Korea and Japan both inherited Buddhism from China. Buddhism entered Korea in the 4th century but it was nearly two centuries later when it entered Japan.
– In addition to images of the Buddha, wooden architecture and sectarian divisions, Korea and Japan inherited a written language and Confucian social system from China.

– Known as Shinto in Japan, shamanism with its beliefs in astral divinities, nature spirits and the power of wandering ghosts or spirits of the dead influenced Buddhism in Japan.
The second millennium featured the emergence and growth of the meditative schools of Chan and Zen.

In Korea, Son Buddhism, build on local traditions, remains Korea’s most successful form of Buddhism.

A youthful sturdy Buddha with a high degree of abstraction was typical of Korean art.

These, from the 6th century were mass produced and once brightly colored.
Korea from the 1\textsuperscript{st} century to 668 is called the Three Kingdoms period.

It was during this period Buddhism developed.
The primary goal of Three Kingdoms period Buddhist art was to express spirituality rather than physical presence.

The more abstract Korean images capture a greater transcendent, spiritual character than Chinese figures.

Buddha, Korea, 14th century,
The most distinctive images is a more abstract seated, contemplative bodhisattva, with one leg crossed over the other and fingers at the cheek were very popular.

Thought to be Maitreya, awaiting his eventual rebirth to save the world…

Buddha, Korea, early 7th century, Three Kingdoms period.
Do You remember who this Buddha reminds you of?

Buddha, Korea, early 7th century, Three Kingdoms period.

Guanyin, bodhisattva of mercy, 12th century, China.
Excavations of the Silla capital from around 668-935, reveal some of the splendor that was once one of East Asia’s three greatest cities.

Anapchi Pond, a man-made lake surrounded by pavilions and temples. More than 15,000 Buddhist objects have been recovered. Buddha, Silla Dynasty, MET
The Korean wooden temple repeats the basic forms of the Chinese sources

Korean Temple Pulguksa
As with all of Korea’s early building, these were damaged by Mongol attacks. They are being rebuilt.

Korean Temple Pulguksa
Not far from Pulguksa is a small monument of cut stones, a replica of traditional Buddhist rock-cut cave shrines. Begun in 751 it took 25 years to complete.

Sokkuram
The shrine consists of various set of guardians, including four lokapalas, arhats, monks, bodhisattvas (a rare 11 headed Avalokiteshvara), and various other figures …

Arranged around a central Buddha figure.
Sokkuram—domed chamber, circular in plan with a narrow vestibule preceded by an anitchamber…
The colossal granite Buddha gazes east across the valley…
Shakyamuni Buddha, Sokkuram, Korea
Other colossal Buddha's, like this one at Sinheungsa, were built at this time period as part of a Zen Temple complex.
The Koryo Dynasty (918-1392)

As political and religious problems marked the latter years of the Silla Dynasty, several centuries of imperial control and revival of Buddhist fortunes occurred during the Koryo Dynasty.

By 1200, a particularly Korean creation, known as Son Buddhism, combined aspects of the traditional discipline, meditation and study of sutras to form a Korean system, unique in Asian Buddhism that is still flourishing today.
Courtly Patronage of Koryo Buddhism resulted in refinement and elegance.

Unfortunately few examples exist.

However, this silk painting depicts Amitabha, his bodhisattvas and attendants. (typical of this time)

Delicate, with haloes, the simple forms indicate the Korean style.

*Amatabha and Eight Great Bodhisattvas, 14th century, silk and gold on silk.*
Later Korean Buddhist Art, especially after the Japanese invasion (16th century), became identified with ‘folk art’ tradition.

Hastened by the revival of Confucianism and anti-Buddhist courts, Buddhist art captured traditional, shamanistic traditions.

*Dramatic, colorful, variety and imagination.*
This later work reflects the Shamanistic culture

Ten Kings of Hell...

What is awaiting those who fail to follow the path of salvation.

King of the Hell of Darkness

This Korean version depicts the king dressed as a Confucian bureaucrat, surrounded by attendants. They are separated from the scene below which consists of gruesome tortures.
Chinese Buddhists believed that after someone died, the Ten Kings of Hell would look at the good and bad deeds he had done in his life, and decide whether he should be reborn to a better life or a worse one.
He could come back as a god at best, or a demon, human, animal or hungry ghost. At worst, he could end up in hell.

With the rise in popularity of Buddhism, the idea became popular that souls would live in space until reincarnation.

In the Taoist tradition it is believed that hungry ghosts can arise from people whose deaths have been violent or unhappy.
Both Buddhism and Taoism share the idea that hungry ghosts can emerge from neglect or desertion of ancestors.

Hungry Ghost 800-1200 Japan
The theme transforms the Indian Buddhist view of judgment after death into a typically Chinese bureaucratic process.

Before being permitted to transmigrate into the next life, a soul is tried by a different king each week for seven weeks; it is sent to the eighth king on the hundredth day, to the ninth after a year, and to the tenth the third year after death.

Met Museum website.