THE NEED FOR INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES AND RESOURCES IN MISSION TO AFRICA IN LIGHT OF THE PRESENCE OF MONISM/WITCHCRAFT[1]

JIM HARRIES

Globally speaking, we seem to be in an endless cycle. The West has grasped the means of being materially productive that has resulted in its amassing wealth. Africa in the meantime engages monism, which perpetuates poverty but demands equality. The interaction of the West that seeks to alleviate the poverty of Africa, in ignoring its root causes, perpetuates it. The fact that the same interaction empowers Western languages gives African people distorted economic signals. It is in the economic interest of many African people to rote-learn foreign wisdom that makes little sense while neglecting locally rooted intelligence and disregarding efforts at countering African monism.

"The missionaries' aim was to develop Christian communities that were self-supporting."[2]

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INTRODUCTION

The above quote by Grace Wamue demonstrates that attempts by Western missionaries to ensure that their projects in Africa are self-supporting are not new. Yet, dependency continues to plague the African church. This article attempts to ask and answer the question as to why this is the case. It goes on to suggest remedies to this situation.

The traditional approach to development projects is for Westerners to set up a system that should be economically viable, on the assumption

that it will continue to be managed in the way that they advocate. Yet it has proved difficult for Africans to continue doing things in the way that missionaries did. This can be explained, at least in part, by considering African people's proclivity to monistic as against dualistic thinking and philosophy. Because for many African people, the physical and the spiritual are not distinct and easily distinguishable categories, they are inclined to run entities set up on the basis of a material rationality according to more familiar (to them) spiritual-physical lines of reasoning. The West's response to this practice has been to ignore it, assuming, as John Locke taught, that Africans are a blank slate onto which new things are being written. Unfortunately (or fortunately) previous understandings have continued to "interfere" with new inputs.

This article equates monism with witchcraft. Monism, the presupposition that all physical/material causation is also spiritual (and all spiritual causation is also material), is found to be very widespread in sub-Saharan Africa. Because at least in some parts of Africa "gods" are anthropocentric,[3] it follows that misfortune always arises from or through a human agent. The human agent may be someone who is already dead, or an adverse orientation of the heart of another living person. Because the spirits of dead people work through the hearts of living people, the spirits of the dead empower witchcraft fears.[4] I take witchcraft as being fear of the power of untoward feelings in the hearts of others, especially feelings of envy.[5]

The above relationships in African thinking are often concealed through the widespread and widely acclaimed practice in Africa whereby formal communication is in European languages. With the increase in globalized communication, African people are under increasing pressure to use these European languages in the same way that Europeans use them, regardless of their own understanding of what is going on around them. Thus, while the traditional worldview is propagated through widespread but informal uses of African languages, the same is concealed from formal contexts, which are the ones that are mostly in view to Westerners. Vulnerable mission, the use of local languages in ministry, is therefore advocated as necessary for a Western missionary to be truly "informed." Vulnerable mission as

here defined also includes the use of local resources in ministry. Such use of local resources frees African people from the need always to please their missionary as a donating foreign patron. Vulnerable mission is not optional. Local ministry really must be done using locally available languages and resources. The question is whether a foreign Western missionary can or is prepared to build on the local.

FOLLOWING THE SCRIPTURES

The search for equality that currently dominates international relations, even in so far as it is rooted in biblical principles of equality, is not the whole picture presented in the Bible. A case can be made for charitable, material giving to those less well off, but a biblical case can also be made for the communication of a spiritual message that need not be underpinned by material resource provision. This is a message that is fundamental to the Scriptures, to the biblical worldview, and to God's purpose for mankind. The call to Christian service in the Scriptures is not to persevere in service to God for as long as this proves to be materially rewarding. It is not one that puts material prosperity on par with one's spiritual standing with God. It is not one in which God's prophet pays people to do God's will, or of obliging people to be followers of Jesus in furtherance of their own economic interests. Neither is it one of forcing people to proclaim "correct" theology in a particular language, while their innate and heartfelt understanding remains a vast distance away from such orthodoxy.

When Christ sent out his missionaries, he sent them as lambs amongst wolves, and he gave them specific instructions not to take a "purse or bag or sandals" (Luke 10:3–4).6 The instructions are repeated elsewhere (Luke 9:3; Matt 10:9; Mark 6:8–9). The reason Jesus gave these instructions has not in recent times been clearly understood. Many missiologists have passed over them, ignoring them or considering them to have been superseded (cf. Luke 22:35–36). The Alliance for Vulnerable Mission (AVM) is seeking to revive these forgotten original principles of Christian missionary service.7 They are not exclusive—there may be a place for carrying a bag, but there may be a place equally for leaving it at home.

