

# Unchaining the Scriptures

Andrew J. Patton, University of Birmingham

Abstract: Ugo Rozzo quipped, “it should also be obvious that the paratext is not the text (even if it is a text).” His sentiment certainly is reflected in most Greek New Testament manuscripts: the page focuses on the scriptures, and paratexts serve the reader in navigating, understanding, and appreciating the sacred words. Determining paratextual relationships in Greek New Testament manuscripts with catenae is more complicated because of the presence of a second extensive text in the same codex. This article explores the relationship between the scriptures and the catenae in manuscripts of the gospels. It proposes that some catena manuscripts reverse the usual text-paratext relationship and decentralizes the biblical text, including it as a reference for the commentary. The format of the constituent elements within a manuscript does not alone suffice to determine the paratextual relationships in commentary manuscripts.

## 1. Introduction

Paratextual studies of Greek New Testament manuscripts have opened new paths for considering the text and reception of the Greek New Testament by analyzing material that has largely been ignored in the history of New Testament textual scholarship.<sup>1</sup> The most extensive of these extrabiblical texts within many New Testament manuscripts are catenae—a form of Byzantine

---

This article has been prepared and published as part of the CATENA project, which has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme (grant agreement no. 770816). A verison of it was initially presented at the seminar “Decentralising the Biblical Text in Manuscript Formation,” held in hybrid format at the University of Birmingham and online on 14 March 2022 under the auspices of the CATENA project. I would like to express my gratitude to Hugh Houghton, Patrick Andrist, and Jacob W. Peterson for their constructive feedback on drafts of this article and the discussion of it with those who attended the seminar.

<sup>1</sup> The Paratexts of the Bible (ParaTexBib) project led by Martin Wallraff and Patrick Andrist instituted a systematic approach to inventorying paratextual material in Greek New Testament manuscripts: <https://paratexbib.eu>. See the introduction to the project and a final assessment of their database: Martin Wallraff and Patrick Andrist, “Paratexts of the Bible: A New Research Project on the Greek Textual Transmission,” *EC* 6 (2015): 237–43; Patrick Andrist, “Asymmetrical Descriptions of Biblical Manuscripts: A Key to the Success of the ‘Paratexts of the Bible (ParaTexBib)’ Project and Its Database,” in *Faszination (Buch-)Handschriften im Jahr 2022: Tradition und Zukunft ihrer Erschließung in Bibliothek und Wissenschaft*, ed. Claudia Fabian, Bibliothek und Wissenschaft 55 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2022), 63–78. A sample of recent studies on paratextuality and Greek New Testament manuscripts includes: Garrick V. Allen and Anthony P. Royle, “Paratexts Seeking Understanding: Manuscripts and Aesthetic Cognitivism,” *Religions* 11 (2020): 1–25; Simon J. Gathercole, “The Titles of the Gospels in the Earliest New Testament Manuscripts,” *ZNW* 104 (2013): 215–33; Jennifer Knust and Tommy Wasserman, “Codex Bezae as Repository,” in *Studies on the Intersection of Text, Paratext, and Reception: A Festschrift in Honor of Charles E. Hill*, ed. Gregory R. Lanier and J. Nicholas Reid, *TENTS* 15 (Leiden: Brill, 2021), 142–74; Darius Müller and Peter Malik, “Rediscovering Paratexts in the Manuscripts of Revelation,” *EC* 11 (2020): 247–64; Jacob W. Peterson, “Patterns of Correction as Paratext: A New Approach with Papyrus 46 (P46) as a Test Case,” in *The Future of New Testament Textual Scholarship: From H.C. Hoskier to the Editio Critica Maior and Beyond*, ed. Garrick V. Allen, *WUNT* 417 (Tübingen: Mohr Sie-

commentary on the scriptures developed in the sixth century that is composed of a series of exegetical extracts from multiple early Christian writers often presented alongside the biblical text. Construing the paratextual relationship between the scripture and the scholia in Greek New Testament catena manuscripts proves to be a perplexing task. They are complicated artifacts because the codices bear at least two lengthy texts that are closely related and arranged in sometimes opaque ways. It is not always immediately obvious what is the text and what is the paratext in these manuscripts. Two recent studies, one by Patrick Andrist and the other coauthored by Andrist and Marilena Maniaci, raise the problems catenae pose in defining paratextual relationships in Greek New Testament manuscripts but leave them unresolved.<sup>2</sup> By attending to the transmission, presentation, and composition of catenae on the gospels, the present study seeks to clarify the paratextual relationship between the scripture and the scholia. The conclusion is that format alone cannot determine the direction of paratextuality in Greek New Testament catena manuscripts because other indicators show that in some codices the biblical text has been decentralized—regardless of its position on the page—and is treated as a paratext to the catena.

## 2. Paratexts and Catenae

G rard Genette’s pioneering work on paratexts offered a new paradigm for book scholars to consider writings and their material existence.<sup>3</sup> However, as Genette was a literary critic interested in modern printed books, his concepts required adaptation so that they could be applied to the study of manuscripts. Andrist synthesized Genette’s concepts and crafted a definition of paratexts for manuscripts: “A paratext is a piece of content whose presence in the codex directly depends, as far as its meaning is concerned, upon another piece of content.”<sup>4</sup> This definition works in most cases in Greek New Testament manuscripts because the copyist makes the primary text apparent. Readers can see the boundaries—physical or textual—distinguishing one text from another and comprehend the dependence between pieces of content.

Greek New Testament catena manuscripts, however, do not answer these questions neatly. In the same article, Andrist recognizes the complexities catenae pose and identifies two possibilities for the relationship between the biblical text and the commentary in frame catenae.

---

beck, 2019), 201–30; Martin Wallraff, *Die Kanontafeln des Euseb von Kaisareia: Untersuchung und kritische Edition*, *Manuscripta Biblica* 1 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2021).

<sup>2</sup> Patrick Andrist, “Toward a Definition of Paratexts and Paratextuality: The Case of Ancient Greek Manuscripts,” in *Bible as Notepad: Tracing Annotations and Annotation Practices in Late Antique and Medieval Biblical Manuscripts*, ed. Liv Ingeborg Lied and Marilena Maniaci, *Manuscripta Biblica* 3 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2018), 130–50; Patrick Andrist and Marilena Maniaci, “The Codex’s Contents: Attempt at a Codicological Approach,” in *Exploring Written Artefacts: Objects, Methods, and Concepts*, ed. B. Quenzer J rg, *Studies in Manuscript Cultures* 25 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2021), 369–94.

<sup>3</sup> English translations of Genette’s principal works on paratexts: G rard Genette, *The Architext: An Introduction*, trans. Jane E. Lewin (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992); G rard Genette, *Palimpsests: Literature in the Second Degree*, trans. Channa Newman and Claude Doubinsky, *Stages* 8 (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997); G rard Genette, *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*, trans. Jane E. Lewin, *Literature, Culture, Theory* 20 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

<sup>4</sup> Andrist, “Toward a Definition,” 139. Published at nearly the same time, Peterson also adapted Genette’s definition of paratexts and paratextual features for manuscripts, reaching a similar position as Andrist: Peterson, “Patterns of Correction as Paratext,” 202–5.

The first option is that the catena and the biblical text together form a unique complex work.<sup>5</sup> In this view, the scripture and scholia in a single manuscript are a text together. Therefore, no paratextual relationship exists. The second option is that the catena is a paratext of the biblical text. Andrist favors this position here because the catenae “lose their relevance when separated from the corresponding biblical ‘texts-as-witness,’” whereas the biblical text is always coherent on its own.<sup>6</sup> He adds that the catena textual tradition itself is flexible—having been edited or adapted independently by the scribe of a particular manuscript—in a way that signifies it is dependent on the more static text of the Bible.<sup>7</sup> While Andrist does not consider in this piece the third possibility that the catena could be the text of which the scriptures are a paratext, that concept surfaces in a more recent work. In this article, Andrist and Maniaci asked significant questions about catenae:

Should the whole set of scholia and the biblical text be analysed as two (or more) works? Or is it more relevant to consider all of them together as a single complex work, which thus includes several previous works or parts of works? In any case, are the scholia paratexts to the plain text of the Bible? Or are the scholia the plain text, and the biblical text a necessary series of quotations, such as many commentators cite when expounding? Or does the page layout decide which one is the plain text?<sup>8</sup>

Here the authors raise the possibility of inverting the text-paratext relationship between the catena and the biblical text and suggest a method for making that determination, namely, the page layout. Yet in this piece, which is admittedly a precursor to a revised edition of *La Syntaxe du Codex*, they do not answer their own questions.<sup>9</sup> Catenae are left complicated. The possibilities and questions raised in these two works not only pertain to the difficulties of understanding paratextuality in Greek manuscripts, but they are also analogous to pressing questions about the texts and development of catenae.

