The possible implications of the bisection of the scroll were also discussed – namely, whether the scroll was copied from two different exemplars or by two different scribes. The purpose of this article is to support the position affirming the bisection of the scroll, by comparing the frequency of variants due to graphic similarity in each part of the scroll in the Masoretic Text and 1QIsaa. In addition, this study adopts the accepted assumption that the bisection of the scroll is a result of its being copied from two exemplars. On the basis of this assumption, it assesses the textual value of these exemplars by evaluating the variants due to graphic similarity in each part of the scroll.

Malachi Martin, for instance, has pointed out that, in the first half of the scroll, only 20% of appearances of the word כיא are written in plene spelling, as opposed to 100% of its appearances in the second half. In the case of the word כה, this tendency becomes even more evident: defective spelling is used consistently in the first half of the scroll, while in the second half it is written in plene spelling every time it appears. Moreover, Cook assessed in detail the use of the letter *aleph* as *mater lectionis* in various positions, and agreed that there is an orthographic difference between the two parts of the scroll.

Pulikottil attributed the orthographic differences to inconsistency on the part of the scribe, who shifted from one system of spelling to the other.

The transmission process of the biblical texts began in antiquity and included transmission in two scripts: Paleo-Hebrew script and square script. Therefore, interchanges between letters may have occurred in Paleo-Hebrew script (e.g. *mêm*-*nûn*), in square script (e.g. *wāw-yôd*), or in both scripts (*dālet-rêsh*). The list of variants due to graphic similarity that will serve here to assess the scroll’s bisection thus includes possible interchanges in both scripts.

However, these letter interchanges are not limited to prefixes and appear also in a middle position. From a linguistic perspective, it is likely that the interchanges of *mêm* and *nûn* at the end of words stemmed from the well-known tendency to alter the plural masc. ending *-im* to *-in*. For the distribution of this phenomenon, see Kutscher. In relation to Mishnaic Hebrew, see also Epstein. For the phonetic similarity between *mêm* and *nûn*, see Macuch, *Grammatik*.

Therefore, I wish to make the claim that the graphic element is interwoven with the morphological one in the interchanges of *wāw* and *yôd*. In these cases, the scribe was uncertain with regard to the letter before him and could not determine whether it was a *wāw* or a *yôd*. The uncertainty led him to decide according to the orthographic tradition known to him. Thus, the graphical element likely plays a decisive role in influencing the development of these variants, even though they are not simple cases of graphic interchange.

On the basis of the definition of variants due to graphic similarity presented above, I collated all such differences between MT and 1QIsaa (Appendix). The distribution of these variants further demonstrates the bisection of the scroll.

The bisection of the scroll assumes that it can be divided into two equal parts, each of 27 columns. Nevertheless, we can see that there are 95 variants due to graphic similarity in the first half of the scroll, and only 45 in the second half.

Two possible conclusions can be drawn from the bisection of the scroll:That the scroll was copied by two scribes, or that it was copied from two different exemplars.

Brook claims that the scroll’s bisection is further evidence for the transmission of Isaiah in two parts during the late Second Temple period.

Indeed, the assumption that 1QIsaa was copied from two different *Vorlagen* is preferable, since the assumption that it was written by different scribes does not seem to be defensible paleographically.

Moreover, this article supports the assumption that the difference between the two parts of the scroll stems from two different exemplars from which the scroll was copied. Through textual evaluation of the variants due to graphic similarity, along with further data available in the scholarship on 1QIsaa, this article offers a textual characterization of these exemplars.