

**Sebastjan Leban\***

*Academy of Visual Arts, Ljubljana, Slovenia*

## The Construction of the Other: (Re)producing Bare Life

**Abstract:** This paper proposes a critical reading of the formation of the Other within capitalism and coloniality. Through an analysis of the master/slave relation, the master/slave dialectic and bare life/sovereignty, the research intends to prove that the construction of the Other is essential for the construction of Western hegemony. In the first part, we are presented with the construction of the Other within Aristotle's master/slave relation that is in the second part related to the master/slave dialectic and racial classification. The paper concludes with a critical reflection on Agamben's term *homo sacer* and gives a short overview of its possible reinvention. The analysis provides an understanding of the construction of the Other in the current state of exception and seems to be crucial in a time where processes of oppression, dispossession and segregation executed upon the Other are increasing.

**Key words:** Bare life, Bios, Zoē, Master/slave dialectic, Master/slave relation, Other, Homo Sacer

### The Master/Slave Relation and the Master/Slave Dialectic

In order to understand the production of the Other in our present reality we need to analyze its historical formation from the master/slave relation onward. Aristotle in *Politics* speaks of the management of the state and of the household where he defines the concept of the complete household consisting of slaves and free men. Within this perspective Aristotle exemplifies the basic three relations within the household: of the master and the slave, of the husband and wife and of the father and children. In the context of this analysis I will take a closer look at the master/slave relation. In Aristotle's time there were two opinions on the relation between the master and the slave. The first one defining the rule of the master as a science, where the management of a household and the mastership of the slaves and the political and royal rule were all the same, and the second one where the rule of the master over the slave was contrary to nature and that the distinction between slave and free man exists by law only and not by nature. For Aristotle in the arrangement of the family the slave is a living possession. The nature of the slave is for Aristotle "he who is by nature not his own but another's man is by nature a slave; and he may be said to be another's

\*Author contact information: [sebastjan.leban@ava.si](mailto:sebastjan.leban@ava.si)

man who, being a human being is also a possession.”<sup>1</sup> Aristotle detected two sorts of instruments that were at the disposal of the master in the successful management of the household: the lifeless instruments and the living instruments. The slave pertained to the living instruments at the master’s disposal. It is in here that we can see the very dehumanization of the slave since the slave is compared or posed on the same level as the lifeless instruments, of being non-human. This naturalization of the role of the slave that it defines the role of the Other as well, is further grounded by Aristotle in the subsumption of the slave to the master. “That some should rule and others be ruled is as thing not only necessary but expedient; from the hour of their birth some are marked out of subjection, others for rule.”<sup>2</sup> We have thus already established from ancient times the role of the slave as the non-being, as the possession of the master, as its instrument. Furthermore what Aristotle in *Politics* establishes, by declaring that those who “foresee by the exercise of mind is by nature intended to be lord and master and that which can with its body give effect to such foresight is a subject and by nature a slave”<sup>3</sup>, constitutes the bases of the master/slave dialectic.

In the master/slave dialectic the slave is posited at the unlimited disposal of the master. As Aníbal Quijano identifies in the structuralization of race and racial identity, as basic instruments of social classification, we also encounter the specific role upon which the whole idea of the Eurocentric perspective of knowledge and the relation of domination has been established. This at the same time represents the historical turn upon which methods of classification have been revolutionized. Quijano notes that it was in colonialism that the Eurocentric perspective of knowledge has been set in place and incorporated as a form of domination together with economic, political and cultural control. This demanded the creation of the new identity of Eurocentrism that represented the colonizer as naturally dominant. This was created by inventing racial classification, a new way of legitimizing the relation of superiority/inferiority between dominant and dominated.<sup>4</sup> The distinction between superior and inferior races was not used only for the proliferation of the master/slave dialectic as a natural form of domination, but it was upon racial classification that we also saw a systematic structuralization of the role of the inferior populations.

