

Origen

Scripture, School, and the Long Trial of a Teacher

A source-first historical biography

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1 A Teacher Whose Questions Outlived His Answers

Origen spent his life making Christian Scripture intellectually exacting, pastorally inhabitable, and spiritually inexhaustible. He compared Hebrew and Greek texts, argued with rival schools, trained readers who became bishops, dictated commentaries into a costly scribal workshop, preached to ordinary congregations, and endured torture rather than renounce Christ. Many later traditions of Christian exegesis learned something from him.

The same reach made him dangerous to later memory. He wrote before the great fourth- and fifth-century doctrinal definitions, distinguished the Church's received proclamation from questions still open to investigation, and offered speculative answers about rational creatures, bodies, freedom, and the end. Some proposals were rejected; some were transformed by followers; some survive only through translators who announced that they had corrected him. Centuries after his death, ecclesial acts named Origen while condemning propositions associated with "Origenism." A truthful life must therefore resist both the innocent genius who was merely misunderstood and the finished heretic whose every page anticipated a later condemnation.

The governing question is narrower and harder: how did a martyr's son become one of the ancient Church's most consequential teachers of Scripture, and how can his life, thought, posthumous trial, and continuing Christian reception be told without making admiration or condemnation erase the evidence?

2 Alexandria: a Martyr's Household and a Young Reader

2.1 A Christian child in an imperial city

Origen was born around 184 or 185, probably at Alexandria. The calculation rests less on a birth record than on Eusebius: Leonides was executed in the tenth year of Septimius Severus, when his eldest son was not quite seventeen (*Ecclesiastical History* 6.2). Origen's Greek name and education do not settle his ancestry, legal status, or anachronistic modern ethnicity. The additional name Adamantius is already known to Eusebius; whether it was a birth name, sobriquet, or literary designation cannot now be recovered.

Alexandria was an imperial port, administrative center, and old capital of Greek scholarship. Its Christian communities were not one modern faculty. Teachers, households, catechists, clergy, ascetics, philosophers, Jewish interpreters, artisans, patrons, and readers occupied overlapping networks. Later accounts arrange those networks into a succession from Pantaenus to Clement to Origen. Clement's influence on Origen is plausible and Eusebius calls the younger man his pupil (6.6), but the extent of direct personal study is not independently documented. "The catechetical school of Alexandria" must not be imagined as a continuously chartered university with a surviving register.

Eusebius says Leonides gave his son both ordinary Greek literary education and daily training in Scripture. The boy memorized passages and pressed beyond their obvious wording into questions about deeper meaning. This scene comes from a defender writing about a prodigy, probably with access to family or school traditions now lost. It is credible evidence for the joined scriptural and literary formation that Origen's own works display, not a transcript of childhood lessons.

2.2 Leonides and the desire for martyrdom

Persecution under the prefect Laetus took Leonides around 202/203. Eusebius reports that Origen wanted to present himself with his father, that his mother prevented him by hiding his clothes, and that he sent Leonides a letter urging him not to change his mind on account of the family. The surviving short line is embedded in Eusebius rather than an extant autograph. The concealed-clothes scene is memorable early Christian biography, not independently controlled eyewitness reporting.

Leonides's property was confiscated. A widow and seven sons were left without their former support. This economic consequence matters as much as the heroic scene. Origen taught grammar and literature for pay, then gradually redirected his labor toward Christian instruction. Eusebius also places him for a time in the household of an unnamed wealthy woman who supported an Antiochene teacher named Paul, regarded by Eusebius as heterodox. The young Origen's refusal to pray with Paul serves Eusebius's defense of lifelong orthodoxy. The household itself reveals a less tidy Alexandrian world: patronage could place competing Christian teachers under one roof.

Martyrdom remained the axis of Origen's moral imagination. His later *Exhortation to Martyrdom*, his homilies, and the suffering at the end of his own life show that this was not merely a biographer's theme. Yet desire for martyrdom was not identical with hatred of life. Origen taught, traveled, revised, argued, and cared for churches for nearly five decades. His mature theology treated bodily life as the arena of freedom and divine education, even when his ascetic practice put the body under severe pressure.

2.3 Women, poverty, and the archive's missing names

The mother who kept Origen alive is never named in the principal surviving account. Neither are the wealthy patron nor, later, the women who copied his dictation. Eusebius explicitly calls Herais a pupil who was still a catechumen when she was martyred (6.4); Potamiaena and her mother Marcella belong to the adjacent martyr narrative (6.5), not to his pupil list. Origen taught women and men; anxiety over that contact is one reason Eusebius gives for the most famous claim about his body.

The gaps should not be repaired by invented biographies. The controlled record shows a mother acting to preserve his life, a wealthy woman providing lodging, Herais receiving instruction, unnamed women copying books, and Juliana transmitting manuscripts. It does not show that all these women belonged to one network or that their money repeatedly financed Origen. Their distinct agency can be marked without assigning unwitnessed words or offices.

Claim: Origen grew from a Christian, educated, economically damaged household marked by Leonides's execution.

Witness: Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* 6.1–3, drawing on letters and people known to Origen, together with Origen's later martyrdom writings.

Limit: Eusebius wrote as an admirer and defender about a childhood more than a century earlier. The sequence is strong; dialogue, motive, household detail, and exact age require genre qualification.

3 Teaching, Asceticism, and the Making of a School

3.1 An eighteen-year-old catechist

During continuing danger at Alexandria, Origen began teaching people who came for Christian instruction. Eusebius places him in charge around age eighteen and eventually says Bishop Demetrius entrusted the work to him. Plutarch, Heraclas, two men named Serenus, Heraclides, Hero, Herais, and others are remembered as pupils who suffered in persecution (*Ecclesiastical History* 6.3–5). The list makes the classroom part of martyr history: learning was preparation for baptism and possible public confession, not an insulated academic career.

The institutional language must remain proportionate. Origen probably taught within an episcopally supervised Alexandrian catechetical structure, but the form, curriculum, and boundary between private school, church instruction, and advanced seminar changed over time. Eusebius says Origen eventually divided the work: Heraclas taught beginners while Origen concentrated on advanced students and Scripture (6.15). Emanuela Prinzivalli reads this division within Demetrius's effort to bring Alexandrian Christian teaching under more regular episcopal direction. That is a named modern reconstruction, not a surviving constitution.

Pupils did not all begin inside the Church. Philosophically educated pagans and members of rival Christian schools heard him. Origen's own defense, quoted by Eusebius at 6.19.12–14, says he studied philosophical systems because learned and heterodox interlocutors came to him. He names Pantaenus and Heraclas as precedents. Philosophy in this account is both intellectual equipment and missionary risk. It could clarify an opponent's premises; it could also furnish categories later critics thought had governed Scripture.

3.2 A severe experiment in Christian philosophy

Origen sold literary books for a small daily income, reduced food and sleep, went barefoot for years, and rejected offers of support, according to Eusebius (6.3). Such details belong to ancient philosophical biography as well as Christian ascetic memory. Their literary fit does not make them false, but it warns against treating every austerity as a measured diary entry.

The most consequential report says the young teacher took Matthew 19:12 physically and castrated himself. Eusebius presents the act as immature zeal, partly intended to prevent scandal because Origen instructed women, and says Demetrius later used it against his ordination (6.8). Origen's later *Commentary on Matthew* 15.1–5, extant in Greek, rejects genital mutilation as the meaning of the verse and redirects the command toward moral continence. Modern scholars remain divided. Henri Crouzel and Joseph Trigg accept Eusebius's report while treating the commentary as later correction; R. P. C. Hanson likewise defended its historicity. Henry Chadwick, Patricia Cox, and Mariusz Szymanski give skeptical or deliberately unresolved readings, while Daniel Caner establishes that the bodily practice was historically intelligible without thereby supplying corroboration. The later rejection can represent maturation, but the story also served ecclesial controversy and fits hostile caricature. No subject-authored admission, medical record, or contemporary independent witness survives. This biography therefore records the act as an early, specific, disputed report—neither a secure bodily fact nor a legend safe to discard.

Whatever happened physically, Origen's ascetic program was real. Celibacy, fasting, poverty, wakefulness, study, and willingness to suffer made the teacher's body part of his argument. Gregory's later farewell address praises the consistency of life and teaching. The cost must remain visible: Eusebius himself says the regime threatened Origen's health. Zeal is historically explanatory without making bodily damage exemplary.

3.3 Learning Greek philosophy without becoming a Greek school

Porphyry, the anti-Christian philosopher, supplied an invaluable hostile witness later quoted by Eusebius. He names Origen's study of Plato, Numenius, Cronius, Pythagorean writers, Chaeremon, and Cornutus, and mocks his use of Greek learning to interpret Jewish Scriptures (6.19). Eusebius disputes Porphyry's account of Origen's Christian origins but accepts his erudition. Their convergence establishes serious philosophical study; it does not settle which Ammonius taught Origen or permit reconstruction of a lost syllabus.

Identifying Origen's teacher with the Ammonius Saccas later associated with Plotinus is possible but not proved. Nor is "Platonist" a sufficient summary of Origen. He borrowed philosophical vocabulary and argumentative forms while opposing an uncreated or coequal cosmos or matter, fixed classes of souls, polytheistic cult, and other positions he judged incompatible with Scripture. Whether eternal divine creativity implied successive ages was a different, disputed question in his works and their transmission. In the *Letter to Gregory*, philosophy and the mathematical disciplines become preparatory instruments; Scripture remains the end, and prayer remains necessary to open it.

The result was not Christianity translated without remainder into Platonism. It was a school in which the Bible, the Church's proclamation, ancient philology, philosophical dispute, moral formation, and prayer interrogated one another. Later reception repeatedly broke that unstable unity apart, keeping the exegete while prosecuting the speculative philosopher.

Ascetic evidence. Eusebius's Origen is a Christian philosopher whose life authenticates his teaching. That is evidence for an ancient moral ideal and for remembered practices. It is not permission to diagnose Origen, certify the disputed operation, or recommend his austerities without pastoral and medical judgment.

