

Good essay about technological context- the physician

[Entertainment](#), [Movie](#)



Scientific discovery and technology have had far reaching positive and negative impact on the society from time immemorial (Neumann and Tunis 378). Though there is no universal definition of technology, a succinct definition is offered by the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, as " the practical application of knowledge " in solving problems or inventing some other useful things (Merriam-Webster Para 1 and 2). In the movie *The Physician*, Philipp Stölzl depicts the role of medical technology in solving mysterious infections and maladies, the laborious challenges undergone by the medics to acquire medical technology and how social and religious belief antagonizes technological development. This paper argues a thesis that advancement in medical technology calls for a sacrifice of a few ambitious individuals, like Robert Cole, who have the passion to seek and apply new knowledge and to defy the antagonistic forces emanating from culture and religion.

The movie, *The Physician*, exalts the role played by the technology in solving the most horrible human suffering of the time, where other systems have failed. The film is set in 11th-century, in the English town, at a time when the medical technology has not significantly developed, and there are no experts to carry out surgical operations or advanced medical treatments.

Consequently, the protagonist has to watch her mother die helplessly after struggling with a mysterious illness. Being a Christina society, it is believed that forces of darkness cause the sickness that the mother eventually succumbs to. As a young boy, Cole swears to study medicines to help people in the future. Orphaned, he joins a barber surgeon as an apprentice, where he learns some basic medieval medicinal skills like bloodletting, dental

extraction and cupping therapy. Unfortunately, the barber contracts cataract and cannot get help from the English people. However, Cole manages to get the help of a Jewish doctor who manages to treat the barber, and he heals fully. At this point, the audience admires the role of Jewish medicinal technology in remedying health complication where the existing technology (in this case English and medieval medical technology) has failed. In the process, he learns about the renowned Persian medic and medical teacher Ibn Sina. He decides to move on to be trained in medicines by Ibn Sina. Ibn Sina's apprenticeship to help Cole a great deal in solving further maladies, especially after he moves on to Egypt where he learns further medical skills. When massive deaths arise from plague arises, he learns to link the oriental flies to the plague. Using basic hygienic principles, he discerns that what is called by the Egyptina as Black Death could be carried by the fleas, and suggests the use of a rat poison to suppress the pest's (oriental fleas) population and consequently manage the deaths, This works miraculously. It can, therefore, be seen that technology comes to offer solutions where traditional beliefs and religions merely created a mystery. He makes a further development by conducting an autopsy, contrary to the tradition and religious doctrines, and in the process learns more about an appendectomy. This knowledge later helps him treat others, like Shah to whom he does appendectomy when he gets vermiform appendix. Probably, had Cole been a conformist, to the traditions and religion, he would not have been in a position to help.

The movie shows that as an application of knowledge, technological development demands constant pursuit of new knowledge and applying the

same to solve existing problems. It also calls for the willingness to sacrifice and go extra mile to find solutions, even if that means defying the norms.

Works Cited

Merriam-Webster. The Merriam-Webster Dictionary, n. d. Accessed October 22, 2014

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