



Regall Tyrannie discovered:

By *Lilburn* OR 12

A DISCOURSE, shewing that all lawfull (approbational) instituted power by GOD amongst men, is by common agreement, and mutual consent. Which power (in the hands of whomsoever) ought always to be exercised for the good, benefit, and welfare of the Trusters, and never ought other wise to be admittred: Which, whensoever it is, it is justly resistable and revokeable; It being against the light of Nature and Reason, and the end wherefore God endowd Man with understanding, for any sort or generation of men to give so much power into the hands of any man or men whatsoever, as to enable them to destroy them, or to suffer such a kind of power to be exercised over them, by any man or men, that shal assume it unto himself, either by the sword, or any other kind of way.

In which is also punctually declared,

The Tyrannie of the Kings of *England*, from the dayes of *William* the Invader and Robber, and Tyrant, *alias* the *Conqueror*, to this present King *Charles*, Who is plainly proved to be worse, and more tyrannicall then any of his Predecessors, and deserves a more severe punishment from the hands of this present Parliament, then either of the dethroned Kings, *Edw. 2.* or *Rich. 2.* had from former Parliaments; which they are bound by duty and oath, without equivocation or colusion to inflict upon him, He being *the greatest Delinquent in the three Kingdoms, and the head of all the rest.*

Out of which is drawn a *Discourse*, occasioned by the Tyrannie and Injustice inflicted by the Lords, upon that stout-faithful-lover of his Country, and constant Sufferer for the Liberties thereof, *Lient. Col. John Lilburn*, now prisoner in the Tower.

In which these 4. following Positions are punctually handled.

1. That if it were granted that the Lords were a legall jurisdiction, and had a judicative power over the Commons; yet the manner of their dealing with *Mr. Lilburn*, was, and is illegall and unjust.
2. That the Lords by right are no Judicature at all.
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4. That by Law and Right it is not in the power of the King, nor in the power of the House of Commons it selfe, to delegate the legislative power, either to the Lords divided, or conjoynd; no, nor to any other person or persons whatsoever.

Unto which is annexed a little touch, upon some palpable miscarriages, of some rotten Members of the House of Commons: which House, is the absolute sole Law-making, and law-binding Interest of *England*.

Hof. 8. 4. They have set up Kings, but not by me: They have made them Princes, and I know it not.

San: G. H. LONDON, Printed Anno Dom. 1647/4 1646

The Online Library of Liberty “Study Guides on Images of Liberty & Power”
 “The Divine Right of Kings or Regal Tyranny? Thomas Hobbes (1651) vs. John Lilburne (1647)”

THE ONLINE LIBRARY OF LIBERTY “STUDY GUIDES ON IMAGES OF LIBERTY AND POWER”

“The Divine Right of Kings or Regal Tyranny? Thomas Hobbes (1651) vs. John Lilburne (1647)”

Introduction: During the upheavals of the English Revolution when the divine right of the English monarchy was challenged by Parliament, the king executed, and a Commonwealth under Cromwell instituted, there was vigorous debate about the kind of government which should be instituted. Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679) argued for a powerful absolute monarch ("The Leviathan") who could keep order and provide essential government services. Above is the famous frontispiece of his book *The Leviathan* (1651) which shows the Leviathan (or the absolute monarch) wearing a crown and holding a sword (a symbol of military power) and a crosier (of religious power). His body is literally the “body politic” as it is made up of millions of his subjects. He is thus also literally the “head” of state. He stands above the two pillars of his power: the army (the column on the left) and the established church (on the right). These views were vigorously challenged by groups within the parliamentary army most notably by the so-called "Levellers" who were the first group to argue for the natural rights of individuals (especially property), religious toleration, and elected parliaments which were responsible to the people. They briefly challenged the divine right of kings to rule before they were crushed by Oliver Cromwell, but their political theory lived on to influence later generations leading up to the American Revolution 140 years later. The lower image is the title page of a Leveller tract by John Lilburne, *Regall Tyrannie Discovered* (London, 1647). The title page is an excellent counterpoise to the Hobbes' title page because it literally rejects every principle advocated by Hobbes. Like many of the pamphlets produced during the revolution it was hastily composed and cheaply printed, often under cover to prevent the censors from seizing the copies before they were distributed. The author and printers had neither the money nor the skill to create well-designed title pages for their works. The best they could do was to use some inventive typesetting to arrange the paragraphs on the front page in interesting and artistic shapes. The tract is over 200 pages in length and Lilburne wanted to give a summary of his main arguments on the title page - hence the very lengthy "sub-title" (if you can call it that) in which he calls the king and parliament "delinquents", "ruffians," "invaders," "rotten" members, and "tyrants." He had in mind exactly the kind of monarch which Hobbes had on his title page.

