



Routledge Studies in Social and Political Thought

POLITICS THROUGH THE *ILIAD* AND THE *ODYSSEY*

HOBBS WRITES HOMER

Andrea Catanzaro



ROUTLEDGE

Politics through the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*

Facing censorship and being confined to the fringes of the political debate of his time, Thomas Hobbes turned his attention to translating Homer's *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* from Greek into English. Many have not considered enough the usefulness of these translations. In this book, Andrea Catanzaro analyses the political value of Hobbes' translations of Homer's works and exposes the existence of a link between the translations and the previous works of the Malmesbury philosopher. In doing so, he asks:

- What new information concerning Hobbes' political and philosophical thought can be rendered from mere translation?
- What new offerings can a man in his eighties at the time offer, having widely explained his political ideas in numerous famous essays and treatises?
- What new elements can be deduced in a text that was well-known in England and where there were better versions than the ones produced by Hobbes?

Andrea Catanzaro's commentary and theoretical interpretation offers an incentive to study Hobbes lesser known works in the wider development of Western political philosophy and the history of political thought.

Andrea Catanzaro is Assistant Professor of History of Political Thought at the University of Genova, Italy. His interests lie in Ancient Political Thought and its reception in the Western Political Literature of Early Modern and Modern Age.

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Politics through the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*

Hobbes writes Homer

Andrea Catanzaro

First published in English 2019
by Routledge
52 Vanderbilt Avenue, New York, NY 10017

and by Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon, OX14 4RN

*Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa
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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Catanzaro, Andrea, 1976– author.

Title: Politics through the Iliad and the Odyssey : Hobbes writes
Homer / Andrea Catanzaro.

Other titles: Hobbes e Omero. English

Description: New York, NY : Routledge, 2019. |

Series: Routledge studies in social and political thought ; 141 |

Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2018056872 (print) |

LCCN 2019004997 (ebook) | ISBN 9781351205672 (Master) |

ISBN 9781351205665 (Adobe) | ISBN 9781351205658 (ePub3) |

ISBN 9781351205641 (Mobi) | ISBN 9780815383642 (hbk) |

ISBN 9781351205672 (ebk)

Subjects: LCSH: Hobbes, Thomas, 1588–1679—Political and
social views. | Homer. Iliad. | Homer. Odyssey.

Classification: LCC JC153.H659 (ebook) |

LCC JC153.H659 C38413 2019 (print) | DDC 320.01—dc23

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2018056872>

ISBN: 978-0-8153-8364-2 (hbk)

ISBN: 978-1-351-20567-2 (ebk)

Typeset in Times New Roman
by codeMantra

to Anna

She knows why

to Paolo

Real coach of life

to Elena

She undeniably deserves it



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1 The Hobbesian Homer

Between Amusement and Propaganda*

SUMMARY – This chapter seeks to contextualize the translations and focuses on the relation between Hobbes and the ancient Greek world, from both a linguistic and an ideological perspective. It also analyses the main positions of scholars regarding the value, role and political significance of Hobbes' translations of the Homeric poems.

It was in 2008 that Eric Nelson published his critical edition of the Hobbesian translations of the Homeric Poems with Oxford University Press. In his substantial *General Introduction*, placed right before the main text, he wrote an incisive and precise sentence summarising what was in his opinion the *ratio* of this work by the Malmesbury philosopher. He wrote: “Hobbes’s *Iliads and Odysseys of Homer* are a continuation of Leviathan by other means”.¹ Nelson was considering politics as a means to explore a text seemingly unrelated to this subject, at least at first glance. The choice to frame the Hobbesian work within this particular perspective ascribed it wider value, since it was not usually considered in this way. About ten years earlier, in an article published in *Translation and Literature*, meaningfully entitled *Political Ideology in Translations of the Iliad, 1660–1715*, Jack Lynch had stressed how, in the English context of Hobbes’s day, it was something of a custom to use translation as a means to achieve political aims. However, he had also underlined how this practice had been put under the magnifying glass by scholars only in recent times. He wrote in the opening lines of this work:

The political upheavals of the fifty years following the Restoration of the Stuarts have for decades figured in critical discussion of English poets from Milton to Pope. Only recently, however, has the same attention been given to political allusions and ideological resonances in the translated verse of this era as to the same features in non-translated texts. Whether the concurrence of one of the richest periods of literary translation is mere chance or something more, the work of these years provides an exceptional opportunity to explore the influence of political ideology on translations, as commentators have recently begun to show.²

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Furthermore, Lynch also underlined how the use of tales of gods and heroes from the Homeric poems had been customary among factions fighting one another in that same period. They were accustomed to using this means not only in order to support their respective ideological apparatus and their speeches, to boost their claims and demands, but also to discredit the positions, opinions and actions of opposing groups. With reference to one of the most famous episodes of the *Iliad*, he wrote:

The *Iliad* opens on the quarrel between Agamemnon, an intractable king who asserts his god-given right to govern heedless of his subjects, and Achilles, who calls for the subjection of the king's power to the will of the people. From Charles I and Puritans to Agamemnon and Achilles was for many seventeenth-century readers no great imaginative leap. Invocations of the Homeric quarrel, with the ensuing civil strife, were likely to assume a contemporary relevance; Agamemnon and Achilles were easily politicized.³

It should come as no great surprise that the particular political condition in England during the first half of the seventeenth century could involve, subsume and use works that were not immediately related to the contemporary state of affairs, at least at first glance. Similarly, it should not seem strange that ancient works could also be brought into play. Hence, it is clear that the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* could have played a role in this game.

However, one point must be stressed: a clear-cut and profound difference exists between the mere reusing of a text and its usage in order to achieve an advantage by showing it in a tamed and *ab origine* oriented version. In this situation, we have a simple deceptive reading not only of the contents but also of the container. It entails something more, something which by far outstrips mere reuse, something able to reveal a conscious choice, a deliberate intention, a targeted action by the man – or men – who chooses to act in this way.

As will be shown in the following pages, the idea that Hobbes, in translating the Homeric poems, might have been spurred by the intention to use them for political purposes remains controversial and has been taken into consideration by the literature only in recent times. It certainly does not lack appeal; indeed, it quite stimulates the imagination.

1.1 Hobbes's Thucydides and Hobbes's Homer: Different Times and Contexts. And Different Aims Too?

The heart of the matter spans two diametrically opposed points: it is necessary to establish whether Hobbes's decision to work on the translations of the Homeric poems is based on a deliberate political purpose or comes from a simple desire to find an amusing way to occupy the last years of

the life. That being stated, what seems to be primarily worth stressing is the anomaly of his decision: he chooses to translate the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* and not the other Greek works whose subjects could be closer to his perspective of political philosophy. After all, this had already happened with *The Peloponnesian War* by Thucydides, when Hobbes was in his forties. The philosopher himself explains his reason for translating the text by the Greek historian in his *Vita Carmine Expressa, Autore Seipso*:

Vertor ego ad nostras, ad Graecas, atque Latinas
Historias; etiam carmina saepe lego.
Flaccus, Virgilius, fuit et mihi notus Homerus,
Euripides, Sophocles, Plautus, Aristophanes,
Pluresque; et multi Scriptorum Historiarum:
Sed mihi prae reliquis Thucydides placuit.
Is Democratia ostendit mihi quam sit inepta,
Et, quantum coetu plus sapit unus homo.
Hunc ego scriptorem verti, qui diceret Anglis,
Consultaturi rhetoras ut fugerent.⁴

Although the preference of the Malmesbury philosopher for Thucydides is clear and manifest, there are other points that deserve emphasis. First, the *scriptores historiarum* seem to be more appreciated than poets: they are said to be worth translating. On the contrary, *carmina* are merely mentioned as something that is familiar because of the Hobbesian habit of frequently reading them. Second, the philosopher acknowledges the value of *The Peloponnesian War* from both a political and an educational perspective. Concerning the former, through its analytical accuracy, Thucydides's work is able to clearly show the downsides, deficiencies and weak points of democracy. Regarding the latter dimension, these precise, delimited and detailed remarks, if detached from their peculiar context, can be useful to illustrate the nature *inepta* of the democratic regime and the unavoidable superiority of *unus homo* on *coetus*.⁵ Finally, Hobbes highlights another educational element, a factor which allows us to appreciate the great value that he is accustomed to ascribing to translation as a political means. He writes: "Hunc ego scriptorem verti, qui diceret Anglis, / Consultaturi rhetoras ut fugerent".⁶ In Hobbes's mind, his making the words of Thucydides available to his contemporaries by translating *The Peloponnesian War* from Greek into English would allow them to benefit from an otherwise inaccessible source. It would also warn them to beware of the speeches of rhetors, a category of men ill-accepted by Hobbes, because of their skills in deeply influencing political choices.⁷

In the *Vita* written in prose, a text that can be found at the beginning of the *opera omnia* by Molesworth (*Thomae Hobbes Malmesburiensis Vita*),⁸ the philosopher clearly explains that his choice to translate Thucydides's

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works had a specific aim, an aim which was something more than a simple English edition of the *The Peloponnesian War*:

Inter historicos Graecos Thucydidem prae caeteris dilexit, et vauis horis in sermone Anglicum paulatim conversum cum nonnulla laude, circa annum Christi 1628, in publicum edidit; eo fine, ut ineptiae Democraticorum Atheniensium concivibus suis patefierent.⁹

That being stated, it seems clear that we have to recognise two stages to the educational moment: there is a preliminary phase in which the text influences only Hobbes; in the second one, instead, the contents are made available to a wider audience, though in an indirect, second-hand way.

Leaving Thucydides and his work to one side, I would like to stress how the nature of this reinterpretation is the real and controversial cornerstone of analyses that take into account the Hobbesian translations of the Homeric poems, since it prompts a lot of questions. How much of Homer¹⁰ and of Hobbes is there in the works that we are considering? How much – if at all – did the ideological background of the Malmesbury philosopher affect the final result? Are there, as in the case of *The Peloponnesian War*, any peculiar Hobbesian aims in the translation, whose causes do not depend on a mere desire to have an English version of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*?

We cannot deduce a great deal of information from the *Vita, Carmine Expressa, Authore Seipso*. Its last lines reveal that it was written when Hobbes was eighty-four years old, that is, in 1672.¹¹ The Hobbesian translation of books IX–XII of the *Odyssey* was the first to be published, just a year later.¹² The expression – “fuit et mihi notus Homer”¹³ – clearly tells us that Hobbes was familiar with the Homeric poems, and we can add nothing more about their possible educational use, which we can, however, do with regard to *The Peloponnesian War*.

Similarly, nothing more can be deduced from the *Vita* in prose, where we simply read:

Silentibus tandem adversariis, annum agens octogesimum septimum, Homeri *Odysseam* edidit, a se conversam in versus Anglicanos, anno deinde proximo etiam *Iliada*.¹⁴

Since this excerpt mentions Hobbes’s age, we can set the date of the translation of the *Odyssey* to 1675 and that of the *Iliad* to the following year. From the same passage, Nelson infers another aspect that can highlight an element worth remarking: in spite of the allusion to the translations of the Homeric poems in this passage from the *Vita* in prose (as a mere memo, it seems useful to remember that we find no mentions of them in the *Vita, Carmine expressa, Authore Seipso*), references to some Hobbesian works – even important ones – are missing.¹⁵

As a whole, the passage from the *Vita* in prose does not appear to be so remarkable because it mentions the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* and is silent on other works, since it does not seem to supply us with crucial elements concerning the translations. However, it becomes really important when we consider another aspect: it allows us to set the dates and to read them within the framework of Hobbes's other publications. That said, this Hobbesian work does not seem able to supply us with more significant information.¹⁶

In the philosopher's vision, therefore, the *scriptores historiarum*, and particularly Thucydides, are reputed to be able to teach and educate people, including those who will live in the following centuries. On the contrary, nothing or almost nothing is said about poetry and poets in these passages; furthermore, it seems possible to read a critique in them, albeit a subtle one. Given this situation, we might run the risk of reading too much into the translations, of forcing them into an unreal framework. For this reason, it seems necessary to move very carefully and proceed step-by-step in aligning hints, clues, evidence supplied by those scholars who chose to take into account the possibility that Hobbes's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* were something more than a simple work of translation. They can often appear almost imperceptible, at first glance bereft of importance, lacking in significance; however, all of them as a whole contribute to shaping a plausible framework, which fits these Hobbesian works. With a view to clarifying this aspect, a brief reconnaissance of the most significant steps in this research process is called for, even if, paradoxically enough, it risked never starting at all, because of Hobbes himself, since one of the most difficult hindrances to this kind of analysis is down to him. In the closing lines of *To the reader, concerning the virtues of an heroic poem*, which is the essay placed right before his translation of the *Odyssey* published in 1675,¹⁷ he wrote:

It is no wonder therefore if all the ancient learned men both of Greece and Rome have given the first place in poetry to Homer. It is rather strange that two or three, and of late time, and but learners of the Greek tongue, should dare to contradict so many competent judges both of language and discretion. But howsoever I defend Homer, I am not thereby at any reflection upon the following translation. Why then did I write it? Because I had nothing else to do. Why publish it? Because I thought it might take off my adversaries from showing their folly upon my more serious writings, and set them upon my verses to show their wisdom. But why without annotations? Because I had no hope to do it better than it is already done by Mr. Ogilby.¹⁸

The question ("Why then did I write it?") and the reply explaining the reasons that spurred Hobbes to work on the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* ("Because I had nothing else to do") both sound meaningful and suggest

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a very easy solution of the issue: there is no issue at all. The translation work appears to be a sort of diversion, in a period when the aged Hobbes has nothing to do. Hobbes clearly stresses that this work “might take off my adversaries from showing their folly upon my more serious writings, and set them upon my verses to show their wisdom”, and he says nothing about a possible educational purpose or anything similar, as was the case, for example, with *The Peloponnesian War*. Undoubtedly, these philosopher’s words hinder an analysis aimed at looking at account his versions of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* from the perspective of political thought. In spite of their weight and significance, however, they cannot be held completely responsible for the scant number of research works on this subject. In a 1996 article significantly entitled *The Despised Version: Hobbes’ Translations of Homer*,¹⁹ J. L. Ball underlined how even John Dryden and Alexander Pope, both involved in working on the Homeric poems after Hobbes, chose not to pay great attention to this work by the philosopher of Malmesbury.²⁰

The same scholar quoted the *Advertisement* of William Molesworth, the man who published the *opera omnia* of Hobbes in the period between 1839 and 1845, finding there other elements to help clarify why the translations of the Homeric poems were not greatly appreciated.²¹ Because of its importance, it seems to be useful to quote the passage of Molesworth’s work mentioned by Ball, though in a slightly longer version than that used in his article.

The translation of Homer was amongst the latest of Hobbes’ works; a signal of retreat from those mathematical contests in which he had spent so much of his time [...] Pope, in the preface to his translation, observes, that the poetry of Hobbes’ version is “too mean for criticism”. Some, however, may possibly find the unstudied and unpretending language of Hobbes convey an idea less remote from the original, than the smooth and glittering lines of Pope and his coadjutors. Pope’s remark upon the habitual carelessness displayed in the execution of the work, is well founded. It was possibly never meant for criticism, and may be fairly looked upon, as the translator has told us in his preface, as the amusement of his old age.²²

Molesworth classified the translations as a “signal of retreat”, especially in comparison with other Hobbesian works clearly reputed most valuable and deserving more attention. This position seems to be consistent enough with the Hobbesian words of the essay *To the Reader, concerning the virtues of an heroic poem*, where the philosopher says that his choice to work on the Homeric poems depends on the fact that he has “nothing else to do”.²³ Accordingly, his decision should be intended as a sort of surrender, a move away from that metaphorical battlefield where he often fought in the forefront in order to advocate, support and defend his

political theories, a means, finally, that would allow him to spend the last years of his incredibly long life actively, at least from the intellectual perspective. The references both to the amusement derived from the translation activity and to considering Pope's *remark as well founded* unveil a sort of prejudice concerning Hobbes's versions of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* and contribute to pushing them into the background, behind the great amount of his most esteemed works. This judgment sounds even worse, since such negative evaluations come from the editor of the Hobbesian *opera omnia*.

A passage of an article by G. B. Riddehough published in *Phoenix* in 1958 well summarises the opinion circulating on these works of Hobbes even one hundred years after these words from Molesworth:

Writers on Hobbes have very little to say in defence of these Homeric renderings. If they mention the translations at all, it is usually to claim indulgence for the work of a very old man who wrote them for his own amusement, and it is scarcely likely that in the history of translations they will ever be promoted to a higher place. What value they possess is a sidelight on the tastes and the classical scholarship of one of the leading philosophers of the Seventeenth Century.²⁴

The only acceptable position is a defensive one, a kind of precautionary apology for these works of Hobbes that can only be accepted as a consequence of a deliberate choice to seek amusement, vindicated by the philosopher's old age; they seem to have little to do with the impressive corpus of his previous works. Furthermore in the footnotes, Riddehough refers to the biography of Hobbes by Sir Leslie Stephen, whose opinion concerning the translations appears to be worth mentioning, since it well explains the air of scepticism around these works.

Nobody has yet, I believe, discovered that the work is a worthy rival of Chapman or Pope: a task which might perhaps have charms for some literary revivalists [...]. It was at least a creditable occupation for a man of eighty-six.²⁵

The *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* by Hobbes, therefore, are not only reputed less worthy of consideration than George Chapman's and Alexander Pope's analogous works,²⁶ but, partly because of the previously mentioned excerpt of the *To the reader, concerning the virtues of an heroic poem* (here removed by me for brevity), are also relegated into the background and are uniquely allowed to be remembered as being "a creditable occupation for a man of eighty-six". Moreover, though from two different perspectives, both Riddehough and Stephen do not seem to think that the evaluation concerning these English versions of the Homeric poems could change and let them move to a better level in the future.

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A. P. Martinich appends something more. That being stated that these works have to be ascribed to the last years of Hobbes's life, they are prepared and published in a period when the philosopher, maybe tired from his previous struggles to support and defend his positions, has partially lost his desire to fight and discuss.

The reason he took up translating Homer's epics should be obvious. He was tired, had left disputation behind, and wanted to enjoy the little time he expected was left to him. He had written a half-dozen substantial treatises, not to mention others in the range of fifty to one hundred pages. Moreover, many of these works were extended replies to earlier objections to his views. So it is plausible that he realized that he had had his say on all the issues, that he had not yet convinced his opponents and that it was unlikely that he would. There is evidence that he had lost his zest for debating.²⁷

Whatever could be the various scholars' positions on this subject and whatever could be our perspective in looking at the translations, a pivotal remark is undoubtedly called for: the first and heavier blow against them was delivered by Hobbes himself. His "because I had nothing else to do"²⁸ influenced the subsequent opinions and discussions on the translations and can rightly be charged with the responsibility of having made the idea of the scant value of these works a lasting one. It seems to be extremely difficult to blame someone else for this: it is very rare to find such clear words in an author's work, to read something very clear-cut as this Hobbesian sentence, to detect some piece of evidence as apparently undeniable as this one. How is it possible not to trust his words? How does one cast doubts on them? Why look for an alternative interpretation when *the* interpretation is clearly stated in black and white by the philosopher himself? Nonetheless, to accept this as the sole possible explanation would really be too hasty and could mean running the risk of being misdirected, at least to some extent. There is something more, something that can strengthen the significance of these Hobbesian words, but is, at the same time, completely detached from them. The translations of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* by Hobbes were disparaged, in both the past and present – though to a lesser extent – because of other reasons linked to him as a philosopher, a scholar and a man deeply involved in the political debates of his day. The impressive quantity, reputation and value of his previous works cast a shadow on the English versions of the Homeric poems. What the philosopher had been in the years before the publication of these works represented a powerful hindrance to their appreciation. His life, his treatises, his essays and their reception after his death deeply influenced opinions concerning his *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. To some extent, it could be rightly said that he was a victim of himself, also in this case.

A 1997 article, published in *Seventeenth Century* by Paul Davis and entitled *Thomas Hobbes's Translations of Homer: Epic and Anticlericalism in late Seventeenth-Century England*,²⁹ summarises the scant regard granted to the translations with these words: “[they] are by definition not original works, and so can contribute little to our understanding of Hobbes’s thought; and secondly, [...] they are poems, and Hobbes was by his own candid admission to William Davenant ‘not a Poet’”.³⁰

Ball stresses the difference between the appreciation for the English versions of *The Peloponnesian War* and those of the Homeric poems: although they were both translations from Greek into English, the work on Thucydides undoubtedly gained more credits.³¹

Nelson provides three additional reasons to explain this question. He writes:

First, Hobbes is chiefly known as a political philosopher, and, accordingly, his translations of ancient Greek poetry have seemed extraneous to a proper appreciation of his thought [...]. Second, from the late seventeenth century onwards Hobbes’s translations were routinely dismissed by literati as poor poetry.³²

As a third motivation, the scholar recalls Hobbes’s by now well-known sentence, written in the *To the Reader, concerning the virtues of an heroic poem*.³³ That being stated, we can say that Hobbes is his own executioner once again: his reputation, fame and celebrity as a philosopher and political thinker push his work as a translator of Homer to be granted less attention. Maybe because of all these causes, the scientific works on the Hobbesian translations of the Homeric poems are very few; a reconnaissance of them comes from Nelson himself, who lists them in his *General Introduction*.³⁴ There we can find the previously mentioned essay of Riddehough,³⁵ Ball³⁶ and Davis³⁷; furthermore, Nelson appends the work of Eleni and Ion Kontiadou, entitled *Thomas Hobbes ως μεταφραστής του Όμήρου* and published in 1966 in *Parnassos*,³⁸ the reply by Martinich to Davis, again in *Seventeenth Century*,³⁹ in a 2001 article entitled *Hobbes's translations of Homer and anticlericalism*.⁴⁰ It seems useful to add the previously mentioned essay by Lynch,⁴¹ the work by Enrica Fabbri *Le translations of Homer: passioni, politica e religione nel pensiero maturo di Hobbes*,⁴² another article by Nelson, *Translations as correction: Hobbes in the 1660s and 1670s*, published within the book *Why concepts Matter. Translating Social and Political Thought*, edited by Martin J. Burke and Melvin Richter,⁴³ and Conal Condren’s work entitled *The philosopher Hobbes as the poet Homer*, which recently appeared in *Renaissance Studies*.⁴⁴ It is moreover worth mentioning the volume by Jessica Wolfe entitled *Homer and the Question of Strife From Erasmus To Hobbes*.⁴⁵

Even if we only take into account the really exiguous number of works present in the secondary scientific literature related to the translations of

the Homeric poems by Hobbes, particularly when compared to the very impressive quantity of articles, papers and books devoted to all his other works, it appears fairly clear what kind of regard they reached during the centuries following the philosopher's death. However, this situation seems to entail a risk: such scant consideration could lead us to underestimate or not to pay the due attention to a work which might reveal something new about the late Hobbes, i.e., about a period less completely and deeply explored and analysed relative to the previous one. Therefore, a different path seems to be needed, in order to enter the problem of the translations from a different perspective, a path that, moving from the previously mentioned scientific works and thanks to their contribution and truly remarkable value, allows us to remove prejudices and hindrances that have gathered over the years, with a view to outlining another kind of framework in which the Hobbesian *Iliad* and *Odyssey* might be placed. This path peculiarly aims to relate to the mentioned works on this subject, in order to focus on some of their elements particularly worth stressing in my opinion, and if possible to add something new, that I hope might widen the discussion.

One of the most powerful barriers which could prevent us from moving in this direction is well explained by Davis in the opening pages of his article. He observes that many disapprovals regarding these Hobbesian translations focus on two peculiar aspects: the first regards their not being original works, the second concerns their scant value from a literary perspective.⁴⁶ I do not want to enter this discussion. What seems to me to be worth underlining from a methodological perspective is the reply of Davis himself, since it, together with the approach proposed by Nelson, provides us with a useful key for interpretation, to reduce the influence of circumstances and prejudices. He writes: "We do not read poems by philosophers to take pleasure in their craftsmanship so much as to learn about the minds of their authors".⁴⁷

Accordingly, the challenge should be in trying to look for the ideas – or, better, the *political* ideas – of the Malmesbury philosopher in a place – the poetry – completely different from his usual one. In other words, the aim is to look for evidence of a deliberate choice by Hobbes to work on political theory in an unusual way. With this in mind, I consider both Davis' suggestion and Nelson's approach two pivotal elements of the same picture. By saying that we have to take into account philosophers' poems in order to deduce something about their thoughts, and that Hobbes's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* are "a continuation of Leviathan by other means",⁴⁸ they pave the way to this kind of direction in research. One last remark deserves to be expressly remembered. This analysis needs another base to stand on, and then to advance. It cannot escape from constantly relating itself to the context, both that of Hobbes's personal life and that dealing with his historical, political and social situation.

1.2 “Nothing Else To Do”?

With a view to proceeding to give as detailed a contextualisation as possible, it seems again to be useful to refer to the opening section of Davis’ article. Since he aims to analyse the subject of anticlericalism in the Hobbesian translations of the Homeric poems, he first needs to come back to the famous sentence placed at the end of *To the reader, concerning the virtues of an heroic poem*, in order to establish whether it actually is as clear-cut and absolute as it sounds. Although the paths will unavoidably diverge when Davis’ work starts to discuss its specific topic, it is worth following this part of his analysis, given that whoever wants to consider these English versions of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* cannot avoid passing through this bottleneck. He writes:

The clue that this is the starting point for research into Hobbes’s motives rather than the end of the line for inquiry about them is in the tone of his words. Hobbes mixes lofty contempt for his ‘adversaries’ with vindictive stabs at them, the cool elegance of chiasmus (‘folly’/‘serious writings’; ‘verses’/‘wisdom’) with uncharacteristically raw (‘to show their wisdom’, i.e. ‘to demonstrate their stupidity’). Reading such prose, his ‘adversaries’ could not have rested easy in the belief that the *Odysseys* was not to be classed among Hobbes’s ‘serious writings’; they could not have taken his word for it that the translation was but a bored scholar’s humanist pastime. Nor should we do now.⁴⁹

Therefore, the notorious “because I had nothing else to do”⁵⁰ should not be interpreted in such a radical sense, but should be read within a sort of sarcastic framework, through which Hobbes defends himself and maybe challenges his adversaries. Accordingly, behind Hobbes’s decision, there should be another aim, something more than the mere desire to spend the last years of his life occupied in an amusing intellectual activity lacking in any philosophical and political purposes.

Although Nelson also takes into consideration the philosopher’s words immediately following this reply, specifically those where Hobbes explains the reasons that spurred him to publish the translations without any notes,⁵¹ he reaches analogous conclusions.⁵² Previously, Ball had given a similar reading too:

The tone suggests that Hobbes should not be taken so seriously. Still, he claims about as little as possible. If he translated Homer simply to amuse himself, only he can judge the result, and if his enemies commit the folly of attacking his work, it is no more than he expects. This clever method of defusing his critics in advance is just the sort of thing one expects from Hobbes. But he does misstep. His decision

12 *The Hobbesian Homer: Amusement, Propaganda*

not to annotate sounds suspiciously like laziness, and to admit the superiority of Ogilby even in annotation is a blunder, considering the persistent lambasting that Ogilby received at the hands of Dryden, Pope and others. To praise Ogilby at all opens Hobbes to the charges of want of taste and critical discernment; and, inevitably, his translation was faulted on these counts.⁵³

Martinich's position is different: though he admits that this passage has sarcastic tones, in his reply to Davis, he affirms that it does not automatically entail the existence of a specific purpose in this translation work. He writes:

this is a witty and sarcastic remark, not at all mysterious, and containing nothing to move us to look for an X-file to supply a motivation. The one he gives is explicit and plausible.⁵⁴

In my opinion, as Hobbes's words are not exclusively construable in a strictly literary sense, it seems plausible that they could have other purposes. Accordingly, hypothesising that these aims might be tied to his previous political works and to his political theory as a whole cannot be viewed as some kind of excessively risky bet. In this regard, another passage from Nelson's *General Introduction* presents an element completely consistent with the coeval context of those years, which proves useful in order to better detail the framework. With regard to the sentence "because I had nothing else to do"⁵⁵ he writes: "this claim is certainly a joke, but it refers to a very real state of affairs".⁵⁶ Relating these words to the contingencies of Hobbes's life makes them seem more significant; as a result the temporal dimension can be placed side by side with the others, particularly the political one. In addition to the question of old age, what appears crucial here, what must be considered as playing a pivotal role, what perhaps compels the philosopher to this commitment to the Homeric poems, is simply a lack of concrete alternatives. In those years, Hobbes's position is precarious in terms of health, his socio-political situation and his relational connections: all of this means he can only move with extreme caution.

That said, his "because I had nothing else to do"⁵⁷ might be even further reinterpreted: since he was in such a condition, and clearly did not feel completely safe to act as he wanted, due to several causes both personal and external, the meaning of his sentence could be quite different. It could be something like "because I could not do anything else", "because I was prevented from doing anything else" or, finally, "because I had no other opportunities to do anything".

Setting aside this sentence and its possible – more or less literal – meanings for a while, what deserves to be stressed is the idea that by broadening the reading of this Hobbesian position through a deeper

analysis of the coeval contextual situation, we can legitimately look at the translations with a view to understanding whether they hide another purpose, particularly a political one.

Obviously, in order to achieve this, a preliminary acknowledgement is needed on who Hobbes was, what was he doing at that time and, particularly, what could be the obstacles that might leave him no other alternative but a translation to spread his political theories. It is particularly worth shedding light on the possible reasons why he should feel so unsafe in freely writing as he had done in the previous decades.

1.3 The Hobbesian Translations of the Homeric Poems

The translations were published at various times between 1673 and 1677, when Hobbes was more than eighty years old. In 1673, a version of books IX–XII of the *Odyssey* was released in London by William Crook under the title of *The Travels of Ulysses: as they were Related by Himself in Homer's Ninth, Tenth, Eleventh & Twelfth Books of his Odyssey, to Alcinous, king of Phaeacia*.⁵⁸

Sometimes, both in the past and in recent times, this publication of an English version of only four books from the *Odyssey* has been considered as a sort of experiment, an attempt or test aimed at evaluating reactions from the audience. Although Molesworth appears cautious on this point

Whether Hobbes had at this time finished any other part of Homer, and put forth those four books of the *Odyssey* as a specimen of the performance, or to ascertain what reception might be expected from the public for the remainder of it, is unknown,⁵⁹

Nelson remarks that already

John Campbell's 1750 'Life of Thomas Hobbes' testifies that *The Travels of Ulysses* was 'very well received by the Publick' and that 'this inspired him [Hobbes] with a Resolution of translating not only the *Odyssey* entire, but the *Iliad* [...]'.⁶⁰

Whether or not it was an experiment, it likely was not viewed so negatively, since in 1675, again by William Crook, a complete translation of the *Odyssey* was published, introduced by the essay *To the reader, concerning the virtues of an heroic poem*. An English version of the *Iliad* was printed by the same editor the following year.⁶¹ Finally, in 1677, a joint edition containing both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* was released, again by Crook.⁶²

In those years, Hobbes was living "at Chatsworth and Hardwick Hall in semi-retirement under protection of Cavendish family",⁶³ that is distant and isolated enough from the coeval political context. With

the exception of *Behemoth* – written in 1668 but published several years later⁶⁴ – his most relevant and famous philosophical and political works were already well-known. In 1640, *Elements of Law, Natural and Politic* was circulating as a manuscript⁶⁵; a Latin version of the *De Cive* had been published in Paris in 1642⁶⁶; the English version of the *Leviathan* had seen the light in 1651.⁶⁷ The *De Corpore* had been published in 1655 and the following year it had been released in English too⁶⁸; the *De Homine* had been published in 1658⁶⁹ and the Latin version of the *Leviathan* in 1668 in Amsterdam.⁷⁰

Accordingly, in the period when Hobbes started working on the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, he and his political and philosophical works were well-known both by people who liked his ideas and by those who disagree with them. This second category of people plays a key role in this game. In the last years of his life, the Malmesbury philosopher had a lot of problem due to censorship. This is a pivotal point for an analysis aimed at sounding out in depth the possible alternative meanings of his translations; Nelson's words summarise the matter well:

Beginning in the mid-1660s, Hobbes found himself completely barred from having his political, theological, and historical works published. The trouble began with the 1662 Licensing Act [...] In 1668, *Behemoth* was denied a licence, and not even a direct appeal to Charles II [...] could rescue it from the censor. Hobbes's *Historical Narration Concerning Heresy* suffered a similar fate soon thereafter, as did the *Dialogue between a Philosopher and a Student of the Common Laws of England*. In 1670 the English reissue of *Leviathan* was actually seized from the press by agents of the Stationers' Company [...]. Parliament's 1666 Atheism Bill, which had been drawn up with Hobbes specifically in mind, was under periodic consideration throughout the last decade of his life [...].⁷¹

As a sort of confirmation of Hobbes's difficult condition in those years, Gaskin highlights how in 1666: "House of Commons seeks information about 'Mr. Hobbes's *Leviathan*' in relation to its bill against atheism [...]. Aubrey reports that about this time 'some of the bishops made a motion to have the good gentleman burnt for a heretic'".⁷²

In light of all of these circumstances, we cannot ignore the wide and multifaceted nature of the context in which the sentence "because I had nothing else to do"⁷³ arose. However, while this context is now outlined more clearly, helping us to better understand the situation as a whole, it also paves the way to other questions and suggests the issue is far more nuanced.

Does Hobbes merely make mention here of a temporal and situational *status* – characterised by old age and the desire to avoid remaining

inactive during this time – or is he also hinting at something else? Is he subtly alluding to the existence of external conditions that force him to act in this way? Is he really engaged with the Homeric poems as such, or would he like to write another kind of work, but feels unable to do so, because of censorship? At this point, the idea that Hobbes was bereft of alternatives at this time starts to seem consistent enough with the overall picture, and Nelson's words interpreting the Hobbesian *Iliad* and *Odyssey* as "a continuation of *Leviathan* by other means"⁷⁴ sound equally consistent. Accordingly, Hobbes's English versions of the Homeric poems would have been a means to bypass censorship and continue spreading his political theories in a period when he was prevented from doing so because of unfavourable external circumstances.⁷⁵

We can consider the issue of censorship one of the most evident clues to support the idea according to which Hobbes would have used the translations as a tool to continue playing a central role in the political discussions of the day. As will be explained in the next chapters, another crucial piece of evidence comes from a lexical analysis stemming from the comparison between the original Greek text and its English version. Since this kind of investigation will concern the bulk of this research work in the following sections, here I would like to stress other details extremely useful in better outlining the picture, though in my opinion to a lesser extent than those shown thus far. The first deals with the reception of the Homeric poems in the English context⁷⁶; a second one, instead, concerns Hobbes himself. Both of them rightly deserve to be taken into account as additional elements able to support a reading of these Hobbesian works from the perspective of political theory.

A first partial English translation of the *Iliad* had been produced by Sir Arthur Hall, who had in 1581 published in London a work entitled *Tenne Bookes of the Iliades of Homer*; it rested on the French translation by Hugues Salel (*Les Dix Premiers Livres de l'Iliade d'Homère*).⁷⁷ George Chapman translated the *Iliad* in 1611 and the *Odyssey* in 1616⁷⁸; we find an analogous sequence – though with different dates (1660 and 1665) – for the same kind of work by John Ogilby. He was the same man mentioned by Hobbes in the passage of the *To the Reader, concerning the virtues of an heroic poem* where the philosopher sarcastically explained his decision to publish the translations without notes, by affirming that he had no hope of competing against Ogilby's.⁷⁹

It seems curious that, among the great number of ancient Greek texts available, Hobbes chose two works that had already been translated into English, as he was possibly aware.⁸⁰ From a literary perspective, what kind of appeal could the third publication of the English version of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* have within a period of little more than sixty years? Why proceed on this path if the oldest edition was published only about ten years prior to Hobbes's? From an editorial point of view, was it worth

taking up such a challenge when the competitors were so highly skilled and famous?

We have no evidence to confirm or disprove the hypotheses on this subject and to untie some crucial knots. However, these questions deserved to be brought into view and included in the discussion, albeit only for what they are: merely questions, substantial, perhaps, but still no more than simple questions.

The second element I would like to focus on concerns Hobbes or, better, his health. As we have repeatedly remembered, when he started working on the Homeric poems he was very old. However, he was also ill: he had overcome a serious illness in 1647,⁸¹ but since the summer of 1656 he had begun to be affected by a new malady,⁸² maybe Parkinson's disease,⁸³ which had made him unable to write autonomously; consequently he was forced to find someone to do it on his behalf.⁸⁴ That being stated, it seems difficult enough to correlate his complicated health conditions with the idea according to which he would have chosen to work on Homer only for a simple desire for amusement. It appears more convincing to think that, exactly because of these complicated circumstances, he would have conceived his translation work as something that might once again have some influence on the current political debate.

As previously, again on this occasion we have no evidence to validate this reading with any certainty. However, there is again a contextual element that deserves to be mentioned and taken into due account because of its force, significance and great importance.

1.4 Hobbes and the Classical World: Language, Culture and Education

There is another important factor that seems useful to support the idea of a particular political purpose behind Hobbes's choice to working on the Homeric poems. Considering its great value, its influences on his political thought, its being part of a kind of continuum with the philosopher's previous works, it deserves in my opinion to be placed at the same level as the question of censorship previously outlined. It is a crucial and pivotal element; however, in order to be fully understood, it needs a preliminary remark, which may seem marginal or merely technical, but is actually not. It concerns Thomas Hobbes's deep relationship with both the Greek culture and language, that of a seventeenth-century English philosopher with texts from an important but sometimes cumbersome past, towards which he was often accustomed to taking a conflicting position.

Hobbes was born in 1588 and was steered towards studies from a young age. From 1592 until 1596, he attended Westport Church School, and from 1596 until 1602, he studied in a private school in Malmesbury; then he moved to Magdalen Hall in Oxford.⁸⁵ The *Vita* in prose informs

us of Hobbes's relation with classical languages: he had started learning them in the years before moving to Oxford.⁸⁶ In his *Vita, Carmine Expressa, Autore Seipso* he writes:

Disco loqui quatuor, totidem legere, et enumerare,
Non bene praeterea fingere literulas.
Sex annis ad verba steti Graecae atque Latinae,
Et decimo quarto mittor ad Oxonium.⁸⁷

We can find other remarkable elements in *Vitae Hobbianae auctarium*; one of them is particularly significant for this analysis:

Quadriennis factus vernaculis literarum elementis operam dedit: octennis doctiorum linguarum tyrocinium posuit sub Roberto Latimero, Oxoniense, Malmesburiae literas docente; qui, quod in puero docilitas tanta, quanta in nullo alio ostenderetur, et simul acris animi et praestantis ingeni illustria signa perspicue cernerentur, ille praecipue in sinu fovit, et supra aequales excolere et incitare solitus est. Tanto autem, jam adhuc in ludo literario degens, in literatura tam Latina quam Graeca progressus fecit, ut Euripidis Medeam simili metro Latinis versibus eleganter expresserit.⁸⁸

We can deduce from these words that Hobbes, since he was fourteen years old, was to such an extent skilled in classical languages that he was even able to translate the *Medea* by Euripides from Greek into Latin.⁸⁹ This is the first known Hobbesian work which allows us to establish a connection between the philosopher and ancient cultures. John Aubrey outlines the same element in the section of his *Brief Lives* devoted to Thomas Hobbes; he also stresses an aspect worth noting about his teacher:

At fower yeer old Mr. Thomas Hobbes (Philosopher) went to Schoole in Westport Church till 8—then the church was painted. At 8 he could read well and number a matter of 4 or 5 figures. After, he went to Malmesbury to Parson Evans. After him, he had for Schoolemaster, Mr. Robert Latimer, a young man of about nineteen or twenty, newly come from the University, who then kept a private schoole in Westport. This Mr. Latimer was a good Graecian, and the first that came into our Parts hereabout since the Reformation. He was a Batchelour and delighted in his Scholar, T. H.'s company, and used to instruct him, and two or three ingeniose youths more, in the evening till nine a clock [...]. At fourtenn years of age, he went away a good Scholescholar to Magdalen-hall, in Oxford. It is not be forgotten that before he went to the University, he had turned Euripidis *Medea* out of Greeke into Latin Iambiques, which he presented to his Master.⁹⁰

During the period spent in Oxford, Hobbes further improved his knowledge of Latin and Greek. However, he quickly lost some of his skills in the following years, because of the duties he was absorbed in, since he had moved into the service of the earls of Devonshire.⁹¹ Only after some years had passed did he choose to start fully recovering his knowledge of Latin and Greek: He writes in his *Vita, Carmine Expressa, Authore Seipso*:

Interea† Graecam et Latinam linguam paulatim perire sibi sentiens, philosophiam autem logicamque (in quibus praeclare proferisse se arbitrabatur) viris prudentibus derisi esse videns, abjecta logica et philosophia illa vana, quantum temporis habebat vacui, imprendere decrevit linguis Graecae et Latinae.⁹²

Gaskin makes mention of both the Hobbesian letters of the 1640s and the publication of the *De Cive* in Paris in 1642 as examples of the complete restoration of Hobbes's abilities in Latin; moreover, it enabled him to enjoy contact with the most famous personalities of his day.⁹³

This is surely a remarkable aspect. However, given that this work is principally focused on the translations of Greek texts, it seems more significant to establish whether and when Hobbes was able to retrieve his linguistic skills in Greek. Fortunately, the philosopher himself supplies us with unequivocal information: in 1629, he published the *Eight Bookes of the Peloponnesian Warre*, namely the translation from Greek into English of *The Peloponnesian War* by Thucydides.⁹⁴ If nothing else, it attests beyond any doubts that at that time, the recovery process started some fifteen years earlier could be considered complete, at least as far as Greek was concerned. Furthermore, we know that Hobbes issued a translation of the *Rhetoric* by Aristotle in 1637.⁹⁵

The publication of the *Eight Bookes of the Peloponnesian Warre* provides us with some important information. First, it is Hobbes's first published work. As Gaskin accurately stresses, the philosopher was about forty years old at that time, and he did not publish anything original until 1640 when he was fifty-two years old.⁹⁶ However, precisely in this silent period, he was growing and developing those ideas that we find in his later and most famous works.⁹⁷

Second, it appears remarkable that the first work which Hobbes chose to publish was the translation of a Greek text, a text which – as we have seen – was assigned a clear educational purpose in Hobbes's vision.⁹⁸

All of this notwithstanding, the relation between Thomas Hobbes and classical culture – particularly Greek culture – was deeply controversial for a long time span during his life. Again, a passage from the *Vita, Carmine Expressa, Authore Seipso* dealing with the translation of Thucydides' work allows us to outline the point: Hobbes had conceived this work – so he affirms – with a view to preventing his contemporaries from

allowing themselves to be influenced by the rhetors' abilities in political discussions.⁹⁹ This stance, here expressed in a very few words, effectively summarises the peculiar position of the Malmesbury philosopher concerning Greek culture, a position which was initially very strong and then softened slightly over the years, though without ever disappearing.¹⁰⁰

It is a cornerstone of his political thought as is clear enough, for example, in these words from the *First Dialogue of the Behemoth*:

There were an exceeding great number of men of the better sort that had been so educated, as that in their youth hauing read the bookes written by famous men of ancient Græcian and Roman Commonwealths concerning their Policy and great actions, in which books the popular gouernment was extolled by the glorious name of Liberty, and Monarchy disgraced by the name of Tiranny, they became thereby in loue with their formes of gouernment.¹⁰¹

In a subsequent passage, we read:

For 'tis a hard matter for men who do all thinke highly of their owne wits (when they haue also acquired the Learning of the Vniuersity) to be perswaded that they want any ability requisite for the Gouernment of a Commonwealth; especially, hauing read the glorious Histories, and the Sententious Politicks of the ancient Popular gouernments of the Greeks and Romans; amongst whom Kings were hated and branded with the name of *Tyrants*, and *Popular gouernment* (though no Tyrant was euer so cruell as a Popular assembly) passed by the name of *Liberty*.¹⁰²

This is a twofold problem: one aspect regards education *per se*; the other concerns its long-term consequences. Character A in the *First Dialogue* immediately stresses a crucial element of the question: at the time of the Civil War, a great many people had been educated and had studied classical works – they are pinpointed as “an exceeding great number”¹⁰³ in the text – and they were men “of the better sort”,¹⁰⁴ that is, coming from the privileged classes.¹⁰⁵ As a result, they were the load-bearing axis of that ruling class whose faults and wrongs had led England to the Civil War. Because of this, Hobbes blamed the classics – or rather, a classics-based education, as it was in England at that time – for having played a pivotal role in that awful event.¹⁰⁶ Obviously, it was not the sole cause; the philosopher is fully aware of the importance of the weaknesses of the Crown, for example from a financial perspective, but he does not underestimate the problem of such an education.¹⁰⁷ Excessive preference accorded to popular regimes and, consequently, an overly direct equalisation of monarchy and tyranny, deeply undermined peace and safety, the very elements which are the crucial targets of politics in Hobbes's political philosophy.¹⁰⁸

However, this is only one side of the issue concerning the education in classics in Hobbes's contemporary England. The problem is multifaceted: Hobbesian subjects against it – though in varying degrees depending on the various phases of his life¹⁰⁹ – lay their foundations on the innate dangerousness that he sees in rhetoric. Hobbes conceives it as an art that can prevent a stable, durable and permanent removal of conflicts. This point has been explored in depth in Quentin Skinner's book entitled *Reason and Rhetoric in the Philosophy of Hobbes*, where the relationship between Hobbes and eloquence is duly analysed, from his first step as a political writer to his last published works.¹¹⁰

This is not the appropriate place to review all the stages of that research work; however, some of them cannot be ignored in a text which aims to look at the translations of the Homeric poems with a view to understanding whether they could be ascribed some political value. Hence, I will briefly highlight some of those elements that, being referred to classical culture, seem to me to be useful in order to outline the relations interweaving Hobbes with ancient Greek works and, consequently, also the Homeric poems.

In the dedicatory letter of the *De Cive*, addressed to William Cavendish the third earl of Devonshire,¹¹¹ we find this explanation about the problem of *scientia civilis*:

If the Morall Philosophers had as happily discharg'd their duty, I know not what could have been added by humane Industry to the completion of that happinesse, which is consistent with humane life. For were the nature of humane Actions as distinctly knowne, as the nature of *Quantity* in Geometricall Figures, the strength of *Avarice* and *Ambition*, which is sustained by the erroneous opinions of the Vulgar, as touching the nature of *Right* and *Wrong*, would presently faint and languish; And Mankinde should enjoy such an Immortall Peace, that (unlesse it were for habitation, on supposition that the Earth should grow too narrow for her Inhabitants) there would hardly be left any pretence for war. But now on the contrary, that neither the Sword nor the Pen should be allowed any *Cessation*; That the knowledge of the Law of Nature should lose its growth, not advancing a whit beyond its antient stature; that there should still be such siding with the severall factions of Philosophers, that the very same Action should be decryed by some, and as much elevated by others; that the very same man should at severall times embrace his severall opinions, and esteem his own Actions farre otherwise in himselfe then he does in others; These I say are so many signes, so many manifest Arguments, that what hath hitherto been written by Morall Philosophers, hath not made any progress in the knowledge of the Truth.¹¹²

Hobbes mentions here both the pen and the sword. This is not a coincidence: using these terms, he clearly manifests his intolerance towards an ethic that is unable to create conditions of stable and enduring peace, because it is continuously forced to change in order to adapt to partisan readings, visions and interpretations. That is why the philosopher wants to produce a different political science which can

replace the dialogical and anti-demonstrative approach to moral reasoning encouraged by the humanist assumption that there are two sides to any question, and thus that in the moral sciences it will always be possible to argue on either side of the case [...] One of his fundamental purposes is to transcend and supersede the entire rhetorical structure – the structure of *inventio*, *dispositio* and *elocutio* – on the basis of which the humanist conception of *scientia civilis* had been raised.¹¹³

These words from Skinner effectively summarise the Hobbesian challenge: the philosopher has to deal with a traditional educational custom which he perceives to be unfit for the contemporary scenario, because of his powerlessness in producing substantial outcomes in both the present and in the long term.¹¹⁴

In order to better detail the framework and emphasise the role, peculiarity and remarkable position of this point in Hobbesian philosophical and political thought, it is once again useful to continue following Skinner's analysis, albeit briefly. He writes:

Hobbes first announces these commitments in the superbly confident epistle dedicatory to *The Elements*, in which he directly confronts the two basic presuppositions of the humanist civil science. One of these [...] is that *ratio* or reason possesses no inherent power to move or persuade. This was taken to be one of the grounds for concluding that an effective civil science must be based on a union of reason and eloquence [...] The other humanist presupposition was that, in debates about justice and policy, it will always be possible to construct a 'probable' argument *in utramque partem*, and that the involvement of our passions and interests will be such that we can never hope to avoid such arguments or finally resolve them with anything approaching demonstrative certainty. This was taken to be a further reason for concluding that we must always be prepared to make use of the moving force of eloquence to win round an audience.¹¹⁵

On the other hand, reason, and scientific reasoning in particular, is able to establish a knowledge of justice that cannot be interpreted in *utramque partem* without resulting in conflicts, due to its innate patency. It happens

for example in mathematics, and particularly in geometry; it seems no coincidence that Hobbes clearly refers to Euclid's *Stoicheia*.¹¹⁶

The clear-cut refusal of rhetoric, since, because of it, "the very same Action should be decryed by some, and as much elevated by others",¹¹⁷ becomes one of the most solid cornerstones of the political thought of the earlier Hobbes. In the following years, his position softens somewhat, as the philosopher recognises that it has the potential to effectively explain the principles derived from the proper use of the *scientia civilis*: "Hobbes's new contention is thus that, if the findings of civil science are to be credited, they will have to be proclaimed with eloquence, since reason cannot in itself hope to prevail".¹¹⁸

Obviously, I suggest further exploring the scientific literature on this topic, since what I have tried to pinpoint here, in a very few passages, covers a vast range of different subjects linked to Hobbes's relationship with rhetoric, and my brief summary certainly cannot offer any real understanding of the complexity or the crucial importance of these subjects. My aim was simply to focus on those elements that seemed useful in contextualising Hobbes's work on the Homeric poems as best possible.

The first element is the educational value attributed to classical texts; Hobbes was fully aware of this, as is clearly seen in his reading of the *The Peloponnesian War* as a means to show how bad and inadequate democracy was as a political regime.

However, we also need to bear the opposite in mind: as highlighted by the previously quoted excerpts from the *Behemoth*, the philosopher was well aware that classics could be a dangerous source for those wishing to attack the monarchy.

Finally, as a sort of further complication, it cannot be forgotten that, in Hobbes's view, rhetoric can make a subject appear as a virtue or a vice through its habit to proceed *in utramque partem*. It obviously undermines and frustrates the original – or supposed – significance of words, concepts and ideals.

Even poetry could not escape from this problem. This was particularly true for Hobbes, since he was handling one of the most famous, quoted and reused classical works over the centuries, works which had deserved, and still deserved, great credit and deference.

That being stated, and right before discussing the third aspect supporting the hypothesis of the existence of a political value in the Hobbesian versions of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, a short digression is called for. It deals with two crucial questions. What kind of *Iliad* and *Odyssey* could Hobbes know and study? What edition did he use? In short, what kind of Homer did he know?

In scientific literature, an exhaustive answer again comes from Nelson. His research work on the catalogues of the Cavendish libraries, both in Chatsworth and in Hardwick,¹¹⁹ helpfully reduces the range of possibilities to only two texts. The former is the *Poetae Graeci principes heroic carminis*

published by Stephanus in 1566; the latter is the *Poetae Graeci veteres carminis heroic scriptores* issued by Jacob Lectius in 1606.¹²⁰ Since the latter text essentially stands on the former,¹²¹ Nelson affirms that “Stephanus’ Greek text was assuredly present at Hardwick in Hobbes’s lifetime”.¹²²

Furthermore, by analysing the catalogues, the same scholar is able to provide a list of the tools that Hobbes had the opportunity of using for his translation work. Nelson mentions the *Lexicon Graeco-Latinum* by Johannes Scapula, the *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae* by Stephanus and the commentary *Homeri opera Graece Eustathii*.¹²³

1.5 To the Reader, Concerning the Virtues of an Heroic Poem. A Third Piece of Evidence?

The entire framework regarding what links Hobbes to the classical world considered thus far seems to me to be a third piece of evidence of his willingness to use the translations for something more than a simple desire for amusement, especially if we associate it with the essay *To the Reader, concerning the virtues of an heroic poem*. In my opinion, the importance of this link is at least comparable both to the issue of censorship previously outlined and to the lexical analysis which will follow in the next chapters. It offers strong supporting for the hypothesis that the English versions of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* were a means to spread his political thought.

This essay does not appear in the edition of *The Travels of Ulysses: as they were Related by Himself in Homer’s Ninth, Tenth, Eleventh & Twelfth Books of his Odyssey, to Alcinous, king of Phaeacia*. It is, however, found both in the 1675 edition of *Odyssey* and in the 1677 joint edition of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*.¹²⁴

It is a rather short text. However, is it imbued with information useful to understand what significance this translation work could have had for Hobbes. For this reason, I think that it is necessary to place emphasis on some of its more significant elements.

The opening lines present a pivotal concept:

The virtues required in an heroic poem, and indeed in all writings published, are comprehended in this one word – *discretion*. And discretion consisteth in this, that every part of the poem be conducing, and in good order placed to the end and design of the poet. And the design is not only to profit, but also to delight the reader. By profit, I intend not here any accession of wealth, either to the poet, or to the reader; but accession of prudence, justice, and fortitude, by the example of such great and noble persons as he introduceth speaking, or describeth acting. For all men love to behold, though not to practise virtue. So that at last the work of an heroic poet is no more but to furnish an ingenuous reader, when his leisure abounds, with the diversion of an honest and delightful story, whether true and feigned.¹²⁵

As stressed by Skinner, in chapter VIII of *Leviathan*, significantly entitled *Of the virtues commonly called intellectual; and their contrary defects*,¹²⁶ Hobbes provides us with a lot of information on what he means by the term *discretion*.¹²⁷ The philosopher particularly explains its significance and also relates it to epic poetry – this is a crucial point to rightly contextualise his *Iliad* and *Odyssey* – right after remarking on the distinction between *good wit (or good fancy)* and *good judgment*. He writes:

But they that observe [...] [the] differences, and dissimilitudes [in men's thoughts]; which is called *distinguishing*, and *discerning*, and *judging* between thing and thing; in case, such discerning be not easy, are said to have a *good judgment*: and particularly in matter of conversation and business; wherein, times, places, and persons are to be discerned, this virtue is called DISCRETION. The former, that is, fancy, without the help of judgment, is not commended as a virtue: but the latter which is judgment, and discretion, is commended for itself, without the help of fancy. Besides the discretion of times, places, and persons, necessary to a good fancy, there is required also an often application of his thoughts to their end; that is to say, to some use to be made of them [...] In a good poem, whether it be *epic*, or *dramatic*; as also in *sonnets*, *epigrams*, and other pieces, both judgment and fancy are required: but the fancy must be more eminent; because they please for the extravagancy; but ought not to displease by indiscretion. In a good history, the judgment must be eminent; because the goodness consisteth, in the method, in the truth, and in the choice of the actions that are most profitable to be known. Fancy has no place, but only in adorning the style [...] And in any discourse whatsoever, if the defect of discretion be apparent, how extravagant soever the fancy be, the whole discourse will be taken for a sign of want of wit; and so will it never when the discretion is manifest, though the fancy be never so ordinary.¹²⁸

Significantly, but maybe not so surprisingly, we find similar subjects in the following section of *To the reader, concerning the virtues of an heroic poems*, when the opening digression on the concept of *discretion* ends and Hobbes starts showing the other virtues which must characterise epic poems. In fourth place in his list, there is *fancy*, which is awarded a high value, though it is used with the due *discretion*.¹²⁹

Bearing in mind both the passages of this essay and the excerpt of *Leviathan* previously quoted, we can deduce that the Hobbesian idea concerning *discretion* dealing with an epic poem looks akin to a sort of proportional equilibrium between what matters of amusement and of education.

The fact that he highlights the concept of profit – namely, that advantage coming from the usage of such proportion – well supports the hypothesis that there could be an educational purpose to his translations. The clear list of virtues – prudence, justice and fortitude – whose characteristics should come from the narrative, seems to me to boost this interpretation. It is further emphasised through the reference to *prudence*, a virtue frequently mentioned in *Leviathan*,¹³⁰ which is pinpointed by these words in a passage of chapter III of *Leviathan* where it is described as “a *presumption of the future*, contracted from the *experience of time past*”¹³¹

Finally, Hobbes’s emphasis on the natural human inclination to appreciate virtue rather than adopting virtuous behaviours, clearly placed right before the beginning of the narrative, truly supports this reading.

Because of its focus on these subjects and its position immediately before the translations, *To the reader, concerning the virtues of an heroic poem* deserves to be raised to the same rank as the other evidence supporting the hypothesis of the *paedeutic* role played by the Hobbesian translations of the Homeric poems.

In his essay entitled *Translation as Correction: Hobbes in 1660s and 1670s*, Nelson, by also mentioning some references from Hobbes’s *The Answer to the Preface to Gondibert*,¹³² highlights the fact that “in the case of epic poetry, the aim was didactic [...]. Poetry, in short, should teach moral virtue”¹³³

Trying to achieve these ambitious aims through the translations of the Homeric poems surely represented a great challenge for Hobbes. Beyond the linguistic and literary issues which, in spite of his being very skilled in classics,¹³⁴ were not easy to handle, there was another serious problem. A lot of events, situations and decisions outlined in the original poems were difficult to link to the idea of moral virtue as it had been conceived and developed by Hobbes in his political works; the same happened with some characters, often the most famous ones, whose actions and behaviours appeared scarcely compatible with his vision.¹³⁵ That said, how is it possible to make this element agree with the previously discussed hypothesis about the political value of the Hobbesian translations of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*? How could it be plausible that he used this kind of means to spread his education message if the tool itself was not deeply connected to that message he aimed to propagate?¹³⁶

I think that the most fitting answer comes again from Nelson, who emphasises Hobbes’s idea with regard to his work and his role as a translator. If, as seems clear enough in *Leviathan*, *To the Reader, concerning the virtues of an heroic poem* and *The Answer to the Preface to Gondibert*, epic poetry is to teach moral virtue,¹³⁷ the translator must have this pivotal target clear in his mind. It also entails that – if necessary – he must be committed to personally fixing any anomalies, misleading

aspects, elements that might undermine the achievement of that essential purpose:

a faithful translation, as we understand it, is immoral. It can never be right to propagate what is contrary to the demands of peace – whether in one’s own voice or in the voice of another. The translator ought, therefore, to be a rescuer of texts, one who saves past authors from their own indiscretions. Hobbes saw himself as just such a translator.¹³⁸

In light of all the above, it seems right to reread and contextualise one more time the repeatedly recalled phrase “because I had nothing else to do”¹³⁹ that we find at the end of *To the Reader, Concerning the Virtues of an Heroic Poem*, which might easily be conceived as the chief culprit in the marginalisation of the Hobbesian translations and subsequent habit of not considering them a “continuation of Leviathan by other means”.¹⁴⁰

Having outlined this framework, I am duty-bound to stress a possible risk that could turn it into a sort of trap. This interpretational scheme might suggest that all the alterations made by Hobbes on the original texts are entirely the fruit of his intention to spread a political and educational message. This is undoubtedly a real and concrete risk, which could lead to seriously erroneous conclusions.

