

ANOTHER SCRIBE OR ANOTHER EXEMPLAR? EXAMINING TEXTUAL
PATTERNS IN CODEX SINAITICUS MATTHEW AND MARK

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Introduction

There are good reasons why scribal patterns in Codex Sinaiticus have been the object of intense scrutiny ever since this early copy of the Bible was discovered in a Sinai Monastery in the mid-nineteenth century. Because a number of scribes and an even larger number of later correctors worked on the manuscript, it offers a considerable opportunity for exploring how these workers interacted.¹ It was made accessible from the outset to scholars and, in recent times, has become even more available with the completion of a project in 2009 to put all the currently separated parts of the manuscript online.²

Dating from around the mid-fourth century, Codex Sinaiticus vies with Codex Vaticanus for the status of the earliest surviving, substantially-complete copy of the New Testament.³ Since the production of Bibles at the time was laborious and costly, relatively few would have been produced and most of these were ultimately discarded and replaced, when they became too worn. Those that have survived may have done so because they were set aside for some purpose, for

1. A summary of the history of analysis, from Constantin Tischendorf's first visit to St Catherine's monastery and publication of parts of the manuscript in 1846 through to the project to reunify its separated parts in digitized form online, is provided by one of the latest scholars to scrutinize Codex Sinaiticus: Dirk Jongkind, *Scribal Habits of Codex Sinaiticus* (Texts and Studies, 5; New Jersey: Gorgias Press, 2007), pp. 5-26.

2. See <http://www.codex-sinaiticus.net>.

3. Most scholars agree that the codices are closely related. For a case that Codex Sinaiticus has primacy, see Peter Cresswell, *The Invention of Jesus* (London: Watkins, 2013), pp. 90-119.

example as a reference or master copy to help in the production of new Bibles.

As with writers today, scribes had their own writing styles with identifiable peculiarities. Using these distinguishing factors as guides, it becomes possible to work out which parts of a manuscript were written by each scribe. In the case of Codex Sinaiticus, four scribes were initially identified (denoted A, B, C and D).⁴ But it was found that the supposed distinctive stylistic characteristics of C were a product of the form of the poetic works of the Old Testament on which the scribes were working.⁵ It was here a case of variation in the source material, as opposed to the handiwork of a different scribe. So, the work attributed to C was reallocated to the other scribes A and D and the posited number of scribes was reduced to three.⁶

The identification of the scribes responsible for Sinaiticus has led to a better understanding of the way the scribes worked together. In a recent study, Dirk Jongkind demonstrates how two scribes (A and D) cooperated together on the Old Testament, dividing whole books and sections of books between them. With one scribe going on ahead, leaving space calculated as sufficient for the other to catch up, this allowed for simultaneous working and would have speeded up the process of producing a complete copy.⁷

In the New Testament, however, the burden of the work was left to scribe A, with B contributing by copying one later book, Hermas, and D writing a few lines of Revelation and three single sheets (double folios). These three sheets, in two instances comprising separated text within a four-sheet quire, represent a puzzling contribution. In the absence of another explanation, the conventional view has been that

4. Constantin von Tischendorf, *Novum Testamentum Sinaiticum* (Leipzig: F.A. Brockhaus, 1863), p. xxi.

5. Herbert J.M. Milne and Theodore C. Skeat, *Scribes and Correctors of the Codex Sinaiticus* (London: British Museum, 1938), pp. 22-50.

6. In the course of the project to put Sinaiticus online, further examination of the prophetic works led to the suggestion that the work previously attributed to B may have been the product of two scribes, B1 and B2. See Amy Myshrall, 'The Presence of a Fourth Scribe?', in Scot McKendrick *et al.* (eds.), *Codex Sinaiticus: New Perspectives on the Ancient Biblical Manuscript* (London: British Library, 2015), pp. 139-48.

7. The scribes did not, however, always get the calculation right and text had either to be squeezed or stretched out in an effort to fit the available space. See Jongkind, *Scribal Habits*, pp. 41-44.

these were correction sheets, replacing work that had initially been undertaken by scribe A.

The scribes made changes to their own work and corrections or amendments were subsequently made by others, including a first corrector Ca. In this paper, I will identify some points where different exemplars may have been used to introduce variations in the cooperative effort by scribes and correctors to prepare the codex.

