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ИСТОРИЧЕСКАЯ ГЕОГРАФИЯ РЕЛИГИОЗНОЙ КОНКУРЕНЦИИ В ИНДИИ В XX – НАЧАЛЕ XXI в.

С. А. ГОРОХОВ¹, Р. В. ДМИТРИЕВ¹, И. А. ЗАХАРОВ¹

¹Институт Африки РАН, ул. Спиридоновка, 30, корп. 1, 123001, г. Москва, Россия

В основу определения уровня конкуренции положена гипотеза о том, что одна религия сменяет другую в результате циклического изменения долей адептов в структуре населения, а также в результате изменения обобщающего их значения модифицированного индекса религиозной мозаичности. Отмечается, что в течение XX в. конкуренция между индийскими религиями, исламом и христианством в Индии возростала достаточно медленно вследствие различий, во-первых, в механизмах их экспансии, во-вторых, в территориальной приуроченности последней. На первом этапе все религии распространялись путем диффузии расширения (ислам – через крупные города в Джамму и Кашмире, Западной Бенгалии, Керале и Дели; христианство – через сельскую местность на северо-востоке страны, в Сиккиме, на Андаманских и Никобарских островах, частично в Одише; индийские религии – в Дамане и Диу, Лакшадвипе, Пудуччери и Гоа). В дальнейшем христианство сохранило этот механизм, ислам путем диффузии перемещения распространился на новые территории (Андхра-Прадеш, Ассам, Джаркханд, Уттаракханд, Уттар-Прадеш, Бихар, Махараштра, Карнатака и т. д.) при одновременном сокращении доли районов старого освоения. Пространство индийских религий сменило вектор развития, перейдя путем сепарации стягивания к сжатию за счет оставления ранее освоенных районов. Основными регионами религиозной конкуренции в настоящее время являются территории в пределах треугольника Амритсар – Раджкот – Бхубанешвар, где лидирующие индийские религии противостоят растущему исламу, а также северо-восток страны, где индийские религии уже почти вытеснены христианством и ислам быстро увеличивает число своих адептов.

Ключевые слова: Индия; религиозная конкуренция; индийские религии; ислам; христианство.

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ГІСТАРЫЧНАЯ ГЕАГРАФІЯ РЭЛІГІЙНАЙ КАНКУРЭНЦЫІ Ў ІНДЫІ Ў XX – ПАЧАТКУ XXI ст.

С. А. ГАРОХАЎ^{1*}, Р. В. ДЗМІТРЫЕЎ^{1*}, І. А. ЗАХАРАЎ^{1*}

^{1*}Інстытут Афрыкі РАН, вул. Спірыдонаўка, 30, корп. 1, 123001, г. Масква, Расія

У аснову вызначэння ўзроўню канкурэнцыі пакладзена гіпотэза аб тым, што адна рэлігія змяняе другую ў выніку цыклічнай змены долі адептаў у структуры насельніцтва, а таксама ў выніку змены абагульняючага іх значэння

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Авторы:

Станислав Анатольевич Горохов – доктор географических наук, доцент; ведущий научный сотрудник.
Руслан Васильевич Дмитриев – доктор географических наук; ведущий научный сотрудник.
Иван Андреевич Захаров – кандидат географических наук; старший научный сотрудник.

Authors:

Stanislav A. Gorokhov, doctor of science (geography), doцент; leading researcher.
stgorohov@yandex.ru
<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9984-6054>
Ruslan V. Dmitriev, doctor of science (geography); leading researcher.
dmitrievrv@yandex.ru
<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4018-9832>
Ivan A. Zakharov, PhD (geography); senior researcher.
vanszax@yandex.ru
<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3838-169X>

мадыфікаванага індэкса рэлігійнай мазаічнасці. Адзначаецца, што канкурэнцыя паміж індыйскімі рэлігіямі, ісламам і хрысціянствам у Індыі на працягу XX ст. узрасла досыць павольна па прычыне адрозненняў, па-першае, у механізмах іх экспансіі, па-другое, у тэрытарыяльнай прымеркаванасці апошняй. На першым этапе ўсе рэлігіі распаўсюджваліся шляхам дыфузіі пашырэння (іслам – праз буйныя гарады ў Джаму і Кашміры, Заходняй Бенгаліі, Керале і Дэлі; хрысціянства – праз сельскую мясцовасць на паўночным усходзе краіны, у Сікіме, на Андаманскіх і Нікабарскіх астравах, часткова ў Адышы; індыйскія рэлігіі – у Дамане і Дзіу, Лакшадвіпе, Пудучэры і Гоа). У далейшым хрысціянства захавала гэты механізм, іслам шляхам дыфузіі перамяшчэння распаўсюдзіўся на новыя тэрыторыі (Андхра-Прадэш, Асам, Джаркханд, Уттаракханд, Утар-Прадэш, Біхар, Махараштра, Карнатака і г. д.) пры адначасовым скарачэнні долі раёнаў старога асваення. Прастора індыйскіх рэлігій змяніла вектар развіцця, перайшоўшы шляхам сепарацыі сцягвання да спіску за кошт пакідання раней асвоеных раёнаў. Сёння асноўнымі рэгіёнамі рэлігійнай канкурэнцыі з’яўляюцца тэрыторыі ў межах трохвугольніка Амрытсар – Раджкот – Бхубанешвар, дзе лідзіруючыя індыйскія рэлігіі супрацьстаяць росту ісламу, а таксама паўночны ўсход краіны, дзе індыйскія рэлігіі ўжо амаль выцеснены хрысціянствам і іслам хутка павялічвае колькасць сваіх адпатаў.

