Jesus and Legion: A socio-political perspective on demon possession and exorcism in Mark 5:1-20 and in African Pentecostal Churches

by

Joshua Tepillah Mwani

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Supervisor: Dr Z. Dube

University of Pretoria

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Chapter One

1. Introduction

1.1 Motivation

Using Jean Comaroff's theory of myths as narratives that seeks to amend broken social canopies, this study seeks to bridge the gap between the reality of demonology within an African worldview and the apparent silence within the academy to raise contextual relevant questions, concerning demon possession and exorcisms. Born and raised in a Pentecostal church, I never had the opportunity to explore other denominational churches. It was only at University level, at the faculty of theology, where I found myself in company with predominantly students from the Dutch reformed church. Why are demons so real within African worldview and African Pentecostal churches, yet difficult to find ways to explain them? Using Comaroff's theory of demonology as a mythical language that provides language for explaining the trauma due to broken worldviews and yet metaphors of combat and amendments of worldviews. I explain this hypothesis by using historical critical methods tools and social scientific tools to explain the political and economic brokenness behind Mark's community. I then use Comaroff's theory of demonology as mythical language to explain, how Mark 5 illustrates both the social brokenness and yet also amendment of social canopies.

1.2 Aims and objectives

To bridge the gap between demon possession as unreal on one hand and real on the other. This will be done by exploring the contexts in which the language of demonology is used. By asking; what circumstances are referred to as demonic? The aim is to show the link between demon possession and social issues.

To indicate that demon possession as 'mythical' does not suggest untrue, rather it is mythical, because it is a seemly false truth used to refer to one's everyday reality. The objective is to establish that belief in demon possession is a sort of language, used to

speak of people's realities. Since people's realities are real, then demon possession is real too.

Finally, this study aims to show that social issues, spoken of through the language of demonology can be solved through exorcism. The objective is to illustrate, that social issues (demons) fractures worldviews and exorcism is used to amend broken worldviews or canopies.

1.3 Theoretical perspective

This study is centred around the story of the Gerasene demoniac found in Mark 5:1-20. Since the study is based on interpreting a written text, the use of different theoretical perspectives is imperative to help extract appropriate information. Important for this study is form and redaction criticism –form criticism provides information concerning the form of the narrative while redaction criticism informs on how the writer redacted the narrative into the larger story of Jesus. Additionally, is the use of the social scientific criticism to extract information about the social context of the people, the society from which the narrative was told; addressing the issues of gender, honour and shame, subsistence and sustenance, and space.

1.3.1 Theory

The study takes a socio-political anthropological view inspired by Jean Comaroff – theory of amending social canopies. The theory argues that by casting out demons, social canopies are amended. The theory is explained in chapter 2.

1.4 Chapter division

This research paper is divided into five chapters:

- Chapter one serves as an introductory section, which contains a literature review on demon possession and exorcism. It reviews theoretical perspectives from a theological, post-colonial, socio-psychological and enlightenment theories.

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- Chapter two establishes the anthropological theory of amending social canopies through exorcism of demons, inspired by Jean Comaroff. This theory will be used to interpreted Mark 5:1-20.

- Chapter three uses the social scientific criticisms to reconstruct the setting of the gospel of Mark –it discusses the dating, location and social setting. This will serve as historical background, to guide the interpretation of Mark.

- Chapter four uses the theory of amending social canopies explained in chapter two, guide by the historical background of Mark in chapter three to interpret Mark 5:1-20 as well as apply the theory to the narrative.

- Chapter 5 moves away from the written text and observes African Pentecostal churches and applies the theory to its practice of exorcism.

Chapter Two

2. Literature review

2.1 Introduction

This introductory chapter reviews the different theoretical perspectives that have been used to explain the issues that surround the subject of demon possession and exorcism. This serves as an overall background for the rest of this study. Here, I only review contributions from the theological, post-colonial and the socio-psychological theory. In addition, views from the Enlightenment or Rational perspective on demon possession and exorcism are highlighted.

2.2 Theological theory

The Theological theory is founded on the idea that the world has two realities; the physical and the spiritual. The spiritual world has two forces that operate in it; the forces of evil through demons and the forces of God through angels. These forces influence the physical world in the senses that, the physical world is controlled by spiritual forces (Newport 1967:332).

A few points about the relationship between theology and demonology need to be outlined, before discussing the theological perspective on demon possession and exorcism. This information will shed light on; why the theological theory might have very little to offer to the subject. It is important to note that the subject has been ignored by many in the past. From the time of the enlightenment period, the subject of demonology has been a debatable topic with some scholars demythologizing the subject (Yung 2002:3). Subsequently, there is only a hand-full of literature concerning the subject. Yung (2002:3) notes that this subject cannot be ignored any longer with the fast growth of the Pentecostal charismatic movement and their teachings of demon possession and exorcism.

Yung (2002:3) explains that, demon possession has not been studied in the past because modernity's world view was shaped extremely by the western Enlightenment or rationality, which interprets the supernatural phenomenon from the perspective of

reason. Although, the 'west' gives the impression of being anti-supernatural, Yung (2002:3-4) found that; what lays under modern western communities is the different levels of fallacies, reliance on astrology, occult practices and spiritualism.

The idea of demons is not explained in details in the Old Testament. However, detailed explanations are found in the New Testament (Newport 1976:326). It has been found that many contemporary traditional scholars agree that; the founding message of Jesus and the Apostle Paul can be understood as closely related to demonology. Such an understanding therefore, suggests that the work of Christ should be seen in the battle with demons (Newport 1967:326).

The theological theory explains the reality of demonology in two streams: Firstly, belief in demons as primitive religion, which sees the world with two realities; the natural and the supernatural. It states that, a demon is a law to itself and therefore, performs irrationally as opposed to a programmed pattern and purpose. Secondly, is the stream that suggests that, the bible sees demon possession as an event with the purpose of frustrating the will of God. It is therefore, not a disorganized chaotic conflict of powers (Newport 1967:332).

Within the New Testament, demons cannot be understood in the absence of Satan. Satan, in the gospels is revealed as a "supernatural evil spirit" who leads smaller evil spirits called demons (Newport 1967:326). The power of Satan in the world, according to the gospels is seen, in the demons' ability to possess the center of a human's personality (Newport 1967:326).

Interesting to note, demons have the ability to recognize another supernatural power superior to them. In Mark 1, there is a clear example of this; when Jesus started with his ministry in Capernaum, he encounters a demon. At that every moment, the demonic spirit is able to identify who Jesus is; "what have you to do with us Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, you are the holy one of God" (Mk. 1:24). Note that demon possession in the New Testament is manifested in different ways, through blindness, dumbness or even in form of mental illness. Demon possession was associated with physical afflictions in most cases. This certainly is with the exception of the Gerasene demonic, whose possession is associated with psychological illness (Newport 1967:327).

Newport (1967:332) points out after a close examination of evil in the bible, that; demon possession is almost always related to personal sin. This suggests, demon possession is a consequence of personal sin. That is to say; personal sin leads or results in demon possession. This notion cannot be final, since there are always exceptions. Consider John 9:2 His disciples asked him, 'Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?". In the following verse Jesus responded by clearly stating that both the blind man and his parents did not sin rather, his case was for the purpose of showing God's power (Jn.93). On one hand, as noted above demons often manifest through illness. On the other hand, here we have a case, where personal sin was not the cause of demon possession rather it was divine order.

Newport (1967:332) suggests that a demon cannot possesses an individual unless they permit or allow the demon to do so. He acknowledges that demons have the ability to tempt, yet insists that the demon can be resisted at will. The process takes place as follows; the first decision of a man is made in the depth of his personality, depending on the decision, an individual may voluntarily open his/her personality for a demonic subjugation (Newport 1967:332).

Although, individuals allow the demonization of his being and puts himself under bondage, the individuals' life still stays in the hands of God. Since God is more powerful than demons, individuals can never be completely under the influence of a demon (Newport 1967:334). One should therefore understand demon possession as an essential theological means for understanding the sin of humans in its historical existence (Newport 1967:334).

The theological theory seeks to find the role of God within a particular spectrum, and provide a theological massage. Take for example the gospel of Mark, the will of God is illustrated in number of narratives which show God's intervention through Jesus among possessed individuals (Hatina 2002:81). The depiction of Jesus as superior to demons, is for the purpose of creating an atmosphere in which oppressed individuals can have hope for salvation (Hatina 2002:81). In agreement with Hatina' (2002) point, Newport (1967:335) also suggests that; narratives of demon possession in the New Testament are practical and redemptive. These narratives acknowledge the supernatural powers of evil, that is; the operation of demons, however focus is on the

redemptive work of God through Christ to deliver men or set men free from demonic spirits.

2.3 Post-colonial theory

The post-colonial theory at the onset has its focus on the relationship between the colonizer, colonized and its complex impact on the collective identity and culture of the society (Leander 2013:41). In this case, demon possession explained from a post-colonial lens is understood as a collective protest against its imperial setting, colonial instability, mimicry, hybridity and the third space as well as the instructive distinction (Leander 2013:41). The above listed factors are all necessary when reading through the lens of the post-colonial theory. However, Mimicry, hybridity and the third space are the main tenants in the post-colonial perspective. It is thus imperative that the terms are explained accordingly.

The term Mimicry, is frequently seen as the term that explains the indecisive relationship between the colonizer and the colonized (Ashcroft, Griffiths & Tiffin 2000:124). During the process of colonization, the colonized people are encouraged to mimic the colonizer by adopting the colonizers cultural habits, norms, institutions and principles (Ashcroft et al. 2000:125). The consequences of this, are not simply a reproduction of the colonizers traits, relatively said; it is a 'blurred copy' of the colonist that can be fairly threating (Ashcroft et al. 2000:125). Homi Bhabha explains mimicry as a procedure in which the colonized people are reproduced "as almost the same but not quite" (Bhabha 1994:86).

Hybridity, regularly signifies the formation of new 'transcultural' forms within a particular region, produced by colonization (Ashcroft et al. 2000:108). When the term is used in horticulture, hybridity refers to the cross-breeding of two species by attaching them to form a third, which is termed 'hybrid species' (Ashcroft et al. 2000: 108). Within the post-colonial perspective, hybridity refers to a cross-cultural 'exchange' (Ashcroft et al. 2000:108). However, this kind of a definition has been greatly criticized, because it often suggests; opposing and ignoring the imbalance and inequality of the power interactions it references (Ashcroft et al. 2000:109). Since such a definition stress the transformative cultural, linguistic and political impacts on both

the colonized and the colonizer, it has been viewed as imitating assimilationist policies by covering cultural differences (Ashcroft et al. 2000:109).

Finally, ambivalence is a term that firstly, grew in psychoanalysis to explain a continual instability between desiring one thing and desiring the opposite. Within a post-colonial theory, ambivalence refers to the complex mix of attraction and dislike that characterizes the relationship between colonizer and colonized (Ashcroft et al. 2000:10). The interaction between colonizer and colonized is ambivalent because the colonized people can never be seen as absolutely opposed to the colonizer. What we then see here, is a collaboration and conflict that exists in a changing relation within the colonial specialty, which may be both abusive and caring at the same time (Ashcroft et al. 2000:10).

Sugirtharajah (2006:7) noted that the post-colonial theory has two points of departure: firstly, it seeks to find the various strategies that the colonizer fabricated for the purpose of creating an image for the colonized. Secondly; it seeks to find how the colonized made use of strategized to stay in the position of power and how they went beyond there set strategizes in order to create an identity, self-worth and empowerment.

To demonstrate clearly what the post-colonial theory has to say about demon possession, it is important at this point to be more practical. Here, I use the story of Mark 5:1-20 to illustrate the notions of the post-colonial perspective.

The story of the Gerasene demoniac radically portrays the encounter of Jesus with a man who is said to be possessed by a 'legion' of demons. This takes place on "the other side" of the sea (Mk.5:1-20). Leander (2013:996) highlights that there are aspects in the story that are of interest to the post-colonial theory, namely; the location in which the events took place, the possession of animals and the political language.

He further explains that because the exorcism took place in a non-Jewish area, it becomes an important designation to analyze. Noting that issues of colonialism take place in foreign lands (Leander 2013:95). During the exorcism the demons are sent in the pigs, this according Leander (2013:95), bring forth a discussion about the borderline between humans and animals, which fit perfectly into the post-colonial

discourse. Finally, the political language "legion" creates the possibility for anticolonial interpretations (Leander 2013:95).

With regards to demon possession, Sugirtharajah (2006:8), notes that emphasis needs to be placed on the methods of resistance. In other words, what strategies do demon possessed people (colonized) use to try and free themselves from the colonizer or possessor.

The story opens with Jesus arriving at the "other side" after a dramatic journey on the sea. From the lens of the post-colonial theory, this seems to evoke images of European travelers and missionaries traveling to "godforsaken lands" (Leander 2013:96). They perceive the area as a place of diverse races that were insatiable and indifferent to religion and one which the "shadow of sin had fallen heaviest, making it one of the haunts of direst wretchedness" (Leander 2013:96). What is important to recognize about this kind of a description is that; it does not only refer to the ancient Gerasa but also to the other 'wretched' areas in the writer's contemporary world. This is based on the account of the writer's transition from using past tense, to the use of present tense (Leander 2013:96).

The notion of other "wretched" lands may also be referring to the non-European territories of the nineteenth century (Leander 2013:99). Interesting about this kind of imagery interplay, is that; it is very closely related to protestant missionary. The foundation of European colonialism is built on the idea that non-European lands are "wretched lands" (Leander 2013:97). The explanation, places Jesus as a European colonizer who went on a missionary trip to a shameful land.

The political terms in the story are significant for this theory, because the possessor in the story of the Gerasene demoniac is named "legion", post-colonial theorist, show that the term functions as a remainder to the people about the ruthless and oppressive nature of the Roman empire (Leander 2013:107). Consequently, the narrative needs to be understood as a critique against the Roman rule (Leander 2013:108).

Conclusively, from a post-colonial perspective demon possession and exorcism are an indirect way of speaking about the issues that surround colonialism. Therefore, instead of directly referring to the colonizer, demon is referred.

Post-colonial theorists also view demon possession as a rational cause. In defending their stance, they provide a biological explanation for demon possession. However, they are careful in not connecting demon possession and bodily diseases since the gospels clearly differentiates between demon possession and physical sickness (Leander 2013:102). Accordingly, what cause demon possession is a weakness in the nervous system, which is the special band between body and soul (Leander 2013: 103). Conferring to Riddle (1879) in the work of Leander (2013) a mere-sensuous life and demonic influence stands in the same relation. This above post-colonial explanation of the process of demon possession concludes that the narrative of the demoniac is a warning against sensualism (Leander 2013:103).

2.4 Social-psychological theory

Another theory that can be used to explain demon possession is the social-psychological theory. With scientific development over the years, which has made it possible to understand the human body better than previously, the social-psychological theory is frequently used to explain demon possession. Mungadze (2002:203) fundamentally states; "what used to be seen as demon possession is now seen as psychological/ psychiatric illness". Consequently, there seems to be a thin line between what can be regarded as psychological illness and demon possession. Often times the symptoms are the same. Perhaps maybe the two are related to each other and should not be separated.

Mungadze (2002:203) notes that, individuals who belief in the operation of evil spirits are those who believe in the bible. However, many times these individuals do not accept the reality of psychological and psychiatric illness. The end result is that, those with psychological and psychiatric illnesses are treated as though they are demon possessed. He aslo observes that those who are both demon possessed and have psychological or psychiatric illness are often set free from demons but not of their psychological psychiatric illness (Mungadze 2002:203).

Having this in mind, I turn now to what the socio-psychological theory says about demon possession. At the forefront of this theory runs the understanding of mental illness and its remedial methods both as personal and social matters (Hollenbach 1981:573). Accordingly, mental illnesses are as a result of social tensions that

individuals experience. What then causes demon possession is the situation of the social tension, for example; a situation of resentment fixed in economic exploitation and a situation of colonial domination and revolution (Hollenbach 1981:573).

Franz fanon attempted to explain the mental illness that people experienced during the Algerian revolutionary war. Accordingly, the context in which the mental illness sprung forth from was that of oppressive colonialism. Such a context can be compared to that of Palestine during the time of Jesus (Fanon 1965:129). Fanon provides a revolutionary decolonization that will explain these mental illnesses. He starts off by stating that, the main Manicheism that ruled the colonial community is kept as it is. The goal is to create an atmosphere where the oppressor is clearly distinguished from the oppressed (Fanon 1965:59). What then happens here, is that; the oppressed needs to be understood as an individual whose wish is to become the oppressor. The oppressed then sees the symbols of social order, for example the military parades, as both inhibitory –that is to stop them from rebellion, as well as stimulating –to motivate them to rebel (Fanon 1965:53).

Living in a situation of consistent conflict, the question; how should the oppressed survive? needs to asked. Fanon (1965:55) answers this by stating that; "while life goes, the native will strengthen the inhibitions which contain his aggressiveness by drawing on the terrifying myths, which are so frequently found in undeveloped societies. For example, maleficent spirits, leopard-men, zombies to mention a few". Individuals who turn to the spirit world in the face of oppression become irrational. They are ready to take instant revolutionary action as to consume itself in an expressive orgy in dance and possession so that they can convert and raise away severe hostility (Fanon 1965:56). Take note that the dance and the ritualized possessions are developed as a method in which the community exorcise itself and set itself free from the oppression they face in reality (Fanon 1965:57).

A step further from mental illness as a result of social tensions, socio-psychological theorist also suggests, that mental illness can be considered as a socially acceptable form of "oblique protest" against oppression, as a whole or a way to flee the oppression (Hollenbach 1981:575). At first hand, social tension causes mental illness and the situation leads to demonic possession as noted above. What then happens here is the opposite. For others, the mental illness becomes a discharge from reality, by reality

they are referring to the social tension being experienced at a particular point in time. Fanon explains that, by using mental illness or possession as an escape from the realities of the society, an individual is actually choosing the lesser evil in order to prevent calamity (Fanon 1963:290).

Additionally, Hollenbach (1981:575) speaks of what he calls the "organized ritual possession" as a method of adapting to social tensions and their situations. This practices are socially recognized and accepted by many tribes. Lewis (1971:79) who is an anthropologist provides evidence for this; In his work *Ecstatic religion: An Anthropological Study of Spirit, Possession and Shaman*; notes that individuals who experience the demonic; particularly women who turned to use a 'shaman-led possession' as a way of enforcing their interests and demands in the presences of a male control. Such is only applicable to ends which they cannot obtain directly (Lewis 1971:85).

For Lewis this type of possession is a "protest cult" because they are a form of 'oblique aggressive strategy'. This is a situation where the defenseless deal with their powerful tormentors, the government, the army, the employers and the tax collector in a way that does not harm or threaten the status quo (Hollenbach 1981:576). Bourguignon (1976:32) also refers to possession that was caused by harsh political and economic condition as "protest cults".

The condition of possession could also be a result of accusation. This method finds its roots in the theory of naming. Accusation is a process in which the dominant class accuses others of madness or mental illness, as a method of obtaining social control (Hollenbach 1981:77). Therefore, what causes possession or mental illness is the attempt by an accused individual to prove their sanity. In their attempt, they often react and respond as though they are insane, which over time because a permeant way of life for them (Hollenbach 1981:579).

Take the Gerasene demoniac for example, according to the accusation rule, the man was in the first place not insane, rather, he was accused of insanity. In his attempt to prove his sanity and failure to do so, he unconsciously become insane, since everyone saw him and treated him as though he was insane (Hollenbach 1981:579). What happens during accusation is better explained by Newport (1967:332), as he notes

that men make decisions at the depth of their personality, depending on what the decision is; the person voluntarily opens his personality for a demonic subjugation (Newport 1967:332). Hollenbach (1981) concludes by stating that, by classifying persons as mentally ill, the society gains control over persons by destroying their selfhood and by degrading persons even further than they were originally (Hollenbach 1981:579).

2.5 Enlightenment/ Rational view

For scholars who argue that the bible is an authoritative book often have a challenge, when they have to deal with subject in the New Testament that teach about demon possession and exorcism. Page (1995:179) notes that for western people; these experiences are strange. Since non-western areas are strongly influenced by the west, they seem to hold the same notions, however, this cannot be completely true. There is need to ask whether exorcism and demon possession still has a place in the modern world? Page (1995:179) proposes three general stances that the modern scholars take to answer the question.

Firstly, the individuals with the stance that maintains that exorcism, no longer has a place in today's world (Page 1995:180). They argue that exorcism and demon possession reproduce a simple understanding of the reality that cannot be applied in our time. They argue that for ancients, any strange behavior that could not be explained or understood was seen as demonic. Development in science over the years has provided ways to understand unusual behaviors both as psychological and organic disorders. They argue that, there is no need to attribute these issues to demons and the use of exorcism as treatment of the disorders is not required and is unfitting (Page 1996:180). This kind of an understanding finds its roots in the Enlightenment view which strongly speaks of rationality.