## 2.1. The Transmission of Catenae in Manuscripts

Establishing what kind of work catenae are and comprehending their textual tradition is a perplexing task. It yields exasperated remarks such as Charles Kannengiesser’s determination that the study of catenae is “a bewildering task” and William R. S. Lamb’s characterization of them

<sup>5</sup> Andrist, “Toward a Definition,” 143. Andrist’s terminology here is specific. He distinguishes between two types of texts found in manuscripts: a “text-as-opus,” which is the initial or original copy of a work. This is juxtaposed to a “text-as-witness,” which is a copy of an already existing opus (“Toward a Definition,” 135–36). See also the updated explanation of the contents in manuscripts in Andrist and Maniaci, “Codex’s Contents,” 370–74; and Patrick Andrist, “The Limits of Paratexts/Paracontents in Manuscripts: Revisiting Old Questions and Posing New Ones,” *COMSt Bulletin* 8 (2022): 213–31. These correspond to D. C. Parker’s trichotomy of documents-texts-works, wherein a work is a written production, equivalent to Andrist’s “opus”; a document is a specific copy of that work; and a text is “the form of the work contained in that manuscript,” which would equate to Andrist’s “text-as-witness”: D. C. Parker, *Textual Scholarship and the Making of the New Testament* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 29.

<sup>6</sup> Andrist, “Toward a Definition,” 143.

<sup>7</sup> Andrist, “Toward a Definition,” 143.

<sup>8</sup> Andrist and Maniaci, “The Codex’s Contents,” 386.

<sup>9</sup> Patrick Andrist, Paul Canart, and Marilena Maniaci, *La syntaxe du codex: Essai de codicologie structurale*, *Bibliologia* 34 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013). See also the brief discussion of catenae as subordinate texts in this work (107–8).

as “chaotic.”<sup>10</sup> While these works and their manuscripts present challenges for researchers, the tools to create some order out of the chaos exist. In order to adduce the paratextual relationship between the biblical and commentary texts in Greek New Testament catena manuscripts, the nature of the catena text must be determined.

Lamb presents an open-book model for the transmission of catenae that posits that the catenae are so flexible that each catena manuscript is a new creation by that manuscript’s scribe and that establishing genealogical relationships between the manuscripts or various types of catenae is impossible and unnecessary.<sup>11</sup> Indeed, the texts of catenae were copied in more divergent ways than the Greek New Testament. The catenae were amended by abbreviating or omitting some extracts or by inserting new ones, along with the usual litany of intentional or unintentional changes to the text that come in any manuscript. Lamb claims that there is no single *Urtext* that stands at the head of the stream for all future catena manuscripts of a particular book.<sup>12</sup> Lamb is correct that no single catena on Mark, catena on Matthew, or any other biblical book can be reconstructed from the entire textual tradition. Yet his portrayal of the catena tradition’s flexibility fails to recognize the composition history of the catenae. There are multiple distinct catena commentaries on each gospel with their own textual traditions. This mirrors, in a way, the numerous commentaries on biblical books written both in antiquity and today. In most cases, catena manuscripts are copies of one of those catenae within a specific tradition.<sup>13</sup>

In this case, how do we make sense of the variety and variation in catena manuscripts without destroying the differences or despairing of their diversity? Michael Holmes describes the Greek New Testament textual tradition as one characterized by macrolevel stability and microlevel fluidity.<sup>14</sup> He means that New Testament manuscripts largely and consistently give their texts with the same structure and content, and at the same time they differ often at the level of verses, sentences, single words, or characters. The concept of macrolevel stability and microlevel fluidity also makes sense of the textual tradition of catenae on the gospels, albeit allowing for more adaptation than one would expect in the Greek New Testament. The division of catenae into various types in the *Clavis Patrum Graecorum* (CPG), while not perfect, is a useful illustration of the different catenae that were composed in the sixth through the twelfth centuries.<sup>15</sup> Each type roughly corresponds to a single catena on a biblical book, and the

<sup>10</sup> Charles Kannengiesser, “Catenae—‘Chains’ of Biblical Interpretation,” in *Handbook of Patristic Exegesis: The Bible in Ancient Christianity*, ed. Charles Kannengiesser, BAC 1 (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 2:978; William R. S. Lamb, *The Catena in Marcum: A Byzantine Anthology of Early Commentary on Mark*, TENTS 6 (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 32.

<sup>11</sup> Lamb, *The Catena in Marcum*, 60.

<sup>12</sup> Lamb, *The Catena in Marcum*, 64.

<sup>13</sup> Andrist shares this view on the catena textual tradition, explaining that a catena is “a single ‘opus,’ whose materialisation in a manuscript is a single ‘text-as-witness’” (“Toward a Definition,” 141, n. 82).

<sup>14</sup> Michael W. Holmes, “From ‘Original Text’ to ‘Initial Text’: The Traditional Goal of New Testament Textual Criticism in Contemporary Discussion,” in *The Text of the New Testament in Contemporary Research: Essays on the Status Quaestionis*, 2nd ed., ed. Bart D. Ehrman and Michael W. Holmes, NTTSD 42 (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 674.

<sup>15</sup> Maurits Geerard and Jacques Noret, eds., *Clavis Patrum Graecorum: IV Concilia; Catenae*, 2nd ed., CPG 4 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2018). Now updated online in the Clavis Clavium database: <https://clavis.brepols.net/clacla>. The CPG classifications for each biblical book are based on published work and sometimes need revision based on the latest findings. For example, Theodora Panella, “Re-classifying the Pseudo-Oikoumenian Catena Types for Paul’s Epistle to the Galatians,” in *Receptions of the Bible in Byzantium: Texts, Manuscripts, and Their Readers*, ed. Reinhart

contents of catena manuscripts can be classified as copies of these types.<sup>16</sup> Within each type of catena, most manuscripts usually give the same scholia in approximately the same way. Thus, as Mathilde Aussedat concludes, “even if there are some losses and alterations in the course of their manuscript transmission, [the exegetical catenae] can be treated as a fixed corpus.”<sup>17</sup> The variety of types demonstrates that those responsible for later catenae deliberately created new compilations—even if they used existing catenae as a source for the new work.<sup>18</sup> The newer compositions often did not replace the older ones; both continued to be circulated and copied. The *CPG* classifications generally reflect macrolevel stability. Yet at the microlevel, there are many differences. Since the catenae themselves were composed of edited extracts from multiple sources, they were susceptible to adaptation and addition by later users. Still, even with microlevel changes within catena manuscripts, the texts can usually be recognized as belonging to one type.<sup>19</sup> This view better accounts for the combination of stability and fluidity in the manuscript tradition of Greek New Testament catenae than the open-book theory and suggests that within a catena type the text is stable enough that it could be the primary text of a manuscript.

That the tradition of catena manuscripts within a type evidences macrolevel stability and microlevel fluidity can be seen in the catenae related to Codex Zacynthius (Cambridge, University Library, MS Add. 10062; GA 040; Diktyon 73427). The undertext in this palimpsest manuscript contains a frame catena with the complete biblical text for most of Luke 1–11; gaps in the scripture and catena exist where pages were lost when the parchment was reused to produce GA L299. The catena on Luke found in Codex Zacynthius, identified as type C137.3 in the *CPG*, is classified within the *Codices Singuli* category because Zacynthius was then the only known witness to its text. Panagiotis Manafis identified an additional catena manuscript that belongs to the Zacynthian type: Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Pal. gr. 273 (Diktyon 66005), a fragmentary frame catena manuscript with an abridged biblical text covering part of Luke 1–4, including places where Codex Zacynthius is lacunose. This manuscript was previously classified as a *Codex Singulus* in the *CPG* as C137.5 following Max Rauer’s

---

Ceulemans and Barbara Crostini, *Studia Byzantina Upsaliensia* 20 (Uppsala: Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, 2021), 387–403; and Emanuele Scieri, “The Catena Manuscripts on Acts: A Revised Classification,” *VC* (2021): 281–305.

<sup>16</sup> As demonstrated in Georgi Parpulov, *Catena Manuscripts of the Greek New Testament: A Catalogue*, TS 3/26 (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias, 2021).

