

Introduction

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Introduction

The Industrial Revolution was a significant event in the world history. It is because it changed and determined the socio-economic conditions existing in the world at this time. The Europeans saw the process of industrialisation as a sign of modernity and progress.

Introduction

However, we also need to ask certain questions related to industrialisation such as "Can we today continue to glorify continuous mechanisation of all work? Did industrialisation only had positive effects? How did it impact the common people?

In an attempt to answer these questions, let us first take a look at the conditions existing before industrialisation.

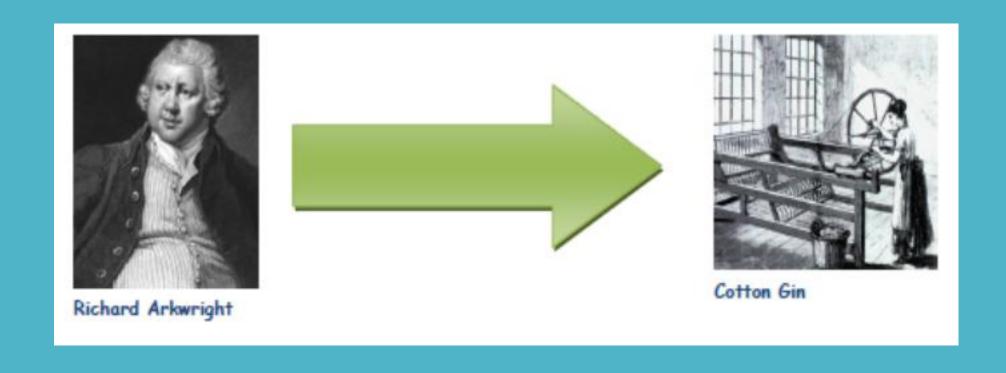
Conditions Existing before the Industrial Revolution

- Even before the establishment of factories, there was large-scale industrial production for the international market. This phase before industrialisation is known as protoindustrialisation. (Proto means original or primitive form).
- During the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, merchants visited the countryside and villages asking farmers to produce for international markets. These merchants often provided money to these farmers.

Conditions Existing before the Industrial Revolution

- Merchants and traders visited the countryside as the guilds of workers, producers and weavers were very strong in towns and had monopoly over production.
- In the countryside, farmers readily agreed to produce for international markets as it supplemented their income. Production and trade were controlled by merchants, with one merchant approximately employing 20–25 workers for weaving, spinning and dying the cloth.

- Many factories began to open up in eighteenth-century England due to several changes which took place then. One of these changes were technological inventions.
- Cotton textile industries were established in large numbers at this time mainly because of technological advancements. The creation of the cotton mill by Richard Arkwright enabled the production of cotton cloth on a large scale in factories. Unlike in the countryside where each task was done separately at different places, work in the factories was managed under one roof.



- Britain saw rapid growth of industrialisation. However, this assumed the following forms:
- o Cotton textiles and iron and steel industries developed rapidly due to the Industrial Revolution. Other industries were still working in a traditional manner.
- o Factories came up at different places, but traditional industries were also operating on a large scale.

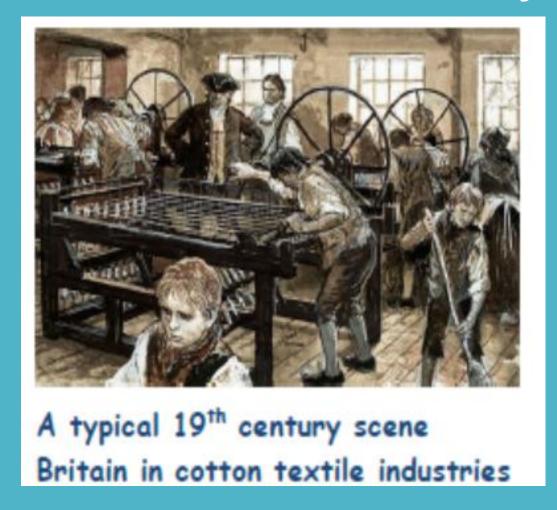
The Beginning and the Growth of the Factory System

o Traditional industries were not based on machine production, but they were also not stagnant. Small little innovations were taking place in traditional industries as well. Some examples of these industries were food processing, building, pottery, glass work, furniture making etc.

The Beginning and the Growth of the Factory System

o Technological changes took place gradually because new machinery was expensive and it was not easy to repair them. For example, it took many years before the steam engine began to be used widely in industries.

o Historians thus accept that a worker in the nineteenth century was not a machine operator but a traditional craftsperson.



Why Human Labour?

There was abundance of human labour in Britain. In the begining, human labour was cheap compared to the machines which were costly.

Some forms of work in industries were seasonal, and industrialists preferred human labourers

Hand labour

Cloth with intricate designs could be produced only by hand and not by machine.