Defining this phenomenon has proven to be a complex task. The second edition of the oxford dictionary defines the term enlightenment as a "shallow and pretentious intellectualism, unreasonable contempt for tradition and authority" (Oxford 2014). Yet, even this simple and clear definition is not so helpful in understanding the concept of the enlightenment. The heart of the enlightenment view lays in the phrase 'everything must have a reason why it should rather than not be' (Dupre 2004:2).

Discussion by scholars such as Rudolf Bultmann illustrate this position. According to Bultmann (1941:1), the New Testament is a 'mythical world picture'. This world in the in New Testament can be compared to a three-story building; with heaven on top, the Earth in the middle and Hell at the bottom. He argues that what happens on earth accordingly, is influenced by spiritual forces, either the angles from heaven or demons from hell. Consequently, humans are not masters of their own (Bultmann 1941:1).

Bultmann (1941:2) places an emphasis on understanding this mythical picture, because he believes; the real content of the New Testament is the presentation of salvation which corresponds to the mythical language of this world picture. For example; "the demonic powers of this world have lost their power (1 Cor.2:6). Bearing this in mind, the modern readers are left with a question; can the modern readers accept this mythical world picture? At first hand, it is certainly not possible since their worldview is influenced by science and technological advancements. Bultmann (1941:3) suggests, it is pointless to accept the New Testament mythical world view, since the mythical world picture as a notion cannot be understood as Christian. This mythical world picture for Bultmann was simply a world view of that time, without the influence of scientific thinking (Bultmann 1941:3). Furthermore, he argues that it would be impossible to accept such a world view since 'no one can appropriate a world picture by sheer resolve, since it is already given within one's particular historical situation' (Bultmann 1941:3).

According to Bultmann (1983:4), the development in science and technology makes it impossible to maintain the world picture of the New Testament. With regards to the subject matter of this study; demon possession and exorcism, he suggests that, the better understanding of forces brought by science ended the belief in demon's and spirits. For examples, science brought knowledge that sickness and cures have natural causes, therefore, are not caused by demons and treated through exorcism (Bultmann 1941:4).

In his rational view Bultmann (1984:5) maintains that, modern people understand themselves as unified beings who ascribe their feelings, thinking and willing to themselves. Additionally, he states, "humans do not understand themselves as peculiarly divided, as the New Testament represents us, so that alien powers can intervene in our inner unity life, rather they ascribe to their selves an inner unity of

state and action and any person who imagens this unity to be slit by intervention of divine or demonic powers a schizophrenic" (Bultmann 1984:5).

He concludes by suggesting that, regardless of whether we comprehend ourselves as normal creatures, who are reliant upon the most astounding degree as in science or psychoanalyzes, we do not view our reliance as being offered over to spiritual forces from which we separate ourselves. Relatively, we view it as our actual being over which we are thus ready to take over by understanding, with the idea that we can appropriately arrange our lives (Bultmann 1984:5).

To simply deny the existence of the demonic, leaves many questions unanswered, for example; what happens to texts about evil spirits in the New Testament? How do we account for those that have personally experienced the demonic? Given that a lot has been orally passed from one generation to the next about demons, we should not be quick to dismiss the possibility in its reality. Those that deny the demonic opt for a demythologized interpretation of texts about demons (Yung 2002:11). Scholars like Bultmann would suggest that beliefs in the reality of demons should to be demythologized so that, the researcher may be able to extract what lies behind the 'myth' (Yung 2002:11). From the demythologizing view, the existence of demons is understood from rational perspective and explainable through variables such as "sin, law, flesh and death, or socio-political structures that dehumanize, such as racism, economic oppression and sexism or the inner spiritual dimensions of such structures or institutions of power" (Yung 2002:12).

Yung (2002:12) further reports that this approach is speedily being seen as having many flaws. For example, the term 'myth' has been found by many scholars to be ambiguous. It also has been noted that, the word is used with the assumption that; since, stories of demon possession in the past are now seen as untrue then the stories that emerge today are also untrue. However, this conclusion is made without checking evidence for its truthfulness (Yung 2002:12).

Page (1995:180) also argues that we cannot simply deny the reality of demon possession and exorcism based on better understanding of human behavior. He cautions scholars not to exaggerate how primitive and native people were in the bible. Since the New Testament clearly states the difference between demon possession

and other aliments (Page 1995:180). Page (1995:180) also notes that it seems that the rejection of the reality of demon possession is founded on rationalistic assumptions that are mismatched with the supernaturalism of the bible. Ultimately, he states that by rejecting the phenomenon of demon possession, one runs the risk of questioning the integrity and authority of Jesus, since Jesus plainly accepted the existence of demon possession (Page 1995:180).

Secondly, those that recognize that demons exist and that possession is possible however, they limit it to the ministry of Jesus and the apostles (Page 1995:180). According, to the observations of Page (1995:180) this stance is difficult to maintain, because history records that, those that took after the apostles continued in the ministry of exorcism. Furthermore, studies in anthropology indicate that many cultures in the modern world have notions of demon possession. It therefore, becomes a challenge to distinguish between the demon possession that Jesus and apostles dealt with and demon possession that is experienced today (Page 1995:181).

Lastly, those that accept the existence of demon possession and ruminate exorcism as a valid and fitting way of treating possession (Page 1995:181). At the bottom of this stance is; the idea that the mission of the church to is extended the ministry of Jesus. However, one needs to consider that exorcism is not mentioned in the great commission (Page 1995:181). Therefore, Page (1995:181), recommends that exorcism should not be the concern of the church, however if need arises for it to be performed it should be done (Page 1995:181).

2.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have reviewed the what the theological, post-colonial and the socio-psychological perspectives have to say about demon possession. Although these are good theories to use, I am not satisfied with their conclusions. The above theories all explain demon possession in metaphorical terms. The theological sees demon possession in light of sin, however sin is a result of human action founded under the notions of free will. The post-colonial theory use demonology as a metaphorical language to protest against its imperial setting. In that context the colonizers are seen as demons and the colonised as demoniacs. And finally the socio-psychology theory suggest that what used to be known as demon possession is not actually a

supernatural spirit possessing a body, rather is a psychological illness that does not need exorcism but medical treatment. In the following chapter, I discussion the socio-political perspective. I reckon this theory better explains the subject of demon possession, because it acknowledges that demon possession and exorcism can be used as a metaphorical language to speak of certain realities but its metaphorical use does not erase the truth in its reality.

Chapter Three

3. Socio-political perspective: Comaroff's Amending Social canopy view

3.1 Introduction

This chapter develops the theoretical perspective of Amending of social Canopies inspired by Comaroff. It suggests that demonology is a mythical language that speaks of a context of subjugation accompanied by distraction and disruption within. People use this mythical language to overthrow and reverse the situation. The theory takes note of the social context of Mark, that was disrupted by imperial violence. Building on Ideas of C. Myers, R. Horsley, P.J. Rajkumar, P.W. Hollenbach, Z. Dube, the theory of Amending social canopies, explain both the mythical language of social disruption –demon possession and combat against the intruder –exorcism.

3.2 Scholarly views concerning the socio-political perspective

Ched Myers

In his work *Binding the strong man: a political reading of Mark,* Ched Myers (2008:6) starts his political reading of Mark firstly, by placing Mark under the Roman oppressive rule in the Mediterranean world. Consequently, he views Marks' audience as experiencing exploitation from the dominating powers. Myers' (2008:8), political reading is based on the political view that Jesus had in the gospel of Mark. Accordingly, Jesus resisted the powers of oppression in a non-violent way. As such, Myers (2008:xxxiii) approaches the gospel of Mark as a record for social revolution. A strong emphasis on the non-violent element should be noted. Horsley has the same line of thought, however, he does not mention the element of non-violence.

In his political interpretation, Myers (2008:8) has his focus on two subjects; repentance and resistance. The word repentance in his use does not restrictively refer to the change of heart by an individual, rather, it carries a broader meaning of "concrete

procedure of turning away from empire, its distractions and seductions, its hubris and iniquity" (Myers 2008:8).

Resistance, as he explains, is the exterminating of powerful sedation of a community that plunders ignorance and underestimates everything political, so as to make out and take solid stands in an historical moment and to seek out a commitment to hinder imperial progress (Myers 2008:8). Important for Myers is that both of these subjects call for non-violent action. D.M. Rhoads (1991:336), in his review on Myers work "binding the strong man: a political reading of Mark's story of Jesus", noted that this non-violent stance of the Markan Jesus can be compared to the Gandhian philosophy of nonviolence.

Another important aspect to note, is that, Myers (2008:146) sees the miracles in Mark as "symbolic actions" that are a necessary tool for the 'new movement' aimed at liberating people. The miracles refer to both his exorcisms and healings, however, focus here will dwell much on the exorcisms. If the exorcism of Jesus is a symbolic action, then demon possession should also be seen as symbolic (Myers 2008:190). The phrase "symbolic action" at first hand is misleading. The literal meaning for "symbolic action" would imply; the miracles that Jesus performed did not actually happen; that Jesus did not heal the sick or drive out demons, thus suggesting that the healing and exorcism narratives are metaphorical. On the contrary by "symbolic action", Myers (2008:146) refers to the action whose central significance, referring to power, lies moderately to the symbolic order in which they happened. Thus, what is seen here, is not a denial of the actual event, rather an emphasis on what the actual event signifies –in the words of Myers "Jesus' symbolic actions were powerful not because they challenged the laws of nature, but because they challenged the very structures of social existence" (Myers 2008:147-148).

For example, in Mark 1:21-28, Jesus drive out an impure spirit from a man in the synagogue (Mk.1:25). Myers (2008:143) suggests that this action is linked to his conflict with the dominant symbolic order. From the setting in which the exorcism takes place, we can deduce that the conflict between Jesus and the unclean spirit (though it did happen) refers symbolically to Jesus' conflict with the scribes (Myers 2008:142). Similarly, in the second exorcism in Mark 5:1-20, Myers does not deny that the man was set free (Mk. 5:18). However, from the political language in the narrative, terms

like 'legion', one can deduce that Jesus symbolically has a confrontation with Roman imperial rule (Myers 2008:193).

Myers is criticized on his symbolic understanding of the miracles of Jesus. According to Rhoads (1991:337), "Myers has misread the concreteness of Marks narrative and therefore, has misinterpreted the nature of power in Marks tale, since Jesus according to Rhoads has no authority to Lord over other people, rather he has authority over demons, nature and illness". Furthermore, Rhoads (1991:337) also notes that Myers' sees the parables as a method of description. Myers sees the parables as describing the dynamics of oppression however, Rhoads suggests that by doing that the parables lose their force as symbols, therefore he lost sight of Marks understanding of Gods role in the kingdom (Rhoads 1991:337).

Richard Horsley

In his work; *hearing the whole story: the politics of plot in Mark's gospel*, Horsley starts his political reading of Mark, by suggesting, that the gospel addresses common Greek speaking villagers. These individuals accordingly do not reside only in Galilee but also among the surrounding Galilee villages. It may also be addressed to those in the eastern provinces of the Roman Empire (Horsley 2001:51).

The foundation of Horsley's (2001) political reading lays on his presentation of the Markan Jesus as a prophet. The prophet Jesus according to Mark as Horsley (2001:44) explains, is similar to Moses in the Old Testament who led the Israelites out of bondage in Egypt, and the prophet Elijah who led the people's resistance to the oppressive rule of king Ahab. Just as prophets in the Old Testament led people out of oppression, Jesus as a prophet will also led the people of out of oppression.

Horsley (2001:40) argues that; Mark presents Jesus as leading a movement of restoration based in village communities. This movement is aimed both at bringing different communities who share the same experience under the imperial rule into contact with each other and joining them in harmony against local and imperial rulers (Horsley 2001:44). In this movement Jesus proclaims the redemptive good news of the kingdom of God by presenting healings and exorcisms (2001:40).

Horsley (2001:137) recommends that; as we listen to the Markan story of Jesus, we need to be cautious of how the terms, motifs, names and the whole episode of a particular narrative alludes metaphorically to certain aspects of Israelite tradition, to the extent that the narratives echoes experiences for the original hearers by suggesting a wider meaning from the tradition.

Considering the above recommendation, we need to ask the obvious question, what would the teaching, healing and exorcisms acts means? Since this research is about demon possession, I focus only on exorcism. Horsley (2001: 136) in light of his recommendations, suggest that the exorcisms of Jesus need to be understood as a manifestation of the kingdom of God, that is to say; in these exorcisms the superiority of God over the dominating powers is reviled. Additionally, in the exorcisms the universal defeat of the demonic forces in the wider program of the formation of God is made manifest (Horsley 2001:138).

At a general level Horsley (2001: 137) understands exorcism in symbolic terms. The exorcism events have greater meaning beyond its literal form. At the beginning of Mark Jesus in Mark 1:21-28 encounters one with an 'unclean spirit'. While Jesus is teaching in the synagogue, the man possessed with an unclean spirit cries out in a loud voice "what do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are- the Holy one of God" (Mk.1:24). What happens after this is that; Jesus commands the unclean spirit out of the man simply by saying "be quiet, come out of him" (Mk. 1:25). According to Horsley, this event denotes exactly what is happening in the immediate context (Horsley 2001:138). Beyond this, the man has been restored, free from possession.

In verse 28 the reader is informed that the news spread quickly (Mk. 1: 28). Horsley notes that this spreading of news is contrary to Hellenistic and Rabbinic exorcism narratives, which were told for the purpose of glorifying the Exorcist, rather this news spread fast for the purpose of informing the people of the kind of power Jesus operates; he operates under divine 'authority and power on behalf of the people in contrast with the scribes and high priests with whom Jesus is consistently in conflict with throughout the Gospel of Mark' (Horsley 2001:138). In other words, this episode is symbolic of the encounters Jesus would have with the other religious leaders.

The second exorcism that Jesus performs is in Mark 5:1-20: his encounter with the Gerasene demoniac. In the story the demons identify themselves as 'legion' (Mk. 5:9). Horsley (2001:140) hints that the hearers of the story would without any explanation given; be able understand what legion meant and represented. Legion was the Roman troops who in their experience invaded their villages, enslaving them, burnt their homes, took their food products and left havoc and distraction in their midst. The demoniac is also described as causing distraction to his immediate community (Mk. 5:3-4) thus he lived in the tombs and as well as causing harm to himself (Mk. 5:5).

If the demons identify themselves as the Roman army, then it is correct to conclude that the violent attack by the Roman army is what triggered the man into such violent behaviour. Since the possessor "legion" is symbolic of the Roman army then the possessed "man" needs to be seen as symbolic of the society that was "possessed by the demonic imperial violence" (Horsley 2001:140). Again here in the second exorcism story by casting out legion, Jesus brings restoration to the man. Important to note is that "for the people in ancient galilee and the surrounding people imperial supremacy was caught up in conflict of higher order, between super-humans and spiritual force, God verse Satan, and Holy Spirit verse unclean Spirt" (Horsley 2001:142).

The following key aspects of the village-based community can be pointed out: firstly, Jesus in Mark tackles his program of teaching and healing in village communities and not individuals (Horsley 2001:40). Secondly, the focus of Jesus' movement was not on one village but on all the surrounding villages. Important to note here, is that; villages did not usual associate and cooperate unless they were in a situation of crises, this perhaps made it easy for Jesus, as they all had a common problem. The sending of the disciples into the other parts of the world, is an indication of Jesus' attempt to expend the movement (Horsley 2001:40).

Thirdly, Mark presents Jesus as leading the movement in direct opposition to the rulers and ruling institutions, rather than a 'politically inoffensive religious reinforcement'. What Jesus does, is to resist and pronounce God's Judgement over the oppressive rulers and institutions (Horsley 2001:41). For example, in Mark 11:15-18, Jesus carries out an obstructive demonstration at the centre of the temple.

Fourthly, the appearance of the kingdom of God in Mark is presented as a contest and a threat to the rulers in Jerusalem and Galilee from the start of the gospel of Mark (Horsley 2001:41). This is seen throughout the gospel: at the begin Mark 1:21-28, the people see Jesus as having an authority which they cannot identify among 'the authority figures', in Mark 3:6, we see the rulers conspiring against Jesus. However, I want to place an emphasis on one factor, which is the death of Jesus, which strongly affirms the above point. Accordingly, Jesus is crucified by the Romans. Horsley (2001:42) suggests that this form of execution by torture is commonly used by the Romans against those who rebelled against the imperial order.

From the above, it is evident why Horsley takes a political reading, however, like any other scholar; his political reading of Mark has been criticized. At first hand many Markan scholars perceive Horsley's work as a post-colonial reading, because he places the Gospel of Mark in the situation of a "colonized" world under Roman empire (colonizer) and sees Judeans and Galileans "as people imperilled to empire" (Gundry 2003:132). The viewing of Horsley's work as possible post-colonial reading is also further supported by a recommendation made by Markan scholar Adela Yarbro Collins at the back of the book.

Horsley is generally criticized on two important points that mould his political reading. Firstly, his denial of Christology in the book of Mark. Horsley (2001:x) claims that any Theology (therefore Christology as well) that is supposedly found in Mark, was made up by the theologian. For him the Gospel of Mark is a story, that is filled with conflicts, evidently referring to historical occasions in ancient Galilee and Judea under the Roman empire (2001:x). Note that Horsley's (2001:x) denies Christology based on the notion that Mark is a merely a story however, Gundry (2003:133) argues that stories have the capacity to carry theology as well, therefore, he sees Mark as persuading a "Christology of power". In agreement to Gundry (2003), about the existence of a theology in Mark, Kingsbury (1983:25) argues that Mark understands the title "son of God" which is continuously used to refer to Jesus, as a substandard way of bearing the true meaning of the person of Jesus. Consequently, majority of Marks writing is to correct the title. Mark does this through his promotion of the theology of the cross and his use of the title throughout the gospel (Kingsbury 1983:25).

Secondly, Horsley, is criticized on his interpretations of economics in Mark. Gundry (2003:132) suggests that Horsley reads almost every situation in economic terms. This means that Horsey employs a political evaluation of Mark in terms of economics. For example; according to Horsley (2001), the Markan Jesus discards the Roman-imposed political economic. This is shown through the opposition of Jesus with the rich man (Mk.10:17-25). Correctly said; the rich man is presumed to have played a role in oppressive economic systems (Horsley 2001:43). However, Gundry (2003: 137) notes; although there might be truth in the above, he strongly holds that Jesus went beyond to set a divine leeway in the verse 27; "with man this is impossible, but not with God; all things are possible with God" (Mk. 10:27).

Rajkumar

Rajkumar (2007:430) starts his investigation on Mark's account of the Gerasene demoniac with the assumption that Mark's account is an "idiomatic integration of the cosmic and socio-political dimensions of the conflict between the forces of good and evil". Therefore, suggests that; any researcher investigating Mark's narratives, should pay attention to the socio-political consequences of each event, particularly the exorcisms narratives. Since, what appears at the bottom of the exorcism story in Mark is an insinuation of freedom from the Roman rule (Rajkumar 2007:430). Consequently, he perceives the Gerasene demoniac as embodying what was happening in his immediate context similar to Myers (2008) understanding. The struggle was against oppression from the Roman rule.

With the same line of thought, exorcism is explained by Davies (1995:79) on one hand, as a 'political move with anti-Roman connotations'. This understanding of exorcism is parallel to Myers (2008:190) understanding of 'symbolic action'. The meaning of these acts would be without any doubt clear to anyone who witnessed them. Davies (1995:79) broader understanding of exorcism leads him to conclude, that the story of the Gerasene demoniac is an 'anti-Roman allegory', both in the content of the story and its place with the gospel of Mark. On the other, Possession is explained as reflections of the political state of a society. In line with the Mark 5 story, the demoniac is a reflection of the Roman domination of Galilee and the extremely disproportionate taxation and indebtedness of the people (Davies 1995:79). If the possessed man is a symbol of the masses in Galilee first century, then we need to understand the effects

of the possession such as the self-affliction are a symbol of the harsh conditions of that time, for example high tax fees.

Rajkumar (2007:430) strengthen the above conclusion about Mark by observing the military or political language found in the narrative. The demons call themselves 'legion' (Mark 5:9). This type of language in the story can be seen as an echo of the occupying Roman military in Palestine. One can therefore, assume that the locals that tried to fight the Roman rule however, failed to rule them out. This left a sense of powerlessness in them. This is illustrated in the story by the failure of the community to bind the possessed man (Rajkumar 2007:431).

Hollenbach (1981:573) and Rajkumar (2007) both agree on the fact that the demoniac should be placed among the masses who disliked their condition of hopelessness and marginalization. They base their categorizing on evidence with the text (Rajkumar 2007:431).

