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Looking at Scribal Practices in the Endings of Mark 16

Claire Clivaz

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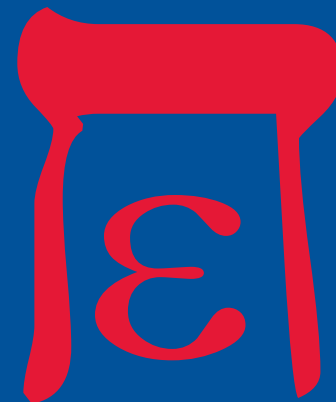
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Jean-Sébastien Rey - Patrick Pouchelle (eds.)

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LOOKING AT SCRIBAL PRACTICES IN THE ENDINGS OF MARK 16

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1. Introduction: *New Testament Studies, Manuscripts and Scribal Practices*¹

This article, along with Peter Malik's article in this issue, demonstrates that New Testament textual criticism (NTTC) currently stands at an interesting point in its development within New Testament studies. As Eldon Epp stated in 2007, a "new era" has begun for NTTC. Similarly, Dan Wallace argued in 2009 that interest in textual studies has brought "back to life a cadaver".² These new trends are a shift away from Epp's worry about the "requiem of the discipline", which he spoke about forty years previous³. Belonging to this trend is the fact that scribal practices are now taken seriously as a legitimate part of NT studies⁴. Previously, in 2012, I argued for a new viewpoint regarding the usual tripartite hermeneutical framework of author-text-reader⁵: "in the field of ancient literature we need to reconstruct this triad rather as 'author-scribe-reader'. For between the author and the readers stand the scribes, those who actually wrote and made the texts"⁶. Building upon a five years research grant on digital methodology and Mark 16⁷, this article high-

¹ Thanks are due to Andrea Allen for the English proof reading of this article. It has been supported by the Swiss National Science Foundation project MARK16.

² E.J. Epp, "It's All about Variants: A Variant-Conscious Approach to New Testament Textual Criticism," *HTR* 100/3 (2007), pp. 275-308; here p. 281; D.B. Wallace, "Challenges in New Testament Textual Criticism for the Twenty-First Century," *JETS* 52 (2009), pp. 79-100; here p. 79.

³ See E.J. Epp, "New Testament Textual Criticism in America: Requiem for a Discipline," *JBL* 98 (1979), pp. 94-98.

⁴ Among the recent publications, see J. Hernandez Jr., *Scribal Habits and Theological Influences in the Apocalypse. The Singular Readings of Sinaiticus, Alexandrinus, and Ephraemi* (WUNT.2 218, Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006); W.E. Arnal et al., *Scribal Practices and Social Structures among Jesus Adherents, Essays in Honour of John S. Kloppenborg* (BETHL 285, Leuven: Peeters, 2016); A. Kirk, *Q in Matthew. Ancient Media, Memory, and Early Scribal Transmission of the Jesus Tradition* (LNTS 564, London: Bloomsbury, 2016); P. Malik, *P. Beatty III (P47): The Codex, Its Scribe, and Its Text* (NTTSD 52, Leiden: Brill, 2017). All hyperlinks have been last accessed on 13.05.21.

⁵ P.E. Spencer, "The Unity of Luke-Acts: A Four-Bolted Hermeneutical Hinge," *CBR* 5/3 (2007), pp. 341-366; here p. 354.

⁶ C. Clivaz, "Luke, Acts and the Ancient Readership: The Cultures of Author, Scribes and Readers in New Testament Exegesis," in A. Gregoy - K. C. Rowe (eds.), *Rethinking the Unity and Reception of Luke and Acts* (Religious Studies, Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2010), pp. 153-171; here p. 154.

⁷ Swiss National Science Foundation database: <http://p3.snf.ch/project-179755>. Virtual

lights scribal practices and the role of the scribe in NTTC by focusing on the test-case of endings in Mark's Gospel⁸, pointing to a specific tradition of the so-called shorter ending in Codex Bobbiensis – or k, according to the *Gregory Aland* classification used in this article –, a tradition that differs from the usual Greek shorter ending. Section 2 first argues that contemporaneous scribal practices still exist in Greek NT scholarship⁹, and Section 3 presents nine cases of scribal practices in Mark 16 – seven Greek NT manuscripts, one Latin NT manuscript, and the Harklean Syriac version of Mark.

2. Mark 16 and Contemporaneous Scribal Practices

Throughout the last decade, a strong consensus has emerged from NT scholars that considers Mk 16,8 as the original ending of the second Gospel, a view recently expressed by Stephen Hultgren: “With the rise of modern textual criticism and gospel studies, it became clear that neither the longer ending nor the so-called shorter ending could be original to Mark. [...] The vast majority of scholars have accepted that 16,8 gives the oldest recoverable ending for Mark, as do I”¹⁰. But in a chapter of *The Mutilation of Mark's Gospel*, N. Clayton Croy has discussed the changing aspects of this consensus¹¹. In his 1965 SBL presidential address, Kenneth W. Clarke noted that the 1946 *Revised Standard Version* reintroduced Mk 16,9-20, justifying this change in view of the history of reading, pointing to the attestations of the long ending in Justin, Irenaeus, and Tatian, as well as evidence in the Latin, Syriac, and

research environment: <https://mark16.sib.swiss>. For a discussion about the methodological aspect, see C. Clivaz, “The impact of Digital Research: Thinking about the MARK16 Project,” *Open Theology* 5 (2019/1), pp. 1-12, <https://doi.org/10.1515/otph-2019-0001>.

⁸ For a state of the art, see C. Clivaz, “Returning to Mark 16,8: What's new?,” *EthL* 96/4 (2019), pp. 645-659, https://poj.peeters-leuven.be/content.php?url=article&id=3286928&journal_code=ETL; for the most recent publications on the topic, see S. Hultgren, “A Vision for the End of Days’: Deferral of Revelation in Daniel and at the End of Mark,” *ZNW* 109 (2018/2), pp. 153-184, <https://doi.org/10.1515/znw-2018-0010>; E.E. Shively, “Recognizing Penguins: Audience Expectation, Cognitive Genre Theory, and the Ending of Mark's Gospel,” *CBQ* 80 (2018/2), pp. 273-292, <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/718762/pdf>; S. Schulthess, “Vaticanus Arabicus 13: What Do We Really Know About the Manuscript? With an Additional Note on the Ending of Mark,” *J ECS* 70 (2018/1-2), pp. 63-84; R. Morgan, “How Did Mark End His Narrative?,” *The Expository Times* 128 (2017/9), pp. 417-426; <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/0014524617692701>; P. N. McLellan, “Specters of Mark: The Second Gospel's Ending and Derrida's Messianicity,” *Biblical Interpretation* 24 (2016/3), pp. 357-381.