There was a high demand for such cloth.

The upper and aristocratic class in Britain also preferred expensive handmade goods.

Life of Human Labourers:

- Because labour was in abundance in Britain, many people migrated from the countryside to the cities in search of employment.
- The possibility of getting a job also depended on the network of friendship and kinship.
- Many people while finding work, spent their nights in under bridges or in night shelters.

Life of Human Labourers:

- There were also long periods of unemployment for people who were working in seasonal industries.
- The wages of workers increased in the early nineteenth century, but the prices of goods also increased simultaneously.
- The fear of unemployment increased the hostility of the workers towards the introduction of machines in factories. For example, when the Spinning Jenny was introduced, women who depended on spinning for earning their livelihood attacked the new machines. Such conflicts continued for a long time.

Life of Human Labourers:

• After 1840s, as the infrastructure expanded and roads, bridges and railway lines began to be laid down, there was an increase in the employment opportunities for the workers.



In Britain, thousands of workers migrated to cities in search of work

Industrialisation in India:

India before Industrialisation

India was known for its cotton and silk textiles before the beginning of the Industrial Revolution in Britain. India produced the finer quality of cotton. Surat in Gujarat, Masulipatnam in coastal Andhra Pradesh and Hooghly in West Bengal were important port towns of India from where goods were exported to the other countries. Many bankers and Indian merchants financed the trading activities.

Industrialisation in India:

India during Industrialisation

- As the European companies gained power in India and received trading rights, they gradually established their own monopolies in trade.
- This resulted in the decline in the old ports of Surat and Hooghly. Exports from these ports fell considerably and the local bankers gradually became bankrupt.

Industrialisation in India:

- The new cities of Bombay and Calcutta grew under the colonial rule. The trade was controlled by the Europeans and was carried on by European ships.
- This led to the decline in many trading houses and the rise of new business houses.
- After the British East India Company established its political control over India and eliminated the other East India Companies, it established its monopoly over buying and selling of cotton goods and took various steps to ensure regular supply of raw cotton and silk.

Industrialisation in India:

This was achieved by the Company by implementing the following steps:

o The Company appointed their own servants called 'gomastha' to supervise the work of weavers, to collect supplies and to check the quality of cloth. This restricted the powers of the traders and merchants.

o The above step also prevented the Company weavers from dealing and negotiating with other buyers. The Company paid advances to the weavers to produce cloth.

Industrialisation in India:

- In many villages, there were clashes between the weavers and the gomasthas. Earlier, the supply merchants were closely related to the weavers and looked after their needs at the time of financial crises. The gomasthas however had no social relationship with the weavers, and hence, they acted arrogantly and were even accompanied by the police and punished the weavers for the delay in work.
- As a result, many villagers left their villages and fled to other villages and set up looms there.

Problems faced by the Indian weavers in the 19th century:

- When the textile industries in England began to produce cloth, need was felt for imposing import duties on foreign cloth which entered its markets. Thus, various import duties were levied on Indian cloth also. As a result, the Indian weavers suffered.
- The English companies in order to sell their goods persuaded the British Government to remove all import duties on English cloth. The English machine-made cloth now entered the Indian markets. Because these cloths were cheap, the condition of weavers in India became worse as their export market collapsed and the local market was flooded with cheap British cloth.

Problems faced by the Indian weavers in the 19th century:

• In the 1860s, the weavers faced another problem. They were not able to procure cotton of good quality as during the American Civil War, the Government exported much of the good quality Indian cotton to Britain.

Factories in India:

By the mid-nineteenth century, factories began to be established in India. The first cotton mill in Bombay began production in 1856. The first jute mill was set up in 1855. In 1974, the first spinning and weaving mill was established in Madras.

• In the eighteenth century, many Indian industrialists were profited by India's opium trade with China.

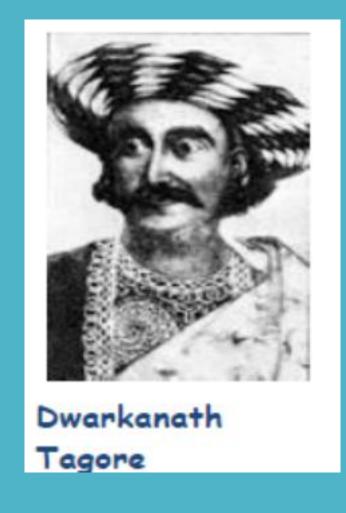
Factories in India:

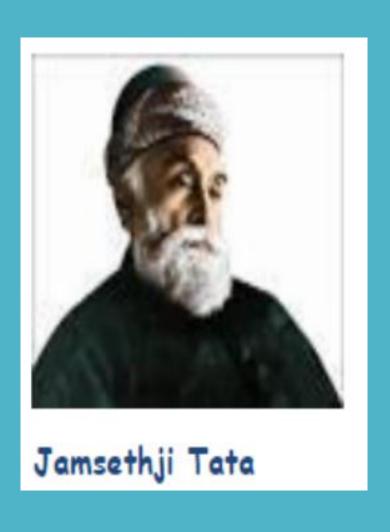
- Dwarkanath Tagore rose to fame after he became a major player in India's trade with China.
- Parsis such as Dinshaw Petit and J. N. Tata became rich because of exports to China and export of raw cotton to Britain. Later, they built huge industrial empires in India.
- Seth Hukumchand and Shiv Narayan Birla (grandfather of G. D. Birla) also profited from trade with China.

