



ALLIANCE FOR VULNERABLE MISSION

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Editor:

Jim Harries, PhD,

Chairman of the AVM

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		Stan Nussbaum

The Alliance for Vulnerable Mission encourages some missionaries from the West to engage in their ministries using local languages and resources.

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Frank Paul

- Frank Paul (pictured) and Jim Harries attended the Christian Community Development conference (details [here](#)) in Germany June of this year. See [here](#) for resources shared by Frank Paul and Jim Harries at a track at this conference. These are freely available pdf files. A recording of Jim’s 15-minute plenary presentation is available [here](#). For a power-point presentation of the slides that Jim used, see [here](#).



Jean Johnson

- Congratulations to Jean Johnson, for having her second article published in www.globalmissiology.org this year. Both articles, now published, were the mainstay of the presentations she gave in the 2015 vulnerable mission UK conferences. Jean writes excellently from first-hand experience!

This article is entitled in brief ‘**Neglect One, Neglect the Other**’ and is available [here](#). Jean closes out by telling us:

Focus on the Worldview, Foster Authenticity
Focus on Local Resources, Foster Authenticity
Foster Authenticity, Foster Credibility

- Jim Harries has an article published in the same edition of globalmissiology.org. His article is entitled ***The Necessity of the Use of African Languages in African Church and Society*** and can be accessed [here](#). Jim concludes: “The use of African languages is essential for healthy sustainable development of the church, as other institutions on the African continent, in this globalised age. Let us bless African nations by taking their languages seriously through having some missionaries carry out their ministries using local languages.”



- See this article published in *transformation*, by Anne Dyer: Anne Elizabeth Dyer
A Discussion of Vulnerability in Mission for the Twenty-first Century from a Biblical Perspective *Transformation: An International Journal of Holistic Mission Studies* 0265378816631253, first published on February 24, 2016 as doi:10.1177/0265378816631253 Anne’s abstract states: “‘Vulnerable mission’ as a technical term was devised by a small team in 2007. There has been considerable Internet and conference debate on this issue since 2007. The issue for which vulnerable mission was formed is to create a way through dependency

syndromes. For those working in areas of patron–client cultures where it is too easy to allow a dependency syndrome to develop, how can a vulnerable approach by the one sent be realistically engaged? This paper is an attempt to consider the definition and biblical warrant for the concept of missional vulnerability. Surveying various biblical scenes even in so brief a paper brings a prophetic challenge.” (More information on the article including on availability can be found [here](#).)

- Transformation, the missions' journal produced by the OCMS (Oxford Centre for Mission Studies) has a list of 'most cited articles'. Vulnerable mission related articles take 14th and 15th position on this list! In 14th place is an article by Jim Harries, close on his tail in 15th place is an article by Ralph Hanger. See [here](#).

Number 14. Jim Harries

The Great Delusion: Post-Colonial Language Policy for Mission and Development in Africa Reviewed *Transformation: An International Journal of Holistic Mission Studies* January 2012 29: 44-61, doi:10.1177/0265378811427998

Number 15. Ralph Hanger

No Visitor Comes Empty-Handed – Some Thoughts on Unhealthy Dependency *Transformation: An International Journal of Holistic Mission Studies* January 2014 31: 21-35, first published on August 30, 2013 doi:10.1177/0265378813501738



- “Some might disagree with me, but I believe that with few exceptions, once a person is over the age of 40, it is more of a challenge for him or her to learn a new language and to adjust well to a new culture. I fluently speak three completely different languages and am highly aware of the reality of learning foreign languages. There are missionaries who expect local people to speak English or their home language. This is what contributed to what Ralph Winter called the “amateurization of mission.” How can people engage in discipling people groups when the quality of their language is poor and they lack cultural understanding?” These are the words of **Daniel Kim** in an article in *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* (January 2011). (This article is only available to subscribers of EMQ.) Kim, Daniel, D., 2011, ‘**An Urgent Plea Concerning Undisciplined People Groups: A Thai Perspective.**’ *EMQ*, January 2011, 47(1), 70-75.

