



**An ERSA Research Workshop
2 - 4 November 2011
Kopanong, Johannesburg**

**Colonial 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 by ERSA to encourage participation, build capacity and share methods and techniques in quantitative African economic history.

This workshop will take a step back and focus on the availability of colonial data. We are pleased to announce that guest speaker, Prof Robert Allen from Oxford University, will be participating. He has written several books (of which the latest book on global economic history will be published shortly before the workshop), but is especially well known for his excellent work on the birth of the Industrial Revolution. For this he worked extensively with colonial data, compiling and sharing his own data sets. Prof Allen will present some of his work at the workshop, and will also facilitate a discussion on colonial data, brainstorming ideas about possible uses of such data.

The workshop will cover 2 days and although the focus will be on colonial data, there will also be time to present work-in-progress and research ideas.

Intended target audience:

Academic researchers and postgraduate students in the fields of institutional economics, business history, African history, development studies and quantitative economic history. We especially encourage people interested in the field to join, as we constantly like to expand the research community. Ten placements will be reserved for academics and students who have never before attended an economic history workshop and it is not a requirement for these participants to present a paper. There will also be a limited number of placements available to participants who have previously presented at an economic history workshop, but do not have a paper to present. For the rest, we encourage the participants to present their research.

Preliminary format of the workshop:

Wednesday 2 November

Lunch 12:30-13:30

Session 1 (14:00 – 15:30)

Introduction: Sophia du Plessis

Robert Allen: What are the questions colonial data can help answer?

Session 2 (16:00 – 17:00)

Two paper presentations

Thursday 3 November

Session 1 (08:00-10:00)

Robert Allen: Why some countries are rich and others poor

Session 2 (10:30-12:30)

Four paper presentations

Session 3 (14:00-15:30)

Roundtable discussion: Colonial data in Africa

Session 4 (16:00-17:00)

Two paper presentations

Friday 4 November

Session 1 (08:00-10:30)

Robert Allen: Roundtable discussion on African Economic history research ideas

Session 2 (11:00-12:30)

Two paper presentations

Conclusion: Sophia du Plessis

Applications:

Applications and abstracts should be submitted to Yoemna Mosaval (Yoemna.Mosaval@econrsa.org) before 12 September 2011. ERSA is able to offer financial support to cover travel and accommodation expenses to a limited number of research active members of any South African tertiary institution who meets the requirements stated in the "intended target audience" section.