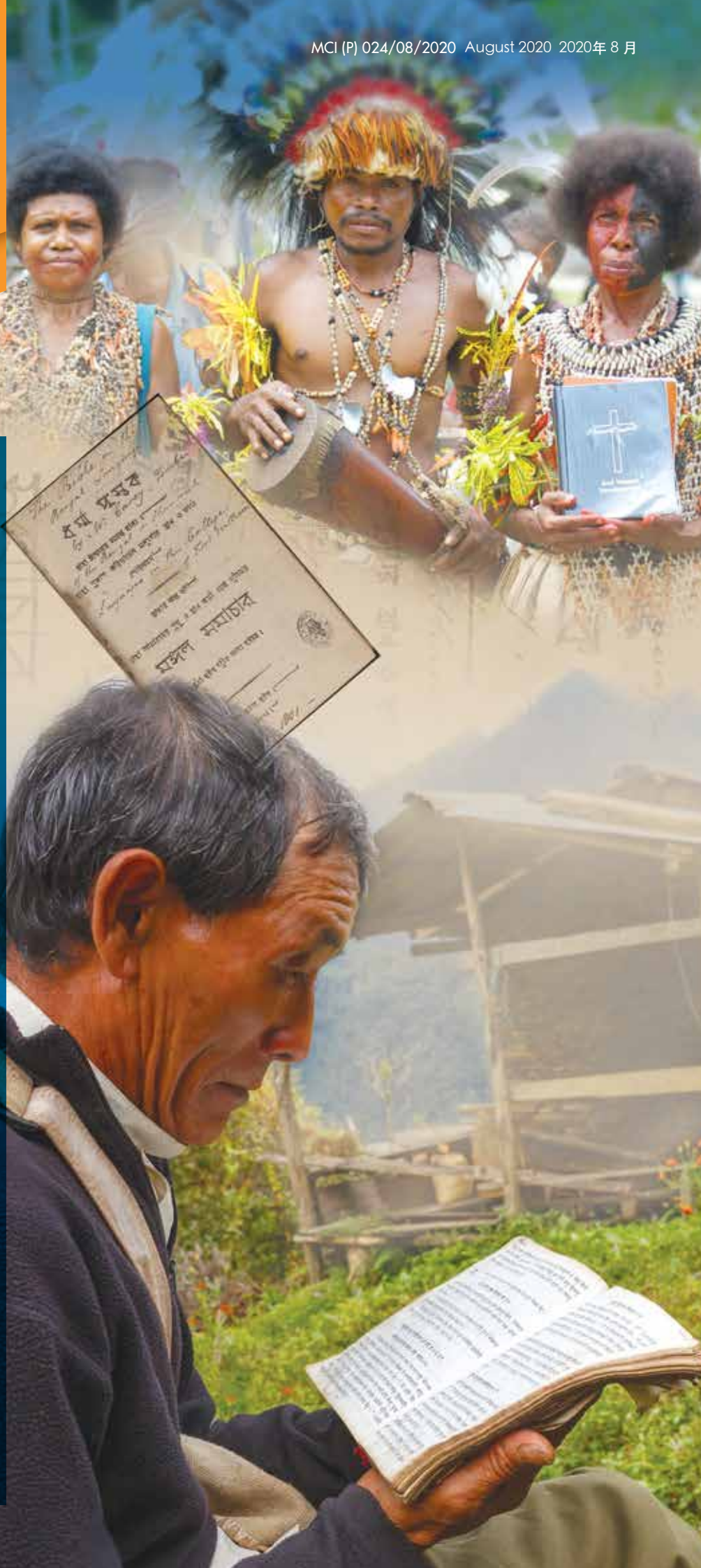


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Editorial

By Dr David Tan, Executive Director

For the major part of 2020, the world has been battered by COVID-19. God has used a tiny virus to bring the whole world to a standstill. The blessing that came with it was that most of us were able to spend more time at home, time which could be used to reflect on what God wants us to learn during this year.

What lessons have I learned this year?

First and foremost, it is that God is sovereign and in control of the world. He can make use of a tiny virus to wreak havoc, with the hope that humanity will turn to him. We human beings are frail and should be humbled by the uncertainty and temporal nature of human life. Yet, seeing how some countries might have opened up too early due to economic pressures, I am not sure we have learned the right lessons.

Another lesson that I have learned is how the poor, the migrants and the less privileged in our societies have suffered during this pandemic. Some have lost their jobs or not received their salaries for months. Some do not even have money for food. There's also the issue of language. The minorities in our midst, including the migrant workers, have had difficulty understanding all the information communicated by government departments, and also accessing medical help at hospitals. This has prompted some students at NUS to volunteer as translators for foreign workers.

Which brings to mind that different language groups also do not have access to God's word in a language that speaks to their hearts. If we need the right language to access help for our physical bodies, then all the more we need the right language to access God's word for our spiritual vitality.

Language and culture are key in missions. So, in this edition of our newsletter, you can read that *Particles Matter*, and that the right accent/pronunciation matter in *What's the Password?* We also feature articles on three famous missionaries who worked on translations and the issue of contextualization. Enjoy reading!



