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978-0-521-87735-0 - Taming the Leviathan: The Reception of the Political and Religious Ideas of Thomas Hobbes in England 1640-1700

Jon Parkin

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TAMING THE LEVIATHAN

Thomas Hobbes is widely acknowledged to be the most important political philosopher to have written in English. *Taming the Leviathan* is a wide-ranging study of the English reception of Hobbes's political and religious ideas. In the first book-length treatment of the topic for over forty years, Jon Parkin follows the fate of Hobbes's texts (particularly *Leviathan*) and the development of his controversial reputation during the seventeenth century, revealing the stakes in the critical discussion of the philosopher and his ideas. Revising the traditional view that Hobbes was simply rejected by his contemporaries, Parkin demonstrates that Hobbes's work was too useful for them to ignore, but too radical to leave unchallenged. His texts therefore had to be controlled, their lessons absorbed and their author discredited. In other words the Leviathan had to be tamed. *Taming the Leviathan* significantly revises our understanding of the role of Hobbes and Hobbism in seventeenth-century England.

JON PARKIN is Senior Lecturer in Politics at the University of York. His previous publications include *Science, Religion and Politics in Restoration England* (Boydell & Brewer, 1999) and an edition of Richard Cumberland's *A Treatise of the Laws of Nature* (Liberty Fund, 2005).

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JON PARKIN

University of York



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For Fiona

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