Achille Mbembe in *On the Postcolony* presents us with the definition of the master/slave dialectic as distinctive between the West and the colonial world that predisposes that the individual in the West “has gradually freed himself from the sway of traditions and attained an autonomous capacity to conceive, in the here and now, the definition of norms and their free formulation by individual, rational will.”<sup>5</sup> On the contrary, in the non-Western societies, the colonized remains secluded in primitivism,

<sup>1</sup> Aristotle, *Politics* (Kitchener, Ontario: Batoche Books, 1999), 8.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, 4.

<sup>4</sup> Anibal Quijano, “Coloniality of Power, Eurocentrism and Latin America,” *Nepantla: Views from South* 1, 3 (2000): 534–35.

<sup>5</sup> Achille Mbembe, *On the Postcolony* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2001), 10.

savageness and nativity, incapable of producing rational thoughts. On these premises, the form of racial classification is established along with the representation of the subjugation of some human species and of the domination of others. Quijano reminds us that this is the history of the colonial power that in terms of the colonial perception produced two decisive implications, the first being centered around the dispossession of the colonial subjects “of their own and singular historical identities”<sup>6</sup>, and the second in the invention of “their new racial identity, colonial and negative”<sup>7</sup>. For Quijano, this marks the point of rupture where racial classification defines the non-white races as inferior, capable only of producing inferior knowledge and culture. Similarly to Quijano, Ramón Grosfoguel explains how historically this condition of differentiation between the civilized master and the uncivilized slave provided the Western man the ability to “represent his knowledge as the only one capable of achieving a universal consciousness, and to dismiss non-Western knowledges as particularistic and, thus, unable to achieve universality.”<sup>8</sup>

According to Mbembe, what we witness today is the actualization of coloniality that speaks of the modern usage of terror that is in complete resemblance to slavery and colonialism. In reference to the representation of the master/slave dialectic, Mbembe locates the constitution of the colonial, native, primitive form of life as the creation of the “most perfect Otherness”<sup>9</sup> in which violence not only reveals the “native as radically Other, it [also] annihilates him/her”<sup>10</sup>. The reality of the colony is the reality of the death world that conceals the colonial subject to an endless subjugation to capital and the colonial matrix of power. At the same time, Mbembe is precise in reading the representation of the Other as the essential element in the “constitution of the colonizer as subject per excellence”<sup>11</sup>. In this way, we see the representation of the master/slave dialectic within the reality of modernity/coloniality as constitutive for the reproduction of both the master and the slave. What is more, for Mbembe, “the colonizer constantly needs the native as that animal that serves as the support for the colonizer’s self-consciousness.”<sup>12</sup> In *On the Postcolony* Mbembe speaks of another crucial element that connects the master/slave dialectic to the master/slave relation exposed by Aristotle. This connection resides in Hegel’s *The Philosophy of World History*, where according to Mbembe we are confronted with the archetypical mode of speaking about Africa, a mode that constitutes its norm. Hegel in researching the development of reason in history defines that “the peculiarly African character is difficult to comprehend, for the very reason that

<sup>6</sup> Quijano, “Coloniality of Power,” 552.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, 551.

<sup>8</sup> Ramón Grosfoguel, “Decolonizing Post-Colonial Studies and Paradigms of Political Economy: Transmodernity, Decolonial Thinking, and Global Coloniality,” *Transmodernity: Journal of Peripheral Cultural Production of the Luso-Hispanic World*, <http://www.escholarship.org/uc/item/21k6t3fq>, accessed October 10, 2016.

<sup>9</sup> Mbembe, *On the Postcolony*, 188.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

in reference to it, we must quite give up the principle which naturally accompanies all our ideas – the category of universality. In Negro life the characteristic point is the fact that consciousness has not yet attained to the realization of any substantial objective existence – as for example, God or Law – in which the interest of man's volition (free will) is involved and in which he realizes his own being."<sup>13</sup> For Mbembe, Hegel's reasoning proceeds in this direction; the life of the master is particular, this particularity is totality, this totality is consciousness, this consciousness is life. The slave on the other hand has no being, or, if it has, then it is the reverse of everything the master is, an error, a possession, a lifeless instrument at master's disposal.

