

**EXPERTS REPORT**  
**HANDWRITING EXAMINATION**

The undersigned at the end of this report

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received the request from Mr Hershel Shanks, editor of the “Biblical Archaeology Review” magazine, regarding the study of the handwriting of a questioned document called “Secret Mark” or “MAR SABA” , written in the Greek language and to reach a conclusion on whether it was written by Morton Smith, the person who published the document, or not. In other words whether Morton Smith simulated the document or not.

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## **METHOD USED IN THE STUDY**

The order of the following procedure used in this handwriting examination is as follows:

- ❖ Handwriting examination and analysis of the disputed writing in order to define its characteristics.
- ❖ Handwriting examination and analysis of the samples of the known written handwriting in order to define the characteristics of the writer.
- ❖ Comparison of the above findings in order to determine the similarities and differences.

## **DESCRIPTION OF THE DOCUMENTS**

### **A. THE QUESTIONED DOCUMENT – Secret Mark or Mar Saba**

The questioned document is a three page document, written by the same hand in red ink. As we can see from the photographs, the ink is the same in all three pages and no entries have been added or altered in the text.

Although we know the exact size of the document which is 198mm x 148mm, we do not know the thickness, color and border line of the paper sheets since we do not have the original document to examine. In the photographs (either black and white or colored) the edges of the pages are apparent and we can see their bad condition (torn/dog eared).

All the pages in the manuscript are written in Greek letters containing several paleographic peculiarities (abbreviations and ligatures) which were used in the 18<sup>th</sup> century from people involved in religious matters and from people involved in political matters. Official correspondence usually was written in calligraphic letters.

This kind of writing was learned and used by few people because of its difficulties in writing or rather in drawing them. In each monastery there were a limited number of monks who knew the drawings of the ligatures and were thus, responsible for the copy of the holy books and for the official correspondence of the Father Superior of the monastery. More over, each monastery wanted and took special care in maintaining the same type of writing and the same type of abbreviations and ligatures so as that this could be seen as a characteristic of the monastery.

In our days, the experts of Greek Palaeography deal with the history and the transcription of the old types of the Greek writing.

In this research, the examination will focus only on the handwriting aspects and not on any other factors.

Morton Smith, an American professor of ancient history, published a letter fragment under the name of “Mar Saba letter of Clement of Alexandria” in 1973. The letter is known as other names too, namely: the Secret Mark, the Secret Gospel, the Mar Saba Fragment and the Theodoros.

Morton Smith claimed that in 1958, during his visit to a Greek Orthodox monastery, the Great Lavra of St. Sabas, known as Mar Saba, he discovered the handwritten letter in the final pages of a book (Isaak Vossius, 1646 printed edition of the works of Ignatius of Antioch), which he photographed in black and white photographs. Years later, a group of scholars published coloured photographs.

The original document cannot be traced, as the manuscripts pages were removed from the book originally found.

Stereoscopic and macroscopic examination of all three pages of the disputed document was carried out from magnified photographs from the original document in the laboratory.

The first page of the questioned document, for the purpose of this study will be named as Q1, the second page as Q2 and the third page as Q3.

## **B. MORTON SMITH'S KNOWN HANDWRITING**

- K.1.a. – e. Morton Smith's handwritten transcription of the Mar Saba letter in modern Greek language, dated 1958. In the same sample of handwriting there is a part of translation of the Mar Saba letter written in English language.

This sample is written in pen as an official script and the English writing shows differences from his writing in notes and scripts. The Greek text though, can be used in the comparison with the questioned document.

- K.2. – K.6. Morton Smith's annotations written inside his copy of Otto Stöhlín's four-volume critical edition of the works of Clement of Alexandria, in Greek and English language, is dated 1959 or later. (The date is extracted from his notes which include dates of references. The book is kept in the Morton Smith Collection in the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York City.)

- K.7. Morton Smith's handwritten notes in the title page of Kragerud's 1959 book. The notes are written in English and include some words in Greek.

- K.8.a. – 8.d Morton Smith's handwriting in several handwritten notes made in an unknown year.

- K.9. Morton Smith's notes in his copy of John Charles Doudna book - The Greek of the Gospel of Mark (1961)

- K.10 - 12. Three pages with Morton Smith's notes in English language, containing Greek words and phrases, in his copy of copy of John Charles Doudna and in C. H. Turner, "Marcan Usage: Notes, Critical and Exegetical, on the Second Gospel," Journal of Theological Studies,

which was published in 1961. The notes are kept in the Morton Smith Collection at the Jewish Theological Seminary.

- K.13 - 24 Morton Smith's notes written in the margins of his own copy of his book Clement of Alexandria and a Secret Gospel of Mark, dated 1973 and later
- K. 25 Morton Smith's notes written in the copy of John Crossan's 1984 book, Four Other Gospels, dated after 1984.
- K 26 Appendix A, Paleographic Peculiarities written by Morton Smith, with the abbreviations and ligatures of the questioned documents.
- K 27 Copies of some of the pages of Morton Smith's book "Tannaitic Parallels to the Gospels" printed in 1951, with his own handwriting.

Morton Smith's genuine handwriting was examined from enlarged photographs. The above handwriting samples are dated between 1951 and 1984, which is before and close to the discovery of the questioned document as well as after that.

These samples were passed on to me as Morton Smith's genuine handwriting.

The sample material used for this research is sufficient in quality and quantity to be able to reach a conclusion.

## **HANDWRITING EXAMINATION OF THE** **QUESTIONED DOCUMENT**

First page - Q1: All edges look weathered. The page is torn at the top right hand corner. Its edges are not straight, with differences in the color of the page throughout the whole page.

There are too many spots and stains on the page, some of them more intense while others are more pale.

In the last line there is a correction in the middle of the word “ αποθνήσκων ” and more specifically in the letters “ θνησκ ”, which is not considered as evidence of forgery.

Second page - Q2: The page is written in the back of the Q1 and its edges are equally damaged and so are the color and spots. There are too many spots and stains on the page, some of them more intense visible from the first page as well, while others are more pale. There is a correction in line 25, concerning the punctuation of the word “ μαθηταί ”, which is not considered as evidence of forgery.

Third page - Q3: The page is damaged, folded and torn mainly on the left side, but the text is not affected. Once again there are too many spots and stains on the page, some of them more intense, others more pale. There are stains of similar pattern which might come through from the first page, an indication that the three pages were together as a unit for some time. The color of the paper is darker at the edge of the page. There is a correction in line 17, concerning the two middle letters of the word “ ἔστιν ”, which is not considered as evidence of forgery.

The first page of the document Q1 starts with a sign named as a cross in the transcription of the document, stating the beginning of a religious letter. The sign together with the first word of the document are outside the left margin of the page, which is almost straight with minor variations from the second line onwards.



From the handwriting examination of the three pages of the disputed document called Mar Saba letter, the following were identified:

This calligraphy writing, with so many abbreviations and ligatures looks like an artistic design of good quality. Although it is a difficult style of writing and needs a lot of practice in order to be able to write in this way; the text is written spontaneously with an excellent rhythm. The letters and their combinations are curved fluently while at the same time the grammatical rules are followed. The movement of the writing indicates a hand used to writing in this manner. The letters are written unconsciously.