<sup>17</sup> Mathilde Aussedat, “Une pratique érudite de lecture des textes bibliques: Les chaînes exégétiques grecques,” *REG* 121 (2008): 549. “Les chaînes exégétiques, en revanche, même si l’on observe quelques pertes et altérations au cours de leur tradition manuscrite, peuvent être traitées comme un corpus fixe.”

<sup>18</sup> Catenae that sourced scholia from earlier catenae rather than the direct tradition of an author are called secondary catenae. On this phenomenon, see Gilles Dorival, “La postérité littéraire des chaînes exégétiques grecques,” *Revue des études byzantines* 43 (1985): 212. Likewise, see Jeremiah Coogan’s contribution in this issue on the recycling of scholia from a catena on a different biblical book for a new composition (“Doubled Recycling: The Gospel according to Mark in Late Ancient Catena Commentary”).

<sup>19</sup> Andrist and Maniaci, “Codex’s Contents,” 378. Andrist and Maniaci highlight the inherent ambiguity of determining how much difference between texts in a fluid tradition is required to call one copy a new work: “Fluid traditions, where one finds radically reworked copies of a work, are an even more difficult challenge.... How large must the difference between two avatars of a single textual tradition be before we go from considering them witnesses of the same work to seeing them as two independent works? There is probably no definitive answer to this question.”

assessment.<sup>20</sup> Manafis shows that this manuscript is a copy of the Zacynthian catena type.<sup>21</sup> Another witness to the catena found in Codex Zacynthius is Paris, BnF, suppl. grec. 612 (GA 747; Diktyon 53347), a frame catena manuscript that contains an abridgment of the Zacynthian type—including 197 of the 335 scholia found in Codex Zacynthius with some additions from John Chrysostom—and includes the full Gospel of Luke.<sup>22</sup> The Paris manuscript was also classified within the *Codices Singuli* category as C137.7.<sup>23</sup> Given its affiliation with Zacynthius and the identification of Pal. gr. 273 as another witness to the type, these designations should be reevaluated. Manafis observes that the catena text in Pal. gr. 273 is “almost identical” to the catena in Codex Zacynthius and to the text in GA 747 where it shares scholia.<sup>24</sup> On the other hand, when the scholia in the Zacynthian-type manuscripts are present in the direct tradition of the author or in the catena of Nicetas of Heraclea—who used this catena as a source—extensive variants exist.<sup>25</sup> Therefore, the catena texts of Pal. gr. 273 and Suppl. grec. 612 are copied as a witness to the catena text. Moreover, the biblical text in Pal. gr. 273 differs significantly from Codex Zacynthius. The biblical text in the latter manuscript has been described as one of the three best witnesses to the earliest form of Luke.<sup>26</sup> The Vatican codex, however, follows a more common Byzantine biblical text.<sup>27</sup> The biblical text in Palatinus was therefore taken from a source different from that of the catena or, if the copyist was reliant on a single exemplar, the standardization of the biblical text had already occurred. This is significant because it uncouples the catena and biblical text in catena manuscripts as a single work.<sup>28</sup> The transmission of the C137.3 catena demonstrates the macrolevel stability and microlevel fluidity that occurs within each catena type.

<sup>20</sup> Max Rauer, *Die Homilien zu Lukas in der Übersetzung des Hieronymus und die griechischen Reste der Homilien und des Lukas-Kommentars*, vol. 9 of *Origenes Werke*, 2nd ed., GCS 49 (Berlin: Akademie, 1959), liii.

<sup>21</sup> Panagiotis Manafis, “A New Witness to the Catena of Codex Zacynthius,” *ZAC* 26 (2022): 371–401. Based on these findings, Pal. gr. 273 has been reclassified to C137.3 in the *Clavis Clavium*.

<sup>22</sup> E. Bickersteth and Harold Greenlee suspected GA 747 shared the same form of catena as Zacynthius: J. Harold Greenlee, “The Catena of Codex Zacynthius,” *Bib* 40 (1959): 1000. Manafis confirmed this and studied which scholia were present in both manuscripts: Panagiotis Manafis, “Catenae on Luke and the Catena of Codex Zacynthius,” in *Codex Zacynthius: Catena, Palimpsest, Lectionary*, ed. H. A. G. Houghton and D. C. Parker, TS 3/21 (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias, 2020), 153–68.

<sup>23</sup> Again, this designation follows Rauer, who noted the affiliation between GA 747 and Pal. gr. 273 but did not connect these to the catena of Codex Zacynthius: Rauer, *Die Homilien zu Lukas*, liii and lvi.

<sup>24</sup> Manafis, “New Witness,” 376.

<sup>25</sup> Manafis, “New Witness,” 384–401. On the sources of the Nicetas catena in Luke: Joseph Reuss, *Lukas-Kommentare aus der griechischen Kirche: aus Katenenhandschriften gesammelt und herausgegeben*, TUGAL 130 (Berlin: Akademie, 1984), xiv; Joseph Sickenberger, *Die Lukaskatene des Niketas von Herakleia*, TU 22.4 (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1902), 73–80.

<sup>26</sup> H. A. G. Houghton and D. C. Parker, “The Gospel of Luke in the Palimpsest,” in Houghton and Parker, *Codex Zacynthius*, 42.

<sup>27</sup> Manafis, “New Witness,” 382–83.

<sup>28</sup> On the biblical text in catena manuscripts, see H. A. G. Houghton, “Catena Manuscripts in the *Editio Critica Maior* of the Greek New Testament,” in *Pen, Print, and Pixels: Advances in Textual Criticism in the Digital Era*, ed. Daniel B. Wallace, David Flood, Elijah Hixson, and Denis Salgado (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2023); Agnès Lorrain, “Éditer les chaînes exégétiques grecques: Quelle place pour les mises en page ?,” *Byzantion* 91 (2021): 238–40; Andrew J. Patton “Direct Copying and a Group of Gospels Manuscripts with Catenae,” *NTS* (forthcoming).

The transmission of catenae in manuscripts is far less bewildering and chaotic when it is recognized that there is no single catena *Urtext* that has been freely changed over centuries—at least in the gospels. Instead, various catenae were compiled in the sixth to twelfth centuries, and each of these was transmitted in further copies. Reframing the textual history of catenae to account for the development of new catenae and allowing for some flexibility in the copying of a particular type recognizes that the fluidity of the text need not limit the possible paratextual relationships in Greek New Testament catena manuscripts.

## 2.2. The Presentation of the Catenae in Manuscripts

Andrist and Maniaci asked: “Does the page layout decide which one is the plain text?”<sup>29</sup> Greek New Testament catena manuscripts generally appear in two layouts. Frame catenae place the biblical text in the center of the page with the scholia arranged in the outer margins and, occasionally, the gutter. Alternating catenae present both the biblical text and the scholia in a single block, alternating between biblical *lemmata* and scholia.<sup>30</sup> Of the 472 entries in the CATENA project’s Catena Catalogue database, 185 manuscripts are in frame format (39 percent), 276 have an alternating format (59 percent), 5 mix frame and alternating format in different books (1 percent), and 6 contain only marginal scholia (1 percent).<sup>31</sup> A catena manuscript’s *mise en page* may indeed shape the way the catena texts are conceived by readers and how they relate to the biblical text in the same manuscript.<sup>32</sup>

Frame catenae generate more immediate questions about paratextuality due to the clear distinction between the two works in these codices.<sup>33</sup> Yet alternating catenae, which are more common, raise the same salient questions about paratextuality between the biblical text and the catenae, making them an important source for determining what kind of text catenae are and how they relate to the biblical text.<sup>34</sup> One of the striking features of alternating catenae

<sup>29</sup> Andrist and Maniaci, “Codex’s Contents,” 386.

<sup>30</sup> The English terms frame and alternating catenae were developed in H. A. G. Houghton and D. C. Parker, “An Introduction to Greek New Testament Commentaries with a Preliminary Checklist of New Testament Catena Manuscripts,” in *Commentaries, Catenae, and Biblical Tradition: Papers from the Ninth Birmingham Colloquium on the Textual Criticism of the New Testament in Conjunction with the COMPAUL Project*, ed. H. A. G. Houghton, TS 3/13 (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias, 2016), 8–13.

<sup>31</sup> Catena Catalogue database: <https://purl.org/itsee/catena-catalogue>. Figures accessed 13 December 2022. This search excludes manuscripts with commentaries by Chrysostom, Theophylact, and Zigabenus not classified as catenae in the CPG.

