

# HISTORY MODULE



DAY 2:  
WHAT ROLE DID THE  
SILK ROAD PLAY IN  
BRINGING BUDDHISM  
TO SOUTH KOREA?

# HISTORY MODULE OVERVIEW

## SKILL FOCUS

**Change and Continuity Over Time; Making Claims;  
Analyzing Evidence in Sources**

## CONTENT

**Expansion of Trade Through Silk Road  
Connections; Spread of Buddhism to the Korean  
Peninsula**

### Did The Silk Road Really “End” in China?

DAY 1

#### CLASS ACTIVITY

##### **Understanding the Connections of the Silk Road and the Korean Kingdom of Silla**

Working collaboratively, students will examine what goods, technologies, and cultural beliefs spread along the Silk Road and how they impacted various cultures, with a specific focus on the Korean peninsula. Students will also learn about the Silla Kingdom in Korea and study its connection to the Silk Road. Finally, working in teams, students will analyze a variety of sources to develop an argument about whether or not the Silk Road actually extended beyond the traditional terminus of Chang'an (Xi'an) in China.

#### CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

**Exit Ticket:** Students will develop an argument and provide supporting evidence to determine if the Silk Road extended beyond the traditional ending point in China.

### What Role Did the Silk Road Play in Bringing Buddhism to South Korea?

DAY 2

#### CLASS ACTIVITY

##### **Tracing the Spread of Buddhism into Korea and the Role of Syncretism in Korea's Adoption of the Religion**

Students will work collaboratively to study the spread of Buddhism out of India and into different areas of East and Southeast Asia by examining how different cultures and regions represented the Buddha. This examination of the way in which regions developed different versions of the Buddha will help students to learn about the concept of syncretism and discover the role it played in the adoption of this religious belief system. Finally, students will compare Buddhism in India with Buddhism in Korea to identify similarities and differences and to identify examples of syncretism.

#### CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

**Exit Ticket:** Students will compare Buddhist images and temples from India and Korea to determine similarities and differences and to identify examples of syncretism seen in Korean Buddhism.

### Assessment

DAY 3

#### **Short Essay Response**

Now that students have explored the Silk Road and the spread of Buddhism, students will explain how Korea was a part of the Silk Road that stretched from India to Japan.

# HISTORY MODULE SOURCES

DAY 1	Stimulus Type	Description	Page
	Map	Routes of the Silk Road	17
	Research Packet	Expert Group: Geography Research Packet	22
	Map	Map of East Asia Showing the Korean Peninsula	22
	Map	The Unified Silla Kingdom and the Territories of the Liaodong Peninsula, Tamna, Usan	22
	Map	The Korean Peninsula	23
	Research Packet	Expert Group: History Research Packet	24
	Map	The Three Korean Kingdoms	24
	Painting	Tributary envoys from Baekje, Goguryeo, and Silla	25
	Research Packet	Expert Group: Politics Research Packet	26
	Photo	Gilt Bronze Statue of a Seated Maitreya	26
	Research Packet	Expert Group: Culture Research Packet	27
	Photo	Crown of the Silla Kingdom	27
	Photo	The Tripitaka Koreana	28
	Map	The Silk Road (c. First Century)	29
	Map	Main Routes and Caravan Routes of the Silk Road	29
	Article	Gyeongju Certified as a Key Silk Road City	30
	Article	The Silk Road Trading Route	31

DAY 2	Stimulus Type	Description	Page
	Map	The Spread of Buddhism and Division into Theravada and Mahayana Sects	52
	Map	Map of the Expansion of Buddhism	53
	Photo	Statue of Buddha, Belur Caves, India	54
	Photo	Carving of Buddha, Feilai Feng, China	54
	Photo	Bronze Statue of Buddha, Sinheungsa, South Korea	55
	Photo	Golden Gilded Reclining Statue of Buddha, Kratié, Cambodia	55
	Map	Blank Map of East Asia	57
	Article	Buddhism's Introduction to Korea	59

DAY 3	Stimulus Type	Description	Page
	Text Excerpt	Thinking about "Korean Buddhism"	79
	Text Excerpt	Korean Buddhism Has Its Own Unique Characteristics Different From Other Countries	80
	Photo	Maha Bodhi Temple, Bodhgaya, India	83
	Photo	Haeinsa Temple, Gayasan Mountain National Park, South Korea	83
	Photo	Chugu-ji Hondo Buddhist Temple in Ikaruga, Nara, Japan	83
	Photo	Korea's gilt-bronze pensive bodhisattva, National Treasure No. 78 [National Museum of Korea]	84
	Photo	Japan's wooden Maitreya in meditation from Chugu-ji Temple [exhibited at the National Museum of Korea]	84

# DAY 2

BASED ON A 60-MINUTE CLASS

## How Did Buddhism Come to South Korea?

### HISTORICAL REASONING SKILLS

**Change and Continuity Over Time, Making Claims, and Analyzing Evidence in Sources**

### OVERVIEW

Students will build off of the knowledge they gained in the History Day 1 activities and begin to analyze changes and continuities that occurred in Korea due to the introduction and rise of Buddhism as a major religion. Students will begin by examining different images of the Buddha and attempting to discern similarities and differences. They will also attempt to identify the region where they would expect to find each of these depictions of the Buddha. To conclude the lesson, students will review a variety of different sources to discern how the adoption of Buddhism in Korea was an example of syncretism.

