

Preface

Adolf von Harnack and 1 Clement

ALTHOUGH THE BROADER CORPUS of Adolf von Harnack's research and scholarly output has received a wide reception throughout the world and has even been translated into several languages, his final work entitled *Einführung in die alte Kirchengeschichte: Das Schreiben der römischen Kirche an die korinthische aus der Zeit Domitians (I. Clemensbrief)*, published by Hinrichs in 1929, has remained untranslated for the English-speaking world. To be sure, Harnack's occupation with 1 Clement had an impact on Clement studies during his own era and continues to impact contemporary studies on 1 Clement,¹ nevertheless it has remained out of reach for those who cannot read German. With the ever-increasing interest in the so-called Apostolic Fathers and the sources of the earliest expressions of Christianity, it seems there is no better time to present a translation not only of Harnack's *Introduction to Ancient Church History* but also four significant journal articles he penned on 1 Clement for the Preußischen Akademie der Wissenschaften prior to his *Introduction*.

The first half of this volume consists of Harnack's *Introduction to Ancient Church History*. Shortly before his death in 1930, Harnack composed the volume as a farewell gift for the students of his church history seminar. The composition of the work is specifically aimed at his students: For example, Harnack includes a translation of the letter (partly for those whose Greek was sub-par and partly as a means of expounding the meaning of the letter), and he uses significantly fewer extensive Greek and Latin passages scattered throughout the volume than, for example, the essays he published on 1 Clement in the second half of this volume. Furthermore, he includes two lists towards the end of the *Introduction* providing his students possible avenues for future investigations, many of which were taken

1. See Larry Welborn's foreword in this volume.

up and addressed later by his students or students of 1 Clement in general. In addition to these features, Harnack's *Introduction* includes discussions on the transmission history of 1 Clement, authorship, the characteristics and religious content of the letter, the sources of Clement's Roman Christianity (e.g., the Old Testament, Christ, and the rational-moralistic idealism of the age and its literary forms), an excursus on Clement's attitude towards the political rulers and power structures of his day, an extensive section on ecclesiology and ecclesiastical offices, and finally notes on the text of 1 Clement. The arrangement and translation of this text follows that of the original publication by Hinrichs in 1929 and not the reprint by Brill in *Encounters with Hellenism*.

In the second half of the volume, there are four appendixes. Each appendix contains one of Harnack's articles on 1 Clement written between the years 1894 and 1926. The first two journal articles, both published within months of one another in 1894, beam with the excitement of a newly discovered Latin translation of 1 Clement. The first, "The Recently Discovered Latin Translation of 1 Clement" (appendix 1), begins with an examination of the extant manuscripts of 1 Clement and their respective value, including an assessment of how matters have now changed in light of Morin's discovery of a Latin translation of the text. Having provided an overview of the current state of affairs, Harnack turns to a number of peculiarities in the Latin translation overlooked by Morin. The text has undergone a number of scribal alterations. The translator has omitted the word "our" in the phrase "our soldiers" (37.1) and in the phrase "our leaders" (60.2). Furthermore, the prayer for "our leaders" and the submission of all Christians to their earthly rulers has been inverted. Instead of Clement praying that Christians might be submissive to their rulers, the prayer exhorts the rulers to submit themselves to the church, more specifically, to the pope. Harnack is certain these readings were not present in the original translation of the letter (which he dates to the second century) nor did they originate with the copyist of the eleventh-century manuscript now in our possession. Instead, he holds out hope that a catalog from the Lobbes Monastery might shed further light on the origin of the forgery. Notwithstanding the criticisms Harnack himself addresses in the subsequent article (see appendix 2), his judgment on the forgery present in this Latin manuscript continues to be positively received in contemporary Clement scholarship. Harnack himself notes Knopf's positive reception of his assessment in his *Introduction*,² and Grant, Lindemann,

2. See Harnack, *Introduction*, 107.

and Lona all cite this article as evidence of the tendentious readings present at times in this Latin translation.³

In the second appendix, “New Studies on the Recently Discovered Latin Translation of 1 Clement,” Harnack provides further investigations into the Latin text. The first portion of the essay begins where Harnack broke off in the previous essay, with a report on the contents on the Lobbes Monastery catalog. This catalog witnesses the presence of a Latin translation of 1 Clement within its library, which stood alongside the works of Cyprian and Cassiodori. The fact that it is not connected to 2 Clement and is placed alongside Cyprian attests to the antiquity of the original translation and its significance. In the second section, Harnack discusses ancient citations of the Latin text of 1 Clement, specifically by Ambrose and Lactantius, which reliably dates the translation to no later than the end of the third century. Section three turns to the internal evidence: the vocabulary employed by the translator, specifically terms for ecclesiastical offices, dates the translation to Rome in the second century. The essay concludes with a fourth section, wherein Harnack engages with critics of his forgery theory offered in the previous essay along with a proposal for how the forgery arose: a marginal reading from a previous manuscript had been mindlessly and uncritically copied into a new manuscript. Once again, Harnack’s philological judgments have found a welcome home in Clement scholarship: By and large, the modern assessment of the extant eleventh-century manuscript is that it originated from an earlier, second or early third-century translation.⁴

Appendix 3 contains the essay “The First Letter of Clement: A Study to Determine the Character of the Oldest Form of Gentile Christianity.” This essay was published in 1909 and represents an earlier investigation into the characteristics of 1 Clement as a whole. It is, in essence, the *Introduction* in its infancy. As Harnack himself notes, much of this essay has been brought into the *Introduction* word-for-word. There are of course interesting differences between the former and later works. Of particular note is the absence of a translation, the absence of textual notes, the presence of a rough outline of 1 Clement in a footnote, the use of lengthy Greek and Latin citations from primary source texts, a substantially different introduction for the work, and the inclusion of an excursus that addresses ecclesiastical *termini technici* attested to for the first time in 1 Clement. I have included this essay here within this volume, despite the large overlap in material with his

3. See Grant, *First and Second Clement*, 3–4; Lindemann, *Die Clemensbriefe*, 173–74; Lona, *Der erste Clemensbrief*, 607n3.