There are a number of other causes in play in this game. First, there are metrical and stylistic reasons¹⁴¹; second, and more simply, some reasons come directly from the narrative: some passages, some situations, some dialogues are not easily removable, alterable or rewritable, since they are necessary to the integrity of the plot. Alterations ascribable to intention with a deliberate aim, both educational and political, those aimed at forging some textual elements according to the Hobbesian idea of moral virtue, and finally, those that clearly reveal their unequivocal relation to his political thought as explained in his previous works, must be placed alongside those unaffected by these motives, such as metrical/stylistic reasons. All of this notwithstanding, these elements are present and are worth emphasising due to their significance and importance from the perspective of the political theory. For this reason, they deserve our attention.

By way of example, lines 788–789 of book II of the *Iliad* can be taken as a paradigm. The *Iliad* describes “The Trojans assembled hard by Priam’s gates,/gathered together there, young men and old”.¹⁴² The expression used in the Greek text is *hoi d’agorás agóreuon* where the verb *agoreúo* clearly describes the situation of speaking in an assembly.¹⁴³

However, the Hobbesian translation is far from literally replacing the passage and seems to suggest a rather different reading from the original one. We find in Hobbes’s version:

Then *Jove* unto the *Trojans Iris* sent,
Who old and young were then at *Priams* gate
Assembled with the King in Parliament.¹⁴⁴

In the Homeric text, the presence of the king is not mentioned in these lines, though it is found in the ones immediately following. Hence, we can deduce that is the reason why Hobbes refers to it. However, the use of the expression “King in Parliament”¹⁴⁵ appears a little less clear, since it has no correspondences at all in the Greek text, and does not faithfully translate or even partially replace the meaning of the verb *agoreúo*.

Can we really accuse Hobbes of a deliberate intention to change this line for educational and political ends? On the other hand, why should we not consider this alteration to be due to any other reasons? In my opinion, we can positively accept the first interpretation if we are also willing to admit that other explanations may exist and, accordingly, that they deserve to be held in the same regard as the political one, particularly when it is not possible to deduce a single, satisfactory answer from textual elements that might unequivocally reveal an intentional and deliberate *modus vertendi*.

Regarding this particular example, and considering it again from another perspective of possible educational purpose, we could explain the translation by imagining that it derives from a need to provide readers with something akin to the contemporary English context, in order for them to better understand the narrative.

Likewise, we can imagine that Hobbes’s ideological background could have influenced his decision to replace *agoreúo* with the English expression “King in Parliament” and, as a result, that this change was more inspired than voluntary, though unwittingly so.

Each of these three hypotheses has a degree of reliability and consistency with the context; that is why all of them must be ascribed the same credit. Similarly, without any other element at our disposal, it would seem arbitrary to choose one of them and reject another or, even worse, to consider one true and the others false.

What seems to me worth stressing, however, is that the analysis of the translations from the perspective of their educational value can be legitimately set sidebyside with others; hence, the hypothesis of the political value of this Hobbesian work seems consistent and deserving of in-depth exploration.

Notes

- * This book was originally published in Italian and was entitled *Hobbes e Omero: una traduzione “politica”?* (Centro Editoriale Toscano, Florence, 2015).
- 1 E. NELSON, *Translations of Homer. Iliad*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2008, p. XXII.
- 2 J. LYNCH, *Political Ideology in Translations of the Iliad, 1660–1715*, “Translation and Literature”, VII, 1998, p. 23; cf. C. CONDREN, *The philosopher Hobbes as the poet Homer*, “Renaissance Studies”, XXVIII, 2013, p. 74; for an overview of the situation in England at that time, see G. GIARRIZZO, *Il pensiero inglese nell’età degli Stuart e della Rivoluzione*, in L. FIRPO (ed.), *Storia delle Idee Politiche Economiche e Sociali*, vol. IV (tomo I), Torino, Utet, 1980, pp. 165–277.

- 3 J. LYNCH, *op. cit.*, p. 24; cf. J. C. A. GASKIN, *Thomas Hobbes. Leviathan*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1998 (henceforth, where not differently shown, the passages coming from the *Leviathan* will be taken from this edition); cf. N. BOBBIO (ed.), *Opere Politiche di Thomas Hobbes*, vol. I, Torino, Utet, 1988, pp. 15–16.
- 4 T. HOBBS, *Tho. Hobbes Malmesburiensis Vita, Carmine Expressa, Autore Seipso*, in G. MOLESWORTH (ed.), *Thomae Hobbes Malmesburiensis Opera Philosophica Quae Latine Scripsit Omnia in Unum Corpus Nunc Primum Collecta*, vol. I, Londini, apud Joannem Bohn, 1839, p. LXXXVIII; on the Hobbesian translation of the *The Peloponnesian War*, cf. in the same book (p. XXVII) the essay by R. Blackbourne entitled *Vitae Hobbianae Auctarium*: “Circa haec tempora in lucem prodiiit primus Hobbiani ingenii partus, nobilissima illa Thucydides e Graeco in Anglicanum sermonem versio, caeteris omnibus, quae gens nostra unquam vidit, antiquorum interpretationibus jure anteferenda; quam domino su Devoniae Comiti dicavit, licet patri defuncto destinatam. Historiam illam charta chorographica Graeciae propria manu descripta ornavit, adjecto etiam indice geographico, et dissertatione de vita et scriptis Thucydides, non tam ex Marcellino vitae Thucydeae scriptore sumpta, quam proprio judicio conscripta”; cf. L. STRAUSS, *Che cos'è la Filosofia Politica*, Urbino, Argalia Editore, 1977, p. 209; C. W. BROWN jr., *Thucydides, Hobbes, and the Derivation of Anarchy*, “History of Political Thought”, VIII, 1987, p. 33; on the relations between the Hobbesian translation of Thucydides' work and that of the Homeric poems, cf. J. WOLFE, *Homer and the Question of Strife from Erasmus to Hobbes*, Toronto, Buffalo, London, Toronto University Press, 2015, p. 390.
- 5 In the essay prior to the translation of Thucydides's work, entitled *To the Readers*, Hobbes explains the educational value of history with these words: “For the principal and proper work of history being to instruct and enable men, by the knowledge of actions past, to bear themselves prudently in the present and providently towards the future” (G. MOLESWORTH, *The English Works of Thomas Hobbes of Malmesbury*, vol. VIII, London, John Bohn, 1843, p. VII); cf. G. ROSSINI, *The criticism of rhetorical historiography and the ideal of scientific method: history, nature and science in the political language of Thomas Hobbes*, in A. PADGEN (ed.), *The Languages of Political Theory in Early-Modern Europe*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1990, pp. 306–307; cf. also note n. 7.
- 6 T. HOBBS, *Tho. Hobbes Malmesburiensis Vita, Carmine Expressa, Autore Seipso*, in G. MOLESWORTH (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. LXXXVIII; on the educational value of history in Hobbes's vision, cf. A. PACCHI, *Introduzione a Hobbes*, Bari, Laterza, 1971, pp. 7–8; on the role of history in Hobbes as a whole, cf. G. A. J. ROGERS – T. SORELL, *Hobbes and History*, London, Routledge, 2000.
- 7 The Hobbesian aim of educating through the translation of the *Peloponnesian War* by Thucydides is clearly explained in the dedicatory letter to Sir William Cavendish where we read: “I could recommend the author unto you, not impertinently, for that he had in his veins the blood of kings; but I choose rather to recommend him for his writings, as having in them profitable instruction for noblemen, and such as may come to have the managing of great and weighty actions [...]. For in history, actions of *honour* and *dishonour* do appear plainly and distinctly, which are which; but in the present age they are so disguised, that few there be, and those very careful, that be not grossly mistaken in them” (G. MOLESWORTH, *The English Works of Thomas Hobbes of Malmesbury*, vol. VIII cit., pp. V–VI); on the problem of

- rhetoric in the philosophy of Hobbes, cf. Q. SKINNER, *Reason and Rhetoric in the Philosophy of Hobbes*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1996.
- 8 *Thomae Hobbes Malmesburiensis Vita*, in G. MOLESWORTH, *Thomae Hobbes Malmesburiensis Opera Philosophica Quae Latine Scripsit Omnia in Unum Corpus Nunc Primum Collecta*, vol. I, Londini, Apud Joannem Bohn, 1839, pp. XIII–XXI; on the complex problem concerning the publishing of essays known as *Vita* of Hobbes, cf. J. E. COOPER, *Thomas Hobbes on the Political Theorist's Vocation*, “The Historical Journal”, L, 2007, p. 535 (footnote n. 67); on the Hobbes's autobiographies see also the note apparently without signature *The autobiographies of Thomas Hobbes*, “Mind”, XLVIII, 1939, pp. 403–405.
 - 9 *Thomae Hobbes Malmesburiensis Vita* cit., p. XIV; cf. R. BLACKBOURNE, *Vitae Hobbianae Auctarium*, in G. MOLESWORTH, *Thomae Hobbes Malmesburiensis Opera Philosophica Quae Latine Scripsit Omnia in Unum Corpus Nunc Primum Collecta*, vol. I cit., p. XLV.
 - 10 My usage of the term “Homer”, both here and elsewhere in the text should not be understood as referring to the author – or authors – of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. It is used as a sort of synonym of the expression “Homeric poems”. On this matter, the explanation by F. DUPONT from *Omero e Dalls. Narrazione e convivialità dal canto epico alla soap-opera* (Roma, Donzelli, 1993, p. 15) seems fitting.
 - 11 *Tho. Hobbes Malmesburiensis Vita, Carmine Expressa, Autore Seipso*, in G. MOLESWORTH (ed.), *Thomae Hobbes Malmesburiensis Opera Philosophica Quae Latine Scripsit Omnia in Unum Corpus Nunc Primum Collecta* cit., p. XCIX: “Octoginta ego jam complevi et quatuor annos”.
 - 12 E. NELSON, *Translation of Homer. Iliad* cit., p. XVI and p. XII.
 - 13 Cf. note n. 4.
 - 14 *T. Hobbes Malmesburiensis Vita*, in G. MOLESWORTH (ed.), *Thomae Hobbes Malmesburiensis Opera Philosophica Quae Latine Scripsit Omnia in Unum Corpus Nunc Primum Collecta* cit., p. XX; E. NELSON, *Translation of Homer. Iliad* cit., p. XXII.
 - 15 E. NELSON, *Translation of Homer. Iliad* cit., p. XVI.
 - 16 The essay entitled *Vitae Hobbianae Auctarium* (*op. cit.*, p. LIV) is equally unable to provide us with information that enables us to go beyond the mere dating of the translations: “Eodem anno 1674, etiam seni pene nonagenario, faventibus Musis, libros aliquot ex Homeri *Odyssea*, specimen integri operis Homericum max prodituri, vernaculo sermane evulgavit”.
 - 17 E. NELSON, *Translation of Homer. Iliad* cit., p. LXXVII.
 - 18 T. HOBBS, *To the reader, concerning the virtues of an heroic poem*, in W. MOLESWORTH (ed.), *The English Works of Thomas Hobbes of Malmesbury*, vol. X, London, Longman, Brown, Green, and Longmans, 1844, p. X; cf. E. NELSON, *Thomas Hobbes Translations of Homer. Iliad* cit., p. XV and p. XCIX; J. BALL, *The Despised Version: Hobbes's Translation of Homer*, “Restoration”, XX, 1996, p. 2; P. DAVIS, *Thomas Hobbes's Translations of Homer: Epic and Anticlericalism in the Late Seventeenth Century England*, “Seventeenth Century”, XII, 1997, p. 233; A. P. MARTINICH, *Hobbes's translations of Homer and anticlericalism*, “Seventeenth Century”, XVI, 2001, p. 147; L. STRAUSS, *op. cit.*, p. 189; L. BOROT, *The poetics of Thomas Hobbes by himself: an edition of his preface to his translations of Homer*, “Cahiers Élisabéthains”, LX, 2001, p. 67 and about the text of the *To the reader*, pp. 74–81.
 - 19 J. L. BALL, *The Despised Version: Hobbes's Translations of Homer*, “Restoration”, XX, 1996, pp. 1–15.

30 *The Hobbesian Homer: Amusement, Propaganda*

- 20 Ibid., pp. 1–2; cf. E. NELSON, *Translation of Homer. Iliad* cit., p. XV; cf. G. B. RIDDEHOUGH, *Thomas Hobbes' Translations of Homer*, “Phoenix”, XII, 1958, pp. 58–59; L. BOROT, *op. cit.*, p. 68.
- 21 J. L. BALL, *op. cit.*, p. 2.
- 22 W. MOLESWORTH (ed.), *The English Works of Thomas Hobbes of Malmesbury, Advertisement*, vol. X cit.; the passage cited by Ball in his article begins after “too mean for criticism” (cf., *op. cit.*, p. 2); cf. E. NELSON, *Translation of Homer. Iliad* cit., p. XVI.
- 23 Cf. note n. 18; also Richard S. Peters in the *Introduction* to the edition of *Leviathan* edited by Michael Oakshott (New York, London, Toronto, Sydney, Touchstone, 1962, p. XIX) writes that Hobbes published the translations “for want of something better to do”.
- 24 R. G. RIDDEHOUGH, *op. cit.*, p. 62; cf. P. DAVIS, *op. cit.*, p. 231: “Commentators on Hobbes continue to fall into two groups as regards the translations: those who ignore them and those who condescend to them”; on the Hobbesian translation of the Homeric Poems, see the biographical note published by Bobbio within his *Introduzione* to the book *Opere Politiche di Thomas Hobbes* (*op. cit.*, p. 47).
- 25 Sir L. STEPHEN, *Hobbes*, London, MacMillan & Co., 1904, p. 62; R. G. RIDDEHOUGH, *op. cit.*, p. 62 (note n. 8).
- 26 George Chapman published an English translation of the *Iliad* in 1611 and a translation of the *Odyssey* in 1616 (cf. note n. 78); Alexander Pope published his version of the *Iliad* in the period between 1715 and 1720; his translation of the *Odyssey* (which was compiled thanks to the work of his collaborators) was published in 1726; on this edition cf. J. S. WATSON (ed.), *Homer's Odyssey translated by Alexander Pope To Which Are Added The Battle of the Frogs and Mice by Parnell and The Hymns by Chapman and Others*, London, George Bell & Sons, 1906, p. VI.
- 27 A. P. MARTINICH, *op. cit.*, p. 147; cf. E. NELSON, *Translation of Homer. Iliad* cit., p. XVI.
- 28 Cf. note n. 18.
- 29 P. DAVIS, *op. cit.*, pp. 231–255.
- 30 Ibid., p. 232.
- 31 Cf. J. L. BALL, *op. cit.*, p. 4.
- 32 E. NELSON, *Translation of Homer. Iliad* cit., pp. XIV–XV.
- 33 Ibid., p. XV.
- 34 Ibid., p. XIV.
- 35 Cf. note n. 24.
- 36 Cf. note n. 19.
- 37 Cf. note n. 18.
- 38 VIII, 1966, pp. 277–299.
- 39 XVI, 2001, pp. 147–157.
- 40 Cf. E. NELSON, *Translation of Homer. Iliad* cit., p. XIV.
- 41 Cf. note n. 2.
- 42 “Humana.Mente”, XII, 2010, pp. 151–155.
- 43 Leiden, Brill Academic Pub., 2012, pp. 119–139.
- 44 C. CONDREN, *op. cit.*, pp. 71–89.
- 45 J. WOLFE, *Homer and the Question of Strife From Erasmus To Hobbes*, Toronto, Buffalo, London, University of Toronto Press, 2015; cf. also A. CATANZARO, *L'ultimo Hobbes: il binomio Behemoth-traduzioni dei poemi omerici come critica alla democrazia*, in R. Bufano (a cura di), *Libertà uguaglianza democrazia nel pensiero politico europeo (XVI–XXI secolo)*, Lecce, Edizioni Milella (Collana: Politica Storia Progetto), 2018, pp. 35–47; ID., *From the Homeric Epic to Modern Political Theory. Olympian Gods*,

Heroes and Human Genesis of Power in Hobbes's Translations of the Iliad and the Odyssey, "Polis: The Journal for Ancient Greek Political Thought", XXXIV, 2017, pp. 44–61; ID., *The Achaeans of Homer and those of Hobbes: from a pluralistic monism to absolutism*, in A. Catanzaro – S. Lagi (eds.), *Monisms and Pluralisms in the History of Political Thought*, Novi Ligure (AL), Edizioni Epoké, 2016, pp. 17–28; ID., *The missing metaphor: Thomas Hobbes and the political problem of pastoral sovereignty*, "Il Pensiero Politico", L, n. 2, 2017, pp. 203–220; ID., *From many kings to a single one: Hobbesian absolutism disguised as an epic translation*, "History of Political Thought", XXXVII, Issue 4, 2016, pp. 658–685; ID., *Thomas Hobbes traduttore di Omero: i "casi" diotrefhés e dioghenés e il problema dell'origine divina del potere politico*, "Il Pensiero Politico", XLVII, n. 1, Florence, Leo S. Olschki, 2014, pp. 39–59.

46 P. DAVIS, *op. cit.*, p. 232.

47 *Ibid.*, p. 232.

48 Cf. note n. 1.

49 P. DAVIS, *op. cit.*, p. 233; Martinich (*op. cit.*, pp. 147–148) does not clearly agree this Davis' reading "Either all contempt is lofty or there is nothing lofty in the contempt shown in this passage. Juxtaposing 'folly' and 'serious writings' does not count as cool elegance of any kind; the phrase 'serious writings' is leaden and banal. The terms 'verses' and 'wisdom' are neither contraries nor contradictories; 'verses' is a nonevaluative term, and 'wisdom' is an evaluative one, being used sarcastically. There is no high wit or cleverness".

50 Cf. note n. 18.

51 E. NELSON, *Translation of Homer. Iliad cit.*, pp. XVII–XIX.

52 E. NELSON, *Translation of Homer. Iliad cit.*, p. XVI.

53 J. L. BALL, *op. cit.*, pp. 2–3; regarding the consideration of Hobbes's acknowledgment concerning the superior quality of Ogilby's notes compared to those that the philosopher thought he could compose as a mistake, Davis (*op. cit.*, pp. 238–239) disagrees: "Hobbes's praise for Ogilby was no 'blunder'; it was a joke, and a revealing one [...]. What would have struck seventeenth-century readers of Ogilby's Homer was the paucity of its annotations, not the quality of them".

54 A. P. MARTINICH, *op. cit.*, p. 147.

55 Cf. note n. 18.

56 E. NELSON, *Translation of Homer. Iliad cit.*, p. XIX; cf. also p. XXI.

57 Cf. note n. 18.

58 E. NELSON, *Translation of Homer. Iliad cit.*, pp. XXII–XXIV and pp. LXXVII–LXXVIII; cf. P. DAVIS, *op. cit.*, p. 231; G. STEINER, *Homer in English translation*, in R. FOWLER (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Homer*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2006, p. 368; C. CONDREN, *op. cit.*, p. 71.

59 W. MOLESWORTH (ed.), *The English Works of Thomas Hobbes of Malmesbury, Advertisement*, vol. X cit.

60 E. NELSON, *Translation of Homer. Iliad cit.*, p. XVI; cf. P. DAVIS, *op. cit.*, p. 231; A. P. MARTINICH, *op. cit.*, p. 150; C. CONDREN, *op. cit.*, p. 71.

61 Cf. E. NELSON, *Translation of Homer. Iliad cit.*, pp. LXXVII–LXXVIII.

62 Cf. *Ibid.*, p. LXXVIII.

63 J. C. A. GASKIN, *op. cit.*, p. LV.

64 On this topic Gaskin (*op. cit.*, p. LV) observes: "A probably unauthorized edition had been published in London in 1679"; on the publications of Hobbes's works as a whole, cf. N. BOBBIO, *Thomas Hobbes*, in L. FIRPO (ed.), *op. cit.*, pp. 279–281; A. PACCHI, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

- 65 J. C. A. GASKIN, *op. cit.*, p. LIV.
- 66 *Ibid.*, p. XVI and p. LIV; cf. R. TUCK – M. SILVERTHORNE, *Hobbes. On the Citizen*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1998, p. IX and p. XIII; N. BOBBIO (ed.), *Opere Politiche di Thomas Hobbes* cit., pp. 33–35; A. PACCHI, *op. cit.*, p. 36.
- 67 J. C. A. GASKIN, *op. cit.*, p. XVII and p. LIV; N. BOBBIO (ed.), *Opere Politiche di Thomas Hobbes* cit., p. 46.
- 68 J. C. A. GASKIN, *op. cit.*, p. XVI and pp. LIV–LV.
- 69 *Ibid.*, p. LV.
- 70 *Ibid.*, p. LV.
- 71 E. NELSON, *Translation of Homer. Iliad* cit., pp. XIX–XX; cf. ID., *Translation as Correction: Hobbes in the 1660s and 1670s*, in M. J. BURKE – M. RICHTER (ed.), *Why Concepts Matter. Translating Social and Political Thought*, Leiden, Brill, 2012, pp. 122–123; P. DAVIS, *op. cit.*, p. 236; maybe it is because of the censorship on himself and his works that Hobbes made the character B of his *Behemoth* pronounce these words: “If any man haue been so singular, as to haue studied the Science of Justice and Equity, how can he teach it safely, when it is against the interests of those that are in possession of the power to hurt him?” (P. SEAWARD (eds.), *Thomas Hobbes. Behemoth*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 2010, p. 158; henceforth, where not differently specified, passages from the *Behemoth* will be taken from this edition); N. BOBBIO, *Thomas Hobbes*, in L. FIRPO (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 308; E. FABBRI, *Le translations of Homer: passioni, politica e religione nel pensiero maturo di Hobbes*, “Humana.Mente”, XII, 2010, p. 153.
- 72 J. C. A. GASKIN, *op. cit.*, p. LV.
- 73 Cf. note n. 18.
- 74 Cf. note n. 1.
- 75 Cf. P. DAVIS, *op. cit.*, p. 236.
- 76 On the circulation of the Homeric poems in the Modern Age Europe, cf. P. DEN BOER, *Homer in Modern Europe*, “European Review”, XV, 2007, pp. 171–185; cf. also P. WILSON, *Homer and English epic*, in R. FOWLER (ed.), *op. cit.*, pp. 272–286.
- 77 Cf. E. NELSON, *Translation of Homer. Iliad* cit., p. XXVI; C. CONDREN, *op. cit.*, p. 72.
- 78 E. NELSON, *Translation of Homer. Iliad* cit. p. XXVI; C. CONDREN, *op. cit.*, p. 72.
- 79 E. NELSON, *Translation of Homer. Iliad* cit., p. XXVI; C. CONDREN, *op. cit.*, p. 72; cf. M. STRAWN, *Homer, Sentimentalism, and Pope’s Translations of the Iliad*, “Studies in English Literature 1500–1900”, LII, 2012, p. 595.
- 80 Cf. E. NELSON, *Translation of Homer. Iliad* cit., pp. XXVI–XXX; C. CONDREN, *op. cit.*, p. 73.
- 81 J. C. A. GASKIN, *op. cit.*, p. LIV; cf. R. TUCK, *Hobbes Leviathan*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1996, p. XII.
- 82 J. C. A. GASKIN, *op. cit.*, p. XVI.
- 83 E. NELSON, *Translation of Homer. Iliad* cit., p. XVI; N. MALCOM, *Aspects of Hobbes*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2002, p. 24.
- 84 J. C. A. GASKIN, *op. cit.*, p. XVI.
- 85 *Ibid.*, pp. XI, LIII and p. XII; cf. Q. SKINNER, *Reason and rhetoric in the philosophy of Hobbes* cit., p. 19; cf. R. TUCK – M. SILVERTHORNE, *op. cit.*, p. X; R. TUCK, *Hobbes Leviathan* cit., pp. XII–XIII; R. SCHLATTER (ed.), *Hobbes’s Thucydides*, New Brunswick, Rutgers University Press, 1975, p. XVII.
- 86 *Thomae Hobbes Malmesburiensis Vita*, in G. MOLESWORTH (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. XV: “Literis Latinis et Graecis initiatus, annum agens decimum quartum, missus est Oxonium”.

- 87 *Tho. Hobbes Malmesburiensis Vita, Carmine Expressa, Autore Seipso*, in G. MOLESWORTH (ed.), *Thomae Hobbes Malmesburiensis Opera Philosophica Quae Latine Scripsit Omnia in Unum Corpus Nunc Primum Collecta* cit., p. LXXXVI.
- 88 R. BLACKBOURNE, *Vitae Hobbiana auctarium*, in G. MOLESWORTH, *Thomae Hobbes Malmesburiensis Opera Philosophica Quae Latine Scripsit Omnia in Unum Corpus Nunc Primum Collecta* cit., pp. XXII–XXIII.
- 89 Cf. Q. SKINNER, *Reason and rhetoric in the philosophy of Hobbes* cit., pp. 25–26 and pp. 174–175; cf. E. FABBRI, *Le translations of Homer: passioni, politica e religione nel pensiero maturo di Hobbes* cit., p. 151; L. STRAUSS, *op. cit.*, p. 171; L. BOROT, *op. cit.*, p. 67.
- 90 J. AUBREY, *Thomas Hobbes*, in O. LAWSON DICK (ed.), *Aubrey's Brief Lives*, London, Secker and Warburg, 1949, pp. 148–149.
- 91 J. C. A. GASKIN, *op. cit.*, p. XV; cf. R. TUCK – M. SILVERTHORNE, *op. cit.*, p. IX; Tuck (*Hobbes Leviathan* cit., p. XIII) highlights that Hobbes “was not always employed directly by the Earls of Devonshire, for at various times there was no person in that family who was playing a part in public life; but at such times he would work for their neighbours in Derbyshire, and in particular for their cousins the Earls of Newcastle who lived at Welbeck”; A. PACCHI, *op. cit.*, pp. 8–9.
- 92 *Tho. Hobbes Malmesburiensis Vita, Carmine Expressa, Autore Seipso*, in G. MOLESWORTH (ed.), *Thomae Hobbes Malmesburiensis Opera Philosophica Quae Latine Scripsit Omnia in Unum Corpus Nunc Primum Collecta* cit., p. XV; cf. J. AUBREY, *Thomas Hobbes* cit., p. 149; J. C. A. GASKIN, *op. cit.*, p. XV.
- 93 Cf. J. C. A. GASKIN, *op. cit.*, p. XV and p. LIII.
- 94 On this Hobbesian work cf. Q. SKINNER, *Reason and rhetoric in the philosophy of Hobbes* cit., pp. 232, 238, 244–249; ID., *Visions of Politics*, vol. II, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2002, pp. 52–55; cf. R. SCHLATTER, *Hobbes and Thucydides*, “Journal of the History of Ideas”, VI, 1945, pp. 350–362; L. STRAUSS, *op. cit.*, p. 171 and pp. 189 ff.; P. J. AHRENSDORF, *The Fear of Death and the Longing for Immortality: Hobbes and Thucydides on Human Nature and the Problem of Anarchy*, “The American Political Science Review”, XCIV, 2000, pp. 579–593; G. ROSSINI, *op. cit.*, pp. 303–324; P. PIS-SAVINO, *Hobbes e Della Casa traduttori di Tucidide*, “Il Pensiero Politico”, XXVI, 1993, pp. 341–355; C. W. BROWN jr., *Thucydides, Hobbes, and the Derivation of Anarchy* cit., pp. 33–62; ID., *Thucydides, Hobbes and the Linear Causal Perspective*, “History of Political Thought”, X, 1989, pp. 215–256; G. KLOSKO – D. RICE, *Thucydides and Hobbes's State of Nature*, “History of Political Thought”, VI, 1985, pp. 405–409; G. BORRELLI (ed.), *Thomas Hobbes. Introduzione a “La Guerra del Peloponneso” di Tucidide*, Napoli, Bibliopolis, 1984, pp. 11–41; ID., *Semantica del tempo e teoria politica in Hobbes*, “Il Pensiero Politico”, XV, 1982, pp. 492–494; R. SCHLATTER (ed.), *op. cit.*, pp. XI–XXVIII; J. SCOTT, *The peace of silence. Thucydides and the English Civil War*, in G. A. J. ROGERS – T. SORELL (ed.), *Hobbes and History*, London, Routledge, 2000, pp. 111–124.
- 95 Cf. Q. SKINNER, *Reason and rhetoric in the philosophy of Hobbes* cit., p. 232 and pp. 239–240; ID., *Visions of Politics*, vol. II cit., pp. 53–54; L. STRAUSS, *op. cit.*, pp. 177–186.
- 96 J. C. A. GASKIN, *op. cit.*, p. XII; A. PACCHI, *op. cit.*, p. 7.
- 97 J. C. A. GASKIN, *op. cit.*, p. XII.
- 98 Cf. notes n. 4–7.
- 99 Cf. notes n. 4–7.
- 100 Cf. Q. SKINNER, *Reason and Rhetoric in the Philosophy of Hobbes* cit., pp. 215–437.

34 *The Hobbesian Homer: Amusement, Propaganda*

- 101 T. HOBBS, *Behemoth. First Dialogue* cit., p. 110; cf. E. NELSON, *Translation of Homer. Iliad* cit., p. XXI; E. FABBRI, *Le translations of Homer: passioni, politica e religione nel pensiero maturo di Hobbes* cit., p. 152.
- 102 T. HOBBS, *Behemoth. First Dialogue* cit., p. 137; we can find analogous positions in the section *Imitations of the Greek and Romans* in chapter XXIX of *Leviathan* (*op. cit.*, pp. 216–219); cf. C. CONDREN, *op. cit.*, p. 76.
- 103 T. HOBBS, *Behemoth. First Dialogue* cit., p. 110.
- 104 *Ibid.*, p. 110.
- 105 The same character takes pains to highlight how some ideas are also spread among common people by clarifying the different channels through which members both of the higher classes and of the mob could be educated: “They are few in respect of the rest of men, whereof many cannot read, many though they can, haue no leisure, and of them that haue leisure the greatest part haue their minds wholly imployed, and taken vp by their priuate businness or pleasures. So that it is impossible that the multitude should euer learne their duty but from the Pulpit, and vpon Holy-days. But then and from thence it is, that they learned their disobedience” (T. HOBBS, *Behemoth. First Dialogue* cit., p. 159).
- 106 On this topic as a whole, cf. Q. SKINNER, *Reason and Rhetoric in the Philosophy of Hobbes* cit., pp. 19–211; particularly on Hobbes, cf. *Ibid.*, pp. 215–425.
- 107 T. HOBBS, *Behemoth. First Dialogue* cit., p. 108: “Truly I thinke if the King had had money he might haue had soldiery enough [...] in England. For there were very few of the common people [...] that cared much for either of the *Causes*, but would haue taken any side for pay and Plunder. But the Kings treasure was very law, and his enemies that pretended the people ease from taxes and other specious things had the command of the purses of the City of London, and of the most Cities and Corporate townes in Engand, and of many particular persons besides”; E. NELSON, *Translation of Homer. Iliad* cit., p. XXI.
- 108 Cf. N. BOBBIO, *Da Hobbes a Marx. Saggi di storia della filosofia*, Naples, Morano Editore, 1965, pp. 17–20; on the problem of the incitement of murdering tyrants in classical literature, criticized by Hobbes, cf. Q. SKINNER, *Reason and Rhetoric in the Philosophy of Hobbes* cit., p. 315.
- 109 Cf. Q. SKINNER, *Reason and Rhetoric in the Philosophy of Hobbes* cit., pp. 426–437.
- 110 The huge power which Hobbes ascribes to rhetoric seems to be well detailed in this passage of chapter VIII-14 of the *Part 2* of the *Elements of Law Natural and Political* (F. TÖNNIES (ed.), *The Elements of Law Natural and Politic by Thomas Hobbes*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1969, p. 177): “Eloquence is nothing else but the power of winning belief of what we say; and to that end we must haue aid from the passions of the hearer. Now to demonstration and teaching of the truth, there are required long deductions, and great attention, which is unpleasant to the hearer; therefore they which seek not truth, but belief, must take another way, and not only derive what they would haue to be believed, from somewhat believed already, but also by aggravations and extenuations make good and bad, right and wrong, appear great or less, according as it shall serve their turns” (henceforth, passages of the *Elements of Law Natural and Political* will be quoted from this edition).
- 111 Cf. H. WARRENDER (ed.) *T. Hobbes. De Cive. The English Version*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1983, pp. 23–28 (henceforth, passages from this Hobbesian work will be taken from this edition).
- 112 *Ibid.*, pp. 25–26; cf. A. PACCHI, *op. cit.*, p. 38; Hobbes had expressed similar ideas in the dedicatory epistle of the *Elements of Law, Natural and Political*

- (*op. cit.*, p. XV): “From the two principal parts of our nature, Reason and Passion, have proceeded two kinds of learning, mathematical and dogmatical. The former is free from controversies and dispute, because it consisteth in comparing figures and motion only; in which things truth and the interest of men, oppose not each other. But in the later there is nothing not disputable, because it compareth men, and meddleth with their right and profit; in which as oft as reason is against a man, so oft will a man be against reason. And from hence it cometh, that they that have written of justice and policy in general, do all invade each other, and themselves, with contradiction”; cf. Q. SKINNER, *Reason and Rhetoric in the Philosophy of Hobbes* cit., p. 300; E. NELSON, *Translation of Homer. Iliad* cit., pp. XXXV–XXXVI; N. BOBBIO (ed.), *Opere Politiche di Thomas Hobbes* cit., p. 21.
- 113 Q. SKINNER, *Reason and Rhetoric in the Philosophy of Hobbes* cit., p. 299; on the relationship between Hobbes and rhetoric, cf. also R. TUCK, *Hobbes Leviathan* cit., pp. XVIII–XIX; cf. T. HOBBS, *De cive*, III-32 cit., p. 75: “for as oft as another good action displeaseth any man, that action hath the name given of some neighbouring vice; likewise the bad actions, which please them, are ever entituled to some Vertue”; ID., *Elements of Law Natural and Political*, VIII-14 of the *Part 2* (*op. cit.*, p. 177): “Such is the power of eloquence, as many times a man is made to believe thereby, that he sensibly feeleth smart and damage, when he feeleth none, and to enter into rage and indignation, without any other cause, than what is in the words and passion of the speaker”.
- 114 N. BOBBIO, *Thomas Hobbes*, in L. FIRPO (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 285; G. ROSSINI, *The criticism of rhetorical historiography and the ideal of scientific method: history, nature and science in the political language of Thomas Hobbes*, in A. PADGEN, *op. cit.*, p. 314.
- 115 Q. SKINNER, *Reason and Rhetoric in the Philosophy of Hobbes* cit., pp. 299–300.
- 116 Cf. J. AUBREY, *Thomas Hobbes* cit., p. 150: “He was 40 years old before he looked on Geometry”; using the information supplied in the *Vita*, Skinner (*Reason and Rhetoric in the Philosophy of Hobbes* cit., pp. 250–251) moves up this “meeting” with Euclid’s work to 1629; he stresses anyway the role played by the reading of this book for the Hobbesian methodological approach to the *scientia civilis*.
- 117 T. HOBBS, *De Cive* cit., p. 26.
- 118 Q. SKINNER, *Reason and Rhetoric in the Philosophy of Hobbes* cit., pp. 352–353.
- 119 E. NELSON, *Translation of Homer. Iliad* cit., p. XXIV; R. Tuck (*Hobbes Leviathan* cit., p. XIII) recalls that from 1608 “Hobbes (when in England) lived in the houses of the Earl, at Hardwick Hall in Derbyshire or Devonshire House in London”.
- 120 E. NELSON, *Translation of Homer. Iliad* cit., p. XXIV.
- 121 Cf. *Ibid.*, p. XXIV.
- 122 *Ibid.*, p. XXIV.
- 123 Cf. *Ibid.*, p. XXV.
- 124 Cf. *Ibid.*, pp. LXXVII–LXXVIII.
- 125 T. HOBBS, *To the reader, concerning the virtues of an heroic poem*, in W. MOLESWORTH (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. III; cf. E. NELSON, *Translation of Homer. Iliad* cit., p. XCII; cf. Q. SKINNER, *Reason and Rhetoric in the Philosophy of Hobbes* cit., p. 371.
- 126 T. HOBBS, *Leviathan*, VIII, pp. 45–54.
- 127 Cf. Q. SKINNER, *Reason and Rhetoric in the Philosophy of Hobbes* cit., pp. 370–372.

- 128 T. HOBBS, *Leviathan* cit., pp. 45–47; the same conception is expressively repeated in the following sections of *To the reader, concerning the virtues of an heroic poem* (*op. cit.*, p. V); cf. E. NELSON, *Translation of Homer. Iliad* cit., p. XXXV.
- 129 T. HOBBS, *To the reader, concerning the virtues of an heroic poem*, in W. MOLESWORTH (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. V.
- 130 For one example cf. T. HOBBS, *Leviathan* cit., pp. 17, 18, 32; in the section of chapter V of *Leviathan* entitled *Signs of Science*, (*op. cit.*, pp. 32–33), Hobbes warns about the risks of a too-frequent use of prudence.
- 131 T. HOBBS, *Leviathan* cit., p. 18.
- 132 *The Answer to the Preface to Gondibert*, in W. MOLESWORTH (ed.), *The English works of Thomas Hobbes*, vol. IV cit., pp. 443–458; E. NELSON, *Translation as Correction: Hobbes in the 1660s and 1670s* cit., p. 127.
- 133 E. NELSON, *Translation as Correction: Hobbes in the 1660s and 1670s* cit., p. 127; concerning the idea that poetry could teach moral virtue, the same Nelson (*Translation of Homer. Iliad*, p. XXXIII) highlights how, starting from the mid-sixteenth century, poetry had been removed from its position alongside logic, dialectic, rhetoric and sophistry, and placed side by side with moral philosophy; cf. also C. CONDREN, *op. cit.*, pp. 77, 78: “Thus, I suggest, just as in *Leviathan* he had concluded that philosophy and eloquence might sit well with each other, so in translating Homer, Hobbes could by turns assume the mantle of the philosopher-poet in order to support his specific doctrines; and use his translation to diminish poetry’s moral and truth-telling status independent of his own philosophic vision. It was to have his cake and eat it, treating the divine Homer rather as he had treated the Bible in *Leviathan*, as an authoritative document where it suited”; also cf. *Ibid.*, pp. 79–80; E. FABBRI, *Le translations of Homer: passioni, politica e religione nel pensiero maturo di Hobbes* cit., p. 152.
- 134 Cf. notes n. 87–93.
- 135 E. NELSON, *Translation as Correction: Hobbes in the 1660s and 1670s* cit., p. 127; cf. E. NELSON, *Translation of Homer. Iliad* cit., p. XXXVIII.
- 136 Cf. *Ibid.*, p. XXI and p. XXXVIII.
- 137 Cf. E. NELSON, *Translation as Correction: Hobbes in the 1660s and 1670s* cit., p. 127; E. FABBRI, *Le translations of Homer: passioni, politica e religione nel pensiero maturo di Hobbes* cit., p. 152.
- 138 Cf. E. NELSON, *Translation as Correction: Hobbes in the 1660s and 1670s* cit., p. 128 and p. 139; ID., *Translation of Homer. Iliad* cit., p. XXXVII; cf. also *ivi*, pp. XLI–XLII; although with exclusive regard to linguistic aspects, Riddehough (*op. cit.*, p. 61) does not interpret this Hobbes’s behavior in an analogous way: “Hobbes unfortunately believed that a translator was entitled to greater license in writing verse than an original poet, and this license he abused particularly in regard to word-order”.
- 139 Cf. note n. 18; also Richard S. Peters in the *Introduction* to the edition of *Leviathan* edited by Michael Oakeshott (New York, London, Toronto, Sydney, Touchstone, 1962, p. XIX) writes that Hobbes published the translations “for want of something better to do”.
- 140 Cf. note n. 1.
- 141 E. NELSON, *Translation of Homer. Iliad* cit., pp. XXX–XXXI; J. L. BALL, *op. cit.*, pp. 4–15; G. B. RIDDEHOUGH, *op. cit.*, pp. 59–61; C. CONDREN, *op. cit.*, p. 74; J. LYNCH, *op. cit.*, p. 25; with regard to the removal of Homeric epithets, Riddehough (*op. cit.*, p. 59) writes: “The vivid Homeric simile is either shortened or left entirely untranslated: epithets such as ‘grey-eyed’ or ‘rosy-fingered’ are ignored with incalculable loss of the pictorial element:

- and, in general, the clear edge of Homeric depiction becomes blurred. Where Homer mentions tamarisk bushes, Hobbes baldly says ‘a tree’.
- 142 *Il.*, II, 887–888, in R. FAGLES (translated by *–Introduction and Notes* by B. KNOX), *Homer. The Iliad*, New York, Penguin Books, 1991; henceforth, except where otherwise specified, the current translations of the passages of the *Iliad* will be quoted from this edition; they will be marked [FK]. Henceforth, the Greek text of the *Iliad* will be quoted from R. CALZECCHI ONESTI, *Omero. Iliade*, Turin, Einaudi, 1950 (as the author specifies, it comes from Thomas W. Allen, Oxford Classical Texts); in case of incongruities with the text published by Stephanus, they will be shown in the footnotes with an “S” in square brackets placed immediately before the references; my comparisons between the original and Stephanus’ text are based on this edition: H. STEPHANUS, *Poetae graeci principis heroici carminis, & alii nonnulli*, Geneva, 1566.
- 143 Cf. H. G. LIDDELL – R. SCOTT (eds.), *A Greek-English Lexicon*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1996, p. 13.
- 144 *Il.*, II, 713–715, in E. NELSON (ed.), *Translation of Homer. Iliad* cit., p. 41; henceforth, the Hobbesian translations of the *Iliad* will be quoted from this edition; and will be marked with the symbol “*” following the number or numbers of the mentioned lines. On this topic, see J. WOLFE, *op. cit.*, p. 395.
- 145 Cf. E. NELSON, *Translation of Homer. Iliad* cit., p. 41; A. CATANZARO, *Thomas Hobbes traduttore di Omero. I “casi” diotrophés e dioghenés e il problema dell’origine divina del potere politico* cit., pp. 42–43. Use of the term Parliament also occurs, for example, in the Hobbesian translation of the *Odyssey* (II, 26* corresponding to the original 26; concerning the edition I used, cf. notes n. 157–158) as a replacement of the Greek *agoré*, i.e., the assembly of the men of Ithaca called by Telemachus; about this moment of discussion and Hobbes’s lexical choice see Nelson’s remark (cf. *Hobbes. Odyssees*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2008, p. 19).

2 The Hobbesian Translations of the Homeric Poems

A Reading from the Political Perspective. Analogies and Differences

SUMMARY – This chapter presents the problems of the dichotomy between sovereign and subjects, and of the genesis of political power in Hobbes's political theory as main criteria leading his translation work. They emerge as the cornerstones of those Hobbesian translation choices that are due to political intents and not imposed by metric or stylistic needs. Furthermore, the chapter analyses Homeric kingship and divine lexicons in order to show similarities and differences between the original Greek terms and their English replacements. It also contains a section devoted to the pivotal encyclopaedic value of the original Homeric poems in the Greek Dark Age, and takes into account the educative purposes of their translations in Hobbes's intention. The comparison reveals the deep differences in ethical and political views between the original *Iliad* and *Odyssey* and their English version by Hobbes.

The purpose of taking a text unaligned with his political vision and, particularly, with his idea of political virtue, and making it a means useful to continue spreading his political thought, is a sort of challenge within the challenge for Hobbes. It adds another difficulty to the already demanding and arduous task of translation. Hobbes has set himself a very precise objective, which he may not have had when he was engaged in the work on *The Peloponnesian War* by Thucydides. As it turned out, this work was in line with his political vision, though he was still at the beginning of his path at that time.

In contrast, the choice to work on the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* pinpoints and characterises another kind of way. Hobbes is no longer shaping his political theories or in an educational phase of his life. He is reaching its end, the conclusion of his philosophical and political path, a path rather completely spent in philosophy and politics. Through his translations of the Homeric poems, he wants to teach, or, better, to continue teaching real, authentic political virtue, that is, the sole means of ensuring human beings a truly peaceful existence and coexistence.

In Hobbes's intentions, Homeric epic poetry becomes – forgive my minimisation – a vehicle in which to hide information for readers, since the philosopher can no longer freely spread his thought in the

traditional way. However, as he sees it, it must be continuously propagated, because it concerns the basic and essential problem of peace.¹⁴⁶

Hobbes may not have been aware when he started working on the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* that they were originally conceived as vehicles for preserving and spreading informative contents.

Obviously, the conditions were profoundly different: there was no need to bypass censorship or hide information possibly considered dangerous by some political and/or religious authorities. There was a somewhat similar problem, albeit within a completely different framework. The issue concerned the safety of the institutions and of social relations as a whole, although the socio-historical context was totally incomparable. During the long period when the Homeric poems were developing and spreading orally,¹⁴⁷ men living in the Hellenic world had to face a crucial problem. Because of historical contingencies still not completely understood to this day, during the period from the twelfth/eleventh to the eighth century B.C., these people had had to find a tool through which to preserve their customs and traditions, the information essential for their very existence, without any opportunities to do so through writing, since they had lost this expertise. In this situation, usually called the Dark Age (twelfth/eleventh–eighth century B.C.),¹⁴⁸ the Homeric poems were the means for preserving and spreading this vital information.

The subject of the encyclopaedic value of the Homeric *épos* is widely discussed in scientific literature, though, if we take into account the enormous amount of work devoted to Homer over the centuries, it is something rather recent.¹⁴⁹ E. A. Havelock explains this instrumental role played by epic poetry even at the time of Plato through these words:

[Poetry] occupied this position so it seems in contemporary society, and it was a position held apparently not on the grounds that we would offer, namely poetry's inspirational and imaginative effects, but on the ground that it provided a massive repository of useful knowledge, a sort of encyclopaedia of ethics, politics, history and technology which the effective citizen was required to learn as the core of his educational equipment. Poetry represented not something we call by that name, but an indoctrination which today would be comprised in a shelf of text books and works of reference.¹⁵⁰

Particularly significant for our purposes, and for the most complete contextualisation possible of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* is Havelock's classification of the information that we can find in them. He pinpoints two main categories, which he calls *nómoi* and *éthea*, which we might define as umbrella terms covering all the informative material integrated within the *épos*.

The explanation of these two categories in his book entitled *Preface to Plato* greatly helps us to grasp a distinctive element that in turn enables us to grasp the kind of work Hobbes had to do while translating these texts.

Nomos in fact represents both the force of usage and custom before it was written down, and also the statutory law of advanced Greek societies which was written down. But the word in this sense is not Homeric. Hesiod was the first to use it and was perhaps responsible for bringing it into currency. In so early a poet the word cannot mean statute but it might cover usage which was promulgated orally. What then are the *ethea*? Originally the word may have signified the ‘lair’ or ‘haunt’ of an animal; in later Greek it develops into the meaning of personal behaviour-pattern or even personal character and so in Aristotle supplied the basis for the term ‘ethics’ [...] The poet [...], we suggest, may be using both of them to describe the social and moral behaviour pattern which is approved and therefore proper and ‘goodly’.¹⁵¹

The analogies between the socio-educational role ascribed to the original poems and Hobbes’s political aim to use them to teach his idea of political virtue seem noteworthy. However, there was also a big difference. Although the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* were conceived as a means to teach and spread a certain idea of politics, of political power, of distinction between justice and injustice, unfortunately for Hobbes they often did not correspond with his own. As a result, there was a gap between the idea of “goodly”¹⁵² in the original texts and the Hobbesian conception of “goodly”.¹⁵³

Because of this, as Nelson explains, the philosopher interprets the action of translating not only as a means of presenting in one language something written in another but as a correction and an amendment for educational ends.

He saw no value at all in replicating errors for the sake of “faithfulness to the original”. Indeed. We should notice that, implicit in his practice, there is an assumption that he is serving the interests of his author, whoever it is. Homer, he makes clear, did not fully understand the principles of civil science; he himself, however, is privy “to all the Theoremes of Morall doctrine”. By correcting Homer’s indiscretions, he is therefore acting on his behalf.¹⁵⁴

Although Homer had not been able to show *nómoi* and *éthea* in accordance with an authentic *scientia civilis* in his poems, that does not mean that his errors needed to be repeated in later translations as a token of faithful respect for the original texts. If we bear in mind what Hobbes thought about the role of contemporary education, built on classics, his idea of fixing past wrongs seems very consistent.

Broadening the sense of Nelson’s words – maybe to its extremes – we might say that, as with the original *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, Hobbes also conceived his translation work from a similar encyclopaedic perspective, but resting upon a more modern and scientifically grounded “goodly”¹⁵⁵ of moral virtue.

Obviously, in addition to the differences between these two works, there are many similarities and affinities between some political and institutional elements, social interconnections and power relations. However, when this compatibility fails, we find varying degrees of modification because of their greater or lesser degree of compatibility with the Hobbesian idea of moral virtue. In spite of this, these alterations cannot stray too far from the framework of the original narrative, since it might compromise its plot, causing it to lose its sense. Significantly enough, these two encyclopaedias – though for the Hobbesian one, we should stress the dubitative use of this term and consider it limited to the moral and political perspectives – set out from an identical premise: for human beings, it is essential to leave behind the pre-political condition.

In book IX of the *Odyssey*, we find the most famous, known and rather disturbing description of such a condition. Over the centuries, it became a sort of archetype of the human inability to interweave conditions of cohabitation and cooperative relations without a power forcing people to do so. It is the episode concerning the mooring of Odysseus and his crew on the island of the Cyclops. Bypassing the essence of the sequence of events, which shows us a dramatically impressive list of negative characteristics of these wild-natured, impressive beasts, the opening words of Odysseus' narrative at the beginning of book IX give a precise delineation of the context as a whole.

From there we sailed on, our
spirits now at a low ebb,
and reached the land of the high
and mighty Cyclops,
lawless brutes, who trust so to
everlasting gods
they never plant with their own
hands or plow the soil.
Unsovn, unplowed, the earth
teems with all they need,
wheat, barley and vines, swelled
by the rains of Zeus
to yield a big full-bodied wine
from clustered grapes.
They have no meeting place for
council, no laws either,
no, up on the mountain peaks they
live in arching caverns—
each a law to himself, ruling his
wives and children,
not a care in the world for any
neighbor.¹⁵⁶

Ἔνθεν δὲ προτέρω πλέομεν
ἀκαχήμενοι ἦτορ.
Κυκλώπων δ' ἔς γαῖαν ὑπερφιάλων
ἀθεμιστῶν
ἰκόμεθ', οἳ ῥα θεοῖσι πεποιθότες
ἀθανάτοισιν
οὔτε φυτεύουσιν χερσὶν φυτὸν
οὔτ' ἀρόωσιν,
ἀλλὰ τὰ γ' ἄσπαρτα καὶ ἀνήροτα
πάντα φύονται,
πυροὶ καὶ κριθαὶ ἠδ' ἄμπελοι, αἳ τε
φέρουσιν
οἶνον ἐριστάφυλον, καὶ σφιν Διὸς
ᾄμβρος ἀέξει.
τοῖσιν δ' οὔτ' ἀγοραὶ βουλευφόροι οὔτε
θέμιστες,
ἀλλ' οἳ γ' ὑψηλῶν ὀρέων ναίουσι
κάρηνα
ἐν σπέσσι γλαφυροῖσι, θεμιστεύει δὲ
ἕκαστος
παίδων ἠδ' ἀλόχων, οὐδ' ἀλλήλων
ἀλέγουσιν.¹⁵⁷

Hobbes translates the passage with these words:

Then to the land of *Cyclopes* we row,
 Men proud and lawless, that relye for food
 Upon the Sky, and neither plant nor plow;
 Yet have they Barley, Wheat, Wine very good,
 Unplow'd, unsown, fetch'd up by show'rs of Rain.
 They have no Courts of Councel, nor of Right,
 On huge high hills themselves they entertain,
 And in their rocky bellies pass the night.
 Each man gives Law to his own Wife and Brood.
 Nor they much for one another care.¹⁵⁸

What seems to me particularly worth stressing here is not principally some textual, lexical or linguistic aspect concerning Hobbes's translation choices, but some conceptual analogies with what we read in chapter XIII of *Leviathan* with regard to the natural condition of mankind. For example, what the Homeric text describes as the Cyclops' customs in relating with their wives and offspring ("each a law to himself, ruling his wives and children/not a care in the world for any neighbor") looks similar to what Hobbes writes there concerning the consequences of an unsafe condition due to the inevitable lack of trust which occurs when there is no coercive power over men, who are equal to one another in terms of their respective sovereign powers. We read in this passage of *Leviathan*:

Whatsoever therefore is consequent to a time of war, where every man is enemy to every man; the same is consequent to the time, wherein men live without other security, than what their own strength, and their own invention shall furnish them withal. In such condition, there is no place for industry; because the fruit thereof is uncertain: and consequently no culture of the earth; no navigation, nor use of the commodities that may be imported by sea; no commodious building; no instruments of moving, and removing such things as require much force; no knowledge of the face of the earth; no account of time; no arts; no letters; no society; and which is worst of all, continual fear, and danger of violent death; and the life of man, solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short.¹⁵⁹

The words of both Odysseus and Hobbes clearly highlight issues linked to pre-political contexts. Although by different paths, they particularly lay emphasis on the absence of solid, recognised and shared institutions, and on the lack of the minimal conditions of stability to allow agriculture and progress as a whole to arise and develop.¹⁶⁰

These two elements seem to be, both in the *Odyssey* and in *Leviathan*, the first step needed to create a society, a step that it is impossible to complete until "Each man gives Law".¹⁶¹

It seems no coincidence that, when the struggle between Agamemnon and Achilles breaks out at the beginning of book I of the *Iliad*, one of the strongest complaints of the son of Atreus regarding his rival is about Achilles's ambition to obtain the leadership of the Achaean army. In a free but more restrictive interpretation of these lines, the philosopher translates the passage to particularly stress this point. According to his words, Achilles wants to "give the law to all as he thinks fit":¹⁶² as Nelson observes, in the philosopher's political theory this is something which is within the exclusive remit of the sovereign.¹⁶³

I will analyse this passage from the lexical perspective in the following pages.¹⁶⁴ What I want to focus on now is shedding light on the fact that both the texts highlight the same kind of problem: the Homeric poems and *Leviathan* view situations of anarchy very negatively, be they real, imagined or prospective. When the human being in his natural condition in the Hobbesian text and the beast in Homer's – on both these occasions the differences appear to be minimal and merely outward – are *athémistos* (literally "lawless, godless")¹⁶⁵ or *lawless*¹⁶⁶ – curiously enough, these two adjectives share a similar privative construction – and, like their respective counterparts, take upon themselves the power of *giving the law*, the shift from a pre-political to a political *status* is completely impeded.

Obviously, both the Homeric *épos* and *Leviathan* oppose this anarchical vision with the idea of a community ruled by an institutionalised power. Contrary to what previously came to light with regard to the analogies between the island of Cyclops and the natural condition of mankind, in this case, we cannot find similar visions, analogous solutions and comparable political proposals. This is why I believe we can interpret a lot of modifications in Hobbes's translations a result of his deliberate intention to alter the original meanings with a view to spreading a precise political message.

The antithesis to the Cyclops' island is Scheria, the realm of the Phaeacians, where a monarch is in charge, although his power is very different from the monarchical power favoured by Hobbes and outlined in *Leviathan*. Despite this, we can stress a general tendency – though not a real analogy – which allows us to put these two ideas of monarchical power side by side in terms of their purpose.

In book XIX of the *Odyssey*, we can read some very significant words concerning this topic. Odysseus, dressed up as a panhandler, starts speaking – unrecognised – to his wife Penelope, so as to highlight her skills in governing Ithaca even without the presence of her husband. He says:

<p>“My good woman,” Odysseus, master of craft, replied, “no man on the face of the earth could find fault from <i>you</i>. Your fame, believe me, has reached the vaulting skies.</p>	<p>ὦ γυναῖκα, οὐκ ἄν τις σε βροτῶν ἐπ'ἀπειρονα γαῖαν νεικέοι· ἧ γάρ σευ κλέος οὐρανὸν εὐρὸν ἰκάνει, ὧς τέ τευ ἠ βασιλῆος ἀμύμονος, ὅς τε θεοῦδης</p>
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Fame like a flawless king's who dreads the gods, who governs a kingdom vast, proud and strong— who upholds justice, true, and the black earth bears wheat and barley, trees bow down with fruit and the sheep drop lambs and never fail and the sea teems with fish—thanks to his decent, upright rule and under his sovereign sway the people flourish. ¹⁶⁷	ἀνδράσιν ἐν πολλοῖσι καὶ ἰφθίμοισιν ἀνάσσω εὐδικίας ἀνέχῃσι, φέρῃσι δὲ γαῖα μέλαινα πυρὸς καὶ κριθάς, βρίθῃσι δὲ δένδρεα καρπῶ, τίκτεθ' ἔμπεδα μῆλα, θάλασσα δὲ παρέχῃ ἰχθῦς ἐξ εὐηγεσίης, ἀρετῶσι δὲ λαοὶ ὑπ' αὐτοῦ. ¹⁶⁸
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This is the English translation by Hobbes:

O Queen, through all the world your praises ring.
Your vertues known are up unto the Skies,
No less than of some great and happy King,
That maintains Justice, and whose fertile round
Bears store of Wheat and Barly and whose trees
Are charg'd with fruit, and all his sheep stand sound,
And under him a valiant people sees.¹⁶⁹

Except for the replacement of the original Greek noun *gýnai*, *woman*, with the English term *queen* – maybe in order to give a stronger institutional tone to the line – and for the possible hint of a greater emphasis laid on the king than on the people as a whole with regard to the idea that flourishing comes from good government, the belief that a link exists between the actions of the rulers and the moral and material good of the ruled people appears fairly intact. It emerges clearly from the last line of both versions. All of this notwithstanding, if the verb that we find in the original *Odyssey* – *aretáo* – can be understood as “thrive, prosper” and – more closely to its etymology – “choose he path of valour”.¹⁷⁰ Hobbes, by using the English adjective *valiant*¹⁷¹ seems to particularly stress this second meaning. This may be a consequence of the definition found in Scapula's *Lexicon Graecolatium* where, for the verb *aretáo* we find “i. qui virtutem comitatur”.¹⁷²

Setting aside the lexical choices for a moment, what seems particularly worth underlining is a close similarity with *Leviathan*. When Hobbes explains the reasons that drive human beings to alter their natural condition, he stresses how they choose to act in this way in order to provide themselves with a power able “to secure them in such sort, as that by their own industry, and by the fruits of the earth, they may nourish themselves and live contentedly”.¹⁷³

The Homeric model conveyed through the praise of Penelope, and the Hobbesian one shown in *Leviathan* are largely congruent. Both the texts aim to achieve a *status* of safety for the ruled people, albeit with some differences in where greater emphasis is placed: either on material aspects or on moral ones, and vice versa. As a result, this kind of condition should lead societies to coexist peacefully and to progress.¹⁷⁴ To sum up, both these works show the advantages of abandoning the natural *status* and those of living together. If we take into account the descriptions of the Cyclops' island and of the natural condition of mankind, it is clear enough that both Homer and Hobbes emphasise that this unsafe situation must be resolved.

2.1 The Dichotomy between Sovereign and Subjects

The most remarkable and significant analogies between Hobbes's and Homer's political thoughts are unfortunately restricted to the preliminary analysis and its immediate consequences. These are the pinpointing of the problem – the unsafe condition stemming from an anarchic regime – and of its solution – the creation of an established political community. In short, we have a common starting point and a bit of similarity in the first step; the path taken, the intermediate stages and the final destination are different, and, especially, largely divergent.

