

S. Heid (ed.), *Petrus und Paulus in Rom: Eine interdisziplinäre Debatte*. Freiburg: Herder, 2011. Pp. 552. ISBN 978-3-451-30705-8. Hardcover € 98.00.

- [1] This large, handsomely produced hardcover tome presents in 22 chapters the edited proceedings of two conferences held in Rome and Freiburg in 2010 by one of Germany's oldest Learned Societies (the Catholic Görres-Gesellschaft, est. 1876). The Editor, a professor at the Angelicum and Vice-Rector of the German College in Rome, collates these conference proceedings as two parts of the present volume, the first dealing with the question of "Peter in Rome" and the second "the Apostles Peter and Paul in Rome". Unsurprisingly in view of their setting, all 22 contributions are in German; a majority of authors appear to be Catholic, and most are classicists, ancient historians or patrologists whose names may be unfamiliar to New Testament scholars.
- [2] Introducing Part I (and the first conference), the well-known patristic scholar Ernst Dassmann ("Petrus in Rom? Zu den Hintergründen eines alten Streites", 13-31) sets the stage by rehearsing 150 years of scholarly debate about the historicity of Peter's ministry and death in Rome. Noting the lively disputes of the late 19th and early 20th century, the mid-century impact of archaeological discoveries and the relative silence of the 1970s and 80s, Dassmann concludes with a measured and up-to-date account of a series of substantial contributions since the 1990s. Here he ranges from Richard Bauckham (1992) and Christian Grappe (1995) to the past decade's significant counterpoint between declarations of achieved 'consensus' (e.g. Joachim Gnlika (2002), Martin Hengel (2007²), Jürgen Becker (2009)) and the marked scepticism in positions like those of Fred Lapham (2003), Michael Goulder (2004) and – for this volume above all – the retired classicist Otto Zwierlein (2009). Like some other recent writers (including the reviewer), the present volume's authors and editors are deliberately engaged in the discussion of a state of scholarly debate that Dassmann in conclusion characterizes as a 'draw' (*Patt*).
- [3] As a church historian, Dominik Burkard ("Petrus in Rom – eine Fiktion? Die Debatte im 19. Jahrhundert", 32-66) takes a step back to offer a more systematic survey of the "long 19th century," beginning with the question of whether Vatican I's boisterous dogmatism of Petrine primacy might not in fact presuppose a conviction that had long since been emptied of all historical plausibility. Following periodic earlier denials of Peter's Roman ministry as early as medieval and early modern sources, 'Phase 1' (1820-1863) marked a fresh departure in (chiefly) Protestant critiques of the Petrine tradition on the part of F. C. Baur and others, with periodic ripostes e.g. from M. Stenglein. The more focused Phases 2 (1864-1879) and 3 (1879-1900) marked the contrasting emphases of Vatican I's dogmatic assertions and key Protestant (and Old Catholic) critical studies like those of A. Lipsius and Baur's son-in-law E. Zeller, which set out to degrade any Petrine connection to the status of purely unhistorical myth. Burkard notes the peculiar failure of Catholic scholars to engage fully with this debate, a situation that only gradually changed after 1879. A new era began with Hans Lietzmann's (1875-1942) study *Petrus und Paulus in Rom*, originally composed in 1916 (rev. 1927), whose marshalling of liturgical and archaeological evidence in support of the Roman tradition constituted a significant methodological gain and in some ways prepared the way for the excavations under the Vatican during the papacy of Pius XII. Burkard concludes wryly that defenders of the "fictional" understanding of Peter's Roman ministry

tended merely to replace one fiction with another, usually incompatible with other proposals.

