

The Partner Scribes of V

Hand A (or V^A) and Hand B (or V^B) are those of the partner scribes who produced the manuscript V in a complicated interaction. In the symbols used by Schwartz in his edition of the scholia, where his siglum for Vaticanus graecus 909 is A instead of the more currently accepted V, his A is my V^A and his A¹ is my V^B.

For much of the manuscript A did most of the work (poetic text and marginal blocks of scholia), and then B corrected and supplemented in places where A had difficulty deciphering what must have been a damaged or faint original. But in some parts B wrote entire pages or provided all the marginal scholia. The pattern of succession suggests that B's work often followed immediately on A's and that A often did not continue further until B had checked the previous work. Schwartz noted that from folio 118 on the codex *a duobus librariis paene alterna vice descriptus est*, but gave no details. He judged that when one corrected or supplemented the work of the other, the same exemplar was being used by both. I believe that this hypothesis is likely to be correct.

The two hands are similar, and although sometimes B's additions are obvious because the ink is darker, in many places there is no strong difference between the appearance of the inks used by A and B. Some of B's glosses are in a very light ink, as on fol. 29r, ὑπόσκηνον above Or. 147 ὑπόροφον and συγγλίθητι above Or. 149 κάτωγε, where we can also observe the later hands V² and V³ working around the earlier gloss. Some of B's glosses are in extremely fine strokes, such as on fol. 3r, τῆς συντομίας above Hec. 33 ὄσονπερ, and καταγκοῦντες above Hec. 35 ἔχοντες (almost washed out). One can also observe variations in the appearance of ink even when the same hand is involved: e.g. on fol. 26v Hand A apparently wrote the top block of scholia first (sch. Hec. 51, sch. Hec. 54, sch. Hec. 57), using the full width of the page, then continued with the lines of the text (48-68) in a partial-width column beneath them, then added sch. 63 and a unique sch. 57 at the top of the left-side column but in lighter ink; similarly, on fol. 26r, an additional note (sch. 30 in its alternative form) has been added at the end of the scholia block and its ink is lighter. Or for Hand B, compare sch. Or. 915 in the top block on fol. 50v, where the note is entirely written by B, but with a light brown ink for the lemma and the usual blacker ink for the note itself; or sch. 626 on fol. 41v: the first line of the scholion (lemma through ἔσχε δὲ παίδας) was added by B in a blank space left by A, but the last three words are in a yellower ink, not in the darker ink of the rest of the line.

The complexity of the alternation of these hands may be illustrated by a few examples. There are places where it is clear that rubrication of the reference symbols preceded the entry of supralinear notes by hand A (e.g. on fol. 31r above Or. 249 ἐπίσημον). A good example of the sequence of entry appears at Or. 328 ὀρεχθεῖς ἔρρεῖς (fol. 33r): the rubricator first placed the reference symbol over ρεχ of ὀρεχθεῖς, Hand A placed φθείρη over ἔρρεῖς, B then added ἐπιθυμήσας over ὀρεχθεῖς, but had to crowd it in between the ref mark and A's gloss; V³ then wanted to extend ἐπιθυμήσας by adding the γάρ-clause found in the marginal scholion, and he had to start the addition above φθείρη.

Characteristics of the Hands

The A hand presents a strong impression of compressed letters, closely spaced; also the impression of a disciplined horizontal across the top of most letters, while the depth of letters is more uneven. On the other hand, various enlarged letters are occasionally used: e.g. some upsilons and omegas and phi loops are exaggerated in width.

Delta: usually upright, but occasionally with extended slant leftward of top loop.

Epsilon: majuscule epsilon slightly enlarged, less common than minuscule with closed lower loop.

ει ligature: quite tall (also when circumflex accent joined to it).

εσ ligature: somewhat large.

εϞ ligature: large ace-of-spades style with distinct point and usually a symmetrical appearance.

Eta: tall when minuscule form is used (cf. kappa).

Iota: three or four different heights used for iota, from minimum small-letter height to very tall above and below.

Kappa: enlarged both above and below line in the majuscule form and in epsilon-kappa ligature; tall initial vertical when minuscule form is used (cf. eta).

Lambda: somewhat large.

Omicron: the ους ligature is written with a very pronounced horizontal element (the loop may be open).

