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Tradition and Modernization in Asia

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Introduction | 1 |
| Lesson One: The Challenge and Promise of Economic Development | 2 |
| • Handout: <i>PowerPoint</i> [®] 1: <i>Assessment Questions</i> | 3 |
| • Handout: <i>Glossary of Key Terms</i> | 6 |
| • Handout: <i>PowerPoint</i> [®] 1: <i>Notes</i> | 8 |
| Lesson Two: Asia and Westernization | 9 |
| • Handout: <i>PowerPoint</i> [®] 2: <i>Assessment Questions</i> | 10 |
| • Handout: <i>“The Annapurna Circus” and “MTV Goes to Asia”</i> | 12 |
| • Handout: <i>PowerPoint</i> [®] 2: <i>Notes</i> | 16 |
| Lesson Three: The Social Impact of Economic Development | 17 |
| • Handout: <i>Sweatshop Labor</i> | 19 |
| • Handout: <i>PowerPoint</i> [®] 3: <i>Assessment Questions</i> | 23 |
| • Handout: <i>PowerPoint</i> [®] 3: <i>Notes</i> | 26 |
| Lesson Four: The Impact of Tourism | 27 |
| • Handout: <i>PowerPoint</i> [®] 4: <i>Assessment Questions</i> | 28 |
| • Handout: <i>PowerPoint</i> [®] 4: <i>Notes</i> | 30 |
| Lesson Five: Development and Health Issues | 31 |
| • Handout: <i>PowerPoint</i> [®] 5: <i>Assessment Questions</i> | 32 |
| • Handout: <i>PowerPoint</i> [®] 5: <i>Notes</i> | 34 |
| Related Films | 35 |
| Tradition and Modernization in Asia Poster Guide | 37 |
| Country Briefing Sheet | 40 |

TRADITION AND MODERNIZATION IN ASIA

The Cultural Impact of Globalization and Economic Development

Tradition and Modernization in Asia is a unit centered on a series of exciting interactive PowerPoint® presentations consisting of photographs and questions designed to teach students about the impact of globalization and economic development on contemporary Asian culture. The PowerPoint® lessons are meant to introduce students to important issues and themes rather than to provide detailed information and research. While the lessons can stand on their own in this regard, they can also be used with supplementary readings on Asia or international economics, a number of which are suggested in the lesson plans.

The unit is designed to make the teaching of economic concepts lively, personal, and accessible to a wide range of students. Students are encouraged to observe, react to, and discuss photographs that represent a number of developing countries across the continent from Pakistan to Indonesia. While each of these countries obviously has its unique culture, history, and problems, the goal of these lessons is to highlight a number of the commonalties they share in meeting the challenge of economic development.

Specific lessons include:

- Changing Landscapes and the Challenge of Transportation
- Globalization and Cultural Diffusion
- Diverging Lifestyles
- The Impact of Tourism
- Health

Depending on the amount of time allowed for discussion and/or writing, as well as the number of supplementary materials used, the entire unit can be completed in one or two weeks. Teachers can easily pick portions of the unit to use depending on time and interest.

All lessons come with a set of assessment questions that address the major issues raised by the slides in each lesson. Teachers may use these for class discussion, oral presentations, or writing assignments to be done in class or at home.

Lesson #1: The Challenge and Promise of Economic Development (1–2 days)

Objectives:

- 1) Introduce students to the concept of economic development.
- 2) Students will understand how rapidly parts of Asia are changing.
- 3) Students will understand the relationship between development, poverty, and urbanization.
- 4) Students will understand the basic infrastructures that form the basis of modernization.
- 5) Students will understand the difficulties associated with modernization.

Materials:

- 1) PowerPoint[®] 1: Changing Landscapes and the Challenge of Transportation
- 2) Handout: *PowerPoint[®] 1: Assessment Questions*
- 3) Handout: *PowerPoint[®] 1: Notes*
- 4) Handout: *Glossary of Key Terms*

Procedures:

Day 1

- 1) Divide the class into groups of three to five students.
- 2) Give each group the notes handout and ask one person in the group to be the recorder.
- 3) Show the PowerPoint[®] presentation.
 - Every time a question appears, allow the groups to discuss their reactions and record them on the notes page.
 - Allow a few groups to share their responses with the class.
 - Go to the next slide for the author’s comments on the photographs. These may be read aloud by a student or the teacher.
- 4) Hand out the Glossary of Terms and ask students how the concepts of “industrialized” and “underdeveloped” relate to the slides they have seen.