Because of the difficulty in curving this type of writing, it was used only by a small percentage of people who mainly dealt with official documents. The monks in monasteries used to copy the holy books or write their official documents with this writing. Also, at the time, it was very common to write the first letter as a drawing or/and to draw the upper margin or all margins around the text.

The hand, which wrote the three pages of the disputed document, it was common to use peculiar forms, connections, pen lifts, ornaments etc. with ease and spontaneity.

The letters have small differences which are within the range of their natural variations.

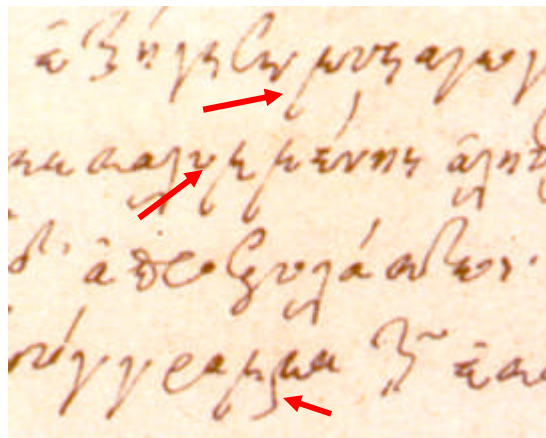


Figure 1. Q1

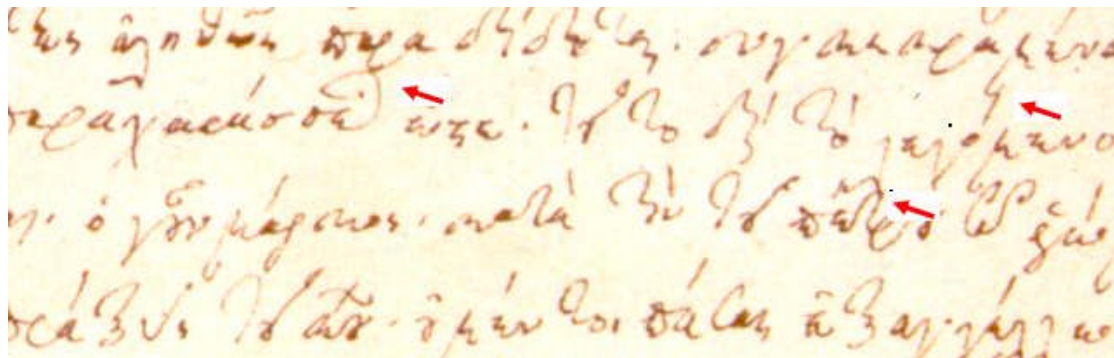
*The small letter “μ” and its natural variations.*

The size in a calligraphic writing should be separated in the upper zone, middle zone and lower zone, so that the comparison with the samples of known writing to be correct.

Although we do not have such a case, the measurement of the middle zone varies from very very small to very small.

The upper zone is 2 to 3 times bigger than the middle zone and the lower zone is 2 to 3 times bigger than the middle zone.

The letters are expanded to upper and lower zone, but the space between baselines is sufficient, so the lines not mix up, except in few points.



*Figure 2. Q1 lines 13-16: Points where two lines touch or almost mixed up.*

The text is written in small letters only. Capital letters are not used after the point, but they are used whenever the writer thinks it is appropriate.

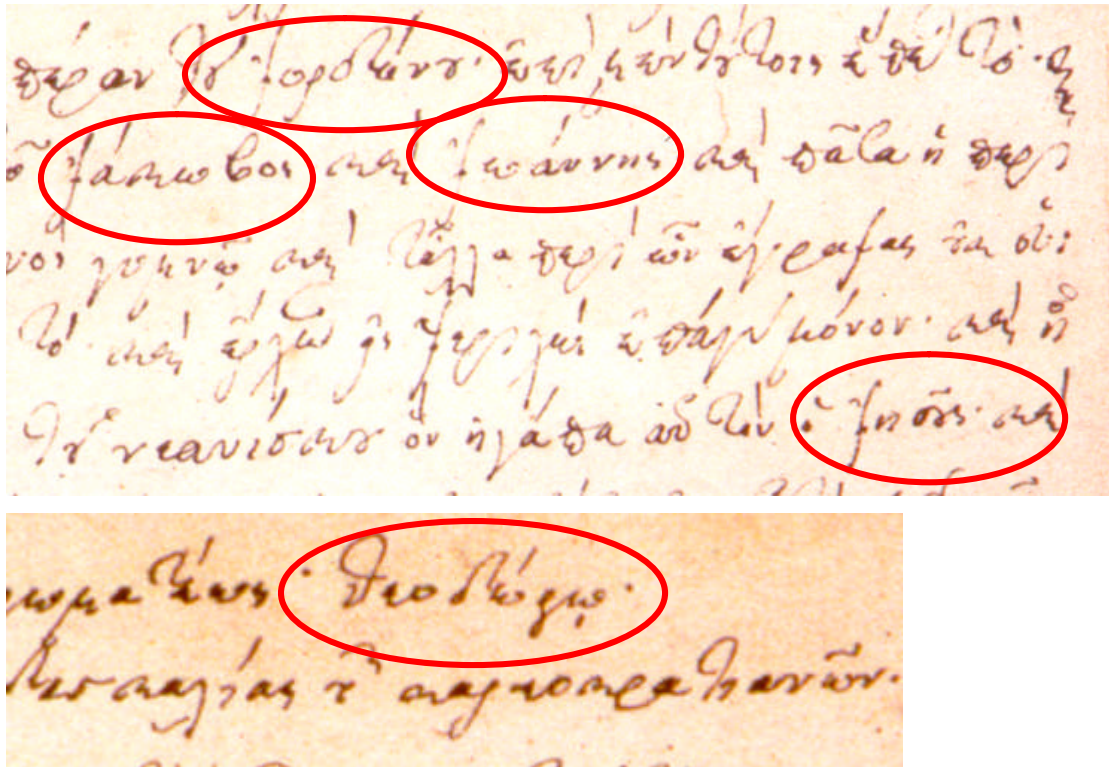


Figure 3. Q3. lines 15 – 16: The name of Jesus ( Ιησούς ) , Jordan ( Ιορδάνης ) and Jacob ( Ιάκωβος ) starting with capital letter, where as in Figure 4. Q1. line 1, the name of Theodore (θεοδώρω) is written with a small “θ”.

The slant, varies from rightwards to vertical, with some leftward movements.

Several leftwards movements are due to the ornaments added according to calligraphy.

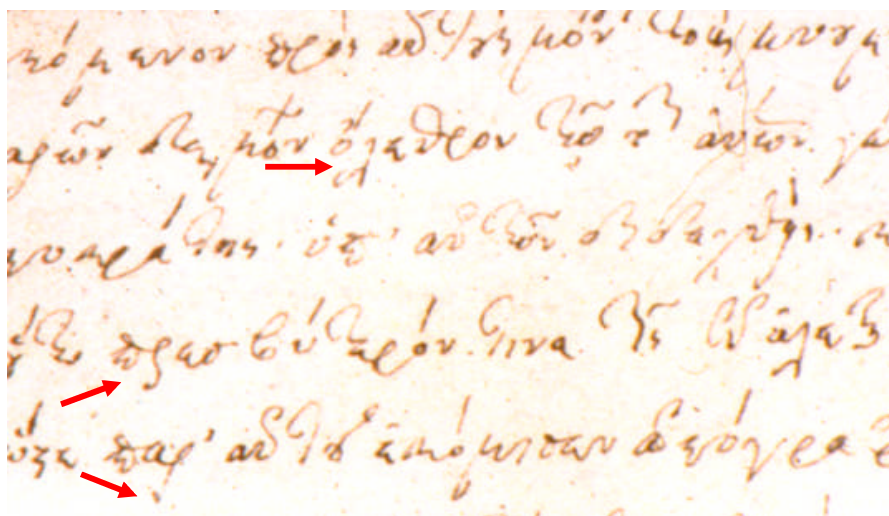


Figure 4. Q2, lines 2-6. Leftwards movements.