Mbembe defines this passage as archetypal for colonial domination because it is beyond Hegel that those archetypes were constituted as norms in racial classification. These archetypes go as follows:

- "the Negro exhibits the natural man in his completely wild and non domesticated state [...], if we would rightly comprehend him, there is nothing harmonious with humanity to be found in this type of character;"<sup>14</sup>

- "the Negro is an example of animal man in all his savagery and lawlessness, and if we wish to understand him at all, we must put aside all our European attitudes. All that is foreign to man in his immediate existence, and nothing consonant with humanity is to be found in his character;"<sup>15</sup>

- "a characteristic fact in reference to the Negroes is slavery;"<sup>16</sup>

- "in the colonial principle of rationality the native is thus that thing that is, but only insofar as it is nothing."<sup>17</sup>

Those are the archetypes used by Hegel in subsuming Africa that became the norm in racial classification. In researching the differentiation within the master/slave dialectic, Mbembe exposes how the human being becomes a subject as soon as he/she is separated from being an animal, a historical reality that does not include the entirety of the human species but concerns the becoming subject of the white dominant race. Mbembe, in *Democracy as a Community Life*, investigates the role of being human. He develops this discourse in relation to the condition of slavery and colonization that saw the development of the historical brutal de-humanization of the colonial body. Mbembe writes that in "racially exclusive ideological discourse 'humanism' was predicated on the belief that a difference of colour was a difference of species."<sup>18</sup> Similarly to Quijano, Mbembe denotes that "race in particular did not simply become

<sup>13</sup> Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *The Philosophy of History* (Kitchener, Ontario: Batoche Books, 2001), 111.

<sup>14</sup> Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of History* (London: G. Bell and Sons LTD, 1914), 97.

<sup>15</sup> Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), 177.

<sup>16</sup> Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of History*, 100.

<sup>17</sup> Mbembe, *On the Postcolony*, 187.

<sup>18</sup> Achille Mbembe, "Democracy as a Community Life," *JWTC*, [http://jwtc.org.za/volume\\_4/achille\\_mbembe.htm](http://jwtc.org.za/volume_4/achille_mbembe.htm), accessed September 15, 2016.

a crucial, pervasive dimension of colonial domination and capitalist exploitation”<sup>19</sup>, but it has become a privileged mechanism for turning black life into waste. It is a condition of constant de-humanization of life that excludes the colonial subject from all universalistic discourses of humanity.

The victorious consciousness that defines the status of the master is according to Mbembe that of the one who has proved, demonstrated, realized, and revealed his superiority over biological existence and the natural world in general. On the contrary the defeated consciousness is banned to the condition of slavery. Thus the colonized is not free, without history, without individuality and subjectivity.

“Like the animal, he/she simply ‘represents’ a sort of eternal essence – given, once and for all, and forever identical to itself. He/she can, of course, attain ‘sentiment of self’, but not ‘self-consciousness’. Incapable of transcending itself as body and as organ, the animal does not rise above itself in order to come back toward itself; it has no distance with respect to itself in order to contemplate itself.”<sup>20</sup> That is why Mbembe asserts that the colonized cannot be defined as a living being empowered with reason. He does not exist as self; it is in a same way as a rock, nothing more.<sup>21</sup>

Similarly to the analysis of Africa, Hegel in *The Philosophy of History* analyses Europe and divides it in three different sections. The first section is represented by Southern Europe, in which Hegel includes Greece, which for a long time presented the theater of History and where accordingly, the World-Spirit resides. The second section is represented by the heart of Europe. In this center of Europe, France, Germany and England are the principal countries. The third section consists of the north-eastern states of Europe – Poland, Russia and the Slavonic Kingdoms.<sup>22</sup> They form the connection with Asia. It is within this fragmentation of Europe that we can grasp the master/slave dialectic being emphasized in the division within Europe. The south in terms of Italy, Spain, Portugal and Greece constitutes the base, the soul of Europe. The north with France, Germany and England is defined as the center representing its mind. While Eastern Europe remains the space in between, a transitory space between Europe and Asia. Thus we have established an inferiorization within Europe that is in strict connection with the inferiorization as conceived in racial classification.

