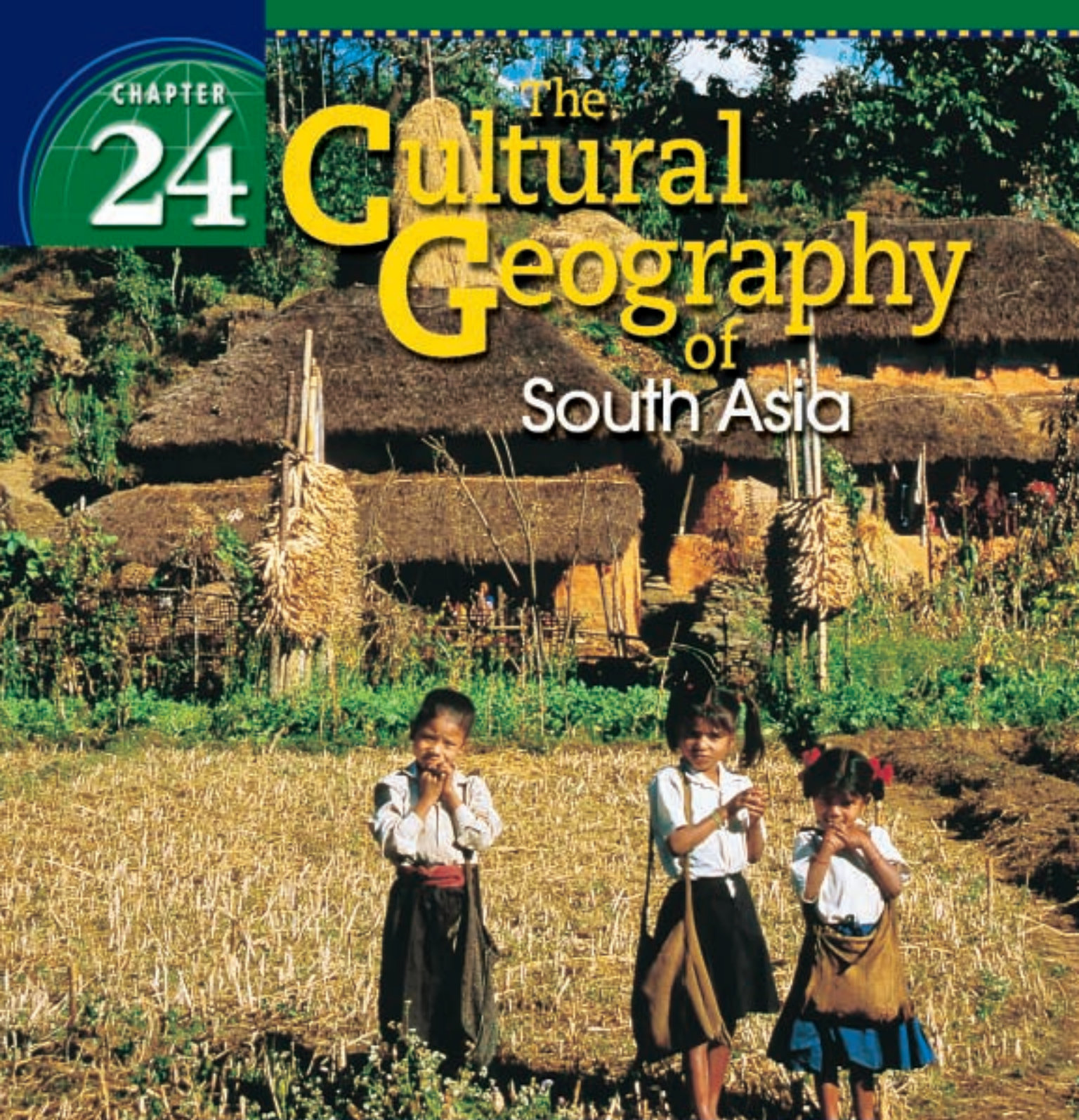


CHAPTER

24

The Cultural Geography of South Asia



GeoJournal

As you read this chapter, note the diversity found in South Asia. Write a journal entry describing the culture of one particularly diverse area of South Asia. Be sure to make your descriptions as vivid and as accurate as possible.



Chapter Overview Visit the **Glencoe World Geography** Web site at tx.geography.glencoe.com and click on Chapter Overviews—Chapter 24 to preview information about the cultural geography of the region.

CLICK HERE

CONTENTS

Guide to Reading

Consider What You Know

India is South Asia's most populous country—with more than one billion people—and the second most populous country in the world. Do you know which country has more people than India?

Read to Find Out

- How do the peoples of South Asia reflect diversity?
- How is South Asia's large population distributed?
- How does life in the region's cities compare with life in traditional rural villages?

Terms to Know

- *jati*
- megalopolis

Places to Locate

- Islamabad
- Mumbai (Bombay)
- Kolkata (Calcutta)
- Delhi
- Dhaka
- Karachi

Population Patterns

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

A Geographic View

Scenes Along the Brahmaputra

[On a side stream of the Brahmaputra] there were men in long skirts, the descendants of ancient Aryans and Arab, Turkish, and Burmese traders. . . . Nearby, children bathed, men walked down planks with wicker baskets of coconuts, melons, and squash. . . . Three women fixed dinner in metal pots over a fire. The smell of mango, diesel fumes, and spices filled the air.

—Jere Van Dyk, "Long Journey of the Brahmaputra," National Geographic, November 1988



Hindu temple near the Brahmaputra, India

Imagine taking a boat down the Brahmaputra River. You see great cities and small villages. You meet travelers on steep mountains and talk with families tending green rice fields. Life along the Brahmaputra reflects the color and diversity of all South Asia. In this section you will get a sense of that color and diversity as you learn about the peoples of this region.

Human Characteristics

One of the most significant characteristics of South Asia's population is its size. Over 1.3 billion people—more than one-fifth of the world's population—live in the region. Size is not the only distinguishing factor of South Asia's population, however. Diversity—the complex mix of religious, social, and cultural influences—is reflected in this region as in almost no other area on Earth. The peoples of the region speak hundreds of languages and practice several major religions. The region's diversity has fostered both tolerance and conflict.

India

India's population includes people from diverse groups. The largest number of Indians are descended from the Dravidians, who have lived in the south of India for 8,000 years, and the Aryans, who invaded from Central Asia more than 3,000 years ago. Also contributing to India's population mix are the descendants of British and Portuguese colonists as well as recent refugees from Tibet and Sri Lanka. Many Indians traditionally identify themselves by their religion—as Hindus, Muslims, Buddhists, Sikhs, Jains, or Christians. Hindus also identify themselves by a *jati*, a group that defines one's occupation and social position.

Pakistan and Bangladesh

Two South Asian countries—Pakistan and Bangladesh—were once part of British India. Pakistan and, later, Bangladesh became separate countries because of their distinct Muslim and ethnic heritages. More than 90 percent of the people of Pakistan and Bangladesh practice Islam. **Islamabad**, Pakistan's capital, is even named for the faith. This religious uniformity overshadows other cultural differences in Pakistan, which has at least five main ethnic groups. In Bangladesh most people are Bengali, an ethnic background they share with some of their Hindu neighbors in the Indian state of Bengal.

History

Sri Lanka's Sinhalese and Tamils

Sri Lanka has two main groups, which are fiercely divided along ethnic and religious lines. They speak different languages and live in different parts of the island country. The Buddhist Sinhalese are the majority and control the government. The other group—Hindu Tamils—have been fighting for an independent Tamil state in northern Sri Lanka since the early 1980s. Clashes between government forces and violent separatist groups like the Tamil Tigers have made this once peaceful, green island a war zone. Since 1984, more than 100,000 Sri Lankans have been killed or have disappeared. Almost a million people have been driven from their homes by ethnic violence—one of the largest such numbers ever recorded. The violence has disrupted the area's economy and demoralized its people.

Bhutan and Nepal

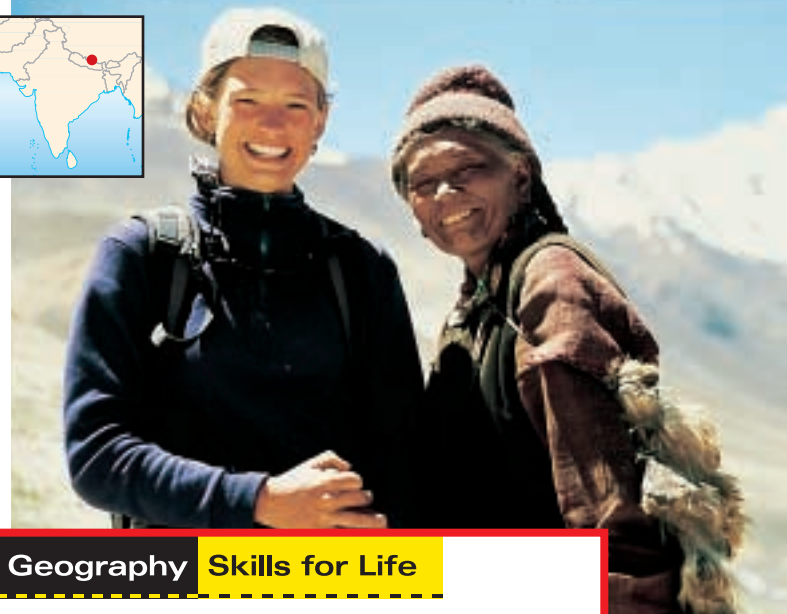
The peoples of Bhutan and Nepal differ in appearance from other South Asians, because their ancestors came from Mongolia. Bhutan's population is fairly evenly divided between the Bhote (BO•tay) people and those of Tibetan ancestry. Nepal, once a federation of tiny kingdoms, is home to a complex mix of ethnic groups. The group most familiar to people outside Nepal are the Sherpas, who are known for their mountaineering skills. One Sherpa, Tenzing Norgay, made the first successful ascent of Mount Everest with Sir Edmund Hillary in 1953.