The graphic movement is plastic, soft and flexible with very good rhythm.

The graphic pressure is varied. Mainly average, with many lighter strokes and letters with more amount of ink.

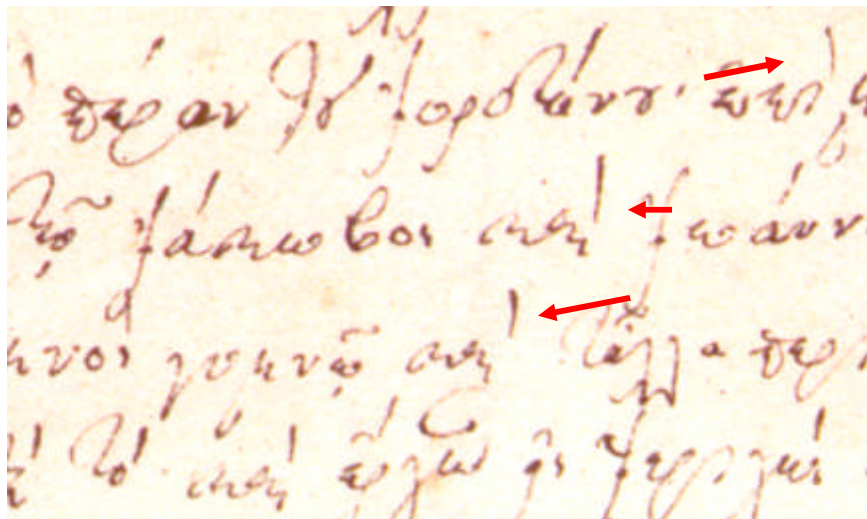
The format of the letters is legible, despite the abbreviations and ligatures and calligraphy.

The writing contains arcades and curves and the letter endings are mainly steady.

The baseline is rather stable with minor wavy lines.

It is written in high speed and although is a connected writing, there are letters written one by one in a word, but this does not deter the good writing rhythm.

The accent marks are correctly used. The size of each accent is bigger than average and it is placed vertically above the letter (12 o'clock) or to the right of the letter (13 o'clock).



*Figure 5. Q3 lines 11-14. The accent marks above the letters.*

The starting point of the accent is far away from the accented letter, but the ending is at a medium distance or very close where it touches the accented letter.



As we see from the photographs, the arrangement of the text on the page is good, with sufficient margins around the text.

The left alignment is slightly increased and decreased; hence the variations in the right alignment are more obvious, but still nicely controlled specially on the third page (Q3).

Paragraphs are not used.

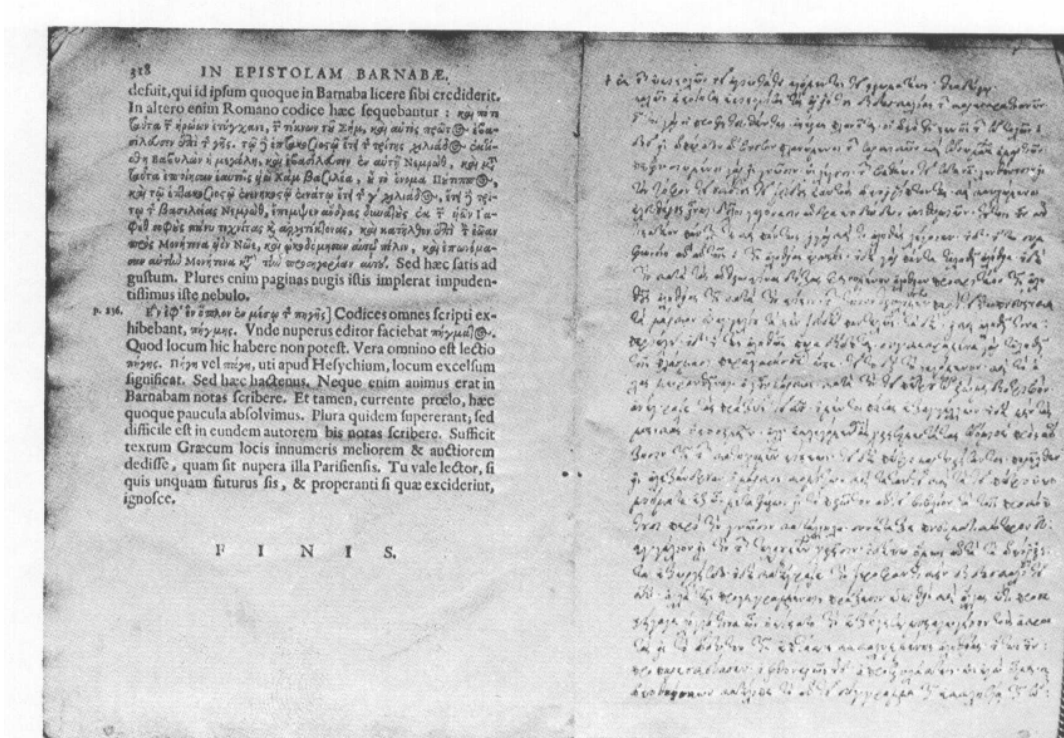


Figure 6. The first page Q1 written in the blank page of the printed book.

Conclusion: The whole writing shows freedom, spontaneity and artistic flair. It also shows a skillful penmanship of a well educated and trained writer who uses the language effectively in expressing his thoughts.

## HANDWRITING EXAMINATION OF THE KNOWN DOCUMENTS

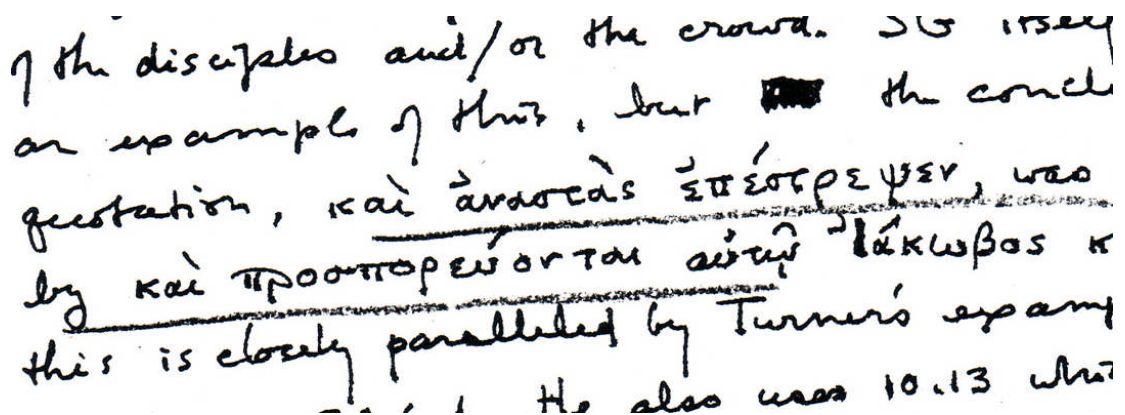
From the handwriting examination of the known documents with Morton Smith's genuine writing, the following were identified:

The knowing documents contain handwriting in English, which is his mother tongue and in Greek, which is his second language.