- [4] The archaeologist Winfried Weber responds to O. Zwierlein's sceptical study with a critical review of scholarly literature relating to the discovery of the second-century memorial (and allegedly the bones) of Peter in the so-called "red wall" bordering the extensive ancient necropolis underneath the Constantinian Basilica of St Peter ("Die Suche nach dem Petrusgrab: Zu den archaologischen Untersuchungen im Bereich der Confessio von St. Peter", 67-113). Weber notes inconsistencies in published documentation and suggests that the excavators were mistaken in several key interpretations of the evidence: the establishment of a formal necropolis on the site does not precede the time of Trajan (98-117), and despite a possible burial from the period of Vespasian near the central site abutting the "red wall" (built after AD 160) it is clear that the development and clustering of tombs around this site postdates the beginning of the necropolis. There is no concrete archaeological evidence indicating a "tomb of Peter" and Gaius' reference in AD 200 to a *tropaion* of Peter at the Vatican need not denote the Apostle's tomb. (But NB the polemical context of *Eccl. Hist.* 2.25.7 does in fact presuppose a desire to counter Montanist claims about the tomb of the evangelist Philip and his daughters at Ephesus; M.B.) For Weber the two most plausible remaining scenarios are that (1) Peter was martyred and buried at the Vatican, perhaps in a mass grave; or that (2) Peter was buried at an unknown location in Rome and the Vatican memorial structure marks the place of his martyrdom. Either way, he agrees with Dinkler (against Zwierlein) that nothing in the archaeological evidence questions the high probability of a historical martyrdom of Peter in Rome.
- [5] Caterina Papi, an Italian archaeologist and epigraphist, presents the inscription "AT PETRV[M]" on the marble flooring of the Constantinian Presbytery, discovered during the excavations of 1939-1949 but strangely never published or discussed in previous scholarly literature ("Der Name des Petrus und die konstantinische Bauhütte am Vatikan", 114-25). Restoration works in the year 2000 confirmed the curious spelling "AT." The inscription can be dated to 319-339 during the period of Constantinian construction; Papi suggests an interpretation "ad Petrum" as most likely denoting not the tomb per se but more pragmatically marking the stonemasonry's intended destination for the marble flooring in the new Petrine Basilica.
- [6] Jutta Dresken-Weiland is an archaeologist and Byzantine art historian whose contribution ("Petrusdarstellungen und ihre Bedeutung in der frühchristlichen Kunst", 126-52) rehearses the more familiar territory of mainly fourth century Petrine artistic iconography – from identifying characteristics to narrative tropes and symbols, including that of the rooster at Peter's denial and Christ's giving of the law and the keys to Peter.
- [7] The Dortmund New Testament scholar Rainer Riesner ("Apostelgeschichte, Pastoralbriefe, 1. Clemens-Brief und die Martyrien der Apostel in Rom", 153-79) begins with Zwierlein's assertion that the "legend" of Peter's Roman martyrdom derives from the author of Acts, whose dual emphasis on Peter and Paul inadvertently gave rise to *1 Clem* 5.1-7 and other late second century sources – among which the legendary *Acts of Peter* (AD 180-190) were the earliest attestation of a Roman martyrdom. Responding to this multiply interleaved tissue of hypotheses, Riesner intriguingly interprets Luke's taciturnity on the death of Paul as the function of an unfashionably early date of

Acts shortly after the Neronian persecution. Turning next to 2 Timothy, Riesner accepts I.H. Marshall's argument for an early posthumous composition, for which he additionally proposes Luke as the author keen to attest the Apostle's exemplary Roman martyrdom (cf. 4.10). A methodological section highlighting early Christian patterns of networking and stress on identifiable individuals and living memory is then followed by an analysis of 1 Clem 5 as implying living memory (even if dated to ca. 96) of the Neronian martyrs including Peter and Paul. Riesner then reviews additional late first or early second-century evidence for Peter's martyrdom in John 21, the *Ascension of Isaiah*, the *Apocalypse of Peter* and canonical 1 Peter. Returning finally to Acts, he suggests hints at Petrine links with Rome (veiled perhaps due to the discretion required by the memory of events still raw and recent?), in the cumulative significance of Peter's dealings with the signally emphatic "Italian" Cornelius (10.1), his flight from Jerusalem in AD 41/42 for exile in 'another place' (12.17), and the intriguing coincidence of this chronology with an early Christian tradition (known to Eusebius and others) dating Peter's first arrival in Rome to AD 42/43. In that case, Luke's reticence about Peter merely matches his reticence about Paul. (Of course the challenging fact remains that in neither case does Luke reveal how much or how little detail he knows; M.B.) Regardless of how one assesses Riesner's reading of Acts or relatively early dating of some NT books, the "multiple attestation" in the complex but pluriform aggregate of his sources does leave positions of thoroughgoing scepticism in danger of appearing superficial and historically facile.