Ключавыя словы: Індыя; рэлігійная канкурэнцыя; індыйскія рэлігіі; іслам; хрысціянства.

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HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY OF RELIGIOUS COMPETITION IN INDIA IN THE 20th – EARLY 21st CENTURY

S. A. GOROKHOV^a, R. V. DMITRIEV^a, I. A. ZAKHAROV^a

^a*Institute for African Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences,
30 Spiridonovka Street, 1 building, Moscow 123001, Russia*

Corresponding author: R. V. Dmitriev (dmitrievrv@yandex.ru)

To determine the level of competition we made an assumption that one religion replaces another as a result of a cyclical change (cycle of the religious competition) in the proportion of adherents and the value of the modified index of confessional fractionalisation. The competition between Indian religions, Islam and Christianity in India increased quite slowly during the 20th century due to differences, firstly, in the mechanisms of their expansion and, secondly, in the territorial confinement of the latter. At the first stage all religions spread by expansion diffusion (Islam – through large cities in Jammu and Kashmir, West Bengal, Kerala and Delhi; Christianity – through the countryside in the North-East of the country, in Sikkim, in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, partly in Odisha; Indian religions – in Daman and Diu, Lakshadweep, Puduchcheri and Goa). Christianity retained this mechanism, while Islam spread after that to new territories (Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Jharkhand, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Maharashtra, Karnataka, etc.) by diffusion of movement. The landscape of Indian religions has changed the vector, passing through the separation of contraction to compression due to the abandonment of previously developed areas. The main regions of religious competition at present are the Amritsar – Rajkot – Bhubaneswar triangle where the still powerful Indian religions are competing with the rising Islam, and the North-East of the country, where Indian religions have already almost been supplanted by Christianity, but Islam is quickly gaining followers.

Keywords: India; religious competition; Indian religions; Islam; Christianity.

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Introduction

The current century on the whole has been a time of religion returning into public life – in countries of the Global North – and traditional institutions that are based primarily on religious norms strengthening – in the countries of the Global South. Because of globalisation, the interaction between different cultural groups, often very different in terms of their value systems, is unavoidable. This may often lead to conflicts on religious grounds [1]. Along with this, globalisation affects religion itself, changing it and leading to the appearance of new religious forms. Finally, due to the uneven demographic development in different re-

gions and increased migration, along with the creation of new religions and religious forms, in two last decades we have seen global shifts in the religious structure of the world’s population which have led to stronger competition between religions and changes of their areas of influence and, as a result, to the transformation of the overall global religious space.

Religion has always been an important – if not decisive – factor in India’s socio-political development: throughout its entire history it has been a country where different religious traditions have existed side by side. Many religions which later spread all over the

world were born here: Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism, Jainism. Islam and Christianity are two other religions which have become popular in the country; while they were born outside of India, having spread across the country, they took on some typically Indian characteristics. Although for all of its history India has been a country with a complex religious structure, Hinduism

has always remained the primary religion. It was around Hinduism – this ancient Indian national religion – that the country’s cultural, social, and political unity has been based around. The socio-psychological structure of society, in which caste solidarity is still extremely strong, has itself to a certain extent been a product of the Indians’ religious views.

Sources, data and methods¹

When analysing religion, competition between different faiths is an important environmental factor. It is this competitive relationship that affects the formation and existence of a religious space. Unlike proponents of the theory of religious economy, who see religious organisations as companies that compete with each other for followers [3], we believe that ideological competition is a more significant factor. According to M. Büttner’s [4] Bochum model, which describes the relationship between religions and their environment, we can claim that this kind of competition is a way for a religion to adapt to the changing surroundings.

