

Do Missions Destroy Cultures?

Perth Lectures

DO MISSIONS DESTROY CULTURES?

University of Perth

Introduction:

- the answer is yes – they change cultures
- the answer is no – they preserve cultures
- implicit in the title given me is that changing cultures is always bad

1. Agents of Culture Change: who have been agents of culture change throughout history?

- missionaries
- business people
- governments and armies
- settlers
- today scientists, technologists, educators

2. History of Culture Change:

- trade and migrations have been major agents of change in history
- governmental expansion, colonialism
- now nationalism and regionalism
- globalism

3. India:

3.1 Business: East India Company 1600 - 1857

- anti missions
- change: brought mills, sewing machines, aluminum, plastic, roads, trains, TV, computers, Coke and Pepsi. Destroyed traditional caste trades.

3.2 Missionaries: 1706 Ziegenbalg and Plutschau, Christian Schwartz and raja

- came early as guests in Indian courts, then as chaplains to British troops
- Christianize:
- Civilize: schools and hospitals and science
- opposed sati,

3.3 Colonial Government: 1857 - 1947

- brought country under one rule
- trains, roads
- court system, education system, medical system, relief system

3.4 Independence Government: 1947

- major player in inaugurating change, even in areas it is not desired

3.5 Globalism:

- capitalism
- migrations to west
- media and entertainment, web, movies, TV, radio,
- science and education and technology

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