THE ONLINE LIBRARY OF LIBERTY “STUDY GUIDES ON IMAGES OF LIBERTY AND POWER”

“The Divine Right of Kings or Regal Tyranny? Thomas Hobbes (1651) vs. John Lilburne (1647)”

Online Resources:

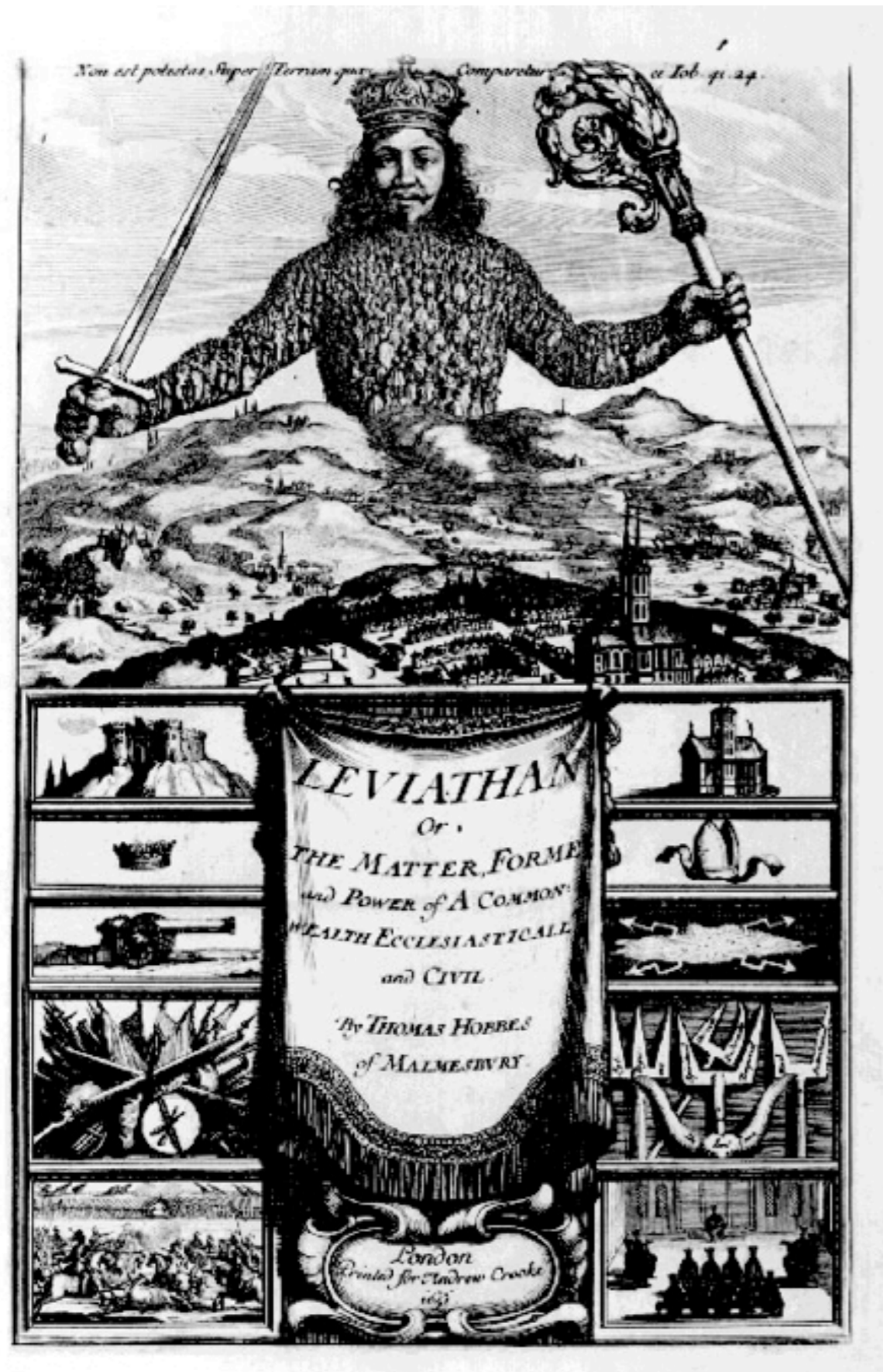
Works by Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679) <<http://oll.libertyfund.org/person/3776>>