There are obvious differences in his writing between his mother tongue and Greek language.

In this research we have a specific question to answer, so we will try to focus in the handwriting examination of his Greek handwriting, although we will consider his ability in writing both languages.

The English writing is spontaneous and unconstrained, with a very good rhythm. We are privileged to have sample material with notes written in both languages, English and Greek, so we can see the degree of his familiarity in each language.



of the disciples and/or the crowd. So it may be an example of this, but the conclusion, quotation, καὶ ἀναστὰς ἐπέστρεψεν, was by καὶ προσπορεύονται αὐτῷ Ἰάκωβος κ'. this is closely paralleled by Turner's example. He also uses 10.13 which

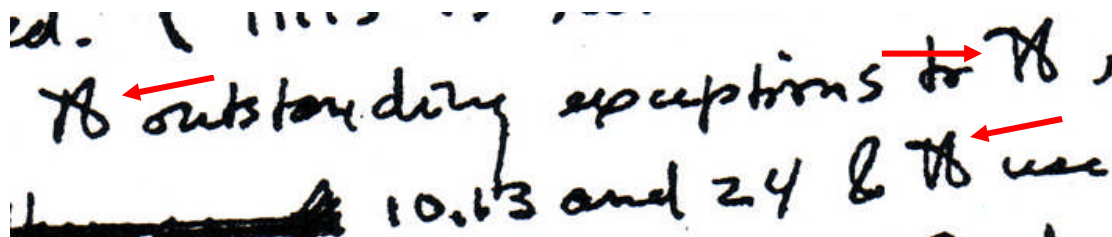
Figure 7. Morton Smith's English and Greek writing dated 1961 or later. The size and the speed of the writing as well as the spontaneity in the use of each language vary intensively.

The letters are expanded in the upper and lower zone in both languages and only in the samples with small notes written in the margins of printed books and/or in limited space, the space between baselines are small so the lines touch each other.

Small and capital letters are used according to grammatical rules.

The size of the middle zone of his Greek writing is small hence in English writing is very small to small and the upper and lower zones are 1 to 2 times bigger than the middle zone.

The slant varies from rightwards to vertical with few leftwards as in the abbreviation he uses. Abbreviations are used only in English writing and not in Greek.



*Figure 8. Morton Smith's writing dated 1961 or later. Abbreviations of a certain English word, with left slant.*

The graphic movement in English writing is plastic, soft and flexible with good rhythm. On the contrary, in Greek writing the movement is constrained.

The graphic pressure is generally average to heavier and some letters written in English, are filled with ink.

The shape of the English letters is simplified, fluent, with a flawless rhythm, not always legible, whereas the opposite happens in his Greek writing.

The shape of the Greek letters is round, clear, written with care, always legible.

The writing contains arcades and curves and the letter endings are firm with a small return of the pen occasionally in down strokes, creating a tiny hook or a blunt ending. The speed differs between the two languages. The English is written in high speed whereas the Greek is written in a low to medium speed.

In his English writing, the important elements are the speed and the movement. In his Greek writing the importance is on the format of the letters.

The English writing is generally connected with small exceptions and he uses abbreviations, opposite to the Greek which is written letter – letter with a very limited and specific connections.

Πλ

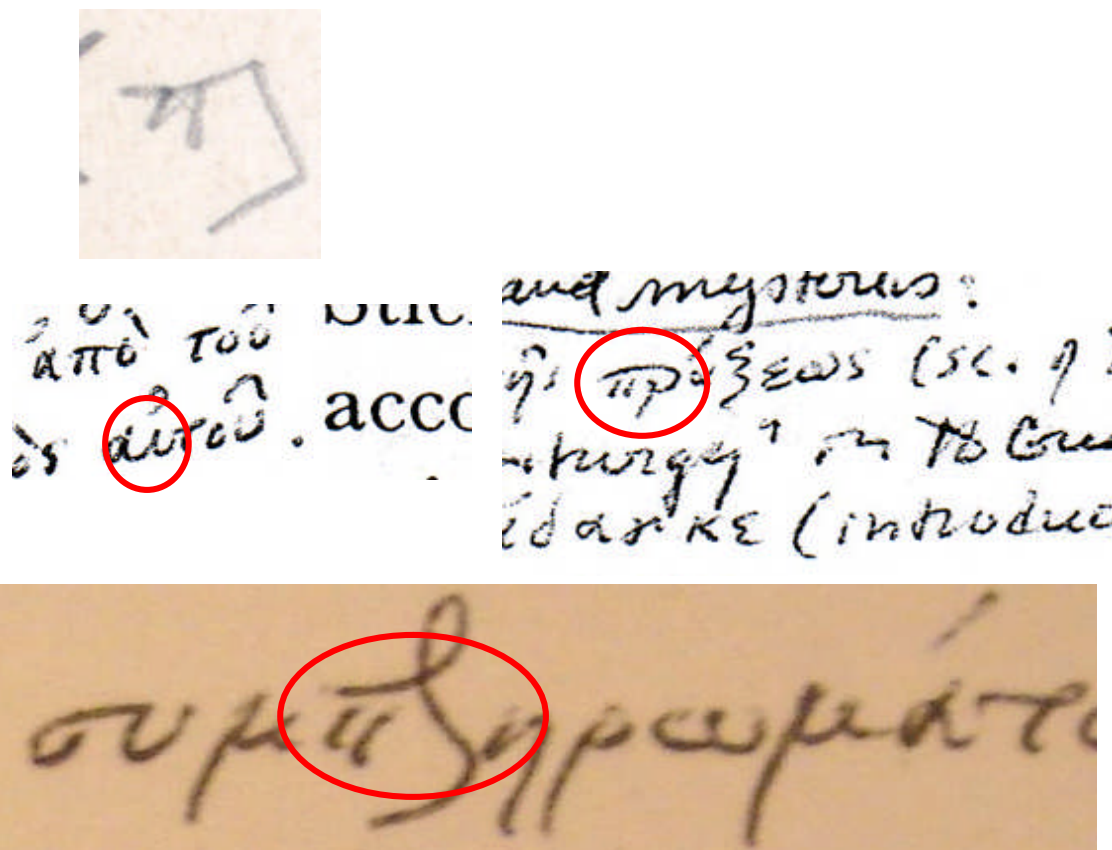


Figure 9. Connections in particular letters: αυτ, πρ, συ, πλ.



The arrangement is generally good and the writer uses the space provided in a good way, although sometimes his writing is crowded.

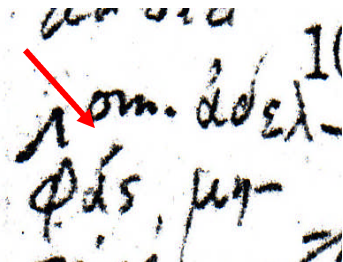
The baselines are slightly wavy.

