

**Alliance for Vulnerable Mission Bulletin**  
**November 2009**

**New Executive Board Member** I am very pleased to announce that **Alex Araujo** has agreed to be the new executive board member of the Alliance for Vulnerable Mission. Alex comes to us with vast experience in diverse areas of mission promotion. He is a gifted and experienced speaker, and has a very deep and profound understanding of vulnerable mission issues. Many of us know him from *pearl* discussions, and we are now very much looking forward to what he has to offer on the executive board. (The members of the AVM executive board are now Stan Nussbaum, Alex Araujo and Jim Harries.)

**‘Sailing Friends’ Blog** Alex maintains a very active blog that contrasts mission by power-boat with that using ‘sails’. This analogy is based on the following address by Dr. Parrot at the 2004 Forum for World Evangelization: “If we are to catch the wind of God in our sails and go wherever those winds take us, we must begin with the unshakable understanding that God alone knows the way—knows the place where wisdom is found. If we want the action plans coming out of this Forum to have significance, we must get out of our powerboats, and step into boats whose sails are filled with the wind of God to take us to the place where wisdom is found.” (<http://sailingfriends.files.wordpress.com/2009/10/opening-address.pdf> )

For Alex’s blog, go to: <http://sailingfriends.wordpress.com/>

**Talking about God cross-culturally (by Jim Harries)**

*The missionary met the tribal African. He heard him say ‘nyasaye’ in reference to the spiritual power that determines people’s fate.*

*“Oh. That is their word for God” thought the missionary. “The English for that word is God” he told the African.*

*“Ahaa” came the reply “so then we know what God is – it is the spiritual force that determines people’s fate!”*

*“No, hang on a minute” said the missionary. “I never said that ‘God’ can be referred to as ‘it’ or that ‘it’ is ‘the spiritual force that determines people’s fate’!”*

*“Oh yes you did” said the tribal African.*

*Both were now on route to considerable inter-cultural confusion!*

**Dan Peterson on the vagaries of translation** Dan wrote an email that was of such good quality that I thought it would be good for others also to benefit from it. He agreed. It looks at the vagaries of translation in inter-cultural context:

<http://www.jim-mission.org.uk/discussion/reflections-on-the-vagaries.pdf>

**Visit to Jim Harries** Click on the link below to read the interim report of the visit by Rev. Clive Bernhard and Ian Burnham, who came to visit me here in Kenya at the beginning of September this year.

<http://www.jim-mission.org.uk/discussion/report-september-2009.html>

**Vulnerable Mission article:** The article below (3000 words) was written by Monica Jyotsna Melanchthon from India for the Edinburgh 2010 conference. It makes reference to the AVM, and very effectively articulates many AVM principles in an Indian context.

[http://www.edinburgh2010.org/fileadmin/files/edinburgh2010/files/docs/VulnerableMission\(Monica\).doc](http://www.edinburgh2010.org/fileadmin/files/edinburgh2010/files/docs/VulnerableMission(Monica).doc)

### **African Linguistics and the Development of African Communities**

I thought this might be interesting for AVM folks. I have not read it, but only read about it. (Chia, Emmanuel N (Ed.)) “Argues for the absolute necessity of developing African languages as a condition of socio-economic development. The work further advocates the involvement of all sectors of society in language development efforts, language identification, and the imperative of validating African languages as equal to the colonial languages.” For details:

<http://www.africabookcentre.com/acatalog/index.html?>

[http://www.africabookcentre.com/acatalog/English\\_in\\_Africa.html&CatalogBody](http://www.africabookcentre.com/acatalog/English_in_Africa.html&CatalogBody)

**Jim’s Journal** A bit of a lighter approach to various vulnerable mission and related concerns is provided in Jim Harries’ November 2009 ‘Journal’, that can be found at: <http://www.jim-mission.org.uk/journal/index.html>

**Vulnerable Mission is not Mission to the Vulnerable!** “Explaining what is sought in a code of conduct for conversion, Ucko suggested that Christians ought to dissociate themselves from any mission work that targets the vulnerable with offers of money or promises of better education for new converts.” In other words, in this 4 minute recorded interview, it is advised implicitly that the missionary and not the ‘targeted people’ ought to be vulnerable ...

<http://www.wcc-usa.org/news/usa-news-container/browse/5/article/1119/mission-work-must-not-tar.html>

**The Edinburgh missionary conference study themes** includes an article by Jim Harries, posted on “transversal 5” found at: <http://www.edinburgh2010.org/en/study-themes/transversal-topics/5-contextualization-inculturation-and-dialogue-of-worldviews.html> The article is entitled 'Inter-cultural communication in the African mission context: An examination of practice'.

Jim Harries  
Chairman, Alliance for Vulnerable Mission