Day 2 (optional)

Read and discuss “China’s Rural Poor Take Flight.” After reading the article (perhaps as homework), ask students to work in groups and brainstorm as many societal problems as they can find highlighted in the reading, then categorize them under the following headings: Economic, Political and Social. The article may be located at

<http://sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/1999/02/02/MN41KAO.DTL&hw=rural+Poor+Take+Flight&sn=003&sc=491>

PowerPoint® 1: Assessment Questions*Student Handout*

- 1) What problems and issues are raised in regard to the pace of change taking place across Asia?
- 2) Describe the factors that are leading millions across Asia to leave their farms and villages for life in the city.
- 3) Describe a physical change that has taken place in your hometown. Explain how that change made you feel and what advantages and drawbacks the change brought.
- 4) What are some common forms of transportation in Asia that are rare in the U.S.?
- 5) What factors make providing adequate transportation to remote village areas problematic?
- 6) In what ways do inadequate transportation systems hamper economic development and visa versa?
- 7) What new problems are posed with the growth of motorized transportation in urban areas?

PowerPoint® 1: Assessment Questions

Answer Key

- 1) What problems and issues are raised in regard to the pace of change taking place across Asia?
 - *problem of developing related infrastructure*
 - *social dislocations and new jobs require different labor force*
 - *loss of historic neighborhoods*

- 2) Describe the factors that are leading millions across Asia to leave their farms and villages for life in the city.
 - *poverty and isolation of village life*
 - *economic opportunity and excitement of city life*

- 3) Describe a physical change that has taken place in your hometown. Explain how that change made you feel and what advantages and drawbacks the change brought.
 - *student responses will vary*

- 4) What are some common forms of transportation in Asia that are rare in the U.S.?
 - *Walking and carrying heavy loads by hand, cyclos, bicycles, motor scooters, trucks that serves as taxis*

- 5) What factors make providing adequate transportation to remote village areas problematic?
 - *Poor villagers cannot pay much for public transportation while petrol prices remain unaffordable.*
 - *Roads are in bad shape and costly to build.*

- 6) In what ways do inadequate transportation systems hamper economic development and visa versa?
 - *Without adequate transportation, costs of moving goods are high, goods cannot be moved in a timely fashion, and poor roads wreak havoc on autos.*

- *Because of low economic development, governments cannot afford to build roads and update public transit, and individuals likewise have little ability to pay for modern transportation.*

7) What new problems are posed with the growth of motorized transportation in urban areas?

- *safety: lack of traffic lights and regulations*
- *pollution*
- *traffic congestion*

Glossary of Key Terms

Industrialized Nation: Advanced industrialized nations are those that possess the greatest wealth and power in the world. Having mostly industrialized in the 19th century, they consume the most resources and possess the most advanced technologies, the highest levels of education, the highest GNPs, and the highest standards of living. Usually less than 5% of the population works in agriculture, the vast majority working in the industrial or service sectors. Countries whose economies are becoming more technologically based and who are shipping more industrial jobs overseas are sometimes referred to as post-industrial or service economies.

Underdeveloped Country: A large number of these countries were colonies of the industrialized nations until after WWII. They are mostly agriculturally based with close to 90% of their populations working on farms and living in rural areas. Most people are quite poor and lack adequate health care and educational opportunities. Life expectancy is lower and infant mortality is much higher than in industrialized nations. Those countries that are now or have just recently created an industrial base to augment their economies are sometimes referred to as “developing” or “newly-developed” countries. In these developing countries, unskilled laborers from the countryside flood the cities looking for economic advancement. This produces the greatest economic asset these countries possess: cheap labor for the new factories, which produce products largely consumed in wealthier nations.

Globalization: Globalization is a word used to describe the rather recent surge in the growth in international cultural exchange and trade. It has been accelerated by advancing technology as well as reductions in artificial barriers to trade. Due to the activities of groups like the WTO (World Trade Organization), the world indeed seems to have shrunk. People anywhere in the world have the potential to buy the same products and listen to the same music. Supporters hope this will bring advancement to all peoples, while critics fear it will make the rich get richer and the poor will at best stay the same. Others fear losing the diversity of culture that now exists in the world.

Cultural Imperialism: Cultural imperialism is a term often used by critics of globalization. It refers to the process of powerful countries exporting their values and products to weaker countries, and thereby subverting the weaker country’s own culture. Critics point to the ever-growing dominance of American products and entertainment in third-world countries. Another aspect of cultural imperialism is the belief that one country’s political and economic system is the best and should be emulated by all others.

Cultural Diffusion: Cultural diffusion is a more neutral term for the process of cultural imperialism, and does not imply a power difference between the cultures involved. It simply describes the process of the ideas or customs of one culture spreading to another. Though the current trend of globalization has accelerated this process in recent times, it has existed throughout human history.