



## **Monstrous Words : Fanon and the Language of Resistance**

Filippo Del Lucchese

Brunel University - West London

[f.dellucchese@gmail.com](mailto:f.dellucchese@gmail.com)

Il saggio considera vari aspetti della relazione tra politica e violenza, con una attenzione particolare alla mediazione linguistica. Più specificamente, attraverso un esame del pensiero di Frantz Fanon, si intende mostrare il modo in cui il potere impiega sempre la violenza in e attraverso un determinato linguaggio, una grammatica, una sintassi. Si vuole inoltre mettere in evidenza il modo in cui il linguaggio è tuttavia anche, al contempo, il nucleo fondamentale dell'espressione di una resistenza vitale al potere, sia sul piano ontologico, che politico. La violenza del potere, anche nelle sue forme più estreme, passa sempre attraverso un atto linguistico. Ciò nonostante, alcuni filosofi politici hanno offerto una diversa prospettiva sulla relazione tra linguaggio e potere: definendo la resistenza come la caratteristica fondamentale della politica, essi hanno evidenziato il fatto che il conflitto con il potere ha luogo anche dentro il linguaggio. Questo diventa così un vero e proprio luogo di battaglia teorico, rendendo in tal modo possibile pensare un diverso ruolo e un diverso significato della violenza. Grazie agli scritti teorici e politici di Fanon, possiamo definire una diversa concezione della violenza. Mediante un'analisi delle sue opere, si espongono e il carattere "mostruoso" che assume per il potere la resistenza ad esso, e la sua relazione con il linguaggio della violenza.

It would not be difficult to show that ever since the Greeks defined the Other by the term *barbaros* – i.e. as one who does not know how to speak – there can be no reflection on politics that does not pass through language. If each epoch has bequeathed its own version of the problem, this is because the change in forms of organizing communal life, as well as conflicts, has not removed the need to establish the status of language vis-à-vis politics.

If we wanted to identify a meaningful point of departure for modernity, it would be the same year as the “discovery” of America by Christopher Columbus when the humanist Antonio de Nebrija, in his famous grammar, declared that Castilian was now replacing Latin as the language for dominating the world<sup>1</sup>. By contrast, when it comes to our era, rather than searching for such a “resonant” declaration (but there are some), it would be better to set about exploring in the microphysical dimension – that is to say, at the level of everyday usages of language, its simultaneously semantic and political nuances and shifts.

To introduce a discussion of Fanon, we have therefore chosen to cite part of a passage from a text that is quite remarkable at a philosophical level, even though its “author” would, for many reasons, have wanted to present it as radically anti-philosophical. It is the speech that Mohammad Sidique Khan, one of the authors of the London bombings, made in front of the camera, before setting out to blow up the underground on 7 July 2005<sup>2</sup>. Among many other arguments that we might find very familiar in this context (the appeal to the Koran, opposition to the Jews and the Crusades), there are at least two that deserve our attention. While addressing himself to his victims (and not to the “powerful” in the West – something already interesting in itself), this young, 30-year-old Muslim (the oldest of the group), who came from a Leeds suburb, declares:

I am going to keep this short and to the point because it’s all been said by far more eloquent people than me. But our words have no impact upon you. Therefore I’m going to talk in a language that you understand. Our words are dead until we give them life with our blood.

We can derive two arguments from Sidique Khan words, which can be used to highlight some aspects of the thought of Fanon, who had reflected, if not in the same terms, than at least within the same problematic of violence. The two theses are (1) that language has become completely powerless. There are no words or arguments that

could contribute anything to understanding the world, or indeed to changing it: total death of language; (2) it is nevertheless possible to bring it back to life through violence, blood, and sacrifice: «I'm going to talk to you in a language that you understand.»

Death of language on the one hand, its potential resuscitation on the other: we believe that it is possible by way of Fanon to criticize the first argument of the text we have just read, by stating that it is never possible completely to destroy a language and reduce its power to nothingness; and yet to uphold, at least in part, the young author of the attack, by saying that it is true that this power is not preserved in abstraction from action. That is to say, all resistance is conducted – among other things – through language, but there is no language without a resistance. One cannot, for example, “say” freedom without at the same time “acting” freedom.