The principle of the use of local languages also has biblical support in the Pentecost event (Acts 2:6-12) and in Luke's testimony of Paul (Acts 22:1-2). Again, I am not attempting to be absolutist. It would have been obvious to people in biblical times that it was advantageous to use a language in ministry that their listeners understood; something that Paul and Barnabas failed to do at their cost as recorded in Acts 14:8-20.

LANGUAGES

The statement, "the missionaries' aim was to develop Christian communities that were economically self-supporting" struck me as incongruous and shocking, because it came from 1890.[8] Having served in East Africa since 1988,[9] I was amazed to find that concern to have been extant so long ago. I had mistakenly thought perhaps it became a concern to a more recent generation of missionaries. It is easy to blame prior generations for their bungles and to assume that we are more enlightened today. But I had to think, are we merely repeating past mistakes?

The approaches to helping people become self-supporting on the part of Western missionaries have doubtless had certain things in common in these last 120 years. One of those things is optimism—an implicit faith that the goal is possible. That faith has at times ebbed. I have witnessed a number of missionaries' optimism being gradually worn away as years of field service have mounted. Indeed, it seems that the longer an observant and astute missionary serves, the lower his or her optimism regarding the chances of achieving project sustainability becomes. One problem with such a decline in optimism is that people at both ends, African and Western, do not like it. Those who lack optimism seem to share in the sin of the spies sent to report on the promised land, who discouraged the Israelites from taking the land that they could, with God's help, have taken (Num 13).[10]

A love of optimists seems to be a deeply ingrained human trait. Hence people consistently love the politician whose forecast when running up to the election is highly positive. People often prefer an optimistic half-truth to a discouraging full-truth! Optimistic half-truths can

indeed spur people into action, but what if (as in the case of mission and development in Africa) optimistic half-truths tend to favour foreigners and "fat cats" while leaving the masses struggling? Could it be helpful to consider this situation more carefully? For example, should we be more optimistic about African people's ability to pass off witchcraft beliefs as irrelevant in "this day and age"? Concern for the plight of child witches[11] seems in recent years to have helped to spark a renewed unease regarding problematic issues in African culture.[12] "Religious" aspects of the culture of Nigerian peoples have recently been identified as evil, rather than as merely opium of the people.[13] "Witchcraft" is the English term that continues to be widely used to encapsulate a set of apparently very contrary beliefs that are widespread on the African continent.[14]

I have pointed elsewhere to the problems that can arise in the course of translation into English.[15] Labeling African phenomena with English terms invariably gives them baggage that is not necessarily rooted in the phenomena themselves. This is the case when it comes to witchcraft. The term is in contemporary times rarely used by people in the native English-speaking world to describe themselves. It is a term that implicitly raises the question of whether Africa is behind the times and should just stop "believing in"[16] something that the native English-speaking world left behind long ago.

Without going into the linguistic debate in much more detail here, I do want to search for an escape from the somewhat arbitrary constraints in understanding imposed by Western ideas about the witchcraft that African people, supposedly erroneously, "believe in." My "escape" is that instead of witchcraft, I want to talk of monism, and sometimes of envy. Monism I take as being an alternative to the dualism (in which the physical/material is taken as being different from the spiritual) which is widespread in Western nations. The increasingly popular Western explanatory system is dualistic; Westerners ever more frequently understand events in physical or material terms. This notion of what is real dismisses causative agents such as gods, spirits, curses, and omens. Monistic explanatory systems instead perceive a variety of causes that invariably include spiritual ones.[17]

In substituting the term *monism* (and at times, *envy*) for that of witchcraft, I hope we will find a little more room for maneuver in our consideration of "the problems of Africa" than has often been the case. Instead of means of overcoming witchcraft—which suggests rather gruesome practices like drowning, poisoning, or burning people, the obstacle to "development" is rather more philosophical in nature: monism. I also intend my use of *monism* to critique a tendency in some recent scholarship to value monism. I refer here to advocates of holistic mission, Tearfund's use of the term *umoja* ("oneness" from Swahili) to describe their strategies for promoting self-sustaining development in the Majority World, and so on.[18] (Some confusion seems to have arisen through the widespread use of English in which the words holy, holistic, and whole sound much the same.) I am not denying that there may be value in holistic approaches to situations, communities, or problems, but I would suggest that there is a dualism inherent both in the gospel and in Western society, and that this dualism is in both cases essential. The root of the essential dualism in the gospel is the distinction between God and the world. The essential dualism that I refer to in Western society is between the spiritual and the physical/material. The fact that these two are related reflects the Christian roots of Western dualism, though dualism arises also as a result of philosophical realism.[19]

If we assume that monistic thinking is contrary in various ways to human wellbeing, and for Christian believers that it incorporates theological error, the question arises as to how it can best be changed so that dualism comes to the fore. The preferred option in Western thinking seems to be to follow the teaching of John Locke, in so far as Locke considered the human mind to resemble a *tabula rasa* onto which information is drawn. According to him, the whole of understanding arises from physical stimuli made to the human senses.[20] Such is the model of education that has been applied from the West to the majority world. It assumes that if educational inputs to the people of Africa are the same as those given to Western people, then African people will have as a result the same capabilities as Western people. There are two important, closely related assumptions that underlie this thinking:

1. That whatever Western people (children) already have as they enter the school system that enables them to benefit from the education they are given, African people also have the same.
2. That African people do not have anything in their understanding that can interfere with their ability to appropriate Western education in the way that Westerners appropriate it.