A New Scribe? Jongkind's Proposition

Jongkind's analysis of the behaviour of each of the Sinaiticus scribes goes into considerable detail, covering such matters as use of paragraphing, ligatures and nomina sacra, frequency of iotacism and the occurrence of singular readings. The analysis gives an improved picture of the characteristics, strengths and weaknesses of each of the scribes. It also defines their contributions more fully and precisely. In doing so, however, Jongkind points to a conundrum: the scribal patterns of behaviour which he identifies in Matthew are not entirely consistent with those of scribe A elsewhere in the manuscript. Could this discrepancy, he speculates, be due to the fact that the copy of Matthew is actually the work of another, as-yet unidentified scribe?⁸

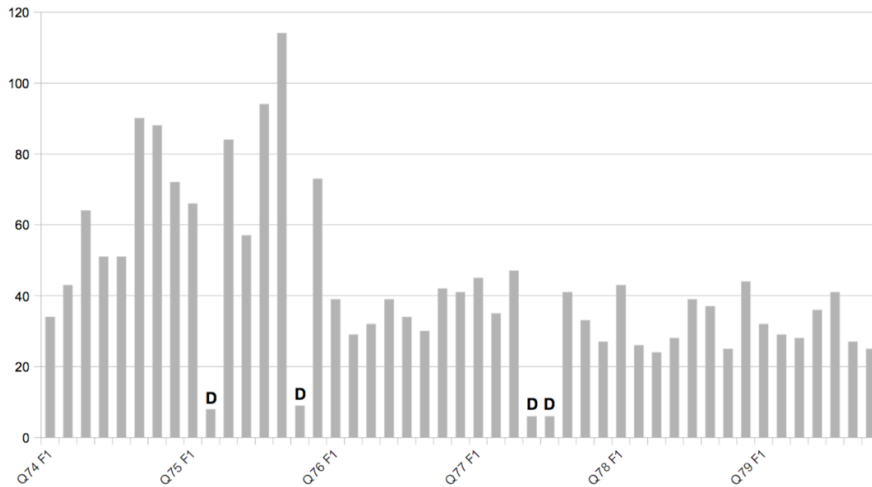


Figure 1. Number of iotacisms per folio for Quires 74-79, Codex Sinaiticus synoptic Gospels.

8. Jongkind, *Scribal Habits*, pp. 91-93, 127-28.

Jongkind analyzes the spelling mistakes made by the various scribes and finds that in general there was consistency in the level of errors throughout the work of each scribe and also between the scribes. The mistakes of substituting ι for ει and ε for αι (a shift often designated ‘iotacism’) were not only common but characteristic: B made the most errors, D the least and A came somewhere between, though closer to D than B. The bar chart of these errors for the synoptic Gospels (Quires 74-79) illustrates this clearly (see Figure 1).⁹

The pattern for the separated bifolium by D in Matthew and for the mid-quire bifolium by D in Mark–Luke are quite distinct, as are the much higher-than-usual error frequencies made by A within the Gospel of Matthew compared with D’s work elsewhere. These frequencies have some abnormally high spikes at points, while by contrast being within the scribe’s normal range at the beginning and end of the Gospel. This then is one significant aberration in A’s work, identified by Jongkind.

The abbreviation of certain words, identified in the text with a bar line placed above the characters, provides a further instance where A in Matthew departs from his usual practice. These abbreviated words have a reverential association either in all cases (as with ΘEOC or XPICTOC) or in some cases (as with YIOC or ΠATHP) and are collectively described as *nomina sacra*. For the latter type, it is interesting that contextually sacred usages are sometimes not abbreviated, while some non-sacred usages may be abbreviated.

The Sinaiticus scribes almost invariably abbreviated five sacred words: ΘEOC, KYPIOC, IHCOYC, XPICTOC and ΠINEYMA (and also the derivation ΠINEYMATIKOC). The degree to which other words were shortened varied, with a preference for abbreviation for the Jewish names ΔAYIA, IEPOYCAΛHM and ICPAHA and for the scribes in general to write other words in full. The patterns in books on which scribes A and D both worked in the Old Testament, *4 Maccabees* and *Psalms*, where it can be presumed the scribes shared an exemplar, indicate that scribe D was generally more scrupulous in limiting the use of abbreviations to the five main sacred words.

There was, however, a marked departure from scribe A’s normal usage in respect of four words (ANΘPΩΠIOC, OYPANOC, MHTHP and ΠATHP). While these were predominantly written in full by the scribe

9. Adapted from the chart in Jongkind, *Scribal Habits*, Appendix 1.

elsewhere in the New Testament, in Matthew these were predominantly abbreviated as *nomina sacra*. Jongkind has identified this as a slightly varying pattern. But, as the table below shows, there is a very striking difference in usage between text attributed to this scribe in Matthew and that in Luke and John.

Table 1. Frequency of abbreviated (A) and full (F) (*nomina sacra*) forms by scribe A in Codex Sinaiticus Gospels.¹⁰

Word	Matthew		Mark		Luke		John	
	A	F	A	F	A	F	A	F
ΘΕΟC	50	1	44	0	110	0	80	0
ΚΥΡΙΟC	54	2	16	0	87	1	45	0
ΠΝΕΥΜΑ	18	0	22	0	31	0	24	0
ΙΗCΟΥC	130	0	72	0	86	0	238	0
ΧΡΙCΤΟC	14	0	4	0	13	0	18	0
ΑΝΘΡΩΠΟC	79	10	33	19	7	90	2	58
ΟΥΡΑΝΟC	36	30	5	11	1	34	1	18
ΜΗΤΗΡ	16	7	11	4	1	13	0	9
ΠΑΤΗΡ	55	3	11	6	0	42	5	121
ΥΙΟC	40	17	24	4	38	21	36	14
ΔΑΥΙΔ	16	1	7	0	11	0	2	0
ΙΕΡΟΥCΑΛΗΜ	2	0	0	0	5	21	0	0
ΙCΡΑΗΛ	12	0	2	1	10	0	4	0

The pattern in Mark for these four words, however, is somewhere between these two extremes. Some further work will be needed to clarify the situation.

