

**THE OPPRESSIVE ELEMENTS UNDERLYING REBUKING OF CHILDREN
A CRITICAL READING OF MARK 10:13-16 THROUGH THE LENSES
OF OTHERING IN SOCIO-SCIENTIFIC AND
POSTCOLONIAL HERMENEUTICS**

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DECLARATION

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for any award in any university.

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APPROVAL BY SUPERVISORS

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DEDICATION

This research is dedicated to the Full Gospel Churches of Kenya and the Word Provision Church in the improvement of the Children's Ministry Department and Sunday school. I am also dedicating it to all my Sunday school children, teachers, my dear parents, Mzee Bernard Kipchillis Kerich and Priscah Sote Kipchillis, my lovely wife, Rebecca Kipchilis, my children: Faith Sergon, Mark Kerich, John Mitei, Mercy Memoi and Meshach Keitany.

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the oppressive elements underlying the othering elements in the pericope of Mark 10:13-16, which led Jesus Christ to tell His disciples, "Permit the little children to come to me; do not hinder them!" ("Ἄφετε τὰ παιδιά ἔρχεσθαι πρὸς με, μὴ κωλύετε αὐτά") when analysed critically through the lenses of the othering in socio-scientific and postcolonial hermeneutics. The researcher uses both the socio-scientific theory of criticism and postcolonial criticism to identify the othering oppressive elements and submits an application of the findings in the contemporary African context. In the analysis, the researcher considers what the pericope of Mark 10:13-16 meant there and then that is the world behind the text, which is the Markan audience and what it means here and now to the current hearers and readers, referring to the world in front of the text. The researcher then proposes solutions to the oppressive elements especially when the pericope is re-read in the African context through the lenses of the othering in socio-scientific and postcolonial hermeneutics. The researcher is guided by the following objectives: First, is to identify the oppressive elements underlying the othering in the pericope of Mark 10:13-16 using the lenses of socio-scientific and postcolonial hermeneutics. Secondly, the researcher analyses the otherings in the pericope of Mark 10:13-16 critically through the lenses of othering in socio-scientific and postcolonial hermeneutics. Thirdly, the researcher determines the implications of the oppressive elements in the pericope of Mark 10:13-16 using the othering in postcolonial hermeneutics. Lastly, the researcher proposes an alternative reading/re-reading of the pericope of Mark 10:13-16 for the African context. In Chapter One: the researcher provides an introduction and background to the study by giving an overview of the whole research. As such, the chapter provides the statement of the problem, the objectives of the study and the research questions as well as the purpose, significance, scope and limitations of the study. In Chapter Two: This section contains literature review. The relevant existing literature on the oppressive elements underlying the otherings in the pericope of Mark 10:13-16. The chapter has been structured in line with the objectives and the research questions formulated for this study. Chapter Three: This chapter discusses the methodology of this research as well as the justification for the choices made. Chapter Four: This concerns the exegesis of Mark 10:13-16. This section deals with the results in meaning of words used in the biblical languages and, in this case, the Koine Greek, which is an in-depth exegetical analysis of the guiding pericope of Mark 10:13-16 from the original Greek language using the lenses of othering in socio-scientific and postcolonial hermeneutics and the deliberations of the oppressive elements categorized. The identified oppressive elements underlying the rebuking of the children in the pericope of Mark 10:13-16 are: Ambivalence, hybridity and mimicry; powerlessness of the children and economic oppression; domination and class oppression (classism); cultural imperialism and religious persecution; violence against children (ageism) GBV and marginalization and institutionalized oppression. The researcher suggests a re-reading of the pericope of Mark 10:13-16 through the lenses of the postcolonial and socio-scientific hermeneutics in the African contemporary society as a solution to curtail the oppressive elements. Chapter Five presents the conclusions and recommendations that can be made from this study, again potential areas of further study are highlighted in this chapter.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ASET: Africa Society of Evangelical Theology

CALHIV: Children and Adolescents Living with HIV

CEF: Child Evangelism Fellowship

EAST: East Africa School of Theology

EDARP: Eastern Deanery Aids Relief Programme

ESV: English Standard Version

FGCK: Full Gospel Churches of Kenya

GBV: Gender Based Violence

KAG: Kenya Assemblies of God

KNH: Kenyatta National Hospital

NCCS: National Council for Children's Services

SSC: Socio-Scientific Criticism

TEV: Today's English Version

VAC: Violence against Children

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Othering: In this research thesis the term is used both in the socio=scientific view and postcolonial view to view more of the othering as a group and not necessarily from a geographical region (Prozorov, 2011). Again Kiambi (2014, p.7) defines as “a concept that is extensively used... for social representation. Just as in stereotyping, othering allows individuals to construct sameness and difference so as to affirm their own identity....” It is dealing or perceiving others as not belonging and in this paper the children seemed not to be belonging to Jesus as viewed by the disciples as evidenced by their rebuking.

Pericope: comes from the Greek word (περικοπή), which means "a cutting-out" hence it is an extract from a passage of the Bible.

Socio-Scientific Criticism: This is a method of Hermeneutics in Bible criticism and interpretation that approaches the text from or with a sociological perspective and in every human story it has social components that informs why it develops the way it does same to the story by Mark in the Pericope of 10:13-16 and it includes the Postcolonial Criticism too.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Introduction

This chapter discusses the background of this study, the objectives of the study, the perspectives relating to the study considering: the plan of the study, the problem statement and the purpose of the study. Also discussed in the chapter are the research questions and the hypotheses. In addition, the justification, the scope, the limitations and delimitations, the significance, and the assumptions of the study are discussed.

Background to the Study

This study examines the oppressive elements underlying the othering [a word which was coined by Spivak in 1985 (Thomas-Olalde & Velho, 2011) and expounded by (Dube et al., 2012) in the Botswana perspective also by Kiambi (2014) in the Kenyan context. The elements in the pericope of Mark 10:13-16, when read critically through the lenses of the socio-scientific and postcolonial hermeneutics (Browning, 2011a; Charles, 2016; L. S. Rukundwa, 2012; Rutere, 2017a) which, according to Geoffrey (2014) is hindering the church to fully fulfil its mandate and obligation of evangelizing the children. This premise is supported too by Chiroma (2017, p. 16) and Kithinji (2021) (Browning, 2011a; Charles, 2016; Punt, 2003; L. S. Rukundwa, 2012; Rutere, 2017a; Sugirtharajah, 2006) who argue that the government should fully support and protect children since they suffer more from imperialism and impunity.

Furthermore, Mark, in the pericope of 10:13-16, showed to his audience the vividness of the action of the people bringing little children to Jesus Christ. The rebuking of those who brought them (the action here is that) the children were being brought to Jesus Christ, and those who were bringing them to Jesus were rebuked by the disciples. In our situation here and now, the contemporary African society is to bring all children to Jesus Christ: for Him to bless them; and more so to save them from sin; and to heal their diseases, the way they were

brought during the Markan time. As they brought them to Jesus Christ, so the contemporary African society is to bring them to be blessed by Jesus Christ. The society should by no means rebuke those who bring little children to be blessed by Jesus Christ.

This is so because not all institutions and churches have children protection and safeguarding policies (NCCS, 2010) in place to prevent the otherings of children (Kenya Catholic Secretariat of Religious Education, 2015). Furthermore, for the children's ministry to be successful and to serve the children efficiently and effectively, support systems and protection are needed both from the church and the government (Chadwick, 2002). It is noted according to the UNHCR (2017) that half of all refugees are children. It was also noted that most of those affected by drought and social injustice are children. Thus, more needs to be done to unearth the oppressive elements in the pericope of Mark 10:13-16. (see also Chiroma & Cloete, 2015; Msabah, 2016).

The core mandate of the church of Christ here on earth, especially in the contemporary African society, is to raise a God-fearing generation (not to rebuke or hinder children), and Bible-believing children who know how to explain and confidently defend their faith. When a stumbling block is put between the little ones and Jesus Christ, the consequences are severe, as mentioned in Matthew 18:6 "But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in and acknowledge and cleave to Me to stumble and sin [that is, who entices him or hinders him in right conduct or thought], it would be better (more expedient and profitable or advantageous) for him to have a great millstone fastened around his neck and to be sunk in the depth of the sea (AMPC)." This again is reinforced by the goal that "every church will support and resource the family as a God-ordained structure for nurturing children and youth..." (Bryce et al, 2008, p. 25)

The Gospel of Mark is a representation of the life of Jesus Christ that is most likely patterned after the Petrine preaching. As such, "Peter's sermon in Acts 10:34-43 provides the

reader with a summary of the basic structure of the narrative Gospel common to Matthew, Mark, Luke and John ” (Mburu 2009a, p.1). Again, there could be a trajectory of othering in the gospel of Mark, which (Kiambi, 2014; Kithinji, 2021) defines as “a concept that is extensively used... for social representation. Just as in stereotyping, othering allows individuals to construct sameness and difference to affirm their own identity....” This aids in comprehending the oppressive elements in this pericope, which led the disciples to rebuke the children.

Moreover, there are oppressive elements underlying the otherings in the pericope of Mark 10:13-16, which made Jesus say, “Permit the little children to come to me; do not hinder them!” (“Αφετε τὰ παιδιά ἔρχεσθαι πρὸς με, and μὴ κωλύετε αὐτά”) in the pericope of Mark 10:13-16. When it is analysed critically through the lenses of the postcolonial hermeneutics, which is under othering in socio-scientific and postcolonial hermeneutics (Robbins, 1995). In this research, it is referred to as the socio-scientific criticism (SSC). This suggests that Jesus Christ was indignant of the othering which was there in the society during the Markan biosphere. Again, this reflected a high trajectory of othering in the Markan world. In this regard, the researcher suggests an alternative reading or re-reading of the pericope in the contemporary African context as opposed to the narrative criticism and discourse analysis (Miceli, 2011).

In this research, the oppressive elements are looked at using the postcolonial and socio-scientific biblical criticism (Mckenzie & Haynes, 1999) to look at the pericope of Mark 10:13-16 (Mcgarvey, 2002). The researcher followed the historical interpretation by default since it also examines the world behind the text and is likely to recognize that the children were oppressed in the Greco-Roman and ancient societies; because the oppressive elements underlying the rebuking of children will not be perceptible, and again some scholars say it is figurative and grouping as in ‘The practice of discipleship’ (10:1–31) (Moloney & S.D.B,

2002) the whole chapter from the kingdom of God. That is why Samuel (2015) agrees with both Kiambi (2014) and Sugirtharajah (2015) on this premise of othering of the children.

The passage

The researcher chose the pericope owing to the oppressive elements underlying the high trajectory of otherings in a critical reading of Mark 10:13-16. The pericope of Mark 10:13-16 is within the sandwich and cannot be read in isolation of (8:22-10:52) and especially (9:33-37). As much as Mark uses the sandwich technique in his writing, Moj (2018, p. 363) explains that “Intercalations are found in the Gospel of Mark. They are graphically described by the following scheme: A – B – A’. Mark’s convention consists of the break-off narration (pericope A) through the insertion of another one (B) and placing it inside. Such a technique is called intercalation, interpolation or a sandwich technique.”

The researcher picked the pericope (B) in this sandwich, which is between divorce and marriage, and it is because children are the ones who suffer greatest in case of any divorce and family break-ups or separation, whether by calamities or by impunities and imperialism like a case of internally displaced persons (IDPs) during the Kenyan post-election violence of 2007/2008 (Oderinde, 2015)

When Mark brought this topic of the disciples rebuking the children, he had in mind the two stratum in his gospel, the Jewish audience and the Greco-Roman audience, which is the world behind the text (Dvorak, 2018; Shawqi, 2018). The children referred to here in this pericope are the young ones less than five years. Therefore, the researcher supports the view of the children being less than twelve years old. This is by Jesus Christ carrying them in His arms because if they were older than 12 years, they might have refused to be carried. Mark uses the term (παιδία) here to mean a little child, an infant, little one, according to the Strong’s concordance. He did not choose to use (Τέκνον), which is a broader term that refers to a child and is used affectionately also for grown-up persons. (See Luke. 7:35; Eph. 5:81;

Peter 1:14) (Souter 1917). This is different again from (Υἱὸν), which means the Son as in John 3:16. Again, Jesus Christ could have blessed them without carrying the children in His arms.

Similarly, one cannot rule out the older children as Mark (5:21-43) mentions the age of little Jairus' daughter to be 12 years. This is discussed further in chapter four. Again, even for Jesus Christ (Who is, Who was and Who is to come; 100% God and 100% Man and possess all the attributes of God), when he was 12 years old as a human being, He was taken to Jerusalem by His earthly parents (Joseph and Mary); He was still under the care of His parent (Luke 2:52). Having in mind the geography and the means of transport (Genesis 22:3; Matthew 21:2) there and then as opposed to our current society here and now (Weima, 2013c).

Statement of the Problem

There is a paradigm shift in the dealing of children in the Markan Gospel. Mark is pointing out that there was a great and serious problem of othering of children (Mark 10:13-16). The making of them subalterns that is not worthy of the Kingdom of God and not praiseworthy to meet their master and saviour also healer the Lord Jesus Christ. This was not the scenario in the Jewish culture initially (Deuteronomy 4:9, 4:10, 6:7, 11:19). The same otherings, according to Kithinji (2021), are still evident in our contemporary African society whereby there is still a lack of effective and efficient workable, sustainable protection, support systems namely: protection policies, safeguarding policies, welfare policies, very low wages/financial support if not none at all for children and youth workers both in the church and in the government for the children's ministry (Andresen et al., p. 44, 2010). In almost all churches and organizations mention children's needs (Kositany, 2016) and activities to be supported; they are almost always done last or not done at all.

The problem of rebuking children and othering them (Fitzgerald, 2011) has persisted in all the ages because the oppressive elements underlying the high trajectory of othering in the pericope of Mark 10:13-16 has not been addressed fully by both the contemporary African society and the church.

Additionally, in the source text, the otherings are there, which is supported by White (2012, p.8). Who says that “Traditional theology in seminaries is usually done without serious or sustained reference to children...” This can be factual information –though a similar study needs to be done in Africa- as in the African context. Moreover, in the church not citing the medical field likewise in the other ministries like the ministry of education; ministry of agriculture, decisions are made about children without meaningfully involving the juveniles in any decision-making processes about them.

