

6-9-2023

Meddling with the Gospel: Celsus, Early Christian Textuality, and the Politics of Reading

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Published with license by Koninklijke Brill NV | DOI:10.1163/15685365-bja10044
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Introduction

Is Eusebius Also Among the Evangelists?

Many Gospel manuscripts, from late antiquity onward, contain portraits depicting the evangelists Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John with their Gospels. Each portrait identifies an individual Gospel with an apostolic figure who authorizes the work. The late ancient Gəʿəz (Classical Ethiopic) Gospel manuscript known as Abba Gäräma III is no exception.¹ This manuscript, however, includes *five* portraits (Figure 1.1). Eusebius of Caesarea joins Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.² Eusebius becomes an evangelist.³

This depiction of Eusebius as an evangelist gestures to another feature in the same manuscript. These Gospels include the system of cross-references known as the Eusebian apparatus. While the covers of the Gospel books held by Matthew, Luke, and John display crosses (Mark is seated so that the cover of his Gospel is not visible), Eusebius holds a codex (that is, a book with pages and covers) with four sets of intersecting diagonal lines that visually echo his

¹ On the manuscript: Bausi 2011; McKenzie and Watson 2016; Piovanelli 2018: 9–10. The manuscript is among the oldest illuminated Gospel manuscripts. Consensus dates it around the sixth century CE on paleographic grounds (cf. McKenzie and Watson 2016: 31–41, 205–9). Carbon-14 dating conducted in 1999 places the parchment of Abba Gäräma III between 330–540 CE with high probability (Mercier 2000: 36–45). Arguing for a later date on art historical grounds, see Elsner 2020: 109–11.

² The opposite side of the leaf contains part of Eusebius' *Ep. Carp.* When the Abba Gäräma codices were rebound in 2006, this portrait was bound into the wrong volume as Abba Gäräma II, fol. 295v. Digital images of Abba Gäräma II, taken by Michael Gervers, are available at <https://w3id.org/vhmm/readingRoom/view/132897> (accessed 3 November 2019). The image is also published in McKenzie and Watson 2016: plate 2.

³ On the evangelist portraits in Abba Gäräma III: McKenzie and Watson 2016: 51–54, 67–82, 153–55. On the Eusebian apparatus and prefatory portraits: Elsner 2020; Kitzinger 2020. Compare the Syriac Rabbula Gospels (Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Ms. Plut. I.56, fol. 2r), completed in 586 CE; in this manuscript, depictions of Eusebius and Ammonius precede the Eusebian apparatus. On the portraits of Ammonius and Eusebius in the Rabbula Gospels, see Underwood 1950: 110–11.

Later Gospel books in Greek, Syriac, Ethiopic, and Armenian also depict Eusebius, sometimes with Ammonius or Carpius. See, e.g., Rome, Biblioteca Palatina, ms. gr. 5, fol. 12v; the Gladzor Gospels (University of California, Los Angeles, Armenian MS 1); Codex Eyckensis A (Maaseik, Abbey of Echternach); and the Amida Gospels (Baltimore, Walters Ms. 541). Further examples are discussed in McKenzie and Watson 2016.



Figure 1.1 Evangelist portrait of Eusebius of Caesarea. Abba Gärima II, fol. 259v (originally part of Abba Gärima III, fourth to sixth century CE). Photograph courtesy of Michael Gervers.

system of cross-references.⁴ Here we see Eusebius as the author of a system that binds these parallel Gospels together. He serves as an authorial figure for a fourfold Gospel, even as the individual evangelists represent their four individual Gospels.

Devised by Eusebius of Caesarea (ca. 260–339/340 CE) in the fourth century, the Eusebian apparatus became a standard feature of Gospel manuscripts and transformed subsequent Gospel reading. While it originated in Greek, the apparatus accompanied the Gospels into many other languages. It circulated in Latin, Gothic, Syriac, Ethiopic, Armenian, Coptic, Georgian, Slavonic, Arabic, even Caucasian Albanian. For well over a millennium, the vast majority of people who encountered a Gospel manuscript encountered the Gospels in their Eusebian form.

Eusebius of Caesarea rewrote the fourfold Gospel with his apparatus. By employing novel textual technologies, he reconfigured the Gospels according to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John into a durable fourfold unity. His apparatus encodes literary and theological arguments into the textual fabric of the fourfold Gospel and, most significantly, invites ongoing use. The Eusebian apparatus thus stands at the center of the early Christian project of constructing and reading a fourfold Gospel. It illuminates the role of book technology in early Christian reading and, conversely, the role of early Christian reading in the development of book technology. It was the first system of cross-references ever devised for any text and is among the early examples of the column-and-row table as a way of organizing information. In each of these ways, the apparatus offers an invaluable window into the emergence of a fourfold Gospel and the late ancient transformation of textuality.

Critical attention to Eusebius' late ancient innovation can transform how we understand technology and textuality, in early Christianity and beyond. *Eusebius the Evangelist* does this in three ways. First, by centering neglected late ancient developments, I challenge histories of Gospel literature that focus myopically on first-century origins and neglect the subsequent history of Gospel practices. As part of the longer history of Gospel reading and writing, Eusebius transformed both scholarship and liturgy; his reconfiguration of the fourfold Gospel continues to influence readers today. Second, the Eusebian apparatus—and the textual technologies that it

⁴ Francis Watson similarly suggests that the parallel lines gesture toward Eusebius' parallel arrangement of Gospels (McKenzie and Watson 2016: 153–55). Unlike the other evangelists in the manuscript, Eusebius does not stand on a pedestal.

employs—participated in a wider late ancient transformation in knowing. By juxtaposing early Christian figures and texts with ancient literary criticism, scientific thought, and pedagogical practice, I reimagine ongoing debates about the relationship between late ancient textuality and earlier ways of knowing in the Roman Empire and about what, precisely, was new in late antiquity.⁵ Centering practices of knowing—the “how” and not only the “what”—reconfigures historical inquiry about thought and society in the ancient and late ancient Mediterranean. Third, the Eusebian apparatus reveals the paradoxical centrality of marginal phenomena, in the history of Gospel reading and beyond. The margin, so often ignored in modern scholarship on ancient texts, controls how readers access the whole—and shapes what readers imagine that “whole” to be.

A Practical Introduction: Reading, Reception, and Use

Experience and practice are central to this book. I invite you, the reader, to experiment with the textual practices that Eusebius offers by means of his apparatus. I explore numerous practices and technologies that are involved in reading and knowing texts.⁶ My approach extends traditional historiographical and philological approaches by using literary theory, material philology, and reception history to reimagine the long history of reading and navigating a fourfold Gospel.

Textual objects invite use. It is not as though texts sit on the shelf as self-contained vessels of meaning. They must be used, put to work. Let’s take a quotidian example. A recipe is a text that facilitates particular actions. The meaning is realized when I measure out butter, sugar, eggs, and flour in the appropriate proportions and combine them to bake a cake. The text invites use. This is why everyday language blurs the lines between a text and the results of using it. I can say, “That recipe is delicious!” because we recognize a metonymic relationship between the text (the recipe) and the results of putting that text to work (the cake). But this is not unique to recipes or instructional texts. *Any* text is an invitation to use. The *Oxford English Dictionary*,

⁵ Transformations in late ancient textuality and knowing: Grafton and Williams 2006; Chin 2008; Chin and Vidas 2015; Stefaniw 2019; Laval Norman 2019: 22–68; Coogan 2021a.

⁶ My thinking about practice is indebted to Michel de Certeau’s *The Practice of Everyday Life* (1984), Brennan Breed’s discussion of the “ethology” of a text (2015), Toril Moi’s articulation of Wittgenstein’s ordinary language philosophy (2017), and Sara Ahmed’s compelling interrogation of “use” (2019). See also the thematic 2013 issue of *New Literary History* (44/4).

Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, Morrison's *Beloved*, the *Revised Common Lectionary*, and the South Bend phonebook all imply and invite particular practices. One can stage *Hamlet*, read parts aloud in a classroom, or analyze the play alone as one composes an academic essay. Texts are meaningful in contexts of use.

