

## **Colonial violence and criminology: A confrontation from the documentary Concerning Violence**

*Violência Colonial e Criminologia: Um confronto a partir do documentário Concerning Violence*

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**Abstract**

The documentary *Concerning Violence: Nine Scenes of Anti-Imperialistic Self-Defense* (2014) illustrates Frantz Fanon's book *The Wretched of the Earth* with images of the struggles for decolonization in Africa. Considering the film's relevance and its pedagogical character, this article proposes an epistemological debate about colonial violence and Criminology. Forward, the necropolitics's concept is triggered to analyze the genocide of the black population in Brazil

**Keywords:** Colonial Violence; Criminology; Genocide of the Black Population.

**Resumo**

O documentário *Concerning Violence: Nine Scenes of Anti-Imperialistic Self-Defense* (2014) trabalha a obra *Os Condenados da Terra*, de Frantz Fanon, a partir de imagens das lutas por descolonização da África. Diante do caráter atual e pedagógico da película, este artigo propõe um debate epistemológico acerca da violência colonial e a Criminologia. Ao final, discute-se a noção de necropolítica para análise do genocídio da população negra no Brasil.

**Palavras-chave:** Violência Colonial; Criminologia; Genocídio da População Negra.

## Introduction<sup>1</sup>

From the top of a helicopter, uniformed soldiers shoot at cattle at the grazing land. Why do they shoot? Against whom is the war waged? The sequence does not explain; however, there is a previous scene that shows a lady surrounded by books – the Indian intellectual Gayatri Spivak –, presenting an author and his work, criticizing the images that will follow. It is with such audiovisual piece, which collects fragments of a book and past wars to think about the present time, that we propose a dialogue with Criminology.

The author is the Martinican Frantz Fanon. The book that gives rhythm to it is *The Wretched of the Earth*. If the images do not explain why the soldiers kill the cattle, the low-pitched tone of Lauryn Hill's voice denounces that "colonialism is violence in its natural state". From this, it is inferred that before the imminent defeat, the cattle die because the colonial army prefers to kill them rather than leave them to the "rebels".

Through such contrasts, *Concerning Violence* does not provide the viewer with obvious connections about the relationship between colonized and colonizers. We encounter a documentary that questions what is considered violence in the colonial context, and, above all, the permanence of colonialism after the movements of independence.

This article, by establishing a relation between cinema and Criminology, instead of developing technical approach, is about understanding that cinema is capable of serving Criminology in the "confrontation of subjects" (AGUIAR, 2012, p. 13). The thematic confrontation that *Concerning Violence* offers to Criminology can articulate the question: how does a discipline that deals with violence as one of its analytical fundamental principles is related to the violence based on the notion of race inaugurated (and perpetuated) in colonialism?

The approximation between cinema and criminological knowledge is made possible since the existence of cinematic genres whose contents approach the penal culture; crime films, "criminals", and punishments, among others (ANITUA, 2016, p. 16). This articulation is not limited to repeated speeches known by jurists and criminologists,

<sup>1</sup> Acknowledgments to Daniela Matias for the reading and review rounds of the text; to Mayara de Carvalho for the introduction to the documentary; to student Lara Séphora for the production of the film's subtitles, which allowed more people to have access to it, and; to the classes of the discipline *Direito dos Grupos Socialmente Vulneráveis do Departamento de Ciências Jurídicas (Law of Socially Vulnerable Groups of the Department of Legal Sciences)*- Santa Rita of the Universidade Federal da Paraíba (Federal University of Paraíba) for the debate about the documentary and the premises of this text.

<sup>2</sup> The choreography metaphor was borrowed from the critique of Bhakti Shringarpure (2014) regarding the

and can act as a way to report the dehumanizing criminal reality (ANITUA, 2016, p. 14). As such, it shares the intentions of Critical Criminology and serves as a useful pedagogical tool for criminological teaching (ANITUA, 2016, p. 14-19).

In order to gather a criminological learning of *Concerning Violence*, the methodological approach to the documentary presented some difficulties regarding the use of videos and images as elements of research. For the analysis of the film, the first step was to "watch and feel", in order to understand the work in its entirety and identify the research question that was imposed (FLICK, 2009, p. 224).

The film is divided into nine scenes, thus the difficulty in selecting scenes and interpretive keys was even harder (FLICK, 2009, p. 224). Therefore, the solution was to prioritize the context both of the film and Frantz Fanon, the author who inspires the documentary. In addition, some scenes and references were selected because they would allow an epistemological dialogue with Criminology.

In the first part of the paper, we present some information about the life and work (BHABHA, 2004; MATA, 2015) of Frantz Fanon (1968, 2008), specifically his contributions on racism and colonialism. In addition, we also call attention to the structure of the film, aspects of its production and some criticism directed at it.

In order to initiate the debate with Criminology, it is necessary to mention the second scene of the documentary, entitled *Indifference*, in which a black intellectual of the Ancient Rhodesia reflects on his experience in jail. This articulation is mobilized through the analysis of criminological paradigms and its racial implications (DUARTE, 2016). It is argued that the notion of colonial hypothesis (ARGOLO, et al, 2016) is used as a tool so that Criminology, built in colonial contexts, can provide answers to the corpses, the colonized, and the peripheral (ZAFFARONI, 2012).

By illustrating colonial violence, the documentary enables the reflection of its permanence in contemporaneity. Thus, the focus is addressed to the Brazilian reality, specifically to the obstacles in the recognition and confrontation of the genocide of the black population. In the Brazilian context, it is established what the Cameroonian political philosopher Achille Mbembe (2011) has named Necropolitics, which is the understanding of sovereignty as a power of death that was constituted in colonialism. Subsequently, statistical data is presented on the genocide of the black population (BRASIL, 2016; CERQUEIRA, 2017), and at the end the "racial borders" of genocide are discussed (FLAUZINA, 2006; 2014).

## 1 Concerning a "teaching film"

*Concerning Violence: Nine Scenes of Anti-Imperialistic Self-Defense* is a documentary film released in 2014 by Swedish director Göran Hugo Olsson. It was produced out of Swedish television archives that portrayed Africa's decolonization processes between the 1960s and 1980s and based on the text *The Wretched of the Earth* (published in 1961) by Antillean intellectual and militant Frantz Fanon.

The documentary presents itself as a heterogeneous audiovisual piece by presenting distinct images that resemble a choreography<sup>2</sup> for Fanon's mythical text, which gains musicality through the narration of North American singer Lauryn Hill. For this reason, before addressing the structure of the film, the author and his work are presented in general lines.