This is the connection implied also by Madina Tlostanova in *Towards a Decolonization of Thinking and Knowledge: A few Reflections from the World of Imperial Difference*, where we are confronted with the concept of the Second World as a typical product of Western modernity. What Tlostanova makes visible and arguable is the revision of the Second World and its Otherness in relation to the colonial matrix of power. Namely too often we are confronted with the idea that the so-called vanishing of the Second World from the hierarchical structure First World/Second World/Third World has to do with the collapse of communism and socialism. Instead we must

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Mbembe, *On the Postcolony*, 190.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid, 187.

<sup>22</sup> Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*, 120.

read the construction of the Second World within the capitalist/colonial matrix of power. Tlostanova thus rightly asks why should we talk about the Second World as a concept, if that concept vanished long ago? "Because the real place of its inhabitants in the global human taxonomy of Western modernity has not changed much, no matter in what ideological disguise this modernity acted or acts today. It can be a place of a second-rate European (sometimes even honorary European), or a place of an honorary human, or even a permanent under-human, not quite human."<sup>23</sup> That is why we must understand the production of Easternness in strict relation to racial classification. Quijano defines that racial classification was invented in order to legitimize the relation of superiority versus inferiority, between dominant and dominated. At the same time, it is within racial classification that a new systematic racial division of labor was produced. Within the racist distribution of labor and the forms of primitive and later on capitalist expropriation of the colonies, we see a new form of control established as well as a new form of representation. In terms of labour control, we must turn again towards Quijano and his distinction in the implementation and development of the capitalist mode of production that is significantly differentiated between the developed First World and the underdeveloped colony. Primitive accumulation in Europe demanded the expropriation of the land of agricultural people and their forced integration into the capitalist wage system. On the other side, primitive accumulation in the colonies demanded the systematic disposal of Indians as manual labourers forced to work until death. Although this practice was substituted around the middle of the 16th century with a "new politics of population reorganization, a reorganization of the Indians and their relations with the colonizers"<sup>24</sup>, the politics of production and reproduction of death never stopped being the reality of the colonies. Contrary to the European peasantry, the colonial subject was not transformed into the new wage labourer of the Industrial era, but was kept in the colonial matrix of power through slavery, forced labour and death. As Quijano implies, the distinction of serfdom from within European soil and the serfdom of the American Indians lies in the fact that the colonized serf had no feudal protection and no land in his possession as a substitution for wages. Quijano reads this distinction from two perspectives: the distinction implied in the essence of the division between the dominant developed world and the colonized underdeveloped colony where sovereign power is organized around necropolitics, and the practice of primitive accumulation from the perspective of racial classification that associated the racial identity of the colonized with the "forms of control of unpaid, unwaged labour"<sup>25</sup>, with the perception that the colonial subject is not worthy of wages. These realities were set as the natural form of power, to which the colonial world was submitted.

---

<sup>23</sup> Madina Tlostanova, "Towards a Decolonization of Thinking and Knowledge: a Few Reflections from the World of Imperial Difference," *Antville.org*, [http://antville.org/static/m1/files/madina\\_tlostanova\\_decolonia\\_thinking.pdf](http://antville.org/static/m1/files/madina_tlostanova_decolonia_thinking.pdf), accessed September 9, 2016.

<sup>24</sup> Quijano, "Coloniality of Power, Eurocentrism and Latin America," 538.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid*, 539.