As Jongkind has rightly pointed out, there is an inherent difficulty in analyzing the information.¹¹ Not only is there variation in behaviour between scribes, and also possibly within the output of a single scribe, but it is also possible that different exemplars were used with their own distinct patterns and that the scribes varied in the degree to which each

10. Adapted from Jongkind, *Scribal Habits*, Appendix 1. There are some differences between the uncial script used by the scribes and standard Greek font, as shown in the table.

11. Jongkind, *Scribal Habits*, pp. 74, 83.

accommodated these or else imposed their own preferences. It is thus difficult, in any given instance, to work out precisely what combination of influences may have been at work.

A third, very distinctive peculiarity of Matthew, noted by Jongkind, is that the colophon, with which the scribe signed off each book, is lacking in its full form for this Gospel. This would usually consist of the book title and sometimes other comments under a decorative pattern (coronis) in a style characteristic of the particular scribe. Hence, for example, the inscription at the end of Luke (by scribe A) reads: ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΟΝ ΚΑΤΑ ΛΟΥΚΑΝ. In the case of Matthew, however, there is no accompanying text and the coronis is of a design that matches none of the three New Testament scribes'. Jongkind has pointed out this discrepancy in support of his suggestion that it may not have been scribe A who was working on Matthew but instead a postulated, otherwise unidentified, fourth scribe.

The Evidence from Mark: An Alternation of Exemplars

There are two main variables that need to be considered in analyzing the unusual features noted for Matthew: the scribal habits of the copying scribe and the constitution of an exemplar. Some further light is shed on this by Peter Head's analysis of the textual characteristics of Mark.¹² He notes that the use of *nomina sacra* predominates for ΑΝΘΡΩΠΙΟC, ΜΗΤΗΡ and ΠΑΤΗΡ in the first half of this Gospel, while the uncontracted forms are more often used in the second half. Contraction of ΟΥΡΑΝΟC, although the word is less frequent, follows the same pattern. While Head considers the idea of a change of exemplar as the explanation for these differences, he appears to have concluded that it would be better to treat them as 'unexplained aberrations'.

The change in usage is however abrupt and marked, and even more extraordinary taken in conjunction with the flow of scribe A's work throughout the four Gospels. If the figures generated by Jongkind are further broken down, according to Head's analysis of Mark, it can be seen that the striking difference is not so much simply between the first and second halves of Mark, but between Matthew plus Mark 1–8

12. Peter M. Head, 'The Gospel of Mark in Codex Sinaiticus: Textual and Reception-Historical Considerations', *TC* 13 (2008), pp. 1-38.

(which are entirely consistent with each other) and Mark 9 onwards together with Luke and John (which are also entirely consistent with each other and radically different in this respect from the first one and a half books of the New Testament). There is a very distinct divide mid-Mark, where the scribe switched from a strong preference for using abbreviated forms for four common words to an equally powerful tendency then to use the full forms for these same words.

It would seem there are two mechanisms that might satisfactorily explain the data. One is that the same, previously identified scribes worked on Matthew and Mark but there was a change of exemplar at around the beginning of ch. 9 in Mark. The other is that, as Jongkind hypothesized for the book of Matthew alone, another as-yet unidentified scribe is responsible for copying both Matthew (except for the bifolium by scribe D) and the first eight chapters of Mark. In this latter case, assuming that differences in habits and behaviour arose from the new scribe, there is then no need to postulate the use of another exemplar.

Table 2. Frequency of abbreviated (A) and full (F) (*nomina sacra*) forms for certain words by scribes A and D, Codex Sinaiticus Gospels.¹³

	Word	Mt.		Mk 1-8		Mk 9-16		Lk.		Jn	
		A	F	A	F	A	F	A	F	A	F
SCRIBE A	ANΘΡΩΠΙΟC	79	10	28	3	5	16	7	90	2	58
	OYPANOC	36	30	4	2	1	9	1	34	1	18
	MHTHP	16	7	10	2	1	2	1	13	0	9
	ΠΑΤHP	55	3	7	0	4	6	0	42	5	121
	ΥΙΟC	40	17	8	1	16	3	38	21	36	14
SCRIBE D	ANΘΡΩΠΙΟC	10	11	na		0	3	1	0		na
	OYPANOC	0	11	na		0	1	0	0		na
	MHTHP	0	0	na		0	1	1	1		na
	ΠΑΤHP	3	2	na		0	1	2	1		na
	ΥΙΟC	1	13	na		1	2	0	5		na

13. Instances of ANΘΡΩΠΙΟC and OYPANOC include plurals. Compiled from Head, 'Gospel of Mark', §§38-59 and Jongkind, *Scribal Habits*, Appendix 1.