It is also important to note that the demoniac responded differently to his political condition; the common way of responding during that time, was in the form of social robbery which assumed the expression of the common people's sense of Justice. For the demoniac it seems to be "one of retreat into an inner symbolic world" (Rajkumar 2007:431). The reason for this, could be that; the demoniac was frustrated over the "increasing failure of resistance, self-defeatism and fatalistic acceptance of the power of the occupiers and the fear of recrimination" (Rajkumar 2007:431).

In light of the context of foreign rule and unembellished oppression the writer of the gospel shows a Christological image of Jesus as the basis of liberation and hope, who will emblematically usher in an alternative social structure (Rajkumar 2007:431). The idea of a Christological image is contrary to how Horsley (2001:x) understand Jesus' exorcism, since for him Mark has no Christology and therefore states that any Christology found was fabricated by the researcher. Accordingly, the exorcism has nothing to do Jesus, rather they have everything to do with the Israelite tradition. Jesus similar to Moses is simply an instrument that God uses to liberate his people. Nonetheless, Christology or not, a socio political reading understands the exorcism of Jesus as a confrontation of the oppressive structures which have exceeded human understanding and coping ability (Rajkumar 2007:431).

Hence, exorcism at a larger scale should be understood in terms of political repudiation, however, this has to be done with great caution; since, the Christological framework in which these exorcisms are worked out cannot be neglected, meanwhile the divinity of Jesus was/is comprehended and deduced in relation to cosmic conflict (Rajkumar 2007:431). Thus Rajkumar (2007:431), recommends that any socio-political reading of exorcism needs to start its interpretation process firstly, by accepting the central motif of the story as an obliteration of the despotic powers.

Dube

In his work *casting demons in Zimbabwe: A political posturing*, Dube (2012:356) understand exorcism as 'coded gestures' that show disapproval for the prevailing political situation. Dube (2012:356), notes how former president Robert Mugabe remained in power. He states that; "Mugabe was one of those African presidents who ran the country with an iron fist, silencing opposing voices and even killing their opponents". Over time the ruling party ZANPF in their attempt to maintain the position of power, adopted violence as a weapon to silence those who tried to rule them out.

This kind of a situation can be compared to that of the Gerasene demoniac who frequently tried over rule the Roman rule. However, their efforts turned into more violence, more death and high tax rates. Dube (2012:358) concludes that in a situation where the public space is blocked and people are unable to express themselves or fight, the church becomes a different space for free expression. In other words, the space in which demon possession and exorcism takes places becomes an alternative space for people to express themselves.

This idea of an alternative space is fully adopted by the psychological theory. As noted in the previous chapter, they understand possession as a process in which an individual chooses a lesser evil in order to cope with the social tensions that happens in reality (Fanon 1963:290). In situations oppression the oppressed are unable to fight against, as Dube (2012:356) noted in his observation of Zimbabwe during the rule of former president Mugabe, a situation where anyone who tries to raise against, ends up dead or extremely injured. The space of possession becomes a safe space to flee the oppression. Possession then provides an opportunity for exorcism. The act of

exorcism in this context could be understood in what Dube (2012:359) calls "coded protest". A method of expressing people's disapproval against the oppressors".

In summary, Horsley understand the exorcism of Jesus as a movement of restoration. Myers shares a similar idea; he sees the exorcism of Jesus as a 'symbolic action' of liberation. what we then see, from a socio-political perspective is the idea that demonology ultimately reviles the people's realities in the presence of oppressive powers or overcoming circumstance.

In the same line of thought to the above scholars, Dube sees exorcism as a "coded protest" against the dominating powers while alluding situations to demon possession is a coded gesture. Closely linked to Dube' understanding of exorcism is Rajkumar who states that exorcism is a political move with anti-imperial connotation. Despite the differences in terminology, all these scholars see exorcism as a sort of mythical symbolic language. By myth I am not referring to the fact that exorcism and demon possession do not happen in reality, rather I use myth in the since that; the exorcism and demon possession do to not speak truly of the actual event,s instead they refer or point to the different situations that people experience in reality within their immediate contexts.

What we then see from the above scholars, is simply that fact that there is relationship between demonology and the social, political and economic situations of the society. Demonology is a mythical language or a symbolic language in which people speak about their realities. Perhaps even how they understand their realities.

3.3 Comaroff' Theory: Amending Social Canopy

The above review is best captured in Camoroff's theory of amending social canopies. Demonology is a dialectal process of making meaning for people's reality and the shared imagined worldview; by casting out evil spirits they attempt to correct the realities of people. This is an expansion of the work of Jean Comaroff.

In her work, *body of power spirit of resistance: the culture and history of a South African people*, she is concerned with the result of the interaction between human action and the organizational structures, between the usual and subservient in the

colonial encounter (Comaroff 1985:1). In exploring the issues around her concerns she takes the Barolong Boo (Tshidi) as a case study. She aims to explore the role of the Tshidi as a defined community yet still in a process of defining themselves, in their own history as persons who in their everyday creation of goods and meanings, they accept yet refuse, replicate yet seek to alter their predicament (Comaroff 1985:1). This forward and backward movement is precisely the problem. Hence Comaroff' (1985:2) main objective is to capture the cultural logic and its long term historical importance regarding power. It is in the understanding of this cultural logic where the theory of amending of social canopies rests.

While considering a life after colonialism she suggests that, because of the colonial rule that Africans experienced, the natives' social and cultural continuities have been fractured or disturbed. Thus, individuals suddenly are forced out from their normal human and spiritual contexts. Through colonialism the native is no longer able to identify or recognize themselves, what they once knew, they no longer know, hence a need to amend (Comaroff 1985:3).

At the foundation of this, is the idea that individuals had a picture of the world; how the world is supposed to be, how they are supposed to experience this world and so forth. This is what Comaroff calls the 'precolonial cosmos'. This picture shaped and structured the way individuals lived. The introduction of the colonial rule, fractured the 'precolonial cosmos' and brought in a completely different picture. In this new cosmos the native cannot recognize themselves (Comaroff 1985:5). Because of power issues they accepted this world view, however, as different life situations surfaced, they had to reject this world view, as they tried to make sense of this new world. In an attempt to repair the fractured precolonial cosmos, the native, engages in symbolic practices (Comaroff 1985:8). This symbolic practices come in different forms, it could be anything, from something complex like a cleansing ritual to something as simple as wearing a bracelet made from animal skin. Bearing the above in mind, if we then consider exorcism as a symbolic practice; the native would attribute a particular condition as caused by an evil spirit (Colonial rule), the process of exorcism becomes a possible solution to the condition of possession by an evil spirit. Therefore, the notions around the language of demonology become a dialectal means/ attempt to correct the realities of people -reality free from oppression and exploitation.

Away from the broader situation of a fractured social canopy in terms of colonialism, I turn to a narrowed situation, specifically the matters that concern healing. In her previous work, *healing and the cultural order: a case of the Barolong boo ratshidi of southern Africa*, she notes that Tshidi impulsively express a set of insights about the cause and effects and the nature of the world which contains a relatively inclusive cosmology (Comaroff 1980:643). By this she suggests that, at a general level the Barolong Boo Ratshidi understands cause and effect in terms of things that happen around the world, both the physical and spiritual. For them, nothing happens coincidently. Subsequently, metaphorical explanations as reasons for the occurrence of things are given, for example; she did not die because she was sick, rather the sickness that caused her death was a result of jealous relative who bewitched her. Significant for this theory; is to understand that the 'negative condition' itself is not important. What is important is the 'why?' and 'how?'; the condition come about. In short the land of the living has individuals who have a particular world view. Although this worldview is fixed and lives on from one generation to the next, it is always at risk of being fractured or disrupted.

Cosmology here refers to; "a manifest perception of a world as they inhere in the context of action and experience" (Comaroff 1980:643). This world rests on the 'self' and its social, spiritual and substantial context. The term 'self' should not be misunderstood as referring to the personality of the individual, rather 'self' here refers to the internal source of quality (Comaroff 1980:643).

The disruption of the ordered cosmology is what Comaroff (1980:643) terms affliction. In light of the above; affliction is a 'lack of self-determination', it is a state of weakness to being overshadowed by something you have no power over: calamity or sickness indicates a disruption of the delicate balance between the subjective and the objective constituents of being, which is usually observed as an interruption into the 'self' (Comaroff 1980:643). In order to manage or control the state of affliction, one needs to identify an affliction in terms of a metaphorical opposition between the self and an external affliction, provided by the symbols of the cosmological repertoire (Comaroff 1980:643). Take for example John 9:2; and His disciples asked Him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?". Jesus and his disciples encounter a man who was blind, according to their cosmological repertoire, a man

cannot be born blind, in their diagnosis, they seek for what could have caused the blindness; a metaphorical opposition. In this case sin is the metaphorical opposition. It is metaphorical because sin does not have the ability to cause one to be blind, so sin has replaced a medical explanation. Therefore, sin as the cause of blindness is a metaphor for the possible medical condition.

In her analysis of Tshidi, she observes the notion of affliction. Affliction in her description, refers to the dislocation of the 'self' and context. The context is a place where everything is well, in all areas of life, be it domestically, socially, economically, politically and finally physically and spiritually. Healing from affliction would then be, the objectification and restructuring or the amendment of such dislocation (Comaroff 1980:644). Essential to this process of healing, as noted above, is the ascribing of disorders in metaphorically terms of opposition between the impaired subject and an interfering external agent. The metaphors through which this is accomplished comprise an indigenous nosology. This suggests that it is in the metaphor that a correct diagnosis is given, thus, an appropriate treatment can be provided (Comaroff 1980:644).

Important to note is that; within the African cultures, the idea of the mind as the facilitator of experiences of the 'self' has no significance in such cultural structures. No internal entity exists, which sets apart the experiencing 'self' and external impingement upon it. As such memories, dreams and so much of the thought process are to be understood as the end result of external forces operating within the person. Tshidi illustrates the 'self' as trapped in a snare of influences. An arena of relations with other people, spirits and natural phenomena, none of which are separated from the 'self' as static and objectified states of being and all which are connected to the 'self' in terms of continuous elements of influence (Comaroff 1980:644). The western notion, that intellect controls the way we experience is not applicable in these cultures. External forces are thus, considered as more powerful than the mind.

According to Tshidi, symptomatology is described as; "the standardized perception of signs of disruption in the person or in group" (Comaroff 1980:645). Consequently, there is no definite distinction made between physical feelings and such situations as troubling dreams, opinions of personal failure, sickness of ones live-stock or ruin of one's property (Comaroff 1980:645).

Important to note is that symptoms have no analytic importance when separated from the wider context in which they happen. In the case where the disorder is perceived as serious, the sufferer will have to seek help from a specialist. The specialist skills make it possible to decode definite symptoms and contextual markers onto the idiomatic language of causality (Comaroff 1980:645).

The rationality of the Tshidi ordering of affliction stems from awareness of causality. Causality then, is necessitated in a variety of symbols which together establish a cosmology (Comaroff 1980:646). Cosmology in the context of healing, offers a dialect for the clarification, forecast and control of dislocated or fractured experiences (Comaroff 1980:651). In the analysis of the Tshidi healing system, she examined the association between subjective experience and cultural order, a dialectic which is expressed cogently in the process of healing but also encompasses all spheres of social action (Comaroff 1980:654).

3.3.1 Implication of this theory

From the above, I propose in accordance to the African cultural logic, three important elements of focus when dealing with how people live; firstly, is the ordered cosmology –that is a perfect world with only positive realities; secondly, is the human being –the being that occupies the cosmology, and finally, is the spiritual world –realms of powers and forces that intrude. All this three thing are all linked together.

In following Comaroff's observation, exorcisms proceed from perceiving the world from the perspective of tension between that which is seen as normal and that which is abnormal. In this case; any negative reality experienced is viewed as abnormal. In the context of demonology, in line with the theory; exorcism is a dialectal process to amend social canopies, the negative reality will be perceived as a demon or an evil spirit, that intrudes on a person with the purpose of disrupting or fracturing the normal. This implies for example that, an individual is sick because he or she has been possessed by an evil spirit –a spirit of sickness, rather than ascribing the sickness to other natural causes.

Additionally, the abnormal infiltrates a reality of the political, economic and social situations. In case where there is an abnormal reality, there is a general view of

hopelessness, since there seems to be no solution, the situation is beyond them. Consequently, people –demon possessed persons, seek to find help in order to amend that which is abnormal back to normality. Therefore, exorcism is a process of order restoration of health, gender roles, institutional functionality.

It is particularly this reason why the African Pentecostal churches today are growing at a faster rate than previously. People with different issues run to these churches seeking for help. The issues that African people experience range from domestic matters, like inability to conceive to economic matters such as unemployment. Within these churches people are made to understand that to every condition there is a spiritual force that drives that condition. Hence the question; what are these pastors doing? needs to be asked, they play an active role in helping individuals amend their social canopies that have been previously fractured. Another question that needs to be asked is, does the term demon refer to social issues affecting people, originally posed by Dube (2012:352) in his observations of the casting out of demons in Zimbabwe as daily practice among Pentecostal churches? The implication of this stance on Dube' question, suggests that the answer would be yes –demons are indeed a social issues experienced by people creating a negative reality.

3.4 Conclusion

The above review illustrates that; perceptions of demons exist in relation to experienced realities of different social issues. Myers' idea of symbolic action, Horsley' notion of Jesus' exorcism as a restoration movement, Rajkumar' understanding of demonology as an idiomatic integration and Dube's notion of a coded language and protest, together build the Camoraff's theory that suggests, referrals of social issues to demon possession is a dialectal process of making meaning for people's realities and worldviews, which speaks of broken social canopies. By casting out the demon, an attempt is made to correct the realties, thus amending social canopies through exorcism.

What follows in the next chapter is; the introductory features of the gospel of Mark: the dating of Mark, place of writing of Mark, the social, economic and political setting, will be discussed. This introductory information will form the foundation to which an

analysis of Mark 5:1-20 will be done, following an application of the theory of exorcism as a dialectal process of amending social canopy's.

Chapter Four

4. Date, Location and Social setting of Mark

4.1 Introduction

This chapter is a building block to interpreting the exorcism story in Mark 5, investigating the probable historical setting of the gospel of Mark. This historical setting covers the social setting, economic setting and the political setting. A discussion on the dating and place of writing for the gospel of Mark is discussed first, then the socio-political location follows. The date and place of writing will help narrow down the discussion of Marks historical location to only the important and relevant information necessary for this research. This constructs significant background evidence that will support the political reading of Mark 5:1-20, which will be deliberated in chapter 4.

4.2 Dating

A precise date for the gospel of Mark has proven to be difficult to pin down, however, having a plausible date for when Mark was written is necessary, in order point out the most probable living conditions during the time the gospel was written. Over the year's scholars have found both external evidence and internal evidence which points towards a possible date.

I start here with the external evidence, according to Irenaeus, Mark was composed somewhere between 64-65 AD after the death of Peter and Paul during the persecution under the rule of Nero (Guelich 1989: xxxi). Crossley (2004:6) notes that this date is likely impossible, since its evidence is not concrete. Critics note that the Greek word, "death" used in this particular text could also be translated as ''depart". They therefore, suggest that; Mark was written during the life time of Paul and Peter after they departed from Rome (Crossley 2004:7). Whether Mark was written after the death or after they departed has no significant influence on the dating, however, it renders this evidences unreadable.

Another tradition holds that; Mark was composed earlier then Irenaeus thought. This tradition suggests that Mark was composed somewhat 40-45. The assumption here is

that; Mark was written in light of Peter's incapacitating Simon Magus during the supremacy of Claudius (Crossley 2004:11). An Eleventh-Century prologue to theophylaet's commentary on the gospels records that Mark was written 10 years after the ascension, is also supports a 40-45 AD date (Crossley 2004:12). However, the evidence for such a date is not trustworthy since there is no solid proof of Peters activities in Rome during the forties (Crossley 2004:12).

The proposed dates above are questionable, simply because they are not historically accurate. However, the possibility of the dates being correct cannot simply be taken away. I now review the internal evidence on the dating of Mark. That is to find clues within the text that hint a particular date. Stock (1989:4) states, "the composition of Mark must be inferred from the indications given by Mark in his work. These establishes general parameters, ruling out periods too early or late".

The date 40 AD could also be supported by internal evidence. If one reads Mark 13:14 "But when you see the abomination of desolation standing where he ought not to be, then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains", in light of the Caligula's attempt to erect his statue in the Jerusalem temple, which was understood as an idolatrous act. One is made to consider 40 AD, as a plausible date for the composition of Mark (Crossley 2004:30).

Usually Mark 13 is used to date the gospel of Mark around 66-70 CE, during the period of the Jewish and the Roman war (Crossley 2004:19). Mark 13 is understood as a secondary source of Jesus' apocalyptic and eschatological deliberations, consequently, the passage should be seen congruently with the 70 AD events (Crossley 2004:19). For contemporary scholarship, the dating of Mark is somewhat 70 AD. Two streams are seen in contemporary scholarship; those that argue for a date before the fall of Jerusalem, who argue for the dates between 67-70 AD on one hand, and on the those who argue a date after the fall of Jerusalem and suggest the dates between 70-73 AD (Guelich 1989: xxxi).

A detailed analysis of Mark 13:3-37 shows that; the author places these discourse in the context of a prediction. The prediction is about the fall of Temple, however, it should be noted that; the type of prediction here is a *Vāticinium ex ēventū*. Given the context of prediction, Mark 13:14 then, contrary to viewing it in light of Caligula

attempted abomination as indicated above, should correctly be seen within the setting preceding the destruction, during a time, when the author could have anticipated the imminent doom of Jerusalem and the temple (Guelich 1989:xxxi). If Mark 13 is a prediction of what is yet to come, then it is highly likely that Mark was written fairly after the Romans began their military crusade under Vespasian in 67 AD, against the Jews in Palestine, but before the last siege of Jerusalem under Titus in the summer of 70 AD (Guelich 1989:xxxii). In support of a pre 70 AD date, Henry Burn (1974:3) notes that; it cannot be possible that Mark was written after the distraction simply because the gospel of Mark does not mention the final fulfilment of the prediction of the destruction of Jerusalem, which happened later during the year 70 AD.

Stock (1989:4) who also supports a pre-70 date, argues; Mark seems to stand between the time of Paul and John. Moreover, he suggests that Mark 15:21 could also be a clue that points to a pre-70 date. Mark 15:21 "And they compelled a passer-by, Simon of Cyrene, who was coming in from the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to carry his cross", in this passage the writer uses the names of the sons to identify the father. when this is compared to other gospels, particularly Matthew and Luke which were written later, the names of the sons are left out. Stock (1989:5) thus argues that; the names are left out, because they were no longer relevant for the time in which Matthew and Luke were written.

Contrary to the other gospels, Mark does not give titles to Pilate or the high priest, stock (1989:5), argues that Mark does so, because he assumes the audience knows who he is referring to. Finally, stocks (1989) points to other small details in Mark that could suggest to a pre 70 AD date. For example, Peter in Mark is given a leading position. The twelve are frequently mentioned in Mark, then in any other gospel, and finally, there is no trace of a church order and hierarchy. This list shows that Mark reveals a stage of early Christianity before the start of the Pauline missions to the Gentiles (Stock 1989:5).

Conclusively, dating Mark to early leads to impossible dates, since, at a general level the language and the content of Mark is in the words of Stock (1989:5) 'extraordinarily coherent, both literarily and theologically', which suggests that; Mark's content is mature. Upon reading Mark, the reader soon realizes that Mark is sure of his subject matter and presents his case clearly. Given Marks subject matter, his content would

not fit in the earliest period of eschatological enthusiasm after the birth of Christianity, since in those first years, there was hardly any of the announcement of the new message and awaiting the end. All this brings the dating of Mark closer to 70 AD. Because of this I find the pre-70 date more conceiving.

4.3 Place of writing and audience

Similar to the dating, the place of writing is also not a clear cut situation, different locations have been proposed over the years based on different assumptions. Here I only highlight the possible locations without going into much detail. The purpose for this section is to provide a plausible location, so that an appropriate social setting is given. The possible locations suggested include the following; Galilee, the Decapolis, Italy, Syria, Rome, other prefer to give a general location such as; it was written in a 'gentile Christian community in the East'. The majority of scholars agrees with the early tradition which records that Mark was written in Rome (Guelich 1989:xxix).

Rome

I start here with the external evidence, according to a second-century anti-Marcionite prologue on the gospel of Mark, which identifies Mark as the interpreter of Peter states that; Mark the interpreter of Peter, wrote the gospel in Italy (Turlington 1969:256).

Irenaeus and Clement of Alexandria indicate that Mark was composed in Rome (Turlington 1969:256). since, Peter died in Rome during the persecution of Nero in 64 AD, Mark supposedly stayed in Rome to do what he could; to make up for the great leader who had been executed (Stock 1989:4). Likewise, 1 Peter 5:13 connects Peter and Mark as having a relationship, the text also locates them in 'Babylon'. Here Babylon is used as an allusion to refer to Rome (Guelich 1989:xxix).

