

Lynette Niebla

Dr. Lyndell O'Hara

HIS 113: World Civilization I

March 6, 2023

The Buddha

1. What events led Siddhartha to leave the palace and seek answers to the "pain of existence"?

- There were four signs that led Siddhartha to leave the palace and seek answers to the "pain of existence," signs that revealed the realities of life that had been hidden from him growing up. The first sign was his encounter with an aging old man, the second was his notice of a sick man twisted with a disease, the third was a corpse being carried to the funeral pyre, and the fourth was a man wrapped in a robe carrying a begging bowl. He experienced the realization of old age, disease, death, and poverty. He believed it was urgent to do something about these fundamental facts of human existence, so he left home to find his own answers to life's suffering.

2. What challenges did he face in his quest to find enlightenment?

- For one, Siddhartha had to basically sneak out of the palace in order to go on his journey. He then experienced suffering in the cities he visited, like disease and suffering. He also came to the realization that in order to find solutions for all these problems, he would have to challenge the Brahmin religion and its beliefs. The meditation he took part in also involved critical conditions, for example, fasting, leading him to almost die from starvation. Lastly was his encounter with the demon Mara, the Lord of ego and illusion, making any horror real inside of Siddhartha's mind.

3. Describe "the Middle Way" of peace and harmony he sought.

The Middle Way was a state of tuneful harmony that led Siddhartha to the state of mind he was looking for. The goal was to have mindfulness or awareness of the body, not ignoring it or trying too hard to find it, but finding a middle ground in its use. When first following the middle way, it led him to the countryside, where he experienced pain and suffering but still sought to find enlightenment in his journey.