



ALLIANCE FOR VULNERABLE MISSION

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Alliance for Vulnerable Mission Bulletin

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Editor: Jim Harries, PhD, Chairman of the AVM



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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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- UK conference December 2019, **Missionaries: aliens, providers, or fellow travellers?** Should the majority world be the target of patronage from rich missionaries?
 - [Details on facebook.](#)
 - [Registration and payment information.](#)
 - Details as on the All Nations website.
(see call for papers below).



People you will meet at conference in UK in December this year:

Hans Christoph and Beatrice Bär (Baer) from Switzerland.



From 1982-1998 and 2006 until present, missionary with OMF International in Thailand, working together with his wife among the Sgaw Karen people as church planter, Bible teacher and trainer.

Message from the Baer's: "One evangelist told me once, you have money, you can send your children away to school but you do not help us enough. I am not going to work with missionaries anymore. He went to work with the [missionaries who were more apt to hand out money]. After six months he was back in the village. He did not like how the [missionaries who were more apt to hand out money] were directing them. We still work together with him. ... At another time when I was walking with Karen Christians to spread the gospel one leader said why is it that you do not help. Look at the other village where the [missionaries who were more apt to hand out money] have built a nice church and we only meet in a bamboo hut. I asked him, how much does that nice church building tell you about the faith of the Christians in that village and how much does your bamboo church tell us about the commitment of the Christians in your village? The church of the [missionaries who were more apt to hand out money] ... tells a lot about the faith [of the missionaries who were more apt to hand out money], and your church tells a lot about your faith. Even though similar questions have been raised none of the churches we have worked with did change to the [missionaries who were more apt to hand out money]. Actually in the meantime these different organizations/denominations work together okay. Usually there is just one church in one village."

- **Message from AVM Board Member.** I (Fred Lewis, AVM Board Member) attended the annual conference of the American Society of Missiology in South Bend, IN, USA, 14-16 June. The theme of the conference was Lifestyles of the Rich and Faithful: Stewardship, Simplicity and Mission. I attended the conference this year because its theme overlapped with AVM concerns and I hoped to be able to raise AVM ideas in plenary or parallel sessions. In that respect my hopes were unrealistic, as it seemed to me there were no easy or natural bridges in presentations to AVM themes.



However, by putting Alliance for Vulnerable Mission (instead of the mission agency I belong to) on my nametag I got many questions about AVM from other attendees during meals. The initial questions, follow-up questions and questioners were genuinely curious and open. In this respect my expectations for the conference were exceeded. I wished more AVMerS would have been there. There were approximately 70 parallel sessions on Saturday and Sunday. Perhaps one or two AVMerS might attend the ASM Conference next year at least to interact with attendees during meals about AVM? The 2020 ASM Conference will again be in South Bend, IN, 19-21 June. The theme of next year's conference is tentatively called Hybrid Identities in Mission. Attending the ASM Conference is one thing we can do to raise awareness of AVM in the States.



- [Why save an indigenous minority language?](#) Here's a case made in a video put out by the BBC, in a case of aboriginal Australian people.

- ["It is my conviction that dependency on Western funds represents a far greater danger to the Gospel than persecution does,"](#) is the message of this short-video recently put out by Jean Johnson and her team at fivestonesglobal.org

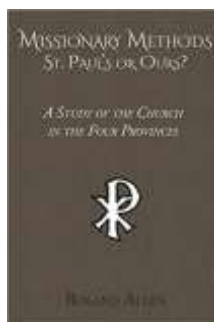




- See [here](#) for ‘The Burden of English In Africa” – [by] Professor Kwesi Kwaa Prah (Part One).’ (If you want to get to the meat, you may want to start at minute 18 or so.)

- [The Language of Instruction Conundrum in Africa](#) is the title of a paper by Professor Kwesi Kwaa Prah (2008). This conundrum is enormous in Africa, where people want to rescue their own languages, while ‘education’ only seems to work in European languages.

- “[To prophesy is to tell the truth,](#)” the World Council of Churches tell us! In a post-truth world, so-called, initiated by Trump, which questions liberalism, new non-liberal perspectives on truth are coming into view.



- Did you know that the full text of *Missionary Methods, St. Paul's or Ours* by Roland Allen, is available (html) for free over the web (second edition)? Find it [here](#).

Call for papers

2019 Conference: Missionaries: aliens, providers, or fellow travellers?

Submit abstracts asap to ims@vulnerablemission.org

Location: All Nations Christian College, Ware, Herts, UK.
Dates / times Sunday 8th December 5 pm to Wednesday 11th December 1 pm.

Should the majority world be the target of patronage from rich missionaries?

Outline paragraph: Outside Christian workers who build on foreign presuppositions in work amongst indigenous communities can, especially when foreign funded and using outside languages, be interpreted as riding roughshod over indigenous sensibilities. True empowerment of local people requires getting alongside them. This necessitates vulnerability to their position and context. Such vulnerability can best be achieved if one shares the Gospel using indigenous languages utilising local resources.

We will be discussing issues such as:

Practicalities and ramifications of use of indigenous languages by Western missionaries.

How does **translation** into an indigenous language (and from an indigenous language) affect the framing of the gospel and of missionary work in general?

While **finances** are needed for mission work, how can one ensure that finances do not dominate one's mission work?

What are the **good practices** that ensure a missionary's vulnerability to local context(s)?

How to engage in mission without exuding (excessive) **power**.

Organisation structures that enable vulnerability on the side of Western missionaries on the ground.

Helping **Churches** who want to engage **directly** in mission cross culturally to avoid pitfalls of **power**.

Tentmaking and **business** as mission models that leave the Westerner vulnerable.: How can the **commercial** world be used to engage in mission without promoting 'evils' of capitalism?

When the uneven spread of wealth is itself an injustice, how can one use one's surplus to enact **global justice**...

How do we utilise all **global media channels** to promote vulnerability in our missionary endeavour?

Is vulnerability the key to **contextualisation**?

Theology traditionally relies strongly on metaphor. In the majority world, local metaphors are unfamiliar to the West. How can one then engage theology interculturally?

When **politics** and 'religion' are not separate categories, missionaries need to be careful not to get bogged down in unanticipated conflicts.

Is **miracle** a post-enlightenment category? Is '**magic**' simply a normal prerequisite of human social existence. What does this imply for cross cultural missionary engagement?

Is **introduction of outside technology** implicitly exploitative and enslaving? Or is it liberating? How does **technology** impact **vulnerable** mission; positive, negative, releasing, enslaving?

How can **Global-localisation** be a springboard for vulnerable mission?

When **short-term mission** has become **poverty tourism** intended to adorn facebook with images of **charity** – what is the way forward?

Can Westerners relate to **anti-Western missionaries** without dominating them?

While the bible is God's inspired book, are **Western curriculum**?

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training for mission

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