

CGCM NEWS

Center for Global Christianity and Mission

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www.bu.edu/cgcm

CGCM DIGITAL PROJECTS AND THE CONTOURS OF WORLD CHRISTIANITY



Photo by ML Daneel. AIC members in Zimbabwe dance as a form of worship. This photo and many others will be included in the upcoming AIC Photo Archive.

As a guiding theme for this academic year, the Center for Global Christianity and Missions has asked the following question: what is world Christianity? On our website and in our last issue, scholars associated with the CGCM provided a wide array of thought provoking answers to our thematic question. While we began the year thinking at the global level, we now set our sights on decidedly more local aspects of the bigger picture. This semester, the CGCM will be enthusiastically hosting the Global Christianity Speakers Series that will include academics who study specific topics in world Christianity—ranging from Orthodoxy, Roman

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This issue showcases current and upcoming CGCM digital projects, including our new In the Midst project, the Dictionary of African Christian Biography, the Boston Korean Diaspora Project, our upcoming AIC Photo Archive, and more.

Global Christianity Speaker Series Spring 2015

All talks take place at 6pm
at STH Room 115.

2/11: **Scott Bessenecker**,
Overturning Missions

2/18: **Margaret Guider**,
OSF, Global Catholicism

2/25: **Kristine Haglund**,
Mormonism

3/18: **Luke Veronis**,
Resurgent Orthodoxy

3/25: **Brian Grim**, Religious
Freedom

4/1: **Robin Harris**,
Ethnodoxology

4/8: **Xiyi Yao**, Chinese
House Churches

Speaker series and other events
continued on page 4.



(Continued from page 1) Catholicism, and Chinese Christianity to Pentecostalism, Mormonism, and ethnodoxology. In addition to serving as a leading platform for academic discourse surrounding world Christianity, the CGCM sponsors a variety of research and digital projects. This edition of the CGCM newsletter showcases these digital projects, demonstrating the way in which each of them helps us understand just what world Christianity is.



Barbara Beach Alter in Landour around 1960. Her story can be found at <http://sites.bu.edu/midst/>.

CGCM Digital Projects: Telling the Stories of the World's Christians

The CGCM offers its resources, materials, and personnel to support a variety of unique and interesting websites. In conjunction with an international network of libraries, universities, and interested individuals, the center gathers hard-to-find materials and makes them easily accessible.

Among its newest projects, the center is now hosting CGCM Visiting Researcher Dr. Catherine Corman's "In the Midst." This project is the result of several years of interviews she conducted with Barbara Beach Alter—an American Presbyterian missionary to northern India. Alter and her husband James rejected conversion as central to missionary activity in favor of service to the surrounding population. CGCM doctoral students Daryl Ireland and Eva Pascal designed the website to feature Corman's innovative audio autobiography, which allow listeners to hear Alter's amazing stories in her own voice. Corman has also constructed a podcast that will soon be available on the website.

The History of Missiology website has long been a central staple of the CGCM's scholarly efforts. Recognizing that missiological books were often rare and very difficult to obtain, especially for students outside of the United States, CGCM director Dana L. Robert conceived of the website as a digital database to make those texts widely available. The CGCM works in conjunction with the Boston University STH Library to achieve this end. In addition to the wide array of primary texts,

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(continued from page 2) the website also includes a handful of biographies of important missiologists.

<http://www.bu.edu/missiology/>.

Recently, the CGCM added the Dictionary of African Christian Biography (DACB) to its cache of web projects. Jonathan Bonk founded the DACB in 1995 at the Overseas Ministry Study Center (OMSC) in New Haven, CT. In 2012, Bonk as Executive Editor and Michelle Sigg as Project Manager brought the dictionary to Boston University. The DACB is a database of biographies of those individuals who have had some hand in shaping African Christianity from its earliest days to the present. Intentionally intercultural and broadly confessional, the DACB obtains materials from a wide variety of international sources in several languages. The hope of the project is to give African Christians across the continent both a resource to learn about their history and a space to tell their stories. Sigg and Bonk have worked to expand the content and capacities of the website (<http://www.dacb.org>), making it available in several electronic forms.

The Boston Korean Diaspora Project tells the stories of those Korean intellectuals who lived, studied, and worked in the Boston area from 1920-1965. In addition to an array of fascinating biographies about Korean Bostonians, the website chronicles important institutions and relates little known stories—such as Yun Buk Suh’s first place finish at the Boston Marathon in 1947. The project is sponsored by the CGCM in cooperation with the East Rock Institute in New Haven, CT. Visit the website at <http://sites.bu.edu/koreandiaspora/>.

The CGCM also hosts the Russian Methodism Digital Archive. This website represents the joint efforts of the CGCM, the Boston University STH Library, and the Russia United Methodist Theological Seminary. Various scholars and institutions have contributed documents, scrapbooks, and other resources that will help give scholars a sense of the shape of Russian Methodist history. <http://digilib.bu.edu/russianmethodism/>.