Frantz Fanon was born in Martinique – a Caribbean territory occupied by France – in 1925. Being a child from a middle-class upbringing, he studied at the Fort France High School, where he was Aimé Césaire's<sup>3</sup> student, and was able to live in an "intellectually and politically stimulating environment" (MATA, 2015, p. 10). During World War II, he joins the Allied Forces to fight against Nazi Germany. The military service earned him a scholarship in France and he was able to graduate in Psychiatry (MATA, 2015, p. 11).

In his first work, *Black Skin, White Masks*<sup>4</sup> (published in 1952), he elaborates a psycho-affective analysis of racism in its constitutive dimension of colonialism. Upon arriving in France, Fanon realizes that he has no privileges for being a middle-class man in Martinique or a Psychiatrist, with his existence reduced to being a black man. In colonial reality, racism is an essential violence, the feeling of inferiority introjected into the consciousness of the colonized (FANON, 2008).

The author analyzes mechanisms such as language, affective relations between white and black people among other aspects, and demonstrates how "white civilization, European culture have imposed an existential deviation on the negro" (FANON, 2008, p. 30). The black man would only exist in the presence of the white man; and, when

<sup>2</sup> The choreography metaphor was borrowed from the critique of Bhakti Shringarpure (2014) regarding the documentary for the British newspaper *The Guardian*

<sup>3</sup> Aimé Césaire was a poet, intellectual and politician of Martinique, known for his work *Discourse on colonialism* among others.

<sup>4</sup> This work was rejected as a thesis at the University of Lyon. Fanon had to elaborate a second thesis to obtain his title of psychiatrist.

confronted with this perspective, the black individual is characterized as irrational, unattractive, without moral or ethical values, prone to crime, having his religious devotions associated with evil and being devoid of history prior to colonization (FANON, 2008).

Stemming from his testimony of the anti-colonial struggle in Algeria between 1953-1957 - where he served as a Psychiatrist for the National Liberation Front - Fanon carries further his critique on colonialism (BHABHA, 2004, p. 23), supporting radical processes of decolonization. This background is the substrate of the book *The Wretched of the Earth* (published in 1961), considered a testament book, since it was written in the last months of his life, after a diagnosis of leukemia, which would take his life at thirty-six years of age<sup>5</sup>.

In this work, Fanon (1968) refuses to see colonialism as an event in which European countries took on a mission of bringing progress and civilization overseas, understanding it instead as violence constituted in racism, as well as predicting the difficulties that African countries would have if they stood up as nations without facing true processes of decolonization. The latter aspect is a warning – indeed a premonition – about the risks of African countries to free themselves from European colonialism without getting rid of the economic, institutional and intellectual models imported from Europe.

In *Black Skins, White Masks* (2008), he demanded his generation and the next ones to carry out the historical tasks that their contexts needed: out the processes of decolonization, they should invent a new humanity. This mission consists in not being content with the imitation of European humanism - present in theories and institutions - that was never practiced towards the colonized (FANON, 1968).

However, his main work would be known almost exclusively for his elaboration on the violence undertaken by colonizers and colonized, emphasizing the latter as the only effective mechanism in face of widespread colonial oppression. Sentences such as the one chosen to start the documentary: "(...) Colonialism is not a thinking machine, it is not a body endowed with reason faculties. It is violence in its natural state and it only can be yield when confronted with greater violence" and to a large extent Jean-Paul Sartre's foreword to the work, made the text be interpreted as an apology to violence.

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<sup>5</sup> Fanon does not witness the liberation of Algeria that would happen seven months after his death (MATA, 2015).

Regarding Sartre's text, both Indian intellectual Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (who is responsible for the spoken preface to the film under review) and other authors who discuss Fanon's work (MATA, 2014; BHABHA, 2005) perceive as detrimental the emphasis that the French philosopher gives to violence. Sartre and other readers do not seem to have read or grasped Fanon's complete message.

This lack of understanding, the confiscation of the book in France and its censorship in several countries, in addition to Fanon being read by contending groups around the world<sup>6</sup> - being regarded as the "Bible of Decolonization" - attribute to *The Wretched of the Earth* a truly mythical aura (BHABHA, 2005, p.16). On the other hand, one may notice the currentness of his work (MATA, 2015, page 15), which makes the author to be understood as a pioneer of Cultural and Postcolonial Studies (MATA, 2015, p.21) and a relevant intellectual in contemporary social mindset.

Recognizing Fanon's complexity helps to understand the multiple audiovisual stimuli of *Concerning Violence*. A quick reading of its synopsis makes it possible to question what the film is about: is it a film about the controversial work of Frantz Fanon or the processes of independence in African countries?

According to the director, the documentary pursues a timeless dimension (WALBER, 2014), a provocation on how far Fanon's text, images and criticism of Eurocentrism may be identified in contemporaneity. The comprehension that Fanon's work suits the analysis of today's race relations and that the *Concerning Violence* images might say something about realities such as the Brazilian one – where there is the endurance of colonial experiences – allows the dialogue with discussions familiar to Criminology.

The film conjures the structure of a book. It begins with a spoken preface by the Indian intellectual Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak in which she presents bio-bibliographic data of the author. In addition to presenting the relevance of Fanon's contribution – Spivak<sup>7</sup> calls his work, and perhaps *Concerning Violence*, a "teaching text" – and criticizing the interpretation attributed to it over the years, based on Jean-Paul Sartre's controversial preface, she also points to relevant issues that have not been developed

<sup>6</sup> Homi Bhabha in his preface to the English-language work gives examples of movements whose leaders read and affirmed Fanon's relevance to his practices: the Black Panther Party in the United States, the IRA (Irish Republican Army), among others.

<sup>7</sup> In the film, Gayatri Spivak uses the expression "Teaching Text".

by Fanon and which remain silenced in the film, specifically the gender dimension and the violence suffered by women in the context of war and colonialism.

Next, nine chapters are presented, "the nine scenes of anti-imperialist self-defense," where images of the armed conflicts and the everyday life of the colonized and colonizers – in the midst of the colonial war – are continually contrasted. The visual records consist of colorful images in good condition of filming and preservation, granting contemporary characteristics to the photography of the film. One dares to say that, added with a careful editing, it is possible that at some point the viewer will forget that these are "excavated" files from Swedish television. The images are shown to the sound of Lauryn Hill's voice, a black American singer who reads the text of the first chapter of *The Wretched of the Earth*, titled "Concerning Violence" and the conclusion of the same book.

Scene number one, *Decolonisation: with MPLA in Angola*, shows a successful attack by The People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola against the Portuguese Army in 1974. In the next image, white people appear playing golf and black people carrying the equipment.

The second scene – *Indifference* – which will be discussed further below – presents an interview conducted in Stockholm, in 1970, with an intellectual from Ancient Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe, reflecting on his experience as a black man in prison. He says he sees no difference between his prison experience and the criminalization of other black men who fight for equality in different parts of the world, such as in South Africa and the United States, but a connection in the shared condition of "subhumans".

