

Agamben, G., Ed. (2011) *Democracy in what state?* New York, Columbia University Press.

Forward by the French publisher

everybody likes democracy vii

the question posed for the book was: is it meaningful, as far as you are concerned, to call yourself a democrat? And if so, what does that mean? Viii

Translators note

In European languages, the word state is capitalized, which helps distinguish it from government

Agamben, G. (2011) *Introductory note on the concept of democracy. Democracy in what state?* G. Agamben, Ed. New York, Columbia University Press: 1-5.

Democracy can mean 1) a way of constituting the body politic = public law, or 2) the technique of governing = legitimation 1

the Greek word politeia = regime, e.g. monarchy, oligarchy, democracy 2
for Agamben a more faithful translation would be politeia = political activity and politeuma = resulting political outcome 3
and a modern translation would be politeia = constituent power and politeuma = constituted power 3

Rousseau's aim was to reconcile juridical and constitutional terms like contract, the general will, and sovereignty with an art of government 3
essentially to reconcile rule with the justification for that rule 3

to think of government as simple executive power is a mistake 4
we cannot fail to address the central question of government and its articulation to the sovereign 4

our political system couples two heterogeneous elements a politico-juridical rationality and an economic-governmental rationality 4

what if no articulation as possible? What if the task at hand should be to disarticulate them? 4