Blessings,
Dr. David Tan



编者语

总主任陈金峰博士

在2020年的大部份日子里，世界各地都受到新冠病毒的打击。上帝使用一个微小的病毒，令全世界陷入瘫痪。随之而来的祝福是，大多数人留在家的时间多了。我们可以利用这些时间来反思，想想上帝要我们从中学学习些什么。

我今年学习到什么功课？

首先，我认识到上帝是拥有掌管世界的主权。祂让一个微小的病毒在全球肆虐，期盼着世人转向祂。人类是脆弱的，面对人生的短暂无常，我们要谦卑自己。然而，当看到有国家因为经济压力而过早开放社区时，我不得不怀疑大家所学到的是否正确。

另外，在这个大流行疫情期间，我也看到社会中的贫穷人、外劳和弱势群体是遭受着怎样的痛苦。有人失去工作，有人几个月都领不到薪水，有人甚至连吃饭的钱都没有。除此之外，还出现了语言的问题。在我们当中的少数族群（包括外劳），无法完全明白政府各部门所发出的信息，也不懂得如何寻求医疗帮助。这促使一些国立大学学生自愿担任外劳的翻译员。

由此使我想到，操不同语言的族群也缺乏一本他们能够容易明白的母语圣经。如果我们要能掌握适当的语言才可使肉身存活，那么，我们更需要用自己熟悉的语言来了解上帝的话语，好让属灵生命得到喂养。

语言和文化是宣教的关键。在这一期里，我们透过文章《你有暗号吗？》让您了解腔调和发音的重要性。我们会介绍三位以圣经翻译闻名的宣道士，并探讨信仰本土化的课题。祝您阅读愉快！

愿神祝福你！
陈金峰博士上

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Particles Matter!

By Felicia

Natural-sounding Singlish is peppered with particles such as *lah*, *hor*, *meh* and many others. No-one teaches a child how to use these; he absorbs this from the environment that he grows up in. These language rules are tacitly understood but not formally articulated. However, they determine what is correct and will communicate effectively to speakers of Singlish.

I myself think that there's no standard Singlish, but rather there are many overlapping Singlish varieties. The Singlish each person speaks is influenced by their individual language backgrounds. So, my particular Singlish has less Hokkien in it, but more Malay and Cantonese.

Singlish Particles

Here are a few examples borrowed from Gwee Li Sui¹, a local poet and writer:

I dun have lah.

[I really don't have it.]

I dun have lor.

[I wish I had it, but sadly I don't.]

I dun have meh?

[You think I don't have it?]

I dun have ha.

[I remind you that I don't have it!]

The Singlish Bible

Did you know that there is an online Singlish Bible translation?² It is actually a paraphrase contributed by various people, and only a few passages have been completed so far.

As I read the Singlish Bible verses out loud, my tacit knowledge kicked in. I did feel that the translators had not always got it quite right. For example:

(1) Genesis 1:6-8

Den God say, "All the water in between must have dua lobang, so then the dua lobang can separate some water and other water." So

God made the dua lobang, then divide the downstairs water from the upstairs water; like that lor. Den God say the dua lobang is Heaven. Got evening, got morning, so second day.

Lor in v. 7 seems to have an air of "it can't be helped; definitely not to be used for God creating a good universe. A better way might be "... so then like that, **lah**." *Lah* in this context would mean something like "obviously" or "of course".

(2) Matthew 26:14-15

Den one of the Twelve, that bugger call Judas Iscariot - he go to the tua kee priests and ask dem "If I gib you Jesus hor, you gib me what meh? Best offer hor." So they quote him thirty piece of silver.

Meh has an air of "Really? Convince me!" that feels out of place. I would prefer, "If I gib you Jesus hor, you gib me what, **ah**?" *Ah* is more appropriate because it has a tone of appeal, as in, "Give me a fair deal here."

Why It Matters

As these Singlish examples demonstrate, tacit knowledge of a language is hard to pin down and describe, but it can access storehouses of meaning and emotion in a language. A natural and interesting Bible translation must surely make use of this type of tacit knowledge to produce an accurate and flavourful translation that will engage its audience. Getting it wrong risks transmitting the wrong meaning, and will certainly be off-putting!