<sup>32</sup> On the layout of catena and commentary manuscripts, see Gilles Dorival, *Les chaînes exégétiques Grecques sur les Psaumes*, Spicilegium Sacrum Lovaniense 43 (Leuven: Peeters, 1986), 1:43–96; Agnès Lorrain, “Autour du Vaticanus gr. 762: Notes pour l’étude des chaînes à présentation alternante,” *Byzantion* 90 (2020): 67–95; Lorrain, “Éditer les chaînes exégétiques grecques,” 219–63; Marilena Maniaci, “The Medieval Codex as a Complex Container: The Greek and Latin Traditions,” in *One-Volume Libraries: Composite and Multiple-Text Manuscripts*, ed. Michael Friedrich and Cosima Schwarke, Studies in Manuscript Cultures 9 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2016), 27–46; Marilena Maniaci, “Words within Words: Layout Strategies in Some Glossed Manuscripts of the Iliad,” in *Trends in Statistical Codicology*, ed. Maniaci Marilena, Studies in Manuscript Cultures 19 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2021), 575–98; Jacques-Hubert Sautel, “Essai de terminologie de la mise en page des manuscrits à commentaire,” *Gazette du livre médiéval* 35 (1999): 17–31.

<sup>33</sup> It is worth noting that in “Toward a Definition,” Andrist limited the discussion to frame catenae (141).

<sup>34</sup> The importance of alternating catenae was also demonstrated in Lorrain, “Autour du Vaticanus gr. 762,” 67–95.

is that, despite the varieties in the formatting and amount of biblical text, the catena itself is copied consistently. An example from Luke 1 in the C130 catena tradition illustrates this point. Table 1 (appended) displays the arrangement of the biblical text and scholia in seven Greek New Testament manuscripts: five in alternating format and two in frame format. These seven codices all contain forms of the C130 catena on Luke.<sup>35</sup> The five alternating catenae contain the earliest catena on Luke, Type C130.1 in the CPG, likely formed in the sixth century and attributed pseudonymously to the fourth-century bishop Titus of Bostra.<sup>36</sup> The two frame catenae belong to Type C130.2, which expands the earliest catena with fourteen additional scholia. All the manuscripts are dated to the tenth century except for GA 807, from the twelfth century.<sup>37</sup> The seven manuscripts are: (1) GA 033 (Munich, Universitätsbibliothek, Cim. 16 [= 2° Cod. MS 30]; Diktyon 45102), a manuscript with the full biblical text in majuscule script and an alternating catena; (2) GA 055 (Paris BnF, Grec. 201; Diktyon 49771), a manuscript with an abridged biblical text in minuscule script for Luke and an alternating catena; (3) GA 807 (Athens, Library of the Hellenic Parliament 1; Diktyon 1097), a manuscript with the full biblical text and an alternating catena; (4) GA 1411 (Athens, National Library of Greece 95; Diktyon 2391), a manuscript with an abridged biblical text and an alternating catena; (5) GA 2110 (Paris, BnF, Grec. 702; Diktyon 50283), a manuscript with an abridged biblical text and an alternating catena; (6) GA 20 (Paris, BnF, Grec. 188; Diktyon 49757), a manuscript with the full biblical text and a frame catena; and finally, (7) GA 773 (Athens, National Library of Greece 56; Diktyon 2352), a manuscript with the full biblical text and a frame catena.

Table 1 displays the arrangement of the biblical text and scholia for Luke 1:1–4 in these manuscripts. The catena usually begins with an introductory scholium (001a) followed by seven explanations (002–008). Two significant textual additions should be noted. GA 055 adds a second introductory comment (001b) before the first biblical lemma that is not present in any of the other manuscripts in this table. It does appear, however, in other catenae on Luke within the C130 type.<sup>38</sup> The added scholium (001b) appears in the text of other catena types: C131, C132, and C137.3. While beyond the scope of this article, these four catena types developed alongside one another, and some were used as sources for the composition of the others. Therefore, finding some instances of interpolation in the manuscripts formed after all four catenae were in circulation is not surprising. The second addition, found in the two frame catenae, GA 20 and GA 773, adds a lengthy extract (002b) to the interpretation of Luke 1:1. This scholium appears in all but one of the seven frame catenae of type C130 but rarely in any of

<sup>35</sup> The C130 catenae on Luke were previously grouped in one large category despite Joseph Reuss having identified subcategories within it (see n. 36). Based on my doctoral thesis, the editors of the Clavis Clavium database have agreed to restructure the C130 class into four subgroups: C130.1, C130.2, C130.3, and C130.4. This reflects the pattern classification of the corresponding “Type A” catenae on Matthew and John.

<sup>36</sup> On the C130 catena and its composition see: Robert Devreesse, “Chaînes exégétiques grecques,” in *Dictionnaire de la Bible, Supplément* (Paris: Letouzey & Ané, 1928), col. 1181–1182; Georg Karo and Hans Lietzmann, *Catenarum Graecarum Catalogus* (Göttingen: Luder Horstmann, 1902), 574; Andrew J. Patton, “Greek Catenae and the ‘Western’ Order of the Gospels,” *NovT* 64 (2022): 121–29; Rauer, *Die Homilien zu Lukas*, xxxiv–xxxvi; Reuss, *Lukas-Kommentare*, xi; Joseph Sickemberger, *Titus von Bostra: Studien zu dessen Lukashomilien*, TU 6.1 (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1901), 16–41.

<sup>37</sup> The only manuscript of C130 dated earlier than the tenth century is Moscow, State Historical Museum, Syn. gr. 384 (Diktyon 44009). This undigitized manuscript could not be consulted nor images commissioned due to Russia’s invasion of Ukraine.

<sup>38</sup> Within C130, BnF Grec. 701 (Diktyon 50282) includes it in the margins, GA 1366 (Diktyon 66421) includes it in the text in the same way as GA 055, and GA 2453 (Diktyon 18806) and BAV Vat. gr. 1692 (Diktyon 68321) replace the usual introduction (001a) with this addition (001b).



the alternating catenae. The scholium is attributed to Photius of Constantinople (820–891 CE) in the eleventh-century catena by Nicetas of Heraclea.<sup>39</sup> Since these are copies of a catena first composed in the sixth century, this scholium is clearly a later addition to the tradition, which commonly occurred with exegetical extracts from Photius in catenae on the gospels and other biblical books.<sup>40</sup> Of the fifty-four Photian scholia found throughout all the catenae in Luke that are given in Joseph Reuss's *Lukas-Kommentare*, only thirteen are added into the three manuscripts Reuss used for this type in his apparatus, and these rarely appear in all three, indicating an idiosyncratic or selective pattern of interpolation rather than a systematic revision of this type.<sup>41</sup> Perhaps the use of the frame format permitted adaptation that was more difficult to accommodate in the copying of alternating catenae.

Apart from these rare expansions, the catena has been copied almost identically despite the different ways biblical text has been incorporated. GA 033 and GA 807 give the full biblical text of Luke 1:1–4 in one larger section, albeit placed differently in each, then repeat the relevant short *lemmata* as an internal reference within the catena in the same order as the other manuscripts.<sup>42</sup> Thus, their arrangement approximates the frame catenae where the full biblical text is present in the manuscript, but the commentary still includes short biblical *lemmata*. The alternating catenae with an abridged biblical text give only the same brief *lemmata* as the other full text manuscripts, and only one of these includes a complete verse (Luke 1:4). In fact, if the text in abridged manuscripts replaced the commentary sections in the manuscripts with a full biblical text, the manuscript would be essentially the same. This communicates two important aspects of catenae. First, the short biblical *lemmata* are an integrated part of the commentary, and their repetition in catena manuscripts regardless of format suggests these are texts being copied as a witness.<sup>43</sup> In a sense these are commentaries with only references to the biblical text as hooks to organize the explanations. The *lemmata* are reference points—some direct quotations of the scriptures of varying lengths and allusions to the text—that should be treated like the witnesses to the biblical text in citations from early Christian writers.<sup>44</sup> Second, Andrist asserted that the scholia could only be a paratext and not a text in frame catenae because “they lose their relevance when separated from the corresponding biblical texts.”<sup>45</sup> However, the presence of the same catena detached from a continuous or complete biblical text in other manuscripts signals that these commentaries are relevant on their own because the short

<sup>39</sup> The scholium is edited in Reuss, *Lukas-Kommentare*, 298, fragment 1.

<sup>40</sup> Reuss, *Lukas-Kommentare*, xxix–xxx. See also Panella, “Re-classifying the Pseudo-Oikoumenian Catena,” 395; Joseph Reuss, “Die Evangelienkatenen im Cod. Archivio di S. Pietro Gr. B 59,” *Bib* 35 (1954): 207–16.