Quite a number of scholars argue for Rome as the place of composition. These scholars do not only relay on the testimonies of Clement of Alexandria and Irenaeus as external evidence, but they also have internal evidence that supports Rome as the place of composition. The content in the entire gospel of Mark, is what makes Rome a plausible place of composition. The content includes a number of Latinisms consisting of numerous Latin words (Guelich 1989:xxx).

Mark 12:42 'And a poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which make a penny', after the mention of the two copper coins, Mark goes on to explain the two capper coins as equivalent to penny. The implication of this explanation suggests that Greek to lepton was not understood, therefore, needed to be explained in Roman quadrants (stock 1989:4). This becomes even so, more true when the text is compared to Luke, who used Mark as a source. Luke 21:2 'and he saw a poor widow put in two small copper coins', notice here that; Luke completely omits the explanation of the copper coins. Likewise, Mark does the same in 15:16 "And the soldiers led him away inside the palace, called Praetorium, and they called together the whole battalion", accordingly, the addition of Praetorium would have not been necessary for Greek-speaking Gentile Christians in the East (Stock 1989:4).

Northern Galilee

Despite the large popularity of Mark been written in Rome, I am more inclined, to agree with Myers who maintains that the place of composition was in or near the North of Palestine (Myers 2008:41). The Latinism here then should be understood as a probable infiltration in the socio-economic and administrative domains of the colonized culture of Palestine (Myers 2008:41). Yet still, others suggest; the composition of Mark could be in Southern Syria or the Transjordan or upper Galilee (Rohrbaugh 2008:143). As a result, the socio-political and political economy account below will have its attention on the social conditions in agrarian Palestine, under the Roman rule.

Although the place of composition has proven difficult to point, the audience in Mark is very clear. Whether in south of Syria or North of Palestine, from gospel itself, it is clear that the audience has to be placed in rural setting. There are three groups that form up the audience of Mark; the city elites, the retainers and the lay people, who are the largest group.

The elite formed about 2 percent of the entire population. These were the highest ranking military officers, priestly folks, the Herodian's and other aristocratic households (Rohrbaugh 2008:145). Because of the prominence of the role of social conflict in Mark's narrative, Rohrbaugh (2008:147) states that 'it is not strange that the opponents of Jesus come from the group of the elite'.

Following the elite was the so called 'retainers'. These individuals were basically the middle man between the elite and the non-elite, they understood both worlds. Among these group of people were the household servants, clerks, lower-level military officers, to mention a few (Rohrbaugh (2008:148). There is a tendency among scholars to also view the Pharisees as forming part of the trainers, who try to contest with the movement of Jesus for influence among the non-elite. Finally, in the audience of Mark are the lay people, which include the degraded, unclean and the expendables. Throughout the gospel of Mark this group of people is seen interacting with Jesus: the leper in Mark 1:40, those living in poverty (MK. 4:25), and the mad-man (Mk. 5:2).

The gospel of Mark; among other literatures of antiquity appears to standout particularly; as it is a story written for and about the common people in that society. Mark reproduces the day to day realities of the common people, that is; their health status, economic status, political conditions and their general degrading that depicted the social existence of the first-century Palestine (Myers 2008:39). In the following section the goal is to move from the world of the text to the world behind the text, which will be broaden understanding of the world of the text.

4.4 Social setting

4.4.1 Peasant-Subsistent setting

In the world of the text; the Jesus of Mark is repeatedly located in villages. Accordingly, he carries out his ministry in houses, deserts, and by the lakeshores (Freyne 2011:188). Something noteworthy about villages is the fact that; resistance against empires, particularly that of the Roman empire often arose from village communities (Freyne 2011:188-188). This is due to the fact that; it was individuals in villages who suffered the most under foreign rule. The Harmony of village life was in accordance with Jewish nationalist system. However, in the narratives of Mark; Jesus does not experience this harmony, instead, the movement of Jesus among the different villages is painted as villages rejecting his gospel; this is seen when Jesus is rejected in his own home town (Freyne 2011:189).

Generally, families in villages lived in one room, though most families had more than one room. A family in this case should be understood as a patriarchal household with

the father as the head, wives and children; wives of married sons are included here as well (Stambaugh & Balch 1986:84). Depending on how large the house was, extended families shared one room, however, it was common for each family to have their own room.

The synagogues in the villages were obviously used for religious services, which members of a village community frequently attended, nevertheless, the synagogues were also used as halls to address community matters. Contrary to the synagogues in the cities, village synagogues belonged to the whole community (Stambaugh & Balch 1986:85).

In villages, lived peasants who farmed for a living; just as their ancestors did. For them the values of kingship and loyalty played a significant role. During the time of Hasmonaean, they shared the conquered lands to some Jewish peasants, in return; the peasants had to serve in the army during the time of war (Stambaugh & Balch 1986:91). Other lands remained as royal lands, which was leased for cultivation to those who had no land (Stambaugh & Balch 1986:91).

The destruction of the Maccabean stated by Pompey, had horrific consequences on village live. It was this destruction that also lead to the first Jewish war against the Romans (Stambaugh & Balch 1986:91). Thereafter, the Romans separated the Greek cities of Samaria and the Transjordan from Judea which eventually left many Jewish peasants without any land (Stambaugh & Balch 1986:91). From here onwards large portions of land remained as royal land and in the hands of the elite.

When Jewish Palestine became subjects of the Roman empire in 63 BC, particularly when they took over Judea, it resulted in more landless (Carter 2013:56). This was so, because, when the Romans got into power they also among others things abolished the constitution made by the Hasmoneans (Hatina 2013:477). The Roman apprehension of Jerusalem, marked the end of the Judean freedom. The severity of this is evidently seen in the lament of Josephus who was a Jewish historian; "for this misfortune which befall Jerusalem Hyrcanus and Aristobulus were responsible because the dissension. For we lost our freedom and became subject to Romans and the territory which we had gained by our arms and taken from the Syrians we were compelled to give back to them" (Carter 2013:67).

The conquest had the greatest impact on the peasant-subsistent farmers. The Roman rule was characterized by its greed, exploitation and enforcement of servitude as recurring experiences for Judeans, as a result the cost of imperial powers was paid through the production and labour of small farmers, craft people and traders (Carter 2013:68). The Romans kept their power through the use of military power, which was very important as this ensured that there was no one who would raise against them (Carter 2013:70). The presences of the military force also reminded subjected people of who their ruler was.

Fraud, robbery, forced imprisonment or labour, beatings, inheritance disputes and forcible removal of rent are all reflected in the village life in the Gospel of Mark. Widows, old parents with their children, parents with abnormal children, the very young and very old, those with sickness or deformities were the most common victims (Rohrbaugh 2008:154).

Only a hand full of peasants could afford professional physicians, because of that, they relayed on different traditional healers (Rohrbaugh 2008:154). Generally, children were the first people to experience illness, of which many of them never lived till adulthood. By the age of thirty, the majority of peasants struggled with internal parasites, rotting teeth and bad eyesight, since most of them lived with protein deficiency (Rohrbaugh 2008:154).

One of the greatest impacts on the lives of the people was seen during the reign of Herod, who demanded Peasants to pay tribute to Roman, as well as pay taxes which supported the different building projects he had. The expenses of villagers could be summarized as follows; tax, rent, principle and interest loans (Stambaugh & Balch 1986:92).

Characteristics of peasant subsistent farmers

Due to the conditions of living among peasant subsistent farmers in particular, the "chronic politically-induced poverty" as Oakman (2008:140) would phrase it, the peasants the show certain characteristics, attitudes and values within their communities.

Peasant subsistent farmers did not only work for agricultural food only, but they also made their own clothing, sandals, modest tools and built their own houses. Contrary to the elite, who bought the above mentioned. Particularly for the elite, held speciality in the produce of pottery, glass receptacles, metal tools and weaponry. However, they always shamed individuals that used their hands for work (Oakman 2008:101).

Peasants generally perceived goods of life as a limited supply, though they were responsible for the produce. This kind of a perception is according to Oakman (2008:141), in line with the 'zero-sum nature of peasant economics'. Which basically suggests that; if an individual gain's more, that gain is at the expensive of another, who would have loss. The result of such a view is 'institutionalized envy' of the settlement. This means that no peasant can progress towards wealth without experiencing village envy. This envy was followed by detrimental gossip, which would eventually pressurise the succeeding peasant to share (Oakman 2008:141). Perhaps this pressure should be considered a method that encourages redistribution.

Peasants had low motivation drive towards success in life, since it was a norm that any gain they had was taken away from them by the powerful (Oakman 2008:141). This way of living was accompanied by stress of not been able to independent. In an attempt to be independent, they had to learn how be content with the little that they had, because they are grouped along kingship lines, the notion of generosity was a way of life, hand in hand with reciprocity (Oakman 2008:149).

Another characteristic of peasants was their ability provide hospitality. There is a lot of evidence that points towards peasants providing hospitality towards outsiders as a regulation. It should be noted that outsiders were treated with suspicion and mistrust, because outsiders frequently dishonoured the interest of the village community (Oakman 2008:149). Finally, we should note that peasants produced for feeding and not for profitable reasons, for them self-sufficiency and produce for survival purposes within the household was important (Oakman 2008:167).

4.4.2 Economical setting

The word economics "refers to the production of goods and services, the distribution of these goods and services among members of society and the consumption of goods

and services" (fiensy 2010:195). Important to note about the economics of antiquity; the economics also included human labour, as well as aspects of who benefits the most of the produced goods. The economic historian Karl Polanyi suggests that; the word economy could be understood from two points of views; on one hand, the view that understands economics as substantive, with a sole purpose of providing for the needs of an individual, a family or tribe. On the other, a formal economics which refers to logical selections between rare means in the quest of human end (Oakman 2008:98). Although both of these can be applied to ancient economics, the first is more plausible to antiquity, since for them economics referred to the management of the household. Important to note; a household could also be used in a broader sense by referring to the management of large estates or imperial realms (Oakman 2008:98). Economics was stamped by the following descriptors; agrarian, aristocratic and the peasant (Fiensy 2010:195).

However, before going into detail on these descriptors, it is vital that I highlight the two central elements of the ancient economy: firstly, was the notion of reciprocity, which basically was about giving favours and returning the favour back. Secondly, was the notion of redistribution, which was basically about giving back obtain goods (Myers 2008:48). This is what Stambaugh and Balch (1986:63) refer to as the social relation of economics. In the economy of social relation, individuals offered assistance to each other, reciprocity. Hospitality was offered to friends who travelled from a different village or town, gifts were frequently exchanged and associations with powerful families were made (Stambaugh & Balch 1986:63). The associations with powerful families was based on the notion that the powerful families needed poorer families for political support, while the poorer families depended on the powerful families for protection, gifts and loans, whenever needed (Stambaugh & Balch 1986:63).

While reciprocity was more clan based, redistribution was more neural, and it usually centred around shrines or temples. More often than any other society unit, priestly groups employed individuals to work on the temple lands. The harvest was later redistributed to those who worked the lands and those who worked off the land in the temple (Myers 2008:49).

To return to the economy descriptors; an agrarian economy is depended on land possession and ranch generation consequently, the only way to gain wealth was by

obtaining as much land as possible (Fiensy 2010:195). Although, this is also true for modern people, wealth making today is not solely dependent on obtained land. These societies were largely controlled by monarchs who obtained and kept power through their military resources. These Monarchs implemented their will on subjects for the purpose of self-enrichment normally through brute force. The landowners often had access to better farming equipment and a diversity in labour, therefore, the possibility for a surplus on production was always present. However, the surplus was frequently taken away from the labourers by their rulers (Fiensy 2010:195).

Next is the Aristocratic society. These includes individuals who never worked directly on the fields, however, largely benefited from the fields by controlling the surplus produced (kautsky 1982:80). Generally, these individuals lived in cities as 'absent landlords' who claimed rent and taxes from peasants in small villages (Fiensy 2010:196). Rohrbaugh (2008:145) states that; "since this group of people was the only group with disposable income, they constituted the only group with real Market in the ancient economy. The literacy rate among them was high, in certain places even the women were educated, they managed the writings, coinage, taxation, military and judicial systems. Their control was strongly legitimated by religious and educational bureaucracy (Rohrbaugh 2008:145). It is estimated that about 10 percent of the population lived in urban centres, while the rest stayed in different small villages in agrarian societies (Fiensy 2010:196).

Finally, are the peasants, who are directly linked to the agrarian society. Other scholars suggest that; peasant is another way of referring to agrarian. Peasants were individuals who lived in small villages and farmed the fields. As indicated above their surplus was taken forcefully by their rulers to improve their standard of living and redistributed it to individuals in the cities who did not farm (Fiensy 2010:197). Peasants and the elite understood the land in very different ways; for the elite the land was a source of income, while the peasants saw the land as a source of survival; a means to feed their household (Fiensy 2010:197).

Myers (2008:51) further notes that; Peasants who had land to work on, had three objectives, which did not include profit making. Firstly, they needed to produce enough to avoid starvation, secondly, they needed to put aside a bit of the harvest, which was to be used as seed in the following planting season. Finally, there was need for a little

extra to cover the needs of reciprocity and the redistribution systems (Myers 2008:51). Those that owned land, laboured on the land as a family unit, which meant family bonding. The loss of land also meant the loss of family bonds. Furthermore, having land gave assurance to having food, since day workers and farm slaves were always at risk of losing their food products (Fiensy 2010:198).

These small land owners had to pay land tax and tribute to the empire. Those who farmed on land, which did not belong to them had to pay rent (Myers 2008:52). Taxes and tributes in the economics of antiquity were part of the economic structure of consumption and distribution. Tribute was payments made to foreign powers, while taxes was payments made to local authorities (Downs 2013:163). Peasants used their surplus to pay for these expenses, while these payments sponsored the comfortable life style of the elite and fed landless merchants, craftsman and day workers in the cities (Fiensy 2010:198). Additionally, to these different expenses was the different poll taxes and tariffs levied upon the small farmer, when they desired to sell their goods in the city market (Myers 2008:52). This made it impossible to come out of poverty. A number of individuals had to live with a financial burden. This burden can be equated to a yoke on a donkey. Cassidy (2001:9), summaries the different types of taxes that were collected in antiquity; capitation taxes, taxes on land, taxes on produce and animals, taxes on professions and occupation, sales taxes, taxes involving the priests and temples, custom taxes and transit taxes.

Since land produced food and was a source of wealth, land was very important, regularly peasants were exploited, which often resulted in them losing their land. Those that had large land often used slaves to cultivate the land under the management of a steward. The steward was a slaves who showed more loyalty and management skills than the rest (Stambaugh & Balch 1986:68). At times small portions of land were given to landless farmers with a rent agreement (Stambaugh & Balch 1986:68). It is estimated that almost half of the peasants' harvest was taken as rent at times (Myers 2008:52). Furthermore, it is generally assumed that from the time of Herod, the political economy ensured that more land was under the control of the elite. This was done by means of imposing high taxes and debts mechanism, which eventually left many landless (Downs 2013:160).

It is also wealthy noting that; in the rural economy as shown in the different gospels, it seems that the making of bread was limited to individual homes, whilst in cities it was formal bakeries that produced bread (Stambaugh & Balch 1986:69).

Debts

Another important factor was the issues of money lending. Money lending played a big role in ancient economies, since it gave poor people an opportunity to survive on one hand, while on the other hand, it kept the elite in the position of power. Money lending was a system in which the rich become richer and poor become poorer. Often times friends borrowed money from friends when needed, as part of their reciprocal duty, however, more frequently the elite played the role of money lenders as they had plenty (Stambaugh & Balch 1986:72). The rich gave loans to their dependents and clients as part of their communal relationship among them. Critical to note is that; under the Greek, Roman and Oriental law, creditors were allowed to perpetually enslave or repossess property of debtors who were unable to pay back loans (Stambaugh & Balch 1986:73).

Oakman (2008:11-12) notes that; debt in antiquity was a formal manifestation of the relation between dependency and duty. Although, the notion of reciprocity and social impartiality in the Graece-Roman and Jewish customs encouraged hope for 'horizontal relation' in the society, more often the imbalances of power and wealth led in fact to 'vertical relations' of supremacy and oppression.

The debt relationships can range from micro spaces of friendship to macro spaces such as political relationships. Given that debts could at times play the role of creating friendship bonds or strengthen political relation in antiquity, for the peasants it was a form of brutal compulsion and a sort of oppression (Oakman 2008:13). The cancelation of debt was from time to time experienced as a progressive symbol of the disappointed, which was generally joined by an interest for redistribution of land that was taken away as a result of debt (Oakman 2008:13).

The following factors could be referred to as the general cause of debts among people: the cost of rent, tithes and taxes imposed on people. Before the Romans took over Palestine, the people generally had to pay taxes and tithes only to the state and the

so called 'old aristocracy', which referred to the priests. With the Roman occupation another tax burden was added, which was to be paid to the so called 'new aristocracy'. The new aristocracy referred to the Herodian's and the procurators (Oakman 2008:23).

Beside the expenses that individuals had to face, the root cause of debts among peasants can be traced to a bad harvest. What would happen in this cause, the tax collectors would only advance credit with the condition that the debt is secured through property (Oakman 2008:24). In the case were the debtor was unable to pay off his debt, which was highly possible, and debtor had land, the land was sold to pay off the debt or was transferred to the creditor to settle the debt (Oakman 2008:27). In a situation where the debtor does not own land, the debtor was either imprisoned or enslaved. Imprisonment was a strategy used by creditors to persuade debtors to use hidden wealth or persuade the family members to the redeem the debtor (Oakman 2008:28).

An important factor to also note is the fact that; indebtedness threatened the availability of goods and services. What debts do is to disrupt the social order to supply the daily bread. The social order suggests that supply should meet the demand within a household, with debts the supply meets the demand of creditors (Oakman 2008:31). A close look on the ministry of Jesus indicates that; numerous times in his proclamations he hinted towards a situation in which debts are to be abolished (Oakman 2008:32). Take for example Acts 20:35; a text in which we are reminded of the teachings of Jesus; 'it is more blessed to give than to receive'. In the context of indebtedness, one could suggest that the writer encourages those with plenty to give as opposed lending. Oakman (2008:32) notes that although Jesus did not have an organised revolutionary movement that could be branded, his idea of liberty through the coming rule of God openly confronted the fundamental elements of the Roman order in Palestine and appealed a following of people oppressed by debts.

4.4.3 Political setting

Before a discussing the politics of that time, it is critical to underscore that the ancients did not regard themselves in individual terms like modern people do. People were rather embedded in others; either in the name of the head of the household, or by the

geographical location, or an immediate relative or even in a powerful patron (Hanson & Oakman 2008:65). As a result, the survival of individuals or households was almost always dependent on who one was associated with.

The networks of relation were two sided; at one side was the patrons. Patrons were individuals who were regarded as elite, their duty as patrons was to provide benefits to other individuals at a personal level, because of the combination of higher powers, authority, rank and wealth the patron possessed. These benefits were not freely given, the patron after providing these benefits anticipated to receive honour, information and political support from the benefiter (Hanson & Oakman 2008:65).

The benefiters were called clients, they were people of a lessor status, who were indebted and devoted to their patrons over a certain time frame (Hanson & Oakman 2008:65). The gap between the elite and the lay people was so far apart because of the hierarchical structure of power. Consequently, the patronage system functioned as system that enabled the elite to gain more honour and status, acquire and hold political offices, increase power and influence and gain more wealth (Hanson & Oakman 2008:66).

The patronage could take the form of physical defence against adversaries, support in a legal case, provide food, money, citizenship, work and appoint individuals to particular official offices, as well as provide tax exemption (Hanson & Oakman 2008:66). The system in villages operated at a micro-level of relationship and at Macro-level outside a village among rulers and states. For example, the Roman emperor who was the most powerful patron in the Roman empire grant citizenship (Hanson & Oakman 2008:68).

In antiquity, politics and economics were closely related. In fact, frequently, the ancient economy was referred to as a political economy. It was a political economy because of two particular reasons: firstly, the economy was based upon forced extraction of goods through heavy taxes, which continued to channel agricultural resources out of the provinces to supply the city of Rome and its imperial administration (Oakman 2008:74). Secondly, it stimulated a flow of goods that fundamentally aided only the elites and their representatives (Oakman 2008:74).

While it was important for the elite to associate themselves with foreign powers depending on the situation, the peasantry had nothing to gain from the continuous change of alliances. Instead, the peasants perceived these acts as disadvantageous to them; the elite continued to bargain with foreign powers at the expense of the peasants (Hanson & Oakman 2008:81). Because of this; peasants frequently rebelled against their rulers, however, rebellion here should not be understood as a 'pre-political act'. It should be understood that peasants did not rebel as an attempt to create a political reform, rather, it was a way to respond against the economic exploitation, occupation of foreign military powers, as well as the introduction of new and increased taxes, to mention a few (Hanson & Oakman 2008:81).

