

**Markus Bockmuehl, *The Remembered Peter: In Ancient Reception and Modern Debate* (WUNT I 262; Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 2010). Pp. xiii + 263. €79.00. ISBN 978-3-16-150580-5.**

- [1] This book comprises nine chapters that are loosely organized around the theme of Peter in “living Christian tradition.” The essays are provocative, well written, and reflect an enormous amount of scholarly energy. They are all worth the reader’s careful perusal.
- [2] Studies on memory in the NT are numerous. Werner H. Kelber and Samuel Byrskog recently edited a volume of essays on *Jesus in Memory: Traditions in Oral and Scribal Perspectives* (Waco, Tex.: Baylor University Press, 2009), and Judith C. S. Redman has forged ahead with her article on “How Accurate Are Eyewitnesses: Bauckham and the Eyewitnesses in the Light of Psychological Research,” *JBL* 129 (2010) 177-197. Peter has not been neglected, although Martin Hengel wrote a volume entitled *Der unterschätzte Petrus* (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 2006) toward the end of his career. One underlying point of contention is form criticism’s vision of an anonymous community’s contribution to the development of the traditions about Jesus. The same argument appears in books and essays on Peter. Bockmuehl, for example, mentions this “anonymous” tradition a number of times (12-14, 16, 22, 56 120)—mostly from a critical perspective. If one rejects these anonymous collections or anonymous flows of tradition, what are the consequences?
- [3] Bockmuehl’s answer with regard to the apostle Peter is not hagiography in the usual sense. Timothy Barnes, for example, in a volume Bockmuehl includes in his bibliography but only refers to once (*Early Christian Hagiography and Roman History* [Tria Corda 5; Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 2010, ix]), quoted Hippolyte Delehayé’s definition of the field: “L’hagiographie critique est une branche de la science historique” (*Cinq leçons sur la méthode hagiographique* [Brussels: Société des Bollandistes, 1934] 7). Readers looking for a rigorous hagiographical analysis of all the early Petrine traditions in Bockmuehl’s set of essays will be disappointed. That is not his intention (v). His own words are perhaps the best guide: “The present volume draws together a number of my most pertinent scholarly studies on the profile and reception of Simon Peter in second-century Christian memory ... In keeping with the genre of collected ‘studies,’ I have made little attempt to impose a single overall argument in either form or substance.” Of the nine chapters in the book, seven were published in earlier versions (see the footnote on p. v). The first introductory chapter and chapter five on Peter in the Pseudo-Clementines are new.
- [4] Bockmuehl’s stated emphasis is “Peter’s presence in ancient Christian memory” (v). One of his recurring and extremely important concepts is “living Christian memory,” which he uses frequently (ca 23 times). There is, however, a question of just how long one should define “living Christian memory” to have lasted into the second century. Bockmuehl assumes that “Peter and his immediate contemporaries” were dead by AD 70. The “immediate followers of this apostolic group” were “dying out by 135.” “Their disciples” were dead by ca 200 (123-124 and cp. 24). Irenaeus (ca 130-200), for example, is the last of those who remembered the last of the apostles’ disciples (17). This does not cohere well with Bockmuehl’s view (24) that only “about 5% of the population at any one time was aged over 60” (based on papyrological data in Egypt). The arithmetic does not easily add up, although it can be forced. The immediate followers of the apostolic group would surely have had to be born at the latest by 50 AD, if the last of the apostles died around 70. If an individual born in 50 AD then lived for sixty-five years (dying around 115), then his or her follower would have had to have been born at the

latest around 95 AD. The disciple of the immediate follower of the apostles would presumably have been born at least 20 years before the death of the follower. With a life span of 65 years, an individual born in 95 would be dead by 160. Perhaps one should not quibble over 40 years, but the presuppositions need to be more clearly defined. My guess would be that the third generation was dead long before 200 unless all three generations in question, by chance, had exceptionally long life spans. The argument can be reformulated in terms of probability (which Bockmuehl furnishes himself on 24). If only 5 percent of ancient Romans (1st century and 2nd) lived beyond 60, then the probability of one of the followers of Peter living past 60 is 5 percent. The probability of one of the disciples of the followers of Peter living past 60 is then also 5 percent. The probability, therefore, of the event (i.e., all three generations living past 60) is then  $.05 \times .05 \times .05$ , which is slightly over one percent.