- God is neither real nor supernatural**, suggests Jim Harries in this blog posting with *Global Connections*. Instead Jim suggests that these categories are contingent on Western philosophy. The categories of ‘real’ or ‘supernatural’ as against natural do not fit either with ancient Christian history, or with many majority world worldviews. See [here](#).



- www.synergycommons.net hosts **Synergy Commons** which “is a global learning community for Christian leaders who want to build effective missional networks in their ministry fields.” One of the groups in the synergy commons is vulnerable mission. I copy below the first post in the vulnerable mission group. Discussion is ongoing. Why not come and join us?



“Let us imagine a slightly simplified scenario whereby people of two different cultures and languages ‘meet each other’. People of culture and language A will learn about people of culture and language B, and vice versa. There are two options regarding the direction of learning. A member of language/culture group A can learn about language/culture group B either from a member of group B who has learned language A, or from a member of group A who has learned language B. I want to ask; which is better?

The answer I propose is that language/culture group A ‘should’ learn about language/culture group B from a member of A who has been exposed to B. Not, that is, from a ‘native’ member of B. I explain this in three ways:

1. A’s growing general body of knowledge about B will be based on how B people impact on the A group. It will not necessarily be based on ‘truth’ about B. Supplementing this knowledge to build on the original understanding requires the same process, group A learning from A people’s exposure to B.
2. A member of group B communicating with people in group A about B will know what they are communicating from, but not what they are communicating into. As a result, they cannot know how their words will be received. A member of group A communicating to group A about group B will however know from the outset how they are being received.
3. We can look at the same issue in terms of educational theory. Educationalists tell us that a good educator goes from known-to-unknown. Good educators of people A about people B need, in order to be able to communicate about B helpfully, to go from known-to-unknown. In order to be able to go from known-to-unknown, they must ‘know’ A profoundly. A member of group B endeavouring to educate people of group A who they do not know profoundly will unfortunately be educating from unknown-to-known.

The above has many implications. If I take an African ethnicity (tribe) verses a native English speaking Western group as my example scenario, the above implies that English speaking Westerners should base their learning about Africa on the knowledge of fellow Westerners who have had exposure to Africa, and not on Africans who are, for example, living in the West. Communication should be in English. Learning should have been in the African language. Similarly, African people should be learning about the West from Africans who have been exposed to the West, and not from Westerners. Those Africans should have learned using English, then they should communicate in an African language.” (by Jim Harries)



- See [here](#) for Craig Greenfield's blog entitled 'Are you unequally yoked? 7 types of partnership in cross-cultural ministry'. "A lot of what we do in ministry superficially looks like partnership or empowerment. But when you scratch the surface, it is really just plain old manipulation or even DISempowerment" suggests Greenfield. Have a look and find out more!

- A blog entitled **Teaching and Learning languages – at home and at school. Why at all?** Can be found [here](#). It looks at the appropriate language for education in Africa, with many links to related discussion sites.
- Please continue to note the date and location below in your diaries:

**Moving beyond post-colonial dependency:
developing sustainability through vulnerability**

sponsored by the **Alliance for Vulnerable Mission** (vulnerablemission.org)

Trinity School for Ministry, Ambridge, Pennsylvania, www.tsm.org
Wednesday 8th November 2017 registration at 5.00pm, finishing 12 noon on Saturday 11th November.
Cost: \$270.00 conference and meals. Bed and breakfast separate. Discounts available for those attending part-time and/or students.

Speakers to include: Jean Johnson, Director, World Mission Associates.
Dr. Stan Nussbaum, Global Mapping International.
Rev. Canon Dr. John Macdonald, Trinity School for Ministry, PA.
Dr. Jim Harries, Chair, Alliance for Vulnerable Mission.
Fred and Carol Lewis, Worldview, Portland, OR.
and other speakers ...



'Emphasising the use of indigenous languages and resources as the norm for some intercultural workers.'
We are looking for presenters of papers in other languages: Korean, Swahili, Spanish ...

Queries to: jim@vulnerablemission.org or jmacdonald@tsm.edu (Details may still change. Registration to open 1st March 2017.)