- [8] Armin D. Baum ("'Babylon' als Ortsnamenmetapher in 1 Petr 5,13 auf dem Hintergrund der antiken Literatur und im Kontext des Briefes", 180-220) returns in his substantial contribution to an old chestnut of scholarly debate, ruling out non-metaphorical references to Mesopotamia and Egypt while pointing out the significant evidence for Second Temple re-appropriations of Old Testament prophecies about Babylon in Judaism's long-simmering tensions with Rome – ranging from Daniel via the Dead Sea Scrolls and Book 3 of the *Sibylline Oracles* to a whole range of New Testament passages. After exploring various socio-economic, political, religious and eschatological facets of this urban metaphor, Baum returns to 1 Peter 5.13 to demonstrate that the most plausible readership's cultural familiarity with the amply accessible precedent for this metaphor as designating the capital city of the current pagan superpower. Two brief appendices concern (1) the consequent irrelevance of this passage for arguments about the epistle's date (whether late or early; M.B.) and (2) Baum's translation of Erasmus' case for a literal reading of "Babylon" (*Annotationes*, 1540).
- [9] Horacio E. Lona ("'Petrus in Rom' und der Erste Clemensbrief", 221-46), a *Neutestamentler* and the author of a respected magisterial treatment of *1 Clement* (1998), turns in his contribution to a question whose consideration some critics found wanting in his commentary (so e.g. B. Dehandschutter, *VigChr* 54 (2000) 329): the relevance of *1 Clement* to the question of Peter's connection with Rome. His careful exposition of chapters 4-6 in dialogue with Zwierlein faults the latter's exegesis while allowing for abiding ambiguities and results which, while undoubtedly modest, are more compatible with the traditional reading than the sceptical alternative. Part II of the chapter offers a detailed critical engagement with Zwierlein's late dating of *1 Clement* and *1 Peter* based on their supposed literary dependency on Acts and the Pastoral

Epistles (again dated exceptionally late) as well as on historical correlations with the Hadrianic era. While some key questions Zwierlein raises about *1 Clement* do indeed remain open, his conclusions seem invalidated by a lack of exegetical sensitivity and historically uncritical presuppositions.