The basic point deals with the particular Hobbesian reading of political answers from the classical tradition, a tradition which is already present in the Homeric poems, albeit in a sort of embryonic *status*. These answers do not rest upon a *scientia civilis* that can really assure conditions of long-lasting, stable and permanent peace. As a result, Hobbes needs to compel that which he does not consider to be virtue within the boundaries of his idea of the same.

Among the most significant discrepancies crucial from the perspective of the history of political thought, it seems worth stressing one in particular, which can be directly related to a passage from *Leviathan*. While it might appear secondary compared to the bulk and importance of the other theoretical suggestions found there, it highlights one of the thorniest problems which Hobbes has to face in using his translation work as a means to teach moral virtue.

Right after considering the causes for the creation of the Commonwealth, having clearly shown the reasons for its existence, and having finally formulated its famous definition as

one person, of whose acts a great multitude, by mutual covenants one with another, have made themselves every one the author, to the end he may use the strength and means of them all, as he shall think expedient, for their peace and common defence,¹⁷⁵

the philosopher adds this sentence: “And he that carrieth this person, is called SOVEREIGN, and said to have sovereign power; and every one besides, his SUBJECT”.¹⁷⁶

This phrase, which can seem to be fringe, obvious or to sound like some kind of afterthought in a section of *Leviathan* deeply imbued with high-value elements in terms of political theory, effectively summarises a pivotal question that Hobbes needs to tackle when he starts translating the Homeric poems, in order to achieve his particular purpose. While he envisages the Commonwealth as resting upon the clear-cut dichotomy between sovereign – conceived as either an individual or an assembly of persons¹⁷⁷ – and subjects, the world depicted in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, the political-institutional contexts described and the relations of command-obedience expounded rarely appear to fit his vision. It would be incorrect to state that this distinction is missing in the Homeric poems; however, it is not as strict, categorical and clear-cut as it is in *Leviathan*.

If we consider, for example, the social structures of the several communities portrayed in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, we can immediately find a clear distinction between people who are *áristoi* and people who are not. It seems similar enough to the Hobbesian view. However, if the men within the class of non-*áristoi* could be easily equated to the subjects as they are portrayed in *Leviathan*, there is no analogous correspondence for category of the *áristoi*, which was not compact enough from the perspective of political power as conceived by Hobbes, that is, as a holder of sovereign power so monolithic as to be embodied by a single man.

This situation is immediately clear, for example, when we consider the assembly in book I of the *Iliad*, which describes the quarrel between Achilles and Agamemnon. From a political and institutional perspective, it distinctly shows the unstable and precarious balance of powers, the uncertain definition of roles, the transient boundaries between men in charge and men who must obey within the Achaean army.¹⁷⁸

It seems obvious that such a situation would be truly problematic, since Hobbes is an author whose deep-seated aim is to fix internal conflict, given that it is the only means to assure safety to the governed people, and since he needs to unequivocally show who is the authentic holder of the entire sovereignty.

This picture is further complicated by the political significance of the struggle in itself: beyond the lack of a clear-cut dichotomy between sovereign and subjects, it reveals another critical element. In such a controversial situation, the authority of the commander-in-chief Agamemnon – who is, as will be clearly stressed in the following sections, the Hobbesian model of a king¹⁷⁹ – is cast in doubt by a subject – Achilles – who creates a deep cleavage within the Achaean army. This action, which must have appeared to Hobbes’s eyes as some sort of sedition,¹⁸⁰ allows Achilles to free a part of the troops – the Myrmidons – from the control of their legitimate – at least in the philosopher’s view – sovereign.¹⁸¹

This may be the clearest example of the difficulties that Hobbes has to face when, in his translation work, he has to deal with the multifaceted category of the *áristoi*. Since there is not a clear-cut detachment between sovereign and subjects within it, in the Homeric saga situations often arise of overlapping sovereignties, situations completely incompatible with the theories explained in *Leviathan* and the other political works of the Malmesbury philosopher.

This is a crucial theme in analysis of the Hobbesian translations, a topic which will be taken into due account and developed in the following chapter. The reason why I choose to mention it here is in order to introduce the Homeric lexicon, which seems to me useful to appreciate the complex and multifaceted problem of fragmentation of power – and particularly of royal power – within the group of the *áristoi*, from a slightly different but complementary perspective.

2.2 The Kingship Lexicon

The deepest cleavage between the original *Iliad* and *Odyssey* and their English translations by Hobbes, dealing with the lack of a clear detachment between sovereign and subjects, can be easily found in the Homeric lexicon, particularly in the kingship lexicon. It seems no coincidence that the majority of the discordant elements relate to the problem of monarchical authority. It leads us to briefly consider what kind of authority the Homeric kings had. With a view to explaining their powers and privileges, Aristotle writes in his *Politics*:

And they had supreme command in war and control over all sacrifices that were not in the hands of the priestly class, and in addition to these functions they were judges in law-suits; some gave judgement not on oath and some on oath – the oath was taken by holding up the sceptre. These kings then of ancient times used to govern continuously in matters within the city and in the country and across the frontiers.¹⁸²

In his essay entitled *La regalità. Beni d'uso e beni di prestigio* (literally, *Kingship. Advantages of custom and esteem*), Pierre Carlier stresses this peculiar triple partition highlighted by the philosopher of Stagira. He confirms that their authority concerned the religious, military and judiciary ambits at the same time.¹⁸³

In order to precisely contextualise the theme of kingship within the Homeric poems, we need to identify who was allowed to be called *king*. The *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* attribute this title to different men; a lot of them – including Achilles, Nestor, Menelaus and Odysseus to name but a few – are members of the same political context, where one person's power often overlaps with that of another, in ways sometimes violent, sometimes tolerated.¹⁸⁴

The dimensions of Commonwealth and of the uniqueness of the political community, which have such remarkable positions in *Leviathan*, are less significant or completely absent in the Homeric poems. This is another of the thorniest elements faced by Hobbes during his translation work, since it deals with the crucial problem of clearly understanding who is the real holder of sovereignty and, accordingly, who must obey him.

Although Agamemnon is the commander-in-chief of the heterogeneous army besieging Troy, his prominent and hegemonic position does not depend on his holding a particular political and institutional office – he is a hero like some others within the Achaean troops – but on other reasons.¹⁸⁵ Furthermore, it is not exempt by disapprovals, criticisms and, sometimes, possible dispossessing, at least in a theoretical perspective.¹⁸⁶ Even Zeus – whose monocratic power seems to be stronger and steadier than Agamemnon's one, except for some occasions¹⁸⁷ – is not completely similar to the model of absolute king explained by Hobbes in the *Leviathan*.

Because of this multifaceted scenario concerning the idea of kingship, the Homeric lexicon adopts numerous nouns – and a lot of verbs deeply related to them – with a view to pinpointing, defining and characterising both the figure of the king and his actions.

Following Emile Benveniste's pivotal study entitled *Indo-European Language and Society*,¹⁸⁸ these nouns are: *wánax*, *basiléus*, *poimén*, *kosmétor*, *órchamos*, *kóiranos*. It seems useful to also add *eghemón*, although in a slightly more marginal position. Albeit simply as a complement,¹⁸⁹ all of them must be related to their corresponding verbs: *wanásson*, *basiléuo*, *poimáino*, *kosméo*, *árcho*,¹⁹⁰ *koiranéo* e *eghéomai*.¹⁹¹

The first three nouns seem to be more all-embracing, more able to express a wide idea of kingship than the others, though they all differ. Because of their crucial value and importance apropos of the theme of the Hobbesian translations, I prefer to focus the analysis on the first three terms, after taking into consideration the other four, whose uses, occurrences and meanings seem less remarkable in terms of the philosophic and political value of their English replacements.

As a rule, *kosmétor*, *órchamos*, *eghemón* e *kóiranos* appear to characterise power – and particularly the kings' power – in peculiar and specific contexts, the majority of which concern conflicting situations.

This is the case, for example, with the noun *kosmétor*, whose link to the term *laón* pinpoints a particular military role; this expression occurs on four occasions and has this meaning in three of them.¹⁹² This *formula* can be literally translated *man who sets armies in array* and refers for example to the two sons of Atreus in line sixteen of book I of the *Iliad*.¹⁹³ Despite the fact that Menelaus is mentioned here for the first time, the poems has already given a lot of information about his brother Agamemnon, particularly on his royal position. In just sixteen lines, he is called *master of the people* (*wánax andrôn*)¹⁹⁴ and *king* (*basiléus*),¹⁹⁵ using two of those

three nouns that refer to the kingship as a whole. As a result, although he is already known to be a king, his being a *kosmétor laón* appears here to derive from an operative rationale due to the situation of conflict, since it clearly denote Agamemnon's ability and authority to "set an army in array" – this is one of the main meanings of the verb *kosméo*¹⁹⁶ –, i.e., the ability and authority to deploy the ranks. In Scapula's lexicon, as the English equivalent of *kosmétor*, Hobbes would have found the words "ordinator, moderator, dux",¹⁹⁷ followed by a general reference that might have sounded related to book I of the *Iliad*. As confirmation of this, the 1820 edition of the same lexicon can be cited, in which line sixteen of book I of the *Iliad* is explicitly mentioned.¹⁹⁸

Something similar can be said about the noun *órchamos*, whose meaning "leader, chief"¹⁹⁹ seems again to be linked to the military sphere.²⁰⁰ We can find it in Scapula's lexicon, in the item regarding the corresponding verb *árcho*, which is in turn correlated to the Latin expressions "principatum obtineo, impero, imperium teneo";²⁰¹ the equivalent for the noun is "princeps".²⁰²

Albeit only within the *Iliad*, the significance and value of the noun *eghemón* are again related to the military ambit; its literal meaning is "guide [...] one who does a thing first, shows the way to others", but also "leader, commander, chief".²⁰³ In the twofold occurrence of this term in the *Odyssey*, the military connotation is completely lost, but the idea remains of the *eghemón* as a man able to show the way.²⁰⁴

Its usage in book XVI of the *Iliad* is worth stressing. While the military contingent of fifty ships brought to Troy by Achilles is being described, we are informed of the presence of "five fighters [*eghemónas*] he named, entrusted with command, /but he himself in his martial power ruled [*énasse*] them all".²⁰⁵ That being stated, it is clear enough that a relation of subordination between the son of Peleus and these *eghemónes* exists.²⁰⁶ Although they have authority, it is delegated by their commander, whose superior position and supremacy are highlighted by the use of the verb *énasse*, which is etymologically related to the *wánax*, one of the three Homeric figures connected to kingship as a whole.²⁰⁷

Although we cannot totally attest the existence of a hierarchical relation between these two figures, partly because of the other occurrences of this term, it seems to be correct to relate, as we did apropos of the nouns *kosmétor* and *órchamos*, the idea of monocratic power in the usage of *eghemón* to a functional logic where the military dimension plays a pivotal role.²⁰⁸

Surely Hobbes would have found it to comply with this particular meaning in the *Lexicon Graecolatium*, where these translations are suggested: "dux", "dux exercitus", "ductor" and "imperator".²⁰⁹

The meanings of the noun *kóiranos* allow us to place it alongside those terms that can be used in reference to some specific ambits of monocratic power and, accordingly, that we cannot exclusively link to kingship as

a whole. Its translation could be “ruler, leader, commander”,²¹⁰ the corresponding verb *koiranéo* refers to the action “to be lord or master, rule, command”.²¹¹

The occurrences of *kóiranos* in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* are not so numerous.²¹² However, we find it in a famous passage which is very frequently quoted, discussed and analysed by those who look at the Homeric poems from a political perspective.

In book II of the *Iliad*, Agamemnon is in trouble, unable to handle a sort of mutiny of the Achaean soldiers, who want to stop fighting against Troy and go back home. Therefore, Odysseus takes the lead in this thorny situation and tries to solve the problem on behalf of his commander-in-chief. With a view to persuading his reluctant comrades in arms to resume besieging Troy, he resorts to the well-known and significant expression of the lines 204–206:

Too many kings can ruin an army—mob rule!/Let there be one commander [*kóiranos*], one master only [*basiléus*]/endowed by the son of the crooked-minded Cronus/with kingly scepter and royal rights of custom:/whatever one man needs to lead his people well.²¹³

This quotation shows us something remarkable. There is a clear reference to kingship expressed through the usage of the noun *basiléus*. Alongside it, we find a less well-identified reference to a sort of leader – *kóiranos* – whose role appears to be detached from the king’s. These lines seem, at least in this situation, to reveal the existence of a complementary relationship between these two terms and, especially, between these two offices, since, according to Odysseus’ words, their combined usage pinpoints the power of Agamemnon. The relationship between the noun *kóiranos* and political power is also visible in the expression *polykoirania*, whose meaning “rule of many”²¹⁴ comes from the same root, together with the adjective *polýs* (“many”²¹⁵).

The *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* give us no further information concerning the meaning of the word *kóiranos*; with regard to the Hobbesian translations of the Homeric poems, it is worth stressing that Scapula’s Lexicon suggests replacing it with “princeps” and “dominus”.²¹⁶

Having concluded this brief overview on the terms that, although connected to monarchy and royal power, can be classified as a secondary lexicon concerning kingship and, accordingly, play a marginal role in the analysis of the Hobbesian versions of the Homeric poems, it seems useful to look at the remaining three, to which the most thorny but significant elements concerning the philosopher’s translation choices, of interest from the perspective of their political value, are principally linked.

In the Homeric lexicon, *wánax* is not only the most recurring but also, in terms of semantic value, the most meaningful word linked to monocratic power over people, animals and objects. Pierre Carlier supplies

us with an efficient summary of the multifaceted and broad value of the meanings entailed in the word *wánax*. He writes:

Ἄναξ is often conceived as the most significant royal title. Its use in the Mycenaean tablets to designate the lord of the palace reinforces this idea. It represents the fact that the verb ἀνάσσειν mostly means «using a royal power»: over a people, a city or, as in the case of Zeus, «over both gods and men». It is also true that, in the *Iliad* ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν, «lord of the warriors», is an epithet of the great king Agamemnon, which is used forty-nine times (i.e., for one third of its total occurrences, since the term ἄναξ occurs one hundred and four times in the *Iliad* as a whole).²¹⁷

That being stated, this definition might be fairly compatible with the Hobbesian idea of a clear-cut dichotomy between sovereign and subjects, as that explained by the philosopher in *Leviathan*. However, Carlier adds:

However, ἄναξ is also used for a number of «small kings» and «lords» who, as in the case of Aeneas and Polydamas, are not «kings» at all, at least in the sense we understand. Furthermore, the most remarkable element is that the semantic area of the term ἄναξ goes far beyond the boundaries of kingship. On the one hand this qualification is often referred to gods; on other it often pinpoints the master of the οἶκος, the master of a slave (these are the most recurrent meanings in the *Odyssey*), and even the master of an animal. Basically it can be said that ἄναξ is used analogously with the term *dominus* in imperial Latin. In general, ἄναξ and ἀνάσσειν outline the idea of a strong authority [...] and an authority of a monarchic nature ἀνάσσειν is not found its plural forms, and ἄναξ rather infrequently); this authority can be exerted over the level of the οἶκος, of the kingdom, of the gods. Furthermore, like «signore» in Italian, ἄναξ is sometimes used merely to stress the majesty of a god or the importance of a character.²¹⁸

This picture is broader and more multifaceted than the previous one: there are some elements which are less easily related to Hobbesian absolutism. The most significant one is undoubtedly the simultaneous presence of a plurality of men allowed to be *kings* within the same group, leading us to the problem of the existence of overlapping sovereignties.

With regard to the translation of the noun *wánax*, the *Lexicon Graecolatinum* seems unable to express the broad, polysemous nature of this word. Although the main meaning is clearly outlined, given that we find the suggested replacement “rex”²¹⁹ followed by a reference to book I, line 7 of the *Iliad*, where this term is used for the first time, and though the correlations to the gods (“dijis quoque”²²⁰) and the possible translation

“*domus dominus*”²²¹ are rightly highlighted, no words are spent to explain its application to several men within the same group and there is no reference to its honorific value.

However, Hobbes might have known this information, given that under the heading *basileús* of Scapula’s *Lexicon*, after the translation “*rex*”²²² he could read “*βασιλεῖς & ἄνακτες dicuntur etiā quilibet clari & excellentes viri*”.²²³ As a result, we can hypothesise that, at least in its plural form which, as stressed by Carlier,²²⁴ is not so frequent in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, the philosopher would have known the honorific meaning of the word *wánax*.

Nonetheless, trying to read the expression “*clari & excellentes viri*”²²⁵ as a reference to the possible simultaneous presence of *βασιλεῖς* and *ἄνακτες* within the same community – that is, something linked to the political problem of overlapping sovereignties – is less easy and, to be honest, a bit too forced.

With regard to the meaning of the noun *basileús* within the Homeric poems, Carlier again states:²²⁶

Contrary to ἄναξ, βασιλεύς occurs both in singular and plural forms. This title is given to both individuals and groups. Βασιλεύς is not referred to gods, not even to Zeus, and it *never* identifies a lord of an οἶκος. The plural collective form βασιλῆες (twenty-two occurrences) always defines a group of elderly men who deliberate on common interests. The singular form is mostly used to identify the man who leads a community, a man who makes decisions after hearing various opinions [...]. Two clarifications [...] are called for: these kings do not rule over clearly-defined states, but overlapping political communities; kingship is by no means synonymous with «monarchy». On the contrary: the peculiar characteristic of the Homeric institutions is the strict relation of βασιλεύς and βασιλεῖς *of the king and of kings*.²²⁷

Apropos of the possible connections between the ἄναξ and the βασιλεύς and, accordingly, of the question of their possible hierarchic relations, crucial from the perspective of the political value of the Hobbesian translations, Benveniste writes:

According to Aristotle, the brothers and the son of the king bore the title of *wánaks*. It would thus seem that the relation between *basileús* and *wánaks* was that which exists between ‘king’ and ‘prince’ [...]. We cannot, however, accept the limitation of the term *wánaks* to the son or the brother of the king; for in Homer a person can be at one and the same time *basileús* and *wánaks*. One title does not contradict the other.²²⁸

Both Carlier’s explanation concerning the existence of overlapping communities within the Homeric poems and Benveniste’s statement about the

possible compatibility of the qualifications of ἄναξ and βασιλεύς, outline a political context where power relations are more complex, multifaceted and ambiguous than the strict dichotomy between sovereign-subjects theorised by Hobbes in *Leviathan*.

The final noun associated with the ideas of both monocratic and royal power in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* seems to be unlinked to political authority. The primary meaning of the Greek term *poimén* literally means “herdsman, whether of sheep or oxen”,²²⁹ something that might not immediately appear connected to the political sphere.

However, if we look, for example, at the lines of the *Odyssey* where Odysseus praises Penelope’s skills in government, we find an idea which is a sort of backbone of the Hellenic conception of kingship, an idea according to which “the king [...] [is] the author and guarantor of the prosperity of his people, if he follows the rules of justice and divine commandments”.²³⁰ This distinctive element allows us to clearly appreciate why the noun *poimén* – often linked to the plural genitive *laón* (“men, i. e. soldiers, both of the whole army and smaller divisions [...] men or people; as subjects of a prince [...] people assembled”²³¹) – is used metaphorically to identify a king: by virtue of his position of supremacy, he must be a man able to take care of his subjects.²³²

To highlight the pivotal importance of this expression in the Homeric poems, suffice it to say that the term *poimén* is used with its original meaning of shepherd in a few more than ten cases, but there are more than sixty occurrences with the meaning of king.²³³

The first translation proposed in Scapula’s *Lexicon* is “paftor. propriè ovium paftor”,²³⁴ but we also read “dicitur & dux feu imperator, veletiam rex ποιμὴν λαῶν”²³⁵ followed by a direct link to the *Iliad*.

This brief analysis on the lexicon of Homeric kingship highlights a problem – the splintered monocratic power within the group of *áristoi* – which is a sort of subset of the broader issue, mentioned above, of the detachment between sovereign and subjects. With regard to the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, the lack of this clear-cut dichotomy causes the cases of overlapping sovereignties to arise. Therefore, it seems obvious that Hobbes, who, in *Leviathan*, put this problem immediately after the description of the genesis of Commonwealth, could be in difficulty with a text not completely in compliance with these crucial political basics. That is why he tries to modify the original texts in those passages that could sound ambiguous to his contemporary readers about this pivotal theoretical aspect.

2.3 The Dichotomy between mortal and immortal god

The second major theme regarding Hobbes and his English translations of the Homeric poems concerns the genesis of political power, though it is less visible than the previous one, at least in terms of quantitative

presence. As a prominent critic of a political power legitimate through divine right, the Malmesbury philosopher is tackling a world – the Homeric one – where some links between men in charge and Olympian deities are present. Although political power does not come from gods in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, there are often relations, close or distant, between kings and gods,²³⁶ and this is enough to create an ambiguity that Hobbes finds hard to accept. These are principally subtle relations, often more formal than really substantial, but enough to cast doubts on the crucial theme of the exclusively human genesis of political power as theorised by Hobbes in his works.

This dichotomy between the human and the divine spheres is clearly explained in chapter XVII of *Leviathan*, while an in-depth analysis of this theme is developed in the following sections of this work.²³⁷ The passage is brief, but worth citing due to its clarity. Right after discussing the nature of the covenant, which allows human beings to create the Commonwealth, Hobbes writes:

This is the generation of that great LEVIATHAN, or rather (to speak more reverently) of that *Mortal God*, to which we owe under the *Immortal God*, our peace and defence. For by this authority, given him by every particular man in the commonwealth, he hath the use of so much power and strength conferred on him, that by terror thereof, he is enabled to conform the wills of them all, to peace at home, and mutual aid against their enemies abroad.²³⁸

Working from this starting point, whose principal value rests upon its effectiveness and significant brevity in showing the existence of two different ambits – the human and the divine – I chose to use the expression *mortal-immortal god*²³⁹ to identify the problems connected to the genesis of political power, which in my opinion deeply influence Hobbes' translation work. However, a clarification is called for: henceforth, I will use it merely as a label to identify or call to mind these particular issues, and without any other meanings.

Similarly to what previously happened with the distinction between sovereign and subjects – which comes shortly after the aforementioned one in *Leviathan* – the problem stems from the need for a clear-cut detachment between two categories which must not have anything in common, but are not so fully distinct in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. This absence, or better, this lack of rigour in these two crucial political points makes the Homeric poems too ambiguous from the perspective of Hobbesian political thought. In order to achieve peace and to live safe and sound, these boundaries need to be acknowledged and, consequently, observed, as their effectiveness in reducing conflicts depends on their being clear-cut, strict and categorical, that is, totally independent from the dangerous action of free will, which often uses rhetoric as a supportive ally.

In *Leviathan*, Hobbes peremptorily clarifies the completely human dimension of that goal, which depends exclusively on the voluntary initial choice of the parties to a pact, and does not consider any divine element. If we consider, for example, the discussion of chapter XL concerning the genesis and nature of Moses' power, the philosopher shows what is at stake:

His authority therefore, as the authority of all other princes, must be grounded on the consent of the people, and their promise to obey him. And so it was: for *the people* (*Exod. 20. I 8*) *when they saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking, removed, and stood afar off. And they said unto Moses, speak thou with us, and we will hear, but let not God speak with us lest we die.* Here was their promise of obedience; and by this it was they obliged themselves to obey whatsoever he should deliver unto them for the commandment of God.²⁴⁰

Obedience exclusively regards the human condition, and its legitimation comes only from the covenant. The divine element is totally kept out of the relation between sovereign and subjects; at most, becomes useful in providing the legitimate holders of power with something to strengthen their position, as Hobbes himself shows in chapter XII of *Leviathan*.²⁴¹

Based on these considerations, the usage of the dichotomy between *mortal* and *immortal god* seems in Hobbes's view to be a means to highlight the deeply immanent genesis of that political power which can allow people to live in peace. The idea of a political authority legitimized by divine right is completely removed, though its holder remains absolute and totally detached from the *corpus* of the people governed.

With a view to highlighting the dichotomy between sovereign and subjects, Hobbes' aim to identify exactly what the authentic genesis of political power really is should help provide people with a clarification as to who must be obeyed. Although the philosopher affirms that, when there is a conflict between divine and human law, men must observe the former, he also focuses on another problem: it is not always simple to distinguish when a command really comes from God or when it is merely a human stratagem used by someone who tries to pass his own will or desires off as God's.²⁴² We read in *Leviathan*:

The most frequent pretext of sedition, and civil war, in Christian commonwealths hath a long time proceeded from a difficulty, not yet sufficiently resolved, of obeying at once, both God and man, then when their commandments are one contrary to the other. It is manifest enough, that when a man receiveth two contrary commands, and knows that one of them is God's, he ought to obey that, and not the other, though it be the command even of his lawful sovereign

(whether a monarch, or a sovereign assembly,) or the command of his father. The difficulty therefore consisteth in this, that men when they are commanded in the name of God, know not in divers cases, whether the command be from God, or whether he that commandeth, do but abuse God's name for some private ends of his own. For as there were in the Church of the Jews, many false prophets, that sought reputation with the people, by feigned dreams and visions; so there have been in all times in the Church of Christ, false teachers, that seek reputation with the people, by fantastical and false doctrines; and by such reputation (as is the nature of ambition,) to govern them for their private benefit.²⁴³

Therefore, if the legitimate holder of sovereignty is allowed to govern through using the link – albeit false – with some deities, so as to gain advantage, other figures are not and, in Hobbes's theory, the reason for this depends precisely on the human genesis of political power. He writes:

And therefore the first founders, and legislators of commonwealths among the Gentiles, whose ends were only to keep the people in obedience, and peace, have in all places taken care; first, to imprint in their minds a belief, that those precepts which they gave concerning religion, might not be thought to proceed from their own device, but from the dictates of some god, or other spirit; or else that they themselves were of a higher nature than mere mortals, that their laws might the more easily be received: so Numa Pompilius pretended to receive the ceremonies he instituted amongst the Romans, from the nymph Egeria: and the first king and founder of the kingdom of Peru, pretended himself and his wife to be the children of the Sun; and Mahomet, to set up his new religion, pretended to have conferences with the Holy Ghost, in form of a dove. Secondly, they have had a care, to make it believed, that the same things were displeasing to the gods, which were forbidden by the laws [...] And by these, and such other institutions, they obtained in order to their end, (which was the peace of the commonwealth,) that the common people in their misfortunes, laying the fault on neglect, or error in their ceremonies, or on their own disobedience to the laws, were the less apt to mutiny against their governors.²⁴⁴

Again here it is quite clear that the genesis of political power rests upon the human sphere, and likewise it is clear that only the holder of sovereignty must have the opportunity of using the divine sphere as an *instrumentum regni*. Due to this, in Hobbes's view, the exact identification of the place where political authority arises, should allow people to distinguish which man – or group of men – must be obeyed, among a number of different subjects demanding obedience.

That being stated, it seems obvious enough that a philosopher like Hobbes, who stands his political theory on this cornerstone, is in trouble when he starts taking into consideration the translation of the Homeric poems. Although the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* present a similar conception of the genesis of political authority, they do not have that same clear-cut detachment between the human and divine ambits, which we find expressly shown in *Leviathan*. Surely, this is something problematic for Hobbes, something that needs to be fixed.

An exact and unequivocal distinction between the ruler and governed people, the conclusive identification of what the authentic source of political authority is, a willingness to continue spreading, through the translation of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, the precepts of a *scientia civilis* that can really ensure people long-lasting safety. That entails in-depth work on the Homeric poems, which, being well-known, studied and widely used both in the political literature and political discussions, deserve to be corrected in any passages that might sound ambiguous, destabilising and, hence, potentially dangerous.

2.4 The Divine Lexicon

That being stated, the comparison between the Homeric and Hobbesian lexicon concerning the mortal-immortal god dichotomy allows us to appreciate the philosopher's *modus operandi* in translations dealing with this particular theme.

Contrary to what we have seen apropos of kingship, the amount of information deduced from this second perspective of analysis seems to principally come from the adjectives rather than the nouns and is not as copious as the previous one. Some cases are very useful and highlight the question well, others are less significant as single instances, but important in order to define the context as a whole.

In particular, there are some values of certain adjectives built on the roots *théos*, “*God, the Deity*”²⁴⁵ and *dio*-²⁴⁶ – a prefix directly related to Zeus – that are worth sounding out in depth because of their peculiar importance from the perspective of the political use of the translations.

Within this group of words that connect the human and divine spheres and highlight some links with people, events or actions that entail elements dealing with politics, political power and its genesis, two adjectives are worth analysing first of all. They are remarkable for their semantic value if nothing else, since their practical consequences and real significance from the perspective of political praxis are less important than might at first seem, though they do establish a clear relation between men in power and Zeus.

These adjectives are *diotrophés* (“*fostered, cherished by Zeus*”²⁴⁷) and *dioghenés* (“*sprung from Zeus [...] ordained and upheld by Zeus*”²⁴⁸), which, at least considering their respective meanings, seem to imply the

existence of some kind of link between rulers and deities. If we also take into account that they are often related to those nouns used to identify the holders of monocratic power and are frequently correlated to people in charge, it seems quite clear why Hobbes particularly focuses on them in his translation work.

As an equivalent for *diotrephés*, Scapula's lexicon suggested the expressions "à Ioue nutritus, Iouis alumnus".²⁴⁹ In the 1820 edition, it is stressed that this is an epithet bestowed on kings,²⁵⁰ as for *dioghenés*, the suggested translation is "è Ioue ortus".²⁵¹

Alongside these two adjectives, which allow us to highlight the most remarkable elements in Hobbes's management of the problem of the genesis of political power in his translations, there are others. They cannot be considered as important as *diotrephés* and *dioghenés* in terms of the information that we can gather from them, but they play a role in completing the picture of this theme as a whole. They are helpful in looking for the *ratio* of Hobbes's translation choices when the Homeric poems run the risk of undermining – obviously in the philosopher's view – the dichotomy between *mortal* and *immortal god*.

While I previously introduced this section by saying that it principally deals with adjectives, I want firstly to focus on an expression that seems particularly important to me. It is composed of a noun and an adjective, and without a doubt it implies a link between men in power and gods, or rather, a clearly identified god. The expression is "*diù philos*", that is *dear to Zeus*,²⁵² whose meaning reveals a connection between the father of the Olympian deities and the people bestowed with this title, though this relation appears to remain on a lesser level than that previously analysed with regard to *diotrephés* and *dioghenés*. Because of its composite nature, there obviously is no direct correspondence in Scapula's lexicon, unless we consider the two terms separately. On the contrary, in it we find the first adjective, which I want to highlight now. This is *theios* – "*of or from the gods, divine*"²⁵³ – which is translated with the expressions "divinus, ad Deum pertinens"²⁵⁴ in the 1593 edition; the 1820 version adds the significant example "θεῖος Ὀδυσσεύς, divinus Ulysses".²⁵⁵

With regard to the Greek adjective *theoikelos* – "*godlike*"²⁵⁶ – the lexicon suggests the translations "Deo fimilis [...] Dicitur de viris eximijs, & qui dijs aequiparandi videntur",²⁵⁷ with a generic reference to book I of the *Iliad*, a reference that, in the more recent edition, is clearly connoted by showing the subject – Achilles²⁵⁸ – associated with this adjective in that context.²⁵⁹

In the same semantic area, we find the attribute *isótheos*, "*equal to the gods, godlike*",²⁶⁰ whose replacements in both versions of Scapula's lexicon are "Deo par, Deo aequiparandus".²⁶¹

Concerning the adjective *theoeidés* "*godlike*",²⁶² to which Scapula also relates *theudés*, we read "Deo fimilis, diuina forma praeditus"²⁶³. One quite odd case is *antitheos*, "*equal to the gods, godlike*",²⁶⁴ its proposed

translation is “contrarius Deo, aduerfarius Deo. Hom. Item par Deo, aequiparandus Deo, diuinus, auguftus. ut ἀντίθεος Σαρπεδῶν, Il. ζ”,²⁶⁵ which is completed, in the 1820 edition, with another significant example in political terms, an example again drawn from the Homeric poems: “et ἀντίθεος ἄναξ, Od. β. diuinis virtutibus praeditus”.²⁶⁶

The adjective *dios*, “heavenly [...] noble [...] excellent”,²⁶⁷ deserves a place in the list as the most frequently used in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* among those we are focusing on.²⁶⁸ As possible replacements, Scapula’s lexicon suggests “Ioue progenitus, à Ioue oriundus. Hom. Item diuinus, i. habens diuinum aliquid quo excellit, praestantiffimus, diuus”.²⁶⁹ In the 1820 version, this translation is expanded with an annotation which, while perhaps excessively general, pinpoints the leanings of the Homeric poems in referring this attribute to particular characters: “Sic ab Hom. vocatur Achilles, et Ulysses, nec non alii”.²⁷⁰

Finally, although it is more focused on the prophetic dimension than on the political one, worth a mention is the adjective – which is also a noun – *theoprópos*, literally “prophetic”,²⁷¹ but also “seer, prophet”.²⁷² Scapula’s lexicon connects this entry – maybe not in a completely befitting way – to *theoprepés* (“meet for a god [...] marvellous”²⁷³), but also adds “Item vates, diuinum [...] qui vadit ad oraculum petendum, qui oraculum confulit”,²⁷⁴ a meaning with some elements worthy of attention, considering how crucial the problem of prophecy is in Hobbes’s political theory.

To sum up, it seems to me that, within the multifaceted body of operations performed by Hobbes on the Homeric poems with a view to achieving his educational target, the two dichotomic aspects of chapter XVII of *Leviathan* are useful to analyse his versions of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* from the perspective of political thought. If we accept that they are “a continuation of *Leviathan* by other means”²⁷⁵ and if we agree with Davis that “we do not read poems by philosophers to take pleasure in their craftsmanship so much as to learn about the minds of their authors”,²⁷⁶ this section of chapter XVII allow us to clearly pinpoint two interpretive criteria useful to understand the basic *ratio* which inspires those Hobbesian translation choices that are significant from the perspective of political theory.

That being stated, I cannot avoid some clarifications. There are some elements that remain outside these analytical categories, because my reading focuses on two specific aspects and leaves others in background. Furthermore, this analysis does not highlight those ambiguous borderline zones where it might seem arbitrary to try to look for political elements at all costs, where evidence is not so strong and clear, or worse, by forcing elements to say something they do not. I chose to stress only those situations where evidence from the texts left me with the least possible doubt as to the *ratio* of the translation choices, avoiding both taking into account passages that were less clear from this perspective and running the risk of straining the meaning of Hobbes’s words. There were occasions where

I was unable to distinguish the hazy borders between Hobbes's intention in translating and mere chance, where the choice of words was imposed by political aims or by linguistic, metrical or narrative considerations. Finally, there were some alterations that were not significant at all from the perspective of an analysis focused on political theory.

All of this notwithstanding, within the Hobbesian *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, there are some remarkable discrepancies with the originals, discrepancies that can be classified as intentional, and explained as being the result of political and educational objectives. In my opinion, the vast majority of these alterations can be referred to those two dichotomic categories that I previously outlined. The labels *sovereign-subjects* and *mortal-immortal god* function as points of convergence, to which a great deal of the Malmesbury philosopher's translation choices seem to me to be plausibly related, in his work on the English version of the Homeric poems.

Notes

- 146 On this theme, see also the particular position of C. Condren (*op. cit.*, p. 78).
- 147 F. CODINO, *Introduzione a Omero*, Torino, Einaudi, 1965, pp. 18–19.
- 148 Cf. A. M. SNODGRASS, *I caratteri dell'età oscura nell'area egea*, in S. SETTIS, (ed.), *I Greci. Storia Cultura Arte e Società*, Turin, Einaudi, 1996, p. 191; Snodgrass also outlines the main characteristics of this Age (*op. cit.*, p. 207); regarding this period – although its dating is slightly different from Snodgrass' – always essential is Moses Finley's warning clarifying why it is called the Dark Age (cf. *La Grecia. Dalla preistoria all'età arcaica*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 1975, p. 98): “Only because of our being in the darkness is the convention legitimate of calling the long period that approximately spans from 1200 until 800 B.C. the «dark age»” (the English translation is mine; henceforth, where not differently shown, I will mark my translations into English of the passages I will quote with a [T.] right after the excerpts translated); cf. C. ORRIEUX – P. SCHMITT PANTEL, *Storia greca*, Bologna, il Mulino, 2003, pp. 19–66; C. BEARZOT, *Manuale di storia greca*, Bologna, il Mulino, 2005, pp. 19–22.
- 149 Undoubtedly, among the scholars that have been involved in research works concerning this topic, E. A. Havelock has a main position. In the introduction to Italian edition of Havelock's book, Bruno Gentili summarises the great qualities of the work of this scholar (cf. B. Gentili in E. A. HAVELOCK, *Cultura orale e civiltà della scrittura. Da Omero a Platone*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 1973, p. VII); cf. W. J. ONG, *Orality and Literacy*, London and New York, Routledge, 2002, pp. 33–34.
- 150 E. A. HAVELOCK, *Preface to Plato*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1963, p. 27; cf. also *ivi*, p. 38; W. J. ONG, *op. cit.*, p. 52.
- 151 E. A. HAVELOCK, *op. cit.*, p. 63; cf. F. DUPONT, *op. cit.*, p. 39.
- 152 Cf. note 151.
- 153 Cf. note 151.
- 154 E. NELSON, *Translation as Correction: Hobbes in the 1660s and 1670s cit.*, p. 139; cf. note n. 133.
- 155 Cf. note n. 151.

- 156 *Od.*, IX, 118–127, in R. FAGLES (translated by –Introduction and Notes by B. KNOX), *The Odyssey Homer*, New York, Penguin Books, 1996; henceforth, unless otherwise specified, the current translations of the passages of the *Odyssey* will be quoted from this edition; they will be marked [FK].
- 157 *Od.*, IX, 105–115; henceforth, the Greek text of the *Odyssey* will be quoted from R. CALZECCHI ONESTI, *Omero. Odissea*, Turin, Einaudi, 1963 (as the author specifies, it comes from Thomas W. Allen, Oxford Classical Texts); in case of incongruities with the text published by Stephanus, they will be shown in the notes with an “S.” in square brackets placed immediately before the references; my comparisons between the original and Stephanus’ text are based on this edition: H. STEPHANUS, *Poetae graeci principis heroici carminis, & alii nonnulli*, Geneva, 1566.
- 158 *Od.*, IX, 113–122 in E. NELSON, *Homer. Odyssees*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 2008, p. 114; henceforth, unless otherwise specified, the passages from the Hobbesian translations of *Odyssey* will be quoted from this edition, and will be marked with an “*” immediately following the quoted line or lines; on this passage cf. also J. WOLFE, *op. cit.*, p. 389.
- 159 T. HOBBS, *Leviathan*, XIII cit., p. 84.
- 160 Even when Hobbes discusses a society rested upon honour, he again stresses the crucial role of agriculture (*Leviathan*, chap. XVII cit., p. 111).
- 161 Cf. note n. 158.
- 162 *Il.*, I, 273*; cf. E. NELSON, *Translation of Homer. Iliad* cit., p. 12.
- 163 E. NELSON, *Translation of Homer. Iliad* cit., p. 12; cf. E. FABBRI, *Le translations of Homer: passioni, politica e religione nel pensiero maturo di Hobbes* cit., p. 152.
- 164 Cf. p. 82.
- 165 Cf. H. G. LIDDELL – R. SCOTT (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 31; F. MONTANARI, *Vocabolario della lingua greca*, Turin, Loescher Editore, 2004, p. 85.
- 166 In quoting the meanings and uses of the English words, unless specified otherwise, I refer to the database of the Oxford English Dictionary (link: www.oed.com/).
- 167 *Od.*, XIX, 116–125 [FK]; cf. E. BENVENISTE, *Indo-European Language and Society*, London, Faber and Faber Limited, 1973, p. 321.
- 168 *Od.*, XIX, 107–114.
- 169 *Od.*, XIX, 90–96*.
- 170 H. G. LIDDELL – R. SCOTT (eds.), *op. cit.*, p. 238; cf. F. MONTANARI, *op. cit.*, p. 333.
- 171 On the adjective *valiant*, cf. link: www.oed.com/view/Entry/221186?rskey=EJGhG4&result=1&isAdvanced=false#eid.
- 172 J. SCAPULAE, *Lexicon Graecolatinum*, Apud Guillelmum Laemarium, 1593, (Digitalized by Google), p. 187. I had no opportunity to verify what edition of this work Hobbes had. In order to solve the problem, I will use both the aforementioned 1593 edition and another one from 1820 (J. SCAPULAE, *Lexicon Graeco-Latinum*, Londra, 1820 – Digitalized by Google), since it seems correct to suppose that, if there were no significant differences and discrepancies between them, we would infer that the versions published in between could also be considered identical in general terms. By way of example, please consider that in the 1820 edition –*op. cit.*, p. 74 – we read “*quae virtutem comitatur*” in place of “*i. qui virtutem comitatur*”). I will note any exceptions in the notes; in all other cases, what I previously wrote remains valid.
- 173 T. HOBBS, *Leviathan*, XVII cit., p. 114.

- 174 Cf. also T. HOBBS, *De Cive*, XIII, 2 cit., p. 157: “Now all the duties of Rulers are contained in this one sentence, *The safety of the people is the supreme Law*; for although they who among men obtain the chiefest Dominion, cannot be subject to Lawes properly so called, that is to say, to the will of men, because to be chief, and subjects are contradictories; yet is it their *duty* in all things, as much as possibly they can, to yield obedience unto right reason, which is the naturall, morall, and divine Law”; cf. ID., *Elements of Law Natural and Political*, VIII-3 of the *Part 2* (*op. cit.*, pp. 179–180): “Concerning multitude, it is the duty of them that are in sovereign authority, to increase the people, in as much as they are governors of mankind under God Almighty, who having created but one man, and one woman, declared that it was his will they should be multiplied and increased afterwards”.
- 175 T. HOBBS, *Leviathan*, XVII, p. 114.
- 176 Ibid.
- 177 Ibid.
- 178 Concerning the structures of the society portrayed in the Homeric poems as a whole, cf. F. CODINO, *op. cit.*, p. 63.
- 179 Cf. E. FABBRIO, *La translations of Homer: passioni, politica e religione nel pensiero maturo di Hobbes* cit., pp. 151–153; ID., *Dal realismo politico di Tuciddide a quello di Hobbes*, “Annali del Dipartimento di Filosofia” (Università degli Studi di Firenze), XV, 2009, p. 23; J. LYNCH, *op. cit.*, pp. 27, 30 and p. 34; E. NELSON, *Thomas Hobbes. Translations of Homer. Iliad* cit., p. LXII.
- 180 Cf. E. NELSON, *Thomas Hobbes. Translations of Homer. Iliad* cit., p. LXII.
- 181 Hobbes view differently the situation where the holder of authority on the army as a whole also has a particular power over a specific part of it. We find mention of this situation in a section of book XII of *Leviathan* (*op. cit.*, pp. 78–79) devoted to the topic *The true Religion and the laws of God’s kingdom the same*, though it is simply an example useful to support another thesis.
- 182 ARISTOTLE, *Politics*, III, 1285b, in H. RACKHAM (trans.), *Aristotle Politics*, London – Cambridge, William Heinemann LTD – Harvard University Press, 1959, p. 253; on the characteristics of the Greek archaic monarchies, cf. G. MIGLIO, *La struttura ideologica della monarchia greca arcaica e il concetto «patrimoniale» dello Stato nell’età antica*, in AA.VV. (ed.), *Gianfranco Miglio. Le regolarità della politica. Scritti scelti raccolti e pubblicati dagli allievi*, vol. I, Milan, Giuffrè Editore, 1988, pp. 144–170.
- 183 P. CARLIER, *La regalità. Beni d’uso e beni di prestigio*, in S. SETTIS (ed.), *op. cit.*, pp. 277–282; cf. G. MIGLIO, *La struttura ideologica della monarchia greca arcaica e il concetto «patrimoniale» dello Stato nell’età antica* cit., p. 146.
- 184 P. CARLIER, *op. cit.*, p. 270.
- 185 Cf. P. CARLIER, *op. cit.*, p. 289; W. DONLAN, *The Structure of Authority in the Iliad*, “*Arethusa*”, XII, 1979, p. 53.
- 186 See, for example, the assembly of book IX of the *Iliad* (17–51) where, replying to Agamemnon who is proposing once again the retirement from Troy, Diomedes refuses to obey and says that he wants to continue fighting even without his commander-in-chief.
- 187 See for example *Il.*, XV, 185–199.
- 188 E. BENVENISTE, *Indo-European Language and Society*, London, Faber and Faber Limited, 1973, pp. 305–376; cf. A. CATANZARO, *Paradigmi politici nell’epica omerica*, Florence, Centro Editoriale Toscano, 2008, pp. 173–270; in line with the work of Benveniste, I chose to transliterate the Homeric terms ἄναξ and ἠνάσσω, with *wanax* and *wanásson*, although they do not have the initial digamma in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.

- 189 Cf. E. BENVENISTE, *op. cit.*, p. 327: “If we study the vocabulary of royalty in Greek, we observe that there is a unilateral relationship between the verbs and nouns relating to the concept of ‘ruling’. The principal verbs are derived from nouns and not vice versa. Thus *basileúein* is a denominative verb form of the noun *basileús*, just as *anássein* is based on *ánaks*. It follows that by themselves these verbs add no new element to what is already known from the basic noun”.
- 190 The correspondence between *órchamos* e *árcho* is given, with some reserve, in F. MONTANARI, *op. cit.*, p. 1505; Benveniste instead writes (*op. cit.*, p. 376): “The form *órkhamos* is connected with *árkhō* ‘command’, but the initial *o-* represents a specifically Aeolic treatment like that *on* for the preposition *aná*”.
- 191 Henceforth, unless otherwise specified in the notes, for recurrences of these verbs and nouns in the Homeric poems, I used the Perseus Digital Library database (Tuft University – section: Perseus Collection. Greek and Roman Materials – link: www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/collection?collection=Perseus:collection:Greco-Roman).
- 192 Cf. A. CATANZARO, *Paradigmi politici nell’epica omerica* cit., pp. 222–225.
- 193 Cf. *Il.*, I, 16.
- 194 *Il.*, I, 7.
- 195 *Il.*, I, 9.
- 196 H. G. LIDDELL – R. SCOTT (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 984; cf. F. MONTANARI, *op. cit.*, p. 1185.
- 197 J. SCAPULAE, *Lexicon Graecolatinum* cit., p. 854.
- 198 J. SCAPULAE, *Lexicon Graeco-Latinum* cit., p. 341.
- 199 H. G. LIDDELL – R. SCOTT (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 1258; cf. F. MONTANARI, *op. cit.*, p. 1505.
- 200 Cf. A. CATANZARO, *Paradigmi politici nell’epica omerica* cit., p. 228.
- 201 Cf. J. SCAPULAE, *Lexicon Graecolatinum* cit., p. 201; ID., *Lexicon Graeco-Latinum* cit., p. 80.
- 202 Cf. J. SCAPULAE, *Lexicon Graecolatinum* cit., p. 201; ID., *Lexicon Graeco-Latinum* cit., p. 80.
- 203 H. G. LIDDELL – R. SCOTT (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 763; F. MONTANARI, *op. cit.*, p. 927.
- 204 Cf. A. CATANZARO, *Paradigmi politici nell’epica omerica* cit., pp. 234–241.
- 205 *Il.*, XVI, 202–203 [FK].
- 206 Cf. A. CATANZARO, *Paradigmi politici nell’epica omerica* cit., pp. 234–237.
- 207 In the original text, *ēnasse* represents a recent development of a more ancient form **ēwánasse*, which can be easily recreated through prosody; the verb is crafted on *wánax*.
- 208 Cf. A. CATANZARO, *Paradigmi politici nell’epica omerica* cit., pp. 234–237.
- 209 Cf. J. SCAPULAE, *Lexicon Graecolatinum* cit., p. 593; ID., *Lexicon Graeco-Latinum* cit., p. 240.
- 210 H. G. LIDDELL – R. SCOTT (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 970; F. MONTANARI, *op. cit.*, p. 1171.
- 211 H. G. LIDDELL – R. SCOTT (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 970; F. MONTANARI, *op. cit.*, p. 1171; cf. P. CARLIER, *op. cit.*, p. 289: “etimologicamente κοίρανος means ‘commander of the army’” [T].
- 212 Cf. A. CATANZARO, *Paradigmi politici nell’epica omerica* cit., pp. 250–252.
- 213 *Il.*, II, 235–239 [FK]; on these lines in Stephanus’ edition, cf. note n. 583; see also J. WOLFE, *op. cit.*, p. 384 and, though the passage involves not only Hobbes, but also La Boétie, p. 388.
- 214 H. G. LIDDELL – R. SCOTT (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 1439; F. MONTANARI, *op. cit.*, p. 1718.

- 215 H. G. LIDDELL – R. SCOTT (ed.), *op. cit.*, pp. 1442–1443; F. MONTANARI, *op. cit.*, pp. 1723–1724.
- 216 Cf. J. SCAPULAE, *Lexicon Graecolatinum* cit., p. 821; ID., *Lexicon Graeco-Latinum* cit., p. 328 (in this edition, alongside the significances of “princeps” and “dominus”, we find also the term “imperator”).
- 217 P. CARLIER, *op. cit.*, pp. 267–268 [T].
- 218 *Ibid.*, pp. 267–268 [T]; cf. E. BENVENISTE, *op. cit.*, p. 319.
- 219 Cf. J. SCAPULAE, *Lexicon Graecolatinum* cit., p. 154; ID., *Lexicon Graeco-Latinum* cit., p. 60.
- 220 Cf. J. SCAPULAE, *Lexicon Graecolatinum* cit., p. 154.
- 221 Cf. *ibid.*
- 222 Cf. J. SCAPULAE, *Lexicon Graecolatinum* cit., p. 259.
- 223 Cf. J. SCAPULAE, *Lexicon Graecolatinum* cit., p. 259; ID., *Lexicon Graeco-Latinum* cit., p. 104.
- 224 Cf. note n. 218.
- 225 Cf. J. SCAPULAE, *Lexicon Graecolatinum* cit., p. 259.
- 226 On the meanings of the term *basiléus* as a whole, cf. H. G. LIDDELL – R. SCOTT (ed.), *op. cit.*, pp. 309–310; F. MONTANARI, *op. cit.*, p. 418.
- 227 P. CARLIER, *op. cit.*, pp. 268–270 [T]; on the political role of the βασιλῆες cf. ID., *La procédure de décision politique du monde mycénien à l'époque archaïque*, in D. MUSTI – A. SACCONI – L. ROCCHETTI – M. ROCCHI – E. SCAFA – L. SPORTIELLO – M. E. GIANNOTTA (ed.), *La transizione dal miceneo all'alto arcaismo. Dal palazzo alla città*, Roma, Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche, 1991, p. 89; G. MIGLIO, *La struttura ideologica della monarchia greca arcaica e il concetto «patrimoniale» dello Stato nell'età antica* cit., pp. 146–154.
- 228 E. BENVENISTE, *op. cit.*, pp. 319–320; on the relations of power in the Homeric poems as a whole, cf. W. DONLAN, *op. cit.*, pp. 53–54.
- 229 H. G. LIDDELL – R. SCOTT (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 1430; F. MONTANARI, *op. cit.*, p. 1707.
- 230 E. BENVENISTE, *op. cit.*, p. 321; cf. notes n. 167–173.
- 231 H. G. LIDDELL – R. SCOTT (ed.), *op. cit.*, pp. 1029–1030; F. MONTANARI, *op. cit.*, pp. 1235–1236.
- 232 On the genesis of the expression *poimèn laôn*, cf. E. BENVENISTE, *op. cit.*, pp. 372–373.
- 233 Cf. *ibid.*, p. 372.
- 234 Cf. J. SCAPULAE, *Lexicon Graecolatinum* cit., p. 1363; ID., *Lexicon Graeco-Latinum* cit., p. 545.
- 235 *Ibidem.*
- 236 Cf. E. BENVENISTE, *op. cit.*, pp. 322–323; G. MIGLIO, *La struttura ideologica della monarchia greca arcaica e il concetto «patrimoniale» dello Stato nell'età antica* cit., p. 146.
- 237 Cf. for example, chapters from XXXII to XLIII of *Leviathan*.
- 238 T. HOBBS, *Leviathan*, XVII cit., p. 114.
- 239 In addition to *Leviathan*, this choice was influenced and inspired by the title of the valuable work by A. P. MARTINICH, *The two Gods of Leviathan. Thomas Hobbes on Politics and Religion* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1992), which is devoted to the relation between politics and religion in Hobbes.
- 240 T. HOBBS, *Leviathan*, XL cit., p. 314.
- 241 Cf. notes n. 242–244.
- 242 Cf. K. HOEKSTRA, *Disarming the Prophets. Thomas Hobbes and Predictive Power*, in “Rivista di Storia della Filosofia”, LIX, 2004, pp. 126–127; see

- also E. NELSON, *Thomas Hobbes. Translations of Homer. Iliad* cit., p. LII; E. FABBRI, *Le translations of Homer: passioni, politica e religione nel pensiero maturo di Hobbes* cit., pp. 153–154; C. CONDREN, *op. cit.*, p. 79; A. P. MARTINICH, *The two Gods of Leviathan. Thomas Hobbes on Politics and Religion* cit., p. 163 and pp. 222–236.
- 243 T. HOBBS, *Leviathan*, XLIII cit., p. 390; we find similar reasonings concerning the relations between human and divine command in chapter XV-1 of *De Cive* (*op. cit.*, pp. 183–184); likewise, the words on the need to distinguish false and real prophets sound similar (*De Cive*, XVI-1 cit., p. 206); see also *Elements of Law, Natural and Political* (6-1 of the Part 2, *op. cit.*, pp. 144–145); cf. A. P. MARTINICH, *The two Gods of Leviathan. Thomas Hobbes on Politics and Religion* cit., pp. 228–236.
- 244 T. HOBBS, *Leviathan*, XII cit., pp. 77–78.
- 245 H. G. LIDDELL – R. SCOTT (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 791; F. MONTANARI, *op. cit.*, p. 958.
- 246 Cf. F. MONTANARI, *op. cit.*, p. 568: “Διο-in compos. = **da Zeus** o (simile) **a Zeus**” (bold in the original version); H. G. LIDDELL – R. SCOTT (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 432.
- 247 H. G. LIDDELL – R. SCOTT (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 435; F. MONTANARI, *op. cit.*, p. 572.
- 248 H. G. LIDDELL – R. SCOTT (edited by), *op. cit.*, p. 432; F. MONTANARI, *op. cit.*, p. 568.
- 249 Cf. J. SCAPULAE, *Lexicon Graecolatinum* cit., p. 1673.
- 250 Cf. J. SCAPULAE, *Lexicon Graeco-Latinum* cit., p. 665.
- 251 Cf. J. SCAPULAE, *Lexicon Graecolatinum* cit., p. 305; ID., *Lexicon Graeco-Latinum* cit., p. 123.
- 252 Cf. H. G. LIDDELL – R. SCOTT (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 1939; F. MONTANARI, *op. cit.*, p. 2283.
- 253 H. G. LIDDELL – R. SCOTT (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 788; F. MONTANARI, *op. cit.*, p. 954.
- 254 J. SCAPULAE, *Lexicon Graecolatinum* cit., p. 627.
- 255 J. SCAPULAE, *Lexicon Graeco-Latinum* cit., p. 253.
- 256 H. G. LIDDELL – R. SCOTT (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 790; F. MONTANARI, *op. cit.*, p. 956.
- 257 J. SCAPULAE, *Lexicon Graecolatinum* cit., p. 451.
- 258 J. SCAPULAE, *Lexicon Graeco-Latinum* cit., p. 183.
- 259 Cf. *Il.*, I, 131.
- 260 H. G. LIDDELL – R. SCOTT (ed.), *op. cit.*, pp. 837–838; F. MONTANARI, *op. cit.*, p. 1010.
- 261 Cf. J. SCAPULAE, *Lexicon Graecolatinum* cit., p. 628; ID., *Lexicon Graeco-Latinum* cit., p. 254.
- 262 H. G. LIDDELL – R. SCOTT (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 790; F. MONTANARI, *op. cit.*, p. 956.
- 263 Cf. J. SCAPULAE, *Lexicon Graecolatinum* cit., p. 447; ID., *Lexicon Graeco-Latinum* cit., p. 182; on the linkage of these two terms in Scapula’s lexicon, consider what is highlighted in H. G. LIDDELL – R. SCOTT (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 792 apropos of θεουδής: “taken as if=θεοιδής by late Poets”.
- 264 H. G. LIDDELL – R. SCOTT (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 155; F. MONTANARI, *op. cit.*, p. 239.
- 265 J. SCAPULAE, *Lexicon Graecolatinum* cit., p. 627.
- 266 J. SCAPULAE, *Lexicon Graeco-Latinum* cit., p. 253.
- 267 H. G. LIDDELL – R. SCOTT (ed.), *op. cit.*, pp. 434–435; F. MONTANARI, *op. cit.*, p. 572.

- 268 On the frequency of the entry δῖος in the Homeric poems, cf. *TLG. Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* (A Digital Library of Greek Literature – University of California, Irvine) at the following link: <http://stephanus.tlg.uci.edu/inst/textsearch>.
- 269 J. SCAPULAE, *Lexicon Graecolatinum* cit., p. 582.
- 270 J. SCAPULAE, *Lexicon Graeco-Latinum* cit., p. 236.
- 271 H. G. LIDDELL – R. SCOTT (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 791; F. MONTANARI, *op. cit.*, p. 958.
- 272 H. G. LIDDELL – R. SCOTT (edited by), *op. cit.*, p. 791; F. MONTANARI, *op. cit.*, p. 958.
- 273 H. G. LIDDELL – R. SCOTT (edited by), *op. cit.*, p. 791; F. MONTANARI, *op. cit.*, p. 958.
- 274 Cf. J. SCAPULAE, *Lexicon Graecolatinum* cit., p. 1388; ID., *Lexicon Graeco-Latinum* cit., p. 555.
- 275 Cf. note n. 1.
- 276 Cf. note n. 46.

3 The Sovereign-Subject Dichotomy and the Problem of Monocratic Power between the Original Homeric Text and its Hobbesian Translation

SUMMARY – The chapter deals with a problem deeply linked to the key question of the sovereign-subject dichotomy. It focuses on the issue of overlapping sovereignties that comes from an original text where there is a massive presence of a plurality of kings (principally called *wánax* or *basiléus*) over the same groups. The political structures of the Achaean army, the group of the Olympian Gods, the communities of Troy, Ithaca and Scheria are not as compliant with Hobbes's political theories as had been suggested in his political works. In the translations, the philosopher tries to present Agamemnon, Zeus and Priam in the *Iliad*, and Odysseus and Alcinoos in the *Odyssey* as kings more absolute than they really are in the original poems. With textual examples and a continuous comparison between the Greek and English lines, this Hobbesian intent clearly shines through. The chapter also explores the problematic disappearance of the pastoral image of the king: while the Homeric poems are imbued with the expression *poimèn laôn* (*shepherd of the people*) used to define holders of monocratic power, this metaphor is almost completely removed in the translations. Moving on from textual examples, some possible explanations are suggested. One section analyses the lexicon of kingship – less frequent but worth mentioning – that is not related to *wánax*, *basiléus* and *poimén*: uses and Hobbesian translations of *kosmétor*, *egghemón*, *kóiranos*, *órchamos* are shown. The last paragraph is devoted to those situations where Hobbes in his translations chooses to add elements that strengthen the idea of absolute power.