### MATERIALS NEEDED:

#### IN-CLASS ACTIVITY

- ▶ Day 1, Activity 3 Handout: Was the Korean Silla Kingdom Part of the Silk Road? (1 per student, p. 29; students should have completed this from the Day 1 lesson.)
- ▶ Activity 2 Handout: Video with Background Information on Buddhism (1 per student, p. 51)
- ▶ Activity 2 Video: "Eastern Philosophy: The Buddha" (5:43 in length)
- ▶ Activity 2 Video (optional): "Buddha and Ashoka: Crash Course World History #6" (12:16 in length)
- ▶ Activity 3 Handout: The Spread of Buddhism and Its Division into Theravada and Mahayana Sects (1 per student, p. 52)
- ▶ Activity 3 Map of the Expansion of Buddhism (1 per team of 4 students, p. 53)
- ▶ Activity 3 Handout: Images of Buddhist Statues, Source 1; Source 2; Source 3; and Source 4 (1 of each per team of 4 students, pp. 54-55)

- ▶ Activity 3 Handout: Comparisons of the Buddhist Statues (1 per student, p. 56)
- ▶ Activity 3 Handout: Where Did Buddhism Spread? (1 per student, pp. 57-58)
- ▶ Activity 4 Reading: Syncretism and the Spread of Buddhism (1 per student, p. 59)
- ▶ Activity 4 Handout: Focus on Korea—Syncretism and Buddhism (1 per student, pp. 61-62)

#### TEACHER ANSWER KEYS

- ▶ Day 1, Activity 3 Handout: Was the Korean Silla Kingdom Part of the Silk Road? (From the Day 1 lesson, p. 40)
- ▶ Activity 2 Handout: Video with Background Information on Buddhism (p. 63)
- ▶ Activity 3 Handout: Comparisons of the Buddhist Statues (p. 65)
- ▶ Activity 3 Handout: Where Did Buddhism Spread? (p. 66)
- ▶ Activity 4 Handout: Focus on Korea—Syncretism and Buddhism (p. 67)
- ▶ Activity 4 Reading: Syncretism and the Spread of Buddhism (p. 69)

## SEQUENCE OF INSTRUCTION

### CLASS ACTIVITY 1 OF 5: SHOULD KOREA BE INCLUDED AS PART OF THE SILK ROAD?

WARM UP/INTRODUCTION (5 MINUTES)

#### CLASSROOM DEBATE

Building off the Check for Understanding activity from History Day 1 (pg. 15), students will be asked to argue either for or against the inclusion of the Silla Kingdom of Korea in what is termed the Silk Road. Students should use the information they gathered in their groups during the previous class as evidence to support their arguments.

#### ACTIVITY PROCEDURE

- ▶ Ensure that students have their completed copy of the Handout from the Day 1 lesson (Was the Korean Silla Kingdom Part of the Silk Road?) Teachers may have collected this as an Exit Ticket at the end of the previous lesson or allowed students to complete it as a homework assignment.
- ▶ Begin by having students close their eyes and put their heads down on their desk. Tell the students you are taking a poll as to whether students argued that the Korean Silla Kingdom was part of the Silk Road or if they thought it was not part of the Silk Road. Count the two sets of responses and put the tally on the board.
- ▶ Next, call on students to share specific evidence they used to support their position. Be sure to be balanced in calling on students who supported both arguments. Allow a few students to share evidence they provided for their arguments.
- ▶ Conclude the activity by conducting another poll to see if students have changed their minds on whether the Silla Kingdom was part of the Silk Road. Ask students to consider the arguments and evidence that their peers presented and see if this has changed their original beliefs. Tally this vote and compare it to the original numbers.
  - ▷ If there was a change in the numbers, ask students to explain what caused them to change their position. If no one changed their position, ask students why the evidence that was provided was not strong enough to cause them to reconsider their beliefs.

For suggested answers, see the Teacher Key to the Handout “Was the Korean Silla Kingdom Part of the Silk Road?” (p. 40).

#### TEACHER NOTES

Most scholars today recognize that the Silla Kingdom was a part of the Silk Road network and played a vital role in transferring goods, technologies, and culture throughout East Asia. Depending on what your students argued, you may want to share this information so that students understand that the Korean Silla Kingdom was a part of the Silk Road.



#### TEACHING TIP

When polling your students during this activity, instead of having students close their eyes and raise hands you could use technology like Poll Everywhere or Socrative to accomplish the same goal.

## CLASS ACTIVITY 2 OF 5: BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON BUDDHISM AND THE SPREAD OF BUDDHISM

CLASS ACTIVITY (10-15 MINUTES)

### VIDEO, GROUP COLLABORATION, DISCUSSION

Students will watch a School of Life video discussing the foundations and origins of Buddhism. This activity is designed to give students more information and background on Buddhism and will prepare them for the subsequent activities.

#### ACTIVITY PROCEDURE

- ▶ Arrange students into teams of five for the remaining class activities.
- ▶ Prior to watching the video, students will individually write down three facts that they know about Buddhism in the left column on the Handout about the Background Information on Buddhism Video. Encourage students to make guesses about the religion if they do not have any concrete knowledge. (2 minutes)
- ▶ Next, as a class, watch the School of Life video which can be found at <https://youtu.be/tiIBs32zN7I>. Students should add at least five new facts they learned in the right column while they are watching the video. (6 minutes)
- ▶ Working in their teams of five, have students discuss the information they added to their Handout with Background Information on the Buddhism Video. Encourage students to add the additional information that they learned from their teammates to their own handout. (4 minutes)
  - ▷ Communicate that the teacher will select a team member to share their findings, so all team members need to be prepared to share the team's conclusions.
  - ▷ Set a timer for four minutes to complete their group discussion.
  - ▷ For students who may struggle with language or confidence speaking in front of peers, you can provide the following sentence stems to help with structure:
    - One thing that I thought was interesting about Buddhism was...
    - One thing that I learned about Buddhism was...
- ▶ Conclude the activity by having each team share with the class one of the "new things" they learned from watching the School of Life video. (3 minutes)

For suggested answers, see the Teacher Key to the Handout with Background Information on the Buddhism Video (p. 63).

#### TEACHER NOTES

While sharing, some groups will realize that they have similar ideas; however, students should be challenged to articulate their ideas by expanding on the original example.



### TEACHING TIP

While the School of Life video provides a great overview of the origins and spread of Buddhism, at times it moves quickly and it is often hard for students to catch all of the important concepts discussed. It is beneficial to slow down the playback on the video and turn on the closed captioning feature when watching the video. Most YouTube videos have closed captioning which can help English Language Learners. You can also choose to pause the video as students are working through the handout.

Some students will benefit from hearing the same information presented in different formats. If you would like to provide your students some additional background on Buddhism and its spread, a John Green Crash Course video is also excellent in providing an overview (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8Nn5uqE3C9w>). While this video is slightly longer, students often enjoy these Crash Course videos because of John Green's humor. The Handout about the Background Information on Buddhism Video can easily be adapted to fit the Crash Course video by changing the video names in the initial instructions.

