



DACB News Link

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Rich New Sources For DACB Biographies



The *DACB* now has access to two plentiful, previously untapped sources for African Christian biographies.

Beginning in August 2016, the *DACB* has been transcribing, coding and uploading the work of notable scholar Louise Pirouet. A historian of Christianity in Uganda, Pirouet conducted research at the University of East Africa, Makerere University in Uganda and at Homerton College of Cambridge University.

"She was one of pioneers of the study of Ugandan Christianity, seconded from the Church Missionary Society to the Department of Religious Studies, Makerere University from 1964 to 1970," wrote Angus Crichton, a research associate at the Cambridge Centre for

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DACB Anniversary Conference Book Coming Out Next Year



Last year, the Center for Global Christianity and Mission hosted the conference "African Christian Biography: Narratives, Beliefs and Boundaries," marking the 20th anniversary of the *Dictionary of African Christian Biography*, in association with the African Studies Center and the African Studies Library.

Now, the CGCM is putting together an edited volume with many of the papers presented at the conference. The book is expected to come out some time in 2017.

One of the strengths of this book--and the conference that birthed it--is that Dr. Dana Robert, in organizing the conference, brought together a diverse forum of both Western and African scholars with expertise in various disciplines--African-American studies, History, African Studies, African Literature, Mission studies, and History of Christianity.

The volume will be published by an African publisher who has distribution networks in Africa and in the States. Dr. Robert wants everyone on the *DACB* Executive and Advisory Councils to have ample access to copies of the book. Therefore it is important for the publisher to be able to easily place its books in African and western libraries. **

- Trevor Persaud

From the Director



In June of this year the *DACB* launched *The Journal of African Christian Biography*. I hope that readers of this column may

have already been introduced to it. Since then, five issues of the journal have appeared online as free downloads. The intention is to make *DACB* stories more readily available to those without access to the internet. To that end, each issue of the journal is available not only in its e-journal version, but in A4 or 8.5 x 11 format printable as booklets, ready for local printing and binding or stapling. Our hope and expectation is that academics and church leaders in various parts of Africa will make print copies of the journal available to

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New Sources, cont'd

Christianity Worldwide, in an email to the *DACB* in March. "While there she researched and completed her PhD thesis on how African Protestant catechists pioneered the growth of the Anglican Church beyond Buganda. She also created the first generation of tools for the study of Ugandan Christianity: the collection of church records and archives, a slide show for teaching East African Church History, editing and publishing *Dini Na Mila*, even a tour of religious sites in Kampala to illustrate Uganda's religious history and the writing of short biographies of Ugandan Christians."

The Pirouet biographies draw mainly from three sources. Some of them come from Appendix A of her Ph.D. dissertation, "The Expansion of the Church of Uganda (N.A.C.) from Buganda into Northern and Western Uganda between 1891 and 1914, with Special Reference to the work of African Teachers and Evangelists" (University of East Africa, 1968), which she published in 1978 under the name *Black Evangelists*. Others are drawn from her books *A Dictionary of Christianity in Uganda* (Department of Religious Studies, Makerere University College, 1969) and *Historical Dictionary of Uganda: African Historical Dictionaries No. 64* (Metuchen: The Scarecrow Press, 1995).

The *DACB* has also received permission to reprint biographies from *Cibles : 235 prêtres africains tués* ("Targets: 235 African Priests Killed"), a book by Neno Contran and Gilbert Kadjemenje (Limete-Kinshasa : Afriquespoir, 2002). The compendium of African Catholic stories will substantially increase the size of French-language portion of the *DACB*.

"The gist of this undertaking is to record the life stories and deaths of the Catholic martyrs in Africa," says Michele Sigg, *DACB* Project Manager. "Some of them are very brief—no story, just how they died, no sources listed—some are more complete and cite sources. We will incorporate the former in the 'memories' collection and the latter in with the biographies." **

- Trevor Persaud

Daughter and Father Contribute Expertise to DACB

The work of the *DACB* owes a great deal to **Frances (Beth) Restrick**, editor of the Book Notes for the *Journal of African Christian Biography* and to her father, David Restrick, who translates *DACB* articles into Portuguese. Beth has been head of the Boston University African Studies Library since July 2009. After a childhood spent in South Africa, Swaziland, and Mozambique, Beth graduated from Eastern Nazarene College in Quincy, Mass., with a BA in General Science, minoring in environmental science. Upon graduation, she returned to Maputo, Mozambique, and spent a year volunteering as a librarian, establishing the library at the Seminário Nazareno em Moçambique (SNM). She enrolled in a masters program at the Simmons Graduate School of Library and Information Science, intending to pursue work in library development in Africa. Shortly after beginning the program, she found a full-time position as library technician and coordinator at Boston University's African Studies Library. Beth earned her MLIS in 2006 and was later appointed head of the African Studies Library in July 2009. She continues to remain involved with library development in Africa, participating in an ongoing project to digitize the SNM library.



David and Rhoda Restrick served as missionaries with the Church of the Nazarene in Mozambique for 25 years. David was teacher and Academic Dean at Seminário Nazareno em Moçambique. They retired from missionary service in 2014, and David joined the religion faculty at Eastern Nazarene College in Quincy, MA, teaching World Religions, Christian Tradition, Missions, and Church history courses. David also serves as associate pastor at the South Weymouth, MA, Church of the Nazarene.

