



STATE CAPTURE AND THE POLITICS OF 'ELITE POPULISM'

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Monday 6 November 2017, 2pm, Jackman Humanities Building, 10th Floor



Ivor Chipkin is the founding director of the Public Affairs Research Institute (PARI), based at both the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) in Johannesburg and the University of Cape Town. He is an Associate Professor at Wits and a Senior Associate Member at St Anthony's College at the University of Oxford. He completed his Phd at the Ecole Normale Supérieure in France and published 'Do South Africans Exist' in 2007, the first attempt to engage with the political concepts undergirding African Nationalism in South Africa. In May this year he and several colleagues published 'Betrayal of the Promise', a report that on 'state capture' in South Africa that has had an important political and intellectual impact in South Africa and elsewhere. He is currently involved in a campaign to democratise and professionalise the civil service.

State Capture and the Politics of 'Elite Populism'.

In South Africa today analysis of current politics frequently invokes the term 'corruption' and the expression 'state capture'. Yet both terms are inadequate conceptually, both on their own terms and for the explanations that they offer. What they obscure is a) the form of contemporary politics - that it is focused on the State-Owned Enterprises and the control of their procurement budgets and b) the *politics* of current politics - that it is driven by more than criminality but is underpinned by political convictions. In other words, it is necessary, not simply to explore the relationship between politics and criminality but to admit that under certain conditions the distinction breaks down.