A special feature of analysing competition between religions is that we can only judge it by its result, which can be an increase in the share of followers for one religion and a decrease for another in the religious space. A religion is considered competitive if it has succeeded in increasing its power by converting more new members and having higher natural and migration increase amongst its followers, both largely determined by the religion’s doctrine. When looking at conversion, we see competition in its most literal sense, so it is applicable for the theory of religious economy since most important is the quality of the religious product when compared to the other «suppliers». When we move past understanding religious competition as an exclusively inter-organisational relationship, we consider most appropriate to define the extent of competitiveness of a religion in broader terms, meaning its ability to get a higher number of followers by any of the mentioned methods.

When the religious diversity of a religious space lowers in favour of a single religion, this can be a key indicator that one religion is winning in a competitive environment. To analyse the changes in the component structure of a religious space, we use the modified index of confessional fractionalisation (MIF):

$$\text{MIF} = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n x_i^2}{1 - \frac{1}{n}},$$

where in the case of religious diversity n is the number of religions in the region; x is the share of i -religion in the religious structure of the region.

When we graphically illustrate the relationship between MIF (axis y) and time (axis x) we can see two types of segments. The first consists of straight lines either parallel to the axis of time or creating angles of small value with it (the segment up to year 9 in fig. 1). These are stages of religious saturation (RS-stages). MIF in this case remains consistently small for decades or centuries. Without the significant influence of any of the religions’ competitive advantage (or, contrariwise, with the consistently high influence of the government) an RS-stage can last centuries.

The other type of segments shown on the graph (stage of disturbance) has the shape of an inverted parabola (the segment between the years 9 and 113 in fig. 1). As the monopoly of a single religion gets weaker and religious competition becomes stronger, the once predominant religion gradually gets replaced by another, or by secular ideologies. In comparison to the length of RS-stages, this process occurs rather quickly and in the perfect situation ends with the creation of a new monopoly (the segment after the year 113 in fig. 1). Such states of religious space, which this work aims to study, were called cycles of religious competition (R-cycles). In its essence a religious cycle is a combination of consecutive repeated states of a religious space with equal or similar values of its structural indicators.

Studying cyclical processes of social development has a long tradition in world science. Beginning with sacred texts of various religions and works of antique thinkers, all the way up to scientific papers of contemporary authors – there are many mentions or even rigorous analysis of the periodicity of super-biological processes: «In history, as in nature, exists a rhythm, a rhythmic change of epochs and periods, a change of cultural types, dawns and dusks, rises and falls. Any type of life has rhythms and periods»² [5, p. 4].

So far, only the utopian philosopher T. Campanella has noted somewhat consistent periods in the development of religions: «Religions and sects (in their change) have a specific cycle. As republics, substituted for monarchies, either through a stage of tyranny, or aristocracy, or oligarchy, or polity, or democracy, or through other ways, are superseded by monarchies again, so a religion, disorganised by heresy, is superseded by atheism, which, many miseries following,

¹In an abbreviated form, the research methodology is described in publication [2].

²Translated by us. – S. G., R. D., I. Z.

leads to the restoration of religion again. There is thus a cyclical movement in the history of religion. Beginning with unity – that is, with a papacy or theocracy – it passes through divers stages or forms from herecy to

atheism, whence it is driven back to unity. These three stages – theocracy, herecy, and atheism – recur in the history of pagan, Mohameddan, and Christian nations» [6, p. 33].

