

DH UNBOUND 2022 – online conference 17-19 May 2022

**Digital Multilingualism in Ancient Languages:
the test-case of the MARK16 project**

Claire Clivaz, Mina Monier, Elisa Nury, Silvano Aldà and Jonathan Barda (SIB, DH+)

This paper presents the impact of multilingual digitalization on the study of a well-known enigma in New Testament textual criticism (NTTC): the different endings of the Gospel according to Mark (see e.g. Focant 2006, Black et al. 2008, Hultgren 2018, Clivaz 2019). The five-year SNSF project MARK16 has created the first multilingual virtual manuscript room focused on a biblical chapter (<https://mark16.sib.swiss>). It allows highlighting the study of witnesses in ancient languages, which are usually set aside in research, and making alternative voices in early Christianity visible. As traditionally assumed in NTTC, ancient Greek has a dominant place, as the original language of the text: the reference classification list of NT manuscripts presents Greek items, then Latin ones, followed by other languages (<https://ntvmr.uni-muenster.de/liste>). But no Greek manuscript that included Mark 16 prior to the 4th century has survived, which means that it is a *de facto* multilingual textual quest. With currently 49 items in ten ancient languages, MARK16 is highlighting folios otherwise inaccessible, like two bilingual manuscripts in Bohairic and Arabic, last commented on by Horner in 1898 (BL Or. 1315 and Bodleian Library Huntington 17). Moreover, the choice of a manuscript room devoted to a specific text has facilitated access to images and OA licenses. For the first time, MARK16 presents three images of the Latin 4th century Codex Bobbiensis, sometimes still described as unreadable. In other words, showing and reading online multilingual manuscripts of the New Testament has the potential to renew fundamental research questions on a long-studied topic.