4 Travel, Ordination, and Rupture with Alexandria

4.1 Rome, Arabia, and the first Palestinian dispute

Origen's fame moved before his permanent departure. Under the Roman bishop Zephyrinus he visited Rome because, in the phrase Eusebius preserves from him, he wished to see that ancient church (*Ecclesiastical History* 6.14.10–11). The episcopate of Zephyrinus supplies the broad range 198–217; a narrower c. 211–212 date is a modern reconstruction. The visit does not establish a Roman commission or a meeting with every theologian active there.

At another point the governor of Arabia asked Demetrius and the Egyptian prefect to send Origen for an interview (6.19.15). Eusebius gives neither the question nor the result beyond a quick return. During the reign of her son Alexander Severus (222–235), the imperial mother Julia Mamaea summoned Origen to Antioch with an escort and heard him speak about Christian teaching (6.21). Eusebius praises her piety; the audience does not prove her baptism

or make Origen an imperial court theologian. Both episodes show Origen's reputation reaching provincial and imperial officials before Christianity had imperial privilege.

Violence in Alexandria drove him to Caesarea in Palestine. Emanuela Prinzivalli, among modern historians, connects the flight with Caracalla's violence at Alexandria around 215; Eusebius calls the event a war and does not name Caracalla at that point. Alexander of Jerusalem and Theoctistus of Caesarea invited the unordained Origen to expound Scripture in church. Demetrius objected that a layman should not preach before bishops; the Palestinian bishops answered by listing precedents. Demetrius recalled him, and he returned. The exchange reveals a concrete institutional question before the later personal rupture: who could authorize a celebrated lay teacher to speak in an assembly?

4.2 A manuscript workshop changes the scale

Ambrose, a wealthy convert from a Valentinian setting according to Eusebius, became Origen's principal patron and intellectual prompter. He financed more than seven alternating shorthand writers, ordinary copyists, and women trained in fine writing (6.23.1–2). Eusebius already knows Origen by the additional name *Adamantius*; its origin and status are unknown. The books did not flow from an “iron” mind directly to posterity. They were produced by timed dictation, correction, materials, skilled hands, money, and demand.

Patronage enabled the large commentaries on John and Genesis, the early *On First Principles*, works on resurrection, and the beginnings of the comparative biblical labor later associated with the Hexapla. It may also have encouraged speed and scale. Ambrose was not merely a passive purse: dedications and Origen's occasional complaints depict a demanding collaborator. The women copyists remain unnamed; their existence forbids the image of a solitary author while the archive withholds individual roles.

4.3 Presbyterate without Alexandrian consent

Around 230–232 Origen traveled toward Greece on ecclesiastical business. On the way, Theoctistus of Caesarea and Alexander of Jerusalem ordained him a presbyter. Demetrius had earlier resisted Palestinian authorization of his lay preaching and now rejected an ordination performed outside Alexandria. Eusebius, a defender of Origen and heir of the Caesarean library, compresses the proceedings and attributes Demetrius's later opposition to jealousy and the old bodily charge (6.8; 6.23). That moral explanation cannot bear the whole history.

Photius, *Bibliotheca* codex 118, later reports Alexandrian assemblies that excluded Origen from teaching and rejected or deposed his presbyterate. The original minutes and full letters do not survive. Jurisdiction, irregular procedure, disputed ascetic status, doctrine, personality, and competition may all have mattered; their exact weight is unresolved. It is safer to say that Demetrius and the Alexandrian church repudiated Origen's ministry, while Palestinian bishops received him as presbyter and teacher. Calling the event simply “condemned for heresy” or simply “driven out by a jealous bishop” imports a verdict the controlled record cannot sustain.

Origen left Alexandria permanently. Heraclas, once his colleague and pupil, assumed the catechetical work and soon succeeded Demetrius as bishop. No surviving reconciliation restored Origen there. Yet bishops elsewhere invited him, and Eusebius later knew letters in which Origen defended his orthodoxy to Fabian of Rome and other church leaders. The Mediterranean Church did not render one simultaneous judgment.

Claim: Origen's Caesarean presbyterate produced a lasting rupture with Demetrius and Alexandria.

Witness: Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* 6.8, 6.19, 6.23, 6.26–27, written from the apologetic Caesarean side and referring to a lost defense and letters.

Limit: The event and divided reception are secure. The original Alexandrian acts, charges, canonical theory, and Origen's complete reply are lost, so motive and precise juridical effect remain disputed.

5 Caesarea: Workshop, Classroom, and Service to Churches

5.1 A new center beside Jewish and Christian libraries

Caesarea in Palestine became Origen's principal home from the early 230s. It placed him among Alexander of Jerusalem, Theoctistus of Caesarea, Firmilian of Cappadocia, Ambrose, clergy, visiting students, Jewish interlocutors, and manuscript collections. The library later developed by Pamphilus and used by Eusebius made Origen's papers and books part of an institutional memory. That later continuity is one reason Eusebius knows so much and also why his life is a defense of the Caesarean inheritance.

The comparative biblical project did not begin with this move. Eusebius places his account of Hebrew and the Greek versions associated with Aquila, Symmachus, Theodotion, and others before the permanent departure (*Ecclesiastical History* 6.16–17). He also says that a woman named Juliana supplied works of Symmachus inherited from the translator, but gives no secure location for the transfer. Modern reconstructions reasonably place continued development of the project amid the books and Jewish-Christian contacts available in Palestine; the surviving evidence does not assign each acquisition or column to Alexandria or Caesarea.

Two exact texts control the ethical limit used here. In *Letter to Africanus* 4–9 Origen reports Hebrew consultation and extensive comparison while also alleging that Jewish authorities removed passages discreditable to their elders. In *Against Celsus* 2.4–8 he calls Jewish Scripture the foundation honored by Christianity, then describes contemporary Jews as abandoned and their displacement as punishment for rejecting Jesus. These passages establish learned dependence, supersession, and collective blame in the checked argument. This publication does not convert them into a complete lexicon or claim that every reference to Jews has the same speaker, audience, or force.

5.2 Gregory's portrait of a teacher

The strongest near-contemporary portrait comes from a pupil traditionally identified as Gregory Thaumaturgus. His farewell address says that he and his brother had intended to study Roman law at Berytus but remained with Origen for about five years. Panegyric magnifies its subject, yet its curricular detail is biographically rare.

Origen first attended to a student's character, using questions and argument to expose untested assumptions. He led pupils through logic, natural inquiry, geometry, astronomy, ethics, and the competing philosophical schools. Gregory admired the freedom to read almost every school except atheistic systems, but the sequence culminated in the prophets and Christian Scripture. The teacher did not give a list of conclusions only; he tried to form readers capable of judgment, prayer, and moral practice.

This school was not identical with elementary catechesis. Gregory was an elite young man with years available for intensive formation. Eusebius says pupils came from many regions and highlights Gregory and Athenodorus, later bishops (6.30). The record is biased toward famous men. It does not tell how women, craft workers, the poor, catechumens, or ordinary baptized hearers experienced Origen's preaching.

5.3 Homilies and the ordinary assembly

Origen did not remain an advanced seminar master. As presbyter he preached through extensive portions of Scripture in church. Eusebius says that only after age sixty did he permit stenographers to record public discourses (6.36.1), although the chronology and the transmitted homily collections are more complicated than a single permission date.

The homilies differ from large commentaries. They address hearers moving through repentance, baptismal identity, temptation, prayer, almsgiving, martyrdom, and moral growth. Their spiritual readings are pastoral exercises, not coded escape from history. Origen can attend to grammar, variant wording, and historical sequence before asking how the same Word judges the present assembly.

The twenty-nine Greek Psalm homilies identified in Munich in 2012 make this late preaching newly audible. Their attribution rests on Jerome's ancient work list, parallels with Latin translations and catena fragments, and internal language and theology. They show why a biography cannot freeze the author in the youthful *On First Principles*: a preacher developed within congregational, Jewish, and clerical settings over decades.

5.4 A consultant in disputed churches

Churches invited Origen when doctrine or discipline was contested. Eusebius credits him with helping Beryllus of Bostra revise a disputed account of Christ's pre-existence and with persuading an Arabian assembly against the claim that the soul perishes with the body until resurrection (6.33, 6.37). The lost dossiers prevent independent reconstruction of every argument.

The *Dialogue with Heraclides*, rediscovered among the Tura papyri, provides a rarer control. It records questions among bishops about Father, Son, and soul, with Origen eliciting and refining Heraclides's formulations rather than merely issuing a decree. The transcript-like record preserves public oral theological testing. It also warns against treating every exploratory sentence in every setting as the same kind of doctrinal assertion.

Under Maximinus Thrax, Ambrose and the presbyter Protocletus suffered as confessors. Origen addressed the *Exhortation to Martyrdom* to them. The teacher who had once watched his father go to execution now wrote for fellow Christians under pressure. Martyrdom, classroom, textual criticism, and ecclesiastical consultation were not separate careers; all asked how the Word could be confessed truthfully when reading carried a cost.

6 Confession, Survival, and the Missing Last Years

6.1 Answering Celsus before the prison

Late in Origen's life, Ambrose pressed him to answer a sustained pagan attack on Christianity. The result, the eight books of *Against Celsus*, was probably written around 248. Origen's opponent had composed the *True Doctrine* many decades earlier. Because that work is lost, its surviving argument must be reconstructed from Origen's extensive quotations and summaries; he is both the respondent and the principal custodian of the case against him.

The reply ranges through prophecy, miracles, incarnation, resurrection, philosophy, empire, war, worship, and the social composition of the churches. It refuses Celsus's picture of Christians as people who flee reason, yet it also refuses to make elite philosophical culture the measure of revelation. The Word addresses simple and learned hearers, and Christian communities form people whom argument alone cannot heal. Origen's last major work is therefore not a retreat into private speculation. It is a public defense of Scripture, the embodied Christ, and an ecclesial way of life.

The date matters. Origen wrote before Decius's measures required sacrifice and certification in many places across the empire. The precise scope, local implementation, and surviving documentation of those measures are not uniform. His argument that Christians serve the common good by prayer and moral discipline would soon be tested against a coercive imperial ritual.