The third scene - *Rhodesia* - shows a white man regretting having to leave Rhodesia, which is about to free itself from English domination. He treats the black man who is serving him harshly, calling him a "stupid little thing." He says with surprise that the "gooks" – a name that refers to those fighting for independence – believe that they will be able to drive cars, for example, and says that his mother-in-law, before leaving, prefers to "burn everything" rather than leave it to the "gooks".

"*A world cut in two*" is the fourth chapter and illustrates the fanonian concept of Manichaeism. It contrasts through images the city of the colonizer and that of the colonized. The first one is portrayed as being always clean, urbanized, different from the second one, "the black city", submitted to the police, hungry, dirty, and so forth. In addition, it reflects on the conscience of the colonized, who, from his experience, based



on the notion of deprivation, can only look at the colonizer, at his possessions and at his way of existing with a resentful look.

The fifth scene "*LAMCO - Liberia 1966*" addresses the intense police repression of a workers strike at a Swedish industry branch in Liberia. There is questioning by strikers whether the same violent treatment was given to strikes in Sweden. A family is placed outside the company home where they lived and left by the roadside with the few belongings they are able to carry.

In the sixth chapter, entitled "*That Poverty of Spirit - Tanzania*", there is a missionary couple from Sweden overseeing the construction of a church by black workers. In the interview, they inaccurately refer to the biblical "inaccuracies" of African religions. When asked if hospitals and schools were to be built, other than the church, they said yes, they just could not tell when that would be.

"*The Fiat G91 - with FRELIMO in Mozambique*", the seventh chapter, portrays African women struggling for independence, highlighting the absences that they lived with during colonialism (education, health, self-esteem) and how the struggle for freedom has brought new meaning to their lives. The Fiat G-91 concerns an airplane used by the Portuguese army to bomb guerrilla territories, including homes, hospitals and schools. In this part of the movie, there is an excruciating scene of a young mother breastfeeding her baby in a hospital. Both have amputated limbs and exposed raw skin, the result of an attack by the Fiat G-91. This last image is especially highlighted in Spivak's spoken foreword, which refers to the young black woman as "Black Venus"<sup>8</sup>.

"*Defeat*", the eighth scene, gloomily demonstrates images of a defeated Portuguese army. Wounded soldiers are shown to the sound of fado<sup>9</sup>. It also presents the intellectual and militant Amílcar Cabral speaking that the Portuguese did not understand that the independence of Guinea-Bissau would enable the development of the culture of its people.

The last chapter, entitled "*Raw Materials*", presents the economic exploitation undertaken by colonialism. There is an interview in which Thomas Sankara – the former

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<sup>8</sup> Spivak finds a resemblance in the young person presented in the seventh scene and the representation of the Venus of Milo and the Black Virgin: "(...) The most shocking part of this film is Black Venus, reminding us of the dismembered Venus of Milo and also the Black Madonna holding a child to breastfeed. This icon reminds us all that the encouragement of rape continues not only in war, but also in developed and developing nations, in women fighting in legitimate armies. Colonizer and colonized are together in gender violence that often celebrates motherhood with gender segregation. Here we must promote our brother Fanon a change of mentality (...) " (CONCERNING VIOLENCE, 2014).

<sup>9</sup> Translator's note: *Fado* is a traditional Portuguese music genre.

president of Burkina-Faso – inquires the help of international organizations such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). The leader - who was killed months after the shooting in a coup d'état - says that this aid does not contribute to the autonomy of African countries, but only creates neocolonial ties.

The presentation above of the elements of the film is insufficient to the understanding of the message it aims to convey. There is no image demonstration of what is commonly understood as explicit violence, except for the initial shot that shows soldiers in a helicopter firing at cattle, spouting blood through their eyes and nose<sup>10</sup> and the scene of the young mother and her baby mutilated by the attacks of the Portuguese.

Inspired by Fanon's proposal, the film here analyzed makes it possible to take note of the violence in daily life's naturalized landscapes. What is most noticeable in the documentary is not the violence that the colonized mobilize against the colonizer, but the processes of violence subtly and vertically inscribed during colonization. In the wake of what the Brazilian pedagogue Paulo Freire identified – himself a Fanon-influenced reader –, there is danger in looking only for the violence of the oppressed without asking who initiated the violent process:

Hence, when the oppressive relationship has been established, violence has been inaugurated, something that until today, in history, has never been triggered by the oppressed.

How could the oppressed initiate violence if they are the result of violence?

There would be no oppressed, if there was no relation of violence that conforms them as violated, in an objective situation of oppression.

Those who oppress install violence, those who exploit, those who do not recognize themselves in others; not the oppressed, the exploited, those that are not recognized by those who oppress them as the other (FREIRE, 2015, p. 58).

Recent Brazilian cinema has offered similar impressions. This is the case of such productions as "Que horas ela volta?" (The Second Mother) by director Anna Muylaert (2015) and "Martírio" by Vincent Carelli (2017). The first shocked the middle-class population by addressing domestic work relations between two women, in which social inferiority, enshrouded in benevolence and affection between maid and mistress, ensured the continuation of class and racial territorial exclusions on a smaller scale, illustrated by the "maid's room".

<sup>10</sup> The film implies that the Colonial Army faced with the imminent defeat, preferred to kill the cattle rather than leave it for the independent country

In the documentary *Martírio*, the process of expropriation and reclaiming of the territory of the Guarani-Kaiowá indigenous people, in Mato Grosso do Sul, and the violence undertaken by the state and rural landowners, reminds, in fanonian terms, of a colonial war. While indigenous people have fought for twenty-five years for their lands and suffer, on average, twenty attacks of militias per month in their villages, Mato Grosso do Sul's society performs parties in the Texan-country style. It is regarding this violence that *Concerning Violence* seeks to ail the Western viewer.

Why did Europe, which lamented so much the barbarism carried out by Nazism, improved their techniques of dehumanization in the African colonies and remained silent about it? Or why, facing the question posed by Eugenio Raul Zaffaroni (2012), are there certain "corpses" that do not enter into the account of violence and genocide?

Göran Hugo Olsson, in an interview, explained that the film is intended for the European public (WALBER, 2014). Since the provocations of anticolonial authors such as Fanon, this is a necessity that seems urgent and self-explanatory. Otherwise, some criticism addressed to the documentary are justified by the same reason. Would it be necessary another cinematic production that would look at African practices through an European gaze? It can be argued that these images would remain unknown to the international public in the Swedish television archives (JOSEFSSON, 2014).