Sigma: occasionally a slim lunate sigma extending far above and below the line (esp. word-initial followed by epsilon).

Tau: occasionally tall tau with only the leftward side of the cap.

Omega: both with the two loops open and with the two loops closed loops, normally with the two parts symmetrical.

Accents: acute and grave accents usually rather long; tall flourish for acute when attached to alpha or omega, for circumflex when attached to omega.

The B hand presents a less disciplined script, with wider spacing between letters. B shows less variation in letter-heights in most interlinear items, but in the block scholia B may randomly enlarge the circumflex, gamma, kappa, and the ει ligature.

Beta: tendency toward larger lower belly of beta vs. flatter smaller lower belly of A's beta (but this is not a consistent distinction).

Gamma: tall majuscule form.

Delta: The upper loop of delta may be upright or tilted to right; but delta is often written with a pronounced backward-leaning upper loop.

Epsilon: in various forms, but all upright, all majuscule except in ligatures.

εϞ ligature: large ace of spades style, but less pointed and less symmetrical than A's version.

εξ ligature: taller and wider than A's, with three right side arcs aligned with a notional upright tangent.

Zeta: with lower two-thirds consisting of almost straight lines at just under 90 degree angle, with small circumflex-like upper part (whereas zeta in A is cursive and upright and

The Hands in Vaticanus graecus 909 (V of Euripides)

very similar to xi); B also has a more florid version of zeta, but it too features angular transitions in the middle section.

Rho: unligatured rho has straight descender, or a slight curve right, or even a flourish to left, but when ligatured the descender of rho forms a smooth curve to join the middle bottom of next letter.

Sigma: lunate sigmas of regular size (compared to closed loops of hand A).

Omega: tends not to be symmetrical, and often has an extra oblique length on the finish of the right side (turned back over the letter).

Accents: less flamboyant acutes and graves than those of A.

Hand B may have done the rubrication (the initials in both lemma and scholion, reference symbols).

The Distribution of Work between A and B

Since previous discussions have not given many details about this, except what can be inferred from Schwartz's use of A¹ (my V^B), I now record my judgment of the distribution of the writing of V by A and B.

In all three triad plays and on 117v (where the arg. Med. begins), the text and main scholia blocks are generally the work of Hand A.

Hecuba: Hand B's contributions are the following: on fol. 12r, sch. Hec. 483, 484, 491, 497 (all entirely B); on 16v, marginal sch. 707 λέιπει, (part of 709?), 710 appear to be by B; on 20v, sch. 1156; on fol. 22v, sch. 1236, 1270

Orestes: on the lower half of 24v, in the space left vacant after the arg. Or. were complete, the main hand added miscellaneous scholia; at the end of the scholia block, A used only half the line; B added there a short grammatical note about apharesis, synkope, and apokope; on 29v, the gloss ὁ θάνατος was written above ὁ πότμος by B, but A added the rest of the annotation to the right, εἰ μὴ γὰρ κτλ. [This is not yet a complete listing for the Orestes pages.]

Phoenissae: fol. 67v, sch. 31 the lemma is by A, but the scholion itself is added by B (last on page, but there was ample room if A had wanted to write it); on 68r, sch. 33 and sch. 36; fol. 70v: sch. 111 (one word), sch. 114 (individual words and phrases, including a s.l. addition; in sch. 114 only εἰσὶ καὶ look like V^B, μεναι looks integral to its word); fol. 71r: sch. 130 (entire, added at end of block, lemma and all); fol. 72r: sch. 151 (lemma perhaps V^A), sch. 155, sch. 156, sch. 157, sch. 159, sch. 160 [This is not yet a complete listing for the Phoenissae pages.]

After the triad plays, B appears more often. On folios not mentioned in the following listings, text and scholia block are by A (B may add glosses).