## CLASS ACTIVITY 3 OF 5: COMPARISONS OF BUDDHIST STATUES

CLASS ACTIVITY (30 MINUTES)

### SOURCE ANALYSIS

Students will examine five different images of Buddhist statues to identify similarities and differences in these depictions. Working collaboratively, student teams will hypothesize why each of these renderings of the Buddha contains different features. Teams will complete the activity by presenting their hypothesis to their classmates.

### ACTIVITY PROCEDURE

- ▶ In teams of four, begin the activity by providing each student with a copy of the Handout on The Spread of Buddhism and Division into Theravada and Mahayana Sects (p. 52). Each group will also need at least one copy of the Map of the Expansion of Buddhism (p. 53) to share (or you can provide one for each student).
- ▶ Have students individually read the information about the development of the Theravada and Mahayana sects of Buddhism. Once they have finished the reading, have them work with their teams to examine the map tracing the spread of Buddhism. Explain to students that both of these handouts will be useful in completing the next part of this activity. (5 minutes)
- ▶ Teams will be examining four different images of the Buddha to discern similarities and differences. They will be recording their findings on the Comparisons of the Buddhist Statues Handout (p. 56).
- ▶ Provide each team with the Images of Buddhist Statues Handout: Sources 1, 2, 3 and 4 (pp. 54-55). Assign one of the images to each student in the group and have them write down notes and observations from examining their assigned image in the space provided on the handout. (4 minutes)
  - ▷ Explain to students that it is important to examine the images carefully and to be thorough in their notes and observations. The handout provides students with suggestions on what to look for when making their observations (such as clothing styles, facial features, and the Buddha's position).
- ▶ Next, have each student share their images and observations with their fellow teammates. As teams are introduced to all four images, have them identify similarities and differences in the images. They should write these down on the chart in their Comparisons of the Buddhist Statues Handout on page 56. (5 minutes)

- ▷ It is important to make it clear to students that all of the images are depictions of the Buddha. While students should note the more obvious similarities and differences, encourage them to look deeper to find more subtle nuances in the depictions that may account for similarities or differences.
- ▶ After teams have identified and discussed similarities and differences among the four images of the Buddhist statues, instruct them to brainstorm reasons as to why differences exist in images of the same Buddha. Instruct teams to include a justification of their hypothesis with specific references from the images. While the team will create a hypothesis together, have students individually write these down in the space provided on the Comparisons of the Buddhist Statues Handout. (8 minutes)
- ▶ Next, instruct the teams to identify where on the map they believe each of these images of the Buddha would be found in South Asia, Southeast Asia, and East Asia. Have them add the corresponding number of the image to the location where they believe it would be found on the map in the Where Did Buddhism Spread? Handout (p. 53). For each choice, teams should explain the reasons for choosing that location in the space provided on the second page. (5 minutes)
- ▶ Call on different teams to share their hypotheses and location choices with their classmates. Encourage other teams to ask questions or challenge the different hypotheses and locations being presented. (3 minutes)

For suggested answers, see the Teacher Key to the Comparisons of Buddhist Statues Handout (p. 65) and the Teacher Key to the Where Did Buddhism Spread? Handout (p. 66).

### TEACHER NOTES

Some students will complete their analysis of their assigned image very quickly by only providing cursory details. During this part of the activity, walk around the classroom and prompt students who only have a few details in their image analysis chart to add additional observations. Direct them to look at clothing styles, facial features, and the Buddha's position if they need guidance. You can use sentence stems to help struggling students ("This image of the Buddha's hairstyle looks..." "This image of the Buddha's clothing looks...").

Some students may begin to touch on the idea of syncretism taking place in the spread of Buddhism to new locations. This is a topic that will be discussed in the next class activity, so any insights students provide can be referenced later in the lesson.

While this distinction is not necessary for students to complete the lesson, it is likely that some of the statues are actually bodhisattvas and not the historical Buddha. As students have read in the Handout on the Spread of Buddhism and Its Division into Theravada and Mahayana Sects, Mahayana Buddhism has bodhisattvas, or those who could attain enlightenment like the historical Buddha, but chose to stay in the cycle of rebirth (*samsara*) to help others to achieve enlightenment. Historically, most East Asian cultures have had their own national bodhisattvas as they moved further from Indianized Buddhism toward indigenous beliefs and practices. While some students may make this connection when comparing the Buddhist statues, it does not impact the goal of this activity. The key point to emphasize is that art in general and Buddhist statues in particular often reveal syncretism as they allow the people of different cultures to have their own "Buddha." Incorporating bodhisattvas is a commonality in Mahayana Buddhism and the particular depiction of the bodhisattva reveals aspects unique to each culture, or evidence of syncretism.



**TEACHING TIP**

Requiring teams to justify the reasoning behind their hypotheses will encourage them to think through their arguments and ensure that they can provide supporting evidence. Since this is a key element promoting the use of higher level thinking skills, practicing this skill often will lead to greater success.

**CLASS ACTIVITY 4 OF 5: SYNCRETISM AND THE SPREAD OF BUDDHISM**

CLASS ACTIVITY (5-10 MINUTES)

**DEFINING, SOURCE ANALYSIS, TEAM DISCUSSION**

Students will learn the definition of syncretism and develop an understanding of this concept by studying some well-known examples of syncretism. Students will also discover how Buddhism first came to Korea, how it blended with traditional Korean cultural beliefs, and why it was adopted as the state religion.

