

**James C. McCann**  
**318-44-4533**

Boston University  
African Studies Center  
232 Bay State Road  
Boston, MA 02215  
(617) 353-7308  
(cell/mobile)  
781 526-0331  
e-mail: mccann@bu.edu

178 Mystic St.  
Arlington, MA 02474  
(781) 643-9788  
(781) 526-0331 (mobile)

**PRESENT POSITION:** Professor and Chair of History (with tenure), Faculty Fellow, Pardee Center for the Study of the Longer –Range Future, Associate Director for Development , African Studies Center, Boston University.

**EDUCATION:**

Ph.D. History - Michigan State University.      M.A. - Michigan State University.  
B.A. History and Political Science- Northwestern University.

**FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS (INDIVIDUAL):**

2014 Distinguished Scholar Prize, American Society for Environmental History.

Associate Fellow (elected), Ethiopian Academy of Science, 2014.

Guggenheim Fellow, 2012-2013.

Fulbright Fellow (Ethiopia), 2012-2013.

Principal Investigator, The Impact of Maize Cultivation on Malaria Transmission (with the Harvard School of Public Health), funded by the Rockefeller Foundation, 2005-2012.

“Best in the World” award, *Gourmand Magazine*, for *Stirring the Pot* (awarded in Paris, March 2011).

George Perkins Marsh Prize (best book in environmental history, 2005). Awarded by American Society of Environmental History for *Maize and Grace: Africa's Encounter with a New World Crop, 1500-2000*.

W.E.B. DuBois Institute, Harvard University (Sheila Biddle Fellow), 2005-2006

Fulbright-Hays Faculty Research Abroad fellow 2002-2003 (for research on maize in Africa)

Cotsen Grant (National Humanities Center) for preparation of C-D Rom course “The Environmental History of Africa.”

Fellow in Residence, Program in Agrarian Studies (Yale University), 1998-99.

Ford Foundation Grant for research on maize and the city (Travel to Mexico, January 1999).

Herskovits prize (best book in African studies) finalist, 2006 (for *Maize and Grace*)

Herskovits prize (best book in African studies), finalist, 1996 (for *People of the Plow*).

Choice Magazine Outstanding Academic Book Award, 1996 (for *People of the Plow*).

Choice Magazine Outstanding Book in African and African-American Studies for the period 1990-1996 (for *People of the Plow*).

Fulbright-Hays Faculty Research Abroad Fellow 1992-93, 1996-97, 2002-03.

Fellow, National Humanities Center, Research Triangle Park, North Carolina (Delta Delta Delta Fellow), 1991-92.

Advanced International Research in African Studies, Social Science Research Council/American Council of Learned Societies, 1991-92.

Grant-in-Aid, American Council of Learned Societies, 1991.

Humanities Fellow, Boston University Humanities Foundation, 1989-90.

*Choice Magazine*, Outstanding Academic Books of 1987-88 (for *From Poverty to Famine*).

National Endowment for the Humanities Travel Grant, 1987.

American Council of Learned Societies, Travel Grant, 1986.

National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Stipend, 1985.

Graduate School Seed Grant, Boston University, 1990, 1984.

Social Science Research Council Fellow, 1980-82.

Fulbright-Hays Fellow, 1980-81.

NDFL Language Fellow (Arabic), 1979-80.

NDFL Language Fellow (Amharic), 1976-79.

**RESEARCH LANGUAGES:** Amharic, Italian, French, Spanish, Arabic.

## **PUBLICATIONS:**

### **Books:**

- 2018 James C. McCann, ed. Donald Crummey, *Farming and Famine: Landscape and Vulnerability in Northeast Ethiopia, 1889-1991*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.
- 2015 *Deposing the Malevolent Spirit: The Historical Ecology of Malaria in Ethiopia* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press,).
- 2009 *Stirring the Pot: A History of African Cuisine* (Ohio University Press).
- 2005 *Maize and Grace: A History of Maize in Africa* (Harvard University Press).
- 1999 *Green Land, Brown Land, Black Land: An Environmental History of Africa, 1800-1990* (Heinemann).
- 1995 *People of the Plow: A Modern History of Highland Agriculture in Ethiopia* (University of Wisconsin Press).
- 1987 *From Poverty to Famine in Northeast Ethiopia: A Rural History 1900-35* (University of Pennsylvania Press).

