

# Week 3 Agenda: U1 South Asia as Region

## India and South Asia: From Area Studies to Ethnic Studies

As we continue our exploration of South Asia using the characteristics of people and place, this week students will increase their knowledge about the distribution of belief systems and economic well-being.

All student work for the week will eventually be used in the unit assessment as they assess what should be the boundaries of the region for themselves.

### **Optional Readings for Teachers or as Class Text**

- DeVotta and Ganguly Ch. 5 "Economies and Development" by Rahul Mukherji and Seyed Hossein Zarhani (pgs. 117-142) & Ch. 8 "Religion" by Chad M. Bauman and Ainslie T. Embree (pgs. 185-220)
- Ludden Ch. 8 "Global South Asia" (pgs. 269-291)
- Mines and Lamb Part Four "Practicing Religion" (pgs. 219-308)
- Oades and Mossman "Chapter 2 – The Science of Well-Being and Positive Psychology" in *Wellbeing, Recovery, and Mental Health*
- Talbot Ch. 2 "Land, Society, Environment" (pgs. 32-46) & Ch. 15 "India Shining" (pgs. 242-253)
- Wadley Ch. 5 "Religion in South Asia" (pgs. 81-96) and Ch. 9 "Arranging a Marriage in Middle-Class Southern India" by Nicole A. Wilson (pgs. 131-150)
- Visweswaran Part I "Debates about Origins: Pre/Modern Religious Pluralities in South Asia" (pgs. 11-45) and Part V "Development and Liberalization" (pgs. 219-302)

### **LESSON #1: The Geography of Belief Systems**

Optional Bell-Ringer: How do you think about belief systems in South Asia – which religions do you associate with the region or particular places within the region?

#### Purpose

- Belief systems – their distribution and the connections they make – are often used to describe the character of a region. Religion is one of the major factors evaluated when describing culture. Students should know both which belief systems are practiced by the majority of people in a particular area and they should know that does not exclude the practice of many other belief systems in those same spaces.

#### Prep

- Students will need digital access to the Pew-Templeton Global Religious Futures Project website's list of countries: <http://www.globalreligiousfutures.org/countries>
- Students will need a printout of a blank outline map of South Asia (like this one: <https://geoalliance.asu.edu/sites/default/files/maps/SCASIA.pdf>)
- Create groups of 7 students each

#### Procedure

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Developed by Rachel Heilman (Issaquah High School) with support from the South Asia Center at the University of Washington with funding from the U.S. Department of Education National Resource Centers Program.

1. Have the groups of 7 meet and discuss how they plan to illustrate patterns of belief systems on their blank maps (Will they color code for the religion practiced by the majority? How will they represent minority groups? Will some information be annotated and other information color-coded?).
2. Each group member should choose/be assigned one of the 7 countries we will consider to be part of South Asia for this course (though eventually, based on their analysis in this unit, some students may argue that some countries should be added or some left out, the course is developed with these 7 in mind): Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka.
3. Each student will use their country's information at the Pew-Templeton Global Religious Futures Project website's list of countries (<http://www.globalreligiousfutures.org/countries>) to complete their part of the map.
4. Individuals then report out back to their group and disseminate the information so that everyone ends up with a complete map.
5. Students should discuss and record their response to this prompt on the back of their maps: Do you think we can use belief systems/religion to define South Asia as a region? Why or why not?

## **LESSON #2: Cultural Diffusion of Belief Systems**

Optional Bell-Ringer: Syncretism occurs when different cultural practices blend with each other. Syncretism draws from multiple sources and results in something new and unexpected. How do you think religious syncretism would work? What would cause it and what would it look like in practice "on the ground"?

### Purpose

- If students are going to consider belief systems as part of the definition of South Asia as a region, they need to take the time to consider what it means to declare that a majority of people in a particular area practice a particular belief system. Can we use that characteristic to decide on hard boundaries? Do all people practicing a particular religion always practice it the same way, free of the influence of other systems of belief? This lesson is designed to push them to think about how cultural diffusion might help us or hinder us in our quest to define South Asia as a region.

### Prep

- Access the Cultural Diffusion PPT (in the course files)
- Students should be prepared to take notes and record responses in a response log as you move through the PPT

### Procedure

1. Guide the class through the PPT presentation.

## **LESSON #3: Measures of Well-Being**

Optional Bell-Ringer: Do you think that measuring a country's economic success is the same thing as measuring the well-being of its people?

### Purpose

- Economists often talk about regions in their analysis. What can we really learn from GDPs and such – is that a valuable metric for delineating the borders of South Asia as a region? And when we talk about economics, is that actually the most important measure of well-being for us to look at? This lesson will guide students through a consideration of South Asia as an economic region, but we will also consider whether or not economics is the only way to talk about how well the people of an area are doing.

