

Digital Scholarship

CHINESE CHRISTIAN PROPAGANDA POSTERS



DACB WINS A PRIZE AFRICANA LIBRARIANS AWARD THE DACB



ACADEMIC HONORS DANA ROBERT INDUCTED INTO AAAS



PORTRAYING AMERICA'S FAITH MOTIVE MAGAZINE

CGCM NEWS

Center for Global Christianity & Mission



Chinese Christian Poster Website

On December 5, 2019 the Center for Global Christianity and Mission at the Boston University School of Theology launched its latest digital initiative: The Chinese Christian Posters Project (www.ccposters.com). Funded by the Henry Luce Foundation, the CGCM has collaborated with fourteen institutions on three continents to compile 470 images of Christian propaganda posters. Given that just a few years ago, the existence of these

“Word as a Mirror,”
Published by the
Religious Tract
Society of Hankow
and Shanghai

posters was scarcely noted or remembered, we are proud to provide the important service of making them fully accessible again.

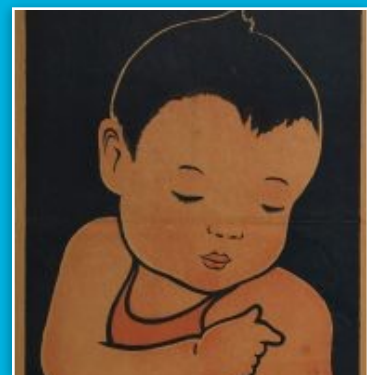
Initially, some of the posters were in such fragile condition they could not be digitized. Money from the Luce Foundation allowed those delicate posters to be worked on by conservationists, so they are now repaired, scanned, and part of the online collection. Recognizing that these posters are not durable, all 470 were digitized at an extremely high resolution so that in the future—if so desired—they can be printed off without losing anything from the original.

The task was not just to preserve the posters, but to make them freely accessible to the public. For that purpose, a website has been built. It allows users to interact with the posters in a variety of ways. A person can filter them, for instance, by year, publisher, size, or artist. The posters have been transcribed into simplified Chinese and translated into English, so the website is fully functional for scholars working in either language. That means users can search and sort posters by entering key words such as “耶稣,” “minorities,” “孩子,” “snake,” or whatever tag word a person might wish to employ. In addition, the website is interactive. Users can curate their own “exhibits.” Through this function, they can select and display a compilation of their chosen posters, and write about their observations and discoveries.

Most historians do not get to work with new sources; they can only re-interpret old ones. This website, however, brings an entire cache of new materials to light. The posters are windows into Christianity in the first half of the twentieth century. Whether a person is interested in popular Christian theology, ideal images of the modern home, the convergence of Christian and Confucian ethics, the promotion of biomedicine, or visions of national salvation, it is all in the posters. Something new is afoot in the study of China and World Christianity.

As a web resource, this project does not end on its release date. It can grow. Currently, the CGCM is working to identify another donor, so several other archives may digitize their posters and add them to the collection. These upcoming additions will increase the number of Roman Catholic posters on the website, in particular. The aim is to create a comprehensive resources that will provide scholars and students a new way to visualize China’s past.

Posters give a picture of how Chinese Christians thought about salvation, family, and medicine



Top: “The Life Saver,” Yale Divinity School, RG221

Middle: “Oranges from our Heavenly Father,” SOAS University of London, PP MS 16/07/04/09

Bottom: “Get Vaccinated,” Kautz Family YMCA Archives - University of Minnesota, B114

Dictionary of African Christian Biography Receives Conover-Porter Award

On November 29, *DACB* Associate Director Dr. Michèle Sigg traveled to the African Studies Association Annual Meeting in Atlanta to receive the Conover-Porter award on behalf of Director Jonathan Bonk and all those who have contributed to the work of the project since its founding in 1995, especially the many African authors, advisors, and supporters. This award is given every two years by the Africana Librarians Council to recognize outstanding work in the area of bibliographic and reference materials. The *DACB* was co-winner of the award.

The Boston University African Studies Center had an exhibit table to promote the various African-related initiatives at BU. The staff, led by Natasha Patel, promoted the project by distributing forty USB drives and copies of the new *DACB Shelf Edition*, a packet with the *DACB* on USB, a brochure, and one issue

of the *Journal of African Christian Biography*. African Studies librarians Beth Restruck, Rachel Dwyer, and Gabe Adugna also distributed copies of the *DACB Shelf Edition* to all the Africana librarians. The *DACB* became a digital project of the CGCM in 2012 (dacb.org).



Michèle Sigg ('18), at left, represented the *DACB* at the African Studies Association



Dana Robert, the co-founder and director of the CGCM, was officially inducted into the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in October 2018. She was accompanied by her son, Samuel Massie.

motive magazine

motive (always spelled with a lowercase "m") was the official magazine for the Methodist Student Movement from its founding in 1941 and, for a few years at the end of its life, for the entire University Christian Movement (UCM). Much celebrated even at the time for its *avant garde* editorial and artistic vision, in 1966 *Time* magazine said it stood out among church publications "like a miniskirt at a church social." It was the single runner-up to *Life* as Magazine of the Year in 1965. Ultimately, its strong stands on civil rights, Vietnam, and emerging gender issues became more than the Methodist Church officials could take. They withdrew funding and it ceased publication in 1972. An entire generation of religious activists were shaped by its vision.

The Center for Global Christianity and Mission and the Boston University School of Theology worked with the United Methodist Church's Global Board of Higher Education and Mission to digitize *motive* and to make the magazine freely accessible online (<http://sth-archon.bu.edu/motive/motive.html>).



motive was always more than a print medium. It was rich in art, using visually arresting images to provoke, anger, rally, and inspire readers. The works of Margaret Rigg, Joachim Probst, Robert Hodgell, Jim Crane, and Sister Corita Scott Kent frequently appeared on the pages of *motive*. They continue to offer an alternative way of seeing American Christianity at mid-century; we invite you to take a second look too.

Spring Events

February 4: "Piecing Together a Historical Collage from Narratives of Evangelical Mission Work with Children, 1897-1929." A doctoral lunch seminar with Laura Chevalier in STH 325 at noon.

February 5: "Blooming Together." Neal and Julie Estey, co-founders of Bloom, will share how bringing people together in sub-Saharan Africa has created healthy communities and economic opportunities in some unexpected places. STH 311 at noon.

February 18-22: Rev. Taylor Denyer, President and co-founder of Friendly Planet Missiology, will spend a week on campus, interacting with students and sharing about her ministry in various cross-cultural settings.

March 21: "The First Women of Theology: Wives, Missionaries, Deaconesses, and the Beginnings of Boston University." A lecture by Dana L. Robert on the 150th anniversary of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society in STH 325 at 4 pm.

April 5: "The Beauty of Salvation: Mission and Art." The Boston Theological Institute's International Mission and Ecumenism Committee will host the 30th annual Costas Consultation at the Boston College School for Theology and Ministry from 1 - 8 pm