Regardless of the potential of the film to think the neocolonial reality and the actuality of Fanon's work, some criticism must be considered. When analyzing the documentary, feminist Luam Kidane (2015, p. 120) questions the extent to which *Concerning Violence* does not repeat the colonial practices of the exploiters, researchers, and cameramen who have for centuries produced a unilateral perspective of Africa<sup>11</sup>. She also emphasized that there would be something shared between those behind the cameras and those who answered the questions, since they did not refrain from responding in a blatantly racist way. For Kidane, a more ethical alternative would

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<sup>11</sup> Luam Kidane emphatically criticizes the seventh chapter, when a young mutilated mother is shown with exposed breasts, breastfeeding her baby, who is also without one of the limbs. The representation of black people and Africa in their nakedness, subjected to violence in their bodies, it should be agreed, is not different from the colonial look that Europe has dispensed to these subjects for centuries. In this sense, the notion of "pornographic glance" proposed by the Latin American feminist Rita Segato (2012, p.120) when discussing the genre in a decolonial perspective seems to fit here: "The position of men has thus become simultaneously interior and exterior, with the exteriority and objectifying capacity of the colonial look, both administrator and pornographic. In a synthetic way, since I do not have the possibility of extending this point, I anticipate that sexuality is transformed, introducing itself as a previously unknown morality, which reduces the body of women into objects and at the same time inoculates the notion of a nefarious sin, heinous crime and all its correlates".

be to restore these images to Africans in order to confront the "danger of a single story" recurrent in narratives and narrators about Africa (ADICHIE, 2009).

In light of these reflections, it is understood that the audiovisual piece to be analyzed starts from Fanon's provocations about the nature of the violence undertaken by the colonized, racism and the need to make use of European systems (scientific and legal, for instance), but it is not a film about Fanon's book alone – not once does the image of the intellectual appear. The discomfort caused by *Concerning Violence* allows us to locate some reflections around Criminology, noting how central criminological theories are appropriated and subverted in colonial contexts, or how the colonial experience remains in the fundamental structures of the penal system, hence in Criminology.

## 2 A Criminology class by Tonderai Makoni

*Indifference*, the second scene of *Concerning Violence*, brings the testimony of a black intellectual from Ancient Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe, regarding his experience in prison. If the structure and complexity of the film make it difficult to identify key points and scenes for analysis, Tonderai Makoni's speech seems to have been carefully selected for a Criminology class at a Law School:

Interview with Tonderai Makoni, PhD, Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), held in Stockholm.

Tonderai Makoni: It was about 11 a.m. I heard a loud knock at the door and I said "who's there?" And they shouted, "Police!" So I got dressed and went with them to the police cells. They told my wife that I would be back soon.

Reporter: - How long have you been in prison?

Tonderai Makoni: - I was in prison for about five years.

Reporter: - Would you tell me how it affected you?

Tonderai Makoni: - Well, when I was detained, the feelings I had and that my colleagues had ... I have looked at the history of the black people since the slavery days. I discovered what they suffered by the hands of white people. Then I looked into the days of colonialism, and I also discovered that the black man was again inferior to everything, under the oppression of the white man. I looked at America, at Great Britain. And in America I still realized that despite emancipation, the black man was still inferior to everything. He is, so to speak, an object. And then we look at South Africa and Rhodesia, and we realize that these are countries with institutionalized racism. Where once again the black people are inferior to everything. He suffers torture, he is less than human. He is an object. If you do not tell them what they want, you go to detention. But another type of torture is that

they can tie our legs in a tree, our hands in a car and then pull. The police say if one does not tell them who did something or what did someone do they will tear one in half. And of course they do. Some people died as a result of torture.

Reporter: - What did you feel when you left prison?

Tonderai Makoni: - I grew up in a manner that made me indifferent. The torture I've been subjected to for the last five years has made me feel less of things, just accept life as it comes. So even when I left, there was no great excitement on my part. (CONCERNING VIOLENCE, 2014).

The photography of this scene is one of the few in black and white in the film. Tonderai Makoni wears a formal outfit, a suit. In uttering the speech transcribed above, his voice does not rise at any moment and his feature is impassive. The call of the scene identifies him as a PhD. However, an insistent search on the internet did not bring any biographical information about him, raising the question of whether the invisibility dispensed to black intellectuals was given to him as well (which can also be understood as academic racism), a similar situation to the work of the patron of the film, Frantz Fanon.

Tonderai Makoni presents arguments related to Criminology. He anticipates a contemporary debate about the penal system, identifying a continuity between colonialism, slavery, imprisonment, and segregationist laws (DAVIS, 2003, pp. 24-27). On the other hand, it seems to confirm Fanon's interpretation (2008, 1968) of the impact of colonial violence on the body and subjectivity of the colonized; he perceived a fraternal bond between other black men who experienced torture and the treatment of being "objects"<sup>12</sup>.

The simple description of the scenes of the documentary *Concerning Violence* may not be able to demonstrate its potential as a scenario for thinking about criminology, looking at the violence of racial relations erected in colonialism. It's a matter of looking into perspective at the main message of Fanon, choreographed in the documentary: who produces colonial violence after all? In illustrating the violence undertaken by colonizers in its economic, subjective, military and cultural dimensions, the film brings to light problems for Criminology, a discipline that has violence as the focus of its essential analysis.

<sup>12</sup> In addition, the jail also crossed the production of the documentary under analysis. Lauryn Hill was in prison, due to a conviction for tax evasion, when she received the invitation to narrate the film. When condemned she said in court: "I am the daughter of former slaves who had a system imposed upon them. And I have an economic system taxed on me" (DAYLY MAIL, 2013). She was surprised by the coincidence of the invitation to narrate *Concerning Violence*, since she was re-reading Fanon in prison (HALE, 2014) and could only record her participation immediately after serving her three-month sentence.

Although Criminology has its origins tied to racist theories, there is a shortage of studies around the debate of race relations (DUARTE, 2016, p.501). Some of the reasons attributed to this absence consist in institutional racism and the racialized mode of knowledge production present in criminological research (ARGOLO et al., 2016, p.2). This means that even critical theories do not value the debate on racism and colonialism, because academic structures are still filled with a certain way of thinking and researchers who share the experience of whiteness<sup>13</sup>.

Evandro Piza Duarte identifies three paradigms in criminological theories and their relation to the notion of race: the etiological paradigm, the paradigm of social reaction and the current critical debate. The first one would have a close link to racial theories. At the end of the nineteenth century, by directing its analysis towards the imprisoned (whom, in their majority, were black men), the beginning of criminological discipline sought to justify criminality through the biological conceptions offered by scientific racism<sup>14</sup> (DUARTE, 2016, p. 502).