### Prep

- Be ready to project the Well-Being Discussion Prompts PPT
- Outline map of South Asia for each student (for example, <https://geoalliance.asu.edu/sites/default/files/maps/SCASIA.pdf>)
- A timer or stopwatch (I like the one at <https://www.classroomscreen.com/>)
- Access and project a political map of South Asia (for example, the UN's <https://www.un.org/Depts/Cartographic/map/profile/SouthAsia.pdf>)
- Access and project the CBS Sunday Morning segment "Bhutan, the mountain kingdom" (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h5T6j3xLSIs>)
- Access and project OR have individual devices for students to access economic info broken down by country (for example, at <https://www.theglobaleconomy.com/economies/>)
- Access and project OR have individual devices for students to access the Social Progress Index (<https://www.socialprogress.org/>) ... you could also use the World Happiness Report (<https://worldhappiness.report/archive/>)

### Procedure

1. Have students get in two lines, facing each other (the line might snake around the room). Each time you change discussion prompts, have one of the lines shift a few spaces to the right or left (any number that strikes you, though I sometimes am very deliberate in avoiding a particular combination). People who get shifted past the end of the line should loop back to the beginning. Specify which line should begin the conversation and then allow them to discuss the prompt freely. Limit discussion time to 2-3 minutes per prompt.

The prompts, which you can use the provided PPT to project:

- What does it mean to talk about your own individual well-being?
- How should we measure a country's well-being – should we limit it to GDP/economics?
- Bhutan's 1729 legal code says that "If the government cannot create happiness for its people, then there is no purpose for government to exist." What are your thoughts about that statement?

2. Have students return to their seats and show them the CBS Sunday Morning segment "Bhutan, the mountain kingdom" (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h5T6j3xLSIs>). Project the domains of gross national happiness for their consideration (<https://gnhusa.org/gross-national-happiness/>). Have them discuss what they have learned in pairs.
3. Explain that GNH is very complex to measure (you can show them the index of the Centre for Bhutan Studies' GNH Survey Report to make the point: <http://www.grossnationalhappiness.com/>), so organizations like the Social Progress Imperative have simplified it to domains they consider to be most measurable (<https://www.socialprogress.org/index/global/definitions#0/0/0>)
4. Students should label the following countries on their South Asia map (in small writing, leaving room for annotations): Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka.
5. Students should annotate their maps with the following information for each country (with you projecting to class or individually using their own devices):
  - Economic growth: the rate of change for real GDP (<https://www.theglobaleconomy.com/economies/>)
  - GDP per capita, Purchasing Power Parity (<https://www.theglobaleconomy.com/economies/>)
  - Social Progress Index Score (<https://www.socialprogress.org/>)
6. On the back of their maps, have students write a response to this question: "Should we use economic or other measures of well-being to talk about South Asia as a region?"

## Relevant Washington State Standards

SSS1.9-12.3 Explain points of agreement and disagreement that experts have regarding interpretations of sources.

SSS1.9-12.5 Explain the challenge and opportunities of addressing problems over place and time using disciplinary and interdisciplinary lenses.

SSS2.9-12.3 Determine the kinds of sources and relevant information that are helpful, taking into consideration multiple points of view represented in the sources, the types of sources available, and the potential uses of the sources.

SSS3.9-12.5 Integrate evidence from multiple relevant historical sources and interpretations into a reasoned argument about the past and its relationship to the present.

C4.9-10.4 Explain how social and political problems are addressed at the local, regional, state, tribal, national, and international level.

E4.9-10.1 Evaluate how people across the world have addressed issues involved with the distribution of resources and sustainability.

G1.9-10.1 Define the characteristics of each of the major world regions.

G1.9-10.4 Explain relationships between the locations of places and regions, and their political, cultural, and economic dynamics, using maps, satellite images, photographs, and other representations.

G1.11-12.4 Analyze information from geographic tools, including computer-based mapping systems, to draw conclusions about an issue or event. G1.11-12.5 Evaluate the complexities of regions and the challenges involved in defining those regions.

G2.9-10.1 Analyze human interaction with the environment across the world in the past or present.

G2.11-12.6 Evaluate how political and economic decisions throughout time have influenced cultural and environmental characteristics of various places and regions.

G3.9-10.1 Define how the geography of expansion and encounter have shaped global politics and economics in history. G3.9-10.2 Analyze the reciprocal nature of how historical events and the spatial diffusion of ideas, technologies, and cultural practices have influenced migration patterns and the distribution of human population.

H1.11-12.1 Evaluate how historical events and developments were shaped by unique circumstances of time and place as well as broader historical contexts.

H3.11-12.6 Evaluate the ways in which the perspectives of those writing history shaped the history that they produced.