This approach to linguistic meaning employs the insights of Ludwig Wittgenstein, who writes, "The meaning of a word is its use."⁷ A word is not a canister that carries its "meaning" within it; as humans, we put words to use, in a wide variety of circumstances, in order to *do* things. Wittgenstein refers to "the meaning of a *word*," but we can extend this idea beyond words and sentences to longer texts and to written artifacts. Wittgenstein's idea that *meaning is use* undergirds my approach to how texts, including the Eusebian apparatus, work. The apparatus affords possibilities for reading and knowing Gospels: for using them. Eusebius' project offers new kinds of access and new creative arrangements of Gospel material. The apparatus thus rewrites the Gospels. Yet the Eusebian apparatus needs to be *put to use*. Like a collection of recipes or the script of *Hamlet*, the apparatus invites the reader to put a textual object to work and to see the results. The Eusebian apparatus offers robust possibilities for putting a fourfold Gospel to use. It offers a recipe, a set of instructions, for reading and rewriting the Gospels again and again.

To understand the Eusebian apparatus, we must practice reading the Gospels *using* the apparatus.⁸ Throughout this book, then, we will use the Eusebian apparatus to see what it tells us about itself, about the Gospels, and about reading and knowing in late antiquity. Moreover, we will observe other readers putting the Eusebian apparatus to use for their own varied ends. Reception reveals the manifold uses afforded by Eusebius' intervention.

Over time, readers have approached the Eusebian apparatus in many ways. Twenty-first-century Euro-American readers primarily encounter the Eusebian apparatus in the margins of a printed edition or in digital manuscript images. Many other readers, from late ancient scholars to present-day Ethiopic and Syriac reading communities, have employed the Eusebian apparatus in an enormous number of manuscript configurations. Yet tracing the history of reading is difficult, since, as Roger Chartier states, reading "only

⁷ Wittgenstein 1952: §43. Intricate and spirited debates rage over Wittgenstein. We need not enter them here. It suffices that my reading makes good sense of what happens when humans interact with textual artifacts. My reading of Wittgenstein is indebted to Moi 2017.

⁸ This attention to histories of use is shaped by Hans Robert Jauss's notion of *Rezeptionsgeschichte* (1977). Cf. Breed 2014 for a different framework, still focused on what texts do and what people do with them.

rarely leaves traces . . . scattered in an infinity of singular acts.”⁹ Subsequent receptions of the Eusebian apparatus, Chartier’s “infinity of singular acts,” reflect the changing practices and insights of readers in their encounters with the Gospels.¹⁰ These traces appear in the use of the apparatus by exegetes and in Gospel manuscripts as marginalia, paratexts, layout, and other features.

My central question concerns the uses that the Eusebian apparatus affords. I adopt this language of “affordances” from Caroline Levine.¹¹ In her book *Forms*, Levine describes social structures and literary features as “forms.” Both are “*an arrangement of elements—an ordering, patterning, or shaping*.”¹² Any form has affordances. To cite Levine again:

Affordance is a term used to describe the potential uses or actions latent in material and designs. Glass affords transparency and brittleness. Steel affords strength, smoothness, hardness, and durability. Cotton affords fluffiness, but also breathable cloth when it is spun into yarn and thread. Specific designs, which organize these materials, then lay claim to their own range of affordances. A fork affords stabbing and scooping. A doorknob affords not only hardness and durability, but also turning, pushing, and pulling. Designed things may also have unexpected affordances generated by imaginative users: we may hang signs or clothes on a doorknob, for example, or use a fork to pry open a lid, and so expand the intended affordances of an object.¹³

This concept of affordances illuminates the Eusebian apparatus. Specific designs, specific textual technologies, afford different possibilities for reading. Systems of division—modern chapter and verse numbers, page numbers, or Eusebian sections—offer reference and segmentation. Section headings summarize and divide. Tables of contents afford structure and

⁹ Chartier 1994: 1–2. Marginalia and reading practices: Jackson 2001; Orgel 2015: 1–29; Treharne 2020.

¹⁰ How a reader approaches a book is shaped both by the physical object (format, size, language, layout, paratexts, and so forth) and by individual and cultural expectations, what Chartier terms “reading practices.” Particularly significant for the study of the Roman Mediterranean is William Johnson’s influential study of reading as a social system, a “reading culture” (Johnson 2010, expanding on Johnson 2000). While Johnson focuses on elite figures in the first and second centuries CE, he provides a model for similar analyses of other readers, including early Christians. Keith 2020 has deployed Johnson’s insights to analyze early Gospel literature.

¹¹ Levine 2015: 6–7. This language derives from the work of environmental psychologist James Gibson (1966), but my use of the concept is influenced by Levine’s articulation.

¹² Levine 2015: 3.

¹³ Levine 2015: 6.

navigation. Enlarged or rubricated initials afford visual prominence and quick access. The table of contents and the section heading afford referential and nonlinear reading.

The language of the “affordance” contributes to a broader account of meaning as use. Affordances are the possibilities of use latent in an object, both the expected and the unexpected. The significance of any technology, then, is not simply what it makes possible, but what it makes obvious and convenient. This is why some architectural strategies place a building’s stairway in plain view but hide the elevator. Users of the building are nudged to walk up the stairs; it’s the obvious way to navigate the built environment. Yet this may frustrate those who cannot or wish not to use the stairs, perhaps a person carrying a heavy box or a person in a wheelchair. Similarly, the affordances of a textual technology are contingent. They facilitate some actions but steer the user away from others. A system of textual segmentation commands: “Divide here, and *not* there.” Cross-references instruct: “Read X with Y, but *not* with Z.” And so forth. As Levine notes, “We can reflect on the contingency of our own ordering principles when we know that they have at other times been organized otherwise.”¹⁴ Sara Ahmed writes, “A history of use is also a history of that which is not deemed useful enough to be preserved or retained.”¹⁵ The Eusebian apparatus both affords certain possibilities and declines others.

This book is about how readers encountered Gospels, so we will focus on physical artifacts and the experiences of readers. Humans often put objects to use in unexpected ways and adapt existing technologies to generate new affordances. This includes texts. Imaginative readers employ textual artifacts and technologies for novel ends. Eusebius’ fourth-century intervention transforms the reader’s encounter with Gospel text on the page and insinuates particular acts of reading. It rewrites earlier Gospels. But the fourth century was not the final context for the Eusebian apparatus, which continued—and continues—to generate new possibilities in the hands of readers. Reception reveals what Eusebius’ fourfold Gospel can do and become. We will thus observe the apparatus throughout its reception, from the fourth century until the present.

Because of its marginal vulnerability, Eusebius’ intervention is easier to ignore or remove than some other, more invasive strategies. Yet the reticence

¹⁴ Levine 2015: xii.

¹⁵ Ahmed 2019: 20.

of this paratext also amplifies its power, allowing it to shape the reader's experience while leaving a text "unchanged." (I discuss the concept of the "paratext" in the next chapter.) The marginal mode of rewriting is reversible; yet this reversibility does not impede the enormous and ongoing reception of Eusebius' reconfigured Gospels. The apparatus had an enormous impact on subsequent practices of Gospel reading precisely because readers put it to use again and again.

Since human lives and thought seldom obey the disciplinary boundaries created by scholars, my approach is interdisciplinary. I juxtapose ancient textual criticism, chronography, astronomy, medicine, and philosophy with a wide range of early Christian sources, attending to neglected evidence from material texts and technical literature. This capacious range of sources enables us to understand the lifeworld of textual objects like the Eusebian apparatus and to see for ourselves how flesh-and-blood readers in late antiquity and beyond discovered their affordances and pressed them into useful service.

Eusebius of Caesarea and His Context

Eusebius' life spanned a number of upheavals—from the "third-century crisis" of his youth, through the political intrigues and military conflicts by which the emperor Constantine I consolidated control of the Roman Empire, to the bloody feuds between Constantine's heirs after his death in 337 CE.¹⁶ Christian communities in the Roman Mediterranean were confronted by persecution in the early fourth century and by theological controversies, especially those surrounding Arius.¹⁷ This time of upheaval and conflict was also a period of intellectual vitality and scholarly innovation.¹⁸ From the mid-third century to the mid-fourth—that is, over the course of Eusebius' lifetime—both the Roman world and the Christian movement were reimagined.

The city of Caesarea Maritima in Palestine, where Eusebius spent his career, was one of the economic, political, and intellectual centers of the eastern

¹⁶ Third-century crisis: Bowman et al. 2005 (especially the introduction); Ando 2012; LaValle Norman 2019: 22–68.

