**RE-IMAGI(N)ING LEVIATHAN[[1]](#footnote-1)\***

**Mónica Brito Vieira**

**University of York**

Chapter 45 of *Leviathan* (1651) offers a clarification of the range of signification of the term “image” in ordinary speech. In its strictest sense, he maintains, an image is “the Resemblance of some thing visible.[[2]](#footnote-2) In a more inclusive signification, the word “image” is understood as any artificial imitation in solid form of a mental appearance, or of an imaginary combination of them. To this Hobbes adds yet a third broader sense of the word whereby “any Representation of one thing by another” is, by transposition, considered to be an image too.[[3]](#footnote-3) This takes him to the conclusion that “an Image in the largest sense, is either the Resemblance, or the Representation of some thing Visible: or both together, as it happeneth for the most part.”[[4]](#footnote-4)

The first time the word “representation” appears in *Leviathan* is with reference to perceptual images. The ideas, concepts or “Thoughts of man”, Hobbes writes in his opening chapter, “are every one a Representation or Appearance, of some quality, or other Accident of a body without us; which is commonly called an Object.”[[5]](#footnote-5) Representation is here being used in the general sense of apparent being, that is, as the synonym of the virtual appearance of an externally existing thing to our mind. This understanding of representation as an appearance not exhibiting a likeness fits perfectly Hobbes’s theory of cognition, constructed as it is against picture theories, according to which our mental images are signs presenting us with objects as they really exist outside us.

Going back to chapter 45, Hobbes selects perceptual images as his first example of images that are resemblances of the visible bodies they represent.[[6]](#footnote-6) The two moves appear as contradictory: to claim perceptual images represent non-pictorially, and to name them resemblances or likenesses. But the contradiction is solved when we take Hobbes to be referring to the psychology as opposed to the reality of sense perception. The common naming of perceptual images as resemblances is not about what images are (i.e., nothing but local motion in our bodies), but about how they are perceived (i.e., as things “appearing to exist, or to have a being without us”).[[7]](#footnote-7) According to Hobbes’s sensationalist psychology, all the delusions of representation – most notably idolatry, understood as the merging of mental image and thing – have their root in this “original” deception of the senses.

Hobbes’s imagistic psychology recognizes an intrinsic power in all things we “see”, exactly as we are made to see them. “Seeing is believing” it is commonly said. Or, as Hobbes dramatically puts it, “not truth, but image, maketh passion”. The power of the image to solicit passion, transform opinion, and prompt voluntary motion, represents a singular opportunity for political aesthetics to shape our opinions and re-orient our behaviour in the world by reaching deep into our imaginative processes and visually priming our minds. As a philosopher openly professing his ambition to construct the world in the image of the truths he disclosed through his science of politics, Hobbes was drawn to deploy the “marvellous effects” of the imagination “to the benefite of mankind” (starting with the capacity of the imagination to present something as something, which lies behind all representation, and Hobbes’s more specific understanding of representation as personation).[[8]](#footnote-8) He needed imagi(in)g to instill true belief and make people act from it.

The notion of “image” is tricky however. It presupposes a pre-given reality that the image copies. Hobbes, we have seen, makes a comprehensive assault on this notion, from his non-pictorial theory of sense perception to his disclosure of visual resemblance as a matter of pictorial artefact. For him, representation in the arts has a strong kingship with representation in politics in that it too plays a constitutive role and enjoys its fair degree of sovereignty. In the arts as in politics, Hobbes disturbs the order of priority traditionally assumed by mimetic theories of representation. He inverts the scheme of dependence from the represented to the representation, while he establishes the latter as a freestanding element in the construction of political reality itself. For this reason, if not for others, physical images (especially icons) are for him a quintessential problem of politics, and must be ultimately submitted to public authority.[[9]](#footnote-9)

As J. T. Mitchell rightly points out, “the critical study of the icon begins with the idea that human beings are created “in the image and likeness” of their creator”.[[10]](#footnote-10) Hobbes opens *Leviathan* with a variation on this theme. To be more exact, he introduces the state as the paradigm of the artwork having its aesthetic foundation in mimesis: “NATURE (the Art whereby God hath made and governes the World) is by the Art of man, as in many other things, so in this also imitated, that it can make an Artificial Animal”, that wonder of artifice, named after that other, wonder of nature, Leviathan.[[11]](#footnote-11) Hobbes is here playing on the notion that political auto-foundation follows God’s creation, and on the common sense notion that true knowledge, just as good art, represents the world as it is. But there is a sting. Nature, for Hobbes, imitates (or rather is) art, and if nature is already art, what is it a mimesis of? A subversive answer reversing conventional thinking insinuates itself here: that the world “is imitation from the beginning”, “that there is no “true original,” that the model is not superior to the copy”, “that nature has no normative role.”[[12]](#footnote-12) After all Leviathan, the artwork, is meant to transcend and subsume nature. And given that it is in man’s nature to be an imaginative animal, whose action in the world follows the images in his mind, an artwork like the state must call *for*, and be called into being *by*, another: the frontispiece of *Leviathan*, the first and arguably the most famous icon of statist political imaginary to date.

Great care has been lavished by scholars of Hobbes on “the correct way to read”[[13]](#footnote-13) the image produced by Abraham Bosse with the creative input of Hobbes. Such “reading” has been undertaken in two main ways: by referring the image back to the argument in the book, namely to the new covenant of representation whereby “A Multitude of men, are made One person, when they are by one man, or one Person, Represented”;[[14]](#footnote-14) and by contextualising it in the relevant background visual traditions.[[15]](#footnote-15) In this essay, I depart from this. I do not offer a study in iconology, that is, a study of the “logos” (the words, ideas, logic or science) of a particular “icon” (image or picture) – the frontispiece of *Leviathan*. Instead of focussing on decoding the frontispiece, I turn to its reception and remaking, or to how the frontispiece has been breathed new life through two contemporary artworks which recall and problematize it – Do Ho Suh’s Some/One (2005) and Ernesto Neto’s Leviathan Thot (2006).[[16]](#footnote-16) It may well be the case however that one can only truly see an artwork through another artwork, and that we come to see new things or old things in a new light by looking at Leviathan from the curious perspective offered by these two much later artworks.

**Do-Ho Suh’s Some/One**

As Hobbes rightly understood it, *the* political fiction of modern politics – that which confers it legitimacy, but also that which makes it work – is that whatever the particular form of government under which one ends up living it is still *the people* that rules at all times. This much is conveyed by the paradoxical and somewhat cryptic formulation in *De Cive*: “the King is the people” (12.8). In *Leviathan*, however, Hobbes tackles the “paradox” of a people that is simultaneously ruler and ruled through a fully articulated theory of representation, which, with its authorisation and ownership provisions, makes the ruler into the bearer of our collective person, and the ruled into the authors of every sovereign act.

