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Most probably Origen's giant treatise *Contra Celsum* was composed circa 250 AD. Origen is fond of embarking on endless sentences interrupted by *amen*. No wonder then that later scholars and scribes had misunderstood his intentions and interpolated.

Contra Celsum tradition of *Contra Celsum* consists of a single manuscript—the Vaticanus graecus 386 of the XIIIth century. The indirect tradition is represented, first, by an anthology of passages from Origen's works, composed by the monk Luke in 1339. The *Contra Celsum* is on fol. 131^r–216^v, 33 lines per page.

Second, by a second exemplar, full of errors and omissions. When they finished their job they got hold of a much better exemplar, collated it with the text they just copied, and meticulously introduced (in the marginal and suprilinear space) the corrections and additions from the second exemplar (cf. Scherer 57). Although both scribes were engaged in the same task the lion's share belongs to the first one. This corrected text of A, copied by the first hands and marked by Koetschau as A¹, is (as a rule) the best extant text of *Contra Celsum*. The input of the later correctors is less significant: A² (XVth century, but before 1339, when P was copied from A), A³ (ca. 1400) and A⁴ (by Gemadius, patriarch of Constantinople, 1454–1456, end of the XVth century).¹

With Koetschau and Robinson² have recognized that A is the only independent representative of the direct tradition, all the rest of the extant manuscripts being direct or indirect apographs of A. Koetschau (1889, 6–63) described 15 of them comprising Books I–VIII. The most important six are:

P. Parisinus suppl. gr. 616, membranaceus, 29 x 21.5 cm; fol. 367, copied by the monk Luke in 1339 (f. 367^r). The *Contra Celsum*: fol. 27–144^v, 27 lines per page.

1. As G. Mercati, *Dezignatione* 24 (1920) 125–133 and 26 (1922) 140, was able to establish. Koetschau identified A² with Bezaevion.

2. Bezaevion was the first one to do so: *Journal of Philology* 14 (1890) 235–236.

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