Dr. Meredith Terretta  
Gordon F. Henderson Chair in Human Rights, Associate Professor of History  
Office hours: By appt.

Winter 2021  
Seminar meets via Zoom (connect through Brightspace):  
Wed. 13 Jan-14 Apr., 9:30-11:20 unless otherwise specified as 8:30-11:20 (as on the days of final oral presentations)

HIS 7338: Decolonizing Africa in an Internationalizing World  
Background knowledge of African history is not a requirement for this seminar. Students of colonialism, including settler colonialism in Canada, as well as students of contemporary French and British history, will gain comparative insights applicable to their own fields of study.

The seminar will consider African decolonization within an internationalist or transregional framework, guided by big questions about sovereignty, race and racialization, federation, alienation of land, extraterritorial political sites beyond borders, transnational solidarities, and worldmaking. Historiographical aims of the seminar are: to articulate social history with internationalist history, to reperiodize decolonization, to examine its postcolonial aftermaths, and to question whether decolonization has been achieved. Secondary goals include exploration of the importance of colonial history to both former colonial powers and formerly colonized African states. Students will gain historical understanding the influence of Africa’s decolonization on shifting global norms.

Students are encouraged to undertake comparative/transregional research for the final projects. The comparison of decolonization in Canada and South Africa—as sites of competition between two colonial powers—is but one example of possible research inquiry.
Statement on Use of Racial Slurs in the Classroom:

In October 2020, the University of Ottawa experienced numerous incidents in which one instructor used a racial slur in a classroom and controversy ensued around the professor’s intentions and the university response. Certain uOttawa professors thereafter used the same anti-black racial slur in their classrooms and in the media, in the name of freedom of expression. While recognizing the importance of academic freedom for professors, I also recognize the importance of students’ own academic freedom and right to a dignified classroom experience free of hate speech. I will avoid, and I expect students to avoid, the use of racial slurs in class. Check out my thread on the incident on Twitter [here](https://twitter.com/MTerretta/status/1318666294309261312?s=20) or cut and paste the link:

EXPECTED STUDENT CONTRIBUTIONS TO KNOWLEDGE:

1. Regular and critically engaged oral contributions to discussion and debate, including feedback generously offered to peers on oral presentations of conceptual essays (weekly). 25%
2. Expert presentation of one week’s readings and critical review of readings/book. Sign up for expert weeks under Groups on Brightspace. Experts will present the week’s work in no more than 15 minutes and ask questions to launch the discussion. A [written critical review must be distributed electronically to members of the class the Monday before Tuesday morning presentations by 5 pm at the latest](https://twitter.com/MTerretta/status/1318666294309261312?s=20). All students will have read the literature review, so the presentation must go beyond merely reading the paper aloud. 25%.
   Skills sharpened: critical review and synthesis. Useful for learning to write a scholarly literature review. Oral communication of ideas and discussion. Learning to respect allotted time limit.
3. 5-8 page overview of how this seminar articulates with your own research specialization. Students should use the concepts and methods elaborated in course material to reflect critically on their own research and approach. In a historiographical discussion, the paper should explain to what extent concepts of decolonization and/or transregionalism orient scholarly historical literature on their field of specialization, the potential for these concepts to contribute to the historiography, and a proposed method for their application. This is a secondary source historiographical, conceptual paper. No primary research is required. 20%.
   Skills sharpened: the development of conceptual argument and historiographical awareness.
4. Ten-minute oral presentation (7 and 14 April: Sign up under Groups on Brightspace): students present their conceptual and historiographical overviews, elaborating the theoretical/conceptual framework they are adopting, any revisionism it has inspired, and the method they conceive for applying it to their research. [Written overviews must be distributed electronically to members of the class the Sunday before Tuesday morning presentations by 5 pm at the latest](https://twitter.com/MTerretta/status/1318666294309261312?s=20). Presentations must go beyond merely reading the paper in order to obtain full credit. 10%. 
Skills sharpened: how to talk about your work in a way that engages others; practice in how to respect time limits.
5. Final version of the 5-8 page overview, incorporating peer and professor feedback. Please note that there should be a significant improvement integrating critical feedback between previous and final versions. The improved, final draft is valued at 20% of the mark. Skill sharpened: how to revise a draft into a final, polished version that incorporates peer feedback.

WEEKLY READINGS (readings are discussed on the day under which they are listed. On 13 Jan, we begin by discussion Allman, Terretta, and Ndlovu-Gatsheni):

Wk 1—13 Jan: African history of decolonization?

Wk 2—20 Jan: What is Internationalist History? What is Global History?
Erez Manela, “International Society as a Historical Subject.” *Diplomatic History* 44.2 (2020): 184-209. (available online via uOttawa library)
Frederick Cooper and Jane Burbank, *Empires*, Chap. 10, especially 312-21. (available online via uOttawa library)

Wk 3—27 Jan: Sovereignty, Anticolonialism and Self-Determination

Wk 4—3 Feb: Alienation of land
Wk 5—10 Feb: Violence

READING WEEK—17 FEB

Wk 6—24 Feb: Worldmaking
Adom Getachew, *Worldmaking after Empire: The Rise and Fall of Self-Determination*, 2019. (available online via uOttawa library)

Wk 7—3 March: Transnational solidarities
Monique A. Bedasse, *Jah Kingdom: Rastafarians, Tanzania and Pan-Africanism in the Age of Decolonization*, 2017. (available online via uOttawa library)

Wk 8—10 March: Extraterritorial political sites beyond borders

Wk 9—17 March: Youth and politics
Wk 10—24 March: Race and racialization


Wk 11—31 March: Humanitarianism and Development

Gregory Mann, *From Empires to NGOs in the West African Sahel: The Road to Nongovernmentality*, 2015. (available online via uOttawa library)

Wk 12—7 April: Postcolonial sovereignty and self-determination


Wk 13—14 April: Importance of colonial history; shifting global norms;

France Nkokomane Ntloedibe, “Where are our heroes and ancestors? The spectre of Steve Biko’s ideas in Rhodes must fall and the transformation of South African Universities.” *African Identities* 17.1 (2019): 64-79. (available online via uOttawa library)
Tapji Garba and Sara-Maria Sorentino, “Slavery is a Metaphor: A Critical Commentary on Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang’s ‘Decolonization is Not a Metaphor.’” *Antipode: A Radical Journal of Geography* 52.3 (2020)” 764-782. (available online via uOttawa library)
Adele Perry, Canadian Historical President, on Recognition of Indigenous and Racialized Scholars and Scholarship, 2019. (link on Brightspace)