Both the dichotomous aspects taken into account in the previous chapter need to be sounded out in depth from a dual perspective. It depends on their own nature, which is divisible into those single elements, but is at the same time merged in a *unicum*. It does not seem possible to detach the political component from the linguistic one, since the translation work, when conditioned by the former, will inevitably affect and shape the latter.

Starting from this basis, the joint result of these pairs of elements – lexical aspect and educational purpose, intention of both translating and teaching, need both to tell a story and to make it fit with a peculiar idea

of political virtue – deserves to be investigated from this twofold perspective. This *corpus*, whose essence is both unique and detached, seems to allow us to infer, deduce and draw some conclusions concerning Hobbes's deliberate will to shape a “continuation of *Leviathan* by other means”²⁷⁷ through the translations of the Homeric poems.

Obviously, the narrative takes the lion's share: it leads the game, marks the boundaries of the field and supplies the raw materials we have to work on. Hence, the educational dimension appears to be deeply interwoven with the linguistic one, and it does not seem possible to conceive of the former without the latter or vice versa. They are two sides of the same coin, two parts of the same picture, sections with their own clear identity, but related to each other; as a result, it would be risky to consider them merely as detached monads, since some information – maybe crucial information – deriving from their deeply interwoven nature might be lost. This is why the analysis, while always bearing in mind their respective peculiar essences as basic cornerstones, will aim to constantly move to and from between the whole and the single parts, trying to sketch out as wide a picture as possible concerning the relations between the original Homeric poems and their English translation by Hobbes. Both the political and linguistic dimensions, in their interwoven autonomy, seem clearly visible if we look at this Hobbesian work from the dichotomous perspective that we saw in the previous chapter. Obviously, the distinction between sovereign and subjects – being deeply linked to that various and multifaceted kingship lexicon highlighted in chapter II – allows us to well understand the value of the combined action of political intentions and linguistic aspects. However, albeit to a lesser extent, at least from the quantitative perspective, the dichotomy labelled through the expression *mortal-immortal god* – due to its characterising the relation between the human and divine spheres with regard to political power – is also able to supply us with significant information.

We can fruitfully, though approximately, adopt a tripartite classification in order to identify the kinds of action implemented by the Malmesbury philosopher with a view to shaping the Homeric text in accordance with his political and educational purposes. However, the first category appears to be larger than the others and deserves to be further split: this is the multifaceted work done by Hobbes on single words, which combines a meticulous consideration for the semantic values of nouns and verbs with a series of removals, simplifications, omissions, and replacements. These tools as a whole represent the powerful arsenal used by Hobbes when he needs to force the Homeric poems within the boundaries of his political theory. Alongside them, and in a secondary position due in part to a more restrained use, at least in quantitative terms, we find the reinterpretation and partial or total rewriting (or even complete removal) of some – usually quite brief – passages. All of this notwithstanding, Hobbes' intent in using these strategies remains tied to the narrative,

whose plot and essential elements cannot be substantially modified. The boundary between reinterpretation and rewriting sometimes appears not to be so clear-cut and easily discernible; however, the *ratio* of their uses appears evident. This is the case, for example, in the previously quoted passage where the Trojans' gathering is replaced by the ambiguous expression "King in Parliament".²⁷⁸

As it seems clear enough from this short overview of the means used by the philosopher to pursue his educational purposes, we are in presence of a very deep connection between the linguistic and political components, whose value and saliency depend on their peculiar and autonomous – although interwoven – natures. The philosopher chooses to work on the Homeric texts principally through the lexicon, while he does not show great interest in the stylistic value of his translations: as stated by some critics, but also by people well-disposed towards him, the Hobbesian lines are not particularly worth considering from a poetic perspective.²⁷⁹ Instead, he lays greater emphasis on the educational dimension, which is the real target of his work.

The logic, which can be inferred from Hobbes's translation choices, is a sort of union, a joint action of both a technical and an educational means, a union whose main purpose is to modify the Homeric texts, with a view to shaping them in accordance with the Hobbesian idea of political virtue.

3.1 Sovereign and Subjects

As previously stressed, the dichotomy between sovereign and subjects immediately explains the twofold nature of Hobbes's translation choices.

Firstly, it happens principally because of the multifaceted political scenarios portrayed in the Homeric poems. In addition to the Achaean army, which receives much of the philosopher's attention, we find other lands and people – the city of Troy, Ithaca, Scheria, just to cite the most famous ones – where the political power is actually monocratic, but it does not exactly fit the characteristics of that kind of authority clearly explained by Hobbes in *Leviathan* and his other political works.

There is also a second reason. The abundance of the Homeric lexicon of kingship does not well match the Hobbesian attempt to both simplify the political context, having the dichotomy sovereign-subjects as main criterion, and to remove possible ambiguities concerning the right identification of the holder of sovereignty. From an analytical perspective, it might seem an advantage, since the remedial actions by the philosopher are more numerous and visible than those related to the distinction between the divine and the human sphere.

Finally, by mainly focusing on those nouns that can be related to kingship in a sort of all-embracing sense – *wanax*, *basiléus*, *poimén* – we can identify and highlight the Hobbesian attempt to fix or handle seemingly ambiguous situations or contexts where conflicts for power and leadership are evident. Hobbes considers all of these potentially dangerous,

since they can affect readers by instilling doubts as to their *status* as subjects, and can supply supporters of Parliament with grounds for their claims and complaints.

Upon examining book I of the *Iliad*, where those relations of command and obedience so remarkable for the philosopher are immediately evident, we can clearly see Hobbes's leanings towards the simplification of the Homeric lexicon of kingship.

In line seven of this book, we find the first noun referred to a holder of sovereign power; moreover, starting from the introduction, the narrative informed us of the existence of a conflictual situation between two Achaeans warriors, whose famous struggle seems to be magnified in the translations by Hobbes.

This last consideration deserves a short digression, given its significance with regard to the following analysis concerning the kingship lexicon in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. It seems to me useful to introduce here an element that will be widely developed in the ensuing pages, but that seems worth stressing here in order to highlight an essential issue. Among all the characters of the Homeric poems who hold royal power – or something akin to it – Hobbes chooses Agamemnon as the ideal archetype of a king, like the one he previously outlined in *Leviathan*.²⁸⁰

It is also curious to note that in the same line we find an English replacement of the original Greek adjective, which can be ascribed to the second dichotomy used to classify the Hobbesian translation choices. Achilles is said to be “dios”²⁸¹ (literarily “heavenly [...] noble [...] excellent”²⁸²), whereas in the English version, he is “stout”,²⁸³ something completely different from the meaning of the original adjective, which is related to the divine sphere. This is only a short preview, determined by the presence of both these crucial elements in the same line: a broader discussion of the second one and its consequences from the perspective of the Hobbesian political theory will take place in the next chapter.

Having clarified who and what Agamemnon is in Hobbes's vision, we can return to the *incipit* of the *Iliad*.

Despite its fame – or possibly because of it – the episode of Achilles's wrath that opens the poem outlines a situation of conflict that – as stated by Lynch – had been used by the advocacies of both monarchy and Parliament, with a view to supporting and boosting their positions and claims.²⁸⁴

It surely represents the archetype of Hobbes's worst scenario, a situation he conceives as a problem typical of a kind of politics that does not come from a rigorous *scientia civilis*. It leads to a *status* that could undermine the safety within the social body and suggests ambiguous interpretations that might nurture discord and divisions.

Paradoxically enough, the wrath episode is the worst kind for a thinker to have to deal with, as he seeks to force the *Iliad*'s narrative within the boundaries of a particular idea of virtue, since it is an event which does not fit well at all, but is too famous and widely discussed over the centuries to be easily eradicated. The plot of the *Iliad* as a whole depends on the struggle between

Agamemnon and Achilles, which is the backbone of the entire poem, and unfortunately for Hobbes, it features a great ambiguity, such as to potentially present the positions of both contenders as valid. Given that there is no possible mediation or composition between the reasons to continue fighting and those for defending a scorned reputation, the wrath episode does not lend itself to a univocal interpretation. It seems quite obvious that Hobbes, who clearly sides with Agamemnon, must view this situation as very problematic in terms of the crucial detachment between sovereign and subjects.

3.2 Plurality of Kings and the Problem of Overlapping Sovereignties (I): The “cases” of *wánax* and *wanásson*

An in-depth analysis of the peculiar position of Agamemnon in Hobbes’s idea will be given in the following pages. This preview was due to the need to connect and compare the first Hobbesian translation choice dealing with the noun *wánax* to the ensuing ones that we find in the same book and in the Homeric poems as a whole.

In the seventh line of book I of the *Iliad*, we read “*Atréides te wánax andrôn*”,²⁸⁵ an expression translated “king Agamemnon”²⁸⁶ by the philosopher. Removal of the plural genitive *andrôn* aside (its absence might derive from a scant need to show the ambit of authority of a king, conceived by Hobbes as absolute, though this hypothesis would require some more convincing evidence in its support), we do not find any other changes relative to the original text: Agamemnon is a king both in Homer’s and in Hobbes’s visions. In spite of this, other translations of *wánax* and its corresponding verb *wanásson* in this book of the *Iliad* reveal a broader and more multifaceted scenario.

Generally, we can observe Hobbes’s recurrent inclination to remove both of them. It could be explained – particularly in cases involving the noun – by an intention to reduce the typical redundancy of the Homeric formulas.²⁸⁷ He often replaces the epithet with the name of the character to whom it refers. This happens, for example, in line 36 of book I of the *Iliad* where, as a replacement for the Greek expression “*Apóllon wánax*”,²⁸⁸ in Hobbes translation (39*), we merely find “Apollo”.²⁸⁹ Sometimes Hobbes makes some expressions more compact by merely using the name or the patronymic. If we consider, for example, the formula “*wánax andrôn Agamémnon*” that occurs in lines 172, 442, 506, we can see that it is never translated in full: in the first and third cases (169* and 484*), it is replaced with a simple “Agamemnon”, and in the second (419*), with “*Atrides*”.

All of this notwithstanding, the analysis concerning the removal of the noun *wánax* in book I of the *Iliad* seems more significant from a linguistic perspective than a political one; it may supply us with some evidence regarding the aforementioned hypotheses on the failure to translate the plural genitive *andrôn*, but nothing else.

However, considering the very numerous situations where it happens, and viewing both the English noun king and the epithets “Agamemnon”

and “Atrides” as one and the same, we can extend to the entire *corpus* of translations what we previously saw apropos of the Hobbesian habit of condensing those expressions referred to the son of Atreus that contain the term *wánax*. In his English version of the *Iliad*, he has a proclivity for simplifying this characterisation of kingship, which is lengthier and more emphatic in the original poem.²⁹⁰

As an example, the systematic removals that we find in books III and IX of the *Iliad* are emblematic, and worth mentioning. In the former, the expression “*wánax andrôn Agamémnon*” occurs three times (81/77*, 267/257*, 455/428*), but is replaced with “*king Agamemnon*” only on the last occasion, although it is clear in all of them that the son of Atreus is exerting his regal power. In book IX, the expression “*wánax andrôn*” is removed twice (109*/114 and 638*/672 [S.668]), whereas the longer formula “*Atreide kýdiste, wánax andrôn Agámemnon*”²⁹¹ (“Great marshal Atrides, lord of men Agamemnon”),²⁹² which occurs four times in this Homeric text (96, 163, 677 [S. 673], 697 [S. 693]), is translated with the noun *king* only in the first and second occurrences (89*, 158*), removed in the third one (640*) and replaced with “*King Atrides*” in the fourth (661*).

In spite of this, both the particular position of Agamemnon in Hobbes’s perspective and the use of the English term *king* as a replacement of the Greek *wánax* ensure that this simplification by the philosopher cannot undermine, lessen, or threaten the role or position of the commander-in-chief of the Achaean army.

Something more significant in terms of political analysis can be inferred from Hobbes’s translation choices concerning the verb *wanásson* in book I of the *Iliad*. It is used seven times in relation to four different people: it occurs once for Nestor²⁹³ and twice each for Agamemnon,²⁹⁴ Apollo²⁹⁵ and Achilles.²⁹⁶

With regard to the particular position of Atreus’s son in the Hobbesian view, it is not at all surprising to discover that the situations where *wanásson* is related to Agamemnon are replaced with English verbs whose meanings are very close to the ideas of *reigning* or *commanding*.

In the first such situation, during the assembly where the struggle arises, Achilles insults his competitor by saying “worthless husks, the men you rule”.²⁹⁷ It is as a very violent phrase, whose impact is partially softened by Hobbes who translates it using a passive form – “fools they are that ruled are by you”²⁹⁸ – but as a whole, it reaffirms Agamemnon’s supremacy over the Achaean army.

The second translation of *wanásson* we are focusing on seems more meaningful: as the quarrel builds, Nestor tries to place himself between the two contenders to enable them to come to an agreement. He exhorts Achilles to give up fighting, since Agamemnon is “*epei pleónessin anássei*” (*for he commands more people*).²⁹⁹

Hobbes modifies this line, emphasising the hierarchical aspect of power relations within the Achaean community. We read in his translation: “*Atrides is before you in command*”,³⁰⁰ an expression that sounds

stronger than the original one both from the perspective of contrast between the two heroes and with regard to the supremacy of Agamemnon over Achilles.

These two preliminary examples allow us to start glimpsing some first details of a political problem, the problem of overlapping sovereignties, which is undoubtedly present in the Homeric poems and which is faced by Hobbes in the translations in accordance with a *ratio* that is profoundly linked to that sovereign-subject dichotomy so dear to him.

Therefore, it does not by chance that Achilles is the hero who is more damaged, diminished and demeaned by the philosopher's translation choices: the son of Peleus is the first member of the Achaean army who casts doubts on Agamemnon's supremacy – or, in Hobbes's view, Agamemnon's sovereignty – and he does so in a vehement and violent way.

Significantly enough, when Achilles recognises the authority of his commander-in-chief over the Achaean army – and, as a consequence, over himself too – we do not find significant differences between the Greek text and its translation by Hobbes. Just considering the nouns and verbs discussed thus far, we can cite a passage from book XXIV of the *Odyssey*, which describes the meeting of these two heroes in the Kingdom of Hades:

Agamemnon,	Ἀτρείδη, περὶ μὲν	Atrides we thought you
You were the one, we	σ᾽ ἔφαμεν Διὶ	of all the Host
thought, of all our	τερπικεραύνῳ	That came to fight
fighting princes	ἀνδρῶν ἡρώων φίλον	against the Town
Zeus who loves the	ἔμμεναι	of Troy,
lightning favored	ἦματα πάντα,	Had been by High
most, all you days,	οὐνεκα πολλοῖσιν τε	Gods beloved
Because you commanded	καὶ ἰφθίμοισιν	most;
[<i>wanássein</i>] such a	ἄνασσες	For in the Army you
powerful host of men	δήμῳ ἐνὶ Τρώων, ὅθι	bore greatest
On the field of Troy	πάσχομεν	sway. ³⁰³
where we Achaeans	ἄλγε' Ἀχαιοί. ³⁰²	
suffered. ³⁰¹		

In this case, the Hobbesian translation appears to fit the original text and there are no conflicts among overlapping sovereignties. Nonetheless, the situations in which conflicts do emerge are more frequent.

During the struggle, for example, as a reply to Achilles' threat to give up the siege on Troy, Agamemnon says: "go home with your ships and comrades, lord it over [*wanássein*]/your Myrmidons! You are nothing to me".³⁰⁴ The Greek verb used in this line is unequivocal: despite its broad polysemy, here it clearly relates to the exerting of a royal power,³⁰⁵ albeit within the boundaries of the Achaean army.³⁰⁶ Unfortunately for Hobbes, Agamemnon has power over the army as a whole, so the philosopher has to soften the impact of this expression, which he can scarcely remove from the narrative, given its importance within the plot of the *Iliad*. By showing

that Achilles can be allowed to *wanássein* over the Myrmidons – that is, over a section of the army – the Homeric poems clearly reveal the existence of overlapping sovereignties. If it does not seem like a problem for the original text – other than for practical aspects regarding the siege of Troy – in Hobbes’s view, it is *the* problem. The use of the verb *wanássein* alludes to a royal power, which, however, is exerted over a section of a group that, as a whole, is ruled by another man. Therefore, Achilles’ particular power overlaps with Agamemnon’s broader one with regard to the Myrmidons, and this can lead to controversies because of the crucial point of obedience. Which of these chiefs must this group obey? In order to make this passage milder, Hobbes avoids translating the verb *wanásso* as he is accustomed to doing when he does not want to remove it or modifying its meaning, namely, by using *to rule*, *to reign*, *to be king* or *to sway*.³⁰⁷ He chooses an expression able both to acknowledge the peculiar authority of the son of Peleus over the Myrmidons, and at the same time to place it outside the sphere of kingship. Hobbes translates “Go ’mongst your *Myrmidons* and use your might”,³⁰⁸ using a noun whose sense of *power* is far from that of *to reign* which can be inferred from the original Greek text.

The Hobbesian reluctance to leave Achilles in the position where he is placed in the original *Iliad* appears to be due to a strong and specific logic: his stance against the commander-in-chief is comparable to an act of sedition, detrimental to the stability and security of the social body and to the peaceful coexistence of the people.

Although expressed in more general terms, we can easily recognise some aspects that may refer to the above case in a passage of chapter XXIX of *Leviathan*. Hobbes’s discussion here aims to warn against the potential dangers of people who enjoy widespread fame and popularity. The philosopher writes:

Also, the popularity of a potent subject, (unless the commonwealth have very good caution of his fidelity,) is a dangerous disease; because the people, (which should receive their motion from the authority of the sovereign,) by the flattery, and by the reputation of an ambitious man are drawn away from their obedience to the laws, to follow a man, of whose virtues, and designs they have no knowledge.³⁰⁹

The analysis concerning the English translation of the verb *wanásso* in book I of the *Iliad* provides us with a sort of indirect confirmation of what has been just outlined. Besides the verb *to rule* in reference to Agamemnon,³¹⁰ the occasions when *wanásso* is referred to Apollo and Nestor highlight another element useful to support the thesis that the wrath episode is a very thorny situation for Hobbes, because of the educational value which he confers to his translations. Both the heroes are said to be reigning (*wanássein*) and the philosopher has no scruples in translating such action through the English verb *to reign*.³¹¹ Unlike Achilles,

Apollo and Nestor exert a royal power over clearly identified and distant cities – Tenedos and Pylos – and their respective authority does not create any problems of overlapping sovereignties within the Achaean army. This seems obvious enough with regard to Apollo, since he is a god, and consequently outside the community led by Agamemnon. Moreover, his action of *reigning* can be interpreted from a slightly different perspective, given that Apollo’s *wanássein* over Tenedos appears to be more akin to some sort of protection by a tutelary numen than to a traditional king’s power.³¹² The same translation choice is adopted for Nestor, which is perhaps less obvious. According to the *Iliad*,³¹³ he went to Troy as the leader of a troop travelling from the city of Pylos, a troop that is completely integrated into the Achaean army. Accordingly, his position is very similar to that of Achilles. So why does the Hobbesian choice sound so different? We can surmise that due to Nestor’s reputation as a skilled and persuasive mediator and advisor, and not as a troublemaker, and, especially, his total lack of insubordination towards the commander-in-chief, Hobbes saw no reason to meddle with the verb *wanássein* in this case. With regard to Achilles, the situation is different: in spite of the priority given to the plot of the *Iliad*, the passages referring to Peleus’ son which could have been used by opponents of the absolute monarchy in Hobbes’s day represent a great and thorny problem for him. The Homeric poems contain a lot of material that might cast doubts on the issue of obedience and undermine the legitimacy of the political power, in accordance with theoretical paths completely at odds with Hobbes’s ideas. Moreover, from an educational perspective, versions of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* that do not fit the Hobbesian conception of virtue might suggest behaviours that, to his mind, cannot lead to a peaceful coexistence.

Achilles’ act of sedition might be seen as a sort of a literary prelude, or as the instigating spark for actions at odds with what the philosopher considers to be the essential aim of real politics.

A passage mentioned in the previous chapter³¹⁴ allows us to clearly see Hobbes’s concern for this kind of problem. During the struggle between Agamemnon and Achilles, the former, by speaking to Nestor, explains the crucial cause of their fighting:

True, old man—all you say is fit and proper—	ναι δὴ ταῦτα γε πάντα, γέρον, κατὰ μοῖραν
But this soldier wants to tower over the armies,	ἔειπες· ἀλλ’ ὄδ’ ἀνήρ ἐθέλει περὶ πάντων
He wants to rule over all, to lord it over all [<i>wanássein</i>],	ἔμμεναι ἄλλων, πάντων μὲν κρατέειν ἐθέλει,
Give out order to every man in sight. Well,	πάντεσσι δ’ ἀνάσσειν,
There’s one, I trust, who will never yield to <i>him</i> ! ³¹⁵	πᾶσι δὲ σημαίνειν, ἅ τιν’ οὐ πείσεσθαι οἴω. ³¹⁶

Hobbes translates by these words:

I nothing can deny of this at all.
 But he amongst us thinks he ought to raign,
 And **give the Law to all as he thinks fit.**
 But I am certain that shall never be.³¹⁷

It seems no coincidence that the second removal of the verb *wanássō* with reference to Achilles in book I of the *Iliad* occurs in this passage: it is a very thorny problem for Hobbes, since it deals with a cornerstone of his political theory. It consists of a situation in which a subject expects to “give the Law to all as he thinks fit”,³¹⁸ an action that is, as Nelson stresses, “the essential attribute of Hobbes’s sovereign”.³¹⁹ Therefore, in the English translation, Achilles is not simply stripped of a royal characterisation present in the original text; he is above all branded as a man who seeks to usurp the political power of the legitimate sovereign.

It seems clear enough, that, although Hobbes alters the original Homeric lines using linguistic tools, his work has great value from the perspective of politics and political education. His message sounds clear-cut: the simultaneous presence of two kings reigning over the same group cannot be allowed.

On this matter, *Leviathan* is unambiguous, peremptory and categorical: the detachment between sovereign and subjects is necessary, and there cannot be any space at all for casting doubts on this crucial fact, given that no other kind of order exists. We find this issue explained and solved in chapter XIX. The philosopher writes:

It is manifest, that men who are in absolute liberty, may, if they please, give authority to one man, to represent them every one; as well as give such authority to any assembly of men whatsoever; and consequently may subject themselves, if they think good, to a monarch, as absolutely, as to any other representative. Therefore, where there is already erected a sovereign power, there can be no other representative of the same people, but only to certain particular ends, by the sovereign limited. For that were to erect two sovereigns; and every man to have his person represented by two actors, that by opposing one another, must needs divide that power, which (if men will live in peace) is indivisible; and thereby reduce the multitude into the condition of war, contrary to the end for which all sovereignty is instituted.³²⁰

Furthermore, as Hobbes himself points out in chapter XVIII, and considering his position concerning Agamemnon’s power over the Achaeans, if they wanted to subjugate themselves to another *wánax*, they

would not have the discretion, since this action entails both a new covenant and a withdrawal from the previous one. Therefore, the operation would be impossible for them, given that it can be granted only by the sovereign himself.³²¹

Like other characters who are *wánax* in the original poems, albeit in different contexts, Nestor does not place himself in opposition to Agamemnon, and thus does not create problems of overlapping sovereignties. This could be why he does not suffer such deletions as Achilles does.

It remains to be explained why Hobbes chooses to side with the son of Atreus. In my opinion, even if we look outside the boundaries of book I, we do not find enough evidence to reach an exhaustive answer; however, it is possible to express some conjectures.

Firstly, we can argue that Hobbes aims to endorse a peculiar idea of order, an idea that he can easily show using the figure of Agamemnon as the heart of the Achaean community. He is the commander-in-chief of the army, the authority all other heroes must defer to, the leader who is entitled to decide for the group; the Homeric text is also quite clear on these points, though not enough according to Hobbes's view. If the philosopher is referring to the monarchical regime, albeit in broad terms, and more specifically to the British monarchy, although within the epic fiction, it seems consistent enough that he sees the established power as one which deserves to be supported and defended – and he likely views Agamemnon's power as such.

There is another element which deserves to be stressed. It is perhaps less significant than the previous one, but still worth considering at least as a corollary, due to its direct correlation with the *Leviathan*. It is clearly difficult enough to image that Hobbes could view the Homeric Achilles as a model well-suited to his idea of king, and there is a passage in *Leviathan* that further stresses this point. In chapter XVII, while discussing how human beings try to escape from the natural condition, the philosopher writes:

Nor is it enough for the security, which men desire should last all the time of their life, that they be governed, and directed by one judgment, for a limited time; as in one battle, or one war.³²²

We know from the *Iliad* that Achilles was undoubtedly the best warrior during the War of Troy; such a remarkable reputation was well known in the following centuries too. Due to this, we can argue that many people, even the less well-read, might have known of his valour. Therefore, we can accept that Achilles might be chosen as a model of an ideal king on some occasions. However, Hobbes seeks a different model of holder of sovereignty: he has other ideas as to what it is expected of such a pivotal figure. The Hobbesian words that immediately follow the aforementioned

ones clearly explain why the warmongering, impulsive and savage son of Peleus could not fit the philosopher's ideal model of king:

For though they obtain a victory by their unanimous endeavour against a foreign enemy; yet afterwards, when either they have no common enemy, or he that by one part is held for an enemy, is by another part held for a friend, they must needs by the difference of their interests dissolve, and fall again into a war amongst themselves.³²³

A political community needs something more than a leader who can simply ensure a victory, which might not last; its ultimate aim is to remain safe and peaceful for a long time. Achilles does not seem to match this identikit.

Coming back to the above question, given Achilles' lack of compatibility, there were no further candidates to become the model of an ideal king: Menelaus is frequently shown as subordinate to his brother; Nestor, Ajax, Diomedes and other heroes are relegated too far into background to be reasonably taken into consideration. Odysseus is famous as the sovereign whose realm was usurped during his absence; accordingly, he does not appear to be the best candidate for the role of model of king, though we will have to distinguish in the following pages between the Odysseus of the *Iliad* and that of the *Odyssey*. In view of all these reasons, it does not seem rash to surmise that Hobbes would have been unlikely to choose a different candidate.

With a view to completing the picture of the Hobbesian choices concerning the translation of the verb *wanáso* with regard to Apollo in book I of the *Iliad*, there is another element worth stressing. Line 38 says that Apollo's rule over Tenedos is "*îphi wanássein*",³²⁴ that is, *ruling with strength*, but this characterisation disappears in the English version, where we only find the expression "honour'd art in *Tenedos*".³²⁵ The removal of the Greek *îphi* characterising the action of the god does not seem particularly significant from a political theory perspective. It nonetheless seems strange that an element fairly compatible with the Hobbesian absolutist conception of power is not taken into consideration in this case.³²⁶

By contrast, in book VI of the *Iliad*, there is a prayer from Hector to Zeus that his son Astyanax, once he has grown up, might hold power over Troy. These wishes are expressed using the words "*îphi wanássein*";³²⁷ on this occasion, the English translation "hold then reins of Ilium steadily"³²⁸ seems more akin to the original Greek meaning than the previous one.

In book I of the *Iliad*, we can clearly observe Hobbes's propensity to remove both *wánax* and *wanáso*; this inclination is indeed seen throughout the philosopher's translations of the Homeric poems as a whole.

Although we could always bear in mind that these words – particularly the noun – are often used as formulas or formulaic expressions in the original texts, and consequently, many removals can be ascribed to metrical and stylistic reasons, nonetheless, we have also to recognise that the idea of kingship associated with them seems to be less important in Hobbes's view than that related to the term *basiléus*. That being said, a systematic, sequential analysis of these removals does not seem useful, since we would risk merely producing a scarcely significant list of passages where it happens. It seems more useful and appropriate to focus only on those cases or highlight only those elements whose peculiarities allow us to appreciate some particular translation choices that appear ascribable and deeply rooted in Hobbes's political and educational intentions.

From book I of the *Iliad* once again, it is possible to deduce that both men and gods suffer the removals of *wánax* and *wanáссо*; the problem of the dichotomy between *mortal* and *immortal* god plays no role in that: the Hobbesian habit is the same for both groups, and it is impossible to find any evidence here of a detachment, which is quite clear in other contexts, as we will see.

That is why Apollo³²⁹ and Zeus, just like Achilles and Agamemnon, and, if we also consider the verb *wanáссо*, also Nestor, are deprived of this characterisation. It is an element common to both the poems. In addition to Zeus and Apollo (albeit here shown only in book I), we can also pinpoint other Olympian deities who are subjected to the same Hobbesian translation treatment: Hermes (*Il.*, II, 90*/104), Poseidon (*Il.*, XIII, 35*/38; XV, 6*/8, 50*/57, 131*/158; XX, 62*/62 [S. 61], 382*/404 – *Od.*, III, 43*/43, 53*/54; IX, 542*/526; XI, 129*/130 [S. 129]; XXIII, 238*/277 [S. 287]), Hades (*Il.*, XV, 159*/188; XX, 61*/61), Hephaestus (*Il.*, XVIII, 130*/137, 382*/417 e *Od.*, VIII, 266*/270).

While we have already discussed Achilles and Agamemnon (again in this case, within book I of the *Iliad*), it is worth stressing that other human beings are sometimes deprived of the epithet of *wánax*.

Two removals in particular, respectively, referring to Diomedes³³⁰ and Aeneas³³¹ seem paradigmatic of the two dichotomous elements that inform the Hobbesian handling of this noun and, accordingly, deserve to be duly stressed.

The first removal relates to the problem of overlapping sovereignties: Diomedes is an important member of the Achaean army and he has a prominent position within it, though not equal to Achilles. In Hobbes's view, this is a typical case where granting Diomedes his royal *status* might make Agamemnon's position less absolute than the philosopher wishes. Furthermore, the hero vehemently and publicly criticises his commander-in-chief during an assembly, as stated in book IX of the *Iliad*.³³² This creates a situation akin to the wrath episode and the

struggle between Achilles and Agamemnon, though to a lesser extent. Hence, it seems relevant to analyse how Hobbes chooses to handle the occurrences of *wanax* related to Diomedes. One in particular, as previously mentioned, seems remarkable: the removal in line 391* of book IV of the *Iliad*. In the original text (420), Diomedes is called *wanax*, but the context is problematic, since it might pave the way to a struggle with Agamemnon. During a battle, the commander-in-chief reprimands the hero for his lack of motivation and accuses him of cowardice (*Il.*, IV, 370–400). Both the *Iliad* and the Hobbesian translation tell us that Diomedes accepts this reproach,³³³ but it is difficult to imagine that Hobbes, a few lines later, could replace the Greek term *wanax* with the word *king* with reference to him, having just shown the hierarchical relationship between these two men.

The removal referring to Aeneas can be explained by the problem of the necessary detachment between the divine and human spheres. During a fight, the Trojan hero is wounded on the hip and, paralysed by his pain, risks being killed by his enemies, until his mother Aphrodite intervenes and pulls him to safety. We read in the *Iliad*:

<p>And now the prince, the captain of men [<i>wanax</i> <i>andrôn</i>] Aeneas, would have died on the spot if Zeus's daughter had not marked him quickly, his mother [<i>méter</i>] Aphrodite, who bore him to King Anchises tending cattle once. Round her beloved son her glistening arms went streaming, Flinging her shining robe before him, only a fold But it blocked the weapons hurtling towards his body. She feared some Argive fast with chariot-team might hurl bronze in his chest and rip his life out.³³⁴</p>	<p>Καὶ νῦν κεν ἔνθ' ἀπόλοιτο ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν Αἰνείας, εἰ μὴ ἄρ' ὄξυ νόησε Διὸς θυγάτηρ Ἄφροδίτη, μήτηρ, ἧ μιν ὕπ' Ἀγχίση τέκε βουκολέοντι ἀμφὶ δ' ἔδον φίλον υἱὸν ἐχεύατο πήχεε λευκῶ, πρόσθε δέ οἱ πέπλοιο φαινοῦ πτύγμ' ἐκάλυπεν, ἔρκος ἔμεν βελέων, μὴ τις Δαναῶν ταχυπόλων χαλκόν ἐνὶ στήθεσσι βαλὼν ἐκ θυμὸν ἔλοιτο.³³⁵</p>	<p>That <i>Venus</i> saw him lying thus 'twass well; Else by <i>Tytides</i> he had there been slain. For then come <i>Venus</i> down, and with the lap Of her Celestial Robe him covered, Lest any of the <i>Greeks</i> should have the hap To kill or wound him as from Earth he fled.³³⁶</p>
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Through two different removals, Hobbes achieves his twofold aim of modifying the meaning of the text from the perspective of both the

sovereign-subject dichotomy and the detachment between the human and divine spheres with regard to political power. Firstly, he removes the expression “*wánax andrôn Aineiás*”; then he partially softens the reference to the divine nature of Aeneas by omitting to mention Aphrodite as mother (*méter*) of the hero.

Oddly enough, the philosopher is less rigorous in book XX, where, in line 307, the verb *wanáссо* is used related to this character; we read “and now Aeneas will rule the men of Troy in power”.³³⁷ The Hobbesian translation is “and that *Aeneas* Race shall without end / the *Trojan* rule”.³³⁸ The philosopher weakens, in part, the reference to the personal kingship of Aeneas found in the Greek text, by mentioning his ancestry and not only the hero; nonetheless it remains in place, though softened.

We can suppose that the link to deity here is less evident than in the previously described situation; we can also argue that Hobbes does not perceive a problem of overlapping sovereignties with Priam who is the current legitimate king of Troy, because the line makes reference not to the present, but to the future. Maybe for these reasons, the philosopher does not implement any actions akin to those shown with regard to the aforementioned passage in book V.

Again with regard to the political problem of overlapping sovereignties, there is an episode in the *Iliad* where it is particularly evident. It is plausible that it was a very big hindrance for the philosopher’s educational purposes, at least based on what we can infer from his translation choices.

Since the scenario is not the Achaean army or the city of Troy, but the Olympus, some remarks are called for. Hobbes seems to consider the divine world as similar to the human contexts we have previously shown: as an autonomous realm with a sovereign and subjects. The Olympian society is ruled by Zeus, and Hobbes does not avoid stressing it, since it is a good fit for his ideas regarding political power.

Zeus’s authority appears evident in book IV of the *Iliad* where, while speaking to her husband, Hera says “I am called your consort / and you in turn rule [*wanáссоεις*] all the mortal gods”.³³⁹ Hobbes translates the passage through these words “And further of your Wife I bear the name, / Whom Mortals and Immortals all obey”.³⁴⁰ He appends the element of supremacy over human beings, a detail absent from these lines, though it is found in other sections of the poem.³⁴¹

That essential dichotomy between sovereign and subjects is immediately evident in this passage of the translations; it represents a cornerstone of Hobbes’s political thought, aimed at ensuring that no one should misunderstand his social position.

In book XV of the *Iliad*, the power of Zeus suffers fierce criticism from some gods. Poseidon negatively reacts to an order sent by Zeus through the messenger Iris, to leave the battlefield.

What outrage! Great as he is, what overweening arrogance!	ὦ πόποι, ἦ ῥ'άγαθός περ ἔων ὑπέροπλον ἔειπεν,
So force me, will he, to wrench my will to his?	εἴ μ'ὀμότιμον ἔοντα βίη ἀέκοντα καθέξει.
I with the same high honors? Three brother we are, all sprung from Cronus,	τρεῖς γάρ τ' ἔκ Κρόνου εἰμὲν ἀδελφοί, οὓς τέκετο Ῥέα,
all of us brought to birth by Rhea—Zeus and I,	Ζεὺς καὶ ἐγώ, τρίτατος δ' Ἀΐδης, ἐνέροισιν
Hades the third, lord [<i>wanásso</i>] of the dead beneath the earth.	ἀνάσσων. τριχθὰ δὲ πάντα δέδασται, ἔκαστος δ' ἔμμορε
The world was split three ways. Each received his realm.	τιμῆς· ἦτοι ἐγὼν ἔλαχον πολιὴν ἅλα ναίμεν αἰεὶ
When we shook the lots I drew the sea, my foaming eternal home,	παλλομένων, Ἰΐδης δ' ἔλαχε ζόφον ἠερόεντα,
And Hades drew the land of the dead engulfed in haze and night	Ζεὺς δ' ἔλαχ' οὐρανὸν εὐρὺν ἐν αἰθέρι καὶ νεφέλῃσι·
And Zeus drew the heavens, the clouds and high clear sky,	γαῖα δ' ἔτι ξυνή πάντων καὶ μακρὸς Ὀλυμπος.
But the earth and Olympus heights are common to us all.	τῷ ῥα καὶ οὐ τι Διὸς βέομαι φρεσίν, ἀλλὰ ἐκηλος καὶ κρατερός περ ἔων μενέτω τριτάτῃ ἐνὶ μοίρῃ.
So I will never live at the beck and call of Zeus! No, at his royal ease, and powerful as he is,	χερσὶ δὲ μὴ τί με πάγῃ κακὸν ὡς δειδισσέσθω· θυγατέρεσσιν γὰρ τε καὶ υἰάσι βέλτερον εἶη
let him rest content with <i>his</i> third of the world.	ἐκπάγλοις ἐπέεσσιν ἐνισσέμεν, οὓς τέκεν αὐτός,
Don't let him try frighten <i>me</i> with his mighty hands—	οἳ ἔθεν ὀτρύνοντος ἀκούσονται καὶ ἀνάγκη. ³⁴³
what does he take me for, some coward out-and-out?	
He'd better aim his terrible salvos at his own,	
all his sons and daughters. He's their father—	
they <i>have</i> to obey his orders. It's their fate. ³⁴²	

The myth presents a situation based upon a triple division, according to which each son of Cronus and Rhea has his own sovereignty over a specific section of the universe. With regard to Hades, by using the Greek verb *wanásso*, the Homeric text clearly explains what kind of authority we are talking about. There are three kings for three different spheres. At first glance, the Hobbesian translation seems to fit the original lines.

For Sons and Heirs of *Saturn* we were three
Begot on *Rhea*. *Pluto*, *Jove* and I.
By lot the **Rule** o'th'Waters came to me.
To *Jove* the **Government** of Heaven fell,
And of the Clouds, and the Ethereal Sky.
To *Pluto* Darkness, and the **rule** of Hell.
Earth and *Olympus* did as Common lye.
Let *Jove* then with his share contented be,
And not encroach on me. For well 'tis known
I hold not any thing of him in Fee,
But live as he should do, upon my own.
He should not unto me such language use,
But to his Children that will be afraid,
And dare not what he bids them, to refuse.³⁴⁴

The philosopher uses the terms *rule* and *government* to describe the power of Zeus, Poseidon and Hades; he moreover clearly specifies where those authorities are exerted. It seems to confirm a triple partition of political power, a partition, respectively, regarding the celestial, the marine and the inferior order. Despite this there is a problem. The social *corpus*, namely, those who chose to confer the *plenum* of sovereignty to a man (or a group of men³⁴⁵) through the covenant, is single and not triple. Despite being divided and hierarchically structured, the Olympian world is not split, but a *unicum*, since it is detached from all other existing communities due to the immortality *status* of its members.

As we read in the *Leviathan*, the power exerted by a sovereign over his subjects is indivisible: “the rights, which make the essence of sovereignty; and which are the marks, whereby a man may discern in what man, or assembly of men, the sovereign power is placed, and resideth [...] are incommunicable, and inseparable”.³⁴⁶ With a view to stressing how important this issue is in the English contemporary context, the philosopher moreover observes:

If there had not first been an opinion received of the greatest part of England, that these powers were divided between the King, and the Lords, and the House of Commons, the people had never been divided and fallen into this civil war; first between those that disagreed in politics; and after between the dissenters about the liberty of religion; which have so instructed men in this point of sovereign right, that there be few now (in England,) that do not see, that these rights are inseparable, and will be so generally acknowledged at the next return of peace; and so continue, till their miseries are forgotten; and no longer, except the vulgar be better taught than they have hitherto been.³⁴⁷

Because of this, we can suppose that translating these lines of the *Iliad* is not so simple for Hobbes, and that he has to carefully work on them. However, the narrative and plot do not allow him to distance himself excessively from an original text which, at least in this passage, attests the existence of a divided sovereignty through the authoritative force of mythology.

By widening the comparison between the original Greek text and the English translation to book XV as a whole, we find that Hobbes – as elsewhere – uses a particular technique to enable him to diminish the problematic meaning of these lines. Since he cannot directly change them, the philosopher chooses to intervene on the surrounding sections of the narrative, changing other relevant elements and information so as to make their impact milder. The original lines 185–199 (corresponding to 158*–172*) show us two different sticking points. The former deals with a problem of divided sovereignty completely incompatible with the Hobbesian absolutist vision previously sketched-out apropos of the Achaean army. The latter is a situation of criticism towards a sovereign, from figures that are described, at least in this passage of the *Iliad*, not as subjects but as having the same dignity as the contested king.

The only *wánax* must be Zeus, though this epithet is never used in reference to him in this book. He deserves to be the unique holder of sovereignty and the only unequivocal figure to which “Mortals and Immortals all obey”.³⁴⁸ Despite being unable to work directly on this passage, and with a view to ensuring this particular status to Zeus, Hobbes uses a very effective expedient. By comparing the Greek and the English versions of book XV, we note that references to the kingship of other mentioned gods, which are made clear by the use of the noun *wánax*, are systematically removed. In this way, he can stress the detachment between Zeus and the other competitors according to the well-known logic of the dichotomy between sovereign and subjects. As a consequence, he is also enabled to milden the impact of this passage without directly modifying it.

In detail, both Hephaestus (187*/214) and Apollo (220*/253) are deprived of the royal *status* originally awarded to them in book XV of the Homeric text. The god who suffers the highest number of excisions of the term *wánax* related to him is Poseidon, and it does not seem to be a mere coincidence, since he is the promoter of the protest against Zeus. Also worth noting is the timing: all these removals precede the seditious act.

Some lines earlier, another Olympian god was about to criticise an order from Zeus, but he was dissuaded by his peers. This was Ares, who had announced his intention of going onto the battlefield to save his son Ascalaphus, who was in trouble. His stance comes a few lines after Hera’s words; the goddess demands that all the deities abide by Zeus’s orders, and warns of Ascalaphus’ forthcoming death. While not directly correlated to the analysis regarding *wánax* and *wanáссо*, this passage

provides us with a useful element to clarify Zeus' position in the Hobbesian view. Hera says:

So each of you here must take what blows he sends.	τῷ ἔχεθ' ὅττι κεν ὑμμι κακὸν πέμπησιν ἐκάστω.	Nor must the God of War on <i>Jove</i>
Why, Ares, I gather, has just received his share...	ἤδη γὰρ νῦν ἔλπομ' Ἄρηϊ γε πῆμα	complain, Or in Rebellion
his son in dead in battle, his dearest son, Ascalaphus—	τετύχαι υἱὸς γὰρ οἱ ὄλωλε μάχη ἔνι, φίλτατος ἀνδρῶν,	against him rise
doesn't invincible Ares claim to be his father? ³⁴⁹	Ἄσκάλαφος, τὸν φησιν ὄν ἔμμεναι ὄβριμος Ἄρης. ³⁵⁰	Because his son <i>Ascalaphus</i> is slain. ³⁵¹

The keyword is the term *rebellion* in this passage, as it characterises the action planned by Ares as undoubtedly seditious.

The situation involving Poseidon seems similar. He too would like to oppose Zeus' order, which, furthermore, he considers as coming from his peer. The problem of objecting to a command from the king, which could give rise to a rebellion,³⁵² is clear, although between the two different cases, the second one seems to be more serious.

With regard to both situations, the solution comes from the original Homeric text to which Hobbes obviously adheres: the *Iliad* says that both Poseidon and Ares obey Zeus, who in any case is usually presented by Homer as having a position of supremacy compared to the other gods. All of this notwithstanding, since the philosopher considers Poseidon's objection more dangerous than Ares', he robs that god of dignity right before the narrative reaches its peak. Hobbes achieves his aim by systematically removing the noun *wanax* referred to Poseidon, and by appending another element, aimed at restoring and reiterating the proper order within the Olympian hierarchies. In reply to Iris when she brings the order, the god accepts it, but says:

True Iris, immortal friend, how right you are—	Ἰρι θεά, μάλα τοῦτο ἔπος κατὰ	<i>Iris</i> , this word was spoken in good
it's a fie thing when a messenger knows what's proper.	μοῖραν εἶπεες· ἐσθλὸν καὶ τὸ τέτυκται, ὄτ' ἄγγελος	season. Much worth, I see, is a wise Messenger.
Ah but how it galls me, it wounds me to the quick	αἴσιμα εἰδῆ, ἀλλὰ τὸδ' αἰνὸν ἄχος κραδίην καὶ	But I was vexed, because thus without reason
When the Father tries to revile <i>me</i> with brute abuse,	θυμὸν ἰκάνει, ὀππὸτ' ἂν ἰσόμορον καὶ ὀμῆ	(When I his equal am by <i>Byrth and Lot</i>)
his equal in rank, our fated shares of the world the same! ³⁵³	πεπρωμένον αἴση νεικεῖεν ἐθέλησι χολωτοῖσιν ἐπέσιν. ³⁵⁴	<i>Jove</i> uses me as I if were his slave. ³⁵⁵

By using *isómoros* (“*sharing equally or alike [...] equivalent, corresponding*”³⁵⁶) and *peproménos* (“*it has or had been (is or was) fated [...] destined to a thing*”³⁵⁷), the *Iliad* makes it clear again that Poseidon believes he has the same dignity as Zeus. On this occasion, Hobbes follows the Homeric text, since his translation “When I his equal am by Byrth and Lot” respects the meaning of the original lines as a whole. However, he appends an element to reduce Poseidon back within the bounds of inferiority: by making the god say that Zeus considers him a slave, the philosopher achieves his aim of alluding to a hierarchical relationship between them, despite this aspect being completely absent from the original text.³⁵⁸

With a view to completing the analysis of this passage (*Il.*, XV, 185–199), it seems useful to consider another element that once again allows us to stress how multifaceted the political message disguised within the translations could be.

By examining the lexicon used by the philosopher in those lines, Nelson particularly focuses on a very significant aspect from the perspective of the contextualisation of this Hobbesian work:

line [168] is Hobbes’s addition. It is part of a pattern in this speech, in which Hobbes has Poseidon use legal language to assert his right to property [...] against «encroachment» by Zeus. The words ‘law’, ‘liberty’, ‘Heirs’, ‘encroach’, and ‘Fee’ (or equivalent) are all absent from the Greek. Hobbes may be intended to recall the Parliamentary rhetoric of the 1640s, which had insisted on the property rights of subjects against the crown.³⁵⁹

With regard to the *Odyssey*, the phenomenon of the excisions of *wánax* and *wanáso* is likewise frequent as a whole, though, as happens in the case of the *Iliad*, they are conserved in some significant points, worth highlighting from the perspective of political theory.

The completely different context allows Hobbes to limit his interventions aimed at handling thorny situations like those previously considered, particularly with regard to the Achaean army, apropos of the dichotomy between sovereign and subjects. For example, the problem of overlapping sovereignties, which plays a pivotal role in the *Iliad*, is less important in the *Odyssey*. The narrative speaks of the existence of well-identified realms – for instance Sparta, Pylos, Ithaca, to cite only lands ruled by Achaean kings – and these realms are apparently perceived autonomous and independent. Therefore, their respective sovereigns – Menelaus, Nestor and Odysseus – are totally considered kings in the translations, though in the English version of the *Iliad* their positions are clearly presented as subordinate to Agamemnon’s authority, to a greater extent than in the original poems. The reason seems clear, and completely consistent with Hobbesian political theory: each of these realms consists of a specific community and has a well-identified

king in charge, whose power comes from the covenant drawn up by that particular community.

The first translations of *wanásson* in the *Odyssey* (138*/117; 217*/181; 449*/181) seem to confirm this reading. The second and the third occurrences refer to Athena who, under false pretences, goes to the royal palace of Ithaca to spur Telemachus to oppose the princes who want to take his father's the throne. She presents herself as Mentès, saying: "Wise old Anchialus/was my father. My own name is Mentès, /lord [*wanásson*] of the Taphian men who love their oars".³⁶⁰ The Hobbesian translation is almost identical: "My father was *Anchialos* and I/*Mentès*, my City *Taphos*, and I King".³⁶¹ Later Telemachus, speaking about the guest, says in the English version: "The man my Fathers old acquaintance was, /*Mentès Anchialides*, and his Town/*Taphos*, and he thereof the ruling has".³⁶² In this last line, the verb *to rule* is used to replace the Greek verb *wanásson*.

In both cases, community and exerting of royal power are deeply interconnected and, since they do not present situations of overlapping sovereignties, they do not create any problems of translation for Hobbes, who in one case even emphasises the meaning of the original Homeric lines.

This happens in the first occurrence (138*/117), found at a point in the narrative devoted to describing Telemachus' wait for his father's return, an event he considers can help him to drive the suitors away from the royal palace and to restore the conditions preceding the War of Troy.

First by far to see her was Prince	Τὴν δὲ πολὺ πρῶτος ἶδε Τηλέμαχος	<i>Telemachus</i> now with the Suiters sate
Telemachus [<i>theoidés</i>]; Sitting among the suitors, heart obsessed with grief.	θεοειδής, ἦστο γὰρ ἐν μνηστήρσι φίλον	Fancying, in case his father should appear,
He could almost see his mag- nificent father, here... in mind's eye—if only <i>he</i> might drop from the clouds	τετιμημένος ἦτορ, ὀσόμενος πατέρ' ἔσθλὸν ἐνὶ φρεσίν, εἶ	Brought home by th'Gods or by some lucky fate, How then these knaves would
and drive these suitors all in a rout throughout the halls	ποθεν ἐλθῶν μνηστήρων τῶν μὲν σκέδασιν κατὰ	slink away for fear;
and regain his pride of place and rule [<i>wanásson</i>] his own domains!. ³⁶³	δῶματα θεῖη, τιμὴν δ' αὐτὸς ἔχοι καὶ καὶ κτήμασι οἷσιν ἀνάσσει. ³⁶⁴	And he again recover his estate, And in his own land rule without a Peer. ³⁶⁵

Whereas the original *Odyssey* restricts itself to imaging Odysseus recovering his wealth, Hobbes, having replaced the Homeric verb *wanásson* with *to rule*, appends the expression "without a Peer" which leaves little doubt on how he conceives the power exerted by this hero over Ithaca.

Significantly enough, in these lines, we find also the removal of the adjective *theoidés* (“godlike”³⁶⁶) describing Telemachus. Albeit less clearly than in other cases, this translation choice shows the intent to keep royal power – which the son of Odysseus does not have at this point of the narrative, but that he might have in the near future – separate from any possible links to the divine sphere.

In occasions like those we have just considered, where the detachment between sovereign and subjects is clear-cut, the risk of conflicts diminishes among possibly overlapping authorities; accordingly, as a rule, and with specific reference to the *Odyssey*, textual modifications are less necessary, because ambiguous situations are fewer.

This does not mean that there are none; however, the *ratio* that leads to many of the Hobbesian alterations dealing with *wánax* and *wanáссо* seems to be caused, in the *Odyssey* more than in the *Iliad*, by factors lying outside the political dimension.

Again regarding these terms, in book XI, they are frequently removed or translated, with reference to several characters, and there are some elements worth analysing. In its 616 lines (of the Homeric version), we find six excisions, two related to Tiresias (139*/144 [S. 143]; 145*/151 [S.150]) and one each to Odysseus (64*/71), Poseidon (129*/130 [S. 129]), Ajax (547*/561 [S. 560]) and Minos (555*/570 [S. 569]). There are also four conservations: in 272*/284 [S. 283] – concerning Amphion and his reign over Orchomenos *with strength* (*íphi*) – in 335*/349 [S. 348] – for Alcinous who is called *king* in the translation – in 378*/397 [S. 396] – where the Homeric expression “*Atreide kýdiste, wánax andrôn Agámemnon*”³⁶⁷ is replaced with “king *Agamemnon*” – and finally regarding Achilles in 478*/491 [S. 490].

It seems to be confirmed the Hobbesian habit of considering as kings those who are in charge of well-identified community, given that it does not lead to problems of overlapping sovereignties. In the occurrence above, for example, the Achilles described, is no longer alive, and is said to be a sort of king of dead men; accordingly his power is not in competition with Agamemnon’s. Perhaps for this reason, Hobbes does not feel the need to remove *wanáссо*. Nonetheless, this should be viewed more as a recurrent habit than a systematic rule: there are several cases where removals are used despite the presence of the conditions previously outlined. One example we can mention is book XXI of the *Odyssey*, where all the four occurrences of the term *wánax* relating to Odysseus (56, 62, 83, 395) are totally removed (47*, 52*, 81*–83*, 395*): though he is undoubtedly a legitimate sovereign,³⁶⁸ he is not allowed to be identified as a king.

In confirmation of the fact that these are tendencies and not rules, another example from book III might be significant, although there may be doubts about it, and even strong ones. In spite of the Greek text using *wanáссо* (304) to indicate Aegisthus’s reign over Agamemnon’s realm, he is clearly a usurper. Hobbes translates “*Egistus* made the *Argives* him obey”,³⁶⁹ recognising a regicide as the legitimate governor of Mycenae.

However, weighing on this passage is the fact that in Stephanus's text, the line containing the verb *wanáso* is missing. Despite that, the Hobbesian translation seems to confirm the acceptance of the Homeric sense, according to which a usurper is shown playing the role of king.

Coming back to the analysis of book XI, one use of the verb *wanáso* with reference to Achilles deserves to be particularly stressed, since an aspect highlighted by Nelson, offers us another remarkable reading of this passage from a political theory perspective.

The narrative is centred upon Odysseus's descent to Hades, and the meeting he has with some dead characters. Among them is Achilles: Odysseus images the hero as king of the dead men, but Achilles replies: "No winning words about death to *me*, shining Odysseus!/By god, I'd rather slave on earth for another man—/some dirt-poor tenant farmer who scrapes to keep alive—/than rule down here over all the breathless dead".³⁷⁰ Hobbes translates this passage through these words:

Talk not to me of Honour here in Hell;
I'de rather serve a Clown on Earth for bread,
Then be of all things Incorporeal
That are, or even shall be, Supreme Head.³⁷¹

Nelson's analysis concerning Hobbes' decision to translate *wanáso* with the expression *to be Supreme Head* allows us to appreciate an aspect which, in my opinion, might be connected to the idea of that dichotomy we previously chose to synthetically label *mortal-immortal god*. The scholar writes:

Henry VIII was declared 'supreme head of the Church of England' in the Act of Supremacy (1534). Here Hobbes's Achilles tells Odysseus that it is better to be a base servant among men than to be 'supreme head' of 'all things Incorporeal' – perhaps another mischievous dig at the divines.³⁷²

Carrying on with the analysis of the *Odyssey*, there are two removals of the term *wánax* relating to Tiresias, which are particularly worth stressing, since they allow us to identify some elements linked to the *ratio* of the dichotomy *mortal-immortal god*, albeit marginally.

The soothsayer's spirit is mentioned seven times in book XI,³⁷³ but only on the last two occasions it is linked to the noun *wánax*. It is not used in these lines with the meaning of possession and exertion of royal power, but, as stated by Carlier,³⁷⁴ in order to identify important individuals.

As previously outlined,³⁷⁵ this meaning may have been known to Hobbes, who always chooses to translate simply as Tiresias, except on the last occasion, that is, one of the two where the Homeric text uses the noun *wánax*. In line 145* (151 [S. 150]), he replaces it with *prophet*, a term

that seems to be closer to the role actually played by the soothsayer in the *Odyssey*.

It is this element that allows us to suggest, albeit with great prudence, a possible political motivation underlying the decision to remove the term *wánax*. The theme of prophecy is crucial in Hobbes's political thought,³⁷⁶ particularly with regard to the previously mentioned deceptive use of religion aimed at either governing or undermining the established order.³⁷⁷

Although principally focused on the figure of the prophet in the Bible, chapter XXXVI of *Leviathan* devotes a large section to clarifying how to distinguish real prophets from false ones, an issue which has important repercussion from a political perspective.³⁷⁸ The twofold removal might be due to the intention to ensure that a noun closely tied to the exercise of royal power should not be related to a member of a category that Hobbes considers potentially dangerous for society.

Obviously, it cannot be anything more than a conjecture, and one which we cannot furthermore develop, due to the lack of other occurrences in Hobbes' translations. It was still worth mentioning, given its link both to the pivotal theme of the dichotomy between the human and the divine sphere with regard to political power and to the instrumental usages of religion by legitimate sovereigns and usurpers.³⁷⁹

There are three final remarkable aspects arising from the analysis of the use or absence of *wánax* and *wanássa* in the translations of the *Odyssey*. They have some importance from the perspective of political theory, but to a lesser extent than those previously considered.

The most significant of them deals with the removals of these terms in reference to the Olympian gods and is clearly consistent with what we have previously seen. This element fits the Hobbesian logic aimed at supporting and defending Zeus' position and authority. The father of the gods is conceived by the philosopher as the unique holder of sovereignty over the Olympian world and is for example identified in the *Odyssey* as "King of Kings"³⁸⁰ or "of Kings the King"³⁸¹ (in both cases in the original text we read "*ýpate kreíonton*",³⁸² literally *highest among powerful [deities]*).³⁸³ In spite of the metrical and stylistic reasons previously mentioned that are always worth bearing in mind,³⁸⁴ this kind of translation shows a particular care by Hobbes to limit the occurrences where *wánax* is referred to the gods, even if it is not used in possible equivocal contexts. To quote only the most frequent occasions, this removal regards for example Poseidon (III, 42*/43, 52*/54; IX, 542*/526; XI, 130*/129; XXIII, 238*/277 [S. 287]), as well as Hephaestus (VIII, 265*/270) and Apollo (VIII, 310*/323, 321*/334, 325*/339).

The second element I would like to focus on comes from the translation choices concerning the term *wánax* in its feminine version, that is, *wanássa* ("queen, lady"³⁸⁵). Its occurrences translated by Hobbes in his *Odyssey* (VI, 143*/149, 169*/175) are related to Nausicaa, daughter of Alcinous, and it is replaced with the English noun *queen*. It clearly rests on

the principal meaning of the masculine form and its primary correlation with royal power. One piece of evidence we might mention for it is line 347*/380 of book III of the *Odyssey* where the term *wánassa* referred to Athena is replaced by a less problematic *goddess*; this translation sounds consistent enough with what we previously outlined about the downgrading of the gods – with the frequent, though partial, exception of Zeus – when they are ascribed royal epithets in the original poems.

The use of the noun *queen* for Nausicaa seems strange, since she is not her mother Arete is the queen of Phaeacians. Hobbes uses the term queen for Arete as a replacement of other Greek nouns connected to the royal power.³⁸⁶ However, it does not seem possible to observe in this use of the term queen for Nausicaa anything significant from the perspective of political theory: more simply, Scapula’s lexicon suggests this translation: along with “regina”, we find the expression “regis filia”,³⁸⁷ followed by a reference to book VI of the *Odyssey*.

Semantic aspects aside, what seems unclear is the political position of these characters. Are they holders of an autonomous power – as the removals referred to Athena might suggest – or does their being *queen*, a noun also used to translate *basiléia* referred to Penelope,³⁸⁸ only depend on their familiar ties with the holders of sovereignty (husbands or fathers)?

