

Textbook Discussion Questions
Chapter 7: Asia and International Studies

Geography

1. Why is it important to study Asia? What significance does it have to the field of international studies?
2. How many regions is Asia subdivided into by geographers? Name them and give one country from each region.

History

1. How far back into antiquity can twentieth-century Chinese and Japanese political formations trace their heritage?
2. Many European countries had colonial holdings in Asia in the 1800s. Name two European countries and one each of their respective Asian colonies.

Culture

1. List three types of cultural diversity present in contemporary Asia.
2. Describe the six waves of religious innovation that have transformed Asian religion over millennia.
3. What are some cultural institutions or practices originating in Asia that have become commonplace in the U.S. and Europe? What are some European practices or institutions that have become commonplace in many Asian countries?

Economics

1. What is an “economic leader” in the context of Asian economic development? What countries have been economic leaders, and when?
2. How has “economic development” traditionally been defined? How are economists beginning to expand that definition?

Politics

1. What kinds of political tension remain in Asia that can be attributed to its colonial past?
2. Which Asian countries currently have nuclear capability?

Demographic Issues

1. What are the chief demographic problems in Asia today?
2. Which state’s legislature seems to indicate that its leaders think the population is growing too quickly? Which state has instituted pro-birth policies because its leaders think it is not reproducing its citizenry quickly enough?
3. What kinds of environmental challenges are various countries in Asia facing?

Development Theory

1. What measures do scholars currently use to gauge a country’s development? Name two factors they consider.
2. Why do development-from-below strategies work best for the least developed regions of the world? Explain.

3. What do you think the author mean by saying that it is crucial to “put people into their development”?

Asian Economic Situation

1. What are some of the issues facing economic development in Asian countries?
2. What natural resources does Asia possess? What countries possess them? How are other factors determining what use can and will be made of these resources?

Development and China

1. Why is it helpful to scrutinize China when studying the Asian region? Which factors make it especially significant?
2. How was China’s present course affected by the policies of Mao Zedong in the 1950s?
3. What was the Great Leap Forward? (When did it take place? What was its purpose? To what extent did it succeed or fail?)

China’s Future

1. How would you categorize China’s current development? In which direction or directions is China’s economic development headed?
2. What was the Tiananmen Square protest in 1989 about? Who was involved? How did it end?

Asia in the World

1. What does Asia offer the global community in the 21st century?