**Professor Mhoze Chikowero**

History 147R: Undergraduate Research Seminar in African History

University of California, Santa Barbara

Venue & Time: HSSB 4020, Wed. 10:00-12:50pm

Office HSSB 4214

Consultation Hours: Wed. 2-4pm, or by appointment

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 Return and get it

This research seminar in African History gives students an opportunity to explore themes in contemporary African histories through guided research and scheduled readings. The seminar centers colonialism as the key problematic. Leading with a **documentary** plus other foundational (especially primary) readings each week, we will dissect the various dimensions of colonialism and its legacies and help conceptualize issues and frame research topics for everyone. You do not need prior knowledge of African History. You will be required to make extensive use of primary sources to write a research paper on a topic chosen (in consultation with me) from a wide range of issues that may include the following themes: colonial warfare and African resistance; land questions; resource conflict and resource sovereignty; Islam and colonialism; missionary Christianity and colonialism; leisure and politics; colonial education policies; science and technology in Africa; colonial social engineering; indigenous knowledge systems; and self-liberation. You are required to identify your research theme and craft a thesis and outline by Week 3. I will also be writing an archives-based article during the course of the quarter, which you will have a chance to read and give me feedback on as the quarter progresses. This is to promote the spirit of co-writing between you and me.

**Grading:** this is how grades are earned: 1). 10 percent attendance and informed class participation, 2). 10 percent impromptu quizzes, 3). 10 percent thesis and outline presentation, and 4). 70 percent final research paper. Find a colleague to read your paper very closely for you before I do.

Readings and themes

We will start the seminar by viewing a documentary that was screened here at UCSB during the UCSB Human Rights Film Festival a few years ago, and then historicize it over the course of the quarter with a view to understanding how the present seeks to create the past.

Week 1: The Image of Africa

* Chinua Achebe, “An Image of Africa,” *Research in African Literatures* 9, 1, 1978.
* Documentary: Mugabe and the White African: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7psV-jald54

Week 2: Historicizing the Image of Africa: Nomenclature, Historiography

* \*\*Chris Lowe *et al*, “Talking about ‘Tribe’: Moving from Stereotypes to Analysis,” <http://www.ciaonet.org/wps/loc01/>, February 2008.
* Documentary: White King, Red Rubber, Black Death: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RmZd0Gw1vLE

Week 3: Ruling by Historiography

* J.D. Omer-Cooper, “Shaka and the Rise of the Zulu,” in Klein and Johnson (eds.), *Perspectives on the African Past*, pp. 126-137.
* Julian Cobbing, “Mfecane as an Alibi: Thoughts on Dithakong and Mpolompo,” Journal of African History,

Week 3: Colonial Blueprints

* Native Committee of Inquiry Report, 1910-11

Week 4: Religion and State

* Mhoze Chikowero, “Missionary Witchcrafting,” *African Music, Power and Being.*
* *The Kaffir Express*

Week 5: Leisure and Politics in Africa

* Mhoze Chikowero,“Architectures of Control,” *African Music, Power and Being.*

Week 6: African Self-Liberation

* Franz Fanon, “On Violence,” *The Wretched of the Earth.*
* Battle of Algiers: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m-lWF100yTM>

Week 7: Insurgency and Counterinsurgency

* Agrippah Mutambara, “Chimoio.”
* Mau Mau: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d3y3zccaj8w

Week 8: Independence, and Subversion

* \*\*\*Find and read a scholarly article on the Biafra “Civil” War
* Cuba and Africa Documentary: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jNpXUC391vc

Week 9: Radical Political Economies of Independence

* Thomas Sankara (1985) The ‘political orientation’ of Burkina Faso, Review of African Political Economy, 12:32, 48-55, DOI: 10.1080/03056248508703615
* Thomas Sankara: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tjjRLRMS69o>

Q: What is neocolonialism? Watch this documentary and answer the question (French African Connection): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lZKHZVVRITY

Week 10: Neocolonialism

* Naomi Klein, “Democracy Born in Chains,” *The Shock Doctrine.*
* Sol Plaatje, “Native Life in South Africa.”
* Documentary: The Big Debate on Land Reform

Amandla!