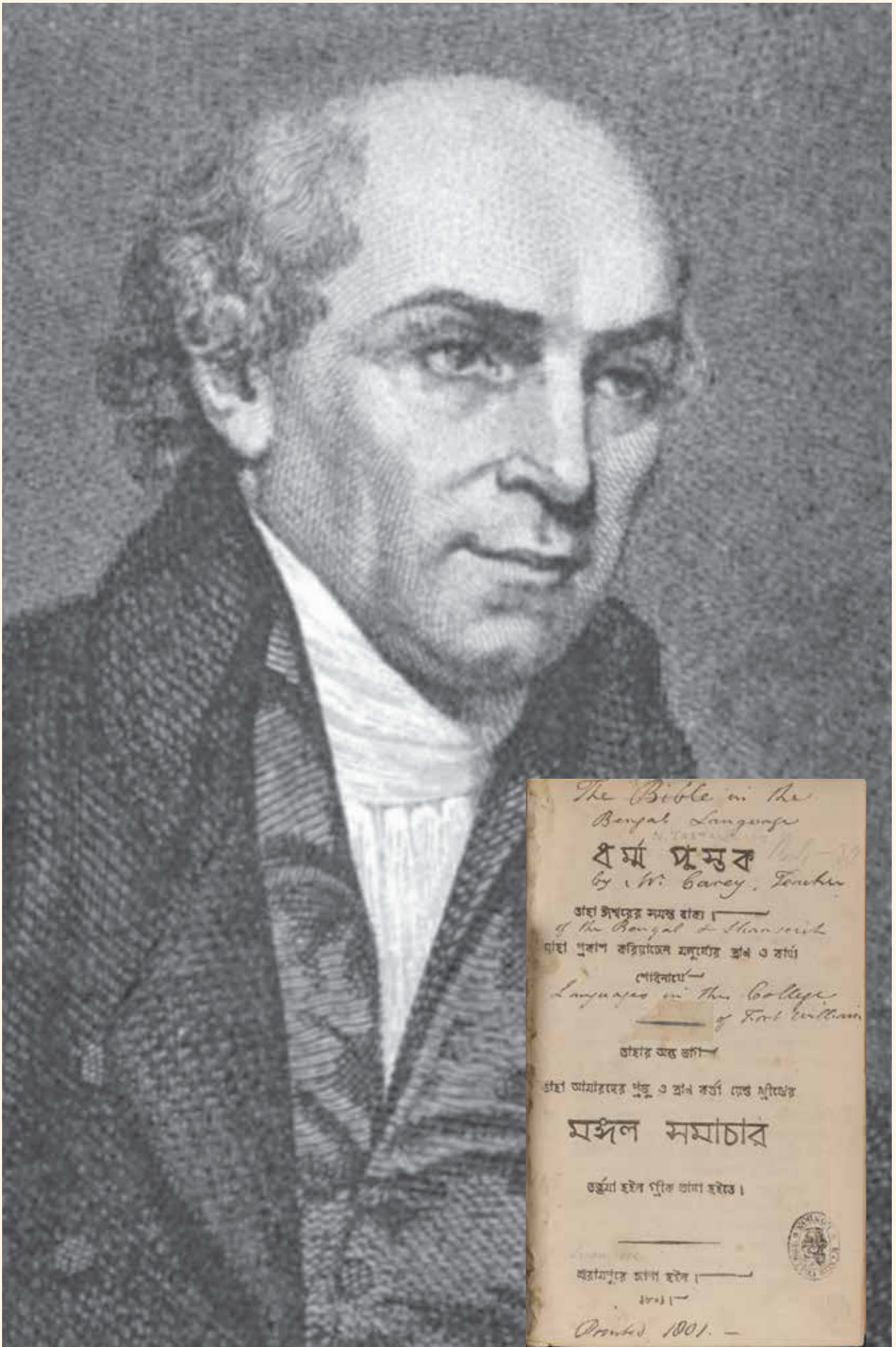
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¹Gwee Li Sui. 2015.

<https://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/whats-the-difference-between-lah-and-lor-poet-gwee-li-suis-take-on-nuances-of-singlish>

²Singlish Bible. 2020.

https://singlishbible.fandom.com/wiki/Singlish_Bible_Wiki



William Carey. 威廉·克里。

3 Famous Missionaries Known for Translation

By Evangeline

Throughout history, many Christian missionaries have faithfully served God in different ways. Here is a list of three famous missionaries who were known for their translation work.

William Carey (1761-1834)

William Carey was a British missionary who was one of the first missionaries sent to India in 1793. Carey grew up in a small village in England and was a shoemaker. Nevertheless, even from a young age, he displayed a flair for languages, eventually teaching himself Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Italian, Dutch, and French.

Later, in India, Carey translated the Bible into several local languages including Hindi, Sanskrit, Bengali, and Assamese. He also translated portions of the Bible into other dialects and languages. He also translated a famous Hindu classic, *Ramayana*, into English.

Carey also founded the Serampore Mission Press that printed a wide variety of textbooks, dictionaries, and literature

that benefitted both the general public and students at all levels. He “thought it important enough that costly fonts of type be cast for the irregular and neglected languages of the Indian people”, much like how Wycliffe today continues to recognise the value and importance of people having access to the Word in their heart languages, regardless of how ‘minority’ a language it might be.

In total, Carey spent 41 years in India. During this time, his pioneering efforts laid the foundations for Bible translations, education, and social reform that proved to be instrumental in influencing the following generations of missionaries to India. As such, he is considered as the ‘father of modern missions’.

三位以圣经翻译闻名的宣教士

文/Evangeline

古往今来，基督徒宣教士在许多不同的领域忠心事主。以下是三位以圣经翻译闻名于世的宣教士。

威廉·克里 (1761-1834)

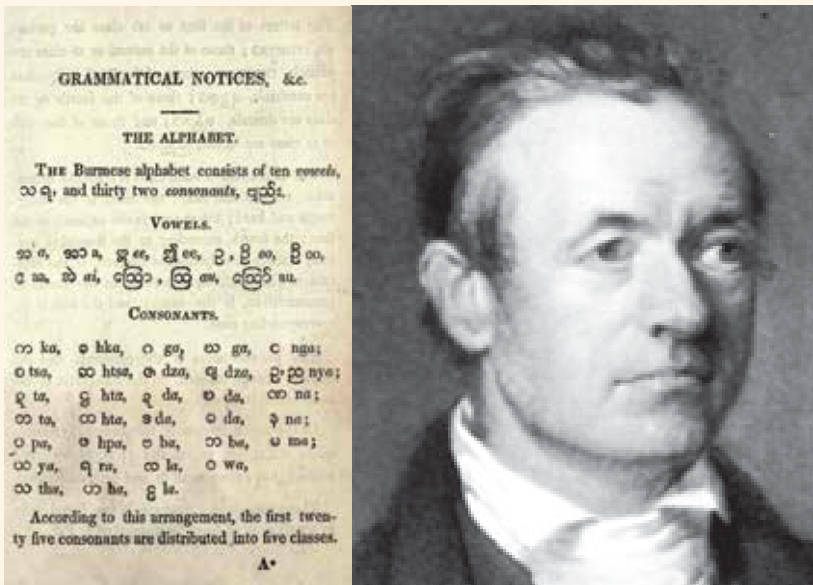
威廉·克里 (William Carey) 是首批被差派到印度的英国宣教士之一。克里是一名鞋匠，在英国一个小村庄长大。他语文天赋很高，自学了拉丁文、希腊文、希伯来文、意大利文、荷兰文和法文。

