

Spatial and Temporal Patterns in Christian Community in Sri Lanka with Special reference to Puttlam District.

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Abstract

Religion has been considered as a "phenomenon which has an unprecedented potentiality in transforming strongly the human thinking, history and the civilization." Religion, which can be identified as a *menti fact* (Haggett, 1977) related to the human being within the culture, can be named as a hidden agenda that is being implemented to attain the power of the world today. Although religion is introduced as one aspect of the culture or the human thinking, in a geographical context it can be defined as a complex process that spread through time and space. Studying these temporal and spatial processes is the core of the Geographical Science today.

In Sri Lanka, Christianity was firmly established through the western colonial enterprises. However, the impact of socio-economic and political influences of Christianity can still be identified in Sri Lanka specially in the coastal regions. The objective of this research is to study the spatial and temporal patterns in Christian Community, in the Puttlam district. Puttlam is selected for this study as it is widely acknowledged that it is an area where Christianity is widely spread. Therefore, this study foreground that there are obvious temporal and spatial diffusion patterns is effect within the said region with regards to the spread of Christianity.

When a religion spread within a particular geographical unit basically geographical factors strongly influence. However, attraction of devotees towards a particular religion and determination of the temporal and spatial pattern of diffusion of the religion is more and strongly influenced by non-geographical factors than the geographical factors. Similarly, with the elapse of time influence of geographical factors become zero and non-geographical factors further contribute to attract people towards religion and its spatial diffusion. Specially, attraction of devotees towards a particular religion does not act as an independent variable but the nature of these patterns of diffusions is determined by the variables or the factors such as education, employment, living condition, as well as the administrative structure of a country.

Key Words: Menti fact, Temporal, Spatial, Christian Community, Geographical factors, Non geographical factors

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