It is in the public domain that the children and the youth now say, “nothing about us without us!” When the othering of children persists in the contemporary African society, church growth may be adversely affected (Grobbelaar, 2016b, p. 120); since few of the children will be able to come to Jesus Christ and grow holistically (Luke 2:52) and transition 100% to the youth and become useful and active church members for today church, not tomorrow.

Objectives of the Study

Overall objective

The overarching objective of this study is to investigate the oppressive elements underlying the otherings in Mark 10:13-16 when critically analysed through the lenses of the othering in postcolonial, socio-scientific hermeneutics and the grammatical-historical investigation by default. The literary context of the Markan gospel was examined to aid in fixing the pericope in the context of chapter 16 and the chapter in the context of the Markan gospel as a whole. Since the Bible is a book about God’s dealing with humans and therefore

has a social component that needs to be unearthed (Rutere, 2017b). An application in our contemporary African society was drawn too.

Specific objectives of this study

1. To identify the oppressive elements underlying the othering in the pericope of Mark 10:13-16 using the lenses of socio-scientific and postcolonial hermeneutics.
2. To analyse the otherings in the pericope of Mark 10:13-16 critically through the lenses of othering in socio-scientific and postcolonial hermeneutics.
3. To determine the implications of the oppressive elements in the pericope of Mark 10:13-16 using the othering in postcolonial hermeneutics.
4. To propose an alternative reading/re-reading of the pericope of Mark 10:13-16 for the African context.

Hypotheses/Research Questions

To achieve the study objectives outlined above, the research was guided by the following questions:

1. What are the oppressive elements underlying the othering in the pericope of Mark 10:13-16 using the lenses of socio-scientific and postcolonial hermeneutics?
2. What are the results of a critical analysis of the pericope of Mark 10:13-16 through the lenses of the othering in socio-scientific and postcolonial hermeneutics?
3. What are the implications of the oppressive elements in the pericope of Mark 10:13-16 using postcolonial hermeneutics?
4. How can the pericope of Mark 10:13-16 be best read/understood in the African context?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the oppressive elements underlying the high trajectory of the otherings in the pericope of Mark 10:13-16, to locate the degree and

projectile of othering in the pericope of Mark 10:13-16 and to draw an application in the African context.

Assumptions of the Study

The following assumptions informed the study:

1. Using the lenses of socio-scientific and postcolonial hermeneutics identifies the oppressive elements underlying the othering in the pericope of Mark 10:13-16.
2. A postcolonial re-reading of the pericope of Mark 10:13-16 has positive implications in the African context.
3. The postcolonial biblical criticism helps reveal the oppressive elements in the pericope of Mark 10:13-16.
4. When the oppressive elements underlying the rebuking of children in the pericope of Mark 10:13-16 are understood and dealt with, the contemporary African society will let all children come to the full knowledge of the Lord and saviour Jesus Christ for healing and salvation; again, the children will transition 100% to adulthood or rather till the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ from on high.

Significance of the Study

The researcher pursues to contribute to the body of knowledge in recognizing and understanding the oppressive elements underlying the othering of children in the pericope of Mark 10:13-16. This will go a long way in enabling both the government and the church in the contemporary African society to work towards meeting the needs of the children physically, psychosocially and spiritually by avoiding the oppressive elements and otherings; and making all the African children come to the full knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. Furthermore, the use of postcolonial as opposed to speech act theory in our African context postcolonial biblical criticism is relevant since Africa identifies with the world of the text,

having been colonized the way the Israelites were controlled by the Romans (Grobbelaar, 2012, 2016a, 2016b; Kiambi, 2014; Kithinji, 2021).

Scope of the Study

This research is a library-based study of the exegesis of Mark 10:13-16 using both the socio-scientific hermeneutics and the postcolonial theory methods of biblical criticism/hermeneutics. The grammatical-historical method of hermeneutics is used by default in the exegesis of the pericope. The researcher identifies the oppressive elements underlying the otherings in the pericope. The study also locates the degree and projectile of othering in the pericope of Mark 10:13-16 when read critically and also suggest a re-reading and an application in the contemporary African society.

The researcher was informed of the choice of these methodologies by Elliott (2011) , who says:

...SSC...studies not only (1) the social aspects of the form and content of texts but also the conditioning factors and intended consequences of the communication process, (2) the correlation of the text's linguistic, literary, theological (ideological), and social dimensions and (3) the manner in which this textual communication was both a reflection of and response to a specific social and cultural context.... (p.7)

In support of socio-scientific that is why the researcher uses both the SSC and the postcolonial methods of Biblical criticism because, as Elliott puts it that no one method is adequate without the others in exegesis, hence the researcher borrowed elements of the other relevant Biblical hermeneutics, including grammatical-historical criticism as mentioned earlier.

Thesis Structure

Chapter One: provide an introduction and background to the study by giving an overview of the whole research. As such, the chapter provides the problem statement, the study's objectives besides the research questions, and the study's purpose, significance, scope and limitations.

Chapter Two: This section contains a literature review. The relevant existing literature on the oppressive elements underlying the rebuked is reviewed in relation to the research objectives. The chapter has been structured in line with the objectives and the research questions formulated for this study.

Chapter Three: This chapter discusses the methodology of this research and the justification for the choices made by the researcher.

Chapter Four: Concerns the results of the exegesis of the pericope of Mark 10:13-16 in line with the background and grammatical-historical investigation by default. The section deals with the results in the meaning of words used in the biblical languages and, in this case, the Koine Greek, which is an in-depth exegetical analysis of the guiding pericope from the original Greek language using both the socio-scientific and postcolonial Biblical criticism of hermeneutics. Additionally, an application in contemporary African society was drawn from re-reading the pericope through the lenses of postcolonial hermeneutics following the designated steps of exegesis.

Chapter Five: This chapter presents the conclusions and recommendations of this study. Possible areas of further research are highlighted in the chapter.

Limitations and Delimitations of the Study

This research study was carried out at the library, and there were some restrictions in accessing the hard copy textbooks due to the COVID 19 pandemic and political mayhem. Still, the researcher used the digital library and soft copies to make the research a success.

Summary of Chapter One

This chapter has provided the overview of this research as it is geared towards investigating the oppressive elements underlying the rebuking of children in the Pericope of Mark 10:13-16 when read critically through the othering in the socio-scientific and the postcolonial methods of Biblical criticism. The grammatical-historical hermeneutics was used

by default. The objectives and research questions have been presented. In the chapter, it has also been clarified that this is library research that does not require surveys or any other fieldwork. In the next chapter, the literature review of related scholarly documents locally and globally will be discussed.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter, as mentioned previously, presents a review of literature related to this study of renowned Biblical scholars in this field of childhood theology. The focus will first be on the oppressive elements underlying the othering in Mark 10:13-16. The analysis of Mark 10:13-16 and exegesis will be done in detail in chapter 4. Also, the implications of the oppressive elements in Mark 10:13-16 and fourthly, the alternative reading/re-reading of Mark 10:13-16 for the African context. The researcher chooses the postcolonial criticism since, when used together with the socio-scientific criticism unearths the oppressive elements.

Othering in Ancient Societies

The Graeco-Roman world had children subordinate to the family, the father being the head, and the children next to the slaves. They took boys to school and married out female children as early as 12 years (History, 2021). They abandoned unwanted children in the streets and were collected by the adult slaves and grew up as slaves (Invicta, 2019).

They did not value children much as opposed to their Hebrew counterparts. Furthermore, there was othering of foreigners, single mothers and slaves in the Graeco-Roman ancient world, which affected children markedly (De Marre, 2021; Gordon, 2020; Iliya, 2019; Melchiorri et al., 2013; Shaw, 2019; Wrenhaven, 2020.) This could have informed the oppressive elements underlying the rebuking of children suggesting a high trajectory of othering which was present during the Markan world brought about by the presence of imperialism and impunity in the society (Kithinji, 2021; Sugirtharajah, 2006) and is alluded again, in the Pauline letter to the Galatians as demonstrated by Paul saying there is no male nor female, Jew nor Gentile (Gal 3:28), which indicates that there was classism and

elements of otherings too in the Galatian Province then during the Pauline time (Elliott, 2011).

Othering in the Modern Worldview

Here and now, that is in the contemporary African society, the othering of children is evident in the global perspective, which is supported by Theodorou (2011, p. 256) who argues that “Children’s relationships and interactions were embedded within particular settings, in turn, shaped by specific discourses and hierarchies. Processes of othering became essential in enacting one’s identity at Mesogeios, even though they were by no means fixed as they changed shape and form depending on the point of reference and the context.” Again, Bokare (2016) adds that in Asia-Pacific, there is still rampant stigma and discrimination of children with HIV/AIDs, which is still evident in our contemporary African society (Bauer, 2020; EDARP, 2020; Moracha, 2022)

Furthermore, in America, racism as a form of othering affects children at home, school, church, hospital and in the marketplace and also ruins their future because they learn about racism from their relatives, including parents/caregivers/guardians and other children instead of learning about the love and care of the Lord Jesus Christ (Brega & Coleman, 1999). Similarly, in our contemporary African society, racism or otherings, takes the form of xenophobia (Gizbert, 2015; SkyNews, 2015), tribalism and nepotism, which gives birth to imperialism and impunity (Kithinji, 2021).

In Australia, MacNaughton & Davis (2001, p. 87), from their research, argued that “The knowledge of indigenous Australians being constructed by the majority of Anglo-Australian children we interviewed directly expressed this process of ‘othering’ and in particular expressed traces of colonial ‘othering’. The children defined Aboriginal people through ‘their’ difference to ‘us’ and these differences were positioned as the exotic.” This position is supported and explained further by Ehlebracht (2019, p.2), who says, “These

feelings, with their evolutionary underpinnings, rightly or wrongly, begin to determine and articulate boundaries that enable us to demarcate who is in and who is out, who is “us” and who is “other.” But what, exactly, makes us who we are? How do you know you are you? How does one know “they” are “they?” From where does your identity come?”

What made the disciplines have a sense of a more belonging to Jesus more than the children they were rebuking? Again, in our contemporary African society, what makes some people and a political class think they are more human than others? In Germany and Britain, otherings are evident because immigrants are discriminated against, even in the workplace (Welply, 2015, pp. 430-453). The current compulsory studying of English as a foreign language before getting employment in the host country is also a modern form of othering (Chanda, 2020).

In Africa, like DRC Congo, there is othering of children who are said to be witches in “that children become witches by eating ‘witch food potion’, or ‘mystical witchcraft seed” (Ekpo, 2020, p. 62), which is a very serious accusation. This denunciation of innocent children to be witches needs the rebuking of the Lord Jesus Christ. The otherings of children is also evident as in Namibia as explained by Pauli (2012, p. 426), who said, “The tension between the still, flexible and processual character of conjugal relations and the low levels of stigmatization against children born out of wedlock, and on the other hand, the boundary-drawing attempts to distinguish ‘good’ from ‘bad’ births is linked to an accelerated class and elite formation process underway in Fransfontein since approximately the 1970s.” In Mark 10:14, Jesus Christ meant that all children are to come to Him, born in or out of wedlock.

Similarly, in Nigeria, Chineyemba (2019, pp. 51-52) did a study in the Akwa-Ibom state, and the findings were like the ones of (Ekpo, 2020a), in the case of Congo mentioned above, and he concluded his study that:

In such critical situation where children are placed at enmity with their families and the community that perceives them as undesirable persons that should be rejected and abandoned unto the street, what should be done? Considering that attempts through legal/judicial system have not sufficiently checkmated the abuse of children believed to be witches in a community so obsessed with the fear of witchcraft. How should this and other related social problem be solved? We can glean from the experience of CRARN and resort to the restorative justice system as alternative to legal/judicial system in conflict resolution... (pp. 61-64)

This confirms that in our contemporary African society, there are children who are alleged to be witches, and this form of othering, stigma and discrimination is the one which Jesus Christ, the chief lover of all children, condemns.

Here in Kenya, ethnic politics remain a problem and children are not left out of the harmful and adverse events/effects of ethnic politics (Ngarachu, 2015a). The children of different political classes are treated differently in various circles namely: schools, church, hospital, marketplace, home, political rallies, riots, strikes, public gatherings and then on the road, especially by the police. Unfortunately, in all these, the boy child suffers most, and many are in prison and remand because of otherings, imperialism and impunity (Kithinji, 2021). The presence of otherings in South Africa was evidenced by what Punt (2018), says in that,

Western individualism placed further demands for a particular form of its wide-ranging aspects of biblical literature to a religious dimension only. The resultant interpretation was dependent upon dichotomies such as structural processes of the formation of identity and “othering” on its contents, fabricated monolithic religious focus on the Bible, and imposed its super- parochial-political, legalistic-ritualistic Judaism versus universal and spiritual Christianity, with its derivatives such as Hellenistic versus Jewish and wisdom versus apocalyptic... (p. 74).

This othering, evident in South Africa, was mainly accompanied by apartheid and imperialism along with imperialism and impunity, apart from the xenophobia mentioned earlier. The view of the western literature overlooked the existing African worldview and interpretation; instead, it imposed the western cultural worldview, which affected the African view of children.

As far as the liberation of black theology (which is an African-American context) and otherings and racial discrimination is concerned, Hopkins (2005) asserts that “According to this normative criterion, the black church has been slacking in what Jesus Christ has called it to be, preach, and do. As the institutional manifestation of the gospel message of freedom from injustice and oppression, a major task of the black church hinges on pursuing the end of racial discrimination and realizing equality. Christian freedom, regardless of colour, in the final analysis, means we are all unencumbered by the spiritual and material things of this world, which turn us into what God has not created us to be (2005, pp. 458-459).”

