

**South Asia**  
**Chapter 8, Part 1: pages 402 - 417**  
**Teacher Notes**

**DEFINING THE REALM**

**I. Major geographic qualities of South Asia**

- Well defined physiography – bordered by mountains, deserts, oceans
- Rivers – The Ganges supports most of population for over 10,000 years
- World's 2<sup>nd</sup> largest population cluster on 3% land mass
- Current birth rate will make it 1<sup>st</sup> in population in a decade
- Low income economies, inadequate nutrition and poor health
- British imprint is strong – see borders and culture
- Monsoons, this cycle sustains life, to alter it would = disaster
- Strong cultural regionalism, invading armies and cultures diversified the realm
- Hindu, Buddhists, Islam – strong roots in region
- India is biggest power in realm, but have trouble with neighbors
- Kashmir – dangerous source of friction between 2 nuclear powers

**II. Defining the Realm**

Divided along arbitrary lines drawn by England

Division occurred in 1947 and many lives were lost

This region includes: Pakistan (East & West), India, Bangladesh (1971), Sri Lanka, Maldives Islands

Language – English is lingua franca

**III. Physiographic Regions of South Asia**

After Russia left Afghanistan Islamic revivalism entered the region

Enormous range of ecologies and environment – Himalayas, desert and tropics

1) Monsoons – annual rains that are critical to life in that part of the world

## 2) Regions:

- A. Northern Highlands – Himalayas, Bhutan, Afghanistan
- B. River Lowlands – Indus Valley in Pakistan, Ganges Valley in India, Bangladesh
- C. Southern Plateaus – throughout much of India, a rich farming region

## **IV. Locals and Invaders**

### **A. Indus Valley Civilization**

Ganges Basin – “crucible of humanity” came out of Africa to here 70,000 years ago

Cultural Hearth – located in Indus Valley, early culture emerged here 5000 BC

Arts and Trades routes emerged from isolated tribes and villages to towns and beyond

### **B) Incipient India (India from the beginning)**

#### Hinduism:

3000 years old and based upon Vedism (a religious belief system based upon Aryans)

Social stratification – caste system, 5 levels, peasants (untouchables) to Brahmins (priests)

Buddhism: Prince Siddhartha was Buddha, India’s state religion

### **C) Early Invaders**

Aryans – from Persia, brought their belief system (Vedism)

Greeks – Alexander the Great invaded and exposed their vulnerability

Mauryan Empire – first state to grow in power and size through persuasion & teachings

Used missionaries to spread Buddhism, 200 BC

Gupta Empire (320-540 AD) – Great advances in science and culture. Hinduism grows afterwards.

Islam – 1000 AD, swept across South Asia, converted by force or by appealing to lower castes

Mughal Empire – enlightened Islamic rule, eventually Islam wanes, Hinduism outlasts it

European Intrusion – Portuguese, Dutch, French, and last British East India Company

Trade: Centered more on trade than land until a mutiny in 1857 – 1947

Odd combination of British govt and traditional feudal systems

Legacy – transportation system, irrigation, cities enlarge, industrialization, education, and medicine

Partition – Muslims wanted separation from Hindus – created a massive refugee problem, great loss of life.

## **V. Population Dilemma – greatest growth on Earth**

A. Population Geography: research on dimensions, distribution, growth, and other human aspects of human population relating to soil, climate, land, social conditions, and economic development.

See page 43 – what is the difference between arithmetic and physiologic population – (people per square mile vs. people per square *arable* mile)

B. Demographic Transition: 4 stage sequence of population changes

Stage 1: pre-industrial – high birth and death rates

Stage 2 & 3: high birth rates, low death rates = population explosion

Stage 4: decreasing birth and death rates

C. Prospects for South Asia: population growth is most challenging on Earth!

D. India's Internal Geographic Variations: individual states have their own population control policies – some with mass sterilizations.

Reasons for increases: religious fundamentalists, low levels of urbanization, inferior status of women.