### **Chapters in Books**

- 2018 "Africa's High Modernism: Historical Ecologies of Climate Change and Hydrologies of Watersheds (Blue Nile and Zambezi)." in Julia Tishler, ed. *Environmental Change and African Societies –Past, Present and Future*. Leiden, Netherlands: E.J. Brill.
- 2017 "Bahir Dar and the Lake Tana Basin: Historical Phases of Growth" Springer Press.
- 2015 "Tastes and Textures of African Cuisines: Pre-modern and Current Trends" in Massimo Montanari and Francois Sabban, eds. *Atlas of Gastronomy*. Bologna: University of Bologna, 2015.
- 2014 "The Agroecology of Malaria: Maize, Mosquitos, and Dynamic Landscape Change in Ethiopia." with

Richard J. Pollack, Anthony Kiszewski, Rachel Nalepa, and Andrew Spielman. PS&A Research Series, African Studies Center, Boston University. [research monograph].

- 2013 "Environmental History" in John Parker and Richard Reid, eds. *Oxford Handbook on Modern African History*. Oxford, U.K., Oxford University Press.
- 2012 "Writing on the African Pot: Recipes and Cooking as Historical Knowledge" in Kyri Claflin and Peter Scholliers eds. *Writing Food History: A Global Perspective*. Oxford: Berg Publishers (forthcoming).
- 2006 "Naming the Stranger" in Paolo Squatriti, ed, *The Nature of History*. Ann Arbor: U. of Michigan Press.
- 2005 "West Africa's Colonial Fungus: Globalization and Science at the End of Empire, 1949-2000." In J. Diefendorf and K. Dorsey, ed. *The City and the Country,: New Themes in Environmental History*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press.
- 2004 "Seeds of Subversion: Maize in Two Old World Empires (Ethiopia and Veneto), 1500-1999. In Thomas Summerhill, ed. *Transatlantic Rebels: Agrarianism in Comparative Context*. E. Lansing, Michigan State University Press.
- 2000 Prospects for Democracy, Agro-ecology and Civil Society: Elections in the Amhara region, Ethiopia's Rural Hinterland ," in Siegfried Pausewang and Kjetil Tronvoll, *The Ethiopian Elections: Democracy Advanced or Restricted*. Oslo: Norwegian Institute of Human Rights.
- 1998 "Leadership, Personality and Political Culture in Modern Ethiopian History" in M. Page and S. Beswick, eds. *Personality and Political Culture in African History* (Michigan State University Press).
- 1994 "Empiricism, Narrative, and Change in African Historical Landscapes" in Michael Glantz, ed., *Creeping Environmental Phenomena*, National Center for Atmospheric Research
- 1994 "The Title VI Mandate, African Studies, and Undergraduate Teaching on Africa" in Patricia Alden and David Lloyd, eds. *African Studies and the Undergraduate Curriculum: New Directions for the 21st Century* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Press)
- 1993 "Ethiopia" chapter in Michael Glantz, ed., *Drought Follows the Plow: Marginal Land Agriculture in Seven Countries* (Cambridge University Press).
- 1990 "The Myth and Reality of Agricultural Crises in Ethiopia: Empirical Lessons from History," in Marina Ottaway, ed., *The Political Economy of Ethiopia* (New York: Praeger).
- 1988 "Children of the House: Households and Slavery in Ethiopia, 1900-35," in Suzanne Miers and Richard Roberts, eds., *The End of Slavery in Africa* (University of Wisconsin Press).
- 1987 "Drought, Land, and Reproduction: Dynamics of Society and Ecology in Northeast Ethiopia," in David Anderson and Douglas Johnson, eds., *Ecology and Stress in Northeast Africa: Historical and Anthropological Perspectives* (London: Crook Green Publishers).
- 1987 "The Social Impact of Famine in Northeast Ethiopia: Some Implications for Rehabilitation," in Michael Glantz, ed., *Drought and Hunger in Africa: Denying Famine a Future* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).

