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Alliance for Vulnerable Mission Bulletin July 2022 Volume 14, Number 7

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Editor: Jim Harries, PhD, Chairman of the AVM.



Table with 3 columns: AVM Board, Name, Advisory Board. Rows include Jim Harries (chair), Peter Stagg (finance), Nick Henwood (communications), Daniel Albert, Andy Dipper, Frank Paul, Deborah Bernhard, John Macdonald (on leave), Chris Flanders, Stan Chu Ilo, Jay Gary, Jean Johnson.

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



Please suggest contributions to this Bulletin to jim@vulnerablemission.org. This month's contents: Learning to be generous without being a patron - our next Webinar - on 21st July. Language as a double-edged sword. Does English cause corruption in Africa? Self-Critique and the Virtue of Vulnerability. The Case Against English in Africa and the Majority World, and its implication for Christian mission today. Mission in a Wounded World. Faith in African Lived Christianity.



Join us at our next quarterly AVM webinar:

"Generosity as an obstacle to missionary work: Learning to be generous without being a patron"

Speaker: Brad Mashburn, working in Senegal

When: Thursday, 21st July, 2022

Time: 14:00 (UK Time)

Sign up using this form for free and we will send you a Zoom link.

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSd5RGlpwN1Yh_LLb2KYraBxxh71mB6BQRQaR-i7Ff8Bwxk6JQ/viewform

..ooOoo..



Language as a double-edged sword

https://www.universityworldnews.com/post.php?story=20220614225653462

On alienation and agency: 'Language as a double-edged sword' is the title to a short article in University World News, Africa Edition, June 16th 2022. It is written by Phaedra Haringsma. 'For Shange, the decision to remove Afrikaans resembles putting "a Band-Aid on a gushing wound" and hoping that it heals. "It did nothing. People who fight to be taught in Zulu are still not supported, but on top of that, black and coloured students who benefited from being taught in Afrikaans now find themselves in a precarious space,' shares Haringsma, in this fascinating short piece.

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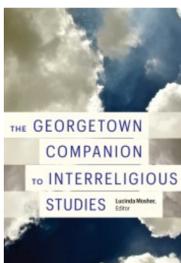
English causes Corruption in Africa

Does English cause corruption in Africa?

https://www.academia.edu/79249324/English_causes_Corruption_in_Africa

I have found myself in discussion, for over a month, with an independent South African scholar, around the question of whether 'English causes corruption in Africa'. I have found this discussion to be 'significant', that this black scholar both has interest in the concerns we raise in the AVM, and a grasp of them. This discussion being in English at the same time rather contradicts AVM procedure, in which we like to engage people in their own languages. It is ironic, that my interlocutor in South Africa ACCEPTS that black Africans on the whole are inclined to prefer imitation of whites to thinking for themselves. This is with some good reason, as African people's thinking doesn't get them very far, either culturally or economically, but it also makes it hard to know when someone is responding according to what is in their heart, and when they are endeavouring to please the white man. This seems to delegitimise scholarly engagement with African people using English ...

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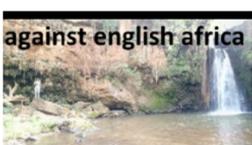


Self-Critique and the Virtue of Vulnerability

https://www.academia.edu/81281904/Ethnography_in_Interreligious_Studies_Embodiment_Self_Critique_and_the_Virtue_of_Vulnerability

Premawardhana, Devaka, 2022, 'Ethnology in Interreligious Studies. 7. Embodiment, Self-Critique and the Virtue of Vulnerability,' 63-71 in: Mosher, Lucinda. The Georgetown Companion to Interreligious Studies. Georgetown University Press, Project MUSE muse.jhu.edu/book/98959. The approach to 'interreligious studies' advocated in this article has a lot in common with the advocacy for vulnerable mission that we promote. It supports theological approaches, as having advantages over 'approaches from nowhere' practiced by secular researchers. It even encourages learning from local people as local people learn, rather than from a set of data objectively acquired by an outsider. Apart from the implication that there's a set of 'equal ... religions ... out there', there's a lot of good stuff in here.

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The Case Against English in Africa and the Majority World, and its implication for Christian mission today

https://youtu.be/3fyEhrwQCdE

Jim Harries presented this paper by zoom at the Oxford Centre for Mission Studies (ocms.ac.uk) to an enthralled audience on 21st June 2022. Go to the above link to see the full presentation, related to AMRIconnect, including discussion with Oxford scholars. (AMRIconnect is a mission information sharing network.)

(For a copy of the paper,

go https://www.academia.edu/82021943/The_Case_Against_English_in_Africa_and_the_Majority_World_and_its_implication_for_Christian_mission_today_Presentation_at_OCMS_Oxford_Centre_for_Mission_Studies_given_by_Jim_Harries_on_21_st_June_2022_2_00_pm. To view Jim's presentation without discussion and reference to AMRIconnect, here. To see the version posted by the Oxford Centre for Mission Studies, go here. To see the version of Jim's presentation subsequently corrected and 'patched' to compensate for poor quality wifi on the day, go here.)

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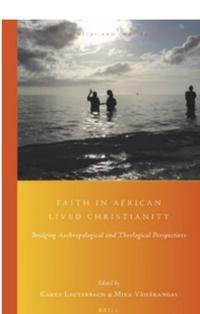
Mission in a Wounded World

https://www.missionstudies.org.au/15th-assembly-theme/

"Powers, Inequalities, and Vulnerabilities: Mission in a Wounded World" is the title of this upcoming mission conference in Australia, 7-11 July 2022.

"Our theme names and explores the perception that missionary activity takes place in a world constituted by wounds in many forms. We want to consider mission—past, present, and future—mindful of the wounds the world and its peoples face; wounds to which Christian mission has sought to respond but which it has, at times, caused." (Contrary to the orientation of the AVM, this conference seems to be more about reaching the vulnerable, than about missionaries 'being' vulnerable.)

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Faith in African Lived Christianity

https://brill.com/view/title/54770?language=en

This book, produced by Brill, entitled Faith in African Lived Christianity offers a comprehensive, empirically rich and interdisciplinary approach to the study of faith in African Christianity. The book brings together anthropology and theology in the study of how faith and religious experiences shape the understanding of social life in Africa.

I particularly recommend chapter 7, entitled: 'How to Respect the Religious Quasi-Other?' Missiologist and anthropologist Vaehaekangas uses anthropology in a way that he anticipates will be an aid to theologians who are questioning the orthodoxy of the Kimbanguist Church practice in Congo. He thus addresses a vital topic often unearthed through the found of vulnerable mission in Africa: how to assess the orthodoxy of Christian groups whose Christianity is not built on Hellenistic foundations? The world of the Kikongo is "manag[ed] ... by spiritual power", definitely a theological issue, Vaehaekangas tells us. This can be explored through anthropology's "radical openness to the other" in research, but which's theorizing opens an abyss with the studied culture! Hence theology and anthropology should work together.

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