在印度，克里将圣经翻译成多种当地语言，包括印地语、梵文、孟加拉语及阿萨姆语。他也将部分圣经翻译成其他语言及方言，又把印度经典《罗摩传》(Ramayana) 翻译成英语。

克里创办了塞兰坡使命出版社 (Serampore Mission Press)，印刷

出版各种课本、词典，以及适合普罗大众和各级学生的文学著作。他坚信“那些不常使用而被忽略的印度语言，虽然字体铸造费用高昂，却是非常重要的。”今天，威克理夫圣经翻译会秉持同一信念，即便是一种很少人用的语言，我们都坚持要使该群体能以自己的“心灵语言”来接触上帝的话语。

克里在印度服事了41年。期间，他努力创新，为圣经翻译、教育、以及社会改革奠下基础。事实证明，他所做的一切对后世前往印度的宣教士影响深远。威廉·克里因而被誉为“现代宣教之父”。



Adorinam Judson. 艾多奈拉姆·耶德逊。

Adorinam Judson (1788-1850)

Adorinam Judson was an American Baptist missionary who was the first foreign missionary out of America. Judson was born in the US in 1788. As a child, he studied theology and began reading when he was just three. In 1812, he and his wife, Ann Haseltine, arrived in India as missionaries. However, having been forced by the British East India Company to leave India, they escaped to Burma (now Myanmar) in 1813.

艾多奈拉姆·耶德逊 (1788-1850)

艾多奈拉姆·耶德逊 (Adorinam Judson) 是美国浸信会第一位差派到海外的宣教士。耶德逊于1788年在美国出生。他三岁开始阅读，年幼时便修习神学。1812年，耶德逊与妻子安娜·哈信天 (Ann Haseltine) 抵达印度当宣教士。然而，造化弄人，夫妻俩被东印度公司驱赶，在1813年逃到缅甸。

耶德逊在缅甸遇到无数的问题与挑战。虽然身为布道家和圣经翻译员，却直到1819年才有人因他信主。在1824至1826年的英缅战争中，耶德逊被缅军以英国间谍罪名拘捕，在狱中饱受折磨。

There, Judson faced countless difficulties and challenges. Serving as an evangelist and Bible translator, he failed to see any converts until 1819! Later, during the Burmese War of 1824 to 1826, he was accused of being an English spy and imprisoned by Burmese forces and tortured.

After he was released from prison, he continued to work tirelessly, eventually completing the translation of the Bible into Burmese in 1834, and thereafter working on the English-Burmese dictionary. After serving for over 30 years in Burma, he went on his first and only furlough back to the US, returning to Burma in 1847 and completing an enlarged dictionary in 1849. Shortly after, he contracted a respiratory fever and died in 1850.

Judson's work in Burma eventually led to a fervent community of about half a million Christians consisting of Burman, Karen, and other people groups. Today, Baptist churches in Myanmar celebrate Judson Day on 13 July every year to commemorate the date of his arrival in Burma in 1813. Judson Baptist Church Singapore also serves the Burmese community of Singapore.

出狱后，他继续努力不懈，终于在1834年完成缅甸圣经翻译；随后也致力编辑英缅词典。在缅甸服事30余年的耶德逊，只有一次回到美国休假。他在1847年重返缅甸，两年后完成英缅扩大版词典。不久之后，他患上呼吸道热症，于1850年与世长辞。

耶德逊在缅甸的服事最终兴起了一个约有50万人的火热基督徒社群，当中包括缅甸族 (Burman)、克伦族 (Karen) 及其他族群。现今，缅甸的浸信教会在每年7月13日庆祝耶德逊日，纪念他在1813年这一天抵达缅甸。新加坡耶德逊浸信会也服事在新加坡的缅甸群体。

James Hudson Taylor (1832-1905)

James Hudson Taylor was born in England in 1832 to a family devoted to God. He had always known that he would one day go to China as a missionary. Although he briefly lost sight of his 'mission' in his teens, he found his way back to God after reading a tract that he had found at home when he was 17. In preparation for his mission ahead, he moved to a remote town and trained under a doctor.

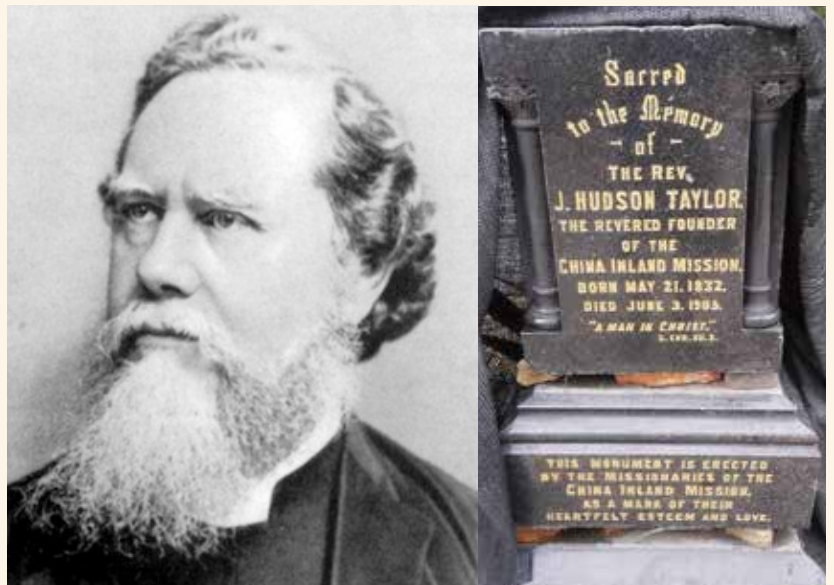
In 1854, Taylor arrived in Shanghai, China as a young man of 21. There, he found that most missionaries he met were more interested in using their translation skills to serve businessmen and diplomats, rather than in serving God's purposes. More pressingly, he felt that the Word needed to be taken to inland China where many were unreached. He set sail down the Huangpu River, distributing tracts and Bibles in villages along the way. In 1856, he moved to Ningbo, where he found a devoted community of missionaries to work with. It was around this time that he adopted the Chinese dress, as he felt that it would help the local people to see him and the gospel as less foreign.