This othering of colour is against the universal welcome of Jesus Christ of welcoming all children of all colours and ethnicity to Him, whether from a poor or rich background, He welcomes them all. This premise is supported by Grobbelaar and Gert, who suggest that trust and learning to trust is at the heart of Christian prayer and, in fact, of the Christian faith. Welcoming children into a world, into life itself, in which they learn to trust, may therefore be at the heart of the message and ministry of the church. Failing to welcome children to such a world and such a life may be a betrayal of the nature and calling of the church itself (Grobbelaar, 2016b, p. 3).” They continue to point out as far as (Mark 10:13-16) is concerned that:

At the heart of Christian theological perspectives on children may, therefore, be the question of how to welcome children into life in such a way that they develop basic forms of trust, of feeling at home; feeling welcome and being accepted; of experiencing faithfulness and reliability; of knowing reassurance and dependability, of developing towards maturity and well-being. After all, Jesus himself ‘took the little children up in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them’ (Mk 10:16) and said ‘whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes not me but the one who sent me’ (Mk 9:37). (Grobbelaar, 2016b, p. 3)

This is the position or should be the status quo of the church and the contemporary African society where God’s love of children and welcoming them to Jesus Christ should and must be in situ. Everything concerning the welcome of children should return to the default;

how God intended it to be in the beginning, more so before the influence of the colonizers. It is important too to be careful on prejudice, African bias, to be aware of the over-glorification of the African past. It is evident that othering and discrimination is not only in the religious sector, but it is extended too to other areas like the medical, social (Essien & Bassey, 2012) and the physically disabled (Dube, 2014a) in the community, as evidenced by not having friendly facilities for people with disabilities.

These otherings need to be unearthed and dealt with in our contemporary African society and the church at large, in the learning intuitions and in the hospitals (Toren et al., 2021). In Luke 2:41–52, Jesus Christ as a 12-year-old child was taken to Jerusalem by His earthly parents as a human being in the temple which supports the letting of children come to Jesus Christ and not rebuking them.

The Bible does not support abandoning and othering of children; instead, it advocates for all children to be saved by coming to Jesus Christ (Psalm 68:5; Revelation 2:4; 1 Timothy 5:8; Ephesians 6:4; Ephesians 4:14; Psalm 139:13-15; Acts 16:31; Titus 3:10-11; Mark 9:42; 1 Corinthians 12:12; Isaiah 49:15; Proverbs 11:29; Mark 10:29-31). Despite what the Bible says in support of children coming to Jesus and not being abandoned, there is still some form of abandonment and otherings (Kiambi, 2014); even in Africa, of children, as stated by UNICEF that “some children are abandoned or orphaned while others leave their families due to their inability to provide and care for them” (Hellen, 2014, p. 68). In Kenya, the majority of the otherings and discrimination against children has been brought about by imperialism and impunity, according to Kithinji (2021).

The study by Oderinde (2015) as far as powerlessness is concerned, in the Jewish culture and so in our African cultures, children are viewed as powerless. They cannot do anything even during war (Togarasei & Kügler, 2014). They entirely depend on the adults to

protect and feed them. Children in Africa lack economic empowerment too because of their inability to make money.

They cannot do income-generating activities unless assisted and supported by the adults in the form of a parent, guardian or caregiver and some of them in children's home(s). This argument seems to be in support of child labour which is a form of othering and against the principle of Jesus Christ of making the children come to Him (Chitando, 2008). In Mark 10:14, Jesus Christ says all children should be left to come to Him, in other words, to be brought to Him; that is why Christ Jesus died for children as much as they are powerless and sinners (Romans 5:6, 8).

Children are powerless in that they lack the power and the ability to resist evil geared toward them. This view is supported by (Oginde, 2017), who notes that "all evil or radical groups target children who are innocent and weak" (Oginde 2017). "The youth who attacked Garissa University was a graduate of the University of Nairobi who had been radicalized by the Al Shabaab. It is also the same in the case of the outlawed Mungiki sect in Kenya, which targets children and the youth also (Oginde, 2021a, 2021b).

It is, however, the case that Jesus Christ died for all children (CITAM, 2016) as well and says all are to receive Him as children (Hunt, 2017; Leithart, 2016; Murphy, 2011; Nyegenye, 2012; Safran, 1937; Shlasko, 2015). Children have also been shown to be powerless, like in Nigeria, among other cultures, where they are battered and even killed innocently by insurgent groups such as the Boko Haram (Makama, 2016).

The current situation in Kenya, like in Mukuru Kwa Njenga slum, Ruai and also Korogocho where the government or unscrupulous private developers demolish houses without factoring in where these children will live and eat [and they demolish the houses very early in the morning, and sometimes during rainy seasons]. Ignoring the basic needs of children is the greatest degree of othering, oppression, imperialism and impunity in our

contemporary African society. It will be very difficultly to explain to such traumatized children the love of God. Instead, the government is to show care and love to the children.

Othering in the Jewish Context

The Jews valued children (Deuteronomy 6:6-7) as opposed to the Romans. This assertion is supported by Murphy (2011, p.49) who argues that “Jews held all children in greater esteem than their contemporaries.” They in fact, provided the basic needs for them like food, shelter and clothing, and it is evidenced again by those who brought the children to Jesus Christ for them to be blessed holistically by Him. This is again supported by both Grobbelaar and Gert, who maintain that the “assessment of childhood in the Jewish and Hellenistic-Roman worlds showed that young children were wholly dependent on adults for shelter, food, protection, affection, education or training, and socialization, all of which seems to have taken place in some form of structured environment (Grobbelaar, 2016a, p. 144).”

The disciples later could have been influenced by the Roman way of valuing children- ambivalent (“the continual fluctuation between wanting one thing and its opposite; the simultaneous attraction towards and repulsion from an object, person or action.”(Kiambi, 2014), this is when one is in-between accepting and or refusing the incoming colonial power, it is a reaction in between and in mimicry (“psychological category that estimates how the subaltern behaves in the prevailing reality of colonization”(Bhabha, 2019; Kiambi, 2014), this is when one starts to ‘ape’ the way some countries left their native language and started using English as their official and national language. Furthermore, hybridity (“is the, ‘in-between’ or ‘third’ space between the colonizer and the colonized” (Kiambi, 2014)- which informed their rebuking. The existing culture merges with the new culture, and a hybrid is created.

On the premise of othering, Murphy (2011), continues to say, “Perhaps there were, in reality, homeless and neglected persons, even street children, within the context of Hellenistic-Roman Palestine, or within Jewish communities of the Diaspora. We simply cannot tell. Within the extant texts, children appear only to exist under the charge of some caretaker, whether a parent, priest or slave-master. (p.60)” this caretaker, parent or guardian is the person whom Mark refers to as people who brought children to Jesus Christ and the disciples (ἐπετίμησαν αὐτοῖς) rebuked them. From the argument, it shows that the Jews initially valued children the way the Africans did before the influence of the colonizers who degraded their culture. This is explained further, “As in the Jewish tradition, there is also evidence that shows the value of children in Hellenistic and Roman societies. Xenophon, the early fourth-century Greek playwright, says that procreation was the principal reason for marriage (Murphy 2011, p.64).” Murphy’s view is supported by the English use of ‘it’ when referring to children and by Togarasei (2014, p.57), who opines that, “Greeks and Romans, children were regarded of little value or importance even the word for them is neuter.” In contrast, the Hebrew people use masculine to refer to children like the (יָלֵד) child and (בֵּן) Son in Isaiah 9:6 are both masculine (Buble Hub, 2004). This depicts the value that the Hebrew had initially through their sociology of language on children (Kamande, 2018). The use of neuter in the Greek language has necessitated the translation to the receptor language like English to use the term ‘it’ as opposed to ‘he’ or ‘she’.

In oppressive culture, Togarasei & Kügler (2014) continue to say that “when African people-children in this case, look at the symbolic features of their context, see difficulties or oppressive cultural values that deprive them of certain liberties and seek liberation. oppression,” (Togarasei & Kügler, 2014, p. 64) this informs one of the reasons why they were bringing children to be blessed or liberated by the saviour Jesus Christ. This is supported by Murphy (2011, p.60) who points out that “Jesus’ remarkable display of love and

affection has been characterized as more in line with Jewish than Hellenistic attitudes toward children.” He does not view the text through the postcolonial lens hence almost agreeing with Murphy (2011, p. 28) who literary, brings in the term (διακονος) servant; Mk 9:35 that a servant and child is rendered as one by the Aramaic term for both, ‘talya’ (child, 9:36) it is used interchangeably in Aramaic and also in the Old Testament. This argument almost normalizes the rebuking of children since they had to be subject to their masters the disciples. The sacrificing of the Jephthah’s daughter (Judges 11:30-40) seems to be an isolated case and could have most likely been due to mimicry of the nearby culture.

From the literature review above, it is evident that much research has been done in the pericope of Mark 10:13-16 as far as othering of children is concerned using hermeneutic methods like historical, literal and socio-scientific, but less has been done as far as the oppressive elements underlying the otherings of children. By using the postcolonial and socio-scientific criticism to unearth the oppressive elements; though the Jews and the African culture initially valued children before the colonizers came and changed or affected the value system of children (Joy, 2019). There is need for the researcher to use the postcolonial theory method of Biblical criticism and socio-scientific hermeneutics in this research to unearth the imperialism and impunity against children in the Markan gospel (Kithinji, 2021).

There still exists otherings brought about by the oppressive elements underlying the rebuking of children in the contemporary African society despite Jesus Christ saying to let all children come to Him in the pericope of Mark 10:13-16. When the Jewish culture is brought into dialogue with the African culture in the care of children, the otherings and the oppressive elements are unearthed, and solutions got in returning back to default, the initial value of children as mentioned by Murphy (2011).

Summary of Chapter Two

The othering of children is evident in the global perspective, which is supported by Theodorou (2011) in Cyprus, by Bokare (2016) in Asia-Pacific, in America (Brega & Coleman, 1999) and Australia (MacNaughton & Davis, 2001), in Germany and Britain (Welply, 2015). In Africa, like in DRC Congo (Ekpo, 2020b). Otherings of children is also evident in Namibia (Pauli, 2012), Nigeria (Chineyemba, 2019), Botswana (Dube, 2002), Kenya (Ngarachu, 2015b) and South Africa (Hopkins, 2005; Punt, 2018). It is not only in the religious sector, but it is extended to the medical, social (Essien & Bassey, 2012) and the physically disabled (Dube, 2014a) in the community. These otherings need to be unearthed using postcolonial criticism and the SSC methods of Biblical criticism (Toren et al., 2021).

A similar study of the pericope of Mark 10:13-16 was done in Nigeria by Oderinde (2015) in the Yoruba perspective. The SSC and the postcolonial hermeneutics were not used, but the historical and the social settings were considered. The othering from the literature review is not only a local problem but a global one as well which needs to be addressed, especially in contemporary African society and the church.

The following chapter presents this study's methodology.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

In this research, the researcher employs both the socio-scientific and postcolonial biblical criticism methods of Biblical criticism; also, the grammatical-historical criticism to unearth the oppressive elements underlying the othering in the pericope of Mark 10:13-16. The steps in exegesis below were followed.

Research Design

This research is conducted in the library and does not require fieldwork or any laboratory involvement. The exegetical stages to be followed include: Step one is the establishment of the text, which is the pericope of Mark 10:13-16. Step two examined the literary context for a better understanding of the Markan gospel despite the postcolonial criticism not being applicable in this step. This helps put the pericope in the context of the chapter and the chapter in the context of the Markan gospel as a whole. Step three examined the historical-cultural context by use of both the postcolonial and socio-scientific Biblical criticisms and to answer the following first two research questions: What are the oppressive elements underlying the othering in the pericope of Mark 10:13-16? And what are the results of a critical analysis of the pericope of Mark 10:13-16? In step four, the researcher established the meaning of the pericope by studying the Koine Greek, bearing in mind the syntactical nuances of the grammar.

Step five involves the determination of the theological principle(s) in the pericope of Mark 10:13-16. Lastly in, step six is the application of Mark 10:13-16 in our contemporary African society. This answered the last two research questions, namely, what are the implications of the oppressive elements in the pericope of Mark 10:13-16? How can the pericope of Mark 10:13-16 be best read/understood in the African context? (Fee, 2002, 2010; Weima, 2013f, 2013e, 2013d, 2013c, 2013a)

The methods involved in this research are the analysis of historical records and documents written concerning the subject of study namely: New Testament Biblical textbooks, e.g., Croy and Wallace; Major NT commentaries, lexicons and dictionaries; Child/Paediatric related books, /articles/journals; also, of the socio-scientific and postcolonial criticisms of the guiding pericope of Mark 10:13-16.

The use of these methods of hermeneutics unearths the oppressive elements underlying the othering in the pericope of Mark 10:13-16 since one is able to view and study the sociological and cultural world behind the text, which Elliott suggests

[SSC] Is a subdiscipline of exegesis, not a new or independent methodological paradigm. It complements the other subdisciplines of the historical-critical method (text criticism, literary criticism, rhetorical criticism and the like) by bringing social-scientific scrutiny to bear both on texts and on their geographical, historical, economic, social, political and cultural (including ‘religious’) contexts. The questions it addresses to these twin objects of analysis and the tools of its investigation are those of the social sciences, especially of sociology and cultural anthropology....(Elliott 2011, p.1)

According to Rukundwa (2012), there is a difference between the post-colonial with a hyphen and postcolonial without a hyphen, which is used in this research thesis. Kithinji (2021) argues that “The hyphenated post-colonial stands for the period after colonialism while the unhyphenated postcolonial stands for a theoretical framework.” Rukundwa also observes that “The postcolonial without a hyphen is used mainly as opposed to the post-colonial.” It is common use to use the postcolonial with a hyphen. The researcher in this thesis uses both the postcolonial (without a hyphen) and the othering in socio-scientific hermeneutics.

Similarly, (Blackwell, 2006) observes that “postcolonial criticism is a new critical ally in helping to unravel biblical texts.” According to Ahiamadu (2014), the socio-scientific theory could have been present even from the time of canonization of the scripture, given that it is still a method of preference by many Biblical scholars as opposed to the latter postcolonial theory. This principle is not only supported by some early church Fathers but the

socio-scientific theory is also meaningful to Kenyan target audiences that is the church and the government (Rukundwa & Aarde, 2012). This method of postcolonial hermeneutics is new, and Mongstad-Kvammen (2013) posits that “Postcolonial studies, as they emerged in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s, were adapted by biblical scholars in the mid-1990s.”

However, to support an earlier date of postcolonial hermeneutics, Sugirtharajah (2006, p. 79) suggests that “Imperial Motives for Canonization consider the early stages of Hebrew Bible canonization influenced by the imperialistic ambitions of the Persian empire...the canon was a politically constructed document for the purpose of advancing imperial ideology, but that the same canon contains postcolonial [from the lenses of the Socio-Scientific] opportunities and germs of resistance, which can be used against the very imperial ideology it sets out to espouse.” His sentiments agree with what is recorded in Hebrews 4:12 that “The word of God is alive and active, sharper than any double-edged sword....” It speaks both to the oppressor and to the oppressed.