¹⁷ Eusebius describes the Great Persecution at Caesarea Maritima in *Mart. Pal.* 4.8.

¹⁸ Johnson (2014: 1–24) and LaValle Norman (2019: 22–68) argue that the third century was not as dire as is often asserted. LaValle Norman provides an exceptional sketch of the intellectual vitality of the later third century.

Mediterranean.¹⁹ Boasting a major port because of a breakwater constructed by Herod the Great and located at the intersection of important land routes, Caesarea was a nexus of trade and travel.²⁰ Refounded as a Roman colony (Colonia Prima Flavia Caesarea) by the emperor Vespasian, Caesarea was the metropolis of Syria Palaestina and the seat of a governor of praetorian rank.²¹ As the seat of a governor, Caesarea hosted a military force of some size; a legion was stationed at nearby Caparcotna (Legio) until at least the third century.²² Maximinus Daia, Caesar in the East from 305 to 313, visited Caesarea between 306 and 308 CE; he may have briefly resided there.²³ Archaeological and literary evidence indicates that the city was home to rabbis, Samaritans, Christians, and devotees of various cults, including that of the emperor.²⁴ By the time Origen of Alexandria (ca. 185–ca. 255 CE) arrived in the third century (ca. 232 CE), Caesarea was the seat of a Christian bishop.²⁵ This Caesarean context put Eusebius in the thick of the intellectual activity of the period.

We know little about Eusebius' early life or family background.²⁶ He was born around 260 CE, probably in Caesarea.²⁷ As a young man, Eusebius saw

¹⁹ An excellent description of Caesarea in Eusebius' lifetime is Patrich 2011b. Cf. Levine 1975; Holum and Raban 2005; Grafton and Williams 2006; Patrich 2011a; Corke-Webster 2019: 13–53. While, as Corke-Webster notes, Caesarea was politically marginal when compared with cities like Antioch, it was a significant regional center (2019: 34). For a sketch of late ancient Palestine: Lapin 2012: 8–37.

²⁰ Herod and Caesarea: Josephus, *A.J.* 15.339; Pliny, *Hist. nat.* 5.13. The harbor silted over the course of late antiquity (Butcher 2003: 132). It is unclear how early this affected Caesarea's economy (Patrich 2011a). Five major roads radiated in all directions (Patrich 2011a: 117; cf. Roll 2005). The Bordeaux Pilgrim, journeying to Jerusalem in 333–334 CE, traveled down the Mediterranean coast to Caesarea before turning inland (*Itin. Burd.* 13; cf. 21 [ed. Geyer and Cuntz 1965]).

²¹ Colony: Pliny, *Hist. nat.* 5.13; Patrich 2011a: 71–90. Governor: Wilkes 2005a: 705, 713.

²² Wilkes 2005b; Tepper 2021. A second legion was stationed at Aelia Capitolina, the site of Jerusalem.

²³ Eusebius mentions that Maximinus was present at public executions (*Mart. Pal.* 6.1; 8.3); cf. Barnes 1982: 65–66.

²⁴ Ascough 2000; Patrich 2011b. Rabbinic movement: Levine 1975: 86–92; de Lange 1976; Horbury 2014. Scholars have focused on Origen and his rabbinic interlocutors, but many of their observations extend to Eusebius a century later. R. Abbahu, Eusebius' rough contemporary, is the most prominent Caesarean figure in rabbinic literature. Maren Niehoff suggests that R. Abbahu was “most likely active under Diocletian” (2019: 297). Herod built a temple to Rome and Augustus (Josephus, *B.J.* 1.415; *A.J.* 15.339; Pliny, *Hist. nat.* 5.13; cf. Patrich 2011a: 103–5).

²⁵ Cf. Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 6.8.4, 6.19.16–17, 6.26; Jerome, *Vir. ill.* 54.

²⁶ A *Life of Eusebius* reportedly penned by his successor Acacius (and mentioned by Socrates, *Hist. eccl.* 2.4) is lost. Johnson 2014 offers the most significant study of Eusebius' *oeuvre*. Recent biographical sketches include Perrone 2005; Grafton and Williams 2006: 133–35; Barnes 2010; Morlet 2012; Johnson 2014: 1–24; Corke-Webster 2019: 13–53. Dated but valuable are von Harnack 1904: 106–10; Quasten 1966: 3.309–11; Barnes 1981: 81–188; Bardy 1987: 9–74. Cf. Inowlocki and Zamagni 2011; Schott and Johnson 2013.

²⁷ Eusebius regarded Caesarea as home (*Hist. eccl.* 8.13.7; *Mart. Pal.* 4.8 LR). He described himself as contemporary with figures born between 259 and 265 CE (*Hist. eccl.* 7.26–31).

the emperor Diocletian when he visited Palestine (*Vit. Const.* 1.19). Eusebius benefited from an exceptional education, which implies family wealth and elite status.²⁸ This involved training in philology, including the textual criticism that was integral to ancient literary analysis. Eusebius joined the circle around the wealthy scholar Pamphilus (ca. 240–310 CE).²⁹ Their association was close enough that Eusebius adopted Pamphilus' name as part of his own. They worked together for some time prior to Pamphilus' martyrdom during the Great Persecution in 309 or 310 CE; Eusebius may have been imprisoned with Pamphilus. At some point during the persecution, Eusebius went to Egypt and witnessed the deaths of martyrs there. After a tenure as a presbyter, Eusebius was elevated to the episcopal throne in Caesarea.³⁰ We know little else about Eusebius' life except his well-publicized participation in the christological controversies surrounding Arius. Eusebius continued as bishop until his death in 339 or 340 CE.³¹

Caesarea was one of the "new intellectual centers" of the later Roman Empire.³² It was tightly connected with other eastern Mediterranean cities, especially Alexandria, Antioch, Berytus, Gaza, and Tyre. Students came from a distance to study.³³ The circle around Pamphilus, where Eusebius began his career, probably resembled other third- and fourth-century "schools" like those surrounding Philostratus, Origen, Plotinus, or Libanius, with students living and studying with a respected teacher.³⁴ The Caesarean circles surrounding

²⁸ Eusebius exhibited his education through copious quotations of varied literary works (discussed by Inowlocki 2011: 219). Both Eusebius' rhetorical skill and his polished prose attest advanced education. Pagan authors used by Eusebius: Carriker 2003: 75–154 Corke-Webster 2019: 47–48.

²⁹ *Mart. Pal.* 4.6–8 LR, 11.1e LR.

³⁰ Consensus has held that Eusebius became bishop between 313 and 315 CE, with the *terminus ante quem* as Eusebius' oration for the dedication of the church in Tyre between 314 and 316 CE. Corke-Webster argues that Eusebius' intellectual stature and rhetorical skill might have made him the choice as orator even if he was not yet bishop (2019: 22). The next *terminus ante quem* is the beginning of the Arian controversy around 318, when Eusebius writes letters as bishop of Caesarea.

³¹ Date of death: Barnes 1981: 263. *OCD* proposes 339 CE. Cf. Sozomen, *Hist. eccl.* 3.2.

³² For this phrase: LaValle Norman 2019: 23.

³³ The author of *Orat. paneg.* came to Caesarea, via Berytus, from elsewhere in the Greek East, although his reasons for coming were unrelated to Origen; it was because of Origen that he stayed and continued his studies of philosophy. On the students who came to study with Origen, see Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 6.30. Pamphilus' students (cf. Eusebius, *Mart. Pal.* 4.3, 5.2) came from around the Mediterranean. The Caesarean law school mentioned by the emperor Justin I, *Dig. const. omni.* 7, was probably later than Origen's time. Whether it was active in Eusebius' time is unknown. Niehoff (2019: 296–97) suggests that the law school was founded as part of Diocletian's efforts to promulgate a Latinate Roman legal system in the Greek East.

