

kon hij ondanks zijn bestuurlijke en diplomatieke werkzaamheden voor het kapittel toch steeds meer opdrachten aannemen.

In 1549 stortte Van Scorel zich op een waterstaatkundige uitdaging: de drooglegging van de Zijpe, een zeearm in zijn geboortestreek die regelmatig voor overstromingen zorgde. Hij haalde tal van vermogende lieden uit zijn enorme netwerk over om hierin te investeren. Van deze onderneming wist hij echter geen succes te maken en in 1554 liep het project vast. Drie jaar later overleed Van Scorel. In het laatste hoofdstuk stelt Jehoel zijn artistieke nalatenschap aan de orde, met aandacht voor zijn reputatie, de werken die aan hem worden toegeschreven en hun lotgevallen. Al tijdens zijn leven werd hij erkend als de schilder die de Italiaanse renaissance naar het noorden had gebracht. Jehoel had ook wel even stil mogen staan bij zijn kinderen, want hun wel en wee laat goed zien hoezeer artistiek talent en een groot netwerk konden zorgen voor sociale stijging van het nageslacht van een eenvoudige dorpspastoor. Van Scorels oudste zoon trad als schilder in de voetsporen van zijn vader en was lid van het Utrechtse stadsbestuur. Hij en andere nazaten trouwden partners uit voornamelijk burgerkringen of de adel.

Jehoel heeft een bijzonder informatief boek geschreven, waarin onnoemelijk veel personen de revue passeren. Juist daarom had een register niet mogen ontbreken. Een ander minpunt is dat de illustraties achterin zijn samengebracht en dat veel daarvan echt te klein zijn afgedrukt. Jehoel stelt in haar inleiding dat er weliswaar veel over Van Scorel is gepubliceerd, maar dat het beeld erg versnipperd is. Zij past talloze puzzelstukjes vaardig aan elkaar en vult heel wat gaatjes waarvan we niet eens wisten dat ze bestonden. Alle bouwstenen lijken klaar te liggen voor een oevrecatalogus en een biografie over een van de interessantste schilders uit de zestiende eeuw.

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Charlotte Epstein, *Birth of the State. The Place of the Body in Crafting Modern Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021). 327 p. ISBN 9780190917630.

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Reading *Birth of the State* is a dazzling experience, which takes the reader to seventeenth-century political theory, the scientific revolution,

the history of knowledge, legal history, and the notions of equality, difference, and agency. In this densely written yet courageous book, Charlotte Epstein aims to parse the co-constitution of the state and the modern political subject in seventeenth-century Europe, particularly as it was consolidated in three fundamental rights: security, liberty, and property, all of which required state protection.

Dissecting the classical canon of early modern English political thought – particularly the political and philosophical writings of Thomas Hobbes and John Locke, in addition to some practices in the field of law, medicine, and art (such as habeas corpus and the anatomy lesson) – Epstein proposes the lens of the body to undertake a genealogy of the founding modern political relation between state and subject.

The body is studied both as an object – an extended moving thing that needed to be placed within the new political space – and as a natural entity providing the link to nature at large. More importantly, though, it is seen as an epistemological lens laying bare the state's demarcation, highlighting processes of exclusion and inclusion. Thus, the book aims to take a fresh starting point for the story of modernity: 'Instead of an individual springing fully formed out of the seventeenth century, with *his* natural rights restored to him at last, it leaves us with a subject of rights that was crafted out of a series of exclusions that the body serves to draw out' (p. 265). For example, Epstein notes how Hobbes proposed the state's attention to bodies, turning away from the conscience that formed a threat to peace during the religious wars. Security was thus conceived as the subject's first natural right. Similarly, the individual body came to be seen as a natural form of property, replacing communal property. It grounded a natural basis for a universal right to private property and thus functioned as a 'naturalising device' (p. 178). Liberty for Locke, in turn, was disconnected from a collective, metaphorical body, as in the medieval corporation, to be rooted in the individual body with a conscience. In short, a focus on the body brings into view the crafting of the 'human', the foundational category for individual rights.

Epstein notes how these foundations were accompanied by inclusion and exclusion: the body was used by Locke to carve out the space of modern politics as an exclusive community of bourgeois, white, male, rational consenters. Irrational people such as criminals and the poor were excluded from free subjecthood, and although Locke claimed that labour made the individual into a person, servants and slaves did not own their bodies.

Throughout the book, Epstein connects political thought with the history of science, including findings from the scientific revolution regarding nature, matter, observation, space, and critical thought. The last chapter is devoted to the public anatomy lesson, which for Epstein reveals the entanglement of the modern state and the new sciences. The early modern public dissection showed the state's sovereign power to kill the (poor) criminal body, which at the same time indicated the upholding of the social order, and manifested a new regime of visibility, attested by the scientists looking at the corpse with spectators as docile subjects. Epistemological and political ordering thus went hand in hand, one of Epstein's main arguments.

The author also interacts with several theoretical positions. Critically engaging with Michel Foucault's conception of epistemes, as well as with Judith Butler's definitions of performativity and agency (instead proposing a less constraining creative and collective conception of agency), Epstein works from poststructuralist insights. Doing so, she argues against the recent trend of new materialism, claiming that the method of deconstruction has not been sufficiently exhausted yet, especially in the theory of international relations.

Covering the histories of political theory, knowledge, and science, Epstein's text displays an impressively broad subject matter while testifying to a strong engagement with philosophy and critical theory. Sometimes this breadth is overwhelming and, necessarily, this scope means that some aspects are covered less thoroughly than others. For example, the attention to practices is scant and in fact mostly limited to a few representations of practices. At the same time, the book's connections between the history of political thought on the one hand and the history of science and knowledge on the other is exciting. Additionally, its use of the body as a lens through which to view the co-constitution of the modern state and the subject of rights is original. This perspective shows how the concept of the body – until now mostly discussed in social, cultural, and medical history – can fruitfully be applied to the history of political thought and the modern state.

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