Postcolonial criticism

This method of Biblical criticism seeks to ask: What does the text (Mark 10:13-16) reveal about the problematic(s) of postcolonial identity, including the relationship between personal and cultural identity and such issues as double consciousness and hybridity? What person(s) or group(s) does the work identify as "other" or stranger? Rutere (2017) notes that postcolonial criticism is a Biblical Hermeneutics method of study, which approaches the text from the sociological perspective and goes beyond the basic meaning to the world behind the text. Whereas Dube and Mbuvi (1999) noted that “for the past two decades, both the term and the field of postcolonialism have been subjected to thorough and extensive criticism from the perspectives of literary, political and religious studies.”

The postcolonial hermeneutics identifies colonial/imperialist intentions behind the text; it also identifies the text as an instrument of oppression but also contains a voice of

justice that can be retrieved. This gives the subjugated or the ‘subaltern voices’ a voice. This has informed the researcher to combine the two methods of criticism as mentioned earlier to unearth the oppressive elements underlying the othering in the pericope of Mark 10:13-16. When the postcolonial method is used per se the ideology of the imperial government then is not discovered without the employment of the socio-scientific criticism.

The Biblical scholar (Loba-Mkole, 2012) continues to say that the “methodological resources since the inception of postcolonialism as a literary tool for critical textual analysis, its counterpart the socio-scientific critical hermeneutics has followed the writings of scholars of African, Asian and Near Eastern origin.” (Loba-Mkole, 2007) Ukpong 2001; (Punt, 2001) and Sugirtharajah, 2001; (Al-Saidi, 2014; Moore & Segovia, 2005) , Homi (Leander, 2010)1994, support the use of the postcolonial criticism. A delineation of what a socio-scientific critical approach to Biblical hermeneutics means to the contemporary African society is to be seen in the various views presented by these scholars, some of whose ideas are relevant to the understanding of the pericope of Mark 10:13-16. Like Sugirtharajah (2001, p.6) points out:

Postcolonialism ... thrived in nineteenth and parts of twentieth century Africa had also trailed the path of Christian missionaries and had been the basis of a hermeneutics of the Biblical texts which literally bolstered the colonial enterprise. Conversely, therefore, postcolonial hermeneutics will be confronting such imperial tendencies as neo-colonial exploitation, militarism and its legitimising texts.

Postcolonial criticism seeks to answer concerns, “in a concept of the human in which everything stems from the notion that ‘I think, therefore I am’, the chief concern with the other is to be able to answer questions such as ‘How can I know the other?’, ‘How can other minds be known?’ The term ‘alterity’ shifts the focus of analysis away from these philosophic concerns with other- ness – the ‘epistemic other’, the other that is only important to the extent to which it can be known – to the more concrete ‘moral other’ (Ashcroft et al., 2007, p. 9).”

Other questions which need to be addressed using postcolonial hermeneutics are “Is it only useful in the third millennium because every other aspect of the Bible has been exhausted over the course of two thousand years? Does postcolonialism do justice to the biblical texts being examined? Does postcolonialism take into account the history of textual transmission in its analyses? Is it anachronistic to apply this modern theory to ancient texts? (Fitzgerald, 2011, p. 2).” Postcolonial criticism does take into account the history of an account and it is too affected by history. That is why according to Msabah (2016, p. 28), when both postcolonialism and socio-scientific hermeneutics in the exegesis of Mark 10:13-16 is “brought again into dialogue with the African culture,” then that is unearthing of the othering in socio-scientific and postcolonial hermeneutics per excellence. The proponents of this method of study include Dube, Sugirtharajah, Bhabha, Rukundwa et al. (Bhabha, 2019; BibleProject, 2016; Dube, 2014b; Fry, 2009; McHugh, 2013; Rukundwa, 2020; Segovia, 2016; Spivak, 2017; UCTV, 2008; Wallace, 2016)

This othering and rebuking of children not to come to Jesus Christ due to imperialism is a form of religious gender-based violence and violence against children as discussed by Koplitz (2021, p. 14), who says:

This event has much meat to it. Surprisingly, Christian academic commentaries have very little information about the passage. These commentaries say that children were brought to Yeshua, and the disciples tried to stop the parents from doing it. Yeshua tells the disciples to bring the children forward. The authors of these commentaries do not take into account the culture of Yeshua’s day. Projecting twenty-first century culture to events in the Scripture offers the least accurate interpretation. This event is an excellent example of this problem. When the culture is examined, it will become clear what is happening in this passage.

Socio-scientific hermeneutics

This method is “Broadly defined, social-scientific criticism approaches the texts of the New Testament from the viewpoint that meaning in language is embedded in a social system that is shared and understood by speakers, hearers, and readers in the communication process (Weima, 2013a).” That is, “Thinking Socio-Scientifically,” sets social science in the broad

context of the ways in which populaces (οχλος) try to answer questions about the world and environment around them (Barton, 2007; Hoover & Donovan, 1996; Mckenzie & Haynes, 1999; Rutere, 2017b). Using the socio-scientific critical hermeneutics to resonate with the contemporary African society, current issues which the contemporary society go through is supported by Anzuruni (2017), who finds that “when the African context is brought into dialogue with the context of ancient Near East in the task of understanding, interpreting and applying wisdom literature, through the prism of African cultural or socio-scientific hermeneutics, that is indeed wisdom par excellence” (p. 17).

This premise is also supported by (Ahiamadu, 2014) who says that the lenses of socio-scientific critical hermeneutics can be applied in different cultures, and the African culture is one of them. This means that the pericope of Mark 10:13-16, in the light of what has been said, can be representative; that is, it can be given importance globally. This is also supported by (Ahiamadu, 2014, p.5), who says that “...capable of eliminating the bifurcation of humans, religions and cultures...Critical hermeneutics is of trust. We need this method of postcolonial and the socio scientific under the African Hermeneutics to resonate well with the African culture and to be applied practically (Mburu, 2018, 2019b, 2019a, 2021; Seminary, 2020).”

This, already identifies closely with the Biblical text as opposed to the western cultures and is supported by many African Biblical Scholars like (Toren et al., 2021), That there is a great need to return back to the African moral values. Since the Western culture has affected the contemporary African society though ambivalence, hybridity and mimicry, which has affected the motives of biblical authors either positively or negatively in interpretation and exegesis of the Biblical text. The researcher supports this argument that it is not only the return to morals per se but also to the alternative reading and the re-reading of the pericope through the socio-scientific optic, which is further reinforced by Rukundwa, who

finds that “In pursuit of biblical understanding in contexts locked into socio-political and economic upheavals, socio-scientific theory is taking the lead (Rukundwa, 2012, p.339)...” Rukundwa’s observation agrees with Rutere (2017, p.1) that the socio-scientific theory can be used in combination with postcolonial criticism in the research of the oppressive elements underlying the rebuking of children in the pericope of Mark 10:13-16. As Rukundwa (2012) notes, there is a need to give more concern to the socio-scientific theory and the postcolonial hermeneutics in doing our critical Bible interpretation or hermeneutics, especially in our African continent and cultures. As such, more researchers are exploring and starting to use both postcolonial and socio-scientific hermeneutics in studying biblical texts (see for example (Browning, 2011b; Moore & Segovia, 2005; Rukundwa & Van Aarde, 2012). Both the socio-scientific and postcolonial hermeneutics, as methods of biblical criticism, can, therefore, be used in exegeting Biblical texts and applying them in our African context (Msabah, 2017; L. S. Rukundwa, 2012; Rutere, 2017a, 2017b)

Summary of Chapter Three

This library-based research is conducted using the qualitative research approach. The methods involved are both the postcolonial and socio-scientific methods of Biblical criticism in the analysis and the use of the grammatical-historical criticism by default of the pericope of Mark 10:13-16 and its application in the contemporary African society. The following chapter deals with the exegesis of the pericope of Mark 10:13-16 and its significance in contemporary African society. Postcolonial and the SCC hermeneutics identify colonial/imperialist intentions behind the text; it also identifies the text as an instrument of oppression but also contains a voice of justice that can be retrieved. This gives the subjugated or the ‘subaltern voices’ a voice.

CHAPTER FOUR

Introduction

. The exegetical stages to be followed include: Step one is establishing the text, which is the pericope of Mark 10:13-16. Step two examined the literary context for a better understanding of the Markan gospel despite the postcolonial criticism not being applicable at this stage. Step three examined the historical-cultural context by use of both the postcolonial and socio-scientific Biblical criticisms and to answer the following first two research questions: What are the oppressive elements underlying the othering in the pericope of Mark 10:13-16? What are the results of a critical analysis of the pericope of Mark 10:13-16? (Fee, 2002b, 2010)

In step four, the researcher established the meaning of the pericope by studying the Koine Greek, bearing in mind the syntactical nuances of the grammar with the help of the Wallace textbook, other Greek texts, relevant New Testament literature and other reliable, online sources. Step five involves the determination of the theological principle(s) in the pericope of Mark 10:13-16. Lastly, in step six, the application of Mark 10:13-16 in our contemporary African society was presented. This answered the last two research questions: What are the implications of the oppressive elements in the pericope of Mark 10:13-16? How can the pericope of Mark 10:13-16 be best read/understood in the African context?

Establishment of the Text

As stated earlier in chapter one, the researcher selected the pericope of Mark 10:13-16 to achieve the research objectives. This pericope is in line with the overarching objectives and goals of this research, owing to the oppressive elements underlying the high trajectory of otherings in a critical reading of Mark 10:13-16. The pericope of Mark 10:13-16 is within the sandwich and cannot be read in isolation of (8:22-10:52) and especially (9:33-37) and as much as Mark uses the sandwich technique in his writing, which is explained by Moj (2018,

p. 363) that, “Intercalations are found in the Gospel of Mark. The researcher selected the part B of the A-B-A sandwich.

In summary Mark chapter 10, Jesus Christ teaches about marriage, riches and service as follows: In verses (1-2) A test from the Pharisees on divorce which was a controversial topic in Jesus’ day (cf. Matthew 19:3; Deuteronomy 24:1). In verses (3-9) Jesus Christ emphasizes marriage and God’s plan in marriage. In verses (10-12), Jesus Christ clarifies the point for His disciples to know about divorce and remarriage (cf. Acts 20:27; Matthew 19:9; Deuteronomy 24:1; 1 Corinthians 7:15).

Most scholars stress that in verses (13-16) Jesus blesses the children and uses them as an example of how we must receive the kingdom of God, but in this study, what is stressed most is the bringing of the children to Jesus Christ and Him saying that the children should be left to come to Him and should not be rebuked. Jesus Christ teaches on riches in verses (17-18), and in verses (19-22), Jesus Christ counsels the young man again on riches.

Mark fixed the story of the children being brought to Jesus Christ between the lesson on divorce and riches so that his hearers would know the value of children who in real life do not think of divorce and riches but mainly of what they can eat wear and where to sleep. The concern of the children is different from the one of the adults, and Jesus Christ wants them all to be brought to Him.

The Pericope of Mark 10:13-16

The pericope of Mark 10:13-16 is in the Markan Gospel. The following is the context of the book of Mark, which includes the general background: author, date and audience. The summary of the key facts about the gospel of Mark according to Mburu:

Author: John Mark, co-worker of the apostle Peter.

Date: ca. A.D. 65–70

Provenance: Rome

Audience: Gentiles in Rome

Purpose: Apology for the cross, discipleship

Key Verse: Mark 10:45 [in this thesis the Key verse is 10:14]

Organization: Largely chronological

Key theme: To demonstrate that Jesus is the Son of God. (Mburu, 2009d)

In Tables 4.1 and 4.3, each scholar views the passage as transitional while some pericopes lack consensus, but the majority of pericopes enjoy scholarly consensus like 10:13-16 (Mburu, 2009a; Michael, 2008).

Historical-Cultural Context Analysis of Markan Gospel

Markan historical context: occasion, purpose and milieu

The Gospel of Mark, thought the shortest of the four gospels, has the least unique material. It is the only Gospel to refer to itself as a “gospel” (cf. 1:1). According to many Bible scholars, it is regarded as foundational to the composition of at least two of the other synoptic Gospels, Matthew and Luke. Mark's opening reference to his story as (εὐαγγελίου) "the gospel of" sets the stage for the use of that term as a literary designation for the four distinctive literary works now called the Gospels-which are the three synoptic gospels, and John-and contributed to the eventual use of “gospel” as a literary designation in the early church.

In terms of its foundational significance, the most widely accepted view today, which the researcher also supports, is that Mark was written first (Mburu, 2009d). This is the John Mark mentioned in (Acts 12:12, 25; 13:5, 13; 15:36-39; Col. 4:10; Phile. 24; 2 Tim. 4:11; 1 Pet. 5:13) and being the writer of the first written gospel and young could have identified himself with the children who were being rebuked by the disciples (Constable, 2021). The (κατα Μαρκον) was added at a later date to show that the Markan Gospel was written by and according to Mark (Moloney, 2002b).

Examination of the Literary Context of Markan Gospel

Markan literary structure: structure and argument

In the Markan gospel, there are agreements in order and wording; the less sophisticated Greek used by Mark; his less developed theology; the succinctness of the Gospel; and the ineptness of its style. That is why having an outline of Mark is not easy, which led Williams (2006, pp. 505-506) to suggest that “Mark’s Gospel is like an oriental carpet with crisscrossing patterns. It is an interwoven tapestry made up of multiple overlapping structures and sequences that serve to bridge breaks in the narrative rather than create them,” as shown in Table 4.1. This is in relation to the use of the sandwich method of A-B-A by Mark too as mentioned earlier in chapter one.

The pericope of Mark 10:13-16 is in consensus as one unit as per all the scholars who did the structure of the Markan gospel, though some title it the receiving of the Kingdom whereas others use Jesus’ blessing children, which is more preferred since the pericope concerns the bringing of children to the Lord Jesus Christ to bless them. Mark’s Gospel is too complex. It contains more patterns than can be expressed in an outline, especially since an outline will necessarily highlight certain patterns and, by doing so, obscure others.