³⁴ Scholarly circles in the third and fourth centuries: Grafton and Williams 2006; Cribiore 2007; Zamagni 2011; Digeser 2012; Johnson 2014: 1–24; Marx 2016; LaValle Norman 2019: 22–68. These portraits emphasize how Christian intellectuals occupied overlapping social and intellectual milieux with their contemporaries. Attention has focused on similarities between Origen, Eusebius, and Porphyry: Grafton and Williams 2006; Schott 2008a; Schott 2008b; Digeser 2012; Johnson 2014. Note also the dedicated issue on "Origenist Textualities" in the *Journal of Early Christian Studies*

Origen and, later, Pamphilus engaged all the disciplines of ancient παιδεία.³⁵ In a farewell panegyric, one of Origen's students mentions training in logic (*Orat. paneg.* 7), physics, geometry, astronomy (*Orat. paneg.* 8), ethics (*Orat. paneg.* 9, 11), philosophy (*Orat. paneg.* 11, 13–14), poetry (*Orat. paneg.* 13), and other literature (*Orat. paneg.* 13–14).³⁶ Eusebius tells us that Pamphilus too “attained to a great degree the education respected by the Greeks” (παιδείας γὰρ οὗτος τῆς παρ’ Ἑλλήσι θαυματομένης οὐ μετρίως ἤπτο, *Mart. Pal.* 11.1e LR).³⁷ Pamphilus’ circle focused on collecting, copying, editing, and cataloguing Christian texts, especially texts that they regarded as scripture.³⁸

The bibliographic practices of Pamphilus’ circle set the trajectory for Eusebius’ career.³⁹ He engaged in textual scholarship throughout his

(23/3 [2013]). Schott (2013b) and Fewster (2018) describe a “Caesarean” model of scholarship. On a Caesarean “school” under Origen: *Hist. eccl.* 6.32, 6.36; Knauber 1968; Crouzel 1970; Schott 2008a; Schott 2009; Jacobsen 2012; Martens 2012; Schott 2012; Schott 2013a; Schott 2013b; Rogers 2017; Bäßler 2018; Satran 2018. Jewish and Christian scholarly circles in Caesarea: Lapin 2005. Lapin cautions against attributing undue institutional status to the circles around Origen and Pamphilus. Some rabbinic circles operated in similar ways: Tropper 2004.

³⁵ Origen maintained that preparatory studies were essential for a competent reader of scripture (Origen, *Cels.* 3.58; *Ep. Greg.*; *Philoc.* 14.1; Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 6.18.4; cf. Schott 2008b: 271–72; Martens 2012: 25–40). Eusebius describes one of his fellow students in Pamphilus’ circle, Apphianus, as having received an extensive education in Berytus before coming to study with Pamphilus in Caesarea (*Mart. Pal.* 4.3 LR; cf. the description of Apphianus’ brother Aedisius in *Mart. Pal.* 5.2 LR). On Origen’s biography: Nautin 1977; Trigg 1983; Crouzel 1985; Neuschäfer 1987; Grafton and Williams 2006; Heine 2010; Martens 2012: 14–19. The most important source for the biography of Origen is Book 6 of Eusebius’ *Hist. eccl.* On the vexed question of a second Origen: Zahn 1920; Edwards 1993; Ramelli 2009; Ramelli 2011; Digeser 2012; Edwards 2015; Bäßler and Nesselrath 2018.

³⁶ Text: Crouzel 1969. The authorship of *Orat. paneg.* is debated, but scholars concur that it was composed by one of Origen’s students; it has traditionally been attributed to Gregory the Wonderworker (ca. 213–ca. 270 CE) from Cappadocia. Arguments for Gregory’s authorship are based on Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 6.30, 7.14; this position is defended by Crouzel. Nautin 1977: 83–85, 183–97 casts doubt on the identification. Origen’s *Ep. Greg.* 1 emphasizes the value of philosophy and of preparatory studies, especially geometry and astronomy. On Gregory and Origen’s circle: Satran 2018; Celia 2019. On Origen’s pedagogical breadth, see Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 6.18.2–4; Jerome, *Vir. ill.* 54. Eusebius may depend on *Orat. paneg.* and Jerome depends on Eusebius’ account. On Origen’s own education, see Epiphanius, *Pan.* 64.1.1–2 (ed. Holl 1915–2006: 2.403).

³⁷ Violet 1896: 77. Eusebius’ account of the circle around Pamphilus in *Mart. Pal.* parallels the account of the circle around Origen in *Orat. paneg.*, as explored in Penland 2013: 89–92. Eusebius eagerly emphasizes connections between Origen’s circle and Pamphilus’, but this does not give strong reason to doubt the overall contours of intellectual activity in Pamphilus’ circle.

³⁸ Pamphilus self-consciously extends the work of Origen. Philological scholarship in Pamphilus’ circle: Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 6.32.3; Jerome, *Ep.* 34.1; *Vir. ill.* 75, 113; Grafton and Williams 2006; Schott 2008b: 271–72. These projects of editing and cataloguing continue in the work of Eusebius, Jerome, and later scholars; cf. Martens 2021.

³⁹ By bibliography, I mean the practice of organizing knowledge about books (real or imagined), including their origins, order, uses, and material features. Several late ancient figures, Christian and otherwise, exhibit a remarkable preoccupation with bibliographic thinking as a way of organizing knowledge about the world—although perhaps none more than Eusebius. The Eusebian

life.⁴⁰ Our knowledge of Eusebius' work derives both from compositions that circulate under his name and, as recent scholarship has noted, from manuscript colophons and marginalia that trace back to Caesarea.⁴¹ Paratextual proclivities mark Eusebius' *oeuvre*. His *Psalms Pinax* categorizes the Psalms according to their authors, revealing Eusebius' sensitivity to questions of authorship.⁴² Eusebius also prepared tables of contents, headings, and other paratexts for many of his own works.

Eusebius' scholarly output was prodigious and varied.⁴³ Since late antiquity, his reception has been foremost as a historian. The *Chronological Tables*, an extensive columnar comparison of different eras, is among his early projects.⁴⁴ The *Ecclesiastical History* initiated an ongoing genre of Christian documentary historiography and continues to shape scholarly reconstructions of the first Christian centuries.⁴⁵ Beyond historiography, Eusebius produced theological treatises, biographies, biblical commentaries, orations, letters, martyrologies, reference tools, and critical editions.⁴⁶ As Aaron P. Johnson has suggested, a bookish scholarly circle provides a plausible context for a number of these projects, especially the *Gospel Questions and Answers* and tools like

apparatus both reflects and invites such bibliographic modes of thinking about Gospel literature. Cf. Coogan 2023.

⁴⁰ Scholarship has focused on Eusebius as an innovator in book technology and citational scholarship: Mendels 1999; Perrone 2005; Grafton and Williams 2006; Johnson 2006; Schott 2012; Schott 2013b; Schott 2013c; Schott and Johnson 2013; Rogers 2017.

⁴¹ Important is Eusebius' work completing and expanding Origen's *Hexapla* and *Tetrapla*. See Marsh 2016 and Marsh 2021, as well as discussion of the colophons in Jenkins 1991; Grafton and Williams 2006: 184–90; Gentry 2016. These colophons were first published in Mercati 1941; a new edition is in preparation by Bradley Marsh.

⁴² The *Psalms Pinax* is published in Wallraff 2013b; cf. Grafton and Williams 2006: 198–200. The sole extant copy (titled πίναξ ἐκτεθείς ὑπὸ εὐσεβείου τοῦ παμφίλου) is preserved as a prefatory paratext to the Psalter in the tenth-century manuscript Oxford, Bodleian Library, Auct. D. 4. 1, fols 24v–25r. The original context is unknown. Wallraff plausibly suggests it was composed in conjunction with Eusebius' *Comm. Ps.* (CPG 3467). While Wallraff calls it a "Psalms Canon," this paratextual project is not a column-and-row table (κανὼν) but an index or catalogue (πίναξ).

⁴³ Johnson 2014 surveys Eusebius' corpus; cf. von Harnack 1904: 106–27; Quasten 1966: 3.309–45. In late antiquity, note Jerome, *Vir. ill.* 81.

⁴⁴ *Chron.*: Croke 1982; Mansfeld and Runia 1997–2010: 1.111–16; Grafton and Williams 2006: 152–78. Burgess dates the first version of *Chron.* around 311 CE (Burgess and Kulikowski 2013: 123; cf. Burgess 1997). Eusebius mentions *Chron.* in *Hist. eccl.* 1.1.6. For the Armenian version: Aucher 1818; for Jerome's Latin translation and revision: Helm 1956.

⁴⁵ As Schott and Johnson have discussed (Schott 2013b; Johnson 2014: 93–96), *Hist. eccl.* is an exceptionally bibliographic work. It organizes Christian history as a library, structured by authors and their texts. On the impact of *Hist. eccl.*, see Hollerich 2021.

