

Examrace

Industrial Revolution, Introduction and Attributes of Pre – Industrial Society

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Introduction

- The Industrial Revolution was the transition to new manufacturing processes that occurred in the 18th century. The desire to produce more goods at low cost to make higher profits led to the industrial revolution and further growth of capitalism. The industrial revolution began in England in about 1750. It was then that machines began to take over some of the work of men and animals in the production of goods and commodities. That is why we often say that the industrial revolution was the beginning of 'machine age'.
- (Revolution: A word signifying transformation and non-reversible break between an older system and a new one. Radical change in government, usually accomplished through violence that may also result in changes to the economic system, social structure, and cultural values. The ancient Greeks viewed revolution as the undesirable result of societal breakdown; a strong value system, firmly adhered to, was thought to protect against it. With the advent of Renaissance humanism, there arose the belief that radical changes of government are sometimes necessary and good, and the idea of revolution took on more positive connotations. Besides its use in politics, the term also found uses like Agricultural Revolution, Commercial Revolution, and Cultural Revolution.)

Attributes of Pre -Industrial Society

- Limited production (i.e. artisanship vs. mass production)
- Primarily an agricultural economy
- Limited division of labour. In pre-industrial societies, production was relatively simple and the number of specialized crafts was limited.
- Limited variation of social classes
- Parochialism—Social theories hold that communications were limited between human communities in pre-industrial societies. Few had the opportunity to see or hear beyond their own village. In contrast, industrial societies grew with the help of faster means of communication, having more information at hand about the world, allowing knowledge transfer and cultural diffusion between them.
- Pre-industrial societies developed largely in rural communities. Capitalism developed largely in urban areas.

Why England Pioneered in Industrial Revolution?

England of the 18th century by having the following favourable conditions led to beginning of industrial revolution within its territories

- Geographical situation of England was an advantage with regards to sea transport and this helped the growth of British overseas empire to expand its market.
- England's "feudal class" and the "gentry" (landowners without feudal titles) had favourable and Competitive attitude towards economic change and capital accumulation
- On the other hand, England had, in its territories, the necessary raw materials like coal and iron ore. England's overseas superiority also helped to a better access and control of raw materials and a cheap labour besides the slaves in the overseas territories.
- High population growth and "enclosure" movements transforming peasantry to "wage competing laborers" also reinforced this advantage.
- Moreover, England's manufactured exports since the beginnings of the industrial revolution had been Wool, cotton and hardware. If compared, for example to France's silk and other luxury goods, England's goods had a steady demand and a larger access to other markets.
- During the 17th and 18th Centuries England had begun to monopolize overseas trade in such a way that all its wars resulted with the acquisition of a new overseas territory.
- Lower prices besides better quality made possible by industrialized production increased the demand for English goods in foreign markets.

Therefore, to summarize the prerequisites for the industrial revolution, it can be noted as follows:

- Sufficient and accelerated capital accumulation.
- Availability and sufficient size of domestic and foreign market.
- Access and control of raw materials
- Free and cheap labour.
- A political and institutional framework facilitating innovation.

World Wars

- The First World War (1914-18) ended with the birth of a new system, the socialist system in the world. The war also sowed the seeds of another world war. These two developments have conditioned the subsequent decades in a big way. In 1939 the Second World War broke out. The Second World War was fought between the two blocs-the Allied powers and the Axis powers.

- The socialist bloc joined the Allies. The Allies won the war. The war ended with the destruction of the old capitalist imperialist dominated world. The world now was divided into two blocs-Western or capitalist blocs, headed by the neo-colonialist power, the United States of America (USA) and the Socialist bloc headed by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR).
- The USA and the USSR emerged as the two super powers. Two blocs represented two contradictory systems. Conflict between them was inevitable. The conflict was turned into Cold War because the world meanwhile experienced a qualitative change.

World War I

Introduction

- In 1914, a war began in Europe which soon engulfed almost the entire world. The damage caused by the war had no precedent in history. In earlier wars, the civilian populations were not generally involved and casualties were confined to the warring armies. It quickly became the “people’s war” to which civilian as well as soldiers were directly and totally committed.
- The war which began in 1914 was a “Total War” in which all resources of warring states were mobilized. It affected the economy of entire world. In its impact also, the war had no precedent. It marked a turning point in world History. It bore fruit in revolution, and sowed the seeds of new and even more deadly conflicts in future.
- It set the pattern for an age of violence that has continued through most of twentieth century. The battles of the war were fought in Europe, Asia, Africa, and Pacific. Because of the unprecedented extent of its spread and its total nature, it is known as First World War.

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