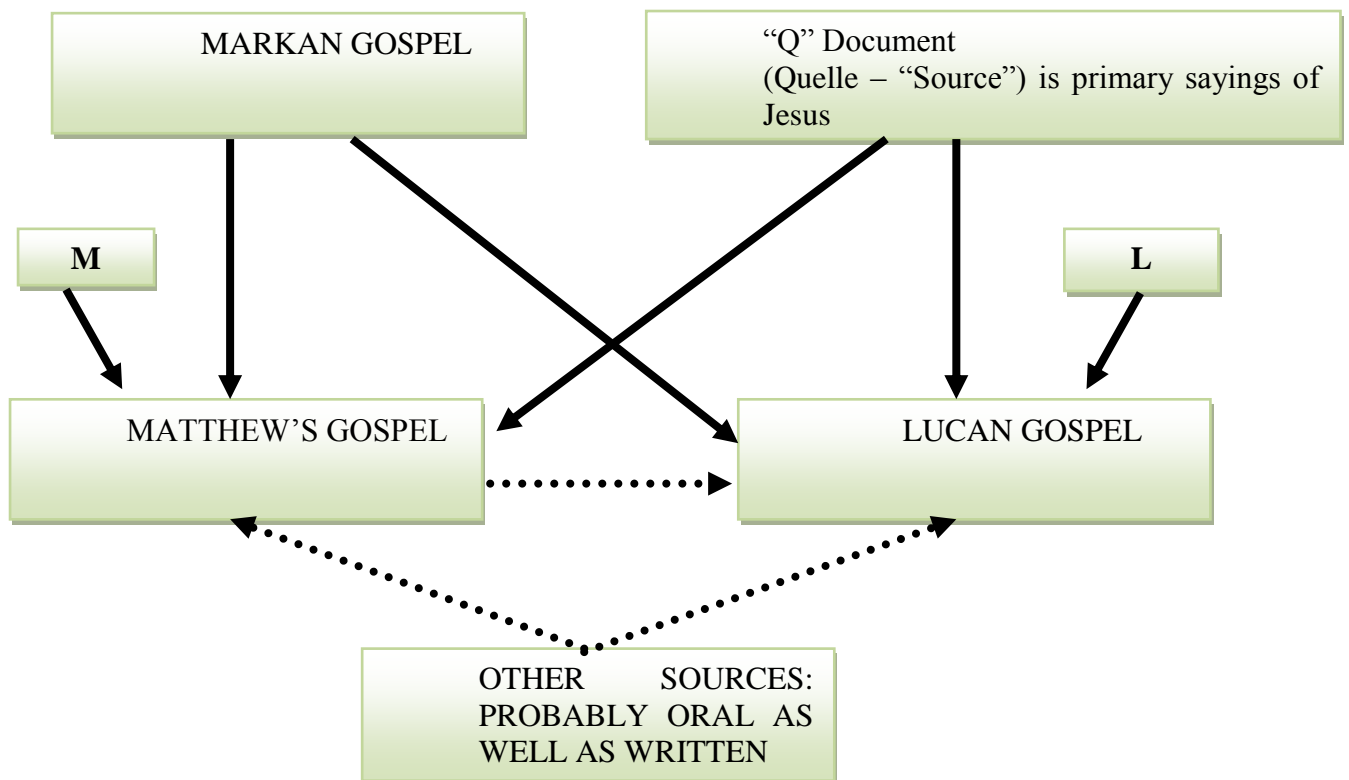
Most Biblical scholars believe that, most likely, Matthew and Luke then used Mark as a primary source to compose their Gospels. It is probable that they-both Matthew and Luke- had additional sources, undoubtedly oral and written. The (written or oral as mentioned above) of “Q” remains highly possible, this is nevertheless the working premise that is adopted by most scholars, and the researcher of this work is in support of it too (Botha, 1993; Mburu, 2009c) see also (Bailey, 1995; Jackson, 2010; Miceli, 2011; Moloney, 2002b).

To understand this better, Figure 4.1 enables the reader to conceptualize the explanation above of the “Q” document. In summary, the "synoptic problem" is the question of the specific literary relationship among the three synoptic gospels (Mark, Luke and

Matthew)—that is, the question of the source or sources upon which each synoptic gospel depended when it was written. (Fee, 2002; Köstenberger, Kellum, L. S., & Quarles, 2016; Li, 2019; Mann, 2007; Mburu, 2009b; Zeichman, 2017).

This view is supported by the premise that “About 92 per cent of it is paralleled in Matthew, about 48 per cent in Luke, and about 95 per cent in Matthew and Luke combined. (Mburu, 2009b, p. 227-254).” The two-source hypothesis of the synoptic problem is explained in Figure 4.1.

Figure 4.1 The Two Source Hypothesis



As explained above, Mark wrote first. Matthew & Luke borrowed their narrative from Mark, and the remaining material in Matthew and Luke was borrowed from another source (Q), and both Matthew and Luke could have used other oral and written sources as well. The M = various other materials (mostly oral, some maybe written) found only in Matthew. The L = various other materials (mostly oral, others probably written) found only in Luke. (Köstenberger, A. J., Kellum, L. S., & Quarles, 2016; Mburu, 2009b)

This study supports the Lucan use of both the Markan gospel and the “Q” document.

By Luke being a historian, he followed the historiographical conventions of the day despite

being a physician –Doctor Luke- (Colossians 4:14). He and Matthew must have consulted more than two documents to make their conclusion. Luke may have used Matthew apart from Mark and the “Q” document, as shown by the dotted arrow, and Matthew might have used Mark and other sources, but the conclusion of the matter is that most likely, Mark was written first among the three synoptic gospels.

Markan theological: themes and motifs

The Markan gospel is a portrayal of the life of Jesus Christ that is most likely veined after the Petrine proselytization. Apostle Peter's sermon in Acts 10:34–43 and the mention of John Mark in 12:12, 25; 13:5, 13; 15:36-39 essentially provide the reader with a fleeting summary of the basic structure of the narrative common to the other synoptic gospels and John. Mark's gospel talks of a story, the (εὐαγγέλιον) ‘Gospel’, about Jesus and the (εὐαγγελίου) ‘of the Gospel’ (1:1 cf. 1:14, 15; 8:35; 10:29; 13:10; 14:19).

Indeed, stress is on the person of Jesus Christ by the use of the genitive by Mark, rather than His discourses or parables. The Markan gospel is blunt about the self-imposed limitations and “weaknesses” of Jesus Christ, and of the four gospels, it is the one that emphasizes the insipidness and weaknesses of the disciples. This, in addition to the status it acquired of being an abridged or condensed edition of Matthew and Luke due to its lack of uniqueness, made it the least popular of the four gospels (Moloney, 2002b) throughout most of Christian history.

However, in the nineteenth century, the proposal that Markan priority be regarded as a solution to the synoptic problem (Moloney, 2002a), the claim that Mark was the most historical of the Gospels, as well as quests for the historical Jesus, led to a revival of interest in this Gospel. The great number of works written over the past forty years reflects this (Mburu, 2009c).

Markan themes and main motif is all about the only begotten (εὐαγγελίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ Υἱοῦ Θεοῦ) Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ and for His audience to believe in Him as the Son of God including the little children which Mark says here in this pericope should be allowed to go to Jesus Christ not to be rebuked. Despite Maclean's view (2007, p. 92) that "Certain authors believe that this saying of Jesus closely reflects a pre-Markan saying, although how close to the original saying is open to question." The view of Mark is that Jesus Christ (Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ Υἱοῦ Θεοῦ) said to the disciples to let the children come to Him there and then, and it is still applicable here and now in the contemporary African society, as corroborated by the exegesis of the pericope below.

Establishment of the Meaning Of Mark 10:13-16

Exegesis of the pericope of Mark 10:13-16

13. Καὶ προσέφερον αὐτῷ παιδιά ἵνα ἅψηται αὐτῶν· οἱ δὲ μαθηταὶ ἐπετίμων τοῖς προσφέρουσιν 14. ἰδὼν δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἠγανάκτησεν καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς Ἄφετε τὰ παιδιά ἔρχεσθαι πρὸς με καὶ μὴ κωλύετε αὐτὰ τῶν γὰρ τοιούτων ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ 15. ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν ὃς ἐὰν μὴ δέξηται τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ ὡς παιδίον οὐ μὴ εἰσέλθῃ εἰς αὐτήν 16. καὶ ἐναγκαλισάμενος αὐτὰ τιθεὶς τὰς χεῖρας ἐπ' αὐτὰ ἠϋλόγει αὐτὰ, (Textus Receptus, 1550)

Own Translation

And they brought little children to Him, in order that He might touch them; but the disciples rebuked them. Having seen it, Jesus, He was greatly displeased and said to them, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God. Amen, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as an infant will by no means enter it." And He having took them up in His arms, laid His hands on them, and blessed them.

Prior to the exegesis of the pericope of Mark 10:13-16, the textual issues shall be tackled first for a better understanding of the exegesis and the pericope. In this pericope, there is only one diagnosed textual issue which affects the understanding and interpretation also the application of the pericope as a whole. The textual issue 'and the disciples rebuked them' (οἱ δὲ μαθηταὶ ἐπετίμησαν αὐτοῖς) graded {A}. The variant reading (Willker, 2015, p. 370) may

have little significance for translations since translators may wish to use a noun instead of a pronoun in the receptor language if the pronoun is ambiguous.

Compare TEV: “some people brought children to Jesus for Him to place His hands on them, but the disciples scolded the people.” (Metzger, 1971, 1981). The researcher prefers the translation that the disciples ‘rebuked them’ (ἐπετίμησαν αὐτοῖς) to mean the children as opposed to those who brought the children, which will be unpacked in the following section when the underlying oppressive elements are considered. The ESV supports this premise by writing:

And they were bringing children to him that he might touch them, and the disciples rebuked them. But when Jesus saw it, he was indignant and said to them, “Let the children come to me; do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God. Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it.” And he took them in his arms and blessed them, laying his hands on them.

The pronoun (αὐτοῖς) could be understood as referring to the children themselves instead of to the adults who were bringing them to Jesus. To avoid possible ambiguity as to whom it was that the disciples were rebuking, some copyists replaced the object pronoun them (αὐτοῖς) with those who were bringing (τοῖς προσφέρουσιν) or those who were bringing (τοῖς φέρουσιν.) The reading in the text has excellent manuscript support.

In addition, the parallel texts in Matt 19.13 and Luke 18.15, which have the pronoun “them,” suggest that Matthew and Luke found the pronoun (αὐτοῖς) in Mark when they wrote their Gospels supporting the prior ground that Mark was written first (Omanson, 2006, P. 88). The position of the researcher here is that the disciples rebuked those who brought the children because they were bringing children- since the children were less than 12 years because, they were brought and as an example of an interpretive choice as seen in most of the pictures shown in Sunday school classes and the Jesus Film (Eshleman, 2016; UPLOAD, 2015) shows the children to be younger than 12 years.

Again, when compared with the Markan previous use of the term little young girl (θυγάτριόν) in 5:23, which again in 5:42, he gives the age to be 12 years (ἑτῶν δώδεκα,) hence when he says little children, he meant those less than 12 years of age. Unfortunately, there and then, the Dubowitz/Ballard score (Lynch & Zhang, 2007) had not been invented formerly to ascertain the correct or approximate age of the children as currently used in the paediatric weight estimation and vice versa (Kelly et al., 2007).

The translation above of the text is by the researcher, though constructed to make sense in the receptor language English and was guided and informed by the exegesis done and Table 4.2. In the Markan pericope of 10:13-16, Mark uses the ‘and’, ‘also’, (Καὶ) which is a conjunction (Wallace, 1996) approximately 9212 times in the whole Markan gospel but seven times in this particular pericope to signify simplicity in his mode of writing as mentioned in the background above. The Καὶ has been used as a connective conjunction (continuative, coordinate) [and, also] since it was a narration, Mark used it as an additional element to the narrative.

When one listens to the gospel of Mark being read aloud in English (Suchet, 2017) and in the Greek language (VIVLOS.NET, 2013), the reading flows from the beginning to the end, and the conjunctions play a key role in the connections of the various sections. In this context, the Καὶ embraces the children brought to Jesus Christ (Metzger, 1971; Wallace, 1996). The Καὶ plays a role when giving the story to children since it is a connector and the children get and identify with the Bible story well.

Furthermore, Mark uses (προσέφερον) they were bringing, which is a progressive (descriptive) imperfect. He actually uses (προσέφερον) to describe the action of the bringing of the children to Jesus Christ there and then, and he brings the vividness or simultaneity with the rebuking of the disciples (Wallace, 1996, P.543). The disciples rebuked the (παιδία) children. The (παιδία) used here by Mark substantively as an accusative of the direct object,

(παιδία) receives the action of (προσέφερον) because it is the direct object of the action; they were the ones being brought to Jesus Christ to bless them as recorded by Mark to his audience (Wallace, 1996, P. 179). (See also Matthew 19:13-15; Luke 18:15-17; Mark 1:1).

Mark chose the term (παιδία) to refer to the children brought to Jesus Christ to be blessed. The disciples rebuked the children on the backdrop of their background of imperialism and impunity brought about by their ambivalence, mimicry and hybridity. This will be explained further below in the section on the postcolonial and socio-scientific approach of this pericope to explain the background in which the disciples reacted the way they did. Those ‘otherred’ were the children by the superiors, in this case, the disciples.

Mark uses (ἵνα) in this pericope (v13) as a purpose conjunction [in order that] to indicate the goal or aim of the bringing of the little children to Jesus Christ (Wallace, 1996, P.676). He also uses (Ἰδὼν) in (v14), which is a dependent verbal participle under adverbial (or circumstantial) which is grammatically subordinated to its controlling verb to answer the question when? It is temporal (Wallace, 1996, p. 622). Mark wanted to inform his audience that when Jesus Christ saw what the disciples were doing, ‘He was greatly displeased’ (ἠγανάκτησεν). This is an active voice in simple active use, which Mark wanted to show his audience that Jesus Christ Himself was displeased with the action of the disciples (Wallace, 1996, P. 411) also (Clark, 2020).

In the same verse, he uses (Ἄφετε) an aorist active imperative, 2nd person plural in the imperative mood as a command from a superior (Jesus Christ) to an inferior (the disciples) (Wallace, 1996, P. 411). Mark shows his audience that it is a progressive action. This was mainly to show the vividness of the narrative and what happened there and then. The effect of the progressive aorist is still felt here and now and can be researched further using the speech act theory (Rutere, 2017b). It applied there and then during the Markan world; it still applies

here and now in that the power of what Jesus Christ said is still effective in the contemporary African society and the church.