Population Density and Distribution

With 780 people per square mile (301 people per sq. km), South Asia's population density is almost seven times the world average. Population growth rates in South Asia have traditionally been high, although educational and economic assistance efforts have slowed population growth

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

World Explorer

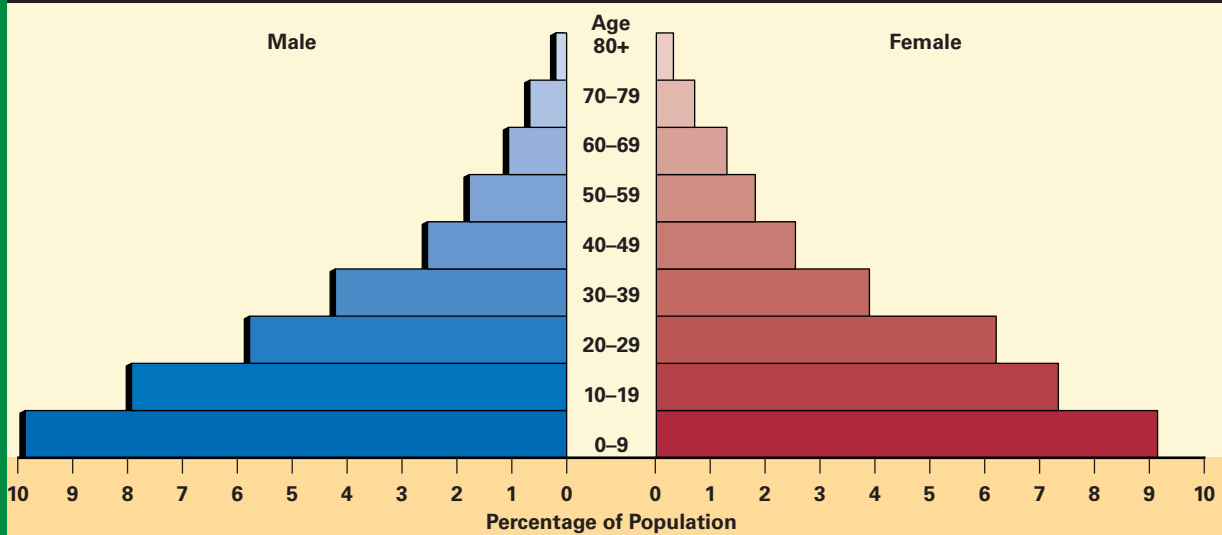


Geography Skills for Life

Himalayan Trekkers The mountain-dwelling Sherpas, such as the woman at right, are famed as guides to foreign expeditions in the Himalaya.

Human-Environment Interaction Which Sherpa made the first successful ascent of Mount Everest?

Population of Pakistan by Age and Gender



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, International Data Base, 2000

Geography Skills for Life

1. Interpreting Graphs Population pyramids show the age and gender characteristics of a country's population. Describe the age distribution of Pakistan's population. Is the majority of the population young or old?

- 2. Applying Geography Skills** What challenges might this age distribution present for Pakistan's future?
- 3. Applying Geography Skills** Research age and gender data for another country on the Internet. Construct a population pyramid for that country.

in some countries. Still, at present rates, South Asia will nearly double its current population by the year 2050.

Regional Variation

Although population densities are generally high throughout South Asia, the distribution of population varies from region to region. Factors such as climate, vegetation, and physical features have an impact on the number of people the land can support. The Great Indian Desert (Thar Desert) is sparsely populated, as are the mountainous highlands of western Pakistan. In southern Bhutan and Nepal, average population densities vary between 44 and 447 people per square mile (17 and 173 people per sq. km). To the north, however, population decreases as the elevation increases. An average of only 25 people per square mile (10 people per sq. km) make their homes in

the Himalayan highlands because of unfavorable living conditions there.

The highest concentrations of population in South Asia are found on the fertile Ganges Plain (Indo-Gangetic Plain) and along the monsoon-watered coasts of the Indian peninsula. Because rice is an abundant and important food source, it is only natural that most South Asians live where rice is grown. Within parts of these agriculturally productive areas, densities exceed more than 2,000 people per square mile (772 people per sq. km). India's Deccan Plateau—not as populous as the Ganges Plain—supports up to 250 people per square mile (97 people per sq. km).

The large tea and rubber plantations of Sri Lanka require numerous workers. They come from the many villages that cluster around the plantations. The tiny coral islands of the Maldives are packed with 2,495 people per square mile (963 people per sq. km)!

Economics

Bangladesh Slows Its Growth

Bangladesh is the second most densely populated country in South Asia, with 2,401 people per square mile (927 people per sq. km). Despite its rich soil and improved farming techniques, Bangladesh still has difficulty feeding its population. As recently as 1991, the average Bengali woman had more than 4 children during her lifetime. A decade later, the average had lowered to 2.8 children per woman. To encourage Bengali women to have fewer children, both private and governmental programs give women small loans to start their own businesses. The programs have achieved some success.

Urban and Rural Life

Most of South Asia's population is rural. In Nepal only 11 percent of the people live in cities. Even in Pakistan, South Asia's most urbanized country, nearly two-thirds of the population lives in

rural areas. The sharp differences between urban and rural life add to the region's many contrasts.

Rural Life

For many of South Asia's peoples, life has changed little over hundreds of years. They farm, live in villages, and struggle to grow enough food for their families. Part of their crop often goes to owners of the fields they farm. South Asia is also home to nomadic or seminomadic groups. These clans, usually large extended families, travel the desert and highlands and herd camels, goats, or yaks for a living.

Growing Urbanization

In recent years growing numbers of South Asians have been migrating to urban areas, drawn by the hope of better jobs and higher wages. As urban populations grow, however, they strain public resources and facilities, such as schools and hospitals. Housing shortages, overcrowding, and pollution are serious problems resulting from rapid urbanization.


South Asia's Cities

South Asian cities are among the world's most densely populated urban areas. **Mumbai (Bombay)** is India's main port on the Arabian Sea as well as its largest city, with a population of more than 18.1 million. The city is also a leading industrial, financial, and filmmaking center. During the day, millions more people from outlying areas enter Mumbai to work. An American visiting Mumbai noted:

“... [M]ost of [Mumbai's] newest citizens are from rural villages. Many of them are refugees from natural disasters such as floods and droughts. Others are refugees from the exacting demands of their own local societies.”

John McCarry,
“Bombay,” *National Geographic*, March 1995

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC World Explorer



GeographySkills for LifeDhaka, Bangladesh

Although Bangladesh is one of the least urbanized countries in the region, its capital of Dhaka has a high population density.

Human-Environment Interaction What factors influence population density?

Kolkata (Calcutta), a thriving port city on a branch of the Ganges River, is the center of India’s iron and steel industries. Here crumbling public buildings and high-rise slums contrast sharply with modern office towers and a modern subway system. Millions of people use the subway to travel to jobs in the city.

Delhi (DEH•lee), India’s third largest city, is part of a **megalopolis**, or chain of closely linked metropolitan areas. Its sprawling land area encompasses the Old City, dating from the mid-1600s, and New Delhi, the modern capital built by British colonial rulers in the early 1900s. More than a million Delhi newcomers from rural areas have become “pavement dwellers”—people living on the streets in temporary settlements called *jhaggi bastis*.

The cities of Bangladesh and Pakistan are also crowded. **Dhaka**, the capital of Bangladesh, is the world’s second most densely populated urban area after Lagos, Nigeria. Rural Pakistanis are drawn to the modern capital, Islamabad, where new housing projects struggle to keep up with a growing population, and to the booming port city of **Karachi**.



Geography

Skills for Life

Urban Contrasts

A growing middle class lives comfortably in India’s suburbs (inset), but the poor in India’s cities must struggle to survive.

Movement Why do people in South Asia leave their families and rural villages to move to urban areas?

TAKS Practice

SECTION 1 ASSESSMENT

Checking for Understanding

- 1. Define** *jati*, megalopolis.
- 2. Main Ideas** Re-create the table below on a sheet of paper, and fill in the characteristics of the population in each South Asian country.

South Asian Countries	Population Characteristics

Critical Thinking

- 3. Making Generalizations** Would you say that diversity has been more of a problem or a benefit for countries in South Asia? Why?
- 4. Predicting Consequences** How might life in South Asia be affected in the next 50 years if present population growth rates and urbanization trends continue?
- 5. Identifying Cause and Effect** What factors have contributed to the growth of South Asia’s cities?

Analyzing Graphs

- 6. Place** Study the graph on page 589. What percentage of people in Pakistan age 9 or under are female?

Applying Geography

- 7. Effects of Geography** Study the population density map on page 562. Write a paragraph explaining how climate, physical features, and resources contribute to differences in population density.

Guide to Reading

Consider What You Know

Many people who are not familiar with the Buddhist religion are nonetheless able to recognize the image of the Buddha. How have you seen the Buddha pictured?

Read to Find Out

- Where did South Asia's first civilization develop?
- What two major world religions originated in South Asia?
- How did invasions and conquests shape South Asia?
- What types of challenges are South Asian countries facing today?