⁹ In the digital culture, the making of the New Testament edited text is becoming everyday more an open-ended continuous process: see U. Schmid, “Transmitting the New Testament online,” in W. van Peursen - A. Van der Weel - E. Thouthenhoofd (eds.), *Text Comparison and Digital Creativity* (SC 1, Leiden: Brill, 2010), pp. 189-205; C. Clivaz, *Ecritures digitales. Digital writing, digital Scriptures* (DBS4, Leiden: Brill, 2019), pp. 167-195 and 218-223.

¹⁰ Hultgren, “A Vision for the End of Days’,” pp. 163-164.

¹¹ N.C. Croy, *The Mutilation of Mark's Gospel* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2003), pp. 18 and 25.

Coptic traditions¹². In the introduction to the 1946 RSV, Frederick Grant uses the manuscript evidence to explain the reintegration of Mk 16,9-20 in a list of passages for which “we have followed B-Aleph-Chester Beatty (or some one or two of them)”¹³. This explanation is quite strange for Mk 16,9-20, since it is absent from the Codex Sinaiticus and Vaticanus, and the Chester Beatty P⁴⁵ does not even have the last folios of Mark. As puzzling as Grant’s statement is, it shows that even from the point of view of the manuscripts, analyses of the endings of Mark have changed over time, especially since palaeography remains “a highly subjective exercise to this day”, as argued by Brent Nongbri in his recent monograph *God’s Library*¹⁴. For example, the perception of Codex Sinaiticus has changed significantly since its discovery. In 1871, John Burgon considered it to preserve an “abrupt termination of the S. Mark’s Gospel”, similar to Codex Vaticanus, which had a “mutilated state of S. Mark’s Gospel”¹⁵.

In the last decades, the opposite perception of these two oldest witnesses to Mark 16 has prevailed¹⁶, and the two following examples underline how it has influenced NTTC research. Firstly, in his 1981 dissertation about Codex Washington in Mark, Larry Hurtado stops his analysis at 16,8 even though this manuscript presents the long ending as well as the so-called Freer logion. As surprising as it is, Hurtado speaks throughout the book of Mk 16,8 as the final verse without a word about the next verses present in the manuscript¹⁷. The second example is *Textkritik des Markusevangeliums* by Heinrich Greeven, published in 2005 fifteen years after his death¹⁸. Not a single line is devoted to Mark 16,9-20 and no explanations are given regarding 16,8 as end of the text, as if there was not even an existing variant following

¹² K.W. Clarke, “The Theological Relevance of Textual Variation in Current Criticism of the Greek New Testament,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 85 (1966/1), pp. 1-16, here pp. 8-10.

¹³ F.C. Grant, “The Greek Text of the New Testament,” in L.A. Weigle (ed.), *An Introduction to the Revised Standard Version of the New Testament* (The International Council of Religious Education, Philadelphia: Penn State University Press, 1946), pp. 37-43; here p. 42.

¹⁴ B. Nongbri, *God’s Library. The Archeology of the Earliest Christian Manuscripts* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2018), p. 5; for a review of the book, see C. Clivaz, “Review of Brent Nongbri, *God’s Library*,” *J ECS* 27 (2019/3), 27/3 (2019), pp. 506-508.

¹⁵ J.W. Burgon, *The Last Twelve Verses of the Gospel according to St. Mark: Vindicated against Recent Critical Objections and Established* (Oxford and London: James Parker and Co., 1871), pp. 2 and 70; repr. (Collingswood, NJ: Dean Burgon Society, 2002).

¹⁶ J.K. Elliott, “The Last Twelve Verses of Mark: Original or Not?” in D.A. Black (ed.), *Perspectives on the Ending of Mark, 4 Views* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2008), pp. 80-102, here p. 82.

¹⁷ L.W. Hurtado, *Codex Washingtonianus in the Gospel of Mark. Its Textual Relationships and Scribal Characteristics* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1981, notably pp. 42-43, 59-61, 72-80). For the opposite opinion at the same period, see for example J. Hug, *La finale de l’évangile de Marc: Mc 16,9-20* (Etudes bibliques; Paris: Gabalda, 1978).

¹⁸ H. Greeven - E. Gütting (eds.), *Textkritik des Markusevangeliums* (*Theologie, Forschung und Wissenschaft* 11, Münster: LIT Verlag, 2005). Greeven is known notably for having edited the 13th version of this synopsis: A. Huck - H. Greeven (eds.), *Synopse der drei ersten Evangelien: mit Beigabe der johanneischen Parallelstellen = Synopsis of the first three gospels: with the addition of the Johannine parallels* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1981)¹³.

16,8¹⁹. Facing this monolithic consensus in mainstream research, other voices have regularly tried to defend either the authenticity of the longer ending, Mk 16,9-20²⁰, or sometimes the lost or erased ending hypothesis²¹. Whatever point of view scholars have adopted in recent decades, they largely share the assumption expressed by Croy: “acceptance of the geniuses of the Long Ending prevailed for centuries”²².

But coming back to the manuscripts themselves – a point fostered in NTTC by digital culture – leads to another perception: the diversity of endings of Mark has, for centuries, been preserved by scribes, accepting a plurality of readings, as Section 3 illustrates. The time is right to assess this diversity of the endings in ancient manuscripts²³, especially since scholarship continues to produce different editions of Mark 16. Such a parallel phenomenon is not surprising if we consider the history of NT reading and editing as a continuum through the centuries within the triad “author-scribe-reader”, evoked in Section 1.