The accent marks in Greek language, is carefully and most probably properly used. The size of each accent mark is big and it is placed at the right (13 o'clock) or at the left of the accented letter (11 o'clock). The distance from the letter is average. Whereas in his English writings the accent marks are not carefully placed, the size and speed differs from the one in Greek.

In ancient Greek language, grammatical rules for the accent marks were very strong as they had a significant impact in the reading and the dictation/spelling of words and sentences. So there were three accent marks the οξεία (oxia) “ ’ ” with left slant, the βαρεία (varia) “ ˊ ” with right slant and the περισπωμένη (perispomeni) “ ˜ ”.

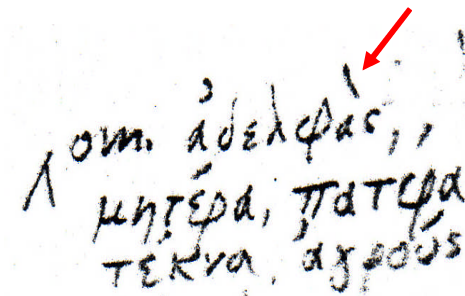
In Morton Smith's writings we can see that he is trying to follow the grammatical rules, as his accent marks are always carefully placed, specially the oxia and varia with their right or left slant. Generally, he does not deviate from the rules as an active writer would do (an active writer out of speed, when writing, would place the accent marks quickly and a bit vertical, without causing any consequences to the text.). In modern Greek language there is only one accent, the οξεία ( ' ).

a.



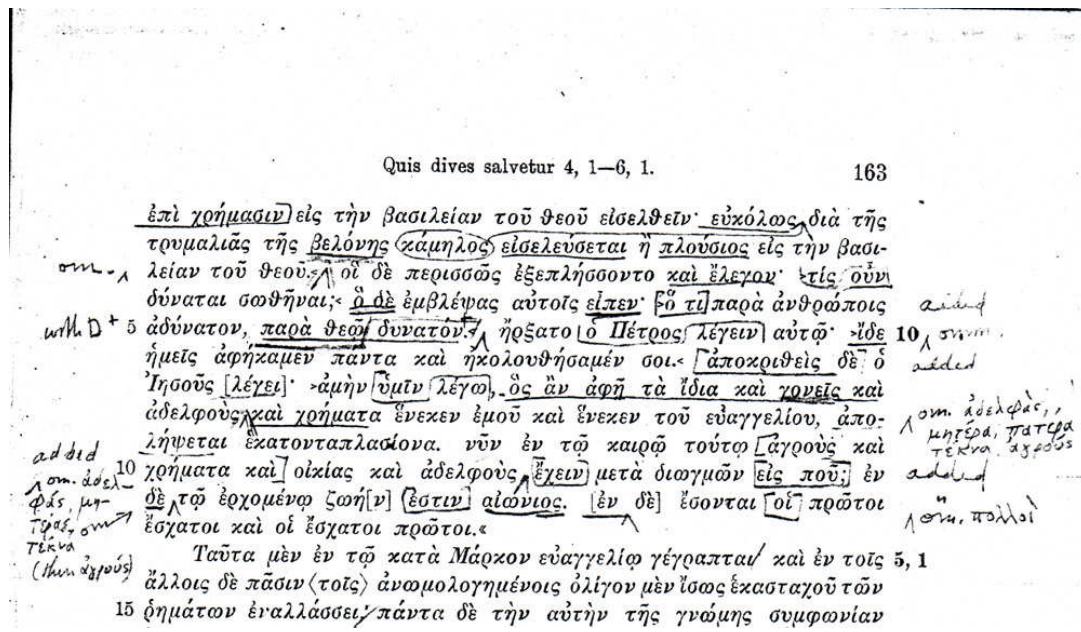
nom. αδελφας, μη-

b.



nom. αδελφας, ,  
μητερα, πατερα  
τεκνα, αγρους

Figure 10. Notes written by Morton Smith, in the margins of his book. Different accent marks in the same word. The word “αδελφάς”, although in both quotations, they have different accent marks as in the above enlargement a. and b.



Conclusion: There is an obvious difference in his mother tongue writing and in his Greek writing. His writing in English language is fluent with letter connections between the words, with personal abbreviations and characteristics, whereas the Greek words are written letter-letter as copy book at a lower speed, without ease and the range of variations is very limited. His writing is like that of a school student. It is obvious that his hand is not familiarised in Greek writing so as to be able to use it freely and with ease and be able to express thoughts and beliefs.

## **COMPARISON OF QUESTIONED AND KNOWN DOCUMENTS**

### **RESULTS**

The handwriting examination revealed substantial non-agreement in important details between the questioned document of “Secret Mark” or “Mar Saba” (Q1, Q2, Q3) as compared to the known Greek handwriting produced by Morton Smith. An outline of significant considerations follows:

Considerations and differences in the

- ❖ **spontaneity**
- ❖ **writing rhythm**
- ❖ **size**
- ❖ **slant**
- ❖ **writing movement**
- ❖ **speed**
- ❖ **depth**
- ❖ **format and shape**
- ❖ **connections and conjunctions**
- ❖ **letter endings**
- ❖ **unconscious individual habits**

The writing in the disputed document is smooth, continuous, free and one which shows artistic and masculine ability.

Mainly because of the education, training and the personal inclination and abilities, an easiness and familiarity gained which makes the writing of letters or words automatic. The experienced writer is one who focuses on his thoughts and the text rather than in the actual process of writing. In our questioned document it is clear that the writing is automatically written in the paper and more over the letters are written calligraphically and not rigidly and copy booked.

Nowadays, learning Modern Greek writing is no longer connected with calligraphy. Schools teach modern and ancient Greek using copy book letters in simple and plain forms. But when the writer has a personal inclination in artistic abilities this is apparent in his writing as soon as he starts writing automatically, expressing his thoughts on paper. He creates his own personal style of writing. On the contrary, the Greek letters in the known writing has been written with limited flexibility.

As soon as a writer feels “comfortable” with a language, then he starts adding or subtracting his own strokes, slant and generally his personal characteristics. This is not the case with the writer of the known material. His Greek writing is as learned in school, copybook, letter-letter, unconnected, carefully drawn.

The opposite happens with the same writer writing in English language. His writing is fluent, connected and small, with high movement and high rhythm. The writer writes automatically, without noticing the format of the letters. On the contrary, the same writer, when writing in another language than his mother tongue, takes care of the format of the letters, so to be understandable, as his interest in the text as long as the meaning takes place in his mother tongue.

We can say that his writing in English is mature; hence the opposite appears in his Greek writing.