⁴⁶ There has been renewed attention to Eusebius of Caesarea as a biblical interpreter, prompted especially by Hollerich (1999; cf. 2013a, 2013b). Older scholarship on Eusebius' biblical interpretation includes Wallace-Hadrill 1960: 59–71; Grant 1980: 126–41 (mostly with reference to "canon"); Barnes 1981: 106–25; Robbins 1986: 175–85.

the *Onomasticon* and the Eusebian apparatus.⁴⁷ Eusebius does not say when he devised his apparatus, nor does he refer to the project elsewhere in his *oeuvre*.⁴⁸ Although scholars have advanced a number of suggestions about the date of the apparatus, any point during Eusebius' career is plausible.⁴⁹

Eusebius regularly engaged in Gospel interpretation. Although his commentary on Luke's Gospel survives only in fragments, Eusebius offers extended discussion of the Gospels in his *Theophany* and *Gospel Proof*, in addition to shorter discussions throughout his corpus.⁵⁰ Questions of Gospel scholarship appear throughout the *Ecclesiastical History*. The *Questions and Answers* address discrepancies and interpretive puzzles in the beginnings (*ad Stephanum*) and endings (*ad Marimum*) of the Gospels.⁵¹

Already in late antiquity, the reputation of a Caesarean library had grown to mythic proportions.⁵² In the seventh century, Isidore of Seville (560–636

⁴⁷ Johnson 2014: 51–83. Morlet 2017 argues that *Quaest.* reflects the terminology of the grammatical classroom. Others (Johnson 1985; Zamagni 2004) identify *Quaest.* with a rhetorical context. As part of the same project as his *Onomasticon* ("Glossary," CPG 3466), Eusebius prepared several other reference tools, including a (tabular?) glossary of equivalents between Hebrew and Greek ethnonyms, a map of Judea, and an annotated plan of Jerusalem and the Temple (*Onom.*, pr.; cf. Johnson 2014: 79). A short work on *Weights and Measures* (CPG 3506, transmitted under the title *ἐκλογή συντομωτέρα περί μέτρων καὶ σταθμῶν*) is attributed to Eusebius, although the attribution is uncertain. Some of Eusebius' commentaries and treatises might derive from a "schoolroom" context.

⁴⁸ Morlet suggests that Eusebius used the apparatus in *Dem. ev.* (2009: 81, 265, 397–98), but this is inconclusive. Similar juxtapositions of Gospel material appear in *Dem. ev.* and in the Gospel apparatus, but the sequence of composition is unclear.

⁴⁹ Barnes (1981: 122) suggests the apparatus was devised in "Eusebius' youth" (before 300 CE) because Eusebius excluded the longer Markan ending. This is not compelling because in *Quaest.*, written sometime after 313 CE, Eusebius mentions the absence of the longer ending from the best manuscripts of Mark (*Mar.* 1.2 [ed. Zamagni 2008: 196–97]; this material is preserved only in the epitome of the work). McArthur dates the apparatus "early in the fourth century" (1965: 250). O'Loughlin suggests "the late third century" (2010: 1) without argument. Morlet suggests that the canons date from early in Eusebius' career, perhaps during Pamphilus' imprisonment, ca. 307–310 (2012: 14). Wallraff suggests the last decade of Eusebius' life based on the complex use of tables but recognizes that this is "on no firm grounds" (2013b: 13). I agree that the Eusebian apparatus represents a more sophisticated use of tables than *Chron.* or the *Psalms Pinax* (itself not even a table), but this does not suffice to demonstrate a later date. I find it unlikely that Eusebius designed the system for Constantine's commission to produce fifty codices (*Vit. Const.* 4.36); one would expect the prefatory *Ep. Carp.* to be a dedication to Constantine and to mention the imperial commission rather than just giving instructions for using the apparatus. Many scholars have refrained from venturing a date, including von Harnack 1904: 121; Nordenfalk 1938; Oliver 1959; Wallace-Hadrill 1960: 58; Quasten 1966: 3.335; Nordenfalk 1984; Johnson 2014; Crawford 2015b; Corke-Webster 2019; Crawford 2019b.

⁵⁰ Although Wallace-Hadrill argued that the extant portions of a commentary on Luke derived from the final (tenth) book of Eusebius' *Gen. elem. int.* (Wallace-Hadrill 1974), Johnson argues that they derive from a freestanding commentary on Luke (Johnson 2011). Cf. Johnson 2013.

⁵¹ Cf. Perrone 1990; Zamagni 2004; Zamagni 2005; Zamagni 2008; Zamagni 2013; Zamagni 2016; Coombs 2016; Schironi 2020.

⁵² Caesarean library: Cavallo 1988; Gamble 1995; Carriker 2003; Frenschkowski 2006; Grafton and Williams 2006; Marksches 2007: 298–331; Knust and Wasserman 2018: 182–86. Cf. Jerome, *Vir. ill.* 75; 113 *Ep.* 34.1. Carriker 2003 attempts to reconstruct Eusebius' library, although he conflates books

CE) asserted that the library contained about thirty thousand rolls in the time of Pamphilus (*Etym.* 6.6.1). It is unclear whether a “library of Caesarea” was a distinct institution when Pamphilus arrived in Caesarea or whether Eusebius simply inherited an extensive private collection assembled by the prodigiously wealthy Pamphilus.⁵³ In any case, Eusebius had access to an extraordinary collection of books. Excerpting and bibliographic description permeate his *oeuvre*—especially the *Ecclesiastical History*, *Gospel Preparation*, and *Gospel Proof*. Yet Eusebius’ bibliographic thinking is nowhere more exquisitely expressed than in his complex and innovative Gospel apparatus.

Using the Eusebian Apparatus

The best way to understand Eusebius’ Gospel apparatus is to pick up a manuscript or a printed edition and *use* the apparatus. Only by using the apparatus—paging back and forth, holding multiple places with one’s fingers, looking in the margins, identifying parallels, and so forth—do we discover how it reconfigures the Gospels. The Eusebian apparatus consists of three elements, integrated into a codex of the fourfold Gospel (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John). I discuss each of these three elements in turn, illustrating them with images from the ninth-century Greek manuscript known as Codex Campianus (Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, ms gr. 48, GA 021) and the twelfth-century Greek manuscript Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, ms gr. 64 (GA 15).⁵⁴ Eusebius’ system is also printed in the Nestle-Aland editions of the Greek New Testament.

that Eusebius cited with the contents of a library (that is, a unified physical collection of books). Carriker analyzes only *Chron.*, *Ecc. hist.*, *Praep. ev.*, and *Vit. Const.* (Carriker 2003: xiii). Corke-Webster (2019: 35–37) sees the library as a more established episcopal institution in the third century than I think is warranted. Ancient libraries broadly: Houston 2014.

⁵³ Eusebius (*Mart. Pal.* 11) describes Pamphilus as coming from an aristocratic family in Berytus. Pamphilus contributed his own wealth to building the library. Eusebius speaks of πύνακες for Pamphilus’ library, which he attached to the lost *Vit. Pamph.* (*Hist. eccl.* 6.32.3; cf. Jerome, *Ruf.* 2.22; *Vir. ill.* 75). For a later list of Origen’s works, imitating Eusebius’ bibliographic habits, see Jerome, *Ep.* 33.3. Indexing a library parallels Eusebius’ labor of editing individual works. Compare Porphyry’s editorial work on the *Nachlass* of Plotinus (described in *Vit. Plot.* 24, 26) and Possidius’ catalogue of Augustine’s *oeuvre* (*Vit. Aug.*); cf. Coogan 2021a.

⁵⁴ Throughout this book, I identify Greek New Testament manuscripts both by location and shelfmark and by the Gregory-Aland (GA) numbering system. The Gregory-Aland list is maintained by the Institut für Neutestamentliche Textforschung (INTF) in Münster at <https://ntvmr.uni-muens-ter.de/liste/>; cf. Aland et al. 2011.

