

Abstract

Colonial Impact on Tamil-speaking Communities of the Eastern Province of Sri Lanka.

Today, Sri Lanka is reaping the consequences of the political, economic, and social impact that occurred during the administration of Western colonial powers from 1597 to 1948. Similarly, the Tamil-speaking communities of the Eastern Province also faced many challenges, threats and lot of hardships during the colonial administration, and still, the impact reflect in their culture, traditions and lifestyle.

The research examines how colonialism affected the Tamil-speaking communities, what the changes were and a comparative study regarding the influence of colonialism on the Tamil and Muslim communities of the Eastern Province. In addition, it is analyzed through two research questions: whether there had been a radical change due to European colonial influence on impact over the Tamil-speaking communities in the Eastern Province and which Tamil-speaking community was highly affected due to European colonial influences in this province.

For this study, the data is evaluated through the historical methodology and the qualitative approach, that included analysis of various documents, such as native literature records, palm leaf manuscripts, oral stories with folklore, Dutch Tombo, British colonial records, archaeological evidence, field visits and interviews with various experts and aged ones. These historical sources help to understand the impact that incurred in the Colonial administration of the Eastern Province.

Therefore, the research reveals that the uniqueness of the Tamil-speaking communities in the province were neglected in various areas, particularly the traditional education system, cultural values, socio, economic features, religious practices and indigenous technologies due to the European influences. Though the Colonialization brought various changes in the Eastern Province, all communities experienced some positive consequences that brought development in the socio, economic and cultural areas for instance the country received modern education, transportation facilities, development of infrastructures and expansion of foreign affairs.

Keywords: Western Colonialism, Tamil-speaking communities, Eastern Province

Further Details

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