Terms to Know

- dharma
- reincarnation
- karma
- nirvana
- raj

Places to Locate

- Indus River valley
- Mohenjo Daro
- Harappa
- Khyber Pass
- Mauryan Empire
- Gupta Empire

History and Government

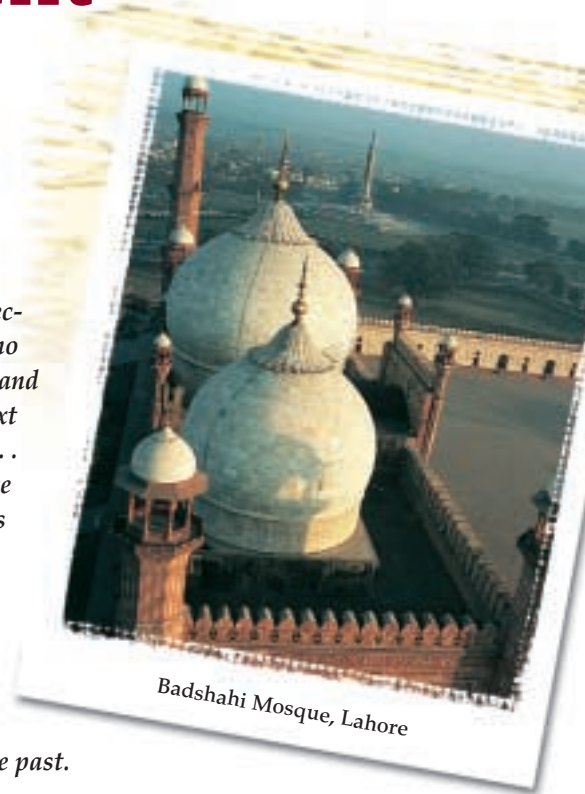


A Geographic View

History as Architecture

Lahore [in Pakistan] . . . is an architectural accumulation of all of those who have conquered it. Mogul mosques stand next to Sikh temples, which stand next to British administration buildings. . . . Sitting near the Alamgiri Gate, a once private entrance to the royal quarters built by the emperor Aurangzeb in 1674 that is big enough for elephants to pass through, I fell into conversation with three college students. . . . Despite all the history around them . . . the young men were more interested in discussing the future than the past.

—John McCarry, “The Promise of Pakistan,” National Geographic, October 1997



Badshahi Mosque, Lahore

Modern life in Lahore unfolds amidst the architectural reminders of the city's fabled past. In fact, throughout all of South Asia, the past and present meet in many different and surprising ways. In this section you will explore South Asia's fascinating history—the story of a series of groups drawn to the region by its wealth of natural resources. Each successive group left its own permanent mark, making South Asia a region of great political and cultural diversity.

Early History

The earliest South Asians left few written records, but evidence of their great achievements in building and trade has been discovered in modern times. As the centuries passed, invaders from the northwest succeeded these early peoples. The influence of all these groups is still felt in South Asia today.

The Indus Valley Civilization

Around 2500 B.C. one of the world's great civilizations arose in the **Indus River valley**. This culture developed a writing system, a strong central government, and a thriving overseas trade. People built what may have been the world's first cities, **Mohenjo Daro** and **Harappa**. Made of bricks hardened by fire in kilns, these cities boasted sophisticated plumbing, sanitation systems, and other technology that would not be matched again for centuries.

Environmental changes may have led to the decline of this civilization between 1700 and 1500 B.C. The cities were most likely lost to flooding or drought as the Indus River changed its course.

The Aryans

As the Indus Valley civilization crumbled, a group of hunters and herders entered the region from the northwest. These people, the Aryans, settled down and began to farm. They left behind sacred writings called the Vedas.

The Vedas reveal Aryan ideas about religion and social structure. Society was organized into four groups—priests, warriors (or nobles), artisans and farmers, and enslaved people. At first the boundaries between groups were somewhat flexible; people of different classes could intermarry and change professions. Gradually, the social structure developed

into a complex system of ranks that dictated from birth one's social status. This "caste" system prevailed in India for centuries and only now is gradually weakening.

Two Great Religions

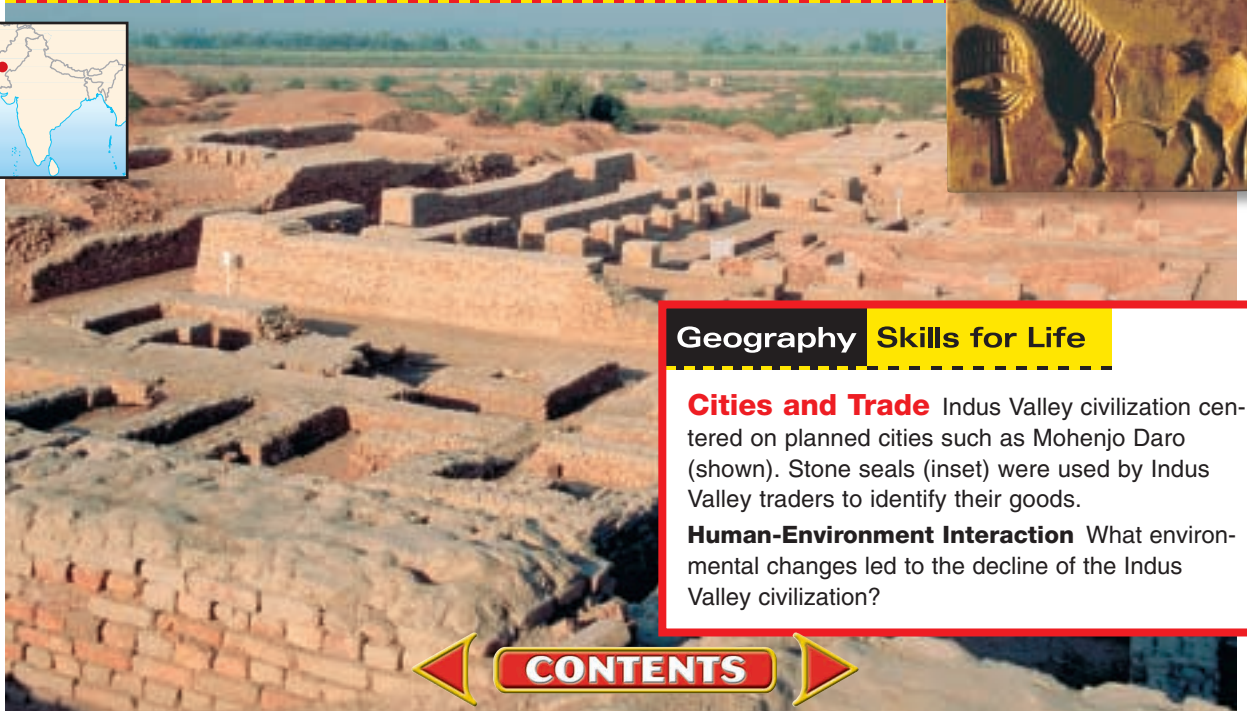
Understanding the basic beliefs of Hinduism and Buddhism is a key to understanding South Asia's history and culture. These two religions, as well as other faiths, have had profound influence in the region.

Hinduism

Growing out of Aryan culture and religion, Hinduism is both a religion and a way of life. Hindu belief requires every person to carry out his or her **dharma** (DUHR•muh), or moral duty. Hindus also believe that after death people undergo **reincarnation**, or rebirth as another living being. This process occurs repeatedly until the individual overcomes personal weaknesses and earthly desires. At that point, a person leaves the cycle of rebirth and becomes reunited with the eternal being. In the law of **karma**, good deeds—actions in accord with one's dharma—move one toward this point, while bad deeds chain a person to the cycle of rebirth.

NATIONAL
GEOGRAPHIC

World Explorer



Geography Skills for Life

Cities and Trade Indus Valley civilization centered on planned cities such as Mohenjo Daro (shown). Stone seals (inset) were used by Indus Valley traders to identify their goods.

Human-Environment Interaction What environmental changes led to the decline of the Indus Valley civilization?

CONTENTS

Hindus honor many gods and goddesses, which are often seen as different forms of the one eternal being. Many Hindus are tolerant of other religions, viewing them as different paths to the same goal.

Buddhism

Siddhartha Gautama (sɪh•DAHR•tuh GOW•tuh•muh) was born around 563 B.C. in what is today Nepal. Belonging to a noble Hindu family, Siddhartha lived a life of luxury. As he grew to manhood, however, he became aware of human suffering. Leaving his wealth and power behind, he went on a pilgrimage. Years of meditation and spiritual seeking led to the moment when Siddhartha perceived what he understood to be the true nature of human existence. He then became known as the Buddha, or the Awakened One.

The Buddha spent the rest of his life sharing his insights with others. He taught that people suffer because they are too attached to material things, which are temporary. The Buddha also taught people to think clearly, work diligently, and show compassion for all living things in order to escape desire and suffering and to be liberated from endless rebirth.

Like Hinduism, Buddhism developed a system of religious rituals, but it was primarily a practical way to achieve human happiness. By following Buddhist teachings, people could become enlightened, entering a state of insight, calm, and joy called **nirvana** (nir•VAHN•uh).

Culture

A Marriage of Influences

Because the Buddha rejected the rigid social system of his day, women and people of lower social classes embraced his teachings. Eventually, Buddhism spread from India to other countries. Sri Lanka became a Buddhist kingdom. In Nepal and Bhutan, new forms of Buddhism emerged that blended Hindu rituals with local practices. In India, Hinduism absorbed Buddhism but retained a tradition of honoring the Buddha.

