Imagining Africa

There has been a long history of idealism concerning the potential of economic and political developments in Africa, the latest iteration of which emerged around the time of the 2007–8 global financial crisis. Here, Clive Gabay takes a historical approach to questions concerning change and international order as these apply to Africa in Western imaginaries. Challenging traditional post-colonial accounts that see the West imagine itself as superior to Africa, he argues that the centrality of racial anxieties concerning white supremacy make Africa appear, at moments of Western crisis, as the saviour of western ideals, specifically democracy, bureaucracy and neo-classical economic order. Uncommonly, this book turns its lens as much inwards as outwards, interrogating how changing attitudes to Africa over the course of the twentieth and early-twenty-first centuries correspond to shifting anxieties concerning whiteness, and the growing hope that Africa will be the place where the historical genius of Whiteness might be saved and perpetuated.

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Imagining Africa

Whiteness and the Western Gaze

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