This means recognizing that "academic criminology has begun in Europe with inquiries about the minority of the colonized" (ZAFFARONI, 2012, p.15). An example of this connection is the Italian Positive School and Cesare Lombroso<sup>15</sup>, one of its main references, which, when investigating the incarcerated individual, elaborated a profile – based on biological signs – that identified the similarity between the "criminal" and the "savage" (DUARTE, 2016, pp. 511-512). Thus, Criminology, along with racist theories, provided a supposedly scientific justification for the "colonial distinction" (DUARTE, 2016, 512).

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<sup>13</sup> Regarding the scarcity of debates on racism and criminology in Brazil and its relation to whiteness: "The second, scarcely studied in the Brazilian case, are the links between critical theories and whiteness. Such links are capable of demonstrating theoretical options, methodological choices, forgetfulness, and especially the connections between analytical categories with a normative-white, male, bourgeois and heterosexual normative order" (ARGOLO, et al, 2016, p.4).

<sup>14</sup> On racial theories, Criminology and its connection with scientific constructions of the nineteenth century: "the birth of Criminology, however, was contemporary to the development of Types Theory and Social Darwinism, that is, the first theories of race. These two groups of theories constituted the central concepts and explanatory hypotheses of Criminology. The imbrications between race theories and the felon and criminal theories are so decisive that one can suggest that there is only a difference of specialization, rather than scientific autonomy" (DUARTE, 2016, p.507).

<sup>15</sup> It is not a matter of reducing Lombroso's contribution to an etiological paradigm, as is commonly thought: "Positivism is not just Lombroso. The current textbooks refer to criminological positivism as the original product of the criminal anthropology of physician Cesare Lombroso. The fact is that Lombroso synthesized what was in the environment and resulted in a theory of the born criminal, denomination that he adopted at the suggestion of his disciple Enrico Ferri and that had previously been used by the Spanish phrenologist Mariano Cuvi and Soler, neither of whom Ferri mentions" (ZAFFARONI, 2012, p. 100).

This approach had a striking aesthetic dimension, when working with the notion that "ugliness is a lack of aesthetic value and badness a lack of ethical value, but they often coincide, ugliness is bad" (ZAFFARONI, 2012, 98). By articulating the ugliness of the criminals to the savages, some theorists of this approach advised that "if there were several suspects and torture should be applied, the judge should begin with the most deformed" (ZAFFARONI, 2012, 98-99). There is a convergence with Fanon's analysis regarding the aesthetic perspective of racism and the attribution of a lack of values to the black individual: "Black is the symbol of Evil and of Ugly. Every day, white puts this logic into action "(FANON, 2008, p.154).

In the 1960s, there was a development of critical perspectives in the criminological discipline with the paradigm of social reaction. In this second moment, there was a need to change the look of Criminology not only to the criminalized, but to the controlling agencies that continued to criminalize the same social and racial groups (DUARTE, 2016, p.502). It is an epistemological turn, since racism becomes the object of analysis, associated with the critique of incarceration and the "unlawfulness of the penal system" (DUARTE, 2016, page 503).

The current criminological setting is characterized by the "defense of proposals of extrication and decriminalization based on various criminal policy movements (abolitionism, minimalism, garantism, etc.)" (DUARTE, 2016, p.504). This is a "contradictory" scenario, in which these proposals coexist with the increase in the criminal control of vulnerable groups – predominantly including the black population – and the enlargement of the criminal justice system (DUARTE, 2016, p.504).

A brief analysis of these paradigms reveals that criminology has a close association with racism, no matter how hard it tries to get rid of it. In addition, criminological theories have been conceived in "central" contexts to be applied in realities in which the colonial situation persists (ZAFFARONI, 2012, p.25). This means that Criminology consists of a localized and provincial knowledge, which loses this characteristic once the punitive power tends to be universal (ZAFFARONI, 2012, p.25).

Considering this, contemplating the complexity of colonial violence shown in the images of *Concerning Violence* demonstrates the need to submit the criminological analysis to the "colonial hypothesis" (ARGOLO et al, 2016). This means to identify the determining function of colonialism and racism in the constitutive relation of penal systems and the racial issue.

By attributing relevance to colonialism as a form of violent territorial, economic and cultural domination, we are allowed "to understand the construction of criminology as a social science at the service of imperialism and with profound repercussions on postcolonial realities" (ARGOLO et al, 2016). The negligence of the colonial hypothesis in criminological knowledge also reveals an epistemological challenge, for colonialism remains persistent in the canons of knowledge production (ARGOLO et al, 2016, p.5).

In proposing the colonial hypothesis as an important and neglected key of interpretation for the criminological studies, Pedro Argolo, Evandro Piza Duarte and Marcos Queiroz (2016, p.5) identify that authors who reflected on the implication of colonialism in criminal systems, such as Fanon and W.E.B DuBois<sup>16</sup>, would be useful for considerations on the matter. Thus, the documentary *Concerning Violence* seems to be a useful pedagogical tool to learn about colonialism, as well as to perceive the continuity of the colonial relations and the actuality of Fanon's work.

The dialogue of Criminology with the colonial hypothesis consists in overcoming the boundaries of epistemological markers that are intended to be universal. It is a matter of revisiting the notions of history, modernity, equality and freedom, identifying processes of resistance of the black people that were not inserted in the narratives considered unique (ARGOLO, et al, 2016, p. 7). It would also demand to acknowledge the critical and non-essentialist perspectives that would contribute to criminological studies, such as Queer Theory, Decolonial Thought<sup>17</sup> and Feminist Criminology (ARGOLO, et al, 2016, p.7).

Decolonizing knowledge in Criminology seems to be an alternative imposed by the message of *Concerning Violence*, once "theorists are central and the corpses are peripheric " (ZAFFARONI, 2012, p. 29). Criminological studies would need to be confronted with the corpses that continue to appear in realities far from the "orderly

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<sup>16</sup> Du Bois was an American black intellectual who contributed to the consolidation of sociology in the early twentieth century. He has had a wide-ranging work and has developed empirical research to refute the use of statistics as a way of reinforcing racism against black people in the field of sociology, as well as focusing on the relationship between crime and race. For him, the criminality attributed to black groups would correspond to a broader "symptom" of the socio-historical context and not to the "cause" of criminality (TUKUFU, 2001, p. 86).

<sup>17</sup> It is a program that has brought together diverse Latin American intellectuals to reflect in an off-center way about modernity and its occult face, coloniality. It originates from the notion of coloniality of power of the Peruvian sociologist Aníbal Quijano (2000), that affirms the permanence of a colonial matrix of power even after the end of colonization. According to Joaze Bernardino-Costa and Ramón Grosfoguel (2016, p. 16) "by avoiding the paradoxical risk of intellectual colonization of postcolonial theory, the network of researchers of decoloniality has launched other bases and interpretative categories of reality from Latin American experiences".



gardens" where the production of these knowledges lie (ZAFFARONI, 2012, p. 29), recognizing them as localized and precarious.

