



Frantz Fanon *The Wretched of the Earth*

'To speak of Fanon today, regardless of how old or young one's interlocutor may be, always entails the risk of entering uncharted territory. Reactions are not always easy to predict and generally fall into one of two categories. There is the "Who's that? Should his name ring a bell?" response; or there is the sudden rush of meaningful memory: "He really helped shape my adolescent perceptions of the books I was just beginning to come across at the time." Known to some, unknown to others, never as universally known as Che Guevara or Sartre or Camus, Fanon was, nonetheless a precursor, and his writings on racism, colonialism, the relationship between oppressor and oppressed, and the prospects of developing nations were groundbreaking. His writings sound an alarm and raise a plea for caution and engage with the realities of the present day.'

- Alice Cherki (2006), *Frantz Fanon: A Portrait*, ix.



**Frantz Fanon**

July 1925 (Martinique) – December 1961 (Washington, DC)

*Black Skin White Masks (1952)*

*A Dying Colonialism (1959)*

*L'An V de la Revolution Algerienne (1959)*

*The Wretched of the Earth (1961)*

*Towards the African Revolution (1964)*

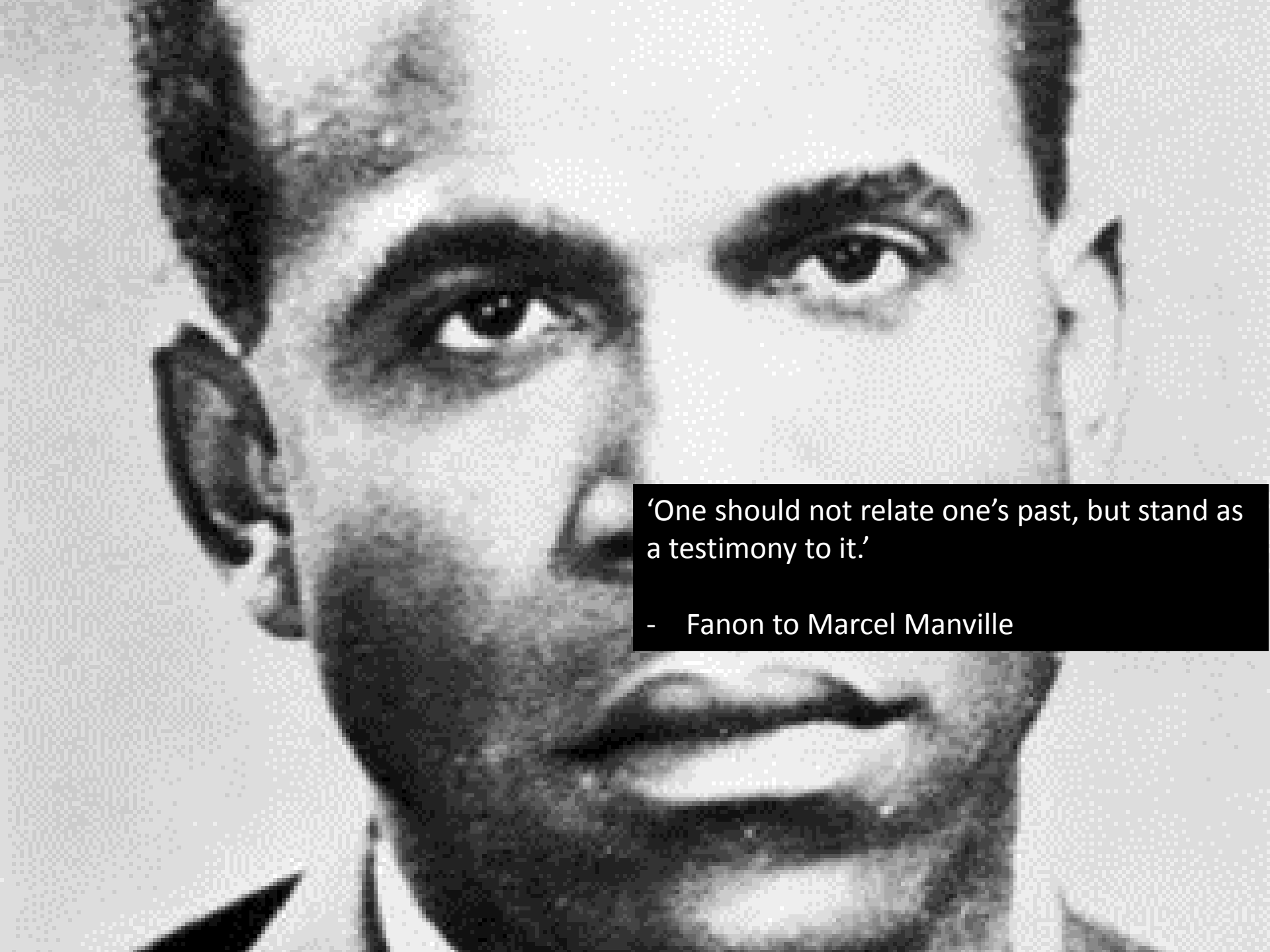
SOLDIER  
FRENCH FREE FORCES

STUDENT  
LYONS

PSYCHIATRIST  
FRANCE & ALGERIA

REVOLUTIONARY  
FLN ALGERIA

FLN  
AMBASSADOR  
GHANA



'One should not relate one's past, but stand as a testimony to it.'

- Fanon to Marcel Manville

England has to fulfill a double mission in India: one destructive, the other regenerating – **the annihilation of old Asiatic society, and the laying of the material foundations of Western society in Asia**

- Marx, BRI, 659.

'la mission civilisatrice'