6.2 The Decian ordeal

The measures of Decius in 249/250 initiated a crisis across the churches. Eusebius says that Origen was imprisoned and subjected to bodily torture: an iron collar, confinement, stretching for days, and threats of burning (*Ecclesiastical History* 6.39). Eusebius says that the judge took care not to kill him; the source does not disclose a complete official strategy. Origen did not make the demanded denial. Letters written after the ordeal were known to Eusebius but are no longer extant as a collection.

This is the fullest early account, but it is not a prison transcript. Eusebius wrote roughly seven decades later in the library that guarded Origen's legacy and used the episode as a confession narrative. The essential facts—arrest, severe coercion, survival, and fidelity—are early and specific. Exact duration, medical consequences, and every instrument cannot be independently checked.

Origen was consequently a confessor in the ancient Christian sense: one who had confessed Christ under official coercion and survived. Calling him a martyr without qualification obscures the ancient distinction, for no early source says that an execution completed his witness. His father Leonides, his pupils, Ambrose, and finally Origen himself make persecution a line through the life, but not a line with the same ending in every case.

6.3 What the record does not let the death scene say

Eusebius opens book 7 by saying that Origen died at the age of sixty-nine. He does not there give a deathbed scene, last words, a place, a grave, or a chain of witnesses. The age places the death around 253 or 254 if the reconstructed birth range is right. Jerome, writing more than a century later, places the death at Tyre in his catalogue entry (*On Illustrious Men* 54). That is an early received location, not a contemporary burial record.

Modern accounts often say that torture caused Origen's death. The inference is understandable: Eusebius describes grave abuse, Origen was already elderly by ancient standards, and death followed within a few years. Benedict XVI's 2007 catechesis similarly joins the suffering to a later death. But neither a medical account nor a near-contemporary causal statement survives. This study therefore says that Origen endured the Decian torture and died afterward, probably around 253/254; it does not turn sequence into certified cause.

Nor can it narrate a verified tomb. Jerome supplies Tyre as the death place, but this edition did not control an early burial act, a custody chain, or an archaeological identification. The historical claim therefore stops with the textual absence.

Claim: Origen confessed Christ under Decian coercion, survived the torture, and died at about sixty-nine, probably in 253 or 254.

Witness: Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* 6.39 and 7.1; Jerome, *On Illustrious Men* 54, for the later Tyre location.

Limit: No contemporary prison act, death account, medical cause, last words, burial record, or continuous tomb history survives in the controlled corpus. Origen is securely a confessor; "martyr," death from torture, and a verified Tyre grave require qualifications the shorter retellings often omit.

7 Books, Voices, and the Accidents of Survival

7.1 A corpus made by more hands than one

Ancient lists portray extraordinary output, but no secure total can be made from them. Eusebius says that he catalogued Origen's works in his lost life of Pamphilus and names many in *Ecclesiastical History* 6.23–36. Jerome's *On Illustrious Men* 54 declines to repeat the list and points instead to his Letter 33 to Paula. Titles overlap, works had multiple books, stenographic sermons could be edited, and the lists are incomplete. Familiar claims that Origen wrote two thousand, six thousand, or some other exact number usually conflate units and later reports.

The material system is clearer than the total. Ambrose's money supported shorthand writers who took turns, copyists who produced ordinary manuscripts, and women skilled in calligraphy. Origen dictated, revised, preached, answered questions, and sometimes wrote letters in his own name; collaborators then turned speech and notes into circulating books. A work may be authentically Origenian without being the untouched product of one pen.

Survival added more collaborators. Greek copyists selected some works and let others disappear. Rufinus translated homilies and *On First Principles* into Latin while openly smoothing passages he believed opponents had corrupted or that conflicted with Origen elsewhere. Jerome translated other homilies, quoted Greek passages against Rufinus, and changed from promoter to prosecutor of Origen's legacy. Catena compilers dismembered commentaries into attributed excerpts. Every theological claim must therefore identify not only work and locus but Greek text, Latin translation, fragment, excerpt, or hostile report.

7.2 The comparative Bible project

The name *Hexapla* refers to Origen's monumental comparison of biblical texts. Eusebius describes Hebrew, the Hebrew transliterated into Greek letters, and Greek versions associated with Aquila, Symmachus, the Septuagint, and Theodotion, with additional anonymous Greek versions for some books (*Ecclesiastical History* 6.16–17). Origen also used critical signs associated with Alexandrian philology to mark relationships among readings.

"Six columns" is a useful name, not an adequate codicological description of every biblical book. The order of stages, relation between Hexapla and Tetrapla, treatment of extra versions, physical format, purpose, and degree of revision remain disputed. Was the central goal a corrected Greek ecclesial text, a synopsis for argument with Jewish readers,

an archive of textual difference, or several purposes developed across decades? The fragments do not permit one answer to exclude all others.

The project was neither a modern critical edition nor a crude search for one original wording. It put difference where a reader could see it. Its great size also made it vulnerable: the complete work was not normally copied, and later readers often received extracts or a Septuagintal text marked from it. Modern reconstruction, including the Hexapla Institute’s critical project, gathers dispersed Greek, Syriac, Latin, Armenian, and other witnesses. It recovers readings, not Origen’s desk in full.

Origen also reasoned explicitly about the scope and authorship of Scripture. Eusebius 6.25 excerpts his list of the Hebrew books, his statement that the Church receives four Gospels, and his judgment that Hebrews transmits Pauline thought in a style and diction not simply Paul’s own. The famous conclusion that God alone knows who wrote Hebrews is thus an Origenian judgment preserved by Eusebius, not a modern slogan detached from his canon work. These passages show textual comparison serving ecclesial reception; they do not amount to one unchanging canon list for every congregation and every category of book.

7.3 What survives, and in what form

Work or family	Setting	Principal survival	Historical control
<i>On First Principles</i>	Alexandria, probably 220s	Four books mainly in Rufinus’s Latin; substantial Greek excerpts and hostile citations	An unusually large early Christian systematic investigation. Rufinus’s announced correction and the polemical Greek fragments must be compared; neither alone is a transparent autograph.
<i>Commentary on John</i>	Begun at Alexandria, continued at Caesarea	Substantial Greek books and fragments, fewer than the ancient total	A long-running anti-Gnostic and exegetical work whose books need not express one unchanged moment.
Genesis and Matthew commentaries	Both centers	Uneven Greek books and sections, catena fragments, and Latin translations	Large commentaries differ from homilies and scholia; a detached fragment requires attribution and context before use.
<i>Commentary on the Song of Songs</i>	Caesarean period, building on earlier homilies	Principally Rufinus’s Latin translation, with Greek fragments	Its ecclesial and nuptial exegesis became especially influential in Latin spiritual reading; the translation layer must remain visible.
<i>Commentary on Romans</i>	Caesarean period	Rufinus’s Latin version in ten books, abridging and reshaping a larger Greek work; Greek fragments	A major witness to Origen on Paul, freedom, law, Israel, and justification, but not a transparent copy of the lost Greek commentary.
Homilies	Principally presbyteral preaching at Caesarea	Mostly Latin translations by Rufinus and Jerome; Greek fragments; twenty-nine Greek Psalm homilies identified in 2012	Congregational speech passed through stenography, editing, translation, and collection. The Munich find materially enlarges the controlled Greek homiletic voice.
<i>On Prayer</i> and <i>Exhortation to Martyrdom</i>	Caesarean spiritual instruction, different occasions	Greek texts survive	Direct witnesses to prayer, freedom, temptation, and confession; neither is a complete summary of Origen’s theology.

Work or family	Setting	Principal survival	Historical control
<i>On Resurrection</i>	Early career; exact stages disputed	Lost as a whole; fragments and reports, including hostile reception	The title and dispute are secure, but later accusations cannot be treated as a continuous surviving treatise.
<i>On Pascha</i>	Date disputed	Greek papyrus portions from Tura	A material recovery of paschal exegesis whose damaged state limits reconstruction.
<i>Against Celsus</i>	Late, about 248	Eight Greek books survive	Origen preserves much of the lost opponent while arranging the answer; quotation does not give unmediated access to Celsus.
<i>Dialogue with Heraclides</i>	Ecclesial consultation, probably 240s	Greek papyrus discovered at Tura in 1941	A transcript-like record of oral exchange, not necessarily an author-revised treatise or a council decree.
Letters	Across the career	A few complete letters or exchanges and many extracts or notices	Eusebius saw a much larger correspondence. Surviving pieces cannot make a complete network or development diary.
Hexaplar materials	Begun by the Alexandrian period, developed at Caesarea	Dispersed fragments and daughter traditions	Layout, stages, and intention remain active critical questions; “the six-column Bible” is shorthand.
<i>Philocalia of Origen</i>	Fourth-century reception	Greek anthology of extracts, traditionally associated with Basil and Gregory of Nazianzus	A major route of authentic Origenian material and later selection, not a book compiled by Origen himself.

7.4 Two discoveries that changed the modern author

In 1941 workers at Tura, south of Cairo, uncovered a cache of papyrus codices. The Bibliothèque nationale de France authority record describes approximately two thousand pages, chiefly works of Origen and Didymus the Blind. Among the Origen material were the *Dialogue with Heraclides* and Greek portions of works otherwise poorly preserved. The find restored a setting in which bishops question one another and formulations are tested aloud. It complicated the image built only from systematic treatises and posthumous accusation.

In 2012 Marina Molin Pradel recognized that a twelfth-century Munich manuscript, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek Cod. graec. 314, contained twenty-nine homilies on Psalms corresponding to works in Jerome’s ancient list. Lorenzo Perrone and the editorial team tested the attribution against language, parallel Latin and catena material, and the historical corpus before publication. “Rediscovery” here means scholarly identification of a manuscript already held in a library, not recovery of an autograph. The event is nevertheless large: substantial Greek sermons now stand beside the Latin translations through which Origen the preacher had principally been known.

These discoveries expose the contingency of reputation. The Origen condemned through propositions, the Origen corrected by translators, and the Origen abstracted into spiritual exegesis were all partial. Papyrus and manuscript work restored a consultant and preacher without making the contested thinker disappear.