Authorship is not to be confused with authority. The point of “the King is the people” fiction is not to say that the people is king or sovereign. It is rather to preclude such claims by saying that the king or sovereign is the people, and no disjunction is ever possible between the two. The sovereign’s willing and acting for “the people” is what makes it be *one* thing rather than a mere collection of things. The people understood as an agent capable of ruling is therefore not a naturally occurring entity. It is a representational fiction. To wit, “the people” is the product of the sovereign acting them out as if they were a (collective) person endowed with a unitary political will, capable of acting with the agency and judgment of a (natural) person. Only the sovereign, to whose will they willingly submitted their own, is empowered to represent them as such, and to thereby bring to life “the people” as an authoritative reality. Otherwise understood the people is never the subject of sovereign power. It remains a multitude (albeit now a pacified one) in “awe” of their power as externalized in the state.

*Leviathan* provides its readers an account of their relationship to the sovereign elaborated in terms of concepts of representation, authorisation, and ownership. At the same time, it offers them an image of the representational fiction engendered and sustained by this relationship. In the frontispiece, where this image is given, Leviathan has the form of a colossal human body made up of the individual bodies of subjects – men, women, children, civilians and soldiers, some of whom kneeling, in an expression of reverence and submission fit for civil worship.[[17]](#footnote-17) The bodies of subjects quite literally congregate into a body politic as their wills contractually bind together to authorise the sovereign to represent or – the Latin etymology is critical here – *personate* them. The contours of this body form the mould within which the “reall Unitie of them all, in one and the same Person”, is cast, thus producing Leviathan, an “Artificial man”, “of greater stature and strength than the Naturall”.[[18]](#footnote-18)

**Figure I.**

**Abraham Bosse**

**Frontispiece to *Leviathan* (1651)**

**The Huntington Library**

Although the frontispiece visually evokes the traditional metaphor of the body, this is a body politic grounded not on the physical presence of a human sovereign but on a new state form. The individual subjects within it represent not a body of the people awaiting representation, but a body of the people incorporated through representation. The state institutes the people, not the other way around. Hence the people understood as a collective capable of action is the same as the state. The body of the people could never be the underlying subject of *potestas* or *imperium*. It is rather the case that *potestas* or *imperium* exist without such a body. This much Hobbes makes clear with his “startling new account of the original covenant”, in which by agreeing with one another to submit their wills to the sovereign’s, subjects-to-be create simultaneously “sovereign power itself, *summum imperium*, and the holder or subject of sovereign power, the sovereign”.[[19]](#footnote-19) Such is the power that lies in Leviathan, the artificial body of the state.

The image of Leviathan is the image of a sovereign state, not a sovereign people. But what might the latter look like? How could a conception of sovereignty that has the body of the people as its subject be portrayed in an image?

*Leviathan*’s frontispiece may carry within itself the germ of its own subversion. Try removing the colossal crowned head, and the resulting image might conjure up thoughts of a body of people capable of being one by themselves – i.e., of a collective macro-subject with the properties of judgment and will normally attributed to individual persons.

Such seems to be the image offered by Do Ho Suh’s installation Some/One. But this is not before showing superficial, and not so superficial, resemblances with the colossus portrayed in the frontispiece of *Leviathan*, which are then overshadowed by more striking contrasts.

**Figure II.**

**Do Ho Suh, South Korean, born 1962**

**Some/One, 2005**

**Stainless steel, military dog tags, fiberglass resin**

**76 x 117 x 136 in. (193.04 x 297.18 x 345.44 cm) (approx.)**

**Minneapolis Institute of Art, The John R. Van Derlip Fund and gift of funds from the Sit Investment Associates Foundation 2012.77a-d**

**Art © Do-ho Suh**

**Photo: Minneapolis Institute of Art**

Let me start with the resemblances. The first resemblance relates to how Some/One appears to the viewer. The sculpture presents itself as a larger-than-life human figure. This is more suggestion than substance however: the human figure is effectively absent, all that remains is a hollow metallic robe, the ghostly presence of an absence, taking on the shape of a protective suit of armour. The garment is reminiscent of the frontispiece of *Leviathan*, with its suggestion of power forged in the becoming-one of the many. In the case of Some/One, the many are not individual human subjects, but soldier dog tags. From a distance, however, they are hard to make out and evoke the optical effect of fish scales.

The overall composition brings to mind the double-layer of armoured scales so tightly sealed that they make Leviathan, the biblical sea monster from which Hobbes’s derives the name of the state, at once impenetrable and invincible. The association of Some/One with maritime power is one often made by the public, especially the Korean public, taking cues from the artist’s own cultural background. They take the installation for the armour of the famous 16th century Korean admiral and national hero, Yi Sun-Shin, whose statue figures centrally in the Sejongno, Gwanghwamun Plaza in Seoul. Yi played a key role in protecting Korea from Japanese invading naval ships in the 1590s, and is widely (but mistakenly) believed to have invented the “turtle ship”, a battleship whose covering of armoured plates resembles the exoskeleton of a turtle.

But this is not the only way in which Some/One resonates symbolically with Hobbes’s Leviathan. The second level of connection is not so much visual as conceptual. Unwittingly, the visitors’ experience of the installation relates to the way Hobbesian subjects are to conceive and experience their relationship with their sovereign and the new abstract corporate person he represents. In particular, interaction with the installation activates the effects of identification and estrangement produced through representation, while playing on subjects’ double role as material and makers, subjects and authors of their protective agency. To grasp this experience, visitors need to walk in and face Some/One’s hollow mirrored surface inside. The reflective effect creates an ambiguous relation between the individual who enters the piece and the piece that is entered. He finds himself enrobed by the armour: protected by its embrace, complicit in its embracing, and also complicit, perhaps, in the resulting illusion of security.

This threefold experience resonates powerfully with the argument of *Leviathan*. For Hobbes protection is a necessary condition of the state’s jurisdictional authority over persons.[[20]](#footnote-20) The state’s capacity to protect subjects, from one another and from foreign enemies, depends on subjects’ lending the state their obedience, power and support. As makers of the state subjects require individualistic explanations for why they should own up to what the state does for them and on their behalf. But representation as an education of interests, however fundamental, is too thin a basis on which to constitute and sustain political community. Equally if not more important is the process of de-inviduation, whereby subjects cease to think of themselves as individuals and see themselves as the state – i.e., as complicit in its every action, their individual identity subsumed under the identity of the whole they comprise. But this projective identification has its schisms. For there will always be occasions when the state, as personated by the sovereign, individuates subjects. Such is the case, for instance, when in a fully working state the sovereign comes after a subject’s life, in order to punish him for a crime, including the crime of desertion, and, in doing so, in effect, ceases to recognise him as subject and regards him instead as a natural agent in a condition of war. Or indeed when the illusion of illusion of security breaks down completely, as the state visibly withdraws its presence, and fails in its fundamental duty to protect.