- [10] The classicist Christian Gnilka (“Philologisches zur römischen Petrustradition“, 247-282) presents a substantial chapter of critical miscellanies about a series of pertinent early Christian texts and issues. These include Cyprian’s assumption of Petrine primacy; Tertullian’s affirmation of the Apostles’ martyrdom as independent of the *Acts of Paul*; the uncomplicated assumption of Peter’s martyrdom by crucifixion in John 21.18-19; Babylon as Rome in 1 Peter 5.13, the theme of “envy” (ζήλος) as the cause of the persecutions in geographic and chronological proximity to the author of *1 Clement*; Dionysius of Corinth as correctly basing his assumption of the Apostles’ martyrdom in Italy on a widely accepted tradition (rather than a misreading of 1 Corinthians and 1 Clement); the temporal continuity of the authors of key sources as subverting an excessively late chronology for the Petrine tradition in Rome; and finally the overarching problem that construals such as Zwierlein’s lack a viable conception of tradition and its role in intertextuality, which alone can provide a coherent picture of the development of the early Christian sources.
- [11] Continuing on this same note of tradition’s hermeneutical import, the editor Stefan Heid (“Die Anfänge der Verehrung der apostolischen Gräber in Rom”, 283-308) traces the history of the Roman martyrs’ cult from the letters of Ignatius to the second-century evidence for the Roman church’s commemoration of the Apostles. He derives from the veneration of Polycarp’s martyrdom support for the possibility that such a Christian cult of the martyrs and their tombs might date from the first century. (The plentiful analogous Jewish evidence is surprisingly absent, even though it would support Heid’s argument; M.B.)
- [12] Oliver Ehlen (“Quando venisti? Zur literarischen Konzeption des *Martyrium Petri*“, 309-25) offers a literary-critical survey of the account of Peter’s martyrdom in the closing chapters of the *Acts of Peter*, which he sees as composed with only minimal local Roman knowledge (which includes the traditions of the *Quo vadis* scene as well as the crucifixion). He concludes not only that these traditions were originally separate but (somewhat optimistically) that the implied redaction utilized source elements predating the martyrdom of Polycarp and developed in a first written stage around AD 150 and a second after 180.
- [13] Historian Heinz Sproll (“Urbs und Orbis: Zwei Gedächtnisorte der frühchristlichen Geschichtskultur“, 326-46) rounds out the proceedings of the first conference with a thoughtful study of Rome as (in Pierre Nora’s sense) a *lieu de mémoire* for early Christianity’s social memory, in which it figures both as ‘the City’ (*urbs*) and, metonymically, as the Empire (*orbis*). Although adopted from early imperial Roman self-consciousness, they became theologized in the development of a diachronic Christian culture of memory under the influence of both Western and Eastern theologians as well as of popes like Damasus I and Leo the Great.
- [14] Part II comprises the papers from the Freiburg conference. Meinolf Vielberg, Professor of Latin at Jena, opens this section of mostly shorter papers on both Peter and Paul with the briefest of introductions (“Die Apostel Petrus und Paulus in Rom”, 349-50). It is perhaps in the nature of this division of labour that Part II significantly repeats or overlaps with material in Part I.

- [15] The archaeologist Hugo Brandenburg (“Die Aussagen der Schriftquellen und der archäologischen Zeugnisse zum Kult der Apostelfürsten in Rom“, 351-82) reviews the evidence for the Roman cult of Peter and Paul, concluding that older as well as recent investigations show with “certainty” that the structural evidence under the Basilica of St Paul Outside the Walls is “the same” as that at the Vatican, so that the tombs of both Apostles were since the mid-second century marked by a memorial subsequently enclosed by a Constantinian Basilica.
- [16] Harald Mielsch, a retired classical archaeologist, presents the archaeology and epigraphy of the Roman necropolis neighbouring the traditional tomb of Peter (“Die Umgebung des Petrusgrabes im 2. Jahrhundert“, 383-404). The use of the area for initially scattered mausoleums began around AD 120, i.e. prior to the evidence for construction activity related to the Petrine cult – thus permitting no confident conclusions about the prehistory of Peter’s tomb and casting doubt on the original excavators’ assumptions about a clear archaeological implication of its existence. Mielsch does not believe the early Christian localization of Peter’s tomb on this spot ca. AD 160 was able to draw on any prior evidence, and he suspects here a parallel to the miraculous “finding” of Christ’s tomb in Jerusalem by Queen Helena.
- [17] The chapter by the classical philologist Wilhelm Blümer (“Zur Überlieferung der Apostelgeschichte in griechisch-römischer Tradition“, 405-21) seems initially out of place, but serves to counter claims (like Zwierlein’s) for a late dating of Acts. It is a study essentially of the Eastern and Western textual transmission of Acts, which leads the author to the view of a widely circulated original text that was then expanded and redacted somewhat before AD 110.
- [18] Returning to a subject covered in the earlier chapter by Armin D. Baum (though without reference to him), the early church historian Michael Durst (“Babylon gleich Rom in der jüdischen Apokalyptik und im frühen Christentum“, 422-43) rehearses the evidence with somewhat less methodological clarity and a stronger focus on Jewish and Christian apocalyptic literature, concluding that Babylon is indeed a code name (*Deckname*, 442 – a conclusion expressly contradicted by Baum, 216/218) serving only to identify the author as the “authentic” Peter who was known to both author and readers as having worked in Rome.
- [19] The next chapter makes room for the volume’s evident *bête noire*, Otto Zwierlein (“Die literarischen Zeugnisse“, 444-67), who reiterates the main lines of argumentation deployed in his book *Petrus in Rom: Die literarischen Zeugnisse* (Berlin/New York: de Gruyter, 2009) – and objects at 444 n. 1 to the Editor’s refusal to let him rebut Gnilka’s arguments rehearsed above. The New Testament books make no reference to Peter’s stay in Rome; Timothy Barnes is mistaken in his use of John 21 to argue that Peter was not crucified but burned in the Neronian persecution; 1 Peter 5.13 uses “Babylon” as a mere metonymy for the Epistle’s generic emphasis on exile, while envisaging Peter in Jerusalem; *1 Clement* is a product of the first decade of Hadrian’s reign and presupposes Acts as well as the epistles of James and 1 Peter, but has no knowledge of any Petrine stay in Rome, let alone any Neronian martyrdom of Peter and Paul; Ignatius, *Romans* 4.6 does attest a Roman tradition of Peter but this is in a pseudonymous document if indebted to Valentinus’ disciple Ptolemaeus and therefore not datable before AD 160; the *Ascension of Isaiah* and *Apocalypse of Peter* are irrelevant; Dionysius of Corinth depends on a misinterpretation of *1 Clement*; the idea of Peter’s presence in Rome does not predate his anti-heretical conflict with Simon Magus in the later second-century *Acts of Peter* legends; while the