8 Scripture, Theology, and Questions Left Open

Origen's theology does not sit in one book. It changes register between early investigation, line-by-line commentary, congregational preaching, apologetic argument, correspondence, and oral consultation. It also predates Nicaea, Constantinople, Ephesus, and Chalcedon. Later definitions can identify real limits, but they cannot be treated as vocabulary Origen had already received and consciously rejected.

The conventional book, chapter, and section numbers below expose the witness layer. *On First Principles* survives principally in Rufinus's announced Latin recension; Greek excerpts independently preserve much of 3.1 and book 4, while Jerome and other opponents preserve selected Greek fragments. A locus in that work is therefore not called unmediated unless the Greek layer is named.

8.1 The Church's proclamation and the work of inquiry

The preface to *On First Principles* 2–10, in Rufinus's Latin, begins with a governing distinction. The teaching handed down through apostolic preaching includes one creator God, Jesus Christ who truly became human, the Holy Spirit, rational creatures and moral responsibility, resurrection and judgment, spiritual powers, and the divine inspiration of the Scriptures. On some points, Origen says, the proclamation gives the fact but not the manner. The theologian should connect what has been delivered and investigate what has not been clearly defined.

This is not a claim that Christian doctrine was a blank field. Nor is it a guarantee that every investigation was harmless. It explains why the work moves from confessed premises into proposals about the order of rational creation, embodiment, worlds, and the end. Origen asks readers to distinguish received teaching from an exercise. Later transmission blurred the labels: Rufinus tried to harmonize the treatise with Origen's more secure teaching, while hostile excerpts selected propositions for prosecution.

The distinction remains essential to biography. It discloses a teacher working while much Christian technical vocabulary was still fluid. It also assigns him responsibility: speculation offered under the discipline of Scripture can still be wrong, destabilizing, or capable of development in directions the author did not foresee.

8.2 Reading the one Scripture in several dimensions

Origen received Scripture as one divine economy spoken through many human books. In *On First Principles* 4.2.4–4.3.5, preserved in Rufinus's Latin and in Greek excerpts gathered in the *Philocalia*, he correlates scriptural meaning with body, soul, and spirit. Elsewhere he uses twofold or other patterns. The deliberately literal English research translation used to compare the Greek excerpts is a modern access layer, not a second ancient witness. These are not a mechanical cipher in which every verse yields three separable answers. They name a pedagogy: establish the wording and narrative, seek moral conversion, and perceive the mystery of Christ and the Church.

The literal level mattered enough to require grammatical work, geography, historical sequence, Hebrew consultation, and the vast comparison of Greek versions. Yet at *On First Principles* 4.2.9 he argues that divine providence placed impossibilities, incongruities, or stumbling blocks in the written narrative to prevent a reader from stopping at a crude surface. That claim allowed him to face anthropomorphic descriptions of God and morally difficult commands. It could also license readings whose control is less evident to a later interpreter.

The spiritual sense is strongest when it grows from the text's language, the rule of faith, the whole scriptural canon, Christ's paschal mystery, and the moral needs of the hearer. It is weakest when "allegory" becomes an escape from Israel, the concrete body, history, or an inconvenient plain claim. Origen's practice includes both remarkably exact philology and supersessionist Christian argument. The bounded evidence used here is *Letter to Africanus* 4–9 and *Against Celsus* 2.4–8: the first joins Jewish consultation to an allegation of textual removal, and the second joins honor for Jewish Scripture to collective abandonment and punishment claims. These loci establish an ethical problem in those arguments; they do not authorize a whole-corpus claim that every Jewish figure or interlocutor functions alike.

8.3 Father, Son, and Holy Spirit before Nicene grammar

Against material conceptions of divinity, Origen argues that God is incorporeal, simple, and beyond created comprehension (*On First Principles* 1.1.1–6, Rufinus). The Son is God’s Wisdom, Word, Image, and power. Generation is not a bodily event and cannot be assigned a temporal beginning: an eternally wise Father was not first without Wisdom (1.2.2–4, 7, 11, Rufinus). This line of thought became important to later Nicene theology.

Origen also speaks of Father, Son, and Spirit as really distinct and, in *Dialogue with Heraclides* 1–4, preserved in the Tura Greek papyrus, tests language about two divine beings without dividing the divine unity. The Greek *Against Celsus* 8.12 likewise distinguishes Father and Son as two subsistences while insisting on their unity of mind, harmony, and will. At the same time he orders their activity and uses forms of subordination that later readers could take in incompatible directions. *On First Principles* 1.3.5–8, in Rufinus’s Latin, both restricts the Spirit’s operation more sharply than later doctrine would and denies greater or lesser dignity within the Trinity. The survival of *On First Principles* through Rufinus further complicates any single formula.

Calling Origen simply Nicene ignores the development still to come. Calling him simply Arian reverses chronology and ignores eternal-generation claims that Arius’s opponents could use. He supplied arguments and problems to both later sides without belonging neatly to either.

His Christology is equally developmental. The eternal Word truly assumes human body and soul. At *On First Principles* 2.6.3–6 (Rufinus), Origen uses the soul of Christ, united perfectly to the Word by unfailing love, to explain how divinity and passible flesh meet. That account protects a real incarnation against Celsus and docetic rivals; the Greek *Against Celsus* 3.41 likewise joins mortal body and human soul to the divine Logos. The pre-existent-soul framework of *On First Principles* is not the later Chalcedonian account. Historical fairness neither calls the categories identical nor pretends they address unrelated questions.

8.4 Freedom, pre-existence, and a world of education

Freedom is the moral hinge of Origen’s system. *On First Principles* 3.1.1–24, substantially preserved in Greek as well as Rufinus, argues against astrological fatalism, Gnostic natures, and any division of humanity into fixed spiritual classes. Rational creatures can turn toward or away from God. Divine providence does not merely punish; it educates and heals, adapting bodies, places, trials, and ages to the creature’s condition.

In the speculative reconstruction of *On First Principles* 2.9.1–8 (Rufinus), God creates rational minds. Their differing movement or negligence helps explain the diversity of angels, human souls, and demons; embodied worlds become ordered settings for correction and return. This proposal sought to defend both divine justice and creaturely responsibility: God did not arbitrarily create some rational beings high and others low.

Its liabilities are serious. Pre-existent souls and embodiment tied to a primordial fall do not belong to the Church’s later received account of each human person’s creation and bodily vocation: the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* 362–366 teaches the unity of body and soul and the immediate creation of each spiritual soul by God. A formally elegant explanation can also turn actual histories of birth, disability, class, or suffering into deserved therapeutic assignments. Origen does not furnish permission to infer an individual’s prior fault from present circumstances. Later Origenists developed more elaborate cycles and hierarchies; not every such scheme is Origen’s, but his speculative architecture made some of them possible.

The number and succession of worlds are particularly unstable in the transmission (*On First Principles* 2.3.1–7, Rufinus). In the complete Greek *Against Celsus* 5.20–22, Origen rejects the Stoic cycle in which the same events recur by necessity. He can imagine ages before or after the present order, yet insists on providence and freedom. He expressly rejects transmigration into animal bodies in *Against Celsus* 8.30 and *Commentary on Matthew* 13.1; later claims of metempsychosis cannot simply replace those loci. Exact diagrams offered in later accusations should not be projected backward unless an Origenian locus survives independently.

8.5 Resurrection and the transformed body

Origen confesses resurrection while rejecting the idea that God merely reassembles every transient particle into its former condition. Using Paul’s seed and spiritual-body imagery in 1 Corinthians 15, he distinguishes changing material from a bodily power or principle of identity through which God raises the person. This argument survives

both in *On First Principles* 2.10.1–3 (Rufinus) and, with different detail, in the Greek *Against Celsus* 5.18–23. The Tura *Dialogue with Heraclides* 24–27 also presses the continuity and transformation of the body in oral dispute. The risen body is transformed, incorruptible, and suited to the life to come.

Opponents charged that this refinement dissolved the flesh into an ethereal non-body. Some accusations may answer extreme followers; some expose the risk in Origen’s own language. The surviving record supports neither the caricature that he simply denied resurrection nor the claim that all his formulations match later received teaching. The Catholic confession that the person rises in this flesh, made incorruptible and reunited with the soul (*Catechism of the Catholic Church* 988–1004, 1016–1017), supplies a boundary for reception rather than a shortcut around the textual dispute.

8.6 Restoration, judgment, and the question of the end

No topic has more often reduced Origen to a slogan than *apokatastasis*—restoration. Scriptural texts such as Acts 3:21 and 1 Corinthians 15:28 lead *On First Principles* 1.6.1–4 and 3.6.1–9 (principally Rufinus) to imagine the final defeat of evil, the healing purpose of divine punishment, and God as all in all. Fire can disclose and purify the sinner rather than express divine cruelty. Because created wills are free and God never ceases to be good, the history of correction may extend across ages beyond present sight. The Greek *Against Celsus* 8.72 also asserts the eventual gathering of all rational beings under one divine law.

Several questions must remain distinct. Did Origen teach the eventual restoration of every rational creature as a settled conclusion or as a hope and hypothesis? Did that include the devil, or does persistent demonic choice remain possible? Would a restored freedom be capable of another fall? How do universal-sounding passages relate to homiletic warnings of exclusion and long-enduring punishment? Greek fragments, Latin correction, genre, date, and later Origenist propositions do not yield one effortless answer.

There is enough evidence to reject two extremes. Universal restoration is not a modern fiction unrelated to Origen; it is a real trajectory in his thought. But “Origen proved that hell is temporary and everyone, including the devil, must be saved” states as a fixed system what the surviving corpus often treats as inquiry, exhortation, or unresolved freedom. Later ecclesial condemnation of universalist cycles and the Catholic teaching on hell—summarized at *Catechism of the Catholic Church* 1033–1037—set a doctrinal limit. They do not license alteration of Origen’s text, and Origen’s hope does not license denial of that teaching.