First, Eusebius introduces his system with a prefatory *Epistle* addressed to an otherwise unknown Carpianus (*Epistula ad Carpianum*, CPG 3465.1). Eusebius describes the features, purpose, and use of his Gospel apparatus. In manuscripts, the *Epistle to Carpianus* often prefaces the Gospels as a whole. It sometimes appears in a decorative framework like the one from the twelfth-century GA 15 in Figure 1.2. In the Nestle-Aland editions, the Greek text is printed in the front matter.⁵⁵

Second, a system of numbers (Greek letters) in the margins of the manuscript page divides the running Gospel text into sections. (Greek numerals are alphabetic; that is, they are represented by Greek letters.) These reference numbers are visible in Figure 1.3. The marginal annotations consist of two numbers (letters) for each section.⁵⁶ The first number of each pair enumerates sections in each Gospel sequentially from the beginning of that Gospel. On this page, for example, five sets of numbers are visible: sections 5 (ε), 6 (ς), 7 (ζ), 8 (η), and 9 (θ) of Mark. Although Eusebius designed these sections for his system of cross-references, later readers put them to work as a general system of references like modern chapter and verse numbers. Beneath each section number, a second number identifies which of ten reference tables (“canons”) coordinates that section with parallels in other Gospels. These canon numbers range from one to ten (ā to ī). The same information is available in the gutter of the Nestle-Aland editions, where section numbers are represented by Arabic numerals and the canon numbers are represented by Roman numerals.

Third, ten reference tables or “canons” (κανόνες, CPG 3465.2) correlate passages. These tables are typically placed near the beginning of a Gospel manuscript. As illustrated in Figure 1.4, the canons are often displayed in a beautiful framework of decorated columns and arches. The use of columns to juxtapose Gospel passages resembles the layout of modern Gospel synopses, although in Eusebius’ system the Gospel passages are represented by their section numbers rather than being written out in full.

Eusebius used this interlocking system of sections and canons to juxtapose Gospel material. For example, if we look at the first row of canon I in Figure 1.4,

⁵⁵ NA28, 89*–90*.

⁵⁶ In Eusebius’ design, the section numbers were written in regular (black) ink, while the canon numbers were written in red (*Ep. Carp.*, ll. 25–30). Later manuscripts (like Codex Campianus) did not always use contrasting colors; place value was sufficient. In NA28, Arabic numerals represent the section numbers, while Roman numerals indicate the ten canons; I follow this practice in references to the sections and canons. As discussed in the next chapter, contrasting red and black ink was also used to organize information in other late ancient manuscripts.



Figure 1.2 Eusebius of Caesarea, *Epistle to Carpianus*. Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, ms. gr. 64 (GA 15), fol. 1v, twelfth century CE. The text continues on fols 2r–3r. Source: gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France.

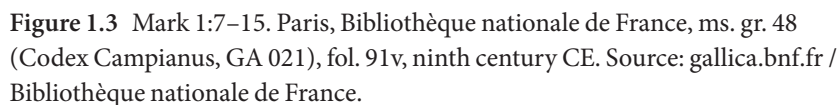


Table 1.1 Eusebius' First Set of Parallels

	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
Section Number (Greek)	η̄	β̄	ζ̄	ῑ
Section Number (Arabic)	8	2	7	10
Corresponding Modern Reference	3:3	1:3	3:3–6	1:23

we find that Matthew §8 (designated by η̄) corresponds to Mark §2 (β̄), Luke §7 (ζ̄), and John §10 (ῑ). The same information is available by consulting the canons in the Nestle-Aland editions.⁵⁷ If we turn to the relevant section in each Gospel, we discover that each of these passages describes John the Baptizer's proclamation. Table 1.1 unpacks the relationships. Using the Eusebian apparatus, we learn that each of these passages has (what Eusebius deems to be) parallels in each of the other canonical Gospels and where to find those parallels.

The canons are not organized as thematic collections—for example, parables, healings, and so forth. Instead, each of the ten canons organizes a different pattern of relationships. The first canon (as in the preceding example) tabulates material found in all four Gospels. The next three canons (II–IV) identify material found in various combinations of three Gospels. The following five canons (V–IX) identify material found in combinations of two Gospels. The tenth canon consists of four sections, each identifying material found in one Gospel only.⁵⁸ In most manuscripts, a header for each canon reminds the reader of which Gospels are juxtaposed there. Table 1.2 shows which Gospels are juxtaposed in each canon.

To understand how the Eusebian apparatus works in practice, we might imagine a reader who wonders about parallels between Jesus' baptism in Mark (1:9–11) and similar material in other Gospels.⁵⁹ If this reader looks to the left margin of the Mark passage in Codex Campianus (Figure 1.3), they will find the letter epsilon (ε̄, representing the number five) and the letter alpha (ᾱ, representing the number one) directly beneath it. This set of

⁵⁷ NA28 (Aland et al. 2012): 90*–94*.

⁵⁸ Eusebius does not exhaust the possible configurations of parallels. A full set of permutations would include Mark-Luke-John and Mark-John.

⁵⁹ Dionysius bar Salibi (d. 1171) uses the same passage to introduce the Eusebian apparatus in his *Commentary on the Gospels* pr. 43 (ed. Chabot et al. 1906).

Table 1.2 Gospels in Each Eusebian Canon

	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
Canon I	X	X	X	X
Canon II	X	X	X	
Canon III	X		X	X
Canon IV	X	X		X
Canon V	X		X	
Canon VI	X	X		
Canon VII	X			X
Canon VIII		X	X	
Canon IX			X	X
Canon X: Matthew	X			
Canon X: Mark		X		
Canon X: Luke			X	
Canon X: John				X

Note: A similar table appears in Nordenfalk 1938: 47.

numbers indicates that the passage is the fifth section in Mark and that its parallels can be found in canon I, which juxtaposes material from all four Gospels. The same information is available in the Nestle-Aland editions of the Greek New Testament; if a reader looks at the gutter of the page, they will find an Arabic numeral “5” above a Roman numeral “I.” To find these parallels, our reader turns to the canons at the front of their manuscript and consults canon I (Figure 1.4). The physicality of this practice is inescapable. Six rows down, the reader discovers that Mark §5 (ε̅) corresponds to Matthew §14 (ιδ̅), Luke §13 (ιγ̅), and John §15 (ιε̅) (Table 1.3).

Table 1.3 Jesus’ Baptism

	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
Section Number (Greek)	ιδ̅	ε̅	ιγ̅	ιε̅
Section Number (Arabic)	14	5	13	15
Corresponding Modern Reference	3:16–17	1:9–11	3:21–22	1:32–34

This information is also available in the Nestle-Aland editions, although the canons are inconveniently hidden in the front matter—suggesting that modern editors have, perhaps, not expected readers to make much use of Eusebius’ system for reading the Gospels together. (After all, a different set of modern cross-references are provided in the outer margins of the Nestle-Aland editions.) Numerous manuscripts, including Codex Campianus in Figures 1.3 and 1.5, also provide the same information in a miniature table at the foot of the page. This convenient adaptation was not part of Eusebius’ design, but it is part of the reception of the apparatus in numerous languages.

Using the information from the canons, our reader can now turn to Matthew and use the sequentially ordered section numbers to locate the fourteenth section (ιδ, Matthew 3:16–17, Figure 1.5). This material corresponds to Mark’s account of Jesus’ baptism, but the section does not include all of Matthew’s baptism account. Matthew’s preceding expansion of Mark is marked as a separate section (Matthew 3:13–15 = §13 or ιγ) and assigned to canon X as material unique to Matthew. One makes similar discoveries by turning to the parallel material that Eusebius identifies in Luke (Luke 3:21–22 = §13 or ιγ).

In John, however, the situation is different. The fourth Gospel does not narrate Jesus’ baptism directly, but Eusebius notes the Baptizer’s testimony that he had seen “the spirit descending like a dove from heaven” (τὸ πνεῦμα καταβαῖνον ὡς περιστερὰν ἐξ οὐρανοῦ, John 1:32) and juxtaposes the surrounding material in John (1:32–34 = §15 or ιε) with the baptism accounts of the Synoptic evangelists. Eusebius’ Gospel apparatus thus indicates both strict parallels and related passages. By means of his Gospel sections and canons, Eusebius guides the reader to discover similarity and difference in the fourfold Gospel. As we will see in subsequent chapters, Eusebius’ apparatus could also be used in other ways, facilitating new modes of Gospel access and creating novel possibilities of Gospel reading.