- very idea of a veneration of apostolic tombs is a late perversion contradicting the Jesus tradition in Matt 8.22. Q. E. D., thinks Zwierlein.
- [20] Five further chapters follow, none of which engage with Zwierlein's contribution to this volume. The ancient historian Walter Ameling ("Petrus in Rom: Zur Genese frühchristlicher Erinnerung" 468-91) rehearses once more the New Testament, patristic and archaeological sources covered previously, and finds them each individually to be fairly vague and unable by themselves to sustain the weight of the tradition. His conclusion draws on notions of memory to suggest that a change in Petrine memory took place at the point when the last living eyewitnesses of the Apostle or his immediate disciples passed away. Until that point, oral memory had constrained the proliferation of wildly competing traditions: this is why there was no competing tradition about how or where Peter died (in contrast to Andrew and others, let alone Homer). Thus the paucity of memory in no way hampered its critical *gravitas* and influence.
- [21] Meinolf Vielberg returns for a second brief entry in his philological analysis of the use in *1 Clement* of the plural personal pronouns "you" for the Corinthians and "we" for the Roman Christians ("Philologisches zum 1. Klemensbrief: Bemerkungen zum Gebrauch der Pronomina 'Wir' und 'Ihr'", 492-96).
- [22] Wolfgang Dieter Lebek, a retired classicist, offers a range of critical miscellanies ("Petrus als Blutzeuge: Tertullianische Probleme", 497-516). He questions Zwierlein's previously argued claim (two paragraphs above) that the *Acts of Peter* is the earliest evidence for a tradition about Peter in Rome; he finds Tertullian's *Apologeticum* uncontroversially linking the Neronian persecution to the martyrdom of disciples of Jesus, and more specifically (yet without dependence on the Petrine *Acts*) of Peter in *Praescr.* 36.2-3 and *Scorp.* 15.3. Finally he articulates an analogy in the question of how one might reference the martyrdom and tomb of James in Hegesippus without knowledge of Josephus.
- [23] Tassilo Schmitt offers an ancient historian's perspective on various critical issues relating to the originally hostile senatorial attribution of blame for the fire of Rome to Nero, which in the author's view has no bearing on what was a 'philanthropically' motivated decision to persecute the Christians for their popularly alleged *odium humani generis* ("Die Christenverfolgung unter Nero", 517-37). However, Schmitt does not consider plausible continuities of inner-Jewish resentment from the Roman history of painful strife *impulsore Chresto* (Suetonius, *Claudius* 25.4) to the ζῆλος explicitly adduced in *1 Clement* as the cause of persecution (5.1). As we know from Josephus, Jewish grievances were more easily communicable to Nero's household than to Claudius' (e.g. through the interventions of his 'God-fearing' wife Poppaea Sabina, Ant. 20.195).
- [24] The senior ancient historian Raban von Haehling offers brief concluding reflections on the papers of Part II, proposing a number of possible reasons for the silence of Acts about the death of Peter and Paul ("Mutmaßungen zum Schweigen der Apostelgeschichte vom Tod der Apostel Petrus und Paulus", 538-47). The context of imminent eschatological expectations raises for him the possibility that oral traditions might not immediately be included in written accounts, while a later date is no indication of unreliability. Luke seems to some extent motivated by pro-Roman loyalties that would (as in other second-century Christian sources) tend to favour euphemistic treatment not only of the gospel passion narrative but *a fortiori* of more recent executions in the capital. Finally (and more tenuously; M.B.), even Cyprian and subsequent critics readily question the views and practices of particular Roman bishops but never the