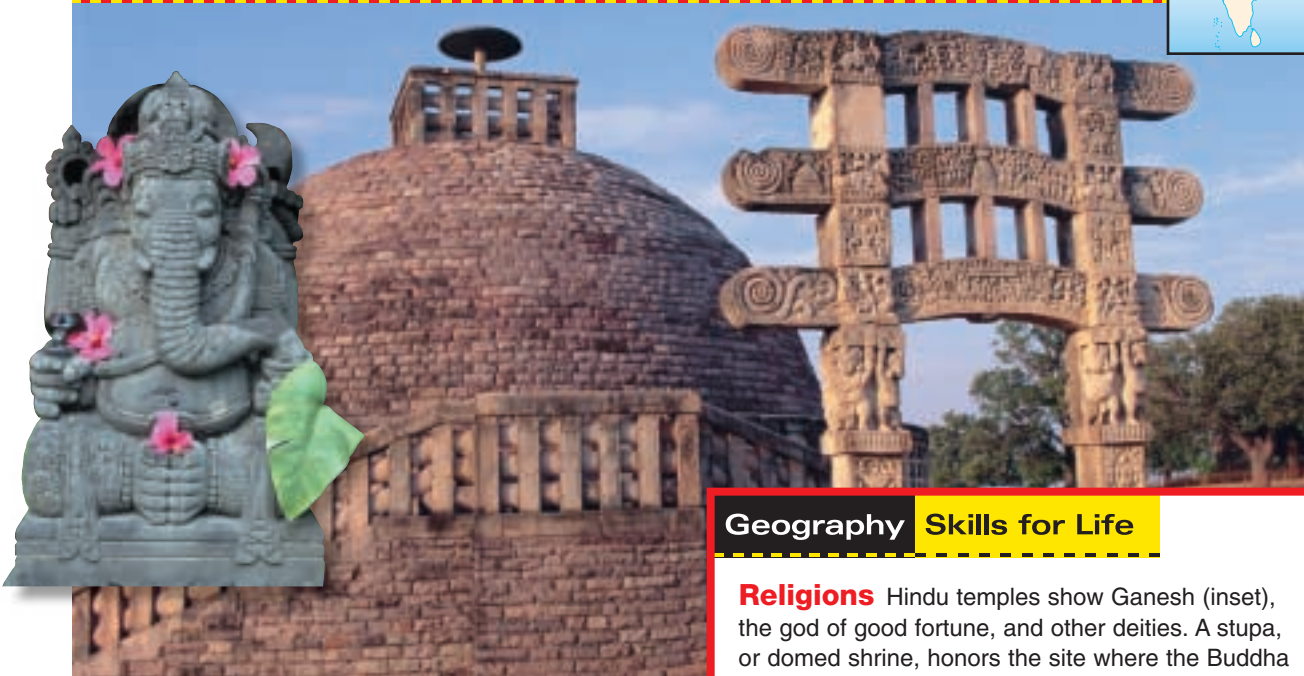
Invasions and Empires

After the Aryans, other groups with new cultures invaded South Asia through the **Khyber Pass** in the northwestern Hindu Kush mountains. The **Mauryan Empire**, established by the first of these



NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

World Explorer



Geography Skills for Life

Religions Hindu temples show Ganesh (inset), the god of good fortune, and other deities. A stupa, or domed shrine, honors the site where the Buddha first preached.

Place How does Hinduism regard other religions?

groups, maintained control from about 320 to 180 B.C. and ruled all but the southernmost parts of the Indian peninsula. Asoka, the last and greatest Mauryan emperor, promoted Buddhism and nonviolence.

About 500 years later, the **Gupta Empire** came into power. From about A.D. 320 to 550, this Hindu civilization was one of the most advanced in the world. Science, technology, and the arts flourished. The numerals we call Arabic today were most likely developed in India during the Gupta period and introduced to Europe by Arab traders.

Muslim missionaries and traders first entered India in the 700s. By the 1100s Muslim armies from Mongolia, Turkey, and Persia had conquered northern India. The Muslim-led Mogul Empire dominated the Indian subcontinent for several centuries. During this era, many South Asians converted to Islam.

The final invaders, Europeans, came by sea. Portuguese traders arrived first in about 1500. They were followed by the French and the British. In the late 1700s, the British expelled the French. Though Portuguese strongholds remained, the British were the major European power in South Asia at this time. The British called their Indian empire the British **raj**, the Hindi word for empire. The British introduced the English language to South Asia, restructured the educational system, built railroads, and developed a civil service. British influence is still seen in some elements of Indian culture.

Modern South Asia

Today South Asia is free of European control. Independence did not come easily, however, and these growing countries still struggle with the aftereffects of colonialism.

Independence

In the early and mid-1900s, India's fight for independence was led by Mohandas K. Gandhi. Using nonviolent methods, such as boycotting British products and staging peaceful demonstrations,



Lion sculpture from the palace of Asoka

Gandhi inspired the peoples of India to seek self-rule. A Hindu, Gandhi worked to end the rigid social system and promote local industry, such as spinning and weaving. Enduring prison and hunger strikes in the struggle for independence, Gandhi earned the name Mahatma, or "Great Soul." According to Gandhi,

“Nonviolence and truth (Satya) are inseparable and presuppose one another. There is no god higher than truth.”

S. Hobhouse, ed., *True Patriotism: Some Sayings of Mahatma Gandhi*, 1939

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

MAP STUDY

South Asian Empires, 300s B.C.–A.D. 400s

Indian Empires

- Mauryan Empire
- Gupta Empire
- Unconquered territories

Geography Skills for Life

1. **Interpreting Maps** Which empire was limited to the Ganges River valley and central India?
2. **Applying Geography Skills** What geographic factors may have aided the cultural advances of the Gupta Empire?

Find NGS online map resources @ www.nationalgeographic.com/maps

In 1947 Britain finally granted independence to British India, and the land became two new countries. Areas with a Hindu majority became India, and those with a Muslim majority became Pakistan. Pakistan actually consisted of two isolated sections—East Pakistan and West Pakistan—separated by about 1,000 miles (1,609 km) of land belonging to India.

Dividing British India split many families. Hundreds of thousands of Hindus in Pakistan moved to India, and a similar number of Muslims in India moved to East or West Pakistan. Violence often marked the movements. Religious violence also claimed the life of Gandhi, who was assassinated in 1948 by a Hindu nationalist opposed to the division of India.

One year after granting India self-rule, Britain gave independence to Ceylon. In 1972 the island took back its ancient name, Sri Lanka. Nepal and Bhutan had always been independent of European rule. The Maldives, a group of islands in the Indian Ocean, won independence from Britain in 1965. In 1971 East Pakistan revolted against West Pakistan

and became the new country of Bangladesh. The western part retained the name Pakistan.

Regional Conflicts

Tensions between India and Pakistan continued after independence. Some border areas, especially the former Indian provinces of Jammu and Kashmir, are still hotly disputed. Today both India and Pakistan have nuclear weapons, adding to the complexity of the conflict. Ethnic and religious tensions also trouble other parts of South Asia. Hindu and Muslim groups within India have clashed. Since the 1980s the Sri Lankan government has been troubled by ethnic Tamil rebel groups seeking a separate Tamil state.

GEOGRAPHY Online

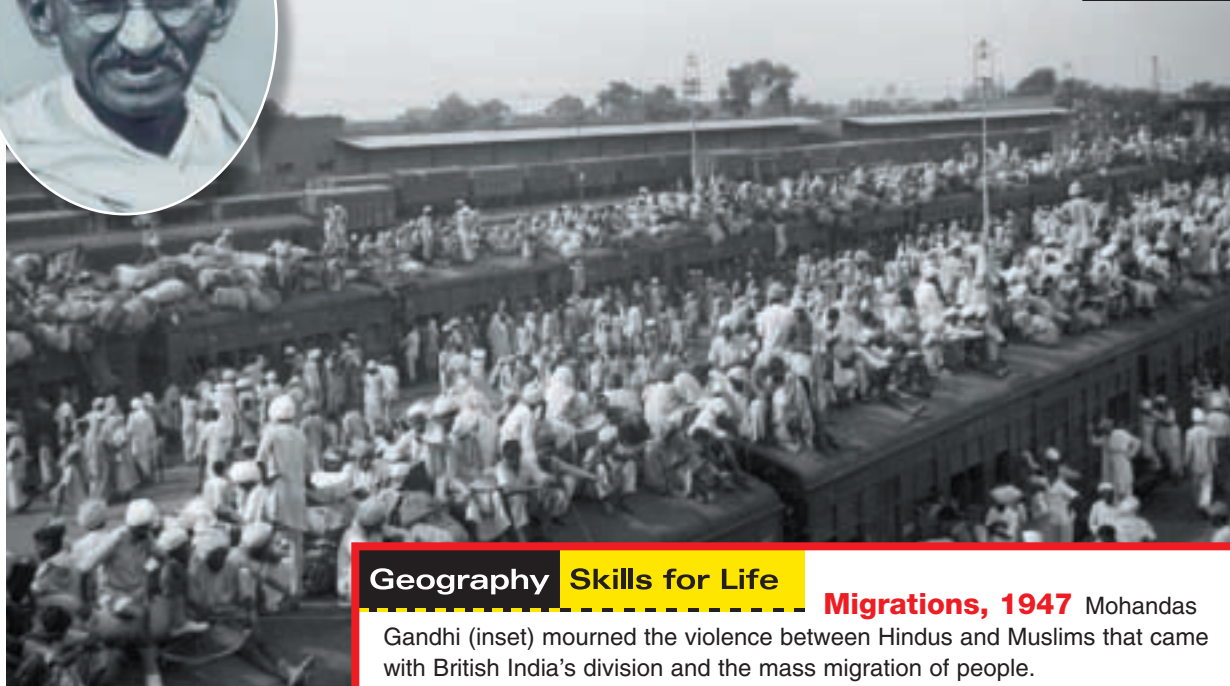
Student Web Activity Visit the **Glencoe World Geography** Web site at tx.geography.glencoe.com and click on Student Web Activities—Chapter 24 for an activity on Kashmir.

CLICK HERE



NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

World Explorer



Geography Skills for Life

Migrations, 1947

Mohandas Gandhi (inset) mourned the violence between Hindus and Muslims that came with British India's division and the mass migration of people.

Place What are the causes of conflict in South Asia today?

Today's Governments

Today's South Asian governments are diverse. India, often called the world's largest democracy, is a federal parliamentary republic. For 40 years following India's independence, members of the Nehru (NAY•roo) family headed India's government. Jawaharlal (jah•wah•HAR•lahl) Nehru was India's prime minister from 1947 until his death in 1964. His daughter, Indira Gandhi, and later his grandson, Rajiv Gandhi, also led the country, but growing ethnic and religious conflict led to assassinations of Indira in 1984 and Rajiv in 1991. Since then, India's prime ministers have had less influence than the Nehru "dynasty." Workable parliamentary institutions have made India's democracy more secure.

