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HIS113: World Civilization I: OB Home Work Week # 7

Film & Response: The Buddha

Question 1

Several events inspired Siddhartha to seek life outside the palace and solve the "pain of existence puzzle." It all began with the young Siddhartha watching a farmer working on the plantation. He paid significant attention to the laborer's toil, effort, and struggle, something he had never witnessed in his privileged lifestyle ("The Life of the Buddha Full BBC Documentary" 12:04-12:17). After watching a farmer dig, he noticed that the opened ground allowed a bird to consume an unearthed worm. Two things came into his mind, including the suffering of humans and the interconnectedness of various factors. Accordingly, this led him to a mental state that triggered his road to enlightenment.

Question 2

Siddhartha faced several challenges in his quest for enlightenment. Notably, his father was not ready to allow him to experience suffering. However, after finally escaping the outside world, Siddhartha began to learn the cruel realities of life. For instance, after observing the older man, he became aware that aging was a compulsory process everyone had to experience ("The Life of the Buddha Full BBC Documentary" 17:26-17:34). Siddhartha learned other realities, including the immortality of human beings, shocking him as he sought enlightenment.

Question 3

The process of enlightenment required Siddhartha to utilize “The Middle Way.” Enlightenment is a state of mind characterized by harmony. As explained in the documentary, it requires an individual to exercise mindfulness or a form of awareness of the body “which neither ignored it nor tries to master it forcefully” (“The Life of the Buddha Full BBC Documentary” 30:51-30:54). Accordingly, this state enabled Siddhartha to achieve the state of enlightenment.

Question 4

“The Middle Way” remains a significant pathway for mindfulness and meditation practiced globally today. It creates a unique understanding of the human body and empowers people to appreciate their environment. As a result, it creates a balance that allows people to acknowledge their strengths and make meaning of their environment. More important, “The Middle Way” prepares one for suffering as awareness enables one to view the bigger picture.

Work Cited

"The Life of the Buddha Full BBC Documentary." *YouTube*, Uploaded by LadyHedonist, 30 September 2013, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B1Qhja4OhdM.