The arrangement of gazes in the frontispiece of *Leviathan* speaks to the process of implication, de-inviduation, and identification it is meant to produce. As Horst Bredekamp has described it, “the eyes of each one [of the subjects], regardless of position, is directed towards the giant’s head and returns through his eyes back to the viewer.”[[21]](#footnote-21) There is a mirroring effect at work here, a kind of paradoxical act of self-seeing, whereby the reader meeting the eyes of the colossus “sees his own Ghost in a Looking-Glasse” but what he sees he also “fears as things of an unknown, that is, of an unlimited power toe do them good, or harme”.[[22]](#footnote-22) In Some/One’s terms, what he see is that he is the robe, yet the robe is an-Other. Do-Ho Suh describes the visitor experience of the piece in vivid detail: “You have to go through the steps and walk on the piece and then walk around the piece and then finally you face the front of the piece and then finally you face the piece. And that moment is very important, I think. Not only experiencing the piece physically by stepping on the dog tags, but also when you see the reflection of yourself inside of the piece. Then you truly become a part of the piece. (…) these many dog tags create this one, larger-than-life figure. It’s ambiguous whether you’re a part of it or not. Whether you are the owner of this robe when you see your own image over there. So that’s why I had the mirror inside.”[[23]](#footnote-23) And here we have the two perspectives Hobbes thought essential for making the state come to be: men will act as rationally committed authors continually authorising, and thereby enabling, sovereign actions, only from fear of a state that they believe exists as a virtually irresistible external agency. To this purpose, they must see themselves both as the *autonomous* makers of the state and as subjects *bound* by the fear of it; as belonging *inside* the state, as its constitutive parts and the source of its power, and as standing *outside* it, as a submissive crowd in awe of a power far greater than that which the mere sum of parts could have generated; as in perfect *identity* with the state, as the person embodying our most fundamental interest in peaceful coexistence, and in perfect *separation* from it, as they have no say, and no right to question, decisions taken by the ruling will of the whole. In sum, Hobbes’s theory of representation makes us stand in front of a mirror where each of us finds himself doubled in two geminated, but very different parts, which must be put into action if the state is ever to be.

For all the visual resemblances with the frontispiece of *Leviathan*, and all the conceptual echoing with Hobbes’s theory of representation, Some/One has a subversive streak to it. There are three main aspects to this subversion: the figure is headless; the body remains (nonetheless) incorporated; and the incorporated parts are citizens of a particular kind: citizen soldiers.

Like Leviathan, Some/One offers a bigger-than-life, ghost-like figure. Some/One’s apparition as a ghost is intensified by the figure’s hollowness and the fact that it is *headless*. There are various suggestive elements to this “decapitation”, starting with King Charles I ‘s beheading for treason on January 30, 1649, famously rendered by Andrew Marvell in *Horation Ode* (1650) as embodied theatricality: “That thence the royal actor born / The tragic scaffold might adorn, / While round the armed bands / Did clap their bloody hands” (lines 53-56). *Leviathan* is sometimes read as a handbook teaching the sovereign how to avoid a similarly tragic stage.[[24]](#footnote-24) Not unlike Marvell, Hobbes deploys a vocabulary derived from drama and the stage, to make the sovereign into the “Actor” of his subjects’ collective persona. He implicates each and every one of them in the sovereign’s acting by rendering them the “Authors” of the sovereign’s actions. He reminds them that he is their “Soveraign Representative”, and that nothing he “can doe to a Subject, on what pretence soever, can properly be called Injustice, or Injury.”[[25]](#footnote-25) But he also warns sovereigns of the need to perform their role convincingly, by honouring the duties of their office and securing subjects’ protection and prosperity at all times. They need an audience at once fearful and appreciative. Marvell’s theatrical scene portrays a version of the latter, but this is an audience showing less gratitude than morbid pleasure. His are disenchanted subjects acting as detached spectators, rejoicing in the punishment of the sovereign for his actions (“a war waged against his own people”, as they came to see it) and cutting themselves off from any responsibility.

Beheadings need not be literal to be of consequence. Claude Lefort has argued that the “democratic revolution”, or the arrival of the people as sovereign, involves the “beheading of the king”. The beheading Lefort has in mind is symbolic, and it means that power is no longer understood as grounded on a body capable of invoking consubstantiality. Instead “the locus of power becomes an empty place”, which can never be fully occupied, for “it is such that no individual or group can be substantial with it – and it cannot be represented.”[[26]](#footnote-26) Political authority is now bodiless, and in a continuous search for legitimacy.

This birth is pregnant of signification. Democracy, Lefort explains, is constituted and maintained through the dissolution of all markers of certainty that comes with the erasure of natural or divine foundations. This opens society and its choices to question: “unity cannot now efface social division”.[[27]](#footnote-27) It is rather the case that “a society that is no longer able to be incarnated cannot give to itself an image of organic unity: it recognizes itself as irreducibly plural.”[[28]](#footnote-28) This requires party pluralism and institutionalised political struggle assuring that no social arrangements are seen as final or incontestable.

Like Lefort’s democrats, Hobbes is an iconoclast, erasing prior foundations of sovereign power to clear space for the one he believes offers greater certainty: self-preservation, now reduced to a sheer need taking precedence over all others. Like Lefort himself, he does not see sovereignty as grounded in a body, be it the body of the people or, indeed, the body of the king. Neither does he follow tradition in conceiving the relationship between commonwealth and sovereign as analogous to that between body and head. Hobbes’s deploys the language of “soul” instead, and places “soul” solidly on the side of artifice (his is an “Artificiall Soul” contrasting with the “natural” soul that is mortal) as the defining property of an “Artificiall Man” – that is, as sovereignty, or a lasting power, “giving life and motion to the whole body”.

Reinforcing the theme of artifice, Hobbes moves sovereignty out of a natural physical location (the body of the king) to a symbolic one (the seat of power). In the Epistle Dedicatory to *Leviathan*, he declares his intention not to speak “of the men (who occupy it), but (in the Abstract) of the Seat of Power”, or sovereignty itself.[[29]](#footnote-29) However, for all the de-personalisation going on here, it is far from Hobbes intention to leave the seat of power empty, or to disallow its representation. Sovereign and state differ, for sure, as the artificial person representing and the person represented by fiction, respectively. But this difference implies dependence: the one cannot be without the other: “For it is the *Unity* of the Representer, not the *Unity* of the Represented, that maketh the Person *One*.”[[30]](#footnote-30) This much is clear from how the “soul’ metaphor is used in *Leviathan*. Unlike what happened in *De Cive*, Hobbes is now adamant that sovereignty is the soul, rather than its holder. But this does not prevent him from occasionally equating the soul with the sovereign, for it is through the sovereign that the commonwealth has a will: “the Sovereign is the publique Soule, giving Life and Motion to the Common-Wealth; which expiring, the Members are governed by it no more, than the Carcasse of a Man, by his own departed (though Immortall) Soule.”[[31]](#footnote-31) Behead the sovereign without providing a substitute, and you will find yourself amongst a warring multitude ravenously plundering the carcass.