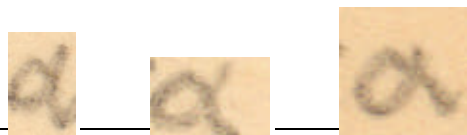
The writing in the questioned document, when compared with Morton Smith's genuine handwriting has shown differences concerning its major graphological characteristics

**and in detail:**



- the letter «α», in the questioned document appears to be as

BUT in the compared writing as



- the letter «β», in the questioned document appears to be as



BUT in the compared writing as



- the letter «γ», in the questioned document appears to be as



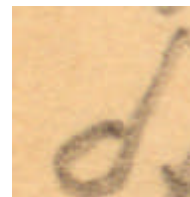
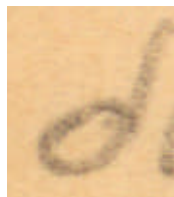
BUT in the compared writing as



- the letter «δ», in the questioned document appears to be as



BUT in the compared writing as



- the letter «ε», in the questioned document appears to be as



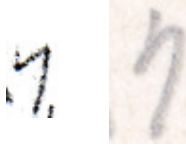
BUT in the compared writing as



- the letter «η», in the questioned document appears to be as



BUT in the compared writing as



- the letter «θ», in the questioned document appears to be as



BUT in the compared writing as



- the letter «υ», in the questioned document appears to be as

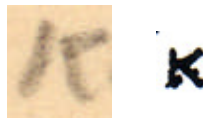
BUT in the compared writing as



- the letter «κ», in the questioned document appears to be as



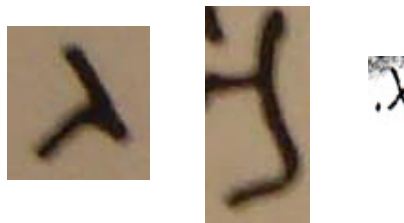
BUT in the compared writing as



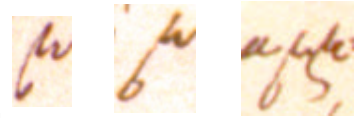
- the letter «λ», in the questioned document appears to be as



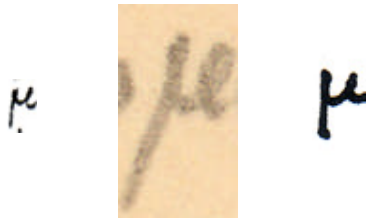
BUT in the compared writing as



- the letter «μ», in the questioned document appears to be as



BUT in the compared writing as



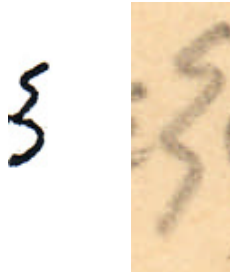
- the letter «ν», in the questioned document appears to be as



BUT in the compared writing as



- the letter «ξ», in the questioned document appears to be as



BUT in the compared writing as

- the letter «ο», in the questioned document appears to be as



BUT in the compared writing as





- the letter «π», in the questioned document appears to be as

BUT in the compared writing as



- the letter «ρ», in the questioned document appears to be as



BUT in the compared writing as



- the letter «σ», in the questioned document appears to be as



as



when in the beginning of the word,



and when at the end of the word as the **the final** «ς»

BUT in the compared writing as



the mid

when in the beginning and the middle of the word



and when at the end of the word as the the final «ζ»



- the letter «τ», in the questioned document appears to be as



BUT in the compared writing as



- the letter «υ», in the questioned document appears to be as



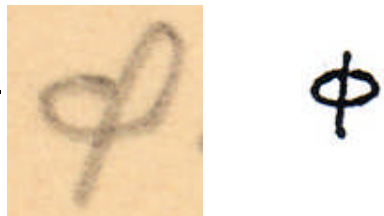
BUT in the compared writing as



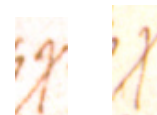
- the letter «φ», in the questioned document appears to be as



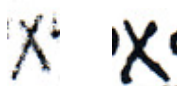
BUT in the compared writing as



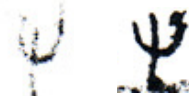
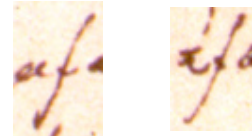
- the letter «χ», in the questioned document appears to be as



BUT in the compared writing as



- the letter «ψ», in the questioned document appears to be as



BUT in the compared writing as



- the letter «ω», in the questioned document appears to be as

BUT in the compared writing as



- the accent « ' », in the questioned document appears to be as



BUT in the compared writing as



*The difference on the slant and the quality of the stroke is significant, because this accent mark (οξεία) is used in most of the Greek words.*

- the accent mark of περισπωμένη « ~ », in the questioned document appears to

be as




BUT in the compared writing as



*This accent mark (περισπωμένη) , although learned in school as ~, with two curves,*


*in the every day use this mark usually ends up as one curve like ^ or as a small line -.*

*In the known writing the mark has an angle instead of a curve. This is a personal characteristic of the writer.*

- the accent marks « ” », in the questioned document appears to be as 



BUT in the compared writing as



- the accent marks « □ », in the questioned document appears to be as 

BUT in the compared writing as



- the male article « ο », in the questioned document appears to be as  

BUT in the compared writing as



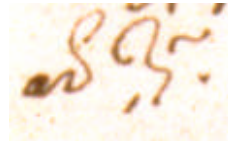
*Note the difference in the format of the accent marks of δασεία. In the known writing the accent marks are drawn slowly with a small angle in the middle of the curve. On*

*the contrary, in the questioned document the accent mark is drawn with a plastic movement and good speed.*

- the υποδιαστολή « , », in the questioned document appears to be as



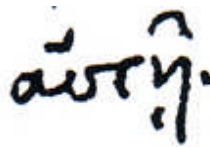
and specifically in the word “αυτή”



BUT in the compared writing as

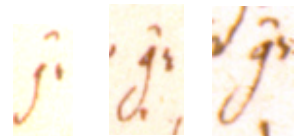


and specifically in the word “αυτή”



*Note the slant of this mark. In the questioned document is quick and without any special care, whereas in the known writing is drawn slowly, with care and clarity.*

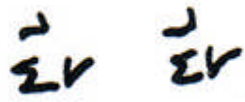
- the preposition « εις », in the questioned document appears to be as



BUT in the compared writing as



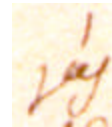
- the preposition « εν », in the questioned document appears to be as



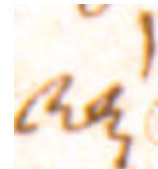
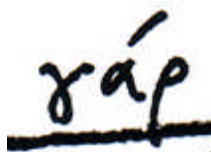
BUT in the compared writing as

*Prepositions and conjunctions (like the word and (και)), are words often used in Greek language, so many writers create their own simplification, not to say abbreviation. More over, when a hand is accustomed to writing with connections and abbreviations, we generally expect to see at least a trace of them.*

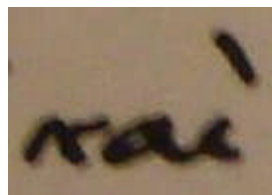
- the conjunction « γάρ », in the questioned document appears to be as



BUT in the compared writing as

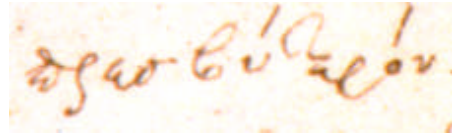


- the word « και », in the questioned document appears to be as



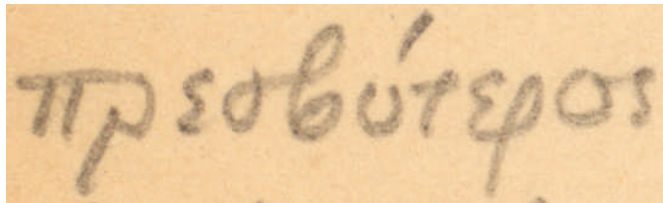
BUT in the compared writing as

*The conjunction “και” (and) is used frequently and lots of Greek writers use abbreviations and write the word in one graphic movement. This is a rather clumsy writing of a very common word.*