### «Bare Language»: Fanon and Klemperer

It is therefore a question of testing what (to borrow and modify an expression of Giorgio Agamben's) I would call the idea of a “bare language” in the light of Fanon's thought<sup>3</sup>. Like Agamben's «bare life», this language is the provision and ultimate, hidden production of sovereign power, not its rational presupposition. A bare language is one that, while employing clear, distinct words, no longer says anything, no longer produces any effects, because it is completely covered (as the author of the London attack says) by an omnipotent, impenetrable veil.

This is why it is interesting to compare Fanon's thought here with that of Victor Klemperer, the Jewish philologist who in his diaries analyzed German society's slide into Nazism in and through its language – what he called the *Lingua Tertii Imperii* (*Language of the Third Empire*)<sup>4</sup>. In fact, we find many similarities in the analyses of Fanon and Klemperer, in two situations – colonialism and Nazism, regarded by Fanon as «the institution of a colonial system in the very heart of Europe»<sup>5</sup> – that can legitimately be regarded as the maximum expression (until today, obviously) of production of “bare life”. Accordingly, if such a “bare language” existed, it would unquestionably be encountered in colonial and Nazi societies.

Now, the analyses of Fanon and Klemperer, from within “social factories” that sought to produce “bare life”, are quite remarkable. The first thing to be noted is that they attempt to apply what can be defined as a “materialist”<sup>6</sup> critique of “bare language”. That is to say, the first thing they try to demonstrate is the ambivalence of linguistic constructions, whenever language is forced to endure pressure from power that wants to produce its nakedness. For Fanon, who follows Sartre on this point, the simple truth and mandatory starting-point is that it is the anti-Semite who, with his discourse, produces the Jew<sup>7</sup>. Klemperer pushes the hypothesis even further and marvels at the power of Nazi “propaganda”. If it was possible to make all newspapers, all publications, all teaching follow the same line, and universally assert that between 1914 and 1918 there had been no world war, in very little time (he says) the whole world would believe it<sup>8</sup>.

It is language, Klemperer writes in a fine phrase, that creates and thinks for you:

As I said, this had already appeared as early as 1929. What an extraordinary anticipation of the language and the fundamental attitudes of the Third Reich! At that time, as I noted the crucial sentences in my diary, I could only have had a vague premonition. And I didn't believe it possible that these convictions could be put into action, that “conscience, remorse and morality” could really be extinguished in a whole army and a whole nation.<sup>9</sup>

And perhaps the most interesting thing Klemperer describes throughout his book is that so many victims, in common with the executioners, were speaking the same language:

even in the case of those who were the most persecuted victims and of necessity mortal enemies of National Socialism, even amongst the Jews, the LTI was ubiquitous ... as omnipotent as it was wretched, omnipotent indeed in its very poverty.<sup>10</sup>

Now, this is an argument which Fanon develops throughout his oeuvre, when he describes either the illusory capacity of black people to appropriate the French language<sup>11</sup>; or the force with which the oppressed throw themselves, «with the tenacity of the shipwrecked», into the culture imposed on them, after having condemned and abandoned their own cultural forms, diet, sexual behaviour, and so on<sup>12</sup>.

Another example in Fanon has a striking contemporary relevance: his critique of French intellectuals faced with torture. Here, we have one of the most striking effects of the tendency to divest a language, in this instance through ellipsis or foreclusion of the

other. At issue is an article Georges Mattei had published in *Les Temps Modernes*, in which he waxed indignant exclusively at the moral degradation that torture produced in the French “youth” serving in Algeria. In rebuking the school of fascism that Algeria had become, Fanon reminds us, this “humanist” is only concerned with the moral consequences for young French men. Language is there to testify to its powers of “repression” and produce the “nakedness” to which we have referred.

Now, in this article, which like all the articles he published in *El Moudjahid* is highly militant, Fanon thinks that we are witnessing a specific characteristic of the French situation in Algeria<sup>13</sup>. But I would like to make a small detour to show how Fanon, although focused on the situation in Algeria, in fact opened up a much larger field of analysis of the cultural foundations of colonization. And this contribution is explicitly recognized by one of the most important authors in the field, Edward Said.

In his best known work, Said shows how philology plays a leading role in the construction of a mythical, and mythically inferiorized, Orient<sup>14</sup>. The truth of the *logos* of colonization is created by arms, but practised and justified by language. The supposed objectivity of its discoveries is constructed by the publication of texts, their translation, the codification of grammars, and the composition of dictionaries with which past eras are reconstructed and the triumph of colonizing civilization justified.