<sup>41</sup> Reuss created a subcategory within his Type A group (C130 in the *CPG*), called *die erweiterte Grundform* (“the extended basic form,” now C130.2). This group of catenae extensively expand the initial catena on Luke with scholia from Photius: Reuss, *Lukas-Kommentare*, xi–xii. See also Reuss, “Die Evangelienkatenen,” 207–16.

<sup>42</sup> Lorrain, “Autour du Vaticanus gr. 762,” 81. Lorrain describes the direct quote or paraphrase of the biblical text within the catena as an internal reference (“référence interne”) and the presentation of the biblical text outside the catena as an external reference (“référence externe”).

<sup>43</sup> Thus, as Lorrain concludes: “Il est indispensable d’éditer la chaîne avec le texte biblique qu’elle transmet” (“It is essential to edit the catena with the biblical text that it transmits”) (“Éditer les chaînes exégétiques grecques,” 238).

<sup>44</sup> The INTF does not consider catena manuscripts with an abridged biblical text as bona fide Greek New Testament manuscripts and does not assign them Gregory-Aland numbers. Codices like GA 055 and GA 1411 with an abridged biblical text were cataloged in the *Liste* during an earlier period when this principle was less established.

<sup>45</sup> Andrist, “Toward a Definition,” 143.

biblical *lemmata* are integrated into the commentary text. When the *lemmata* within the commentary are repeated on the same page as the full text of the scriptures as found in the frame catenae, the two works are each intelligible on their own even though they relate closely to one another. In these cases, other factors must be considered to determine whether the scholia or the scriptures is the main text in frame catena manuscripts.

This analysis indicates that the alternating catenae without the full biblical text are in fact simply a type of commentary manuscript. The biblical text in these manuscripts, even when distinguished by some form of visual delimitation, is part of the work, and no paratextual relationship exists because there is no subordination of either text. These *lemmata* are reference points helping to make sense of the exegetical extracts but are not a separate text themselves.<sup>46</sup> Catena manuscripts with the commentary and the full biblical text are more complex and open to paratextual relationships. In these codices, there are two potential primary pieces of content, the biblical text and the catena.<sup>47</sup> Since the dependency is unclear, regardless of the *mise en page*, another line of approach needs to be taken in order to identify the primary text—the *raison d'être* must be determined.<sup>48</sup> Are there signs in the arrangement of the catena text and the biblical text that indicate that the primary reason this manuscript existed was to have a commentary or to have the New Testament? When thinking about why a manuscript may have been produced, it certainly is true that if a community or individual only wanted a copy of the biblical text, it would have been more efficient and useful to have a copy of only the New Testament without the catena. On the other hand, while the catena stands as an independent text, it can be beneficial to have the complete biblical text as a point of reference for understanding the scholia—especially when larger units of the text are being explained. Likewise, having explanations of the biblical text alongside a copy of the New Testament can be useful for understanding what is read. Any of these scenarios is plausible.<sup>49</sup>

Codex Zacynthius is a manuscript in which the biblical text, in frame format, exists primarily to facilitate the use of the commentary. Hugh Houghton and David Parker note seventeen occasions where the biblical text in Zacynthius was repeated on subsequent pages because the commentary on those verses extended beyond the initial page. Remarkably, Luke 2:21 and Luke 9:1 were written three times because of the extensive exegetical scholia.<sup>50</sup> Likewise, GA 050 (Diktyon 48524<sup>51</sup>), another early catena manuscript on John, frequently repeats biblical text at the point where the commentary extends over multiple folios. The scribe copied the

<sup>46</sup> In this sense, the lemma might have hypertextual valence—pointing to the full biblical text—within the context of a metatextual work. See Gilles Dorival, “The Bible, Commentaries, Scholia, and Other Literary Forms,” in *On the Fringe of Commentary: Metatextuality in Ancient Near Eastern and Ancient Mediterranean Cultures*, ed. Sydney H. Aufrère et al., *Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta* 232 (Leuven: Peeters, 2014), 171–73; Genette, *Palimpsests*, 1–10.

<sup>47</sup> Andrist, Canart, and Maniaci, *La syntaxe du codex*, 51, 104–8; Andrist and Maniaci, “Codex’s Contents,” 370–73.

<sup>48</sup> Andrist also highlights the value of deducing a manuscript’s purpose in order to understand the paratextuality of its constituent parts: “From the producers’ point of view, these paratexts were entirely in service of the book’s theme, since their *raison d'être* is (to put it in modern terms) to help mediate the biblical content to the readers” (“Toward a Definition,” 141).

<sup>49</sup> Andrist and Maniaci, “Codex’s Contents,” 386; Lorrain, “Autour du Vaticanus gr. 762,” 70–76. On Christian nonlinear reading practices and manuscripts, see Jeremiah Coogan, “Gospel as Recipe Book: Nonlinear Reading and Practical Texts in Late Antiquity,” *EC* 12 (2021): 40–60.

<sup>50</sup> Houghton and Parker, “Gospel of Luke in Palimpsest,” 33–34.

<sup>51</sup> Fragments of GA 050 are split between four holding institutions: Oxford, Christ Church, Wake 2; Athens, National Library of Greece, 1371; Athos, Dionysiou Monastery, 71; and Moscow, State Historical Museum, Syn. gr. 119.

first part of John 1:1 five times, John 3:5 three times, John 4:12 twice, John 20:15 twice, and John 20:17 three times.<sup>52</sup> GA 0141 (Paris, BnF, Gr. 209; Diktyon 49779) is another catena manuscript with a repetitious biblical text, this time in alternating format. In this case, extensive blocks of scholia are broken up with the repetition of the same *lemmata*, imitating the practice of the frame catenae.

This suggests that the full biblical text in these manuscripts was not copied so that readers had a fresh copy of Luke or John.<sup>53</sup> Rather, it seems the biblical text was included as a reference point for the commentary. The catenist envisaged the scriptures to be read alongside the catena and believed it essential in making sense of the interpretations as seen in the preface to the catena in Codex Zacynthius:

I thought that it was indispensable to add this to the present introduction as a clarification and explanation for those who encounter it. For they should know that those who have interpreted this divinely-inspired scripture have not only been carried in different ways in their ideas but, indeed, have not divided the very words of the same divine scripture identically, and have laid out their interpretation accordingly. For one of them made their exposition setting out more words and another fewer... So one ought to read the first and the second or even the third chapter of the text of the divine scripture, and the accompanying interpretations in this manner so that the ideas may be easily comparable for those who encounter them.<sup>54</sup>

The preface to the catena describes the biblical text on the page in this manuscript as an aid to fully comprehending the commentary, indicating that the purpose of this catena manuscript was to have a commentary. In this case, the expected relationship of paratextuality in which the catena is the paratext has been inverted. To put it another way, even in frame catenae, the biblical text is not always the primary text. Manuscripts with a repetitious biblical text—the opposite of an abbreviated text and yet equally useless for reading the scriptural material—privilege the commentary at the expense of the scriptures despite their respective positions on the page. In a similar manner, the alternating catenae with the full biblical text also decentralize the biblical text because the reading pattern for the scriptures is obstructed by the commentary. Jeremiah Coogan discusses how the segmentation of a text through devices such as

<sup>52</sup> Thanks are due to Hugh Houghton for drawing my attention to this manuscript. Kurt Treu observed, “Der Kommentar ist so so umfangreich, daß die Lemmata mehrfach wiederholt werden müssen.” See Kurt Treu, *Die griechischen Handschriften des Neuen Testaments in der UdSSR: Eine systematische Auswertung der Texthandschriften in Leningrad, Moskau, Kiev, Odessa, Tbilisi und Erevan*, TU 91 (Berlin: Akademie, 1966), 263. See also Barbara Ehlers, “Eine Katene zum Johannes-Evangelium in Moskau, auf dem Athos (Dionysiu), in Athen und in Oxford (050),” in *Materialien zur Neutestamentlichen Handschriftenkunde*, ed. Kurt Aland, ANTF 3 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1969), 96–133.

<sup>53</sup> Alan Taylor Farnes reaches the same conclusion about GA 0141 and its descendents (GA 821 [Diktyon 40150] and possibly GA 1370 [Diktyon 9323]), which are alternating catenae that repeat and omit the biblical text at various points: *Simply Come Copying: Direct Copies as Test Cases in the Quest for Scribal Habits*, WUNT 2/481 (Tübingen, Mohr Siebeck, 2019), 173–76. It is worth noting that these catena manuscripts on John are all witnesses to the same type of catena (C145): Joseph Reuss, *Matthäus-, Markus- und Johannes-Katenen nach den handschriftlichen Quellen untersucht*, NTAbh 18.4–5 (Münster: Aschendorff, 1941), 210–15.