Medea

118r: text by B, scholia in block by A, interlinear glosses by B; cursive additions by V³

The Hands in Vaticanus graecus 909 (V of Euripides)

118v: text and start of sch. block by B, one schol. by A; glosses B and a few V³
119r: text and scholia at top and bottom of block by B, scholia in middle of block by A; glosses by B, V³, and possibly one by V² on penultimate line
119v: text B, sch. block A; glosses B, V³, possibly one V²
120v: text A, sch. block B; glosses B and V³
121r: text and scholia B
121v: all B, with some V³ glosses and maybe V^{rec}
122r-125v: all B
126r :Med. 275-286 by B, but 287-290 by A, and the only scholion on this page is by A
142r: last scholia in block (partial sch. 837, sch. 835), are crossed out by rubricator; fuller version of 837 is on verso; I'm not sure about 835 because the image I have is poor here.
143r: text A, sch. all B except for first two lines at top
143v: text B, no sch., last two lines (Med. 899-900) are crossed out in red because 144r starts with 899 (by A)
147v: text A, sch. block part A, but more than half B
148r: all B except one sch. at top by A
148v-149v: all B
151v: all B
152r: text A, sch. B
152v: text A except last line Med. 1254 by B; sch. B
153r-v: all B
154r: text A, sparse sch. B
154v: text and sch. B

Hippolytus

157v: remainder of arg. and opening lines of text A, sch. B
158r-159v: all B
160r: B text, but sch. A
168v: text A except for last two lines by B, Hipp. 403-404, sch. at top A, at side B
169r: text B except for last two lines by A, Hipp. 421-422; sch. apparently A
173r: text A except last three lines by B, Hipp. 565-567; sch. B
173v-174r: all B
175v: text A except last two lines by B, Hipp. 663-664; sch. B
176r: all B
178v: text A except last line by B, Hipp. 757; sch. B
179r: all B
182r: text A, sch. B
182v: all B
183r: text B except last two lines by A, Hipp. 930-931, sch. A
185v-186v: text A, sch. B
187r-187v: all B
188r: text B except last two lines, Hipp. 1122-1123; sch. A

Alcestis

199r-208v: all B, including some sparse sch. Many pages have been trimmed down in conservation to just the text column; presumably they had no scholia, since the surviving

The Hands in Vaticanus graecus 909 (V of Euripides)

top and bottom areas are without scholia, and the conservator would probably have attempted to keep damaged margins if there had been writing on them.

216v-220v: all B, incl. sparse scholia

Andromache

228r: at the top the last lines of Alcestis are by A; the bottom two-thirds of the page have hyp. Andr. by B

228v: dram. pers. and start of text and sch. Andr. by B

229r-230r: text B, sch. B except one sch. (last) on 230r by A

259r-261r: text A, sch. B

Troades

261v-263v: Tro. hyp and text and sch. all by B (all the rest of play from 264r on by A)

Rhesus

I detect no sign of B (except for some glosses) anywhere in the surviving pages containing parts of Rhesus.

The Later Hands

Hands A and B I take to be early or very early Palaeologan hands. Many have claimed the manuscript may be “Planudean” and date it 1280-1300, but Nigel Wilson judges it may be as early as 1250-1280, and there are arguments against Di Benedetto’s view that some scholia unique to V reflect Planudes’ teaching. The other hands that added glosses in V are far more informal and cursive and similar to the glossing hands found in the recentiores of the very late 13th and early 14th centuries or to even later hands. In editions of Euripides it is sometimes hard to be sure which later hand is intended (V² in one edition may be the same hand labelled V³ in another). The following are the observations I have made about the glossation.

I use V² for the hand that uses a blacker ink or a medium brown ink (but also yellowish brown ink sometimes), a cruder script with fuzzier strokes and wider letter-spacing, but not as fully cursive as the next one described. For examples see Hec. 85 ἀλίαστος, where, after the original gloss ἄταρβος ἀμετακίνητος ἄφοβος, V² adds ἄφευκτος; or Hec. 93 the gloss τῆς κορυφῆς τοῦ τύμβου. At other times, however, this hand seems to be smaller and more cursive and thus more similar to V³. See the example at Or. 480 ἀστραπᾶς (fol. 37v), where in gray ink we have διὰ τὸ ὄμματα αἱματώδη at normal mid height above the line (by V² in my opinion), and then V³ squeezes in below that τουτέστι τὰς νοσερὰς ἐκφλογώσεις [unless this is same hand working at different times]. Or see Or. 152 (fol. 29r), where V² placed the gloss διὰ χρόνου above χρόνια (but starting above the middle of that word, because the space above the first letters was already taken by the rubricator’s reference symbol), and later in the line καὶ κοιμάται above εὐνάζεται; then V³ added a longer annotation, starting right after V²’s χρόνου and splitting the last word ἐκου/μήθη around V²’s καὶ κοιμάται [again, unless this is the same hand working at different times].

