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REVIEW OF THE BOOK: "GUNS, GERMS, AND STEEL"

The main focus of this research paper is to provide a clear review of the main issues within the book: "Guns, Germs and Steel". In this book, the author Jared Diamond tries to examine the immediate causes of racial and cultural forms of discrimination which lead to the events of the European civilization in South America and Africa. Diamond (23-69) argues that the unique environmental traits, which are composed of both plants and animals, for each region led to the evolution of the aforesaid civilization processes.

Notwithstanding, those regions with formidable farming lifestyle had intrinsic forms of plants and animals which catapulted the process of civilization, while the lands which lacked these formidable farming traits continued with their primitive lifestyle of hunting and gathering. The regions which possessed positive traits, required successful farming and later developed into larger towns. This form of togetherness later developed into a common language that facilitated early use of technologies.

Taking into account that other areas, which were occupied with hunters

and gatherers, lagged behind thus, providing an opportunistic base for the developed regions to penetrate them and explore their manner of life. Diamond further argues that with the end of Ice Age human beings had occupied major parts of the continents which resulted to a level playing field, making it challenging to foretell the next location for civilization (Diamond 123-209).

Despite the even spread of human beings, there were still differences created as a result of the unique environments which in fact determined the level of development of particular areas: depending on whether or not a land was fair for cultivation or for hunting and gathering. In his Polynesian experiment, Diamond (303-356) develops the story of two brothers of the same ancestry but separated by unique environmental differences witnessed in the continents.

In yet another example, Diamond develops the rationale behind the early forms of civilizations within the primitive hunters and gatherers. For instance, in 1532, about 168 Spaniards killed tens of thousands of Inca soldiers and displaced the remaining ones through the capture of their emperor: Atahualpa within a span of twenty four hours. This act of war was made possible since they possessed technologically-advanced weapons composed of guns and swords, while their enemies possessed such primitive tools as clubs and hand axes (Diamond 377-409). Furthermore, through their developed creativity and early advancements in medicine, the Spanish settlers introduced small pox to the aforementioned communities of Incas that led to civil war and later captured their emperor. Basically, the Europeans possessed such technical facets as ships, killer germs as well as politically established leadership which they used at the expense of the primitive communities.

It is safe to assume that the Europeans possessed an upper hand over the matter because of the established level of food production.

According to Diamond (389-446), the exact basis for technological advancements resulted from the vast production of food. As such, these communities which practiced both plant and animal farming, developed into areas of origins for "Guns, germs and Steel". Unlike hunters and gatherers, their counterparts farmers specialized in such farming activities which maximized their use of land since a small piece of farm could support high number of people: high birth rate. This aspect led to surplus food production which further allowed newer ventures to take course: for example, the art of inventing and scribing.

From food production, Diamond further argues that there was developed: "Guns, Germs and Steel". Germs. It is safe to assume that most of the epidemic diseases of human beings came by as a result of close proximities with animals. For instance AIDS is believed to have originated from apes. The fundamental aspect of development of extensive population densities, as a result of farming, provided a formidable ground for thriving such epidemics as small pox, malaria and chicken pox. The spread of these epidemics to the undomesticated section of the globe led to immense levels of death since these people did not develop immunities for such diseases (Diamond 440-456).

Scribing. The developments of farming zones into densely populated towns led to the spread of the written form of language. This scribing technique was crucial for the purpose of record keeping in respect to tax and food management. Technology: as a result of stable food supply, these farming communities supported innovations of both and ideas and



tools. Hunters and gatherers, who lacked these skills, attributed to tool sophistication techniques. They were considered vulnerable as their lands and properties were confiscated by the powerful farming communities. Centralized Government as a form of Leadership. The resultant densely populated communities paved way for cooperation of different chiefdoms and later stated that they need established laws to govern them. This aspect led to the formulation of such laws as division of labor, taxes and irrigation schemes as a whole (Diamond 450-470).