As the daughter of Nazarene missionaries, Beth has an abiding interest in the history of missions and the Church in Africa. As an undergraduate, she frequently consulted the *DACB* for both her own personal curiosity and for research. She never imagined that one day she would be involved lending research support to the *DACB* in her capacity as African Studies Librarian and serving as the Book Notes Editor to the *JACB*. David was also eager to be a part of the work of the *DACB* and, upon arriving in Boston in 2014, volunteered to translate articles into Portuguese. **

Featured Biography: Tomasi Semfuma

Semfuma, Tomasi
 d.1929
 Anglican
 Uganda



[BUNYORO. Muganda]

In his youth Rev. Tomasi Semfuma was a servant of Princess Nalumansi, a sister of Kabaka Mutesa. In 1884 he started to learn at the Protestant mission, and must have been baptized shortly after this since he was made a member of the first Church Council in 1885. In May 1886 he took Ashe the news that Nalumansi had burnt her fetishes, an action which precipitated further persecution. He would have been executed, but Mackay redeemed him with a gift of ivory to the Kabaka. In 1888 he was among the Christian exiles in Ankole. He was commissioned by Bishop Tucker in 1891 as one of the first lay-evangelists. In 1892 he was wounded at the Battle of Mengo, but his life was saved by Dr. Gaskoin Wright. In 1895 he was sent as an evangelist to Koki, and when Kitehimbwa was appointed by the British Mukama of Bunyoro in 1898 he went with him and stayed at Masindi teaching at his court. In 1899 he was ordained deacon, and returned for a time to Masindi. In 1901 he was ordained priest and was then appointed to Luwero in North Bulemezi where he remained until 1916. In that year he was transferred to Natete where he worked until his retirement. He died at Katwe on September 4, 1929. **

Louise Pirouet

See the biography at http://www.dacb.org/stories/uganda/semfuma_tomasi.html for the full source list.

This biography was included in "Appendix A: Biographical Notes," on page 425 of "The Expansion of the Church of Uganda (N.A.C.) from Buganda into Northern and Western Uganda between 1891 and 1914, with Special Reference to the work of African Teachers and Evangelists" (PhD Thesis: University of East Africa, 1968). Pirouet published this thesis as *Black Evangelists* (London: Rex Collings, 1978). However, *Black Evangelists* does not reproduce the detailed biographies, complete with references to sources, found in Appendix A of the thesis. Print copies are available at Africana Section, Makerere University Library (U 02 P57); The Centre for Christianity Worldwide, Cambridge; and a microfilm copy at the School of Oriental Studies, London.

Who's New at DACB-Boston: Trevor Persaud and Stephen Lloyd

The DACB welcomed two new staff members this year:

Trevor Persaud is a second-year M.Div. student at BU School of Theology with a concentration in Religion and the Academy. A Howard Thurman Fellow and a former writer for *Christianity Today*, Trevor has a B.A. in Communication Arts and English from Oklahoma Wesleyan University. Trevor's academic interests lie in the liminal space where theology and everyday faith bleed into one another. He learned about the DACB while taking Dr. Dana Robert's class in African Christianity during his first semester at BU.



Stephen Lloyd is a PhD student in the Graduate Division of Religious Studies. Before arriving at BU, Steve earned a BA at Loyola University Maryland, where he double majored in history and theology. He then earned a MAR at Yale Divinity School, where he studied the history of Christian Missions. Steve's main area of focus is the history of Christianity in Africa. His dissertation research is on the changing relationship between Afrikaans Dutch Reformed missionaries and the South African apartheid state. He is a member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and is committed to ecumenical dialog and missions. His wife Emily is an

Episcopal priest, and they live in New York. **

their students, colleagues or church members. Thus far journal content is taken from material already available in the *DACB* memory base. The **June** issue featured stories of two Ethiopian women: Wallata Petros (by Wendy Belcher) and Hakalla Amale (by Belaynesh Diddamo), with an introduction by Jonathan Bonk. For the **July** issue, Dana Robert provided the background to two biographies of Josiah Kibira of Tanzania (respective authors are Angolwisyé Isakwisa Malambuqi and Stephen Lloyd). **August-September** was a combined issue, featuring the stories of Dominic Ignatius Ekandem, David Windibiziri and Abiodun Babatunde Lawrence, all researched and written by Nigeria's former head of state, Olusegun Obasanjo, with commentary provided by *DACB* Advisor Deji Ayegboyin and Michael Ogunewu. For October, Gabriel Leonard Allen, Gambian engineer and church leader provided both the story and background of William Wadé Harris, the great prophet-evangelist of West Africa. And for November, Paul Nchoji Nkwi has introduced our readers to two forerunners of Cameroonian Christianity, Michael Timneng and Jeremiah Chi Kangsen. Overseeing all of this is Managing Editor Michele Sigg with her small but efficient part time team of Boston University graduate students, Trevor Persaud and Stephen Lloyd (see their stories on page 3). She has served as the *DACB*'s Project Manager since 2002.

In addition to biographical content, each issue featured a helpful column on "Recent Print and Digital Resources Related to Christianity in Africa," compiled by Beth Restrick, head of the African Studies Library at Boston University (see her story on page 2).

At their annual meeting in Nairobi this December, the Advisory Council will be exploring ways to enhance and more widely distribute the journal. Questions of frequency, content, paper publication, and circulation will be discussed. Should the journal carry on as a monthly publication? Or would a bi-monthly or quarterly journal be preferable? Should content be restricted to biography, or should it be expanded to include church histories and other writing intersecting with on-the-ground African Christianity? What kind of local publication and distribution arrangements might be possible through academic or church centers in various African cities? Answers to these questions have far-reaching editorial, financial, and logistical implications, and vigorous discussion is anticipated.

This issue of the newsletter will make it evident that the *DACB*, now in its twenty-first year of existence, continues to be a dynamic, growing, and steadily evolving window into African Christianity. ✱

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Project Director



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*American donations in support of the *DACB* should be sent to:

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<http://www.dacb.org/supportthedacb.html>

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