



# Rogues: Two Essays on Reason (Meridian: Crossing Aesthetics)

*Jacques Derrida*

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*Rogues*, published in France under the title *Voyous*, comprises two major lectures that Derrida delivered in 2002 investigating the foundations of the sovereignty of the nation-state. The term "*État voyou*" is the French equivalent of "rogue state," and it is this outlaw designation of certain countries by the leading global powers that Derrida rigorously and exhaustively examines.

Derrida examines the history of the concept of sovereignty, engaging with the work of Bodin, Hobbes, Rousseau, Schmitt, and others. Against this background, he delineates his understanding of "democracy to come," which he distinguishes clearly from any kind of regulating ideal or teleological horizon. The idea that democracy will always remain in the future is not a temporal notion. Rather, the phrase would name the coming of the unforeseeable other, the structure of an event beyond calculation and program. Derrida thus aligns this understanding of democracy with the logic he has worked out elsewhere. But it is not just political philosophy that is brought under deconstructive scrutiny here: Derrida provides unflinching and hard-hitting assessments of current political realities, and these essays are highly engaged with events of the post-9/11 world.

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