Often suffering from poor health, Taylor returned to England in 1860 for medical reasons. There, however, he worked on translating and revising the Ningbo New Testament. In 1865, after praying for 24

戴德生 (1832-1905)

戴德生于1832年出生在英国一户虔诚的基督教人家。他自幼就想到中国宣教。在青春时期，他曾一度失去对信仰的热忱。但在17岁那年，透过在家中找到的一份福音单张而重新回到神的怀里。为了预备日后的宣教路，戴德生搬到偏远的小镇，跟随一名医生学习医术。

1854年，21岁的小伙子戴德生来到中国上海。在那里，他发现所遇见的宣教士多数是用他们的翻译技巧来为商人和外交官服务，而非为神工作。戴德生认为迫在眉睫的事工，乃是要将上帝的话语带给中国内陆的未得之民。于是，他搭船沿黄浦江进入内陆地区，在途经的村庄分发福音单张和圣经。到了1856年，他搬到宁波，找到一群虔诚的宣教士。从那时起，戴德生便改穿唐装，他觉得这样可以消除中国人对他和福音的陌生感。



Hudson Taylor. 戴德生。

missionaries to return to China with him, he founded the China Inland Mission (now OMF International) and returned to China in 1866.

Hudson Taylor died in Hunan, China in 1905, after serving a total of 51 years in the country. While he was oft known as a 'man of faith', to this he would humbly respond that he was 'only a servant of a faithful God'. Today, OMF International continues Taylor's work in presenting the gospel to not just the people in Inland China, but to all the peoples in East Asia.

身体一向欠佳的戴德生在1860年返回英国接受治疗。他在英国期间仍然继续翻译和修订宁波版新约圣经。在1865年，为招募24名愿意到中国的宣教士，他创办中国内地会（即现在的海外基督使团），并于翌年回到中国。

1905年，戴德生在中国湖南安息主怀。他在中国事奉了51年。常常有人称赞他对上帝的信心，但他总是谦虚地回应：“我只是信实主的一个仆人。”今天，海外基督使团传承戴德生的使命，不仅在中国内陆传扬福音，更在东亚地区的各族群中宣讲耶稣基督的救恩。

Contextualisation – Culture in the Light of Scripture

By Sharon



Reading the Bible (South Asia). 阅读圣经 (南亚)。 Photographer: Marc Ewell ©Wycliffe Global Alliance.

From its infancy, the early church faced the issue of contextualisation – how to help new believers apply their Christian faith to their daily lives. Paul’s missionary work among the Gentiles raised the question of whether these non-Jewish believers should be required to conform to Jewish practices and culture. Acts 15 provides an account of how leaders of the New Testament church dealt with this issue. Eventually it was decided that, barring a few issues regarded as crucial, the new believers should not be required keep the Jewish law.

Why contextualise?

Ultimately, the goal of contextualization is to create indigenous churches which are able to express their worship of God in their own cultures and languages. There has to be an understanding that no culture is either wholly evil or wholly good; every culture will have both positive as well as negative features.

The question of how far to contextualise is faced most acutely when Christians seek to communicate the gospel in a culturally relevant way to those from another culture, whether on the mission field or at home. New believers have to be guided in evaluating the customs, rituals and values of their own culture in the light of their new faith. Even those who may have been Christians for years daily face questions of how much of contemporary culture to accept or reject.

Like the Pharisees in Acts 15, some missionaries or evangelists choose to import wholesale their own “Christian” culture, replacing much of the new believer’s own culture. This communicates the message to new believers that the only way to be a Christian is to adopt a foreign “Christian” culture. It confuses the outward practices of dress, musical styles, rites of passage, etc. with Christian beliefs and values. Such practices in the past have caused missionaries to be accused of cultural imperialism and destroying ethnic cultures. Failure to contextualise may also drive believers to guiltily practise the old customs and rituals in parallel or in secret.

At the other end of the spectrum, simply adding a few “Christian” practices while retaining much of the new believers’ original culture and worldview risks distorting the gospel message by blending it with non-Christian elements, and often results in an unacceptable level of syncretism.

So how can Christians communicate the gospel in a culturally sensitive manner, without distorting or undermining the truths of the Christian gospel?



Using traditional and western instruments in a village church (Papua New Guinea). 在乡村教会使用传统和西方乐器进行崇拜 (巴布亚新几内亚)。

Photographer: Marc Ewell ©Wycliffe Global Alliance.

Critical contextualisation

Paul Hiebert, a missiological anthropologist, recommends the practice of critical contextualization as a way to communicate the gospel message with the minimum of distortion. Under the guidance of the missionary or evangelist, new believers should first seek to understand and analyse both the underlying beliefs of the traditional rituals and customs of their own culture, and also biblical truths. They should then evaluate their cultural practices in the light of Scripture, and decide which may be retained as compatible with their new faith. Other practices may be rejected outright as unbiblical. There will also be some practices that could be adapted or modified.

