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Truth and Reconciliation: 21st century reparations politics in Europe

Since the turn of the century and increasingly in the last decade, European nation states have initiated processes of self-examination and in various degrees examined the extent and character of colonial transgressions, aimed at reconciliation with the victims. The question of how best to reconcile with our colonial legacy and its aftereffects has prompted a variety of rhetorical practices such as truth and reconciliation commissions, government inquiries, official apologies, and reconciliation ceremonies, and they are the subject of increasing political and public debate.

In this presentation, I introduce my post doc project, “The Age of Apology: Contemporary Re-evaluations of European Colonialism” and delve into the Danish-Greenlandic context (the Greenlandic ‘experiment children’) and the French-Algerian (*les Harkis*, the Algerian soldiers who fought for France in the Algerian War of Independence). Historiography, framing mechanisms, and the rhetoric of official apology are central in both contexts.