Jesus Christ is still saying unto the contemporary African society to let the little children come to Him. (Ἄφετε) is also vocative, and it is capitalized because it is a direct speech from Jesus Christ, meaning Jesus Christ still tells us to let the children come to Him. Again, this prompted the researcher to argue that this is the key verse in this pericope of the contemporary African society letting all the children come to Jesus Christ holistically. Mark uses the verb (ἐναγκαλισάμενος) in the aorist middle as a participle, and it is a nominative masculine singular. He was stressing the kind of action as opposed to the time of action. Which is translated (having taken [them] in arms), meaning Jesus Christ took the children in His arms and (κατεβλόγει) blessed them, as evidenced by the personal pronoun ‘them’ (αὐτὰ)

This is to signify that the children were brought to Jesus for Him to heal them; it is evident by the common Markan use of the word ‘to save’ (σωξεν). In support of that premise, Murphy (2011, p. 92) adds that “but also refers to eschatological notions of eternal life and the reign of God; i.e., —Healing...and being saved...are nearly one and the same in Mark.”

Moreover, in (v15), continuous with the vocative use of, ‘Amen, I say to you’ (ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν) it is vocative which Koplitz (2021) says that “the chiasm is developed around the action of Yeshua with the children.” This was mentioned earlier in the A-B-A sandwich which Mark uses. Here, Jesus Christ tells the disciples and all who were present, including the children that they have to receive the kingdom of God as young and little children who believe without question.

The belief of the children can be likened to how children readily accept vaccines as opposed to adults. For instance, many adults worldwide have been reluctant, while others have refused to take the vaccine against COVID-19. In this Markan case of believing in the

Lord Jesus Christ, there is no form; the only remedy is to follow what Jesus Christ said and says in His word since He does not change (Hebrew 13:8).

Mark shows the importance by the use of the (ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν). In the Kalenjin culture, when the old men say ‘kikirie’, it is taboo to do anything and something bad the children will always accept and follow because they believe in the old people. That is why Proverbs 22:6 talks of training up children when they are young so that they do not forget when they are old. That is why in John 1:12, one becomes the child of God when they receive Jesus Christ. Likewise, 1 Peter 2:2-3 says, “Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation— if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good. (ESV)” again, 1 John 5:21 tell his audience that, “Little children, keep yourselves from idols (ESV)”. Similarly, Murphy (2011) suggests that “the purpose of Mark’s interpretation of this pericope was to teach adults that true greatness is best conveyed through humble service, represented by the children.” This is true.

Correspondingly, in (v16), Mark uses, ‘And He took them up in His arms, laid His hands on them, and blessed them.’ (καὶ ἐναγκαλισάμενος αὐτὰ τιθεὶς τὰς χεῖρας ἐπ’ αὐτὰ ἠϋλόγει αὐτὰ), Mark uses the verb (ἐναγκαλισάμενος,) which is an aorist middle participle, nominative masculine singular, which can be rightly translated as having taken them up in His arms to show and to describe the action Jesus Christ blessing the children there and then. Mark brings to his audience the vividness of the action.

As mentioned earlier, Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever (Hebrews 13:8). He does not change. What He did there and then, He is able and willing to do it here and now when children are brought to Him. Again, Mark uses the verb (ἠϋλόγει), in the active indicative imperative form, 3rd person singular, to also show the vividness of the action of Jesus Christ blessing the children (Wallace, 1996). He blessed all who were brought to Him.

Mark, in this pericope, unearths the oppressive elements underlying the othering in the pericope of Mark 10:13-16, which is why Togarasei and Kügler (2014) note that "...By depriving children of their basic rights, the government of Zimbabwe resembled the disciples of Jesus who blocked the children who came to Jesus Christ..." (Togarasei & Kügler, 2014).

While in Botswana Dube, (2002, p 32) in relation to the children affected and infected by HIV/AIDS and if COVID was there then it could have been mentioned, she says in support of Jesus Christ words in Mark 10:13-16, that, "These verses underline that the gospel of Christ is good news to all those marginalized by society and that children's rights are God-given. Like in most places of the world today, children in ancient times were powerless members of their families, societies and nations. Jesus' position is therefore socially subversive - he empowers children." Jesus Christ still empowers Children in our contemporary African society. There is a need to make sure they meet Him and know Him – Jesus Christ the Great I AM (Kubai, 2018) in person and keep mentoring them. Mentorship is key in bringing the children to the full knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ (Gathongo, 2018); before they become youth, they must be children first, and the better they know Jesus Christ at a tender age, the better for their holistic growth and development. (Chiroma, 2017; Chiroma & Cloete, 2015; Chiroma, 2008)

A similar study of the pericope of Mark 10:13-16 was done in Nigeria by Oderinde (2015), touching on the role of parents in the Yoruba perspective using the historical and the social settings. He concluded by saying

Christians are expected to emulate Christ in giving loving attention, affection and recognition to children. They should not be pushed aside as nonentities; rather they are to be treated as individuals with potentials. We are to embrace and bless them and live exemplary life that they can emulate. Parents should be examples of Christian life and conduct, caring more for the salvation of their children than other things. It is the responsibility of parents to give their children the upbringing that prepares them for lives pleasing to God. (p. 57)

Similarly, another research on the pericope was done using the literary and source criticisms by Nyegenye (2012, p. 167), and the study concluded that “Most commentators interpret Mark 10:13-16 in light of Mark 9:35-37. In both texts, Jesus overturns the power and status expectations of His disciples by bringing up the image of a child (παιδια) as the true example of greatness. The word (παιδιον) means a very young child or infant, little child or growing child.”

Determination of Theological Principles in Mark 10:13-16

The theological principles drawn from the above exegesis of the Markan pericope of Mark 10:13-16, as derived through the lenses of both the postcolonial and socio-scientific hermeneutics, are as follows:

Postcolonial view of the pericope of Mark 10:13-16

Ambivalence, hybridity and mimicry

What does the pericope reveal about the problem of post-colonial identity, including the relationship between personal and cultural identity and such issues as double consciousness and hybridity? What person(s) or groups does the work identify as "other" or stranger? In this pericope, the children are ‘otherred’ by the disciples, and Jesus Christ intervenes by telling them not to hinder the children but to let them come to Him. What made the disciples do that, and why specifically rebuke the children? Mark brought this story and also Matthew and Luke in the parallel texts (Matthew 19:13-15; Luke 18:15-17) –when the parallel text is exegeted it brings the same meaning as the one of this pericope of Mark 10:13-16- to stress the importance of children in the Kingdom of God, as said by Jesus Christ in these pericopes. This pericopes means that all children should be brought to Jesus Christ for holistic healing both physical and spiritual. Jesus Christ wants all children to be brought to Him and no one should hinder them so that He is able to save and heal them.

The ambivalent behaviour, hybridity and mimicry of the disciples from the colonization mind of the Greco-Roman world; could have led to the otherings of the children, since initially, from the Genesis or the Pentateuch account by Moses in Deuteronomy, children were respected as evidenced in Deuteronomy 11:19 (cf. Deuteronomy 4:9; Deuteronomy 4:10; Deuteronomy 6:7; Psalm 78:4; Psalm 78:6; Proverbs 22:6; Ephesians 6:4). The Jewish culture respected children and brought them to the synagogue. That is why colonial governments violated human dignity, and the disciples were mimicking that unknowingly, and the children were the ones most affected (Huyssteen, 2017).

There is also the denial of some cultural rights to the children by othering them. (Nyegenye, 2012) the otherings mentioned by Mark in this pericope is made more explicit by what Ehlebracht (2019, p.2) says, “These feelings, with their evolutionary underpinnings, rightly or wrongly, begin to determine and articulate boundaries that enable us to demarcate who is in and who is out, who is “us” and who is “other.” But what, exactly, makes us who we are? How do you know you are you? How does one know “they” are “they?” From where does your identity come?” What informed the disciples to think they are the ones to be with Jesus Christ and the children are not to be with Him? Were they the only inner circle required to be with Jesus Christ but not the children? This was othering per excellence!

The Lord Jesus Christ rebuked them openly as recorded by Matthew, Mark and Luke (Matthew 19:13-15; Mark 10:13-16; Luke 18:15-17). The othering of children is influenced by ambivalence, hybridity and mimicry (Kithinji, 2021; Sugirtharajah, 2013). The Hebrew culture initially, before they interacted with other cultures valued children (Genesis 1:28; 18:19; 33:5; Exodus 20:12; Leviticus 19:3; Deuteronomy 4:9; 6:6-7; 11:19; 30:1-3; 2 Chronicles 34:1-3; Isaiah 38:19; 49:15-16; 54:13; Jeremiah 1:5; Psalm 8:2; 113:9; 115:14; 127:1-5; 128:3; 139:13; Proverbs 22:6; Ecclesiastes 12:1). They gave them a dignified position (Blackwell, 2006).

The otherings of children is evident in the global perspective, which is supported by Theodorou (2011) in Cyprus, by Bokare (2016) in Asia-Pacific, again in America (Brega & Coleman, 1999) and Australia (MacNaughton & Davis, 2001), in Germany and Britain (Welply, 2015). In Africa, like DRC Congo (Ekpo, 2020b) otherings of children is also evident as in Namibia (Pauli, 2012), Nigeria (Chineyemba, 2019), Botswana (Dube, 2002) and also in Kenya (Ngarachu, 2015b) as South Africa (Hopkins, 2005; Punt, 2018) and it is not only in the religious sector but it is extended too to the medical, social (Essien & Bassey, 2012) and the physically disabled (Dube, 2014a) in the community.

(Togarasei & Kügler, 2014) argues that “Although the majority of the child victims of sexual exploitation and abuse are girls, both girls and boys, of all ages and backgrounds, everywhere in the world, fall victims of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse. However, the highest prevalence rate of child sexual abuse geographically was found in Africa.” This happens when the children who later grow up to be adults and become perpetrators by not knowing the Lord Jesus Christ. These otherings are unearthed using the postcolonial criticism and the SSC (Toren et al., 2021) as explained earlier by Sugirtharajah that the influence of the colonizers played a role in the othering of the children. The nature of the Hebrew people was to bring children to be blessed by Jesus Christ since He was and He is a great teacher, and they could not have hindered them were it not for the influence of the postcolonialism, which made the disciples rebuke them. Again, this is affirmed by Koplitz (2021, p. 15) who says, “The custom was different when a holy man visited the home. Every man would present his boys to the holy man to bless them and protect them from diseases.” Again it is evident from this statement by Koplitz (2021) that the girl child was ‘otherred’ then as opposed to the current contemporary African society where the boy child is vulnerable and in danger of othering by the society; the endangered male child as most people put it.-This was fully addressed by Jesus Christ be saying in Mark 10:14 (ἰδὼν δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἠγαπάκτησεν καὶ εἶπεν

αὐτοῖς Ἄφετε τὰ παιδιά ἔρχεσθαι πρὸς με καὶ μὴ κωλύετε αὐτὰ τῶν γὰρ τοιούτων ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ'). All children both male and female [red, black, blue and white] to be brought to Jesus Christ (the omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent and immutable God) for Him to save them, heal them and protect them all.

The powerlessness of the children and economic oppression

The Bible says in Exodus 23:3, “You will not be partial to a powerless [person] in his legal dispute (LEB).” (see also Leviticus 19:15; Deuteronomy 28:32; 2 Sam 22:45; 2 Kings 19:26; 2 Chronicle 14:11; 20:12; Nehemiah 5:5; Job 5:16; 14:10; 26:2; 31:23; Psalms 18:44; 89:47; Isaiah 14:10; 26:14; 37:27; 40:29; Jeremiah 48:45; Lamentation 1:6; Daniel 10:8; 10:16; Amos 2:7; 4:1; 8:6; Micah 5:12; Habakkuk 1:4; Act 5:39; 14:8; Romans 5:6; 6:6; 8:3,7; 2 Corinthians 13:9; Galatians 4:9; 2 Thessalonians 2:8; and Hebrews 2:14; 10:4). God is against social injustice (Msabah & Bowers, 2017). Before the ambivalence, hybridity and mimicry mentioned above, the Hebrews used to empower their children, and they were economically stable; but, when they were taken captives, those who suffered most were the children and women but more so the children. Children are powerless and are likened to the sick, foreigners who do not have economic empowerment or are unable to assist and help themselves without the succour or guidance of an adult.

In support of this, Eck (2014) notes that “Jesus’ patronage, finally, is also extended to the most vulnerable and marginalized persons in 1st-century Mediterranean society, namely women and children. Because of its patriarchal social structure, women and children in the 1st-century Mediterranean world were treated as property.” Similarly, in the Kalenjin culture, children and women are not Kalenjins as in they are counted as tribe less. They can belong to any other tribe so long as they have not been initiated into the community through circumcision, especially for the boys. Women and girls are tribe less because they would belong to all tribes (like when they get married to another culture and tribe even abroad and

overseas, they belong to the new tribe and culture; and, when they come back, they still belong to the community).

This could be a good culture since when there is any war; children and women are not to be killed since they are tribe less. This Kalenjin culture was affected by the influence of the colonial powers whereby they gave both men and women, including children above 18 years, national identity cards, which must have the tribe indicated. Jesus Christ in Mark 10:13-16 wanted the powerless children to come to Him since they need His holistic empowerment. Jesus Christ is against the oppression of the vulnerable and the poor, and He wants all to come to Him (Isaiah 1:18).

Domination and Class Oppression (classism)

The disciples from the mimicry of the colonizers developed a class and dominion of the powerless like the children. Jesus Christ rebuked them. God loves all and has no partiality. He wants to save all including the oppressed children despite viewed as of a low class as mentioned namely: Genesis 1:26-31; 2:24; 2:7; 12:3; 19:1-13; 19:1-38; 19:23-25; Exodus 3:14; 20: 4-6, 7, 8-11, 12, 16, 17; 22:21; 22:22; Leviticus 18:1-30; 20:1-27; Numbers 5:1-31; Deuteronomy 10:17; 21:23; Deuteronomy 23:17; 1 Samuel 2:1-36; 16:7; 1 Kings 2:1-46; 1 Chronicles 2:1-55; Proverbs 22:2, 7; 24:23; 31:10; Matthew 5:44; 7:12; 8:5-13; 15:22-28; 25:1-46; Mark 12:31; Luke 1:37, 53; 10:27, 38-42; John 1:1; 3:16-17; 4:1-54; 7:24; 8:12; 13:34; 14:6,27; 15:12; Acts 5:1-42; 6:1-15; 10:1-11:35; 17:26; Romans 1:1-32; 2:11; 5:8; 6:13; 10:12-13; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10; 11:3; Galatians 3:28; 5:14; Ephesians 2:14; 4:32; 6:9; Colossians 3:11, 13, 25; 1 Timothy 5:21; Titus 2:9; James 2:1-10; 1 Peter 3:7; 4:8; 2 Peter 1:1-21; 2:1-22; 1 John 1:9; 2:11 and Revelation 1:1-20; 7:9-10 (Arar, 2015; Sanchez, 2004; Ukpong, 1984; T. K. Williams, 2012).

