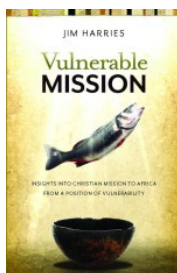


# Alliance for Vulnerable Mission Bulletin December 2011



ALLIANCE FOR VULNERABLE MISSION

- **Book on vulnerable mission published and available**



Vulnerable Mission book hot off the press! Title: *Vulnerable Mission: insights into Christian mission to Africa from a position of vulnerability*. The book contains deliberations on and proposals for Western mission strategy for the Majority World that were written by a missionary while on the African field and that reflect the globalised world and post-modern

ethos of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. See

[http://missionbooks.org/williamcareylibrary/product.php?](http://missionbooks.org/williamcareylibrary/product.php?productid=715&cat=0&page=1)

[productid=715&cat=0&page=1](http://missionbooks.org/williamcareylibrary/product.php?productid=715&cat=0&page=1) , for a price of as little as \$10.99 per book.

Published by William Carey Library, *Vulnerable Mission* consists of a collection of Jim's articles. (Sales/distribution for UK/Europe – please contact [veronica@vulnerablemission.org](mailto:veronica@vulnerablemission.org).)

- Go here <http://lists.vulnerablemission.org/listinfo.cgi/pearl-vulnerablemission.org> to join in a **live email discussion** about vulnerable mission. Send your question, and engage in debate with over 100 vulnerable mission enthusiasts on this list-serve. (All emails will come into your account automatically once you subscribe. You can unsubscribe again any time if you want to.)
- The World Evangelical Alliance Mission Commission (WEA MC) tri-annual consultation that was held in Germany 6<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> November 2011 was attended by AVM Advisory Board member Alex Araujo and Exec. Board chairman Jim Harries. The consultation gave opportunity for sharing about vulnerable mission with many delegates, including two formal vulnerable mission seminars. Twenty of Jim's recently published book on vulnerable mission were sold.

## **Conference Announcement – USA + UK**

The AVM in conjunction with ACU (Abilene Christian University) are to hold international conferences in the USA and UK in March 2012.

For details go to:

<http://www.vulnerablemission.org/vulnerable-mission-conference-2012/>

To register for USA conference go to: [www.acu.edu/missions](http://www.acu.edu/missions)

To register for UK conference, send email to:

[admin@cliffcollege.ac.uk](mailto:admin@cliffcollege.ac.uk)



Trans-World Radio is co-sponsoring the US conference

- The Alliance for Vulnerable Mission will have a stall attended by Frank Paul and Jim Harries at the **Mission-net congress** to be held in Germany 28<sup>th</sup> December 2011 to 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2012. We will also be leading seminars – one on the Thursday and one on the Sunday. For details go to: <http://mission-net.org/mission-net/home> The conference, I believe the largest of its kind, aims to enable young people in Europe to explore the wide range of possibilities in missions internationally today.
- This amazing and well researched article by Galdolfo looks at the question of the appropriate language medium for education in Africa. It presents a *very strong* case in favour of the use of African languages in both education and governance: Gandolfo, Andrew J., 2009. Education Medium and African linguistic rights in the context of globalisation. *Globalisation, Societies and Education*. 7/3, September 2009, 321-336. Here is the abstract: “In the context of globalisation, European languages, especially English, continue to be the favoured medium of official communication and are valued and promoted as the dominant languages of commerce, international communication, education and scientific knowledge. In this paper, I argue that European educational language medium policies perpetuate the hegemonic influence of western languages and their corresponding forms of knowledge. I further argue that these policies have also devalued and marginalised indigenous languages, knowledge systems and cultural identities in sub-Saharan Africa. I explore the social justice implications of these policies for indigenous language communities in the region.”
- A book by Jim Harries entitled *Three Days in the Life of an African Christian Villager* will **soon be available** for order over the internet for a price of just £6.00. The following review was written by the AVM administrative assistant Fiona Adams, who has administered the book’s publication on behalf of the AVM: “This book bursts like a breath of fresh air into the reader’s mind. What it promises, it gives – a fascinating insight into life in an African village as seen and interpreted by a Christian man. We are privileged to be given a penetrating glimpse of life for this man over just three days – three days packed with work, domestic life and family problems, and church services,

including funerals (ever-present in Africa). I commend this book to anyone teaching or studying missiology, but also to anyone interested in mission work.” Watch this space: <http://www.authorsonline.co.uk>