**ACTIVITY PROCEDURE**

- ▶ In the previous activity, students likely provided a wide range of reasons for the differences in the Buddha's appearance in the four images. While a variety of different answers and responses are correct, it is essential for students to understand that syncretism plays a big role in the reasons behind both the similarities and differences that are seen.
- ▶ Distribute the Reading on Syncretism and the Spread of Buddhism (p. 59). Have students read the short article and answer the questions about the reading. (4 minutes)
- ▶ Allow teams to compare their answers to the three questions from the reading. (1 minute)
- ▶ Read this example of syncretism that is provided for students in the Focus on Korea—Syncretism and Buddhism Handout (p. 61):
  - ▷ One famous Western European example of syncretism was the inclusion of the Germanic tradition of decorating homes with fir trees (and later decorating the trees themselves) to celebrate the Winter Solstice. When Christianity spread into Germanic regions, this tradition was incorporated into the Christian celebration of Christmas and ultimately led to the now common practice of decorating a Christmas tree as a celebration of Jesus' birth.
- ▶ Have students make a guess as to what the word "syncretism" means, based on the example provided and write it on their Focus on Korea—Syncretism and Buddhism Handout. (2 minutes)
- ▶ After students have made their own attempts at defining syncretism, read the following definition to students and have them record the definition on their Focus on Korea—Syncretism and Buddhism Handout:
  - ▷ "Syncretism is the combining of different beliefs and cultures. It often involves the merging of cultural traditions with a new religious belief, but can also be applied to art and architecture. For religions, this asserts an underlying unity and allows for an inclusive approach to other faiths."
  - ▷ To make it easier to process, you can add this shorter explanation:
    - "Syncretism is the process of blending different cultural features to form something new."
- ▶ Then students should brainstorm with their teammates other examples of syncretism, adding them to their Focus on Korea—Syncretism and Buddhism Handout. (1-2 minutes)

- Share some of these examples identified by students with the larger class. (1-2 minutes)

For suggested answers, see the Teacher Key to the Focus on Korea—Syncretism and Buddhism Handout (p. 67).

### TEACHER NOTES

Some students may struggle in coming up with other examples of syncretism for this activity. You can provide assistance by encouraging students to think of any examples where two cultures have come together and created something new. An easily understood example you can share is the idea of Tex-Mex food—a blending of Texas and Mexican cuisines.

## CLASS ACTIVITY 5 OF 5: CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

CLASS ACTIVITY (5 MINUTES)

### EXIT TICKET

As an exit ticket to this lesson, students will revisit some of the images they examined in Class Activity 3. Using their new understanding and knowledge of the concept of syncretism, students will attempt to point out specific evidence showing how syncretism can be seen in these images.

### ACTIVITY PROCEDURE

- Have students look at the two images on the second page of the Focus on Korea—Syncretism and Buddhism Handout. These are images that students already examined during Activity 3, but with their new knowledge about syncretism and the spread of Buddhism to Korea, students will re-examine these images.
- After students look at the images again, have them complete the chart, identifying similarities and differences and providing evidence of syncretism as seen in the two statues. Collect the student responses as an exit ticket as students leave the class.
- If you do not have enough time to complete this during class, students can complete this Check for Understanding Activity as homework.

For suggested answers, see the second page of the Teacher Key to the Focus on Korea—Syncretism and Buddhism Handout (p. 67).

# HANDOUT: BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE BUDDHISM VIDEO

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Period: \_\_\_\_\_

## SCHOOL OF LIFE: EASTERN PHILOSOPHY—THE BUDDHA

Watch the short School of Life video on Buddhism. Before watching the video, write down at least three things you know about Buddhism. After watching the video, add at least five additional things that you learned and correct any misconceptions you made in your “What I knew before the video!” section.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tiIBs32zN7I>

What I knew before the video	New facts that I learned about Buddhism by watching video
1	1
	2
2	3
	4
3	5
Additional Notes/Info:	Additional Notes/Info:

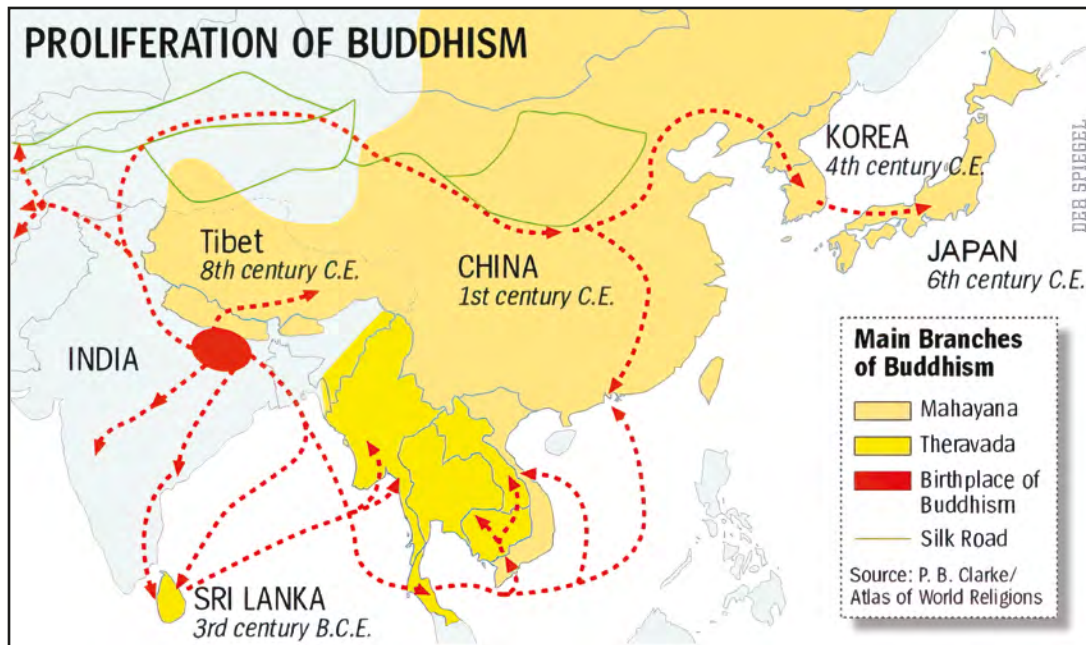
# HANDOUT: THE SPREAD OF BUDDHISM AND DIVISION INTO THERAVADA AND MAYAHANA SECTS

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Period: \_\_\_\_\_

## MAP

### The Spread of Buddhism and Division into Theravada and Mayahana Sects

Source: Der Spiegel Atlas of World Religions: Asian Religions, 2007



As Buddhism spread across Asia and diffused into new regions, the religion broke into two main branches: Theravada Buddhism and Mahayana Buddhism. Each of these branches had slightly different understandings of Buddhism and spread to distinctly different areas.