Gaining in momentum for about a decade²⁴, digital culture tends to lead to a diversification of Greek New Testament editions. The *Nestle-Aland 28th* (NA28) remains without contest the leading edition, along with the *Editio Critica Major* (ECM) in the hands of the *IGNTP*²⁵; the ECM of Mark’s Gospel is scheduled to be published in 2020²⁶. But the NA28 is published in two different versions: the printed version adds in brackets the short and the long endings after Mk 16,8, with details given in the critical apparatus, but the online NA28 version presents these two endings in the main text, without brackets, following immediately from Mk 16,8²⁷. The copyright rules force the NA28 open access version to remove the critical signs and apparatus²⁸,

¹⁹ See Greeven - Eberhard (eds.), *Textkritik des Markusevangeliums*, notably pp. 27, 34 and 742.

²⁰ See recently for example M.A. Robinson, “The Long Ending of Mark as Canonical Verity,” in D.A. Black (ed.), *Perspectives on the Ending of Mark, 4 Views* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2008), pp. 40-79; N.P. Lunn, *The Original Ending of Mark. A New Case for the Authenticity of Mark 16,9-20* (Eugene: Pickwick Publications, 2014); D.W. Hester, *Does Mark 16,9-20 Belong in the New Testament ?* (Eugene: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2015).

²¹ See recently for example C.A. Evans, *Mark 8,27-16,20* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2001); N.T. Wright, *The Resurrection of the Son of God. Christian Origins and the Question of God* (Vol. 3, London: SPCK, 2003); N. Clayton Croy, *The Mutilation of Mark’s Gospel* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2003); Elliott, “The Last Twelve Verses of Mark”.

²² Croy, *The Mutilation*, p. 19.

²³ See Clivaz, “The Impact,” pp. 9-10.

²⁴ See C. Clivaz, “Homer and the New Testament as ‘Multitexts’ in the Digital Age?,” *SRC 3* (2012/3), pp. 1-15; <http://src-online.ca/index.php/src/article/view/97>; Clivaz, *Écritures digitales*, pp. 166-195 and 217-222.

²⁵ *International Greek New Testament Project*, <http://www.igntp.org/>.

²⁶ See <https://www.bibelwissenschaft.de/startseite/editionsprojekte/editio-critica-maior-ecm/>; <http://ntvmr.uni-muenster.de/ecm>.

²⁷ See <https://www.bibelwissenschaft.de/online-bibel/novum-testamentum-graece-na-28/lesen-im-bibeltext/bibel/text/lesen/stelle/51/160001/169999/ch/3da621e776ded642415734e401882016/>.

²⁸ The SBL Greek New Testament is entirely available online in open access, and

and this online version looks very similar to the Byzantine Greek NT edition²⁹. Last but not least, the experimental and interactive New Testament Virtual Manuscript Room could be considered as a third way of open-ended editing Greek New Testament by the NA “scribes” team³⁰.

The 2017 *Tyndale House Greek New Testament* (THGNT) presents a different editing choice regarding the endings of Mark 16. THGNT follows *fl* by editing the comment in minuscule 1 following Mk 16,8:

ἐν τισι μὲν τῶν ἀντιγράφων, ἕως ὅδε πληροῦται ὁ εὐαγγελιστῆς· ἕως οὗ καὶ Εὐσέβιος ὁ Παμφίλου ἐκανόνισεν· ἐν πολλοῖς δὲ καὶ ταῦτα φέρεται³¹.

In some of the copies, the evangelist finishes here, up to which (point) also Eusebius of Pamphilus made canon sections. But in many the following is also contained³².

It is impressive to look at folio 220v of this 12th century manuscript³³: the folio begins with this comment, written in the main text but with a different purple ink instead of the brown ink used for the biblical text. The comment, found also in other *fl* witnesses, presents a flexible point of view on the variants: the end of the gospel in 16,8 is “accomplished” in some copies by way of the Eusebian canonical numeration, whereas other copies present vv. 9-20. By choosing to edit the ending(s) of Mark in this way, the THGNT assumes the point of view of the history of reading, a very important feature regarding what can be found in diverse manuscripts, as Section 3 shows.

consequently presents a unique version in Mark 16, following the NA28 position; M.W. Holmes (ed.), *The SBL Greek New Testament* (Atlanta: SBL/Logos Bible Software, 2010), <http://www.sblgnt.com>.

²⁹ W.G. Pierpont - M.A. Robinson - J.J. Dodson (eds.), *The New Testament in the Original Greek: Byzantine Textform 2018* (VTR Publication, 2018), pp. 135-136.

³⁰ See <http://ntvmr.uni-muenster.de/home>.

³¹ Minuscule 1, f. 220v; consultable on <https://mr-mark16.sib.swiss/show?id=R0Ex>.

³² D. Jongkind - P. Head - P. Williams (eds.), *The Tyndale House Greek New Testament* (THGNT), Tyndale House, 2017, p. 107, footnote on 16.8. This comment was already enlightened by R.I. Swanson, *New Testament Greek Manuscripts. Variant Readings Arranged in Horizontal Lines against Codex Vaticanus. Mark* (Sheffield & Pasadena: Sheffield Academic Press & William Carey International University Press, 1995), p. 267. For a comment, see D. Jongkind, *An Introduction to the Greek New Testament, Produced at Tyndale House, Cambridge* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2019), Kindle edition, l. 1170: “The end of the Gospel of Mark poses a unique set of questions, and the issue has a long history within Christian scholarship. As editors, we did not see it as our task to commit ourselves to any particular solution to the problem”.

³³ On *fl* in Mark, see A.S. Anderson, “Codex 2193 and Family 1 in Mark,” in D. Gurtner - J.H. Hernandez - P. Foster (eds.), *Studies on the Text of the New Testament and Early Christianity, Essays in Honour of Michael W. Holmes, New Testament Tools, Studies and Documents* (NTTSD 50, Leiden: Brill, 2015), pp. 100-133.

3. *Mark 16 through the Lens of Some Ancient Scribal Practices*

Section 3 is a first step towards establishing a history of Mark 16 readings through scribal practices. Nine examples will be considered, ranging from around 400 CE until the 13th century, found in seven Greek manuscripts (083, 099, 019, 044, 1, 304 and 579), in one Latin codex (k) and in the recent edition of the Harklean Syriac version of Mark³⁴. The first purpose of this overview is to illustrate the fact that the endings of Mark 16 have been subject to a plurality of readings through the centuries, most of the time co-existing. Secondly, it illustrates the importance of reading Mark in diverse ancient languages³⁵, here with two examples in Syriac and Latin.