- [5] But on to less abstract questions. Part One of the book comprises three chapters on “Simon Peter Re-Remembered.” The first chapter is entitled “Re-Introducing the ‘Remembered’ Peter.” Here Bockmuehl argues for a fresh approach to Petrine questions using living memory. In much scholarship Peter is (as in Hengel’s phrase), the “underestimated” disciple, although Peter was a “bridge-man” who held early Christianity together (8, adopting a concept of J. D. G. Dunn). Peter is a “guarantor” of the Jesus tradition (6) and in early Christian “reception” he is the “anchor” of Gentile Christian churches in the East and West (8). Bockmuehl admits that “Streams of memory, like rivers, cannot be dissected” (15). Consequently, he does not intend to present the reader with “clear cut ‘historical-results’” (15). The results of this kind of work are a bit vague: “living memory may indeed merit a degree of cautious critical privilege in our attempt to make sense of the tenuous origins of the Apostle’s astonishingly large cultural and religious ‘footprint’ in subsequent Christian history” (20). If the results are not clear-cut history, then one wonders just what the results actually are. Bockmuehl is aware of these problems (19). With regard to living memory, Irenaeus (24) was a “hearer” of Polycarp who was “the companion of the apostles” (which would make Polycarp quite old—a problem Bockmuehl does not address). Living memory was also present in Gnostic circles (e.g., Basilides’ teacher was Glaucias who “interpreted” Peter, 24-25, 30). The availability of “living memory” in the second century “will serve to illustrate early Christianity’s astonishingly diverse and yet at times surprisingly constrained variations on the remembered Peter” (30).
- [6] The second chapter, “Assessing Peter between Jesus and Paul in Recent Scholarship,” seeks to place Petrine scholarship in the context of the “Third Quest” for the historical Jesus and the “New Perspective” on Paul. Bockmuehl establishes a dialogue with E. P. Sanders, John Dominic Crossan, N. T. Wright, and Dunn by considering each scholar’s view of Paul, Jesus, and Peter. The conclusion begins with this telling phrase: “At one level, the results of this survey are somewhat disappointing” (57). This is because all four scholars admit that at least “in principle” Peter links Jesus to Paul, but “in practice none of them carries this through to any significant analytical engagement beyond the answers given by previous generations of scholars” (57). A “breakthrough” does, however, begin to appear in the work of Dunn, who argues that Peter, as the “bridge-man” “becomes the focal point of unity for the whole Church” (58 with reference to Dunn’s *Unity and Diversity in the New Testament: An Inquiry into the Character of Earliest Christianity* [London: SCM 1977] 385-386). This conclusion is similar to that of John P. Meier: “He [Peter] bridges in a singular way the ministry of the historical Jesus and the mission of the early church” (60, with ref. to Meier’s *A Marginal Jew: Rethinking the Historical Jesus* [ABRL; 4 vols.; New York: Doubleday 1991-2009] 3.245).
- [7] Next Bockmuehl analyzes “Peter and Paul Between History and Reception” (chapter three).

Here he argues for a more nuanced position than that of F. C. Baur's "bi-polar paradigm" in which Peter is diametrically opposed to Paul (65, 66, 69) and in which Acts is a synthesis of both polarities. Bockmuehl thinks that the division between the two in Antioch was not a matter of "basic 'gospel' doctrine nor straightforwardly of halakhah, but rather the practical (and indeed theologically *and* halakhically articulated) arbitration between different but equally passionate ecclesial loyalties to the gospel of Jesus Christ" (69).