One of the most common ways alienated workers responded was through 'social banditry'. This normally happened when individuals had been suppressed and forced out of their land and village, because of extremely high tax, or were forced to sell their land or their land was confiscated from them by the elite. In response they would form social bandits in reaction to their living condition (Hanson & Oakman 2008:81). Economic factors like server drought and increased interests charged on money borrowed, which eventually increased the people's indebtedness also played in increased banditry groupings. Political factors such as the exploitation of power by Roman administrators and the deteriorating legitimacy of both high-priestly and Herodian authority and the irregularity of Roman governors should also be considered as factor that led to increased bandit's groupings (Horsley 1995:264).

Bandits often occupied frontier areas. Frontier areas where places that where characterized with a form of sustained disorder and disturbances. As such it would make sense for displaced people to stay in such areas (Horsley 1995: 261). These individuals regularly invade and stole from the locals and the imperial elites to survive (Hanson & Oakman 2008:81). Interesting is that although Jesus was not a social bandit, he is frequently associated with social bandit, he was even crucified between two social bandits (Mark 15:27). By running away from the villages and staying in isolated areas they rebelled against the rulers. In these newly occupied areas, the individuals did as they pleased, with no one to rule of them, Horsley (1995:265) reports that rebellion by social bandits was not revolutionary.

When the elite noticed that peasants continued to form bandit societies, the elite responded to this through crucifixion. This was a method the elite used to handle cases of bandits and rebellion (Hanson & Oakman 2008:85). Crucifixion was an act of disgrace, torture and execution, devised to deal with individuals who were considered as intimidating to the established exploitative way of life and the interest of the elite (Hanson & Oakman 2008:86). The sole purpose was to create fear in the hearts of other peasants, who would try to form bandit groupings, as an attempt disrupt the status quo. Those captured because of rebellion or theft were tortured before been crucified, through flogging, burning or piercing, thereafter, were walked to their death carrying the cross-beam, walking in disgrace through the streets and then nailed to the cross (Hanson & Oakman 2008:81).

The Politics of first-century Palestine must be comprehended in light of its control by Roman interests. The various areas of Palestine were progressively controlled by Roman client-rulers, regents and procurators (Hanson & Oakman 2008:89). Contrary to modern politics, ancient politics operated in the interests of only the elite ruler and their retainers. The rule was ranked, from aristocratic on the top and the peasants at the bottom with nothing to say in the process (Hanson & Oakman 2008:89). In order for the elite to maintain their status and to protect their interests the system of patronage was fundamental on one hand. On the other, with limited resources among the lower-class, they needed to associate themselves to a powerful patron. Thus, creating beneficial networks. It is these networks that give patrons more honour and influence and the client with access to goods and services (Hanson & Oakman 2008:89).

The Jewish war

Because of my pre-70 dating of the Gospel of Mark, as opposed to looking at the entire history of the Roman rule, this last section of chapter three will only look at the events that took place in and around the time to which Mark was written. Specifically, I shall highlight the events of the Jewish-Roman war, which eventually led to the fall of the temple.

Like any other war that took place in past, there are events which acted as building blocks towards the actual war. Equally with the Jewish-Roman, the outbreak of the

war was preceded by numerous events involving different towns and groups, different degrees of violence and different factions both within Jewish and non-Jewish societies. The following are the main events that have been recorded as building blocks toward the war.

Firstly, is the increased Jewish hostility towards Florus which led to a protest, when the Roman legate Cestius in Syria was accompanied by Florus to Jerusalem during the Passover season. Florus was known for his oppressive rule (Hays & Mandell 1998:181). It is recorded that during his visit to in Jerusalem with Cestius, multitudes crowded around them criticising Florus and demanding that he be removed from his political position, thus, setting the people from his oppression free. Florus in response Mocked the people's protest on one hand and on the other Cestius like any good Politian would have done, promised the protestors that their request will be considered. Evidently, it was Cestius response and lack of action in response to the jeering Jewish crowds that paved way for following events (Hays & Mandell 1998:181).

Secondly, was the civic chaos at Caesarea. The resentments and fights that had described the relationship between Jews and non-Jews in Caesarea eventually turned into a massive violence. Furthermore, Nero's judgement against the Jews was seemingly understood as tolerating anti-Jewish conducts in the city (Hays & Mandell 1998:181).

Thirdly, was the temple treasury incident. In this incident it is said that the Jews were unable to pay their tributes to Caesar for a while, which left them in great debts. In response to the fall back in payments, it is recorded that; Florus was sent to Jerusalem and obtained seventeen talents from the Jerusalem temple treasury. This action taken by Florus was what resulted in a Roman-Jewish confrontation (HayS & Mandell 1998:182). Additionally, When Florus heard about the insults towards him because of his response towards the temple treasury's failure to pay tribute, he personally went to Jerusalem and held a court hearing demanding that he be given the men who had insulted him. What followed was a command to his soldiers to loot the city market and nearby areas, many people were captured, terrorised and crucified (Hays & Mandell 1998:182). Important to note is a comment by Josephus, who reports that; "Florus proceeded to do what no one had ever done, namely; to scourge before his tribunal

and nail to the cross man of equestrian rank, man who if Jewis by birth were at least invested with that Roman dignity" (Hays & Mandell 1998:182).

Fourthly, was the rebel capture of Palestinian strongholds. The rising strength of mobs and rebel units in the countryside ultimately led to their capture of vital strongholds (Hays & Mandell 1998:183). The following event was caused by the termination of Imperial sacrifices. In Jerusalem the traditional sacrifices offered in the temple on behalf of the Roman state were stopped by priestly movements under the leadership of the captain of the temple (Hays & Mandell 1998:184). According to Josephus' report sacrifices offered for the emperor twice a day of two lams and a bull was the basis of the war with the Romans (Hays & Mandell 1998:184). Finally, the Roman aggressive reactions. This aggressive action was triggered by the news that to emperor Nero who at the time was in Achaia that the Jews conquered Cestius (Hays & Mandell 1998:190).

It should be noted that; there are many other events that led to the war, however, the above mentioned are the major events. All events cannot be mentioned because of the limited space in this study. However, the above are sufficient for the purpose of this chapter; which is the draw a picture of what was happening during the composition of the gospel of Mark. The Romans were unable to reconcile with the Jews concerning crucial matters, instead, they purposefully provoked the Jews, for example Caligula' attempt to erect his statue in the Jewish temple (Brandon (1951:155).

Although from the above, it seen as though religious conflicts was what led to the war, other factors should also be considered. Brandon (1951:155-156) notes that economic factors also played a role. He notes that the ancients largely depended on agriculture for a living. The successful production of food through agricultural means was solely dependent on the sustenance of harmony and good order. However, the Romans were unable to provide this; the taxations were high, the rulers were unjust and greedy, and the security provided was little (Brandon 1951:156).

The news of the revolt and mainly of the slaughter of the Romans garrison at Jerusalem had a catastrophic consequence for the Jewish populace of Caesarea. The response to the news was most violent and a complete genocide of the Jews succeed (Brandon 1951:158). The bloody act naturally provoked Jewish retaliations. The

gentile cities of Philadelphia, Sebonitis, Gerasa, Pella, Scythopolis, Gadara, Hippos, Kedesa, Ptolemais, Gaba and of the district of Gaulonitis were attacked, the neighbouring Syrian villages were laid waste and without doubt gentiles throughout Palestine mostly perished as victims of Jewish prejudice (Brandon 1951:158).

In the spring of the year 67 the fate of the Jews changed, in that year it is recorded that Vespasian arrived in Palestine with three legions and a strong body of supplementary troops (Brandon 1951:161). During this time the Jews had a number of fortified cities, so this was not going to be an easy battle. Because the Jews did not have as much men power, they resorted in fighting from their stronghold. In response to this, Vespasian saw it imperative to reduce provincial Palestine before attacking the heart of the rebellion (Brandon 1951:162).

An important aspect about the Jewish war, is to understand that the zealots did not arise against the Romans because they had the military power and resource to defeat them, rather it was probably because of their remembrance of how the Lord God delivered their forefathers from the hands of the Egyptians (Brandon 1951:159).

4.5 Conclusion

As shown in the discussion above, I am in agreement with scholars who have a pre 70 AD dating of Mark, particularly because the Markan Jesus predicts the distraction of the temple, however, Mark does not mention the fulfilment of the prediction. Furthermore, I have shown that Mark could not have been produced in Rome, since Marks narrative is predominantly in a village setting. I then discussed how village life was; socially, economically and politically. Based on the findings in the above discussion It can be established that the audience of Mark was suffering under foreign oppressive rule. In the following chapter using this information as a background. In chapter 4 I examine the Gospel of Mark as a political book and provide a social political reading of Mark 5:1-20 using the theory amending social canopies.

Chapter Five

5. Interpretation of Mark using Jean Comaroff's Anthropological theory

5.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the story of the Gerasene demonic found in Mark 5:1-20, using Jean Comaroff's theory as described in chapter two, to explain the notions of demon possession and exorcism.

Comaroff's theory of amending social canopies rests on the idea that when people are born, they have a worldview that is shaped by geographical locations, religious and culture beliefs, and political situations in which they find themselves in. This worldview is called an 'ordered cosmology' (Comaroff 1980:643). The ordered cosmos is subject to disruption. The disruption is what Comaroff calls 'affliction' (Comaroff 1980:643). The only way to solve the problem of affliction is to; firstly, identify the 'affliction' in terms of metaphors of opposition and the latter is sometimes imagined in spiritual terms such as demon possession. In this case, demon possession could be regarded as a metaphor of that which the community struggles to explain and exterminate. Since the problem shutters and fractures the normal meaning making processes, symbolic language is engaged to explain it. The Language of demonology and possession provides both the language to explain the trauma associated with the presence of the haunting, strange and oppressive situation. Equally the ritual of exorcism is regarded as an attempt to amend the fractured or disrupted worldview. This is done by engaging in symbolic practices. In this case exorcism is the symbolic practice.

All together the theory of amending social canopies dictates that, a picture of a perfect world is drawn. From this picture, what was broken and what is being symbolically amended should be identified. In this chapter I shall apply the theory of amending canopies to Mark 5:1-20; by identifying the broken place of Gadara and its political condition under the empire, broken households and social ties, broken bodies and

displacements, and illustrating how exorcism in the story symbolically amends these conditions.

5.2 Structure of Mark 5:1-20

A narrative redaction approach reveals that the story of the Gerasene demoniac Mark 5:1-20 falls within a series of four miracles, positioned near the sea. The series begins in Mark 4.35 when Jesus calms the violent wind and waves, as they cross over to the other side –into gentile territory. The story moves swiftly to the second miracle, which is the focus for this study; Mark 5:1-20, the last two miracles are inserted together and happen in Jewish territory after their return from the land of the gentiles. Jesus is approached by a synagogue ruler known as Jairus; whose daughter was sick to the point of death (Mk. 5:21-24). However, while Jesus is on his way to attend to Jairus' daughter, the flow of the narrative is disturbed by a woman known to have an issue of blood (Mk. 5:25). Her healing is unique; she only touches the edge of Jesus' garment and she is immediately healed. After the third miracle the narrative returns to the daughter of Jairus; Jesus continues to the house of Jairus and heals the girl (Mk. 5:35-43).

Iverson (2007:24) argues that the way the four miracles are placed, reveals a thematic progression that showcases the power and authority that Jesus possesses over different natural and supernatural occurrences. The arrangement of miracles suggests that no power, whether nature, evil spirits, sickness or even death can withstand God's agent, Jesus. It further, suggests that even traditional religious boundaries cannot also stop the mission of Jesus (Iverson 2007:24).

The last three miracles have something in common; they all have to do with Jewish culture, regarding cleanness. In performing these miracles, Iverson (2007:24) remarks that Jesus runs the risk of being considered as unclean by entering unclean lands to heal the man with a legion of unclean spirits. He is also touched by a woman who was unclean and finally he is in connect with a deceased girl.

All these four miracles are connected in one way or the other; the first miracle story ends with the disciples wandering and questioning one another; "what kind of a man is he that even the winds and the waves obey him" (Mk. 4:41). Although the disciples

are not answered immediately, as one would expect; the answer to their question is answered in the second miracle. The legion of demons brings to the disciples the revelation of what kind of a man he is; Jesus is the 'son of the most-high God' (Mk.5:7). So, the first two miracles relive who Jesus is. How are the last two connected to the first two? Iverson (2007:24) suggest that the healing of the woman with the issue of blood and the resurrecting of the daughter of Jairus are significant, as they reveal that the presence of God is vigorously at work in Jesus.

I turn now to the microstructure. Iverson (2007:25), notes that the intentionality of the larger narrative can clearly be seen as well in the microstructure of Mark 5:1-20. Accordingly, the stylized story includes an introduction (Mk.5:1-5), a body (Mk. 5:6-17) and a conclusion (Mk.18-20). The literary structure of the story forms a chiasm, with the formula, A B C B A:

(A) Introduction: the possessed man Approaches Jesus (5:1-5)

   (B) Jesus' encounter with the possessed man (5:6-10)

      (C) The Episode involving the herd of pigs (5:11-14a)

   (B) Jesus encounter with the community people (5:14b-17)

(A) Conclusion: The restored man approaches Jesus (5:18-20)

what appears at the center of the scene is the cleansing of the possessed man and the subsequent destruction of the swine.

The above pericope is often categorized as an exorcism narrative, however, many recognize that it does not follow the typical pattern of an exorcism narrative (Guelich 1989:273). Apart from its intense details which instigated other commenters like Dibelius and Grundman to see the pericope as a tale 'novella'; the use of the adjuration formula by the evil spirit –Legion rather than the exorcists –Jesus (Mk. 5:7), the odd position of the dismissal (Mk.5:8), the unusual banishment (Mk. 5:13) and the irregularity of the description, suggests that the story is more complex than an ordinary exorcism story (Guelich 1989:273). Consequently, numerous scholars suggest that this complex story is a mixture or expansion of traditions that commenced with an

original exorcism story, which was later transformed into a mission story (Guelich 1989:273).

5.3 Interpreting Mark 5:1-20 from Comaroff' amending social canopy theory

The story in Mark 5:1-20 is made up of 3 scenes, as indicated in the structural analysis above. The scenes divide in the following manner: the first scene which tells the condition of the main character –the Gerasene demoniac, verses 1-5. The second scene is the casting out of the demon; that is the actual miracle; verses 6-14b. The last scene is around the response of the community people, verses 14b-17. The narrative concludes with a command from Jesus to the freed man fulfils the command in verse 18-20 (Thurston 2002:61). What follows this is a verse by verse exegesis of the text.

 Verse 1

The story of the healing of the demon-possessed man, opens with a confrontation of a man possessed with an evil spirit. A comparison of the different exorcism stories in all the gospels review that; Mark's narrative particularly chapter 5:1-20, comprises more details and embellishment than any other single incident in the gospels preceding to the trail narrative. For Myers (2008:190) this story unwraps another set of powerful symbolic actions in his ministry of liberation.

Concerning the Location: The events of the story take place in the 'region of the Gerasenes'. The City of Gerasa was one of the ten cities of the Decapolis, which was found across the Jordan in the territory ruled by Phillip (Perkins 1995:582).

This apparent place, where the miracle took place is seen by many commenters as problematic. The city of Gerasa was approximately thirty miles southeast of the seaside locale implied in the story. In the text, the events seemly take place at the seaside (Mk. 5:2). The actual geographical location Gerasa and the geographical location to which the events took place do not much up, since between Gerasa the actual city and the sea; is a two days' journey on foot (Edwards 2002:390). This then renders the information in verse 13 questionable. With the distance between the sea

and the village of Gerasene, it would be impossible for the of pigs to rush down into the sea (Beavis 2011:93).

Myers (2008:190) attempts to solve this problem by suggesting that; perhaps, Mark was not concerned with the accuracy of the geographical location, rather, he desired to simply establish the concept of the 'other side of the sea', as a gentile socio-symbolic space, thus, Mark recognized the realm around Gerasa, which forms part of what was known as the Decapolis (Mk 5:20). The term Decapolis is a Hellenistic region given a generic designation, which refers to 'ten cities or towns' (Myers 2008:190). In agreement with Myers, Beavis (2011:93) argues; the exact location is not a matter of concern here, rather that the ministry of Jesus had expended into gentile spaces, that were prominent by political, social, cultural and religious similarities with Greco-Roman culture. For Edwards (2002:391), when Mark mentions Gerasene, he does not refer to the city itself, rather to the region associated with Gerasa, which most likely would have been extended to the sea of Galilee.

Another matters that needs to be accounted for with regards to the location; is the different readings we find in the different Manuscripts; others speak of Gerasenes, and Gadarenes, while others Gergesenes. Why so many different readings as to where the events took place? Stock (1989:165), answers this by suggesting that; this was caused by the desire of the narrator to find a settlement closer to the sea. A study of the geography of the ancient time reveals that the place Gergese does not exist, which then leaves Gadara and Gerasa.

Although numerous scholars agree that Gerasa is the most plausible location for where the miracle took place, John (2001:85) suggests that the presence of the pigs which are depicted as running down into the sea, tempers with the plausibility of Gerasa as the most probable place. He thus suggests that considering the pigs; Gadara was likely the place the miracle took place. This argument is further strengthened by the fact that Gerasa is much further inlands in comparison to Gadara. For Edwards (2002:391), both Gerasa and Gadara are situated too far inland to be an appropriate site for the narrative. The only practical explanation for this misplacement was that the account in the beginning was associated with Gadara, however, because Gerasa became known as a region of Jewish revolt, which was brutally destroyed by the Roman military, Mark decided to locate the story there (John 2001:85-86).

A step further, by crossing over to the other side, Jesus was violating obstacles that separated Jews from Gentiles, in other words, the barriers between what was clean and unclean (Perkins 1995:582). Furthermore, the arrival of Jesus into gentile territory should be understood as a symbol of a new opening into a new feature of His ministry. Consequently, Mark uses the name of a chief place; Gerasa, of the district to emphasize the importance of this new advancement (Stock 1989:165). In line with the theory of amending social canopies, Jesus has identified a land with a broken canopy; the land is seen as unclean. In otherwise it is not in accordance to Jewish worldview. Unclean in this case should also be understood as broken or fractured. Although he violates Jewish expectation as Perkins (1995) would say, it is the only way to amend the land; he had to go there and clean –amend the land through exorcism.

Verse 2-5

Concerning the condition: In the following verses; 2-5, a description of the demoniacs living conditions is given. According to Edwards (2002:393) this is one of the most 'lamentable stories of human wretchedness' in both the Old Testament and the New Testament. The vocabulary used in this description is raw and brutal. The use of binding methods through chains and irons do not yield positive results; the chains and irons fail to subdue the demoniac (Edwards 2002:394).

A language of attempted failures and the use of harsh methods fits the context in which the text was produced; a context of war, as shown in the previous chapter. According to Perkins (1995:583) the living conditions of the man forms an 'antitype' to the civilized, Hellenistic city close by: as he lived like a wild animal among the dead and repeatedly injures himself, because all forms of human restraint, chains, cannot contain him. The demoniac is an antitype because he represents the living conditions of the people out there under the Roman rule.

The idea of repeated failed attempts – "no one could bind him", is used more than once by the writer in this pericope. This perhaps is a technique by the writer to place emphasis on the fact that the demoniacs condition was beyond human effort, thus the need for supernatural intervention. Even more true is the fact that the narrator wanted to bring the audience to remembrance of Mark 3:27, where the words; 'no one' and 'bind', are also found (Stein 2008:251). Adding to Stein's notion of the need for

'supernatural intervention', I see these failures as an indication that once a canopy is broken, human effort alone is not enough to amend it. There is need for a divine power: a kind of power that surpasses the laws of nature because in the first place it was not human effort that broke the canopy, but supernatural powers did.

Concerning the site: The features of the site in the narrative contribute to its unmistakably gentile character (Myers 2008:190). The demoniac' dwelling is among the tombs and the presence and role of the pigs denote impurity in unity to the Jewish cultural codes (Myers 2008:191). Stock (1989:166) notes that; since tombs in ancient times were thought of as a dwelling place of unclean spirits, symbolically, the tombs become a fitting place for the insane to dwell there. Thurston (2002:62) shares the same thought by stating; "tombs were primary hangout places for demons".