Therefore, a decolonial project<sup>18</sup> has two directions. The first is the refusal of "any and all forms of knowledge that proposes itself to universalization" (BERNARDINO-COSTA, GROSGOUEL, 2016, p.16). Next, one must recognize that decoloniality – beyond an academic perspective – is "the practice of opposition and intervention, which arose at a time when the first colonial subject of the modern / colonial world system reacted against imperial designs" (BERNARDINO-COSTA, GROSGOUEL, 2016, p.17). For this reason, the colonial hypothesis presupposes a re-signifying of power and knowledge matrix – such as modernity – based on the practices and perspectives of the colonized (black, indigenous and others) (ARGOLO et al., 2016).

In addition to the Tonderai Makoni scene, there are other passages from *Concerning Violence* that offer the possibility of considering the colonial hypothesis and how the practices of criminalization fall differently among colonized and colonizers. The fifth scene, in showing the repression of a workers' strike in Liberia, is an illustration of such unequal processes.

The film is an opportunity to ask Criminology, in its "central gardens", about which violence it deals with. Would it be the daily experienced violence in the world's peripheries, which has nothing to do with postcolonialism, or the formulation of "an ideology that will confuse the aggression and alienation of the man subjected to the process of colonization with its intrinsic evil, classifying as criminal all the forms of survival other than the colonial reality"? (DARTE, 2016, p.520) Regarding this fundamental distinction, we discuss below, through the documentary, the dialogue with the colonial hypothesis based on the problems contemporary to the Brazilian reality and to Criminology, specifically the notions of necropolitics (MBEMBE, 2011) and genocide (FLAUZINA 2006, 2014).

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<sup>18</sup> The use of the term "decolonial" rather than "*descolonial*" {"*descolonial*" in Portuguese comes from the word "*descolonizar*", associated to post liberation of colonies} has a semantic implication in the geopolitics of knowledge. In the translation of the term decoloniality or decolonisation into Portuguese or Spanish, removing the letter "s" from the prefix "des" demarcates a distinction between a broader epistemic proposal that is the decolonial project, and the idea of decolonization that is mistakenly associated with the moment post-colonial, or better post-liberation of colonies (Walsh, 2009, pp. 15-16).

### 3 The colonial hypothesis of genocide or "*For whom the bells do not toll*"<sup>19</sup>?

Frantz Fanon's experience in the Algerian war led him to question how Europe – which resented and criticized itself for the Nazi practices – improved their techniques of dehumanization in its African colonies a few years after the Holocaust. In presenting several contexts of African struggles against the colonial violence of European powers in the decades after World War II, *Concerning Violence* demonstrates that Fanon's observation did not apply only to the Algeria of *The Wretched of the Earth*.

Faced with the extent of the violence he witnessed and recorded in his clinic, Fanon did not identify any contradiction, but a logical relationship, since for him "(...) Nazism turned the whole of Europe into a true colony" (FANON, p. 80). In the documentary, one may notice how Europe and the current neocolonial moment manipulate the notions of life, humanity, rights, equality, and freedom in the submitted realities, differently than in their own contexts.

The notion of the colony as a locus of learning for the massacre brings relevance to the message of the film, as well as allows its viewers to analyze the difficulties in understanding as genocide the violence against the black people in Brazil. The contributions of Cameroonian Achille Mbembe (2011), about what he called "necropolitics", deepen the relationship between colonial occupation and sovereignty as an exercise of death around the world.

The colonial occupation was where sovereignty was constituted in an unrestricted way as the power of death, "as the capacity to decide who can live and who should die" (MBEMBE, 2011, p. 19). The notion of race became the "shadow" of Western political thought and practices and served as the foundation for a life of total domination (MBEMBE, 2011, p. 22).

In the experience of slavery, one can locate the origin of modern "terror", since it provided a triple loss in the spatial, corporeal, and political status dimensions (MBEMBE, 2011, 31-32); the experience of death during life. It was the concretization of the state of exception in its fullest extent; the slave master does not submit to rules

<sup>19</sup> This is an allusion to the text of the English poet John Donne (1572-1631), whose following excerpt is an epigraph to the book *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (published in 1940) by the American writer Ernst Hemingway: "No man is an *Ilând*, intire of it selfe; every man is a peece of the *Continent*, a part of the *maine*; if a *Clod* bee washed away by the *Sea*, *Europe* is the lesse, as well as if a *Promontorie* were, as well as if a *Mannor* of thy friends or of *thine owne* were; any mans death diminishes me, because I am involved in *Mankinde*; And therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; It tolls for *thee*." (HEMINGWAY, 2013)

regarding the life and death of the enslaved (MBEMBE, 2011, 31-32). Violence is distributed or not in the body of the enslaved as a "whim", a real exercise of terror (MBEMBE, 2011, 31-32).

Because the colonial situation implies total opposition between colonizers and colonized, the latter fill an imaginary of savagery and death (MBEMBE, 2011, 41) and permanently occupy the position of the "enemy." In order to face such fiction, hostility has a civilizing mission, in which there is no "common point between conqueror and indigenous," and for this racial exclusion one does not distinguish "combatants" from "noncombatants" or "enemies" from "criminals" (MBEMBE, 2011, p.39).

One should not speak of colonial war but of massacre, since one is faced with "the expression of an absolute hostility that puts the conqueror before an absolute enemy. All manifestations of war and hostility turned into fringes by the European legal imaginary find a place to emerge again in the colonies "(MBEMBE, 2011: 41). And if the independence of the colonies does not mean the end of colonial relations, Achille Mbembe identifies the permanence of necropower in what he called "late colonial occupations of modernity."

When analyzing the set of violence practiced in Palestine, the author affirms that it is a clear experience of necropower at the present time (MBEMBE, 2011, p. 46). It is externalized by the "[non-]distinction between internal and external enemies", the "militarization of everyday life" and the exercise of military commands to kill anyone, anywhere (MBEMBE, 2011, 53). Moreover, the population has the reproduction of their material life (including income) compromised, in addition to being subjected to "open executions" as well as "invisible killings" (MBEMBE, 2011, p. 53). This means reaffirming that in the present time, the necropower does not submit to rules or institutions.