In terms of representation the idea, body and notion of the Western man, knowledge, politics and culture were proposed as the dominant universalistic discourse. In this regard Grosfoguel writes of the imposition of the colonial matrix of power through the European perspective of knowledge into what he terms as being embraced in the concept of Westernized university. By that, Grosfoguel presupposes an expansion of the Eurocentric perspective of knowledge that is “characterized by privileging the Western male canon of thought and the study of the ‘other’ as an object rather than as a knowledge-producing subject.”<sup>26</sup> This logic of coloniality of the mind is what constitutes the continuation of colonialism along with coloniality. According to Grosfoguel, the reason for non-Western, non-Eurocentric knowledges to be taught and present in the curricula of Westernized university comes as a direct consequence of the political struggles of the 1960s and 1970s in the U.S. that let “subjects from racialized minorities study themselves as subjects who think and produce knowledges from bodies and spaces”<sup>27</sup>. This act of inclusion, is far from being a de-universalizing process, since the inclusion of non-Western, non-Eurocentric knowledges is fictitious and does not transform the master/slave dialectic in place. This implies that their integration in the curricula derives from their inclusion through exclusion, signifying that, physically, they are placed in the curricula and taught at universities,<sup>28</sup> but epistemically, they are excluded from the Western, universal, dominant theoretical discourses. Grosfoguel implies that non-Western, non-Eurocentric knowledge is banalized, inferiorized and kept under the capitalist/colonial matrix of power. He accuses the Westernized university of being a machine of the “global mass production of Eurocentric fundamentalism.”<sup>29</sup> The diversity of knowledges that does not derive from this perspective is categorized as inferior and not worthy of being taken seriously inside the Westernized university. This reality of concealing speaks of a form of racism that Grosfoguel names as the most hidden mechanism of the production of epistemic racism and sexism. Colonization through knowledge production, or to be precise, the coloniality of knowledge, continues its march in subordinating knowledge outside of the white, male, heterosexual and universal perspective.

## Bare Life

Another crucial element in researching the construction of the Other resides within the concept of bare life, developed by Giorgio Agamben. For Agamben bare life is not simply natural productive life, the *zoē* of the Greeks, nor *bios*, it is a zone of

---

<sup>26</sup> Ramón Grosfoguel, “The Dilemmas of Ethnic Studies in the United States: Between Liberal Multiculturalism, Identity Politics, Disciplinary Colonization, and Decolonial Epistemologies,” *Human Architecture: Journal of the Sociology of Self-Knowledge* 10, 1 (2002): 82.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> According to Grosfoguel under the categories of Ethnic studies, Gender studies, Slavic studies, Asian studies, etc.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid, 83.

indistinction and continuous transition between man and beast, nature and culture. Agamben identifies bare life, in the life of *homo sacer*, who may be killed and yet not sacrificed. *Homo sacer* “is an obscure figure of archaic Roman law, in which human life is included in the juridical order solely in the form of its exclusion (that is, of its capacity to be killed).”<sup>30</sup> Even though we cannot deny the very fact that Agamben’s definition of bare life allowed us to diagnose the new forms of domination and political dangers in modernity we must be precise in identifying the missing element in bare life, that is of its connection to the master/slave dialectic and the master/slave relation.<sup>31</sup> Ewa Plonowska Ziarek states that “because the expropriation of the slave’s life constitutes him/her as a non-person, or a socially dead person, it produces another instance of bare life, violently stripped of genealogy, cultural memory, social distinction, name and native language, that is of all the elements of Aristotle’s *bios*. Slavery in all its different historical formations was institutionalized as the extreme destruction of the socio-symbolic formation of subjectivity.”<sup>32</sup>

In reference to the production of the Other and bare life in today’s society does the identification of the bare life as *homo sacer* sufficiently reflect the multiplicities of the subjugated bodies we are confronted with? Ziarek in researching bare life exposes the need of reconsideration of the way bare life is implicated in gender, class, colonial and racist configurations of the political. One of the crucial problems Ziarek detects is the relationship of bare life to slavery. “As soon as Aristotle introduces the crucial distinction between *zoē* and *bios*, *oikos* and *polis*, he is confronted with the localization and legitimation of enslaved life.”<sup>33</sup> In here we can detect the very fundamental problem in both Aristotle’s defense of slavery and his definition of the slave being an animate instrument at the master’s disposal, belonging to the household, and Agamben’s exclusion of the slave from being identified as bare life.