What renders the demoniac unclean is his relation to the tombs in accordance to the Old Testament Law, where any interaction with the dead defiled one for seven days. In Numbers 19: 11 "Whoever touches a human corpse will be unclean for seven days. 12 They must purify themselves with the water on the third day and on the seventh day; then they will be clean. But if they do not purify themselves on the third and seventh days, they will not be clean. 13 If they fail to purify themselves after touching a human corpse, they defile the Lord's tabernacle. They must be cut off from Israel. Because the water of cleansing has not been sprinkled on them, they are unclean; their uncleanness remains on them."

In line with the above text anyone who failed to cleanse themselves from the contamination of tombs, 'must be cut off from Israel'. Furthermore, the Torah teachings and rabbinic interpretation stretched uncleanness from contact with the dead to include contact with anything associated them; including their bier, mattress, pillow or tombs (Edwards 2002:395). Stein (2008:249) also states, the spirit is unclean because of the tombs and further adds that the spirit unclean because it is an evil demon.

Contrary to Edward's (2002) understanding of the implication of "unclean" above, Collins (2007:267) argues that the use of "unclean spirit" does not refer to gentile impurity. It cannot refer to gentile impurity, since the same term is used outside the context of gentiles –when Jesus heals the possessed man in the synagogue in Capernaum (Mk. 1:23,27). Collins (2007:267) furthermore notes that; it is also unlikely

that the uncleanness was as a result of its connection with the tombs. Adequately, the spirit is unclean because of its origin. Correctively, the connection of the tomb alludes to the fact that the man is possessed by the spirits of those who died out of violence (Collins 2007:267).

The language used to describe the binding methods is particularly interesting as it places emphasis on how extreme the condition of the man was. A closer look into the Greek indicates that the use of chains and irons to subdue the possessed man, in attempt to subjugate is more fitting for an aggressive animal than that of a person. The Greek word for "subdue" – δαμάσαι used by Mark is also used in James 3:7 when referring to the taming of a wild beast (Edwards 2002:394). The description about how the community people tried to help him, by binding him and their failure to do so, should be understood only as an emphasis on the extent of his condition (Stock 1989:166). Conclusively, after considering how the demoniac lived, what is clear is that; the objective of demon was to misrepresent and terminate the image of God in humans (Stock 1989:166). Within the same line of thought, I suggest that we understand the object of the demon as a mission to fracture the man' initial worldview (broken canopy) –by destroying the normal way of life and forcefully introducing a new way of life; that he and his immediate community members do not recognize –a life in the tombs, crying day and night while inflecting pain on self.

Given that the man was chained in the manner that one would chain a wild animal, this response only suggests that the man acted like an animal, as such Thurston (2002:62) is right in suggesting that; the man was 'mad'. He notes that in accordance to the Talmud one was only considered 'mad' if they had the following treats: 1. If they slept by grave, 2. If they continuously tear their clothes, 3. If they walk around at night, 4. If they destroy everything around them. What happens in verse 3-5 is a clear retrospective of the four signs of madness and an emphasis of the power that the demon had of the demoniac (Thurston 2002:62). For Collins (2007:267) as well, the vivid description is an indication that the demoniac was out of his senses and placed in isolation. I see this description as an indication of a broken canopy; that is to say, the narrator communicates to the readers what was broken.

Verse 6-8

At his arrival, Jesus has an encounter with the demoniac, who is said to be powerful that even chains and iron could not hold him. This is even more true if we consider the storm that almost killed them. The courage of Jesus should be commended, for the place that Jesus went to, was a place where no one would try or even think of going. By going there; Jesus infiltrates both the ritual wall of uncleanness and the intimidating reputation of the demoniac (Edwards 2002:369).

Jesus' encounter with demoniac: The content of verse 6 is frequently perceived as an editorial expansion, since it carries the same content of verse 2 –the meeting of Jesus and the demoniac. This technique is used by writers who deviate in order to return to the original line of thought (Collins 2007:267).

when the demon possessed man meets Jesus; the demon fell on its knees in front of him. From the description, the condition of the demoniac in verse 3-5, the reader is made aware that the man had no control over himself, consequently, Collins (2007:267) suggests that this submissive gesture is an act influenced by the unclean spirit. The Greek word προσεκύνησεν which translates to fall on their knees refers to; "prostrating oneself before a person to whom reverence, or worship is due" (Edwards 2002:367). It is also interesting to note that in this section –verse 6-7, the demoniac postured himself in a manner that express an attitude of submission yet in the first five verses he is portrayed as a powerful man who could not be subjugated yet alone him submitting to any one (Iverson 2007:27).

According to Collins (2007:267), the act of kneeling is an indication that the unclean spirit recognizes the power and status of Jesus. Similarly, Iverson (2007:28) notes that during the demons' encounter with Jesus, the demon abandons all attempts to use its own power to gain control. Instead, from the onset it recognizes that; it stands not a chance at fight with Jesus; for Jesus carries superior powers (Iverson 2007:28). Contrary to Iverson (2007:28) thought of 'falling on his knees' as a form of submission, Perkins (1996:583) and Edwards (2002:367), argue that; the nature of apparent submission somehow implies an effort by the demonic powers to stop Jesus from entering into the region. The following verse is evidence of this.

In verse 7 the submission without hesitation turns in confrontation: "what do you want with me, Jesus, Son of the most-high God? In God's name don't torture me!". A

universal point of view without digging deep; what we see here is a contradiction between the act bowing and what is said. If truly indeed the purpose of the bowing was to worship or to submit to the authority of Jesus, the demon would not have used interrogative language in a lay man' opinion. However, scholars have different views. For Beavis (2011:93) the calling of Jesus as "son of the most-high God" is a sort of praise. This praise is a defensive technique by the unclean spirit.

The question is like the question the unclean spirit asks Jesus in Mark 1:24. According to Collins (2007:268) in both scenarios the unclean spirit bids to control Jesus or resist Jesus by uttering his name and revealing knowledge of Jesus' identity.

Contrary to Collins (2007) and Beavis (2011), Stein (2008;253) argues that; for Mark the confrontational question is not an attempt to gain power, rather, it is a question that signifies subservience of the unclean spirit to Jesus. Consequently, this should be seen in a positive light, as its purpose in the gospel of Mark is to advance Mark's Christological message, making it impossible to reason; that the question was an attempt to prevent the exorcism. I strongly agree with Stein' understanding of the demon's confrontation. The amending of canopies is a power struggle between two forces; the two cannot co-exist. Only the power of Jesus can amend; the unclean spirit knows who Jesus is –a greater power, so there is no need for it to try and fight.

An observation on the demon's salutation to Jesus, strengthens the idea of a gentile settings. In contrast to Mark 1:24, where Jesus is called 'Jesus of Nazareth', here Jesus is called; 'son of the most God' (MK. 5:7), which is a Hellenistic designation, which is not found elsewhere in the New Testament except in Luke's writings and in Hebrews 7:1 (Myers 2008:191). Although, the use of that term is odd, Thurston (2002:62) suggests that it is an appropriate term for gentile territory and to be used by the unclean spirit.

The unclean spirit, concludes its confrontational speech in the following way: "I adjure you by God don't torture me!" (Mk. 5:7). Commenters note that in exorcism, the methodical term 'adjure' normally comes from the exorcist and directed to the spirt being cast out (Stein 2008:254). However, in this case the opposite take place; it is the demon that the adjure comes from, directed to Jesus. An attempts to reconstruct what the unclean spirit was trying to do by this adjuration have yield no results,

however, for Steins (2008:254) it is clear for the audience of Mark, that this adjuration is in consistency with verse 6. It therefore should be understood as a 'desperate plea' as opposed to an effort to put a curse on Jesus, like its purpose when used by an exorcist.

Stein (2008:254), further strengthens his agreement suggesting that the above argument is also structurally pleasurable. He notes that from chapter 1:1 – 4:41 Jesus is a place of superior power. Consequently, it would be unlikely that the audience of Mark would see the situation of Mark 5:7, as an "exorcist-demon". The demons request not to be tortured is an indication that; exorcism is painful or distressing for the unclean spirit (Collins 2007:268).

At this point is it clear that the demons have no power over Jesus, in a similar thought as Stein (2008:254), I see the request as a "desperate plea" from the unclean spirit, because in order for the amendment to take place, what was fractured has to be worked on –a revisal of events. Which means, in a similar manner in which the demoniac cried day and night injuring himself caused by the unclean spirit, Jesus should cause the unclean spirit to cry day and night. So, the pain from the demoniac is removed and given to the unclean spirits.

In verse 8 the unclean spirit is exorcized from the demoniac, only by means of an authoritative word, which further indicates the power that Jesus has over unclean spirits. Jesus possessed unique powers over unclean spirits that non ever possessed. Considering the following: The Greek magical papyri in Egypt to which enlightens of the long and complex formulas, spells, and catch-words that ancient exorcists used as they wrangled with demonic opponents to gain power over them. Similarly, Philostratus describes a long and involved conversation of Apollonius with a demon including empirical signs that the exorcism had been effective. Surprisingly, with Jesus there is no elaborate protocol, nor is there usefulness of the power to exorcism dependent on the words he utters. Rather the power to prevail over the demonic dwells within Jesus himself; He speaks, and the demons are expelled (Edwards 2002:399).

Verse 9-13

Concerning the political language: In verse 9 Jesus wrests with this powerful demonic horde, in the process its name is reviled; its name is legion. It is not unusual that Jesus asked the unclean spirit; what its name was, since this is a characteristic technique during exorcism (Collins 2007:268). By reviling the name of the unclean spirit, I propose that Jesus attempts to identify what was broken. Identifying what is broken is very important, as this determines whether the canopy can be amended. Perhaps this is why Jesus' first attempt to cast out the demon (amend the canopy) in verse 8, it did not work. He was amending something he did not know. However, in his second attempt after gaining knowledge of the name, the exorcism is successful.

The word 'legion' is a Latinism which could only have meant one thing for Marks social world: A division of Roman soldiers (Myers 2008:191). The name of the unclean spirit, shades light about the nature of the demoniac; the demoniac is not a 'split personality' but a 'multiple or shattered personality' equal to the number and force of the Roman legion occupying him (Edwards 2002:399).

Furthermore, the term 'Legion', is revelation that explains the demoniac's violent history. The term is a frightening reminder of the number, power and intention of the demons (Edwards 2002:399). The name also justifies for the demoniacs' unusual strength; the man was not possessed by one demon but by a legion of demons (Iverson 2007:28). Horsley (2001:140) suggests that it is most likely that the legion spoken of here is the same legion who in their latest experience would have numerous times confronted their communities without exhibiting mercy, burning their homes, killing and enslaving the people and taking their goods.

The term 'legion' creates a military imagery in the narrative, which can specifically be political but can broadly be seen as a social term. A close reading of the narrative in the Greek indicates that the story is filled with military language and imagery. It is the revelation that; the demon is legion; that signals that the rest of the story might have military language. Let's take for example the term used for "herd", such a term correctively cannot be used to refer to pigs. Myers (2008: 191), records that such a term is used for a 'bond of military workers'. Another word to ruminate on is "he dismissed them" – ἐπέτρεψεν which signifies a military command, regularly used when a commander of an army dismisses his soldiers. Finally, the phrase "run into", -

ὥρμησεν which denotes to troops rushing into battle and not animals (Myers 2008:191).

According to John (2001:86), the use of military language should be no shocker at all. He claims that the New Testament theology frequently makes very strong connotations between the present powers during a precise political period and supernatural power, who were held to stand behind them. John (2001) further explains that in some way the unconcealed identification between the evil powers and domination system of scribes and Pharisees are vacant in the gospel, an identification between the Roman power and supernatural powers, which control them can therefore be established (John 2001:86). The effect of the use of the term 'legion' echoes the destruction of people and property caused by the Roman rule. The notion that the writer attempts to establish is one of evil spirits being compared to the Roman legions (Perkins 1996:584). Other scholars like; Myers 1988, Theissen 1983 and Hollenbach 1981, further suggest that the use of military language is meant as a refutation of the imperial occupation in Palestine (Beavis 2011:93).

On the contrary, Collins (2007:270) recommends that we do not focus on anti-Roman themes, when addressing the military language of Mark. Consequently, he reckons that the purpose of the story is not –at least not predominantly- to make an assertion about the Romans, but to show how Jesus recued the demoniac from his predicament and reinstated him to a normal life. In other words, the story primarily serves the purpose of illustrating how Jesus amended the demoniacs canopy through exorcism.

Nonetheless, the political implications cannot simply be disregarded, as such Collins (2007:270) rightful places the political implication as serving a secondary purpose, considering the fact that it would be a culturally coherent move for the hearers to connect the kingdom of Satan with the Roman imperial rule and exorcism of Jesus with the restored kingdom of Israel.

In verse 10, Legion is now completely afraid of what Jesus will do to them. This fear is triggered by the new information that Jesus has. He now knows the name of the demon. According to Thurston (2002:62) 'to know is to have power over a person or a spirit'. This is a similar strategy that Legion used previously in vv.7 "what do you want

with me, Jesus, Son of the most-high God" (Mk.5:7), however, it did not work because Jesus carries superior power.

In compliance with the structure vv.10; "and he begged Jesus again and again not to send them out of the area" (Mk.5:10), can be connected to vv.5 "when they saw Jesus from a distance, he ran and fell on his knees in front of him". Horsley (2001:140) observes that the details of these verses was strategically placed by the writer to cultivate hope, suggesting that their liberation was near. He argues that; it is for the purpose of empowering the audience, particularly those that suffered under the Roman rule.

In vv.12 Legion has an odd request, they ask to be sent into the pigs as opposed to been sent into the open. The question of why they wanted to be sent in the pigs on one hand has proven difficult answer, while others simply ignore it; others can only speculate. Edwards (2002:399) suggests that; the request is probably because the demons felt that in the pigs, they were safer from the authority of Jesus (Edwards 2002:399). For Collins (2007:271) it is because the unclean spirits still want to remain in the region of Gerasene. On the other, there is need to interrogate why Jesus granted their request. Thurston (2002:62) notes that for ancients it was common knowledge that once a demon was cast out, the demon emitted their rage by causing chaos and damage around the community. Therefore, by allowing the demons to possess the pigs, Jesus avoids the potential chaos and damage. The demons cause the pigs to commit suicide. The compulsion to self-destruction they fuss in the man (Mk.5:5), comes to realization, when the pigs drown in the water, consequently, the legion joined the demons that caused the storm, who also were cast out in the previous pericope (Thurston 2002:62).

In vv.13, legion is sent into the pigs as per request. Notice the number of pigs which is recorded was two thousand and the capacity of legion, which was estimated at six thousand man do not much. This inconsistency suggests that the verse was probably a later addition. Whether the verse was a later addition or not, has proven to be problematic for many commenters. In an attempt to solve the mystery behind the inconsistency, commenters suggest that; perhaps the one liable for the insertion had in mind the military unit of *tole* –'battalion', in the incarceration of Jerusalem in 37 BC. Accordingly, the strength of a *telos* was about 2000 men. Consequently, the original

continuation of verse 11 was verse 14 and the herd of swine was only added for consistency purposes, since the swineherds had seen what had happened (Stock 1989:167).

Legion has left the man and had drowned. The request of Legion needs to be examined; it is most likely that Legion requested to be sent into the pigs for survival purposes. Such a suggestion is consistent to its behavior from the start. What we have here is two things: on one hand, seemly Legion was unable to foresee the outcome of their request. On the other Jesus grants their request because he foresaw the outcome. According to Collins (2007:271) by granting permission to enter into the pigs Jesus indirectly sends Legion into the sea. There Legion cannot harm humanity. Even more true is that Jesus has sent them into their proper dwelling. In this context the sea is symbolic of the 'abyss' or 'sheol', which is the home of demons.

By permitting Legion to go into the pigs, I propose that Jesus strategical kills two birds with one stone; he cast the unclean spirit out and there after cast the unclean animals from the land. Jesus amends the man's canopy by casting Legion out and he amends the land by allowing Legion into the pigs which results into their death.

Verse 14-17

The next scene of the story is centered around the response of the locals towards what just happened during the exorcism. The report that the swine heads had taken to the people, ordered everyone around the surrounding areas to go witness what had happened. What they see is surprising; the man who was once a lunatic and is no longer a lunatic. The people found him settled and dressed up in his right mind; the depiction that is drawn here is that of discipleship and salvation –A restored individual sitting at the feet if Jesus (Edwards 2002:332).

In verse 15, the phrase; "sitting there, clothed and in his right mind", in the Greek is phrased with a series of three participles which marks the emphasis of the features, which absorbed the attention of those who arrived at the scene (Stock 1989:168). There is need to understand the clothing code that is reviled in this section. Accordingly, being naked and raving the man indicated that the man had no respective identity, and a man with no form of identity was as good as a deceased man. Clothing

was symbolic; to be without clothing in public, is to be a nobody, any individual undressed to nakedness in public is dishonored to the extreme. Perhaps this is why Jesus was undressed and made to move without clothing in public, before he was nailed on the on the cross. Contrary to this, been fully dressed; the demoniac was recognized as a person, his identity was reinstated, he was seen as a person; there was no need to bind him with irons and chains like a wild animal, he was now self-possessed and able to reach to others (Stock 1989:168).

The description here suggests that; he was, before the exorcism naked, although, the description in vv.2-5 makes no mention of him being naked. Collins (2007:272) reckons that the participle 'to be clothed' here refers to effect of the exorcism, which has trigged the man's previous interest to dress properly. I suggest that dressing up is evidence of an amended canopy.

In vv.17 the community people plead with Jesus to leave the area. Such a response is unexpected. The community people failed to help the demoniac numerous times, and now here is an individual, who was able to solve problem, however, instead of welcoming Jesus and his disciples, they choose to send him away. What was in the minds of the people? what triggered such a response? Evidently, it seems the community people were not concerned with the demoniac, who had just been restored, rather they are concerned about their living, which was dependent on livestock –pigs (Thurston 2002:63). Within a few minutes of the arrival of Jesus the people have lost about 2000 pigs; "what would happen if he stayed for a week?" the community people probably wondered. The people fear that; if Jesus keeps casting out demons there might not be enough livestock to send the demons into. As such for these people their way of living is more important than life itself (Thurston 2002:63).

For Collins (2007:273) the reaction of fear in the people, which caused them to send Jesus away, suggests; the exorcism is an epiphany of divine power. Since fear is the suitable human reaction to such a manifestation. What is clear by now is the fact that there was no 'war' or 'battle' between Jesus and the unclean spirits from the start to the end of the story. The narrative envisions the surrender and judgement of the defeated enemy.

Verse 18-20

The story ends with the former demoniac requesting to go with Jesus. Contrary to the request of the demons, which was granted, the restored man is denied of his request. Something of interest to note here is that; the words that the restored man uses are that of discipleship in Mark 3:14 indicating that he wished to Join Jesus, so that he may be sent, similar to the disciples (Edwards 2002:353). According to Thurston (2002:63), such a request is not in any way odd, especially in the gospel in Mark. Since, the appropriate way to respond to healing or the receiving of the preached word of God was to become a follower.

Jesus denies him the request probably because a gentile would have been a hesitant block in his mission. Contrary to Jesus' usual habits seen in other healing narratives, he does not swear the man to quietness, rather he tells him to go testify of what had happened. Edwards (2002:354) argues that the command to quietness was unnecessary in gentile lands, where there was no fear of false messianic anticipation. The reason Jesus sends the man to announce what had happened to him, may also be related to the fact that Jesus has been banished from the region (Edwards 2002:254). According to Thurston (2002:63) when the delivered man adheres to the command of Jesus, he provides evidence to the community people that he has been fully restored.

Finally, the story closes in a typical Markan ending, with a response of the community people's amazement. Overall, it should be considered that when Jesus casts out the demons and unclean animals, he symbolically cleans the unclean territory of gentiles. Since the demons were symbolic of the Roman rule, Jesus had metaphorically defeated the imperial rule of the Romans.

Conclusively, the present narrative is not about a mentally troubled man who is healed by psychotherapy but is about a man possessed by numerous demons, who was healed by their expulsion (Stein 2008:258). It is about a story of a man whose canopy was broken by evil spiritual forces, which displayed consequences of natural factors. His broken canopy was amended through exorcism and not scientific methods.

5.3.1 The political stance of the narrative

Perkins (1996:584) outlines that the colonial powers that ordered the area perceived themselves as the foundation of civilization and peace. Conversely, the native lay people thought differently. As such Theissen (1991:110) stipulates "Jesus whose cosmological power was demonstrated at the sea, shows that; the presence of God's rule can also disrupt the structural violence done to persons in this setting". In others words the miracle was a revelation of a greater power, a power greater than that of the Roman rule.

The merciless attacks of the Roman army were what drove the man into such violent behaviors, in which he (the Gerasene demoniac) found himself wounding himself and causing distraction in the community, without the ability to control it. The same way the native lay people could not control the distractive actions of the Roman army (Horsley 2001:140). Given that the 'legion' is representative of the Roman army, then we also have to agree that the man is representative of the whole society, which is "possessed by the demonic imperial violence to their person and communities" (Horsley 2001:140).