Said shows how the basic method for constructing this “objective truth” is provided, for example, in the oeuvre of the philologist Ernest Renan. Now, what I found interesting in this reference is the explicit connection Renan makes between language and monstrosity, particularly in the study of Semitic and its place among other languages. Renan acknowledges the enormous importance of the inventor of modern teratology, Isidore Geoffroy St. Hilaire. In studying the monstrous anatomy, St. Hilaire uses the power of the linguistic paradigm to explain the place of monsters in the biological system.

The monster – this is the thesis – is only an anomaly by comparison with other phenomena among which it can be classified and understood. Just as anomalies in language cannot be expelled but must be understood within a science of that very language, so anatomical anomalies cannot be regarded as gratuitous exceptions, but must find their place within the system as a whole. With St. Hilaire, Renan shares the general, mythical idea of the scientists who lays out his object of study, be it speech or

the living organism, on the table of his laboratory and is then in a position «definitively to tell man the word of things» – that is, to give him a *logos*.

Just as St. Hilaire's monsters were organisms with arrested development, for Renan the Semitic group (*inter alia*, Akkadian, Assyrian, Aramaean, Hebrew and Arabic) is a phenomenon of blocked development, by comparison with the more mature languages and cultures of the Indo-European group. An inorganic, blocked language, incapable of regeneration. Even the Semites, therefore, are only half-living creatures. The role of the scientist, once again, is to dissect this linguistic and cultural monster on the table of his laboratory and classify it within the system: «Me, being there at the center, inhaling the perfume of everything, judging, comparing, combining, inducing – in this way I shall arrive at the very system of things.»<sup>15</sup>

We have thus laid the ground for returning to Fanon's texts and finding there a faithful registration of the same sensitivity to the power of language exercised over the life of the colonized. A zoological language that generates animals or a teratological language that generates monsters:

the negro is a savage [writes Fanon] ... For colonialism, this vast continent was the haunt of savages, a country riddled with superstitions and fanaticism, destined for contempt, weighed down by the curse of God, a country of cannibals – in short, the Negro's country.<sup>16</sup>

And again:

The native is ... the enemy of values, and in this sense he is the absolute evil. He is the corrosive element, destroying all that comes near him; he is the deforming element, disfiguring all that has to do with beauty or morality; he is the depository of maleficent powers, the unconscious and irretrievable instrument of blind forces.<sup>17</sup>

So in effect, to return to our initial hypothesis, we have here a very clear awareness of what language can do, when it is applied to making a life bare. And it is a necessary condition – that is, for Fanon one cannot create bare life, to the extent that it is possible to do so, except through a bare language. But what is interesting, and makes it possible only partially to uphold the author of the London attack on this score, is that for Fanon (as for Klemperer) there is at the heart of language itself a kernel of irreducible resistance which makes it impossible to complete this task – that is, to produce a completely bare life and language. One might say in Spinozist fashion: either there is a life and a language or indeed they are bare.

But why through language? Klemperer says it in his way: the language of the Third Reich was “as omnipotent as it was wretched, omnipotent indeed in its very poverty”. For Fanon, it is perhaps even more interesting to follow the abrupt change in the certainty of the colonialist *logos*, which (as Nigel Gibson aptly puts it) crept into his mind as the bodies of the wounded arrived in his hospital at Blida, and which would lead him to write his famous resignation letter in 1956: we can’t go on like this, it is necessary to join the action<sup>18</sup>.

What had been obstructed was first and foremost communication and understanding between doctors and patients. In his therapy, Fanon had tried to implement reforms in an attempt to construct a genuine therapeutic community. That is to say, treatment of illness was to be conducted through the mediation of language and mutual communication. Yet what happened was that this reform yielded positive results with white women (the first group observed by Fanon), but produced no results with Arab men (the second group). The failure of these reforms was the decisive turning-point. Fanon realized that Western methods, however reformed, could not be applied to the colonial world. The Algerian was not French and this was something colonial psychiatry could not concede. Communication with the patient, in the colonial language, did not work. It was therefore necessary to abandon books and turn to reality.

