Ancient testimony showing knowledge of the Gospel of Peter includes:

Origen, on Matt. 10. 17 (Klostermann, pp. 21, 26 ff.): a Gospel of Peter (and the Protevangelium of James) are mentioned en passant.

Eusebius, HE 6. 12 (Schwartz, GCS 9. 2, pp. 544-7): Serapion, bishop of Antioch c.190, found a church in Rhossus using an unorthodox book known as the Gospel of Peter.

Eusebius HE 3. 3. 2 (Schwartz, GCS 9. 1, pp. 188 ff.): the Gospel of Peter is named among writings not handed down among the catholic scriptures.

It was, however, only in 1886-7 that a document containing a Gospel of Peter (who is named in ch. 14 = §60) came to light during excavations in Akhmîm. This fragment was found together with fragments of Greek Enoch and the Apocalypse of Peter. 1 The manuscript is of the eighth century, but the composition of the Gospel of Peter is much earlier, as Eusebius' reference to Serapion indicates. Most scholars date its composition to the second half of the second century: Vaganay, Gardner-Smith, and Denker put it even earlier.² Another fragment of the same gospel has been found at Oxyrhynchus (P. Oxy. 2949) and is dated early in the third century. This shows considerable variation when compared with the Akhmîm fragment.

In many ways the Gospel of Peter can be compared with P. Egerton 2 (q.v.). Both betray early knowledge of the canonical Gospels but with differences that may be due to the influence of oral traditions.

One of the major questions raised in the numerous publications that followed quickly upon the first editions of the Gospel of Peter was its relationship to the canonical Gospels. Some features can easily be identified: for example, from Matthew has been taken the washing of hands, the sealing of the tomb, the bribing of the soldiers; from John the dating of the death, the crurifragium, and the appearance of the risen Jesus by the sea; from Luke the episode of the thief, and the involvement of Herod. But there are also significant differences and changes from incidents in the canonical Gospels. Although some commentators earlier this century over-estimated the dependence of Peter on the canonical tradition, few then or now would go to the other extreme and claim that this gospel represents an independent witness to the Passion of Jesus. Crossan's views on the independence of Peter have been answered by R. E. Brown and F. Neirynck. Nowadays it is generally concluded that this gospel is secondary to and dependent on the accounts of the passion in the canonical Gospels.

Another question that is often raised is the alleged Gnosticism or docetism in this writing. Certainly the cry from the cross, and Jesus' seeming inability to suffer pain, and some other details have encouraged commentators to see Gnostic traits in the writing or to say that it was not Gnostic itself but prepared the way for fully Gnostic passion narratives.

The author's main aim seems to have been apologetic, especially in his attempts to blame the lews and exonerate Pilate for Jesus' death. It is thoroughly anti-semitic in tone, for example attributing the crurifragium not to the fulfilment of Old Testament prophecies (as in the canonical Gospels) but to Jewish malevolence.

Gardner-Smith's verdict on this gospel (7TS 27 p. 260) was that '... "Peter" was hardly theologian enough to be a heretic: some passages may reflect heretical tendencies in his source, but "Peter" was probably unconscious of the fact'.

My translation is from the Greek as printed by Mara. The double numbering is maintained. The sixty verses originated in Harnack's edition, the fourteen chapters in I. A. Robinson's.

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- A. Lods, L'Évangile et l'Apocalypse de Pierre (Paris, 1893) (facsimile edition) (= Mémoires publiés par les membres de la mission archéologique française au Caire 9.3, 217-35).
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Text reproduced in (among other places):

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¹ See below for the Apocalypse of Peter.

² S. G. Hall, Melito of Sardis: On Pascha (Oxford, 1979), gives several references to the influence of the Gospel of Peter on Melito. The Gospel of Peter may also have influenced the Syriac Didascalia and Justin.

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- Cf. P. Oxy. 4009 ed. D. Lührmann and P. Parsons, *OP* 60 (London, 1994) 1–5 and D. Lührmann, 'POx 4009: Ein neur Fragment des Petrusevangeliums?' *NovT* 35 (1993) 390–410.

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Aland¹³, 585; Huck-Greeven¹³, 285-6; Boismard, 415.

