

A belief system is not only what you believe in, but it is also away of life in many cases. Belief systems can be spread all around the world in many different ways. The spreading of these belief systems have effected many different nations around the world.

One belief system that spread to many different places was Buddhism. Buddhism started off in India but then spread. The main goal of Buddhism is to become "Buddha" or enlightened. The believers in Buddhism had to practice the 4 Noble Truths and the 8 fold Path which helped them on their way to reaching Nirvana, the highest goal of Buddhist beliefs, and enlightenment. Buddhism spread to many different countries such as China. It was able to spread to China from India by cultural diffusion. Buddhism was not spread by conquest. Instead it travelled by caravans along the Silk Road. So people who converted did it by choice, not because of force. The activities and examples of the monks were very important in this process. It is still practiced in China. The Chinese people that believe in Buddhism have to meditate. Buddhism has changed since it spread to Chinese culture, but it is still Buddhism.

Another belief system that spread was communism. Communism started as an idea during the Industrial Revolution that there should be no more classes, that all people are equal. Karl Marx believed that workers and their bosses were in a class struggle with each other. He predicted the workers would win and create a classless society. Everybody would share as equals. Communism first started in Russia which became the Soviet Union. During the Cold War Communism took over parts of Asia and it controlled China, North Korea and North Vietnam. Communist leaders in these countries

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## Anchor Paper – Thematic Essay

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studied the ideas of Marx and Lenin. Some trained in the Soviet Union when Stalin ruled. They took these ideas back to their countries. Communism spread to North Korea & Vietnam helped cause the Korean & Vietnam wars. In both cases, the North was communist and the south was not. Communism unified Vietnam after the war. North & South Korea stayed split where the North was communist and the south was democratic. In China Mao used communism to create communes and eliminate landowners. Mao's ideas about communism were forced on people with the Red Book. His ideas differed from Stalin's ideas about communism. It is still alive in China, it is not as powerful a belief as it was before, but it is still there. Those were all the ways communism beliefs effected Asia. It was spread by not only cultural diffusion but by taking over those weak nations and turning them into believers of Communism.

Belief systems have been around forever and will continue to keep growing. They have spread around the world and effect the world today.