There is a further curious and notable feature, associated with the division mid-Mark regarding usage of *nomina sacra*. The text in question comes within the last opening of quire 76 in Mark, on the verso of folio 7. Chapter 9 begins near the bottom of column two of four columns. Up to and including this column, new paragraphs beginning on a new line in Matthew and Mark are demarcated generally by negligible intrusion (ekthesis) of the first letter into the left margin of the column. But, from the head of column three of the verso of folio 7, just after the start of chapter nine, there are a series of sharply marked paragraphs, with the first letter (often K) shifted very far, sometimes wholly, into the margin. The pattern does eventually attenuate but can be discerned to continue right up into scribe A's work in Luke.¹⁴

While the initial extreme ekthesis, starting at about the beginning of ch. 9, is a distinct feature, so too is the relative lack of ekthesis in Matthew and Mark up until then, compared with other parts of the New Testament. This then is also indicative of a transition point, suggesting that either there was a change of exemplar or there was, at this point in preparing the manuscript, a change of scribe.¹⁵

The discovery that the fault line, in terms of a dramatic change in frequency of *nomina sacra* for several common words, does not come at the end of Matthew but is further forward within Mark is illuminating. It is not at all supportive of Jongkind's suggestion of a possible change of scribe in Matthew alone. Furthermore, the pattern that Jongkind identifies regarding the frequency of iotacisms for the text of scribe A is the same for both halves of Mark, for Luke and both the first two and the last one-and-a-half folios in Matthew (see Figure 1). It is also relatively consistent with the pattern that Jongkind finds for scribe A compared with scribe D, in Psalms.¹⁶

14. Figure 2 © British Library Board, Add.Ms.43725 f.222v/Codex Sinaiticus.

15. For the third and fourth columns of Q76F8V, there is extreme ekthesis for all the paragraph breaks. But there is arguably more-than-usual ekthesis, compared with what had happened previously, for the first paragraph of ch. 9 towards the bottom of Column 2. The transition, involving change in use of *nomina sacra* also, can thus be identified as being in place at the start of Column 3, though possibly effective a few lines earlier, at the start of ch. 9.

