

# General Bio of Celsus and the Possibility that the Celsus Who Wrote "The True Word" was not the Celsus who was friend of Lucian

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Wikipedia: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Celsus>

**Celsus** (/ˈsɛlsəs/; Hellenistic Greek: Κέλσος, *Kélsos*; fl. AD 175–177) was a 2nd-century Greek philosopher and opponent of early Christianity.<sup>[1][2][3]</sup> His literary work, *The True Word* (also *Account*, *Doctrine* or *Discourse*; Greek: Hellenistic Greek: Λόγος Ἀληθής),<sup>[4][5]</sup> survives exclusively in quotations from it in *Contra Celsum*, a refutation written in 248 by Origen of Alexandria.<sup>[3]</sup> *The True Word* is the earliest known comprehensive criticism of Christianity.<sup>[3]</sup> Hanegraaff<sup>[6]</sup> has argued that it was written shortly after the death of Justin Martyr (who was possibly the first Christian apologist), and was probably a response to his work.<sup>[6]</sup> Origen stated that Celsus was from the first half of the 2nd century AD, although the majority of modern scholars have come to a general consensus that Celsus probably wrote around AD 170 to 180.<sup>[7][8]</sup>

THIS points out that there may be more than one Celsus, and there is confusion as to whether the anti-Christian Celsus was in fact an Epicurean:

## Philosophy<sup>[edit]</sup>

All that is known about Celsus personally is what comes from the surviving text of his book and from what Origen says about him.<sup>[9]</sup> Although Origen initially refers to Celsus as an Epicurean,<sup>[10][11][12]</sup> his arguments reflect ideas of the Platonic tradition, rather than Epicureanism.<sup>[10][13][12]</sup> Origen attributes this to Celsus's inconsistency,<sup>[10]</sup> but modern historians see it instead as evidence that Celsus was not an Epicurean at all.<sup>[10][11]</sup> Joseph Wilson Trigg states that Origen probably confused Celsus, the author of *The True Word*, with a different Celsus, who was an Epicurean philosopher and a friend of the Syrian satirist Lucian.<sup>[11]</sup> Celsus the Epicurean must have lived around the same time as the author of *The True Word* and he is mentioned by Lucian in his treatise *On Magic*.<sup>[11]</sup> Both Celsus the friend of Lucian and Celsus the author of *The True Word* evidently shared a passionate zeal against *superstitio*, making it even easier to see how Origen could have concluded that they were the same person.<sup>[11]</sup>