Unfortunately, we seem to hit a problem here quite quickly in terms of language of use. Education in Africa is largely carried out using Western languages. When languages are understood as needing to be integrally linked to particular Western cultures so as to function effectively, then this is something that African people do not have. African languages/cultures meanwhile are something that Western people do not have but African people do have. The presence of these languages/cultures "interfere" with African people's engagement with Western education, for example through the way in which they affect how Western languages are understood.

It is very difficult to justify the assumption that a child entering school is a blank slate,[21] not least because the home life of children prior to entering school, which surely is strongly formative of their character, differs between cultures, nations, tribes, and linguistic communities. Linguistically one can consider the implicit and explicit translations that must be going on as a child learns in English at school while using another language at home. In much of Africa a foundational monistic outlook on life is already in place before a child begins to acquire formal schooling. It is difficult for a child, or an adult for that matter, to break out of the kinds of strictures placed upon them by the monistic community within which they live and relate to others, even as they engage in Western education.

The dominant wisdom demonstrated in educational policy practice seems to be that the best way to provide an escape from the strictures of monistic thinking is to ignore them and to trust that they will go away. Hence educational systems (including theological education systems) being designed for and taken up by African people are no different from those in the West. This applies increasingly as advances in communication technology that enable globalization take hold.

Globalisation enables the spread of provincialisms by people who think that their provincialisms are universal.[22]

That people are ignoring vast differences between themselves and others for the sake of some kind of superficial global uniformity ought to strike us as incredible. It would be helpful to adopt a thoughtful approach instead of ignoring contextual complexity. Popular educational wisdom states that learning should begin where someone is and then take them to where they are not. Contemporary educational systems in much of Africa, in assuming people to be "at the same place as the West" ignore cultural differences between Africa and the West.

If the educational system in Africa is so ineffective, then why is it so popular and so widespread? The answer in short is subsidy. The educational system in much of Africa is not homegrown, nor is its adoption motivated by what it can achieve or help people to achieve within the society receiving it. Were the latter the case, then Africans would educate their children using familiar languages. On the contrary, the perceived value of Western education in parts of Africa is in the links it provides to the wider world of European language–speaking peoples. The reason these links are so prominent and so critical to African communities is because English (perhaps more than other European languages) is the dominant language through which numerous varieties of charity and aid are distributed. Those with good English get this aid and get to control it, whereas those without good English are subject to the whim of those who get it. The power in English is not in the way it assists a community to help itself but the way it makes communities dependent on outside charity.

Such an educational system can severely restrict the development of a community: it forces students into great expense in terms of both time and finance to acquire the language of education, before being able to acquire the education in that language. It results in education being not from known to unknown, but from unknown to unknown. As a result the use of an African language is essential for education in Africa to be truly effective. There is a strong case to be made in favour of every people's total education to be in their mother tongue.[23] Even

failing this, I believe there is still a compelling case that any African language used in education in Africa should be seen as a better prospect than the European languages that are widely used at present.

Some scholars may consider that the great advantage of the use of English in Africa is that it enables access to written resources and provides a lingua franca for the continent. Kwesi Prah powerfully critiques this view.[24] Few scholars seem to ask themselves why it appears that every African language has failed to be the medium of enlightened advanced education. A question that should follow is, what are the implications of the fact that an African language apparently cannot be the medium of "modern" education? Could it be that there are qualities of African languages that render them incompatible with modern education? If such qualities exist, then how can learning a European language in itself enable a people to overcome such qualities? Presumably the content of African languages arises from the content of African lives. Does learning of another language "magically" result in a change in way of life? Or is the widespread use of English making people dependent on what they do not understand because it is not a part of who they are? If we had examples of non-European languages "succeeding," then perhaps we could say that the choice of a European language for an African student is a free or arbitrary choice. As it is, if it is a choice at all, then it is a choice that largely precludes taking the African person's own context seriously. This default option for African students handicaps them for the rest of their lives.[25]

For example, consider the contrast between monism and dualism. English is "at home" in dualistic communities. When used by dualistic people, it can be extremely productive, because the way it is used fits the contours of life of the people concerned. But if used by a monistic people, it loses its moorings. Its implicit categories are no longer the right ones. It serves a monistic people very poorly. This is the case unless they adapt English so as to use it in their way. Such "adaptation" of English defeats the original intention—that English be a means of easing communication with the wealthy and powerful international community and a means of achieving development and prosperity on Western lines.