But if Lefort’s radical democracy, with its dissolved and unrepresentable body, offers, to a certain extent, Hobbes’s nemesis, it is not clear that Do Ho Suh’s Someone/One speaks to it either. Lefort stresses that democracy arrives when the body of the king ceases to function as image and anchor of a society’s unity, when the beheading results in the disincorporation of society. As a result, power is no longer understood as grounded on a body, including the body of the people itself. The people will then be said to be sovereign, for sure, but its body is not given, and the people’s identity will “constantly be open to question”.[[32]](#footnote-32) What democratic citizens have in common is therefore not a common good, a shared collective identity, or a general will through which conflicts can be eliminated, but a public space of debate in which conflicts – including conflicts about who the people is – can be expressed and negotiated.

Unlike Lefort’s, Some/One’s decapitation does not engender disincorporation, but incorporation in a new form, the body of the people, as represented symbolically by the robe. Its union is presented as forged by a strong sense of self-identification and collective identity (namely, nationalism) given meaning through a logic of enmity and sacrifice, and experienced as something tangible through compulsory universal military service. Made out of dog tags, the body projects the image of homogeneous unity from the military to society as a whole through the concept of the citizen-soldier. This – unlike Lefort’s – is an image of unity effacing all social division.

As an image of arms-bearing citizenship Some/One befits the classical image of the republic. The Engager theorist Marchamont Nedham was the first modern political theorist to insist that republics must bear their own arms. The people (by which Nedham meant, the better part thereof) must be soldiers. He believed this essential for the preservation of the liberty of the people, both at home and abroad. Amongst the ancient Romans, he perused, “a general exercise of the best part of the people in the in the use of arms” was commonly seen as “the only bulwark of their liberty: this was reckoned the surest way to preserve it both at home, and abroad; the majesty of the people being secured thereby, as well against domestic affronts from any of their own citizens, as against the foreign invasions of bad neighbours.” It was when Rome saw itself forced “to erect a continued stipendiary soldiery (abroad in foreign parts)” that its “liberty was lost.”[[33]](#footnote-33)

Hobbes differed most strongly. And this adds an ironic layer to Some/One. Involving risk to one’s own life, military service poses a challenge to Hobbes’s theory of political obligation. A commonwealth cannot provide protection to its subjects unless it bears the swords of justice and war. However, the acknowledgement of a right of self-defence prior to the commonwealth raises questions as to the extent of the citizens’ obligation to fight and potentially risk their lives for it. All three of Hobbes’s political treatises insist that at the heart of sovereignty lies the right of sovereign to raise armies and oblige subjects to form armies if the protection of the commonwealth so requires. In *Leviathan* this obligation is, if anything, reinforced. The covenant is now a covenant of authorisation, and in authorising the sovereign to bear their person (individual and collective) subjects take on the duty to assist him with their power and strength.

At the same time, however, exceptions to the duty are recognized. The covenanted words that ground the obligation to assist the sovereign in war, “*I Authorise*, *or take upon me*, *all his actions*”, Hobbes insists, imply no restriction to one’s former natural liberty to resist or ward off injury from oneself, for “by allowing him to *kill me*, I am not bound to kill my selfe when he commands me.”[[34]](#footnote-34) To this argument from natural right Hobbes adds an argument about the end of the state. If the sovereign commands one to do something which compromises the purpose behind one’s willing submission to the commonwealth (i.e., self-preservation), one might legitimately refuse to obey, but not if this refusal compromises the state’s ability to protect, or the “End for which the Soveraignty was ordained”.[[35]](#footnote-35) In practice, this means that the sovereign has the right to command one to fight as a soldier and to punish one’s refusal with death; but it also means that the subject “may nevertheless in many cases refuse, without Injustice; as when he substituteth a sufficient Souldier in his place: for in this case he deserteth not the service of the Commonwealth.”[[36]](#footnote-36) The excuse of fear is therefore available to subjects, who can avoid battle by offering a substitute, or even flee from battle if they believe to face mortal danger. When any of these occur “not out of treachery, but fear” – that is, not out of political reasons, but of concerns for survival – “they are not esteemed to do it unjustly, but dishonourably.”[[37]](#footnote-37) The excuse of fear is not similarly available to the enlisted soldier however. By voluntarily enrolling himself in the armed services and by in some cases accepting remuneration in exchange for them the soldier signals consent. His enlistment, voluntary or paid, amounts to a new covenant, producing special obligations, above and beyond those incurred by ordinary subjects. Unlike the conscripted subject, he “who inrowleth himselfe a Souldier, or taketh imprest mony” renounces therefore to “the excuse of a timorous nature; and is obliged, not onely to go to the batell, but also not to run from it, without his Captaines leave.”[[38]](#footnote-38) The original covenant creates a blanket obligation to assist in war. But the enlisted soldier covenants more exacting standards of obligation. He lays down his “liberty of timidity”; he entrusts his commander his right of private judgment, as to whether and when to exercise the right to flee; and he is not at “liberty to submit to a new Power, as long as the old one keeps the field, and giveth him means of subsistence, either in his Armies, or Garrisons: for in this case, he cannot complain of want of Protection, and means to live as a Souldier”.[[39]](#footnote-39) It is only when even this fails that he “may lawfully submit himself to his new Master”.[[40]](#footnote-40)

Grounded on self-preservation, Hobbes’s commonwealth would contradict itself if it were to be built upon the civic duty of soldiering and the extreme sacrifice of soldiers. In allowing subjects the excuse from fear, Hobbes partially off burdens them of the choice between the right of self-preservation and the duty to obey the sovereign when the latter would seem to directly threaten their lives. In allowing for a specific covenant of soldiering, and in attaching especially stringent responsibilities to it, he opens the door for ordinary subjects to offload onto soldiers a service and a sacrifice that would otherwise, of right and of necessity, fall upon them. Potentially is important here, since it is the sovereign’s right to conscript. He alone holds the right to judge the degree and extent of ordinary subjects’ involvement and contribution that is necessary to defend the commonwealth.[[41]](#footnote-41) This granted, however, key changes are being set in motion: from military service as a feudal or a collective obligation to military service as an individual and a covenanted affair; from soldiering as a civic duty to soldiering as a special role; from armies of zealous citizen-soldiers esteeming spiritual redemption and public felicity above established authorities and their own life to an “apolitical army of citizens mercenaries”.[[42]](#footnote-42) This changing paradigm explains the irony of Some/One when juxtaposed to Leviathan. Neither intends to portray a Christ-like figure, but both resonate somehow with components of Christ’s imaginary, conceptually and visually. Hobbes’s artificial man is not unlike the composite Christ of the radical theologians, or the person in whom all subjects unite and incorporate as one, but he bears none of the signs of the imagery of passion.[[43]](#footnote-43) With its sleeves outstretched, and its meditation on sacrifice, Do Ho Suh’s Some/One references Christ as a figure of pathos. But Christ’s sacrificial life and death turn into the symbol of a sacrificial republic – or a commonwealth forged in blood. Hobbes’s congregating subjects, raptured by the theatricality of the sovereign presence, are replaced in it by the dog tags used to identify battlefield casualties and to free soldiers facing death from the fear of being forgotten, rather than individually remembered and perhaps glorified. They are small but effective devices set against the finality of death, the very bedrock for Hobbes’s body politic.

