

# Ancient and medieval cities history question 2



Technological Innovations and Growth Technological innovations have been a part of the factors which influence society for as long as we have had civilization. The development of the wheel, the discovery of fire and other basics form the root of our civilization but further advances such as knowing how to transport large quantities of fresh water from one end of the city to another as well as transporting and storing large quantities of food also allow cities to grow in unimagined ways (Dunn et. al. 2006). The example of Rome in this regard is quite applicable since the historical record which we have shows us that the Romans certainly used technology to their advantage since it helped them run their city more efficiently.

For example, figure 3. 4 shows a boat being towed across a river which means river traffic is being controlled by the administrators on land. This certainly shows that the city had grown to a point where traffic on the river could cause confusion and even traffic jams which had to be avoided in order to keep Rome running efficiently. Just as the Romans had created pathways for clean water coming into the city and pathways for removing dirty water out of the city, their river transport systems allowed more to be done in less time.

Of course the input of more goods coming from around the empire meant that the Romans needed specific ways and better methods for storing the goods that were coming to them. To handle this, they created granaries like the ones shown in figure 3. 5 which allowed food and grain to remain fresh for longer periods of time than before. As reported by Dunn et. al. (2006), technological innovations allow cities to build more and grow at a faster rate than other cities and the expansion of Rome not only created the requirement for improved technology, it also answered the requirements

with improvements in technology.

In fact, such innovations are just a few of the total innovations which the Romans called on to help them in growing their city in a stable manner. For example, the presence of social services such as a city wide fire management system and the ability of their engineers to build multistory houses and apartment buildings only helped in expanding the city (Wikipedia, 2007). At the same time, their engineers and technologists also helped in expanding the overall size of the Roman Empire with the creation of empire wide systems of management that were greatly helped by the Roman development of paved roads and tracks.

These roads allowed not only the fast movement of troops and legions but also of goods and services that permitted the people living in Rome to have a higher standard of living. As Rome grew in stature both as a city and as an empire, it is certainly likely that more people were attracted to Rome due to the opportunities it provided as much as for the beauty that it offered.

#### Works Cited

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Word Count: 539