

Economic Globalization and Cultural Heritage in Sri Lanka Today

EDWIN DICKEN

Economics & Finance Department

2641 Kennedy

SAINT PETER'S UNIVERSITY

EBOULEVARD, JERSEY CITY, NJ, 07306

Email Address: edickens@saintpeters.edu

Abstract: This paper explores the essentiality of economic policy to the cultural expression of heritage. Especially in multicultural countries, widely agreed-upon economic objectives and opportunities to participate in them is central to the expression of diverse strands of heritage that make up the overall culture. As a Buddhist majority and a Hindu majority culture, Sri Lanka is an important case study for analysis of the relationships between economics and heritage. This paper takes the long view to recognize significant economic issues since Sri Lanka's independence. At Independence, the country had much initial postcolonial promise with a prosperous export sector, high education levels, a stable macro economy and strategic location. Significantly, the initial postcolonial period saw a unified country through struggle against the British. However, this promise became derailed during the civil conflict, which had both economic roots and impact. In response to this history, this paper will focus on the current post-conflict era to stress that a harmony of diverse heritages can be achieved through current economic policies that promote the well-being of diverse communities, including inter-regional cooperation and connectivity across South Asia.