

Discuss three developments that enabled Great Britain to achieve a dominant economic position between 1700-1830. (2000 #4)

The three developments that enabled Great Britain to achieve a dominant economic position between 1700-1830 were, the Agricultural Revolution which led to the Industrial Revolution, the supreme naval power, her domination of world trade in conjunction with her vast colonial empires gained in the wars. The Agricultural Revolution led to Industrial Revolution because it transformed farming techniques and used improved methods of cultivation and stock raising, thus increasing the food supply in England and less people needed to produce it. Labor was thus released to other pursuits. Population also increased because of the results of better farming which produced more food. Growth of population stimulated the expansion of industry. The Industrial Revolution in Britain was a process of shifting from hand tools to power machinery. It brought about many useful inventions, many in the textile industry. This resulted in the rise of cotton industry from 9th place to 1st place in Britain and it made up almost half of all British exports. Other inventions involved machinery like the steam engine and the locomotive. Another factor that enabled Great Britain to achieve a dominant economic position was the international trade. By the 18th century, Britain was self-supporting and an exporter of grain. Foreign trade also precipitated the process of industrialization as it created demand for the products of British industry. Another major factor in Britain’s successful economy were the colonial empires making Britain a Mediterranean power and the British added to their American holdings at the expense of France. British trade with America and the East tripled between 1755 and 1785. The acquisition of India after 1763 also affected Great Britain’s economy in a positive way. The last major factor in the successful economy of Great Britain was its naval power. By decimating the French and Spanish navies, the British navy ended any possible threat to the British islands from Napoleon, and ensured British naval superiority for much of the 19th century.

A...Agricultural Revolution:

1. The British agricultural revolution is associated with the consequent process of industrialization in that:
   a. It involved farming on a large scale instead of the medieval open fields cultivated in strips by peasants.
b. Because of less need of farmers, more people worked in other fields like growing factories. Mobile Labor was common because many farmers would move into the city to work in factories.

c. There was a transformation of the village community of mostly self-subsistent peasants into a community of agricultural laborers whose basic standards of living relied more on national and international market conditions rather than the state of the weather.

d. There was a large increase in agricultural productivity.

2. The Agricultural Revolution occurred because of the domination of landowners in the government.

e. Landlord needed full control over his land.

f. Saw barrier in old village system of open fields, common lands, and semi collector methods of cultivation.

g. Improvement also required investment of capital.

h. Since great landowners controlled parliament they passed hundreds of enclosure acts. They authorized enclosure by fences.

   ii. Resulted in strict regime of private ownership and individual management.

   iii. Small owners sold out or were excluded in various ways.

   iii. Ownership of land in England became concentrated in the hands of a relatively small class of wealthy landlords.

3. Results:

   a. Result was the transformation of farming.

   b. Use of improved methods of cultivation and stock raising.

   c. Made more use of fertilizers

   d. Introduced new implements such as drill seeder and horse hoe.

   e. Brought in new crops such as turnip and a more scientific system of crop rotation.

   f. Attempted to breed large sheep and fatter cattle.

   g. Food supply in England was increased, while a small percentage of the population was needed to produce it. Labor was thus released to other pursuits.

   h. Greater number of English country people became wage earners.

   i. English people became mobile; they would go where the jobs were or where wages were slightly higher.
B...Industrial Revolution: the process of shifting form hand tools to power machinery.

1. Background:

   i. Until 1780, the work of the world was done with hand tools.
   j. Power was supplied by human or animal muscle reinforced by levers or pulleys or the running of water or mobbing air.

2. New accomplishments:

   a. Power supplied by human manipulation
   b. More recondite forms of energy found in steam, electricity, combustion of gases and most recently within atoms.

3. Inventions:

   a. Fly shuttle invented by John Kay: machine in which only one person instead of two was needed to operate a loom.
   b. Spinning Jenny 1760: It was a mechanized spinning wheel. They were first operated by hand.
   c. Water frame: invented by Richard Arkwright in 1769, it was used for the multiple spinning of many threads.
   d. Steam Engine: invented in the 1780's by Arkwright. It was used to drive his spinning machine.
   e. Cotton Gin: Invented by Eli Whitney. This invention was used to speed up the removal of seeds.
   f. Power loom: invented by Edmund Cartwright in 1785. It was used to improve the speed and quality of weaving.

4. Results of the industrial revolution:

   a. Cotton rose from the 9th place to be number 1 among British industries in the same year. By 1820 it made up almost half of all British exports.
   b. Economically significant steam engine used to drive the pumps in the coal mines.
   c. Improvements of Newcomen's engine were made by James Watt, because of all the fuel used in the engine.
   d. Soon after 1800 the steam engine was successfully used to propel river boats, notably on the Hudson in 1807, by Robert Fulton who imported the improved engine made by Watt.
   e. Watt's engine first became a locomotive when it was put into practical uses in the coal fields. George Stephenson's rocket: was the first fully satisfactory locomotive.
f. By 1840 the era of railroad construction was under way in both Europe and the U.S.

5. Transport improvements
   a. The developments of canals can be regarded as one of the foundations of industrialization.
   b. Roads were extended and improved throughout the 19th century with the growth of turnpikes.
      i. This decreased traveling times and therefore reduced prices of commodities.

C. Rise in Population cannot be attributed to an influx of people from countries, but to a rise in fertility and a fall in mortality.

1. Between 1740-1820, the death rate fell almost continuously from an estimated 35.8 per 1000 for the years 1730-1740 to 21.1 per 1000 for the years 1811-1821.
   a. Influences operating to reduce the incidence of death.
      i. The introduction of root crops made it possible to feed more cattle in the winter months and so to supply fresh meat throughout the year.
      ii. The substitutions of wheat for inferior cereals and an increased consumption of vegetables straightened resistance to disease.
      iii. Higher standards of personal cleanliness lessened the dangers and infection.
   iv. The larger towns were paved, drained and supplied with running water.
   v. Knowledge of medicine developed, dispensaries increased.
   vi. More attention was paid to such things as the disposal of refuse and the proper burial of the dead.