#### Articles (since 1986)

- 2018 A Reprise and Renewal: African Agricultural Historiography. PS&A Research Series, No. 16. Boston: Boston University African Studies Center.
- 2018 "Food Systems and the Environment: Agriculture, Nutrition, Health, and the Environment in Africa" Wafaie Fawzi, et. al., Harvard School of Public Health, Harvard Kennedy School, submitted to *Lancet*, forthcoming.
- 2018 The History of Agriculture in Ethiopia. *Oxford Encyclopedia of African History*. Oxford U.K.: Oxford University Press.

- 2017 "The building of the Terra Firma: the political ecology of land reclamation in Veneto (16<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> centuries), *Environmental History*, July 2017.
- 2015 "The Lights and the Follies." Review article. *American Historical Review*
- 2011 "The Political Ecology of Cereal Seed Development in Africa: A History of Selection" *IDS Bulletin* (Journal of the Institute of Development Studies), 2, 42.
- 2011 "Deposing the Malevolent Spirit: A Historical Cultural Ecology of Malaria in Northwest Ethiopia." Research Series Working Paper, No. 9. Program for the Study of the African Environment, Boston University.
- 2010 "Satellite Imagery, Landscape History, and Disease: Mapping and Visualizing the Agroecology of Malaria in Ethiopia," with Magaly Koch. Research Series Working Paper No. 8. Program for the Study of the African Environment, Boston University.
- 2008 "Disease as History and Agro-ecology: Malaria" (Review article), *International Journal of African Historical Studies*.
- 2006 with Timothy Dalton, "Breeding for a New Maize Paradigm, *International Journal of Agricultural Sustainability*. 4(2): 99-107.
- 2005 Asnakew Kebede, McCann, James C., Yemane Ye-ebiyo, and Kiszewski, Anthony. "New Evidence of the Effects of Agro-ecological Change on Malaria Transmission." *American Journal of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene*.
- 2005 "Africa's Environmental Footprints: Tracking Past and Future." *Environmental History*, 10, 1 (2005), 59-61.
- 2003 "African Lives as Historical Narrative," *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 30, 1 (2003), 125-30.
- 2001 "Maize and Grace: History, Corn, and Africa's New Landscapes, 1500-1999," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*,
- 2001 "Literacy, Orality, and Property: Church Documents in Ethiopia," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* (Summer 2001), 1-10
- 2000 "Climate and Causation in African History," *International Journal of African Historical Studies*
- 1997 "A Tale of Two Forests: Deforestation Narratives in Ethiopia, 1840-1996," *Environmental History*, 2, 1 (1997)
- 1994 "The Environmental History of Eastern Africa," *Environmental History Review*, 1993
- 1991 "Agriculture and African History," *Journal of African History*, 31.
- 1991 "Orality, State Literacy, and Political Culture in Ethiopia: Translating the Ras Kassa Registers," Discussion Papers in the African Humanities, African Studies Center, Boston University, AH#10.
- 1990 "A Dura Revolution and Frontier Agriculture in Northwest Ethiopia, 1898-1920," *Journal of African History*, 30, 1.121-34.
- 1990 "A Great Agrarian Cycle? A History of Agricultural Productivity and Demographic Change in Highland Ethiopia 1900-87," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 20, 3, 389-416.
- 1986 "The Political Economy of Rebellion in Northeast Ethiopia, 1928-30," *International Journal of African Historical Studies*.
- 1986 "Household Economy, Demography, and the "Push Factor in Northern Ethiopian History, 1916-35," *Review*, 9, 3.

#### INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- 1998-2019 invited lectures presented at University of Oxford, University of Sussex, University of Michigan, University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, Michigan State University, Brigham Young University, University of California-Riverside, Yale University, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Tufts University, University of Oregon, San Diego State University, University of California-Davis, University of Groningen (Netherlands).
- Keynote Speaker, Watson Institute, Brown University "Africa's Environmental Future as Past," December 2009. "My Life as a Mosquito," Seminar presented to Modern Times, Rural Places seminar, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, February, 2009.
- Master Respondent, conference on Cultural Creativity in the Ethiopian American Diaspora, Harvard University/Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study. Spring 2008.
- Organizer, Workshop on the Impact of Maize Production on Malaria Transmission. Funded by the Rockefeller Foundation, Jimma (Ethiopia), July 2007.
- Invited Participant, Conference on Africa's Environmental History, Royal Swedish Academy, Stockholm. April 2007.
- Consultant, Norwegian Centre for Human Rights, University of Oslo. . (Ethiopian elections evaluation and field study), 2005
- Mother-Baby Maize Breeding Program, International Center for the Improvement of Maize and Wheat (CIMMYT), Harare, Zimbabwe. Visiting Scientist to evaluation crop breeding program. June-July 2004. (with Dr. Timothy Dalton, University of Maine). Regional field study in Zimbabwe, Malawi, and South Africa.
- Keynote Speaker, Workshop on African Environmental History and Applied Research, Uppsala University/Stockholm University, April 2004.
- Food and Agriculture Organization (United Nations), Rome, Seminar Presented on Maize and Malaria to the Farming Systems Department, July 2003.
- Visiting Scientist, International Center for the Improvement of Maize and Wheat (CIMMYT), Harare Zimbabwe, July 2003.
- Norwegian Institute on Human Rights University of Oslo, Ethiopian Election Observer, May-June 2000.
- National Humanities Center, MacArthur Foundation Project on the Ecological Humanities. Planning Group (April 1999).
- U.S.A.I.D./Tufts University, Workshop on Strengthening A Livelihoods Approach for Disaster Response in Africa, Joint Workshop by Feinstein International Famine Center (Tufts U.) and the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID), November 1998.
- Social Science Research Council and African Academy of Science, Workshop on Biodiversity in Africa, , Nairobi, 1994.
- National Science Foundation and African Academy of Science, Workshop on Drought in Africa.
- International Livestock Centre for Africa, consultant on Project on Improved Production on Black Clay Soils, 1992-94.
- American Jewish World Service/Save the Children (Norway), consultant on Social Context of Food Storage, 1990.
- U.S. Congress, Invited testimony to Joint Economic Committee (Senator A. Gore) on Long-term strategy for environmental policy for ending famine, February 1990.
- Member, Advisory Board on Rural Vulnerability, United Nations Development Program, Ethiopia, 1988.
- United Nations Environmental Program (Ethiopian Meteorological Services Agency), consultant and project design for drought early warning program for northeast Africa, 1988-present.

Oxfam (U.K.), Consultant to evaluate social impact of rural development projects in Hararge, Ethiopia, 1987.

U.S. House of Representatives, Testimony to Joint House Committees on Economic Policy, Human Rights, and Africa, , October 1987.

Oxfam America, consultant to evaluate Ethiopia oxen/seed rehabilitation program in cooperation with the Staff Council of the International Livestock Commission for Africa (ILCA), 1985-86.

National Center for Atmospheric Research, Organizing Committee, International Colloquium, "Denying Famine A Future."

House of Commons (U.K. Parliament), Testimony on Ethiopian studies in the U.S. given to United Kingdom Ethiopia Society, London, July 1984.

Research Associate, Institute of Ethiopian Studies, Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia, Summer 1985, January-September 1982.

Visiting Fulbright Scholar, Italy (Rome), November 1981-January 1982.

Visiting Fulbright Scholar, Britain (London, Oxford, and Durham), May-November 1981.

Research Associate, Institute of African and Asian Studies, University of Khartoum, Sudan, January-May 1981.