3.1. *Minuscules 1, 304 and 579, 12th-13th Centuries*

Like the scribe of minuscule 1, Eusebius comments on two endings in Mark 16, in *Ad Marinum* 1,1-2, here in the 2016 translation of Clayton Coombs: “For in almost all of the copies the ending of the Gospel according to Mark is specified in this way [16,7-8]. But the things that are conveyed next, rarely in some but not in all, may be expansionary [περιττῶ], especially if it might imply a contradiction to the testimony of the other evangelists. This is what someone who avoids and confutes an unnecessary [περιττόν] question might say. On the other hand, someone else, who dares to reject as spurious nothing whatsoever in any way whatever of the things which are born in the text of the Gospels, declares the reading to be double, as also in many other places, and that each of the two should be received – not one at the expense of the other – since the faithful and pious have judged thus”³⁶. According to Coombs, Eusebius accepts both endings: “given his awareness of the usage of the longer ending in at least some churches, and in view of its weighty advocates, he suggests that the authority of *both* variants should be affirmed”³⁷. Claudio Zamagni also published a commentary of Eusebius’ *Ad Marinum* in 2016, concluding similarly that, for Eusebius, “il est sage de garder les deux

³⁴ S.S. Yohanna, *The Gospel of Mark in the Syriac Harklean Version. An Edition Based upon the Earliest Witnesses* (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute Gregorian & Biblical Press, 2015).

³⁵ See the important project *Marc multilingue*: J.-C. Haelewyck, “Presentation of the international project ‘Marc multilingue’,” *Filologia Neotestamentaria* xv (2002), pp. 3-17; an example of the impact of the Syriac tradition on NTTC in Luke 22,43-44 is given here: C. Clivaz, *L’ange et la sueur de sang ou comment on pourrait bien encore écrire l’histoire* (BITS 7, Leuven: Peeters, 2010), pp. 449-450 and 457-460.

³⁶ C. Coombs, *Dual Reception: Eusebius and the Gospel of Mark* (Emerging Scholars: Christian History, Fortress Press, 2016), pp. 240-241; on page 256, footnote 8, he explains his two different translations of περιττῶ and περιττόν in the same sentence. For a recent edition of the Greek text with a French translation, see C. Zamagni, *Eusèbe de Césarée. Questions évangéliques* (SC 523, Paris: Cerf, 2008), pp. 194-197.

³⁷ Coombs, *Dual Reception*, p. 234.

leçons”³⁸. Minuscule 1, by adding within the main text a comment before the long ending, reflects this same perception some centuries later.

But in the same century, minuscule 304 makes the contrary choice, ending Mark at 16,8. 304 has been only seldom analysed³⁹, but in a 2019 article⁴⁰, Mina Monier confirms that 304 is correctly quoted in the NA28 alongside 01 and 03 as witness of the shortest ending⁴¹. However, scribe/author of 304 did not ignore the existence of the longer ending, since he/she preserves the Byzantine text of Mark, sharing Theophylact’s commentary order with some notable changes⁴², a point already observed by Robert Devreesse⁴³. The scribe’s willingness to close the text at 16,8 despite awareness of additional material is clearly manifested by the epigram he adds at the end of the text, on folio 241r⁴⁴: as Monier notes, “the copyist signals the end of the commentary with a classic epigram that says: ‘As the travellers rejoice upon reaching their homeland, likewise the scribe is upon the end of this book’⁴⁵. This epigram declares the end of the Gospel of Mark’s commentary at this point. Interestingly, a closer look into the epigram in the manuscript shows an attempt to erase it, and then we can see that there was another attempt to rewrite the epigram as the first three words appear ὡσπερ ξένοι χαίρουσι

³⁸ C. Zamagni, *L’extraît des Questions et réponses sur les évangiles d’Eusèbe de Césarée: un commentaire* (BEHE.R 171, Turnhout: Brepols, 2016), p. 230.

³⁹ See for example Burgon, *The Last Twelve Verses*, p. 283: “the text of S. Mark is here interwoven with a Commentary which I do not recognise. But from the correspondence of a note at the end with what is found in Possinus, pp. 361-3, I am led to suspect that the contents of this MS. will be found to correspond with what Possinus published and designated as ‘Tolosanus’”. For main information see J. Reuss, *Matthäus-, Markus- und Johannes-Katenen. Nach den handschriftlichen Quellen untersucht* (NTA, Münster: Aschendorffsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1941), notably pp. 107-109, 146-147 and 233-234.

⁴⁰ M. Monier, “GA 304, Theophylact’s Commentary and the Ending of Mark,” *Filologia Neotestamentaria* 52 (2019), pp. 94-106, <http://reader.digitalbooks.pro/book/preview/125526/filog-8?1574842521282>; Mina Monier, “GA 304 and the Ending of the Gospel of Mark,” *eTalk*, SIB, 23.05.19, https://etalk.sib.swiss/?dir=Mark16_MM_1#0.304transcriptionandEnglishtranslationareavailableonhttps://mr-mark16.sib.swiss/show?id=R0EzMDQ=.

⁴¹ Institut für Neutestamentliche Textforschung, *Novum Testamentum Graece* (Stuttgart, Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2012), p. 174.

⁴² Monier, “GA 304, Theophylact’s Commentary,” p. 106.

⁴³ R. Devreesse, “Chaînes exégétiques grecques,” in *Supplément du Dictionnaire de la Bible* 1 (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1928), pp. 1085-1234, here p. 1175; signaled by Reuss, *Matthäus-, Markus- und Johannes-Katenen*, p. 233. Opposite opinion: see Jongkind, *An Introduction*, Kindle edition, l. 1143.

⁴⁴ See on the BNF website <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b10722123f/f250.item>

⁴⁵ Monier, “GA 304, Theophylact’s Commentary,” p. 100, footnote 23: “Ὠσπερ ξένοι χαίρουσι ἰδεῖν πατρίδα, οὕτω καὶ ὁ γράφωντος βιβλίον τέλοισ. A database of the occurrences of this epigram, as well as its different forms, can be found here <http://www.dbbe.ugent.be/type/view/id/201/>. See also H. Omont, ‘Le dernier des copistes grecs en Italie, Jean de Sainte-Maure (1572-1612),’ *Revue des Études Grecques* 1-2 (1888), pp. 177-191. Most recently, see Julie Boeten - Sien de Groot, ‘Byzantine Book Epigrams: The case of ὡσπερ ξένοι,’ Paper given at the 23rd International Congress of Byzantine Studies, August 2016. Available here: <https://tinyurl.com/y2npue29>”.