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Bonaccorsi, i. 16-27. Erbetta, i.1, 137-45. Moraldi, i. 503-17.

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A. J. Dewey, "Time to Murder and Create": Visions and Revisions in the Gospel of Peter', in R. Cameron (ed.), The Apocryphal Jesus and Christian Origins (Atlanta, 1990), 101-27 (= Semeia 49). [Cf. response by J. D. Crossan, ibid. 155-61.]

- 1. 1. ... But of the Jews none washed their hands, neither Herod nor any of his judges. And as they would not wash Pilate stood up. 2. And then Herod the king commanded that the Lord should be taken off saying to them, 'What I have commanded you to do to him, do.'
- 2. 3. Now there stood there Joseph, the friend of Pilate and of the Lord, and knowing that they were about to crucify him he came to Pilate and asked for the body of the Lord for burial.² 4. And Pilate sent to Herod and asked for his body. 5. And Herod said, 'Brother Pilate, even if no one had asked for him we should bury him since the Sabbath is drawing on.3 For it stands written in the law: "The sun should not set on one that has been put to death." And he delivered⁵ him to the people before the first day of unleavened bread,⁶ their feast.
 - 3. 6. So they took the Lord and pushed him as they ran and said, 'Let us

drag the Son of God along now that we have got power over him.' 7. And they put upon him a purple robe and set him on the judgement seat and said, 'Judge righteously, O King of Israel!' 8. And one of them brought a crown of thorns and put it on the Lord's head. q. And others who stood by spat on his eves, and others slapped him on the cheeks, others pricked him with a reed, 8 and some scourged him saving, With this honour let us honour the Son of God.'

4. 10. And they brought two malefactors and crucified the Lord between them. But he held his peace 10 as (if) he felt no pain. 11. And when they had set up the cross they wrote: 'This is the King of Israel.'9 12. And having laid down his garments before him they divided them among themselves and cast lots for them. 9 13. But one of the malefactors rebuked them saying, 'We are suffering for the deeds which we have committed, but this man, who has become the saviour of men, what wrong has he done you?'11 14. And they were angry with him and commanded that his legs should not be broken 12 so that he might die in torment.

5. 15. Now it was midday and darkness covered all Judaea. And they became anxious and distressed lest the sun had already set since he was still alive. It stands written for them: 'The sun should not set on one that has been murdered.'13 16. And one of them said, 'Give him to drink gall with vinegar.' And having mixed it they gave it to him to drink.¹⁴ 17. And they fulfilled all things and accumulated their sins on their head. 15 18. And many went about with lamps [and] as they supposed that it was night, they stumbled. 16 19. And the Lord called out and cried, 'My power, O power, you have forsaken me!'17 And having said this, he was taken up. 20. And at the same hour the veil of the temple in Jerusalem was torn in two.¹⁸

6. 21. And then the Jews drew the spikes¹⁹ from the hands of the Lord and laid him on the earth. And the whole earth shook and there was great fear. 20 22. Then the sun shone and it was found to be the ninth hour. 21 23. And the Jews rejoiced and gave his body to Joseph that he might bury it since he had seen all the good deeds that he (Jesus) had done. 24. And he took the

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<sup>7</sup> Cf. Justin, Apol. 1. 35; John 19: 13.
<sup>8</sup> Cf. Mark 14: 65; 15: 16-20.
<sup>9</sup> Cf. Mark 15: 24 ff. and parallels.
10 Cf. Mark 14: 61 and parallel; 15: 5 and parallel.
11 Cf. Luke 23: 30 ff.
12 Cf. John 19: 31 ff.
<sup>13</sup> Mark 15: 33 and parallels; Amos 8: 9.
14 Cf. Matt. 27: 34, 48 and parallel.
15 Cf. John 19: 28, 30.
<sup>16</sup> Cf. John 11: 10. Von Gebhardt conjectured 'they went to bed'.
<sup>17</sup> Cf. Mark 15: 34 and parallel. Perhaps translate as a question 'Have you forsaken me?'
<sup>18</sup> Mark 15: 38 and parallel.
<sup>19</sup> John 20: 25, 27.
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¹ Cf. Matt. 27: 24.