Histories of Gospel Scholarship

The ornamented arches and columns of the Eusebian canons are among the most recognizable features of late ancient and medieval manuscripts. The canons of the sixth-century Rabbula Gospels (Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Ms. Plut. I.56), for example, appear on the cover of the *Oxford Handbook of Early Christian Biblical Interpretation*, where they represent

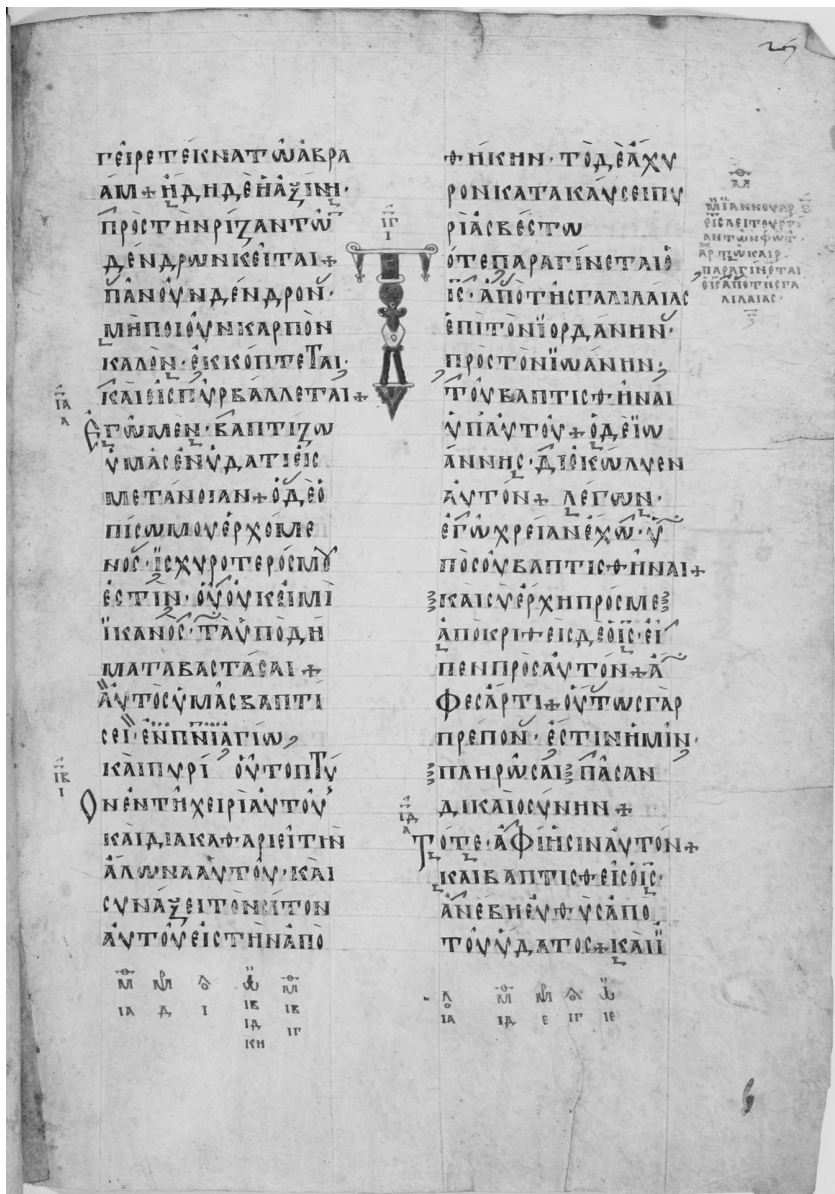


Figure 1.5 Matthew 3:9–16. Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, ms. gr. 48 (Codex Campianus, GA 021), fol. 25r, ninth century CE. The section continues on fol. 25v. Source: gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France.

late ancient Christian textuality.⁶⁰ The decoration of the Eusebian canons, especially in Latin manuscripts, has enjoyed careful scholarship over the last century. Carl Nordenfalk's study of late ancient Gospel canons, published in 1938, remains the most thorough discussion.⁶¹ Other studies examine the canons in specific manuscripts, regions, or periods.⁶² Although Nordenfalk considered textual aspects of the Eusebian apparatus in his monograph and in a few later articles, art historians often neglect the apparatus as a system for Gospel reading.

Until recently, historians of early Christianity have done little to remedy this omission.⁶³ Scholars often misunderstand the apparatus and, as a result, ignore its contributions to the study of Gospel literature, late ancient textuality, and the history of knowledge. In keeping with its enormous manuscript reception, the Eusebian apparatus has been printed in numerous editions of the Greek New Testament since Erasmus of Rotterdam's second edition, the *Novum testamentum* of 1519.⁶⁴ The bulk of textual scholarship on the apparatus occurred in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Caspar Gregory, George H. Gwilliam, Adolf von Harnack, Eberhard Nestle, Frederick H. A. Scrivener, Hermann von Soden, and Theodore Zahn discussed the Eusebian apparatus in their work on New Testament manuscripts.⁶⁵ The most robust engagement appears in John Burgon's

⁶⁰ Blowers and Martens 2019. Similarly, the canons of the Book of Kells and of the Lindisfarne Gospels are among the most famous examples of medieval Latin book culture.

⁶¹ Nordenfalk 1938.

⁶² Leroy 1957; Leroy 1962; Leroy 1964: 139–97; Wright 1979; Mathews and Sanjian 1991; McGurk 1993; Netzer 1994; Kouymjian 1996; O'Reilly 1997; Mullins 2001; Beall 2005; Canart 2008; Mullins 2010; Gearhart 2016; McKenzie and Watson 2016; Elsner 2020; Gnisci 2020; Herbert 2020; Kitzinger 2020; Trinks 2020; Wittekind 2020.

⁶³ Scholars occasionally lament this neglect: Nestle 1908; Nordenfalk 1938: 52 n. 3; Nordenfalk 1984: 96–97; O'Loughlin 2010: 4; Wallraff 2013a: 34.

⁶⁴ The Eusebian apparatus appears in Greek New Testament editions of Erasmus (1519, 1522, 1527, 1535), Stephanus (1551), Beza (1588), Elzevir (1624), Walton (1657), Mill (1707), and Lloyd (1827). It is absent in the editions of Griesbach (1777), Lachmann (1831), Scrivener (1877), Westcott and Hort (1881), and von Soden (1913). Tragelless (1857–1859) and Tischendorf (1869–1872) include section and canon numbers, but not canons. The inverse occurs in the Complutensian Polyglot (Gospels printed ca. 1520, published 1522), which includes *Ep. Carp.*, but not the canons or sections. On the apparatus in Erasmus' *Novum testamentum*: Wallraff 2016: 162–72. Critique of earlier printed editions: Nestle 1908. The apparatus has appeared in the Nestle(-Aland) *Novum Testamentum Graece* from its seventh (1908) edition until the most recent edition, the twenty-eighth (2012). *Ep. Carp.* and the canons are also printed with Eusebius' works in PG 22: 1272–93. Since the completion of this study, an *editio minor* of the Eusebian apparatus has been published as Wallraff and Andrist 2021.

⁶⁵ Zahn 1881: 31–32; Gwilliam 1890; von Harnack 1893: 406–7; Scrivener 1894: 1.59–63; Gregory 1900: 2.861–72; von Soden 1902–1910: 1.388–402; Nestle 1908.

defense of the originality of Mark 16:9–20.⁶⁶ Since Eusebius did not assign sections for these twelve verses, Burgon sought to show that the apparatus reflected the idiosyncratic fourth-century views of Eusebius rather than offering evidence for the absence of these verses in a first-century text of Mark. Over the course of the twentieth century, the Eusebian apparatus appeared in numerous introductions to the New Testament but seldom enjoys more than a few sentences.⁶⁷ Only a few scholars discussed it at greater length.⁶⁸ Recent studies of individual New Testament manuscripts have provided more sophisticated discussions.⁶⁹

Scholarship on the Eusebian apparatus has often been dismissive. Again and again, scholars describe the apparatus as a badly made and worn-out tool, one that biblical scholars should consign to the dustbin of discarded techniques. Rather than appreciating its contributions to book technology and Gospel reading, scholars disparage the apparatus as inferior to modern *instrumenta*. Harold Oliver describes Eusebius' project as an "inadequate critical tool when compared with modern synopses of the Gospels."⁷⁰ Harvey McArthur calls it "primitive."⁷¹ Adolf Jülicher asserts that "no very excessive intelligence, after all, went into [the apparatus]."⁷²

Recent years, however, have witnessed renewed attention to the apparatus, prompted by two broader shifts. The first is a surge of interest, across academic disciplines, in material texts.⁷³ Attention to Eusebius and early Christian book culture was prompted by Anthony Grafton and Megan Williams in their *Christianity and the Transformation of the Book: Origen, Eusebius, and the Library of Caesarea*. Grafton and Williams dub Eusebius an "impresario of the codex."⁷⁴ A second movement is the turn to reception history

⁶⁶ Burgon 1871: 127–28, 295–312. This remains the context in which New Testament scholars most frequently engage the Eusebian apparatus.