Like India, Pakistan is a parliamentary republic, but instability and military rule have prevailed since 1971. A more stable democracy seemed likely in the 1990s under Benazir Ali Bhutto, the country's first female prime minister, and later under her successor, Nawaz Sharif. In 1999, however, charges of official corruption led to a military coup. Pakistan's new leader, General Pervez Musharaff, pledged to have a more democratic government.

Sri Lanka and Bangladesh also are parliamentary republics. Intense political or ethnic rivalries, however, have made stable political rule difficult. After independence, political assassinations or military takeovers marked both countries. In recent years



▲ *Sheikh Hasina Wazid (right), prime minister of Bangladesh, shown here with Megawati Sukarnoputri, president of Indonesia*

democratic rule has been strengthened. In 1994 Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumartungah (chahn•DREE•kah BAHN•dah•rahn•EYE•keh KOO•mahr•TOON•gah) was elected Sri Lanka's first female president. Two years later, Sheikh Hasina Wazid was elected as Prime Minister in Bangladesh.

A few countries in the region today have traditional forms of government. For example, Bhutan and Nepal have monarchies that are trying to modernize and still keep some power. Once ruled by a sultan, the Maldives became a republic in 1968.

TX TAKS Practice

SECTION 2 ASSESSMENT

Checking for Understanding

- 1. Define** dharma, reincarnation, karma, nirvana, raj.
- 2. Main Ideas** Re-create the graphic organizer below on a sheet of paper, and complete it by filling in information about the successive groups that influenced South Asia.



Critical Thinking

- 3. Making Inferences** Describe characteristics of South Asia during ancient, colonial, and modern eras.
- 4. Comparing and Contrasting** In what ways are Hinduism and Buddhism similar? Different?
- 5. Identifying Cause and Effect** How do present-day political borders in South Asia reflect ethnic and religious conflicts?

Analyzing Maps

- 6. Location** Study the map of South Asian empires on page 595. Which empire extended beyond the borders of present-day Pakistan?

Applying Geography

- 7. Geography and Religion** Think about the influences of religion on the history and culture of South Asia. How has the geography of the region impacted South Asia's religions?

MOUNTAIN MADNESS: STRUGGLE FOR KASHMIR

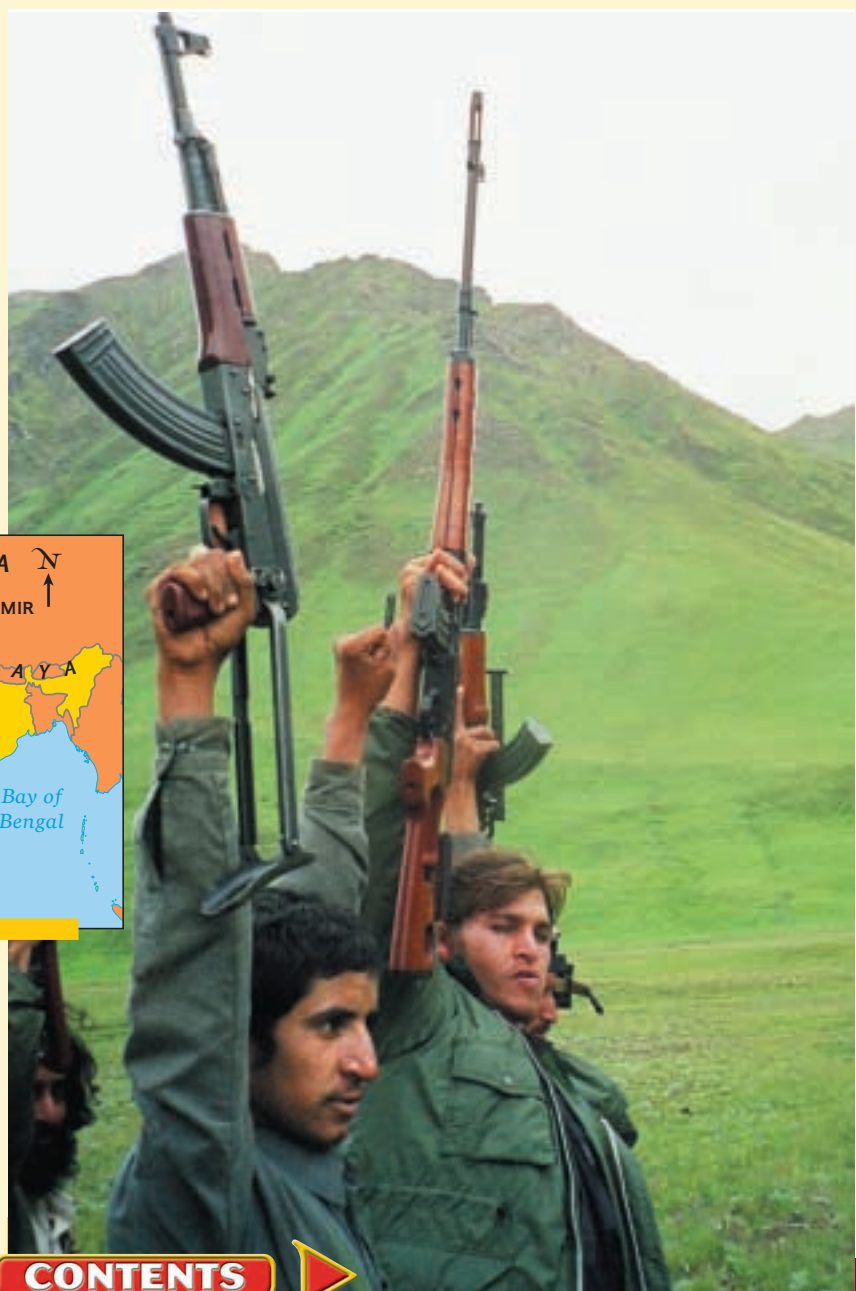
A CASHMERE SWEATER, made of soft wool from the undercoat of the Kashmir goat, is a prized possession. So, too, is the Kashmir region, where the goat got its name. The problem: two countries claim Kashmir. No wonder, for Kashmir, situated high in the Himalaya on the northern tips of India and Pakistan, is renowned for its beauty and climate. Ancient mountain villages are reflected in the waters of its crystalline lakes. Fields of crocuses are harvested for the world's most expensive spice—saffron. However, decades of fighting have shattered this idyllic realm.

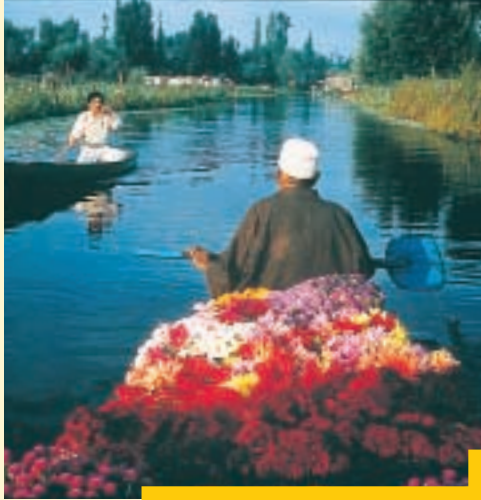
Tale of Two Religions

For centuries, Kashmir was part of the Indian kingdoms, ruled by maharajas, or princes. In 1846 Kashmir became the British Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir. When predominantly Hindu India won independence in 1947, Britain partitioned the western part of India to create Pakistan as a homeland for South Asia's Muslims. As the leaders of the existing Indian states decided which country to join, widespread rioting broke out between



Kashmiri Muslims struggle violently against Hindu India's rule. ►





◀ A flower merchant rows down a river in Kashmir, where years of warfare have shattered the calm.

Hindus and Muslims.

In the face of the chaos, the prince of Jammu and Kashmir sought to remain autonomous. As a Hindu, his loyalties were with India, but the majority of the population was Muslim. A Muslim uprising,

perhaps supported by Pakistan, sent the prince fleeing to Delhi, where he signed his state over to India. India then sent troops to put down the uprising. The Pakistani army responded, and the first India-Pakistan war began.

India claimed a legal and historical right to Kashmir, but Pakistan insisted it would be a better homeland for the Muslim enclave. Each side also has strategic needs: India wants Kashmir as a buffer between itself and China, while Pakistan relies on river waters flowing from Kashmir for irrigation and electricity.

Demand for Independence

In 1949 the United Nations arranged a truce, which established a cease-fire line that split Kashmir unequally between India and Pakistan. But peace did not last. War broke out again in 1965. In 1972 an accord reaffirmed the original cease-fire line, now called the line of control. Yet troops on both sides regularly fire across it, killing civilians and wrecking villages.

In the late 1980s, a new crisis engulfed Kashmir. Muslim groups within Kashmir, demanding independence, began killing Indian soldiers and Kashmiri Hindus. India responded with force. Then the stakes were raised. In 1998, first India, then Pakistan confirmed the world's worst fears by conducting underground nuclear weapons tests. Today tensions continue between India and Pakistan, the world's newest nuclear powers, as they vie for Kashmir.

Looking Ahead

With nuclear weapons in the mix, other nations must pay attention. Why is this dispute so difficult for India and Pakistan to resolve? Why is it important to the world that they resolve it?

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY



1947 Britain partitions India to create Pakistan; war erupts over Kashmir

1949 United Nations establishes cease-fire line, dividing Kashmir between India and Pakistan

1965 Second India-Pakistan war

1972 Agreement restores line of control

1980s Kashmiri Muslims (background photo) press for Kashmir's union with Pakistan

1988 Kashmiri Muslims seek independence; scores of refugees (photo above) crowd camps

1998 India and Pakistan conduct nuclear tests

Guide to Reading

Consider What You Know

Indians speak many variations of the same basic language. What are such language variations called?