[...]. This possibly reflects conflicting views of later owners or readers of the manuscript regarding the ending of Mark⁴⁶. Such attempts bring to mind the case of Lk 22,43-44 in Codex Sinaiticus as I have previously noted⁴⁷.

In other words, in the 12th century we have a scribe in minuscule 1 that proposes two different endings for Mark, a scribe in 304 who ends Mark at 16,8, sealed with an epigram underlining that the end of the book has been reached, potentially then erased and rewritten by two subsequent scribes, according to Monier. Therefore, to the contrary of the dominant critical consensus, the longer version was not the only possible ending of Mark in the 12th century or in the Byzantine tradition more broadly. Minuscule 579, 13th century, further reinforces this observation, a manuscript described as an “independent witness” by Leopold Foullah in his 1991 PhD⁴⁸. Indeed, it presents the short ending after 16,8 in the main text as a normal fluent ending without comment or annotation on folio 70r. The longer ending then begins on the next page, folio 70v, without further comment or annotation. This example is, so far in our research, a unique case of a manuscript with the short and long ending as fluently copied in the manuscript, both fully included in the usual text. The word τέλος appears at the end of 16,8, but it is a usual reading indication frequently present in other manuscripts at this location.

This key observation underlines the crucial importance of examining the manuscripts themselves in NTTC. Indeed, Foullah simply counts 579 in a list of manuscripts with the short and the long endings without signalling its particularity⁴⁹. Considering together minuscules 1, 304, and 579 leads to the following conclusion: in the 12th and 13th centuries, some scribes read Mark 16 with possible diverse endings. Only the first scribe of 304 affirms that it is the end of the book; the scribe of 579 even presents the text with both endings in a continuous way. A plurality of reading of the endings of Mark is also attested in preceding centuries, as part 3.2 enlightens.

⁴⁶ Monier, “GA 304, Theophylact’s Commentary,” p. 101.

⁴⁷ Clivaz, *L’ange et la sueur de sang*, p. 254: “ \aleph^* et le second correcteur \aleph^2 ont [Lc 22,43-44], alors que le premier correcteur \aleph^1 les a supprimés”.

⁴⁸ L.A. Foullah, *The independent witness to the New Testament Greek text of manuscript 579, located at present in the Bibliothèque Nationale de Paris* (PhD thesis, University of Leeds, 1991, 2 vol.), <http://etheses.whiterose.ac.uk/241/>; see also A. Schmidtke, *Die Evangelien eines alten Unzial-Codex (B \aleph -Text). Nach einer Abschrift des 13ten Jahrhunderts* (Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs, 1903); A.W. Carr, *Byzantine Illumination 1150-1250. The Study of a Provincial Tradition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), pp. 278-279.

⁴⁹ Foullah, *The independent witness*, vol. 1, p. 421: in this list, Foullah counts X, what is wrong, since 033 has only the long ending; he does not mention ψ . Mk 16,9 and Mk 16,9-20 are not signaled in the list of specific Mark readings in 579 (*ibi*, vol. 2, p. 967).

3.2. *The Harklean Syriac Version, Codex 083, 099, 019 and 044*

We benefit from an excellent 2015 edition of *The Gospel of Mark in the Syriac Harklean Version*, 615/616 CE⁵⁰. In it, the full double marginal note about Mk 16 is translated by Yohanna, whereas the text itself presents the long ending: “‘It is given somewhere and these’: all these things ordered to the household of Peter we have reported briefly. Afterwards Jesus himself, through them, sent forth from east to west the sacred and imperishable proclamation of eternal salvation. Am[en]; [...] in a [f]ew of those more accurate manuscripts, the Gospel of Mark finishes at: ‘for [they were afraid]’. In some others, instead, they add even [...]”; then the long ending is given in the main text⁵¹.

Before this attestation, the uncial 083, 6th-7th century⁵², also gives a clear attestation of three endings, with the title in *subscriptio* after 16,8 (page 71, end of col. 1), then the shorter ending (col. 2) – perhaps introduced by a comment, but the page is damaged here –, then the longer ending introduced by the same comment in the Harklean version but not in the margin and in smaller characters than the main text⁵³. Whereas 579 offers a continuous text with the three endings, 083 clearly separates them. In a similar way, 099 – a one-folio Greek in Coptic characters manuscript with the comments in Greek – ends Mark at 16,8, followed by the shorter ending and the long ending (but 16,8-20), introduced each by a comment and without *subscriptio* after 16,8. This manuscript is difficult to date and has been assigned to either the 7th (NA28) or the 10th century (Horner). Others have simply judged it as extremely difficult to date (Amélineau)⁵⁴. Finally, along with 083 and 099, the beautiful 019, 8th century⁵⁵, preserves the shorter ending and the longer ending in the main text, introduced each by a comment on f. 113r.

⁵⁰ Yohanna, *The Gospel of Mark in the Syriac Harklean Version*, p. 5.

⁵¹ Yohanna, *The Gospel of Mark in the Syriac Harklean Version*, p. 93; Syriac edition on p. 195.

⁵² See J. Irigoin, “L’ onciale grecque de type copte,” *JÖBG* 8 (1959), p. 29-51; H. von Soden, H. Freiherr, *Die Schriften des Neuen Testaments in ihrer ältesten erreichbaren Textgestalt. Teil I: Untersuchungen. Abt. I: Die Textzeugen* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1911), pp. 144-145. For a complete edition of Mk 16 in GA 083, see A. Smith Lewis, *Catalogue of the Syriac Mss. in the Convent of S. Catherine on Mount Sinai* (London: J. C. Clay and Sons, 1894), pp. 103-104; for a partial edition (until Mk 16,5), see J.R. Harris, *Biblical Fragments from Mount Sinai* (London: J. C. Clay and Sons, 1890), p. 52.

⁵³ See 083 on <http://ntvmr.uni-muenster.de/manuscript-workspace>; all the quoted manuscripts have been checked on this website.