Cultural imperialism and Religious Persecution

The disciples decided to embrace the culture of imperialism and impunity, thinking they would act the way they wanted without much question. Jesus Christ rebuked them and educated them that children are important and the kingdom of God belongs to them. By refusing the children not to see Jesus Christ, that was religious persecution per excellence, a religious gender-based violence against the children (NCKK, 2021; The Lingage, 2021; UOBirmingham, 2021; WHO, 2021).

As it was during the time of the Markan gospel so it is in the current contemporary African society where imperialism and impunity is the order of the day (Kithinji, 2021). There is a need still here and now for the rebuke of the Lord Jesus Christ to remind the contemporary African society that there is a need to let the children come to Him. The children are to be involved in decisions which affect them. This is evident because Mark does not record whether the disciples asked the children about their views of meeting Jesus Christ and why they wanted to meet the Great I AM. The disciples could have been quick to listen and slow to speak to the children and those who brought them to Jesus Christ (James 1:19).

Socio-Scientific view of the pericope of Mark 10:13-16

The violence discussed above under postcolonialism, still is a factor of concern under the socio-scientific view of the pericope of Mark 10:13-16. As it was in the Markan world so it is in the contemporary African society, violence against children still exists.

Violence against children (ageism) GBV

“Thinking scientifically” sets social science in the general context of the ways in which people try to answer questions about the world around them. When the disciples rebuked the children not to meet Jesus Christ to be blessed and prayed for, they violated their religious rights. That was violence against children. They were powerless and unable to

protect themselves but depended on their parents/guardians/caregivers. They were termed as ‘others’ and, at the same time, depended on ‘others’ for upkeep!

They discriminated the children because of their age. Some scholars say the children could have been dirty and disturbing, but that is not a basis for refusing them to meet Jesus Christ. If they were dirty, Jesus Christ being very open, would have told them to go take a bath as was the case in Mark 5:21-43, when He told the parents (of Jairus’ daughter) to feed the little girl. Jesus Christ took the children carried them by His hands and blessed them all (Williams, 2012).

The violence and GBV against children is still present in our contemporary African society. Play therapy at home, in schools, churches and hospitals enable children and youth workers to /diagnose the problem. As it is said by medics, any unexplained wound of a child is battered baby syndrome until or unless proven otherwise. Though the violence perpetrated against the children by the disciples in Mark 10:13-16 was more psychosocial and religious, not necessarily physical (Schaafer & Cangelosi, 2016). To curb this violence and GBV against children, all institutions, including the church, are to have child protection and safeguarding policies in place, which need to be adhered to at all times, when serving and dealing with children (Bauer, 2020; Keller et al., 2017; Mootz et al., 2017; NCCS, 2010; Okeke-Ihejirika et al., 2018).

Marginalization and institutionalized oppression

Marginalization is among the five faces of oppression, namely: violence, exploitation, powerlessness, and cultural imperialism, according to Young (2014). The disciples marginalized the children by othering them, making them appear different from the other people or adults who were meeting Jesus. Making the children the subalterns (Kiambi, 2014), they put them in the same group as those with lepers who were not to meet other people.

Jesus Christ was indignant about their actions. He rebuked them and told them, straight-up, that all children are to come to Him. Jesus Christ still does not want children to be marginalized even in our contemporary African society. The disciples, which Mark declined to name, institutionalized the oppression, thinking it was normal and were doing Jesus Christ a favour. Nowadays (MacNaughton & Davis, 2001; Welply, 2015).

The disciples also stigmatized the children by refusing them to go to Jesus (Bokare, 2016a). No one else debriefed and listened to the children on how they felt apart from the Lord Jesus Christ. In the contemporary African society, Jesus Christ has left the responsibility of protecting and listening to children who undergo marginalization, violence, GBV and institutional oppression to the church, the government and the society (Grobbelaar, 2016a; MacNaughton & Davis, 2001; Welply, 2015; Young, 2014).

In summary, the pericope of Mark 10:13-16 is in the Markan Gospel. The Markan gospel is a portrayal of the life of Jesus Christ that is most likely veined after the Petrine proselytization. Markan themes and main motif is all about the only begotten (εὐαγγελίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ Υἱοῦ Θεοῦ) Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ and for His audience to believe in Him as the Son of God including the little children which Mark says here in this pericope should be allowed to go to Jesus Christ not to be rebuked.

The pronoun (αὐτοῖς) could be understood as referring to the children themselves instead of the adults who were bringing them to Jesus. To avoid possible ambiguity as to whom it was that the disciples were rebuking, some copyists replaced the object pronoun (αὐτοῖς) them with (τοῖς προσφέρουσιν) those who were bringing or (τοῖς φέρουσιν) those who were bringing. Furthermore, Mark uses (προσέφερον) they were bringing, which is a progressive (descriptive) imperfect; he actually uses (προσέφερον) to describe the action of bringing children to Jesus Christ there and then, and he brings the vividness or simultaneity with the rebuking of the disciples.

The disciples rebuked the (παῖδια) children. The παῖδια used here by Mark substantively as an accusative of direct object, (παῖδια) receives the action of (προσέφερον) because it is the direct object of the action; they were the ones being brought to Jesus Christ to bless them as recorded by Mark to his audience. Mark uses (ἵνα) in this pericope (v13) as a purpose conjunction [in order that] to indicate the goal or aim of the bringing of the little children to Jesus Christ. He also uses (Ἰδὼν) in (v14), which is a dependent verbal participle under adverbial (or circumstantial) which is grammatically subordinated to its controlling verb to answer the question when? It is temporal.

Mark wanted to inform his audience that when Jesus Christ saw what the disciples were doing (ἠγανάκτησεν) He was greatly displeased. This is an active voice in simple active use, which Mark wanted to show his audience that Jesus Christ Himself was displeased with the action of the disciples. In the same verse, he uses (Ἄφετε) an aorist active imperative, 2nd person plural in the imperative mood as a command from a superior (Jesus Christ) to an inferior (the disciples). Mark shows his audience that it is a progressive action. This was mainly to show the vividness of the narrative and what happened there and then.

The effect of the progressive aorist is still felt here and now. Mark uses the verb (ἐναγκαλισάμενος) in the aorist middle as a participle, and it is a nominative masculine singular. Which is translated (having taken [them] in arms), meaning Jesus Christ took the children in His arms and (κατευλόγει) blessed them, as evidenced by the personal pronoun (αὐτὰ) them. This is to signify that the children were brought to Jesus for Him to heal them is evident by the common Markan use of the word (σωξεν) to save.

Moreover, in (v15) continuous with the vocative use of (ἀμήν λέγω ὑμῖν) Amen, I say to you, it is vocative. Correspondingly, in (v16), Mark uses (καὶ ἐναγκαλισάμενος αὐτὰ τιθεὶς τὰς χεῖρας ἐπ' αὐτὰ ἠυλόγει αὐτὰ), And He took them up in His arms, laid His hands on them, and blessed them.

Relevance of Mark 10:13-16 in African Society

The Significance of Mark 10:13-16 in the African contemporary society

Equally mentioned in chapter one Mark, in the pericope of 10:13-16, showed to his audience the vividness of the action of the people bringing little children to Jesus Christ. The rebuking of those who brought them (the action here is that) the children were being brought to Jesus Christ, and those - whether male or female, rich or poor; Mark is silent about it here - who were bringing them to Jesus were rebuked by the disciples. In our situation here and now, the contemporary African society is to bring all children to Jesus Christ: for Him to bless them; and more so to save them from sin; and to heal their diseases, the way they were brought during the Markan time. As they brought them to Jesus Christ, so the contemporary African society is to bring them (all children) to be blessed by Jesus Christ. The society should by no means rebuke those who bring little children to be blessed by Jesus Christ.

The researcher supports the dedication of young children to the Lord Jesus Christ at the church, and some Bible scholars further suggest that Jesus Christ meant the children should be baptized. Jesus Christ will empower the children when they are brought to Him with the Holy Spirit (John 14:15-31), and they will all transition to adulthood believing in the Lord Jesus Christ (John 17:12).

Many Bible scholars and researchers support bringing children to the Lord Jesus Christ at an early age by avoiding the oppressive elements of othering children. This is done by making the learning environments, including Sunday school, child-friendly (McMillon & Edwards, 2000). The children would always want to go to Sunday school to be taught the word of God and, in the long run, come to the full knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.

This is a fulfillment of what Jesus Christ said to the disciples to let the children come to Him (v14). For the learning environments to be child-friendly, resources are needed, and the church and the community at all times are involved in providing the resources (Njoroge,

2019). The disciples later could have been influenced by the Roman way of valuing children- ambivalent, mimicry, hybridity- which informed their rebuking of the children. In the contemporary African society, one should be aware of the influence of imperialism and impunity on the way children are dealt with. If the contemporary African society is not bringing children to the Lord Jesus Christ, where else are the children taken to?

Furthermore, all the African children are to be brought to Jesus Christ for their holistic care in Sunday school. This premise of bringing children to Jesus Christ, according to Chiroma (2019), involves children's sports and games talent shows, competitions, rallies and even conventions and conferences. This view is also held by Freese (1979, p. 213), who argues that “the convention movement of 1832 to 1903 as a means of communicating ideas could be compared with the types and impact of conventions and conferences of today.

A discussion of the type of leadership, lay and/or professional, could provide insight into the contemporary view of the Sunday school.” Children’s activities should still be organized in observance of COVID-19 infection prevention protocols as indicated by World Health Organization (Roberto et al., 2020).

The ultimate goal of bringing children to the Lord Jesus Christ is for them to know Him, and to grow up as Christians. Children can also bring other children to Jesus Christ. Children reach out to other children with the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ when well mentored (Chiroma, 2015) by the adult Christians, and it brings about church growth (Nale, 2007; Nxumalo, 2014; Permana et al., 2019; Richard, 2007; Rivers & Coibion, 2007; Rop, 2021; Wade, 2019). In Mark 10:14, Jesus Christ meant that all children are to come to Him whether born in or out of wedlock.

Additionally, Jesus Christ in the Markan gospel (v15) stressed His point by using the vocative (ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν) means it is a firm affirmation. The contemporary African society has to heed His command of receiving the Kingdom of God like the young children. Apart

from bringing children to Jesus Christ, everyone else is supposed to receive the kingdom of God. The vocative is likened to the Kalenjin cultural prayer, which was brought to the church and resonates well with the community, whereby when a point is to be stressed, they use ‘iman! iman!’ which is an equivalent of the (ὁμῆν λέγω ὑμῖν) (Ochien’g, 2014). The term is also used when cursing diseases like COVID-19 to show the vividness of the action (KONTE, 2020)

The Markan use of the (καὶ) and, also as discussed in (v14) should include children in our contemporary African society. After considering the above exegesis and discussions as far as our contemporary African society is concerned; the conclusion of the matter is that the weak, poor, powerless and the little children are supposed to be cared for and more so to be brought to the full knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. They get saved by believing in the Lord Jesus Christ and being filled with the Holy Spirit, as stated in the Johannine gospel (John 14) (cf. Romans 10:14). They are to be given equal opportunities to serve in the church (meaningful involvement). The ministers in the ministry should be well taken care of by the church in the form of salaries and welfare. The children and youth workers, including the Sunday school teachers, should be salaried like the pastors if the contemporary African society really values the children coming to the full knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. For children coming to Jesus Christ, it means them believing and receiving eternal life through Jesus Christ that is entirely depending on the finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross and we should let all children come to Jesus Christ.

From the forest of Greek and the application of good exegesis, there is a great need to do the right and correct exegesis (Weima, 2013b) so that the correct application is arrived at. In the case of the pericope of Mark 10:13-16, the scripture is clear that Jesus wants little children to come to Him, and nobody should hinder them. Modeling Christlikeness in the children was the wish of the parents when they were bringing the children to Jesus Christ.

The otherness of the innocent children and calling or wrongly suspecting some as witches is against the teaching of Jesus Christ, who is willing to receive them all and bless them. Jesus Christ does not discriminate against colour, race, tribe or class. The contemporary African society is to emulate Jesus Christ in embracing all children. Similarly, the African church should strengthen the support systems of the Children's ministry, which allows all the little children to come to the full knowledge and belief of the Lord Jesus which is the purpose why Mark wrote his gospel. The contemporary African society needs to also consider using the three worlds of the scripture, which is paramount and the application of the Four-Legged Stool suggested by Mburu (2019) in the African Hermeneutics in situ and is Hermeneutics per excellence.

Summary of Chapter Four

There and then, during the Markan world, Jesus wanted the children to come to Him and rebuked the actions of the disciples of having a very high trajectory of otherings. Again, here and now, Jesus Christ still wants all children of all races (red, black, blue, white), including those in the streets, to come to Him. Jesus Christ still rebukes all those who hinder children not to receive Him for the holistic touch from Him (that is, forgiveness of sin and healing of their diseases). It is evident that the oppressive elements underlying the rebuking of children still exist in our contemporary African society and the heeding of the key verse in this pericope of Mark 10:14 needs to resonate well with our current African contemporary society and a re-reading of the pericope of Mark 10:13-16 with the postcolonial and socio-scientific hermeneutics in mind. Considering the three worlds of the scripture is paramount. The last chapter presents the conclusions, recommendations and possible areas of further study in line with this study.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

In this chapter, as previously mentioned, the researcher presents the conclusions and recommendations following the results and data analysis of the study. Possible areas of further research are highlighted.