Achille Mbembe presents characteristics that death power assumes in the Palestinian case, which are not so distant from Brazilian reality. Recently, the Atlas of Violence 2017 (CERQUEIRA, et al, 2017) was published by the Institute of Applied Economic Research (IPEA), bringing statistics of violence based on the Ministry of Health's Mortality Information System (SIM), combined with data from the 10th Brazilian Public Security Yearbook of the Brazilian Public Security Forum (CERQUEIRA, et al, 2017, p.5), referring to the period between 2005 and 2015. The first analysis was that "in just three weeks are murdered, in Brazil, more than the total number of people killed in all the terrorist attacks in the world in the first five months of 2017, which involved

498 attacks, resulting in 3,314 fatalities "(CERQUEIRA, et al, 2017, p.5). The publication does not refrain from saying that the context of violence is similar to that experienced during the wars (CERQUEIRA, et al, 2017, p. 30).

Statistical data show that homicide is the main cause of male mortality among young people: 47.8% of young people deaths, aged 15 to 29, are homicides. When young men were analyzed between 15 and 19, homicides corresponded to 53.8% of deaths (CERQUEIRA, et al, 2017, p.8). Considered in numbers, the statistics show that between 2005 and 2015 there were 318 thousand young people killed (CERQUEIRA, et al, 2017, p.8).

When the data are submitted to the race variable, it is perceived that the violence that causes death in Brazil has the black population as a priority target. For every 100 people killed in Brazil, 71 are black (CERQUEIRA, et al, 2017, page 30). In the period from 2005 to 2015, the death of non-black people declined by 12.2%, while there was an increase in mortality of blacks by 18.2% (CERQUEIRA et al., 2017, p.31). Regarding the violence against women, the racial question also prevails: there was a decrease in the deaths of non-black women (7.4%) and an increase in the deaths of black women (22%) (CERQUEIRA, 2017, p. 37).

The conclusions of the Atlas of Violence assert the same majority profile of the victims: "men, young, black and with low schooling level" (CERQUEIRA, 2017, et al, p.55). Although living conditions have improved in the country within the time interval studied, there remains "the fact that, in the last decade, the bias of violence against young people and blacks has increased even more", in addition to the underreporting of data concerning violence (CERQUEIRA, 2017, et al, p.55).

The Brazilian death experience approaches Achille Mbembe's notion of necropower when one analyzes the Report of the Parliamentary Commission of Inquiry on Youth Murders, which was approved by the Federal Senate in 2016 (BRASIL 2016). Through public hearings in various cities of the country, and through the gathering of information with the government, civil society organizations and the families of the victims, the report affirms the existence of a genocide of black youth in Brazil, brought about by the action or inaction of the Brazilian State (BRASIL, 2016, p.33).

The ongoing genocide occurs through different actions: "homicides resulting from police intervention", including the so-called *autos de resistência*<sup>20</sup>; extrajudicial executions of young people; the violence against the "drug war", especially in favelas (urban peripheral communities whose population is mostly black and poor); by the persistence of "institutional racism"<sup>21</sup> that infiltrates public and private institutions" (BRASIL, 2016, p.146). Black women, who are not excluded from physical violence in their bodies, also suffer the impact of genocide due to the loss of their children (kids, adolescents and young adults), followed by the invisibility and impunity of these crimes (BRASIL, 2016, p. 7).

The report repeats the conclusion that this is a context analogous to that of war, with state neglect being its central cause, proven by the difficulty of producing the diagnosis of the genocide of black youth. In addition, the State "which does not provide public policies for social inclusion and for actions against violence that are efficient enough is the same that ignores the genocide of black youth" (BRASIL, 2016, p. 45).

The denial of violence committed against the black population as a genocide in Brazil is linked to the neglect of the international society affected by the conflicts illustrated in *Concerning Violence*, since the conditions for the practice of genocide are the existence of "an internal political decision" and of the consent of the "international political scenario" (ZAFFARONI, 2012, p.353). Regarding this, the racial limitation of the notion of genocide is discussed below.

Eugenio Raul Zaffaroni (2012, p. 32) perceives something similar to what Fanon noticed; "The criminological policy of racist criminology, after passing through America and Africa, ended at Auschwitz." However, similar to the Brazilian case, not all corpses enter into the account of what is considered legally and criminologically as genocide (ZAFFARONI, 2012, p.258).

<sup>20</sup> The persistence of the *autos de resistência* is denounced several times in the report. It is an institutional practice, where deaths in "confrontation" with the police are classified as "acts of resistance", and there is no inquiry to investigate the murder. This practice is recurrent as a way of making invisible the death of black people and police executions, despite not being covered by the Brazilian legal system (BRASIL, 2016).

<sup>21</sup> The report characterizes the way in which institutional racism operates: "As we have seen, black individuals are the most murdered, but also those with the lowest level of education, lower wages and less access to the labor market. The infant mortality rate of the black population is higher than that of the white population, and black women also die the most during childbirth, as well as in the shortest prenatal follow-up time. The number of young black people who are remained by the Socio-educational System (Sinase) is greater, and it is precisely the young black who dies the most within this system, in the custody of the state" (BRASIL, 2017, p. 147).

This difficulty finds its origins in the formulation of the concept of genocide<sup>22</sup> in International Law (FLAUZINA, 2014, 122). After the holocaust, it was a matter of creating a typification that would criminalize practices that would jeopardize the physical and cultural reproduction of groups (FLAUZINA, 2014, 121). At the moment, the initial proposal of the author of the concept, Raphael Lemkin, was not adopted because there was an understanding of it being broadly comprehensive and a threat to sovereignty, since it aimed to criminalize "a widespread social destruction, whose important elements were homicides, cultural assaults and political assaults and economic effects on the target groups "(FLAUZINA, 2014, p 123).

The rejection of this notion occurs due to the pretensions of the countries that were the protagonists of the convention debate: European colonialism in Africa, segregation laws in the USA, Soviet repression of opposing political groups, among others (FLAUZINA, 2014, 124). In addition, the concept reproduces a "hierarchy of tragedies", in which the silencing of racism against black people is a relevant aspect (FLAUZINA, 2006: 122), since genocide is coined from the "Holocaust uniqueness"<sup>23</sup> (FLAUZINA, 2014, p 131).

Far from minimizing the tragedy that Nazism has bestowed on Jews and to humanity, one must question why the adequacy of the concept of genocide is denied for situations such as the mass extermination of the Brazilian black population, the Palestinian case, or even the contexts portrayed in *Concerning Violence*. It is perceived as a "distorted administration of this concept," which has "a special impact on black communities, in the light of the peculiar historical representations that recognize this social group as the antonym of humanity" (FLAUZINA, 2014, 135).

This understanding does not consist in novelty, because since colonialism the content that supplies the idea of humanity is white supremacy (FLAUZINA, page 135). In understanding this, the inaugural event of violence against humanity would indeed be the holocaust, because it is a "white tragedy" (FLAUZINA, 2014, 136), when European

<sup>22</sup> In accordance with Article II of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide: "Genocide means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy in whole or in part a national group, ethnic, racial or religious, as such: (a) to kill members of the group; b) cause serious injury to the physical or mental integrity of members of the group; c) intentionally submit the group to the condition of existence capable of causing total or partial physical destruction; (d) take measures to prevent births within the group; e) effecting the forced transfer of children from the group to another group "(BRASIL, 1952).