A moment ago, we cited the attitude of the scholar in the golden age of colonialism, striving to reconstruct languages or civilisations that he regarded as dead or monstrous on the table of his laboratory. In this sense, Fanon’s gesture seems to be an identification with monstrosity, a veritable overturning of the examination table that also inverts its logic. Where colonisation was a systematic degradation of the culture and values of the colonized, it is now the values and words of the colonizers that reveal themselves to be a poor, bare language: «All the Mediterranean values – the triumph of the human individual, of clarity and of beauty – become lifeless, colourless knick-knacks. All those speeches seem like collections of dead words»<sup>19</sup>. The language of the colonizer is bare and dead. The true monster climbs down from the scientist’s table and begins to walk on its own legs and to talk its own language.

## The Language of Monsters

Once again, we must start with the Greeks if we want to grasp the meaning of the identification with a monstrous language. Jacques Rancière, among others, has put the point well with his concept of disagreement<sup>20</sup>. For Aristotle, the slave is one who understands language (he has to understand it in order to be able to obey his master), but who at the same time does not possess it, because he is not altogether human. This is the dividing line between *phoné* and *logos* to which Plato referred when he denounced democracy as the usurpation of the *logos* and the demand for political community by the savage *phoné* of the animal people. The issue is played out on this dividing line between human language and non-human language. For Fanon the inhuman conceived by colonization is animal or monstrous, because ultimately it is a question of constructing an absolute alterity that could ground and justify the exigency of a historical mission and a comprehensive, absolute domain. On this score, we can once again only partially uphold the discourse – for it is indeed a discourse with its *logos*, and not only a *phoné* – of the suicide bomber. If it is true that language can never be reduced to utter nakedness, it is also true that it only resists in and through struggle. It is only in resistance for freedom that Fanon discovers the language of freedom. And this language is the highly concrete one of land, of souls and bodies, the struggle of the Algerian people for its own land and to eject the colonizer.

It is once again in modernity that philosophers had posed this question, with respect to obedience and freedom of speech and thought: can one think freely without acting freely? Can one conceive a free soul and a language to express the ideas of this soul, without the body likewise being free? I believe that without formulating the issue in these terms (which are those of early modern philosophy), Fanon made an experiment of this in the years of struggle. And his conception of “lived experience” (especially that of the black, in chapter 5 of *Black Skin*) precisely represents an attempt to overcome the separation between description and comprehension of the world and humanity on the one hand and action on the other.

Even when Fanon speaks of “spiritual community”, a materialist (rather than “spiritualistic”) conception should be understood by it: consciousness is never given in



the mind of the isolated human being – in his essence – but in collective existence and a veritable collective “indignation”:

Equally victims of the same tyranny, simultaneously identifying a single enemy, this physically dispersed people is realizing its unity and founding in suffering a spiritual community which constitutes the most solid bastion of the Algerian Revolution.<sup>21</sup>

The whole critique of Bantu essentialism, for example, is based on rejection of an Essence that does not exist or no longer exists. Either one frees the body with the soul, or one is caught in the trap of this symbolic, Manichaean ontology, a chimera of reason – that is, once again, a poor, bare language.

Fanon’s whole analysis is guided by a concern not to separate the soul and the body of the colonized, their words and their actions. In the essay “On National Culture”, he explicitly says that «you do not show proof of your nation from its culture but ... you substantiate its existence in the fight which the people wage against the forces of occupation», for «You will never make colonialism blush for shame by spreading out little-known cultural treasures under its eyes.»<sup>22</sup> Fanon speaks of decolonization as a new rhythm «introduced by new men, and with it a new language», adding that «the “thing” which has been colonized becomes man during the [very] process by which it frees itself.»<sup>23</sup> All this is the strongest affirmation of the fact that on the one hand the colonized is never completely silent (his language is never completely bare), and that on the other his speech can only be provided through an action – that is, it needs to be given life: one cannot speak and think freedom without at the same time “acting” it.

If we use the expression “identification with monstrosity”, it is because we are dealing with much more than a mere metaphor here. Césaire was already speaking in such terms when he said: «We had adopted the word “negro” as a term of defiance.»<sup>24</sup> His surrealism, understood as synonymous with revolution, was a weapon for exploding the French language by the use of this “black French”. Fanon’s gesture is even more intense. The “wretched” of the Earth – the very choice of that title – becomes a veritable war cry, taken up by Jacques Roumain’s splendid poem “Les Sales Nègres”<sup>25</sup>. For Fanon, as for Roumain, it is no longer a time for dialogue (in fact, for the colonialist it never has been a time for dialogue). Decolonization presents this monstrous face, in that it is not a comparison between two rational points of view, but on the contrary an affirmation (absolute, one might say) of a henceforth autonomous point of view. For

Fanon, this comes back to reconsidering the dialectic in the colonial world. When colour is introduced into the Hegelian dialectic, what falls away is its very foundation – that is, reciprocity<sup>26</sup>.