The demons acknowledge that Jesus carries a greater power, they do not stand a chance against him, hence they instigate to negotiate with him, they request not to be sent out of the country but into the pigs. Once again, the distractive character of a 'legion' is shown; upon possessing the pigs, they destroyed the pigs by causing them to sink (Perkins 1996:584). Horsley (2001:140) argues, because Jesus sends 'legion' into the pigs, the Roman legion is now connected to the pigs. This connection renders them unclean, since the tradition of that time perceived pigs an unclean animal (Perkins 1988:584).

Essential to note, for the Jews, the loss of the pigs was not of concern, since the presences of pigs symbolized the uncleanness of the area. The drowning of the pigs in the sea signifies that Jesus had cleansed the area (Perkins 1996:585). The cleansing of the area points to the later cleansing of gentiles, that will be brought by the preaching of the restored man. Nonetheless, from a political reading, the loss of pigs in the area refers to the removing of evil oppressive powers, that is the Roman rule.

According to Horsley (2001:141), the sea here signifies the whole Mediterranean Sea, across which the Roman legions had come from; to subjugate the countries of Syria and Palestine. So, the pigs rushing down into the sea was an image of return, showing that; 'the same way the Romans come is the same way they shall return'. As noted above: the aim of this story is to cultivate hope and faith for the oppressed, discouraged, hopeless individuals that one day they will be liberated and set free.

Finally, the drowning of the pigs may reiterate the Exodus story, the deliverance of the Israelites, when the Egyptian soldiers drowned in the sea (Exod. 15:1-10). Taking the two stories as parallels; the two stories are above all liberation stories, stories of hope, stories about setting people free (Myers 1988:191). The closing part of the story is the restoration of the man and his appointment as a missionary tool to preach to the ten cities in his region. He is the earliest gentile missionary known. Here we see the use of a chiasm by the author: on one hand Jesus rejects the Man's offer to follow him, at the crossing side of the chiasm; Jesus permits him to go preach the good news to the others (Perkins 1996:585). This act by Jesus is a validation that he is the one who will convey salvation to gentiles, which implies that he initiated their inclusion during his own ministry (John 2001:89).

The above reviews the numerous imageries used for the purpose of echoing the Roman imperial occupation in Palestine: following the confrontation of the Jewish presiding class in 'scribal' ordered synagogues. Jesus meets the other side of the colonial rule: the demons which symbolized Roman rule (Myers 1988:192). Every detail in this narrative was strategically placed to signify something and no stone should be left unturned.

In line with a political perspective, I conclude the story by suggesting that the above story informs us of the people's liberation from the Roman imperial rule and their vicious acts, which reminds the people of God's original deliverance of the Israelites. Metaphorically speaking the exorcism of Jesus is the act of destroying the evil forces that possess the people and putting in place God's rule (Horsley 2001:141). John (2001:86) found that; "the oppression of one culture by another frequently becomes reflected or expressed through the phenomenon of possession. When this happens, exorcism becomes symbolic of corporate liberation from oppression". Subsequently, this particular exorcism is a proclamation by means of a narrative that even the powers

of the Romans will soon fall against the liberating power of God in Christ (John 2001:87).

5.3.2 Socio-political manifestation

A socio-political reading of the exorcism of legion from the Gerasene demoniac, clearly allows to extract evidence that shows the broken place of Gadara and its political condition under the empire. Such a reading suggests that; the exorcism was a fight against Roman imperialism, which can be better understood through an analogy of modern's peoples experience of colonialism (Horsley 2001:141). Thus, been possessed by a legion of demons should be perceived as a combination of the consequences brought by Roman imperial violence, and as an expatriate protest against it and a self-protection against a suicidal retaliation against the Roman rule.

Horsley (2001:145) argues that in becoming possessed and violently irrational, the man sacrificed his sanity. Though this seems too big of a sacrifice, his life is more important. In this case, considering the political situation and social situation, surviving was of greater importance. The violence of the possessed man can be understood in line with the people's reaction in sending Jesus away (Horsley 2001:145).

The possession of the man became a source for the society's hatred of the violent effects of the Roman command. The function of this narrative was to produce a different narrative for the whole community: instead of accusing and striking out against the Roman order, they now shifted the blame on spiritual forces (Horsley 2001:144). Consequently, demon possession became a sort of coping mechanism. Perhaps this is why the community people refused to accept the liberation of Jesus' exorcism, instead, they thought of him as a threat to their 'skillfully balanced adjustment to Roman order' (Horsley 2001:145). Perhaps they responded out of fear, after all everyone that confronted the imperial rule (legion) found themselves dead and worsened the living conditions under oppression.

Horsley (2001:145) notes that "for ancient Galileans, Judeans and other people, understood their life under the Roman rule as being caught up in a struggle between God and superhuman demonic forces. This was both an empowering revelation and a diversionary mystification". Two lines of thought are established here: on one side is

the sentence that; their oppression was part of the larger world-historical struggle and that God was ultimately in control, which aided in avoiding 'suicidal rebellion' against the Romans and inspired them to continue with their traditional way of life. On the other; it took attention from the political- economic realities of the Roman order and redirected the fight into a battle against the spiritual forces that worsened the situation (Horsley 2001:145-146).

All together a socio-political perspective illustrates that demonology is a metaphorical language to speak of people's realities: particularly in the context of Mark; those that lived under the oppressive imperial order of the Roman rule. As such the story of Mark 5:1-20, becomes a mirror image of people's lives, those in Marks community, the immediate audience.

Although the political perspective is a great lens to use, when viewing the story of Mark 5:1-20 particularly, because of the political language and political imagery strategically used in the story and the context in which the gospel was produced. This perspective like any other perspective has short falls. The problem with this perspective is that it renders demonology as metaphorical, that is to say; in reality, there is no such as thing as possession by a demon. However, the possibility of truth in its reality should be considered, especially with the numerous references to demon possession and exorcism in the ministry of Jesus. Not only was this true for the time of Jesus but even for today particularly in the African context. Over the years, in South Africa and many other African nations, the Pentecostal movement has grown and is growing at a faster rate than ever before. There is a shift; people are moving from traditional churches to Pentecostal churches.

I could not help but to wonder; why is there a shift? It is particularly this question that triggered my interest in demonology. In response to the above question; many might reckon that; it is the charisma they find in Pentecostal churches; the lively loud music, the hyper way preaching –often called the feel good sermons, the freedom to dress as they please and so forth. Although this is true, I am more inclined to think that the shift is because of the emphasis in these Pentecostal churches about the spiritual world; their teachings on evil spirits and their ability to cast out evil spirits, especially in the African context.

Pentecostal preachers teach that everything in the physical is connected to the spiritual; that before anything happens in the physical, it is first made manifest in the spiritual world. These teachings are based on a text found in the letters of Paul; Ephesians 6:12 "for our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of his world and against spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms". This text is often interpreted as suggesting that the different challenges that people go through are as result of spiritual forces. The most common issues that people face are social issues, which could be traced back to the political and the economic situation in a given nation. Dube (2012:358) in his observation of Zimbabwe states; "within a context where people have no food to eat, the church encourages people to pray and fast more, citing the example of Jesus who also fasted and prayed. Pastors are aware of the deteriorating health delivery system and the economic decline, but they are prevented from speaking in fear. Instead, on Sunday they exorcise the demons of hunger, sickness and unemployment".

What we see here is a link between social issues that people go through and demons or evil spirits that possess and torment. The social issues in Pentecostal churches are named in relation to a spirit; instead of unemployment, they would call it a 'spirit of unemployment' or the 'demon of unemployment'. Because it is a spirit or a demon, it needs to be cast out. Since, people experience challenges that are beyond their control, often times they cannot explain, why they are experiencing those challenges or even how those challenges come about. There is a great need among the people for explanations: why does an intelligent degree holder not get a job? why does a healthy person suddenly get sick and immediately die? Economical or medical explanations in a context where people do not have access to resources are not sufficient. In such cases, the church provides answers for them. Pentecostal churches offer people explanations (it is a demon) and solutions (exorcism).

Explanations such as high unemployment is caused by an economic crisis in the country are not satisfactory. All they do is kill the hope of the people and leave the people with even more unanswered question. The social challenges the people experience on a daily basis and the mysterious solution of exorcism that the African Pentecostal churches provides are notions I seek to explain.

Let's take for example a 28-year-old graduate who cannot find a Job; he has the right qualification, he graduated from a good university, he sends out his curriculum-vitae and goes for interviews but cannot get a job. Although one could explain his in ability to get a job as a result of his inexperience in the field or even under performing during interviews, or even simply an economic issue, the Pentecostal church would explain this problem spiritually. By suggesting that the reason is because the 28-year-old graduate is possessed by a spirit of unemployment. Until that spirit is cast out, he will never get employed. This goes back to what the apostle Paul says in Ephesians 6:12, "the struggle is not against flesh and blood", which means that the challenges that people go through have very little to do with the physical state but everything to do with the spiritual state.

What seems to be interesting about the link between social issues and demonology is that; with the arise of social issues in a given area, there is also an increase in Pentecostal churches that practices exorcism (Dube 2012:357). Perhaps this is the reason why exorcism and the belief in the spiritual world is more practiced in developing countries than in developed countries.

Pentecostal pastors deem that; during the preaching of word of God, there is a dispute of powers that exists between that of Jesus and evil spirits. when evil spirits are faced with the power of Jesus, the demons perceive a superior. What gives the exorcist power or ability to cast out a demon is the use of the name of Jesus or the blood of Jesus (Dube 2012:358). Many Pastors believe that a simple command can cause a demon to manifest and to leave. They presume that anything that has a name should bow down to Jesus' name, since his name is above all other names, as the scriptures states; "that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth" (Philippians 2:12). By means of a firm voice, the pastor would command the demon of starvation, lack, illness, theft, agony or any other social challenge an individual is going through; 'I charge you in Jesus' name to leave!' (Dube 2012:358).

In a similar way, we also see the New Testament referring to particular issues as a spirit of; Luke 13:11 "and a woman was there who had been crippled by a spirit for eighteen years, she was bent over and could not straighten up at all". The woman was a crippled, however, the text suggests that it was a spirit of crippled-ness that

possessed her, thus, she could not work. If this is true, then this become a bunch mark for all other issues; blindness is as a result of a spirit of blindness, until such a spirit is exorcised, the situation or condition remains the same and will not change. Consider Luke 4:39; so he bent over her and rebuked the fever, and it left her. She got up at once and began to wait on them". Why would Jesus rebuke the fever, if it was not a spirit? Often times in exorcism, spirits are commanded and rebuked. Although not explicit in the text, what Jesus was rebuking was not the fever but the spirit of a fever.

Moving forward, the following questions need to be answered; what happens during exorcism? What is the point of exorcism? And why do people seek exorcism? It is these question that direct the application of my theory of amending social canopy's.

what follows next is an application of the theory of 'amending social canopies. As indicated in chapter two, I argue that belief in demonology is a dialectal process of making meaning for people's reality and shared imagined worldview; by casting out demons –exorcism, the exorcist attempts to correct the realities of people or reconstruct fractured social canopy's. Theory of amending social canopy's works as follows; identify what is broken and the show how it broken condition is symbolically amended.

5.4 Theory of Amending social canopies applied

In order to demonstrate the theory of exorcism as amending social canopies. It is very important that we understand the canopy before it was fractured/ broken. By way of definition, I define a canopy as a world in which an individual is born into. This world is made up of one's culture, religion, economic and political status. In this section, I firstly, paint a picture of the demoniacs' canopy. Secondly, I illustrate how his canopy was fractured/ broken as a result of been possessed by legion and finally show how the exorcism symbolically amended his social canopy.

The demoniac' Social canopy

Broken social ties

A community: The world in which the demoniac lived in, was a world that did not embrace the concept of individualism. This world is what Comaroff calls "the

precolonial cosmos" –the world before the fracture (Comaroff 1985:5). Individuals were seen through the eyes of other people, thus, a community and not an individual. Accordingly, the way to measure one's importance or status was by asking who an individual's father was, from which area was he born and to which nation they belonged to (Malina, Jourbert & Van Der Watt 1996:4). People in the New Testament were mostly identified through their family, or hometown. For example, Jesus is referred to as; 'Jesus of Nazareth' while others refer to him as the 'son of Joseph'.

Community as opposed to individualism meant that; individuals did not have personal freedom of choice, individual rights and freedom of association. Instead, decisions on who to associate with, which career to take, who to marry, which religion to believe in, where all decision made on behalf of by the family (Malia et al. 1996:4). The family grouping was the most important grouping in the first century. The group was responsible for determining the values and behaviours of its members. It was therefore imperative for members to know its values and rules within a group (Malina et al. 1996:4).

Having noted the above, let us take a look at the demoniac's life as described in the story. The first thing we notice; the name of the man is not told in the story. This is because during his time people were not identified as singles. Nonetheless, he is known as the 'mad man from the region of the Gerasene'. By virtue of this information, it was most likely that everyone would know who was spoken of.

Since there was no room for individualism in the demoniac's social canopy (precolonial world), what formed one's identity was groupings such his family, the community to which he belonged to, the town or city he come from and the tribe he was associated with as noted above. This meant that the fall of one affected every other member of the group. As such, the story narrates that from the moment the man was possessed by the demon, those within his grouping tried to handle the situation within, before it caused damage to the group. In verse 4 we read that; 'he was often chained hand and foot, but he tore the chains apart and broke the irons on his feet' (Mk. 5:4). In accordance to a community-based kind of lifestyle, it is most likely that those that chained him were individuals from his social grouping, who tried to help him as he was a threat to himself and possibly members of his group.

The verse ends by indicating that no one could bind him. Which suggests that; the members of his grouping could not help him. The phrase may also imply that the possessed man, because of his possession; could no longer abide to the values and rules of the group. Failure to do had serious implications on the group. Should one fail to abide to the values and rules of their social tie or a larger social group, the individual was removed from the group for the sake of the other members. In the following verse the demon possessed man is located in the tombs and hills (Mk. 5:5). Which indicates that he longer lived among his people, he now lives in the tombs by himself, as an individual.

Fractured/broken canopy: According to the precolonial world the demoniac should be described with what Malina (1993:67) calls a "dyadic person". The word from the Greek that suggests to 'a pair'. In this case it refers to a person who is fundamentally a 'group-embedded' or a 'group oriented' individual. However, when the demoniac finds himself in the tombs living alone; doing as he pleases, he now leads an individualist lifestyle, he had broken the codes of the social ties of his precolonial world. The group-oriented worldview that he knows; that he belongs to has been fractured/broken. Perhaps he cries day and night (Mk.5:5), because he does not recognise the life he leads now.

This fracture has an effect on his identity, which was mostly founded through his family. By moving away from his family or his immediate community the man has lost his identity. He can no longer be identified with his family name, because his family do not recognise him as family. The loss of identity means you became a nobody. He can no longer be recognised as a person. This means no one would offer him help. He cannot get a job, he cannot marry, he cannot be in the marketplace. He basically cannot associate with anyone. This is the reason why the nearby village people who come to witness what had happened, were not bothered by the now delivered man but about their pigs. In their minds the pigs were a source of survival –food, whilst the man was a nobody, a dead man that was alive (Thurston 2002:63).

Although the narrative does not inform us of his age or marital status, we can only assume that; since he was a male, because of the fracture on his canopy, he was not able to fulfil his manly obligations according to the codes of social ties. For instance, if he was a father, he could no longer supply his household with food and clothing

(Malina et al 1996:6). It was the duty of the father to represent his clan in public, in the cultic place and to defend the good family name, he could no longer do this (Malina et al 1996:6).

The fractured canopy does not only affect the man but also has a direct effect on other people, particularly those around them; those to whom he is socially connected to, who now have no one do defend and represent them in public spaces. The children have lost a Father, the wife has lost a husband, the parents have lost a son, grandchildren have lost a grandfather, friends have lost a friend, employers have lost an employee. There is need for the canopy to be amended, since the social ties have been broken.

Social ties amended: At the start of the story of the Gerasene demoniac, the reader is provided with a description of the man. Particularly in verse 3 his geographical information his provided; "this man lived in the tombs" (Mk.5:3). This phrase is evidence that indicates that his social ties where broken. A tomb is a place for the dead, furthermore as shown in the previous sections; a tomb was seen as an unclean place, it was therefore, not a dwelling place for living people. The demoniac finds himself in the tombs after his possession by legion. In other words, legion is the reason the man stays in the tombs.

Because of these effects that legion had on the demoniac, symbolically; legion represents; isolation and loneliness, selfishness and betrayal. He lives alone in isolation, therefore, he lives in loneliness. He acts like an outlaw, in his acts, he does not consider others; what they think of him or how he makes others feel. He only thinks of himself. His behaviour is embarrassing and brings shame to those he is socially tied to, but he is not bothered. He has betrayed all his social tries by running away from society, into living in the tombs. In verse 8 Jesus commands the spirit to leave the man (exorcism) symbolically Jesus amends the social ties that have been broken. Only after legion has left the body, then the man is able to return home, reconnect with his social ties. In verse 19 "Go home to your own people and tell them how much the Lord had done for you and how he has had mercy on you" (Mk 5:19). The man is sent back to his family and his community people, so that he might be able to fulfil his responsibility according to his social ties. That is to say; he needs to be a father, a husband, an employer or employee and so forth again.

Broken household codes

Honour and shame: Another element of his canopy was the social values of honour and shame. For ancients in the first century, the gathering of material possession, contrary to the twenty-first century was not the primary goal or objective for life. Often times those driven by the desire to gain more material possessions were accused of doing it at the expenses of those around them. In other words, they were accused of exploiting others (Malina et al 1996:8). Relatively, what was fundamental was working towards increasing one's social status.

What determined one's status was the social values of Honour and Shame. Honour on one hand is correctly defined as; "a person's worth as a person and to the recognition of his worth by others" (Malina et al 1996:8). Broadly speaking it refers to an appropriate attitude and behaviour at the place where the three lines of power, gender status and religion meet (Malina 1993:31). In order for this to be functional, members of a society share a set of values and feelings put together in the symbols of power, gender status and religion. This refers to how roles were performed and how these roles affect others (Malina 1993:31). A good example of how honour worked; take a male, who is a father. The position of a father is his gender status; he therefore plays the role of instructing his children to perform certain duties. Instruction giving is a power play, should the child adhere to his instructions, they have treated him with honour, he therefore can claim that he is an honourable father. Consequently, those that witness these events acknowledge that he is indeed an honourable man (Malina 1993:32).

From the above example, honour in this context is simply to perform your duties as a male accordingly, with others witnessing the actions performed. I use the gender male, because honour was strongly linked to males. The affirmation or acknowledgement of this honour by others meant that; those outside one's grouping would treat you honourably (Malina 1993:32).

There are basically two ways in which this honour can be obtained. Malina (1993:33) speaks of ascribed or acquired, in the same way money can. Ascribed honour is honour that simply was given freely; it is inherited. Often ascribed to children from parents. Acquired honour refers 'to the socially recognized claim to worth that a person

obtained by excelling over and beyond others in the social interaction that are known as challenge and response' (Malina 1993:34). This challenge and response is a sort of social arrangement; a social game in which people hassle each other to socially defend procedures in order to obtain the honour of another (Malina 1993:34).

On the other, shame is defined as; "people's mindfulness of their public reputation" (Malina et al 1996:8). It is in these values that the ideas of grouped societies, contrary to an individualistic society become important. It was the responsibility of the group to acknowledge one's honour. As such the goal of every man was to have his own values accepted by others. It was therefore, important for people to know every good act done, as well as to adhere to the norms of the group they belonged to (Malina et al 1996:8). In the case where an individual did not adhere to the norms of the group or claimed in public honour that was not recognised by their group, such individuals was punished or removed from the group (Malina et al 1996:8).

Fractured canopy: Having understood the social values of honour and shame, it is safe to say that the demoniac was stripped of his honour by the demons. Firstly, we need to note that he could not control himself, others could not control him as well, which implied he was unable to adhere to any group norms. The demoniac is described a distractive man (Mk. 5:4), which suggested that he could not act in an honourable manner or perform honourable deeds, such as helping outsiders.

Because of his lack of self-control and inability to think rationally, he was then called the mad man of Gerasene. Names played a big role in the configuring of honour. Malina (1993:38) notes that; honour could be symbolled by a name. Other names upon hearing them signified honour. One' good name, which basically refers to a person's reputation holds the fundamental concern of people in every context of public action and provides purpose and meaning to their lives. A bad name such as: mad, thief, prostitute to mention a few, would imply; 'one without honour', which ultimately meant that such persons cannot be trusted.

Because the demoniac had a bad name, he could not be trusted, therefore the opportunity to work, borrow money or rent out land or a property was taken away from him. Consequently, the man made the tombs his dwelling place; he had no choice but to dwell there.

