Debating two opposite ideologies of conquerors: han dynasty and roman empire

History, Empires

Han and Roman attitudes, though structurally different, share a positive perspective on technological advances. Han China embraced technology with little to no opposition, gaining popularity with both high ranking officials and the general citizenry alike whereas Roman society grudgingly accepted technology with an air of superiority and disdain. Due to key cultural differences in Han and Roman society, their notion of technology splinters off into two similar but distinct schools of thought based on the influence of the patriarchal society and the ideology of the mandate of heaven in Han China, and the emphasis on philosophy and religion in Roman society.

Han China holds technology in high regard due to the heavy influence of its patriarchal society and the ideology of a mandate of heaven. Huan Tan, an upper-class Han philosopher, (Doc. #3) exemplifies how the role of a patriarchal society, combined with concept of the mandate of heaven affected their perspective on technology. As examined in an excerpt from New Discourses, Han Chinese emperors are seen as benevolent, god chosen rulers entrusted with the well-being of their people. This concept is further explored in a correspondence to a local official from a Han government official (Doc. #1) concerning flood prevention. The idea that higher ranking persons are expected to attend to the welfare of their population is reflected in the concept that work regarding technological advances is to be handled by the most qualified individuals to best serve the population. The Han Dynasty's cultural norms allow for a favorable perspective on technology based on its societal structure.

In contrast to Han Dynasty's attitude towards technology, the Roman empire reluctantly accepts technology as it provides an increased amount of ease in daily life but scrutinizes work associated with technological advances as Roman society places value on enlightened thinking. Seneca, an upper-class Roman philosopher (Doc. #5) embodies the thought that work associated with tools and craftsmanship, an extension of technology implies a less elevated mind, therefore lacking Roman society's emphasized values of enlightened, philosophical thinking. Cicero, an upper-class Roman political leader dictates the idea of craftsmanship is vulgar as it is not skill that is hired, but rather labor. (Doc. #2). The aforementioned concept of scrutinizing laborious work as it reflects the lack of higher level enlightened thinking is manifested in Cicero's observation of the working class. Although Roman society accepted technological advances, they regarded work associated with technology with contempt as it lacks the higher skill and elevated thinking that the Roman society valued.

Despite their key differences due to societal values and cultural norms, Han and Roman societies both agree that technology benefits the general population and facilitates ease in day to day life. History of the Early Han Dynasty, (Doc. #7) endorses the idea of great benefit for little labor due to the implementation of technology. This paints technology in a positive light, as it's creation lessens the work of the common people. Likewise, Frontius, a Roman general and water commissioner for the city of Rome boasts the accomplishments of aqueducts and Roman technological advances in water transport (Doc. #6). Technology is regarded with a positive connotation in

Roman text as it increases the comfort of the general population as they go about their daily activities. In both the Han Chinese and Roman Empire, regardless of their cultural differences, both agree that technology is a valuable asset to their respective societies.

Han and Roman societies, due to their societal differences and values their respective cultures emphasize, have distinct perspectives on technological advances. Han Chinese society's view on technology was influenced by ideas of patriarchal beliefs accompanied by the concept of a mandate of heaven whereas the Roman Empire was influenced by their emphasis on philosophical elevated thinking. Nonetheless, the general attitude towards technology is positive as it provides a more efficient approach to daily life.