What Fanon is talking about is therefore a monstrous incomprehension. Language itself becomes monstrous, for the communication of orders and obedience becomes impossible: «There is talk of fanaticism, of primitive attitudes in the face of death, but once again the now crumbling mechanism no longer responds. [...] The occupant is bewildered. The end of race prejudice begins with a sudden incomprehension.»<sup>27</sup>

This incomprehension can be read in terms of monstrosity, in the same way that philosophers and theologians read it<sup>28</sup>, by admitting the existence of mythical “monstrous races” in very remote lands. Monstrous races had been created by God as a punishment, following the destruction of Babel. The confusion of languages and incomprehension are therefore born at the same time as monstrosity. The new struggle and the new language to which Fanon refers might in this sense be regarded as the Babel of the colonial world (and its malediction, stripped, obviously, of any metaphysical or religious accent).

It is an identification with the abject<sup>29</sup>, in which people had previously been held by the rhetoric and language of the *colon*. Why do we use violence?, asks Fanon at the famous Accra Conference in April 1960. Because (this is his answer) for the colonized it is the expression of an “animal” instinct of preservation – one might say their *conatus*: «I say animal and speak in biological terms because, *when all is said and done*, such reactions are simply defensive reactions exhibiting an utterly banal instinct of self-preservation. [emphasis mine]»<sup>30</sup> It is in somewhat inverting Agamben’s logic, that Fanon here claims an animal dimension in the resistance to power.

And this animal affirmation – this is the great discovery – is not only *phoné* (it never was), but a counter-*logos*, an autonomous rationality that terrifies the colonizer, by first of all transforming his language into a dead thing: «All the generals-in-chief of all the colonial wars repeat the same things, but how can they fail to understand that no rebellion is ever vanquished? What can it possibly mean, to vanquish a rebellion? »<sup>31</sup>

**Vulgus linguam servat**

Let us now try to understand the meaning of certain passages where Fanon seems to idealize the dimension of struggle in an almost mystical appreciation. For example, let us take this passage from *L'An V*: «This people, which was lost to history, ... can now no longer draw back. This illiterate people that is writing the finest and the most stirring pages of the struggle for freedom cannot draw back nor be silent. »<sup>32</sup> We are definitely dealing with a political manifesto, rather than sociology or even political theory. Rhetoric seems to prevail completely here and to set aside any concern for scientificity or objectivity.

Fanon himself would not have been ashamed to present these texts as first and foremost a political manifesto. In that sense they require no defence by this critic. However, we would like to show that with this rhetoric Fanon is in the process of doing much more – that is, of asserting the centrality of the collective dimension of language and imagination in the production of a new humanity in and through struggle. That is to say, if we have hitherto spoken of language in general, the moment has come for Fanon to show how *this particular* language operates in the concrete history of a people's struggle.

It is astonishing to rediscover in Fanon's thought various classical, indeed traditional arguments from republican political thinking – for example, the requirement for the masses to «be able to meet together, discuss, propose and receive directions»; or for citizens to «be able to speak, to express themselves and to put forward new ideas»<sup>33</sup>. The awakening of this people does not occur in one go, says Fanon, and it is necessary to practise using words. That is to say, once again, the “power of the multitude” (even if Fanon does not use this term) is to be discovered not in ontology, but in history, where it fashions itself into a school of democracy, taking all its risks (it is not by chance that the relevant chapter is entitled “Mésaventures de la conscience nationale”).

When Fanon uses the word “liturgical” to describe this congregation of citizens that is beginning to learn the mechanism of self-government through speech, we should understand it in the sense of “ritual” rather than “sacred” (even if that of a civic religion), for there will be no transcendental principle and no general will to guarantee the success of this undertaking.