Read to Find Out

- How do the lives of South Asia's peoples reflect the region's linguistic and religious diversity?
- What contributions to the arts has the region made?
- How are South Asian countries meeting challenges to improve the quality of life in the region?
- How is the rich cultural diversity of South Asia reflected in distinctive celebrations?

Terms to Know

- guru
- mantra
- sadhu
- stupa
- dzong

Places to Locate

- Taj Mahal
- New Delhi

Cultures and Lifestyles

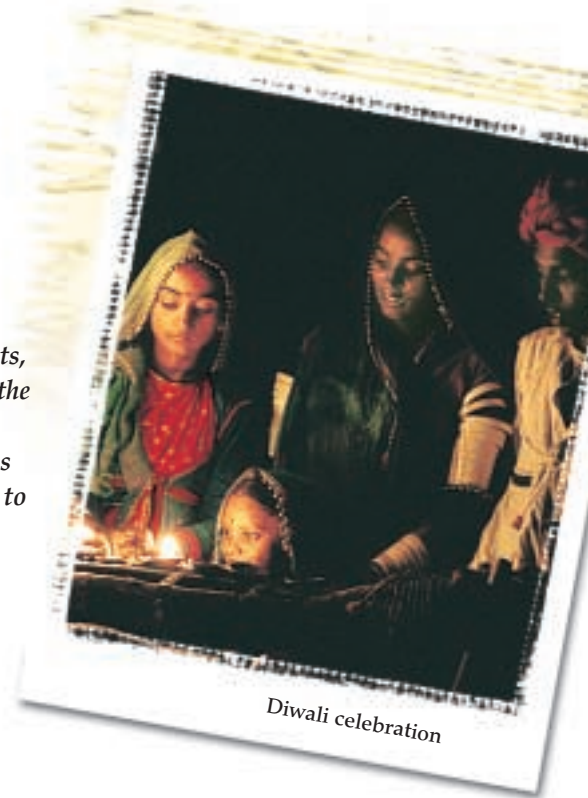


A Geographic View

A South Asian Celebration

Diwali, the five-day Festival of Lights, was my family's favorite among all the religious observances that crowd the Indian calendar. . . . It commemorates to the Hindus of the north the return to India of Lord Ram and his wife, Sita, after their victory over the . . . king of Sri Lanka. Tiny earthen oil lamps are lit to outline every house and hut to guide them on the journey home. Sikhs also celebrate on this night of Diwali. Even Muslim families sometimes join in.

—Jeffrey C. Ward, "India: Fifty Years of Independence,"
National Geographic, May 1997



Diwali celebration

South Asia's ethnic diversity has produced a rich cultural blend, a mix of contrasting elements much like the spicy Indian stew called *masala* or the mixture of pungent spices that make up curry. As you read this section, note the gifts of art, music, architecture, and dance that South Asia shares with the world.

Languages

The peoples of South Asia speak 19 major languages and hundreds of local dialects. In India alone the government officially recognizes 14 languages, although Hindi is chief among them. English, the common language of international business and tourism, is also widely spoken in the parts of South Asia that were once under British rule.

Indo-European Languages

Most languages spoken in Pakistan, Bangladesh, and northern India fall into the Indo-European family of languages. These languages—Hindi, Urdu, and Bengali—trace their roots to the Aryan invaders of 3,000 years ago and are related to most of the major languages of Europe.

About half of India's people, especially those in the northern and central states, speak Hindi as their primary language. Urdu is Pakistan's official language, and Bengali is the official language of Bangladesh. In many northern areas, Indians speak Hindustani, a mixture of Hindi and Urdu. Nepali, Sinhalese, and Divehi, the official languages of Nepal, Sri Lanka, and the Maldives, respectively, also have Indo-European roots. Sanskrit, the classical Aryan language of the Vedas, is still used for religious, literary, and musical purposes.

Other Languages

Most of the population in southern India and Sri Lanka speak languages of the Dravidian family, whose roots go back to the earliest inhabitants of southern South Asia. Dravidian languages include Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, and Malayalam. In the north the languages of Bhutan and parts of Nepal reflect these countries' close ethnic and historical ties to East Asia.

Religions

Hinduism, Islam, and Buddhism are the major religions of South Asia. Most people in India and Nepal are Hindus. Hinduism is also practiced, to a lesser extent, in Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. Pakistan, Bangladesh, and the Maldives were all founded as Islamic states, and the majority of the people in these countries are Muslims. India's 120 million Muslims form the country's second-largest religious group. Buddhism, although no longer a significant religion in India, remains strong in Sri Lanka, Bhutan, and Nepal.

Other religions practiced in South Asia include Jainism, Sikhism, Christianity, and Zoroastrianism. Jainism was founded in the 500s B.C. by Mahariva, a Hindu teacher. India's more than 3 million Jains practice strict nonviolence, believing that every living thing has a soul. Sikhism, founded in the early A.D. 1500s by a **guru**, or teacher, named Nanak, teaches that there is one God and that

good deeds and meditation bring release from the cycle of reincarnation. Most of South Asia's 20 million Sikhs live in northwestern India, and many want an independent Sikh state there.

About 17 million Christians also live in South Asia, concentrated in urban areas in southern and northeastern India. The Indian city of Mumbai is home to some of the last living Zoroastrian followers, known as the Parsis, whose religious and cultural heritage comes from ancient Persia.

Culture

Religion and Daily Life

The influence of religion is ever present in South Asia. In Bhutan and Nepal, for example, colorful prayer flags wave in the wind, and prayer wheels twirl on many corners, sending out invocations. Monks chant **mantras**, or repetitive prayers. In India, Hindu holy men called

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC **MAP STUDY**

South Asia: Languages

Language Families

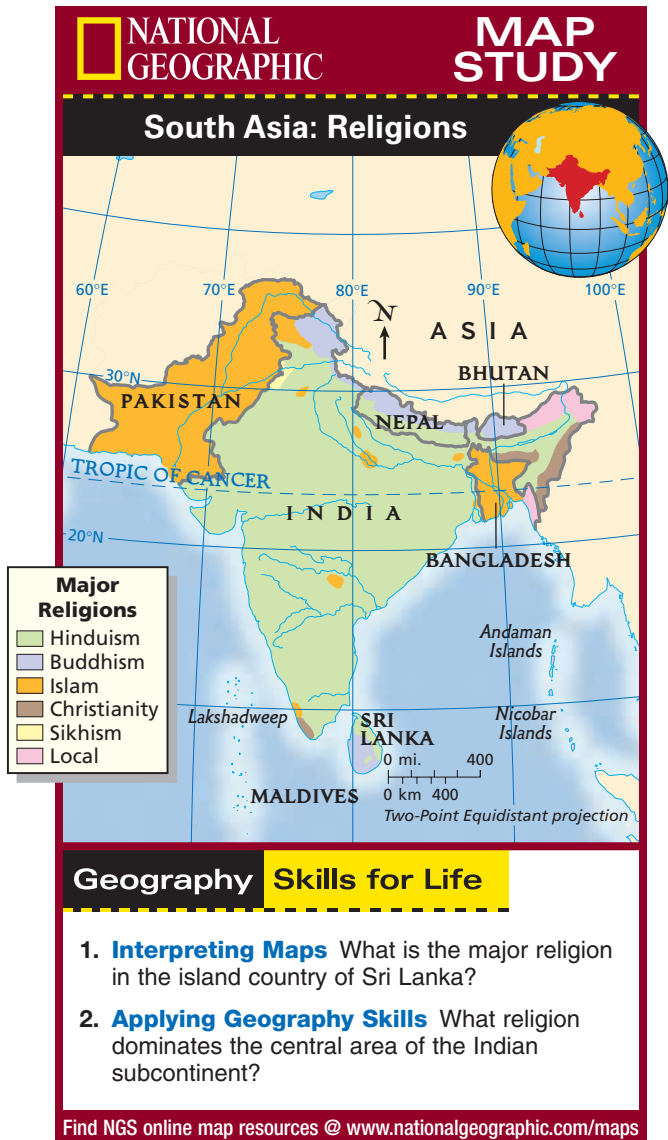
- Indo-European
- Dravidian
- Sino-Tibetan
- Austro-Asiatic
- Naga Selected language

0 mi. 400
0 km 400
Two-Point Equidistant projection

Geography Skills for Life

- Interpreting Maps** What is the dominant language family in northern South Asia?
- Applying Geography Skills** What does the variety of languages in South Asia indicate about the region's history?

Find NGS online map resources @ www.nationalgeographic.com/maps



Through such organizations they try to influence the government to pass laws that deal with religious or social issues.

The Arts

Artistic expression is as much a part of South Asian life as religious practice. The South Asian environment, with its rich appeal to all the senses, nurtures a variety of distinctive, artistic expressions.

Literature

The South Asian literary tradition has its roots in religion. India's two great epic poems, the *Mahabharata* (muh•hah•BAH•ruh•tuh) and the *Ramayana* (rah•MAH•yah•nuh), combine Hindu social and religious beliefs with intricate plots and richly detailed characters. These two works, composed between 1500 and 500 B.C., endure today in public readings, mask and puppet theater, and even television series. An especially treasured portion of the *Mahabharata* is the *Bhagavad Gita* (BAH•guh•vahd GEE•tuh), or "song of the lord." In this dialogue between a warrior and his chariot driver, the Indian god-hero Krishna, the reader finds a message of devotion to duty and courage in the face of death.

Among writers in the 1900s, South Asia boasts the Muslim poet and philosopher Muhammad Iqbal, who wrote in the early part of the century. He was the first to propose the idea of an Islamic state in South Asia. The 1913 Nobel laureate Rabindranath Tagore was an Indian who wrote poetry, fiction, and drama in both English and Bengali. Tagore wrote India's national anthem, whose third verse proclaims:

“Eternal charioteer, thou drivest man's history along the road rugged with rises and falls of Nations. Amidst all tribulations and terror thy trumpet sounds to hearten those that despair and droop, and guide all people in their paths of peril and pilgrimage. Thou dispenser of India's destiny, victory, victory, victory to thee.”

