



CONCERNING VIOLENCE

Spring
Season
2015

Release: 2014

Cert (UK): 15

Language: English & Swedish

Runtime: 78 mins

Director: Göran Olsson

Writer: Frantz Fanon (based on the book), Göran Olsson

Cinematographer: Various (from news items, etc)

Cast: Lauryn Hill (Narrator)



Göran Hugo Olsson's 'Concerning Violence' is the first major film to grapple with the work of the influential Martinican author and psychiatrist Frantz Fanon. The documentary focuses on the opening chapter of Fanon's classic text *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961), in which the author posits the act of one nation colonising another as a form of pure, subjugating violence. Fanon also discusses violence – in the context of uprising and rebellion – as a means of liberation and physical, spiritual catharsis for the oppressed.

When Fanon's book was initially published in France, it was banned almost immediately by the authorities, who saw it as a recklessly incendiary glorification of violence. This negative view was only burnished by the book's preface, written by Fanon supporter Jean-Paul Sartre, which wholeheartedly endorsed the thesis of violence as a cleansing act and, according to Fanon biographer David Macey, overshadowed the actual work.

The film focuses on a specific struggle for liberation in one of a number of African countries, including Angola, Zimbabwe, Liberia, Tanzania, Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau and Burkina Faso; the footage dates from the mid-1960s up to the late 1980s. Yet there's no doubt that its final passage – in which Europe is described as "literally the creation of the third world", and America as a "monstrous" colonial power – is intended to give the viewer plenty to process with regard to contemporary nations still suffering the pronounced after-effects of colonisation. In many cases, Fanon's astringent words seem as relevant today as ever. (Taken from 'Sight and Sound')