For example, they may decide that most traditional food and clothing are perfectly compatible with their new faith. However, they may conclude that food involved in some rituals should be considered off-limits to Christians, and that they should cease participating in certain practices that have spiritual significance. They may decide that traditional musical styles and instruments can be used in worship, with new lyrics. It may be necessary for the missionary or evangelist to help the new believers devise or adapt new rituals to replace discarded ones, especially those which mark important rites of passage (e.g. marriages or funerals).



A festival (Philippines). 庆典 (菲律宾)。

Photographer: Janeen Michie ©Wycliffe Global Alliance.

Hiebert stresses that these decisions should not be simply imposed on new believers by the missionary or evangelist; the new believers should be involved in the process for a number of reasons. First, they are better able than a foreigner to discern the deep and hidden meanings in their cultural practices. On the other hand, an outsider's perspective can be helpful in highlighting aspects of their own culture they may be blind to. Note that this does require that the missionary spend the time and effort to gain a significant level of understanding of the new believers' culture. Secondly, it helps new believers grow spiritually and learn discernment as they practise applying Scripture to their own lives. Ideally, this process should be a communal one, so that new Christians can learn to put into practice the priesthood of believers.

In any cross-cultural setting, there is always the risk of contextualising too much or too little, or in the wrong way. But by the grace of God and the Spirit's guidance, these mistakes can be rectified over time. What we must not do is ignore the challenge of contextualization. If we do, the gospel will continue to remain "foreign" to many who are still unreached.

从圣经角度看文化：本土化的问题

文/Sharon



Preparing food for a feast (Botswana). 为宴席准备食物 (博茨瓦纳)。Photographer: Zeke du Plessis ©Wycliffe Global Alliance.

早期教会从起初就面对本土化的问题——如何帮助新信徒活出信仰。使徒保罗向外邦人传福音时便遇到这个情况：非犹太族信徒需要遵行犹太人的风俗和文化吗？使徒行传15章记载了当时新约教会的领袖如何处理这个问题。最后，他们决定除了几项至关重要的规条外，新信徒不需要遵守犹太律法。

为何要本土化？

本土化的最终目标是要建立本土教会，让信徒能以自身的文化和语言来敬拜上帝。我们要明白，没有一个文化是完全邪恶的，或是完全美好的；每一个文化都有其优点和缺点。

无论是在本地或是在宣教工场上，我们都要考虑如何适切地将信仰本土化。传讲的信息要融入对方的文化背景，异文化者才能容易明白福音。我们要引导新信徒以这个新信仰的标准来衡量自身文化的习俗、礼节和价值观。信主多年的基督徒也经常要思考是否要接纳或拒绝时下的潮流文化。

正如使徒行传15章所记载的法利赛人，有些宣教士和传教者漠视新信徒的自身文化，一成不变地

向对方灌输自己的“基督教文化”。这种做法所传达的信息是：若不遵行这套外来的“基督教文化”，你便不能成为基督徒。基督教的信仰和价值观就被服饰、音乐风格、礼仪、等等混淆了。因此，宣教士往往因为不重视民族文化而被视为是文化的帝国主义者。不恰当的本土化也会导致新信徒心生愧疚，暗地里继续奉行旧习俗和礼仪。

相反地，如果只加入少许“基督教”文化，而让新信徒保留大部分其自身文化与世界观，福音信息就会因混和了“非基督教”元素而被扭曲。这种融合方式并不恰当，难被接纳。

因此，基督徒在向异文化对象传福音时，如何才能既尊重民族文化而又不扭曲、不颠覆福音真理呢？

批判性本土化

宣教人类学学家保罗·希伯特推荐采用批判性本土化的传福音方式，避免福音真理受到亏损。在宣教士或传教者的引导下，新信徒应首先探讨自身文化中传统礼仪和习俗背后蕴含的意义，再而认识圣经真理。对照两者后，本着圣经真理衡量



Men and women in traditional costumes hold copies of the Gapapaiwa Scriptures (Papua New Guinea). 身着传统服装的男女，手握新出版的 Gapapaiwa 语圣经 (巴布亚新几内亚)。Photographer: Lisa vanden Berg ©Wycliffe Global Alliance.

在自身文化中，哪些习俗与礼仪是不符合圣经真理而需要摒弃，哪些是与自己的新信仰没有冲突而可以保留或调整。

例如：他们或会认为一般的传统食品和衣着与新信仰没有冲突。但是，他们分析后的结论是基督徒不应吃用作祭祀的食物，也不应该参与带有宗教性质的传统礼仪。他们也可能认为传统音乐风格和乐器，只要配上新歌词就可以用来敬拜颂赞上帝。宣教士或传教者需要引导新信徒设定一些仪式来取代传统礼仪，特别是那些标志人生重要阶段的事宜，比如是婚礼和丧礼。

希伯特强调宣教士或传教者绝对不可为新信徒作出决定。新信徒必须参与整个决策过程，因为他们比外国人更了解其文化习俗的深层及隐藏意义，而外来人则较容易察觉他们对自己文化的盲点。所以宣教士需要花时间和精力去深入了解新信徒的文化。此外，决策过程能促进新信徒的灵命成长。他们透过在生活中应用圣经而学习辨别真理。理想情况下，本土化的决策过程要在新信徒群体中进行，这样他们就能学习活出信徒皆祭司的教导。

在任何跨文化背景下，本土化都可能出现过多或不足的情况。然而，随着时间的流逝，这些错误都会藉着神的恩典和圣灵的带领而得到修正。最重要的是：不可漠视本土化的挑战，否则，未得之民会继续视福音为“洋教”。



A funeral procession (India). 葬礼队伍 (印度)。Photographer: Marc Ewell ©Wycliffe Global Alliance.