The third and final significant element concerns the occurrences of the translation “master”³⁸⁹ for the Greek term *wánax*; it is *per se* a meaning which is part of the wide polysemy of this word, and whose proposed translation in Scapula’s lexicon is the expression “domus dominus”,³⁹⁰ from this perspective, it does not create any problems. However, there is an exception which can perhaps be explained through a reference to the Hobbesian theory of political power. Despite the high number of occurrences related to the idea of *wánax* as a *master* of something – particularly of the *oikos*³⁹¹ – there is one – which seems to precisely reflect the meaning of the original text – where the philosopher chooses to use the noun *king* in place of the more usual *master*. Exasperated by the suitors’ behaviour, Telemachus hopes that – should his father not return – one of them might come to power over Ithaca at last and leaves his home for good. He says:

<i>I'll be lord</i> [<i>wánax</i>] in	ἀντὰρ ἐγὼν οἴκοιο ἄναξ ἔσομ'	But I am King in
my own house and	ἡμετέροιο	my own
servants. ³⁹²	καὶ θυμῶων. ³⁹³	Family. ³⁹⁴

This shift from the idea of simply being master of the family to that of being its king can be linked to what we read in *Leviathan* apropos of the two ways by which sovereign power is created. Hobbes writes that it exists even before the covenant “when a man maketh his children, to submit themselves, and their children to his government, as being able to destroy them if they refuse; or by war subdueth his enemies to his will, giving them their lives on that condition”.³⁹⁵ As a consequence Telemachus,

though deprived of any possible authority on Ithaca, by maintaining his personal supremacy – as clarified by the Homeric text – over the paternal *oikos*, seems to be a real sovereign in Hobbes's eyes, albeit within the bounds of that small community.

3.3 Plurality of Kings and the Problem of Overlapping Sovereignties (II): The “cases” of *basiléus* and *basiléuo*

The analyses of the real, partial, biased or missing translations of the noun *basiléus* and the verb *basiléuo* enable us to confirm, complete and clarify what previously emerged with regard to the terms *wánax* and *wanáso*. They also permit us to append further elements in support of the thesis of Hobbes' instrumental – and, therefore, political – use of the translations.

Whereas the logic inspiring his translation choices can be linked to the already well-known intentions, it might be said that this is, more than *wánax*, the meaning of *king* which the Malmesbury philosopher mainly appreciates. His care and attention in refining – either in positive or negative ways – both the textual aspects able to support his political theories and, on the other hand, those able to oppose them appear to be even more accurate than those shown thus far. It surely happens due to a lot of multifaceted reasons, most of which come from textual contingencies. Despite this, we must not underestimate the role and value that this noun and its derivatives have had in the political lexicon over the centuries. Among the terms used by the Greeks to denote the holder of royal power, without a doubt *basiléus* has had a greater and longer tradition; it was also used a lot outside the boundaries of the epic tales.³⁹⁶

Accordingly, it does not seem reckless to hypothesise that Hobbes's care concerning the uses, occurrences and meanings of *basiléus* both in the *Iliad* and in the *Odyssey* comes partly from its importance over the centuries and from the deeper connection to royal power that it has maintained, also outside the Homeric poems.

As with the analysis of *wánax* and *wanáso*, it is again book I of the *Iliad* which offers us a first look – both specific and general – at the Hobbesian translation choices concerning the political value of the terms *basiléus* and *basiléuo*. The position and role ascribed to Agamemnon are confirmed and strengthened: once more he is the archetype of a ruler, the character on whom Hobbes focuses his greatest efforts, in order to make him as akin as possible to his idea of king, clearly explained in *Leviathan*. Unfortunately for the philosopher, the original Homeric text does not help him. From the outset, the son of Atreus is in trouble: the army over which he is commander-in-chief is suffering because of a plague which is due to a mistake he himself committed. There are no doubts in the *Iliad* about this; however in the translations, this element is softened and diminished, with a view to making Agamemnon's position milder.

<p>Apollo the son of Zeus and Leto. Incensed at the king he swept a fatal plague through the army— men were dying and all because Agamemnon spurned Apollo's priest.³⁹⁷</p>	<p>Λητοῦς καὶ Διὸς υἱός· ὁ γὰρ βασιλῆϊ χολωθεὶς νοῦσον ἀνὰ στρατόν ᾔρσε κακὴν, ὀλέκοντο δὲ λαοί, οὔνεκα τὸν Χρῦσην ἠτίμασεν ἄρητῆρα Ἴατρείδης.³⁹⁸</p>	<p><i>Apollo</i>; who incensed by the wrong To his Priest <i>Chryses</i> by <i>Atrides</i> done, Sent a great Pestilence the <i>Greek</i> among.³⁹⁹</p>
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The Greek text clearly ascribes Apollo's wrath, and consequently the plague, to Agamemnon's insult towards Crises. However, the Hobbesian version greatly softens the strength of these lines: firstly there is a reference to a generic *wrong*; furthermore, it is completely detached from any possible institutional references. The guilty party is always Agamemnon, but, by avoiding mentioning his role through the removal of the noun *basiléus*, Hobbes can separate such a censurable and damaging action by the commander-in-chief from being so closely linked to the holder of sovereignty; all of this, without altering an event which might otherwise have compromised the entire plot of the *Iliad*.⁴⁰⁰ A further reason is that it is not so easy to reconcile such a situation, where the safety and life of the subjects are in jeopardy, with the idea of the creation of the commonwealth as described in *Leviathan*.

There is a section of chapter XVII devoted to this topic; however, we can perhaps find the most significant elements related to this episode of the *Iliad* in chapter XXI, entitled *In what cases subjects are absolved of their obedience to their sovereign*. The philosopher writes:

The obligation of subjects to the sovereign, is understood to last as long, and no longer, than the power lasteth, by which he is able to protect them. For the right men have by nature to protect themselves, when none else can protect them, can by no covenant be relinquished. The sovereignty is the soul of the commonwealth; which once departed from the body, the members do no more receive their motion from it. The end of obedience is protection; which, wheresoever a man seeth it, either in his own, or in another's sword, nature applieth his obedience to it, and his endeavour to maintain it.⁴⁰¹

The *Iliad* is clear in saying that Agamemnon jeopardises the safety and the very life of the community over which he has charge; obviously this element, in the Hobbesian view, might nullify the covenant through which such power is built and might consequently free the Achaeans from any bonds of obedience with their commander-in-chief.

This is a thorny episode to handle. It introduces the very pivotal question of the difficulties of the son of Atreus in ruling the Achaean army. The first books of the *Iliad* are literally imbued with this problem, and it also frequently emerges in the subsequent sections of the poem. The opening episode clearly reveals Agamemnon's unfitness to rule, and his weakness in that element which represents the very essence of political authority. Furthermore, from a Hobbesian perspective, it undermines the idea that political virtue can be taught through the translation of a poetical work. That might be why he needs to show Agamemnon – and not the *basiléus*, the institution he too represents – as the guilty party for the plague, albeit in a less categorical way than in the original text.

A few lines later, the *Iliad* confirms that Agamemnon's situation is not so good: right after the convocation of the soothsayer Calchas, aimed at explaining what is happening and how the Achaeans can stop the plague, he refuses to answer, fearing retaliations, and asks for protection from Achilles. Calchas knows that he has to say something to make a *basiléus* angry. Reassured about it, he finally replies and points at the commander-in-chief as the guilty party of what is happening within the Achaean camp. It is worth stressing the words used by Hobbes to translate the soothsayer's request for protection.

A mighty king,	κρείσσων γὰρ βασιλεύς	Swear you will save me
Raging against an	ὄτε χώσεται	with word and hand.
inferior, is too	ἀνδρὶ χέρη·	Of all the <i>Greeks</i> it will
strong.	εἷ περ γὰρ τε χόλον γε	offend the best;
Even if he can swallow	καὶ αὐτῆμαρ	Who though his anger
down his wrath	καταπέψη,	for a while is
today,	ἀλλά τε καὶ μετόπισθεν	smother,
still he will nurse the	ἔχει κότον,	Will not, I fear, long
burning in his chest	ὄφρα τελέσση,	time contented rest,
until, sooner or later,	ἐν στήθεσσιν εἴοισιν·	But will revenged
he sends it	σὺ δὲ φράσαι εἷ	be some time or
bursting forth. ⁴⁰²	με σώσεις. ⁴⁰³	other. ⁴⁰⁴

In the English Hobbesian text, there is no place at all for the noun *basiléus*. There is only a general reference to someone who is *the best* among the Achaeans. The institutional element, the one that might once more identify the holder of sovereignty as the man charged with the responsibility of the plague, is again removed. Even the dreaded potential reprisal by the commander-in-chief – which of course soon arrives,⁴⁰⁵ albeit only verbally – is softened.⁴⁰⁶

We can pinpoint two different strategies here. On the one hand, Hobbes tries to protect Agamemnon by pushing the guilt of the plague which affects the Achaean army away from him and, especially, from what he institutionally represents. On the other, since he cannot completely remove the event from the plot, Hobbes tries to connect the fact

only to Agamemnon and not to the *basiléus*, in order to protect the monarchy as a whole specific cases aside. On this topic, Nelson writes:

If the purpose of epic is to teach moral philosophy, and if the highest requirement of moral philosophy is obedience to sovereigns, then for an epic to demonize the institution of monarchy is about as indiscreet as one could get.⁴⁰⁷

Nor is it a situation where we need to identify who the holder of sovereignty is or reaffirm what the real source of political power might be; the very existence of the monarchy is at stake in this book of the *Iliad*. Therefore, Hobbes's determined work on these lines is no great surprise, also given their role and position in the poem as a whole. He probably considered it problematic that such a critical episode was placed at the *incipit* of such a famous, widely read and quoted work. Accordingly, it seems consistent enough to think that the philosopher worked to soften it. We should also bear in mind some subsequent passages of the *Iliad*, particularly those not removable from the plot, where Agamemnon's authority teeters in the assembly and, equally, what it represented for Hobbes. Furthermore, right from the opening lines, the well-known problem of the simultaneous presence of men honoured by the title of king within the Achaean army appears clear. Obviously, as happened for *wanax* and *wanásso*, the episode of Achilles' wrath can also be used as an archetype of the Hobbesian translation choices concerning the terms *basiléus* and *basiléuo*. In the original text, when Agamemnon – in the midst of the struggle – spurs the son of Peleus to leave the army and rule (*wanássein*) over the Myrmidons,⁴⁰⁸ a significant element emerges. By replying to Achilles' threat concerning his possible abandonment of the army and the war, Agamemnon says:

<p><i>Desert</i>, by all means—if the spirit drives you home! I will never beg you to stay, not on <i>my</i> account. Never—others will take my side and do me honor, Zeus above all, whose wisdom rules the world. You—I hate you most of all the warlords loved by the gods [<i>dioitrephéon basiléon</i>]. Always dear to your heart, strife, yes, and battles, the bloody grind of war.⁴⁰⁹</p>	<p>φεῦγε μάλ', εἴ τοι θυμὸς ἐπέσσυται, οὐδέ σ' ἔγωγε λίσσομαι εἴνεκ' ἐμεῖο μένειν· πᾶρ ἔμοιγε καὶ ἄλλοι οἳ κέ με τιμήσουσι, μάλιστα δὲ μητίετα Ζεὺς. ἔχθιστος δέ μοι ἔσσι διοτρεφέων βασιλήων· αἰεὶ γάρ τοι ἔρις τε φίλη πόλεμοί τε μάχαι τε.⁴¹⁰</p>	<p>Go when you will, (said <i>Agamemnon</i>) fly, He not entreat you for my sake to stay. When you are gone more honour'd shall be I, Nor <i>Jove</i> (I hope) will with you go away. In you I shall but loose an enemy That only loves to quarrel and to fight.⁴¹¹</p>
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It seems to me that these lines are a sort of emblematic *summa* of the main problems that Hobbes faced when translating the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. In a few lines, the thorniest and most complex issues, but also the less acceptable situations and conditions, are condensed into a very dangerous *unicum*, whose positioning at the beginning of the poem magnifies the level of criticality.

Here, we have the two well-known problems of Hobbesian political theory presented one after the other: the first concerns the dichotomy between sovereign and subjects, the second, the human or divine genesis of political power. This one, which will be explored in the next chapter, is evident because of the use of the Greek adjective *diotrephés* (“*fostered, cherished by Zeus*”,⁴¹² whose meaning suggests the existence of a sort of tie between the father of the Olympian gods and those that the Homeric poems identify as *basiléus*. The first one, instead, lays emphasis on the problem of overlapping sovereignties. There are two main critical elements: on the one hand, Agamemnon identifies Achilles as a man that, within the Achaean army, is allowed to be called *basiléus*. On the other, this noun is used in its plural form and it reveals the existence of a multifaceted political regime, whose political structure cannot immediately fit the clear-cut Hobbesian dichotomy between sovereign and subjects. Thus, it seems less surprising that the means through which the philosopher escapes from this problematic situation is the complete removal of the entire expression *diotrophéon basiléon*, without any kind of compensation in the English text.

What remains clear – and it cannot be otherwise – is the stigmatising of Achilles’s behaviour. It can be easily explained by considering the pivotal role played by the problems of the civil war and, in general, of the lack of safety in Hobbesian political theory, and the philosopher absolutely wants to fix these problems.

The twofold work in defence of both Agamemnon and the monarchy as a whole is carried on and we find another significant stage at line 219* (corresponding to the original 231), where the adjective referred to *basiléus* is more problematic than the noun itself. During the struggle, Achilles challenges his commander-in-chief with these words:

<p>Safer by far, you find, to foray all through camp, commandeering the prize of any man who speaks against you.</p> <p>King who devours his people! Worthless husks, the men you rule.⁴¹³</p>	<p>ἢ πολὺ λωϊόν ἐστιν κατὰ στρατὸν ἐϋρὺν Ἀχαιῶν δῶρ' ἀποαιρεῖσθαι ὅς τις σέθεν ἀντίον εἶπη δημοβόρος βασιλεύς, ἐπεὶ οὐτιδανοῖσιν ἀνάσσεις.⁴¹⁴</p>	<p>But thou to take from other men their due (Safe lying in the Camp) more pleasure hast. But fools they are that ruled are by you.⁴¹⁵</p>
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We have already considered this passage during our examination of the use of *wanássein*,⁴¹⁶ but now, by also focusing on *basiléus*, we can widen and complete our analysis. In these lines, not only is the term *basiléus* removed, but it is also deprived of the adjective *demobóros* (“who devours his people”⁴¹⁷), which is completely unsuited to the idea of king seen in *Leviathan*: a sovereign who is created by the individuals with a view to securing “them in such sort, as that by their own industry, and by the fruits of the earth, they may nourish themselves and live contentedly”⁴¹⁸ and who cannot be “rich, [...] glorious, [...] [and] secure”,⁴¹⁹ whereas his “subjects are either poor, or contemptible, or too weak through want, or dissension”.⁴²⁰

These lines not only cast doubts on Agamemnon’s supremacy within the Achaean army – an element which is stressed through the translation of *wanáso*⁴²¹ – they also call into question the essence of monarchic power itself. A king “who devours his people”⁴²² and, accordingly, a sovereign who does not allow the community he rules to “live contentedly”⁴²³ undermines or removes that condition of safety which is the essence of his very existence.

Another remarkable reason from the perspective of political thought seems to play a role in the removal of the expression *demobóros basiléus*. The passage mentioned refers to the struggle at its peak, and it clearly shows a moment of public criticism towards a monarchic power. Achilles is vehemently casting doubts on Agamemnon’s authority and, what is worse, he is doing so in front of the whole army. By cutting out – through the expedient of the removal of *basiléus* – such a critical element so closely linked to the regal role of the son of Atreus, Hobbes can alleviate the seriousness of the moment and remove the risk that this episode might provide people seeking to criticise the English Crown with a motive or a starting point to do so.

On this topic, the philosopher is clear and categorical in *Leviathan*, where we read in chapters XXIX and XXX:

Another infirmity of a commonwealth, is [...] the liberty of disputing against absolute power, by pretenders to political prudence; which though bred for the most parts in the lees [dregs] of the people, yet animated by false doctrines, are perpetually meddling with the fundamental laws, to the molestation of the commonwealth; like the little worms, which physicians call *ascarides*.⁴²⁴

They [the people] ought to be informed, how great a fault it is, to speak evil of the sovereign representative, (whether one man, or an assembly of men;) or to argue and dispute his power; or any way to use his name irreverently, whereby he may be brought into contempt with his people, and their obedience (in which the safety of the commonwealth consisteth) slackened.⁴²⁵

It seems no coincidence that when a character in the *Iliad* acts to defend Agamemnon, the institutional role of the latter does not suffer removals: at line 277, Nestor exhorts Achilles to stop fighting against the king (*basiléus*)⁴²⁶ and the philosopher chooses to exactly follow the Greek text by translating “Forbear the King (*Pelides*)”.⁴²⁷

A little further on, when the narrative focuses on the ambassadors going to Achilles’ tent in order to take Briseis, we find two significant removals in a row. The first concerns the action of these ambassadors: the original text says that they stop because they fear and respect the *basiléus*.⁴²⁸ The second deals with Achilles’ words. The hero identifies the commander-in-chief as a “*basiléos apenéos*”⁴²⁹ (literally: “*ungentle, rough, hard*”⁴³⁰ king). Within a few lines, the text again shows the same situations previously seen: on the one hand, Achilles is identified as a king, and on the other one, he insults the holder of sovereignty. In both cases, Hobbes opts for removal: in the first, there is no mention at all of Peleus’ son’s *status* as *basiléus*; in the second, the translation is “unbridled man”⁴³¹, an expression which makes no reference to Agamemnon being king.

With regard to this aspect, Nelson’s comment seems significant, since it is useful to comprehend the general dimension of this phenomenon (and not only within the bounds of book I): “Hobbes routinely declines to translate the word ‘king’ when Agamemnon is being attacked or is described behaving badly”.⁴³²

In translating an episode of book II of the *Iliad*, Hobbes acts in a very similar way. During an assembly, Agamemnon completely loses his control over the army, and Thersites has no qualms in vehemently criticising him. Right after the description of Odysseus’s work to restore the order, we read in the *Iliad*: “But one man, Thersites, still railed on, nonstop./His head was full of obscenities, teeming with rant,/all for no good reason, insubordinate, baiting the kings [*basiléis*]”.⁴³³

These lines highlight two different problems. Firstly, they reveal that there is a plurality of kings within the Achaean army. Then, they show that it is possible to criticise men who are in power, even though, as happens in this specific episode, the discussion is not appreciated at all by the holder of political authority. The philosopher chooses to translate with these words: “*Thersites* only standeth up and speaks./One that to little purpose could say much,/And what he thought would make men laugh, would say”.⁴³⁴ He omits both the reference to the simultaneous presence of a plurality of kings and Thersites criticising the Achaean kings.

As already happened with the struggle between Achilles and Agamemnon, the Hobbesian translation choice completely fits the previously quoted passages of chapters XXIX and XXX of *Leviathan*.

Concerning this work of defence both of Agamemnon and of monarchy in general, the text of the *Iliad* offers Hobbes a great help. Because

of its encyclopaedic and educational function, the Homeric text itself does not show appreciation of the criticism from Thersites, and that is why the episode ends with the strong opposition of Odysseus against the protester. The result is a very violent and public reprimand that gives rise to a physical struggle where the king of Ithaca clearly prevails. What follows this struggle is the most astonishing episode, but also one that allows us to understand which side the *Iliad* leans towards. It describes the laughter coming from the army, when the soldiers see Thersites defeated and suffering after the fight against Odysseus.⁴³⁵ The protester, whose action is aimed at achieving advantages for all his comrades in arms, is not only assailed – both verbally and physically – by Odysseus, he is also taunted by those peers that he sought to defend.

This conservative dimension of the *Iliad*, which aims to maintain the *statu quo*, not to allow everyone access to political power, and to prevent criticism as far as possible, earns the appreciation of Hobbes, who obviously avoids altering the narrative here. However, by citing Odysseus's words before the physical dispute, and then the phrases of an unidentified soldier who speaks after the clash, the philosopher three times uses an identical means with a view to altering what is for him a further element of fear.

What a flood of abuse, Thersites! Even for you, fluent and flowing as you are. Keep quiet.	Θερσίτη ἄκριτόμυθε, λιγύς περ ἐὼν ἀγορητής, ἴσχεο, μηδ' ἔθελ' οἶος ἐριζέμεναι	Prater, that to thy self seems eloquent, How darest thou alone the King t'upbraid?
Wo are <i>you</i> to wrangle with kings [<i>basiléis</i>], you alone?	βασιλεῦσιν οὐ γὰρ ἐγὼ σέο φημὶ χεριώτερον	A greater Coward than thou art there's none
No one, I say – no one alive less soldierly than you, none in the ranks that came to Troy with Agamenon.	βροτὸν ἄλλον ἔμμεναι, ὅσσοι ἄμ' Ἄτρείδης ὑπὸ Ἴλιον ἦλθον.	'Mongst all the <i>Greeks</i> that came with us to <i>Troy</i> .
So stop your babbling, mouthing the names of kings [<i>basiléis</i>], flinging indecencies in their teeth, your eyes peeled for a chance to cut and run for home [...]	τῷ οὐκ ἂν βασιλῆας ἀνὰ στόμ' ἔχων ἀγορεύεις, καὶ σφιν ὄνειδέα τε προφέρεις, νόστὸν τε φυλάσσοις. [...]	Else 'gainst the King thy tongue would not so run. Thou seek'st but an excuse to run away. [...]

A thousand terrific strokes he is carried off—Odysseus, taking the lead in tactics, mapping battle-plans.	«ὦ πόποι, ἦ δὴ μυρὶ Ὀδυσσεύς ἔσθλα ἔοργε βουλὰς τ' ἐξάρχων ἀγαθὰς πόλεμόν τε κορύσσων· νῦν δὲ τόδε μέγ' ἄριστον ἐν Ἀργείοισιν ἔρεξεν, ὃς τὸν λωβητῆρα ἐπεσβόλον ἔσχ' ἀγοράων. οὐ θῆν μιν πάλιν αὖτις ἀνήσει θυμὸς ἀγῆνωρ νεικεῖειν βασιλῆας ὄνειδείους ἐπέεσσιν.» ⁴³⁷	And, Oh said one t'another standing near; <i>Ulysses</i> many handsome thing has done, When we in Council or in Battle were, A better deed than this is he did none, That has so silenced this railing knave, And of his peevish humour stay'd the flood, As he no more will dare the King to brave. ⁴³⁸
But here's the best thing yet he's done for the men— he's out a stop to this babbling, foulmouthed fool! Never again, I'd say, will our gallant comrade risk his skin to attack the kings [<i>basiléis</i>] with insults. ⁴³⁶		

Both Odysseus and the Achaean soldier are speaking about Thersites' insulting behaviour, not only towards Agamemnon, but also the kings (*basiléis*). Hobbes, simply by using the singular form (*the King*) despite the original plural, goes beyond the text of the *Iliad*. By bearing in mind the narrative, we can take for granted that even the original poem tends to defend Agamemnon on this occasion. However, Hobbes goes much further, removing the reference to the existence of a plurality of kings within the army. The triple repetition of the same grammatical alteration leaves few doubts on this Hobbesian translation choice: it reveals a clear intention by the philosopher to work both on the problem of criticism towards the holder of sovereignty in general and on this element so incompatible with his political theory.

Other passages in the *Iliad* allow us to generalise the problem of overlapping sovereignties and to extend it to the majority of the heroes besieging the city of Troy. It is the first and most remarkable political consequence of this kind of structure of political powers which seems to be typical of the Homeric world and, particularly, of the Achaean army.

Since the *Iliad* itself is a poem principally intended to narrate Achilles's wrath, it is undoubtedly true that the son of Peleus is the fiercest, most dangerous and complicated competitor that Agamemnon must deal with. However, the problem of the dichotomy between sovereign and subjects does not only apply to him. One of the most significant markers of the Hobbesian annoyance concerning this thorny situation can be easily inferred by considering his translation choices regarding the term *basiléus*. They allow us to deduce some significant aspects which are in continuity with and complementary to what was previously shown about

the same problem, though in that case linked to the translations of *wánax* and *wanáссо*.

Again within book II, before Thersites starts criticising Agamemnon, the commander-in-chief convenes a Council of “his ranking chiefs”⁴³⁹ [“*megathýmon* [...] *gherónton*”⁴⁴⁰] – a bit further on, Nestor identifies them as “Friends, lords of the Argives, O my captains”⁴⁴¹ [“*hō philoi, Argheíon heghétores edé médontes*”⁴⁴²] – in order to explain to them the strategy for spurring the army to fight once again against the Trojans, given that his prophetic dream foretold of the victory. The assembly is closed by Nestor himself, who is the first participant to leave the assembly. In the description of this moment, a significant aspect emerges.

And out he marched, leading the way from council.	ὥς ἄρα φωνήσας βουλῆς ἐξ ἤρχε	And having said, began to
The rest sprang to their feet, the sceptered kings [<i>skeptuchós basiléus</i>]	véεσθαι, οἱ δ' ἐπανάστησαν πειθοντό τε	lead away. ⁴⁴⁵
obeyed the great field marshal. ⁴⁴³	ποιμένι λαῶν σκηπτουῶχοι βασιλῆες. ⁴⁴⁴	

A group of kings are assembled with Agamemnon; furthermore they are described as kings bearing scepters,⁴⁴⁶ an element that, in the Homeric poems, clearly, though not exclusively, indicates royal power.⁴⁴⁷ However, there is no evidence of this in the Hobbesian translations: within a few words not directly linked to the political authority of those characters, the philosopher summarises several original lines, leaving nothing of their *status* as kings.

Something similar happens a little further on. The *Iliad* describes the heralds trying to silence the assembly in order to allow the soldiers to hear the “*diotréphéon basiléos*”⁴⁴⁸ (the kings fostered by Zeus). The Hobbesian translation of this line is “to make them silent, or to drown their cry”.⁴⁴⁹ The removal of the noun *basiléus* is obvious, and also of the related adjective,⁴⁵⁰ whose meaning echoes the problem of the divine genesis of political power, albeit indirectly. In book VII, Nestor spurs the Achaean commanders to give instructions concerning both the burying of the fallen comrades and the building of a defensive wall as an obstacle for their enemies. The Homeric text confirms that they happily accept both Nestor’s suggestions, by saying: “So he advised. All the warlords [*basilées*] sounded their assent”.⁴⁵¹ It is a moment of consultation and decision, where the Achaean kings are present; the text leaves no doubt at all on this. Hobbes opts to implement a drastic strategy, completely removing the entire line in his translation.

In book IX of the *Iliad*, we find the episode of the ambassadors sent to Achilles by Agamemnon to persuade him to come back and fight, and to raise the course of the war again, since, without him, the Achaeans were in great trouble. Odysseus goes to the Myrmidon’s tent, carrying

with him the reconciliatory offering, and hoping to spur the hero to start fighting again. This attempt does not give the expected outcome. However, Achilles' words allow us to add another significant tile to the mosaic we are outlining. Still angry because of what happened, he says:

But now that he's torn my honor from my hands, robbed me, lied to me—don't let him try me now. I know <i>him</i> too well—he'll never win me over! No Odysseus, let him rack his brains with you and the other captains [<i>basiléis</i>] how to fight the raging fire off the ships. Look— what a mighty piece of work he's done without me. ⁴⁵²	νῦν δ' ἐπεὶ ἐκ χειρῶν γέρας εἴλετο καὶ μ' ἀπάτησε, μή μευ πειράτω εὖ εἰδότος· οὐδέ με πείσει. ἀλλ', Ὀδυσσεῦ, σὺν σοί τε καὶ ἄλλοισιν βασιλεῦσι φραζέσθω νήεσσιν ἀλεξέμεναι δήϊον πῦρ. ⁴⁵³	But since she By <i>Agamemnon</i> from me take is, Ne'er think (<i>Ulysses</i>) to prevail with me. He shall not twice deceive me. But provide (<i>Ulysses</i>) that your Ships not burned be. ⁴⁵⁴
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Hobbes completely removes the section of line 346 where there are not only the noun *basiléus* in its plural form, but also the related adjective *állos* (“another”⁴⁵⁵), whose meaning intensifies the sense. The text of the *Iliad* is referring again to such a typical situation within the Achaean army which is scarcely compatible with the Hobbesian ideas concerning political power. Once again the philosopher has to come to terms with the dilemma whether to remove or maintain an unwanted expression, since such an alteration would be unlikely to go unobserved. However, it does not seem to be a problem for the philosopher. Given that his translation aims at teaching political virtue, and this virtue is grounded on the idea that sovereignty cannot be divided, the removal of the problematic section of line 346 seems like a natural consequence of this vision. What can be considered surprising is the reasons why Hobbes chooses in his translation to opt rather one-sidedly for a monarchical reading, though in the *Leviathan* he clearly considers the possibility that the sovereign power could be held by a group of men.⁴⁵⁶ That little assembly which the *Iliad* identifies as Council, namely the gathering of the Achaean kings, is a moment of consultation and to some extent, of decision making.⁴⁵⁷ Accordingly, it might well fit that particular role; it would also have contributed to diminishing the lack of compatibility between the political structures of the Homeric world and their interpretation in the Hobbesian translation.

In my opinion, the peculiar contemporary context and his preference for the monarchy might lead him to opt for a rigorous monocratic interpretation. Actually, since this work also aimed to show models both political and behavioural, the monarchical preference might come from its being better fitted and incisive for this purpose.

Furthermore, we need to keep always in mind what Fausto Codino wrote about the Homeric Council:

In Homer [...] the Council (a mainly aristocratic institution) is present few times and with less well identified assignments. While in the *Odyssey* it has a certain role, in the *Iliad*, instead, – at war – where it should have the essential role of a high command, when crucial decisions are made, the poet gathers the general assembly, although only the most influential persons within it speak and act.⁴⁵⁸

Despite what has been outlined thus far, in the *Iliad* we find an uncommon usage of the verb *basiléuo*, which is used in a particular context from which we can maybe infer the possibility of a diarchic exercise of political power, though it is included as a mere hypothesis in the narrative.

The usual occurrences of the verb *basiléuo* aim to identify the action of ruling, namely, situations that, if they do not create ambiguities, are faithfully recovered by Hobbes in the translations (consider, for example, lines 392 and 401 of book I of the *Odyssey* where the corresponding translations are “be King” (421*) and “reign” (432*) or book XXIV (435*/483 [S. 482]) whose English replacement uses the same verb), but a passage in book IX of the *Iliad* shows us an anomalous usage of this verb.

Among the ambassadors sent by Agamemnon to Achilles in order to persuade him to come back to fight, we also find Phoenix, preceptor of the young Myrmidon, and very close to him. Speaking to him, the son of Peleus encourages him not to defend Agamemnon and to reign (*basiléuein*) with him:

Phoenix, old father, bred and loved by the gods, what do I need with honor such as that? I say my honor lies in the great decree of Zeus. That gift will hold me here by the beaked ships as long as the life breath remains inside my chest and my springing knees will lift me. Another thing– take it to heart, I urge you. Stop confusing my fixed resolve with this, this weeping and wailing just to serve his pleasure. Atreus' mighty son.	Φοῖνιξ, ἄττα γεραιέ, διοτρεφές, οὐ τί με ταύτης χρεὼ τιμῆς φρονέω δὲ τετιμῆσθαι Διὸς αἴση, ἣ μ' ἔξει παρὰ νηυσὶ κορωνίσιν, εἰς ὃ κ' ἄυτμῆ ἐν στήθεσσι μένη καὶ μοι φίλα γούνατ' ὀρώρη. ἄλλο δέ τοι ἐρέω, σὺ δ' ἐνὶ φρεσὶ βάλλεο σῆσι μή μοι σύγγχει θυμὸν ὀδυρόμενος καὶ ἀχεύων,	Such honour I seek none. <i>Jove</i> honours me, Since by his will I at my ships abide, No more molest me for <i>Atrides</i> sake, But stay with me, and equal to me reign, And such as are my friends for your friends take,
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<p>It degrades you to curry favour with that man, and I will hate you for it, I who love you.</p> <p>It does you proud to stand by me, my friend, to attack the man who attacks me—</p> <p>be king [<i>basiléuo</i>] on a par with me, take half my honors!.⁴⁵⁹</p>	<p>Ἄτρεΐδῃ ἥρωϊ φέρων χάριν· οὐδέ τί σε χρῆ τὸν φιλέειν, ἴνα μὴ μοι ἀπέχθηαι φιλέοντι. καλὸν τοι σὺν ἐμοὶ τὸν κήδειν ὅς κ' ἐμὲ κήδη· ἴσον ἐμοὶ βασιλεύει καὶ ἡμισυ μείροο τιμῆς.⁴⁶⁰</p>	<p>And do not loose my friendship his to gain.⁴⁶¹</p>
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Achilles is asking Phoenix to cooperate with him in exercising political power over the Myrmidons; this element is completely accepted by Hobbes, who translates with the expression “and equal to me reign” what the original text expresses as “*ison emoi basileue*”, though it clearly indicates a situation with more than one king ruling over the same group. We can suppose that, given the totally hypothetical sense of this proposal and, moreover, because of its not being realised in the following narrative of the *Iliad*, the philosopher chose not to modify these lines. However, since it seems to be an exception, and we have no other elements to add, we can reasonably consider it nothing more than an anomaly.

Coming back to the main subject, there is another tool or expedient used by Hobbes with a view to stressing in a monarchical sense the political significance of the Homeric poems. Moreover, this tool can be easily related to the *Leviathan*.

It is another of those situations where linguistic expedients and political-educational needs appear to be reciprocally and inevitably interwoven: the former would not exist without the latter, but the latter would be in trouble without the former.

Both Hobbes’s careful attention to avoid the problem of overlapping sovereignties due to the simultaneous presence of *basiléis* in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* and the number of tools employed in order to prevent its potentially dangerous consequences clearly reveals his care in managing these issues as well as his resoluteness in eliminating, diminishing and softening the negative effects.

When the textual contingencies compel him to make mention of the presence of more than one individual who holds the title of king or, on the other hand, when circumstances allow him to highlight some aspects of this situation that he considers worth emphasis, the philosopher uses the technique of the downgrade,⁴⁶² though in a different way from what we have seen thus far.⁴⁶³

The *ratio* always deals with the clear-cut dichotomy between sovereign and subjects, but we can see, on some occasions, a further specificity

whose *ratio* appears to be directly referable to a passage of *Leviathan* which explains how to balance such a necessary and categorical principle aimed at achieving peace with the hierarchical structure of a society that seems more multifaceted, complex and organised. Through a reference that, without any doubts, is affected by the English context contemporary to him, Hobbes writes in book XVIII:

And as the power, so also the honour of the sovereign, ought to be greater, than that of any, or all the subjects. For in the sovereignty is the fountain of honour. The dignities of lord, earl, duke, and prince are his creatures. As in the presence of the master, the servants are equal, and without any honour at all; so are the subjects, in the presence of the sovereign. And though they shine some more, some less, when they are out of his sight; yet in his presence, they shine no more than the stars in the presence of the sun.⁴⁶⁴

The detachment line is clear-cut: in Hobbes's vision, the existence of intermediate offices and honours does not compromise the cornerstone of indivisible sovereignty, rather, it strengthens it. Furthermore, it does not jeopardise the necessary dichotomy between the holder of political power and those who have to obey to it. All the hierarchies, ranks and levels into which a society can be divided, have no autonomous reason for being, and exist only because of the creative action of the sovereign.

Hobbes himself uses very similar words in the opening paragraphs of *Dialogue I* of the *Behemoth*. Character A, in order to allow speaker B to climb up "the highest of time"⁴⁶⁵ – the period 1640–1660, metaphorically called "the diuells mountain"⁴⁶⁶ – with a view to observing the events of the English Civil War from a wider perspective, while listing the causes of this conflict, also includes the following:

Lastly the people in generall were so ignorant of their duty, as that no one perhaps of ten thousand knew what right any man had to command him, or what necessity there was of King or Commonwealth, for which he was to part with his money against his will; but thought himselfe to be so much master of whatsoever he possest, that it could not be taken from him vpon any pretence of common safety without his owne consent; King they thought was but a title of the highest honour, which Gentleman, Knight, Baron, Earle, Duke were but steps to ascend to, with the helpe of Riches.⁴⁶⁷

The hierarchic degrees are slightly different and wealth is charged with giving false hope of political and social ascent, but the basic misunderstanding appears to be identical: in such a context, the detachment between sovereign and subjects is progressively softened and loses its indispensable clear-cut boundaries. Honours are no longer conceived as

concessions, but as something independent of the will of whoever is in power. In Hobbes's view, this kind of reading contributes to creating political instability, and it seems no coincidence that he lists it among the causes of the Civil War.

Coming back to the Homeric poems, it is clear enough that the use of the tool of downgrading allows the philosopher to further fix the problem of the simultaneous presence of kings within the same group, and, accordingly, of the overlapping sovereignties. Although the original texts do not enable Hobbes to systematically adopt this strategy, he chooses to include within the categories mentioned in *Leviathan* – earl, lord, duke, prince – the potential competitors of those he wants to consider, not just some *basiléis*, but the real *basiléis*. The others are simply their emanations and hence serve to confirm the superiority of the real holders of sovereignty. Obviously, this strategy is very systematically and frequently applied in defence and protection of Agamemnon, his role and his position.⁴⁶⁸

We find a first significant occurrence in book II of the *Iliad*. Right after announcing the withdrawal from the siege of Troy, with the hidden intention of spurring the army to fight harder, the son of Atreus loses control of the situation, because the army considers his statement genuine, and starts chaotically running to the ships in order to return home as soon as possible. In such a confused situation, while all soldiers –*áristoi* and non-*áristoi*– are rushing to the sea, Odysseus takes the leadership and situation upon himself. He adopts two different strategies to restore order, two strategies dependent on the *status* of his comrades (*basiléus* or simple members of the army). It seems significant to consider some aspects from the first one, which is thus described in the *Iliad*: “Whenever Odysseus met some man of rank, a king [*basiléus*],/ he'd halt and hold him back with winning words”.⁴⁶⁹ On this occasion, the political problem is two-fold: there is not only the well-known situation of the plurality of kings but also – and perhaps worse for Hobbes – these ones blatantly disobey an order from their commander-in-chief, which – as Odysseus reminds them – had been given to them in advance during the Council.⁴⁷⁰

By using the technique of downgrading, Hobbes can both fix the first problem and soften the consequences of the second one. We read in his translation: “And when he met with any Prince or Peer,/He gently said”.⁴⁷¹ *Basiléus* becomes *prince*, that is, according to the explanation in *Leviathan*, someone who is subordinated to the holder of sovereign power. Furthermore, Odysseus, compensating for Agamemnon's lack of authority, might for this reason appear to be a potential competitor of the commander-in-chief. However, by using the term *peer* for him, Hobbes demotes the king of Ithaca to a lower hierarchical level than Agamemnon, again placing him in the general group of the members of the Achaean army, namely, the subjects of Atreus' son.

The downgrading of some *basiléis* to *princes* is a frequent tool used by the philosopher in his translation of the *Iliad*. For example, we find it in

VII (100*/106),⁴⁷² IX (699*/710 [S. 706]), XII (302*/319), XIV (346*/379), XIX (289*/309); in XVIII (512*/556)⁴⁷³ and XXIII (33*/36) the noun used as a replacement is *lord*, whereas in XXIV (372*/404), the term is *leader*.⁴⁷⁴

An occurrence in book XIX is worth mentioning: the original Homeric lines mention “other kings [*állous* (...) *basiléas*]”⁴⁷⁵ and the Hobbesian translation is “other Princes”.⁴⁷⁶

On this occasion, the downgrade both allows the philosopher to remove any possible misunderstanding and, contrary to what we saw in a previously-mentioned example,⁴⁷⁷ renders the excision of the adjective *állous* unnecessary.

A case from the *Odyssey* appears equally significant. It is moreover referred, though not directly, to one of the less acceptable political regimes that Hobbes has to handle in his translation work, because it is at odds with his absolutist vision. It is the political system of Scheria, the Phaeacians’ island, where, according to what we read in the Homeric text, Alcinous, the king, is more akin to a *primus inter pares* than a king in the Hobbesian sense.

If the analysis only focused on the lines where this regime is described, we could not fully understand Hobbes’s subtle work to force this situation into a dimension more befitting of his ideas, and to stress the detachment between the sovereign and the subjects more markedly than in the original poem. We read in those lines:

<p>There are twelve peers [<i>basiléis</i>] of the realm who rule our land, thirteen, counting myself.⁴⁷⁸</p>	<p>δώδεκα γὰρ κατὰ δῆμον ἀρπυρέεες βασιλῆες ἀρχοὶ κραινούσι, τρισκαιδέκατος δ’ ἐγὼ αὐτός.⁴⁷⁹</p>	<p>Twelve Princes in <i>Phaeacia</i> there be, And I the thirteenth am.⁴⁸⁰</p>
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On this occasion, the translation is faithful and it seems no downgrading technique is used; on the contrary, at first glance and paradoxically enough, Alcinous’s rank seems to be diminished to the level of the others: the assertion “I thirteenth am” sounds clear in identifying his position within the group of the *princes*. Here, Hobbes seems to choose a more subtle approach than in the previously considered situations, and this seems to be due to several reasons.

Firstly, the model of the Phaeacians’ island as a whole was traditionally recurrent and quoted in the political literature; accordingly, it was hard to modify. The comparison between Scheria and the Cyclops’ island – though, from a merely narrative perspective, the latter follows the former – could create a contrast effect which could lead to interpretations resting upon the antithesis between political organisation and the lack thereof. In the specific case of the Phaeacians’ land, however, this political interpretation runs the risk of being oriented in a different

direction from that appreciated by the philosopher. Accordingly, from his perspective, some fixing was needed, but it was too famous and politically significant a passage to be directly and radically altered.

By widening the analysis to book VIII as a whole and by moving back to book VII, we can find some aspects to enable us to claim that a downgrade technique was actually used by Hobbes according to a logic which, as with Agamemnon, aims to protecting the supremacy of the king over other *basiléis*, or rather, following the Hobbesian idea, over subjects.

In the English translation, the word *prince* referred to the Phaeacians' king is used only on this occasion, where he is speaking in the first person about himself and the other men who are in charge of Scheria.

Generally, as a replacement for the Greek noun *basiléus*, we find the English term *king*; for instance, consider books VII (43*/46⁴⁸¹ and 129*/141) and VIII (150*/157 and 445*/469). The name *king* is also employed in book VII (9*/11 and 24*/23) as replacement of the verb *wanáso*.

The other Phaeacians' *basiléis* are not treated in the same way: in book VIII 37*/41 and 41*/47, for example, the couple *skeptúchoi basiléis* in the first case and the single epithet in the second one are replaced simply by *princes*. In book VII 44*/49 the more problematic expression *diotrephés basiléis* is merely substituted by the expression "King and Queen"⁴⁸² related to only Alcinous and Arete. This expression ably removes any link to the kingship for those men, as well as the mention, suggested by the adjective, of their possible tie with the deities.

In the description of the Throne Room, this subordinate relation is more strongly emphasised. However, on this occasion, in order to highlight this aspect, we have to set aside the analysis of the words *wánax* and *basiléus* just for a while, since they are not present in this passage.

Inside to left and right, in a long unbroken row	ἐν δὲ θρόνοι περι τοῖχον ἐρηρέδατ'	And round about them all,
from farthest outer gate to the inmost chamber,	ἐνθα καὶ ἔνθα, ἐς μυχὸν ἐξ οὐδοῖο	Thrones every way,
thrones stood backed against the wall, each draped	διαμπερές, ἔνθ' ἐνὶ πέπλοι	All cover'd with a dainty Stuff and fine,
with a finely spun brocade, women's handsome work.	λεπτοὶ εὐύνητοι βεβλήατο, ἔργα γυναικῶν.	The work of Womens hands.
Here the Paheacian lords [<i>eghétors</i>] would sit enthroned,	ἔνθα δὲ Φαιήκων ἡγήτορες ἐδριόωντο	The King and Lords , and drink and
dining, drinking—the feast flowed on forever. ⁴⁸³	πίνοντες καὶ ἔδοντες· ἐπηετανὸν γὰρ ἔχεσκον. ⁴⁸⁴	make good chear. ⁴⁸⁵

Use of the Greek noun *eghétor* ("leader, commander, chief"⁴⁸⁶) aside, it is worth considering how Hobbes chooses to translate these lines. By adding

the term *king*, which is absent in the original text, and replacing *eghétōres* with lords, he is able to stress and emphasise the detachment between Alcinous and the other Phaeacians' *basiléis*, though there is no separation evident in the Greek lines.

Coming back to the passage from which we started, it seems reasonable to affirm that the philosopher here chooses to downgrade Alcinous from *basiléus* to *prince*, with a view to maintaining all the other Phaeacian kings on a low level, who are described as having his same rank in the Homeric text. It clearly is a means to an end, aimed at levelling off the system as a whole to a lower degree, in order to make the Alcinous' supremacy stand out on other occasions. As a consequence, he acquires a position of supremacy among those members of the Phaeacian community, whom the *Odyssey* identifies as *basiléis* like Alcinous. Accordingly, also the regime of Scheria generally appears more monocratic than in the original poem.

We find an analogous logic – and from an Hobbesian perspective, perhaps worsened by a context where some people try to claim the throne of a king believed to be dead – in the choice to replace the term *basiléis* with *princes* to identify the suitors, that is, those who strive to usurp the position of the legitimate sovereign Odysseus. Hobbes does not allow them to be called *basiléis* as they are in the original poem.⁴⁸⁷

Book XX presents two cases (168*/194 and 169*/196) which might be related to the same idea. Eumaeus is carrying Odysseus to Itacha's palace disguised as a panhandler. When the cowherd Philoetius sees him, he says:

Who's this stranger, Eumaeus, just come to the house?	τίς δὴ ὄδε ξεῖνος νέον εἰλήλουθε, συβῶτα,	What Countryman, and what his Parents were?
What roots does the man claim—who are his people?	ἡμέτερον πρὸς δῶμα; τέων δ' ἔξ εὔχεται εἶναι	For, for his person he may be a Prince .
Where are his blood kin? his father's fields?	ἀνδρῶν; ποῦ δέ νύ οἱ γενεὴ καὶ πατρὶς	God can make Princes go
Poor beggar. But what a build— a royal king 's [<i>basiléus wánax</i> ⁴⁸⁸]!	ἄρουρα; δύσμορος, ἧ τε ἔοικε δέμας βασιλῆϊ	from Land to Land And beg, when he will give them misery. ⁴⁹¹
Ah, once the gods weave trouble into our lives they drive us across the earth, they drown us all in pain,	ἄνακτι ἀλλὰ θεοὶ δυόωσι πολυπλάγκτους ἀνθρώπους, ὅππότε καὶ βασιλεῦσιν	
even kings [<i>basiléis</i>] of the realm. ⁴⁸⁹	ἐπικλώσωνται οἷζύν. ⁴⁹⁰	

In both occasions, Hobbes chooses to downgrade the term *basiléus* by replacing it with *prince*. It may again be due to the will to maintaining the overall level lower than really is, with a view to saving the supremacy of

Odysseus in absolute terms. Finally, again in the *Odyssey* but in a section where some events of the War of Troy are remembered, while talking about the burials of the heroes, the ghost of Agamemnon says: “you in your day have witnessed funeral games/for many heroes, games to honor the death of kings [basiléus]/when young men cinch their belts, tense to win some prize”.⁴⁹² The Greek text, while using a singular form, makes reference to kings in a general sense, and paves the way for the fact that there might be more than just one. That could be why in the English version this noun is replaced by “Princes”,⁴⁹³ a term that represents an evident downgrade of the original and that thus enables Hobbes to render the plural sense.

In general, it seems possible to conclude that the philosopher opts to use *lord* and *prince* in place of *basiléus* with a view to avoiding situations of overlapping sovereignties. Whether it is employed to strengthen a position of supremacy or to reduce the impact of the competitive forces at stake, the downgrading technique is clearly aimed at diminishing the presence of these situations and at defusing their possible consequences. This behaviour sounds fully consistent with what the philosopher says both in *Leviathan* and *Behemoth* about the filiation of positions and honours from the sovereign.

However, one particular case should be highlighted, in which Hobbes replaces *basiléus* with *lord* according to a *ratio* outside the classification thus far presented; it seems to be an anomaly and an exception, but it is still right to show it.

In book XVIII of the *Iliad*, there are several lines devoted to describing the episodes portrayed on Achilles’ shield. One of them depicts a “king’s estate [téménos basiléion]”⁴⁹⁴ where a harvest is underway, supervised by a king (*basiléus*).⁴⁹⁵ The philosopher translates the reference related to the estate “goodly Close of Wheat”,⁴⁹⁶ completely ignoring the adjective referring to kingship. He also uses “lord”⁴⁹⁷ in place of the more usual *king*, in order to replace the term *basiléus*. It seems that there are no political reasons behind the choice to opt for this kind of translation. Metrical and stylistic motivations aside, we can only hypothesise that, given the completely general nature of this reference, Hobbes did not consider this translation problematic and dangerous.

The analysis concerning *basiléus* and *basiléuo* also allows us to highlight other significant aspects. While, apropos of the translation choices regarding the political regime of the Phaeacians’ island, Nelson conveniently affirms “Hobbes frequently eliminates references to multiple kings in any single territory”,⁴⁹⁸ it seems to me crucial to also stress that, as emerges from some Hobbesian replacements of the terms *wánax* and *wanáso*, when the relation between the sovereign and the community is free from any ambiguities – that is, when there are no doubts as to places or people over which the authority of a sovereign is exerted – the nuance emphasising the possession of a regal position tends to be preserved.

This is the case of Sarpedon, for example (*Il.*, XVI, 649*/660), of the Laestrygonians' king (*Od.*, X, 103*–105*/110), of the Egyptians' sovereign (*Od.*, XIV, 268*/278), that of the Thesprotos (*Od.*, XIV, 302*/316) and of the Sidonians (*Od.*, XV, 103*/118), whose *status* as *basiléus* is fully recognised and made clear through the use of the noun *king*.

The second reference is particularly worth mentioning, since it clearly explains how Hobbes is used to handling those sections of the Homeric texts which present and describe this kind of situation. Newly arrived in the land of the Laestrygonians, Odysseus sends some comrades on a reconnaissance mission, with a view to collecting information about the people. We read:

And before the walls they met a girl, drawing water, Antiphates' strapping daughter–king o the Laestrygonians. She'd come down to a clear running spring, Artacia, where the local people came to fill their pails. My shipmates clustered round her, asking questions: who was king [<i>basiléus</i>] of the realm? who ruled [<i>wánasso</i>] the natives here? ⁴⁹⁹	κούρη δὲ ξύμβληντο πρὸ ἄστεος ὕδρευούσῃ, θυγατέρ' ἰφθίμῃ λαιστρυγόνος Ἄντιφάταο. ἢ μὲν ἄρ' ἔς κρήνην κατεβήσето καλλιπέερθρον Ἄρτακίην· ἔνθεν γὰρ ὔδωρ προτὶ ἄστῃ φέρεσκον· οἱ δὲ παριστάμενοι προσεφῶνεον, ἔκ τ' ἑρέοντο ὅς τις τῶνδ' εἴη βασιλεὺς καὶ οἷσιν ἀνάσσοι . ⁵⁰⁰	Met with the Daughter of <i>Antiphates</i> that was of Lestrigonians the King She had fetch't water from <i>Artacies</i> ; <i>Artacies</i> the name was of a Spring. They askt her of the King and of the People . ⁵⁰¹
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The context is clear: there are a well-identified land and a specific people, and it is likewise clear that the man in power is not in dangerous competition with the authority of someone else. Accordingly, there are no conditions that cause Hobbes to feel the need to modify the text. On the contrary, his choice is to faithfully translate it, albeit freely enough: he lays emphasis on those elements – “the King” and “the People”⁵⁰² – which, in his view, are the very essence of the Commonwealth.

One final aspect arising from the analysis of the Hobbesian work on the terms *basiléus* and *basiléuo* deserves consideration.

Unlike with *wánax*, the Homeric lexicon – though on a very limited number of occasions⁵⁰³ – presents a sort of hierarchical scale of power, which is built through the use of the superlative and comparative forms of the term *basiléus*. The scarceness of these occurrences means we cannot attribute a specific role to them, particularly if we compare them to the overall

amount of occasions where this noun has no alterations at all. However, it seems worth analysing how Hobbes approaches these situations, given that these linguistic circumstances outline contexts where one king is *more king* than the others or, even, *the most king*. These are particular occasions where, though the clear-cut supremacy of one is evident, the text suggests the existence of that well-known simultaneous presence of kings within the same group which is not appreciated at all by the philosopher.

In the opening lines of book IX of the *Iliad*, Agamemnon is again described in a situation of great difficulty. Since Achilles has gone away from the battlefield, the Achaean army is suffering several defeats. Because of this, the commander-in-chief proposes the retreat to the assembled soldiers, with no hidden agenda on this occasion. In response, Diomedes starts publicly criticising the son of Atreus, creating a situation very akin to those previously seen in book I with Achilles and in book II with Thersites.

Once again, Hobbes needs to defend Agamemnon; oddly enough, given that the original lexicon offers him a possible solution, the philosopher chooses not to use it.

Trying to appease the situation, Nestor suggests that his commander-in-chief should hold a banquet with a view to continuing the discussion in greater peace. However, the king of Pylos is aware that such a proposal and its implementation require the approval of the man in charge. Hence he says:

Then,	Ἄτρεΐδῃ, σὺ μὲν	And let them all from
Atrides, lead the way—you	ἄρχε· σὺ γὰρ	you (<i>Atrides</i>) take
are the greatest king	βασιλεύτατος	Their Orders. For you
[<i>basiléutatos</i>]. ⁵⁰⁴	ἔσσι. ⁵⁰⁵	are our General . ⁵⁰⁶

On this occasion, Hobbes cannot use the tool of downgrading that the Homeric usage of the superlative form *basiléutatos* might suggest to him, since it would not be a levelling to the bottom aimed at making a single king figure stand out. It would be a levelling to the top, that is, a recognition that many kings are present and, at most, one of them is *the most king*. It would clearly contradict what Hobbes writes in chapter XVII of *Leviathan*, where he states that only one (man or group of men) can be the sovereign, whereas all the others must be subjects. This might be why Hobbes shifts the dichotomy to a military plane, while it is actually clearly linked to the political terminology, replacing *basiléutatos* with “our General”.

The situations where the Homeric lexicon uses comparative forms lead to different translation choices by the philosopher. It also depends on the form itself: since it is by its own nature intended to create a comparison, it runs the risk, more than the previous one, of providing evidence of the simultaneous presence of kings.

The first occurrence (*Il.*, IX, 160) is also the only one where the significance suffers no alterations in translating, though this can be explained by moving from the Hobbesian intention of making Agamemnon the archetype of the absolute sovereign.

While pondering whether to send a legation to Achilles in order to achieve a reconciliation, the son of Atreus says about the rival:

Let him submit to me!	δηθητω–Αιδης τοι	Inexorable none
Only the god of death	αμειλιχος ηδ’	but <i>Pluto</i> is,
is so relentless, Death	αδαμαστος:	But hated for’t.
submits to no one–	τουνεκα και τε βροτοισι	I am the
so mortals hate him most	θεων εχθιστος	greater King,
of all the gods.	απαντων–	And elder man;
Let him bow down to me!	και μοι υποστητω, οσσον	he should
I am the greater king	βασιλευτερος	consider
[<i>basileuteros</i>],	ειμι	this. ⁵⁰⁹
I am the elder-born, I	ηδ’ οσσον γενεη	
claim–the greater	προγενεστερος ευχομαι	
man. ⁵⁰⁷	ειναι. ⁵⁰⁸	

While, on the one hand, Agamemnon’s being more king than Achilles entails a sort of equivalence of their respective institutional positions, on the other, it is also true that, in a situation where the comparison regards only these two characters – specifically those among whom the conflict of power in the *Iliad* is stronger and full of consequences – the advantages of presenting the son of Atreus in a position of supremacy position over Achilles overcome the disadvantage of recognising the latter as a *basileus*. Hobbes can afford it on this occasion, also because his translations are generally oriented in an opposite way as a whole. In any case, it remains the only situation where the English text faithfully reproduces the original one.

Again in book IX, but at line 392, the Homeric lexicon once more presents the word *basileuteros*. We are in a section where the struggle between these characters is going ahead, though at a distance. Achilles, right after receiving the reconciliation proposal, shows his own annoyance because one of Agamemnon’s daughters is part of the compensatory gifts. He says:

His daughter...I will	κουρην δ’ ου γαμεω	I’ll not his
marry no daughter of	Αγαμεμνονος	Daughter
Agamenon.	Ατρεΐδαο,	take. Bid him
Not if she rivaled	ουδ’ ει χρυσειη Αφροδιτη	bestow her
Aphrodite in all her	καλλος	Upon some Prince
golden glory,	εριζοι,	he thinks
not if she matched the crafts	εργα δ’ Αθηναη	more worthy.
of clear-eyed Athena,	γλαυκωπιδι ισοφαριζοι:	Let her
not even then would I	ουδε μιν ως γαμεω ο δ’	For Husband
make <i>her</i> my wife! No,	Αχαιων αλλον	have a King
let her father pitch on some	ελεσθω,	of greater
other Argive–	ος τις οτ’ επειοικε και ος	power. ⁵¹²
one who can please	βασιλευτερος	
him, a greater king	εστιν. ⁵¹¹	
[<i>basileuteros</i>] than I. ⁵¹⁰		

Hobbes cannot perhaps afford to downgrade Achilles – a possible future husband of a sovereign’s daughter – bestowing him a rank lower than *king*. Therefore, right after stressing that the other Achaeans are *princes*, he moves the comparison from the political dimension – that is from its being linked to the office – to that of distinction, showing us that Achilles himself – namely Agamemnon’s fiercest competitor – recognises that there are *greater kings* than him. As we saw in the previously delineated example, it seems like a game of cost effectiveness: the disadvantage of allowing Achilles to be described as king is compensated by the advantage of diminishing him by saying that there are kings greater than him.

The last occurrence is in book X of the *Iliad*. During a discussion within the Achaean group apropos of a night sortie against the Trojan camp, Diomedes volunteers, but he needs a comrade to cooperate with him. Taking the floor, Agamemnon says:

Diomedes, soldier after my own heart, pick your comrade now, whomever you want, the best of the volunteers—how many long to go! But no false respect. Don’t pass over the better man and pick the worse. Don’t bow to a soldier’s rank, an eye to his birth—even if he’s more kingly [<i>basiléuteros</i>]. ⁵¹³	Τυδείδη Διόμηδες, ἐμῶ κεχαρισμένε θυμῶ, τὸν μὲν δὴ ἔταρόν γ’αἰρήσειαι, ὃν κ’ἔθελῃσθα, φαινομένων τὸν ἄριστον, ἐπεὶ μεμάασί γε πολλοί. μηδὲ σὺ γ’αἰδόμενος σῆσι φρεσὶ τὸν μὲν ἀρείω καλλείπειν, σὺ δὲ χεῖρον’ ὀπάσσειαι αἰδοῖ εἴκων, ἐς γενεὴν ὀρόων, μηδ’εἰ βασιλεύταρός ἐστιν. ⁵¹⁴	<i>Tydidēs</i> , whom I love, now chuse your man; Regard not Birth nor Scepters, but the cause. Take him that you think best assist you can. ⁵¹⁵
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The words sound clear: it is a delicate decision, which rests strongly upon the military competences of the candidates, and that need not take into account any hierarchical reasons. However, Agamemnon is hiding an ulterior motive: he does not want Diomedes to bring Menelaus with him, since the commander-in-chief fears for the life of his brother. That is why he invites Diomedes not to consider either the lineage or the hierarchical rank (*med’ei basiléuteros estin*), but his valour, a requisite which puts Menelaus behind other soldiers. This plan actually succeeds, given that Diomedes chooses Odysseus.