Experience proves, adds Fanon, that the important thing is not that three hundred people form a plan and decide upon carrying it out, but that the whole people plan and decide even if it takes them twice or three times as long. The fact is that the time taken up by explaining, the time “lost” in treating the worker as a human being, will be caught up in the execution of the plan. People must know where they are going, and why.<sup>34</sup>

Now there is a text which perfectly illustrates this collective construction of a political knowledge of the multitude. It is “This is the Voice of Algeria”, in *Studies in a Dying Colonialism*. In it Fanon describes the lived experience of radio in the struggle. Whereas the words that initially come out of it – those of Radio Algiers – simply represent a foreign body for the Algerian, a vehicle for the culture and values of the colonizer, subsequently, almost all of a sudden, it ends up covering a fundamental strategic role. In my view, these are pages of an extraordinary profundity, where Fanon reconstructs the genealogy of this transformation in the memory of the free radios created during the Second World War. It was then up to Radio London to counter-pose itself, word for word, to the bare language of the Third Reich.

But here the most interesting thing, once again, is the way that language is transformed by and transforms political struggle. There is an utterly “cinematographic” scene described by Fanon, where we really do seem to find ourselves in a room packed with people trying to hear and understand some word, while the radio signal is being disrupted by French counter-intelligence.

Imperfectly heard, writes Fanon, ‘obscured by an incessant jamming, forced to change wave lengths two or three times in the course of a broadcast, the *Voice of Fighting Algeria* could hardly ever be heard from beginning to end. It was a broken, choppy voice.’<sup>35</sup>

Through speech, we see a genuinely new form of struggle being born. What seems interesting to me, once again, is the collective and imaginative dimension of this struggle. Collective, firstly because not everyone understands all the languages – Arabic, Kabyle, French – and it is therefore necessary to translate, explain, repeat. Collective next because, as a result of the jamming, it is often the case that an objective understanding of the broadcast is impossible and we then see a veritable labour of elaboration set in train:

Everyone would participate, and the battles of yesterday and the day before would be re-fought in accordance with the deep aspirations and the unshakeable faith of the group. The

listener would compensate for the fragmentary nature of the news by an autonomous creation of information.<sup>36</sup>

Here the key word is “autonomous”. It is thus that, according to Fanon, each Algerian “emits and transmits” the new language. It is a mutilated, confused language, often made up of “true lies”, but which is already a form of knowledge produced by the collective imagination: *vulgus linguam servat*, as Spinoza would have said.

Once again, we should not naively extol this imaginative dynamic. Klemperer remind us once again of the ambivalence of this power of the multitude: the language of the third Reich, of the monologues of Goebbels or Hitler, would never have been able to survive all alone, had not the great majority of people made it their own.

But what is important, Fanon seems to be saying, is that a new front in the struggle should be opened; and this front precisely takes the form of language: «From now on the demagogues, the opportunists and the magicians have a difficult task. [...] The attempt at mystification becomes, in the long run, practically impossible.»<sup>37</sup>

Accordingly, even when the situation seems desperate, even under the harshest tyranny or slavery, resistance is always possible. Moreover, it is always-already there. As C.L.R. James, biographer of Toussaint L’Ouverture, suggested, the only place where blacks do not rebel is in the books of white historians<sup>38</sup>. Perhaps it is the concept of Creole identity which reminds us most forcefully that between language and power there is never a unilinear relationship, in which *a* power imposes *its* language. The “lingua franca” in the Mediterranean, for example, a mixture (among other things) of Arabic from the Maghreb, Italian and French, was an example of the circulations of ideas and resistance. It ceased to be spoken in the 1830s, after the conquest of Algiers. Or take “pidgin English” or the language of slaves, which were formed in the holds of ships during the Atlantic crossing<sup>39</sup>. «The method used by the Guinea traders to keep the negroes quiet,» wrote a commentator in 1689, «is to select them from different countries and languages, so that they cannot act together because they do not understand one another.»<sup>40</sup> Fanon would say that this is already an admission of defeat, for as soon as people are together they have already begun to construct the language of resistance.

