SAHS
Southern African Historical Society

Currently hosted by the Department of History, University of the Witwatersrand
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26th Biennial Conference
21-23 June 2017
'Disputed Pasts, Fractured Futures and the Work of History'

Hosted by the Department of History, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg

As southern Africa and the world nears the end of an especially turbulent decade, peoples, ideas, structures of power and institutions are being reconfigured in ways both uncertain and unpredictable. As public debates intensify, the past itself has become disputed, with historiographical orthodoxies, even the academy itself, questioned and sometimes abandoned. Yet, the work of history and historians – putting the past and present into dialogue – is vital for imagining possible futures for our world.

The 26th biennial conference of the Southern African Historical Society (SAHS) will raise questions about the potential of history and the production of historical knowledge to work with or against new economic, political and cultural forces. It asks what fresh perspectives are emerging from and about the discipline of history and how these may illuminate the particular crises of our current socio-economic and political moments.

Providing a reflective backdrop to proceedings, the Wits History Department will be marking its centenary year, and the Wits History Workshop its 40th anniversary. These institutions have made a significant impact on southern African scholarship and the wider public, charting new paths and breaking with tradition in often unpromising contexts. The conference offers an opportunity to consider these complex intellectual histories and its place in regional historiography.

The SAHS, therefore, invites contributions from professional historians, post-graduate students, and cognate specialists such as archaeologists, archivists, documentary film-makers and heritage practitioners. As the professional body for historical studies in southern Africa, this conference, however, is not exclusive in terms of its theme. We strive to reflect the broad diversity of the discipline in this region and are therefore open to a wide range of themes, including (but not limited to):

- Contested canons: historical structures, new and old
- The History Department: the past and future of historical epistemology
- Transnational trails and entangled diasporas
- Silencing the future: all archives matter!
- Winds and tides of change: oceanic and airborne modernities
- The past and its shadows: imagination, dreams and the supernatural as evidence
- The persistence of the precolonial
- Dissenting bodies and voices: generational engagements with the past
- #MustHistoryFall?: disputed decolonisations
- Colonial anxieties
- Business, capital, conflict: past economics and future derivatives
- Environmental history: fracking, fractured, fracturing
- Flows of water/flows of power/flows of history
- Blowing hot/blowing cold: wars, insurgencies, rebellions
- Histories for healing and harming
- Forms of history-making: digital, analog, modular

We invite proposals for sessions in three different formats: papers, panels and roundtable discussions. Participants are encouraged to propose experimental sessions using creative forms of presentation not covered by these standard session types. Please consider choosing a session format that will most effectively achieve your intellectual goals, and will best foster lively interaction among presenters and between presenters and the audience. Paper submissions should include an abstract (max 200 words) and a very short CV (a brief paragraph of 100 words). Panel and roundtable submissions should include a minimum of three papers (each with a 200-word abstract and short CV), a proposed moderator/chair (if possible), and a 100-word abstract. Please send to Mucha Musemwa, mucha.musemwa@wits.ac.za by *16 January 2017.*

Early-bird conference registration fee for SAHS members: R2000 (Regular fee: R2500).
Conference registration commences 1 March 2017.
Early-bird registration ends on 15 April 2017.
Post-doctoral fee: R2100. Post-graduate fee: R1700. There will also be a limited number of post-graduate bursaries to assist with registration fees.
Further details regarding student bursaries, conference logistics, the SAHS Vice-Presidential student essay prize, and the special conference edition of the *South African Historical Journal* will be published on the SAHS conference website in due course: http://www.sahs.org.za.

For more information, please email Mucha Musemwa: mucha.musemwa@wits.ac.za or Prinisha Badassy: prinisha.badassy@wits.ac.za.

The Southern African Historical Society is committed to fostering the development of young scholars in History and its allied disciplines.