



**An ERSA Training Workshop  
1 – 3 April 2009  
Glenburn Lodge, Muldersdrift**

**Historic data and economic history research in  
South Africa**



In association with the Economic History Society of Southern Africa

## **Introduction**

This workshop continues the strategic initiative for South African Economic History that started in 2007 with a training workshop presented by Prof James Robinson of Harvard University, followed by a successful networking workshop held in September 2008. At the September workshop two needs were identified: addressing the quantitative skills shortage, and furthering our knowledge of data available in South Africa.

This training workshop has been designed to meet these needs. Dr. Martine Mariotti (Australian National University) will present the first part of the workshop as a short course in economic history. She will focus on the types of questions being asked in economic history, and ways of solving them. The presentation will discuss the need for economic theory as well as an analysis of the quantitative techniques that are common in historical research in Economics. Because the course is intended to be fairly deep, participants will be asked to read a selection of popular papers ahead of time so that more time can be spent on discussion and analysis.

This will be followed by presentations by Prof Robert Shell (UWC), Prof Charles Simkins (Wits), Mr Peter Perkins (Stats SA) and Dr. Christiaan van Bochove (Utrecht University) on available data and how to utilise it.

The next activity for economic historians is the International Economic History Congress to be held in Utrecht, Netherlands in August 2009, where we are organising two sessions: one being on business history and the other on quantitative African economic history. This will be followed by another ERSA sponsored research workshop in October 2009. This workshop will focus specifically on slavery, and will be attended by one of the leaders in the field, Prof Nathan Nunn of Harvard University.

These events will strengthen the existing community of scholars in economic history in South Africa, but, more importantly, aim to expand the number of active researchers so as to increase the weight of scholarship in this field.

### **Specific set of issues to be addressed by the workshop:**

- Current research questions in economic history, and how to solve them using quantitative techniques
- Historical data available in South Africa and how to utilize it
- Planning of publication on the new economic history of South Africa

### **Intended target audience:**

Academic researchers and postgraduate students in the fields of institutional economics, business history, African history, development studies and quantitative economic history. Attendees need not have participated in the first two workshops

### **Preliminary format of the workshop:**

We plan to present a 2 1/2 day workshop:

## **Wednesday 1 April**

### Session 1 (09:00-10:30)

Martine Mariotti – A (brief) history of economic history

### Session 2 (11:00-12:30)

Martine Mariotti – A practical approach to writing an Economic History article (this section will include a discussion on quantitative techniques)

### Session 3 (14:00-15:30)

Martine Mariotti – What can Economic History do for South Africa and what can South Africa do for Economic History?

### Session 4 (16:00-17:00)

Christiaan van Bochove – Economic history in developing countries: the state of the art

## **Thursday 2 April**

### Session 1 (09:00-10:30)

Charles Simkins – Economic history in South Africa: what do we know, what don't we know

### Session 2 (11:00-12:30)

Peter Perkins – Economic data in South Africa: A StatsSA perspective

### Session 3 (14:00-15:30)

Robert Shell – Changing Hands and cliometric research

### Session 4 (16:00-17:30)

Christiaan van Bochove – Archival work: how economists can benefit from working with historians

## **Friday 3 April**

### Session 1 (09:00-10:30)

John Luiz and Martine Mariotti – South Africa's New Economic History: Volume I

### Session 2 (11:00-12:30)

John Luiz and Martine Mariotti – South Africa's New Economic History: Volume II

A gala workshop dinner will be held for all on Thursday evening.

**Applications:**

ERSA is able to offer financial support to cover travel and accommodation expenses of a limited number of research active members of any South African tertiary institution wishing to attend the workshop.

If you are interested in attending the workshop, please send your name, academic affiliation and areas of interest to: Tania Jacobs ([tania.jacobs@uct.ac.za](mailto:tania.jacobs@uct.ac.za)) before 28 February 2009.

**Organising committee:**

Dr Sophia du Plessis  
Prof John Luiz  
Dr Martine Mariotti  
Mr Johan Fourie  
Mr Krige Siebrits

**Contact person:**Academic

Dr Sophia du Plessis  
Tel: +27 (0)21 808-2204  
[sophia@sun.ac.za](mailto:sophia@sun.ac.za)

Administrative

Tania Jacobs  
Tel: +27 (0)21 650-5239  
Fax: +27 (0)21 650-2854  
[tania.jacobs@uct.ac.za](mailto:tania.jacobs@uct.ac.za)