Photos: <https://st-eutychus.com/2010/biblestories-for-boys-say-shibboleth/>

What's the Password?

By Evangeline

How do you tell a Kiwi apart from an Aussie? The clue is in their favourite food. As Aussies tend to have broader vowels and Kiwis, lower vowels, in Australia, you would have *feesh and cheeps*, while in New Zealand, you would have *fush and chups*. Evidently, the difference lies in their pronunciation.

How do you tell an Aussie apart from a Singaporean (Singlish speaker)? Well, their pronunciation. In the most colloquial form of Singlish, *their* becomes *diar*, *three* becomes *tree*, *with* becomes *wif* ... and so on. A lot of these pronunciations are largely a legacy of the early English teachers in Singapore – such as the Catholic French and Irish nuns, and Indians and Sri Lankans from the British Indian subcontinent – all of whom had an inability to produce certain English phonemes which did not exist in their native tongues.

The pronunciation of words (or phrases) is fascinating and, at the same time, a powerful linguistic

device that can distinguish and identify people. Unless we learned two or more languages when we were young, very often, our tongues would have the muscle memory to produce only the specific sounds peculiar to its mother tongue. Give it an unfamiliar sound, and what comes out of our mouths would simply be the closest sound from our native language.

There are ample stories throughout history of the use of pronunciation as a practical tool. One such example is of passwords, used to identify friend or foe. In the Pacific theatre during the Second World War, American soldiers always used passwords such as 'lollapalooza' or 'priest', which contained the letter 'L' or consecutive consonants like 'pr' or 'st'. This was because Japanese speakers tend to confuse 'L' and 'R', and are in the habit of ending every syllable with a vowel (with the exception of 'N'). Hence, upon hearing the first syllables returned as 'rorra' or 'puri', the American soldiers would immediately open

fire without seeing their faces or even waiting to hear the rest. Similarly, over in Holland, the Dutch used words like 'Scheveningen' (a place in the Netherlands), while in Denmark, the Danes apparently used phrases like 'Rødgrød med Fløde' (red currant berry pudding with cream), all of which are almost impossible for non-native speakers of the respective languages to pronounce.

These passwords worked, simply because they were a means of identification that distinguished a particular group of people from another. Such passwords have come to be termed as 'shibboleths'. Interestingly, the origin of this term goes back to Judges 12:5-6 in the Old Testament, in which a similar event to those told above took place:

The Gileadites captured the fords of the Jordan leading to Ephraim, and whenever a survivor of Ephraim said, "Let me cross over," the men of Gilead asked him, "Are



you an Ephraimite?" If he replied, "No," they said, "All right, say 'Shibboleth.'" If he said, "Sibboleth," because he could not pronounce the word correctly, they seized him and killed him at the fords of the Jordan. Forty-two thousand Ephraimites were killed at that time.

American soldiers. Asked to recite the song, which is also the American national anthem, spies would belt out the whole four stanzas perfectly, only to be caught immediately. Why? Because most Americans (then and now) would only be familiar with the first stanza, which is the part most commonly sung as the national anthem!

And the best part of God's kingdom? No password is needed to enter – just His grace.

Today, the definition of shibboleths has been extended to include more than just passwords, or specific words and phrases. During the conflict in Northern Ireland in the latter half of the 20th century, one could tell a Protestant apart from a Catholic just by how he or she referred to a particular city in Northern Ireland. Protestants, who were generally supporters of the United Kingdom, would call it Londonderry, while Catholics, who were for a united Ireland, would simply call it Derry.

While all of the stories here suggest that shibboleths can be of both linguistic and non-linguistic elements, one thing we can conclude is that language can be a strongly-felt part of a person's identity, and can also distinguish one group from another (sometimes leading to division!). This is why at Wycliffe, we believe that helping people retain the use of their language protects their cultural heritage and identity. The only difference is that, in God's kingdom, a multitude of languages causes no division and has neither friend nor foe. It is simply an expression of God's wonderful creativity.

In other accounts of WWII, the Allied powers also used the test of the *Star Spangled Banner* on suspected Axis spies posing as



Gilead was a part of Manasseh. 吉利德是玛拿西的一部分。

你有暗号吗？

文/Evangeline

如何区分几维人（Kiwi，即新西兰人）和澳洲人？线索是从他们最爱的食物着手。澳洲人在说话时会扩大拉长元音，几维人则会将元音降低。在澳洲，你会听到 feesh and cheeps，在新西兰则会听到 fush and chups。这个明显的区别就在于他们的发音。

那你又如何区别澳洲人和说新加坡式英语的新加坡人呢？一样可以从他们的发音着手。以最通俗的新加坡式英语来说，their 变成 diar, three 读成 tree, with 念成 wif 等等。这些发音很大程度上是受早期新加坡的英语老师所影响。老师当中有包括来自法国的天主教徒和爱尔兰修女，以及来自英属殖民地印度次大陆的印度人和斯里兰卡人——他们的母语里没有某些英语音素，所以无法发出准确的英语读音。

单字或短语的发音十分迷人，也是一个区分和识别人群的强力语言工具。除非从小就曾学习过两种或以上的语言，否则在听到一个自己母语所没有的音素时，我们的舌头便会惯性地发出母语中最近似的语音，而无法正确掌握该陌生的音素。