In the globalizing world it is becoming more and more difficult for different peoples to use English as they like. There are too many people who are trying to align English with international standards for adaptation to happen easily. The main hope of many monistic people around the world is, in fact, to use English in the way that it "should be," even when such use clashes with their way of life and makes little sense to them. English use has to be an imitation and cannot arise from understanding. That is, English has to be rote-learned, as is a large proportion of the African educational curriculum. Still, accusations of corruption in economic and other practices abound. As a result, the use of subsidy to promote English and other non-African languages in Africa may be crippling the continent.

ECONOMICS, GOD, AND AFRICAN LEADERSHIP

Dambisa Moyo has probably become the most internationally renowned economist from Zambia. Her book *Dead Aid* speaks loudly and boldly against "charitable" practices that are "the silent killer of growth."[26]

To her the dependence of Africa on foreign aid is clear, gross, and wrong.[27] Her statements regarding this dependence have intrigued me: "foreign aid . . . continues . . . to be the predominant source of financial resources for much of the continent."[28] Just how dependent is the continent on foreign aid? The answer must of course depend on the definition one will take of terms such as "aid" and "dependence." What exactly qualifies as aid? What criterion is used for aid to be considered foreign?

A broad definition of aid is necessary in order to understand dependence comprehensively. Foreign control of the economy contributes to the aid-related dependence that Moyo discusses. Remittances sent by relatives from overseas into local communities, which official statistics do not take into account, should also be included in a comprehensive definition of aid. Moreover, we must account for the way that the impact of aid multiplies within the local economy. The gross receipts of aid are tremendous by themselves, yet

this number alone does not reflect the depth of dependency that such income creates.[29]

What impact does aid money have? Some try to minimise its apparent impact by emphasising how small it is in relation to GDP figures. Subjectively speaking—as a member of a rural African village community (admittedly a village targeted by the Millennium Villages Project, but the same could really be said even before MVP came)—it seems that foreign donor funds are constantly in view. It would seem that locally available resources quickly get used up in immediate home needs, whereas it is donor money that is used to fund whatever takes people beyond the level of basic self-sufficiency and household survival. If Moyo is right, then the degree of dependency of many African communities is very large indeed. The withdrawal of aid could certainly result in a severe catastrophe, yet the current system seems to be increasing this kind of dependency.

My reason for delving into this area of economics is not to belittle or to put down African people who would like to believe that they are doing better than I am indicating. It is to point to a massive concern that is crying out for attention. This concern links in to our discussion of dualism and monism. Could it be that deeply implicit and widely spread monism is preventing African people from grasping what is necessary in order to develop their economies along the same lines as others in the rest of the world? If this is the case, then we are face to face with an enormous and critical question: how to help people to grasp principles of dualism without which the onslaught of poverty intertwined with dependency will persist.

The perception that what Africa needs is science and technology is not new in the West. Unfortunately, attempts at transmission of scientific/technological principles have been rooted in the presupposition of dualism, onto which to latch scientific insights. The question of how to "convert" a people from being monistic in their worldview to the adoption of a partially[30] dualistic worldview looms large. What strikes me as perhaps the most interesting with respect to this worldview question is how we are challenging the secular agenda with what has traditionally been mission/Christian territory. By

discussing monism instead of just material poverty, and then conversion as a description of "needed change," religious faith has become the central issue for socio-economic development.31 Religious faith after all, in its engagement with heart and affection, contributes presuppositional foundations on which other things, including secularism, come to build.32

The shift from monism to dualism has a lot to do with monotheism or a "high view of God." If some Africans do not have a traditional understanding of a high God,33 then that absence can help to explain why it has been so difficult for them to acquire a dualistic worldview. Fennella Cannell makes a clear case for Christianity as source of dualism.34 The key, then, to Africa's social/economic development, lies in the appropriation of the gospel of Jesus Christ.35 That gospel must not be merely the prosperity gospel or the gospel that concentrates on driving out demons which seems to be the variant encouraged by today's "aid culture," but which can leave the monistic worldview intact. I refer here especially to Pentecostalism, that (including charismatics) claims one quarter of the world's Christians,36 but as James K. A. Smith concedes, easily becomes compromised to primal worldviews.37

Before looking at the missionary strategy that reflects the nature of God as high God, I want to make a few further comments regarding how historically a transition from monism to dualism has been enabled. This was a transition occurring during the fourteenth- to sixteenth-century Italian renaissance. In the course of this Renaissance monotheistic Christian belief was almost universally presupposed.38 In the seventeenth Century, according to Anthony Balcomb, "the main objection that arose against the belief [in magic] was [not science but] . . . that it threatened the idea of a transcendent omnipotent creator who could impose his will by divine fiat in the created order".39 It is possible that the Greek discovery of dualism was connected to links between Greek culture and knowledge of the true God derived from Moses.40 Did Max Weber not also hint that economic advances in Europe were as much to do with "extreme faith" in Protestantism as with technological innovativeness?41 In fact movements of faith have

often motivated masses of people in ways unequalled by either political revolution or "merely" social innovation.[42]