**Figure III.**

**Do Ho Suh, South Korean, born 1962**

**Some/One, 2005**

**Stainless steel, military dog tags, fiberglass resin**

**76 x 117 x 136 in. (193.04 x 297.18 x 345.44 cm) (approx.)**

**Dog tags detail**

**Minneapolis Institute of Art, The John R. Van Derlip Fund and gift of funds from the Sit Investment Associates Foundation 2012.77a-d**

**Art © Do-ho Suh**

**Photo: Minneapolis Institute of Art**

It has sometimes been suggested that Hobbes’s creation of the office of “soldier”, and his reliance on this office for the protection of the commonwealth, are a reflection of his belief that “ordinary subjects make unreliable soldiers”, their personal qualities and the passions to which they are prone (namely, anxiety, fear, cowardice), making them “an uncertain foundation of state power (and therefore of social order)”.[[44]](#footnote-44) But I would submit that, to some extent, this is to mistake the effect for the cause. Hobbes finds in fear the cement of political obligation. While desire of, and hope for, commodious living offers a more positive motivation for covenanting, fear is still the “Passion to be reckoned upon”.[[45]](#footnote-45) This is true within the commonwealth too. Given human propensity to slip back into uncivil modes of behaviour, the fear of a return to the existential and indiscriminate terrors of nature must be kept alive. Men who lose this fear are willing to dissolve the commonwealth, go to war, look for other states for security, or to sacrifice the preservation of self for the preservation of soul. An impending sense of mortality is vital to sustain political community not only by detracting men from doing certain things, but also by keeping them to the terms of the covenant. As Julie Cooper has rightly noticed, in *Leviathan*, “anxious meditation on mortality inspires recognition of human equality, and, by extension, sustains political community”. Hobbes’s philosophy functions therefore “as a *memento mori*, recalling subjects to their finitude in an effort to secure their obligation.”[[46]](#footnote-46) Hence while “Timorousnesse, many times disposeth to the desertion of the Publique Defence”, a sufficient degree of fearfulness is amongst the traits of character that the state must nurture amongst ordinary subjects for the sake of a more certain foundation of state power and social order.[[47]](#footnote-47) By contrast, some of the traits of character that make a good soldier – selflessness, courage, bravery, intrepidity, extending sometimes to the “Contempt of Wounds, and violent Death” – may be best circumscribed to a few.[[48]](#footnote-48) For although Hobbes deems the reconciliation of “a Courage for the Warre, and a Fear for the Laws” in one and the same man ultimately possible, he recognizes its great difficulty and limited potential for generalisation.[[49]](#footnote-49) Education and discipline must combine in their reconciliation, and the latter is nowhere greater than in the military, where intrepidity is reined in by the tightest structure of command and the duties, ethics, and responsibilities of a particular role: the role of soldier.[[50]](#footnote-50)

Through the delineation of this particular role, through its partial submission under a market logic, and through the additional restraints on the right of private judgment befalling those who perform it, Hobbes furthers the de-politicization of action in war and seeks to abate some of the dangers inevitably presented by armies.[[51]](#footnote-51) As history had repeatedly shown, an army that grows excessively found of its commander, and/or that grows independent of its ruler – e.g., for believing its ends to transcend his –, might easily overthrow present power to establish a commonwealth of its own. This requires prudence in committing armies only to the most loyal of subjects. The strength of an army, Hobbes contends, consists “in the union of their strength under one Command.”[[52]](#footnote-52) Therefore, when “an army is so powerful and so numerous that it’s easy to pretend that they are the people” (as is the case in in republics where all citizens are ipso facto soldiers, and all soldiers are ipso facto citizens) there is little separating such a union from the “reall Unitie” of a commonwealth.[[53]](#footnote-53) This is compelling reason for confining soldiering – as much as possible – to a special role.

And here we see again why the image of a body of the people incorporating themselves (under none, or perhaps under the absent presence of a commander discerned under a robe) through the virtues of military civic duty is anathema to Hobbes. This seems to be the image offered by Some/One. But is it? Not all might be as simple as it seems. The ironies in juxtaposing Leviathan to Someone/One should not make us lose sight of the ironies Some/One displays by itself. The fact that the figure is hollow and headless can speak of a sovereign body (effectively a garment, without a body) hollowed out of its power to rule: although it would be tempting to think that any of the visitor’s heads could stick out from the robe as they walk inside, and stand as ruler interchangeably, given the height of the installation, it cannot: subjects are there simply represented (symbolically, by the dog tags) while also being asked to watch over themselves (by confronting their reflection on the inside mirror). What is more, the dog tags that make up the robe are fictional, with the fictional nodding here not simply towards the artefactual but towards fakery. These are not real soldier dog tags, but factory rejects, with a nonsensical string of characters engraved on them. The dog tag symbolically represents the interplay between individuality, collectivity, and anonymity within the military, which the name of the installation brings home. It individualizes the person who wears it. But it does it through a device, which like many in the military, itself a faceless body, renders uniform. Some/One’s dog tags may be randomly unique, but they do not individualize. Their randomness is interchangeable, and hints at de-inviduation verging on de-humanization. They work just as much as an assertion as a questioning of individual identity and collective identity, or how the latter might dissolve the former: Some (plurality)/One (unity)/Someone (a pronoun which fittingly doubles as a person of authority and as an unknown or unspecified person). They also speak to the peripatetic life of the artist himself, between the US and his native South Korea, and the attendant fluidity of identity (not this, nor that, but someone). This turns Do Hu-Suh, the artist, into one of those stones “which by the asperity, and irregularity of Figure” do not easily lend themselves into the building blocks of a collective whole, conceiving itself less as a wholeness than as a unity.[[54]](#footnote-54)

**Neto’s Leviathan Thot**

Hobbes’s acute awareness of the political significance of imagery springs from his belief that “not truth, but image, maketh passion”,[[55]](#footnote-55) the beginning of all voluntary motion. Hence the covenant – although itself a useful fiction and a performative metaphor – is ultimately too thin a basis upon which to forge the “reall Unitie” of the body politic. Union requires more, namely the development of a shared imaginary, which is also a shared reality for those imagining it. Subjects needed to be shown how and why they make an all-powerful state, for sure. But it is at least as important that they are shown what that state – and the people it makes – looks like. Image and word need combining in delivering such image. For “seeing” what an image represents is not, for Hobbes, a strictly perceptual act. It is an interpretative activity requiring the intervention of one’s imagination, as often prompted by a verbal aid. Such is the power and politics involved in naming the state as “Leviathan”.