<sup>54</sup> H. A. G. Houghton, Panagiotis Manafis, and Amy Myshrall, *The Palimpsest Catena of Codex Zacynthius: Text and Translation*, TS 3/22 (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias, 2020), fol. 1r. The preface occurs in eleven other Greek New Testament catena manuscripts: Paris, BnF, Suppl. gr. 1300; GA 050, GA 39, GA 87, GA 137, GA 254, GA 397, GA 1078, GA 1422.

*ekthesis*, titles, and the Eusebian apparatus “facilitates nonlinear reading.”<sup>55</sup> The actual segmentation of the biblical text makes this practice nearly compulsory by making a linear reading of the biblical text cumbersome.<sup>56</sup> The intended mode of reading provides one clue to the reason a manuscript was produced.

Titles are a paratextual feature that sheds light on the paratextual relationship between the biblical text and the scholia in catena manuscripts.<sup>57</sup> One of the primary functions of the inscription before the beginning of a work is to signal to readers what they will be reading, which conveys information about the content and sets the readers’ expectations for the reading experience.<sup>58</sup> Though the titles in Greek New Testament manuscripts are not uniform, the titles in the gospels usually involve some form of *εὐαγγέλιον κατὰ* plus the name of the evangelist: *Ματθαῖον, Μᾶρκον, Λουκᾶν, or Ἰωαννην*.<sup>59</sup> GA 139 (Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. gr. 758; Diktyon 67389) is an eleventh-century frame catena manuscript of Luke and John with the full biblical text. It appears in the same visual format as many manuscripts of the gospels, containing painted evangelist portraits on the versos immediately prior to the first folios of the gospel texts. On the first page of the gospel, an illuminated ribbon in a floral pattern appears above the title to the gospel, and the title is signaled with a cross and written in red ink immediately above the biblical text. However, instead of writing the expected version of “according to Luke or John,” the title given is *Ἑρμηνεῖαι διαφόρων ἐρμηνευτῶν εἰς τὸ κατὰ λουκᾶν [or ἰωαννην] ἅγιον εὐαγγέλιον* (“Interpretations of various interpreters of the holy gospel according to Luke [or John]”) (fols. 2r, 87r). Therefore, GA 139 is a codex that, based on layout and form of the biblical text, could intend the scriptures to be the main text and the catena as a paratext but gives as the title for the work—placed as a heading over the sacred text—a title for the com-

<sup>55</sup> Coogan, “Gospel as Recipe Book,” 47, 45–50. See also Laurence Vianès, “Aspects de la mise en page dans les manuscrits de chaîne sur Ézéchiél,” in *Le Commentaire entre tradition et innovation: Actes du Colloque International de l’Institut des Traditions Textuelles (Paris et Villejuif, 22–25 septembre 1999)*, ed. Marie-Odile Goulet-Cazé, Bibliothèque d’histoire de la philosophie NS (Paris: Vrin, 2000), 86–87.

<sup>56</sup> Aussedat, “Une pratique érudite de lecture des textes bibliques,” 554. Aussedat determined that the layout and linking signs of the frame catenae on Jeremiah in her study indicate that these codices were also not designed for linear reading.

<sup>57</sup> The Titles of the New Testament (TiNT) project led by Garrick Allen and Kelsie Rodenbiker is spearheading comprehensive research on titles in Greek New Testament manuscripts: <https://www.gla.ac.uk/schools/critical/research/researchclusters/biblicalinterpretation/titles-of-the-new-testament>. See Garrick V. Allen and Kelsie G. Rodenbiker, “Titles of the New Testament (TiNT): A New Approach to Manuscripts and the History of Interpretation,” *EC* 11 (2020): 265–80.

<sup>58</sup> Andrist, “Limits of Paratexts/Paracontents,” 229: “They tell the readers how the text should be read and, beyond this, how the work should be understood.”

<sup>59</sup> For the flexibility of titles, see Garrick V. Allen, “Paratexts and the Reception History of the Apocalypse,” *JTS* 70 (2019): 600–632. On the titles in the gospels, see Garrick V. Allen, “Titles in the New Testament Papyri,” *NTS* 68 (2022): 156–71; Gathercole, “The Titles of the Gospels,” 33–76; Martin Hengel, *Die Evangelienüberschriften* (Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag, 1984) and Hengel’s updated discussion in “Die Evangelienüberschriften” in *Jesus und die Evangelien: Kleine Schriften V*, ed. Martin Hengel and Claus-Jürgen Thornton, WUNT 211 (Tübingen, Mohr Siebeck, 2007), 526–67; Matthew D.C. Larsen, “Correcting the Gospel: Putting the Titles of the Gospels in Historical Context,” in *Rethinking ‘Authority’ in Late Antiquity: Authorship, Law, and Transmission in Jewish and Christian Tradition*, ed. A. J. Berkovitz and Mark Letteney (London: Routledge, 2018), 78–104; Silke Petersen, “Die Evangelienüberschriften und die Entstehung des neutestamentlichen Kanons,” *ZNW* 97 (2006): 250–74.

mentary.<sup>60</sup> This suggests that the purpose of this manuscript was to have a commentary on Luke and John rather than primarily to have a copy of the gospels. Catena manuscripts, even those of the same type, do not always have the same titles. Among the manuscripts cited in table 1 that are witnesses to the C130 catena on Luke, GA 773 (frame, full) has standard titles for the gospels that make no mention of the commentary; GA 033 (alternating, full), GA 055 (alternating, abridged), GA 20 (frame, full), GA 807 (alternating, full), and GA 2110 (alternating, abridged) give titles for the commentary only; and GA 1411 gives both a gospel title and a commentary title. In this case the only extant gospel title is in Luke, and it is simply the word *λουκάς* positioned above the text where a running title would normally be written. The commentary title, however, is written in semimajuscule script above the beginning of the main text with a decorative line drawn above it. These visual features indicate it has priority, and the title “Luke” written in the margins may function as a reference or heading. Based on this small sample, the alternating catenae are most likely to have a title designating the contents of the manuscript as a commentary, but the frame catenae may have a standard title for the gospel or give the commentary title as in GA 139. The titles, as well as other paratexts, offer insight into the paratextuality of the texts in Greek New Testament manuscripts, regardless of their format.

The presentation of the catena text, the division of the biblical text, and the ascription of the work indicates that the *raison d'être* for some catena manuscripts was to have a copy of the catena with the New Testament text rather than to have a copy of the New Testament with the catena as a supplement. In such cases, the scriptures are best understood as a paratext to the catena even when their layout and script makes the scripture visually preeminent.

### 2.3. The Composition of the Catenae

The composition of a catena reflects an intentional design by the compiler that resulted in a new compilation that can be classified as a work. At the level of the extracts, scholia were selected from other collections or directly from manuscripts of an early Christian's writing and then edited to fit into the catena.<sup>61</sup> In his study of the catena in Matthew, Joseph Reuss observed that the catenists took exegetical and theological material without the practical exhortations that were also part of the homilies from which these came.<sup>62</sup> Then they strung the comments

<sup>60</sup> Christoph Marksches contends that the titles accompanying catenae are not actual titles as for a book but merely descriptions of the compilation process: “Schon bei den zitierten griechischen Titeln aus den Handschriften handelt es sich ja nicht um regelrechte Buchtitel, die auf ein literarisches Genre Bezug nehmen, sondern vielmehr um eine schlichte Beschreibung des Sammlungsprozesses, der der Publikation vorausging.” See Christoph Marksches, “Wie wurde antike christliche Bibelexegese überliefert und wie soll sie folglich ediert werden?,” in *Handschriften- und Textforschung heute: Zur Überlieferung der griechischen Literatur; Festschrift für Dieter Harlfinger aus Anlass seines 70. Geburtstages*, ed. Christian Brockman, Daniel Deckers, Lutz Koch, and Stefano Valente, *Serta Graeca* 30 (Wiesbaden: Reichert, 2014), 149. This seems too fine a distinction.

<sup>61</sup> On the principles guiding the composition of catenae, see Mathilde Aussedat, “Les chaînes exégétiques: Une forme littéraire et une pratique d'érudition florissantes dans le domaine de l'exégèse de la langue grecque,” in *Le païen, le chrétien, le profane: Recherches sur l'Antiquité tardive*, ed. Benjamin Goldlust and François Ploton-Nicollet (Paris: Presses de l'Université Paris-Sorbonne, 2009), 169–79.