8.7 Prayer, sacrament, and the formation of desire

The large cosmological questions can hide the daily Origen. *On Prayer* 2 and 22–30, surviving in Greek, treats prayer as participation in the Son’s address to the Father and works line by line through the Lord’s Prayer. Three homiletic loci, all surviving through Rufinus’s Latin, make the pastoral range auditable: *Homilies on Leviticus* 2.4 joins conversion, almsgiving, and forgiveness; *Homilies on Genesis* 10.4 requires chastity both bodily and within; and *Homilies on Exodus* 13.3 compares careful reception of the Eucharist with attentive custody of God’s word. *Against Celsus* 8.33–34 treats consecrated bread with reverence and thanksgiving, while 8.68–75 presents Christian prayer and moral service as a contribution to public order. Scripture is not mastered when its hidden architecture is named; it must become virtue.

This pastoral center qualifies without erasing the speculative risk. Origen’s best connections arise when philology, doctrine, prayer, and moral change constrain one another. His most dangerous connections arise when a beautiful cosmic explanation outruns what the Church has received or when spiritual reading displaces a people, body, or history. Both capacities belonged to the same intelligence.

9 Networks of Authority, Labor, and Disagreement

Origen never occupied a single institution that could authorize, finance, and preserve all his work. Demetrius could entrust Alexandrian teaching and later repudiate the Palestinian ordination; Alexander and Theoctistus could receive the same man as preacher and presbyter. Ambrose could finance dictation but not settle episcopal standing. Caesarean custody could preserve letters that the Alexandrian proceedings did not. The life moved through overlapping powers rather than one continuous office.

That structure explains why relationship terms must remain exact. Leonides was father and teacher; Heraclas pupil, colleague, and successor; Gregory a panegyrist-pupil; Ambrose a patron, prompter, and fellow confessor. Julius Africanus was an erudite correspondent whose surviving challenge elicited a substantial reply; the exchange does not prove personal friendship. Heracleon and Celsus survive largely inside arguments written to defeat them. Each relation opened a different kind of evidence, and none gives transparent access to private motive.

The rupture with Alexandria displays the limits most sharply. Eusebius assigns Demetrius envy; later Photius, *Bibliotheca* codex 118, reports two assemblies through Pamphilus's lost apology. No minutes, complete charges, or votes survive. The evidence establishes divided authorization and lasting separation, not a secure single motive or a modern trial transcript.

The manuscript workshop likewise distributes agency without dissolving authorship. Eusebius 6.23.1–2 names more than seven alternating shorthand writers, ordinary copyists, and women trained in fine writing. Ambrose provided resources and questions; Origen dictated, argued, corrected, and attached his name; workers made the output reproducible. The sources do not disclose wages, individual assignments, or how far patronal pressure shaped particular conclusions. They do establish that the celebrated corpus was material and collaborative.

Access was unequal. Gregory's years of advanced study presupposed literacy, travel, and leisure; congregational preaching reached a different public. Named bishops and elite pupils dominate the archive, while a mother, a woman host, Juliana, Herais, and women copyists enter only in bounded episodes. Their presence corrects the solitary-genius picture, but the missing names do not license a reconstructed common network.

Disagreement also produced preservation. Africanus's objection keeps both sides of a textual argument in view. Origen's refutations conserve pieces of Heracleon and Celsus while controlling their order and frame. Gregory's praise, Porphyry's attack, Eusebius's defense, and the Alexandrian repudiation therefore cannot be averaged into a neutral portrait; they must be read as acts by participants with different objects and stakes.

The costs are correspondingly differentiated. Imperial authorities executed Leonides and pupils and tortured Origen; Origen's own austerity endangered his health; Alexandrian authorities ended his ministry there; later translators and excerptors determined much of what readers could hear. These are not one institutional mechanism and Origen did not cause every injury around him. They show why his intellectual history is inseparable from bodies, money, authorization, and the uneven custody of words.

10 Origen after Origen: Transmission, Controversy, and Recovery

Origen's posthumous history was neither one fall from honor nor one recovery from oblivion. Readers separated his exegesis from his cosmology, translated what they wished to preserve, attached his name to later systems, and returned to manuscripts when inherited portraits no longer agreed. The object called "Origen" therefore changed with the archive available to each reader.

10.1 Early criticism and the Caesarean defense

Methodius, near the turn of the fourth century, attacked Origenian accounts of creation and resurrection while also using forms of exegesis and dialogue that show his proximity to the tradition he opposed. His anti-Origen material is itself fragmentary: substantial portions of *On the Resurrection* survive through Epiphanius's *Panarion* 64, while Jerome, *On Illustrious Men* 83, records works against Origen. Criticism thus preceded the Caesarean apology; its surviving form already depends on later selection.

Many manuscripts associated with Origen entered or remained in the Caesarean collection. Pamphilus copied and defended them before his martyrdom in 310. While imprisoned he worked on an *Apology for Origen*; ancient reports associate Eusebius with the six-book project, but the division of authorship and extent of collaboration are disputed. Only the first book survives substantially, through Rufinus's Latin translation. It answers charges by comparing passages and arranging an excerpt-based defense. Rufinus then appended a distinct tract, *On the Falsification of the Books of Origen*, which argued that opponents had altered Origenian texts. The lost Greek, Rufinus's translation and appendix, and disputed collaboration prevent this transmitted dossier from serving as a neutral record.

Eusebius then made Origen the center of *Ecclesiastical History* book 6. His access to letters and books gives the life unique value. His investment in the Caesarean inheritance explains its apologetic shape: lifelong fidelity, fruitful

pupils, episcopal allies, and endurance under torture vindicate the library he received. The historian must use that archive and analyze its defense at the same time.

10.2 Selective inheritance in Greek and Latin

Several major fourth-century writers received Origen selectively. Athanasius quotes his eternal-generation language at *On the Decrees of Nicaea* 27 without receiving the whole speculative corpus. Didymus the Blind extended Origenian exegesis at Alexandria. Basil of Caesarea and Gregory of Nazianzus are traditionally associated with the *Philocalia*, an anthology that preserved especially useful passages on Scripture and freedom. Gregory of Nyssa developed themes of spiritual ascent and healing in a distinct account.

Evagrius Ponticus joined Origenian exegesis to ascetic psychology and a more schematic account of rational minds, embodiment, and return. His *Kephalaia Gnostika* 2.69–75 distinguishes prior and present divisions of rational beings and graded bodies; 3.41 and 3.49–52 map judgment through changes of body; 5.19, 5.22, and 5.25 correlate resurrection with restoration of body, soul, and intellect. The Greek work is largely lost, so these claims are controlled through the unreformed Syriac witness as well as surviving Greek fragments. Evagrius and later readers stand between Origen and some propositions called “Origenist.” Genealogy matters in both directions: this Evagrian architecture is not a verbatim work of Origen, but neither is it unrelated to possibilities in the earlier corpus.

Latin transmission followed other routes. Rufinus and Jerome translated homilies; Hilary and Ambrose of Milan adapted exegetical materials. Augustine’s *Confessions* 5.14.24 recalls how Ambrose’s spiritual exposition removed crude objections to the Old Testament, but does not name Origen as Augustine’s direct source. The line is therefore mediated: Origen informed practices used by Ambrose, and Ambrose helped Augustine hear Scripture differently. It is not a documented teacher-to-pupil chain from Alexandria to Hippo.

10.3 The controversy of the 390s and its competing histories

Epiphanius’s *Panarion* 64, composed in the 370s, had already assembled an anti-Origen biography and doctrinal dossier. In the 390s he pressed John of Jerusalem to repudiate Origen. The dispute drew in Palestinian monasteries, ordination and episcopal jurisdiction, and the former friendship of Jerome and Rufinus.

The reciprocal texts expose incompatible translation ethics. Rufinus’s preface to his Latin *On First Principles* announced correction of interpolations and invoked Jerome’s earlier practice. Jerome’s *Apology against Rufinus* and letters answered with a rival claim to literal exposure; Rufinus’s *Apology against Jerome* returned the charges. Neither polemic is a disinterested report. Together they show that the form in which Latin readers met Origen was itself at issue.

In Egypt, Theophilus of Alexandria moved from opposing anthropomorphic speech about God and tolerating learned Origenian monks to campaigning against Origenist teaching amid conflict with monastic groups. The Tall Brothers fled and were received by John Chrysostom at Constantinople; their petition became one strand in the crisis that ended in John’s deposition. Origen’s name now linked books, monastic authority, and relations among major sees.

Socrates Scholasticus, *Ecclesiastical History* 6.7–17, later narrated these events with sympathy for Origen and sharp criticism of Theophilus. His account supplies an essential counter-history, not an eyewitness neutral verdict. Elizabeth A. Clark’s documentary reconstruction and Samuel Rubenson’s institutional analysis independently show why the controversy cannot be reduced to sudden discovery of a fixed list of propositions: doctrine, translation, ascetic networks, episcopal government, and retrospective storytelling acted together.

10.4 Palestinian Origenism, Justinian, and Constantinople II

The sixth-century conflict did not concern an untouched copy of Origen’s third-century corpus. Didymus belonged to the fourth-century Alexandrian reception; Evagrius transformed ascetic and cosmological themes; Palestinian monks then debated further schemes of pre-existent minds, embodiment, Christ, hierarchy, resurrection, and universal restoration. The labels applied to factions, including Isochrists and Protoktists, come through partisan witnesses and do not provide a complete neutral map.

Cyril of Scythopolis's *Life of Sabas*, at its conciliar conclusion (section 85 in one source division and 90 in R. M. Price's translation), is a major near-contemporary monastic narrative of the conflict and its conciliar ending. It links Origen with Didymus and Evagrius and narrates victory over a movement in Palestinian monasteries. Its proximity is valuable; its Sabaite hagiographic purpose means that its labels and causal sequence still require comparison with texts attributed to the named thinkers and with imperial and conciliar acts.

Justinian intervened in the early 540s with the *Letter to Mennas against Origen*, often described as an edict, and a Constantinopolitan home synod condemned propositions in 543. The terminology matters: an imperial theological letter and local synodal action are not the formal sessions of the later ecumenical council, even when manuscript collections transmit related material together.