These observations challenge us to reconsider a lot of contemporary missions' strategy. Why have missions produced dependent churches addicted to the prosperity gospel? In short, Western missions' strategies have frequently presupposed the existence of dualism in the populations they have reached. For example, they have assumed that African people will understand that the resources provided by the Western mission body to support the spreading of the gospel are not the gospel. It has been very difficult, if not impossible, for many African people to grasp this. The challenge for the next generation of believers is how to spread the gospel without making the African church dependent on a dualism that it does not have, outside resources that it cannot control, and outside languages that it cannot own?

The West has been attempting to have African church leaders play a key part in the leadership of Western (–resourced and –language) mission efforts. Yet, we need to ask ourselves, How can African church leaders be expected to guide strategies to reach their own people that are rooted in misguided foreign assumptions? Instead of attempting to incorporate Africans into mission by educating them in Western languages and presupposing that they have a dualistic understanding that they do not, the challenge is now for Westerners to adjust their mission strategies to align with African realities. The lead, after God, must come from Africa. This requires the use of African languages as they are used by African people in Africa.[43]

African people leading Western mission efforts are invariably responding to an intricate and complex context of their own about which Westerners know relatively little. That context, including pressures from extended family and monistic presuppositions has almost invariably compelled the African to maximise the use of Western languages and to maximise foreign income in mission—to perpetuate dependence and the prosperity gospel. New mission efforts guided by the vulnerable mission principles of reliance on local resources and local languages must go beyond drawing on these

"native informers." Informers need to be allowed to speak more freely than is often the case. Listening to them in their own languages and ensuring that the economic equation not be loaded strongly in favour of their compliance enables such freedom. Such is what we are calling vulnerable mission.

VULNERABLE MISSION

We can define vulnerable mission as mission (or development intervention) by Westerners in the majority world that is carried out using local resources and languages. Instead of relying on "educated" foreign nationals to guide Western missionaries, Western missionaries and development workers must themselves become experts at intercultural communication. This requires that they become immersed in the languages and traditions of the people they are reaching. A vulnerable missionary will become dependent on locals and not on Western donors for the success of their endeavours. They will not so much devise "strategy" as they will respond in a Christ-centred way to the "strategies" of local African or other Majority World believers. Such can enable vulnerable mission to achieve a truly indigenous theology; something which money-laden strategists using Western languages have failed to accomplish for decades.

The carrying out of vulnerable mission depends on achieving the cooperation of nationals. Nationals have become increasingly accustomed to responding to proffered finance and other benefits. How Western missionaries will be welcomed if they do not have such to offer remains to be seen. The obligation is now, in the absence of the option of buying access, on the Westerner to adjust to the non-Western context. Will they be able to meet this challenge?

The new mission that emerges from vulnerable strategies on the part of Westerners opens numerous arenas full of challenge. Allow me to outline these by way of answering some of the critics of vulnerable mission strategies.

Some say that vulnerable mission is a way of denying African people access to Western languages or to funds. Yet, is a church pastor in the

USA who is inviting young people to talk about God denying them access to education in mathematics? That pastor has not gone to the school to burn the mathematics textbooks; he has simply chosen to offer people something other than mathematics; so also for vulnerable missionaries with respect to English and donor funds.

My own prediction is that a VM will get the kind of stark view of "life" in African (Majority World) communities that has often been missed by contemporary missionaries. As the view becomes stark and clear, so will previously barely perceived challenges. Typically in Africa the major challenge is how to deal with the monism we are considering, which has in the West become known as witchcraft; something largely ignored by the current Western missionary force. The critics have long said that witchcraft does not "exist." Recently, its impact has become more visible. Vulnerable mission provides an alternative to the perhaps much more common secular critique of monism.[44]

The rise in the visibility of African witchcraft in recent years has been notable. Stepping Stones Nigeria in particular has invested heavily in making the problem of child witches better known.[45] Unfortunately, their work suffers the weakness of treating witchcraft as if it is an appendage to life in Africa that they can excise, rather than recognising it for what it is—an expression of the African worldview. Nevertheless the actions of Stepping Stones and others[46] in drawing our attention to this issue can be considered progress. It is an improvement on those who perceive Africa's problems to be only in the material realm—the position of many big players in the field of development, such as the Millennium Development Project, who are forced to be secular in orientation.