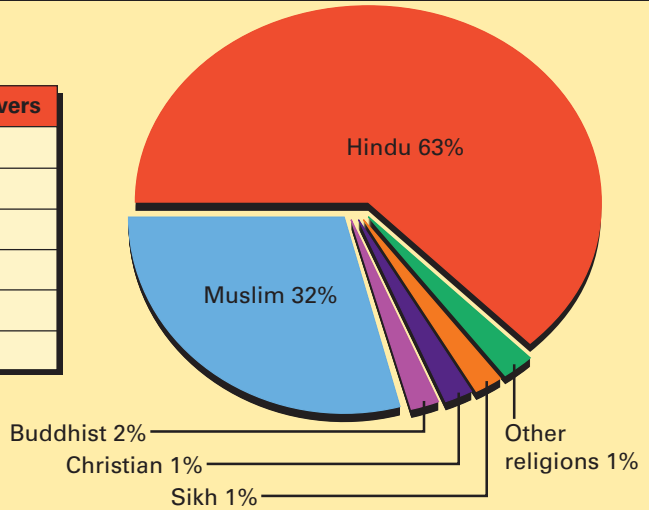
Rabindranath Tagore,
"Jana Gana Mana," 1911

sadhus dress in bright yellow robes and roam from temple to temple, carrying only their blankets and begging bowls. In the streets and roads of India, where Hindus consider cattle sacred, thousands of cows roam freely, sometimes wearing garlands of bright marigolds. Buddhist pilgrims from around the world visit the shrines of Sri Lanka. In Pakistan and Bangladesh, many Muslim women wear the *chador*, the enveloping robe and veil that Islamic tradition requires for modesty.

Local communities of all these religions maintain places of worship, schools, clubs, and charitable foundations. Many religious groups, such as Hindus, have formed their own political parties.

South Asia: Religions

Religion	Number of Followers
Hindu	820,000,000
Muslim	420,000,000
Buddhist	25,000,000
Sikh	22,000,000
Christian	20,000,000
Other religions	20,000,000



Sources: World Almanac, 2001; Britannica Book of the Year, 2000

Geography Skills for Life

1. Interpreting Graphs What percentage of the population of South Asia is not Hindu?

2. Applying Geography Skills How does the number of Hindus compare with the number of followers of other religions in South Asia?

Some contemporary South Asian novelists live in other countries but continue to write from a uniquely South Asian perspective. Salman Rushdie, born in Mumbai, has written controversial novels on Indian history and Islamic politics. Michael Ondaatje, born in Sri Lanka but now living in Canada, won England’s prestigious Booker Prize for his novel *The English Patient*, which became an Academy Award-winning film.

Dance and Music

India has numerous classical dance styles, most of which are based on themes from Hindu mythology. The style known as *Bharata Natyam* (bah•RAH•tah NAHT•yam) is practiced mainly in the south. Based on the devotional postures of sacred temple dancers, these dances involve rapid whirling, stamping feet, and an elaborate language of hand gestures called mudras. The dancers, usually women, wear bright silk saris and jingling gold jewelry.

On India’s west coast, an ancient style of dance called *Kathakali* (kah•tha•KAHL•lee) is now being revived. The male dancers wear huge, colorful

masks, and their violent movements are rooted in martial arts postures.

Indian classical music is divided into two basic types: Hindustani, in the north, and Karnatic, in the south. The melody of each is called the raga, and the rhythm is called the tala.

Movies

Since the first Indian motion picture was made in 1896, movies have been a popular form of entertainment in India and Bangladesh. India’s film industry, centered in Mumbai (nicknamed “Bollywood,” a combination of Bombay and Hollywood), is the world’s largest, producing more than 800 full-length feature films a year. When Satyajit Ray, India’s most renowned director, died in 1992, more than half a million people joined his funeral procession.

Visual Arts and Architecture

Traditionally South Asians have used the visual arts to express religious beliefs and to document daily life. Stone carving and sculpture exist from as far back as the Indus Valley civilization, and some

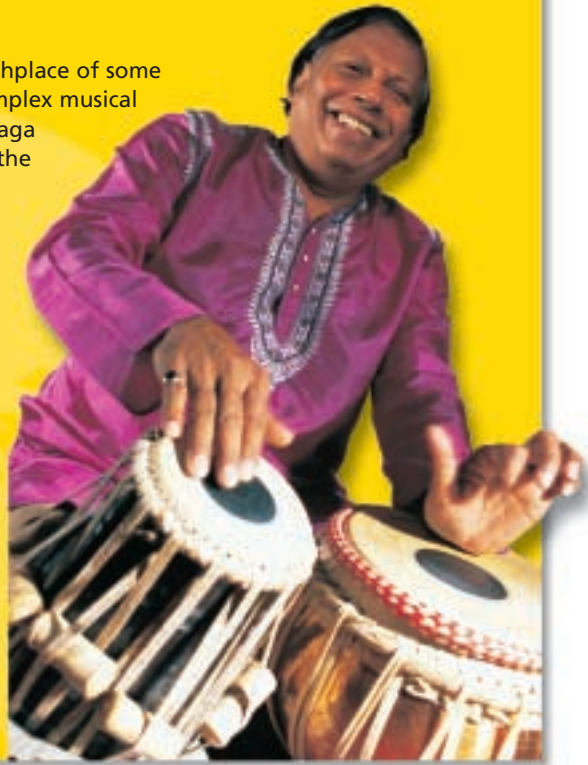


music of SOUTH ASIA

The Indian subcontinent is the birthplace of some of the world's oldest and most complex musical forms. The traditional systems of raga (melody) and tala (rhythm) are at the root of the music of India.

Instrument Spotlight:

The **tabla** is the most popular percussion instrument of India. The cylindrical right-hand drum is carved of wood and is tuned by hammering wooden pegs underneath leather straps that hold the skin to the drum's top. The left-hand drum has a wider skin surface attached to a kettle-shaped metal bowl. Although the tabla first evolved in India about 500 years ago and is traditionally used in Indian classical music, these drums are now used in modern pop, jazz, and fusion music all over the world.



World Music: A Cultural Legacy Hear music of this region on Disc 2, Tracks 7–13.

Mauryan Empire techniques for polishing marble have never been duplicated. Under Mogul emperors, traditional Muslim restrictions against depicting the human form loosened, and portraits and decorative miniature paintings flourished.

The elaborate Hindu temples of India, the Buddhist **stupas**, or domed shrines, of Nepal and Sri Lanka, and the fortified monasteries, or **dzong**, of Bhutan illustrate South Asia's artistic spirit. The **Taj Mahal** in Agra, India, and the Golden Temple of the Sikhs in Amritsar (UHM•RIHT•suh), India, are world famous. A Muslim emperor built the Taj Mahal (shown on page 559) in the 1600s as a tomb for his beloved wife. Made of white marble, with towers and domes in the Islamic style, the structure has delicate screens, carved in the Hindu style.

Modern South Asian arts and architecture blend traditional and Western styles. By the mid-1900s South Asian painting and sculpture had an international flavor, and South Asian artists worked in a variety of different media. The mixture of traditional and modern forms is especially apparent in

architecture. For example, the modern city of **New Delhi**, with its well-laid-out streets and Western-style government buildings, sits next to the historic city of Delhi, known for its mosques, ancient forts, and busy bazaars.

Quality of Life

The governments and economies of South Asia are still developing. Lifestyles there are a complicated mixture of the traditional and the modern, challenging South Asia's quality of life.

Health

Life expectancies in South Asia are generally lower than those in industrialized countries. Only Sri Lanka's life expectancy of 72 years comes close to that of the United States. Nepal's life expectancy, about 57 years, is the region's lowest, and in India, life expectancy is only about 61 years. In most countries in the region, figures for males and females are fairly close.

Tropical diseases, such as malaria, were once widespread but have been brought under control in much of South Asia. Other health problems continue, however. For example, South Asia and Southeast Asia together have the second-highest rate of HIV infection and AIDS in the world.

The scarcity of clean water in South Asia makes waterborne diseases such as cholera and dysentery common. About one-third of Nepal's infants die from dysentery before their first birthdays. Infant mortality rates are also high in Pakistan.

Food

Although improved farming techniques and government policies now make it theoretically possible for most of South Asia to feed its people, poor nutrition is still a problem. Almost one-third of South Asia's people are too poor to buy high-quality protein foods. To obtain needed protein, some South Asians eat soy-based tofu or beans.

Religious dietary restrictions prohibit Muslims from eating pork. Hindus cannot eat beef, and Jains and many Buddhists are vegetarian. Nevertheless, many South Asians enjoy cuisines of great variety.

Education

South Asia's standard of living is likely to rise with improved education. The region's governments are committed to raising literacy rates and extending educational opportunities to women and members of lower social classes.



▲ A middle school in Hyderabad, Pakistan

Celebrations

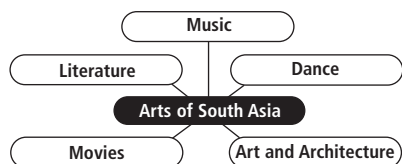
South Asia's cultural mix is underscored by its many celebrations. Muslims mark the end of the month-long daily Ramadan fast with feasting and family visits. Buddhists celebrate the birthday of Siddhartha. Hindus, Christians, Jains, and Sikhs all celebrate their traditional holidays. South Asians commemorate national holidays as well. For example, Indians mark the anniversary of the adoption of their constitution on January 26, known as Republic Day.

TX TAKS Practice

SECTION 3 ASSESSMENT

Checking for Understanding

- 1. Define** guru, mantra, sadhu, stupa, dzong.
- 2. Main Ideas** Create a graphic organizer like the one below, and fill in information about South Asian arts.