⁵⁴ G.W. Horner (ed.), *The Coptic Version of the New Testament in the Southern Dialect. Otherwise Called Sahidic and Thebaic. Vol. 1: The Gospels of S. Matthew and S. Mark* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1911), pp. 640-642, with a complete transcription of 099; E. Amélineau, “Notice des manuscrits coptes de la Bibliothèque Nationale renfermant des textes bilingues du Nouveau Testament,” *NEMBN* 34/2 (1895), pp. 363-427; here p. 365; for a description of 099, see pp. 370-371.

⁵⁵ S.J. Voicu - S. D’Alisera, *Index in manuscriptorum Graecorum edita specimina*, Roma: Borla, 1981, p. 471.

083, 099, and 019 attest to a practice of copying all endings in the continuous text but with comments, whereas 579 gives them in a continuous text, without comment; the Harklean version keeps the longer ending in, with the shorter ending and the comments in the margin. A fourth way to deal with the different endings is represented by 044, 9th-10th centuries⁵⁶: the shorter ending concludes the text without a sign of interruption after 16,8; then a comment in the main text introduces the longer ending on f. 14v, indicating that it is found in some manuscripts after 16,8. As in 579, the shorter ending in 044 seems to be just the continuous text after 16,8, and it is fully integrated in the text, as in the Latin codex k, the Codex Bobbiensis. As a final piece of our overview, k preserves some surprises in Mk 16 and should be considered, in our opinion, an old witness transmitting a specific tradition.

3.3. *The Latin Codex Bobbiensis (k): Another Tradition*

Dated by Bruce Metzger to the end of the fourth century, with a “text going back to the early third century” (Elliott)⁵⁷, k presents a particularly interesting case in Mk 16. It is well known for having only the short ending⁵⁸, but the NA28 critical apparatus comments on the short ending in this way: (k) sy^{hmg}. Codex k is here correctly put in brackets because it preserves a slightly different version of the shorter ending, along with other peculiar features in the rest of chapter 16. We noticed also that Greek 044 and 579 integrate the shorter ending in the main text without comment or annotation, adding parallel cases to k about the possibility to have the shorter ending as actual ending.

A few scholars working on the endings of Mark have carefully checked k in Mk 16. James Kelhoffer, for example, notes in a footnote that the manuscript preserves the “Shorter Ending” (it^k), but it is in fact the usual Greek version⁵⁹, unrelated to the k Latin text. Moreover, he considers, following

⁵⁶ Voicu - D’Alisera, *Index in manuseriptorum Graecorum*, plate 24.

⁵⁷ B.M. Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption, and Restauration*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992³), p. 73; J.K. Elliott, “The Endings of Mark’s Gospel and the Presentation of the Variants in the Marc Multilingue Edition,” in C.-B. Amphoux - J.K. Elliott - B. Outtier (eds.), *Textual Research on the Psalms and Gospels - Recherches textuelles sur les psaumes et les évangiles, Papers from the Tbilisi Colloquium on the Editing and History of Biblical Manuscripts - Actes du Colloque de Tbilisi, 19-20 septembre 2007, Textual Research on the Psalms and Gospels, Novum Testamentum. Supplements (NT.S 142, Leiden: Brill, 2012)*, pp. 113-124; here p. 119. On codex Bobbiensis, see also D.C. Parker, “Unequally Yoked: The Present State of the Codex Bobbiensis,” *JThS* 42 (1991), pp. 581-588 (reprint in 2009); H.A.G. Houghton, “The Text of the Early Latin New Testament,” in idem, *The Latin New Testament: A Guide to its Early History, Texts, and Manuscripts* (Oxford: Oxford Scholarship Online, 2016), pp. 155-184.

⁵⁸ Foullah, *The independent witness*, p. 421; Lunn, *The Original Ending of Mark*, p. 43; Houghton, “The Text,” p. 161.

⁵⁹ J.A. Kelhoffer, *Miracle and Mission. The Authentication of Missionaries and Their Message in the Longer Ending of Mark (WUNT.2 112, Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000)*, p. 1;

the common opinion, that it “does not follow smoothly after Mark 16, 8”⁶⁰ because of the order of silence in 16,8. But Camille Focant points rightly to the fact that k does not mention the silence of the women in 16,8⁶¹, a detail not signalled in NA28, mentioned only in the previous edition of NA27. As Elliott summarizes, one can observe in Mk 16 in k three “significant variants in 16, 1, 3 and 8b”⁶². Lunn develops the description of these variants, which include a full verse added between 16,3 and 16,4⁶³, arguing, with William Farmer, that k “exhibit[s] a text containing many scribal blunders”⁶⁴. But neither Elliott nor Lunn mention a puzzling particularity of the so-called short ending of k: it speaks about *qui cum puero*, “those with the boy”, whereas the Greek version mentions “those around Peter”. Herrmann von Soden emended in 1911 *puero* to *Petro*⁶⁵, but Adolf Jülicher kept *puero* in his 1940 transcription⁶⁶.

In 2016, Houghton questioned whether “boy” should be read for *Petro*⁶⁷ in “the absence of Vetus Latina editions of the Gospels”⁶⁸. In 2018, the publication of Mark in the *Vetus Latina* was completed by Jean-Claude Haelewyck, who chose to make no less than five corrections in the short k ending, including *Petro* for *puero*, harmonizing it as much as possible with the Greek short ending⁶⁹. It is far beyond the purpose of this article to discuss all the corrections, but I suggest that it is time to consider Mark 16 in k for what it is: an alternate tradition, including particularities in 16,1.3.8b. As a result, this

see also the full Greek text in footnote 215, pp. 232 and 233. For the usual Greek version, see 019, 044, 083, 099, 274^{mg}, 579, 11602 with *sa*^{mss} *sy*^{hmg} *bo*^{mss} *aeth*^{mss}.

⁶⁰ Kelhoffer, *Miracle and Mission*, p. 162.

⁶¹ C. Focant, “Un silence qui fait parler (Mc 16,8),” in idem, *Marc, un évangile étonnant, Recueil d'essais (BETHL 194, Leuven: Peeters, 2006)*, pp. 341-358, here p. 343.

⁶² Elliott, “The Endings of Mark’s Gospel,” p. 119.

⁶³ N.P. Lunn, *The Original Ending of Mark. A New Case for the Authenticity of Mark 16:9-20* (Eugene: Pickwick Publications, 2014), p. 43.