The Second Council of Constantinople in 553, received by the Catholic Church as the fifth ecumenical council, names Origen in its eleventh anathema among heretics and condemns him with impious writings. The famous fifteen anti-Origenist anathemas printed in some collections do not survive as decrees of the council's formal sessions; Norman Tanner excludes them from his critical collection of the conciliar decrees. Their relation to pre-conciliar deliberation and Justinian's campaign remains a historical question.

Both facts must remain visible. The received council did name Origen; it did not individually attach every later Origenist proposition to a demonstrably authentic sentence in a formal session. "Origenism" can designate a person, a textual tendency, an Evagrian development, a Palestinian party, or a dossier of propositions. Those objects cannot be silently exchanged.

10.5 Manuscript survival, print, and confessional argument

Direct Greek transmission narrowed, but Origen did not vanish. Greek commentaries, the *Philocalia*, catena excerpts, Hexaplar daughter texts, and the Caesarean historical tradition remained. In Latin, homilies and commentaries translated by Rufinus and Jerome carried spiritual exegesis even where the author's disputed name receded. Ninth-century Photius, for example, still read and summarized the apology at *Bibliotheca* codex 118, thereby preserving information absent from the surviving first book.

Print rearranged the archive again. Erasmus's large Origen edition, published posthumously in 1536 with extensive prefaces and a life, praised the preacher and exegete while acknowledging ecclesial criticisms. Renaissance humanists and Reformation writers then used or attacked Origen on Scripture, allegory, free will, and salvation; "the reformers" did not form one reception. Andrea Villani's survey makes the double movement visible: new access to texts enabled both appropriation and sharper rejection.

Pierre-Daniel Huet's *Origeniana* introduced his 1668 edition of the Greek biblical commentaries. Biography, doctrinal analysis, manuscript search, and editing were now joined in a sustained early-modern research program. Huet did not end confessional argument, but his attempt to inventory evidence became a landmark between patristic apology and modern historical study.

10.6 Critical recovery and a larger Origen

Modern recovery changed both texts and organizing questions. Robert J. Daly's historiography of twentieth-century scholarship maps a sequence from Ferdinand Prat and Walter Völker through Gustave Bardy, Hans Urs von Balthasar, Aloisius Lieske, Jean Daniélou, Henri de Lubac, and Henri Crouzel. Daly describes a scholarly discovery of a more whole Origen: biblical, spiritual, ecclesial, philosophical, and synthetic rather than merely the author of a closed speculative system. The sequence is a history of scholarship, not proof that its authors reached one theological verdict.

Material discoveries prevented that recovery from remaining conceptual. The Tura papyri found in 1941 restored Greek works including the *Dialogue with Heraclides* and *On Pascha*. In 2012 Marina Molin Pradel identified twenty-nine Psalm homilies in the twelfth-century Munich manuscript BSB Cod. graec. 314; Lorenzo Perrone and collaborators tested the attribution through Jerome's list, catena parallels, language, and theology. A consultant and late preacher became more audible beside the author preserved by Rufinus and his accusers.

Current scholarship accordingly studies textual criticism, classrooms, scribal labor, Jewish-Christian relations, philosophy, preaching, gender, patronage, doctrine, and reception. A larger field does not guarantee a kinder verdict. It makes the object of any verdict more exact.

10.7 Catholic praise within stated limits

Benedict XVI devoted two general audiences, on 25 April and 2 May 2007, to Origen’s life, exegesis, prayer, and teaching. He presents Origen as a major teacher whose movement from letter to moral and spiritual sense belongs within the Church and should become love. The catecheses are significant official Catholic reception of Origen’s gifts.

They are not a canonization, a grant of liturgical cult, or an adjudication of the textual relation between 543, the fifteen anathemas, and Constantinople II. Their genre permits learning from Origen without making every proposition his settled teaching or treating historical praise as a new conciliar act.

Claim: Origen’s legacy passed through selective use, translation, real doctrinal controversy, official condemnation, print, and manuscript recovery.

Witness: Methodius and Epiphanius; Pamphilus/Rufinus and Eusebius; Jerome and Rufinus; Socrates; Cyril of Scythopolis; Justinian and Constantinople II; Photius, Erasmus, and Huet; modern critical scholarship and discoveries; Benedict XVI.

Limit: Each witness addresses a different object and belongs to a different contest. No single use of “Origenism,” condemnation, or recovery can replace that sequence.

11 Origen in Tradition: Memorable Claims under Review

Origen did not acquire a stable saint’s Life with an authorized cult. His memorable traditions grew instead from Eusebius’s admiring biography, hostile doctrinal dossiers, shorthand histories of theology, and modern recovery. The most vivid claims need neither ridicule nor automatic repetition.

Memorable claim	Earliest controlled witness	Historical status	Responsible use
Origen was a pagan Greek who converted as an adult.	Porphyry, quoted by Eusebius at <i>Ecclesiastical History</i> 6.19, says Origen moved from Greek life to Christian teaching; Eusebius replies that Origen was Christian from childhood and has already narrated Leonides.	The witnesses conflict. The martyr father and scriptural childhood are integral to the earlier sustained biographical account; Porphyry is hostile but valuable and may have understood Origen through a conversion stereotype or confused biographical detail.	Preserve the conflict explicitly. “Greek” describes education and culture in the passage, not a modern ethnicity proved by a civil record.
Adamantius means that Origen was literally “made of steel.”	Eusebius knows the additional name; later writers explain it through indefatigable labor.	The name is early; whether birth name, sobriquet, and exact original force are unresolved.	It can symbolize endurance only when interpretation is not presented as a registered surname or physical fact.
Origen founded a university called the Catechetical School of Alexandria.	Eusebius 6.3–6, 6.15 describes teaching, Demetrius’s commission, and a later division of pupils; no charter survives.	A real episcopally connected and evolving teaching activity; modern institutional form unproved.	“School” may name teachers, pupils, curriculum, and succession without importing departments, degrees, buildings, or uninterrupted corporate identity.
Clement was certainly Origen’s long-term personal master.	Eusebius 6.6 calls Origen a pupil of Clement; the historical overlap is plausible.	Early received relation, but duration, setting, and curriculum lack independent control.	Speak of probable direct influence alongside the much clearer literary and Alexandrian inheritance.
Origen studied with the same Ammonius Saccas who taught Plotinus.	Porphyry’s extract names Ammonius; identification with Plotinus’s teacher is later reconstruction.	Possible K, not established; ancient people shared the name, and Eusebius also disputes Porphyry’s description of Ammonius.	Use only to establish serious philosophical formation, not a documented classroom lineage from Ammonius through Origen to Christian Platonism.

Memorable claim	Earliest controlled witness	Historical status	Responsible use
Origen's mother hid his clothes to stop his martyrdom.	Eusebius 6.2, written about a century after the reported event.	Specific E biographical tradition, not independently corroborated.	It truthfully depicts remembered maternal agency and adolescent zeal if not embellished into eyewitness dialogue.
Origen castrated himself because of Matthew 19:12.	Eusebius 6.8 gives the specific act, motives, and Demetrius's later use; Origen's surviving Matthew commentary rejects literal enactment.	Early, disputed report. No admission, independent contemporary witness, or bodily evidence survives.	Keep as a serious unresolved claim and warning about ascetic literalism, not a comic anecdote, medical certainty, or fact to conceal.
Demetrius expelled Origen solely from jealousy.	Eusebius gives jealousy as the moral explanation; original Alexandrian acts are lost.	Rupture secure; single motive unproved.	Include jurisdiction, irregular ordination, doctrine, ascetic status, and personality as possible factors without inventing their weight.
Two Alexandrian synods precisely tried and deposed him for enumerated heresies.	Photius, ninth century, <i>Bibliotheca</i> codex 118, summarizes Pamphilus's lost apology and distinguishes two assemblies.	May preserve early material, but it is late and lacks the acts, charges, votes, and Origen's complete defense.	State two synods as a late dossier reconstruction, not a contemporary transcript; do not collapse the rupture into a modern heresy trial.
Ambrose was definitively a Valentinian—or definitively a Marcionite—before Origen converted him.	Eusebius 6.18/6.23 gives the Valentinian affiliation; Jerome, <i>On Illustrious Men</i> 56, calls him Marcionite.	Conversion and patronage converge; prior affiliation conflicts.	Preserve both labels rather than synthesizing a sectarian biography not supplied by either witness.
Julia Mamaea became Christian or was baptized by Origen.	Eusebius 6.21 says she summoned Origen and heard Christian teaching, while praising her piety.	Audience and instruction E; baptism and formal affiliation unproved.	The episode shows Christian teaching reaching imperial proximity, not a secret Christian court.
Philip the Arab was baptized by Origen, the first Christian emperor.	Eusebius 6.34 preserves a separate Easter story about an unnamed emperor, and 6.36 notes Origen's letters to Philip and Severa; later traditions combine claims.	Letters likely; baptism by Origen and identification of the penitent emperor are unproved in the controlled record.	Do not make correspondence a sacramental dossier or settle Philip's religion by harmonization.
The Hexapla was exactly six columns throughout and the first modern critical Bible.	Eusebius 6.16–17 and surviving fragments establish a comparative project with varying extra versions.	Monumental textual scholarship secure; physical form, stages, and goals debated.	Explain the ancient philological project on its terms and identify “six-column” or “critical edition” as shorthand.
Origen wrote exactly six thousand books.	Ancient and later work lists count titles, books within works, homilies, letters, and scholia differently.	Huge output secure; exact popular totals legendary or methodologically unstable.	Name the surviving work and transmission instead of using a prodigious number as biographical proof.
Origen taught that all souls, necessarily including the devil, will certainly be saved.	Restoration language occurs in authentic works; other passages stress freedom and judgment. Rufinus, fragments, and later Origenist dossiers differ.	Universal restoration is a real Origenian trajectory; its modal certainty, mechanics, recurrence, and inclusion of the devil remain disputed.	Neither erase the trajectory nor quote the maximal later system as a settled sentence by Origen. Catholic teaching supplies a reception boundary.
Origen denied bodily resurrection.	His works confess resurrection and argue from 1 Corinthians 15 for transformed identity; ancient critics challenge his account of bodily continuity.	Simple denial is false; some formulations are genuinely problematic and not identical with later received teaching.	Keep the confession, the metaphysical account, the criticism, and later doctrinal boundary distinct.