² Mark 15: 43 and parallels.
³ Cf. Luke 23: 54.

⁴ Cf. John 19: 31; Deut. 21: 22 ff.

⁵ Cf. Mark 15: 15 and parallels.

⁶ Cf. Mark 14: 12 and parallels.

²⁰ Matt. 27: 51, 54.

²¹ Cf. Mark 15: 33 and parallels.

Lord, washed him, wrapped him in linen, 22 and brought him into his own sepulchre, called Joseph's Garden.²³

- 7. 25. Then the Jews and the elders and the priests, perceiving what great evil they had done to themselves, began to lament and to say, 'Woe on our sins, judgement has arrived and with it the end of Jerusalem.'24 26. But I mourned with my companions and, being wounded in heart, we hid ourselves for we were being sought after by them as if we were evil-doers and as persons who wanted to set fire to the temple. 27. Besides all these things we were fasting and sat mourning and weeping night and day until the Sabbath.²⁵
- 8, 28. But the scribes and Pharisees and elders, being assembled and hearing that the people were murmuring and beating their breasts, said, 'If at his death these exceeding great signs happened, behold how righteous he was!'²⁶ 20. They were afraid and came to Pilate, entreating him and saying, (30) 'Give us soldiers that we may guard his sepulchre for three days, lest his disciples come and steal him away and the people suppose that he is risen from the dead, and do us harm.'27 31. And Pilate gave them Petronius the centurion with soldiers to guard the sepulchre. And with them there came elders and scribes to the sepulchre, and all who were there together rolled a large stone 32, and laid it against the door to the sepulchre to exclude the centurion and the soldiers, and they (33) put on it seven seals, pitched a tent there and kept watch.²⁸
- 9. 34. Early in the morning, when the Sabbath dawned, there came a crowd from Jerusalem and the country round about to see the sealed sepulchre. 35. Now in the night in which the Lord's day dawned, when the soldiers were keeping guard, two by two in each watch, there was a loud voice in heaven, (36) and they saw the heavens open²⁹ and two men come down from there in a great brightness and draw near to the sepulchre. 37. That stone which had been laid against the entrance to the sepulchre started of itself to roll and move sidewards, and the sepulchre was opened and both young men entered.³⁰
- 10. 38. When those soldiers saw this, they awakened the centurion and the elders, for they also were there to mount guard. 39. And while they were narrating what they had seen, they saw three men come out from the sepulchre, two of them supporting the other and a cross following them (40) and the heads of the two reaching to heaven, but that of him who was being led reached beyond the heavens. 41. And they heard a voice out of the

heavens crying, 'Have you preached to those who sleep?', 31 42. and from the cross there was heard the answer, 'Yes.'

11. 43. Therefore the men decided among themselves to go and report these things to Pilate. 44. And while they were still deliberating the heavens were again seen to open and a man descended and entered the tomb. 45. When those who were of the centurion's company saw this they hurried by night to Pilate, leaving the sepulchre which they were guarding, and reported everything that they had seen, being greatly agitated and saying, 'In truth he was (the) Son of God.'32 46. Pilate answered and said, 'I am clean from the blood of the Son of God; it was you who desired it.'33 47. Then they all came to him, beseeching him and urgently calling upon him to command the centurion and the soldiers to tell no one about the things they had seen. 48. 'For it is better for us', they said, 'to make ourselves guilty of the greatest sin before God than to fall into the hands of the people of the Jews and be stoned.34 49. Pilate therefore commanded the centurion and the soldiers to say nothing. 35

12. 50. At dawn on the Lord's day Mary Magdalene, 36 a woman disciple of the Lord—for fear of the Jews, ³⁷ since they were inflamed with wrath had not done at the sepulchre of the Lord what women are accustomed to do for their dead loved ones. 51. She took with her (women) friends and came to the sepulchre where he was laid. 52. And they were afraid lest the Jews should see them and said, 'Even though we could not weep and lament on that day when he was crucified, yet let us now do so at his sepulchre. 53. But who will roll away for us the stone that is across the entrance to the sepulchre, that we may go in and sit beside him and do what is due?'-(54) for the stone was great³⁸—'and we fear lest any one see us. And if we cannot do so let us at least place by the entrance what we have brought as a memorial for him, and let us weep and lament until we go home.'