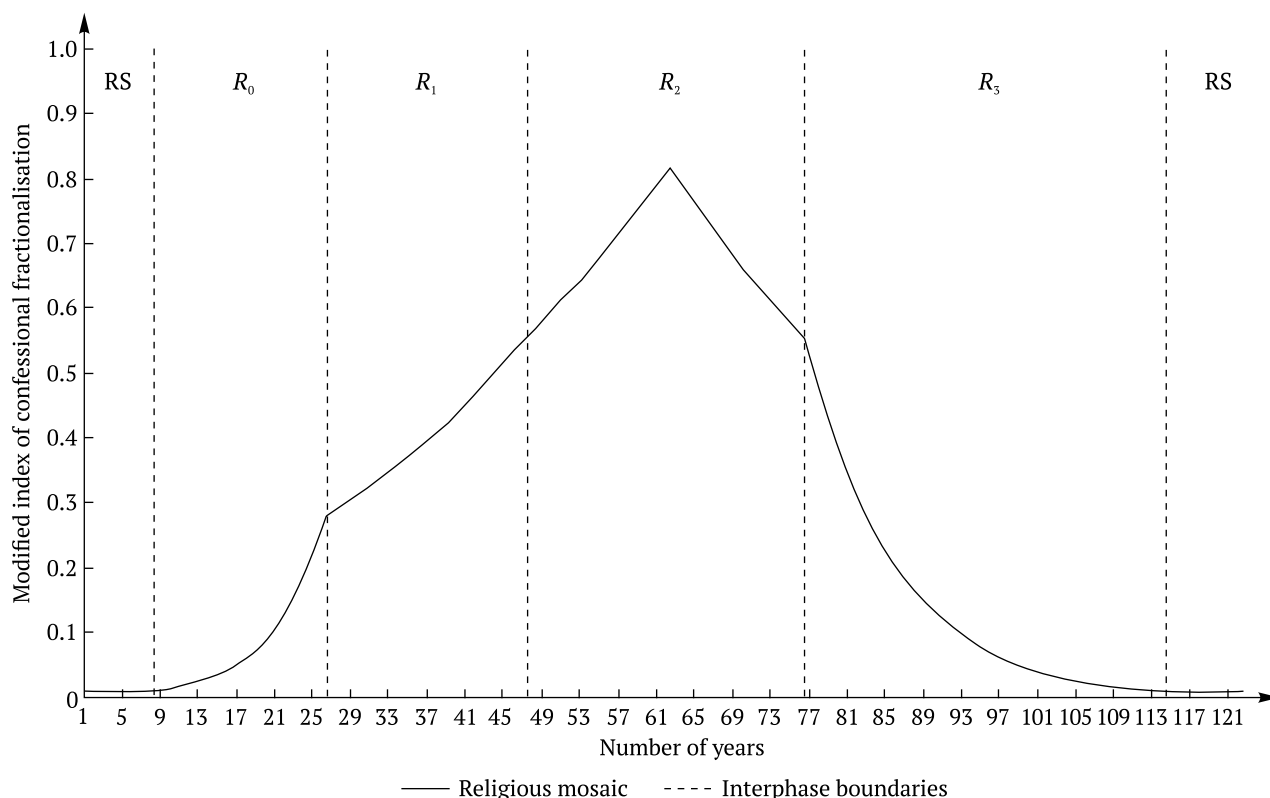


Fig. 1. Changing of the modified index of confessional fractionalisation during the religious space's average R-cycle between two RS-stages

Since then, prominent researchers of cyclical processes have highlighted the impact of non-religious cycles on the development of religions. P. A. Sorokin talked about the possible existence of cycles of great social change, during which «several religious... institutions and ideological systems either appear and decline... or undergo a radical change in their organisation and fate» [6, p. 37]. A. J. Toynbee viewed religious discrimination as a stimulus of pressure [7]. L. Weber, the secretary of the French Philosophical Society, when defining cycles of religious-ethical and materialistically technical societies, assigned great importance to religion [8]. N. D. Kondrat'ev noted that the upward part of every one of his cycles is accompanied by a fall in religiousness, while every downward part – by a rise [9]. V. Pareto highlighted a link between 50–60-year economic and political cycles and cycles of religious development [10]. It has to be mentioned that Ch. Guignebert [11] and M. Sergeev [12] have highlighted the frequency of changes in the religiousness of populations. Also, A. D. Savateev talks about the fact that radical Islamic groups are created in periods that are primarily linked to the increase of antagonism towards the West [13]. It is important to note that to our knowledge no attempts have been made to distinguish religious cycles on the basis of empirical data, so this work can be considered the first to do this.

S. A. Gorokhov have defined the following phases in the structure of R-cycles (see fig. 1):

1) the phase of initial substitution (R_0) during which there is a gradual decrease in the share of followers of the the religion under substitution. This affects religious diversity: before the start of the cycle MIF was consistently low for a prolonged amount of time, but now it begins to grow slowly. The average duration of the phase is 18 years;

2) the phase of stable substitution (R_1) continues the R-cycle. MIF during this phase is in the interval of [0.281; 0.556]. The share of the religion under substitution falls from 87 to, on average, 70 %. The average duration of the phase is 21 years;

3) the phase of parity (R_2) is remarkable in that during it followers of the fading and rising religions are equal. Some time after the beginning of R_2 , MIF grows, reaching its highest point on average at 0.820. Next, as soon as the new religion becomes dominant (more than 50 % in case two religions are competing), MIF begins to decrease. All in all, the phase continues until the MIF reaches 0.557 (inclusive). The share of the rising religion while the religious space is in phase (R_2) on average increases from 30 to 70 %. The average duration of the phase is 29 years;

4) the phase of final substitution (R_3) is the final phase of the R-cycle. It lasts from the time MIF reaches

0.556 and until it stabilises at relatively low levels, ideally – almost next to the time axis. Thus, MIF continues falling and reaches low levels: the new religion almost completely replaces the old one, and the strength of religious competition falls significantly. The average duration of the phase is 29 years [2].

