961, pp. 128-136. An authoritative study on the Markan style and language remains C.H. Turner’s notes published in the first quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. His works have recently been republished with additional notes by G.D. Kilpatrick and J.K. Elliott, see J.K. Elliott, *The Language and Style of the Gospel of Mark: An Edition of C.H. Turner’s “Notes on Marcan Usage” Together with Other Comparable Studies*, Leiden, Brill, 1993. Turner outlines the various Semitic influences on Mark, see pp. 215-234. However, against this interpretation see Marius Reiser, *Syntax und Stil des Markusevangeliums*, Tübingen, J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1984. He argues against a Jewish Greek style of Mark and explains that Semitisms are only found in “Wortschatz, Semantik und Phraseologie” (p. 164). Nonetheless, this does not dispute that the relevant Hebrew and Aramaic texts influenced Mark.

ered. Therefore, the question of whether Mark used the Hebrew Bible, the LXX, or both, does not matter; the Hebrew Bible surely presents the base for the LXX and Jewish ideas developed further in the intertestamental period and manifest themselves throughout the NT, including Mark. The impact of the OT on Mark is undeniable; one can simply point to the beginning of the gospel and all the various OT references.<sup>90</sup> As regards the relevance of the Dead Sea Scrolls for the NT,<sup>91</sup> Martinez appropriately comments,

Both entities (the group or groups that copied and preserved the Dead Sea Scrolls and the group or groups that produced the New Testament) shared the same general chronological time frame and certainly co-existed until the year 68 of the first century, when the settlement of Qumran was destroyed; they were geographically close: Christianity developed in Jerusalem, about 15 miles from the shore of the Dead Sea, where the settlement was located; both developed in the same Palestinian society in a crisis situation.<sup>92</sup>

For all these reasons, it is imperative to include the applications of the Hebrew/Aramaic equivalent of  $\gamma\epsilon\nu\epsilon\acute{\alpha}$  in these corpora of texts into this investigation.<sup>93</sup> As regards the structure of the philological analysis, wherever possible it will be arranged chronologically according to the dating of each corpus of sources.<sup>94</sup> The first step will be to analyse the non-biblical sources written in Greek to show the various applications of  $\gamma\epsilon\nu\epsilon\acute{\alpha}$ . This will be followed by a consideration of the Septuagint (LXX) and the Hebrew Bible and all further Jewish writings. The results of this analysis will not only enlighten the range of meanings attached to  $\gamma\epsilon\nu\epsilon\acute{\alpha}$ , but

---

<sup>90</sup> The very beginning of the gospel contains an OT promise, which Guelich (*Mark 1-8:26*, p. 3) describes as the beginning of the “focus on Jesus’ coming”. Schweizer (*Das Evangelium nach Markus*, p. 14) even comments, “Allem voran stellt er die beiden alttestamentlichen Worte, die dadurch, obwohl sie sich direkt nur auf 1,4-8 beziehen, eine Art Überschrift über das ganze Buch bilden und alles Folgende als Erfüllung des Weges Gottes mit Israel darstellen”.

<sup>91</sup> Here it should be pointed out that certain attempts have been made to identify fragments from cave 7 with passages from the NT, most notable is the hypothesis that 7Q5 equates to Mk 6:52-53, see Jose O’Callaghan, ‘Papiros neotestamentarios en la cueva 7 de Qumrán’, *Biblica*, vol. 53, (1972), pp. 91-100. However, this theory has been convincingly refuted by Stefan Enste, *Kein Markustext in Qumran: Eine Untersuchung der These: Qumran-Fragment 7Q5 = Mk 6, 52-53*, Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2000.

<sup>92</sup> Florentino Garcia Martinez, ‘Qumran Between the Old and the New Testament’, in Florentino Garcia Martinez, (ed.), *Echoes from the Caves: Qumran and the New Testament*, Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah 85, Leiden, Brill, 2009, p. 1.

<sup>93</sup> This will be discussed thoroughly when analysing the LXX and the various Hebrew words that were used to translate  $\gamma\epsilon\nu\epsilon\acute{\alpha}$ .

<sup>94</sup> This specifically refers to the corpora of sources, not to each individual source. For example this study is not concerned with the dating of each individual Pseudepigraphical text, although remarks will be provided if there are significant doubts about the dating of the texts.

show some potential developments in its semantics. Finally, attention will be turned towards the NT and more specifically the Markan use of  $\gamma\epsilon\nu\epsilon\acute{\alpha}$ .

### 1.4.2 Exegesis

While this philological investigation intends to establish the semantic range of the word and provide some clues regarding the way it is employed in Mark, it is important to recognise that philology is not a substitute, but rather a tool for exegesis. Therefore, the second part of the study will be a thorough exegetical analysis. From the scholarly surveys it is already apparent that several methodologies have been employed in critical enquiries of Mark 13. Quite often these studies can be divided into synchronic versus diachronic approaches. While diachronic approaches often take the form of source- or redaction-critical studies, this study is not concerned with the source material, a certain *Vorlage*, or with ways Mark redacted this material in order to compose his thirteenth chapter. These were the common approaches of older studies. It is not disputed that Mark used older source material in his composition of the chapter. However, questions of what material belongs to an older tradition or why Mark added certain redactional aspects are not the emphasis of the present study.

Therefore, a synchronic understanding of the Markan text is adopted in the present study. The term  $\gamma\epsilon\nu\epsilon\acute{\alpha}$  features four times in the Gospel of Mark (Mk 8:12, 38; 9:19; 13:30) and a thorough exegesis of each of these occurrences and their respective pericopae is thus performed in the second part of this work (chapter 3). These exegeses establish the relevant pericopae that feature the term and provide an in-depth analysis. While there are some new exegetical insights in respect to these individual pericopae, the overall aim is to show how Mark employs the term consistently throughout his gospel with the same function. After the exegesis I conclude by comparing the results from the philological investigation (chapter 2) with the results from the exegetical analysis (chapter 3) to form a new thesis on the Markan use of  $\gamma\epsilon\nu\epsilon\acute{\alpha}$ . It is shown that the term encompasses a group of unbelievers that continuously oppose Jesus and his followers.

Hier können Sie "The use and function of genea in the Gospel of Mark: New Light on Mk 13:30" sofort kaufen und weiterlesen:

[Amazon](#)

[Apple iBookstore](#)

[buchhandel.de](#)

[ebook.de](#)

[Thalia](#)

[Weltbild](#)

Viel Spaß!