



Jamie Monson, Ph.D.

Associate Professor of History

Carleton College, Northfield

Born in 1956 in California
Studied History at Stanford University and
at the University of California at Los Angeles

FOCUS

PROJECT

Mobility, Marginality and HIV/AIDS in East Africa: Reconstructing the Historical and Demographic Context of Disease Transmission

This project will develop an interactive, interdisciplinary methodology for understanding the historical demographic context of disease transmission in southern Tanzania. It will bring together qualitative and quantitative data from the humanities, from the social sciences, and from biomedical research in order to understand the relationship between rural mobility and the incidence of HIV/AIDS. The project will use life-history narratives together with demographic statistics and GIS imagery to reconstruct the historical demographic context within which disease transmission takes place.

Recommended Reading

Monson, Jamie. "Relocating Maji Maji: The Politics of Alliance and Authority in the Southern Highlands of Tanzania, 1870(1918)." *Journal of African History* 39 (1998): 95-120.
-. "Memory, Migration and the Authority of History in Southern Tanzania, 1860(1960)." *Journal of African History* 41 (2000): 347-372.
-. "Maisha: Life History and the History of Livelihood Along the TAZARA Railway in Tanzania." In *Sources and Methods in African History: Spoken, Written, Unearthed*, edited by Toyin Falola and Christian Jennings, 312(331). Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2003.

COLLOQUIUM, 22.03.2005

Truth and the F-Word, or: Knowledge versus Ideology? On Epistemological Uses of Feminism in the Social and Natural Sciences

The TAZARA Railway (Tanzania Zambia Railway) was China's showcase development project in Africa. Built between 1969 and 1975 to link Zambia's copperbelt to the Indian Ocean, it was heralded in East Africa as the "Great Freedom Railway" because it liberated central African economies from their dependence upon southern African routes. During the railway's construction some 20,000 Chinese workers labored alongside their African counterparts through some of the most difficult terrain in East Africa.

At the time, the railway was derided by critics who viewed it as an ideologically-driven Cold War project, rather than a meaningful contribution to regional development. Following the liberation of Zimbabwe and South Africa from white settler rule, transportation economists predicted that TAZARA would no longer have an economic future.

In the small towns and regional centers that line the railway corridor, however, there was another development story. Here TAZARA has been an important resource in sustaining a thriving small-scale economy, facilitating multi-spatial livelihoods for individuals and communities. The railway links different kinds of markets, agro-ecological zones, and cultural areas. It allows rural producers to move from one geographic place, resource or occupation to another, within a rural economy that is continually changing.

This enhanced mobility has contributed over time to significant landscape change, and thus to conflicts over resource use. As increasing numbers of immigrants move into the railway corridor, they bring with them new ways of using natural resources and new links to market economies. The conflicts that have resulted are expressed in terms of ethnicity, generational divisions and socio-economic differentiation.

EVENINGCOLLOQUIUM

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26.04.2005

Freedom Railway to Ordinary Train: A Social History of the TAZARA Railway