4. For the impact of Harnack’s essay on the current views about the original Latin translation, see Lona, *Der erste Clemensbrief*, 15, 15n2–3.

Introduction for those interested in investigating the development of Harnack's thoughts on 1 Clement.

The final essay, which Harnack published in 1926, is a detailed investigation into all the uses of the epithet "servant of God" (παῖς θεοῦ) for Jesus up until the Apostolic Constitutions and Canons (see appendix 4). Harnack's goal in this essay is to answer the question: Why has ὁ παῖς θεοῦ as an epithet for Jesus penetrated the churches and their history despite the fact that it was never a common name for him in the New Testament? To answer this question, he charts the origins of the phrase (a translation of the Hebrew *ebed YHWH*) and analyzes every documented instance of its usage within the literary remains of the early church. He concludes that παῖς θεοῦ ("servant/son/child of God") was not widely used because of the baser meaning (i.e., "servant") that could have been associated with it. Nevertheless, this epithet conveyed intimacy and a sacredness that had penetrated into the liturgy and prayers of the church, ensuring that its usage endured longer than it otherwise would have, until it was gradually and inevitably replaced by νιὸς θεοῦ ("son of God") because this designation for Jesus did not have the uncomfortable baggage associated with παῖς θεοῦ. Although the reception of this article in later Clement research is sporadic,⁵ Hermut Löhr engages with Harnack throughout his own extensive investigation of this epithet and its meaning in 1 Clement.⁶

Before bringing this preface to its overdue conclusion, it is important to make the reader aware of the translator's approach to Harnack's articles along with a number of features of the translation itself. Throughout this translation, I have attempted to render his words as faithfully as possible into a smooth English idiom. Sentences of unbearable length or complexity have been broken up into smaller and more manageable pieces. Incomplete sentences, which were prolific throughout Harnack's comments on the text of 1 Clement, have been expanded and completed in numerous places where the phrasing was awkward or where the meaning might have otherwise been obscured. Translator's Notes (marked by the abbreviation TN within the footnotes) have been added to explain idiomatic expressions, provide alternate translations for difficult constructions, or in rare instances provide an explanation of Harnack's choice of terminology. There was at least one instance—in Harnack's essay on "servant" as an epithet for Jesus—where a paragraph spanning three pages was divided into smaller sections. It is my hope that this attention to English aesthetics makes for a more pleasant reading experience.

5. For instance, there is no reference to this work in Lona, Lindemann, Grant.

6. See Löhr, *Studien*, 318–34.

Additional features of this translation should be identified. Those familiar with Harnack's work on 1 Clement in German may notice that I have made a number of changes to his text. None of these changes have a bearing on content, but instead attempt to conform Harnack's works to the stylistic norms of contemporary academic literature. Abbreviated citations, which at times only included an author's name and the date of the publication, have been filled out wherever possible and a full bibliography of works cited has been provided. Additionally, Harnack's tendency to quote phrases, clauses, or whole verses from 1 Clement and only reference the chapter and not the specific verse(s) cited has not been maintained. While Martin Rumscheidt in his reader *Adolf von Harnack: Liberal Theology at its Height* begrudgingly tolerated this practice because of the work it would have required to repair it,⁷ I have provided this additional information: Where citations of quoted text were missing, they have been supplied; where only the chapter has been provided by Harnack and it is clear that he was referencing a specific verse within that chapter, the verse has been supplied; in all matters that were unclear, no action was taken and Harnack's texts remain as they once did. Students of Harnack and 1 Clement will, I believe, benefit from more precise citations of the source texts as well as the accompanying index of ancient sources for the *Introduction* and all the appendixes. Finally, Harnack's original works—as I am certain will also be true of this edited compilation—contained numerous typographical errors (e.g., missing or incorrect versification in his translation of 1 Clement, incorrect accentuation or misspellings of Greek words, and incorrect references to the text of 1 Clement, to mention only a few). These errors—where I have become aware of them—have been corrected within this translation. Should one object to this liberality with Harnack's works, the original German texts are freely available online and can be consulted at the reader's discretion.

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7. Rumscheidt writes: “The reader will become aware of Harnack's irritating habit of quoting a variety of poets, writers, and journalists without citing the source. The editor decided that the absence of such references, which to search out would have been a huge task, does not reduce the clarity of the image of Harnack's life and work” (Rumscheidt, “Introduction,” 41). Clearly Rumscheidt's decision was prudent when one considers the scope of literature Harnack interacted with in his more extensive works as well as the fact that Rumscheidt did not have the aid of modern electronic search tools.