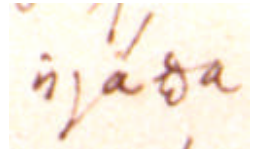


- the word «πρεσβύτερος», in the questioned document appears to be as

BUT in the compared writing as

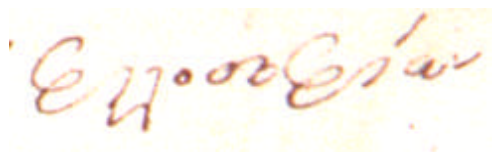


- the word «ηγάπα», in the questioned document appears to be as



BUT in the compared writing as

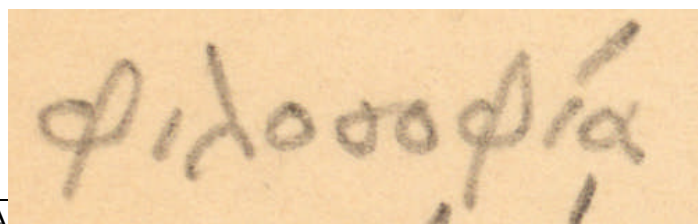
ηγάπα ηγάπα



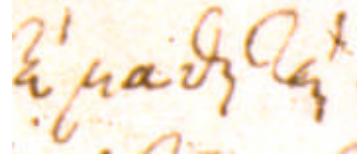
- the word «φιλοσοφία», in the questioned document appears to be as

BUT in the compared writing

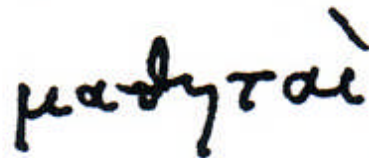
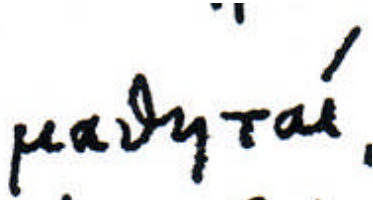
the word «φιλοσοφία» as



- the word «μαθηταί», in the questioned document appears to be as

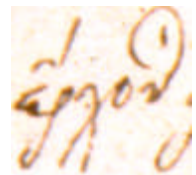


BUT in the compared writing as

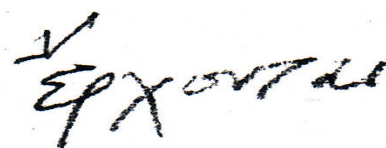
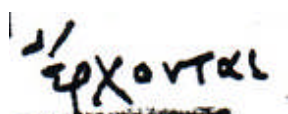


*In the known writing there is a difference in the accent. Morton Smith seems to be aware of the Greek grammatical rules, but still makes mistakes. In the questioned document, there is something like a correction in the punctuation, or some stain of ink previously thrown. This can not be answered from our research but we can understand that Morton Smith could only copy the Greek words and phrases, not write them expressing his thoughts.*

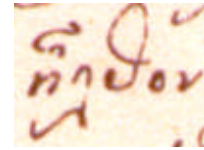
- the word «έρχονται», in the questioned document appears to be as



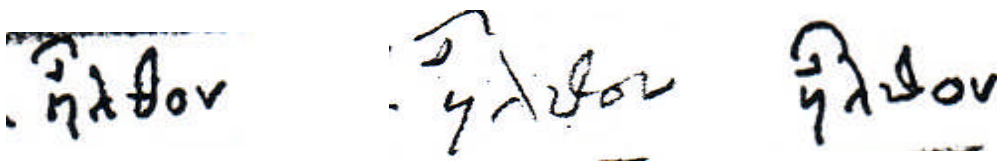
BUT in the compared writing as



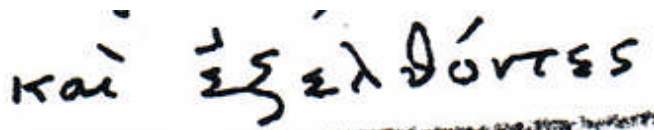
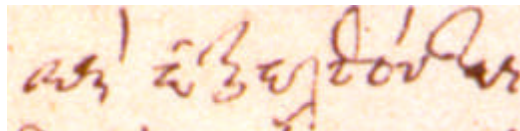
- the word «ήλθον», in the questioned document appears to be as



BUT in the compared writing as



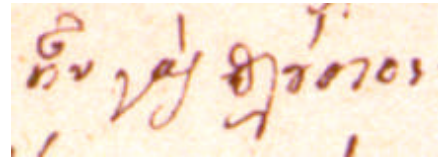
- the words «και □ ξελθόντες», in the questioned document appears to be as



BUT in the compared writing as



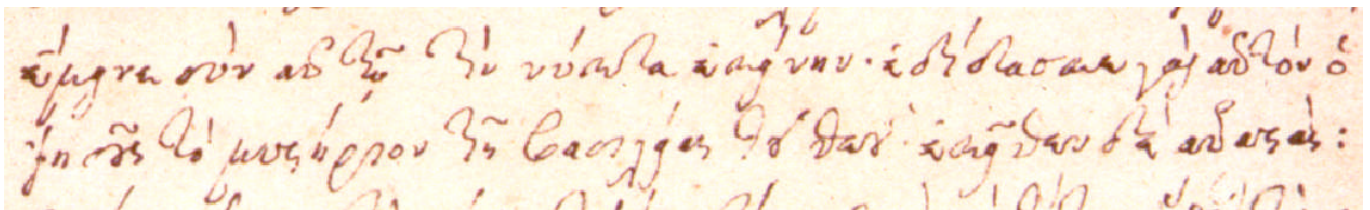
- the sentence «ὁ γὰρ πλούσιος», in the questioned document appears to be as



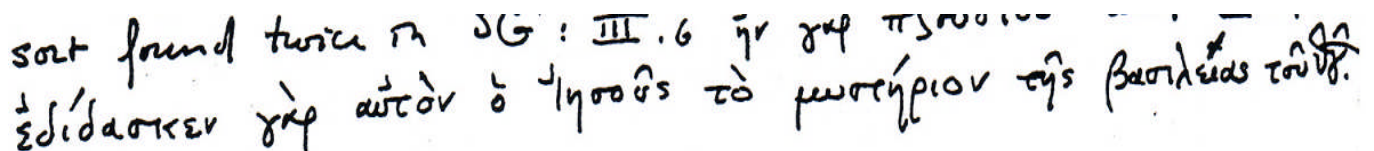
BUT in the compared writing as



- the sentence «ὁ δίδασκεν γὰρ αὐτόν ὁ Ἰησοῦς τὸ μυστήριον τῆς βασιλείας τοῦ θεοῦ.», in the questioned document appears to be as



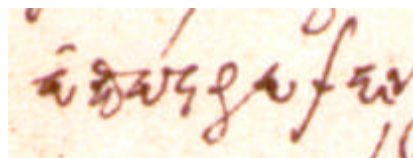
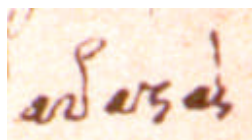
BUT in the compared writing as



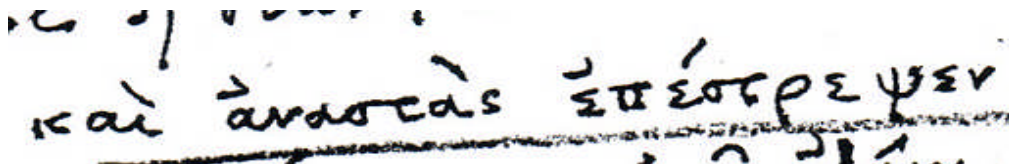
*Note: The conjunction of the letters “ov” , which is pronounced oo (as in zoo), is commonly written in one movement. In the known writing the conjunction is used in*

writing the name of god, but not in writing the name of Ἰησοῦς (Jesus), which is commonly used in the religious texts . More over the conjunction in the known writing is of a poor quality in comparison with the one in the questioned document.

