Sample Essay Scoring 3 of 5

On the Movement of People

An enduring issue is a challenge or problem that has been debated or discussed across time. An enduring issue is one that many societies have attempted to address with varying degrees of success. One such issue is the disruption caused by movement of large numbers of people through migration and conquest.

The world does not see fit to give human beings the unlimited resources that we crave. To make matters worse, resources that we need are not distributed evenly across the world. Some regions are more suitable to human habitation than others. Some regions lose their suitability through climate change or human waste. When our location does not suit us, we have to move. These mass migrations became increasingly problematic as the world became more populated and movement into another region inevitably led to contact with other people. There really is not a time in memory when this ever went well.

Document 2 is a primary source revealing the struggles of the Roman Empire against migration and invasion of Germanic tribes. The cultural differences between these tribal groups and Romans were wide. In this excerpt, author Salvian praises the values of the Goths and Vandals, but Salvian’s opinion is not necessarily representative. See works by St. Jerome of the sacking of cities as “barbarians” move through the empire. Note that history books record these migration waves and invasions as done by “barbarians”. That is how historians remembered them, mostly because the histories were written by Romans. The Goths were pushed westward partly because of attacks by Huns. Vandals and Allemani and related Germanic peoples were moving to find land and freedom as population rose. There was a great deal of trouble with Rome. Roman legions could not hold back migrations across the Danube in the 5th century. The Roman economy and size was not sustainable. To the east, attempts to integrate Goths led to battles where a Roman emperor was even killed. Refugee camps teemed with suffering. It was a mess.

Document 3 is an excerpt by an author lamenting the migration of Angles, Saxons, and Jutes from the continent into Britain after the Roman legions left in the 5th century. Britain was populated by Celts when the Romans came. Roman influence in Britain was less than in France because they were there less time. The infighting among the Briton tribes when the Roman legions pulled out was influenced by mercenaries that some kings paid to come in and help fight their Briton neighbors. The problem with mercenaries is, they eventually realize they don’t need you anymore. A wave of Saxon migration followed, Germanic people coming into Britain, eventually pushing many of the Celts off into the “Celtic Fringe” of Wales, Scotland, and Cornwall. Britain would not be invaded again until 1066. Anglo-Saxon culture largely replaced Celtic.

Is it an invasion or a migration? Depends on which side of the fence you’re on. We human beings seem doomed to be unable to share the world’s bounty. We’re tied to our clans and tribes.