<sup>23</sup> According to Ana Flauzina (2014: 132): "Some common arguments present the number of victims, the methods and efficiency of execution, and the question of Holocaust fraud as proof of their unique status in the violent context of modernity."

colonialist practices are exercised against their own populations (ZAFFARONI, 2012, p. 306).

Faced with this, Fanon's inquiry illustrated in the documentary, about the selectivity of Western understanding in relation to what is violence becomes eloquent. By refusing recognition of the genocide committed against non-white people, the States reaffirm their sovereign power to kill, in the molds of colonialism. The activation of genocide is not simply strategic, since it repeats colonial stereotypes and invisibilities, demonstrating its racial aspect.

The inaugural vice in the formulation of the concept of genocide denotes another obstacle to confronting the extermination of Brazilian black population. Here, from the analysis of the penal system, one notices "the old marks of discrimination, keeping the asymmetries in place" grounding the "genocidal project that anchors its performance" (FLAUZINA, 2006, p.90).

The Brazilian State plays the role of "administrator of death" (ZAFFARONI, 2012, page 68) of the black population through the penal system. From the criminalization of black people and the production of criminal biographies as a justification for murder (Flauzina, 2006, p. 116) to prisons, which are corpse factories<sup>24</sup>, the state demonstrates its necropolitics vocation. It is the provocation posed by Eugenio Raul Zaffaroni; if "theories are central and the peripheral dead", and some corpses are not considered for the calculation of criminal statistics, the role of Criminology is to confront theories with corpses (ZAFFARONI, 2012, 30).

Criminology, which has its roots in racist theories, can play a new role, acting as a place of qualified criticism for genocide (FLAUZINA, 2006, p. 123) by using the lens of racism (FLAUZINA, 2006, 135). This methodological key consists of starting from the colonial hypothesis of Criminology, seeking to overcome the "embedded notion of violence" for the debate about the mass elimination of the black population (FLAUZINA, 2006, p. 111).

Placing racism at the center of the criminological debate emphasizes the penal system's own logic that, constituted in the colonial context, did not break this pattern

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<sup>24</sup> In January 2017 alone, three massacres took place in Brazilian penitentiaries, accounting for 113 deaths, according to Isabella Miranda (2017) "what binds all these heaps of bodies are not only their non-white colors, but the motives and concrete possibilities of deaths to which the incarcerated in Brazil are subjected. In all cases, the conditions of imprisonment in which they remained were degrading and subhuman. In all cases, the public authorities charged the factions with the causes of the rebellions that would have culminated in deaths. In all cases, there was overcrowding in prisons where corpses were found."

(FLAUZINA, 2006, p. 138), and currently extends its bias for death to white and non-white bodies. According to Ana Flauzina (2006, p. 82), this epistemological turn offers "a coherent answer to those who ask themselves about the reason for such violence within the then vigorous apparatus of military repression and interventions with the disqualified white individuals wandering throughout the country."

However, it cannot be claimed that violence is in the process of becoming deracialized. On the contrary, the idea of race and "black" historically constituted the basis of the "modern project of knowledge" and governance, and with it the notion of humanity and inhumanity (MBEMBE, 2014, p.10). Faced with the current arrangement of capitalism, "the systematic risks to which slaves were exposed during the first capitalism now constitute, if not the norm, at least the fair share of all subaltern humanities" (MBEMBE, 2014, p.16).

It is the "universalization of the black condition" (MBEMBE, 2014, p.16), now no longer founded on the biological dimension, but on contextual notions such as culture and religion (MBEMBE, 2014, p.20). To this universalization, Achille Mbembe (2014, p.18) called the "black becoming of the world", according to which (many) lives are considered "disposable" and "soluble" and this pattern is established.

The colonial violence expressed in the images of *Concerning Violence* once again claims its actuality. Fanon's *Wretched of the Earth* expands beyond African contexts, morphing into corpses that question the Western meaning of violence and speak to publics and bodies of knowledge about the pending task: decolonization.

### Final thoughts

The task of reducing the message of a film to written text is complex. The multiplicity of stimuli that the documentary *Concerning Violence*, in its nine scenes, offers to the public could not be developed exhaustively on these pages. Being aware of the circumstance, this text serves only as an invitation to the experience of the film and to the use of cinema as a viable pedagogical instrument for teaching and for criminological reflections.

The analyzed film calls attention to the current thinking of Frantz Fanon and identifies colonialism as one of the indispensable elements for the understanding of



contemporary society. It also raises the curiosity about the outcome of the independence processes recorded in the film. From news reports and what is established as the "single story" of Africa (ADICHIE, 2009), it is possible to see that they have not been able to implement Fanon's advice on the constitution of their own model of society and not the imitation of European models, that is to say, true decolonization. In addition, the documentary offers a landscape of colonial relations that seem to be accurate nowadays.

The present text suggested a demonstration that Criminology, since its origin as a discipline, was tied to the notion of racism. The colonial experience offered an existential picture of race-based inequalities for which criminological knowledge fulfilled at one point the role of justification. Even if one sees a commitment to self-criticism, the discussion on racism and colonialism is not located in the centrality of criminological debates.

It is apparent the need for Criminology to submit to the colonial hypothesis. As the authors (ARGOLO, et al, 2016) who defend this idea demonstrate, such an epistemological attitude leads to two paths: revisiting authors who considered it and decentralizing hegemonic narratives of knowledge production. As of now, the proposal of the film reinforces its meaning, for it explains explaining the nature of violence in colonial contexts and values the contribution of fanonian thought.

Fanon dedicated his last days to resignify the idea of violence, and the documentary tries to illustrate this: there is a difference in the recognition of what is considered violence according to the race of those who practice it. Colonial violence inscribed in institutional racism, in the repression of the "colonized city" and in the genocide of the black population (e.g. the Brazilian favela) are not accentuated or effectively disapproved. In contrast, the response of the colonized to this violence is controlled, among other means, by the penal system.

Perceiving the continuities between colonialism and the penal system assists in the analysis of the genocide of the Brazilian black population. Necropolitics, a standard that operates in the exemption of bodies and in the negligence of violence directed to racialized groups, had its apprenticeship in colonialism. It means to convey that the practices of death of the penal system that continue being directed mainly to the black population were constituted in the scope of colonial relations. Faced with the genocide

of the black population, the documentary recasts the actuality of colonial violence as a relevant axis for analysis by criminological studies.

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**The author is solely responsible for writing the article.**