It is time for Westerners intervening in Africa to concede that beliefs related to monism are not there "objectively" waiting to be analysed using English as if they are in a laboratory. Treating beliefs in this way is like studying the habits of fish through first laying them out in the sun on a concrete surface. Monistic/witchcraft beliefs affect Africans' communication about themselves and their communities. When talking with African people about witchcraft, even if the conversation is in English, one is not only discussing witchcraft, but one is also using

witchcraft categories, and in that sense engaging in witchcraft, whether one knows it or not. In the course of discussion an African speaker may well be wary of the way what he says could implicate him in witchcraft attacks, and so on. Such topics are effectively tackled using African languages.

Envy is not given a great deal of prominence in many secular discussions today, despite the prominence of envy in Africa. The Western approach, rooted in objectivity, excludes such human sentiments as envy from view. Seen from the African side, the history of the interaction between Western and African people is intricately connected to issues concerning envy. This could be very evident to those who take a broader look at relationships between the West and Africa. Envy is the powerhouse of a lot of the evil associated with witchcraft (i.e., monistic beliefs).

Whether African communities can escape the clutches of envy/jealousy is a very important question. I take envy as a synonym for witchcraft. If they can do so, then in a sense they have already overcome one of the terrors of witchcraft. Such beliefs (i.e., fear of witchcraft) are very difficult to overcome, but if African communities cannot overcome their orientation to envy, then it will be hard to make progress on other fronts. Envy constantly curtails alternative options of mutual cooperation between community members. If each one has set out from the beginning to make sure that others not get ahead,[47] regress is easier than progress. Envy easily disregards victims—if my focus is on how to close the gap between myself and others I consider to be better off than I, then I may have little energy left to consider someone else who is worse off.[48] Africa cannot "be developed" by others without its own people's active participation, yet envy undermines the possibility of that participation.

David Maranz articulates one outcome of envy: in many African communities, those who are better off have an innate and unquestioned obligation to give.[49] (They are required to "give" so as to avoid the consequences of the envy (i.e., witchcraft) of others should they not do so.) What the receiver gives in return is a kind of servitude and verbal public praise. In terms of relationships between the wealthy

West and Africa, this means that according to many Africans the West is required to keep giving and giving to Africa until material equality is reached. Such an equation includes relatively little consideration for the need to impart material productivity to Africa, because in the African view of the world much overlap between spiritual and "material productivity" looks different than it does in the West.

The flip side of Africa's demands is of course the West's willingness to give. The evidence demonstrates that the African approach to imbalances in wealth is proving enormously successful—to the tune of $1 trillion given to the continent in foreign aid over the last 50 years.[50] Africa's pleas for help would have accomplished nothing if no one was listening, but those who are listening are also responding generously. The sum total of reasons as to why the so-called international community responds as generously as it does to appeals for help from Africa is too large a topic for us here.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

While the Bible may advocate equality, it does not insist that spiritual messages be accompanied by material charity. The Bible points us towards the advantages of the use of mother tongues.

Western missionaries have long recognised the need for African churches and communities to be self-supporting. African monism has hindered the achievement of that goal. Western experts have ignored monism, but contrary to their hopes, its persistence has revealed the shallowness of their aspirations for how Africa should develop. A necessary component to the overcoming of the ignorance of Westerners in Africa is a considered response to and not an ignoring of what is there, including monism and its products. Because monism will not simply go away, Western missionaries must carefully address it, which requires the use of African language(s) in church, leadership, and education.

Africa's dependency on outside aid is massive. Empowering the continent's people requires an appreciation of dualism, which has historically often come to a more monistic people by means of

religious conversion—a kind of conversion which, contrary to popular opinion, has barely occurred in Africa. Because leading people from monism to dualism is different from the West's education and leadership practices that operate within the boundaries of dualism, the best approach to African leaders ought to include an attempt to gain understanding from their perspective. The responsibility is on the West to communicate and interact interculturally.

To share the gospel and not Western culture remains an acute challenge to Western Christian missionaries. The rising visibility of witchcraft in Africa even in secular circles demonstrates an awareness of aspects of monism until recently deemed irrelevant by strict dualists. The way forward must be in a vulnerable approach to mission, that intends to overcome the intensity of envy associated with monism to foster belief in God as high God and to move away from the current widespread African Christian faith that hopes intently in this-worldly success.

Jim Harries (PhD) served for three years amongst the Kaonde people in Zambia. Since 1993 he has lived in a Luo village in western Kenya. In that time he has been teaching Theological Education by Extension at Yala Theological Centre and Siaya Theological Centre in western Kenya. He lectures part time at Kima International School of Theology. He has learned the languages of the Kaonde, Luo, and Swahili people. Harries is the chairman of the Alliance for Vulnerable Mission and serves as adjunct faculty at William Carey International University and Global University, both in the USA. He can be contacted at jimoharries@gmail.com.

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[1] This essay is an adaptation of a lecture presented at the Abilene Christian University "Global Conference on Vulnerable Mission," March 7–10, 2012.