Memorable claim	Earliest controlled witness	Historical status	Responsible use
Origen's allegory means that biblical events never happened.	Commentaries combine variants, grammar, history, moral address, and spiritual senses, while <i>On First Principles</i> sometimes identifies narrative impossibilities.	False as a general rule; the balance varies by text and passage.	Test each reading rather than using "allegorist" as praise or dismissal.
Origen was condemned as a heretic during his lifetime everywhere in the Church.	Alexandria repudiated his ministry; Palestinian and other bishops continued to receive and consult him. Exact Alexandrian acts are lost.	False universalization of a real local rupture.	Name jurisdiction, action, and divided reception.
Constantinople II either condemned every sentence Origen wrote or never condemned Origen at all.	The council's received anathema 11 names Origen and impious writings; the famous fifteen anti-Origenist anathemas are not in the formal acts and are excluded by Tanner from the conciliar decrees.	Both absolutes are false. Relation of the fifteen to pre-conciliar deliberation remains debated.	State the received act's actual wording and distinguish author, authentic works, later systems, the 543 action, and disputed textual attachments.
Origen was a canonized saint and martyr whose feast was later suppressed.	No controlled canonization, universal ancient cult, stable feast, or execution record was located; Eusebius says he survived torture.	Confessor secure; saint, martyr by death, and suppressed-feast narrative unproved.	Admiration and private honor should not be represented as a competent liturgical act.
Benedict XVI restored Origen to official Catholic authority or canonized him in 2007.	Two official general audiences praise Origen as exegete and teacher.	Important M catechetical reception; no canonization or new conciliar act.	Read the praise in its actual genre and scope.
Any elegant spiritual sentence circulating under Origen's name is authentic.	The corpus survives through translations, fragments, catenae, and later anthologies; online lists commonly omit work and locus.	Unsupported until work, section, language, edition, and translator are identified.	Exact attribution matters especially for an author whose translators admitted correction.

11.1 Why doubtful stories still matter

The clothes, the bodily act, the iron endurance, and the condemned name have become miniature explanations of Origen. Each makes a genuine feature visible: maternal rescue, ascetic danger, intellectual labor, fidelity under pain, or speculation's risk. Each becomes false when it replaces the documentary scale of a life.

Tradition history is therefore not a disposal appendix. It asks why Christians needed Origen to be the literalist who harmed his body, the allegorist who escaped bodies, the universalist who abolished judgment, or the master secretly restored by a pope. The contradictions reveal continuing arguments over how Scripture, reason, authority, hope, and error belong together.

12 Synthesis: The Teacher and the Trial

Origen's life has an intelligible center. A child formed by Scripture and his father's execution made reading an act of total discipleship. He built schools in which grammar and philosophy served the biblical Word, a manuscript workshop in which textual difference could be inspected, and a preaching practice in which the same text judged ordinary Christian desire. When imperial power required sacrifice, the theory of confession became bodily fact.

The center did not prevent overreach. Origen wanted divine justice, freedom, the diversity of creatures, embodiment, and the final victory of goodness to form one coherent economy. Where apostolic proclamation did not specify the manner, he explored. Some explorations gave later theology indispensable language: the Son's eternal generation, Scripture's spiritual depth, freedom against fixed natures, and punishment ordered toward correction. Others tied

human embodiment to pre-existent fault, rendered resurrection vulnerable to dissolution, or made the end more schematic than the Church could receive.

The difference between Origen and Origenism is therefore neither absolute nor imaginary. Later ascetics, translators, accusers, and imperial theologians selected and transformed his proposals. They must not be quoted as his direct voice. Yet a founder is historically related to the possibilities his system opens even when followers construct a doctrine he never stated in that form. Reception history is fairest when it traces that relation instead of choosing between total blame and total exoneration.

His Christian character should be narrated with the same restraint. The sources establish disciplined prayer, radical generosity, service to churches, formation of pupils, and fidelity under torture. They also establish an institutional rupture, severe bodily practice, damaging polemical structures, and disputed doctrine. No competent act inspected for this edition canonizes him, and this project does not create one. Sanctity is not proved or disproved by historical aggregation; what history can do is refuse a fictive cult while making the cost and fruit of discipleship visible.

Three absences remain decisive. The Alexandrian proceedings are lost, so the living Church's first case against Origen cannot be retried from full evidence. Most of the Greek corpus is lost or mediated, so a perfectly reconstructed "true Origen" remains an aspiration. The death and burial have no continuous near-contemporary narrative, so the confessor's last act cannot be made to say what his books say.

Those absences do not exhaust the legacy. A durable gift is a practice of connected attention: compare the wording; listen to interlocutors; read within the Church's proclamation; bring intellect into prayer; test an interpretation by the life it forms. His history adds the necessary reverse tests: identify who paid and copied; ask whom an interpretation displaces; distinguish inquiry from confession; and do not let a brilliant connection outrun evidence or received faith.

The reception of this teacher is accordingly not resolved by simple approval or by repeating an anathema. It continues wherever Christians read him with exact gratitude—deeply enough to receive what is true, historically enough to know whose words survive, and ecclesially enough to name the point at which exploration can no longer govern belief.

A Scope, Chronology, and Evidence

A.1 Identity and bounds

Name. This study uses *Origen*, Latin *Origenes*, conventionally "Origen of Alexandria." Eusebius also knows *Adamantius*. Its status as birth name or sobriquet and the later interpretation "man of steel" remain unresolved. The study does not use "Saint Origen," because no competent canonization or stable received cult was established.

Life range. About 184/185 to about 253/254 CE. The birth is calculated from Eusebius's statement that Origen was not yet seventeen when Leonides died under Septimius Severus; the death is calculated from Eusebius's age of sixty-nine. These are linked approximations, not two independent civil dates. All dates are proleptic Common Era. Regnal and persecution synchronisms are given as ranges when modern chronologies differ.

Places and jurisdiction. The principal settings are Alexandria in the Roman province of Egypt; Rome; Caesarea Maritima and Jerusalem in Roman Palestine; Antioch in Roman Syria; Arabia; Athens and the route toward Achaia; and, in Jerome's later report, Tyre. Modern names orient the reader and make no claim about ancient ethnicity or current political boundaries. Origen belonged to Greek-speaking Christian networks and worked with Hebrew and multiple Greek biblical forms. This is not a full social history of any city or a complete catalogue of his travel.

Ecclesial state. Christian from childhood in Eusebius's account; teacher and catechist at Alexandria; ascetic layman; presbyter ordained by Palestinian bishops around 230–232, with that ordination repudiated at Alexandria but received elsewhere; ecclesial consultant and preacher at Caesarea; confessor after Decian torture. He was not a bishop. "Monk" is avoided where it would import a later institutional form.

A.2 Reader, question, and thesis boundary

The intended reader is a serious general reader, cleric, student, or researcher who wants one sustained life with visible evidence limits. The governing question is how a martyr's son became one of the ancient Church's most consequential

teachers of Scripture and how his thought and posthumous trial can be narrated without admiration or condemnation erasing the archive.

The thesis is historical: Origen joined textual scholarship, philosophical inquiry, ecclesial teaching, prayer, and embodied confession on an exceptional scale; the same speculative architecture generated real theological risks and later transformations. The publication does not issue a canonization verdict, reverse an ecclesial act, provide a critical edition, settle every disputed attribution, or replace Catholic doctrine with a historical reconstruction.

Included are the recoverable life, material school and workshop, principal writings by genre and survival, major theological structures, relationships, Alexandrian rupture, persecution and death, first and sixth-century Origenist controversies, conciliar reception, modern manuscript recovery, and memorable traditions. Excluded are a book-by-book commentary bibliography, a complete edition history, exhaustive exact-locus ethical lexicon, all manuscript witnesses, and unsupported tomb, relic, iconographic, or patronage claims.

A.3 Evidence key

Code	Meaning
A	Subject-authored evidence: Origen's works, letters, and reported self-statements, controlled by genre, date, language, and transmission.
N	Contemporary or near-contemporary external witness, such as Gregory's panegyric or Porphyry's hostile report; proximity does not remove literary purpose.
E	Early received report, especially Eusebius and Jerome; valuable for otherwise lost material but not automatically eyewitness.
L	Later biographical, local, devotional, visual, or traditional reception; evidence for its own period unless independently controlled.
M	Official ecclesial reception, limited to the actual act: for example Constantinople II or a papal catechesis.
K	Named modern critical reconstruction, with premises, transmission, and alternatives exposed.
S	Source-grounded synthesis by this publication; never attributed to an ancient witness.

