



Department of English Speaker Series: Dr. Derek Hook

Invitation | “Four moments in the post-apartheid unconscious”

Date: Wednesday, 30 April 2014

Time: 13:00 – 14:00

Place: FGG 201/202 (Block B)

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Biography: Derek Hook is a Reader in Psychosocial Studies at Birkbeck College, University of London and an Extraordinary Professor of Psychology at the University of Pretoria. He is the author of *A Critical Psychology of the Postcolonial* (2011) and *(Post)apartheid Conditions* (2013). He is psychoanalytic practitioner, a research fellow of the Independent Social Research Foundation, and a lead researcher in the Apartheid Archive Project.

Abstract: This paper takes as its starting point an investigation of the topic of 'libidinal economy' as it appears in the writings of psychoanalytically-informed social theorists. There are, no doubt, inherent limitations in extrapolating from the psychical to the social. I argue, nevertheless, that there is much of analytical value in exploring the underlying affective and psychical qualities of a *prevailing social bond*. Doing so draws our attention to the particular attachments linking subjects to given social formations. From this conclusion I go on to pose a methodological framework that aims to pin-point a variety of affective elements. I suggest that a given mass is in part constituted by: what it fears; its chief mode of social complaint; its narcissistic self-representations; its enjoyments; and its lost objects. Fragments from an analysis of post-apartheid culture help animate these speculative ideas. In this respect the paper develops ideas related to the recent death of Mandela; the topic of 'white ruins'; and the notion posed by Chabani Manganyi of the 'violent reverie' of murderous fantasies stemming from the era of apartheid.