The Hobbesian problem here is once again the use of the term *basiléuteros* which reveals once more the presence of a plurality of kings within the same group. Again on this occasion, he opts for drastic action: the reference to kingship is pushed into the background with a fleeting

mention of sceptres. Successively, the term *basiléuteros* is deprived of any institutional and royal value, and transformed into a mere acknowledgment of technical skills.

The outcomes are three lines almost bereft of any element directly related to the topic of kingship or, still less, suggesting some reading at odds with the idea of the clear-cut detachment between sovereign and subjects.

3.4 *Poimèn laôn* and the Disappearance of the Pastoral Idea of Monarchic Power

Although the noun *poimén* and the verb *poimáino* are undoubtedly part of the Homeric lexicon on kingship – here, even more than for the previously analysed terms, the remarkable aspects seem to come from the former more than the latter – they are more noticeable by their absence than by their translation.

As we have seen thus far, the Hobbesian habit of being inclined to omit or alter the lexicon of kingship – for a number of different reasons – is not surprising. However, with regard to these specific terms, there is a difference. Textual analysis reveals that the philosopher's problem in translating, replacing and removing them seems to be more extensive than those previously shown. Given that, due to his educational aim (net of the metric and stylistic reasons), Hobbes tends to modify any situations that threaten his political theory by describing dangerous or even only ambiguous scenarios, with *poimén* and *poimáino* his actions appear more drastic. His work does not seem simply aimed at reducing the risks or consequences of situations he conceives as problematic. He seems to want to remove the very idea that political authority can be equated with pastoral authority.

This metaphor is part of the history of political thought from its beginnings: we can trace it back to the Homeric poems. The figure of the king-shepherd, whose basic idea is related to the power conceived as accountability towards those who accept a ruler, is undoubtedly one of the most frequently used models both in Greek and in Latin ambits. It has also had great importance in later political traditions.

The basic idea does not seem so different from Hobbesian archetype of a sovereign, whose reasons for existence are clearly explained in *Leviathan* with these famous words:

it is no wonder if there be somewhat else required (besides covenant) to make their agreement constant and lasting; which is a common power, to keep them in awe, and to direct their actions to the common benefit. The only way to erect such a common power, as may be able to defend them from the invasion of foreigners, and the injuries of one another, and thereby to secure them in such sort, as

that by their own industry, and by the fruits of the earth, they may nourish themselves and live contentedly; is, to confer all their power and strength upon one man, or upon one assembly of men, that may reduce all their wills, by plurality of voices, unto one will.⁵¹⁶

Seeking safety – both internal and external – steering the community towards the common good, accepting the ties of obedience, given that the person in power has to ensure the aforementioned aims, seem to be aspects that fit a political reading where the king can be seen as a sort of shepherd.

All of this notwithstanding, the philosopher does not seem to appreciate a lot this kind of parallelism, this reading of political power, this interpretation of the relation between sovereign and subjects, though – at least at first glance – it does not sound so far from his own political ideas.

However, before suggesting some hypotheses and interpretation, it seems advisable to analyse the texts, with a view to bringing out the most significant elements.

The first one undoubtedly is the very great number of removals suffered by these terms; that is why, unlike what we have thus far, it is more useful to focus on their scant occurrences than on their many removals and alterations.

With regard to the latter, I limit myself to a list of the most important passages where they can be found, in order to indicate their amount, their systematic frequency, and spread both within the Homeric poems as a whole and within each one. The noun *poimén*, often linked to the plural genitive *laôn* (of the people) and, anyway, with a clear political meaning,⁵¹⁷ is removed in *Iliad* I (249*/263), II (74*/85; 92*/105; 216*/243; 699*/772), IV (280*–281*/296; 387*/413), V (133*/144; 465*/513; 514*/566; 517*/570), VII (224*/230), IX (75*/81), X (2*/3; 62*/73; 358*/406), XI (90*/92; 176*/187; 188*/202; 345*/370; 471*/506; 600*/651 [S. 650]), XIII (388*/411), XIV (20*/22; 393*/423; 480*/516), XV (225*/262), XVI (2*/2), XVII (320*/348), XIX, (231*/251; 357*/386), XXII (271*/277), XXIII (396*/389; 418*ss./411) and in the *Odyssey* III (147*/156; 437*/469), IV (499*/528; 503*/532), XIV (479*/497), XV (129*/151), XVII (104*/109), XVIII (60*/70 [S. 69]), XX (87*ss./106), XXIV (338*/368 [S. 367]; 411*/456 [S. 455]).

Such a great number of excisions is, if not evidence, at least a clearly significant characteristic of a removal choice which, because of its very systematic recurrence, must have its own reason for being.

In this regard, it is worth mentioning another aspect arising from the textual analysis, an aspect that, though less frequent than the removals, offers us some notable information. On the rare occasions when the Homeric poems use the noun *poimén* in its original meaning without giving it a political characterisation, Hobbes appear less reluctant to recognise the figures pinpointed through this term as *shepherds*.

It happens for example in the long metaphor closing book VIII of the *Iliad*, where the campfires inside the Trojan camp are compared to the stars in the sky; the poem says that, by watching them, “the shepherd’s

[*poimén*] heart exults”⁵¹⁸. In book XII of the same poem, Hector lifting up a very big rock is compared to a *poimén* able to carry in his hand a ram’s skin without any effort.⁵¹⁹ Again in book XXIII of the *Iliad*, there is a generic reference to a shepherd and the Greek term used is *poimén*.⁵²⁰ In book X of the *Odyssey*,⁵²¹ in the description of the land of the Lestrygonians, there is another generic reference to shepherds (*poimén*).⁵²²

Bearing in mind that, of the sixty or more occurrences of the noun *poimén* in the Homeric poems as a whole, only on some ten occasions is it used without any political meaning,⁵²³ it seems quite clear that there might be a specific reason which spurred Hobbes to avoid faithfully translating this term. Given this, it seems useful to consider some of the occasions, actually not so numerous, where the reference to the royal power entailed in the noun *poimén* is maintained by Hobbes in his translations.

The first situation where it happens is in book II of the *Iliad*; it regards Agamemnon and it does not sound strange at all.⁵²⁴ On the contrary, the previous⁵²⁵ and following⁵²⁶ omissions are surprising, given that these three elements – all related to Agamemnon – if analysed together, are very significant as a whole, though at first glance they might seem to be the result of three unrelated choices, incongruous with one another.

Why is the same character, and what is more, one whom Hobbes clearly prefers, treated in such different manners within the same book? The only translation is found within Odysseus’ violent reprimand of Thersites.

We can have no idea, no clear idea at all how the long campaign will end... whether Acaea’s sons will make it home unharmed or slink back in disgrace. But there you sit, hurling abuse at the son of Atreus, Agamemnon, marshal of armies [<i>Atréide Agamémnoni, poiméni laón</i>], simply because our fighters give Atrides the lion’s share of all our plunder. ⁵²⁷	οὐδέ τί πω σάφα ἴδμεν ὅπως ἔσται τάδε ἔργα ἢ εὖ ἢε κακῶς νοστήσομεν υἱές Ἀχαιῶν. τῷ νῦν Ἀτρεΐδη Ἀγαμέμνονι, ποιμένι λαῶν, ἦσαι ὄνειδίζων, ὅτι οἱ μάλα πολλὰ διδοῦσιν ἦρωες Δαναοί. ⁵²⁸	Because we know not how we shall come off As yet from <i>Troy</i> , must you the King upbraid, And at the Princes of the Army scoff, As if they too much honor him paid? ⁵²⁹
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The removal prior to this occurrence of *poimén* translated by Hobbes is in the final section of Thersites’ discourse, where the criticism against the commander-in-chief becomes stronger, partly due to the mention of the deprivation of Briseis suffered by Achilles at the hands of Agamemnon himself.

<p>«[...] Look—now it's Achilles, a greater man he disgraces, seizes and keeps his prize, tears her away himself. But no gall in Achilles. Achilles lets it go. If not, Atrides, that outrage would have been your last!» So thersites taunted the famous field marshall [<i>poimèn laôn</i>].⁵³⁰</p>	<p>«[...] ὃς καὶ νῦν Ἀχιλλῆα, ἕο μέγ' ἀμείνονα φῶτα, ἠτίμησεν· ἐλὼν γὰρ ἔχει γέρας, αὐτὸς ἀπούρας. ἀλλὰ μάλ' οὐκ Ἀχιλλῆϊ χόλος φρεσίν, ἀλλὰ μεθῆμων· ἦ γὰρ ἄν, Ἀτρείδῃ, νῦν ὕστατα λωβήσαιο.» ᾧως φάτο νεικείων Ἀγαμέμνονα, ποιμένα λαῶν, Θερσίτης.⁵³¹</p>	<p>But that <i>Achilles</i> is to anger slow, that injury of his had been his last.⁵³²</p>
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The aforementioned subsequent omission is in the closing section of book II, in the so-called Catalogue of Ships, that part devoted to presenting the various heroes and contingents of the Achaean army who have come to Troy.

<p>Best by far of the men was Telamonian Ajax while Achilles raged apart. The famed Achilles towered over them all, he and the battle-team that bore the peerless son of Peleus into war. But off in his beaked seagoing ships he lay, raging away at Atrides Agamemnon, king of armies [<i>poimèn laôn</i>].⁵³³</p>	<p>ἀνδρῶν αὖ μέγ' ἄριστος ἦν Τελαμώνιος Αἴας, ὄφρ' Ἀχιλεὺς μήνιεν· ὁ γὰρ πολὺ φέρτατος ἦεν, ἵπποι θ', οἱ φορέεσκον ἀμύνονα Πηλείωνα. ἀλλ' ὁ μὲν ἐν νήεσσι κορωνίσι ποντοπόροισι κεῖτ' ἀπομηνίσας Ἀγαμέμνονι ποιμένι λαῶν Ἀτρείδῃ.⁵³⁴</p>	<p>'Mongst Greeks the greater <i>Ajax</i> had no Peer, (For now <i>Achilles</i> had the War declined, Whom none in Prowess equall'd or came near, Nor other Horses could with his compare.) But at his Ships he discontented staid, And full of spight which he t'<i>Atrides</i> bare.⁵³⁵</p>
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Considering what has emerged thus far with regard to the figure and role of Agamemnon in the Hobbesian translations, it is difficult not to see that, on the occasions when the reference to his royal authority expressed through the formula *poimèn laôn* has a negative meaning in the narrative, Hobbes's version does not take it into account at all. On the contrary, when the lines contain elements supporting or strengthening Agamemnon's position, the philosopher has no scruples in replacing that

expression with the term *king*, albeit using a more simplified formula than the original one (“*Atréide Agamémnoni, poiméni laôn*”).

By further detailing the context, we can appreciate how this translation choice is part of a wider aspect which counts on three different actions whose contemporaneous use allows Hobbes to defend Agamemnon, given that his authority is in trouble in this section of the narrative. The aforementioned words of Odysseus come after two situations where the original plural term *basiléis* (247 and 250) is replaced by king in its singular form (223* and 226*) and Thersites’ criticism is shown as referred not to the Achaean kings as a whole, but to *the king*.⁵³⁶ What immediately follows this operation is the mentioned translation of *poimèn laôn* with king, a translation that, significantly enough, is placed between the two analysed omissions of the same expression.

It is perhaps not unnecessary to highlight that, in both these situations, the son of Atreus – and, as a consequence, the institution that he represents for Hobbes – is, directly or indirectly, charged with having triggered the wrath of Achilles. Its public effects, particularly on the war, affect the army, and hence the authority of Agamemnon, the main bearer of responsibility, is weakened.

By not identifying the son of Atreus as *poimèn laôn* – that is, by not bringing out his as *king* in this specific situation – the philosopher lessens and diminishes the crucial and serious problem of the clash against Achilles, a clash which reveals great incompatibility with his political theory.

Analogously, in an episode of book VII of the *Iliad* where the question of Achilles’ wrath arises again, Hobbes chooses to remove the reference to the royal power of Agamemnon, by the excision of the expression “*Agamémnoni poiméni laôn*”. Ajax is speaking and he says to Hector:

Hector, now you’ll learn, once for all, in combat man-to- man, whatt kind of champions range the Argive ranks, even besides Achilles, that lionhearth who mauls battalion wholesale. Off in his beaked seagoing ship Achilles lies, raging away at Agamemnon, marshal of armies [<i>Agamémnoni poiméni laôn</i>]– but here we are, strogn enough to engage <i>you</i> , and plenty of us too. ⁵³⁷	Ἔκτορ, νῦν μὲν δὴ σάφα εἴσειςαι οἰόθεν οἴος οἴοι καὶ Δαναοῖσιν ἀριστῆες μετέασι, καὶ μετ’ Ἀχιλλῆα ῥηξήγορα θυμολέοντα. ἀλλ’ὁ μὲν ἐν νῆεσσι κορωνίσι ποντοπόροισι κεῖτ’ ἀπομηνίσας Ἄγαμέμνονι, ποιμένι λαῶν· ἡμεῖς δ’ εἰμὲν τοῖοι οἱ ἄν σέθεν ἀντιάσαιμεν καὶ πολέες. ⁵³⁸	And threatening said, <i>Hector</i> I’ll make you see, That in the Army many yet remain, Though from us angry gone <i>Achilles</i> be, And discontent from Battle now abstain, That fear not <i>Hector</i> . Do the worst you can. ⁵³⁹
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The problematic lines are identical to those of book II previously analysed,⁵⁴⁰ where we saw that Hobbes avoids translating the reference to Agamemnon's kingship, given that the passage does not offer a very positive image of his behaviour.

By making specific reference to what has emerged thus far from the analysis of book II of the *Iliad* apropos of the translation – real or missing – of the pastoral characterisation of political power, it is hard to hypothesise that such a disparate variation of replacement choices – together with a number of other actions all aimed at strengthening Agamemnon's position – might be random. On the contrary, it seems reasonable to argue that they depend on precise reasons, and fully within a scheme and logic aimed at defending that figure conceived as the archetype of the absolute monarch.

We find analogous behaviour in a passage of book XIX of the *Iliad* where, though the problem of Achilles's wrath continues, the Homeric text sees the institutional role of Agamemnon recognised even by Thetis. Speaking to his son, the nymph says:

So go and call the Argive warriors to the muster:	ἀλλὰ σὺ γ'εἰς ἀγορὴν καλέσας ἦρωας Ἄχαιούς,	Go you, and th'Argive Lords to Councell call,
renounce your rage at the proud commander Agammenon [<i>poimèn laôn</i>],	μῆνιν ἀποειπὼν Ἄγαμέμνονι, ποιμένι λαῶν,	And with King Agamemnon there agree,
then arm for battle quicly, don your fighting power!. ⁵⁴¹	αἶψα μάλ' ἐς πόλεμον θωρήσσεο, δύσεο δ' ἄλκην. ⁵⁴²	and put your anger off before them all. ⁵⁴³

On this occasion, it is not only advantageous for Hobbes to maintain the idea of kingship entailed in the expression *poimèn laôn*, since the situation is broadly in favour of Agamemnon. The philosopher also has another opportunity, and he does not fail to grab it.

The Greek text describes a situation where the Achaeans are summoned to the assembly,⁵⁴⁴ but it does not specify who they are. However, the English translation says something more, something remarkable. We read in the Hobbesian version “Go you, and th'Argive Lords to Councell call/And with King Agamemnon there agree”. The philosopher specifies that, king aside, the attendees are the *lords*, that is, according to what he explains both in *Leviathan* and *Behemoth*, the subjects. The fact that he does not remove the royal idea expressed through the Homeric formula *poimèn laôn* is useful to once again stress the clear-cut detachment between these two components of the social *corpus*. That is probably why there is no omission here, where there usually would be.

The further elements that can be inferred by the remaining Hobbesian translation choices concerning this expression are scant. Worth

mentioning is the fact that sometimes – consider, for example, *Iliad* V (465*/513; 514*/566), X (2*/3) and XIV (20*/22) – the philosopher replaces this formula which identifies an institutional role with the simple name or the patronymic of the man to whom it is referred. On other occasions – see, for example, *Iliad* V (517*/570) and XXIV (623*/654) – he prefers to use some personal pronouns. It seems reasonable to highlight that in all the above-mentioned cases, the removals do not regards secondary characters of the *Iliad*, but figures of primary importance: Aeneas and Menelaus (twice) for the occurrences in Book V and Agamemnon for those in books X, XIV and XXIV.

The *Odyssey* as a whole is less generous in data and information concerning this topic. However, there is a case of translation of the expression *poimèn laôn* which is anomalous and, because of this, significant. At the beginning of book IV, Telemachus and Pisistratus, son of Nestor, go to Sparta in order to look for information about Odysseus. As they are arriving, Eteoneus, the Menelaus’s squire, catches sight of them. We read in the *Odyssey*:

The travelers,	Τὼ δ' αὐτ' ἐν προθύροισι	Mean while by
Nestor's shining son and	δόμων αὐτῶ τε	th'Horses
prince Telemachus,	καὶ ἵππῳ,	th'utter Gate
had brought themselves	Τηλέμαχος θ' ἦρωσ καὶ	without
and their horses to a	Νέστορος ἀγλαῶς	<i>Telemachus</i> stood
standstill	υἱός,	and <i>Pisistratus</i> .
just outside the court when	στῆσαν· ὁ δὲ	Then <i>Eteoneus</i> by
good lord Eteoneus,	προμολῶν ἶδετο	chance came
passing through the gates	κρείων	out,
now, saw them there,	Ἐτεωνεύς,	A careful Servant of
and the ready aide-in-arms	ὀτρηρὸς θεράπων	<i>Menelaus</i> .
of Menelaus	Μενελάου	And having seen
took the message through	κυδαλίμοιο,	them, in he
his sovereign's halls	βῆ δ' ἴμεν ἀγγελέων διὰ	went agen,
and stepping close to his	δῶματα ποιμένι	And being near to
master broke the news:	λαῶν,	his Master sate,
“Strangers have just	ἀγχοῦ δ' ἰστάμενος	O King (said he)
arrived, your majesty,	ἔπεα πτερόεντα	there are
Menelaus.	προσηύδα·	without two
Two men, but they look	«ξείνω δὴ τινε τῷδε,	men
like kin of mighty Zeus	διοτρεφές ὦ	Like Great mens
himself [...]». ⁵⁴⁵	Μενέλαε,	Sons with their
	ἄνδρε δύω, γενεῆ δὲ	Coach and
	Διὸς μεγάλοιο	Gate. ⁵⁴⁷
	ἔϊκτον [...]». ⁵⁴⁶	

On this occasion, the translation of *poimèn laôn* is *master*, a meaning which seems to refer more to the sense of *owner (master) of the oikos* that we have

seen for the term *wánax*⁵⁴⁸ than to the idea of the king-shepherd. Menelaus is the king of Sparta, but, in this specific situation, the English translation describes him as the master of the palace where he lives. What seems surprising is that this is one of the cases where Hobbes usually has no problems at all in recognising the characters' *status* as king, since the ruled communities are well identified and, accordingly, there cannot be any problem of overlapping sovereignties. Not without reason, corresponding to the Greek adjective *diotrephés*, we find the English noun *king*, which leaves little doubt as to how Hobbes conceives the position and role of Menelaus in this situation. That being said, the replacement of the pastoral image of royal power with the term *master* is hard to explain according to the considerations given thus far. It seems to depend on another, broader logic, which seems more apt to explain why this peculiar characterisation of the holder of a monocratic power is so systematically ignored by Hobbes.

The problem rests not only upon the questions previously highlighted, according to which the Hobbesian translation choices concerning the expression *poimèn laôn* appear completely in line with those regarding both *wánax* and *basiléus*. Both the emphasis laid on the sovereign-subjects dichotomy and, in particular, the strong strategy aimed at defending Agamemnon as a model of the absolute king never diminishes. However, there is something more: we can see a peculiar inclination for the omission, removal and substitution of this expression, an inclination more marked than we saw for both *wánax* and *basiléus*. It offers us a glimpse of other motivations spurring the philosopher to such a radical refusal of this image of monocratic power. I think that, in this case, the most problematic aspect is not the royal power itself, but its relationship to this metaphor. This does not depend on Hobbes' refusal of the idea of a king who takes care of his people like a shepherd. I am convinced that the problem is in the herd, since the idea of the community conceived as a group of sheep harshly clashes with another cornerstone of Hobbes's political theory. We find the essential elements of the problem well highlighted in the section of chapter XVII of *Leviathan* entitled *Why certain creatures without reason, or speech, do nevertheless live in society, without any coercive power*. Hobbes writes:

It is true, that certain living creatures, as bees, and ants, live sociably one with another, (which are therefore by Aristotle numbered amongst political creatures;) and yet have no other direction, than their particular judgments and appetites; nor speech, whereby one of them can signify to another, what he thinks expedient for the common benefit: and therefore some man may perhaps desire to know, why mankind cannot do the same. To which I answer.⁵⁴⁹

Then, the Hobbesian answers follow. He says that these two kinds of community deeply differ because the human one is characterised by

continuous competition among men, the distinction between common and private good, the presumption that each one considers himself better in ruling, the skill of presenting good as evil and evil as good, and criticism towards those in power.⁵⁵⁰ However, there is one final and decisive reason.⁵⁵¹ Hobbes closes:

Lastly, the agreement of these creatures is natural; that of men, is by covenant only, which is artificial: and therefore it is no wonder if there be somewhat else required (besides covenant) to make their agreement constant and lasting; which is a common power, to keep them in awe, and to direct their actions to the common benefit.⁵⁵²

The systematic removals of the expressions relating to the pastoral reading of kingship might depend on Hobbes's refusal of any link to that tradition of political thought which refers to the Aristotelian idea of man as *zôon politikón*, a gist he completely rejects. The choice to live in society does not depend on precepts of natural law, but springs from a peculiar need that finds its substance in a solution that, far from being congenital, is completely artificial, since it comes from the will of those who, in order to save their lives, opt for the covenant.

Furthermore such a will is hardly compatible with the image of the herd, given that it is usually conceived as a mass pushed by fear and by the propensity to act more as a mob than as a group composed of autonomous individuals with well-defined identities. Although in the natural condition of mankind human beings lack safety, the decision to get out of this *status* is an individual aspect through which each member of the future Commonwealth rationally chooses as an individual to create a society.⁵⁵³

The shepherd's authority, though at least apparently corresponding to the description given by the philosopher in *Leviathan* of a power able to subjugate and steer the actions of the social *corpus* to the common good,⁵⁵⁴ since it does not originate from a deliberate choice, but springs from mere natural aggregation – an event that according to Hobbes's negative anthropology cannot happen⁵⁵⁵ – fails to show a suitable image of real royal power, albeit in a purely metaphorical sense.

While these are the most plausible reasons why Hobbes is reluctant to relate the Homeric formula *poimèn laôn* to the holder of sovereignty, it is important to underline that, despite the very rare cases where an analogous expression occurs in *Leviathan*, we can find a varying interpretation by the philosopher.

If we take into account the uses of the expression *shepherd (or pastor) of the people* in this Hobbesian work, it does not seem to be possible to infer a univocal reading.

It occurs for example in chapter XXXIII within the section entitled *The New Testament*, and it is used with a view to identifying emperors. While discussing the Laodicea Council, Hobbes writes:

this Council was held in the 364th year after Christ. After which time, though ambition had so far prevailed on some doctors of the church, as no more to esteem emperors, though Christian, for the shepherds of the people, but for sheep; and emperors not Christian, for wolves.⁵⁵⁶

We find two other significant occurrences in chapter XLII, where, while discussing the right of the Christian prince to appoint pastors, the philosopher observes:

For it is evident to the meanest capacity, that men's actions are derived from the opinions they have of the good, or evil, which from those actions redound unto themselves; and consequently, men that are once possessed of an opinion, that their obedience to the sovereign power, will be more hurtful to them, than their disobedience, will disobey the laws, and thereby overthrow the commonwealth, and introduce confusion, and civil war; for the avoiding whereof, all civil government was ordained. And therefore in all commonwealths of the heathen, the sovereigns have had the name of pastors of the people, because there was no subject that could lawfully teach the people, but by their permission and authority. This right of the heathen kings, cannot be thought taken from them by their conversion to the faith of Christ; who never ordained, that kings, for believing in him, should be deposed, that is, subjected to any but himself, or (which is all one) be deprived of the power necessary for the conservation of peace amongst their subjects, and for their defence against foreign enemies. And therefore Christian kings are still the supreme pastors of their people, and have power to ordain what pastors they please, to teach the Church, that is, to teach the people committed to their charge.⁵⁵⁷

A little further on, while he is considering the *De Summo Pontifice* of Cardinal Bellarmine, Hobbes clearly highlights what is in his opinion the distinction between the sovereign and the pastor with regard to power.

Besides, it maketh nothing to the power of any pastor, (unless he have the civil sovereignty,) what kind of government is the best; because their calling is not to govern men by commandment, but to teach them, and persuade them by arguments, and leave it to them to consider, whether they shall embrace, or reject the doctrine taught. For monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy, do mark out unto us three sorts of sovereigns, not of pastors; or, as we may say, three sorts of masters of families, not three sorts of schoolmasters for their

children. And therefore the second conclusion, concerning the best form of government of the Church, is nothing to the question of the Pope's power without his own dominions: for in all other commonwealths his power (if he have any at all) is that of the schoolmaster only, and not of the master of the family.⁵⁵⁸

The first passage aside, where the juxtaposition between the pastoral idea of power and the emperor's is clear and unequivocal, what arises from the others is an idea that partially modifies the issue by digressing from the exclusively political ambit to that of teaching. However, it is true that, though Hobbes is speaking about educational aspects, his purpose is and remains political, and the discussion always concerns the theme of power. It seems significant that, with a view to discussing the topic of the forms of government, the philosopher stresses the existence of a distinction between sovereigns and pastors, a distinction whose essence refers to two different ideas of authority respectively correlated to that of the head of the household and that of the teacher.

In *Dialogue I of Behemoth*, however, the philosopher identifies the sovereign and the shepherd:

Is not a Christian King [...] as much a Bishop now, as the Heathen Kings were of old. For amongst them *Episcopus* was a name common to all King. Is not he a Bishop now to whom God hath committed the charge of all the Soules of his Subjects both of the Lavity and the Clergy? And though he be in relation to our Sauour who is the chiefe Pastor, but a sheep, yet compared to his owne Subjects, they are all sheep, both Layique and Clerique, and he only Shepard.⁵⁵⁹

What value and significance was assigned by Hobbes to the formula *poimèn laôn*, and how it was related with the analogous expressions he uses both in *Leviathan* and in *Behemoth* is not fully clear. What the translations allow us to say is that, of the three principal meanings concerning the king's power in a wider and all-embracing extent in the Homeric lexicon, this one, while achieving a good, long-lasting tradition in political thought, is the more penalised one in the Hobbesian English version.

3.5 In Order to Complete the Lexicon of Kingship

Right after closing the analysis concerning the uses of the nouns *wánax*, *basiléus* and *poimén* and their corresponding verbs, a little overview of the remaining terminology dealing with the monocratic power in the Homeric poems is needed, with a view to completing the discussion. As previously described, these are not such frequent situations. They are principally related to peculiar and specific aspects, and are for the most part fairly insignificant in terms of their reception in Hobbes's translation

work. Despite that, there are some passages, uses and situations that deserve to be looked at, albeit briefly.

The noun *kosmētōr* is one of the three epithets of kingship used in the first sixteen lines of the *Iliad*. In the very beginning, this poem presents Agamemnon by identifying him as *wanax* (7), *basilēus* (9) and *kosmētōr* (16). The first noun is translated *king*; the second is replaced by the Greek patronymic *Atrides*, maybe in order to avoid putting the monarchy in a bad light.⁵⁶⁰ The third occurrence seems a little different. It is translated by using again the Greek patronymic *Atrides*, but there is a remarkable difference compared with the aforementioned case, a difference that sheds light on a very significant element for political analysis. The Homeric text is describing Apollo's minister Chryses coming to the Achaean camp in order to ask for his daughter's return.

Yes, Chryses approached the Acaean's fast ships to win his daughter back, bringing a priceless ransom and bearing high in hand, wound on a golden staff, the wreaths of the god, the distant deadlky Archer.	ὁ γὰρ ἦλθε θεῶς ἐπὶ νῆας Ἀχαιῶν λυσόμενος τε θύγατρα φέρων τ' ἄπερείσι' ἄποινα, στέμματ' ἔχων ἐν χερσὶν ἐκηβόλου Ἀπόλλωνος χρυσέῳ ἀνὰ	For <i>Chryses</i> came unto the <i>Argive</i> Fleet; With Treasure great his Daughter to redeem; And having in hand the Ensignes meet, That did the Priestly Dignity beseem, A Golden scepter and a Crown of Bays,
He begged the whole Achaean army but most of all the two supreme commanders , Atreus' two sons. ⁵⁶¹	σκήπτρῳ, καὶ λίσσετο πάντας Ἀχαιοῦς, Ἄτρεΐδα δὲ μάλιστα δύο, κοσμήτορε λαῶν. ⁵⁶²	Unto the Princes all made his request; But the two Atrides chiefly prays, Who of the Argive Army were the best. ⁵⁶³

Chryses' request is public: he firstly asks the Achaeans as a whole and then their commanders. This brings out two aspects. The first deals with what we have already seen apropos of Hobbes's use of the downgrading technique to support those he considers the better models of the absolute king. On this occasion, there is no institutional role to be diminished, since the Greek text merely makes mention of *all the Achaeans* ("πάντας Αχαιοῦς"). However, given that Agamemnon is one of the characters involved, the philosopher does not avoid presenting him in a position of supremacy (he has furthermore been called a *king*⁵⁶⁴ a few lines earlier) over the others, who become generally and merely *princes* in his English version. However, a thornier problem immediately follows. The *Iliad* clearly says that Chryses particularly talks with those individuals actually able to give Chryseis back to him, namely, Agamemnon and Menelaus, the commander-in-chief and his brother. The Greek text is very precise in showing that the minister asks both these man for her return; by using

the specific suffix of the dual form “*Atréida [...] kosmétore laôn*” the *Iliad* avoids any possible misunderstanding concerning the translation of this line. As a consequence, Hobbes faces a situation where a choice, crucial for the continuation of the war, is in the hands of two individuals who are both in charge on the Achaeans, as the epithet clearly reveals. This element is in conflict both with Hobbes’s absolutist view concerning the role of Agamemnon and with his idea of the indivisibility of sovereignty.⁵⁶⁵ That might explain his choice to omit the expression “*kosmétore laôn*” relating to the two sons of Atreus, and its replacement with a less problematic acknowledgement of their being *the best* within the Achaean army.⁵⁶⁶

There is only one other occurrence of the noun *kosmétor* which deserves consideration, since it is linked to the previously analysed one. In book III of the *Iliad*, Helen is asked by Priam to show him who the warriors of the besieging army are from the walls of Troy. He is seeing these warriors for the first time and cannot be familiar with them. Having shown Agamemnon, Odysseus and Ajax, the woman is looking in vain for the two Dioscuri, Castor and Polydeuces; the Homeric text reveals what Helen cannot know at that time, namely, that they are not deployed in Troy, since they are already dead. From the passage two aspects emerge worth stressing, and which can be respectively deduced from the expression used in order to identify the two heroes and from its English translation.

but two I cannot find, and they're captains of the armies [<i>kosmétore laôn</i>],	δοιῶ δ'οὐ δύναμαι ιδέειν κοσμήτορε λαῶν, Κάστορά θ'ἰππόδαμον	But <i>Castor</i> I and <i>Pollux</i> cannot see.
Castor breaker of horses and the hardy boxer Polydeuces.	καὶ πύξι ἀγαθὸν Πολυδεῦκα, αὐτοκασιγνήτω, τῷ	Two Princes are they, and well known by Fame,
My blood brothers. Mother bore them both. ⁵⁶⁷	μοι μία γείνατο μήτηρ. ⁵⁶⁸	And by one Mother Brothers are to me. ⁵⁶⁹

As we saw with the two sons of Atreus, again on this occasion we have two of brothers. However in the previous one, the commander-in-chief was directly involved, and it could seem like some sort of diarchy, albeit only nominally; that would be completely at odds with Hobbesian political theory. In the second case, the Dioscuri, though holders of a not well-defined power within the Achaean army, are not linked to the commander-in-chief by family ties like Menelaus; accordingly they can easily be downgraded to the rank of *princes*.

In both cases, the dimension dealing with political power and authority implied in the expression *kosmétore laôn* seems to be lost, while it instead appears totally embedded in the Hobbesian translation logics. Particularly worth noting is the further example of the well-known strategy aimed at defending Agamemnon, which takes advantage – in the first case directly, in the second one in a more subtle way – of an English translation that is far from faithful to the original text.

The downgrading technique again takes the lion's share in the most significant occurrences of the noun *eghemón*. In detail, together with the customary uses of the English term *prince* (*Il.*, XI, 277*/304) and *lord* (*Il.*, XVI, 351*/352), in order to pinpoint the Achaeans *eghemón*, we find, perhaps because of the more military and less political sense of this word, the meaning akin to that of *leader*⁵⁷⁰ – previously seen in *Il.* XXIV (372*/404) apropos of *basiléus*⁵⁷¹ – a meaning which occurs in book II (333*/365, 437*/476, 665*/740) and IV (398*/429, 500*/538) of the *Iliad*. Actually, because of the mainly technical sense of this term in the Homeric lexicon, we cannot say that the English translation of these last occurrences was due to an evident intent by Hobbes to downgrade those who are identified by this noun in the original text.

However, there are three situations where the philosopher chooses to translate in a way which brings the link between *eghemón* and the monocratic power unequivocally into the daylight.

The first one is in book II of the *Iliad* within the so-called Catalogue of Ships; concerning the military contingent coming from Crete, the *Iliad* says:

And the great spearman Idomeneus led [<i>eghemonéuo</i>] his Cretans, the men who held Cnossos and Gortyn ringed in walls, Lycotos, Miletus, Lycastus' bright chalk bluffs, Phaestos and Rhytion, cities a joy to live in – the men who peopled Crete, a hundred cities strong. The renowned spearman Idomeneus led [<i>eghemonéuo</i>] them in force with Meriones who butchered men like the god of war himself. ⁵⁷²	Κρητῶν δ' Ἴδομενεὺς δουρικλυτὸς ἡγεμόνευεν , οἱ Κνωσὸν τ' εἶχον Γόρτυνά τε τειχιόεσσαν, Λύκτον Μίλητόν τε καὶ ἀργινόεντα Λύκαστον Φαιστόν τε Ῥύτιόν τε, πόλεις εὖ ναιετοώσας, ἄλλοι θ' οἱ Κρητῆν ἐκατόμπολιν ἀμφενέμοντο. Τῶν μὲν ἄρ' Ἴδομενεὺς δουρικλυτὸς ἡγεμόνευε Μηριόνης τ' ἀτάλαντος Ἐνυαλίῳ ἀνδρειφόντη. ⁵⁷³	From <i>Cnossos</i> , <i>Gortys</i> (in the Isle of <i>Crete</i>) <i>Lictus</i> , <i>Miletus</i> , <i>Phaestus</i> , <i>Rycius</i> , <i>Lycastus</i> , and some others, went a Fleet Of eighty Ships with King Idomeneus . And valiant as <i>Mars</i> <i>Meriones</i> . ⁵⁷⁴
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In this passage, while in the original the verb *eghemonéuo* occurs twice – the second occurrence seems also to involve Meriones, but Hobbes appears to slyly move forward by ignoring the copulative conjunction *te*, which equalises both the characters in the action of ruling – the sole proposed English translation is related to royal power and is faithfully translated using the noun *king*.

In book XIII of the *Iliad*, Poseidon, while speaking about the difficulties of the Achaean army following Achilles's abandonment of the war, recognises that they principally depend on the action of Agamemnon against Achilles, Agamemnon who is identified by the god as an *eghemon*.⁵⁷⁵ On this occasion, despite a disadvantageous context for the son of Atreus,⁵⁷⁶ Hobbes does not avoid using the term *king*.⁵⁷⁷

We find a similar translation in book VIII of the *Odyssey*, where, apropos of Alcinoos leading the Phaeacians to the place where their assembly would take place, we read:

Poised in his majesty, Alcinoos led [<i>eghemonéuo</i>] the way to Phaeacia's meeting grounds, built for all beside the harbored ships. ⁵⁷⁸	τοῖσιν δ' ἡγεμόνευ' ἱερὸν μένος Ἀλκινόοιο Φαιήκων ἀγορήνδ', ἧ σφιν παρὰ νηυσὶ τέτυκτο. ⁵⁷⁹	And to the Publike place the King him led, To sit in Council with his Princes there. ⁵⁸⁰
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In this case the verb *eghemonéuo* is not only again replaced by the English noun *king*, but its meaning and value are also strengthened by the simultaneous addition of a reference to *princes*, whereas the original text has merely an overall mention to the Phaeacians.

Both of these last translation choices, particularly the second one, seem to be completely consistent with the logic of the defence of the role of the sovereign, a logic from which Agamemnon, Zeus and Alcinoos take great advantages.

As mentioned in the previous chapter,⁵⁸¹ to the noun *kóiranos* is linked one of the most quoted and reused passages – in a political key – of the Homeric saga as a whole.

The lines refer to Odysseus and his words during the flight of the army described in book II of the *Iliad*. In stopping the Achaeans running to the ships, the hero rebukes them by saying:

How can all Achaeans be master [<i>basiléusomen</i>] here in Troy?	οὐ μὲν πῶς πάντες βασιλεύσομεν ἐνθάδ'	Let one be King (we cannot all be Kings)
Too many kings can ruin an army–mob rule [<i>polykoiranía</i>]!	Ἀχαιοί· οὐκ ἀγαθὸν πολυκοιρανίη·	To whom <i>Jove</i> gave the <i>Scepter</i> and the Laws
Let there be one commander [<i>kóiranos</i>], one master only [<i>basíleus</i>], endowed by the son of crooked-minded Cronus with kingly scepter and royal rights of custom: whatever one man needs to lead his people well. ⁵⁸²	εἷς κοίρανος ἔστω, εἷς βασιλεύς , ᾧ δῶκε Κρόνου πάϊς ἀγκυλομήτεω σκῆπτρόν τ' ἠδὲ θέμιστας, ἵνα σφίσι βουλεύησι. ⁵⁸³	To rule for him. ⁵⁸⁴

Both the *Iliad* and Hobbes share the same solution on this occasion for the same problem: both the original text and its English translation find situations where the political power is exerted by more than one person repulsive. The replacement of the Greek term *polykoirania* with the expression “we cannot be all kings” entirely fits with what we read in the lines of the *Iliad*, and what Hobbes writes concerning the indivisibility of sovereignty. It seems fairly insignificant that the noun *kóiranos* in the following line is omitted or, perhaps, incorporated with *basiléus* in the expression “let one be king”, given that the meaning of the passage remains clear and unequivocal. Only one *basiléus* wants Odysseus and only one king is well accepted by the philosopher. On this topic, there are very scant possibilities for misunderstanding.

It is more problematic to try to argue why there are not drastic alterations in the final lines, where the distinction between the human and divine sphere appears rather thin. Before suggesting some possible readings, a remark is called for. This Greek text has also to be understood as rather anomalous compared with what usually emerges from both poems regarding the genesis of political power: in both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, it does not spring from the divine ambit.

It is true that the heroes are sometimes proud of having lineages or blood ties with some Olympian gods, but their authority is and remains an exclusively human element. Also, the ostensible investiture which seems to come from these lines of the *Iliad* sounds more like a formal sanction of a *status* coming from other paths than a sort of consecration by some deities and, in this specific case, by Zeus.⁵⁸⁵

In this case, Hobbes partially softens the sense of the Homeric passage by inserting the expression “to rule for him” which, because of the use of the preposition *for* (“representing”, “in place of”, “instead of”⁵⁸⁶), makes the meaning seem ambiguous.

We can hypothesise that, since these lines were well known, he has not seen fit to greatly alter such a famous, widely mentioned and quoted passage. Finally, it seems to be likewise plausible that these translated lines as a whole fitted his purposes so well – rarely do we find in the Homeric poems other passages so categorical apropos of the indivisibility of monocratic authority – that, although at odds with his ideas concerning the genesis of political power, the philosopher opted for a less radical modification of the text, albeit with a quite ambiguous formula.

The other information that can be deduced from the translations of this term in the work of Hobbes are meagre and less significant, except for the fact that it is sometimes affected by the logic of both downgrade and removal.

Concerning the former, two occurrences of the *Odyssey* (I, 275*/247⁵⁸⁷ and XVI, 113*/124⁵⁸⁸) are worth mentioning: in order to replace the verb *koiranéo* related to the suitors, Hobbes uses the term *lords* to put them in a lower position than Odysseus. Furthermore, in the *Iliad* the Greek

expression “*eghemónes Danaôn kai kóiranoi*”⁵⁸⁹ (“the captains of Achaea and the kings”⁵⁹⁰) is translated with the term “leaders”.⁵⁹¹

Concerning the latter, we have two excisions of the epithet *kóiranos laôn* related to Ajax (*Il.*, XI, 609*/644 [S. 640] and XI, 433*/465) who, perhaps due to his being within the group of Agamemnon’s potential competitors, suffers these removals.

The only occasion when *kóiranos* is replaced by *king* is so very far from being linked to the idea of royal power that it is worth noting only because of its uniqueness, and surely not for its value and meaning from a political perspective.

Right after a fight against him, Odysseus drives away the panhandler Irus from the palace, warning him not to “*ptochón kóiranos éinai*”⁵⁹² (literally: “being the leader of panhandlers”⁵⁹³), an expression that in the Hobbesian text is translated with “Beggars King”.⁵⁹⁴

Analogous considerations can be made for the noun *órchamos* which, often related with the plural genitive *laôn*, sometimes occurs in both poems. Worth mentioning are again the use of a rather systematic excision, a case perhaps related to the downgrade, in a broad sense, and some conservations of the value linked to the exercise of monocratic power.

In detail, Agamemnon (XIV, 100*/102), Menelaus (XVII, 8*/12) and Achilles (XXI, 222*/221) lose this characterisation in the *Iliad*. The first situation depends on a logic of defending Agamemnon, a defence that also extends to the adjacent lines.⁵⁹⁵ The other cases appear less significant from the perspective of a political reading of the translations. More numerous, though likewise fairly insignificant, are the excisions that we find in the *Odyssey*.⁵⁹⁶

In the Catalogue of Ships, Asius is said *órchamos andrôn*⁵⁹⁷ in Greek and *leader*.⁵⁹⁸ In English, but, also considering the overall subordination of the commanders of various Achaean contingents to the commander-in-chief Agamemnon that we can see in the poem as a whole, and particularly in this section of book II, we cannot deduce anything else from it.⁵⁹⁹

Because of their significance and the fact that they bring further evidence to support what previously emerged from the analysis of the three all-embracing terms of kingship, the cases where the noun *órchamos* is translated with *king* by Hobbes merit emphasis.

They are very delimited occasions which are referred to a sole character, are gathered only in the *Odyssey*, and are related – except for one occurrence whose alteration is, however, unimportant from the perspective of its value – to a single line repeated five times. The character is Menelaus and the text which concerns him says “*Atréide Menélae diotrophés, órchame laôn*”⁶⁰⁰ (literally “Menelaus, son of Atreus, fed by Zeus, leader of people”⁶⁰¹).

The son of Atreus is no longer described as a member of the contingent besieging Troy, but as legitimate king of Sparta. Therefore, we see the

ideal conditions to recognise his *status* as king. The community is well identified and defined; his brother is not present since he is the sovereign of another realm; finally, there are no problems of overlapping sovereignties. That is perhaps why on four occasions (IV, 155*, 293* and 309*; XV, 57*) Hobbes recognises Menelaus in his *status* as king, expressed in the Homeric text with the expression *órchamos laôn*.⁶⁰² Of the remaining occurrences, (XV, 77* and 142*), the first is almost ignored and the second is translated merely with “*Atrides*”.⁶⁰³

3.6 Modifications in Additional Sense: The “case” of *king*

Another Hobbesian translation habit aimed at supporting and defending some crucial aspects of monocratic power – particularly that of certain characters like Agamemnon, but also, albeit to a lesser extent and principally limited to the *Odyssey*, like Menelaus and Nestor – seems to confirm the considerations which have come out till now.

Despite the great amount of Hobbesian interventions on the Homeric poems depending on a logic which can be roughly considered as deriving from a *ratio* of subtraction – and the excisions surely represent the more emblematic examples of this – an additional *ratio* exists, albeit visible in less frequent cases than the previous one. On some occasions, Hobbes chooses to append information that the Greek text does not provide, to characterise a situation in a particular way not identified in the same way in the two poems, so as to emphasise elements which are given less emphasis in the original texts. It is obvious enough that the problem of monocratic power and its representation in the translations also feels the effect of this.

Among the tools depending on this logic that are remarkable in their significance from a perspective of political theory, the most significant is undoubtedly that of specification of both the role and the institutional function of some characters. Even when the Greek text does not emphasise these aspects, sometimes Hobbes opts to highlight and stress them with a view to pursuing his educational purpose.

The most emblematic case seems to be that related to emphasising the kingship of certain characters, which is often achieved by appending the English noun *king* related to characters whom the philosopher wants to emphasise in this *status*. It obviously happens without any connection at all to the original text. It seems no coincidence that this situation occurs, both in the *Iliad* and in the *Odyssey*, with those men who, from the Hobbesian perspective, should actually be considered king. Obviously on this occasion, the previously mentioned considerations must be still taken into due account, as regards the effects of metrical and stylistic motivations on translation choices. Despite that, some uses, occurrences and English replacements of Homeric lines seem to have a political explanation.

If we consider the *Iliad* and focus on the most famous characters, the use of this addition of the term king is very significant, particularly in the cases of two kings that Hobbes surely appreciates, albeit to different degrees: Agamemnon and Priam. This aspect, being fully consistent with what previously emerged from the analysis of the Hobbesian handling of the Homeric lexicon on kingship, is not unexpected: the position of the king of Troy and that shaped by Hobbes in the translations in favour of the son of Atreus both refer to contexts where it is clear that they are the legitimate sovereigns of their respective groups. Accordingly, there is no any reason preventing the philosopher from highlighting, reaffirming and stressing their *status*, particularly when, as we see for example for the son of Atreus, the text of the *Iliad* is less clear-cut in recognising it.

Maybe it is not a coincidence that the first occurrence of the appending of the noun *king* concerns Agamemnon itself, in a situation where his authority risks being overcome by that of the army led by him. Right after Crises' arriving at the Achaean camp, and after showing the ransom for his daughter, he has to face the obstinacy of the commander-in-chief. We read in the *Iliad*:

And all ranks of Achaean cried out their assent: “Respect the priest, accept the shining ransom!”	Ἐνθ' ἄλλοι μὲν πάντες ἐπευφήμησαν Ἄχαιοι αἰδεῖσθαι θ' ἱερῆα καὶ ἀγλαὰ δέχθαι ἄποινα·	To this the Princes all gave their consent, Except King <i>Agamemnon</i> . He alone,
But it brought no joy to the heart of Agamemnon.	ἀλλ' οὐκ Ἄτρείδῃ Ἄγαμέμνονι ἦνδανε θυμῶ,	And with sharp language from the Fleet him sent. ⁶⁰⁶
The king dismissed the priest with a brutal order ringing in his ears. ⁶⁰⁴	ἀλλὰ κακῶς ἀφίει, κρατερόν δ' ἐπὶ μῦθον ἔτελλε. ⁶⁰⁵	

The original text does not specify the institutional position of the son of Atreus: it merely uses his name and the patronymic adjective. However, it is a problematic context, where a crucial decision concerning the community as a whole is at stake. Furthermore, both in the *Iliad* and in its translation, Agamemnon himself has the final word on this matter. That is likely why Hobbes specifies the royal *status* of the son of Atreus by appending the noun *king*, which emphasises the political meaning of the original lines.

The number of occasions, not huge, but still significant, where the philosopher uses this tool with to defend Agamemnon, and the fact that the same technique is also employed for other characters, suggests that this peculiar translation choice cannot be considered a coincidence.⁶⁰⁷

Different, but still analogous, is the case of Priam. Since he is king of a city and a well-identified people, Hobbes is facilitated in showing him as legitimate sovereign. However, even for such a character, the philosopher sometimes opts to stress this *status* by appending the term *king*.

The first occurrence when it happens is in book III of the *Iliad*. Achaeans and Trojans reach an agreement concerning a truce. However, they need the presence of the king in order to make it official. In replacement of the Homeric line where we read “*áxete dè Priámoio bíen*”⁶⁰⁸ (literally: “[you] lead the force of Priam”⁶⁰⁹), the English text translates “And let the old King Priam present be”⁶¹⁰. The emphasis of the institutional element seems clear, while it does not exist in the original Greek line.

Such a translation choice appears almost systematic in this book – it also occurs in 113*/117, 119*/124, 152* and 153*/161, 220*/228 – but it is frequent enough in the poem as a whole.⁶¹¹ As we saw in the case regarding Agamemnon, it suggests that we cannot be allowed to consider such a translation choice to be the result of mere chance.

Quite emblematic is an occurrence in book XIII. In spite of a text that sounds unimportant – describing the return of Teucer to Troy to take part in the war – there is a twofold addition of the term *king*. We read in the *Iliad*:

<p>But once the trolling ships of Achaea swept ashore, home he came to Troy where he shone among the Trojans, living close to Priam, who prized him like his sons.⁶¹²</p>	<p>αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ Δαναῶν νέεσσι ἤλυθον ἀμφιέλισσαι, ἄψ ἔς Ἴλιον ἦλθε, μετέπρεπε δὲ Τρώεσσι, ναῖε δὲ παρ Πριάμου· ὁ δὲ μιν τίεν ἴσα τέκεσσι.⁶¹³</p>	<p>But when the <i>Argives</i> come to <i>Troy</i>, he then Dwelt in King <i>Priams</i> Court, much honoured Both by the King himself and by his men.⁶¹⁴</p>
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Although the Greek text simply says that Teucer is hosted in Priam’s palace, the English one twice underlines the institutional role of the king of Troy. Even assuming that one of them could depend on metrical and stylistic reasons, it seems fairly difficult – also due to the cases previously outlined – not to observe a Hobbesian intent to stress Priam’s institutional role in this passage.

Though not part of the cases where there is the addition by the philosopher of the term *king*, there are two occurrences related to Zeus that are worth showing, because of their deep relationship with what has been outlined thus far on this theme. We find them in book III of the *Iliad* (269* and 305*).

In replacement of a Greek line twice repeated identically (“*Zeû páter, Ídethen medéon, kýdiste méghiste*”,⁶¹⁵ “Father Zeus!/Ruling over us all from Ida, god of greatness, god of glory!”⁶¹⁶) and bereft of any reference

to the kingship of the father of the Gods, Hobbes choses to translate differently, but using two additional techniques, both aimed at underlining and stressing the royal status of Zeus:

O mighty *Jove*, the **Monarch** of the Gods.⁶¹⁷ O glorious *Jove*, **whom all the Gods obey**.⁶¹⁸

The additional alterations are evident. Both the appending of the noun monarch and the clarification concerning the obedience due from all gods have no clear correspondence in the Greek, but they confer great value and significance to these lines. Accordingly, this translation choice can also be ascribed to a clear intention by the philosopher to characterise them politically.

We find analogous uses of this technique by Hobbes in the *Odyssey*, albeit referred to other characters, principally Menelaus and Alcinous. Regarding the former, there are no doubts at all concerning the legitimacy of his power. Likewise for the latter, although the Homeric text outlines a political regime which does not completely fit with the preferences of the philosopher. Therefore, while in the case of Menelaus, we can consider these additional interventions as a means to emphasise his institutional role, with occurrences that seem fairly insignificant, with Alcinous there is something more. It seems to be a sort of protective tool both for the uniqueness and the absoluteness of Alcinous' position. An occurrence in book XII is the most remarkable archetype. Alcinous asks Odysseus to continue to narrate the vicissitudes of his difficult return home. The hero replies:

«Alcinous, majesty, shining among your island people, there is a time for many words, a time for sleep as well. But if you insist on hearing more, I'd never stint on telling my own tale [...].» ⁶¹⁹	« Ἀλκίνοε κρείον, πάντων ἀριδείκετε λαῶν, ᾧρη μὲν πολέων μύθων, ᾧρη δὲ καὶ ὑπνου· εἰ δ' ἔτ' ἀκουέμεναι γε λιλαιέαι, οὐκ ἄν ἐγὼ γε τούτων σοι φθονέομι [...].» ⁶²⁰	Renowned King <i>Alcinous</i> , you know there is a time to talk, a time for rest; but since you long to hear, I'll tell you now. ⁶²¹
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Despite there being no contingent needs concerning the institutional regime of Scheria, Hobbes opts to strengthen the original Greek term *kreíon* (literally: “ruler, lord, master”⁶²²) by appending a royal emphasis with the English noun *king*, which is a useful noun to further characterise these lines in an institutional sense.

If we bear in mind the huge number of analogous additions of the term *king* for the benefit of Alcinous⁶²³ and, at the same time, the previously

considered need to make his *status* of *basiléus* higher than that of the other Phaeacians *basiléis* who, in the original text, are described as participating in the power,⁶²⁴ we can include this passage within a translation strategy aimed at handling a situation which Hobbes considered thorny.

Although here taken into account only with regard to the more significant political lexicon and to some specific characters from the Homeric poems, the logic of the additional interventions, while having a lower value than those of opposite nature, seems play a role in the *summa* of the Hobbesian translation choices intended to achieve his educational purposes.

Notes

- 277 Cf. note n. 1.
 278 Cf. note n. 144.
 279 Cf. notes n. 24–27.
 280 Cf. E. FABBRI, *La translations of Homer: passioni, politica e religione nel pensiero maturo di Hobbes* cit., pp. 151–153; ID., *Dal realismo politico di Tuciddide a quello di Hobbes* cit., p. 23; J. LYNCH, *op. cit.*, pp. 27, 30 and p. 34; E. NELSON, *Thomas Hobbes. Translations of Homer. Iliad* cit., p. LXII.
 281 *Il.*, I, 7.
 282 Cf. note n. 267.
 283 *Il.*, I, 6*.
 284 Cf. note n. 3.
 285 *Il.*, I, 7.
 286 *Il.*, I, 6*.
 287 E. NELSON, *Translation of Homer. Iliad* cit., pp. XXX–XXXI; cf. note n. 141.
 288 *Il.*, I, 36.
 289 *Il.*, I, 39*.
 290 Cf. for example: *Il.*, II, (253*/284, 369*/402, 398*/441); III, (77*/81, 257*/267, 428*/455); IV, (147*/148, 320*/336); V, (35*/38); VI, (28*/33); VII, (160*/162, 295*/314); VIII, (254*/278); IX, (89*/96, 109*/114, 158*/163, 641*/677 [S. 673], 661*/697 [S. 603]); X, (56*/64, 74*/86, 86*/103, 101*/119, 212*/233); XI, (97*/99, 233*/254); XIV, (63*/64, 101*/103); XVIII, (104*/111); XIX, (48*/51, 76*/76, 131*/146, 154*/172, 161*/177, 165*/184); XXIII, (172*/161, 881*/895).
 291 *Il.*, IX, 96.
 292 *Il.*, IX, 112 [FK].
 293 *Il.*, I, 252/240*.
 294 *Il.*, I, 231/219* and 281/266*.
 295 *Il.*, I, 38/41* and 452/430*.
 296 *Il.*, I, 180/176* e 288/272*.
 297 *Il.*, I, 270 [FK].
 298 *Il.*, I, 219*.
 299 *Il.*, I, 281; the English translation is mine.
 300 *Il.*, I, 266*; cf. E. FABBRI, *Le translations of Homer: passioni, politica e religione nel pensiero maturo di Hobbes* cit., p. 152.
 301 *Od.*, XXIV, 25–29 [FK]; henceforth, unless otherwise specified, bold text depends on my choice.
 302 *Od.*, XXIV, 24–27.
 303 *Od.*, XXIV, 29*–32*.

- 304 *Il.*, I, 211–213 [FK].
- 305 Cf. notes n. 217 and 218.
- 306 This royal authority of Achilles over the Myrmidons is for example reaffirmed by Hobbes in line 168* of book XVI of the *Iliad*, where we read “For of the Myrmidons the King was he” which translates the Homeric line 172 “he ruled [*wanássō*] through great strength” (this English translation is mine).
- 307 Limited to the book I of the *Iliad*, we can for example mention lines 219*/231, 240*/252, 452*/430; concerning “to sway”, there are no occurrences in this book; cf., for example, *Il.*, II, 94*/108; about the expression “to be king”, cf., for example, *Il.*, XIX, 98*/109.
- 308 Cf. *Il.*, I, 176*.
- 309 T. HOBBS, *Leviathan*, XXIX cit., p. 220.
- 310 Cf. note n. 298.
- 311 Cf. *Il.*, I, 240*/252 e 430*/452.
- 312 It is however worth stressing that Hobbes, in line 38*/41 – which is completely identical to 430*/452 –, chooses to remove the verb *wanássein*.
- 313 *Il.*, II, 591–602.
- 314 Cf. footnote n. 162.
- 315 *Il.*, I, 334–339 [FK].
- 316 *Il.*, I, 286–289.
- 317 *Il.*, I, 271*–274*.
- 318 *Il.*, I, 273*.
- 319 E. NELSON, *Translations of Homer. Iliad* cit., p. 12; cf. E. FABBRI, *Le translations of Homer: passioni, politica e religione nel pensiero maturo di Hobbes* cit., p. 152; cf. note n. 162.
- 320 T. HOBBS, *Leviathan*, XIX cit., pp. 123–124.
- 321 T. HOBBS, *Leviathan*, XVIII cit., p. 115: “And consequently they that have already instituted a commonwealth, being thereby bound by covenant, to own the actions, and judgments of one, cannot lawfully make a new covenant, amongst themselves, to be obedient to any other, in anything whatsoever, without his permission. And therefore, they that are subjects to a monarch, cannot without his leave cast off monarchy, and return to the confusion of a disunited multitude; nor transfer their person from him that beareth it, to another man, or other assembly of men”.
- 322 T. HOBBS, *Leviathan*, XVII cit., p. 112.
- 323 Ivi.
- 324 Cf., *Il.*, I, 38.
- 325 *Il.*, I, 41*.
- 326 As an example, consider the section entitled *The generation of a commonwealth* in chapter XVII of *Leviathan* (cit., p. 114), where we read: “For by this authority, given him by every particular man in the commonwealth, he hath the use of so much power and strength conferred on him, that by terror thereof, he is enabled to conform the wills of them all, to peace at home, and mutual aid against their enemies abroad”.
- 327 *Il.*, VI, 478.
- 328 *Il.*, VI, 463*.
- 329 Cf. for example 39*/36, 77*–78*/75 and, maybe, 375*/390.
- 330 Cf. for example *Il.*, IV, 391*/420.
- 331 Cf. for example *Il.*, V, 273*–275*/311.
- 332 *Il.*, IX, 31–79; cf. E. FABBRI, *Le translations of Homer: passioni, politica e religione nel pensiero maturo di Hobbes* cit., p. 153.
- 333 Cf. *Il.*, IV, 401–402 e *Il.*, IV, 477.