A.4 Detailed chronology

Date	Place	Event and evidence	Status
c. 184/185	Alexandria	Birth calculated from age at Leonides's death. Greek literary and Christian scriptural education in the household.	E; probable range
202/203	Alexandria	Leonides executed and property confiscated; Eusebius says Origen's mother prevents his attempted public accompaniment.	E; event strong, scene qualified
c. 203 onward	Alexandria	Origen teaches literature and Christian inquirers; Demetrius entrusts catechetical work; pupils suffer in persecution.	E; sequence strong
early career	Alexandria	Severe fasting, wakefulness, poverty, and barefoot practice. Eusebius places disputed self-castration in this period.	E; ascetic pattern strong, operation unresolved
198–217; often narrowed to c. 211–212	Rome	Visit during the episcopate of Zephyrinus, described by Origen as a wish to see the ancient Roman church.	A through E; narrow date modern reconstruction
before c. 215 or later	Arabia	A governor requests an interview through Demetrius and the Egyptian prefect; question and result are lost.	E; relative date disputed

Date	Place	Event and evidence	Status
c. 215	Caesarea, Palestine	Origen leaves Alexandria; violence; Alexander and Theoctistus invite the lay teacher to expound Scripture. Demetrius recalls him.	E; event strong, imperial synchronization K
222–235; exact year unknown	Antioch	During Alexander Severus’s reign, Julia Mamaea summons Origen with an escort and hears Christian teaching.	E; audience, not baptism
late 210s–220s	Alexandria	Ambrose becomes patron; the scribal workshop expands the commentaries. Work begins on major biblical and systematic projects.	A/E; work dates approximate
probably 220s	Alexandria	<i>On First Principles</i> and early books of the <i>Commentary on John</i> ; comparative biblical work develops.	A/E/K; relative dating
c. 230–232	Caesarea / route to Achaia	Theoctistus and Alexander ordain Origen presbyter during a church journey; Demetrius repudiates the action.	E; event secure, year and process approximate
early 230s	Alexandria and Caesarea	Permanent rupture with Alexandria; Origen settles at Caesarea. Heraclas succeeds in Alexandrian teaching and then as bishop.	E; lost acts limit juridical detail
c. 232–235 onward	Caesarea	Advanced school, preaching, commentary, Hexaplar work, and consultations take mature form.	A/N/E; multi-year process
235–238	Palestine / Cappadocian network	Under Maximinus, Ambrose and Protoctetus suffer; Origen writes <i>Exhortation to Martyrdom</i> .	A/E; usual range
probably 230s	Caesarea	The pupil traditionally identified as Gregory Thaumaturgus studies about five years and delivers a farewell panegyric.	N; identity/date widely accepted but reconstructed
230s–240s	Arabia and Palestine	Consultations associated with Beryllus of Bostra and an Arabian dispute about soul and resurrection.	E; outcome through admirer
probably 240s	Uncertain ecclesial venue	<i>Dialogue with Heraclides</i> : bishops test language about Father, Son, and the soul.	A/N-like transcript-like papyrus witness; date approximate, not verbatim minutes
after age sixty	Caesarea	Eusebius says Origen permits stenographers to record public preaching; transmission suggests a more layered homily history.	E; threshold report qualified
c. 248	Caesarea	Eight books <i>Against Celsus</i> , prompted by Ambrose.	A/E/K; strong approximate date
249/250	Place not securely reported	Under Decius, Origen is imprisoned and tortured but survives without apostasy.	E; place not given securely by Eusebius
c. 253/254	Tyre in Jerome’s later report	Death at age sixty-nine. No controlled death scene, cause, or burial act.	E; age early, place later
c. 290–310	Eastern Mediterranean	Methodius criticizes Origenian creation and resurrection teaching; much of the anti-Origen material survives through later excerptors.	N/E; chronology and transmission layered
c. 307–310	Caesarea	Pamphilus defends Origen while imprisoned. Ancient reports associate Eusebius with a six-book apology, but authorship and collaboration are disputed.	E; first book in Rufinus’s Latin
fourth century	Greek East and Latin West	Athanasius, Didymus, the Cappadocians, Evagrius, Hilary, Ambrose, Jerome, and Rufinus receive different texts and practices selectively.	A/N/E/K; no unitary school
c. 374–377	Cyprus	Epiphanius’s <i>Panarion</i> 64 assembles an anti-Origen biography and doctrinal dossier.	N/E; heresiological purpose
c. 393–403	Palestine, Egypt, Rome, Constantinople	First Origenist controversy joins doctrinal, translational, monastic, and episcopal conflicts.	N/E/K; partisan dossier

Date	Place	Event and evidence	Status
early fifth century	Constantinople	Socrates, <i>Ecclesiastical History</i> 6.7–17, supplies a pro-Origen counter-history of the Theophilus and Chrysostom crisis.	E; retrospective and partisan
543	Constantinople	Justinian’s <i>Letter to Mennas against Origen</i> and a home-synod condemnation.	M/E; distinct from 553
553	Constantinople	Fifth ecumenical council; received anathema 11 names Origen. The separate fifteen-anathema collection is not part of the formal conciliar acts in Tanner’s edition.	M/K; textual distinction essential
c. 555–558	Palestine	Cyril of Scythopolis narrates the Sabaite victory over Origenists and links Origen, Didymus, and Evagrius to the conciliar ending.	N/E; near-contemporary hagiographic party history
ninth century	Constantinople	Photius, <i>Bibliotheca</i> codex 118, summarizes the Origen apology and preserves otherwise lost dossier claims.	E; late reader of lost material
1536	Basel	Posthumous publication of Erasmus’s large Origen edition with prefaces and a life.	K/printed reception; praise and criticism
1668	Rouen	Pierre-Daniel Huet publishes Greek biblical commentaries with the <i>Origeniana</i> .	K/printed scholarship
1907–1938	Europe	The recovery sequence mapped by Robert J. Daly begins with Prat, Völker, Bardy, von Balthasar, and Lieske.	K; historiography, not an ecclesial act
1941	Tura, Egypt	Discovery of papyrus codices including the <i>Dialogue with Heraclides</i> and other Origenian material.	K/institutional catalogue; secure modern event
1948–late twentieth century	Europe	Daniélou, de Lubac, and Crouzel continue recovery of the biblical, spiritual, ecclesial, philosophical, and synthetic Origen.	K; Daly’s historiographic sequence
25 April and 2 May 2007	Vatican City	Benedict XVI gives two general audiences on Origen’s life and teaching.	M; catechesis, not canonization
2012	Munich	Marina Molin Pradel identifies twenty-nine Greek Psalm homilies in Bayerische Staatsbibliothek Cod. graec. 314.	K/manuscript; attribution critically tested

A.5 Competing chronologies and unresolved sequence

Eusebius organizes the life largely by imperial reigns, ecclesial succession, age notices, and clusters of writings rather than a modern year-by-year diary. Modern chronologies differ on the first Arabian journey, Caracallan flight, Julia Mamaea audience, beginning and sequence of the Hexaplar project, exact ordination year, Gregory’s stay, consultations in Arabia, *Dialogue with Heraclides*, individual commentaries, Decian place of confinement, and death year. The table uses ranges or relative order rather than choosing a precision the evidence cannot carry.

The two most important dependencies are explicit. The birth range depends on Eusebius’s age-at-Leonides calculation; the death range depends on his age at death. Tyre comes from Jerome, not Eusebius 7.1. The two-synod account comes from Photius’s late summary of a lost apology, not surviving Alexandrian minutes.

A.6 Corpus and method

The principal ancient corpus inspected comprises Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* book 6 and 7.1; Gregory’s *Address of Thanks*; Porphyry through Eusebius; Origen’s *On First Principles*, *Against Celsus*, *On Prayer*, *Exhortation to Martyrdom*, *Letter to Gregory*, Africanus correspondence, surviving commentary and homily loci, and the *Dialogue with Heraclides*; Jerome’s *On Illustrious Men*; the Rufinus/Jerome translation dispute; Methodius through Epiphanius; Socrates 6.7–17; Cyril of Scythopolis, *Life of Sabas*, conciliar conclusion; Photius codex 118; and later imperial,

conciliar, and papal acts. Modern controls include current handbook studies, Clark and Rubenson on the first controversy, Daly on twentieth-century recovery, work on sixth-century Origenism, critical Psalm-homily attribution, manuscript catalogs, Hexaplar research, and critical conciliar editions.

Consequential claims were tested first against the earliest reasonably accessible witness, then against opposed or independent witnesses, genre, transmission, and current professional reconstruction. Subject-authored does not mean unmediated: much of Origen is preserved by stenographer, translator, excerptor, or opponent. Official sources establish what an authority did, not neutral biography. Source-grounded inference is labeled rather than inserted into a witness's voice.

Internet-accessible research texts were last checked through 2026-07-19. Mutable claims are limited to that cutoff. The research records preserve exact loci, source functions, inaccessible or lost materials, and negative results.

A.7 Limits, rights, and review state

This release completed internal historical research and theological, transmission, tradition, and official-reception audits at publication scale. Independent specialist, theological, rights, and ecclesiastical review remains outstanding. The internal work did not perform a full critical-edition collation of every work, exhaustive manuscript census, complete lexicon of language about Jews, medical assessment, or item-level tomb, relic, iconographic, patronage, and local-cult audit. No claim requiring those reviews is made as established.

Ancient public-domain English research translations are cited and mostly paraphrased; brief ancient wording is tied to a locus. Modern scholarship and Vatican translations are paraphrased without inference of reuse rights from online access. This study's original prose falls under the repository license; third-party source texts and images do not. No third-party image is reproduced.

B References

B.1 Origenian works actually inspected

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- Origen and Julius Africanus. *Letter to Africanus* and Africanus's letter concerning Susanna, especially Origen 4–9 and 12–13, public-domain ANF research translation; accessed 2026-07-19. The disagreement is preserved as correspondence; personal friendship is not inferred.
- Origen. *Letter to Gregory*, public-domain ANF research translation; accessed 2026-07-19. Used for philosophy as preparatory discipline and the priority of Scripture and prayer.
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Benz, eds., *Origenes Werke*, vol. 10, GCS 40 (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1935), pp. 348–361, and Ronald E. Heine, trans., *The Commentary of Origen on the Gospel of St Matthew*, 2 vols., Oxford Early Christian Texts (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018). Fragment, book, language, and translation boundaries remain explicit; protected modern wording is paraphrased.

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B.2 Ancient and medieval external witnesses

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- Gregory Thaumaturgus, attributed. *Address of Thanksgiving to Origen*, especially 6–15, public-domain ANF translation; accessed 2026-07-19. Used as a near-contemporary panegyric by an elite pupil, with identity and chronology qualified.
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B.5 Manuscripts and live research records

- Bibliothèque nationale de France. Tura manuscript-cache authority record, BnF Catalogue; accessed 2026-07-19. It controls the 1941 location, approximate extent, and the presence of Origen and Didymus, not the wording of individual works.
- Bayerische Staatsbibliothek. Cod. graec. 314, first half of the twelfth century, 371 folios, official MDZ viewer; accessed 2026-07-19. The manuscript record and Perrone’s attribution study control separate claims.
- The Hexapla Institute, project site; accessed 2026-07-19. Used only for the existence and current scope of a modern fragment-reconstruction project; it does not authenticate a complete recovered Hexapla.

B.6 Translation and reuse boundary

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