



**An ERSA Research Workshop  
21-24 January  
Johannesburg**

**Co-hosted by the  
Economic History and Macroeconomics ERSA Groups**

**Savings, credit and debt in South African history**



In association with the Economic History Society of Southern Africa

## **Savings, credit and debt in South African history**

The emergence of financial markets has been the subject of extensive investigation over an extended period of time, but the early development of savings, credit extension and debt as instruments of the foundation of the financial system in Africa remains under-researched and under-explored. Aspects of savings behaviour in the early colonial societies of the later South Africa, as well as the transfer of credit practices from countries of origin as well as the traditional indigenous African societies established the foundation of early South African financial history. Despite some studies on the organization, operation and extension of financial institutions in the early colonies, the savings and credit as well as debt markets in early societies remain an area unexplored and misunderstood from a social history perspective. This workshop aims at exploring the different forms of savings and credit extension in the early colonial context of what would in 1910 become South Africa. The workshop intends to explore the use of debt in the variety of forms it manifested and what impact such forms of social control exercised in society. The dynamic interaction between African societies and the colonial settlements also poses the question about the forms of savings and credit extension between those societies and the emergence of debt and financial markets in that context.

The ERSA Economic History Research Working Group and the ERSA Macroeconomics Research Working Group wish to invite contributions to this workshop from all South African and African economic historians. The workshop intends to examine a wide range of topics pertaining to the early history of savings, credit and debt in South Africa since the seventeenth century exploring investigations from History, Economics, Anthropology and Sociology – and any other innovative perspective. The workshop encourages the application of a wide range of methodologies in order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of savings, credit and debt behaviour through our history facilitating a deeper understanding of the past for innovative future policy formulation.

The ERSA Economic History and Macroeconomics research workshop on Savings, Credit and Debt in History offers the insights of two international scholars on the research field:

- Professor J P B (Joost) Jonkers from the University of Amsterdam. Prof Jonkers has published on Dutch corporate finance, VOC shipping finance and saving and credit in Dutch society.
- Dr D'Maris Coffman from Cambridge University. Dr Coffman is the Leverhulme/Newton Trust early career Fellow and Director of the Centre for Financial History, Newham College, with research interests in the advent of markets for debt securities in Britain and other commodities markets.

The guests will present aspects of their own work to facilitate the exploration of the research topic and engage in the transfer of appropriate and new methodologies of research on the workshop topic.

Date: 21-24 January 2015

Place: Johannesburg, South Africa

Number of participants: The number of participants will be limited to 15 delegates.

Funding: Travel expenses in South Africa will be covered and accommodation for the duration of the workshop will be provided by the ERSA Economic History Working Group.

Domestic Flights: To Johannesburg (OR Tambo or Lanseria)

Requirements: This is an open call for submissions to scholars in the broad research area of savings, credit and debt since the seventeenth century 'South African' colonies and indigenous societies, to present the result of research – which could be research in progress, completed research, research in related areas or research in the conceptualisation phase. Scholars will be invited to present their work and engage in the ensuing discourse.

Applications must be submitted by Friday, 5 December 2014. Send all abstracts to: [workshops@econrsa.org](mailto:workshops@econrsa.org) with the subject title: Economic History – January 2015.