



ALLIANCE FOR VULNERABLE MISSION

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Alliance for Vulnerable Mission Bulletin

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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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[“Honor, Shame and the Gospel: Reframing Our Message for 21st Century Ministry,”](#) Conference. June 19–21, 2017, Wheaton College (Chicago).

- ‘Vulnerability in a post-colonial context’ is the title of this article by Eleanora Hof, a missiologist from the Netherlands, [here](#) available over academia.edu. “... it is a critical practice to keep the window of vulnerability open. This means that in our world of tightening border control, xenophobia and islamophobia, practicing vulnerability instead of retreating into a gated existence is of fundamental importance. In this contribution I will apply the importance of vulnerability to my own field of research, postcolonial missiology, and I will explain how vulnerability is a critical praxis in a postcolonial missional church” shares Hof.



- See [this](#) blog by Jim Harries, published by *Global Connections, UK*, in which Jim suggests that ‘donor money’ administered by missionaries can be an equivalent to protection money or collateral intended to offset costs of nationals having to use their time and resources to engage a foreigner ...



- **SA spokesperson refuses to speak English**

A South African government spokesperson refused to speak English ... on an English-medium radio station when asked to comment on the possible solution to the benefit cut-off facing millions of South African next month. Is this a rebellion against the monopoly of English in South Africa? See [here](#).

- How can one assist the majority world to benefit from



'superior' theology? This is a question asked by Jim Harries in [this](#) article, published by the Lutheran Journal, *Currents in Theology and Mission*. The article is entitled; **'Enabling the majority world to benefit from 'superior' Western theology'**. Here is Jim's abstract: "Is the suggestion that Western theology is in no way superior to other theologies a pretentious humility? While contextualisation is a necessary part of enabling theology to work, subsidising Western theological education can block contextualisation. Helpful translation is introducing something new into a pre-existing field. Theological education in the majority world being in Western languages implies translation from known into unknown bodies of knowledge and understanding. Success in this project would require destruction of the target context. Theology should be taught, i.e. learned, primarily by example. Theological education should be engaged in using the language of the people being reached."



- **Help! My spouse doesn't feel called to this**, is the title of Greenfield's blog found here, that considers helping spouses who differ on whether or how they want to do ministry. <http://www.craiggreenfield.com/blog/calling>



Book review: Sharifian, Farzad, 2017, *Cultural Linguistics*. Amsterdam/PA: John Benjamins.

This book is freely available for download here:
https://www.academia.edu/31114420/Cultural_Linguistics

Book review: Cultural linguistics, a new discipline of which Sharifian identifies himself as a key originator, discovers new problems and solutions. It focuses on cultural *conceptualisations*. That is; on the fact that words are conceptualised differently according to the cultural use made of them by their community.

Cognition here considered is not 'between the ears', but also of a community. Language is looked at as containing schemas, categories, and metaphors, all of which are culturally grounded.

Use of the term 'spirit' is a strategy used by Aboriginal people in Australia, to try to communicate something about themselves to other Australians, Sharifian tells us. Use of particular words, 'triggers' certain 'schemas' in people's thinking. Even should Aboriginal people be very fluent in English, misunderstandings will still arise from others' engagement with them, because the conceptualisations they carry are so different from those of standard English speakers. For example, that 'land' is a living thing, and that 'medicine' is something with spiritual power. Saving face under pressure to conform, can have people accept offers that they actually find repugnant, Sharifian tells us.

If indeed body and culture shapes the mind, then Cartesian dualism has been undermined. This has many implications, that I believe should be of interest to missionaries and to bible translators. A means to test for conceptualisations, is to tell someone a story, then to ask them to recall it from memory. The re-telling will reveal conceptual biases.

In our age, when English is increasingly used *intra*-culturally, what are the implications of this for its *inter*-cultural use? World Englishes differ at the level of cultural conceptualisation, Sharifian tells us. Here's a foundation for dictionary production – to include conceptualisations.

More reflections.

Sharifian articulates many considerations related to language use between Western and majority world people that to many scholars still appear foggy. He is obviously a prolific scholar, many more articles by him are available on academia.edu. His focus on Australian Aboriginals enables him to speak, I believe, very effectively into closely-parallel contexts in the South Pacific, Africa, and beyond, and thus to contexts of minority-language groups with whom bible translators tend to be active. Sharifian is endeavouring to encourage broadening of Australian English to incorporate Aboriginal conceptualisations. To me what he is actually doing – is making a very good case for the use of non-Western languages by non-Western people, and those who want to engage with them.

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: allyson@vulnerablemission.org or jmacdonald@tsm.edu

(Details may still change. Registration to open 1st March 2017.)