- 334 *Il.*, V, 347–355 [FK].
- 335 *Il.*, V, 311–317.
- 336 *Il.*, V, 275*–280*.
- 337 *Il.*, XX, 355 [FK].
- 338 *Il.*, XX, 287*–288*.
- 339 *Il.*, IV, 71–72 [FK].
- 340 *Il.*, IV, 56*–57*.
- 341 Oddly enough, a similar power over human beings is given to a lesser deity – Sleep – by the Homeric poems. It is worded “Sleep, master [*wánax*] of all gods and all mortal men” (*Il.*, XIV, 279 [FK]); the Hobbesian translation is “Sleep, to whom both men and Gods all bow” (*Il.*, XIV, 217*).
- 342 *Il.*, XV, 220–238 [FK].
- 343 *Il.*, XV, 185–199.
- 344 *IliSad*, XV, 158*–172*.
- 345 Cf. *Leviathan*, XVII cit., p. 114; despite the assembly element is contemplated by Hobbes in the *Leviathan*, in the translations he seems to prefer the monocratic one.
- 346 T. HOBBS, *Leviathan* XVIII cit., p. 120.
- 347 T. HOBBS, *Leviathan* XVIII cit., p. 121.
- 348 Cf. note n. 340.
- 349 *Il.*, XV, 134–137 [FK].
- 350 *Il.*, XV, 109–112.
- 351 *Il.*, XV, 93*–95*.
- 352 On the achievement of sovereignty through rebellion, Hobbes writes (*Leviathan*, XV cit., p. 98: “And for the other instance of attaining sovereignty by rebellion; it is manifest, that though the event follow, yet because it cannot reasonably be expected, but rather the contrary; and because by gaining it so, others are taught to gain the same in like manner, the attempt thereof is against reason. Justice therefore, that is to say, keeping of covenant, is a rule of reason, by which we are forbidden to do anything destructive to our life; and consequently a law of nature”; we find a sort of definition of rebellion in a passage of chapter XXVIII (cit., pp. 210–211) where Hobbes is arguing that inflicting pains on innocent individuals in war is not at odds with the natural law: “who deliberately deny the authority of the commonwealth established, the vengeance is lawfully extended, not only to the fathers, but also to the third and fourth generation not yet in being, and consequently innocent of the fact, for which they are afflicted: because the nature of this offence, consisteth in the renouncing of subjection; which is a relapse into the condition of war, commonly called rebellion; and they that so offend, suffer not as subjects, but as enemies. For rebellion, is but war renewed”.
- 353 *Il.*, XV, 245–250 [FK].
- 354 *Il.*, XV, 206–210.
- 355 *Il.*, XV, 178*–182*.
- 356 H. G. LIDDELL – R. SCOTT (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 838 (*isómoiros*); cf. F. MONTANARI *op. cit.*, p. 1011.
- 357 H. G. LIDDELL – R. SCOTT (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 1452; cf. F. MONTANARI *op. cit.*, p. 1732.
- 358 This element is well stressed by Nelson in *Translations of Homer. Iliad* (cit., p. 238, footnote n. 275); cf. also C. CONDREN, *op. cit.*, p. 83.
- 359 E. NELSON, *Translations of Homer. Iliad* cit., p. 237.
- 360 *Od.*, I, 208–210 [FK].
- 361 *Od.*, I, 216*–217*.
- 362 *Od.*, I, 447*–449*.

- 363 *Od.*, I, 132–137 [FK].
- 364 *Od.*, I, 113–117.
- 365 *Od.*, I, 133*–138*.
- 366 H. G. LIDDELL – R. SCOTT (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 790; cf. F. MONTANARI, *op. cit.*, p. 956.
- 367 Cf. note n. 291.
- 368 Several passages of the translations seem to clearly highlight that this is Hobbes's position. For example, in book V, in order to translate Athena's words praising Odysseus's government ("Think: not one of the people whom he ruled/remembers Odysseus now, that godlike man,/and kindly as a father to his children"; 12–14 [FK]), Hobbes writes: "That of *Ulysses* are forgetful grown,/Whose Government so gentle was just" (11*–12*).
- 369 *Od.*, III, 279*.
- 370 *Od.*, XI, 555–588 [FK].
- 371 *Od.*, XI, 473*–476*.
- 372 E. NELSON, *Homer. Odyssees cit.*, p. 155; Nelson also refers to Davis' analysis on this passage, an analysis which highlights another significant element; cf. P. DAVIS, *op. cit.*, pp., 234–235: "The withering candour of Achilles's reply was there in Homer, but Hobbes targets its impact particularly on to his 'adversaries' in the scientific community by putting into Achilles's mouth an epithet which he commonly adduced to indict them of using 'names that signifie nothing' in a perpetuation of 'the ... canting of Schoole-men'. '[T] hings incorporeal', and even more so 'substances incorporeal' (which is how Ulysses' mother describes the dead some lines earlier), harks back to passage after passage of Hobbesian invective against 'senslesse' priestcrafty 'speech'".
- 373 Cf. *Od.*, XI, 32, 50, 89, 90, 139 [S. 138], 144 [S. 143], 151 [S. 150].
- 374 Cf. note n. 218; cf. also A. CATANZARO, *Paradigmi politici nell'epica omerica cit.*, p. 183: "Tiresias is called ἄναξ, but he does not belong to any categories [previously mentioned]: he is a soothsayer; he is not a king, a shepherd, a judge; I believe we should refer here to Carlier's suggestion [*La regalità: Beni d'uso e beni di prestigio cit.*, p. 268] according to which sometimes this term is used to identify an «important» person, regardless of his specific role. We might also suggest, though in this case it remains a mere hypothesis, that Odysseus considers Tiresias a sort of specialist in his specific field, and therefore equates him to a king with regards to his art" [T].
- 375 Cf. note n. 223.
- 376 Cf. E. FABBRI, *Le translations of Homer: passioni, politica e religione nel pensiero maturo di Hobbes cit.*, pp. 153–154; A. P. MARTINICH, *The two Gods of the Leviathan. Thomas Hobbes on Politics and Religion cit.*, pp. 228–236; cf. notes n. 242–243.
- 377 Cf. note n. 242.
- 378 This is the Hobbesian definition concerning the figure of the prophet in the Bible (*Leviathan*, XXXVI cit., p. 281): "The name of PROPHET, signifieth in Scripture sometimes prolocutor; that is, he that speaketh from God to man, or from man to God: and sometimes predictor, or a foreteller of things to come: and sometimes one that speaketh incoherently, as men that are distracted. It is most frequently used in the sense of speaking from God to the people". On the problem of prophecy outside the Bible, see in particular chapter XII, entitled *The absurd opinion of Gentilism (op. cit.*, p. 77): "So easy are men to be drawn to believe anything, from such men as have gotten credit with them; and can with gentleness, and dexterity, take hold of their fear, and ignorance".

- 379 Cf. notes n. 240–241.
- 380 *Od.*, I, 55*.
- 381 *Od.*, I, 97*.
- 382 *Od.*, I, 45 and 81.
- 383 In *Od.*, IX, 563* (corresponding to the Homeric line 552) we find the expression “mighty *Jove*” as a replacement of “ὄς πάσι *wanássei*” (who rules over all) with reference to the father of gods.
- 384 In line 93*/112 of book XX of the *Odyssey*, for example, *wánax* is removed for Zeus too, as also happens in the *Iliad* for Agamemnon and in the *Odyssey* for Odysseus (beyond the aforementioned cases of book XXI – cf. p. 97 – for further examples, see XIII, 181*/194; XIV, 308*–311*/326, 381*/395; XVII, 187*/201; 353*/378; XX, 92*/111; XXII, 106*/119).
- 385 Cf. H. G. LIDDELL – R. SCOTT (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 121; F. MONTANARI, *op. cit.*, p. 196.
- 386 For example, in *Od.*, VII, 47*/53, *queen* is used as replacement of *déspoina* “mistress, lady of the house” (H. G. LIDDELL – R. SCOTT (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 380; cf. F. MONTANARI, *op. cit.*, p. 506); in VII, 225*/241 e XI, 333*/345 as a replacement of *basíleia* “queen, princess” (H. G. LIDDELL – R. SCOTT (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 309; cf. F. MONTANARI, *op. cit.*, p. 418).
- 387 J. SCAPULAE, *Lexicon Graecolatinum* cit., p. 153; cf. ID., *Lexicon Graeco-Latinum* cit., p. 60.
- 388 Cf. *Od.*, XVI, 313*/337 [S. 338]; XVII, 471*/513, 533*/583.
- 389 Cf. for example *Od.*, IV 87*/87; IX, 456*/440, 465*/452; XIV, 45*/40, 66*/60, 69*/63, 139*/139; XV, 500*/557 [S. 556]; XVII, 174*/186, 176*/189, 275*/303, 293*/318, 301*–303*/320.
- 390 Cf. note n. 221.
- 391 Cf. note n. 218.
- 392 *Od.*, I, 455 [FK].
- 393 *Od.*, I, 397–398.
- 394 *Od.*, I, 430*.
- 395 T. HOBBS, *Leviathan*, XVII cit., pp. 114–115.
- 396 Cf. A. CATANZARO, *Paradigmi politici nell’epica omerica* cit., pp. 207–212.
- 397 *Il.*, I, 10–12 [FK].
- 398 *Il.*, I, 9–11.
- 399 *Il.*, I, 9*–11*; on this point cf. J. LYNCH, *op. cit.*, p. 34 and C. CONDREN, *op. cit.*, p. 85.
- 400 On the Hobbes’s protection towards Agamemnone cf. E. FABBRI, *La translations of Homer: passioni, politica e religione nel pensiero maturo di Hobbes* cit., p. 153.
- 401 T. HOBBS, *Leviathan*, XXI cit., p. 147.
- 402 *Il.*, I, 93–98 [FK]; on the episode of the verbal struggle between Agamemnon and Calchas caused by the verdict (*Il.*, I, 106–120), cf. E. FABBRI, *La translations of Homer: passioni, politica e religione nel pensiero maturo di Hobbes* cit., pp. 153–154.
- 403 *Il.*, I, 80–84.
- 404 *Il.*, I, 80*–84*; cf. E. NELSON, *Translations of Homer. Iliad* cit., p. 6 and p. LXIV.
- 405 Cf. *Il.*, I, 106–115.
- 406 On these lines cf. E. NELSON, *Translations of Homer. Iliad* cit., p. LXIV.
- 407 Ivi, p. LXV.
- 408 Cf. note n. 304.
- 409 *Il.*, I, 204–210 [FK].
- 410 *Il.*, I, 173–179.
- 411 *Il.*, I, 169*–174*.

- 412 Cf. note n. 247.
- 413 *Il.*, I, 268–270 [FK].
- 414 *Il.*, I, 229–231.
- 415 *Il.*, I, 217*–219*.
- 416 Cf. note n. 297.
- 417 *Il.*, I, 270 [FK]; concerning the meaning, cf. also H. G. LIDDELL – R. SCOTT (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 386; F. MONTANARI, *op. cit.*, p. 513.
- 418 T. HOBBS, *Leviathan*, XVII cit., p. 114; cf. note n. 173; on the removal of *demobóros*, see E. NELSON, *Translations of Homer. Iliad* cit., p. 10.
- 419 T. HOBBS, *Leviathan*, XIX cit., p. 125.
- 420 *Ibid.*
- 421 Cf. note n. 297.
- 422 Cf. note n. 417.
- 423 Cf. note n. 418.
- 424 T. HOBBS, *Leviathan*, XXIX cit., p. 221.
- 425 *Ibid.*, XXX cit., p. 225.
- 426 *Il.*, I, 277.
- 427 *Il.*, I, 263*.
- 428 *Il.*, I, 331; in the Hobbesian translation (316*–317*) we read: “And they silent were,/And stood still, struck with fear and reverence”; on this point, cf. E. NELSON, *Translations of Homer. Iliad* cit., p. 14 (footnote n. 27) and E. FABBRI, *Le translations of Homer: passioni, politica e religione nel pensiero maturo di Hobbes* cit., p. 153.
- 429 *Il.*, I, 340.
- 430 H. G. LIDDELL – R. SCOTT (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 188; F. MONTANARI, *op. cit.*, p. 279.
- 431 *Il.*, I, 322*; cf. E. FABBRI, *Le translations of Homer: passioni, politica e religione nel pensiero maturo di Hobbes* cit., p. 153.
- 432 E. NELSON, *Translations of Homer. Iliad* cit., p. 14.
- 433 *Il.*, II, 245–248 [FK].
- 434 *Il.*, II, 118*–190*.
- 435 *Il.*, II, 270–276.
- 436 *Il.*, II, 284–292 and 319–324 [FK].
- 437 *Il.*, II, 246–251 and 272–277.
- 438 *Il.*, II, 219*–224* and 241*–247*.
- 439 *Il.*, II, 62 [FK].
- 440 *Il.*, II, 53.
- 441 *Il.*, II, 94 [FK].
- 442 *Il.*, II, 79.
- 443 *Il.*, II, 100–102 [FK].
- 444 *Il.*, II, 84–86.
- 445 *Il.*, II, 75*; on this topic see E. NELSON, *Translations of Homer. Iliad* cit., p. 23 (footnote n. 44).
- 446 Cf. H. G. LIDDELL – R. SCOTT (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 1609; F. MONTANARI, *op. cit.*, p. 1931.
- 447 E. BENVENISTE, *op. cit.*, p. 324: “In Homer [...] [the] *skêptron* is the attribute of the king, of heralds, messengers, judges, and all of persons who, whether of their own nature or because of a particular occasion, are invested with authority. The *skêptron* is passed to the orator before he begins his speech so that he may speak with authority. The ‘sceptre’ in itself is a staff, the staff of the traveller or the beggar [...]. It would be of interest to try and establish the original meaning of *skêptron* in order to see if we can infer in what form this emblem was imagined. We may start from the concept of royalty itself, for the insignia of royalty are of a different order from mere

ornaments. The sceptre and the crown are royalty in themselves. It is not the king who reigns but the crown because it makes the king. It is the crown which through all time is the foundation of royalty [...] This mystical notion also attaches to the Homeric *skêptron*: a person can reign, judge, harangue only when he has the *skêptron* in his hands”.

448 *Il.*, II, 98.

449 *Il.*, II, 83*; on this point, see E. NELSON, *Translations of Homer. Iliad* cit., p. 23 (footnote n. 45).

450 Cf. note n. 247.

451 *Il.*, 396 [FK].

452 *Il.*, IX, 417–423 [FK].

453 *Il.*, IX, 344–347.

454 *Il.*, IX, 342*–346*.

455 H. G. LIDDELL – R. SCOTT (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 70; F. MONTANARI, *op. cit.*, p. 137.

456 Cf. notes n. 177, 243, 320.

457 Cf. A. CATANZARO, *Paradigmi politici nell’epica omerica* cit., pp. 271–274.

458 F. CODINO, *op. cit.*, p. 88 [T].

459 738–752 [FK].

460 *Il.*, IX, 607–616 [S. 603–612].

461 *Il.*, IX, 574*–580*.

462 On this topic cf. E. FABBRI, *La translations of Homer: passioni, politica e religione nel pensiero maturo di Hobbes* cit., p. 153.

463 Cf. for example pp. 88–89.

464 T. HOBBS, *Leviathan*, XVIII cit., pp. 121–122; a bit earlier (*op. cit.*, p. 120), Hobbes had observed: “considering what value men are naturally apt to set upon themselves; what respect they look for from others; and how little they value other men; from whence continually arise amongst them, emulation, quarrels, factions, and at last war, to the destroying of one another, and diminution of their strength against a common enemy; it is necessary that there be laws of honour, and a public rate of the worth of such men as have deserved, or are able to deserve well of the commonwealth; and that there be force in the hands of some or other, to put those laws in execution. But it hath already been shown, that not only the whole militia, or forces of the commonwealth; but also the judicature of all controversies, is annexed to the sovereignty. To the sovereign therefore it belongeth also to give titles of honour; and to appoint what order of place, and dignity, each man shall hold; and what signs of respect, in public or private meetings, they shall give to one another”; cf. M. M. GOLDSMITH, *Hobbes’s “Mortall God”: is there a Fallacy in Hobbes’s Theory of Sovereignty*, “History of Political Thought”, I, 1980, p. 35.

465 T. HOBBS, *Behemoth. Dialogue I* cit., p. 107 and ivi: “If in time as in place there were degrees of *high* and *low*, I verily beleuee that the highest of time would be that which passed between the years of 1640 and 1660. For he that thence, as from the diuells mountain, should haue looked vpon the world, and obserued the actions of men, especially in England, might haue had a prospect of all kinds of Injustice, and of all kinds of Folly that the world could afford, and how they were produced by their dams *hypocrisy* and *self-conceit*; whereof the one is double iniquity, and the other double folly”.

466 Ivi, p. 107.

467 Ivi, pp. 110–111.

468 On this topic see for example A. CATANZARO, *From many kings to a single one: Hobbesian absolutism disguised as an epic translation* cit., pp. 675–682; on the position of Agamemnon in Hobbes’s view cf. note n. 179.

469 Cf. *Il.*, II, 218–219 [FK].

- 470 Cf. *Il.*, II, 192–197.
- 471 *Il.*, II, 165*–166*; cf. E. NELSON, *Translations of Homer. Iliad* cit., p. 26.
- 472 On this occasion, the Homeric expression is “*basiléis Achaiôn*”.
- 473 E. NELSON, *Translations of Homer. Iliad* cit., p. 307.
- 474 On this occasion, the Homeric expression is “*basiléis Achaiôn*”; differently from the previous cases, the word *leader* is not in the list of chapter XVIII of the *Leviathan*. However, the *ratio* of this Hobbesian replacement sounds very similar to that applied in the other cases.
- 475 *Il.*, XIX, 366 [FK] (original line n. 309).
- 476 *Il.*, XIX, 289*.
- 477 Cf. notes n. 452–454.
- 478 *Od.*, VIII, 435–436 [FK].
- 479 *Od.*, VIII, 390–391.
- 480 *Od.*, VIII, 368*–369*; cf. E. NELSON, *Homer. Odyssees* cit., pp. 105–106.
- 481 On this occasion, Hobbes’s translation seems curious, since *basiléus* is replaced by *king*, but within the expression “King and Queen” (44*) which has no analogy with the original.
- 482 *Od.*, VII, 44*.
- 483 110–115 [FK].
- 484 *Od.*, VII, 95–99.
- 485 *Od.*, VII, 84*–87*.
- 486 H. G. LIDDELL – R. SCOTT (edited by), *op. cit.*, 764; cf. F. MONTANARI, *op. cit.*, 927; sometimes Hobbes chooses to translate with *princes* the expression *eghéttores edè médontes* (*princes and heads*) referred to those Phaeacians who rule with Alcinous; cf. for example *Od.*, VIII (25*/26, 88*/97, 513*/536); on the meaning of the term *médon* cf. H. G. LIDDELL – R. SCOTT (edited by), *op. cit.*, 1089; F. MONTANARI, *op. cit.*, p. 1313.
- 487 Cf. *Od.*, I, 394/427*.
- 488 On the usage of *basiléus* and *wanax* in this line cf. H. G. LIDDELL – R. SCOTT (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 114 where the translation “*lord King*” it is given, in which *wanax* seems to have an adjectival function.
- 489 210–216 [FK].
- 490 *Od.*, XX, 191–196.
- 491 *Od.*, XX, 168*–170*.
- 492 *Od.*, XXIV, 95–97 [FK].
- 493 *Od.*, XXIV, 81*.
- 494 *Il.*, XVIII, 639 [FK].
- 495 *Il.*, XVIII, 556 (646 [FK]).
- 496 *Il.*, XVIII, 506*; cf. E. NELSON, *Translations of Homer. Iliad* cit., p. 307.
- 497 *Il.*, XVIII, 512*; cf. E. NELSON, *Translations of Homer. Iliad* cit., p. 307 (footnote n. 338).
- 498 E. NELSON, *Homer. Odyssees* cit., pp. 105–106.
- 499 *Od.*, X, 116–121 [FK].
- 500 *Od.*, X, 105–110.
- 501 *Od.*, X, 99*–105*.
- 502 *Od.*, X, 105*.
- 503 *Il.*, IX, 69, 155 and 392; X, 239.
- 504 *Il.*, IX, 79–80 [FK].
- 505 *Il.*, IX, 69.
- 506 *Il.*, IX, 61*–62*; cf. E. NELSON, *Translations of Homer. Iliad* cit., p. 134; E. FABBRI, *Le traduzioni di Omero: passioni, politica e religione nel pensiero maturo di Hobbes* cit., p. 153.
- 507 *Il.*, IX, 189–193 [FK].
- 508 *Il.*, I, 158–161.

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- 509 *Il.*, I, 154*–156*; cf. E. NELSON, *Translations of Homer. Iliad* cit., p. 137.
510 *Il.*, IX, 474–479 [FK].
511 *Il.*, IX, 388–392.
512 *Il.*, IX, 386*–388*.
513 *Il.*, X, 275–280 [FK].
514 *Il.*, X, 234–239.
515 *Il.*, X, 213*–215*.
516 T. HOBBS, *Leviathan*, XVII cit., pp. 113–114.
517 Cf. notes n. 231–233; on the topic of the pastoral metaphor in the Hobbes's translations of the Homeric poems, cf. A. CATANZARO, *The missing metaphor: Thomas Hobbes and the political problem of pastoral sovereignty* cit., pp. 203–220.
518 *Il.*, VIII, 647 [FK] (496* - [S. 555]).
519 *Il.*, XII, 451 (418*).*
520 *Il.*, XXIII, 835 (825*).*
521 *Od.*, X, 82 (79*).*
522 Cf. also *Il.*, XIII (462*/493) and *Od.*, IV (87*/87).
523 Cf. note n. 233.
524 *Il.*, II, 226*/254.
525 *Il.*, II, 216*/243.
526 *Il.*, II, 699*/772.
527 *Il.*, II, 293–299[FK].
528 *Il.*, II, 252–256.
529 *Il.*, II, 225*–228*.
530 *Il.*, II, 278–282[FK].
531 *Il.*, II, 239–244.
532 *Il.*, II, 215*–216*.
533 *Il.*, II, 873–878 [FK].
534 *Il.*, II, 768–773.
535 *Il.*, II, 694*–699*.
536 Cf. notes n. 437–438.
537 *Il.*, VII, 262–269 [FK].
538 *Il.*, VII, 226–232.
539 *Il.*, VII, 221*–225*.
540 Cf. notes n. 530–532.
541 *Il.*, XIX, 40–42 [FK].
542 *Il.*, XIX, 34–36.
543 *Il.*, XIX, 30*–32*.
544 On this point cf. E. NELSON, *Translations of Homer. Iliad* cit., p. 309 (foot-note n. 344).
545 *Od.*, IV, 24–31 [FK].
546 *Od.*, IV, 20–27.
547 *Od.*, IV, 21*–28*.
548 Cf. note n. 218.
549 T. HOBBS, *Leviathan*, XVII cit., p. 113.
550 *Ivi*, p. 113.
551 *Ivi*, pp. 113–114.
552 *Ivi*, pp. 113–114.
553 Cf. for example T. HOBBS, *Leviathan*, XIII cit., p. 86: “The passions that incline men to peace, are fear of death; desire of such things as are necessary to commodious living; and a hope by their industry to obtain them. And reason suggesteth convenient articles of peace, upon which men may be drawn to agreement”.
554 T. HOBBS, *Leviathan*, XVII cit., pp. 112–113.

- 555 T. HOBBS, *Leviathan*, XIII cit., p. 83: “men have no pleasure, (but on the contrary a great deal of grief) in keeping company, where there is no power able to over-awe them all. For every man looketh that his companion should value him, at the same rate he sets upon himself: and upon all signs of contempt, or undervaluing, naturally endeavours, as far as he dares (which amongst them that have no common power to keep them in quiet, is far enough to make them destroy each other,) to extort a greater value from his contemners, by damage; and from others, by the example. So that in the nature of man, we find three principal causes of quarrel. First, competition; secondly, diffidence; thirdly, glory”.
- 556 T. HOBBS, *Leviathan*, XXXIII cit., p. 257.
- 557 *Ibid.*, XLII cit., pp. 360–361.
- 558 *Ibid.*, XLII cit., p. 367.
- 559 T. HOBBS, *Behemoth. Dialogue I*, p. 124.
- 560 Cf. p. 82, notes n. 397–399.
- 561 *Il.*, I, 14–18 [FK]; on Agamemnon’s behaviour on this occasion, cf. C. CONDREN, *op. cit.*, p. 84.
- 562 *Il.*, I, 12–16; [S. puts a comma between μάλιστα and δῶω].
- 563 *Il.*, I, 14*–20*.
- 564 *Il.*, I, 6*.
- 565 Cf. for example T. HOBBS, *Leviathan*, XVIII cit., pp. 120–121.
- 566 Cf. E. NELSON, *Translations of Homer. Iliad* cit., p. 4.
- 567 *Il.*, III, 282–284 [FK].
- 568 *Il.*, III, 236–238.
- 569 *Il.*, III, 226*–228*.
- 570 Cf. notes n. 203–204.
- 571 Cf. note n. 474.
- 572 *Il.*, II, 740–746 [FK].
- 573 *Il.*, II, 645–650.
- 574 *Il.*, II, 585*–589*.
- 575 *Il.* XIII, 108.
- 576 Cf. E. NELSON, *Translations of Homer. Iliad* cit., p. 220.
- 577 *Il.*, XIII, 95*.
- 578 *Od.*, VIII, 4–6 [FK].
- 579 *Od.*, VIII, 4–5.
- 580 *Od.*, VIII, 4*–5*.
- 581 Cf. note n. 214.
- 582 *Il.*, II, 234–239 [FK].
- 583 *Il.*, II, 204–206; [S., at line 206, as a replacement for βουλευῆσι uses βασιλεύη; this element lays more emphasis on the significance of the passage in the sense of kingship, but, as a whole, taking into account the aims of this analysis, it does not substantially modify its general meaning].
- 584 *Il.*, II, 181*–183*.
- 585 Cf. footnote n. 236.
- 586 Cf. OED: www.oed.com/view/Entry/72761?rskey=EcXZA&result=2&isAdvanced=false#eid (consultation date: 07/08/2018).
- 587 In Stephanus’ edition, the verb *koiranéo* is joined to the preposition *katá* from which it is detached in that edited by R. Calzecchi Onesti.
- 588 As in the previous case, we find the same union of the verb and the preposition *katá*.
- 589 *Il.*, II, 760.
- 590 *Il.*, II, 863 [FK].
- 591 *Il.*, II, 685*; Hobbes, while using the downgrading technique, does not opt to employ the meaning of *princeps* suggested by Scapula’s lexicon (cf. note n. 216).

- 592 *Od.*, XVIII, 106 [S. 105].
- 593 This English translation is mine.
- 594 *Od.*, XVIII, 88*.
- 595 Cf. E. NELSON, *Translations of Homer. Iliad* cit., p. 222 (footnote n. 253).
- 596 See for example *Od.*, III (365*/400, 417*/454, 451*/482), X (209*/224, 506*/538), XIV (26*/22, 125*/121), XVI (31*/36), XVII (172*/184), XX (162*/185, 225*/254).
- 597 *Il.*, II, 837.
- 598 *Il.*, II, 768*.
- 599 The lexical choice seems significant, given that Scapula's lexicon suggested the term *princeps* for the translation of the noun *órchamos* (cf. note n. 202).
- 600 *Od.*, IV, 291; the other occurrences are in IV, 316, and in XV 64, 87 and 167.
- 601 This English translation is mine.
- 602 Cf. *Od.*, IV, 156, 291 and 316, XV, 64.
- 603 Cf. *Od.*, XV, 87 e 167.
- 604 *Il.*, I, 25–29 [FK].
- 605 *Il.*, I, 23–25.
- 606 *Il.*, I, 26*–28*; on these lines cf. E. NELSON, *Translations of Homer. Iliad* cit., p. 4 (note n. 7).
- 607 Cf. *Il.*, I (307*/321), II (30*/35–38), VII (50*/57), XXIII (303*/295); *Od.*, XXIV (176*/186 [S. 185]).
- 608 *Il.*, III, 105.
- 609 This English translation is mine.
- 610 *Il.*, III, 102*.
- 611 Cf. for example *Il.*, VI (244*/250), VII (39*/44), VIII (280*/303), XX (297*/306), XXII (474*/478), XXIV (261*/279).
- 612 *Il.*, XIII, 208–210 [FK].
- 613 *Il.*, XIII, 174–176.
- 614 *Il.*, XIII, 154*–156*.
- 615 *Il.*, III, 276 and 320.
- 616 *Il.* III, 329–330 [FK].
- 617 *Il.*, III, 269*.
- 618 *Il.*, III, 320*.
- 619 *Od.*, XI, [FK].
- 620 *Od.*, XI, 378–381; [S. 377–380].
- 621 *Od.*, XI, 361*–363*.
- 622 H. G. LIDDELL – R. SCOTT (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 993; cf. F. MONTANARI *op. cit.*, pp. 1195–1196.
- 623 Cf. for example *Od.*, VII (193*/208, 311*/332), VIII (2*/2, 51*/56, 97*/104, 230*/235, 361*/381, 365*/385, 378*/401, 441*/464, 511*/533), IX (1*–2*/2), XI (335*/346, 353*/362 [S. 361]), XIII (174*/185–186).
- 624 Cf. pp. 119–121.

4 Mortal and Immortal God

The Problem of the Genesis of the Political Power

SUMMARY – The chapter explores the Hobbesian handling of that Homeric lexicon, which, at least from a linguistic perspective, creates connections between men who are in charge and the Olympian gods. The philosopher aims to remove all these links because they can cast doubts on the genesis of political power that he wants to view as completely human. The *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* seem to agree with this vision, albeit in a less rigid way than Hobbes, but their lexicon does not. The Homeric poems overflow with adjectives like *diotrephés* (fostered by Zeus), *dioghenés* (sprung by Zeus), *theudés* (akin to God), *theoprópos* (prophetic and prophet), *isótheos* (godlike), *theoeidés* (godlike), *antítheos* (godlike), *theíos* (divine), *theoeikelos* (godlike), *díos* (divine) or expressions like *Dii philos* (dear to Zeus) referring to holders of political power. Comparative analysis highlights why and how Hobbes chooses to manage this problematic lexicon, and shows that the vast majority of his choices are aimed at reducing ambiguities concerning the origin of political power.

If we consider the two dichotomies influencing Hobbesian translation choices with regard to the Homeric poems, undoubtedly that concerning the detachment between sovereign and subjects has taken the lion's share in the analysis thus far. The latter, though it has at times emerged, mainly as a kind of complement to the former, has remained in background, and its analysis has been deferred.

It principally depends on the great disparity, in terms of both quantity and significance, of the elements relating to the distinction between sovereign and subjects, and those linked to the second dichotomy, which we chose to label mortal-immortal god. Before systematically using this label, we need a reiteration of a previous remark: it is simply a concise and useful way to identify the detachment between the human and divine spheres with regard to the genesis of political power.⁶²⁵ Furthermore, we need to clarify that the alterations depending on the first dichotomy come from a multifaceted dimension with basic characteristics dissimilar to one another. The same does not seem to be entirely true of the second one.

It sounds quite obvious that, while the common elements are very numerous, less numerous are the situations of contrast, conflict or friction that Hobbes considers problematic, and which cause the alterations, distinctions and the *corpus* of his translation choices as a whole.

Likewise, it is clear that when, within a context able to generate a lower number of questions and discussions, few of them – or, even, only one – emerges because of their characterisation, their nature or their being anomalous with regard to this context, they become a sort of point to which interventions aimed at forcing the text in a specific direction converge.

These are the main reasons why the analysis concerning the two dichotomies animating Hobbesian translation choices appear irregularly unbalanced in favour of the detachment between sovereign and subjects. All of this notwithstanding, the dichotomy labelled as mortal-immortal god, that is, the dichotomy dealing with the genesis of political power, is not bereft of significance and importance. Although it is less present in quantitative terms, is mainly limited to a restricted ambit and is focused mostly on very specific aspects, it deserves to be sounded out in depth, as we did with the previously considered dichotomy.

The presence of the Olympian world in the Homeric poems could not be easily removed: the interaction between deities and human beings or events and, sometimes, their leading the lives of men towards specific outcomes were part of the connective tissue of the narrative, and they could not be taken away. Furthermore, it was allegedly not Hobbes's intention to do so. The Hobbesian defence of Zeus's monocratic power, for example, clearly reveals that the real problem is not the presence of deities but, as happens in the human ambit, their potential actions outside the bounds of a moral virtue that must comply with the *scientia civilis* theorised in *Leviathan* and in the other political works of the Malmesbury philosopher.

As long as the Olympian gods are merely a community which, like that of the Achaeans, the Phaeacians or the citizens of Ithaca, has situations of disorder or does not fully comply with Hobbes's political theory, but, because of the narrative or philosopher's *ad hoc* interventions, is forced within certain bounds, there are no peculiar conditions according to which the mortal-immortal god distinction could be undermined. Real problems arise when the human and divine spheres become connected in ambits where the philosopher cannot allow ambiguities to exist.

When it is not completely and unequivocally clear from what source political power springs, the condition of stable and long-lasting safety for the community is greatly weakened. If the idea of the covenant as the sole means of leading individuals out of the natural condition of mankind is undermined, it paves the way for the break-up of the Commonwealth.

The Homeric texts are also actually far enough from conceiving outside the human sphere both the genesis and the *raison d'être* of political power. Although the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* are not as categorical as *Leviathan* on this point, as previously illustrated,⁶²⁶ we have no investiture – other than merely a formal one – nor divine legitimation concerning the holding of political authority.

Despite this, the Homeric lexicon is less clear than the picture portrayed within the poems suggests. There are linguistic elements which

can pave the way to ambiguities, create misinterpretations and confusion. Accordingly, if the aim of the translations is to teach virtue, in Hobbes's vision, these elements must be neutralised.

Since this is the ultimate purpose, it very occasionally happens that Hobbes takes advantage by emphasising what he finds in the Homeric text and going beyond the significance of the original lines. This occurs for example when he prefers to stress the role of a particular character, whom he conceives as the legitimate holder of sovereignty instead of focus on the issue of the genesis of his power.

Lynch explores one of the most emblematic cases in his *Political Ideology in Translations of the Iliad*.⁶²⁷ It deals with a passage of book I of the *Iliad* where, because of the struggle and of Agamemnon's unstable position, the philosopher must intervene in order to defend him. The example considers Nestor's words to Achilles, which are aimed at making the fighting stop.

And you, Achilles, never hope to fight it out with your king, pitting force against his force: no one can match the honors dealt a king, you know, a sceptered king to whom great Zeus gives glory. ⁶²⁸	Μῆτε σύ, Πηλεΐδη, ἔθελ' ἐριζέμαι βασιλῆϊ ἀντιβίην, ἐπεὶ οὐ ποθ' ὁμοίης ἔμμορε τιμῆς σκηπτουῶκος βασιλεύς, ᾧ τε Ζεὺς κῦδος ἔδωκεν. εἰ δὲ σὺ καρτερός ἐσσι, θεὰ δὲ σε γείωατο μήτηρ, ἀλλ' ὄ γε φέρτερός ἐστι, ἐπεὶ πλέονεσιν ἀνασσει. ⁶²⁹	Forbear the King (Pelides) For the man Whom Jove hath crown'd is made of Jove a limb. Though you be strong, and on a Goddess got, <i>Atrides</i> is before you in command. ⁶³⁰
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In his translation, Hobbes goes far beyond what we read in the original text. Concerning this passage, Lynch observes:

This is a significant extension of the original where, although a monarch receives honour [...] from Zeus, he is hardly a 'limb'. For Hobbes, the king is not merely honoured by Jove; he is part of him, partaking in divinity.⁶³¹

Analogously, in a passage of book II of the *Iliad* where Odysseus is portrayed while trying to restore order within the Achaean army, the hero says:

The rage of kings is strong, they're nursed by the gods [<i>diotrephés basiléus</i>], their honor comes from Zeus— they're dear to Zeus. ⁶³²	θυμὸς δὲ μέγας ἐστὶ διοτρεφέων βασιλήων, τιμὴ δ' ἐκ Διός ἐστι, φιλεῖ δὲ ἐ μητίετα Ζεὺς. ⁶³³	Deep rooted is the Anger of a King , To whom high <i>Jove</i> committed has the Law, And Justice left to his distributing. ⁶³⁴
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Although the connection to the Olympian world expressed through the adjective *diotrophés* is removed, the translation emphasises it more than is seen in the *Iliad*. While discussing the Hobbesian modifications of this passage and stressing their distance with regard to the original one, Nelson states:

This is a significant departure. The Greek text says nothing here about Jove entrusting kings with ‘law’ and the task of ‘distributing’ justice.⁶³⁵

Actually, these are anomalous and very rare situations; however, at least in these cases, the logic of defence prevails over the intention of detaching the genesis of political power from any link, even hypothetical, to the divine sphere.

Concerning the passage commented by Lynch, it seems to me that there are two reasons why Hobbes is spurred not only to avoid removing the ambiguous reference but also to emphasise its value. The former depends on a logic which is internal to the poems; the latter, instead, relates to *Leviathan*. On the one hand, there is an undeniable intent to defend Agamemnon from both the attack of Achilles and a series of events that, line by line, weakens and undermines his position of supremacy over the Achaeans. On the other, Hobbes seems to refer here to the gist theorised in chapter XII of *Leviathan*, according to which the legitimate sovereign is allowed to use his link – real or alleged – to the deities in order to “keep the people in obedience and peace”.⁶³⁶ On this occasion, since the son of Atreus is at stake, the problem of the nature of his power is less overriding, whereas the one dealing with the detachment between sovereign and subjects is stronger and, accordingly, must more urgently be clarified, stressed and defended.

With analogous reasoning, we can also explain the reading of the passage from book II of the *Iliad*, which seems even more unbalanced than the previous one in terms of the dichotomy between the deity and the holder of sovereignty.

What happens when the characters who have these relations with the Olympian gods are others, particularly when such links exert an influence on political dynamics? What happens when the Homeric heroes – those who in the text are clearly *basiléis*, and cannot always be deprived of their *status* by the philosopher – are proud of their privileged relations with some Olympian deity?

4.1 Human or Divine Genesis of the Political Power? The Kings “Fostered” and “Sprung” by Zeus

The most emblematic situation, which provides us with very remarkable information and shows as clearly as possible Hobbes’s care to keep the

human and the divine spheres separate with regard to the genesis of political power, is linked to two lexical elements, on which Hobbes particularly focuses, due to their frequent occurrence, ambiguous meanings, their relationship with characters in power, with a view to neutralising their dangerousness.

These two adjectives occur often in the poems, and with regard to the Homeric lexicon, though they seem to entail a relationship with the deities, they are to be conceived more as honorary epithets than as attesting a *status* or a substantial condition of those who are so described. Accordingly, while they semantically allow us a very little space for interpretation, their usage unveils the real meaning that they had in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.

They are *diotrophés* and *dioghenés* – literally *fostered by Zeus*⁶³⁷ and *sprung by Zeus*⁶³⁸ – which, respectively, occur in 56 and 88 occasions within the Homeric poems (the former 34 times in the *Iliad* and 22 in the *Odyssey*; the latter 46 and 42),⁶³⁹ and establish a deep connection between men and deities, albeit mainly from the sole perspective of their semantic value.

In the Homeric poems, neither of these two adjectives entail any divine investiture or anything else to suggest a non-human genesis of political power. Despite that, it also seems fairly consistent that for an author aiming to make these texts fit his political theory, and who considers the divine right of kings a hindrance for peace and safety, the translation or replacement of these adjectives is a primary and crucial problem.

Again on this occasion, as we saw with the kingship lexicon, the tools used by Hobbes in order to achieve his goal are the same ones we already saw in the previous analysis concerning the problem of monocratic power: modifications, removals, reinterpretations of words and expressions, but also, though only occasionally, rewriting or elimination of lines. Analogously, the majority of translations choices can be referred to the first set of strategies, whereas the second one is used in a more limited number of cases.

4.2 The Sovereign Fostered by Zeus. Not a mere Lexical Problem

With regard to the episode of Achilles' Wrath, and with a view to completing our previous considerations, it seems useful to return to a passage – already examined, albeit for other reasons – through which to access the analysis of the situations where Hobbes has to deal with the adjective *diotrophés*.

When Agamemnon forces his rival to not simply threaten his retreat, but to actually implement it, he says: "I hate you most of all the warlords/loved by the gods [*diotrophéon basiléon*]. Always dear to your heart,/strife, yes, and battles, the bloody grind of war".⁶⁴⁰ In the Hobbesian

translation (“In you I shall but loose an enemy/That only loves to quarrel and to fight”⁶⁴¹), there is no acknowledgement whatsoever of the *status* of *fostered by Zeus* related to the Homeric kings, as it clearly appears in the original text. However, obviously enough, the philosopher maintains the reference to Achilles’ continuing inclination to fight and seek conflicts.

In these lines, beyond the problem of the plurality of *basiléis*, there is also that of the genesis of their authority, an authority which, because of the use of the adjective *diotrophés*, risks appearing to come directly from the deities and, as a consequence, not from the covenant. On this occasion, with a view to defending the idea of the distinctions between sovereign and subjects and the human and divine spheres with regard to the arising of political power, the Malmesbury philosopher radically removes the compromising terms and makes the text completely bereft of any element that might call those situations to mind. Two excisions of this adjective seem emblematic, since they are related to a character in the *Iliad* whose kingship fits the Hobbesian vision well and, accordingly, a character who suffers little of the philosopher’s corrective actions. This is Priam, whose condition as king of Troy does not create particularly significant problems from this perspective. There is a specific and well-identified community, there is a defined land where he rules and there are no ambiguous situations to undermine Priam’s position. Despite the existence of two centres of power – the former, more political, inside the city, the latter, more operative, on the battlefield – and in spite of their occasionally appearing not completely in agreement with each other,⁶⁴² the institutional role of Priam is not called into question by situations that might be interpreted by Hobbes as cases of overlapping sovereignties. Priam, as well as Agamemnon, Alcinous and other characters of varying degrees of fame, is and remains, a king in the translations.

That being stated, the detail of cases concerning *diotrophés* referred to him allows us to infer a significant element. Book V of the *Iliad* tells about Ares blending among the Trojan soldiers in order to spur them to fight. In the incipit of his speech, we read:

You royal sons of Priam, monarch dear to the gods [<i>diotrophés basiléus</i>], how long will you let Achaean massacre your army? ⁶⁴³	ὦ υἱεῖς Πριάμοιο, διοτρεφέος βασιλῆος, ἔς τί ἔτι κτείνεσθαι ἔασετε λαδὸν Ἀχαιοῖς. ⁶⁴⁴	Children of <i>Priam</i> what d’y e mean, said he; Shall the <i>Greeks</i> follow killing us to <i>Troy</i> ? ⁶⁴⁵
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Although it is removed as happens to *diotrophés*, Priam’s *status* as *basiléus* does not seem to be cast in doubt in this passage: both the exhortation “sons of Priam” in the opening line and its replacement with a

fairly identical English expression do not pave the way for discussions on this point. However, one element disappears: the precise idea that Priam could be *fostered by Zeus*, that is, something potentially able to establish a direct link between the king's power over Troy and the father of the gods.

We find an analogous excision in a passage found in the conclusion of the *Iliad*, where the Trojan king, who a little earlier is portrayed ordering the people to bury Hector's body,⁶⁴⁶ closes the mourning period by giving a banquet, held – as the Homeric text says – in the house of Priam “*diotrophéos basiléos*”.⁶⁴⁷ Hobbes chooses to replace this line with these words: “To Priam's house they came again, and there/He made a splendid supper for them all”.⁶⁴⁸

Considering that Hobbes chooses to maintain the idea of the command given by Priam to have the banquet prepared, we can infer that the excision of the expression *diotrophés basiléus* does not depend on the fact that the institutional role of Priam is not recognised, but rather on the philosopher's intent not to relate this *status* with a direct tie to Zeus.

Both these examples linked to the king of Troy are undoubtedly significant, but not completely satisfying from the perspective of an analysis aimed at looking for a political reason for the corrective actions to this adjective. However, they are the first pieces of a frame composed of other similar details that shape a *unicum* that can provide us with significant elements.

One of them comes from book IV of the *Iliad* where Agamemnon harshly scolds Odysseus and Menestheus son of Peteos because they are reluctant to go onto the battlefield.

You there, Peteos' son, a king, dear to the gods [<i>diotrophés basiléus</i>]!	ὦ υἱὲ Πετῆω διοτρεφέος βασιλῆος,	<i>Menestheus</i> (said he) Son of a King,
And you, the captain of craft and cunning, shrewd with greed!	καὶ σύ, κακοῖσι δόλοισι κεκασμένε,	And you the crafty man <i>Ulysses</i> , why
Why are you cowering here, skulking out of rage?	κερδαλέοφρον, τίπτε καταπτώσσοντες	When you your men should to the Battle bring,
Waiting for others to do your fighting for you? ⁶⁴⁹	ἀφέστατε, μῖμνετε δ' ἄλλουζ, ⁶⁵⁰	Stand you here shrinking from the Enemy? ⁶⁵¹

On this occasion, the removal has nothing to do with Peteos' *status* as *basiléus* or Menestheus' *status* as the son of a king, who is hence linked to him through blood ties also with regard to his institutional role, perhaps from a potential forward-looking perspective. This role seems completely fitting with what we read in the section of *Leviathan* devoted to the right of succession.⁶⁵² At stake is not the relation between father and son, even

from the institutional perspective. What is at stake is the tie between the king and Zeus. Hobbes chooses to completely remove the link between the human and divine spheres, while allowing the role and positions of these two characters to survive.

On other occasions, he bypasses the hindrance of the adjective *diotrophés* by using less drastic – but equally effective – tools.

In book XXIV of the *Iliad*, for example, Priam addresses Achilles using this epithet without any other political or institutional nuance.⁶⁵³ In his translations, Hobbes does not use removal, but he completely modifies the meaning of the adjective, achieving his aim of freeing it from any reference to power without impairing its sense of the link between the human and divine worlds. His translation is “O *Thetis* Son”,⁶⁵⁴ an expression able to both recognise the partial divine condition of Achilles – a well-known element without any political implication – and avoid relating him to Zeus who, despite the nymph, rules over the Olympian gods⁶⁵⁵ and who, albeit from a merely formal perspective, as we have already stressed, confers sceptre and laws to the *basiléus*.⁶⁵⁶

The passage from *fostered by Zeus* to “Thetis Son” does not seem to depend merely on a stylistic reason, but appears as an intentional corrective intervention aimed at neutralising a specific element. The information eternalised by the myth, that is, the partial divine nature of Achilles – information which does not create problems from the political perspective – becomes the tool used to fix the text. By basing his translation on it and not, as suggested by the Greek, on the idea of *fostered by Zeus*, Hobbes maintains an element that can underline the particular *status* of the son of Peleus, but, at the same time, neutralises the potential danger from the Homeric use of the adjective *diotrophés*.

There is a character who has a sort of twofold position, depending on the poems where he is portrayed (potential competitor, like other *basiléis*, of his brother in the *Iliad* and legitimate king of Sparta in the *Odyssey*); either way Menelaus suffers the rather systematic removal of the adjective *diotrophés*. This fact clearly highlights that the excision does not depend on anything to do with the sovereign-subject dichotomy; accordingly there must be a different reason, and a different explanation. It seems to have to do with what we decided to label with the expression mortal-immortal god.

On this occasion, there are no characters to be defended or competitors to be downgraded. The Hobbesian choices concerning *diotrophés* with reference to Menelaus seem to suggest that, consistently with a political theory that excludes the possibility of the divine genesis of political power, the very concept linked to this adjective must be totally rejected.

We find a first significant excision in book X of the *Iliad*. Agamemnon, speaking to his brother, says “Tactics,/my noble [*diotrophés*] Menelaus.

That's what we need now".⁶⁵⁷ Hobbes translates "Brother (said *Agamemnon*) you and I/Must better counsel take than we have done",⁶⁵⁸ using an expression where the meaning of *fostered by Zeus* is completely lost because of the replacement of this adjective with the noun *brother*.

There are not a lot of textual and contextual elements that can help us shed light on the reason for this translation choice or even to hazard a political explanation. Despite that, we cannot ignore that one of the characters of this dialogue is Agamemnon who, unlike Menelaus, is considered by Hobbes as *the king* in the *Iliad*. Since they are brothers, we can hypothesise that if the king of Sparta is *diotrophés*, the same could be said for Agamemnon and, accordingly, that the commander-in-chief of the Achaean army might appear to hold such a power because of a special relationship with Zeus which goes beyond the aforementioned formal investiture. The replacement of the adjective with the word *brother* might be the consequence of this kind of reading, which might in turn explain the other frequent excisions of *diotrophés* with reference to Menelaus, albeit only in the *Iliad*.

We find the majority of them in book XVII, and it seems no coincidence, since it is a part of the poem devoted to narrating the achievements of this hero. The epithet is omitted on five occasions (24*/34, 221*/238, 608*/652, 633*/679, 656*/702) and always replaced with the name, except in the fourth case where the pronoun *he* is used; in book XXIII too (596*/594), *Menelaus* takes *diotrophés*' place. With a view to achieving a higher goal, and consistently with the theories seen in *Leviathan*, Agamemnon can sometimes be allowed to let a link with the deities to shine through,⁶⁵⁹ while the same cannot be for his brother.

As previously described, analogous information can be inferred from the removals of this adjective with reference to Menelaus in the *Odyssey*. In spite of the fact that the political-institutional context is radically different, another kind of Hobbesian translation choice might be expected regarding Menelaus, as happens apropos of the kingship lexicon, but this does not happen.

There is a first element worth stressing is in the opening lines of book IV. In the final section of the previously mentioned passage where the squire Eteoneus announces that Telemachus and Pisistratus are coming to Sparta, we read:

<p>«Strangers, have just arrived, your majesty [<i>diotrophés basiléus</i>], Menelaus. Two men, but they look like kin of mighty Zeus himself [...].⁶⁶⁰</p>	<p>«ξείνω δὴ τιπε τώδε, διοτρεφές ὦ Μενέλαε, ἄνδρε δύο, γενεῆ δὲ Διὸς μεγάλιο εἶκτον [...].⁶⁶¹</p>	<p>O King (said he) there are without two men Like Great mens Sons with their Coach and Gate.⁶⁶²</p>
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Here, doubts are not cast on Menelaus' position as legitimate sovereign of the city and, therefore, there are no circumstances – like those previously seen – relating to the defence and protection of the role of Agamemnon. Therefore, it seems consistent enough that the lexicon adopted by Hobbes should not reveal any alteration regarding this element. However, something else is missing. The philosopher removes the adjective *diotrephés*, forgoing the possibility to describe the hero with an epithet that could potentially link him and his power to the divine sphere. Menelaus' royal authority survives and is strengthened by the addition of the noun *king*, which is completely absent from the Greek text, but it is deprived of any and all divine characterisation.

A little further on something analogous occurs: Helen, while speaking to her husband, twice calls him *Menelaus diotrephés*.⁶⁶³ In both cases, this expression is translated “King Menelaus”,⁶⁶⁴ where, beyond the omission of the adjective, there is again an emphasis on the institutional role of Atreus's son, which is totally missing in the original text.

Again within the same book, we should highlight that the occurrence of line 391 (385*) is ignored, whereas that of line 561 (529*) is replaced with the simple name of the king of Sparta.

It is furthermore worth stressing that the choice not to take into account this Homeric characterisation also appears usual in those occasions where the Greek text clearly mentions Menelaus's position or institutional role: it happens three times in a row, again in book IV.⁶⁶⁵ In these cases, the expression *órchamos laôn* is linked to *diotrephés*; as we have already seen in the analysis regarding this noun,⁶⁶⁶ on three occasions the translations of its five occurrences contain a clear reference to kingship expressed using the English term *king*, yet the significance of *fostered by Zeus* never appears.

A sort of confirmation that the excisions of the adjective *diotrephés* referred to a holder of sovereignty cannot be a mere coincidence comes from two removals affecting Odysseus in book X of the *Odyssey*.⁶⁶⁷ There is nothing at all replacing the first one, whereas in place of the second, we simply find “*Ulysses*”.⁶⁶⁸

Nor does it seem to matter what the position of these characters is in the original text or how Hobbes considers them in his translations. On the contrary, paradoxically enough, their *status* worsens their condition. What appears to characterise these removal choices depends on the *ratio* of systematically uprooting those elements able to undermine – albeit only marginally – the detachment between two dimensions that, in Hobbes's view, must be and remain completely separate.

Despite everything highlighted thus far, a situation exists where the Malmesbury philosopher chooses to translate the expression *diotrephés basiléus* literally. Book III of the *Odyssey* tells us that, with a view to

supporting Telemachus in the journey he is about to undertake, Nestor has a chariot prepared with some food. We read in the poem:

A house keeper stowed some bread and wine abroad and meats too, food fit for the sons of kings [<i>diotrophés basiléus</i>]. ⁶⁶⁹	ἐν δὲ γυνὴ ταμίη σῖτον καὶ οἶνον ἔθηκεν ὄψα τε, οἷα ἔδουσι διοτρεφῆες βασιλῆες . ⁶⁷⁰	A Maid laid in; and with it choisest meat, Which none but God-fed Kings eat when they dine. ⁶⁷¹
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On this occasion, the Hobbesian translation is in complete accordance with the original text, both in replacing the adjective and in maintaining the plural form. Concerning this aspect, we can hypothesise that, since the passage refers to kings in a generic sense, the philosopher does not see any significant reason to alter it. Different and less explainable is the use of the expression “God-fed kings”, which only occurs throughout both poems,⁶⁷² and can perhaps thus be classified as a mere anomaly.⁶⁷³

4.3 The Sovereign Sprung by Zeus. A Semantically Tighter and Politically more Problematic Tie

The translation or replacement of the Greek adjective *dioghenés* might be more difficult for Hobbes than that of *diotrophés*, since, from a semantic perspective, the former has an extra problem compared to the latter. It is true that *diotrophés* entails, suggests or merely evokes the existence of a relation between the man in question and the deities, but its meaning clearly specifies that such a tie arises after birth. On the contrary, the term *dioghenés* subordinates the relation to a procreative action by Zeus and thus makes this tie even more evident. Furthermore, since the adjective often relates to individuals in power, the problem concerning the genesis of political authority is even more strongly emphasised. Hobbes’ translation choices and his corrective actions show that this is and remains a priority for the Malmesbury philosopher.

As previously highlighted, the cases relating to Menelaus led us to suggest the hypothesis that the *ratio* of the translation choices regarding *diotrophés*, being generally free from the exerting of royal power, was connected more to the *mortal-immortal god* dichotomy than to the necessary detachment between sovereign and subjects. Concerning *dioghenés*, the occurrences – both translations and removals – regarding Odysseus provide evidence apt to suggest a similar reading.

The total amount and importance of the cases relating to the king of Ithaca undoubtedly make him a remarkable marker of the *ratio* which seems to drive Hobbesian choices concerning the handling of the adjective *dioghenés*.

We find a first excision in book II of the *Iliad*; right after seeing the rushing getaway of the Achaean army to their ships, Athena exhorts Odysseus to restore the order:

The bright-eyed goddess Pallas lost no time. Down she flashed from the peaks of Mount Olympus, quickly reached the ships and found Odysseus first, a mastermind like Zeus, still standing fast. He had not laid a hand on his black benched hull, such anguish racked his heart and fighting spirit. Now close beside him the bright-eyed goddess stood and urged him on: «Royal son of Laertes [<i>dioghenés</i>], Odysseus, great tactician—what, is <i>this</i> the way? All you Argives flying home your fatherland, tumbling into your oar-swept ships? [...].» ⁶⁷⁴	καρπαλίμως δ' ἴκανε θαῶς ἐπὶ νῆας Ἀχαιῶν. εὗρεν ἔπειτ' Ὀδυσῆα, Διὶ μήτιν ἀτάλαντον, ἔσταότ'· οὐδ' ὄ γε νηὸς εὖσσέλμοιο μελαίνης ἄπτειτ', ἔπει μιν ἄχος κραδίην καὶ θυμὸν ἴκανε· ἀγχοῦ δ' ἴσταμένη προσέφη γλαυκῶπις Ἀθήνη· «διογενές Λαερτιάδη, πολυμήχαν' Ὀδυσσεῦ, οὔτω δὴ οἰκόνδε φίλην ἐς πατρίδα γαῖαν φεύφεσθ' [...].» ⁶⁷⁵	From high <i>Olympus</i> , and stood on the sand Where lay the <i>Greeks</i> . <i>Ulysses</i> then she found Angry to see the people go from Land. <i>Ulysses</i> , said she, do you mean to fly. ⁶⁷⁶
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Hobbes chooses not only to remove *dioghenés* from his translation, but also to eliminate the expression “*Diū mētīn atálanton*” – “a mastermind like Zeus”⁶⁷⁷ – which, albeit without directly entailing political consequences, tends to raise Odysseus to a divine level.

It does not seem to be a coincidence and, on the contrary, it appears consistent enough that the philosopher tries here to force Odysseus into the human dimension, since, some lines later, the king of Ithaca restores the order and supremacy of Agamemnon within the Achaean army. The fact that he ascribes the epithet *sprung by Zeus* to Odysseus, his being akin to this god and his ability in restoring order through his prestige, might be dangerous in terms of the Hobbesian priority to defend the son of Atreus. The twofold removal is also useful to eliminate any possible allusion to the link between the human and divine worlds. All of this

notwithstanding, it is quite clear that the logic inspiring these translation choices depends more on the need to protect the dichotomy between sovereign and subjects than the detachment between the human and divine dimensions, although this is also a factor. The example mentioned is still significant, if nothing else because it highlights a habit of Hobbes regarding Odysseus in the *Iliad* as a whole.⁶⁷⁸

If it can be explained through the logic of protection of Agamemnon – among the Achaeans, for example, also Ajax⁶⁷⁹ and Patroclus⁶⁸⁰ are deprived of this epithet – the eight occurrences in the *Odyssey* seem to authorise us to place the Hobbesian interventions within a wider picture.⁶⁸¹

Since there are neither political problems dealing with the question of overlapping sovereignties, nor doubts on who is the legitimate king of Ithaca, it becomes more complex to try to explain such removals simply with the same argument and the logic of Agamemnon's defence as a particular case of the sovereign-subject dichotomy. On the contrary, by mainly taking into due account the idea of the detachment between mortal and immortal god, as we saw with the occurrences of *diotrophés* relating to Menelaus, these translation choices found in the *Odyssey* also seem a little clearer.

That is not to say that what we previously outlined apropos of the excisions of *dioghenés* in the *Iliad* does not fit a plausible logic, but this second reading, together with the previous one, cast light on the fact that there are two different dimensions inspiring these Hobbesian interventions, and that the second one is prevalent. Therefore, while an explanation of these removals in the *Iliad* based on a strategy to defend the sovereign authority remains convincing, here it seems to be in a wider dimension, which has as its first argumentative target the genesis of political power and, only secondly, the protection of royal authority.

As seen with *diotrophés*, *dioghenés* also highlights a problem that arises before the institutional moment, dealing with an element that precedes it and which, sometimes, embeds it, while always remaining separate and recognisable. Both in the *Iliad* and in the *Odyssey*, the king of Ithaca cannot be allowed to be *sprung by Zeus* since this kind of tie, being dangerous to the political authority and its origin, must be erased and rendered harmless. Although, the removal is also useful to Agamemnon's defence (as we saw in the passage quoted from the *Iliad*), it does not divert Hobbes from his primary target, which is the removal of every possible reference to the relation between rulers and deities.

A sort of confirmation *a contrariis* that the Hobbesian intent is principally focused on this aspect, seems to come from the occurrences where the philosopher chooses translate rather than remove the adjective *dioghenés* relating to the king of Ithaca in the *Odyssey*.