2. Growth of population stimulated the expansion of industry.
   a. There was an increase of availability of labor which was more mobile in becoming less peasant orientated.
i. This was important as a predominantly large peasant community holds back progress due to the lack of investment. In this way the economy could advance and encourage progress.

D. International trade: the commonest way, by which an economy can develop from a pre-industrial to an industrial state.

1. By the 18th century, Britain was self-supporting in foodstuffs and was an exporter of grain.
   a. In return for commodities from other countries, Britain manufactured goods of all kinds especially those made of wool, iron, and leather.

2. Foreign trade precipitated the process of industrialization as it created a demand for the products of British industry.
   a. It gave access to raw materials which both widened the range and cheapened the products of British industry.
   b. It provided an economic surplus which helped to finance industrial expansion and agricultural improvement.
   c. It helped create a business ethic that promoted home trade as well as foreign trade.
   d. It helped the expansion of large towns and industrial centers.

E. Banking system:

1. To start, the bank was the government’s banker: managing the Government’s accounts; the recoinage of 1696, providing and arranging loans to the Government.

2. It was also a commercial bank, dealing in bills- the then equivalent of overdraft finance, furnishing finance for trade. It took deposits and issued notes, and with the development of the issue function it would double the Effect of out coined Money.

3. Great Britain also made money from the insurance best known as Lloyds. Lloyds of London Insurance Company first established in 1687.

4. London became the world’s clearinghouse and financial center. Progressive countries in other lands looked to Britain as their model, hoping to learn from its advanced industrial methods, and to imitate its parliamentary political system.
F...Supreme British Navy

1 In order to maintain superiority at sea, British marines protected the British alliances on the Continent, and so by diverting the expense of France.

2 As the navies role in protecting commerce increased, the Royal Navy expanded further, from 105 ships of the line at mid-century to 195 in 1790.

3 Building on earlier improvements in sails and rigging, charts and navigational techniques, the size and quality of ships improved.

A Decisive naval confrontations in the 18th century:

i...British navy defeated a Spanish fleet in 1718, thereby preventing an invasion of Sicily.

ii...It defeated a French fleet in 1759, making impossible any French plan to assist the rebels against the British monarch.

iv...By the end of the Seven Years War, all the French establishments in India, as in Africa and America, were at the mercy of the British. The French overseas lay prostrate, and France itself was again detached from the overseas world on which much of its economy rested.

v...At the Battle of Trafalgar from the Napoleonic Wars (1799-1815), Nelson destroyed a French fleet on its way to land troops in Italy. By decimating the French and Spanish navy, Nelson ended any possible threat to the British islands from Napoleon and ensured British naval superiority for much of the 19th century.

G. New Economic Theories:

1. The principle of laissez-fair - Adam Smith in "The Wealth of Nations"

i. government should not interfere with business
ii. what is good for entrepreneurs is good for everyone
iii. free competition gives people the chance to do the job they do best
iv. governments only duty is to keep peace and order

2. Effects of population growth

i. Thomas Malthus (1798) "An Essay on the Principle of Population"

a. declared that population always grows faster than food supply
b. supply of workers becomes greater than the demand
3. Socialist Ideas

i. cooperative communities

a. Utopia - an ideal society

i. Charles Fourier - wanted to set up small communities where people would enjoy their work

H...Colonial Empires:

1. British were the greatest winners in the War of the Spanish Succession. Union of England and Scotland had taken place during the war, therefore making Britain a power in the Mediterranean.

2. The British added to their American holdings at the expense of France.

3. The asiento extorted from Spain won from France was the most valuable gain. The asiento, by permitting one shipload of British goods to be brought each year to Poto Bello in Panama, also provided opportunities for illicit trade in nonhuman cargoes.

4. The Spanish empire was pried open, and British merchants entered on an era of wholesale smuggling into Spanish America, competing strenuously with the French, who because of their favored position in Spain were usually able to go through more legal channels.

5. The British by defeating France, assured themselves of a line of Protestant kings and of the maintenance of constitutional and parliamentary government.

6. The British in the 1780's enjoyed proportionately more of the trade with America and Asia, the French more of the trade with the rest of Europe and the Near East.

7. The seven years war victory opened up new commercial channels for the British. British trade with America and the East tripled between 1755 and 1785.

8. In India the British government was drawn increasingly into a policy of territorial occupation. A British "paramount power" eventually emerged in place of the empire of the Moguls. British political rule in India stimulated British business there, until in the greatest days of British prosperity, India was one of the main pillars of the British economic system, and the road to India became in a real sense the lifeline of the British empire.
In Conclusion, the three factors that enabled Great Britain to achieve a dominant economic position between 1700-1830 were the Industrial Revolution, the supreme British naval power and the colonial empires. The Industrial Revolution came about because of the Agricultural Revolution which improved farming techniques. The improved farming techniques help the rise of the population because of more food available and it required less labor for more product. This advantage allowed Great Britain to concentrate on industrialization. The industrialization resulted in many useful inventions like the steam engine and the locomotive. Another development that helped the Britain’s economy was the supreme British naval power which by decimating the French and Spanish navy, it ended any possible threat to the British islands from Napoleon and ensured British naval superiority for much of the 19th century. The last development but just as important to the British economy was the colonial empires making Britain a Meditaranean power and the British added to their American holdings at the expense of France. The seven years war victory opened up new commercial channels for the Britain. British trade with America and the East tripled between 1755 and 1785.

Bibliography:


