The Plato Manuscripts W and Lobcovicianus

David J. Murphy

In a recent note, Lidia Perria has identified the scribe of Lobcovicianus VI Fa 1 (=L) with the principal scribe of Vind. suppl. gr. 7 (=W), a primary witness to the text of Plato. It had long been maintained that L is a copy of W. On the strength of her identification of the scribes as the same man, however, Perria suggests that W and L may have been copied independently from the same exemplar in the eleventh century. If she is right, Perria’s conclusions would be important for students of Plato as well as for palaeographers, for she raises the possibility that L may be a new primary witness. Unfortunately, neither Perria’s hypothesis of the independence of L nor her identification of its scribe can be correct.

1 Lidia Perria, “Note paleografiche,” RStBiz N.S. 22–23 (1985–86: hereafter ‘Perria’) 82–89; her contribution to a recent collection of studies of L in Studi su codici e papiri filosofici (=StAccTosc 129 [Florence 1992]) 103–36 reached me too late for use here but does not affect the present argument.


4 The independence of W was first proved by J. Král, “Über den Platocodex der Wiener Hofbibliothek Suppl. phil. gr. 7,” WS 14 (1892) 161–208.


6 Perria 84. She is probably right in assigning W to late s. xi (cf. her “Il codice W di Platone e il Vat. gr. 407,” RStBiz N.S. 20–21 [1983–84] 99ff), although it could be younger.
First, there can be no doubt that L is a copy of W. Král (supra n.5) had already offered decisive proof based on blank spaces or false conjectures in L that correspond to words that are truncated on torn leaves of W. Perria discounted Král's evidence on the strength of her thesis that the scribes were the same man: in her view, not enough time could have elapsed for damage to W to have occurred when L was copied. But this does not follow, and these errors of L cannot plausibly have arisen from W's exemplar; the nature of damage to W makes it clear that W once contained more letters than the scribe of L read. To Král's evidence from *Euthyd.*, add: 295ε2 κάλλιον ἐπίστασαι κάλλιτι λειγε στασι αί W: κάλλιστ έν ἐπίστασαι L; 296ε1 δύναι αί δύ λαί L W: δύ sic spat. relict. L. Further, Cra. 439ε7 ὅπ' ... 440λ2 γνωσθεί σι επιδεικνύται i.m. by the first scribe of W. The edge of the folio was later cropped, cutting off some of the marginal words. Here again, L tried to restore by guesswork: i.e., 440λ1 δύ ἐπιστόντος absciss. in W im: ἐστι L; *ibid.* ἀλλα καί] ἀλλα σι absciss. W im: ἀλλα L. Cf. also La. 194 λ5 ἄνδρεψα] evanid. in W: om. L.

Second, W as we now have it was copied by three different scribes. L reproduces each scribe's work almost exactly, including W3's inserted *Symp.* and *La.* leaves, where L follows W3.

7 Perria 85, although she grants that other evidence may show L to be a copy of W. Olivier and Monégier du Sorbier (supra n.2: 98) also express doubt that L is a copy of W.

8 I indicates line break; *, damage. Král (supra n.5: 360) reports that a sheet of paper had once been glued onto the torn edge of fol. 464v in W. This sheet obscured some of the letters at the beginning of lines.

I have used films in the Yale Plato Microfilm Archive to collate L, *Par.* gr. 1808 (=Par), and *Escorialensis* Y I 13 (=Ese) in various dialogues, including *Cra.* and *La.*, and film provided by the Nationalbibliothek to collate W. For *Bodl.* Clarke 39 (=B) and *Ven.* gr. *Append.* Cl. IV.1 (=T) in *Symp.* I have used Burnet's apparatus; in *La.* I have collated T from microfilm and B from T. W. Allen, *Plato Codex Oxoniensis Clarkianus* 39 phototypice edilus (Leiden 1898). Ese is a copy of T through Par in these dialogues.

9 W1 (the scribe studied by Perria) copies the bulk of the codex. W2 copies *Cit.*, *Resp.*, and *Ti.* W3 copies *Timaeus Locrus* and supplies fol. 139 *Tht.*, fol. 256 in *Symp.* and fol. 488-88 in *La.* Cf. *Diels*, Hunger, and Mazal (supra n.3) and L. Post, *The Vatican Plato and its Relations* (Middletown 1934) 31f.

10 Two errors of L (La. 190ε5 ίδέλαιοι ίδέλαι L, and 190ε6 φέγγιοι φέγγι L) arise from W3's attempt to abbreviate by leaving off the ending of each verb. Cf. also *Symp.* 173ε7 οἰσθαί *BTEscL*: οἰσθαί *W3L*; 174α5 οἴσθαι *BTEsc*: οἴσθαί *W3L*; *La.* 186ε1 ἔπικειν *BTEsc*: ἔπικειν W3L; 187ε8 πρότερον *BTEsc*: om.
even against W3's source, Esc. L cannot have copied those leaves from W1's exemplar, for this either had lacunae or a text different from Esc, which is in another Ms. family. W3 did not copy L; cf. e.g. La. 189a7 μανθάνων BTEscW3: θαυμάζων L; 189b5 συνδεκινδύνευσας BTEscW3: συνεκινδύνευσας L; 190e6 εφ' οίον BTEscW3: οίον'' L.

Finally, in Cra. and La. as well as in other dialogues, L repeats all the errors of W and adds errors of its own. L is correct against W only in cases of errors easy to emend, many of them involving orthography or quotations from poetry. This is the classic pattern presented by an apograph. L, then, is of no value for the text save as a source of lectiones singulares.

Now, to the two scribes. Perría (supra n.6: 96–99) is right, as far as I can judge from the plates, in her identification of W1 and the scribe of Vat. gr. 407. It appears, however, that she has been misled by the small portions of L shown in plates printed by Gollob and Olivier/Monégier du Sorbier (supra n.2). Although the hands of W1 and L are very much alike, down to many details of letter forms and ductus, fundamental differences show that the two scribes are not the same man.

I. Overall Look of the Script (cf. Plates 2 and 3)

(a) W1's letter forms are more oblong and less uniformly rounded than L's. (b) W1's acute accents are at an angle of 45°.

W3L; 188b4 αὐτῶ BTEsc: αὐτῶ W3L; 190a2 οἷς BTEsc: οἴσαρ W3L; 190a4 ἢς BTEscL; ὰς W3L (and six other separative errors).

11 Esc is the source of W3's added leaves. Cf. Symp. 173 δ1 ἔμε ἣγείσθε Par: ἔμε ἣγείσθαι BT: ἣγείσθαι ἐμὲ EscW3; 174e2 οἷς Photius b: οἷς BTPar: τὸν EscW3; 175a8 καλοῦ EscW3: καὶ οὗ BT: καὶ σῷ ParEsc; La. 186e6 μαθήτες BTPar: μαθητές EscW3; 187a6 γενόμενοι BTPar: γεγονόμενοι EscW3; 187a4 συμβαίνῃ EscW3d (confirms Bekker): συμβαίνει BTPar Esc; 190c9 οἷς BTParEsc: οἰσθῇ W3 (Esc's compendium for ως looks like θς). W3 is a copy of Esc in TL as well; cf. W. Marg, Timaeus Locrus. De Natura Mundi et Animae (Leiden 1972) 20ff.


To discuss them would create unnecessary tedium. For other dialogues cf. Marg, Boter, Slings, and Jonkers (supra n.11); A. Carlini, Platone. Alcibiade, Alcibiade secondo, Ipparco, Rivali (Torino 1964) 28ff; D. Murphy, "The Manuscripts of Plato's Charmides," Mnemosyne ser. 4 43 (1990) 332.
or less; those of L at an angle of 60° or more. (c) W1 forms smooth breathing marks with a two-part stroke: down, then across, with varying degrees of roundness. There is also an occasional square breathing mark. L always makes smooth breathing marks with one rounded stroke: across, then down. I would consider (b) and (c) decisive by themselves.13 (d) Unlike W1, L displays elements of Fettaugen-Mode, esp. on fol. 1–28 and after fol. 500: enlarged epsilon (both types), omicron, sigma, sometimes alpha or phi.14

II. Formation of Letters, Ligatures

(a) W1 frequently forms εγ, εσ, ευ, and εχ ligatures with an ascending crest and a stroke descending from its middle to begin the next letter (cf. PLATE 2 passim). With εζ, εξ, and επ, W1’s ascending crest creates occasional “ace of spades” ligatures (cf. Pl. 2, line 26), although W1’s overall style is not so-called en as de pique.15 Epsilon ligatures whose next stroke descends from the middle are rare in L. When they do appear, crests are normally descending (cf. Pl. 3, ii lines 10, 15). If ascending crests appear at all, they are added as separate strokes. (b) W1’s majuscule nu often continues the diagonal stroke down to the right beyond its junction with the vertical ascender to form a pronounced point (Pl. 2, line 3, last line). (c) The bottom of L’s minuscule nu often approximates a point (cf. Pl. 3). (d) Many of W1’s majuscule eta’s are twice as tall or more as their width and have wavy verticals (Pl. 2, line 9). Those of L are rarely taller


than one-and-a half times their width and lack the wavy look. These factors disallow identification of the scribes as the same man.

III. Frequency of Certain Features

This material does not generate 'proof', strictly speaking, for scribes do change features of writing style within a codex or develop them over the years. Indeed, statistical analysis of many of L’s usages is problematic, for the scribe modifies features of his script several times as he goes along. The following differences, however, are stark enough that they become difficult to harmonize with the “identity” thesis.

(a) Forms of καί (in percentages).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>W1</th>
<th>Agati Type:</th>
<th>L</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Type:</td>
<td>Type:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fol. 10r–13v</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fol. 78r–81v</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fol. 283v–287r</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fol. 482r–485v</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>35</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

I have seen a Type L on fol. 83v of L; none in W. (b) L encloses omicron inside lunar sigma occasionally at line end, a feature lacking in W1. (c) W1 often reduces ει ligature, less often εγ, to

16 L’s script usually inclines to the right at 100°–105°, but in fol. 29 to ca 91 it inclines at 105°–110° and in sections with extensive scholia (e.g. Phaedrus) it is almost vertical. Proportionate size of rounded letters diminishes at fol. 29, although the first scribe is clearly still at work (so too conclude Olivier and Monégier du Sorbier), but it gradually increases again, beginning about fol. 91. Percentage of minuscule to majuscule eta is 91%–99% on 28r–v, 85v, 421r and 433r; on 29r–v it is 26%–74%. Elsewhere, letter size is reduced when scholia are extensive, but beginning on fol. 451, which contains only two words inm, letter size drops temporarily from ca 21.7 letters per line on 450v (consistent with most of L) to 26.1 letters on lines of the same width.

17 M. L. Agati, “La congiunzione καί nella minuscola libraria greca,” *Scritti* 8 (1984) 69–81, esp. 71f, distinguishes these types, among others:

- Type A: three minuscule letters written out
- Type C: three letters written out, majuscule kappa
- Type G: cursive ligature with majuscule kappa
- Type I: tachygraphic abbreviation resembling an S
- Type L: tachygraphic abbreviation ι.
its minimum shape (cf. Pl. 2, line 20), a form avoided by L. (d) L employs hyphens passim in the left margin to join words divided by line end (cf. Gollob Pl. 5 n.1) but uses no paragraphos. The reverse is true for W1. (e) W1’s mute iota is adscript. L follows suit, but I have detected subscript iota on fol. 29–30 and 451r.

Scholars have disputed L’s date. Although its heavy use of minuscule forms and overall similarity to W1 make L look close to it in age, some features would suggest L is at least a century or two later (cf. supra Ib–d; IIa, c; IIIa, d–e). Certainty, however, is provided only by its derivation from W3, the terminus post quem of which Marg (supra n.11: 20) has established as 1314. Thus, although L offers little help to the editor of Plato, it is interesting as an apparent product of a versatile, archaising scribe. The codex was a de luxe piece (cf. Perria 87f), and it is tempting to speculate that this factor, as well perhaps as the influence of W, helped induce L’s scribe to be sensitive to earlier canons.

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18 To various proposed dates of L listed by Perria 84, add Diels (supra n.3) s. xv; Post (supra n.9: 32f) and Jonkers (supra n.11: 66): s. xiv. N. G. Wilson, reviewing Olivier and Monégier du Sorbier (cf. supra n.2), CR n.s. 35 (1985) 176, correctly suspected that L is an archaising Ms. of at least s. xiv. He notes that the illumination appears to be Western, although that could have been added at a later time (so Perria 88). On the date of W cf. supra n.6.


Mr. Vindobonensis suppl. gr. 7, fol. 100v: Plato, Crab. 434E4-435D5.
(Courtesy Nationalbibliothek, Wien)
PLATE 3 MURPHY

Ms. Lobcovicianus Radnice VI Fa 1, fol. 85v: Plato, Cra. 434e6–435e8.
(Courtesy Národní knihovna v Praze [Prague])
(photograph reduced to 93%)