The established boundaries of the successive phases are chosen in such a way that the ratio of the lengths of the parabola's arcs for each of them during an ideal competition cycle is 1 : 1 : 2 : 2, which makes it possible to free the duration of the phases from the influence of floating boundaries. Strictly speaking, the ratio should have been different, 1 : 1 : 4 : 2, but the value of MIF in the phase of parity is practically never higher than 0.82. Having studied over 170 cases, S. A. Gorokhov have empirically established that the average R-cycle (with all its phases) lasts 106 years [2]. In this time, one religion is almost fully replaced by another. We find it necessary to draw the readers' attention to the fact that the S. A. Gorokhov's findings are close to the length of Christianity's establishment in Rome lasting 115 years – from Diocletian to Theodosius [14]. Of course, some exceptions can be found to this rule; however the increase or decrease of the R-cycle (as a whole or of some of its phases) in a specific country can be attributed to the country's unique religious processes and not to the fault of the suggested model.

Before the 19th century, R-cycles were probably the only existing type of religious competition. Cycles followed each other with long periods of a lack of religious competition between them – so it was for centuries. In the 19th century a new type of R-cycles appeared. Now the religious space was also affected by a competition between religion and secular ideologies. In many countries the next cycle was put into motion not by the rise of followers of a new religion, but by a rise in non-religious people.

Still, in India the process of secularisation has yet to become widespread. To analyse religious competition in the country as a whole and in its administrative units (AU) – states and union territories – we have analysed sources that include data on the population's religious affiliation. To compare time series, we had to unify the borders not only of the country, but also of its AU. This was complicated by the fact that India's administrative division changed several times during the 20th century. Thus, we had to adapt the borders of India and its states to those that existed during the time of the 2011 census. The result of this work is a table with more than 1250 cells with data on the followers of Indian religions, Islam, and Christianity in India as a whole and in its AUs during every year in the interval from 1901 (or 1911) to 2011 that ended with a year 1.

Results

The religious space of India is made up of several religions. The largest in terms of followers – Hinduism – together with others (Buddhism, Sikhism and Jainism) constitute a larger group of Indian religions. Its main competitors in the country as a whole, as well as its AU, are Islam and, to a lesser extent, Christianity. The competitive relationship between these religions has been developing rather slowly: in the period between the censuses of 1911 and 2011, the share of followers of Indian religions has decreased by only 4.5 % (from 88 %), 3.8 % of which moved to Islam and 0.7 % – to Christianity.

Of the 35 states and union territories (hereafter – in the Census – 2011 boundaries and names) in 1911, in 32 followers of Indian religions made up a majority of the population, in two (Jammu and Kashmir and Lakshadweep) – there was a Muslim majority, in one (Goa) – a Christian one. A century later, although the share of Muslims has increased, Islam still predominated only in the same two administrative divisions as in 1911 [15]. At the same time, it is important to note the decrease in the share of Muslims in Jammu and Kashmir and Lakshadweep. This means that the increase in the Muslim population happened in other states and union territories, so the territory of Islam's religious space in India widened.

The same conclusion, although slightly differently, is applicable to Christianity's religious space. By 2011, Christianity was already dominant in three states: Meghalaya, Mizoram, and Nagaland (according to our

calculations, by the middle of 2017, Christianity became the predominant religion in Manipur). The spread of Christianity happened not only through expansion diffusion (like Islam) but also via relocation diffusion – as in Africa [16]: having lost the leading position in Goa to Hinduism, Christianity regained its influence in Southern India (and also, even if to a lesser degree, in Goa) choosing the North-East as its new region of influence.

Indian religions have maintained their leading positions in the country as a whole during this period. Despite them giving up some of their share in the North-East and also their share of the population decreasing in most states and union territories, in some they were able to increase their influence. This group of administrative divisions includes, first and foremost, Muslim divisions and West Bengal with a traditionally high Muslim population, second – small states and union territories Daman and Diu, Delhi, Goa, Puducherry, and Tripura. Thus, the religious space of Indian religions, despite a slight contraction, has remained relatively stable throughout the century mostly due to the regions of the Hindi Belt, which have a proportionally high population.

Up to now, the country has been relatively homogenous in terms of religion: MIF during the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century have remained in the interval of 0.3–0.4 (fig. 2), and there have not been any significant changes in the value of the index.