16. Jongkind, *Scribal Habits*, pp. 260-61.

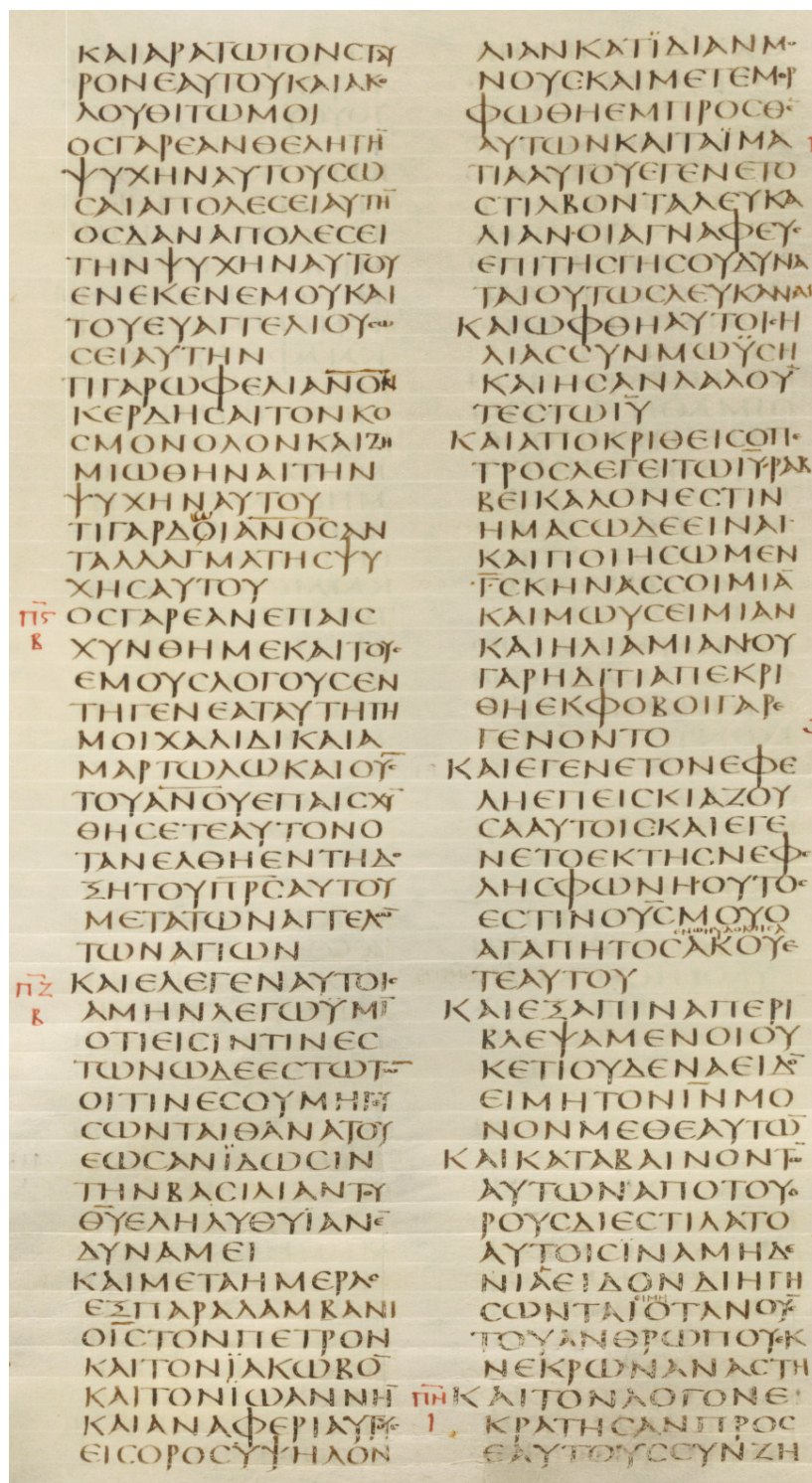


Figure 2. Columns 2 and 3 of Codex Sinaiticus Q76F7V (Mk 8.34-9.10), showing start of exaggerated outdenting (ekthesis) in Column 3.

This evidence provides support for the idea of one scribe working on Mark and, by extension, Luke and Matthew (except for D's bifolia), as this idea reconciles the evidence from *nomina sacra* and ekthesis with that provided by iotacism.

What the evidence taken together shows is (a) a change of scribal behaviour, in terms of iotacism, solely within Matthew by the scribe traditionally identified as A and (b) a change of scribal behaviour, in terms of use of *nomina sacra* and ekthesis in paragraphing, by that same scribe between his work on Matthew and Mark up to the end of Mark 8 compared with his work from about the beginning of ch. 9 onwards. In this latter respect, the extreme ekthesis beginning at Mk 9.4 serves to highlight the generally slight ekthesis in the New Testament up to that point.

It is not immediately clear why there should have been a change of scribal behaviour within Matthew. But it looks increasingly likely that the change between Matthew plus the first half of Mark and the second half of Mark onwards reflects a change in the exemplar used by the scribe. The alternative explanation, that another scribe was involved, requires one to accept that this hypothetical scribe should have differed significantly from scribe A in terms of the use of both *nomina sacra* and ekthesis over the course of Matthew and the first part of Mark but, in the first part of Mark, exhibit precisely the same pattern of iotacisms as in the remaining work attributed to scribe A. It would furthermore have entailed an unusual change of scribe, mid page and mid chapter.¹⁷

Also, as Jongkind has noted, there have been no proposals or support from palaeographic experts for a different scribe for Matthew—or, for that matter, for the first eight chapters of Mark.¹⁸ To explore this possibility further, I examined the frequency and style of one important indicator, the KAI compendium, in the work currently attributed to scribe A in Matthew, Mark and 1 Maccabees, against a sample of work attributed to the other two scribes.

I found first of all that, as previously described by Milne and Skeat as well as Jongkind, there are marked differences between the hands of

17. There are two examples in the Old Testament where scribes shared the work of a single book, *4 Maccabees* and *Psalms* but, in both instances, scribe A took over from scribe D at the start of a new page. In the New Testament, scribe D wrote the first few lines of *Revelation*, leaving scribe A to complete the book.

18. Jongkind, *Scribal Habits*, p. 128.

the three scribes.¹⁹ Scribe D's stroke on the downward arm (or tail) of the *kappa* is indeed generally curved, whereas that by scribe A is generally straight and at an acute angle. Scribe B's stroke is often shorter or has an angle in it. There is, as would be expected, a degree of variation within the work of each scribe. The one surprise was to find several cases in the work by scribe A (1 Macc. 3.20; 5.33; 6.11; 10.83; 11.18; 15.35; Mt. 6.25; 21.34) where the tail on the letter kappa is bent, as it is in scribe B's hand.

I discovered nothing in the general style and deployment of the KAI compendium in Matthew to indicate the work of a new scribe, nor any significant differences between the two parts of Mark.