In verse 15 the man is presented as dressed and in his right mind after his deliverance (Mk. 5:15). From this information we can deduce that before his encounter with Jesus, he had no clothing on. Not having clothing on was a disgraceful thing. Adding to his lack of honour, it seemed that he had no shame either: since shame is defined "people's mindfulness of their public reputation", the man did not in any way show concern about his public reputation: all he did was cry out loud day and night and cut himself with stones (Mk. 5:5). All in all, the Gerasene demoniac had no values.

Finally, Malina (1993:49) notes that honour is also symbolled by testicles, which represent masculinity, bravery, influence over family, readiness to defend one's status and refusal to submit to humiliation. Not having clothing on, resulted in public humiliation, leaving the community and migrating to the tombs suggests that he was not brave enough to fight for his honour. Staying alone in tombs, he lost his influence over his family. From the above we can thus conclude without any doubt that the mad had no honour left in him.

Household codes amended: once legion has left the man; "and the impure spirits came out and went into the pigs" (Mk. 5:13). The man is freed and his delivered from the power of legion. In verse 15, the writing describes the effects the exorcism: "they saw the man who had been possessed by the legion of demons, setting there, dressed and in his right mind" (Mk.5:15).

When the man is fully dressed, his honour as a human being has been restored. He can now be respected and treated like a human been and not like an animal as in seen in verse 4 "for he had often been chained hand and foot" (Mk.5:4).

What followed next, was that; Jesus gave him an honourable job ("go home to your own people and tell them how much the Lord has done for you and how he has had mercy on you" (Mk. 5:19). He is to preach the good news, the gospel of Christ to the gentiles. The man was given the privilege of been the first gentile evangelist ever: "so the man away and began to tell in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him" (Mk.5:20). This fact the he was able to adhere to the instruction of Jesus proves that he was indeed set free and makes him more honourable.

5.4.1 Concluding remarks

Having looked at the original canopy of the mad man of Gerasene and how his canopy was fractured, as a consequence of demon possession, and effects of the exorcism. There is only one question remaining that needs to be answered; how was his canopy amended? As proposed and indicated in the previous chapters, the answer is simply exorcism.

As illustrated in chapter three, I argue that the belief in the reality of demonology is a dialectal process of making meaning for people's reality and shared imagined worldview. Exorcism, which is an important part in the subject demonology –the casting out of demons, should in this context be understood as an attempt to amend the realities of people.

The language of demonology in which people, mostly African people use to speak of their realities, all in all is a coded socio-political myth:

- It is coded because it does not speak directly about the matter at hand. Take for example sudden death in a household, one could explain it medical by stating that 'the one who died was ill', however, those who use this coded language would suggest that it was because of a 'spirit or demon of death'.
- it is socio because whatever that is been spoken of in this coded language of demonology are social issues. The social issues are caused by spiritual forces but the consequences manifest in the physical in form of social problems. Take for example the Gerasene demoniac, because of legion that possessed him, he was left unemployed, homeless and enduring extreme levels of poverty.
- It is political because in addressing this issues there is a power war, a wrestle of power between the forces of evil that caused the fractures on canopies and the forces of good that try to amended the fractured canopies. The two cannot core exist, the one has to leave in order for the other to take over and rule.
- Finally, it is a myth. By mythical I do not suggest that the reality of demon possession be put in question, or that the story has no truth in it. It is mythical because the language is metaphorical: It uses a spiritual language to speak of social issues.

In chapter three I illustrated that people live in a world that is pre-ordered in a particular way. Everyone knows that life has to take a certain direction, for example, a girl will one day grow up, get married and become a mother. Failure to get married is disruption to this world. Beyond this pre-ordered world is the spiritual world, were forces of evil dwell. Forces of evil have one goal, that is to disrupt people' ordered world. So, what would cause a woman not to bare children in a worldview that expects her to be a mother is the activities in the world beyond, the spiritual world.

So, what happened to the Gerasene demoniac? the encounter of Jesus and the demoniac is a start of a war between two powerful forces, that have great influence on the physical world. The first thing that Jesus does is identify the kind of evil force that has possessed the man – "what is your name?" "my name is Legion" (Mk.5:9). Legion is a symbol of broken social ties and broken household codes.

So, when Jesus commends the demon legion out of the man at a spiritual level. He does not only cast the demon out. By casting out Legion out of the man, Jesus takes away homelessness, disgrace, shamelessness, unemployment, pain, loneliness, confusion, distraction and madness. The spiritual exercise of casting out demons has a physical implication. What this means is; whatever that happens in the world beyond (spiritual world) has an impact on the world below (physical world).

Once the demon was cast out, three things happen instantly as shown in verse 15:

- He was seen sitting still: which suggests that he was no longer a confused man and was not distractive like he was previously.
- He was seen dressed: which suggests that his shamelessness was taken away and his dignity as a living human being was restored.
- He was in his right mind: which suggests that the madness he experienced was gone. He was now able to think rationally.

In verse 19 Jesus says "Go home to your own people and tell them much the Lord has done for and how he had mercy on you" (Mk. 5:19). Jesus sends him back to his home, which means he is no more homeless. Consequently, loneliness will be taken away, as he dwells among his people. Finally, Jesus employs him, thus taking away

unemployment. He is now like Jesus a preacher of the good news – "so the man went away and began to tell the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him" (Mk.5:20).

5.5 Conclusion

In conclusion, to simply dismiss the reality of the spiritual world and its effects on the physical is a sign of ignorance and laziness on the side of a scholar. I do acknowledge the difficulty to explain mysterious spiritual things in an academic platform, however, it's difficult to explain, does not mean it does not exist or is not real. The spiritual world that is filled with demons and angels is more real than we can comprehend. It is even more real to Africans who lack resources and the ability to solve their economic, social and political challenges on their own and are pushed to believe in a supernatural being. In a continent filled with people who experience high levels of poverty because of the injustices of the higher class, because of exploitation from political leaders, because they lack the resources to better their lives, because they have lost courage and hope in life; the only thing they have remaining is a coded socio-political mythical language of demonology in which they are constantly seeking exorcists to cast out demons so their canopies can be amended.

Although these realities have not been formally investigated by many, the fact that many people in African strongly believe in the reality of spiritual world and its effects on the physical should indicate a certain level of truth –that even in this day and age that is full of scientific discoveries and technological advancements people still hold on to this coded language. The large numbers of people attending Pentecostal churches is evidence; I believe that people are getting helped through exorcism, otherwise why would people go there?

Chapter six

6 African Pentecostal Exorcisms as amending Social canopies

6.1 Introduction

Although there are a number of people that do not belief in the possibility of demon possession, thus the need for exorcism, the practice of exorcism did not end with Jesus in the gospels. Throughout the New Testament the apostles were actively involved in the casting out of demons. Today we have the African Pentecostal Church at the forefront with the practice of exorcism. In this chapter, I discussion my observations about exorcism in African Pentecostal churches. This will provide a contemporary context, where exorcisms are understood as amending social canopies. Here I revel the context of brokenness within people's social lives and then at a meta-level interpret, how exorcisms performed are dialectically corresponding to such social realities within African Pentecostal churches.

6.2 African Pentecostal churches and Exorcism

African Pentecostal churches commonly share a New Testament conviction in the possibility of demonic influence in human conduct. This is known to others as "demon possession" while to others "oppression" or "demonization". Terminology might differ but there is only one consequence, which is the fact that; all that are demon possessed or suffer oppression or demonization need exorcism (Anderson 2006:117). It is this emphasis on exorcism that has triggered the rapid growth of African Pentecostal churches (Asamoah-Gyadu 2007:310).

Majority of Pentecostals believe in the biblical position of a particular devil known as Satan and his agents; demons. The parallel experience of an evil spirit world for many Africans is truth, consequently, there is need for a Christian solution of liberation (Anderson 2007:117). This solution of liberation that Pentecostals offer is exorcism. Exorcism within Pentecostalism is known as 'deliverance'. Although deliverance

ministries can be traced in western parts of the world, there is no question or doubt that exorcism is a protruding product in African Religious Market (Anderson 2006:117).

Understanding the African worldview is central to understanding the role of the spirit world in African. At a general level, at least most if not all Africans belief in the existence of the spiritual world; a world that is invisible, one that regulates the happenings of physical. Ekeke and Chike (2010:210-211) notes; for Africans belief in the invisible can be traced to many generations past. In this world, there is a supreme being that controls everything. This belief in the existence of such a being was triggered by men's realization of their limitation, weaknesses and insatiable nature. Their lack of it is the reason Africans begun to contemplate that; there must be a supreme being, who is greater than all, that can be sought for help (Ekeke and Chike 2010:211). In this world also; is spirits that are less superior to the supreme being. Spirits in this case do not refer to ancestors or divinities, but to "those apparitional entities which from separate categories of beings from those described as divinities" (Ekeke and Chike 2010:216). These spirits are seen as powers which are almost immaterial as shades or mists which take on human form. They are invisible and spiritual beings. These spirits are responsible for harm and havoc that humanity faces (Ekeke and Chike 2010: 217).

Consequently, Africa is a place where the fear of evil and the menace of demons, ancestral spirits and gods frequently devastates people. Anderson (2006:118) notes that in African when problems arise, people need outside help to strengthen themselves against the uncertainties and irregularity of life. These uncertainties and irregularities are largely caused by the fact that life is the consequence of the activities of spiritual forces.

The African healers give answers that individuals in a tough situation look for and solutions for the rebuilding of lost power, coordinating the harrowed to the soul world and regularly educating them to focus on the predecessors, so as to determine their issues (Anderson 2006:118). Contrary to focus on ancestors as a way to resolve problems as a solution that African healers suggest, Pentecostal ministers have stressed that ancestral spirits are a type of evil spirit and need to be exorcised. This teaching has brought a relief on Africans. Reason being that at times ancestral spirits

require more than people are willing to give, at times what these spirits want is never clear and failure to appease them often leads to problems (Anderson 2006:118).

6.3 Pentecostal exorcism as amending social canopies

Having highlighted the notions of the African Pentecostal churches in relation to the African world view, I turn focus to what happens within African Pentecostal churches. Although Africa is known as a source of raw materials, history informs us that the African people have not benefited fully from its resources as much as westerners. Africans have suffered exploitation from the west, even worse is the fact that most African leader follow the trend.

Take South Africa as an example; South Africa is said to be one of the most developed countries among other African countries, however, the country still finds its self in high levels of poverty; thousands of South Africans do not have adequate income to attain minimal levels of health services, food, housing, clothing and education. Among other reasons the poverty in South African is a consequence of the high rate of unemployment. Issues of corruption only worsen the situation. The issue of poverty gives birth to other socio-economic issues such as increased crime rates, increased health issues, in ability to access better education to mention a few. The socio-economic issues that black south Africans experience could be attributed to the injustices of the past (apartheid), even more now, to the corruptions within the present government.

So what do we have? We have people who on a daily bases fight to better their lives; surrounded by poverty, unemployment, corruption, sickness and many other challenges, it is only normal to seek for solutions everywhere and anywhere. Other migrate from South African, others protest against the government, others engage in self-introspection while others try spiritual methods through traditional healer and witch doctors, however, none of these has yield satisfactory results. People are left hopeless and with many unanswered questions.

The African Pentecostal church over the years has become a symbol of hope for many Africans, as it provides answers for many people. In the streets of South African voices of individuals, referring one another to Pentecostal churches are heard; "I heard there

is a man of God who prays for people to get jobs", "there is a new prophet around the corner who can help you with your condition".

I find myself in a Pentecostal church, upon my observation, I found that people that walk into the walls of the church have different socio-economic issues: Its issues of unemployment; others suddenly lost a job, when they were at the peak of their careers, others are simply unable to get jobs after they graduate. People with sicknesses; others do not have access to better health care services, others doctors have no solutions for them. People with Marital issues; others are barren others are in abusive relationship and so many more issues. All these people with different issues affecting their lives have tried many methods to solve their problems but they have not been successful. The church then becomes their last hope. The solution that the church offers is a solution of exorcism.

Critical to understand is that everyone who is born in a world that is perfect; a world that is full of opportunities and possibilities to succeed. People are born with purpose and great destinies, however, as they age, they begin to realize the world is not so perfect; it is full of uncertainties and irregularities. Uncertainties and irregularities are caused by the fact that humanity is not in control of what happens tomorrow, destiny is in the hands of spiritual forces. These spiritual forces are responsible for disturbed world views –fractured/broken canopies. A canopy is considered broken when experiences and expectations do no not match; for example, I expect to get a Job after graduating from university but I experience joblessness. The world of unemployment is a broken canopy of my initial canopy –what Comaroff (1980:643) calls the 'ordered cosmology', world of employment after graduation.

In accordance with the theory of amending social canopies, the people that find themselves in these Pentecostal churches are those with broken canopies. The world in which they live in, can no longer be recognized; it is a world of suffering and pain. Their experience of the world at the moment and the world in which they are supposed to live cannot be reconciled. They are supposed to be fruitful in all they do but all they experience is unfruitfulness.

What remains of them is the broken canopy and many questions; "what went wrong?" "Why am I going through this?" "how long shall I continue to suffer?" "Who will rescue

me from this?" at this point it is clear to many that the condition is beyond economical interventions. Here I seeks to illustrate my observations that when the Government fails fix socio-economic issues through socio-economical methods, the church; particularly the Pentecostal church becomes an alternative site for solution.

Despite the overall decrease of church attendance over the years because of technological advances, church attendance in Pentecostal churches is still very high. The African Pentecostal church has taken up the role of fixing socio-economic issues (amending social canopies). Within the context of sickness, unemployment, barrenness, abuse, poverty, divorce, the church encourages people to look up to God, because their struggle is not physical but spiritual (Ephesians S6:12). They are reminded that their suffering is not the plan of God as stated in the scriptures; "for I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future" Jeremiah 29:11. Which basically means that any bad experience the people are experiencing is the plan of the devil and his agents demons.

Pentecostal ministers are aware that most of this issues are caused by the current economic state, political situations, corruption and even the injustices of the past, however, they are prevented from speaking against the government. Instead, during church services they cast out the demons of sickness, unemployment, barrenness, abuse, poverty and divorce. They suggest that to every problem or situation, there is a demon behind it; a demon of sickness will bring sickness. As a solution they teach that people should not focus on the sickness but one the cause of the sickness, in this case; the demon. By casting out the demon of sickness, the problem of sickness is solved.

With the increase of people suffering from socio-economic issues, there is also an increase in the practice of exorcism. Perhaps this is the reason why most Pentecostal churches practice exorcism in African, than any other continent of the world. This increases the need to explore the relation between demon possession and socio-economic issues that people experience.

Pentecostal ministers believe that during prayer, a contest of power exists between the power of Jesus and that of the demon. Faced with the presence of Jesus through

the Holy Spirit, the demons experience the victorious power of Jesus. Demons often manifest during cooperate prayers. Pentecostal ministers state that because demons cannot be seen physical, they need to be provoked; demons are provoked through prayer. Prayer in this context is a direct call for God to wage war against the forces of evil. Once a demon has manifested, then its casting out can take place. Demons can manifest in different ways; it can be by screaming, falling down, trembling or moving in unusual ways; most commonly their body movements mimic an animal. Once the demon has manifested, the minister process to cast the demon out by laying his hands on the possessed persons or simple command the demon to leave, from a distance.

Important for the casting out of demons, is identifying the name of the demon. Reason being that Pentecostal ministers believe that everything should bow at the mention of the name of Jesus. In other words, everything that has a name should bow to the name of Jesus because the name Jesus is above all other names. Like this, the Minister identifies the name of the demon; "you demon of sickness, unemployment, barrenness, abuse, poverty and divorce", then commands it to leave; "leave that body in the name of Jesus name".

The different demons that are cast out; according to their names are all socio-economic issues. Dube (2012:359), in his observation of demon possession in Zimbabwe asked; "if demons are synonymous to social issues then what does casting out of demons mean?" to answer Dube (2012), I suggest that exorcism is a dialectical attempt to amend social canopies. By casting out the demon of poverty, the minister removes the spirit responsible for the poverty experienced, by removing the spirit responsible, the individual's world is now a world free of the demon of poverty –an amended canopy.

Conclusively, people with socio-economic issues –broken canopies, find themselves in Pentecostal churches seeking for solutions. At a metaphorical level, African Pentecostal churches teach that demons are responsible for the socio-economic issues faced. As a solution, the church offers exorcism. By casting out the demon responsible for socio-economic issues, the minister is indeed amending the broken canopy. Most members in Pentecostal churches testify about how their lives changed after exorcism took place.

6.4 conclusion

In this chapter I illustrated how African Pentecostal churches use exorcism as a method to solve socio-economic issues that people face on a daily base. It seems people move with the social-economic challenges to the church as well, making the church not only a place of worship, but also a place where socio-economic challenges are solved. Here I observed that casting out demons is not simply a metaphysical illustration. Rather it is a method of amending broken social canopies.

Conclusion and way forward

In this final conclusion, I offer the main arguments of the entire thesis and a reflection on the research findings to formulate a way forward.

Chapter two as the introduction of this study reviewed different theoretical perspective which have been used to explain notions of demon possession and exorcism. This serves as critical historical information for the study.

In chapter three, I discussed the theory of amending social canopies built on suggests made by scholars who take a socio-political perspective, namely: Ched Myers who argues that demon possession is symbolic –It is symbolic of social issues and that exorcism is a symbolic action –it is an action aimed at resolving social issues. Richard Horsley, presents Jesus the exorcist as leading a movement of restoration. He argues that individual who have been subject to a type of violence or abuse have lost something and restoration can only come through exorcism. Rajkumar suggests; references to demon possession and exorcisms are an "idiomatic integration of the cosmic and socio-political dimensions of the conflict between the forces of good and of evil" (Rajkumar 2007:430). And finally Dube who argues that demon-possession as a coded language to speak of political situations and exorcism as a coded gesture that show disapproval for the prevailing political situation. The theory of amending social canopies, thus argues that belief in demon possession is a dialectal process of making meaning for people's reality and shared imagined worldview; by casting out demons, they attempt to correct the realities of people.

In chapter four discussed the dating, location and the social setting of Mark. I advocate for a pre- 70 AD dating of Mark, which places the writing of the gospel during a time of battle before the fall of Jerusalem. Numerous locations have been proposed for the location of Mark. Traditionally, Rome is the suggest location, while others suggest Syria. Nonetheless, I am more inclined to a location of in or near the north of Palestine, consequently, the language in Mark that is often seen as contrary, should be seen as evidence of socio-economic and administrative domains of the colonized culture of Palestine. Finally, the social setting is that of peasant-subsistent who depended on the elite for survival.

Chapter five interprets Mark 5:1-20 using the theory of amending social canopies. The story narrates of a man possessed with a demon called legion. Symbolical for the audience of Mark, legion refers to the Roman imperial rule, which translates a broken community. Because of legion the man has broken social ties and broken household codes, he lives a life that he and others cannot recognize. When Jesus casts legion out of him, Jesus symbolically restores the broken social ties and broken household codes, thus, amending the demoniacs canopy. Here I illustrated that the mythical language of demonology is one that people use to overthrow and reverse their situations. Instead of the story being seen as a false psychological delusional story, to the hearers, the myth of combat between evil and good is real.

In chapter six I disused my observations of African Pentecostal churches and Exorcism. Here I showed how these churches have used exorcism to combat social issues, such as unemployment, barrenness, sickness, poverty to mention a few. To these social issues, African Pentecostal churches suggest that; to each social issue there is a demon that drives it. As such, the solution to the social issues is to cast the demon out, by casting the demon out social canopies are amended.

Way forward

Though the primary motivation for this study was to illustrate that the language of demon possession and exorcism is more of a reality to many than is a myth, one cannot disregard the necessity for further study. As reviewed in chapter one the subject is regarded as simply mythical; while post-colonial scholars perceive the subject in metaphorical terms, the socio-psychological scholars simple argue that better understanding of the human body have enabled them to better explain behaviors that were in the past seen as demonic because they lacked the technology and the science to explain. In chapter four and five I showed how demon possession is a reality by establishing a link between social issues and demons, then showed how exorcism is used as a solution of demon possession –social issues, further study could explore the outcome of exorcism. Did the exorcism solve the social issue or the exorcism mentally empowered the individual to believe their problem was solved? Does exorcism have the same effect as a motivational talk? Does the ritual of exorcism illustrate the power of the mind? By this I am pondering on whether or not individuals

who engage in these practices, are made to believe that all is well after a demon was cast out.

While this study provided the framework for understanding demon possession as a reality in relation to social issues rather than a myth, another area for further study could be the case of demon possession in relation to psychology: the emotional and mental state, -The dreams (Nightmares and hallucinating) they have, the feelings they experience (depression and anxiety).

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