“Leviathan” is the metaphoric image through which Hobbes makes us access his work.[[56]](#footnote-56) “Leviathan” is also the name through which Neto’s invites us into his.[[57]](#footnote-57) Instead of a proper name, of one mythical figure, however, Neto gives us two: “Leviathan Thot”. The biblical sea monster is here juxtaposed to the “re-orthographed” (from the original “Thoth”) ibis-headed Egyptian god of wisdom, magic, and gatekeeper of the underworld (continually menacing the Leviathanic state, if not brought under it) in a quasi-shamanic rhythmic montage: “Than toth than toth than toth than toth slow ly the levi is raised, … toth than… than, thot… than, …than…”.[[58]](#footnote-58)

Asked about the significance of his work, Neto explains “the work is an opportunity to think about the state again and how things are now.” The state form against which this thinking takes place is Hobbes’s. This much is clear from Neto’s describing Leviathan as “a monster bigger than us, which has dominion over us, and that we somehow do not see but is everywhere, almost a divine thing but not a god anymore, rather a state, which has been created by us: we form Leviathan”.[[59]](#footnote-59) Set against this Hobbesian background, however, the two-name composite chosen by Neto for his piece inscribes a tension, as opposed to a dialectic, at the heart of the piece. For as Hobbes is never tired of reminding us “where there is already erected a Soveraign Power, there can be no other Representative of the same people”. Were men to “erect two Soveraigns; 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 Warre”.[[60]](#footnote-60) Leviathan Thot is the name of “a *Kingdome divided in it selfe*”, and such a kingdom “*cannot stand*”.[[61]](#footnote-61)

Leviathan Thot was built for a particular site – the Panthéon. Neto sees this site as the embodiment of the Hobbesian statist political imaginary: “That Leviathan that is the Panthéon”.[[62]](#footnote-62) Completed at the start of the French Revolution, the building formerly known as Saint-Geneviève, was renamed, and turned from a church into a mausoleum for the internment of great Frenchmen – that is, from a place of religious worship (to the patron saint of Paris) to a place of civil worship (to the republic and its heroes) and of consecration of the French sense of self.

As Leviathan Thot takes over this building layered with meaning, the visitor walking into its immense silent chamber finds himself enwrapped in a giant octopus-like tentacular structure wending its way through the geometries of the Panthéon (see Figure IV., p. ). This invading body composes a kind of all spreading, unfathomable, monstrous parasite, attaching itself to the high vaulted ceilings, its multiform limbs falling at differing heights, their bulging ends sagging earthwards, with the ponderous force of gravity working itself against matter. There is a menacing animality here, giving life to the tensions between mass and gravity, as set against the stillness of the geometrical rationality of the surrounding architecture. A confrontation between nature and culture (“supercivilization”, as Neto sometimes refers to European culture, of which Leviathan is the guardian) looms large as an omnipresent menace. But this nature is itself already culture. This Lycra monster is no marvel of nature. It is an artefact, a game of forces, a mechanic organism.

The overall composition brings to mind the Brazilian trope of anthropophagy as a metaphorical definition of ingestion and appropriation of otherness, transculturation and hybridity, which questions post-colonial dependence. There is a clear irony in this visual evocation of the assimilative perspective of cannibalism. The ritual of anthropophagy was originally coloured by a colonial lens, making the Tupi Guarani Indians a household name in seventeenth century Europe. “Tupi or not Tupi, that is the question” is Oswald de Andrade’s rewriting of Hamlet’s dilemma in the *Anthropophagite Manifesto* (1928). The Euro-colonial understanding of the savage, cannibalistic otherness, was visually disseminated by Theodore De Bry’s illustrations of anthropophagic rituals. De Bry is a hinge joint here. His engravings of North American Indians inspired Hobbes’s dramatic rendition of *Libertas* in the frontispiece of *De Cive*. There, however, native Americans originally engraved running after stags are reinvented as running after fellow human beings. Their likely fate is represented on the background by a trestle on which hangs a dismembered limb, like those many limbs falling from Neto’s lycra body. Seemingly devouring the Panthéon, a secular “temple of enlightenment”,[[63]](#footnote-63) in its bowels, his disarmingly visceral monster satirizes as well as subverts cultural colonialism. “We want the Carahiba revolution. Bigger than the French Revolution”, reads the manifesto. The anthropophagous “savage” Brazilian is back to “cannibalize” the symbolic and cultural legacy of colonizers, absorbing and transforming it to create a new image of power, or a power dislocating the grip of image: everywhere and no-where, less seen than felt, sensory overloaded but ultimately un-figured in its omnipresence.

This is how Leviathan Thot might “appear” when read against the metaphor that names it. On purely visual grounds, however, the installation is far more unfathomable. What strikes the eye first, it is organic quality – deconstructed, almost spooky, as if alive. Neto explicitly describes it as a “spatial body”. But if this is a body, it is dismembered, literally taken apart. Dismembered bodies smell of rot: but Neto’s feels less like a body in decomposition than like eden, or a body undergoing tropical growth. Neto explicitly speaks of the parts of the installation as the body parts of an organism: head, stomach, arms, fingers, even sexual organs (drooping breasts, testicles, phalluses), all of which stripped bare, without the connective tissue that would normally bring them together as a whole. This is not a body which is given a proper form, so that its parts can perform their proper functions. Although there is some symmetry to it, this body is no metaphor of order: it makes no attempt to render the body politic orderly by subsuming the identity of the parts under one recognizable organizing principle.

Hobbes saw – and depicted – the sovereign as the form of the commonwealth, that which gave unity to an otherwise *multitudo dissoluta*. One might be tempted to see this *in* Neto’s installation, as it divides sovereignty between Leviathan and Thot, and presents itself to the eye as a *materia informis*. But though the artist insists on the independence of its parts, they are not chaotic. They are held together by a mechanics of tension and counter-tension. This does not produce a body in motion, but a sinuous body living in suspension. Form is here shaped by this mechanics, rather than that which gives it shape. This might not be immediately obvious. Neto’s floor plans for the installation look as if part of a process of *formalising* the artwork. But as the artist himself stresses the artwork forms itself *only* in the contact between body and harnesses and finds the identity of its form in the equilibrium resulting from the ongoing conflict between matter and gravity. Its social physics, if there is one, is that of a mechanical play of forces.

When visually juxtaposed to the body archetype the levitating body strikes one as expansive and amorphous. But it has a centre, placed at the heart of the Panthéon’s neoclassical rationalist order. The Panthéon is a cruciform building with a high dome over the crossing and lower saucer-shaped domes over the four arms. The centre of “That Leviathan that is the Panthéon” is the high dome. It is also there that we find the centre of Neto’s installation – what he calls the “column”. This is a vast reticulated pale pink skin-like structure that descends from the cupola, and is held to the ground with pendulous balls, surrounding Foucault’s pendulum. Meanwhile, however, the metal sphere suspended from the dome on a metal thread keeps charting and marking visible the imperceptible – the rotation of the earth, gravity and transiency – as if the gigantic monster’s ticking heart.