I use V³ for a hand that writes sometimes in a somewhat larger script and sometimes in an extremely small one, depending on space, but in a very informal and irregular style, with backwards-sloping epsilon, the tail of rho turned up under loop, with downward serif at end; e.g. Hec. 38 (fol. 3r) ἀπὸ τοῦ τὰ σίτα αἶρειν κυρίως ἐπὶ τῶν πεζῶν added above πᾶν στρατεύμ' ἑλληνικόν; probably also καινοπρεπὲς σχῆμα, somewhat more regular because squeezed carefully into the space above εὐθύνοντες ἐναλίαν and below the earlier glosses (V² κιν?????? ἐκτοπίζοντας, V^A θαλασσίαν).

To give an example, I would assign the various supralinear additions on fol. 36r on the line Or. 429 as follows: the rubricator placed a reference symbol above οὐδ'; V^B wrote the gloss οὐκ ἐκαθάρθης above ἤγνισαι; V² added the gloss διὰ, above σὸν and below V^B's gloss, and to the right of V^B's gloss V² added another gloss ἦτοι ὑπὸ τοῦ συγγενικοῦ φόνου, starting above αἶμα; finally V³ squeezed in below V²'s gloss ἦγουν τὸ μητρικόν σου, starting above the μ of αἶμα (because the accent took up the space above αι). The ductus of these last two glosses is fairly similar, but V²'s is in the more yellowish ink.

There are some glosses where it is impossible to tell whether V² or V³ was responsible, and these are recorded as V^{2/3}. As mentioned parenthetically above, one must bear in mind the possibility that these two might be the same scribe, working at different times. The difficulty of relying on ink color and appearance is illustrated by the difficulty of a passage like Or. 546 (fol. 39v): an annotation in the right margin consists of two sentences, in different styles of writing and with different thickness of the stroke; the first sentence (διάνοια λυτικῆ τῆς προβολῆς καὶ τῶν ἀπ' ἀρχῆς ἄχρι τέλους) appears to be the hand I usually call V³, while the second sentence, using the connective γάρ to add to the first sentence (λέγει γὰρ οὐχι δύσνους ἀλλὰ τιμ[ωρῶν] τῷ πατρὶ) looks like what I usually call V². Another example of uncertainty: (fol. 3r) Hec. 42 has above the line in very thin script ἡ ψυχὴ προνοεῖται τὰ αὐτίκα μέλλοντα γενέσθαι, to which a later, sloppy hand in blacker ink adds ὡς ἀυλότερον καὶ θειότερον καὶ καθαρότερον: I think the initial note is probably by V^A, while the addition is probably V³ (but this phrase is sloppier and has much wider spacing of letters than this hand a few lines earlier above Hec. 38).

Some characteristics of the cursive hands in Orestes:

Beta: with two clubs.

Delta: with reduced loop, even flattened so as to have no white space, and the upper part tilted right and sometimes short, producing a strong similarity to sigma.

Epsilon: backward sloping epsilon when not in ligature.

ει ligature: upright, with its loop sometimes small.

εϞ ligature: with smooth arch, open rho loop.

Theta: loop often closed, flat.

Nu: angular.

Omicron: may be joined to pi, either suspended from the horizontal or above it

Rho: when not in ligature, with lower stroke turning horizontal under letter with serif at end

The Hands in Vaticanus graecus 909 (V of Euripides)

Sigma: $\sigma\theta$ may have a very flattened sigma loop.

Tau: $\tau\omicron\upsilon$ formed with tau and above it a fountain-like abbreviation of $\omicron\upsilon$ and the circumflex

Regular use of diaeresis on iota and upsilon

These characteristics are common to notes that are in various shades from grayish to light brown to yellowish brown; when written small, there is usually little basis for distinguishing different hands.

These hands (V^2V^3) also provide some annotation outside the triad plays.

There are occasionally notes by hands that appear to be even later, and for these in the triad plays I use simply V^{rec} . Outside the triad there is a later hand that stands out from the others, featuring a more florid and larger script, often in a blacker ink, with loops that are much more open and long flourishes added to some letters, like phi.