For example, in book X, with a view to spurring the hero to descend to the Kingdom of Hades in order to consult the soothsayer Tiresias, Circe says:

Royal [<i>dioghenés</i>] son of Laeters, Odysseus, born for exploits [<i>polyméchanos</i>], let no lack of a pilot at the helm concern you, no, just step your mast and spread your white sail wide— sit back and the North Wind will speed you on your way. ⁶⁸²	διογενές Λαερτιάδη, πολυμήχαν’ Ὀδυσσεῦ, μή τί τοι ἡγεμόνος γε ποθή παρὰ νηϊ μελέσθω, ιστόν δὲ στήσας ἀνά θ’ ἰστία λευκά πετάσσας ἦσθαι τὴν δέ κέ τοι πνοιή Βορέαιο φέρησιν. ⁶⁸³	Renown’d <i>Ulysses</i> (answer’d <i>Circe</i>) here Against your will with me you shall not stay. But e’re you go unto your Country dear, You must a Voyage make another way. ⁶⁸⁴
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Hobbes unites the two adjectives of the original Greek text – *dioghenés* and *polyméchanos* (“*resourceful, inventive*”⁶⁸⁵) – using a single epithet which allows him to avoid recognising the hero’s *status* as *sprung by Zeus*. The use of “renown’d”, whose significance is “known or talked about by many people; highly reputed; celebrated, famous”⁶⁸⁶ excludes any reference to the divine sphere.

That it might be not a mere accident seems to be confirmed by other similar situations. In book XI (617 [S. 616]), the same expression is analogously translated (593*). Again in book XI – this time at line 405 [S. 404] – and in XIV (486) as a replacement for *dioghenés*, we find the English term *noble* (385* and 468*). Finally, in book XVI (167), the translation is *wise* (155*). Although this Homeric line is repeated verbatim, on no occasion are there elements in the English text that evoke the potentially dangerous original value of this adjective.

Because of the occurrences considered here, and given the particular position of Odysseus in this poem, it seems legitimate to claim that the Hobbesian reluctance to faithfully translate *dioghenés* seems closely related to the problem of the genesis of political power. Whereas in the *Iliad*, the removal of this adjective appears to be inserted in a different frame, and runs the risk of being confused among the others inspired by the logic of the dichotomy between sovereign and subjects, particularly for the protection of Agamemnon, in the *Odyssey*, these reasons grow less important and seem to clarify its autonomous essence completely consistent with the need to set the genesis of political power within an exclusively human context, as clearly expounded in *Leviathan*. As emerged from the analysis of *diotrophés* relating to Menelaus, regardless of the institutional role of the individuals that are described with this adjective, the very idea it implies must be eliminated because of its dangerousness.

To conclude the analysis of these two adjectives, it seems useful to recall a previously mentioned passage (which we examined only with regard to one of them), since it seems to provide some sort of summarised outline of the Hobbesian translation habit concerning these two epithets.

When Eteoneus catches sight of Telemachus and Pisistratus, he addresses Menelaus by calling him *diotrophés*⁶⁸⁷ and informs him of two men coming that “look like kin of mighty Zeus himself”⁶⁸⁸ (“*gheneé de Diòs megáloio éikton*”).⁶⁸⁹

As we have seen, Hobbes removes the epithet related to the king of Sparta and appends the noun king; furthermore, he replaces the expression with reference to both Telemachus and Pisistratus – whose meaning is completely comparable to *dioghenés* – with “Like Great mens Sons”.⁶⁹⁰ These interventions allow him to eliminate any elements potentially able to link these characters to the Olympian world, along with any power they have or might have as heirs, respectively, of Odysseus and Nestor.

4.4 Other Divine Characterisations and their Links to the Genesis of Power. A Completion

Undoubtedly, the analysis of *diotrophés* and *dioghenés* leads us to infer the most significant elements in support of the thesis of a political use of the translations, particularly with regard to the mortal-immortal god dichotomy. However, another group of terms from the Homeric lexicon deserves to be examined, albeit briefly, because they do connect men and gods. They are further worth stressing since, in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, they often relate the deities with men in power. The information coming from this kind of analysis is less significant than the previous ones, but it is still useful to outline an overall frame and to place the elements thus far examined into a broader general context, where the topic of the ties between the human and the divine spheres is very carefully tackled by Hobbes.

Because of its analogy and affinity with the two adjectives already analysed, it seems useful start by examining the expression “*Diῖ philos*” – literally *dear to Zeus*⁶⁹¹ – which occurs about fifteen times, exclusively in the *Iliad*.⁶⁹² Although it refers to the father of the gods, it seems to characterise the relation between him and those who are said to be so in a less strict sense than when the adjectives *diotrophés* and *dioghenés* are used. Through the analysis of the only occurrences – about ten – which, because they refer to particular characters from the Homeric poems, can be related to the subject of political power, we can infer a significant common trait. Every time the Homeric text uses this expression, the Hobbesian choice is removal. In the translations, Achilles, Odysseus and Hector are neither called *dear to Zeus* nor do we find lexical replacements that might allude, even slightly, to the existence of a relation between them and the Olympian world. Undoubtedly, we must consider that in

the *Iliad*, all these characters are conceived by Hobbes as competitors of the respective legitimate sovereigns, though, in the case of Hector, this contrast must be considered merely potential. Nonetheless, the very essence of the expression “*Diῖ philos*” drives us to explore its uses and occurrences in depth, not only from the perspective of the sovereign-subject dichotomy but also with regard to the human genesis of political power.

Given this, it does not seem surprising, but rather significant, that the five occurrences referring to Achilles⁶⁹³ and the three each, respectively, referring to Odysseus⁶⁹⁴ and Hector⁶⁹⁵ are not replaced by the philosopher with expressions that maintain the original meaning and characterisation. This happens even when power dynamics involving Agamemnon and Priam are not at stake, something clearly referable to the exclusively human ambit of the necessary detachment between sovereign and subjects.

In book I, there is an emblematic omission. Right before the clash arises and, accordingly, right before the political problem of the supremacy over the Achaean army is publicly revealed, Achilles summons Calchas to the assembly with a view to finding a way to stop the plague as quickly as possible. The soothsayer addresses the hero in order to gain protection should someone would not accept his answer, saying:

«Achilles, dear to Zeus... [<i>Diῖ philos</i>], you order me to explain Apollo's anger, the distant deadly Archer? I will tell it all. But strike a pact with me, swear you will defend me with all your hearth, with words and strength of hand [...]». ⁶⁹⁶	«ὦ Ἀχιλεῦ, κέλευαί με, Διῖ φίλε, μυθήσασθαι μῆνιν Ἀπόλλωνος ἐκατηβελέταο ἄνακτος· τοιγὰρ ἐγὼν ἐρέω· σὺ δὲ σύνθεο καὶ μοι ὄμοσον ἧ μὲν μοι πρόφρων ἔπεσιν καὶ χερσίν ἄρῆξειν [...]». ⁶⁹⁷	<i>Achilles</i> (said he) since you me command To tell you why this Plague is on us come, Swear you will save me both with word and hand. ⁶⁹⁸
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At this point in the narrative, there are still no elements that can be related to the contrast between Achilles and Agamemnon, and there are no power logics at stake; in spite of this, Hobbes drastically intervenes on the text, completely removing the expression “*Diῖ philos*”. Therefore, we can hypothesise that this action seeks to detach the figure of the son of Peleus – and especially what he is about to represent – from that of Zeus and, as a consequence, to place Achilles' power – clearly revealed by the autonomous convocation of the assembly – in a merely human dimension.

Despite this general bent to remove the expression “*Diῖ philos*”, as well as the fact that this action principally regards Homeric characters

holding political authority, and while considering that both these Hobbesian choices might lead us to ascribe the omission to his intent not to let ambiguities concerning the genesis of power survive in the English version, it seems that no other significant aspects can be inferred from the Hobbesian translation or replacement of this expression found in the *Iliad*.

A little bit more significant information can be inferred from the analysis of the Hobbesian translation choices concerning the adjective *theios* “of or from the gods, divine”.⁶⁹⁹ It depends both on the larger number of occurrences⁷⁰⁰ and on some of its uses that show us particular aspects worth stressing. Occurrences without any political value aside,⁷⁰¹ there are some correlations to both particular characters and institutional roles that fit the wide frame regarding the problem of the genesis of political power.

Excluding “*theion ghénos*”⁷⁰² – literally *divine ancestry* – which would be interesting were it not relating to Chimera, a supernatural being, there are three cases in the *Odyssey* worth noting, since this adjective is combined with the noun *basileús*.

The first one occurs in book IV: on the margin of a conversation between Menelaus and Telemachus, the narrator says:

And now as the two confided in each other, banqueters arrived at the great king’s [<i>theios</i> <i>basileús</i>] palace, leading their own sheep, bearing their hearty wine, and their wives in lovely headbands sent along the food. And so they bustled about the halls preparing dinner.... ⁷⁰³	ὥς οἱ μὲν τοιαῦτα πρὸς ἀλλήλους ἀγόρευον, δαιτυμόνες δ’ ἔς δῶματ’ ἴσαν θειῶν βασιλῆος . οἱ δ’ ἦγον μὲν μῆλα, φέρων δ’ εὐήγορα οἶνον· σῆτον δὲ σφ’ ἄλοχοι καλλικρήδεμοι ἔπεμπον. ⁷⁰⁴	Whilst they together thus discursing staid, The bidden Guests, fat sheep, rich wine bring in, And bread their Wives upon the Tables laid, And about Supper busie were within. ⁷⁰⁵
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The expression *theios basileús* is completely removed here. However, if we consider the particular context – the palace of Menelaus at Sparta – while there are no doubts at all on his being *basileús*, in spite of the excision, the only information lost is that it relates his institutional role to the divine sphere, albeit from a merely lexical perspective. This translation choice, when framed within the dichotomous logic *mortal-immortal god*, does not seem surprising, but fully consistent with what Hobbes theorised in *Leviathan* apropos of the genesis of political power.

A little further on in the same book, Penelope says while complaining about suitors' behaviour:

What, didn't you listen to your fathers—when you were children, years ago— telling you how Odysseus treated <i>them</i> , your parents? Never an unfair word, never an unfair action among his people here, though that's the way of our god-appointed kings [<i>theîos basiléus</i>], hating one man, loving the next, with luck. ⁷⁰⁶	οὐδέ τι πατρῶν ὑμετέρων τὸ πρόσθεν ἀκούετε, παῖδες ἐόντες, οἷος Ὀδυσσεὺς ἔσκε μεθ' ὑμετέροισι τοκεῦσιν, οὔτε τινὰ ῥέξας ἐξάισιον οὔτε τι εἰπὼν ἐν δῆμῳ ἢ τ' ἐστὶ δίκη θείων βασιλήων ἄλλον κ' ἐχθαίρησι βροτῶν, ἄλλον κε φιλοίη. ⁷⁰⁷	As if your Fathers never told you how <i>Ulysses</i> with them did himself behave That never did unkindness to them shew In Deed or Word. Although a liberty Kings often take, one man to love or hate Above another, without telling why. ⁷⁰⁸
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In the translation, the epithet *theîos* is removed and the kings lose any characterisation potentially able to link their position to the divine sphere.

The English translation of this passage allows Nelson to highlight a further element that I think is important to emphasise here, since it helps to outline the complex and multifaceted context in which the excision of this adjective takes place:

This is a rare negative comment about kings that Hobbes allows to stand. He does however, soften it somewhat.⁷⁰⁹

The last occurrence of *theîos* linked to the noun *basiléus* is in book XVI, where is said of Eumaeus and a herald going to the palace of Ithaca carrying the same news:

And now those two men met, herald and swineherd, both out on the same errand, to give the queen the news. But once they reached the house of the royal king [<i>theîos basiléus</i>] the herald strode up, into the serving-women's midst, and burst out. ⁷¹⁰	τῷ δὲ συναντήτην κῆρυξ καὶ δῖος ὑφορβὸς τῆς αὐτῆς ἔνεκ' ἀγγελίης, ἐρέοντε γυναϊκί. ἀλλ' ὅτε δὴ ῥ' ἵκοντο δόμον θείου βασιλήος , κῆρυξ μὲν ῥα μέσησι μετὰ δηωῆσιν ἔειπεν. ⁷¹¹	<i>Eumaeus</i> was for the same bus'ness there. He from his Lodge, the other from the Deep. ⁷¹²
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The Hobbesian lines are briefer than the original, but – whether the omission is intentional or not – what is dropped is precisely the reference to the *divine king*.

That this is more than happenstance seems to be confirmed by observing that it is the *basiléus* of Ithaca who is deprived of this epithet more frequently than any other in the *Odyssey*, though in this poem, Hobbes does not cast doubts on his legitimate role as king.⁷¹³

Among the numerous excisions concerning this adjective, two of them deserve to be emphasised as they offer further evidence that the philosopher primarily seeks to remove the ties with the deities and not to deny Odysseus’ *status* as king. It seems consistent enough with the logic previously highlighted concerning both *diotrephés*⁷¹⁴ related to Priam, Peteos, Menelaus and *dioghenés*⁷¹⁵ to Odysseus.

These are a couple of lines repeated word for word in the Greek text, and translated in English in a similar, but not identical, way. The passage, both in book II and in book IV, says:

Think: not one of the people whom he ruled remembers Odysseus now, that godlike man [<i>theios Odysseús</i>], as kindly as a father to his children. ⁷¹⁶	ὡς οὐ τις μέμνηται Ἵδουσσῆος θείου λαῶν οἷσιν ἄνασσε, πατήρ δ’ ὡς ἥπιος ἦεν. ⁷¹⁷
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The Hobbesian translation is respectively:

Since you <i>Ulysses</i> have so soon forgot, That ever rul’d us like a Father kind. ⁷¹⁸	That of Ulysses are forgetful grown, Whose Government so gentle was and just. ⁷¹⁹
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In both cases, Odysseus’s royal authority is not in doubt – “rul’d” and “government” replace the verb *wanássō* quite effectively – but the epithet characterising the hero as divine is totally removed. Again on this occasion, the corrective intervention seems to focus on an element which deals more with the essence of power itself than the man who exerts it.

Analogously, we can explain the excisions of this adjective suffered by Achilles.⁷²⁰ Despite this, with regard to him, there is an anomalous exception compared to the overall inclination to removal, which is therefore worth mentioning.

While describing the moment when Apollo removes Achilles’s helmet from Patroclus’s head allowing Hector to seize it, the *Iliad* says:

Forbidden before this to defile its crest in dust, it guarded the head and handsome brow of a god,	πάρος γε μὲν οὐ θέμις ἦεν ἱππόκομον πῆληκα μαίνεσθαι κονίησιν, ἀλλ’ ἀνδρὸς θείου κάρη χαρίεν	That never had been so defil’d before When on <i>Achilles</i> Godlike head it sate.
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a man like god [<i>anér</i>	τε μέτωπον	But <i>Jove</i> to <i>Hector</i>
<i>theíos</i>] Achilles. But	ρύετ' Ἀχιλλῆος· τότε δὲ	gave it now to
now the Father	Ζεὺς	wear,
gave it over to Hector to	Ἴκτορι δῶκεν	And only then
guard his head in war	ἢ κεφαλῇ φορέειν,	when near him
since Hector's death	σχεδόθεν δέ οἱ	was his fate. ⁷²³
was closing him	ἦεν ὄλεθρος. ⁷²²	
quickly. ⁷²¹		

Other than the fact that the text of the *Iliad* mentions an *anér theíos* first and then identifies him as Achilles, whereas the Hobbesian translation immediately assigns the hero's name to the epithet, there are no differences between these passages apropos of the replacement of *theíos*.

By using the English adjective *godlike*, the original meaning is respected and maintained at least in this case.

The occasional occurrence and, particularly, the high number of situations where this characterisation is systematically removed, mean we can consider this Hobbesian translation choice to be an anomaly. It is still worth noting that there are no aspects at stake concerning political power or its genesis in this passage and, above all, that in the poems, Achilles has the *status* of demigod, which might persuade Hobbes not to correct it as he does on other occasions.

Again with a view to supporting the hypothesis according to which Hobbes has a twofold intent of removing the tie between men and gods with regard to the genesis of political power, but also of maintaining the textual elements attesting its essence, it seems useful to mention a case concerning a fringe character in the *Iliad*, since it adds a further tile to the overall picture. In book XIV of the *Iliad*, Hera is described while going to Lemnos, a city ruled by Thoas; we read in the poem:

and east of Athos skimmed	ἐξ Ἀθῶω δ' ἐπὶ	And from the
the billowing, foaming	πόντον ἐβήσετο	mountain <i>Athos</i>
sea,	κυμαίμοντα,	ore the Deep.
and touched down on	Λῆμον δ' εἰσαφίκανε,	And came to <i>Lemnos</i>
Lemnos, imperial	πόλιν Θείοιο	where King
Thoas' city [<i>theíos</i>	Θόαντος . ⁷²⁵	Thoas swaid. ⁷²⁶
<i>Tóas</i>]. ⁷²⁴		

On this occasion, the *Iliad* clearly stresses the divine nature of Thoas. Hobbes obviously opts to remove *theíos* but also to strengthen Thoas's institutional role by appending the English noun *king*, which has no equivalent in the Greek text. As a consequence, the English version stresses both the position of this character and his complete detachment from any ties to the Olympian world, at least from a lexical perspective.

Continuing the analysis of the lexicon that establishes a connection between the human and divine spheres in contexts and situations

significant from the perspective of political power, the adjective *theoikelos* (“godlike”⁷²⁷) deserves to be taken into due account. It clearly does not depend on the significance of its general use, since between both poems, we find only five occurrences,⁷²⁸ and four of them are removed by the philosopher.⁷²⁹ However, on one occasion, its’ translation appears to be in continuity with what previously emerged apropos of Achilles linked to the epithet *theios*.

In book XIX of the *Iliad*, Odysseus addresses the son of Peleus calling him “θεοεἰκελ’ Ἀχιλλεῦ”.⁷³⁰ Unlike all the other cases – and one of them regards the same character – the epithet is not only translated, but the Hobbesian replacement is *godlike*.⁷³¹

If the previous omission, relating to the same son of Peleus, cannot surprise us – the *Iliad* tells of the struggle and, in the original text, Agamemnon himself identifies the rival as *theoikelos*⁷³² – the reasons why, on this second occasion, Hobbes chooses to allow the hero to be akin to gods seems less evident.

Unfortunately, the uniqueness of the occurrence and, accordingly, the absence of further elements and textual evidence do not allow us to go beyond the previously outlined hypotheses regarding the adjective *theios*.

The information inferred from the fifteen or so occurrences of the adjective *isótheos*⁷³³ – literally “equal to the gods, godlike”⁷³⁴ – is very scant, since it is almost always removed.⁷³⁵ Worth showing is the fact that prominent *basileis* suffer its removal: Priam, Ajax, Menelaus and – albeit in a potential future – Telemachus. However, the overall nature of these omissions concerning this adjective weakens a political reading of those related to these characters.

We find an analogous trend in the handling of the more numerous occurrences⁷³⁶ of the adjective *theoideis* (“godlike”⁷³⁷), an adjective mentioned above apropos of a reference to Telemachus, but not studied in detail.⁷³⁸

Setting aside the numerous excisions regarding Paris, since his resemblance to the gods seems to be more easily related to his famous attractiveness than to something linked to significant aspects from a political perspective,⁷³⁹ there are two remarkable removals regarding Priam and the son of Odysseus that seem worthy of note. They seem linked more to the royal power, albeit in the case of the latter only in a potential perspective.

The king of Troy is said to be *theoideis* in nine cases and, though he is – also for Hobbes – a legitimate sovereign, he is never pinpointed as such in the translation.⁷⁴⁰

Once again, institutional role and resemblance with deities seem to travel on different paths. Although the former is maintained, the latter is systematically hushed up, maybe because of its ambiguity as to the genesis of political power. Despite this, a clarification is called for. These excisions are all gathered in book XXIV, and the expression “*Priamos*

theoïdēs”⁷⁴¹ is clearly a formula. It suggests that we proceed with extreme prudence in seeking a political intent in this kind of translation choice. Although we cannot exclude that such an intention might exist, we must equally recognise that metrical and stylistic reasons clearly prevail here.

The range of occurrences regarding Telemachus is more varied, while the Hobbesian translation choice is totally identical. In the Greek text, the son of Odysseus is called *theoïdēs* on six occasions, and every time the adjective is ignored.⁷⁴²

In book VII of the *Odyssey*, we find an element that seems to be quite consistent with what emerges several times in this analysis about the fact that removals or alterations of the lexicon relating the human and divine spheres are not often influenced by the *status* or political role ascribed by Hobbes to the men characterised by the epithet. While the poem describes a moment when Odysseus is staying at the palace of Alcinous, we read:

But king Odysseus still remained at hall, seated beside the royal Alcinous [<i>theoïdēs</i>] and Arete as servants cleared the cups and plates away. ⁷⁴³	αὐτὰρ ὁ ἐν μεγάρῳ ὕπελειπετο δῖος Ὀδυσσεύς, παρ δέ οἱ Ἀρήτη τε καὶ Ἄλκίνοος θεοειδῆς ἦσθην ἄμφιπολοι δ' ἀπεκόσμεον ἔντεα δαιτὸς. ⁷⁴⁴	Only <i>Ulysses</i> staid, and by him sate The King and Queen. Table removed were, And all that to the Supper did relate. ⁷⁴⁵
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In addition to the characters' reversal and, consequently, the first mention of Alcinous in place of his wife, what is surprising is both the substitution of their name with their respective institutional roles and the complete removal of *theoïdēs* related to the Phaeacian king. Once again, a position of power is not called into question, but its possible (and perhaps merely lexical) relation with the deities is not allowed to survive.

When Hobbes has to translate a passage from the *Catalogue of Ships* describing the Phrygian army, he adopts quite a similar approach:

Ascanius strong as a god [<i>theoïdēs</i>] and Phorcys led the Phrygians in from Ascania due east, prime for the clash of combat. ⁷⁴⁶	Φόρκυς αὖ Φρύγας ἦγε καὶ Ἀσκάνιος θεοειδῆς τῆλ' ἔξ Ἀσκανίης· μέμασαν δ' ὕσμῖνι μάχεσθαι. ⁷⁴⁷	The Phrygians from <i>Ascania</i> , far off, Were led by Phorcys and <i>Ascanius</i> ; And Battle lov'd. ⁷⁴⁸
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While the philosopher does not reject the Ascanius' leadership role over the Phrygians – the expression “were led by” faithfully replaces the meaning of the Greek verb *ágo* “lead, carry, fetch, bring”⁷⁴⁹ – he avoids maintaining the original characterisation of *theoïdēs*. Again on this occasion, the choice of

translation, albeit with reference to a secondary character and a marginal situation, seems to follow the same logic previously seen for Alcinous and, knowing the previously explained need for prudence, also for Priam.

Almost no information can be inferred from the six occurrences of the adjective *theudés*⁷⁵⁰ which, while equated in Scapula's lexicon with *theoidés*,⁷⁵¹ is more correctly translated by Hobbes with the English adjectives "godly"⁷⁵² or "devout",⁷⁵³ which seem to better denote the original meaning of "*fearing God*".⁷⁵⁴ Sometimes the philosopher chooses to ignore it.⁷⁵⁵

The Hobbesian interventions regarding the sixty or so occurrences of the adjective *antitheos*⁷⁵⁶ in both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* – "*equal to the gods, godlike*"⁷⁵⁷ – are mainly removals. Among the most important characters who suffer the deprivation of this adjective are Menelaus,⁷⁵⁸ Odysseus,⁷⁵⁹ Ajax⁷⁶⁰ and Nestor.⁷⁶¹

Furthermore, there are other, perhaps lesser-known characters, whose removals throw light on some complementary aspect still worth stressing.

Firstly, we can note that, when *antitheos* is related to groups – as is seen for example with the Lycian⁷⁶² people and Odysseus's mates⁷⁶³ – the overall inclination is the same as for single individuals, that is, removals prevail. Concerning the suitors, this adjective is replaced with the English "proud"⁷⁶⁴ in a passage from book XIV of the *Odyssey*.

There are two cases of a singular link that becomes twofold in the translation and loses any divine characterisation; they are a little more useful than the previous ones in order to understand Hobbesian choices concerning this adjective.

While speaking about the procreation by Zeus of his two sons Minos and Rhadamans, the god identifies the latter as *antitheos*.⁷⁶⁵

The philosopher writes: "*Minos and Rhadamans both famous men*",⁷⁶⁶ removing the connotation given by the adjective, and bringing both these characters onto the human plane by appending the noun "men".

Analogously in book XXIV of the *Iliad*, Priam, while speaking of his sons Mestor and Troilus, says that the former is like a god,⁷⁶⁷ but the English replacement is "*Mestor and Troilus both valiant men*".⁷⁶⁸

Again within the Trojan army, we find Polydorus, who is one of the king's sons, and thus, in a forward-looking and fairly hypothetical perspective, a potential heir in Hobbes's eyes. In the Homeric text, he is identified as *antitheos*,⁷⁶⁹ but on a first occasion, Hobbes simply calls him "*Priam's youngest Son*"⁷⁷⁰ and the second time, "*Polydore*".⁷⁷¹

These examples seem only marginally related to the political-educational use of the translations, but they allow us to figure out overall how the philosopher refers to a lexicon, which, in some situations and with regard to some characters, seems at odds with his idea of *scientia civilis*.

The removal suffered by Sarpedon in book VI of the *Iliad*⁷⁷² seems more significant. He is the leader of the Lycians, together with Glaucus; accordingly, he is the holder of political and military power⁷⁷³; furthermore, he is also the son of Zeus. Despite all of this, Hobbes has no qualms

at all in removing the characterisation of *antitheos* found in the original text, thus detaching, as he often does, the institutional role from any potentially problematic connections with the Olympian world.⁷⁷⁴

In the interests of completeness, the sole case of faithful translation of this adjective deserves a mention. In book I of the *Odyssey*, Polyphemus, son of Poseidon and the nymph Thoosa, is called *antitheos*,⁷⁷⁵ an epithet that becomes “God-like”⁷⁷⁶ in the Hobbesian translation. However, there do not seem to be any political or educational reasons to explain this translation choice.

More complex, particularly given the very high number of occurrences,⁷⁷⁷ – but also more significant for an analysis of the translation from a political perspective – is the case of the adjective *dios*, literally “heavenly [...] noble [...] excellent”.⁷⁷⁸

This characterisation has already emerged on a previously mentioned occasion, but it was only considered with regard to that particular case and not analysed any further. Bringing it back into consideration now allows us to better grasp the meaning. I refer here to the Hobbesian replacement of the Greek *dios*, referring to Achilles, with the English “stout”⁷⁷⁹ in the opening lines of the *Iliad*.⁷⁸⁰

The meaning clearly entailed in the original epithet is thus moved onto a human level, avoiding the addition of a further dangerous element in this crucial moment of the narrative (the very problematic *incipit*, due both to the plague and to its being caused by Agamemnon). Indeed, this adjective describes Achilles’ not completely human nature, and risks denoting his power as coming from gods: a power that he undoubtedly has, since, as previously highlighted,⁷⁸¹ even before the *Iliad* calls him *basiléus*,⁷⁸² he has the authority to autonomously summon the assembly of the Achaeans.

There is a very high number of excisions of *dios* in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*; accordingly their analysis is scarcely significant. For example, Achilles,⁷⁸³ Parides,⁷⁸⁴ Diomedes,⁷⁸⁵ Hector,⁷⁸⁶ Nestor,⁷⁸⁷ Odysseus,⁷⁸⁸ but also Agamemnon⁷⁸⁹ himself often suffer the removal of this epithet. Therefore, it seems more useful to consider some of its translations, which show elements of continuity with previously emerging aspects apropos of the relations between the human and divine spheres.

Hobbes is prevalently inclined to defend the institutional role of men in power, who are called *dios*, as long as this does not impinge on problems arising from a lack of clear-cut detachment between sovereign and subjects, of course. However, at the same time, he tries to avoid linking these characters to the Olympian god.

One indirect but quite significant piece of evidence that with this adjective, Hobbes is primarily focused on avoiding any possible confusion between human and divine spheres with regard to political power lies in the English words he uses to replace it.

It seems remarkable that the Malmesbury philosopher should use such a varied, wide and multifaceted range of meanings to replace a single adjective. Less astonishing is the fact that the trait common to all of these

words is not a semantic root, but the almost total absence of meanings relating to deities.

The Achilles *dios* described in book II of the *Iliad* as staying near the ships, angry with Agamemnon,⁷⁹⁰ is not called *stout* here as on the previous occasion, but “General”.⁷⁹¹ This word joins together both the noun and the adjective, and allows Hobbes to comply with his political theory. This choice seems to fit both the sovereign-subject dichotomy and the mortal-immortal god distinction. Regarding the former, Achilles’ authority is military in nature and is exerted only over the Myrmidons. Regarding the latter, the replacement chosen shows absolutely no similarity to the original Greek and gives no hint of any divine genesis of political power.

A little further on, the same hero becomes “great”⁷⁹² instead of *dios*,⁷⁹³ whereas in book XX, he is again *dios* in Greek, but in the translation he is associated to Aeneas – who is mentioned in the same line – and both are described as “the two best”.⁷⁹⁴ All together we have four different meanings related to the same character, and all of them are far from allowing the original to shine through. Moreover, if we add the very high number of removals of *dios* related to Achilles,⁷⁹⁵ we can apparently infer or at least suspect that this group of translation choices might derive from a deliberate intention. Considering that the translations are all marked by the absence of a link to the divine world, it can be argued that Hobbes might intend to remove the tie between men in power and the potential cause of the genesis of their authority.

If we look at Odysseus, analysis of the translation of the adjective *dios* relating to him seems to confirm this reading. In this case, in addition to the very great number of the excisions,⁷⁹⁶ in the rare cases when this epithet is actually translated, the original meaning is not respected at all. In book V of the *Iliad*, we read:

<p>Tlepolemus – far across the lines the armed Achaeans hauled him out of the fight, and seasoned Odysseus [<i>dios</i>] saw it, his brave spirit steady, ablaze for action now. What should he do? – he racked his heart and soul – lunge at Prince Sarpedon, son of storming Zeus.⁷⁹⁷</p>	<p>Τληπόλεμον δ' ἐτέρωθεν εὐκνήμιδες Ἄχαιοι ἐξέφερον πολέμοιο· νόησε δὲ δῖος Ὀδυσσεὺς τλήμονα θυμὸν ἔχων, μαίμησε δέ οἱ φίλον ἦτορ· μερμήριζε δ' ἔπειτα κατὰ φρένα καὶ κατὰ θυμὸν ἢ προτέρω Διὸς υἱὸν ἐριγδοῦποιο διώκοι, ἦ ὃ γε τῶν πλεόνων Λυκίων ἀπὸ θυμὸν ἔλοιτο.⁷⁹⁸</p>	<p>Mean while <i>Tlepolemus</i> his body dead The <i>Greeks</i> fetch'd off. The wise <i>Ulysses</i> then Within himself a while considered, Whether to charge <i>Sarpedon</i> or his men.⁷⁹⁹</p>
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What sounds odd is the choice of the English adjective *wise* to replace *dios*. The strangeness depends not only on the actual meaning of the chosen word but particularly on the fact that Hobbes – as already highlighted⁸⁰⁰ – also uses it in an occasion where he has to translate the word *dioghenés*, relating to the king of Ithaca. It seems remarkable that the philosopher firstly chooses to translate – which seems to be more the exception than the rule for both terms – and then to use a single word to replace two different terms which, even in merely semantic terms, are crucial for him, and which he replaces with nouns far removed from the original meaning and, consequently, less dangerous for his purposes.

It seems to me that, considering the peculiar position of Odysseus, the whole range of corrective actions – and particularly the removals – of *dios* relating to him, and the analogies with the previously examined case of Achilles, again here there are elements suggesting that this translation choice depends on the intent not to leave any ambiguity regarding the nature of his power.

A further piece of evidence to support this reading comes from book VIII of the *Odyssey*, where in place of the same adjective in the original Greek text,⁸⁰¹ the Hobbesian choice is “unblest”,⁸⁰² a replacement which seems completely at odds with the original meaning.

Less remarkable, though no less significant, are the translations of this adjective relating to men in power such as Diomedes, Hector and Agamemnon, due both to their value in se, and to the usual Hobbesian habit of rather systematically removing this epithet with reference to them.⁸⁰³ With regard to the first one, we have “great man”⁸⁰⁴ in place of *dios*; concerning the second, “honor’d”.⁸⁰⁵ The expression “Agamemnon’s virtue”⁸⁰⁶ replaces the Greek “*Agamémmona díon*”,⁸⁰⁷ which was the most complicated to handle from the perspective of the genesis of political power.

However, a couple of lines referring to a lesser character from the *Iliad* supply us with an effective *summa* of what seems to be the Hobbesian *ratio* leading these translation choices. While remembering his heroic youth, Nestor says:

When Arcadia’s champion Ereuthalion strode forth, a man like god for power [<i>isótheos</i>], his shoulders decked with King [<i>wánax</i>] Areithous’ armor, massive [<i>dios</i>] Areithous... the Great War-club, sothey called that hulk, his men-at-arms and their sashed and lovely women. ⁸⁰⁸	τοῖσι δ’ Ἐρευθαλίων πρόμος ἴστατο, ισόθεος φώς, τεύχε’ ἔχων ὤμοισιν Ἀρηϊθόοιο ἄνακτος , δίου Ἀρηϊθόου, τὸν ἐπίκλησιν κορυνήτην ἄνδρες κίκλησκον καλλίζωνοί τε γυναῖκες. ⁸⁰⁹	Amongst them stood one <i>Ereuthalion</i> , And of the great man <i>Areithous</i> Upon his Shoulders had the Armour on, Who Clubman commonly surnamed was. ⁸¹⁰
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Besides the excision of *isótheos* referring to Ereuthalion, what is important to stress is that this passage clearly states the twofold essence of Areithous: he is both *wánax* and *díos*. It is a difficult combination for Hobbes to accept, since it opens up the possibility for the human and divine spheres to be confused, and the origin of political power misunderstood. Accordingly, it is not surprising to find the adjective *díos* replaced with “the great man *Areíthous*”, an expression aimed at fixing this thorny situation.

There is another element worth showing. In book VI of the *Iliad*, Antea, the wife of Proetus king of Tirintus, is called *díos*.⁸¹¹ On this occasion, the Hobbesian translation is “Queen Anteia”,⁸¹² with a characterisation which again emphasises an institutional aspect with no equivalent in the Greek text, while failing to maintain the link, albeit merely semantic, with the divine dimension.

Finally, worthy of consideration is *theoprópos*, both adjective and noun, meaning “prophetic”,⁸¹³ but also “seer, prophet”,⁸¹⁴ The reason why it seems useful to analyse this word, is not because of its impact – actually very minimal – on the problem of the genesis of political power; it is more significant from the perspective of prophecy, which is a particular aspect of the relation between the human and divine dimension that Hobbes considers potentially dangerous, and that he sounds out in depth in *Leviathan*.⁸¹⁵ This term occurs three times in the Homeric poems, and two of them appear particularly significant.⁸¹⁶

In book XII of the *Iliad*, Polydamantes, who is known to be a very capable counsellor, stands clashes with Hector regarding the best strategy to adopt at a particular point in the war. In the closing lines of his speech, we read:

So a knowing seer	ὧδέ χ' ὑποκρίναίτο	And this (I think)
[<i>theoprópos</i>] of the gods	θεοπρόπος , ὅς	will any Augur
would read this omen,	σάφα θυμῷ	finde
someone clear in his mind	εἶδειη τεράων καὶ οἱ	That in's
and skilled with signs,	πειθοίατο	professional
a man the Trojan armies	λαοί. ⁸¹⁸	has any skill. ⁸¹⁹
would obey. ⁸¹⁷		

This passage is emblematic since it goes to the heart of the problem. He who speaks in the name or on behalf of some god can exert great influence over the people – a meaning that can equally be related to the term *laós*, translated here as *army*⁸²⁰ – even in contrast with the legitimate sovereign, in this occasion Hector, commander-in-chief of the Trojans, who proposes to do the opposite of what Polydamantes suggests. He is clearly not a soothsayer; he only compares himself to one. Still, this is enough to spur Hobbes to intervene.

This aspect could potentially create a rift within the Trojan army, thus undermining the safety not only of the troops, but also of the city they

are protecting. Accordingly, it does not seem remarkable that the philosopher, though he translates *theoprópos* faithfully enough with the English noun *augur*, removes any reference to the possible obedience of the army to men who might present themselves as soothsayers.

On the contrary, when the Homeric text does not present problems in this regard, but rather criticises the seers, we do not find any alterations in the English version. For example, in book I of the *Odyssey*, Telemachus, while speaking about his scepticism towards the bearers of news concerning his father, says:

«Eurymachus,»	«Εὐρύμαχ', ἦ τοι	Then said
Telemachus answered	νόστος ἀπόλετο	<i>Telemachus</i> ,
shrewdly,	πατρός ἐμοῖο·	My Father's
«clearly my father's journey	οὐτ'οὖν ἀγγελίῃ ἔτι	dead,
home his lost forever.	πεῖθομαι, εἴ ποθεν	We never shall
I no longer trust in	ἔλθοι,	again see one
rumors—rumors from	οὔτε θεοπροπίης	another.
the blue—	ἐμπάζομαι, ἦν	With Messengers I
nor bother with any	τινα	trouble not my
prophecy, when mother	μήτηρ	head,
calls	ἐς μέγαρον καλέσασα	Nor Soothsayers
some wizard [<i>theoprópos</i>]	θεοπρόπον	that do but
into the house to ask him	ἐξερέηται [...]. ⁸²²	sooth my
questions [...]. ⁸²¹		Mother. ⁸²³

The Greek lines contain a clear disapproval of seers, and there are no problematic elements from the perspective of Hobbesian political theory, as there were, for example, in the previously analysed episode of the discussion between Hector and Polydamantes. That is probably why Hobbes does not intervene in modifying the text and maintains in his translation the original sense of the Greek word, replacing it with the corresponding English noun *soothsayer*.

It seems to me that, from a political perspective, nothing else significant can be inferred about this term and its translation by Hobbes.

All in all, the analysis concerning both the lexicon establishing a relationship between the human and divine spheres and its translation choices by the philosopher clearly highlights an intent of keeping political power separate from any references to a genesis placed outside the human covenant, even when this is not particularly evident in the original text.

The frequent removal of terms conceived as dangerous, ambiguous or even just potentially equivocal that we see in both works, together with those situations where the English translation is deprived of its original value, quite clearly show us the philosopher's intent to fix, amend or correct the Homeric text in those lines, passages or words that appear to him to be at odds with his political theory about the genesis of political power.

A further confirmation of sorts lies in those situations where this kind of action is implemented even when these terms refer to characters that Hobbes considers legitimate sovereigns. What they are from the institutional perspective remains and, sometimes, it is even reinforced by Hobbes' translation, but most of the time their ties with the divine world are severed.

Lastly, it seems possible to find an overall leaning towards emphasis of the mortal-immortal god dichotomy, a tendency that can easily be related to that educational logic dealing with political virtue, which is one of the possible reasons why Hobbes, though elderly, chooses to translate the Homeric poems. By showing and underlining in his versions of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* that political power has no divine genesis, the philosopher aims to foster and create those conditions of safety that, since his earliest works, he considers an essential pillar of long-lasting peace.

Notes

625 Cf. note n. 239.

626 Cf. notes n. 236 and 585.

627 Cf. note n. 2.

628 *Il.*, I, 324–327 [FK].

629 *Il.*, I, 277–281.

630 *Il.*, I, 263*–266*; cf. E. FABBRI, *Le translations of Homer: passioni, politica e religione nel pensiero maturo di Hobbes* cit., p. 152.

631 J. LYNCH, *op. cit.*, p. 36; cf. C. CONDREN, *op. cit.*, p. 81.

632 *Il.*, II, 226–228 [FK].

633 *Il.*, II, 196–197; [S. has the expression *diotrephés basiléus* in its singular form].

634 *Il.*, II, 173*–175*.

635 Cf. E. NELSON, *Translations of Homer. Iliad* cit., p. 26; cf. C. CONDREN, *op. cit.*, p. 75.

636 T. HOBBS, *Leviathan*, XII cit., p. 77; cf. pp. 60–61 and note n. 242.

637 Cf. note n. 247.

638 Cf. note n. 248.

639 Cf. note n. 191; on the uses and the meaning of the adjectives *diotrephés e dioghenés* in the Homeric poems, cf. E. BENVENISTE, *op. cit.*, p. 306; cf. also A. CATANZARO, *Thomas Hobbes traduttore di Omero: i «casi» diotrephés e dioghenés e il problema dell'origine divina del potere politico*, “Il Pensiero Politico”, XLVII, 2014, pp. 49–59; ID., *From many kings to a single one: Hobbesian absolutism disguised as an epic translation* cit, pp. 679–685.

640 *Il.*, I, 208–210 [FK].

641 *Il.*, I, 173*–174*.

642 On this topic cf. M. BONANNI, *Il cerchio e la piramide. L'epica omerica e le origini del politico*, Bologna, il Mulino, 1992, pp. 27–31.

643 *Il.*, V, 534–535 [FK].

644 *Il.*, V, 464–465.

645 *Il.*, V, 425*–426*.

646 *Il.*, XXIV, 777–778.

647 *Il.*, XXIV, 803.

648 *Il.*, XXIV, 769*–770*.

649 *Il.*, IV, 392–395 [FK].

650 *Il.*, IV, 338–340.

651 *Il.*, IV, 321*–324*.

- 652 T. HOBBS, *Leviathan*, XIX cit., pp. 128–129.
 653 *Il.*, XXIV, 553.
 654 *Il.*, XXIV, 527*.
 655 Cf. notes n. 339–340.
 656 Cf. notes n. 213, 582 and 583.
 657 *Il.*, X, 49–50 [FK].
 658 *Il.*, X, 34*–35*.
 659 Cf. notes n. 630, 631 and 632.
 660 *Od.*, IV, 31–32 [FK].
 661 *Od.*, IV, 26–27.
 662 *Od.*, IV, 27*–28*.
 663 *Od.*, IV, 139 [S. 138] e 235 (on this occasion the Homeric line present also the patronymic *Atrides*).
 664 *Od.*, IV, 138* e 236*.
 665 *Od.*, IV, 156/155*, 291/293*, 316/309*.
 666 Cf. pp. 140–141.
 667 *Od.*, X, 266 and 419.
 668 *Od.*, X, 247* and 389*.
 669 *Od.*, III, 537–538 [FK].
 670 *Od.*, III, 479–480.
 671 *Od.*, III, 447*–448*.
 672 I had the opportunity to verify the uniqueness of the expression God-fed in the translations, through the online version of Nelson’s work, which I consulted through the website of the Bodleian Library in Oxford (<http://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/bodley>).
 673 Cf. A. CATANZARO, *Thomas Hobbes traduttore di Omero. I “casi” diotrepheés e dioghenés e il problema dell’origine divina del potere politico* cit., p. 55.
 674 *Il.*, II, 194–204 [FK].
 675 *Il.*, II, 168–175.
 676 *Il.*, II, 150*–154*.
 677 *Il.*, II, 197 [FK].
 678 Beyond the aforementioned passage, see for example *Il.*, VIII, 83*/93; IX, 302*/308 e 589*/624 [S. 620]; X, 122*/144 e 301*/340; XXIII, 722*/723.
 679 *Il.*, IV, 455*/489; IX, 609*/644 [S. 640]; XI, 433*/465.
 680 *Il.*, XVI, 694*/707.
 681 Cf. *Od.*, II, 344*/366; X, 413*/443, 424*/456, 472*/504; XI, 54*/60, 87*/92 (in [S.] this line is not present), 458*/473 [S.472]; XIII, 338*/375.
 682 *Od.*, X, 553–557 [FK].
 683 *Od.*, X, 504–507.
 684 *Od.*, X, 453*–456*.
 685 H. G. LIDDELL – R. SCOTT (eds.), *op. cit.*, p. 1440; F. MONTANARI, *op. cit.*, pp. 1719–1720.
 686 Cf.: <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/162515?rskey=kYmajg&result=2&isAdvanced=false#eid> (consultation date: 11/09/2018).
 687 *Od.*, IV, 26.
 688 *Od.*, IV, 32 [FK].
 689 *Od.*, IV, 27.
 690 *Od.*, IV, 27*.
 691 Cf. note n. 252; on this expression and the following terms taken into account in this paragraph, cf. A. CATANZARO, *From the Homeric Epic to Modern Political Theory. Olympian Gods, Heroes and Human Genesis of Power in Hobbes’s translations of the Iliad and Odyssey* cit., pp. 45–61.
 692 On the frequencies of the terms considered in this section, I used *TLG. Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* (A Digital Library of Greek Literature – University

- of California, Irvine), link: <http://stephanus.tlg.uci.edu/inst/textsearch>; henceforth: [TLG].
- 693 Cf. *Il.*, I (74/78*), XVI (169/157*), XVIII (203/190*), XXIV (472/445*).
- 694 Cf. *Il.*, X (527/469*–472*), XI, (419/392* e 473/458*).
- 695 Cf. *Il.*, VI (318/302*), VIII (493/447*), X (49/37*ff.).
- 696 *Il.*, I, 86–90 [FK].
- 697 *Il.*, I, 74–77.
- 698 *Il.*, I, 78*–80*.
- 699 Cf. note n. 253.
- 700 The adjective *theios* occurs about eighty times in the Homeric poems (cf. [TLG]).
- 701 Consider, for example, the references to the essence *theios* of the dream (*Il.*, II, 22 e 56; *Od.*, XIV, 495) or of the aoidoses (*Od.*, I, 336; IV, 17; VIII, 43, 47, 87 e 539, in this last case in [S.] there is *dios* instead of *theios*; XIII, 27; XVI, 252; XVII, 359; XXIII, 133 [S. 143]; XXIII, 143 [S. 153]; XXIV, 439 [S. 438]).
- 702 *Il.*, VI, 180.
- 703 *Od.*, IV, 698–702 [FK].
- 704 *Od.*, IV, 620–624.
- 705 *Od.*, IV, 581*–584*.
- 706 *Od.*, IV, 773–779 [FK].
- 707 *Od.*, IV, 687–692.
- 708 *Od.*, IV, 646*–651*.
- 709 E. NELSON, *Homer. Odyssees* cit., p. 60; cf. C. CONDREN, *op. cit.*, p. 75.
- 710 *Od.*, XVI 368–372 [FK].
- 711 *Od.*, XVI, 333–336.
- 712 *Od.*, XVI, 331*–332*.
- 713 Cf. for example: *Il.*, II (335/303*); IX (218/212*); X (243/219*); XI, (806 [S. 805]/759*) e *Od.*, I, (65/79*); II (233/225*, 259/249*, 394/377*–378*); III, (398/364*); IV, (682/640*, 799/751*); V, (11/11*, 198/198*); XV, (63/56*, 313/277* [S. 312], 347/306* [S. 346], 554/498* [S. 553]); XVI (53/44*); XVII, (3/2*–3*, 230/213* [S. 231], 402/373*–375* [S. 403]); XVIII, (417/381*–384*); XX, (248/219*, 283/259* [S. 284], 298/272* [S. 299], 325/298*); XXI (74/62*, 189/161* [S. 190], 244/212*, 432/374*); XXIV, (151/141* [S. 150]).
- 714 Cf. pp. 167–174.
- 715 Cf. pp. 174–179.
- 716 *Od.*, II, 260–262 [FK] and V, 12–14 [FK].
- 717 *Od.*, II, 233–234 and V, 11–12.
- 718 *Od.*, II, 225*–226*.
- 719 *Od.*, V, 11*–12*; with regard to these lines – but, particularly, to the two previous ones – see Nelson, *Homer. Odyssees* cit., p. 64.
- 720 See, for example, *Il.*, XVII (199/180*) and XIX (279/258*).
- 721 *Il.*, XVI, 925–929 [FK].
- 722 *Il.*, XVI, 796–800.
- 723 *Il.*, XVI, 778*–781*.
- 724 *Il.*, XIV 275–276 [FK].
- 725 *Il.*, XIV, 229–230.
- 726 *Il.*, XIV, 213*–214*.
- 727 H. G. LIDDELL – R. SCOTT (eds.), *op. cit.*, p. 790; F. MONTANARI, *op. cit.*, p. 956; cf. note n. 256.
- 728 Cf. [TLG].
- 729 Cf. *Il.*, I (131/124*–126*); *Od.*, III (416/380*), IV (276/276*), VIII (256/249*–251*).
- 730 *Il.*, XIX, 155.
- 731 *Il.*, XIX, 138*.

- 732 *Il.* I, 131.
 733 Cf. [TLG].
 734 H. G. LIDDELL – R. SCOTT (eds.), *op. cit.*, pp. 837–838; F. MONTANARI, *op. cit.*, p. 1010; cf. note n. 260.
 735 Cf. *Il.*, II (565/518*), III (310/294*), IV (212/205*), VII (136/129*), IX (211/197*–199*), XI (428/399*, 472/441*), XV (559/517*), XVI (632/626*), XXIII (569/570*; 677/677*); *Od.*, I (324/354*–356*), XX, (124/103*).
 736 The adjective *theoeidés* occurs on 44 occasions in the Homeric poems (cf. [TLG]).
 737 H. G. LIDDELL – R. SCOTT (eds.), *op. cit.*, p. 790; F. MONTANARI, *op. cit.*, p. 956; cf. note n. 262.
 738 Cf. pp. 90–91.
 739 Cf. *Il.* III (16/16*, 27/26*, 30/30*, 37/31*ss., 58/56*, 450/422*), VI (290/280*, 332/317*, 517/501*), XI (581/538* [S. 580]), XIII (774/733*), XXIV (763/731*).
 740 Cf. *Il.*, XXIV (217/204*, 299/276*, 372/338*, 386/350*, 405/373*, 483/459*, 552/526*, 634/606*, 659/628*).
 741 Consider, for example, *Il.*, XXIV, 299.
 742 Cf. *Od.*, I (113/139*), III (343/314*), XIV (173/171*), XVI (20/16*), XVII (328/309*, 391/366* [S. 392]); cf. [TLG].
 743 *Od.*, VII, 266–268 [FK].
 744 *Od.*, VII, 230–232.
 745 *Od.*, VII, 217*–219*.
 746 *Il.*, II, 974–975 [FK].
 747 *Il.*, II, 862–863.
 748 *Il.*, II, 801*–803*.
 749 H. G. LIDDELL – R. SCOTT (eds.), *op. cit.*, pp. 17–18; F. MONTANARI, *op. cit.*, p. 68.
 750 Cf. [TLG].
 751 Cf. note n. 263.
 752 There are three cases where this term is used as replacement for the Greek *theudés*: *Od.*, VI (121/120*), VIII (576/548*), IX (176/180*).
 753 This translation occurs in *Od.*, XIX (364 [S. 365]/335*).
 754 H. G. LIDDELL – R. SCOTT (eds.), *op. cit.*, p. 792; F. MONTANARI, *op. cit.*, p. 959.
 755 Cf. *Od.*, XIII (202/186*) and XIX (109/93*).
 756 Cf. [TLG].
 757 H. G. LIDDELL – R. SCOTT (eds.), *op. cit.*, p. 155; F. MONTANARI, *op. cit.*, p. 239; cf. note 264.
 758 Cf. *Od.*, VIII (518/497*), XXIV (116/107*).
 759 Cf. *Il.*, XI (140/133*); *Od.*, I (21/22*), II (17/16*–19*), IV, (741/696*), VI (331/320*), XIII (126/120*), XIV (40/46*–49*), XV, (90/78*); XIX (456/412*), XX (369/338*–340* [S. 370]), XXI (254/224*), XXII (291/253*).
 760 Cf. *Il.* IX (623/588*[S. 619]), X (112/94*).
 761 Cf. *Od.*, XI (512/499* [S. 511]).
 762 Cf. *Il.*, XII, (408/381*), XVI (421/424*).
 763 Cf. *Od.*, XI (371/356* [S. 370]), XIX (216/201*), XXIV (300/277*–280* [S. 299]); in *Od.*, IV (571/539*) there is a reference to Menelaus's mates. Again on this occasion *antitheos* is removed.
 764 *Od.*, XIV, 18/21*.
 765 Cf. *Il.*, XIV, 322.
 766 *Il.*, XIV, 302*.
 767 *Il.*, XXIV, 257.
 768 *Il.*, XXIV, 245*; cf. note n. 171.
 769 *Il.*, XX, 407 e XXI, 91.

- 770 *Il.*, XX, 407*.
 771 *Il.*, XXI, 86*.
 772 Cf. *Il.*, VI, 199; Sarpedon is also deprived of this same epithet in *Il.*, V, 692/638*.
 773 Cf. *Il.*, II, 876–877.
 774 Cf. *Il.*, VI, 192*.
 775 Cf. *Od.*, I, 70.
 776 *Od.*, I, 85*.
 777 There are more than four hundred situations where the adjective *dios* occurs in the poems; cf. [TLG].
 778 H. G. LIDDELL – R. SCOTT (eds.), *op. cit.*, pp. 434–435; F. MONTANARI, *op. cit.*, p. 572.
 779 Cf. *Il.*, I, 6*.
 780 Cf. *Il.*, I, 7; cf. p. 75.
 781 Cf. p. 180.
 782 Cf. *Il.*, I, 54.
 783 Cf. for example *Il.* I (292/278*), V (788/729*), VI (423/423*), IX, (209/208*, 667/663* [S. 663]), XI (599/549* [S. 598]), XVII (402/368*), XVIII (181/173*, 228/203*–205*, 305/275*, 343/313*), XIX (364/364*, 384/357*), XX, (386/361*, 388/363*, 413/391*, 445/419*), XXI (49/41*, 67/59*, 138/130*, 149/145*, 161/168*, 250/244*, 265/257*), XXII (102/105*, 172/171*, 205/197*, 326/322*, 330/325*, 364/362*, 376/373*, 455/451*), XXIII (136/142*, 140/147*, 193/197*, 333/337*ss., 534/537*, 555/559*, 828/817*, 889/875*), XXIV (151/137*ss., 180/162*ss., 513/490*, 596/569*, 668/636*).
 784 Cf. for example *Il.*, III (352/334*, 403/384*), VII (355/325*), VIII (82/74*), XIII (766/723*).
 785 Cf. for example *Il.*, V (837/784*, 846/791*), X (502/441*).
 786 Cf. for example *Il.*, V (211/194*, 471/430*, 601/554*), VI (515/499*), VII (42/35*, 75/69*–71*, 169/169*, 192/189*ss.), IX (651/619* [S. 647]), XI (197/186*, 327/297*), XII (83/81*–83*), XIII (129/116*, 688/644*), XV (15/13*, 239/208*, 652/603*), XVII (710/661*–663*, 719/671*ss.), XVIII (103/99*), XX (240/233*ss., 428/401*ss., 440/413*), XXII (320/317*, 393/390*, 395/394*), XXIII (24/25*), XXIV (22/15*, 50/45*, 175/160*, 390/354*ss., 593/566*, 660/629*).
 787 Cf. for example *Il.*, II (57/49*), X (54/45*), XI (510/475*); *Od.*, I (284/319*).
 788 Cf. for example *Il.*, I (145/141*), II (244/217*), III (314/300*), V (679/624*), VIII (97/85*), IX, (169/162*, 192/185*, 223/217*–219* [S. has *theios* in place of *dios*], 676/641* [S. 672]), X (460/403*), XI (449/420*, 767/721* [S. 766]), XIX (48/45*, 141/125*, 310/290*), XXIII (729/729*, 759/761*, 765/764*, 778/774*); *Od.*, I (196/226*ss., 396/428*ss., 398/428*ss.), II (27/25*, 96/90*), III (84/77*, 121/109*ss., 126/118*), IV (280/281*), V (171/157*, 269/246*ss., 486/454*ss.), VI (1/1*, 117/116*, 127/124*ss., 217/208*, 224/213*, 249/234*ss., 322/310*), VII (1/1*, 21/22*, 133/123*–124*, 139/129*, 177/167*, 230/217*, 329/309*, 344/321*), VIII (199/195*, 381/361*, 446/442*, 494/471*), XIII (56/52*, 63/60*, 187/175*, 250/232*, 353/318*), XIV (4/4*, 148/149*), XV (340/301* [S. 339]), XVI (5/3*, 90/88* [S. 91], 164/173*, 186/173*, 225/211*, 258/240*, 266/249*), XVII (280/257*ss., 506/466*, 560/517*), XVIII (90/75*, 117/99* [S. 116, but with *theios* in place of *dios*], 281/248* [S. 280]), XIX (1/1*, 51/37*ss. [S. 52], 102/85*, 141/126*, 225/203*, 430–437/396*), XX (1/1*, 92/74*, 104/86*, 120/97*), XXI (38/33*, 190/162*, 414/361*), XXII (81/75* [S. 82], 261/225*), XXIII (111/112* [S. 121]), XXIV (131/118* [S. 130], 176/164*–165* [S. 175], 232/216* [S. 231]), 241/224*–225* [S. 240], 348/323* [S. 347], 424/380* [S. 423], 482/430*ss. [S. 481], 490/441* [S. 489], 504/454* [S. 503], 537/483* [S. 536]).
 789 Cf. for example *Il.*, II (221/199*, 120/194*ss.), IV (223/212*), VII (312/290*), XI (251/231*), XVIII, (257/230*), XXIII (36/34*); *Od.* XI (168/159* [S. 167]).

- 790 *Il.*, II, 688.
 791 *Il.*, II, 624*.
 792 Cf. *Il.*, VI, 394*.
 793 Cf. *Il.*, VI, 414.
 794 *Il.*, XX, 161*.
 795 Cf. note n. 783.
 796 Cf. note n. 789.
 797 *Il.*, V, [FK].
 798 *Il.*, V, 668–673.
 799 *Il.*, V, 613*–616*.
 800 Cf. p. 178.
 801 *Od.*, III, 84.
 802 *Od.*, III, 77*.
 803 Cf. notes n. 785, 786 and 789.
 804 *Il.*, V, 784*/837; a similar translation is used by Hobbes in order to replace *dios* referred to Areitoos in *Il.*, VII, 138/130*.
 805 *Il.*, V, 428*/467.
 806 *Il.*, IV, 212*.
 807 *Il.*, IV, 223.
 808 *Il.*, VII 156–160 [FK].
 809 *Il.*, VII, 136–139.
 810 *Il.*, VII, 129*–132*.
 811 *Il.*, VI, 160.
 812 *Il.*, VI, 146*–147*.
 813 H. G. LIDDELL – R. SCOTT (eds.), *op. cit.*, p. 791; F. MONTANARI, *op. cit.*, p. 958; cf. note n. 271.
 814 H. G. LIDDELL – R. SCOTT (eds.), *op. cit.*, p. 791; F. MONTANARI, *op. cit.*, p. 958; cf. note n. 272.
 815 Cf. p. 99 and notes n. 376, 377, 378; cf. E. FABBRI, *La translations of Homer: passioni, politica e religione nel pensiero maturo di Hobbes* cit., pp. 153–154; A. P. MARTINICH, *The two Gods of the Leviathan. Thomas Hobbes on Politics and Religion* cit., pp. 228–236.
 816 Cf. [TLG].
 817 *Il.*, XII, 264–266 [FK].
 818 *Il.*, XII, 228–229.
 819 *Il.*, XII, 227*–228*.
 820 The Scapula's lexicon (*Lexicon Graecolatinum* cit., p. 932) suggests for *laós* the translation “turba, populus”; cf. also ID., *Lexicon Graeco-Latinum* cit., p. 370.
 821 *Od.*, I, 470–474 [FK].
 822 *Od.*, I, 413–416.
 823 *Od.*, I, 443*–446*.

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