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Critical Analysis of Civilizations and Food Production

Introduction

Agriculture triggered a significant change in the society. For many years, people used to hunt and gather food from the local environment. They depended on plants and animals provided by nature. Farming was invented around 200 years ago, and this enabled individuals to access new sources of food and energy that transformed the way people lived. The increase in the production of food resulted in a rise in population that helped the humans to develop settlements. The increase in population led to the development of civilizations. Civilizations enabled people to practice agriculture which resulted in increased food supply, attain economic stability and began a settled life.

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African Civilization

The introduction of new methods of new crops and methods of food production from South Asia, agriculture changed many societies in Africa (McKay 271). The range of chances was dependent on geography and climate variations. Some of the communities such as Bantus grasped an opportunity of domestication of animals and agriculture. They also took advantage of skills of iron working that developed in western and northern Africa that later spread across the southern and central part of Africa. In Africa Agriculture started very early and the knowledge of cultivating plants moved from ancient Judea to the west. Improved agriculture helped farmers to cultivate crops such as sorghum, millet, and sorghum among others (Guissepi 05). A majority of African communities started a sedentary lifestyle gradually that include clearing the villages, depending on root crops such as cassava and yams, fishing and clearing fields. Those who were hunters and gatherers only lived in the separate parts of African continent.

Settle agriculture continued to spread in different parts of Africa particularly East Africa between 1500 and 1000 B.C.E. People in this region raised cattle, grew cereals and used tools made of stones and woods. The practice of keeping livestock spread rapidly compared to the cultivation of crops. Cattle were highly prized by people of this region. Most of the agreements of trade, political compacts, and marriage alliances involved cattle in negotiation. The spread of ironworking also influenced early societies in Africa. Better tools were improved that helped in the clearing of bush and other activities that led to the increase in food production (Guissepi 08).

Civilization had a negative impact as it caused displacement of some communities (McKay 272). With the rise in population due to increase in food production, there was a strain of natural resources including land for farming. As a result, coTe communities moved to search for greener pastures as the conflicts broke. As the people developed a settled life, they caused a change in climate as a result of cutting vegetation. Some

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communities found the change in climatic conditions as unfavorable, and hence they moved to other areas (New World Civilizations 02).

Modern life is still affected by African civilization. Agriculture remains the backbone of many parts of Africa. Most of the communities cultivate crops and domesticate animals. However, due to the limited resources including land, most of the people opt to do zero grazing especially on the part of livestock. The livestock is meant for milk or meat, and this has improved production to feed the population in developing countries in Africa

Western Ancient Civilization

Communities in different parts of America started gathering wild food and cultivating crops around 800 B.C.E (McKay 303). Some of the earliest crops include avocados, chilies, and beans. At one point those who were living what is now Mexico on Southern part began raising maize that was recognized as an important crop. Different types of maize were bread for a variety of use. Maize was considered as the source of life for human and hen had a religious meaning. In America, farming was not limited to the food stuff. Some of the communities that had settled along the coast practiced irrigation to grow crops such as cotton and beans among others. Advancement of agriculture had a significant impact on the people. Land cultivation brought a steady and reliable supply of food that contributed to high rate of fertility.

The population of Americans increased steadily that gave room to the rise of first urban societies. Political and religious structures began to be built in South America. It was a sign that people had already developed a settled life. Further, the surplus of agricultural produce gave rise to the trade, and this enabled to the individuals to get what they did not have as far as food was concerned (McKay 304).

The development of agriculture brought slavery and slave trade (The Age of Discovery 07). Individuals from African and other countries were sold to provide labor

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to the agricultural fields. This caused immense suffering to those who were under slavery. There was disruption of natural selection. For instance, a variety of various hybrid of maize were produced for different purposes. Some of the hybrids could not do well with fluctuating climatic conditions (McKay 305).

Western Ancient still affects the modern life. For instance, communities especially those along the coastal areas used irrigation to increase food supply. Today, irrigation is still practiced in arid and semi-arid areas. Some parts still experience low precipitation, and hence irrigation plays an important role in supplying crops with water to cater for the growing human population.

Middle East Civilization

The full civilization emerged about 300 B.C. in the Middle East in Tigris-Euphrates. Later on, it developed along the Nile region and spread to different parts of Middle East. Civilization provided a framework for the majority of developments that took place in the world history

(McKay 367). Agricultural civilization led to the emergence of cities as people did not live in towns. The rise of cities had a significant influence and power into the countryside. Further, cities depended on wider attributes of civilization among them political organization and trade which was extensive. Cities were not founded until when the Middle East produced enough food for consumption and surplus for trade. Merchants played the role of transporting food to the city to feed the growing population and carried goods from the city to other places. A solid political organization led to the formation of a legitimate government that helped in regulating the relationship between countryside and the cities (The New World 07).

Maya Civilization

The civilization changed the practices used in the production of food (NewWorld

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Civilizations 03). It enabled the communities to start reliable food production which was crucial to their well-being. The cycle of farming was linked to religion and astronomy. Since a majority of the Maya population engaged in agriculture for means of livelihood, management of natural resources including land resulted in a harvest that was more dependable and hence supporting economic growth. The increase in food production caused the Maya population to increase that forced people to look for other settlements. The quantity of agricultural production depended on the location. Some parts were more fertile than others, and this caused the people to raise fields to collect deposits of silt to improve soil fertility.

Nevertheless, Maya civilization on agriculture had also a bad effect. As more land was cleared to plant crops, soil lost its fertility quickly. As a result, the productivity to feed the growing population decline. Other activities that depended on agricultural produce such as trade also reduced due to the decline in the quantity of agricultural output (Craig 18).

Today, Maya community still practices agriculture to feed its population (New World Civilizations 04). Some of the methods used during the process of civilization are still practiced. For instance, waste management was critical especially during summers. Water is still managed through modern ways such as storage in tanks and other places for use when there is a dry spell.

Conclusion

From the analysis, it is apparent that the four civilizations have similarities as well as differences in food production. The development of agriculture enabled them to start urban settlements. Agricultural productivity increased, and there was a growth of cities. However, they employed different methods of agriculture which still affect the modern life.

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