<sup>62</sup> Joseph Reuss, *Matthäus-Kommentare aus der griechischen Kirche: aus Katenenhandschriften gesammelt und herausgegeben*, TUGAL 61 (Berlin: Akademie, 1957), xviii–xix. The Peter of Laodicea catenae show a similar exegetical focus: C. F. Georg Heinrici, *Des Petrus von Laodicea Erklärung des Matthäusevangeliums*, *Beiträge zur Geschichte und Erklärung des Neuen Testaments* 5 (Leipzig: Dürr, 1908), xxviii–xxxii.

together by adding introductory or transitional phrases to form a coherent work. The comments themselves were typically edited from the direct source to accommodate the catena. These changes may range from the alteration of verb tenses to even making a new paraphrase of a source.<sup>63</sup> The selection and editorial process unique to each type of catena results in a new work distinct from the other commentaries circulating at the same time.

A similar pattern also exists on a large plane across the gospels. Catenaes were composed as a systematic project for interpreting the scriptures, and those on a particular corpus were meant to be read together. In the gospels, the same persons usually composed catenaes for three of the gospels—Matthew, Luke, and John—and these catenaes were often bound together in the same manuscripts.<sup>64</sup> One case is the earliest catenaes on Matthew (C110.1), Luke (C130), and John (C140.1). Two aspects of the composition of these catenaes point toward the catenist's intent for these to be read together. First, the catenist likely formed the catena in the order Matthew–John–Luke, an order that is reflected in many of the manuscripts with these catena types that differs from the order found in most other catena manuscripts on the gospels.<sup>65</sup> Reorganizing the usual order of the gospels seems to have facilitated the interpretive goals of the catenist. Matthew and John have fewer parallels and held a place of priority in early Christianity, so they were interpreted first. Then Luke was read next as another gospel with non-Matthean material. The omission of Mark appears to be an intentional choice because it offered little new information after the other gospels were read.<sup>66</sup> Second, the catenist took a distinctive approach to composing the catena in Luke. They did not include scholia on many of the parallel passages between Matthew and Luke. Instead, at these points a comment was added—often signaled with a script change or other distinguishing mark—that listed either chapter titles or explicit references to the text in Luke that were being skipped and concluded with the phrase *προεγράφη εἰς τὸ κατὰ Ματθαῖον* (“it has already been written in [the Gospel] according to Matthew”).<sup>67</sup> Since the C130 catena on Luke is nearly always included in manuscripts with the C110.1 catena on Matthew, it is evident that the reader was being directed back to the catenist's work on Matthew. And since these interventions correspond to the Eusebian apparatus along with the *kephalaia* and *titloi*, the reader could use those paratexts to refer to the correct place in Matthew.<sup>68</sup> In this way, each catena on a gospel was not conceived only as

<sup>63</sup> On the techniques of editing scholia from their sources, see Carmelo Curti, *La catena palestinese sui Salmi graduali: Introduzione, edizione critica, traduzione, note di commento e indici* (Catania: Università di Catania, 2003), xii. On these techniques in later Byzantine edited collections, see Panagiotis Manafis, “The *Excerpta Anonymi* and the *Constantinian Excerpts*,” *Byzantinoslavica* 75 (2017): 250–64; and Panagiotis Manafis, *(Re)writing History in Byzantium: A Critical Study of Collections of Historical Excerpts* (London: Routledge, 2020), 26–42.

<sup>64</sup> Patton, “Greek Catenaes and the ‘Western’ Order of the Gospels,” 120–29; and Joseph Reuss, *Matthäus-, Markus- und Johannes-Katenen nach den handschriftlichen Quellen untersucht*, NTAbh 18.4–5 (Münster: Aschendorff, 1941).

<sup>65</sup> Patton, “Greek Catenaes and the ‘Western’ Order of the Gospels,” 121–29.

<sup>66</sup> Many catena manuscripts include a catena on Mark composed by a different person, probably for the sake of completion: Reuss, *Matthäus-, Markus- und Johannes-Katenen*, 141.

<sup>67</sup> The *προεγράφη* comments have received attention in many studies on catenaes in the gospels: Devreesse, “Châînes,” col. 1182; Patton, “Greek Catenaes and the ‘Western’ Order of the Gospels,” 123–25; Max Rauer, *Der dem Petrus von Laodicea zugeschriebene Lukaskommentar*, NTAbh 8 (Münster: Aschendorff, 1920), 71; Rauer, *Die Homilien zu Lukas*, xxxviii; Sickenberger, *Titus von Bostra*, 24; Harold Smith, “The Sources of Victor of Antioch's Commentary on Mark,” *JTS* 19.76 (1918): 352.

<sup>68</sup> On using the Eusebian apparatus and the *kephalaia* in gospels reading and exegesis, see Jeremiah Coogan, “Mapping the Fourfold Gospel: Textual Geography in the Eusebian Apparatus,” *J ECS*

a standalone work but as a part of a larger project across the gospels. While no other catenist used the same cross-references appearing in the C130 catena on Luke, each of the catenists in the gospels seems to have completed work on at least Matthew, Luke, and John, which are frequently contained in the same codices, often with one of the separately written catenae on Mark added.<sup>69</sup> Having been bound together consistently, though not invariably, supports the argument that the catenae themselves are works and that copies of them are witnesses. The composition of the catenae, both internally in the editing of the scholia and externally in their correlation to other catenae on the gospels by the same catenist, reinforces that the catenae were conceived as a work that maintains its relevance and meaning with or without the full biblical text.

### 3. Conclusion

Catena manuscripts obscure the conventional distinctions between text and paratext that are usually clear in Greek New Testament manuscripts. The questions about the nature of catena texts and the ambiguities in catena manuscripts have led to their being viewed merely as paratextual explanations of the biblical text that were secondary to the sacred words on the same page.<sup>70</sup> The transmission of the catenae, the presentation of the text on the page, and their composition establishes that Greek New Testament catena manuscripts usually constitute copies of an existing text rather than the free work of the scribe. It is also apparent that in some manuscripts—especially in alternating catenae with the full biblical text and in frame catenae, like Codex Zacynthius—the biblical text often should be understood as a paratext facilitating the use of the commentary.<sup>71</sup> Recognizing this pattern of paratextuality does not mean all catena manuscripts exhibit this paratextual relationship. Catena manuscripts in alternating format

---

25.3 (2017): 354–57; Coogan, “Transmission and Transformation of the Eusebian Gospel Apparatus in Greek Medieval Manuscripts,” in *Canones: The Art of Harmony*, ed. Alessandro Bausi, Bruno Reudenbach, and Hanna Wimmer, *Studies in Manuscript Cultures* 18 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2020), 42–44; Coogan, *Eusebius the Evangelist: Rewriting the Fourfold Gospel in Late Antiquity*, *Culture of Reading in the Ancient Mediterranean* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2023); Matthew R. Crawford, “Severus of Antioch on Gospel Reading with the Eusebian Canon Tables,” in *Gospel Reading and Reception in Early Christian Literature*, ed. Andrew J. Byers, Madison N. Pierce, and Simon Gathercole (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022): 215–33; Crawford, *The Eusebian Canon Tables: Ordering Textual Knowledge in Late Antiquity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 96–121; J. R. Edwards, “The Hermeneutical Significance of Chapter Divisions in Ancient Gospel Manuscripts,” *NTS* 56 (2010): 413–26.

<sup>69</sup> Owing to their exceptional length, the catenae compiled by Nicetas of Heraclea are copied in codices covering only one book. The Nicetas catenae are the ones about which the most complete information on the date and place of their composition exists: Christos T. Krikones, *Συναγωγή Πατερων εις το κατα Λουκαν Ευαγγελιον: Υπο Νικητα Ηρακλειας (Κατα τον Κωδικα Ιβηρων 371)*, *Βυζαντινα Κειμενα Και Μελεται* 9 (Thessaloniki: Kentron Byzantinon Ereunon, 1976), 17–25; Bram Roosen, “The Works of Nicetas Heracleensis (ὁ τοῦ Σεργῶν),” *Byzantion* 69 (1999): 135–38.

<sup>70</sup> For example, Daniel B. Wallace, “Medieval Manuscripts and Modern Evangelicals: Lessons from the Past, Guidance for the Future,” *JETS* 60 (2017): 30–32: “The sacred writings are marked out in a special way and are considered of greater importance than the commentary. These medieval scribes understood the significance of Scripture and made sure to highlight it over *comments* about it” (emphasis original).