Critical Thinking

- 3. Making Generalizations** What are the major languages of South Asia, and what do they have in common?
- 4. Comparing and Contrasting** How might job opportunities for religious minorities in South Asia compare with those for religious minorities in other parts of the world?
- 5. Problem Solving** What improvements in health and education might enrich the quality of life in South Asia?

Analyzing Maps

- 6. Place** Look at the map of South Asian languages on page 601. What is the dominant language family in Pakistan? In Bhutan?

Applying Geography

- 7. Identifying Relationships** Write a short essay describing the relationship among language families, religious groups, and national identities in South Asia.



Evaluating Information and Sources

You live in a world saturated with information and opinions. Finding information on any topic is not a problem. But how can you decide which information is useful and accurate?

Learning the Skill

Information that you find while researching can come from a variety of sources. However, not all of the information that you find may be useful or even accurate. It is important to evaluate the information you find in order to determine whether it is valid information. To evaluate information and sources:

- **Identify the reliability of the source.** Consider whether the source may be biased. For example, a statement published by an environmental group and one published by a large energy company may have different biases.
- **Summarize the key points of the information in a few sentences.**
- **Distinguish fact from opinion.** Look for ways that facts are chosen or left out to support the stated opinions.
- **Verify facts by cross-checking them in other sources.** Check encyclopedias, almanacs, and other references to be sure the information is accurate. Make sure you are getting complete information from your sources.
- **Follow up with additional research.** Look for additional information about your source and about the issue.

"British rule in India was not malign [or] needlessly cruel. . . . [T]he purpose of British rule was to educate Indians to be able to rule themselves and for the British to retire. . . . When freedom came, the British left us valuable legacies, which have come in very useful to us in ruling ourselves to some purpose."

—M.R. Masani, former opposition leader of the Indian Parliament

"[The British] tried to educate a certain middle class and allowed it all the facilities; but the basic reforms they did not carry out. Our literacy rates were so poor, and our technology has taken years to catch up with modern developments. . . . They needn't have left us to chaos, as they did, and divided our country. That was the worst—the partition of India. That was criminal: all the poisonous weeds have grown on that. . . ."

—Aruna Asaf Ali, Indian nationalist leader

Practicing the Skill

Read the passages about the effect of British rule in India. Then answer the questions.

1. How reliable are the speakers as sources of information?
2. Summarize each speaker's position.
3. Is the information in this source primarily fact or opinion? Explain.
4. What evidence does each speaker present?
5. What other information might you need to gain a deeper understanding of the topic?

Applying the Skill

Research a current South Asian issue in multiple sources—magazines, newspapers, or Internet sites. Analyze the usefulness of the articles as sources of information. Determine whether the articles present primarily facts or opinions. Also, evaluate the articles' validity, and identify any biases.



The **Glencoe Skillbuilder Interactive Workbook, Level 2** provides instruction and practice in key social studies skills.



SECTION 1

Population Patterns (pp. 587–591)

Terms to Know

- *jati*
- megalopolis

Key Points

- The population of South Asia reflects a rich and complex mix of religions, languages, and social groupings.
- South Asia has a high overall population density, but population distribution varies from region to region according to climate and terrain.
- There is a sharp contrast between urban and rural life in South Asia.

Organizing Your Notes

Create an outline using the format below to help you organize your notes for this section.

Population Patterns	
I. Human characteristics	
A. India	
1. Descended from diverse groups	
2.	
3.	
B. Pakistan	

SECTION 2

History and Government (pp. 592–597)

Terms to Know

- dharma
- reincarnation
- karma
- nirvana
- raj

Key Points

- One of the world's first civilizations developed in the Indus River valley.
- South Asia gave birth to two of the world's major religions, Hinduism and Buddhism.
- South Asia was shaped by a series of invasions and conquests, including the expansion of the British Empire into the region.
- South Asian countries today face the challenges of independence and establishing new governments.
- Several South Asian countries have had female leaders after becoming independent.

Organizing Your Notes

Use a table like the one below to help you organize important details from this section.

Country or Area	Early History	Government	Religions

SECTION 3

Cultures and Lifestyles (pp. 600–605)

Terms to Know

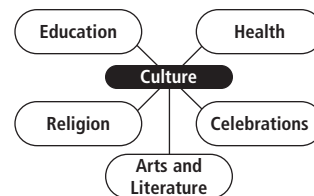
- guru
- mantra
- sadhu
- stupa
- dzong

Key Points

- South Asia is a land of many languages and religions.
- The diverse cultures of South Asia have made rich contributions to the arts.
- South Asia faces the challenge of improving the quality of life for much of its population.
- Even with the challenges it faces, South Asia benefits from its cultural diversity.

Organizing Your Notes

Use a web diagram like the one below to help you organize your notes for this section.



Reviewing Key Terms

Write the letter of the key term that best matches each definition below.

- | | |
|----------------|------------------|
| a. <i>jati</i> | d. reincarnation |
| b. megalopolis | e. guru |
| c. karma | f. <i>dzong</i> |

- a social group that defines a person's occupation and standing in the community
- a teacher
- rebirth
- fortified monasteries
- a large metropolitan area
- good or bad deeds and their effects

Reviewing Facts

SECTION 1

- How do many Indians traditionally identify themselves?
- Where are the highest population densities in South Asia found?
- What economic activities are important to Mumbai? What economic activities are important to Kolkata?

SECTION 2

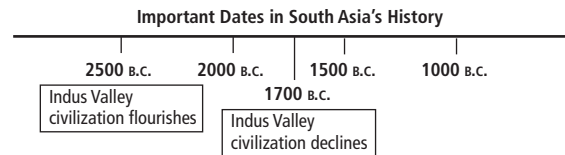
- Where did the first South Asian civilization develop?
- Which ancient South Asian empire was one of the most advanced civilizations in the world?
- Which European power ruled much of South Asia until the mid-1900s?

SECTION 3

- Name the primary languages of Pakistan, Bangladesh, and northern India.
- What religion teaches nonviolence and holds that every living being has a soul?
- What art form is a major industry in India?

Critical Thinking

- Making Generalizations** How has the physical geography of South Asia contributed to the development of diverse cultures?
- Drawing Conclusions** What are some religious influences on South Asia's peoples?
- Categorizing Information** Create a time line showing important dates and events in South Asian history.



NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC **Locating Places**

South Asia: Physical-Political Geography

Match the letters on the map with the places and physical features of South Asia. Write your answers on a sheet of paper.

1. Sri Lanka	4. New Delhi	8. Karachi
2. Mumbai (Bombay)	5. Nepal	9. Bhutan
3. Kolkata (Calcutta)	6. Hindu Kush	10. Dhaka
	7. Islamabad	

The map shows South Asia with latitude and longitude lines. The Tropic of Cancer is marked. Letters A through J are placed at various locations: A (Himalayas), B (Ganges delta), C (Mumbai), D (Delhi), E (Kolkata), F (Arabian Sea), G (Thar Desert), H (Bangladesh), I (Sri Lanka), and J (Hindu Kush). A scale bar shows 0 to 400 miles and kilometers. The projection is Two-Point Equidistant.

Self-Check Quiz Visit the **Glencoe World Geography** Web site at tx.geography.glencoe.com and click on Self-Check Quizzes—Chapter 24 to prepare for the Chapter Test.

CLICK HERE

Using the Regional Atlas

Refer to the Regional Atlas on pp. 560–563.

- 1. Location** Where are most of South Asia's largest cities located?
- 2. Human-Environment Interaction** What physical features might account for the areas of low population density in the northern part of the region?

Thinking Like a Geographer

What factors, including physical geography, helped the process of diffusion of South Asian cultural influences to other parts of the world?

Problem-Solving Activity

Problem-Solution Proposal Using information from your text, the school library, or the Internet, write a report that proposes a solution to one of the following problems of South Asia: urban population density, conflicts in Sri Lanka or the Kashmir region, or nutrition and health. Your report should include an outline of the problem, recommendations for a solution to the problem, and a course of action. Design and draw graphic elements, such as charts, as needed.

GeoJournal

Persuasive Writing Using your GeoJournal data, write a short speech urging American high school students to become familiar with South Asian history and culture. Use descriptive language, appropriate vocabulary terms, and powerful verbs to convince your audience of the value of learning about South Asia.



Technology Activity

Developing Multimedia Presentations Work with a team to develop a multimedia presentation on one aspect of South Asia's history or culture. (Examples include the Gupta Empire, Indian dance, or Buddhism in Bhutan.) Use reference works and the Internet to develop your presentation. Present your work to the class.



TX TAKS Test Practice

Read the passage and choose the best answer for the following multiple-choice question. If you have trouble answering the question, use the process of elimination to narrow your choices.

“Raindrops keep falling on the head of anyone who takes a summer trip to Mawsynram, a hill town in northeast India. And falling. And falling. Two Indian meteorologists claim, and many U.S. specialists agree, that Mawsynram has ousted Hawaii’s Waialeale as [the] earth’s wettest spot, measured by average annual rainfall. Mawsynram gets an average 467.44 inches of rain a year, compared with 459.99 for Waialeale.”

“Geographica,” National Geographic, May 1993

1. According to the reading, which of the following statements is NOT a fact?
 - A The average annual rainfall in Waialeale, Hawaii, is less than that of Mawsynram, India.
 - B Mawsynram and Waialeale are wetter than other places on Earth.
 - C All Indian and U.S. meteorologists agree that the average annual rainfall in Mawsynram, India, is greater than that in Waialeale, Hawaii.
 - D Many U.S. specialists believe that with 467.44 inches of rain annually, Mawsynram, India, is Earth’s wettest spot.



Learn to distinguish facts from nonfacts. Sometimes nonfacts contain phrases such as *I believe* or *in my view* or broad generalizations such as *every*, *all*, or *never*.