[2] Grace Nyatugah Wamue, "The Use of European Traditions in the Study of Religion in Africa: East African Perspectives," in *European Traditions in the Study of Religion in Africa*, ed. Frieder Ludwig and Afe Adogame, Series of the African Association for the Study of Religions (Wiesbaden, Germany: Harrassowitz, 2004), 366, of Western missionaries to East Africa in the period beginning in 1890.

[3] Joseph G. Healey, *A Fifth Gospel: The Experience of Black Christian Values* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1981), 146.

[4] Jim Harries, "Pragmatic Theory Applied to Christian Mission in Africa: With Special Reference to Luo Responses to 'Bad' in Gem, Kenya" (PhD thesis, University of Birmingham, 2007), 210, http://etheses.bham.ac.uk/15.

[5] Jim Harries, "Witchcraft, Envy, Development, and Christian Mission in Africa," *Missiology: An International Review* 40, no. 2 (April 2012): 129–39.

[6] All Scripture quotations, unless specified otherwise, are from the New International Version.

[7] See http://vulnerablemission.org.

[8] Wamue, 366.

[9] Jim Harries, "Meeting the Indigenous Church: A Personal Account of an African Missionary Journey" (unpublished manuscript, 2009), http://www.jim-mission.org.uk/harries-bio.pdf.

[10] I have pointed elsewhere to the dependence on providence often found in endeavours by Westerners in the Majority World that does not apply to their activities when "at home." See Jim Harries, "Providence and Power Structures in Mission and Development Initiatives from the West to the Rest: A Critique of Current Practice," *Evangelical Review of Theology* 32, no. 2 (April 2008): 156–65.

[11] See Stepping Stones Nigeria, "Child 'Witches,' " The Issues, http://www.steppingstonesnigeria.org/witchcraft.html.

[12] Such consideration of the problems of Africa as being unique has been variously oppressed in the course of history, as also explained by Bethwell A. Ogot, *Reintroducing Man into the African World: Selected Essays 1961–1980* (Kisumu, Kenya: Anyange Press, 1999). Okot p'Bitek, *Religion of the Central Luo* (Nairobi, Kenya: East African Literature Bureau, 1971), 10–58, attempted to undermine reports of Europeans about African communities.

[13] As suggested by Karl Marx, *Critique of Hegel's "Philosophy of Right,"* trans. Annette Jolin and Joseph O'Malley, Cambridge Studies in the History and Theory of Politics (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1972), 131. I include place quotation marks around the term "religious" because I consider use of this category with reference to African ways of life usually to be a false imposition.

[14] Gerrie ter Haar, *Imagining Evil: Witchcraft Beliefs and Accusations in Contemporary Africa*, Religion in Contemporary Africa (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2007).

[15] E.g., see Jim Harries, *Vulnerable Mission: Insights into Christian Mission to Africa From a Position of Vulnerability* (Pasadena: William Carey Library, 2011), 239–55.

[16] I take a term such as "believing in" as coming from recent relatively cerebral Western Christianity. For the African witchcraft is likely to be simply a part of the way things are, rather than something to be "believed in" or "not believed in."

[17] Such a category as "spiritual causes" is of course rooted in dualism and so does not make sense for monists.

[18] Tearfund International Learning Zone, "Umoja," Churches, http://tilz.tearfund.org/Churches/Umoja.

[19] The realist believes "that the objects of our senses are real or exist in their own right quite independent of their being known to, perceived by, or related to mind." Harold H. Titus, Marilyn S. Smith, and Richard T. Nolan, *Living Issues in Philsophy*, 9th ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 283. Such belief clearly sets up a dualism of things that are real as against those that are "not real."

[20]*Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, s. v. "John Locke (1632–1704)," accessed August 13, 2011, http://www.iep.utm.edu/locke.

[21] "*Tabula rasa*," see discussion on Locke above. This thinking would need to assume that the upbringing and home-life of African children is identical to, or at least functionally the equivalent to, that of Western native English-speaking children.

[22] Samuel M. Tshehla, " 'Can Anything Good Come Out of Africa?': Reflections of a South African Mosotho Reader of the Bible," *Journal of African Christian Thought* 5, no. 1 (2002): 23.

[23] Kwesi Kwaa Prah, "The Burden of English in Africa: From Colonialism to Neo-Colonialism," (keynote address presented to the Department of English: 5th International Conference on the theme: Mapping Africa in the English-Speaking World, University of Botswana, Francistown, Botswana, June 2–4, 2009),http://www.casas.co.za/FileAssets/NewsCast/misc/file/The%20Burden%20of%20English%20in%20Africa%20University%20of%20Botswana%20June09%20Version2.pdf.

[24] Ibid., 5.

[25] Stating that an African language ought to be the medium of instruction is of course not to say that European languages should not be taught as subjects. To teach European and other African languages as subjects is highly recommended. Research suggests that African students become more competent in English if it is taught as a subject, rather than when it is the language of instruction.