⁶⁷ Jülicher 1904: 588; Metzger 1981: 42 (§26); Parker 2008: 315–16.

⁶⁸ Nestle 1908; Penna 1955; Oliver 1959; McArthur 1964: 266; McArthur 1965; Barnes 1981: 120–22; Thiele 1981; Nordenfalk 1982; Nordenfalk 1984; McGurk 1993. The most significant twentieth-century study is the unpublished dissertation of Edward Engelbrecht (1994), which argues that the apparatus was an Origenist Gospel harmony.

⁶⁹ Skeat 2004: 220–22; Jongkind 2007: 109–20, 263–86; Head 2008; Smith 2014b: 139–56; Hixson 2019: 91–93.

⁷⁰ Oliver 1959: 139.

⁷¹ McArthur 1965: 256.

⁷² Jülicher 1904: 588.

⁷³ Significant works that prompted interest in early Christian book culture are Harry Gamble's *Books and Readers in the Early Church* (1995) and Larry Hurtado's *The Earliest Christian Artifacts: Manuscripts and Christian Origins* (2006), although neither discusses the Eusebian apparatus. Recent monographs focused on the Christian New Testament include Allen 2020 (on the Apocalypse) and Keith 2020 (on the Gospels).

⁷⁴ "A Christian Impresario of the Codex" is the subtitle of chapter 4 (pp. 178–232) in Grafton and Williams 2006. On the Eusebian apparatus, see pp. 194–200.

in New Testament studies. These two trends converge in recent discussions of the Eusebian apparatus by Francis Watson,⁷⁵ Martin Wallraff,⁷⁶ Andrew Riggsby,⁷⁷ and others.⁷⁸

Most recently, Matthew Crawford has advanced scholarship on the Eusebian apparatus. His recent monograph analyzes the apparatus as a way of “ordering textual knowledge” in late antiquity.⁷⁹ In the first part of his study, Crawford situates the apparatus in the context of Alexandrian scholarship, including Origen of Alexandria’s *Hexapla* and Ptolemy the Astronomer’s *Handy Tables*. In the second part of the monograph, Crawford discusses four receptions of the Eusebian apparatus: Augustine of Hippo’s *On the Harmony of the Evangelists*, the revision of the apparatus in the Syriac Peshitta, the use of the apparatus in early medieval Hiberno-Latin scholarship, and the tradition of Armenian commentaries on the Eusebian canons. Crawford’s discussion of the Eusebian apparatus is insightful.

In this book, I diverge from Crawford in two major ways. First, Crawford treats the apparatus as a “scholarly” project, late ancient “reception” distinct from earlier Gospel production. Yet this obscures how Eusebius’ project continues previous trajectories of Gospel writing and how it produces a durable configuration that *is* the fourfold Gospel for over a millennium. For this reason, the scope of this book begins not with third-century scholarship but with the earliest Gospel writing. I locate the Eusebian apparatus in an expansive landscape of Gospel production and reception that extends from the first century to the present. Second, Crawford’s focus on the Eusebian apparatus as scholarship limits his discussion to how the apparatus facilitates exegetical practices, but these are only one piece of the puzzle. Eusebius transformed the fourfold Gospel into a new object that facilitated a wide range of textual and physical practices, from liturgy to textual criticism. These shifts in perspective widen our scope, and I thus consider numerous further sources, especially in Ethiopic, Greek, and Latin, from a wider range of genres. Each exhibits the ongoing significance of Eusebius’ rewriting of the fourfold Gospel.

⁷⁵ McKenzie and Watson 2016: 145–86; Watson 2016a: 103–23; Watson 2017.

⁷⁶ Wallraff 2013a: 32–37; Wallraff 2013b; Wallraff 2016. The European Research Council project, “Paratexts of the Bible” (2015–2019), includes the Eusebian apparatus (Wallraff and Andrist 2015).

⁷⁷ Riggsby 2019: 218–21; Riggsby forthcoming.

⁷⁸ Mansfeld and Runia 1997–2010: 1:111–18; Toda 2014; Fewster 2018. Recent work has focused on Hiberno-Latin reception: Howlett 1996: 12–20; O’Loughlin 1999; Mullins 2001; O’Loughlin 2007b; O’Loughlin 2009; Howlett 2010; Mullins 2010; O’Loughlin 2010; Mullins 2014; Crawford 2017; O’Loughlin 2017a.

⁷⁹ Crawford 2019b; cf. Crawford 2015b; Crawford 2016a; Crawford 2017; Lang and Crawford 2017; Crawford 2018a; Crawford 2019a; Crawford 2020; Crawford 2022.

Overview of Argument

The Eusebian apparatus is a pivotal point in the emergence of a fourfold Gospel. By crafting the Gospels according to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John into a durable canonical and bibliographic unity, Eusebius transformed the fourfold Gospel that circulated for a millennium and more. The next four chapters of this book locate Eusebius' innovative project in a broader late ancient revolution in textual knowledge (chapter 2) and in a central trajectory of early Christian Gospel writing and reception (chapter 3), before exploring Eusebius' creative juxtapositions of Gospel material (chapter 4) and his enduring impact on Gospel reading (chapter 5).

Scholars often ignore tools for knowledge production, but, as we observe in the next chapter, Eusebius used innovative textual technologies to afford new possibilities of reading. He creatively adapted the table of contents, an emerging device used to structure miscellanies and reference texts. Drawing on the work of earlier grammarians, mathematicians, and astronomers, Eusebius employed the novel possibilities of the column-and-row table to facilitate newly complex approaches to textual access and analysis. The apparatus provides the conceptual and practical tools to generate new textual practices and new modes of Gospel reading.

In the third chapter, I trace a history of Gospel writing from Mark to Eusebius. Eusebius continued the dynamics of self-conscious, expansive rewriting that are visible in earlier reconfigurations of Gospel material. He was not the first reader to notice the problems and possibilities created by a pluriform Gospel, nor was he the first to rearrange Gospel texts in creative spatial ways—but his technological innovations enabled him to diverge in crucial ways from previous projects of Gospel writing. Using the textual map and the columnar table, Eusebius both preserves the four individual Gospel narratives and creates new possibilities for reading the fourfold Gospel as a unity. He rewrites the fourfold Gospel.

The fourth chapter traces how Eusebius' creative juxtapositions transformed Gospel reading, connecting material in ways that previous Gospel configurations had not. Although Eusebius engages the Gospels in the company of earlier thinkers, especially Origen of Alexandria, both his overarching approach and many of his specific juxtapositions are unprecedented. Here I challenge a pervasive misunderstanding of the apparatus. Scholars since the nineteenth century have assumed that Eusebius' apparatus centered on historical harmonization, reconstructing a "real" sequence of

events behind the Gospels. Yet, rather than advancing an apologetic project to resolve discrepancies, Eusebius declined history as his primary frame of reference. He reconfigured the Gospels to create new patterns of reading based on echo, allusion, and narrative parallel.

The fifth chapter traces the enduring impact of Eusebius' reconfigured fourfold Gospel. Late ancient textual practices are central to longer histories of Gospel literature. The enormous reception of the apparatus—which includes almost every language into which the New Testament was translated until the early modern period—reflects the manifold ways in which readers used Eusebius' Gospels. Ancient and medieval manuscripts preserve not only Eusebius' apparatus but also the fingerprints of past readers on the page. To reconstruct these histories of reading—across time, language, and geography, and in both manuscript and print—I investigate manuscript marginalia, modifications to the apparatus, and use by subsequent authors. From liturgy to textual criticism to new projects of Gospel comparison, the Eusebian apparatus shaped textuality and knowledge from the fourth century onward, and it continues to do so in the present. This capacious approach reveals a history of organizing textual knowledge across languages, cultures, and media. The meaning of the Eusebian apparatus is in its use—past and present.