



Mains Practice Question

Q. Industrialisation and Colonisation complemented each other in establishing British supremacy across the globe. Analyse. (150 words)

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Approach

- Begin by defining the terms Industrialisation and Colonisation.
- Explain how Colonisation and Industrialisation were mutually complementary
- Conclude with the emergence of British hegemony in political, economic and cultural realm

Introduction

Industrialisation refers to the emergence of machine based production using inanimate power resources like steam or electricity. Colonisation on the other hand, refers to the practice of acquiring colonies by conquest or other means and using them to serve its own economic and political interests.

Body

The first wave of colonisation ,during the Age of Exploration, was dominated by countries like Spain and Portugal. But in the second wave, with pioneering start of the Industrial Revolution, Britain emerged as numero uno amongst colonisers. Industrialisation led to:

- Emergence of new ideas.
- Increase in scale of production.
- Development of modern equipment.
- Improvement in transportation and communication. All these provided disproportionate advantage to Britain over other colonising powers and led to expansion of its territories.
- With more colonies under its control, it was able to satiate the demand of raw material for its industries back at home.
- As industries grew, more and more raw materials were needed to feed those industries.
- India and Egypt were good sources of cotton, Congo and the East Indies, of rubber, other products needed were food grains, tea, coffee, indigo, tobacco and sugar.
- To obtain these, it was necessary to change the pattern of production in the countries where they could be grown.
- Thus, the colonists forced the cultivation of only one or two crops which they needed as raw materials for their industries.
- Later with an augmented scale of production, domestic markets got saturated and the surplus was diverted towards the colonies like India, turning them into markets.

With inexorable pace of industrialization aided by the raw material, manpower for labour and army from the colonies, Britain established Pax Britannica.

Conclusion

This domination was not confined only to the political, economic and military sphere. British culture,

language, educational and administrative structure too enjoyed global prominence, making Britain a veritable global colonial power.

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