#### **Theravada Buddhism**

Theravada Buddhism is the older of these two branches and adherents attempt to follow the teachings of the Buddha exactly, often becoming monks or nuns. The Theravada Buddhist goal is to become an *arhat*, someone who follows the Eightfold Path to extinguish greed, hatred, and ignorance and become enlightened. In Buddhism, enlightenment leads to *nirvana*, a state in which greed, hatred, and ignorance are extinguished, and there is freedom from the cycle of rebirth known as *samsara*. Theravada Buddhism first spread from India to Sri Lanka, and then took a strong hold in Southeast Asia in the states of Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, and Burma.

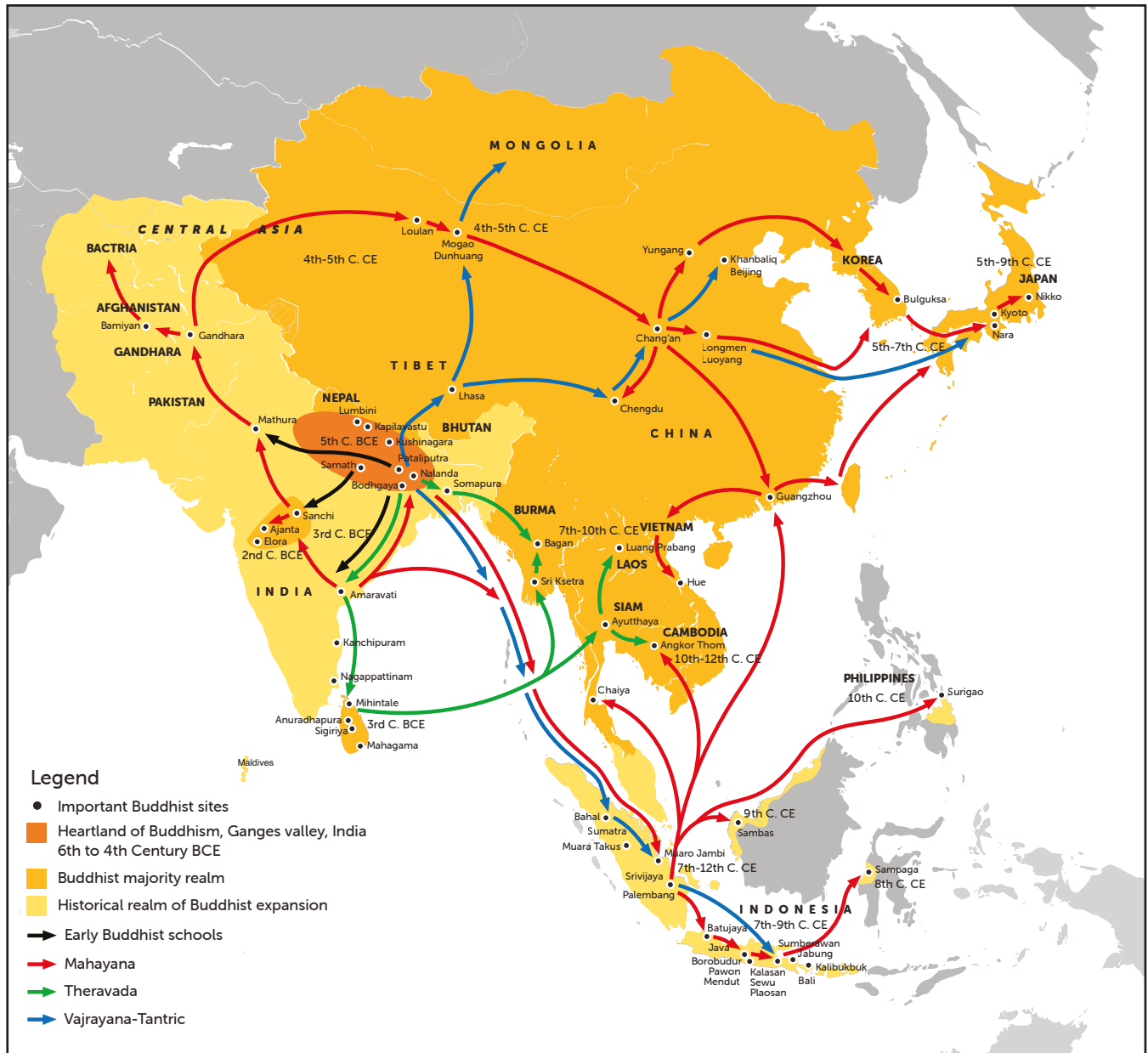
#### **Mahayana Buddhism**

Mahayana Buddhists also believe that they can reach enlightenment by following the teachings of the Buddha. However, the goal of a Mahayana Buddhist is to become a *bodhisattva*. A bodhisattva has achieved enlightenment, but often will choose to stay in the cycle of rebirth (*samsara*) to help others to achieve enlightenment as they have already done. Mahayana Buddhism spread initially north into Tibet, then entered China and spread to Korea, Japan, and Vietnam.

## MAP

# Map of the Expansion of Buddhism

Source: Wikimedia Commons. <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=30905152>



The map shows the Buddhist expansion from the Buddhist heartland in northern India starting in the 5th century BCE to areas with a Buddhist majority (orange). It also shows the historical extent of Buddhist influences (yellow). Theravada Buddhism and Mahayana Buddhism are described in the text on the previous page. Vajrayana-Tantric Buddhism was a smaller offshoot of Mahayana Buddhism that developed first in India but became most popular in Tibet. Its followers sought to recapture the enlightenment experience of the Buddha.

# HANDOUT: IMAGES OF BUDDHIST STATUES

Examine the images of the Buddhist statues. Note the details (such as clothing styles, facial features, and the Buddha's position) that you observe in the space below.