Scribe D's Contribution in Matthew

While it now seems clear that no other scribe did the work currently attributed to scribe A in Matthew, and that what may have happened mid Mark was a change of exemplar, there was of course another scribe who *did* work on both these Gospels. This was scribe D who contributed three sheets (bifolia) in the New Testament. The first sheet consisted of separated text of Mt. 16.9–18.12 and Mt. 24.35–26.6 and the second sheet, mid quire, consisted of continuous text from Mk 14.54–Lk. 1.56. Scribe D later undertook a third sheet, consisting of two sections of separated text: 1 Thess. 2.14–5.28 and Heb. 4.16–8.1.

These three sheets are attributed with confidence to scribe D, as conforming to his characteristic style. What is not so easy to determine is whether, on any or all of these occasions, the change of scribe was accompanied by a change of exemplar.

In terms of use of *nomina sacra*, there are some distinct differences between scribe A and scribe D. Scribe D was more rigorous throughout the Old and New Testaments in confining the use of *nomina sacra* to the five sacred words. There was also a contrast in the treatment of YIOC. Scribe D customarily used the full form for this word throughout, while scribe A in the Gospels more often abbreviated it.

The pattern exhibited in Matthew and Mark, up to and including Mark 8, suggests that scribe A was here conforming to his exemplar (X), in using *nomina sacra* for ANΘΡΩΠΙΟC, ΜΗΤΗΡ, ΠΑΤΗΡ and

19. Milne and Skeat, *Scribes and Correctors*, pp. 22-23; Jongkind, *Scribal Habits*, p. 88.

OYPANOC, despite tending to follow the general scribal practice elsewhere of using full forms for these words.

In Matthew, scribe D used the full forms for YIOC and OYPANOC, but was inconsistent with ΠΑΤΗΡ and ΑΝΘΡΩΠΙΟC (i.e. ten times writing the latter word abbreviated and eleven times writing it in full). This variation may indicate that scribe D was working from an alternative exemplar (Y) which differed in its usage of *nomina sacra* from the exemplar (X) used by scribe A and from his own practice and preference exhibited elsewhere.²⁰

Jongkind finds that, while scribes A and D were generally comparable in the frequency with which they used the KAI compendium, scribe D's contributions of two bifolia in the Gospels (Mt. 16.9–18.12 and Mt. 24.35–26.6; Mk 14.54–Lk. 1.56) were marked by a significantly higher frequency of use (4.4 per folio as opposed to 2.3 by scribe A), though based on a total of only 17 instances.²¹ This could, however, have come about as a by-product of scribe D's need to compress his text, in order to fit it within the space allocated to him.²²

It is interesting that the work by scribe D within Matthew made use of clearly outdented paragraph beginnings, where the degree of ekthesis was in sharp contrast with the surrounding text by scribe A. This adds to the case that a different exemplar was used for scribe D's text, on the basis that the degree of outdenting of the first letter may have been at least partly a reflection of the exemplar, as opposed to or as well as the preference of the scribe. In Mark, scribe A followed the practice in Matthew of minimal ekthesis up to the end of Mark 8, with then a period of extreme ekthesis, for the first letter of paragraphs, starting at the beginning or shortly after the beginning of Mark 9.²³

To summarize, the combination of Peter Head and Dirk Jongkind's findings, taken together with the other data presented above, point to the use of an initial exemplar (X) by scribe A for Matthew and the first eight chapters of Mark followed by a change to another exemplar at the beginning of Mark 9. There is some evidence, from the varying use of *nomina sacra* and ekthesis, that scribe D used an alternative exemplar (Y) for his bifolium in Matthew.

20. Jongkind, *Scribal Habits*, p. 259.

21. Jongkind, *Scribal Habits*, p. 89.

22. See n. 30 below.

23. Chapter and verse divisions for the New Testament were added many centuries later for the convenience of readers.

Amendments to a Less-Developed Text

A very busy period of activity can be identified in the first book and the first half of the next book in the New Testament. There is an intervention by a second scribe for a bifolium within Matthew, which has separated text, a period associated with this when the first scribe's spelling deteriorates and an apparent change of exemplar mid Mark. Bringing in a second scribe just to write a single bifolium from another exemplar would have been cumbersome, requiring a lot of effort, and is hard to explain. So too is the first scribe's abrupt switch to another exemplar in the middle of a page. In neither case is it possible to see or identify what would have been in the original exemplar (X) used by scribe A.

But there may be clues in some other changes made by contemporary correctors, where both the original text and the modification can be seen. There are two such significant alterations to the text by scribe A.

Peter Head deals with one of these, the addition of the words 'son of God', abbreviated as a *nomen sacrum*, to the opening of Mark at 1.1, 'the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ'.²⁴ He presents a case that the phrase was not erroneously omitted, but rather happened not to be used by the scribe at 1.1. One of his arguments is that the shorter reading without the *nomina sacra* YY ΘY is widely attested among second-century Greek witnesses onwards, while the longer reading is not attested until around 400 CE. Accidental omission of such an important phrase, he also suggests, is unlikely at the very beginning in copying a Gospel.

