PROJECT DESCRIPTION

In 1965 Prof. Norman Miller conducted a social survey in three different Tanzanian districts, namely Tabore, Rungwe, and Kisarawe. The study was the basis of Prof. Miller’s doctoral dissertation and numerous published articles on the political scene of early post-colonial Tanzania. Now, forty years later, we (Purcell and Miller) attempted to replicate Miller’s study in an effort to measure changes that have been taking place in the social, cultural, economic, and political spheres of rural Tanzania through a pilot study which involved students from both Davidson College and the University of Dar es Salaam in Tanzania. We returned to the original villages where the 1965 survey was done, namely Mbwamaji in Temeke district, Sungwe in Kisarawe district, and Usagari in Tabora district (for logistical reasons Rungwe district is left out for now). The aim was to conduct a time-line depth survey, using information based on Prof. Miller’s 1965 survey. Given the time span and recent methodological approaches, we modified the original survey and formulated relevant questions to the present time to collect data on various aspects of rural Tanzania covering the four decades that have elapsed. In a broader scope we looked to explore how the specifics of occupation, education, economic life, family life, quality of life and values have shifted over the last forty years in connection with development efforts made by the Tanzanian government, non-governmental and international agencies. The overall objective of our project was to compare and contrast the state of affairs with respect to socio-cultural, political, and economic processes and attitudes at the grassroots level. We pose questions such as:

* How are rural people faring in the post-ujamaa era?
* Compared to the period soon after independence, what is the character of rural people’s occupations, resources, and livelihoods, participation in politics?
* What types of political identities and political alignments manifest themselves locally and how are they viewed at the grassroots?
* How accountable is the government, NGOs, and political parties to the citizens?

Contemporary data will be collected in a standardized manner that will allow some basic statistical assessments and correlations and comparisons with the 1965 findings. The study argues for the importance of local level studies for they reveal not only patterns of behavior in their cultural settings but also the impact of processes of social, political, and cultural change.

Duration: 6 weeks to cover Mbwamaji (Temeke), Sungwe (Kisaware), and Usagari (Tabora) between June 1 to July 30, 2005, in Dar es Salaam, Coastal, and Tabore regions.