Contents

Preface ix

Acknowledgments xi

Introduction xiii

- A "Demarcationist" Approach xiii
- The Field of Study xv
- Pointers and Gaps in the Studies xvi
- Following the Social Scientific Method xix
- My Respects to Missiologists xx
- A Return to Demarcation as an Aid to Interchange xxi

1. The Concept of Diffusion in Relation to Religion 1

- A Stubborn Concept with a Low Profile 1
- The Concept of Diffusion and Its Associates 3
- Results from the Study of Diffusion 5
- Diffusion and Religion 7
- Three Diffusing Religions 13
- Variations in the Dependent Variable 14
- Conclusion 16

2. A Theoretical Perspective and Methodology 19

- Theoretical Considerations 19
  - Background Variables from the Two Sides of Diffusion 19
  - Macro Level Variables 23
  - Micro Level Variables 26
  - Summary Statement 31
- The Methodology 32

3. Buddhism 37

A New Moral Order for a New Set of Rulers 37
Buddhism of the Old School - Theravada 39
Mahayana or Elaborated Buddhism 42
Variations Compared 47
Discussion 49
Conclusion 53

4. Christianity Before 1500 57

Diffusion and Variations in the Mediterranean Basin 57
Diffusion and Variations to the North 63
Diffusion and Variations to the South and East 71
Discussion 74
Conclusion 76

5. Islam 79

The Rise of Islam Among the Arabs 79
The Initial Diffusion of Islam Under the Omayyads 81
The Dissolution of Arab Power Under the Abbasids 84
Diffusion to the Turks and Central Asia 87
Diffusion to the East 88
Diffusion to Africa 91
Diffusion to North America 92
Discussion 93
Conclusion 96

6. Christianity After 1500, Part I The Societies in Asia 99

Diffusion to the Middle East 100
Diffusion to South Asia 101
Diffusion to Southeast Asia 105
Diffusion to East Asia 110
Discussion 117

7. Christianity After 1500, Part II The Societies in Oceana, Africa, and the Americas 121

Diffusion to Oceana (including Australia) 121
Diffusion to Africa, South of the Sahara 126
Diffusion to the Americas 135
Discussion 142
Conclusion 147

8. Conclusions and Some Directions for Study 149

The Nature of the Findings 149
My Unhidden Agenda 152
Arguments from the Data 155
Additional Support from Recent Case Studies 160
Religion and Domination 161
Religion and Identity Formation 166
Some Directions for Study 168

Appendix - A Theological Perspective With Missiological Implications 173

The Demarcation 173
The Three Religions and Human Yearnings 175
Seeing God at Work 177
Domination and Resistance 178
New Identities 184
The Sociology of the Knowledge of God 187
The Message and the Method 189

References 195

Name Index 209

Subject Index 215