If Head is right, then this fact suggests that scribe A's exemplar X was earlier than a source that the corrector had in mind in making the addition.²⁵ If so, then it may represent a point in a continuum over time, during which the use of the label 'son of God' increased in prevalence.

Another correction or amendment, this time by the first (and thus possibly contemporary) corrector Ca, occurs in the description of the women present at the cross in Mt. 27.56. What appeared in the text,

24. Peter M. Head, 'A Text Critical Study of Mark 1.1', *NTS* 37 (1991), pp. 621-29.

25. While the team responsible for Codex Sinaiticus online identified the corrector here as simply one of the scribes, Malik has pointed to scribe D working from another exemplar. See Peter Malik, 'The Earliest Corrections in Codex Sinaiticus: A Test Case from the Gospel of Mark', *BASP* 50 (2013), pp. 207-54.

after allowing for an accidental harmonization of ‘mother’ to the previous usages of ‘Mary’, was ‘... among whom was Mary the [] of James and the Mary the [] of Joseph and the mother of the sons of Zebedee’ (EN AIC HN MAPIA H TOY IAKΩBOY KAI H MAPIA IΩCHΦ KAI H MAPIA H TΩN YIΩN ZEBEΔEOY).

This is unusual in that it defines both Marys in terms of familial relationships. There is a case that Joseph/Joses, as one of the brothers of Jesus, is a stand-in for Jesus himself; the online team in translating Codex Sinaiticus took this view in rendering ‘mother of Joses’ at Mk 15.40 and 15.47 as ‘mother of Jesus’. Given that James was taken to be the brother of Jesus, and Mary therefore the mother of both James and Jesus, scribe A’s version carried with it the implication that there were two Marys present, both in a familial relationship of some sort with Jesus.

Ca eliminated this by means of wholesale changes to make the text read, ‘... among whom was Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James and Joseph and the mother of the sons of Zebedee’ (EN AIC HN MAPIA H ΜΑΓΔΑΛΗΝΗ Κ[ΑΙ] MAPIA H TOY IAKΩBOY KAI H IΩCHΦ ΜΗΡ ΚΑΙ Η ΜΗΤΗΡ ΤΩΝ ΥΙΩΝ ΖΕΒΕΔΕΟΥ). This can be construed as part of an ongoing process whereby the family that Jesus may have had was modified.

It could be contended that the corrector was merely making Mt. 27.56 conform with the description in Mk 15.40, which has similar wording. This argument does not however apply to the exemplar text available to scribe A, since Mk 15.40 was in fact copied in by scribe D, who may well have been using another exemplar, as part of his second bifolium. It is likely that the versions in scribe A’s exemplar (X) for Matthew and Mark were consistent, as now appears in Mt. 27.56 before amendment by Ca.

The changes made in-house, possibly by scribe D, and by the first corrector Ca to scribe A’s copy are significant in that, even if made to conform to other versions, they did also contribute to developing both the narrative and doctrine. Considerations of a similar kind could also have been behind the changes of exemplar, involving in one case an awkward arrangement of assigning a bifolium to another scribe and in the other an abrupt switch of exemplar, mid page.

As the first and possibly contemporary corrector, Ca could either actually or effectively have been the scriptorium corrector.²⁶ This individual did comprehensively review, correct and edit the entire manuscript, apart from *Barnabas* and a duplicated section of 1 Chronicles. Ca's work in Matthew and Mark was in part an arbitration between the original exemplar used by scribe A and other sources.²⁷ In what appears to be a similar vein, Ca made some substantive changes to scribe A's text further on in Luke.²⁸

In examining the changes made in-house, as corrections or amendments to Mark, Malik identifies scribe D as a corrector of scribe A's work and a small number of cases where the new version appeared to have come from another exemplar.²⁹ This is consistent with my own finding of differences in the use of *nomina sacra*, indicating that scribe D has worked from another exemplar in his bifolium in Matthew.

An overall role as a critical corrector, using material from other sources as deemed necessary, could embrace both types of activity. Scribe D may thus have been deployed both to make small corrections to scribe A's work and to introduce more substantive variations by taking over from scribe A, one whole bifolium at a time, where these were needed.³⁰

This would help explain the two other factors in Matthew, besides the pattern of *nomina sacra*, that puzzled Jongkind. One is the colophon at the end of Matthew which has no text and a coronis that is not

26. The case by Cresswell, *Invention of Jesus*, pp. 84-88, that Codex Sinaiticus was not abandoned, but corrected to serve as an exemplar or master copy from which to make further copies, is also made by Klaus Wachtel. See Klaus Wachtel, 'The Corrected New Testament Text of Codex Sinaiticus', in Scot McKendrick *et al.* (eds.), *Codex Sinaiticus: New Perspectives on the Ancient Biblical Manuscript* (London: British Library, 2015), pp. 97-106. Accepting Ca as a contemporary eliminates the need to postulate a long delay between the preparation of the manuscript and its comprehensive correction.