The People’s History of the Boston University School of Theology tells the story of the “School of the Prophets.” First and foremost, it is designed as a space for graduates of STH to tell their stories, focusing on their life’s work and what the school has meant to them. It also features a number of biographies of some of STH’s “famous prophets” and includes yearbook material from the past century. It also intentionally has a sub-focus on Boston University’s missionary and international students. <http://www.bu.edu/sth-history/>.



The STH graduate and Lutheran Bishop Josiah Kibira. His story can be found on the DACB website: <http://www.dacb.org>, and also at the People’s History of STH: <http://www.bu.edu/sth-history/>.

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Global Christianity
Speaker Series
Spring 2015

4/15: **Brad Gill**, Mission Frontiers

4/29: **Allan Anderson** and **Dana Robert**, Global Pentecostalism and Mission & Unity

Other Upcoming Events

2/24: **Jose Casanova** presents the Fourth Annual Peter Berger Lecture. 4pm, at STH B19.

2/27: Costas Consultation of the BTI: The Revitalization of Latin American Christianity. Keynote by **Todd Hartch**. 1pm-8pm at the GSU.

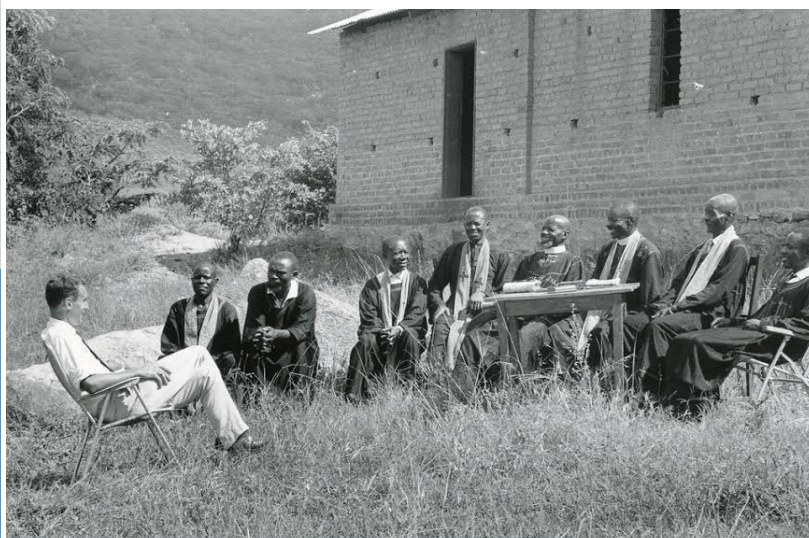
3/21: CGCM visiting researcher **Jesudas Athyal** will be acting president of the BU-hosted New England & Maritime American Academy of Religion.

3/27: Civil Disobedience as Spiritual Practice hosted by **Jim Antal**. For more info, contact Elizabeth Parsons (parsonse@bu.edu).

Stephen Lloyd and Eva Pascal edited this issue of the CGCM News. Visit the CGCM website www.bu.edu/cgcm or email us at cgcm@bu.edu.

Expanding Our Web Materials: The African Initiated Church Photo Archive

The co-founder of the CGCM and Professor Emeritus Marthinus Daneel spent decades in southern Africa researching African Initiated Churches. His work spanned across religious boundaries into African traditional religions, as new Christian movements became rooted in African soil by selectively embracing and transforming indigenous culture, language, music, art forms, rituals, religious notions. Living among the people during the treacherous decade and a half struggle for Zimbabwe's liberation that started in 1964, Dr. Daneel was one of the only westerners trusted to work with both African traditionalists and Christian communities. During upheavals and the aftermath of war, Dr. Daneel was able to document emerging churches and their pioneer leaders who forged their own Christian paths and carved out new adaptations of traditional religion. Among the traditionalists, Dr. Daneel's friendship with local spirit mediums allowed him to be the first westerner to visit and document sacred shrines in Zimbabwe. Not content to be a silent observer, Dr. Daneel helped to build and maintain a massive ecumenical and inter-religious treeplanting movement, a cause for renewed solidarity among communities previously united in the struggle for liberation, a struggle that could now be directed to protecting the earth. His work and research has yielded a wealth of photographs documenting African Initiated Churches, traditional religion, and the treeplanting movement. In a digital photo project overseen by Eva Pascal, the center is working to digitize over a thousand of these images and to make them available online. Among some of the features of the digital project, photo stories will be organized and browsable by album, and also be searchable by subject. The project is set to launch by the end of 2015.



ML Daneel with leaders of an African Initiated Church in Zimbabwe. The vast archive of photos will give researchers unique insight into AICs during the second half of the twentieth century.