This critique is substantially defined in Magnus Fiskesjö’s text *Outlaws, Barbarians, Slaves: Critical Reflection on Agamben’s Homo Sacer*. Fiskesjö’s main critique of Agamben is the omission by Agamben of the slave and the barbarian, the two main figures of historical sociopolitical inequality, from being bare life. “Both the concept of the slave and that of the barbarian involve the denial of equal membership in society, and a reduction to something less than human, which could then be exploited outside normal law.”<sup>34</sup> As already detected within Aristotle’s *Politics*, the figure of the slave is defined as that of an instrument within the household, an object according to Fiskesjö of naked exploitation. In that same manner the figure of the barbarian has

---

<sup>30</sup> Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 12.

<sup>31</sup> Ewa Plonowska Ziarek, “Bare Life on Strike: Notes on the Biopolitics of Race and Gender,” *South Atlantic Quarterly* 107, 1 (2008): 103.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 95–96.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 94.

<sup>34</sup> Magnus Fiskesjö, “Outlaws, Barbarians, Slaves: Critical Reflection on Agamben’s *Homo Sacer*,” *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory* 2, 1 (June 2012): 161.

been deployed in order to justify subjugation as a historical process of civilisation. Fiskesjö defines that “the two paradigmatic figures are also closely linked, and in effect have formed a two-pronged tool for such subjugation and exploitation by which people first defined as barbarians are reduced to and exploited as slaves – a pattern repeated today when illegal migrants are dragged down into (illegal and hidden) slavery.”<sup>35</sup>

In further analyzing bare life from race and gender perspective Ziarek says that “bare life, wounded, expendable and endangered is not the same as biological *zoē*, but rather the remainder of the destroyed political bios.”<sup>36</sup> This destroyed political bios is the outcome of the construction of the Other, be it as a slave, a refugee or a migrant. The devaluation of all those lives is differentiated, from the reality of the slave being defined as animal life to the reality of the refugee and of the illegal migrant occupying the space of indistinction between the beast and the man. We can also speak about that same devaluation when analyzing the Eastern body – a body that is not as devalued as the life of the black man, but that is differentiated in regard to the white Western man. This body is only partially civilized, partially educated, and partially Universal, in constant need of a struggle for being recognized as political life.

According to Agamben “every society – even the most modern – decides who its sacred men will be. It is even possible that this limit, on which the politicization and the exception of natural life in the juridical order of the state depends, has done nothing but extend itself in the history of the West and has now – in the new biopolitical horizon of states with national sovereignty – moved inside every human life and every citizen. Bare life is no longer confined to a particular place or a definite category. It now dwells in the biological body of every living being.”<sup>37</sup> By not localizing bare life in its proper body, place and role in society signifies misleading the argument for a specific purpose that accordingly to Fiskesjö has no critical reflection of its own Eurocentric perspective and inevitably of its own Eurocentric fundamentalism. Second, by defining that each one of us is also bare life, it implies the very capacity in the new bio(necro)political horizon to produce bare life, as also the power of the sovereign to transform political life into bare life anytime and anywhere.