**SOURCE 1**  
Statue of Buddha, Belum Caves, India

Source: Wikimedia Commons. [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Buddha%27s\\_statue\\_near\\_Belum\\_Caves\\_Andhra\\_Pradesh\\_India.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Buddha%27s_statue_near_Belum_Caves_Andhra_Pradesh_India.jpg)



**Source 1: Notes and Observations**

**SOURCE 2**  
Carving of Buddha, Feilai Feng, China

Source: Wikimedia Commons. [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Maitreya\\_and\\_disciples\\_carving\\_in\\_Feilai\\_Feng\\_Caves.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Maitreya_and_disciples_carving_in_Feilai_Feng_Caves.jpg)



**Source 2: Notes and Observations**



### SOURCE 3

## Bronze Statue of Buddha, Sinheungsa, South Korea

Source: Wikimedia Commons. [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Korea-Sinheungsa-Bronze\\_Buddha-02.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Korea-Sinheungsa-Bronze_Buddha-02.jpg)



### Source 3: Notes and Observations

### SOURCE 4

## Golden Gilded Reclining Statue of Buddha, Kratié, Cambodia

Source: Wikimedia Commons. <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=60924655>







### Source 4: Notes and Observations

# HANDOUT: COMPARISONS OF THE BUDDHIST STATUES

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Period: \_\_\_\_\_

## COMPARING BUDDHIST STATUES

Notes and Observations on Buddhist Statues			
Source 1	Source 2	Source 3	Source 4
			

Similarities and Differences in the Images	
Similarities	Differences

Team Hypothesis
Why would the Buddha be depicted differently in the images?



## HANDOUT: WHERE DID BUDDHISM SPREAD?

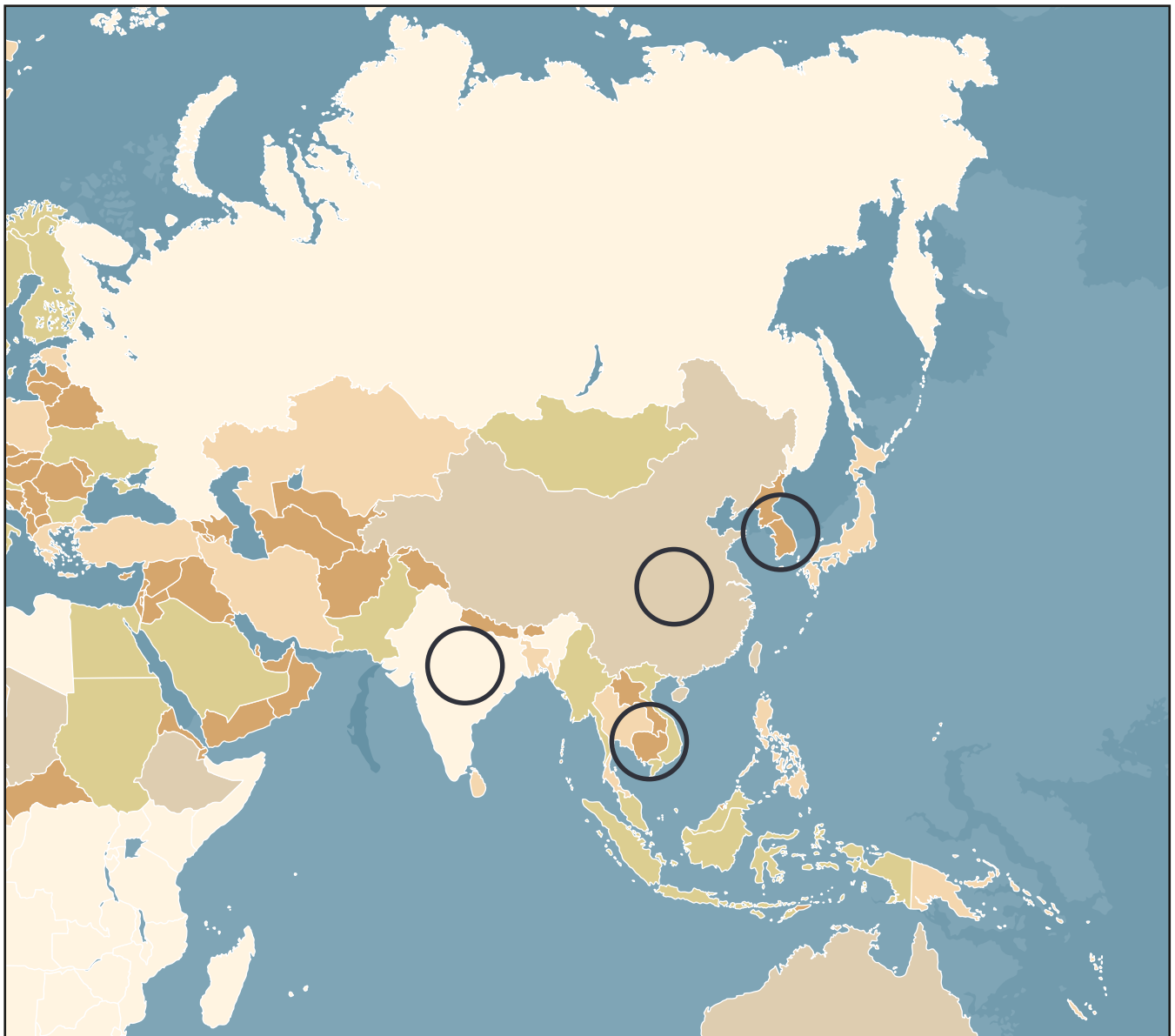
### WHERE DID BUDDHISM SPREAD?

Each source from the Images of Buddhist statues (Sources 1-4) is in one of the locations below. Write the number of the source in the correct location on the map below. Explain your reasoning for choosing each location in the space below the map.

#### MAP

#### Blank Map of East Asia

Source: Wikimedia Commons, 2006



## WHERE DID BUDDHISM SPREAD?

### Reasons for choosing the location for each Buddha statue on the map

### Source 1

## Source 2

### Source 3

### Source 4

### Why did Buddhism spread to these locations?

# READING: FOCUS ON KOREA: SYNCRETISM AND BUDDHISM

## ARTICLE

### Buddhism's Introduction to Korea

Source: World History Digital Education, July 2020

#### BUDDHISM'S INTRODUCTION TO KOREA

Buddhism's arrival in Korea led to major changes in Korean society and ushered in an era that has been described as a Golden Age for Korean civilization. Korea's location near the end of the Silk Road allowed it to benefit from goods, technologies, and cultural beliefs that had traveled across Eurasia. Buddhist monks traveling into Korea increased this interaction.

Kings and queens in the kingdoms of Korea saw the benefits of supporting Buddhism to help them centralize their political power by promoting beliefs that positioned them as either the Buddha himself or as rulers who were given their ruling power through Buddhism. The state utilized Buddhism as an important part of protecting the state and maintaining power, which were distinctive and important features of Mahayana Buddhism in Korea.