Works by John Lilburne (1615-1657) <<http://oll.libertyfund.org/person/4685>>

School of Thought: The Levellers <<http://oll.libertyfund.org/collection/139>>

Topic: The English Revolution <<http://oll.libertyfund.org/collection/68>>

Other Study Guides on Images of Liberty and Power <<http://oll.libertyfund.org/title/2350>>



Engraving: Frontispiece to Thomas Hobbes, *The Leviathan* (1651) by Abraham Bosse (1602-1676)

Description: On the left is the famous frontispiece to Thomas Hobbes, *The Leviathan* (1651). The book's motto was the Latin "Non est potestas Super Terram quae Comparetur ei" (There is no power on earth to be compared to him). The Leviathan (or the absolute monarch) is wearing a crown and holding a sword (a symbol of military power) and a crosier (of religious power). His body is literally the "body politic" as it is made up of millions of his subjects. He is thus also literally the "head" of state. He stands above the two pillars of his power: the army (the column on the left) and the established church (on the right). From top to bottom, the left shows symbols of the Army (a castle, a crown, cannon, weaponry, and battle); the right shows the corresponding symbols of the Church (a cathedral, a bishop's mitre, excommunication, logic, and a religious court). There couldn't be a better depiction of the notion of "throne and altar" which formed the basis of state power in the 17th century.

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Things to Note

Engraving: Frontispiece to Thomas Hobbes, *The Leviathan* (1651) by Abraham Bosse (1602-1676)

1. the motto at the top of the page says in Latin: "Non est potestas Super Terram quae Comparetur ei" (There is no power on earth to be compared to him).
2. The Leviathan (or the absolute monarch) is wearing a crown and holding a sword (a symbol of military power) in his right hand and a bishop's crozier (a symbol of religious power) in his left hand. His body is literally the "body politic" as it is made up of millions of his subjects. He is thus also literally the "head" of state.
3. The monarch surveys a tranquil scene of his kingdom enjoying law and order: note the church to the right.
4. He stands above the two pillars of his power: the army (the column on the left) and the established church (on the right). From top to bottom, the left shows symbols of the Army (a castle, a crown, cannon, weaponry, and battle).
5. The right shows the corresponding symbols of the Church (a cathedral, a bishop's mitre, excommunication, logic, and a religious court). There couldn't be a better depiction of the notion of "throne and altar" which formed the basis of state power in the 17th century.

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1. That if it were granted that the Lords were a legall jurisdiction, and had a judicative power over the Commons; yet the manner of their dealing with *Mr. Lilburne* was, and is illegall and unjust.
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Vnto which is annexed a little touch, upon some palpable miscarriages, of some rotten Members of the House of Commons: which House, is the absolute sole law-making, and law-binding Interest of England.

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Printed at G. H. LONDON, Printed Anno Dom. 1647/1648

Image: Title page to John Lilburne's *Regall Tyrannie discovered* (1647).

Description: On the left is another title page of a Leveller tract by John Lilburne, *Regall Tyrannie Discovered* (London, 1647). The Levellers were the first group to argue for the natural rights of individuals (especially property), religious toleration, and elected parliaments which were responsible to the people. They briefly challenged the divine right of kings to rule before they were crushed by Oliver Cromwell, but their political theory lived on to influence later generations leading up to the American Revolution 140 years later. The title page is an excellent counterpoise to the Hobbes' title page because it literally rejects every principle advocated by Hobbes. Like many of the pamphlets produced during the revolution it was hastily composed and cheaply printed, often under cover to prevent the censors from seizing the copies before they were distributed. The author and printers had neither the money nor the skill to create well-designed title pages for their works. The best they could do was to use some inventive typesetting to arrange the paragraphs on the front page in interesting and artistic shapes. The tract is over 200 pages in length and Lilburne wanted to give a summary of his main arguments on the title page - hence the very lengthy "sub-title" (if you can call it that) in which he calls the king and parliament "delinquents", "ruffians," "invaders," "rotten" members, and "tyrants." He had in mind exactly the kind of monarch which Hobbes had on his title page.

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Vnto which is annexed a little touch, upon some palpable miscarriages, of some rotten Members of the House of Commons: which House, is the absolute sole law-making, and law-binding Interest of England.

Hof. 8. 4. *They have set up Kings, but not by me: They have made them Princes, and I know it not.*

Printed in LONDON, Anno Dom. 1644

Transcription: Regall Tyrannie discovered:

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Printed by G. H. LONDON, Printed Anno Dom. 1647

Transcription (continued)

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