[26] Dambisa Moyo, *Dead Aid: Why Aid Is Not Working and How There Is a Better Way for Africa* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2009), 48.

[27] Ibid., 36.

[28] Ibid., 25.

[29] For example, a certain amount of foreign money subsidizes the primary school sector of a country. Some of that money will go to pay teachers. The teachers will buy food from a shop. This will enable shopkeepers to acquire produce from farmers, who will in turn purchase other products from the shops, so that the shopkeepers as well as the teachers will become owners of bicycles. The use of bicycles will enable certain young men to enter into the

bicycle repair business, which will mean that their wives will have the money with which to purchase artificial hair and to pay someone to apply it and so on. At which point is money-flow no longer considered to be due to foreign aid? Another example: the presence of numerous outside agencies providing all kinds of aid, all requiring efficient communication systems, results in large profits for mobile phone companies that are in turn taxed by African governments for their own spending. That government income, which seems to be internally produced, arises only slightly indirectly from foreign aid. Just how dependent then are African economies on foreign aid?

30 I do not think it is possible, and certainly it is not "healthy," to be entirely dualistic.

31 This paragraph raises many questions, which I cannot address in this short article. I refer my readers to some of my other writings, such as those found at http://www.jim-mission.org.uk/articles/index.html.

32 James K. A. Smith, *Thinking in Tongues: Pentecostal Contributions to Christian Philosophy* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), 5, 59.

33 As says Okot, 41-58; contra John S. Mbiti, *Introduction to African Religion*, 2nd ed., African Writers (London: Heinemann, 1991), 45-59, and Kwame Bediako, "Biblical Exegesis in the African Context—The Factor and Impact of Translated Scriptures," *Journal of African Christian Thought* 6, no. 1 (June 2003): 21.

34 Fennella Cannell, "The Christianity of Anthropology," *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 11, no. 2 (June 2005): 338, 350-51; Fennella Cannell, "The Anthropology of Christianity," in *The Anthropology of Christianity*, ed. Fennella Cannell (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006), 14.

35 I do not here go into the area of comparative religions, and whether "the key" may rather be in Buddhism, Islam, etc., for reasons that go beyond the scope of this article. I point my reader to Cannell, "Anthropology of Christianity," 1, 2, 16, 21, and Talal Asad, "The Construction of Religion as an Anthropological Category," in *A Reader in the Anthropology of Religion,* ed. Michael Lambeck, Wiley-Blackwell Anthologies in Social and Cultural Anthropology (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2002), 122. Both of these authors give singular credit to Christianity for the emergence of categories associated with modern dualism.

[36] See The Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, "Global Christianity," Christian, Religious Affiliation, Topics, http://www.pewforum.org/christian/global-christianity-exec.aspx.

[37] Smith, 41.

[38] Bambang Sugiharto, "Radical Consequences of the Primacy of Experience in the Hermeneutics of Culture," in *Communication across Cultures: The Hermeneutics of Cultures and Religions in a Global Age*, ed. Chibueze C. Udeani et al., Seminars: Culture and Values, vol. 26 (Washington, DC: The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 2008), 94.

[39] Anthony Balcomb, "The Great Comeback of God(s): Theological Challenges and Opportunities in a Post-Secular World," *Missionalia: Southern African Journal of Mission Studies* 38, no. 3 (November 2010): 418.

[40] John R. Salverda, "Moses, Hermes and Io," Ancient/Classical History, About.com, http://forums.about.com/n/pfx/forum.aspx?tsn=1&nav=display &webtag=ab-ancienthist&tid=5159.

[41] Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, trans. Talcott Parsons (New York: Scribner, 1958).

[42] The reader can note that the English I use here is implicitly dualistic in that I make a distinction between the religious and the non-religious (e.g., the "merely social") that is an invention of Western society. This is not an argument that arises from the widespread African worldview, in which these are not distinct.

[43] There would be less point in using an African language in a Western way. The point of the argument presented here is that mission policy for Africa must emerge as a result of the impact of God's Word on the African milieu.

[44] Note that in this article we are considering *witchcraft* to be largely synonymous with the terms *monism* and *envy*.

[45] See fn. 11.

[46] See also Tony Kail, *Cry from the Bush: A Christian Response to Africa's Epidemic of Witch Hunts, Child Witches and Deadly Exorcisms* (Scotts Valley, CA: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2011).

[47] See for example Kwesi Kwaa Prah, *The African Nation: The State of the Nation*, CASAS Book Series 44 (Cape Town: Centre for Advanced Studies of African Society, 2006), 153.

[48] The various implications for communication of a society rooted in envy are too wide for me to explore more fully here. See Harries, "Witchcraft."

[49] Maranz, 150.

[50] Moyo, xviii.

– See more at: http://missiodeijournal.com/article.php?issue=md-4-1&author=md-4-1-harries#sthash.7qZjEJ6z.dpuf