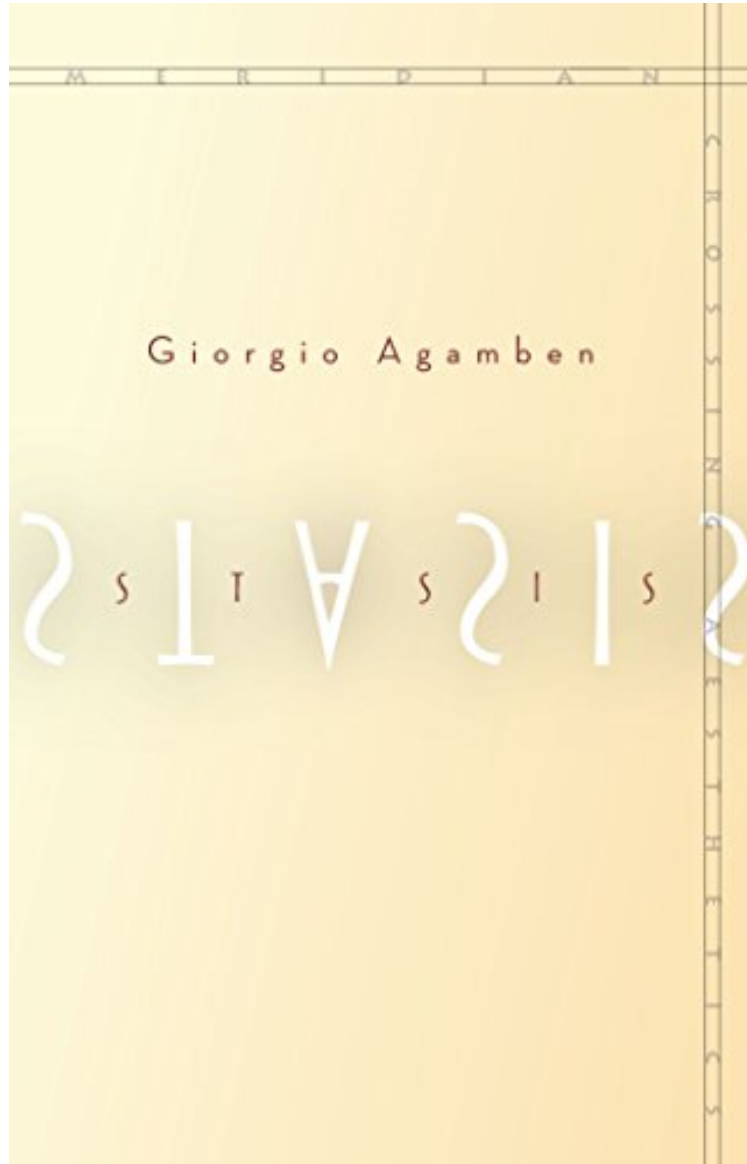


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Giorgio Agamben

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#615739 in Books Giorgio Agamben 2015-09-09 2015-09-09 Original language: English PDF # 1 7.00 x .50 x 4.50l, .20 #File Name: 080479731596 pages Stasis Civil War as a Political Paradigm Meridian Crossing Aesthetics | File size: 50.Mb

Giorgio Agamben : Stasis: Civil War as a Political Paradigm (Meridian: Crossing Aesthetics) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Stasis: Civil War as a Political Paradigm (Meridian: Crossing Aesthetics):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. THIN!By Orson WellesThe book itself is literally quite thin. The book, hardly recognizable as such, is divided up into two sets of seminar lectures. The Peripatetic Reader's review is quite accurate. I did find the discussion of Nicole Loraux's work useful. Agamben singles out an essay she published in French but did not include her book *The Divided City*. The essay has not been translated into English. Oddly, there is no mention of Derrida's chapter "The Phantom Friend Returns" in *The Politics of Friendship* in which Derrida discusses Loraux's work. I also found a reference to an essay on the Frontispiece of Hobbes' *Leviathan*. I tracked it down and learned a lot from it. In any case, this is a very quick read. I think I would want my money back if this is all I got from the seminar he taught.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Worth noting, this is a small book containing lectures ...By Jack CadeWorth noting, this is a small book containing lectures given at Princeton, this is NOT an actual rigorous book of philosophy.

7 of 9 people found the following review helpful. Somewhat Misleading Title but Worthwhile NonethelessBy The Peripatetic ReaderThe forward to this book is promising. It states that this book consists of two lectures given by the illustrious Italian political philosopher Giorgio Agamben at a seminar at Stanford University concerning civil war on October 2001. The subtitle for this book is *Civil War as a Political Paradigm*, promised to be an illuminating read of Agamben presenting his theory of civil war following the cataclysmic changes wrought by 9/11.

This is not what the book is about, sort of. The book consists of two lectures alright, but one lecture describes civil war in ancient Greece and the other is (sort of) about civil war according to Thomas Hobbes. The first lecture concerns civil war in ancient Greece. Essentially civil war was considered to be an inter-family dispute and struggle, not surprising considering the close-knit nature of society in Greece at that time. Fairly straightforward. The second lecture concerns civil war according to the political philosophy of Hobbes. While the subject of civil war is mentioned, of course, but the main focus of Agamben is on other matters. But that's okay. Agamben's discussion of those other matters is probably more interesting. I would say the main focus of the second lecture is the decipherment of the famous engraving of the first edition of the *Leviathan* which graces many, if not most, modern editions of the work. This engraving is packed with symbols containing esoteric meaning which can be understood only with reference to Hobbes' philosophy, and, according to Agamben, made according to his express instructions. As I indicated, this is the most interesting part of the book. Political philosophers such as Carl Schmitt have expounded on the meaning of the symbolisms in the frontpiece of the *Leviathan*. Agamben even talks about why Hobbes' work was even so named. The *Leviathan*, after all, is the Biblical anti-Christ and arch-demon. Was this Hobbes' opinion about the rough and tumble nature of everyday politics? Agamben does not provide any answers but plenty to think about. When Agamben returns to the subject of civil war, the purported topic of this book, it can be understood only with reference to the general philosophy of Hobbes. Here, Agamben might lose the general reader or those not intimately familiar with Hobbes' political philosophy. I have more than a passing knowledge of Hobbes but I had to stop reading this book to consult Wikipedia and re-familiarize myself with Hobbes' philosophy. Be that as it may, broadly considered, civil war for Hobbes was considered a struggle between the population in a state of nature (called the multitude) and the population who have conceded power to the sovereign (People). As with the other matters, Agamben does not provide any answers and this is not a definitive book about the nature of civil war. It does provide plenty of food for thought and is a good start for those interested in political philosophy. Therefore, highly recommended.

We can no longer speak of a state of war in any traditional sense, yet there is currently no viable theory to account for the manifold internal conflicts, or civil wars, that increasingly afflict the world's populations. Meant as a first step toward such a theory, Giorgio Agamben's latest book looks at how civil war was conceived of at two crucial moments in the history of Western thought: in ancient Athens (from which the political concept of stasis emerges) and later, in the work of Thomas Hobbes. It identifies civil war as the fundamental threshold of politicization in the West, an apparatus that over the course of history has alternately allowed for the de-politicization of citizenship and the mobilization of the unpolitical. The arguments herein, first conceived of in the immediate aftermath of 9/11, have become ever more relevant now that we have entered the age of planetary civil war.

About the AuthorGiorgio Agamben is a contemporary Italian philosopher and political theorist whose works have been translated into numerous languages. His most recent title with Stanford University Press is *Pilate and Jesus* (2014).