- [8] The second part of the book, "Peter in Syrian and Roman Memory," begins with an analysis of "Peter in Syria: Ignatius, Justin and Serapion" (chapter four). Bockmuehl first considers the tradition of a house of Peter in Capernaum mentioned in Egeria's pilgrimage, and notes that the issue is surrounded by "archaeological ambiguities and uncertainties" (74). Bishop Serapion of Antioch (ca 190-211) denies apostolic authority to the Gospel of Peter (cp. Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* 6.12.3-6), but states that "we" receive Peter and the other apostles as Christ himself (82). Bockmuehl takes that statement as an indication that there was still a living memory of Peter ca 200 (82). In his discussion of Justin, *Dial.* 106.3 Bockmuehl sees a direct relationship between Peter and the Gospel of Mark: "It is said that he changed the name of one of the apostles to Peter; and it is written in his memoirs (ἐν τοῖς ἀπομνημονεύμασιν αὐτοῦ) that this so happened, as well as that he changed the names of two other brothers, the sons of Zebedee, to Boanerges, which means 'sons of thunder.'" Although "memoirs" is ambiguous, only Mark 3:16 indicates that Jesus "gave Simon the *name* Peter" and only Mark 3:17 mentions "Boanerges" (35). Consequently Justin knew Mark as Peter's memoirs, and Bockmuehl argues that it is time to reexamine the relationship between Peter and Mark. Ignatius may have known people in Antioch who knew Peter (88). *Smyrn.* 3:1-3 is an indication that Petrine memory was "adduced against docetic interpretation of the resurrection," although that does not prove Ignatius had "second-hand memories of Peter" (88, 90). In *Rom.* 4:3 Ignatius "evidently appeals to a local memory of the *personal* presence, ministry and (by implication) the martyrdom of both apostles [Peter and Paul] in Rome. (91)."

[9] Bockmuehl in "Peter, Paul and Simon in the Pseudo-Clementines" (chapter five), accepts a date of the early third century for the base document of the *Homilies* and *Recognitions* (96-98). He contests the identification of Simon Magus in the Clementines with Paul (101-112). His conclusion is clear: "In brief: while some evidence of anti-Paulinism exists especially in the compact history of the early Jerusalem church in Book I of the *Recognitions*, we have seen that the Pseudo-Clementines in general, and the key passage in *Homilies* Book 17 in particular, do not readily yield what has been extracted from them by the virtual scholarly consensus in the wake of F.C. Baur" (112). There is no "polarity" between Peter's mission to the Jews and Paul's mission to the Gentiles in the Clementines, and they are not Ebionite.

[10] In chapter six, "Peter's Death in Rome? Back to Front and Upside Down," Bockmuehl includes a systematic discussion of his concept of "living memory," which can include "pegs" such as places with which the apostles are associated (119-124). He analyzes 1 *Clem.* 5:2-4, 7; 6:1 from this perspective. Clement may have been silent about details of Peter's and Paul's deaths for church-political reasons such as the accusation that Christians were guilty of capital crimes against the state (128). Bockmuehl also makes the point that there were no other "*competing localities*" for the place of Peter's death (131). He concludes that Peter "came to Rome to advance the gospel and gave his ultimate testimony there" (132).

[11] Part Three is "The Memory of Peter's Futures." Chapter seven is an investigation of "Peter's Names in Jewish Sources." In this close philological analysis, Bockmuehl looks at the fre-

quency of Simon/Simeon, Bar Yonah, Cephas, and Petros in Jewish sources. Simon was a patriarch's name that "had returned to popularity only about 200 years earlier, apparently in connection with Jewish hopes for national restoration (156)." Šim'on bar Yonah was "a sound Jewish name with a familiar and perhaps particularly Galilean patronym" (156). Although Kēfā' ("rock" or "crag") "makes good Aramaic sense and can be satisfactorily explained both from the Dead Sea Scrolls and from rabbinic sources, there is no evidence that it was in use in Palestine as either a Jewish or even a Christian name at any time in late antiquity" (156). The epithet, however, would have been intelligible to rabbis and presumably Aramaic speaking churches in first century Judaea and "this unique appellation" "most clearly distinguished Peter" (156) among those churches. *Petros* was a name used in Rabbinic and Greek Jewish sources (151-152), and the loan word *petra* also appears in Rabbinic sources. Peter was from a Greek-speaking environment (Bethsaida) and so may "have been called *Petros* from the start" (150, 156). Bockmuehl adduces evidence in which the word *petra* "features both in the Septuagint and in midrash to identify a faithful person on whom God builds the foundation of his people" (157, cp. 152-156).