27. Cresswell, *Invention of Jesus*, pp. 224-26, 188-94.

28. Cresswell, *Invention of Jesus*, pp. 113-14.

29. Malik, 'Earliest Corrections', pp. 207-54.

30. This view fits the evidence better than the idea of correction sheets for hypothetical errors, presumed in an original version by scribe A. The substantial compression of text observed in both halves of scribe D's bifolia could not have come about in this way but are an expected outcome of the scribes working together and miscalculating how much space to leave, as also happened in the Old Testament. See Cresswell, *Invention of Jesus*, pp. 231-62.

in scribe A's style. It was customary for the last scribe working on a book to add what was effectively his signature to sign it off. It may be that scribe A left the space blank, when he was ready to move on, because scribe D had not at that point finished his sheet. Someone else, possibly the scriptorium corrector, later added a coronis when the book was complete.

The other odd feature is the unusual pattern of iotacisms by scribe A around the bifolium by scribe D. This could have been generated as a consequence of scribe A's distraction on the first occasion, in the New Testament, of having to make calculations of where to leave off and begin just for a single sheet of separated text. Because he was distracted, he either made more spelling mistakes or alternatively reverted more frequently to his own colloquial style, or maybe both.

It is not possible to identify what changes scribe A may have initiated by switching to another exemplar in the middle of Mark. Likewise, the variations in scribe D's exemplar that led this to be chosen for the bifolium of separated text in Matthew cannot now be determined. This is because the only available evidence is the finished version and what was in the initial exemplar (X) cannot now be seen.

There are a number of possible explanations for the changes of exemplar. It could be, though it seems unlikely on the evidence as a whole, that the scribes were working without direction, picking up and using whatever exemplar was immediately to hand. One possibility, deserving consideration, is that scribe A began with what he considered to be the best available source for the combined Gospels of Matthew and Mark. But it was an incomplete manuscript and this necessitated a change to another exemplar after Mark 8.

In the absence of evidence pointing another way, this could also explain why the first part of John (1.1–8.38) in Codex Sinaiticus differs from the remainder, in its failure in relative terms to agree with Codex Vaticanus and P⁷⁵ and its closer affinity with Codex Bezae, suggesting two 'blocks' of text in John from different exemplars. Scribe A wrote the whole but may have used an incomplete exemplar for the first part of the Gospel.³¹

31. See Gordon D. Fee, 'Codex Sinaiticus in the Gospel of John: A Contribution to Methodology in Establishing Textual Relationships', in Eldon J. Epp and Gordon D. Fee, *Studies in the Theory and Method of New Testament Textual Criticism* (Studies and Documents, 45; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), pp. 221-43.

It is, however, of interest that the text that scribe A used in Mark, before switching exemplars, begins with the transfiguration narrative and comprises a substantial part of the equivalent to Matthew's account which lies within the first folio of scribe D's Matthew bifolium. It is therefore reasonable to suggest that a version of the text introduced through scribe D in Matthew may have necessitated another change of exemplar in Mark to ensure that the two Gospel accounts remain harmonized.

Conclusion

The analysis in this paper has shown that apparently atypical scribal behaviour in Matthew does not reflect the introduction of a new and hitherto unidentified scribe, but is a product of the interaction between the scribes and their exemplars. Scribe A used a less developed text (X) for Matthew and the first part of Mark. This was modified through alterations by scribe D and the first corrector Ca, who may have been a contemporary and who comprehensively edited the manuscript.

Scribe D wrote a bifolium whose folios come within a quire in Matthew, consisting of separated text, that appears to have been from an alternative exemplar (Y). Scribe A switched to an alternative at the beginning of Mark 9, perhaps to harmonize with the version introduced through scribe D in Matthew.

Previous work on Codex Sinaiticus focused on identifying and characterizing the manuscript's scribes and correctors. This has been worthwhile in providing a wealth of information about the manuscript itself and the cooperative effort that went into its production. It also provides a platform for beginning to examine the way in which the text was put together, using different exemplars. Without first identifying and controlling for scribal variation, it is hard to discover anything with a degree of certainty about the manuscript's sources.

It could well prove more difficult to distinguish alternative exemplars than it has been to identify and characterize the different hands working on the manuscript. At least, in this latter case, the evidence is there and can be seen and directly analyzed. In the case of sources there is rarely any direct information. The exemplars that were used will, almost invariably, have long since vanished. Their identity and their deployment have to be deduced and their characteristics inferred.

This paper makes a start by identifying some points where there may have been a change of exemplar in one important manuscript. It does appear that the scribe copying out the bulk of the New Testament in Codex Sinaiticus began with a text that was then modified at various points, either by amendment or by substitution from one or more alternative sources. There may prove to be other points where, through differences in content and style, it will be possible, in this and other manuscripts, to identify and examine variation in the use of alternative exemplars.