**Figure IV.**

**Ernesto NETO**

**Leviathan Thot**

**2006**

**Lycra tulle, polyamide fabric, styrofoam balls**

**dimensions variable**

**Installation view: Le Festival d'Automne: Pantheon, Paris, 2006**

**Photo: Marcus Wagner**

**Courtesy the artist; Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York; and Galeria Fortes Vilaça, São Paulo**

Neto’s choice of name for this section is significant since the column together with the entablature are the elements of architecture showing architecture’s nature to be that of conflict between gravity and rigidity, support and load.[[64]](#footnote-64) Interdependence, conflict, eventually resolved on the basis of power through a process of strained counterposition and negotiation are also notions integral to Neto’s social physics. The lightness of the dripping sculpture is not effortless: it rather “comes from the fight.” [[65]](#footnote-65)

The imposing column is punctured throughout by large holes. They seem to mimic the octagonal panelling of the cupola, while stretching and distorting its rigid geometry. The structure of the panelled cupola is, in turn, vaguely reminiscent of the pattern of the colossus’s body in the frontispiece of *Leviathan*, especially in its fair copy quasi-anamorphic rendition.[[66]](#footnote-66) They form a regular, compact pattern, which the “column” stretches out, piercing holes through and through, as if undoing the optical sacrifice of the parts to the whole – as if reversing the frontispiece’s anamorphic resolution. Leviathan could laugh “at the shaking of a speare’, for its mail or scales “shut up together as with a close seale”. Neto’s intervention leaves it far more vulnerable to the risk of perforation.

Let the visitor’s eye follow the column to the top, and he will see the oculus of the great cupola opening onto a second cupola covered in Antoine Gos’s Apotheosis of Sainte Geneviève (1811), the lower part of which features four crowned sovereigns. The clef de voûte of the cupola is an oculus opening itself to the light coming from the skylight of the external dome. As Éric Alliez has rightly noticed, in a monument to the self-founding republic, this works less as an access to divine transcendence, than as an access being closed off to be re-occupied by “an empty centre of Power to which everything must equally submit.”[[67]](#footnote-67) Instead of submitting to such a centre, or of seeking to define and occupy a centre of power of its own, Neto’s “anti-Leviathan” seems intent on putting its “physical and metaphysical coordinates into and under tension”, including its reliance on the power of the image to project an image of power which fully realizes itself.[[68]](#footnote-68) But this very exercise presupposes a stage where conflict might appear, where social and political division might legitimately show and come into the open, to eventually produce a stasis that does not leave behind the decomposing smell of dismemberment. While under duress, the stage here belongs still with the Leviathanic state.

Hobbes’s contemporaries were immersed in a culture that believed it possible to visualise ideas. But the history of political ideas remains primarily textual – a history of words and arguments alone. Engagement with visual artefacts as autonomous or auxiliary devices for exploring political concepts and their reception over time and space is still in its infancy. In scrutinising the relationship between image and word, we still struggle to confer image any independent status: we treat the image as a matter of words, and insist in “reading” it discursively. There is an old and venerable tradition to this, in the belief that "the spiritual image, *imago dei*, is not only the soul or mind of man, but the Word of God.”[[69]](#footnote-69) Yet we experience words and images differently, and that this difference needs to be theoretically and historically accounted for. That images deserve to be true objects of investigation is also clear from the plentiful evidence that they are forms of representation integral to the ways in which political ideas – especially those shaping collective imaginaries enabling collective agency – emerge, take a real force, and make their way into the work. This much is shown by the ubiquitous and materialized (but very often unconscious) presence of the Leviathanic state imaginary in contemporary artistic production, including the works analysed here: Do Ho Suh’s Some/One and Ernesto Neto’s Leviathan Thot. As Alliez and Bonne perceptively note about the latter, it offers a critical engagement with “the image of power in its relation to the power of the image”[[70]](#footnote-70) as theorized and realized in *Leviathan*. Although Neto’s “language” is still recognizably visual, he is highly critical of our ocular-centric culture, and our privileging of the eyes, and the powers of visibility, over the multi-sensorial, immersive, full-body experience his works seek to provide. While Hobbes sought to command the public sphere of visibility – and this implied (as shown in the frontispiece) absorbing viewers into it while also shutting them off – Do Ho Suh, and even more so, Neto, invite visitors to literally enter their artworks, either to trap them within, and direct their vision back onto themselves (as Leviathan does), or to let one wander around, in a seeming complete freedom. Neto’s anti-Leviathan, in particular, seems to offer this freedom as an antidote to Leviathan’s entrapments, its arbitrariness as an antidote to Leviathan’s iconicity, even though the artwork is gradually lucking into a new iconicity of its own. Hobbes, for one, believed processes of iconicity fundamental to the constitution of political order (whatever its form), especially the one reifying the most important of political concepts – the state – into a form of symbolic power. And it is this symbol still that we find stoking Do Ho Suh’s and Neto’s imagination, and being reconstructed, through reminiscence and dissection, in artworks that, for all their resistance to Hobbes’s image of power, similarly magnify power into a presence eliciting visitors’ awe.

**Figure V.**

**Do Ho Suh, South Korean, born 1962**

**Some/One, 2005**

**Stainless steel, military dog tags, fiberglass resin**

**76 x 117 x 136 in. (193.04 x 297.18 x 345.44 cm) (approx.)**

**Minneapolis Institute of Art, The John R. Van Derlip Fund and gift of funds from the Sit Investment Associates Foundation 2012.77a-d**