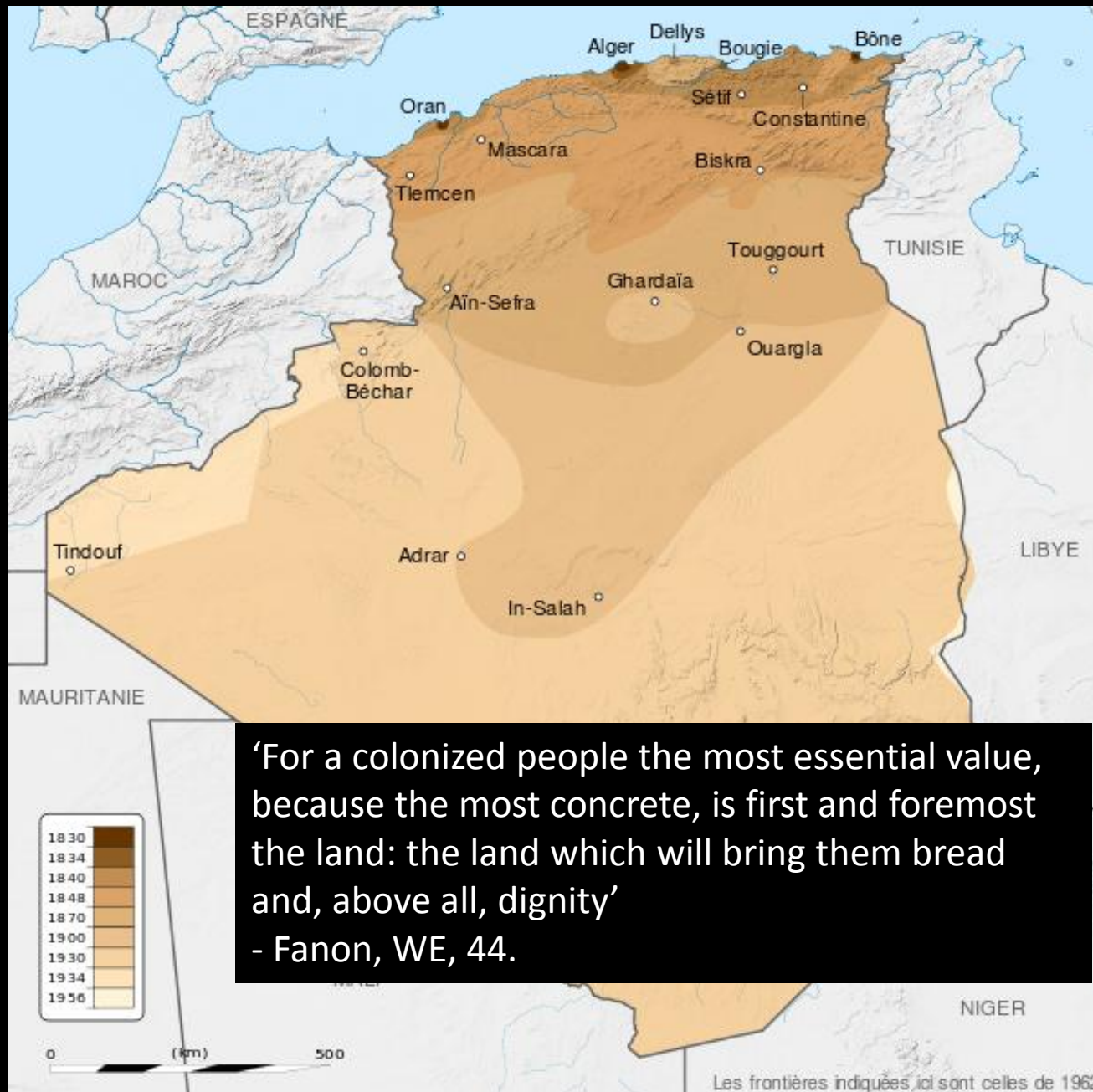


‘mise en valeur’

We should set out to create not a colony properly speaking in Algerian but rather the extension of France itself across the Mediterranean. It is not a matter of creating a new people, with its own laws, its customs, its interests, and sooner or later its separate nationality, but of implanting in Africa a population that resembles us in everything. If this goal cannot be attained immediately, it is at least the only one for which we should constantly and actively strive.

- Alexis de Tocqueville

- 1886 - 219,000 French citizens and 211,000 settlers from Spain and Italy
- 1895 - Algerians lost more than 5 million hectares of land
- 1936 - 7.7 million hectares or 40% of Algeria's landmass



'For a colonized people the most essential value, because the most concrete, is first and foremost the land: the land which will bring them bread and, above all, dignity'  
 - Fanon, WE, 44.



# Algerian War of Independence

November 1954 – March 1962



It is a year since I left Fort-de-France. Why? To defend an obsolete idea. . . . I've lost confidence in everything, even myself. ...*I was wrong!* Nothing here, nothing justifies my sudden decision to defend the interests of farmers who don't give a damn.

- Letter from Fanon to his parents while fighting with French Liberation Forces in WWII (1945)



AIME CESAIRE



'Since I was born in the Antilles, my observations and my conclusions are valid only for the Antilles – at least concerning the black man *at home*'

Fanon, BSWM, 14.

I am talking of millions of men who have been skillfully injected with fear, inferiority complexes, trepidation, servility, despair, abasement

Cesaire, Discourse on Colonialism.

Lord/ Bondsman

Master/ Slave

the black is not a [hu]man

Fanon, BSWM, 9.

There is a fact: White men consider themselves superior to black men. There is another fact: Black men want to prove to white men, at all costs, the richness of their thought, the equal value of their intellect.

Fanon, BSWM, 10.

For the black man there is only one destiny. And it is white.

Fanon, BSWM, 10.

For the Negro who works on a sugar plantation in Le Robert, there is only one solution: to fight. He will embark on this struggle, and he will pursue it, not as the result of a Marxist or idealistic analysis but quite simply because he cannot conceive of his life otherwise than in a form of a battle against exploitation, misery, and hunger.

Fanon, BSWM, 224.