## VI. South Asia's Burden of Poverty

India: 2/3 live in poverty

Pakistan: 1/3 live in poverty

Bangladesh: 1/2 live in poverty

Children: 1/2 of all regions children are malnourished

Girls: viewed as less important than boys in health, education, and law

## VII. Latest Invasions – investments & politics

India: Pro Moscow to Pro USA

Business growth spurred by USA, global growth with Information

Technology

Full nuclear partner today

Pakistan: Pro USA in gov.'t only

Economic growth is good, 2-7%

Bangladesh: Clothing sweatshops

### Teacher Side Notes:

**Hinduism** - emerged from the beliefs and practices brought to India by the Indo-Europeans (Aryans). (6th century BC)

**Buddhism** - born of discontent; made the state religion of India in 3rd century BC

**Islam** - sweeps through central India from the 8th -10th centuries AD

### 1. Hinduism

#### *General Points of Interest:*

Not just a religion- An intricate web of religious, philosophical, social, economic, and artistic elements

No common creed, No single doctrine

No direct divine revelation

No rigid narrow moral code

-Polytheistic

- Many idols
- Various sacred writings
- Varying beliefs
- Absorbed other religions
- Venerate cows
- Burn dead
- Caste separation
  - Brahmins: priests and scholars.
  - Kshatriya: kings, governors, warriors and soldiers
  - Vaishya: cattle herders, agriculturists, artisans and merchants.
  - Shudras: laborers and service providers.
- “State” of secondary importance

***Major tenets of Hinduism:***

Three main ideas are important in understanding the Hindu religion and the caste system

**A. Reincarnation** - Every living thing has a soul.

When a living thing dies, its soul moves into another living creature.

Souls are reborn in a newly created life.

**B. Karma** - Every action brings about certain results.

There is no escaping the consequences of one’s actions.

Good behavior is rewarded when the soul is reborn into a higher ranking living creature.

**C. Dharma** - A set of rules that must be followed by all living things if they wish to work their way up the ladder of reincarnation.

Each person’s dharma is different.

***Three basic practices of Hinduism:***

***Puja*** or worship

**Cremation** of the dead

**Caste system:** priest, soldiers, merchants, artists, peasants, untouchables.

## **2. BUDDHISM – Siddhartha/Buddha**

Adherents objected to harsher features of Hinduism

Focuses on knowledge, especially self-knowledge

Elimination of worldly desires, determination not to hurt or kill people or animals

### **Four noble truths of Buddhism:**

- a. Sorrow and suffering are part of all life.
- b. People suffer because they desire things they cannot have.
- c. To reach a stage of not wanting. The way to escape suffering is to end desire.
- d. To end desire, follow the “middle path,” i.e., the path that avoids the extremes of too much pleasure and desire.

### **Eightfold path to the middle way**

Right understanding

Right purpose

Right speech

Right conduct

Right means of earning a living

Right effort

Right awareness

Right meditation

### **Fall of Buddhism on the subcontinent**

Hinduism - broad and tolerant, accepting many of the teachings of Buddha

Buddhists in India - willing to compromise with the beliefs and customs of Hinduism

Final blow - 8th century - arrival of Islam

Destroyed the great Buddhist monasteries

Burned libraries

Killed monks

Today - only a few million Buddhists in India

### 3. Islam is:

Monotheistic

No idols

One sacred book

Uniform dogma - 5 pillars

- 1) Shahadah: **Creed**. "There is no God but Allah and Muhammad is the messenger of God."
- 2) Salah: Requirement to **pray 5 times a day** at fixed times during the day: dawn, noon, mid-afternoon, sunset, and night. Each salat is performed facing towards the Kaaba in Mecca.
- 3) Zakat: **alms-giving**, is the practice of charitable giving by Muslims based on accumulated wealth, and is obligatory for all who are able to do so. It is considered to be a personal responsibility for Muslims to ease economic hardship for others and eliminate inequality. Zakat consists of spending 2.5% of one's wealth for the benefit of the poor or needy, including slaves, debtors and travelers.
- 4) Sawm during Ramadan: **Ritual fasting** is an obligatory act during the month of Ramadan. Muslims must abstain from food, drink, and sexual intercourse from dawn to dusk during this month, and are to be especially mindful of other sins.
- 5) Hajj: a **pilgrimage** that occurs during the Islamic month of Dhu al-Hijjah to the holy city of Mecca (2015-Sept 21-26) , 12 days short of our calendar), and derives from an ancient Arab practice. Every able-bodied Muslim is obliged to make the pilgrimage to Mecca at least once in their lifetime if they can afford it. When the pilgrim is around ten kilometers from Mecca, he must dress in Ihram clothing, which consists of two white sheets. Both men and women are required to make the pilgrimage to Mecca, as the Hajj is mandatory for both males and females. After a Muslim makes the trip to Mecca, he/she is known as a hajj/hajja (one who made the pilgrimage to Mecca). The main rituals of the Hajj include walking seven times around the Kaaba, touching the Black Stone, travelling seven

times between Mount Safa and Mount Marwah, and symbolically stoning the Devil in Mina.

Intolerant (of other religions)

Eat beef/Sacrifice cows

Bury Dead

Social Equality (in theory) – poor liked it

Theocratic society