



ALLIANCE FOR VULNERABLE MISSION

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Alliance for Vulnerable Mission Bulletin

January 2017 (Archived back-copies [here](#) Subscribe for free [here](#))

Volume 9, Number 1.



Editor:

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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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Jonathan Winter, is the newest member of the AVM advisory board. Based in Belfast N. Ireland, Jonathan currently serves as a mobiliser and cross-cultural missions trainer with Logos Ministries International, UK. Jonathan received an MA in Intercultural Studies at the Philippines Baptist Theological Seminary in Baguio City. He is currently pursuing, an MA in Contemporary Missiology at Redcliffe College in Gloucestershire, UK. Jonathan spent 13 years as a missionary in the Philippines working and still continues to be involved in teaching and training Asian missionaries for cross-cultural missions in Asia as well as working among Filipino migrant churches in the UK and across Europe.



- “**Timothy Fitzgerald** was Reader in Religion at the University of Stirling between 2001-2015. His work treats 'religion' not as a stand-alone category but as a key term in the modern configuration of categories that constitute and construct secular liberal 'reality'. He has thus worked on the critical deconstruction of 'politics' and 'political economy' and their binary relation to 'religion'.”

Some readers may be wondering what this has got to do with vulnerable mission? In some ways, VERY MUCH INDEED. Look at [this](#) paper by Timothy to get the gist of what he is saying. He tells us that the Western category *religion* is essentially illegitimate. He does so in easily understandable terms. He realises also, that once one undermines the category 'religion', because 'secular' is what is not-religion, then one has also undermined the category of 'secular'. What then of secular people's criticism of Christian mission? This makes Fitzgerald's work of great interest to people involved in Christian mission from the West. Meanwhile, it is this supposed dualism of 'religion' as against 'the secular' that makes a lot of mission efforts almost non-understandable to many people in the majority world. Go [here](#) to participate in live ongoing discussion on this issue.

Vulnerable mission can show-up the above flaw, that undergirds almost all of western scholarship.

- Bulletin readers interested in **TRANSLATION AND CULTURAL CONVERSIONS** please look [here](#) for details of a course with this title to be held in Italy May to June 2017. This theme: “invites creative, generative explorations of the many powerful and ethically-charged sites of change and exchange that characterize translational contexts, from traditional notions of religious conversion to contemporary concepts of digital and media conversion, from transformative processes of identity to transformational rewritings of literary texts and the evolution of cultural canons. Join us for a stimulating time of discussion and discovery, led by our two distinguished Nida Professors and a diverse roster of additional faculty lecturers” says the website.
- The following applies to foreign language papers at the AVM conference to be held in PA, USA, In November 2017:
 - i. There must be at least one other person there who can listen to, hear, and comment on the presentation.
 - ii. A title and abstract to be written in English.
 - iii. We will not encourage translation, except for an abstract.

- See [here](#) for blogs by Jean Johnson that very helpfully and constructively look at questions related to **the care of widows and orphans in Cambodia**.



- **Native English speakers are, according to Jennifer Jenkins, the world’s worst communicators!** See [here](#) for details. Why is this? More and more people globally are using English as a kind of ‘lingua-franca’. It helps them to communicate with people with whom do not have another common language. They can use a kind of simplified standardized English to make each other understood. That all works (reasonably) well, ... until the native speaker comes along! A native speaker of English uses shortcuts, abbreviations, peculiar regional ways of communicating, idioms, and so on. They may also speak quickly, grasp things quickly, and quickly draw conclusions that non-native speakers don’t get. Non-native speakers get overwhelmed, confused, tired, and left out. Jennifer says, in effect, that native speakers of English should un-know their colloquial English when engaging interculturally.

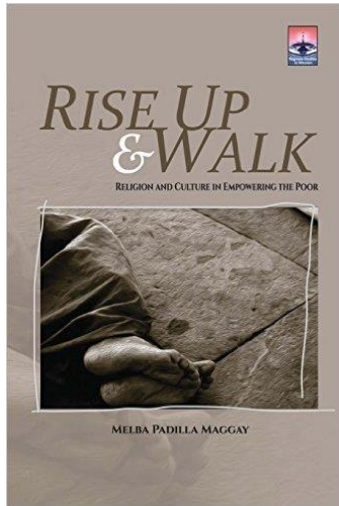


The problem that she outlines with respect to Europe, seems to be as much or more of a problem in Africa. Probably also in other parts of the majority world. The native speaker of the lingua-franca in this sense ends up being disadvantaged! Jennifer advocates “you need to simplify” (citing Steggles). Otherwise, native speakers of English DOMINATE, Jennifer warns. Jennifer here identifies a key reason for a missionary to use an indigenous language; **avoid dominating**.

What makes native-English baffling? See [here](#). More on the same theme [here](#).

Disclaimer: despite the quality of the above articles, it should be said that they do NOT consider many of the issues that should also to concern an intercultural missionary. (Ed.)

- See [here](#) for a review of a book on development in the Phillipines, by Maggay. (Maggay, Melba Padilla, 2015, *Rise up and Walk: religion and culture in empowering the poor*. Eugene: Oregon: Wipf and Stock.) Here is the final paragraph



of Jim’s review: “This is a remarkable book. It is remarkable and note-worthy, because it is written in English, and is digestible by Westerners, yet is by a Filipino. It is remarkable, because it opens the lid onto familial and community issues amongst Filipinos that seem to be the bread and butter of daily life, and shows how they integrate with faith, and relate to development. It is remarkable enough to deserve time-spent in a detailed read to acquire pseudo-indigenous insights into what actually happens when Western-based NGOs practice their ‘development-oriented’ craft in a majority world setting.”

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.)