**'The North African Syndrome' (1952)**

Algiers School of French Psychiatry

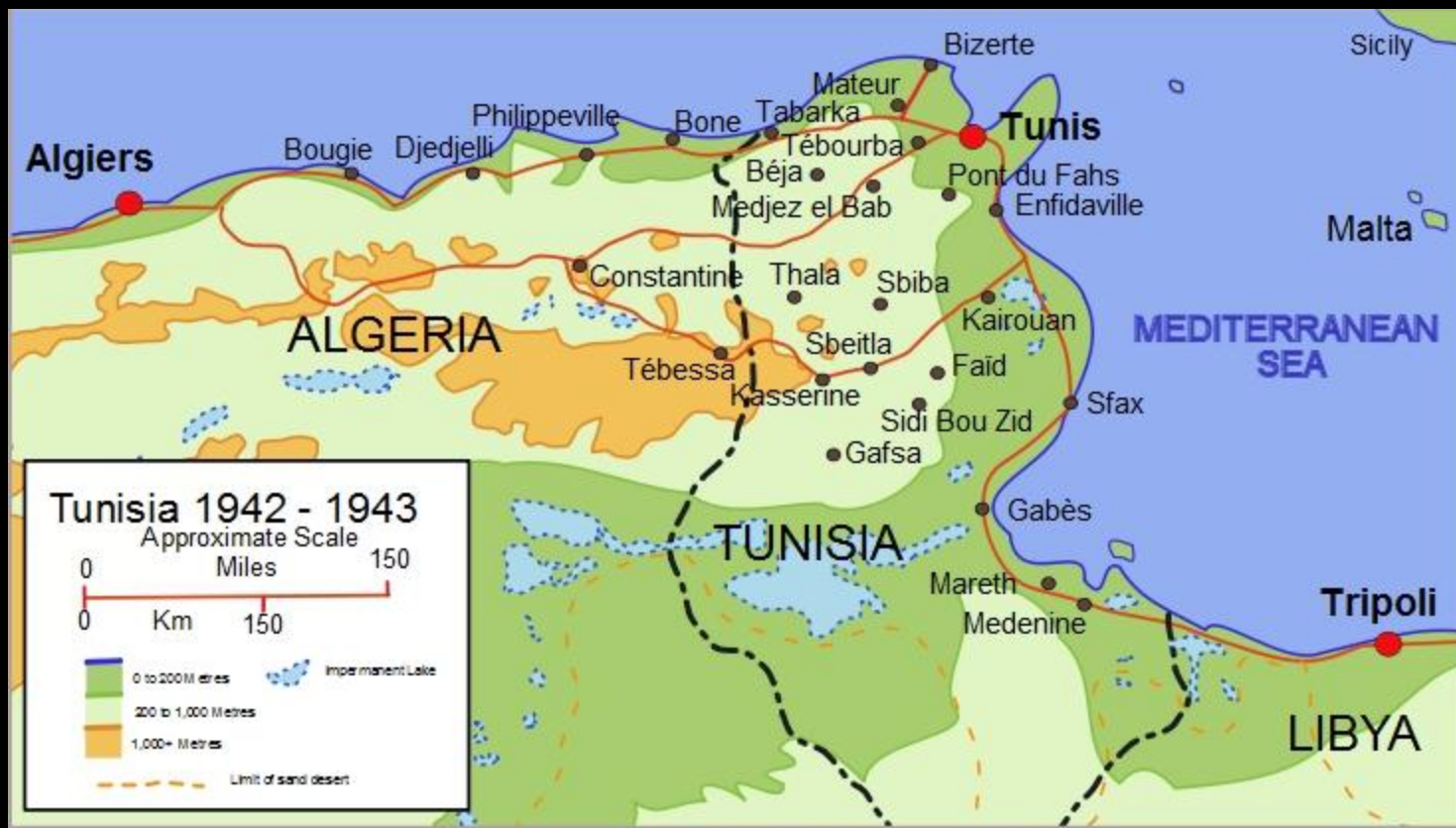
'the Algerian doctors who graduated from the Faculty of Algiers were forced to hear and learn that the Algerian is a born criminal. Moreover, I remember one of us in all seriousness expounding these theories he had learned and adding: "It's hard to swallow, but it's been scientifically proved." The North African is a criminal, his predatory instinct a known fact and his unwieldy aggressiveness visible to the naked eye. The North African loves extremes so you can never entirely trust him. Today, your best friend, tomorrow your worst enemy'

- Fanon, WE, 223.