Conclusion

The exegetical stages followed in this research include Step one, the establishment of the text, which is the pericope of Mark 10:13-16. Step two is an examination of the literary context for a better understanding of the Markan gospel. Step three an examination of the historical-cultural context by use of both the postcolonial and socio-scientific Biblical criticisms, including the grammatical-historical criticism by default. This was able to answer the first two research questions: What are the oppressive elements underlying the othering in the pericope of Mark 10:13-16? What are the results of a critical analysis of the pericope of Mark 10:13-16? In step four, the researcher established the meaning of the pericope by studying the Koine Greek. Step five involved the determination of the theological principle(s) in the pericope of Mark 10:13-16. Lastly, step six is the application of Mark 10:13-16 in our contemporary African society. This answered the last two research questions: What are the implications of the oppressive elements in the pericope of Mark 10:13-16? How can the pericope of Mark 10:13-16 be best read/understood in the African context?

There and then, during the Markan world, Jesus Christ wanted the children to come to Him and rebuked the actions of the disciples of having a very high trajectory of otherings, and again here. Now in our contemporary African society, Jesus Christ still wants all children of all races (red, black, blue, white), including those in the streets, those seeking asylum, and those in prisons and hospitals, to come to Him. Jesus Christ still rebukes all those who hinder

children not to receive Him for the holistic touch from Him (that is forgiveness of sin and healing of their diseases).

It is evident from the research that the oppressive elements underlying the rebuking of children still exist in our contemporary African society and the heeding of the key verse in this pericope of Mark 10:14 needs to resonate well with the current African situation and a re-reading of the pericope with the postcolonial and socio-scientific hermeneutics in mind. Considering the three worlds of the scripture is paramount, and the application of the Four-Legged Stool, which Mburu (2019) in the African Hermeneutics in situ is Hermeneutics per excellence.

Recommendations

This study recommends that the weak, poor, powerless and the little children are supposed to be cared for and more so to be brought to the full knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ irrespective of colour, race, nationality, and social status. They are to be given equal opportunities to serve in the church (meaningful involvement). The ministers are to be well taken care of by the church in the form of stipends, salaries and welfare. It is paramount for the church today to have enough support systems and structures to facilitate the young children and the youth to come to Jesus Christ.

From the forest of Greek and the application of sound exegesis there is a great need to do the right and correct exegesis so that the right application is arrived at. In the case of Mark 10:13-16, the scripture is clear that Jesus Christ wants little children to come to Him, and nobody should hinder them in the contemporary African society. Since modeling Christlikeness in the children was the wish of the parents when they were bringing them to Jesus Christ; the contemporary African society, mainly the church, is to strengthen the support systems of the children's and youth ministry, which allows all the little children to

come to the full knowledge and belief of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is why Mark wrote his gospel.

Mark showed his audience the vividness of the action of the people bringing little children to Jesus Christ and the rebuking of those who brought them. The action here is that the children were being brought to Jesus Christ, and those who were bringing them to Him were rebuked by the disciples. In our situation here and now, the contemporary African society is to bring all children to Jesus Christ for Him to bless them and save them from sin and heal their diseases the way they were brought during the Markan time. As they brought them to Jesus Christ, so in this age and time, all children are to be brought to be blessed by Jesus Christ. The contemporary African society should by no means rebuke those who bring little children to be blessed by Jesus Christ. This supports the holistic ministry to the children and the youth by Jesus Christ.

Furthermore, the African church needs to emulate, taking care of the spiritual, physical and psychosocial needs and protection also welfare/safeguarding of all children, including those in street families and the sick. There is a need for networking among churches and various organizations and stakeholders dealing with children and youth for the betterment of the ministry in the contemporary African society. The multi-sectoral approach is also paramount for the success of the children and youth ministry in the contemporary African society. This study draws the conclusion that all children should be brought to the full knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ by avoiding and shunning the oppressive elements mentioned in chapter four, underlying the pericope of Mark 10:13-16.

The Possible Areas of Further Study

1. Looking at the pericope of Mark 10:13-16 through the speech act theory.
2. Is denying children games, sports, camps and use of gadgets a form of othering?

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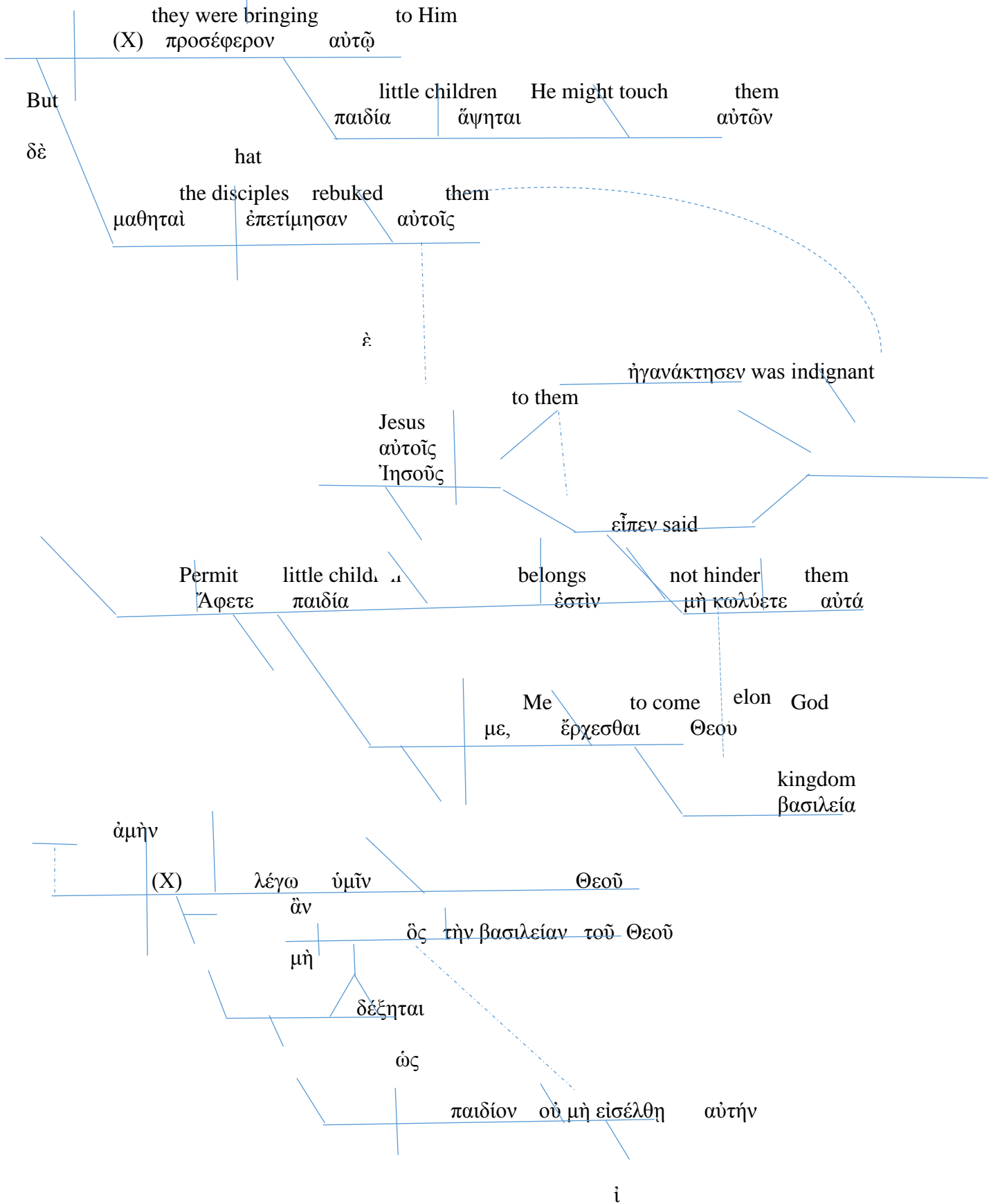
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APPENDICES RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

Figure 4.2 MARK 10:13-16 GREEK TEXT DIAGRAMMING



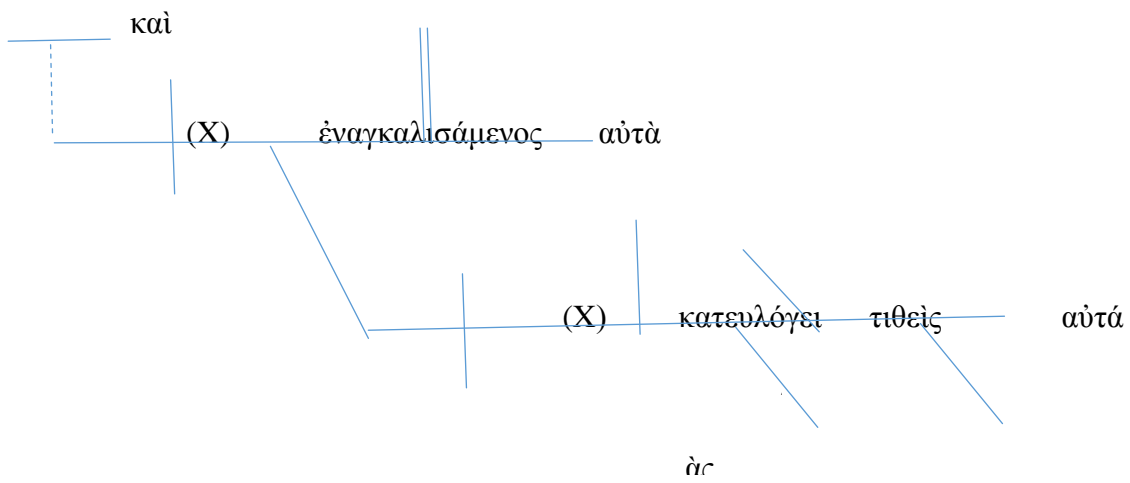


Figure 4.2 Mark 10:13-16 Greek Text Diagramming

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Table 4.1 MARK 10:13-16 PARSING OF THE GREEK TEXT

Mark 10:13	Greek	English	Morphology and syntax
	Καὶ	And	Conjunction (7)
	προσέφερον	they were bringing	Verb-imperfect active indicative-3 rd person plural (1)
	αὐτῷ	to Him	Personal pronoun dative masculine 3 rd person singular (1)
	παιδία	little children,	Noun, accusative neuter plural (1)
	ἵνα	that	Conjunction
	αὐτῶν	them	Personal pronoun genitive neuter 3 rd person plural (1)
	ἄψηται·	He might touch.	Verb, aorist middle subjunctive 3 rd person singular (2)
	οἱ	-	Article, nominative masculine plural (1)
	δὲ	But	Conjunction
	μαθηταὶ	the disciples	Noun, nominative masculine plural
	ἐπετίμησαν	rebuked	Verb, aorist active indicative 3 rd person plural
	αὐτοῖς·	them.	Personal pronoun dative masculine 3 rd person plural (2)

(Bible Hub, 2004a)

Mark 10:14	Greek	English	Morphology and syntax
	ἴδων	Having seen	Verb, aorist active participle, nominative masculine singular (1)
	δὲ	now,	Conjunction
	ὁ	-	Article, nominative masculine singular (1)
	Ἰησοῦς	Jesus	Noun, nominative masculine singular
	ἠγανάκτησεν	was indignant	Verb, aorist active indicate, 3 rd person singular (2)
	καὶ	and	Conjunction
	εἶπεν	said	verb, aorist active indicate, 3 rd person singular
	αὐτοῖς	to them,	Personal pronoun dative masculine 3 rd person plural
	Ἄφετε	Permit	Verb, aorist active imperative, 2 nd person plural (1)
	τὰ	the	Article, accusative neuter plural (1)
	παιδία	little children	noun, accusative neuter plural
	ἔρχεσθαι	to come	Verb, present middle infinitive (1)
	πρός	to	Preposition (4)
	με,	Me;	Personal pronoun accusative 1 st person singular (1)
	μὴ	not	Adverb (6)
	κωλύετε	do hinder	Verb, present active imperative, 2 nd person plural (1)

	αὐτά·	them!	Personal pronoun accusative neuter 3 rd person plural (3)
	τῶν	To the	Article, genitive neuter plural (1)
	γὰρ	for	Conjunction
	τοιούτων	such,	Demonstrative pronoun, genitive neuter plural (1)
	ἔστιν	belongs	Verb, present active indicative, 3 rd person singular (1)
	ἡ	the	Article, nominative feminine singular (1)
	βασιλεία	kingdom	Noun, nominative feminine singular (1)
	τοῦ	-	Article, genitive masculine singular
	Θεοῦ.	of God.	Noun, genitive masculine singular (2)

(Hub, 2004a)

Mark 10:15	Greek	English	Morphology and syntax
	ἀμὴν	Truly	Hebrew word
	λέγω	I say	Verb, present active indicative 1 st person singular (1)
	ὑμῖν,	to you,	Personal pronoun dative 2 nd person plural (1)
	ὅς	whoever	Relative pronoun nominative masculine singular (1)
	ἄν	-	Particle (1)
	μὴ	not	Adverb
	δέξεται	shall receive	verb, aorist middle subjunctive 3rd person singular
	τὴν	the	Article, accusative feminine singular (1)
	βασιλείαν	kingdom	Noun, accusative feminine singular (2)
	τοῦ	-	Article, genitive masculine singular
	Θεοῦ	of God	noun, genitive masculine singular
	ὡς	as	Adverb
	παιδίον,	a child,	Noun, nominative neuter singular (1)
	οὐ	no	Adverb
	μὴ	not	Adverb
	εἰσέλθῃ	shall enter	Verb, aorist active subjunctive, 3 rd person singular (1)
	εἰς	into	Preposition
	αὐτήν.	it.	Personal pronoun, accusative feminine, 3 rd person singular (1)

(Bible Hub, 2004b)

Mark 10:16	Greek	English	Morphology and syntax
	καὶ	And	Conjunction
	ἐναγκαλισάμενος	having taken [them] in arms,	Verb, aorist middle participle, nominative masculine singular (1)
	αὐτά	them	Personal pronoun accusative neuter 3rd person plural

	κατευλόγει	He was blessing,	Verb, active indicative imperative, 3 rd person singular (1)
	τιθείς	having laid	Verb, present active participle, nominative masculine singular (1)
	τάς	the	Article, accusative feminine plural (1)
	χειράς	hands	Noun, accusative feminine plural (1)
	ἐπ’	on	Preposition
	αὐτά.	them.	Personal pronoun accusative neuter 3rd person plural

(Hub, 2004b)