In conclusion, Agamben in defining the formation of the nation-state explains how in the *Declaration of Human Rights and Citizenship* we see a passage to the citizenship that does not simply identify a generic subjugation to royal authority, but where that citizenship names the new status of life as origin and ground of sovereignty. This passage defines at the same time the crucial problem not reflected by Agamben that must be searched for in the very definition of citizenship. The passage to citizenship was a privilege that was widely denied to the colonial subject and it is still denied to all those excluded from the First World, the refugees, the illegal migrants, the expelled, etc. These are the lives that are forced to be bare life, kept in a permanent state of exception. The question of citizenship becomes even more relevant when analyzing

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Ziarek, “Bare Life on Strike,” 90.

<sup>37</sup> Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, 81.

the current European politics of exclusion and segregation to which all those coming from the Third World trying to enter Europe illegally are subjected. They are the living dead of today, forced to migrate by the historical expropriation imposed on them through coloniality. They are, without citizenship, deprived of any rights, and have to be submitted to necropolitics on biopolitical soil. This is exactly why Ziarek demands a supplementing of the term bare life – bare life that should be redefined in a more complex structure, in terrain that will allow us to determine the new forms of domination/subjugation and at the same time to establish new forms of emancipation.<sup>38</sup> This complex structure can be located in the very source of Agamben's distinction between *bios* and *zoē*. When we transform the body of bare life from *homo sacer* to the body of the slave, the refugee, the illegal migrant, we do not solely redevelop bare life and sovereignty but we provide a new historical perspective in terms of the construction, production and reproduction of the Other.

## References

- Aristotle. *Politics*. Kitchener, Ontario: Batoche Books, 1999.
- Agamben, Giorgio. *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998.
- Fiskesjö, Magnus. "Outlaws, Barbarians, Slaves: Critical Reflection on Agamben's Homo Sacer." *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory* 2, 1 (June 2012): 161. doi:10.14318/hau2.1.009
- Grosfoguel, Ramón. "Decolonizing Post-Colonial Studies and Paradigms of Political Economy: Transmodernity, Decolonial Thinking, and Global Coloniality." *Transmodernity: Journal of Peripheral Cultural Production of the Luso-Hispanic World*. <http://www.escholarship.org/uc/item/21k6t3fq>. Accessed October 10, 2016.
- Grosfoguel, Ramón. "The Dilemmas of Ethnic Studies in the United States: Between Liberal Multiculturalism, Identity Politics, Disciplinary Colonization, and Decolonial Epistemologies." *Human Architecture: Journal of the Sociology of Self-Knowledge* 10, 1 (2002): 81–89.
- Hegel, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich. *Lectures on the Philosophy of History*. London: G. Bell and Sons LTD, 1914.
- Hegel, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich. *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975.
- Hegel, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich. *The Philosophy of History*. Kitchener, Ontario: Batoche Books, 2001.
- Mbembe, Achille. "Democracy as a Community Life." *JWTC*. [http://jwtc.org.za/volume\\_4/achille\\_mbembe.htm](http://jwtc.org.za/volume_4/achille_mbembe.htm). Accessed September 15, 2016.
- Mbembe, Achille. *On the Postcolony*. Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2001.

---

<sup>38</sup> Ziarek, "Bare Life on Strike," 103.

Quijano, Aníbal. "Coloniality of Power, Eurocentrism and Latin America." *Nepantla: Views from South* 1, 3 (2000): 533–80.

Tlostanova, Madina. "Towards a Decolonization of Thinking and Knowledge: a Few Reflections from the World of Imperial Difference." *Antville.org*, [http://antville.org/static/m1/files/madina\\_tlostanova\\_decolonia\\_thinking.pdf](http://antville.org/static/m1/files/madina_tlostanova_decolonia_thinking.pdf). Accessed September 9, 2016.

Ziarek, Ewa Płonowska. "Bare Life on Strike: Notes on the Biopolitics of Race and Gender." *South Atlantic Quarterly* 107, 1 (2008): 89–105. doi:10.1215/00382876-2007-057

Article received: June 5, 2017  
Article accepted: June 12, 2017  
Original scholarly paper