**Art © Do-ho Suh**

**Photo: Kent DuFault**

1. \* This article was researched and written as part of Mónica Brito Vieira’s project, “The Representative Turn in Democratic Theory”, funded by the British Academy SG143255. My thanks to the British Academy for the support needed to complete the piece. I would also like to thank Thomas Fossen and Bert van Roermund for the invitation to contribute an earlier draft of this paper to the workshop “The Portrayal of Politics” (Leiden, December 2017). Special thanks to the discussant and the participants at the workshop for valuable comments and suggestions for the improvement of the piece. Being a reflection on images, the piece had to include a couple of pictures. For permission to reproduce them I am especially grateful to the Minneapolis Institute of Art, the Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York, and the photographer Kent DuFault. I must also record my gratitude to the artists, Do Ho Suh and Ernesto Neto, their galleries, the photographers, and the anonymous visitor in the last photo. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ed. Richard Tuck (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 447. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. *Ibid.*, 448. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. *Ibid.*, 449. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. *Ibid*., 13. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Ibid., 447. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Hobbes, *Elementorum Philosophiae Sectio Prima De Corpore*, in *Opera Philosophica Omnia*, ed. Sir William Molesworth (London, 1839-45; repr. 1999), II, 82. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Hobbes, “Answer to the Preface to Gondibert,” in *Sir William Davenant’s Gondibert*, ed. D. F. Gladish (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), 145. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. On icons, see Monica Brito Vieira, *The Elements of Representation in Hobbes* (Leiden, Brill, 2009), 15-74. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. J. T. Mitchell, *Iconology: Image, Text, Ideology* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1986), 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. *Ibid.*, 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Paul Dumouchel, “Mirrors of Nature: Artificial agents in real life and virtual worlds”, in *Mimesis, Movies, and Media*, ed. Scott Cowdell, Chris Fleming and Joel Hodge (Sydney: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2016), 52. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Keith Brown, “The Artist of the Leviathan Title Page”, *British Library Journal*, 4, 1978. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 114. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Margery Corbett & R. W. Lightbown, *The Comely Frontispiece: the Emblematic Title-Page in England, 1550-1660* (London: Routledge, 1979), 218-230; M. M. Goldsmith, “Picturing Hobbes’s Politics? The Illustrations to Philosophicall Rudiments”, *Journal of Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 44 (1981), 232-239; Noel Malcolm, “The Title Page of *Leviathan*, Seen In a Curious Perspective”, in *Aspects of Hobbes* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 200-229, see also Noeal Malcolm, “The Name and Nature of Leviathan: Political Symbolism and Biblical Exegesis”, Intellectual History Review 17:1 (2007), 21-39; Thomas Bredekamp, *Hobbes Der Leviathan. Das Urbild des modernen Staates und seine Gegenbilder 1651 - 2001* (Berlin: Akademie, 2006), 39-52; Quentin Skinner, “The Material Presentation of Hobbes’s Theory of the Commonwealth”, in *The Materiality of Res Publica: How to Do Things with Publics*, ed. Dominique Colas *et alia* (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Press, 2009), 115-59. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. In the reading offered here both artworks are seen as recalling and problematizing *Leviathan*. It should be noticed however that while Ernesto Neto references *Leviathan* explicitly, Do Ho Suh does not. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. That this is civil worship (to a mortal god) rather than religious worship (to the immortal One) is signalled by the fact that subjects keep their hats on. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 120 and 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Annabel Brett, *Changes of State: Nature and the Limits of the City in Early Modern Natural Law* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011), 138. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Arash Abizadeh, “Sovereign Jurisdiction, Territorial Rights, and Membership in Hobbes”, in *The Oxford Handbook to Hobbes*, ed. A. P. Martinich and Kinch Hoekstra (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 397-432. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Horst Bredekamp, “Thomas Hobbes’s Visual Strategies”, in *The Cambridge Companion to Hobbes’s Leviathan*, ed. Patricia Springborg (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 40. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 441. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. See Do Ho Suh’s interview in: https://art21.org/read/do-ho-suh-some-one-and-the-korean-military/ [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Noel Malcolm, *Thomas Hobbes: Leviathan* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 56-7 and Gabriella Slomp, “Limiting *Leviatha*n: an advice book for rulers? Larry May on Thomas Hobbes”, *Social Theory and Practic*e, 41: 1 (2015), 149-163. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 148. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Claude Lefort, *The Political Forms of Modern Society* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1986). [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. *Ibid.*, 303-4. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Claude Lefort, *Le Temps Present. Écrits 1945-2005* (Paris: Belin, 2007), 741. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. *Ibid*., 114. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. *Ibid.*, 230. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Lefort, *Political Forms of Modern Society*, 304. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Marchamont Nedham, *The Excellencie of a Free State* (1656), ed. Richard Baron (London: A. Millar and T. Cadell, 1767), 114-19. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 151. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. *Ibid.* [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. *Ibid.* [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. *Ibid.*, 151-52. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 151. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. *Ibid.*, 485. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. *Ibid.* [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. See, for instance, *Leviathan*, 126 and 231. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. Deborah Baumgold, “Subjects and Soldiers: Hobbes on Military Service”, *History of Political Thought*, 4: 1 (1983), 43-64; 57. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. For the concept of “composite Christ” see Christopher Hill, “Covenant Theology and the Concept of a “Public Person””, in *The Collected Essays of Christopher Hill*, *Volume Three: People and Ideas in 17th Century England* (Brighton, Sussex: Harvester Press, 1986), 318. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. Baumgold, “Subjects and Soldiers”, 59. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 99. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. Julie Cooper, *Secular Powers: Humility in Modern Political Thought* (Chicago, Ill.: Chicago University Press, 2013), 68. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 483. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. *Ibid.* [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. *Ibid*, 484. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. Hobbes makes this explicit in *Behemoth*, where he claims that “Fortitude is a royal virtue; and though it be necessary in such private men as shall be soldiers, yet, for other men, the less they dare, the better it is both for the commonwealth and for themselves.” See Ferdinand Tönnies (ed.), *Behemoth or The Long Parliament* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1990), 44. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. Although he also recognizes that the mercenary character of such soldiers is a double-edged sword, for where the incentive for fighting is simply necessity or profit they might offer their services to wealthy disloyal services contending for sovereignty. See especially *Behemoth*, 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. Hobbes*, Leviathan*, 126. [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. *Ibid*, 120. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 106. Hobbes’s quotation refers to the passions and traits of character that come in the way of the virtue of mutual accommodation, as built up through sociability. I am therefore consciously misappropriating it here. [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. Hobbes, *The Elements of Law Natural and Politic*, ed. Ferdinand Tönnies, int. M. M. Goldsmith (London: Cass, 1969), 68. [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. And therefore also the image he uses to illustrate it, although there is arguably little in the way of monstrosity in his imaging of the Leviathanic state. For a different view, see Magnus Kristiansson and Johan Tralau, “Hobbes’s Hidden Monster: a new interpretation of the frontispiece of *Leviathan*”, *European Journal of Political Theory* 13: 3 (2014), 299-320. [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. The most comprehensive study of Ernesto Neto’s installation is Eric Alliez’s (with Jean-Claude Bonne), *Undoing the Image. Body Without Organs, Body Without Image: Ernesto Neto’s Anti-Leviathan* (Falmouth: Urbanomic), 2013. Although I am indebted to aspects of Alliez’s analysis, I remain sceptical about his reading of Neto’s work through the lens of Deleuze’s and Guattari’s notion of “diagrammatic assemblage” undoing the image of the aesthetic regime. [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. Ernesto Neto au Panthéon, retrieved from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bZrL7ncLoVI. YouTube (2017, November 15th). [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 130. [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. *Ibid.*, 127. [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. Neto’s remark is compilled by Sarah Jeong in *Dossier de press: Ernesto Neto – Festival d’Autonmne à Paris 2006* np. [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. Paulo Herkenhoff, “Leviathan Thot: A Politics of the Plumb” *Parkett*, 78 (2006): 129. [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. Arthur Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Representation*, trans. E. F. J. Payne (New York: Dover, 1969), vol. I, 214. [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. As Neto explains, “The lightness comes from the fight. When you look at the piece there is a certain degree of lightness, but there is a strong energy of conflict between the elements involved. To have this whole environment in a state of balance, there is a power negotiation between the parts and an atmosphere of interdependence.”  Fernanda Gomes, “Interview: Ernesto Neto and Fernanda Gomes,” *Bomb*, 102 (2008), 80. [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. See Malcolm, *Aspects of Hobbes*, ch. 7. [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
67. Alliez and Bonne, *Undoing the Image*, 57. [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
68. *Ibid.*, 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
69. Mitchell, *Iconology*, 34. [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
70. Alliez and Bonne, *Undoing the Image*, 48. [↑](#footnote-ref-70)