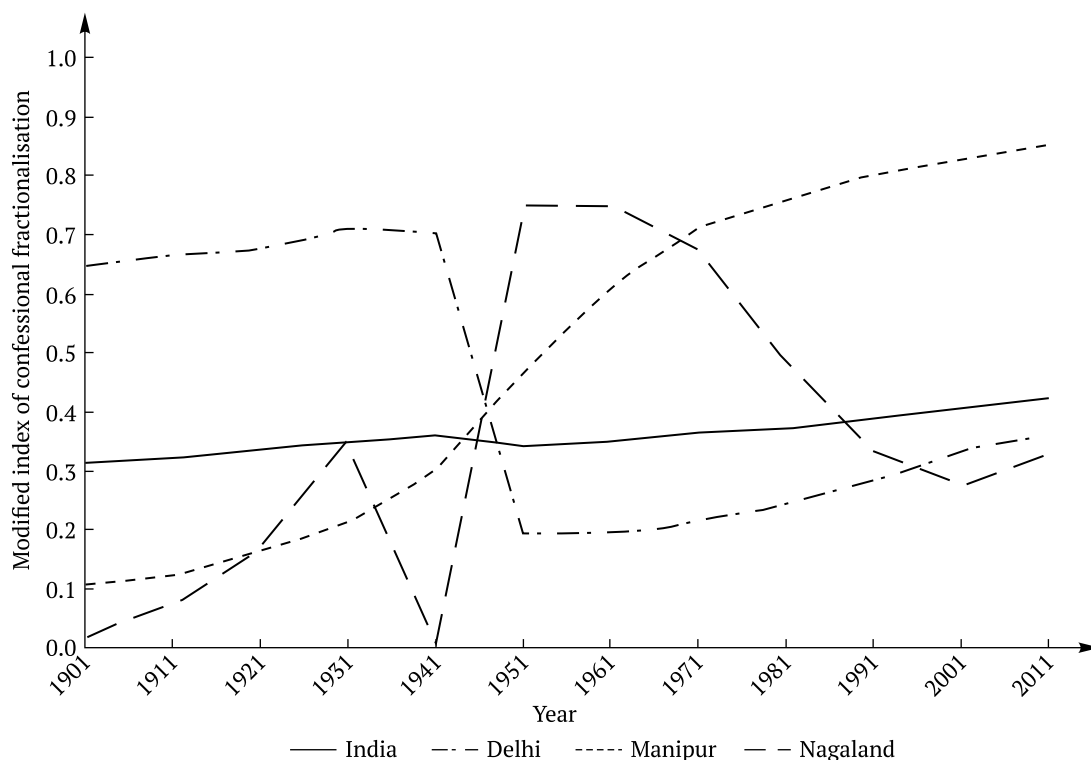


Fig. 2. Changing of the modified index of confessional fractionalisation during the religious space's R-cycle in India, National Capital Territory of Delhi, and in the stages of Manipur and Nagaland.

Source: [17–20] and data of Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India

The 1940s – when India was getting ready for independence and then achieved it – are an exception, Pakistan becoming an independent country and other cross-border movements of large quantities of people from India into Pakistan and vice-versa, led to a decline in the share of Muslims in India's population and an increase in followers of the already dominant Indian religions (mostly Hinduism). Because of this, MIF of separate AU and of India as a whole decreased during the period. At the same time, after India became independent, MIF began – even if very slowly – to rise. Most states and union territories followed the same trend, but there were some regions where the changes were most noticeable (fig. 3).

First, the North-East of the country («Seven Sisters») where a sharp increase in the number of Christians led to a significant rise in MIF and, thus, the strength of religious competition. Second, the South of the country (Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh) and Goa and Maharashtra. Here, despite a slight increase in the share of Christians, the primary competition was between Indian religions and increasingly influential Islam. The primary region where the changes in MIF were not as significant was the Hindu Belt and some adjacent states, situated within the triangle Amritsar – Rajkot – Bhubaneswar.

Although a significant number of people – several million people – moved between India and Pakistan during the 1940s, there was no significant change in MIF (in terms of states moving from one group of MIF into another) in the regions to which or out of which migration occurred. Along with this, it is notable that

in Indian states that border with East Pakistan (Bangladesh) the changes in religious competition were more significant than in regions that border Pakistan itself. Apart from East Bengal (the swap of Hindus and Muslims with Bangladesh) and some North-East states (where with the appearance of new administrative divisions, Christianity began to rise quickly) only Delhi and Andhra Pradesh moved into a different MIF-value group.

To analyse the changes in religious competition on other hierarchical levels, we analysed cities of the following groups: cities with over a million citizens, capitals of states and union territories, largest cities in an administrative division when such cities are not the capital (in 2011, there were 72 such cities).