⁶⁴ W.R. Farmer, *The Last Twelve Verses of Mark* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 48; quoted by Lunn, *The Original Ending of Mark*, p. 60, note 168.

⁶⁵ H. von Soden, *Das lateinische Neue Testament in Afrika zur Zeit Cyprians* (Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur 33, Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs, 1909), p. 449.

⁶⁶ A. Jülicher, *Das Neue Testament in altlateinischer Überlieferung. II. Marcus-Evangelium (Itala 2, Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1970)*, p. 158.

⁶⁷ Houghton, “The Text of the Early Latin New Testament,” p. 162.

⁶⁸ Houghton, “Editions and Resources,” in Id., *The Latin New Testament*, pp. 114-143, here p. 127.

⁶⁹ J.-C. Haelewyck, *Evangelium secundum Marcum, Vetus Latina. Die Reste der altlateinischen Bibel 17* (fascicule 10, Freiburg: Herder, 2018), p. 798, in footnote: “omnia autem quaecumque praecepta erant et (*correx* in *schemate*) qui cum puero (*correx* in *schemate*) erant breviter exposuerunt post haec et ipse iesus adparuit et ab orientem (*correx* in *schemate*) usque in orientem (*correx* in *schemate*) misit per illos sanctam et incorruptam praedicationis (*correx* in *schemate*) salutis aeternae amen”. Haelewyck’s corrected transcription stands at the top of the page in this way: “omnia autem quaecumque praecepta erant eis qui cum Petro erant breviter exposuerunt post haec et ipse iesus adparuit et ab oriente usque in occidentem misit per illos sanctam et incorruptam praedicationem salutis aeternae amen”.

ending should be called from now on “the short k ending”. Consequently, I give the transcription and translation of Houghton as the most accurate:

omnia autem quaecumque praecepta erant et qui cum puero erant breuiter exposuerunt. post haec et ipse Iesus adparuit et ab orientem usque usque in orientem misit per illos sanctam et incorruptam praedicationis salutis aeternae. amen.

But those who were also with the boy [for *Petro*, Peter?] told in brief everything which they had been instructed. After this, Jesus himself appeared too and sent the holy and unchanging <message> of the preaching of eternal salvation through them from the east all the way right to the east [west?]. Amen.⁷⁰

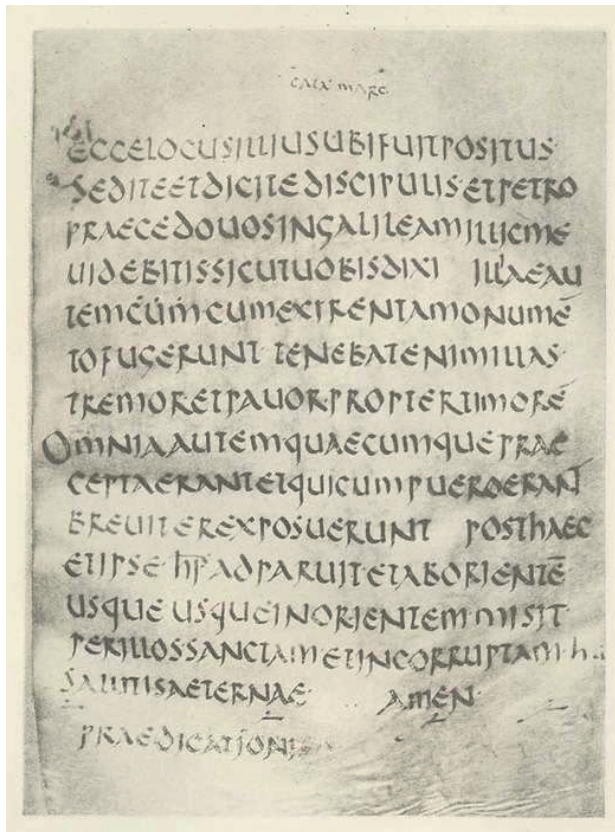


Figure 1: Codex Bobbiensis (k), fol. 41 recto. Mark 16, 6-9, 14th century, public domain; author: Apw (<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:CodexBobbiensis.jpg>). See also <https://mr-mark16.sib.swiss/show?id=Vkwx>

⁷⁰ Houghton, “The Text of the Early Latin New Testament,” p. 162.

In his 2018 *Gospels Before the Book*, Matthew Larsen presents in Appendix B the 1886 transcription of codex k by James Wordsworth et al.⁷¹, arguing that Mk 16 in k “may also be regarded as yet another ending”⁷². But for some unknown or implicit reason, Larsen has omitted from this transcription the words *et qui cum puero erant*, whereas Wordsworth et al. preserve them in their transcription⁷³. The fact is all the more surprising since Larsen quotes Hugh Houghton’s *Latin New Testament* several times, which presents precisely the variant *puero/Petro* in k, as shown above. But there is no word about *puero* in Larsen’s analysis. Moreover, he does not signal the absence of the women’s silence in Mk 16,8 in k. Quite obviously, the critical potential of the text of Mk 16,8 in k has not been exhausted, even if Jayhoon Yang has devoted an important part of his unpublished 2004 PhD to it⁷⁴. So far, no one seems to have seriously considered *et qui cum puero erant* as a plausible reading. The hypothesis is fully discussed in a forthcoming article; I conclude here with some preliminary remarks⁷⁵.

The codex k is usually presented as the unique evidence of the shorter ending only⁷⁶. But as we have seen, 044 and 579 include the shorter ending without comment or diacritic mark, presenting it as a normal ending after 16,8. Moreover, 083, sy^{mg}, 019 and 099, as well as 274^{mg}, show that they knew the shorter ending as a way to conclude the Gospel according to Mark. So k is not the only witness of this practice. Mk 16 in k, with all its particular features, has never been studied as an alternative tradition, either within the field of NT studies or in Christian apocrypha. The quest promises to be fascinating, as even a preliminary analysis of *cum puero* suggests.

First of all, as anyone can check on folio 41 recto available on wikicommons and reproduced here⁷⁷, *cum puero* is written in a very clear way, with-

⁷¹ M.D.C. Larsen, *Gospels Before the Book* (Oxford University Press, 2018), p. 158.

⁷² Larsen, *Gospels Before the Book*, p. 117.