Yet, Buddhism did not completely replace Korea's local religions. Instead, Buddhism in Korea incorporated many of the local and tribal gods into Buddhist beliefs as protectors and supporters of the Buddha. Some traditional beliefs simply incorporated the Buddha into their own beliefs as another powerful god to worship. This blending, or syncretism, of religious beliefs allowed for the rapid spread and acceptance of Buddhism in the Korean peninsula.

Buddhism was also popular among the peoples of Korea as it offered a larger and more complex understanding of the world around them. Buddhism provided a reward for living a good life with reincarnation to a paradise of bliss. In this world, Buddhism had strong connections linking much of East Asia and enabled monks to travel to China and even India to study the religion. This interconnection increased the exchange of both ideas and goods among the people of Korea and the rest of East Asia.

When the Silla Kingdom conquered the entire peninsula of Korea, it led to an even faster spread of Buddhism. Wealthy monasteries appeared throughout Korea and provided new opportunities for craftsmen to create gifts for these monasteries. Korean artists began to learn and master the art of sculpture only after the arrival of Buddhism, as artisans began to make representations of the Buddha. Printing was another significant impact of Buddhism on Korea. Because Buddhists are required to help spread the Buddha's teachings, it pushed Koreans to improve printing technologies to meet the demand for Buddhist texts. Koreans responded by creating the most efficient and highest quality movable-type woodblock printing.

# READING QUESTIONS

## FOCUS ON KOREA: SYNCRETISM AND BUDDHISM

Use the article you just read on Buddhism’s Introduction to Korea to help you answer the following questions:

**What are some examples of syncretism in Korean Buddhism that the article discusses?**

---

---

---

**What are some reasons why Koreans would adopt Buddhism?**

---

---

---

**How did syncretism help Buddhism to become more popular in Korea?**

---

---

---

## HANDOUT: FOCUS ON KOREA—SYNCRETISM AND BUDDHISM

## EXAMPLES OF SYNCRETISM

One famous Western European example of syncretism was the inclusion of the Germanic tradition of decorating homes with fir trees (and later decorating the trees themselves) to celebrate the Winter Solstice. When Christianity spread into Germanic regions, this tradition was incorporated into the Christian celebration of Christmas and ultimately led to the now common practice of decorating a Christmas tree as a celebration of Jesus' birth.

## WHAT IS SYNCRETISM?

Using the example above, make a guess of what the word "Syncretism" means. Write your guess below:

---

## DEFINITION OF SYNCRETISM

Write the definition of Syncretism that your teacher provides you below:

---

Can you think of any other examples of syncretism? (Remember, syncretism does *not* only have to be religious—it can be the blending of any two cultures.) Write your responses below:

---

**FOCUS ON KOREA: REVISITING TWO STATUES OF THE BUDDHA**

Analyze two of the statues we studied earlier. Note the similarities and differences using specific details. What evidence do you see of syncretism in these two statues?



Buddhist statue in India



Buddhist statue in South Korea

Similarities between the two statues:	Differences between the two statues:
Evidence of syncretism:	

# TEACHER KEY: HANDOUT WITH BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE BUDDHISM VIDEO

## SCHOOL OF LIFE: EASTERN PHILOSOPHY—THE BUDDHA

Some examples of the important things that students learned about Buddhism from the video are:

- ▶ The story of the Buddha is a story about confronting suffering.
- ▶ The Buddha was born sometime between the 6th and 4th century BCE as the son of a wealthy king in the foothills of Nepal and was named Siddhartha Gautama.
- ▶ It was prophesied that he would either become the emperor of India or a very holy man.
- ▶ His father wanted him to become the emperor of India, so he kept Siddhartha isolated in a palace. He had jewels, servants, and a very lavish life in which he was protected from any and all misfortunes of normal life.
- ▶ At 29, however, he left the palace and met a sick man, an aging man, and a dying man.
  - ▷ He was shocked to learn that these people represented the lives of “normal” Indians and that one day he too would have to deal with these conditions.
  - ▷ On another trip outside of the palace he met a holy man who sought spiritual life in the vastness of human suffering.
- ▶ Inspired by the holy man, Siddhartha left the palace and began trying to learn from other holy men.
  - ▷ He almost starved to death by avoiding all physical comforts and pleasures, but realized that this did not bring him an escape from suffering.
  - ▷ He then thought of his boyhood and how compassion brought him peace.
  - ▷ Using this idea, he ate, meditated, and reached the highest state of being—nirvana, which refers to the “blowing out” of the flames of desire and liberation from the cycle of rebirth.
- ▶ Knowing this made Siddhartha the “Buddha” or awakened one.
  - ▷ He achieved this by identifying that all creation is unified by one thing—suffering.
  - ▷ He then devised a way to best confront suffering.
    - Don’t live in luxury.
    - Don’t live without food or any comforts.
    - Instead, live in moderation—“The Middle Way.”
      - » *This allows for maximum focus on compassion and seeking enlightenment.*
  - ▷ Next he devised a path to transcend suffering—“The Four Noble Truths.”
    - 1st: There is suffering and constant dissatisfaction in the world.
    - 2nd: Suffering is caused by desires.
    - 3rd: We can transcend suffering by removing or controlling desires.
      - » *We must change our outlook instead of our circumstances.*

- » *With correct behavior and a mindful attitude, we can become better people by inverting negative emotions.*
- 4th: We can move beyond suffering by following "The Noble Eightfold Path."
  - » This involves a series of actions in behaving "right" and "wisely"
    - » *Right View*
    - » *Right Intention*
    - » *Right Speech*
    - » *Right Action*
    - » *Right Livelihood*
    - » *Right Effort*
    - » *Right Mindfulness*
    - » *Right Concentration*
  - » These are all habits that must be practiced and must be trained. The moment of understanding is only one part of becoming a better person.
- After the Buddha's death, his followers collected his "sutras" or sayings and developed texts to help guide people in meditation, ethics, and mindful living.
- Monasteries grew in China and East Asia.
  - ▷ Buddhism even became uncommon in India for a time despite being founded there until the emperor Ashoka converted to Buddhism and spread the religion by sending monks to spread the tradition.
  - ▷ Buddhism spread throughout Asia, and eventually the entire world.
- Buddhism split into two major schools:
  - ▷ Theravada in Southeast Asia.
  - ▷ Mahayana in China and Northeast Asia.
- Today there are more than 500 million Buddhists in the world.