Only a quarter of the chosen cities had stronger religious competition than that of the state it is situated in – meaning the cities were in a higher MIF group than the state as a whole (fig. 3). It is notable that most of them are situated inside of the Amritsar – Rajkot – Bhubaneswar triangle, where the influence of Indian Religions is especially strong. In other words, we can see the following pattern: in states where Islam and Christianity predominate over Indian religions (the South and the North-East) there is no significant difference between the MIF of cities and the states that they are in, so religious competition is consistent at all geographical levels of administrative division. However, in places where Islam and Christianity have not managed to overtake Indian religions, expansion begins from the biggest cities and only then spreads to smaller cities and rural areas.

union territories decreasing after India and Pakistan became independent. The states that lost the largest share of followers of Islam are Delhi (see fig. 2) and West Bengal, to a lesser extent – Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand and Bihar. Thus, we see proven our thesis about the strong influence of the migration of Muslims

and followers of Indian religions after independence on the religious space of Eastern administrative divisions that border Bangladesh. At the same time, Islam's R-cycle did not stop or become replaced by the R-cycle of another religion in any of the aforementioned states. It continued (albeit returning to earlier phases) in the 1950s.

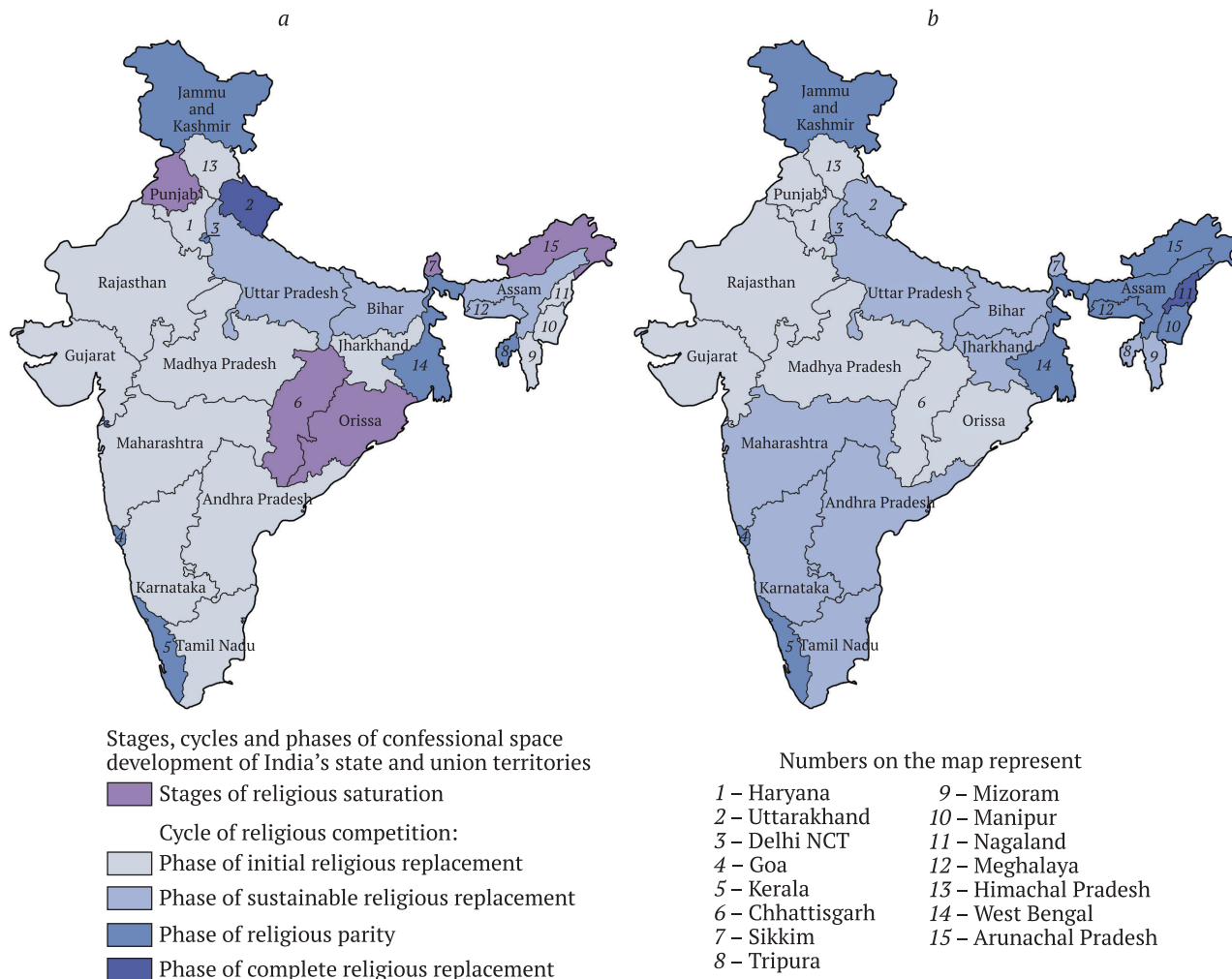


Fig. 4. Stages, cycles and phases of religious space development of India's states and union territories in 1911 (a) and 2011 (b).
Source: [17–20] and data of Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India

