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Research Professor, Boston University
Email: jjbonk@bu.edu

Mrs Michèle Sigg, Project Manager
PhD student, Boston University
Email: dacb@bu.edu

Dr. Dana Robert
Professor, Boston University

Dr. Lamin Sanneh
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Center for Global Christianity and Mission
Boston University School of Theology
745 Commonwealth Avenue
Boston, Massachusetts 02215, USA
Website: www.bu.edu/cgcm/



DICTIONARY OF AFRICAN CHRISTIAN BIOGRAPHY

www.DACB.org

MISSION

To document, collect, preserve, and make freely accessible biographical accounts and church histories from oral and written sources in order to advance a scholarly understanding of African Christianity

INTRODUCING THE DACB

THE PROJECT



The *DACB* is an international online database featuring the biographies of African Christian leaders, evangelists, missionaries, and lay workers. It documents the stories of men and women who have laid the foundations, shaped the character, and advanced the growth of Christianity in its many expressions across Africa. Contributors are drawn from academic, church, and mission communities in Africa and

elsewhere. The project was initiated in 1995 and it is ongoing. The **Center for Global Christianity and Mission** at Boston University School of Theology provides technical and administrative support.

While the recent growth and character of Christianity in Africa is without historical precedent, information on the principal local figures and leaders of this growth – from local evangelists and pastors to nationally known Christian leaders – does not appear in standard historical and biographical reference works.

The chief concern of the Dictionary is to showcase biographies of significant figures who have influenced Christianity in Africa from its inception to the present. Broadly inter-confessional, it draws on the great range of oral and written records, and it seeks contributions of original research from those primary sources. While the principal language of the Dictionary is English, there are growing numbers of entries in French, Portuguese, and Swahili, the major *lingua franca* used in many African institutions of higher learning.

WEBSITE

The *DACB* website, which receives over 1,500 daily visitors, can be freely accessed at www.DACB.org. Most of our visitors come from Nigeria, the U.S., the U.K., South Africa, and Kenya but the site is visited by people from countries in every continent. More than one million people viewed the *DACB* website between January 2014 and December 2015.

Photograph courtesy of Dr. Marthinus Daneel

OPERATIONAL FRAMEWORK

How does the *DACB* work? The *DACB* consists of two distinct but functionally complementary entities: (a) *The Dictionary of African Christian Biography* database operational center at Boston University, and (b) African collaborating institutions (research centers, academic departments, graduate schools). These institutions are committed to biographical and historical research integral to understanding local, regional, national, or denominational expressions of Christianity.



Institutions and academic centers collaborate with the *DACB* in the research, authorship, and verification of data for biographical and church histories. These institutions also facilitate and host practical training forums in oral history. These same academic centers encourage the research and writing of stories for preservation and dissemination through the *DACB*. Stories that comply with *DACB* guidelines are

published with full attribution in the database and are freely available for publication as monographs, articles, or as chapters in books. **Boston University** maintains the technical integrity of the database. The **Project Manager** monitors and maintains the editorial standard of entries as they are prepared for inclusion in the *Dictionary of African Christian Biography* database.

The Africa Advisory Council meets once each year to consider *DACB*-related processes, content, promotion, publication, and dissemination. Members serve a maximum of three consecutive three-year terms.

The Editorial Committee is responsible for overseeing the day-to-day operations of the *DACB*, liaising with the Africa Advisory Council, and advising collaborating institutions across Africa.

DACB and DACB Affiliates have a shared interest in the mission of the *DACB*. For this reason, close voluntary cooperation between the editorial office in Boston and affiliated institutions or individuals is fostered.

The Newsletter keeps *DACB* friends, collaborators, and supporters apprised of ongoing developments and provides suggestions on how to utilize the *DACB* in the context of congregations and classrooms.

REGIONAL CONFERENCES



The Dictionary seeks financial co-sponsorship for academic conferences that focus on African Christian biography and histories of the church. Conferences may be organized, convened, and hosted at select institutions throughout Africa under the auspices of such organizations as WAATI, AACC, ASTHEOL, ATISCA, ATIEA, and women's organizations.

PUBLICATIONS

Select papers presented at regional conferences and monthly featured biographies will be showcased in an annual publication, *The Journal of African Christian Biography*.