# TEACHER KEY: HANDOUT ON COMPARISONS OF THE BUDDHIST STATUES

## COMPARING BUDDHIST STATUES

### Notes and Observations on Buddhist Statues

**Source 1**



The seated Buddha has elongated ears. His face is more typical of South Asian than East Asian statues. A circle is located in the middle of the Buddha's forehead; he is holding fingers in what looks like an "okay" symbol and wearing what looks like a toga. He is not smiling; his hair is shaped in a topknot made of small snail shells on top of his head.

**Source 2**



The Buddha is lying on his side; his ears are not as elongated as other Buddhas; and he is much heavier than other Buddhas. He has a big smile on his face and is wearing what looks like a robe. This statue looks more East Asian (Chinese). The Buddha's hands are in a normal position; he is bald; it looks like others are bringing him gifts.

**Source 3**



The Buddha is seated and has elongated ears. This statue looks more East Asian (Korean). The Buddha is wearing what looks like a toga, is not smiling, and his fingers are not in a special position but are resting in his lap. There is an ornate, oval looking disc behind the Buddha's head. His hair has many different small spheres. He has a dot on his forehead.

**Source 4**



The Buddha is lying down on what appears to be a bed with pillow; the statue is made of gold. He is wearing what appears to be a full-length toga or robe. His ears are not easily visible and his hands are at his side and cannot be seen. His hair is black. This statue looks more Southeast Asian.

### Similarities and Differences in the Images

#### Similarities

- ▷ Sources 1 and 3 have elongated ears.
- ▷ Sources 1 and 3 have dots on the forehead.
- ▷ Sources 1, 3, and 4 are not smiling.
- ▷ Sources 1 and 3 are seated.

#### Differences

- ▷ The 2nd and 4th Buddhas are lying down.
- ▷ The clothing on some differs from others.
- ▷ Source 2 has people bringing him gifts.
- ▷ Source 2 is smiling.
- ▷ Hairstyles are different.
- ▷ Source 3 has an oval-shaped disc behind his head.

### Team Hypothesis

Why would the Buddha be depicted differently in the images?

- ▷ While the Buddha kept his general appearance as the religion spread, the Buddha's facial features, hairstyle, and clothing were adapted to fit those of the cultures that Buddhism encountered. People are more likely to adopt something that looks familiar to them, which is a reason why the appearance of the Buddha would be changed to look and dress like the people in the areas to which Buddhism spread.

## TEACHER KEY: HANDOUT ON WHERE DID BUDDHISM SPREAD?

### WHERE DID BUDDHISM SPREAD?

Each source from the Images of Buddhist statues (Sources 1-4) is in one of the locations below. Write the number of the source in the correct location on the map below. Explain your reasoning for choosing each location in the space below the map.



The statues are in the following countries: 1, India; 2, China; 3, South Korea; 4, Cambodia.

# TEACHER KEY: HANDOUT ON FOCUS ON KOREA—SYNCRETISM AND BUDDHISM

## DEFINITION OF SYNCRETISM

Write the definition of Syncretism that your teacher provides you below:

- 
- ▷ Syncretism is the combining of different beliefs and cultures. It often involves the merging of cultural traditions with a new religious belief, but it can also be applied to art and architecture. When religions spread, this asserts an underlying unity and allows for an inclusive approach to other faiths.
  - ▷ Syncretism is the process of blending different cultural features to form something new.
- 

## OTHER EXAMPLES OF SYNCRETISM

Can you think of any other examples of syncretism? (Remember, syncretism does *not* only have to be religious—it can be the blending of any two cultures.) Write your responses below:

---

**There are various answers, which can include:**

- ▷ **Foods:** Tex-Mex; pizza (Italian and American).
  - ▷ **Religion:** Easter's blend of Christianity (the resurrection of Jesus) and paganism (bunnies and eggs are symbols of fertility and life).
  - ▷ **Music:** Jazz is a combination of German parade music, Brazilian beats, and elements of the blues, which developed from mixed African and European traditions.
-

## FOCUS ON KOREA: REVISITING TWO STATUES OF THE BUDDHA

Analyze two of the statues we studied earlier. Note the similarities and differences using specific details. What evidence do you see of syncretism in these two statues?



Buddhist statue in India



Buddhist statue in South Korea

### Similarities between the two statues:

- ▷ Both are seated.
- ▷ Both have similar elongated ears.
- ▷ Both have a dot on the forehead.
- ▷ Both are wearing a toga/robe.

### Differences between the two statues:

- ▷ The hand positions are different.
- ▷ The hairstyles are different.
- ▷ The togas/robes look to be made of different material.
- ▷ The Korean Buddha has an oval-shaped object behind his head.

### Evidence of syncretism:

- ▷ While both Buddha statues have many similarities, including the dot on the forehead, seated position, and elongated ears, there are differences that exist. Syncretism can be seen in the Korean Buddha statue as it has more East Asian facial features. Further, the Korean Buddha appears to be dressed in silk, a material that was more commonly found in Korea than India.

## TEACHER KEY: READING ON SYNCRETISM AND THE SPREAD OF BUDDHISM

Use the reading to help you answer the following questions:

- ▶ What are some examples of syncretism in Korean Buddhism that the article discusses?
  - ▷ **Buddhism in Korea incorporated many of the local and tribal gods into Buddhist beliefs as protectors and supporters of the Buddha.**
  - ▷ **The Buddha was incorporated into traditional Korean beliefs as just another powerful god to worship.**
- ▶ What are some reasons why Koreans would adopt Buddhism?
  - ▷ **Buddhism offered a larger and more complex understanding of the world around them.**
  - ▷ **Buddhism provided a reward for living a good life with reincarnation to a paradise of bliss.**
  - ▷ **Buddhism offered strong connections to other parts of Asia; for example, monks could travel to China and even India to study the religion.**
- ▶ How did syncretism help Buddhism to become more popular in Korea?
  - ▷ **By incorporating the Buddha into their own beliefs, either as another traditional god or as the primary god who was protected and supported by their traditional gods, Koreans saw the Buddha as part of a system that they had already established and that made sense to them.**