## Bibliography

- AA.VV. (Boal, I. *et al.*), 2005, *Retort. Afflicted Powers: Capital and Spectacle in a New Age of War*, Verso, London and New York.
- Agamben, G., 1998, *Homo sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, Stanford University Press, Stanford (CA).
- Augustine, *The City of God*.
- De Nebrija, A., 1492, *Gramática castellana*, texto establecido sobre la ed. princeps de 1492 por Pascual Galindo Romeo y Luis Ortiz Munoz, Edición de la Junta del Centenario, Madrid.
- Cesaire, A., 2004, *Discours sur le colonialisme*, Présence Africaine, Paris (interview with René Depestre).
- Fanon, F., 1965, *Studies in a Dying Colonialism*, trans. Haakon Chevalier, Monthly Review Press, New York.
- Fanon, F., 1967a, *Toward the African Revolution (Political Essays)*, trans. Haakon Chevalier, Monthly Review Press, New York and London.
- Fanon, F., 1967b, *The Wretched of the Earth*, trans. Constance Farrington, Penguin, Harmondsworth.
- Fanon, F., 1986, *Black Skin, White Masks*, trans. Charles Lam Markmann, Pluto Press, London and Sydney.
- Fanon, F., 2001, *L'An V de la révolution algérienne*, La Découverte, Paris.
- Gibson, N., 2003, *Fanon: The Postcolonial Imagination*, Polity Press, New York.
- James, C.L.R., 1989, *The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L'Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution*, Vintage, New York.
- Klemperer, V., 2000, *The Language of the Third Reich: LTI – Lingua Tertii Imperii. A Philologist's Notebook*, trans. Martin Brady, Athlone Press, London and New Brunswick (NJ).
- Kristeva, J., 1980, *Powers of Horror*, trans. L.S. Roudiez, Columbia University Press, New York 1982.
- Linebaugh, P., Rediker, M., 2000, *The Many Headed Hydra: The Hidden History of the Revolutionary Atlantic*, Verso, London.
- Ranciere, J., 1998, *Disagreements: Politics and Philosophy*, trans. J. Rose, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis.
- Rediker, M., 2007, *The Slave Ship: A Human History* Viking, New York.
- Roumain, J., 2003, *Œuvres complètes*, Ed. Léon-François Hoffman, Collection Archivos, UNESCO, Madrid.
- Said, E., 2003, *Orientalism*, Penguin, London.
- Sekyi-Out, A., 1996, *Fanon's Dialectic of Experience*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge (MA).

## Notes

- 
- <sup>1</sup> Nebrija (1946).
- <sup>2</sup> Cf. AA.VV. (I. Boal *et al.*) (2005, 206).
- <sup>3</sup> Cf. Agamben (1998).
- <sup>4</sup> Cf. Klemperer (2000).
- <sup>5</sup> Fanon (1967a, 33).
- <sup>6</sup> I use this term even though I am not sure that the two authors would themselves have accepted such a definition.
- <sup>7</sup> Fanon (1986, 87).
- <sup>8</sup> Klemperer (2000, 112-13).
- <sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 27.
- <sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 20.
- <sup>11</sup> Fanon (1986, 20-21).
- <sup>12</sup> Fanon (1967a, *passim*).
- <sup>13</sup> In fact, this is not the case. *Inter alia*, today we have a transfer of the syndrome to the United States, where the opposition to the war in Iraq, although very courageous, is conducted almost exclusively in terms of the argument of the young American men who have been sent to die at the front in a war of benefit exclusively to people linked to the Bush administration. Just like Mattei, there is an almost total inability to think the Other, even on the part of those who would like to defend it in some way.
- <sup>14</sup> Cf. Said (2003).
- <sup>15</sup> E. Renan, *L'aventure de la science* (1848), quoted by Said (2003, 132).
- <sup>16</sup> Fanon (1967, 170).
- <sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 32.
- <sup>18</sup> See Gibson (2003, 84-90).
- <sup>19</sup> Fanon (1967b, 36).
- <sup>20</sup> Rancière (1995).
- <sup>21</sup> Fanon (1965, 120).
- <sup>22</sup> Fanon (1967b, 179-80).
- <sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 28.
- <sup>24</sup> Césaire (2004).
- <sup>25</sup> Cf. Roumain (2003).
- <sup>26</sup> On Fanon and the dialectic, see Sekyi-Out (1996).
- <sup>27</sup> Fanon (1967a, 44).
- <sup>28</sup> Among others, Augustine in *The City of God*, XVI, 8.
- <sup>29</sup> See also Kristeva (1980).
- <sup>30</sup> Fanon (2001, 176-7).
- <sup>31</sup> Fanon (1965, 30-31).
- <sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 31.
- <sup>33</sup> Fanon (1967b, 157).
- <sup>34</sup> Fanon (1967b, 155-6).
- <sup>35</sup> Fanon (1965, 86).
- <sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 86.
- <sup>37</sup> Fanon (1967b, 74).
- <sup>38</sup> Cf. James (1989).
- <sup>39</sup> Cf. Rediker (2007).
- <sup>40</sup> Cf. Linebaugh-Rediker (2000).