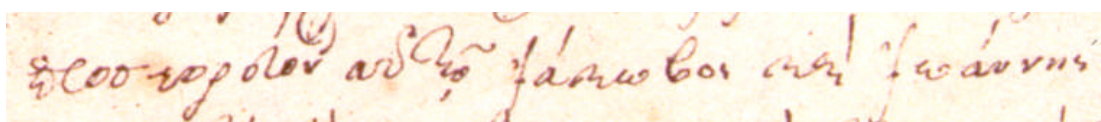
- the sentence «καὶ ἁναστάς ἐπέστρεψεν», in the questioned document appears to be as



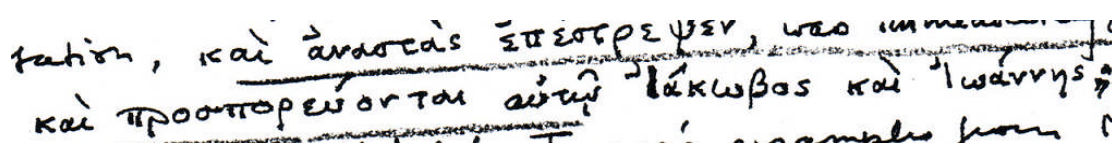
BUT in the compared writing as



- the sentence «καὶ προσπορεύονται αὐτῷ Ἰάκωβος καὶ Ἰωάννης», in the questioned document appears to be as



BUT in the compared writing as

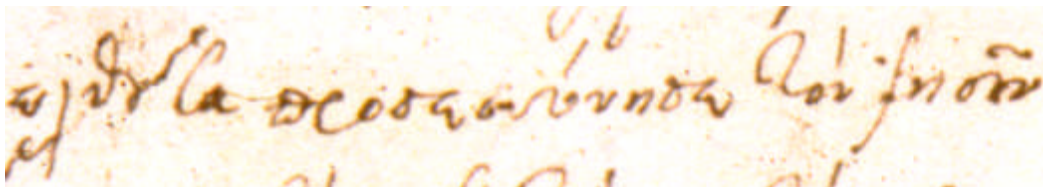


Although in the alphabet used (Appendix A – Palaeographic Peculiarities) for the transcription of the text is indicated that there is no capital I,

Note that initial *ϛ* is a small *ι*.  
At the ends of ligatures a mark

*the general grammatical rule is that the accent mark in capital letters is placed on the left side of the letter and specially between 10 and 11 o'clock.*

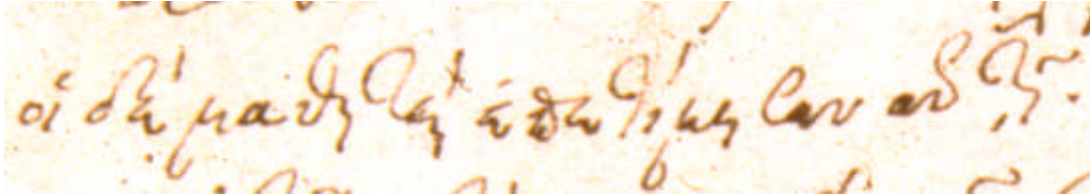
- the sentence «ἐλθοῦσα προσεκύνησε τὸν Ἰησοῦν», in the questioned document appears to be as



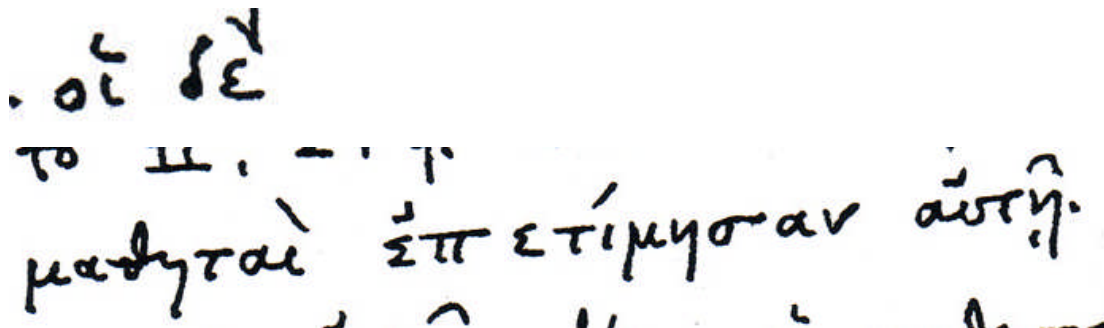
BUT in the compared writing as

6.1. He also used  
ἐλθοῦσα προσεκύνησε τὸν Ἰησοῦν

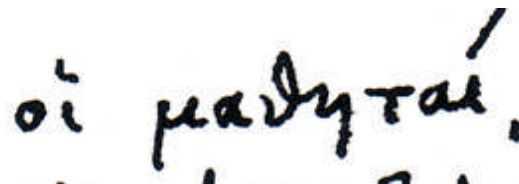
- the sentence «οι δέ μαθηταί ἐτίμησαν αὐτήν», in the questioned document appears to be as



BUT in the compared writing as



*Note: the word “οι μαθηταί” appears in the knowing writing for a second time as:*



*The accent mark is different though the word is the same and according to grammatical rules the accent should be the same.*

The above stated detailed differences in class and individual characteristics are of fundamental importance and concern the differences in the structure of Morton Smith's handwriting.

More over, the level of his ability concerning his Greek language handwriting characteristics is like that of young school children who have not started to use writing in a practical way expressing thoughts and ideas.

Thus Morton Smith could possibly imitate a copy booked, immature and impersonal writing, but it would be unlikely for him to imitate a writing with high level rhythm. With the same thinking, he could imitate a high level writing in English rather than a copy booked, immature and impersonal English writing.

## **OPINION**

The following opinion is based upon an examination of the documents submitted to me for this purpose using the application of appropriate handwriting principles, and my experience and training as a forensic document and handwriting examiner.

It is my professional opinion that the writers of the questioned document of “Secret Mark” on the document listed as Q1, Q2 and Q3 and Morton Smith's handwriting on the documents listed as K1 – K27, are most probably not the same.

Therefore it is highly probable that Morton Smith could not have simulated the document of “Secret Mark” .

## **QUALIFYING STATEMENT:**

This opinion is based solely on the documents listed as having been examined. Due to the limitations imposed in examining document photographs, this opinion is highly probable. This opinion is subject to amendment if additional examinations are performed using additional exemplars which may exhibit evidence not observable in the documents upon which this opinion was based.

This handwriting examination has been carried out by the  
Questioned Document Examiner

Venetia Anastasopoulou

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