



Thomas Hobbes: Translations of Homer: The Iliad and the Odyssey (Clarendon Edition of the Works of Thomas Hobbes)

By *Eric Nelson*

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This volume in the Clarendon Edition of the Works of Thomas Hobbes contains his translations of Homer's Iliad and Odyssey, edited by Eric Nelson. Hobbes translated the Homeric poems into English verse during the course of the 1670s, when he was already well into his eighties. These texts constitute his most extensive single undertaking, as well as his last major work. Yet, despite the explosion of interest in Hobbes over the last fifty years, this is the first modern critical edition of the Homer translations. Nelson provides extensive annotation detailing Hobbes's interactions with the Greek text of the epics and with other early-modern editions and commentaries, as well as a substantial scholarly introduction placing Hobbes's enterprise in the wider context of Restoration politics and poetics. Nelson also offers a detailed analysis of the translations themselves, identifying the numerous instances in which Hobbes rewrites the poems in order to bring them into alignment with his views on politics, rhetoric, aesthetics, and theology. Hobbes's Iliads and Odysseys of Homer, Nelson suggests, should be regarded as a continuation of Leviathan by other means. This edition will be fascinating reading for anyone interested in early-modern political philosophy, literature, and classical studies.

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- Rank: #3336266 in eBooks
- Published on: 2008-07-31
- Released on: 2008-07-31
- Format: Kindle eBook

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Review

We are lucky to have the poems so intelligently annotated and eruditely introduced; Eric Nelson's edition is an impressive achievement. * Henry Power, Times Literary Supplement * Nelson's notes will undoubtedly be instrumental in all further critical evaluations of Hobbes' Homer... Nelson's edition throws new light on the text and makes us rethink the translation's critical heritage. * Miklos Peti, Bryn Mawr Classical Review * This is a welcome publication for all those interested in the reception of Homer and in translation studies more broadly. * Vedia Izzet and Robert Shorrock, Greece and Rome * This exquisite edition of Thomas Hobbes translation of the Homeric epics is a most welcome addition to the Clarendon Edition of the Works of Hobbes. It is welcome not only for making these translations done at the end of Hobbes life easily accessible... but also for the superb introductory comments... and Nelsons wonderful commentary. * Arlene W. Saxonhouse, History of Political Thought *

About the Author

Eric Nelson is Assistant Professor of Government at Harvard University, and author of *The Greek Tradition in Republican Thought* (Cambridge University Press, 2004).

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