13. 55. But having arrived they found the sepulchre opened. And they came near, stooped down there, and saw a young man sitting in the middle of the sepulchre, comely, and clothed with a brightly shining robe. He said to them, (56) 'Why have you come? Whom do you seek? Not the man who was crucified? He is risen and gone. But if you do not believe, stoop this way and see the place where he lay for he is not there. For he is risen and is gone to the place from which he was sent.' 57. Then the women fled frightened.³⁹

14. 58. Now it was the last day of unleavened bread and many went away

²² Cf. Mark 15: 46 and parallels.

²³ John 19: 41.

²⁴ Cf. Luke 23: 48 v.l.

²⁵ Cf. Mark 2: 20 and parallels; 16: 10.

²⁶ Cf. Luke 23: 47 f.

²⁷ Cf. Matt. 27: 62-6.

²⁸ Cf. Mark 15: 46 and parallels; Matt. 27: 66.

²⁹ Cf. Matt. 3: 16 f. and parallels.

³⁰ Cf. Matt. 28: 1 f.

³¹ Cf. 1 Pet. 3: 19.
³² Mark 15: 39 and parallels.

³³ Cf. Matt. 27: 24.

³⁴ Cf. John 11: 50.

³⁵ With v. 47 cf. Matt. 28: 11-15.

³⁶ Cf. Matt. 28: 1 and parallels.

³⁷ Cf. John 20: 19.

³⁸ Cf. Mark 16: 3 f.

³⁹ Cf. Mark 16: 1-8.

and returned to their homes because the feast was at an end. 59. But we, the twelve disciples of the Lord, wept and mourned and each one, grieving for what had happened, returned to his own home. 60. But I, Simon Peter, and my brother Andrew took our nets and went to the sea. 40 And there was with us Levi, the son of Alphaeus, whom the Lord...

40 Cf. John 21: 1 ff.

The Gospel of Gamaliel

No known document bears this title, and no such title is found in patristic literature. Modern scholarship is responsible for the identification. A certain confusion between a work attributed to Gamaliel and other works, including perhaps the Gospel of Bartholomew, was encouraged by the collection of Coptic fragments assembled by Revillout under the title 'Gospel of the Twelve Apostles', which Baumstark, James, and others subsequently divided into different texts; some may legitimately be read as fragments of the Gospel of Gamaliel, especially Revillout's fr. 15, actually attributed to Gamaliel, and perhaps 5, 10, 11, 13, 14 (others may be from the Gospel of Bartholomew (a,v,)). The book to which these fragments are said to have belonged was given the name 'Gospel' by Baumstark and by Ladeuze. It tells of the events of Good Friday and the days following. Some Arabic redactions have appeared and some Ethiopic fragments have come to light. The latter know this work as 'The Lament of Mary' although such a title is not appropriate to the whole of the contents as known in Ethiopic. Revillout's fragment 15 (= Lacau, no. 2) is found in the Ethiopic work. The original language is likely to have been Coptic and, according to van den Oudenrijn, could go back at least to the fifth century. The contents are orthodox and anti-Jewish in tone. The whitewashing of Pilate, revered as a saint in the Coptic church, is a dominant theme.

Only Revillout's fr. 15 is summarized here; others may be seen under 'Coptic Narratives of the Ministry and Passion' below.

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- E. Revillout, 'Les apocryphes coptes, i, Les Évangiles des douze apôtres et de Saint Barthélemy, in PO 2.2, ed. R. Graffin, (Paris, 1904; repr. 1946), 117–98.
- P. Ladeuze, 'Apocryphes évangeliques coptes. Pseudo-Gamaliel: Évangile de Barthélemy', *RHE* 7 (1906), 245–68.
- A. Mingana, 'The Lament of the Virgin and the Martyrdom of Pilate', in *Woodbrooke Studies* 2, with introduction by J. R. Harris *BJRL* 12 (1928), 411-580 (Garshūni text with Eng. trans.).
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¹ Reviewed by A. Baumstark, 'Les apocryphes coptes', *Rev. Bib.* NS 3 (1906), 245-65. esp. 253-9; 'Un Évangile de Gamaliel'.