⁷³ J. Wordsworth et al. (eds.), *Portions of the Gospels according to St. Mark and St. Matthew from the Bobbio Ms. (k) Now Number G. vii.15 at the National Library at Turin, together with Other Fragments of the Gospels from Six Mss. At the Libraries of St. Gall, Coire, Milan and Berne (usually cited as no, o, p, a2, s and t)* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1886), p. 23; <https://archive.org/details/portionsofgospel00worduoft/page/22/mode/2up>. At page cxxx, *puero* is listed in the corrections to be made, but not clearly evaluated as an “imperfect correction” or “senseless barbarism”; but the transcription does not signal a mistake for *puero*.

⁷⁴ J. Yang, *Other Endings of Mark as Responses to Mark: An Ideological-Critical Investigation into the Longer and the Shorter Ending of Mark’s Gospel*, Sheffield (UK), 2004, <http://etheses.whiterose.ac.uk/3555/>. See below for the discussion of an illustrative point.

⁷⁵ C. Clivaz, “Mk 16 im Codex Bobbiensis. Neue Materialien zur *conclusio brevior* des Markusevangeliums”, *Zeitschrift für Neues Testament* 47/24 (2021), forthcoming. See also on k M. Larsen, “A Real-and-Imagined Biography of a Gospel Manuscript”, *Early Christianity* 12.3 (2021), pp. 103-131.

⁷⁶ See Houghton, *The Latin New Testament*, p. 10; Larsen, *Gospels Before the Book*, p. 118; but Yang, *Other Endings of Mark as Responses to Mark*, p. 3, footnote 4: “Latin [it. a] may also have originally contained the shorter ending only”.

⁷⁷ The folio 41 recto image has been put in 2006 on wikicommons; I added the caption on 05/06/19: “Codex Bobbiensis (k), fol. 41 recto. Mark 16, 6-9, 1vth century,” <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:CodexBobbienis.jpg>. The three images of the Mk 16 folios in k

out hesitation, and cannot be read as *cum Petro*. Yang compares the *puero/Petro* variant to the objective mistake *maxriam* for *mariam* in Mt 1,20 k, fol. 44, l. 7⁷⁸, but the comparison is not convincing since *puero* is grammatically and semantically correct in Mk 16,9k. If *puero* cannot be counted among the number of the spelling or grammatical mistakes in k, can one find a plausible historico-cultural framework that could explain *et qui cum puero erant*? I suggest, and will explore further, that this expression could echo the polymorphic Christ present in apocryphal literature. Jean-Daniel Kaestli suggested a useful reference to this phenomenon that exists in the *Acta Petri* 21,29, quoted here in French and in English in footnote. In this passage, some blind widows are made able to see again and narrate to Peter what they have seen during the miracle:

Les unes dirent: “Nous avons vu un vieillard d’un aspect tel que nous ne pouvons te le décrire”. D’autres: “Un jeune homme (*juvenem adolescentem*)”. D’autres encore dirent: “Nous avons vu un enfant (*puerum vidimus*) nous toucher légèrement les yeux: et nos yeux se sont ouverts”. Alors, Pierre glorifia le Seigneur en disant: “[...] Dieu est plus grand que nos pensées, comme je viens de vous le rapporter et comme vous l’avez appris des anciennes disant sous quelles formes différentes elles ont vu le Seigneur”⁷⁹.

This first apocryphal reference could support the conclusion that k preserves a real independent tradition with *qui cum puero erant*. Considering all the particularities of k in Mk 16, it is wise from now on to consider it a third witness to Mark 16 at the end of the 4th century, alongside 01 and 03. The mention of *cum puero* presents a potential case not only of freedom in the scribal practices in biblical texts, but also a clear case of scribal practices in contemporary scholarship, either accepting *puero* (Wordsworth, Jülicher), questioning it (Wordsworth, Houghton), emending it (von Soden, Haelewyck) or forgetting it (Larsen). It is an illustration of the triad author-scribe-reader in which textuality is always embedded. Moreover, in Mk 16 in k the women are for once not reduced to silence. Looking back to the end of the 4th century, the nine cases presented here – in chronological order

(f. 40r, 40v and 41r) have been published and transcribed on MARK16 website: <https://mr-mark16.sib.swiss/show?id=VkwX>.

⁷⁸ Yang, *Other Endings of Mark as Responses to Mark*, p. 194.

⁷⁹ F. Bovon - P. Geoltrain (eds.), *Ecrits apocryphes chrétiens 1 (Pléiade 442)*, Paris: Gallimard, 1997), p. 1089. For the most recent edition, see M. Döhler (ed.), *Acta Petri. Text, Übersetzung und Kommentar zu den Actus Vercellenses (TU 171)*, Berlin: de Gruyter, 2018), p. 106; for an English translation, see J.K. Elliott (ed.), *The Apocryphal New Testament. A Collection of Apocryphal Christian Literature in an English Translation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1993, reprint 2005), p. 415: “They said: ‘We saw an old man of such comeliness as we are not able to declare to thee’; but others said: ‘We saw a young man’; and others: ‘We saw a boy touching our eyes delicately, and so were our eyes opened’. Peter therefore magnified the Lord, saying: ‘[...] God that is constant is greater than our thoughts, even as we have learned of these aged widows, how that they beheld the Lord in diverse forms’”.

k, 083, sy^{hmg}, 019, 044, 099, 1, 304 and 579 – attest to the continuity of various readings in Mark 16. The quest for understanding this NT textual critical enigma is being reinvigorated.

ABSTRACT

Building upon a five years research SNSF grant on digital methodology and Mark 16, this article highlights scribal practices in New Testament textual criticism by focusing on the test-case of endings in Mark's Gospel, pointing to a specific tradition of the so-called shorter ending in Latin Codex Bobbiensis or G. VII.15. This tradition differs from the usual Greek shorter ending. Section 2 first argues that contemporaneous scribal practices still exist in Greek NT scholarship, whereas Section 3 presents nine cases of scribal practices in Mark 16 – seven Greek NT manuscripts (Gregory-Aland 083, 099, 019, 044, 1, 304 and 579, in chronological order), one Latin NT manuscript (codex k), and the Harklean Syriac version of Mark.

KEYWORDS: Codex Bobbiensis; Mark Endings; History of reading; New Testament; Textual Criticism

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