- [12] In "Simon Peter and Bethsaida" (chapter eight), Bockmuehl examines Bethsaida's place in the gospels, especially its "social context"—including the question whether it was a village or city, whether it was originally located in Galilee or Gaulanitis, jokes based on the accents of Galileans, and fishing techniques in Bethsaida. He also gives fine archaeological descriptions of Et-Tell (2.5 kilometers north of the Sea of Galilee) and el-Araj which is several hundred meters from the sea after "plentiful winter rains" (178). Bockmuehl argues for a symbiosis of et-Tell and el-Araj since both sites seem to have been originally linked by a Roman road (179, 182): "... the image of Julias as a kind of 'acropolis' with its own fishing suburb on the lake continues in my view to be plausible (182). Part of his conclusion is that "Both literary and archaeological evidence points to the fact that Bethsaida's culture in the first century was under strongly Hellenistic influence ..." (184) and that "the ministry of Jesus and his disciples expended great, if ultimately unfruitful, energy in the highly marginal, interstitial Jewish setting of Bethsaida" (185).
- [13] Bockmuehl completes his study with "The Conversions of Simon Peter" (chapter nine). Luke 22:31-32 includes a prophecy that Peter will "turn back" (καὶ σὺ ποτε ἐπιστρέψας). This "conversion" "is *in the future* rather than the past" (192). Bockmuehl then looks for evidence of this "conversion" in Catacomb art (196-199), which depicts Jesus, Peter and a rooster (which Christians took to be a symbol of resurrection), the *Acts of Peter*, 1 Peter 1, and John 21. "We found in Luke 22:31-34 the evangelist's surprisingly clear anticipation that at some point, not in his Galilean past but in his apostolic and episcopal future, Peter would indeed 'turn back' and, as a result of this 'conversion,' assume a charge of strengthening his brothers" (204). Luke never identifies the time of the conversion in the Gospel or in Acts.
- [14] It is readily apparent that neither is there a single unifying thesis in the book, nor is there a clear unifying structure and method. That was not Bockmuehl's intention (cf. paragraph 3 above). There is much to be learned in the book, and the lack of a single thesis is not ultimately a fatal objection. It would be useful to have more analysis of the *Gospel of Peter* and the *Apocalypse of Peter* (the latter absent from his index). One frustration this reader experienced was the usual lack of indication of which critical editions Bockmuehl was using (e.g., "Porphyry" on page 3 [presumably von Harnack?], Irenaeus passim [Harvey or SC?], and so forth). With regard to Porphyry in particular: it is now apparent that the fragments von Harnack attributed to Porphyry from the corpus of Macarius Magnes, while based probably

on Porphyry's arguments, are not the *ipsissima verba* of the critic of Christianity (cf. my *New Testament in Greco Roman Paganism* [STAC 3; Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck 2000]). Bockmuehl's (131) claim that Phlegon mentions Peter (FGH 2B:257 F 16e = Origen, C. Celsum 2.14) is probably erroneous (Φλέγων ... καὶ τὴν περὶ τινῶν μελλόντων πρόγνωσιν ἔδωκε τῷ Χριστῷ, συγχυθεὶς ἐν τοῖς περὶ Πέτρου ὡς περὶ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ, καὶ ἐμαρτύρησεν ὅτι κατὰ τὰ εἰρημένα ὑπ' αὐτοῦ τὰ λεγόμενα ἀπήνησε). At the least Phlegon's confusion renders it unlikely that one can confidently assume he mentioned Peter, although it is clear he mentioned Jesus. One absence with regard to the Hebrew and Aramaic research Bockmuehl (otherwise) handled so successfully: I do not understand why the Bar Ilan database of Responsa was not used (this is an error comparable to not using the TLG in Greek linguistic research). I found few typographical errors (79 n. 20 ῶ is dropped from ἐαυτ, 85 n. 48 τὸειπεῖν, 97 and 11 Gerhard [for Georg Strecker], 167 the *resh* should be *dalet* in the first Hebrew word, 167 n. 47 *bet* is dropped from the beginning of the first word). These are mostly quibbles, and the book is to be highly recommended.

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