<sup>71</sup> The phenomenon of the paratext becoming the text has also occurred in gaming media: Mia Consalvo, “When Paratexts Become Texts: De-centering the Game-as-Text,” *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 34 (2017): 177–83.

with an abridged biblical text are best understood as a single commentary text with the short *lemmata* as an integrated part of the work. The question remains open concerning frame or full-text alternating catenae without the indicators described in this article. Nor does it mean that textual scholars are misguided in using the biblical text in some of these manuscripts as a source for the initial text of the New Testament. Rather, it may add nuance and understanding to peculiarities found in these manuscripts. In that case, recognizing these manuscripts as catena manuscripts—which is not readily apparent in the Gregory-Aland system—and understanding the paratextuality of the biblical text or catena text makes for better evaluations of them as witnesses to the Greek New Testament.<sup>72</sup> Additionally, clarifying the nature of the catena as a work, regardless of whether or not it is a paratext in a particular manuscript, enhances the understanding of these texts and invites further studies on their development and editions of different catenae on each biblical book.

---

<sup>72</sup> Houghton proposes the addition of the prefix K for *Katene* before the Gregory-Aland number in future editions of the *Editio Critica Maior* and hand editions of the Greek New Testament. See Houghton, “Catena Manuscripts in the *Editio Critica Maior*.”





GA 033 X / Full / Alt.	GA 807 XII / Full / Alt.	GA 055 X / Abr. / Alt.	GA 1411 X / Abr. / Alt.	GA 2110 X / Abr. / Alt.	GA 20 X / Full / Frm.	GA 773 X / Full / Frm.
		Luke 1:2b <b>οἱ ἀπαρχῆς</b> δὲ εἶπεν [005] ἵνα τὸ ἀξιόπιστον τῆς συγγραφῆς ... τῆς οἰκείας εὐαγγελικῆς ἱστορίας	Luke 1:2b <b>οἱ ἀπαρχῆς</b> δὲ εἶπεν [005] ἵνα τὸ ἀξιόπιστον τῆς συγγραφῆς ... τῆς οἰκείας εὐαγγελικῆς ἱστορίας	Luke 1:2b <b>οἱ ἀπαρχῆς</b> δὲ εἶπεν [005] ἵνα τὸ ἀξιόπιστον τῆς συγγραφῆς ... τῆς οἰκείας εὐαγγελικῆς ἱστορίας	Luke 1:2b <b>οἱ ἀπαρχῆς</b> δὲ εἶπεν [005] ἵνα τὸ ἀξιόπιστον τῆς συγγραφῆς ... τῆς οἰκείας εὐαγγελικῆς ἱστορίας	Luke 1:2b <b>οἱ ἀπ ἀρχῆς</b> δὲ εἶπεν [005] ἵνα τὸ ἀξιόπιστον τῆς συγγραφῆς ... τῆς οἰκείας εὐαγγελικῆς ἱστορίας
		Luke 1:2b <b>αὐτόπτας δε και ὑπηρέτας καλεῖ τοῦ λόγου</b> [006] Τοὺς ἀγίους ἀποστόλους δυνατὸν δ'ε ἐκλαμεῖν ... ὅτι δωρεὰν λαβόντες δωρεὰν ἔδωκαν και ἡμῖν	Luke 1:2b <b>αὐτόπτας δε και ὑπηρέτας καλεῖ τοῦ λόγου</b> [006] Τοὺς ἀγίους ἀποστόλους δυνατὸν δ'ε ἐκλαμεῖν ... ὅτι δωρεὰν λαβόντες δωρεὰν ἔδωκαν και ἡμῖν	Luke 1:2b <b>αὐτόπτας δε και ὑπηρέτας καλεῖ τοῦ λόγου</b> [006] Τοὺς ἀγίους ἀποστόλους δυνατὸν δ'ε ἐκλαμεῖν ... ὅτι δωρεὰν λαβόντες δωρεὰν ἔδωκαν και ἡμῖν	Luke 1:2b <b>αὐτόπτας δε και ὑπηρέτας καλεῖ τοῦ λόγου</b> [006] Τοὺς ἀγίους ἀποστόλους δυνατὸν δ'ε ἐκλαμεῖν ... ὅτι δωρεὰν λαβόντες δωρεὰν ἔδωκαν και ἡμῖν	Luke 1:2b <b>αὐτόπτας δε και ὑπηρέτας καλεῖ τοῦ λόγου</b> [006] Τοὺς ἀγίους ἀποστόλους δυνατὸν δ'ε ἐκλαμεῖν ... ὅτι δωρεὰν λαβόντες δωρεὰν ἔδωκαν και ἡμῖν
		Luke 1:3a <b>τὸ δὲ ἔδοξε κάμιοι παρηκολουθηκῶτι δηλοῖ</b> [007a] ὡσάν ει ὅτι λέγει τάχα ἂν και κινδυνεύσαιμι ... οὐ ὅ ἔπαινος ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ	Luke 1:3a <b>τὸ δὲ ἔδοξε κάμιοι παρηκολουθηκῶτι δηλοῖ</b> [007a] ὡσάν ει ὅτι λέγει τάχα ἂν και κινδυνεύσαιμι ... οὐ ὅ ἔπαινος ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ	Luke 1:3a <b>τὸ δὲ ἔδοξε κάμιοι παρηκολουθηκῶτι δηλοῖ</b> [007a] ὡσάν ει ὅτι λέγει τάχα ἂν και κινδυνεύσαιμι ... οὐ ὅ ἔπαινος ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ	Luke 1:3a <b>τὸ δὲ ἔδοξε κάμιοι παρηκολουθηκῶτι δηλοῖ</b> [007a] ὡσάν ει ὅτι λέγει τάχα ἂν και κινδυνεύσαιμι ... οὐ ὅ ἔπαινος ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ	Luke 1:3a <b>τὸ δὲ ἔδοξε κάμιοι παρηκολουθηκῶτι δηλοῖ</b> [007a] ὡσάν ει ὅτι λέγει τάχα ἂν και κινδυνεύσαιμι ... οὐ ὅ ἔπαινος ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ
		Luke 1:4 <b>ἵνα ἐπιγνώψ περι ὧν κατηχήθης λόγων τῆν ἀσφάλειαν</b> [007b] Θεόφιλον δὲ ὀνομάζει πρὸς ὄντινα ... θεόφιλον φερωνύμως καλούμενον	Luke 1:4 <b>ἵνα ἐπιγνώψ περι ὧν κατηχήθης λόγων τῆν ἀσφάλειαν</b> [007b] Θεόφιλον δὲ ὀνομάζει πρὸς ὄντινα ... θεόφιλον φερωνύμως καλούμενον	Luke 1:4 <b>ἵνα ἐπιγνώψ περι ὧν κατηχήθης λόγων τῆν ἀσφάλειαν</b> [007b] Θεόφιλον δὲ ὀνομάζει πρὸς ὄντινα ... θεόφιλον φερωνύμως καλούμενον	Luke 1:4 <b>ἵνα ἐπιγνώσκη περι ὧν κατηχήθης λόγων τῆν ἀσφάλειαν</b> [007b] Θεόφιλον δὲ ὀνομάζει πρὸς ὄντινα ... θεόφιλον φερωνύμως καλούμενον	Luke 1:4 <b>ἵνα ἐπιγνώσκη περι ὧν κατηχήθης λόγων τῆν ἀσφάλειαν</b> [007b] Θεόφιλον δὲ ὀνομάζει πρὸς ὄντινα ... θεόφιλον φερωνύμως καλούμενον
		Luke 1:5-17 <b>ἵνα ἐπιγνώψ περι ὧν κατηχήθης λόγων τῆν ἀσφάλειαν</b> [008] ἐπειδὴ γὰρ ἀκοῆ παρέλαβεν ... ἐν τῇ πίστει διατηρεῖ	Luke 1:5 (allusion rath- er than explicit lemma) [008] ἐπειδὴ γὰρ ἀκοῆ παρέλαβεν ... ἐν τῇ πίστει διατηρεῖ	Luke 1:5 (allusion rath- er than explicit lemma) [008] ἐπειδὴ γὰρ ἀκοῆ παρέλαβεν ... ἐν τῇ πίστει διατηρεῖ	Luke 1:5 (allusion rath- er than explicit lemma) [008] ἐπειδὴ γὰρ ἀκοῆ παρέλαβεν ... ἐν τῇ πίστει διατηρεῖ	Luke 1:5 (allusion rath- er than explicit lemma) [008] ἐπειδὴ γὰρ ἀκοῆ παρέλαβεν ... ἐν τῇ πίστει διατηρεῖ