



## Lecture Series “Signatures of World Society”

# Race and Equality: Haiti and South Africa

Victoria Collis-Buthelezi  
(Johannesburg)



© Victoria Collis-Buthelezi

Tuesday,  
**01 July 2025**  
**6.15 p.m.**  
Zoom

This lecture reads US President Donald Trump’s executive order on South Africa as part of a long discomfort around race and equality that predates and exceeds Trump. Reading post-apartheid South Africa’s constitution as an attempt to dismantle racial inequality, similar to Haiti’s 1805 constitution, the lecture explores Trump’s preoccupation with South Africa as a representative one strain of US and Western constitutionalism in the wake of European colonialism. That is, the current rights discourse and notion of egalitarianism emerged in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in the midst of the French and American Revolutions and at the height of colonial projects that required some persons to be cast outside of humanity and personhood. Many of those who were deemed subhuman or not granted legal personhood were racialized as Black, indigenous, not white. Post-World War II, the US predicated its image in the world as a place of equal opportunity, if not equal outcomes. Yet at the heart of America’s constitutional order is an aphoria – on one hand, everyone is created equal, on the other, the racialized enslaved could never be equal to Man. The lecture explores Trump, not as an aberration of American constitutionalism, but one embodiment, and post-apartheid South Africa as its existential threat.

---

This lecture will only take place via Zoom  
Meeting ID: 696 7099 4418 – Passcode: 609070