There comes a time when silence becomes dishonesty. The ruling intentions of personal existence are not in accord with the permanent assaults on the most commonplace values. For many months my conscience has been the seat of unpardonable debates. And the conclusion is the determination not to despair of man, in other words, of myself. The decision I have reached is that I cannot continue to bear a responsibility at no matter what cost, on the false pretext that there is nothing else to be done.

- Fanon's Letter of Resignation from Blida-Joinville.





*El Moujahahid* – FLN Paper

FLN's Ambassador to Ghana

THE VEIL.....

Patriarchy

Colonialism

Revolution

the veil worn by the women appears with such constancy that it generally suffices to characterize Arab society

- Fanon, AU, 162

the Arab woman is first of all who wears the veil.

- Fanon, AU, note 2, 162.

The woman who sees without being seen frustrates the colonizer. There is no reciprocity. She does not yield herself, does not give herself, does not offer herself.

- Fanon, AU, 169.

'Carrying revolvers, grenades, hundreds of false identity cards or bombs, the unveiled Algerian woman moves like a fish in the Western waters. The soldiers, the French Patrols, smile at her as she passes, compliments on her looks are heard here and there, but no one suspects that her suitcases contain the automatic pistol that will presently mow down four or five members of the patrol'

Fanon, AU, 180-181.

Removed and resumed again and again, the veil has been manipulated, transformed into a technique of camouflage, into a means of struggle.

Fanon, AU, 183.

**WRETCHED**  
**OF THE EARTH**



**FRANK CASTLE**

Looking at the immediacies of the colonial context, it is clear that **what divides this world is first and foremost what species, what race one belongs to**. In the colonies the economic infrastructure is also a superstructure. The cause is effect: You are rich because you are white, you are white because you are rich. This is why a Marxist analysis should always be slightly stretched when it comes to addressing the colonial issue....In the colonies, the foreigner imposed himself using his cannons and machines. Despite the success of his pacification... the colonized always remains a foreigner....The ruling species is first and foremost the outsider from elsewhere, different from the indigenous population, 'the others

- Fanon, WE, 5.



The “native” sector is not complementary to the European sector. The two confront each other, but not in the service of a higher unity. Governed by a purely Aristotelian logic, they follow the dictates of mutual exclusion. There is not conciliation, one of them is superfluous

Fanon, WE, 4.

## LUMPENPROLETARIAT

In the industrialized countries the peasant masses are generally the least politically conscious, the least organized as well as the most anarchist elements. They are characterized by a series of features – individualism, lack of discipline, the love of money, fits of rage, and deep depression... -

Fanon, WE, 66.



The peasants distrust the town dweller. Dressed like a European, speaking his language, working alongside him, sometimes living in his neighborhood, he is considered by the peasant to be a renegade who has given up everything which constitutes the national heritage. The town dweller is a 'traitor, a mercenary' who apparently gets along very well with the occupier and strives to succeed in the context of the colonial system.

Fanon, WE, 67.

This lumpenproletariat, this cohort of starving men, divorced from tribe and clan, constitutes one of the most spontaneously and radically revolutionary forces of a colonized people.

- Fanon, WE, 81.

Colonized peoples are not alone. Despite the efforts of colonialism, their frontiers remain permeable to news and rumors. They discover that **violence is atmospheric**, it breaks out sporadically, and here and there sweeps away the colonial regime. - Fanon, WE, 30.

this atmospheric violence, [is] this violence rippling under the skin...- Fanon, WE, 31.

Nazism transformed the whole of Europe into a genuine colony - Fanon, *WE*, 58.

Hitler's crime was 'the fact that he applied to Europe colonialist procedures which until then had been reserve exclusively for the Arabs of Algeria, the coolies of India, and the blacks of Africa  
- Aime Cesaire, *A Discourse on Colonialism*, 14.

decolonization is always a violent event

Fanon, WE, 1.

The colonized subject discovers reality and transforms it through praxis, his deployment of violence and his agenda for liberation

Fanon, WE, 21.