

Sovereignty on Trial

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This paper will examine Agamben's conception of sovereignty in relation to both its antecedents and its continuing importance in his work. First appearing forcefully in *Homo Sacer* as a coherent development of his earlier examination of the Aristotelian notions of potentiality and impotentiality (*potenza/impotenza, dunamis/adunamia*), Agamben's analysis of sovereignty and the sovereign ban-structure provides the frame not only for his widely influential work on biopolitics, but also, as this paper will propose, for more recent theologically inflected work such as his reading of the scriptural account of the trial of Jesus.