人类历史中有许多使用发音作为实用工具的例子。其中一个便是采用暗号来识别敌友。在二战时的太平洋地区，美军总是使用如 “lollapalooza” 或 “priest” 这类的暗号来辨别敌友。这些暗号里包含英文字母 ‘L’ 或英语的连续辅音如 ‘pr’ 或者 ‘st’。日语使用者

经常混淆 ‘L’ 和 ‘R’ 的发音，并且习惯于用元音为每个音节做结尾（除 ‘N’ 以外）。所以，当听到回复是 ‘rorra’ 或者 ‘puri’ 时，美军便会毫不犹豫地开火，根本不用等见到对方或听完整个暗号。同样的，荷兰人会用北欧地名 ‘Scheveningen’，而丹麦人则用像 ‘Rødgrød med Fløde’（红醋栗浆果布丁加奶油）这类短语。对当地语言非其母语的人而言，是绝对无法咬准读音的。

这些字或词语之所以能成为暗号，是因为它们能有效地辨识不同的人群。久而久之，此类暗号被称为 ‘示播列’（shibboleth）。有趣的是，这个名称的由来可追溯至旧约士师记12:5-6，当时就发生了类似的事件：

基列人占领约旦河的各渡口，不容以法莲人过去。如果以法莲逃亡的人说：“让我过去吧。”基列人就问他：“你是以法莲人吗？”如果说：“不是。”基列人就对他说：“请说‘示播列’。”以法莲人因为发不出准确的字音，就说成“西播列”；基列人就捉住他，在约旦河的渡口那里杀了；那时以法莲人死了四万二千人。

今天，‘示播列’除了是指暗号外，其定义已延伸至包括其他专属名词或短语以外的词语。在20世纪下半叶的北爱尔兰冲突中，以北爱尔兰某城市的名称就能轻易分辨出天主教徒和新教徒（Protestant）。

主要支持英国的新教徒会称该城市为 Londonderry，而倾向于统一爱尔兰的天主教徒则只称之为 Derry。

在二战的其他记录中，盟军还对涉嫌伪装成美军的间谍进行《星条旗》（美国国歌）测试。当被要求背诵《星条旗》歌词时，间谍虽然能完整无误地背诵整首歌的四节歌词，却仍然被即时逮捕。这是为什么呢？因为向来绝大多数的美国人只熟悉经常唱的第一节！

在上述的故事里，尽管‘示播列’包括语言或非语言的元素，但我们能得出一个结论：语言是一个人自我身份中非常重要的部分，也能够被用来区分不同的群体（甚至引起分裂！）正因如此，在威克理夫，我们深信帮助人们保留其语言，就可以保护他们的文化遗产和身份认同。唯一不同的是，在神的国度里，各种语言之间是不会发生分裂或敌对的情况。因为，语言只是神奇妙创造的完美表现罢了。

最美妙之处是：我们无需任何暗号，只靠祂的恩典，便可进入神的国度！

Our Vision

The vision of Wycliffe is to see lives and communities transformed through the word of God in their heart languages. Wycliffe Singapore engages churches and individuals in Singapore to support and be involved in language projects among unreached people groups in their own languages.

Potential and Expressed Needs

The Need

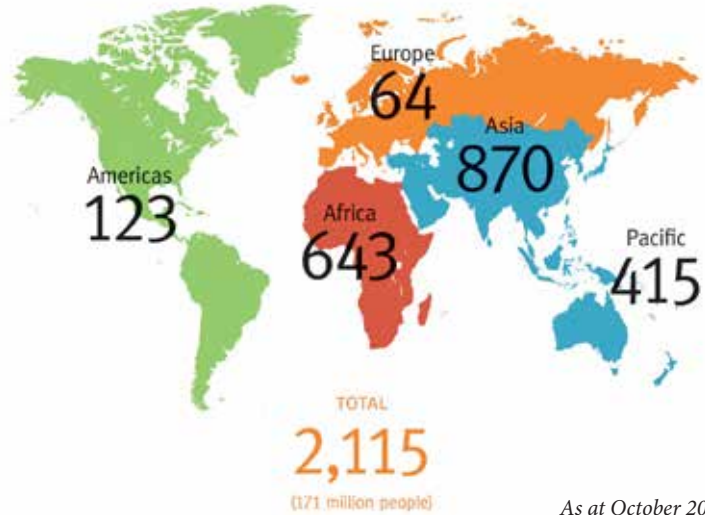
There are about 7,353 languages spoken or signed in the world. The numbers on the map refer to the number of languages where work has been requested or is likely to be needed, but where no translation has begun yet.

Other Statistics

Languages with full Bible:
698 (5.6 billion people)

Languages with NT or portions:
2,686 (1,256 million people)

Translation projects in progress:
2,617 (5.4 billion people)



As at October 2019

For more details, see <https://www.wycliffe.net/statistics>

The Work



Bible Translation

This involves different skill sets such as language survey, building relationships in the community, devising scripts, training local translators, IT, project management etc.



Literacy

This enables the people to read and write in their own languages.



Scripture Engagement

Communities are encouraged to express and experience the Word of God in their languages and cultures through oral storytelling, ethnoarts, vernacular media etc.



Community Development

Communities meet God through projects which demonstrate concern for their economic, physical, emotional and spiritual health.

What Can I Do?



Pray

We need your prayer support. Go to our website and sign up for our prayer newsletter!



Give

At Wycliffe, we depend on the financial support of partners who contribute to our work both in Singapore and overseas.



Serve

We need more than Bible translators to do the job! Besides language-related roles, there are roles for all kinds of professional skills including arts, management, administration, finance, teaching, IT etc.

Contact us to find out about short-term or long-term opportunities, internships and mission trips — or simply to find out where you can fit in missions!

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