Roman church's original connection with Peter's ministry, martyrdom and burial place.

- [25] Reviewers of multi-author volumes are familiar with the challenge of grab-bags of varying quality without much sense of any overall argument; and some such difficulties are necessarily magnified when faced with a tome of 550 large, densely printed pages. There is much variety here in levels of argument and erudition; and despite the original conference setting, the Editor makes little attempt to encourage cross-engagement on matters of significant (if rarely major) disagreement. The overwhelming opposition to Otto Zwierlein's unnecessarily sceptical construal of the sources nevertheless allows a clear if slightly lop-sided consensus to emerge on certain points: even though the presence and martyrdom of Peter and Paul in Rome cannot be straightforwardly derived from any one early document, it nevertheless follows reasonably from the cumulative weight of a complex of literary, archaeological, liturgical and traditional sources. While some critics might describe this consensus as "conservative," in fact the conclusions are far from monochrome and the cumulative volume of critical and historical learning deployed here creates a decided sense of intellectual *gravitas*. Especially in their recurrent analytical stress on the mutually conversant memory and effective history of diverse literary and non-literary prosopographical sources, these essays undoubtedly constitute a landmark contribution to the renewed vitality of Petrine study in recent scholarship.
- [26] Three constructive critical observations may nevertheless be *à propos*, perhaps above all for the Editor and publisher. First, despite its large size and its often impressive treasure chest of references, the Editor did not see fit to provide either a standardized bibliography (or even chapter bibliographies) or an index of any kind. These days a prestigious publisher like Herder should know better, even if continental academics of a certain generation still may not.
- [27] For this and other reasons, secondly, the volume's significant overall contribution to an important larger debate is in danger of being largely lost to international scholarship – a problem that could have been partly redressed by a good editorial Introduction or postscript offering a synthetic orientation to the volume's central intellectual gains along with an outline of remaining open questions and *desiderata*. Once again the absence of formative editorial input is unfortunate.
- [28] Thirdly, and whilst explicitly acknowledging the impressive calibre of the leading contributions, this reviewer nevertheless found himself surprised at the continued tolerance of an anachronistically Germanocentric vision of scholarship in a number of chapters. Even in cases where the erudition and intellectual quality of the argument are otherwise not in doubt, it remains the case that a number of these authors are far from reliable and up-to-date guides on the international *status quaestionis*. Conversely, the importance of the subject matter and the undeniably high quality of a good number of the contributions could have been made a great deal more accessible with the provision of English abstracts.
- [29] For those with the patience to mine its rich resources, this will prove a landmark contribution to a debate of immense exegetical, historical, hermeneutical and ecclesiological interest – and indeed a contribution that ought to be more easily accessible. While a translation of the entire volume hardly appears practical or worthwhile, a suitably re-edited, compact volume of ten or twelve of these

chapters does strike the reviewer as a desirable and potentially attractive proposition for a North American or British publisher.

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