The R-cycle of Christianity has been in progress in other territories. It mostly developed in the areas populated by the scheduled tribes: in the North-East (except Assam and Tripura), in Sikkim, on the Andaman and Nicobar Islands (before independence), and also partially in Orissa. Therefore, there are few regions in India where Islam and Christianity compete with each other; however, having separated their area of influence, they compete with Indian religions in virtually every administrative division of India. An exception is Kerala, where Christianity – once the main rival of the still dominant religions – is gradually giving up its positions to Islam; in the state of Tamil Nadu the latter is currently only beginning to catch up with Christianity, but it is likely that Islam will be the primary threat

to Hinduism here too in the near future. At the same time, the spread of Christianity has not been centre-orientated with the movement from the city deeper into the states like it was with Islam. In the aforementioned states Christianisation began from the countryside, but almost everywhere it spread continuously and fairly, for example in Manipur (fig. 2), sometimes hindered by interference from the government.

Unlike with Islam and Christianity, during 1901–2011 very few states went through the R-cycle of Indian Religions. These are regions that are small in size and far from the main areas of religious competition, namely the union territories Daman and Diu, Lakshadweep, Puducherry; as well as the state of Goa (and, in the past, the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Tripura and Uttara-

khand). It is notable that of the 35 states and union territories in India, there is not a single administrative division that completed an R-cycle of any religion during the analysed period. The closest to doing so were the Northeastern states – Tripura and, especially, Nagaland.

In Tripura, the R-cycle of Indian religions, having almost finished by the beginning of the 1970s, was interrupted by the new (at that point collective) R-cycle of

Islam and Christianity. In Nagaland (fig. 2), discounting the short-term anomalous drop in MIF at the beginning of the 1940s linked to the active government intervention that threatened to strip the population of various privileges for converting to Christianity, the R-cycle has not yet been completed. However, as we see it, the cycle's length will not differ significantly from the standard period for countries – 106 years.

Conclusions

Thus, the main pluses of the religious cycle model include not only the possibility to explain why one religion gives way to another but also (most importantly) the presence of an apparatus for forecasting the development of the confessional space. In most cases, knowledge of the regularities of the alteration of the phases of the cycles of religious competition allows a researcher to formulate subsequent medium- and long-term trends in the development of the confessional space. This approach, it appears, has some advantages compared to the current forecasting method, which is based on the postulate that the current indicators of the growth of the number of religious communities will not change. It is the latter variant of forecasting that is used in the most authoritative sources on confessional statistics [21; 22].

The R-cycle of Islam started on the periphery of the main space of Indian Religions – in Jammu and Kashmir, West Bengal, Kerala and Delhi. It spread towards the centre via cascade diffusion expansion from within India – through its major cities – and then through relocation diffusion adding new territories and simultaneously lowering the share of the initial regions of influence; the R-cycle next reached the semiperipheral belt: states Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Jharkhand, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Maharashtra, Karnataka and some others. Finally, it started in the stronghold of Indian religions – the Amritsar – Rajkot – Bhubaneswar triangle.

The R-cycle of Christianity has occurred in other regions. Before independence, followers of Christiani-

ty were concentrated in their traditional areas – on the South of India, but during the second half of the 20th century the R-cycle began via expansion diffusion in the scheduled tribes: in the North-East (except Assam and Tripura), in Sikkim, on the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, and also partially in Orissa. Here, however, Christianity did not follow the same pattern as Islam (spreading from the cities) but rather spread from rural areas.

Unlike Islam and Christianity, during 1901–2011 very few states went through the R-cycle of Indian religions. These are regions that are small in size and far from the main areas of religious competition, namely the union territories Daman and Diu, Lakshadweep, Puducherry; as well as Goa (and, in the past, the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Tripura and Uttarakhand). Before the last quarter of the 20th century Indian religions spread via expansion diffusion; however, lately the space of Indian religions has been becoming more concentrated because of different (during different periods) states – through contraction separation. Even now Hinduism sets the rules of the game in the relationship between various religious entities on India's territory; this religion's heritage (primarily in connection to the caste system and its modifications) also plays a major role in all South Asian countries, even those where Hindus make up only a small part of the overall population. Thus, India's religious space is the result of the development of Hinduism, its many variations and denominations, which are largely created through interactions with other religions that have appeared in the country.

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