- Bailin and Battersby’s article argues for the importance of taking account of non-Western approaches to issues, even in the Western academia. It relates an intriguing example of an irrigation practice that was more effective when led by priests than when it was guided by scientific principles. This has me want to ask the academic community: if the injunctions of a traditional priest are more effective than is science in the running of an irrigation system, can we not then also say that God’s wisdom from the Scriptures may be more helpful in running human communities than are ‘modern’ sociologically informed theories? Bailin, Sharon and Battersby, Mark, 2009. ‘Beyond the boundaries: critical thinking and differing cultural perspectives.’ *Ethics and Education*, 4/2 2009, 189-200. (Available for free from here: <http://www.tandfonline.com/toc/ceae20/4/2> ).
- *Boko Haram* is the name of a militant Islamist group in Nigeria. *Boko* is presumably ‘book’, and *haram* from Arabic ‘sinful’. This group appears to be against Western education. Could it be that their opposition to Western education is needlessly and by default extended to Christianity because Christianity is always implicitly pro-western? Is there room for a majority world Christianity that is not necessarily pro-Western, and that could therefore evade attacks made on Western values? I am reminded of commentary I have heard of Ethiopia – that the Orthodox Church there in some ways feels itself to be closer to Muslims than it does to evangelicals. A missionary’s activities being funded from the West makes it difficult for majority world churches to express any anti-western feelings that they might have. A VM can set them free to speak their mind ...
- For back-copies of the AVM Bulletin go to: <http://www.jim-mission.org.uk/avm-bulletins/index.html>
- There is a vast amount of research currently going on looking at the relationship between American and Chinese people. Some of this is both very interesting, and also very relevant to our interests in the AVM. For example, the article entitled ‘The Applicability of Western Socio-Legal Frameworks to the Study of Negotiation in Chinese Society’ by Chung, Mona and Ingleby, Richard (*Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, 33/2, 169-177 April 2011). Here is part of the abstract (my emphasis): “Attempts to study negotiation in Chinese society and to improve negotiation between Chinese and Western business people are themselves constrained by cross-cultural differences. **Extended immersion of Western academics in Chinese settings** and the involvement of cross-cultural specialists **is required** to advance understanding of cross-cultural negotiation.”

- Cunningham-Cross' essay 'Re-imagining the world through Chinese eyes: the search for a "Chinese school" of international relations theory' that can be found at [http://www.bisa.ac.uk/index.php?option=com\\_bisa&task=view\\_public\\_papers&Itemid=126](http://www.bisa.ac.uk/index.php?option=com_bisa&task=view_public_papers&Itemid=126) explores China's efforts at engaging with western discussions on international relations. The author portrays Chinese scholars as trying all means to enable them to participate in debate on international relationships with the West, but yet being frustrated. There is something in the American (global?) debate on international relations that is keeping 'others', even as massive a force as China, out. There seem to be parallels here with the church relating internationally, and barriers that needs to be broken down so as to enable churches to interrelate on a worldwide basis. Vulnerable mission offers some hope for approaching and overcoming such barriers.
- See here: <http://www.glocalade.org/conf#English> for details of a conference with an approach very much in parallel to that of VM, to be held in Costa Rica in January 2012. If you are interested in joining the conference please state your affiliation with the AVM. **The conference organizers are VERY KEEN on having some people from the AVM join them at this conference.**
- Westerners love to value integrity. Sometimes this trips up people in the Majority World. Why? Here's an explanation by AVM executive board member Stan Nussbaum: "Integrity. The more individualistic a culture is, the more it will define integrity in terms of faithfulness to a code of ethics. The closest synonym is honesty. In communal cultures, integrity is defined more as total faithfulness to a group. The closest synonym is loyalty. Believers in both kinds of cultures see honesty and loyalty as biblical values, but the more individualistic believers assume that people of integrity would never compromise their honesty to preserve their group loyalty while the more communal believers cannot imagine how people could call themselves "honest" if they compromised their group loyalty. It is therefore easy for each side to believe that it has biblical integrity and the other side lacks it."
- 'What International Aid Can't Do' is the title of an article by Joshua Foust, that seems to line up with some of the thinking of vulnerable mission, in Uzbek context. See: <http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2011/11/what-international-aid-cant-do/248708/>
- See here for the Guardian's 'poverty matters' blogs: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/global-development/poverty-matters>
- Too many aid agencies and other NGOs are too afraid to admit their failures. Well, someone is trying to do something about this: <http://www.admittingfailure.com/2011/01/launch-of-admitting-failures/> Vulnerable mission is a way of working that retains a close vulnerability to failure, so as to give a quick turn around in thinking that can enable re-innovation.

- “Following Jesus ... quickly becomes primarily a lucrative financial venture for even the most sincere convert. Local believers become disillusioned and embittered, while Muslim neighbors are confirmed in their belief that the only reason anyone would become a Christian is greed for easy Western dollars” report a group of missionaries. ... “No longer are missionaries sent to spread international peace through preaching the Gospel. Instead, expatriate workers are commissioned to oversee and ensure profitable returns on investments via indigenous movements” adds Livingston in this article entitled ‘Maintaining Invisibility’ that can be found listed here: [http://www.bisa.ac.uk/index.php?option=com\\_bisa&task=view\\_public\\_papers&Itemid=126](http://www.bisa.ac.uk/index.php?option=com_bisa&task=view_public_papers&Itemid=126)
- See [http://hopec.org/board/board\\_2/read\\_f.php?board\\_code=hopeccol&num=44&page=2&list\\_num=14](http://hopec.org/board/board_2/read_f.php?board_code=hopeccol&num=44&page=2&list_num=14) for an article entitled ‘Overcoming the Destructive Effects of Naïve Western Funding’ focusing on mission and development work in Bangladesh. An excellent read!
- Read this before doing a “Medical Mission”, Open letter from Eddy Leopoldo Fuentes, C.P.O. who has a practice in Guatemala Providing Orthotics and Prosthetics: <http://livinglifenabled.wordpress.com/2011/11/21/read-this-before-doing-a-medical-mission-open-letter-from-eddy-leopoldo-fuentes-c-p-o-who-has-a-practice-in-guatemala-providing-orthotics-and-prosthetics/>

Yours,

Jim Harries, (PhD).  
Chairman, Alliance for Vulnerable Mission