Factories in India:

• Most of the industrialists had only limited opportunities for carrying out trade in India because of the monopoly of the English business houses in India. Till the First World War, European Managing Agencies in fact controlled a large sector of Indian industries. They usually had to engage in supplying raw materials to Britain. While Indian financiers often provided capital to European agencies, the latter made all investments and took business decisions.

Factories in India:





Workers in India:

- Many farmers, artisans and peasants who were not able to find work in villages migrated to industrial cities in search of job opportunities. In 1911, more than half of the workers in the Bombay cotton industries came from the district of Ratnagiri.
- Most of the mill workers returned to their villages during the period of harvests.

Workers in India:

- Later, many workers from the United Provinces (roughly present Uttar Pradesh) travelled great distances to Bombay and Calcutta in search of employment opportunities.
- However, getting jobs was always difficult. The companies employed a jobber to recruit the workers. Thus, the jobber became an influential person. At times, jobber began to demand money from workers in lieu for providing jobs to them.

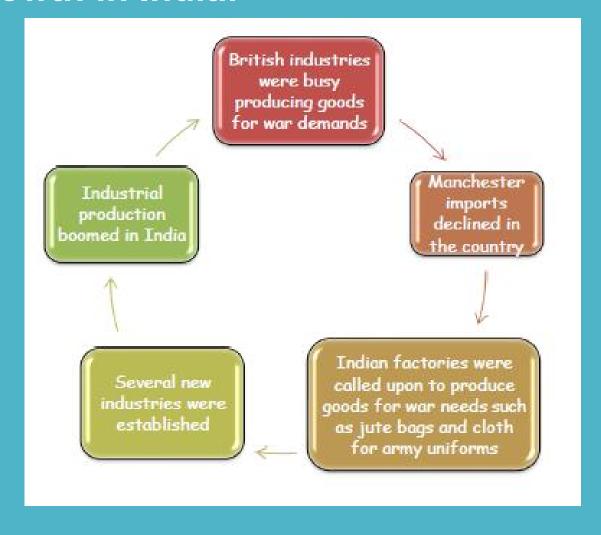
Industrial Growth in India:

- Many European agencies traded in plantations, mining businesses and export of raw materials (indigo, jute and cotton) to Europe.
- Indian businessmen avoided competing with Manchester goods which flooded the Indian markets.
- The beginning of the Swadeshi and Boycott movements gave a huge impetus to Indian industries. Because the export of Indian yarn to China declined, the industries began to manufacture cloth in India.

Industrial Growth in India:

- During the First World War, when British mills began to manufacture war materials and the exports from Manchester declined, the Indian industries flourished as they had vast home markets to supply their goods.
- Further, the Indian industries supplied jute bags, cloth for army uniforms, tents, leather boots and many other items to the war front. The industrial production in India boomed during the war period.

Industrial Growth in India:



Small Scale Industries:

- More than half of the industries in 1911 were located in Bombay and Calcutta. There were small- scale production units, workshops and household units which were functioning all over the country.
- In the twentieth century, the handloom production expanded because of the following reasons:
- o Weavers used new technology for weaving clothes. Many weavers were using looms with the fly shuttle which increased a worker's productivity. Many other technological innovations also helped the weavers to compete with the mill produce.

Small Scale Industries:

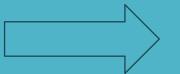
- o Weavers manufactured both coarse and fine cloth. While the coarse cloth was bought by the poor, the fine cloth was bought by the rich. The sale of fine cloth such as Benarasi sarees did not decline even during famines as the rich could still afford to buy these.
- o Mills also could not imitate special designs such as sarees with woven borders.
- Weavers continued to make cloth though they were not a prosperous class and they often lived hard lives.

Creating Markets for Goods:

- Advertisements are an important tool for marketing and selling goods in the markets.
- Manchester cloth which came into the Indian markets had the label 'Made in Manchester'. This was to make consumers confident of the quality of the produce which they were purchasing.
- Labels also carried images which appealed to the people to buy the goods.

Creating Markets for Goods:

The images of Indian gods and goddesses were used by the manufacturers to sell products. This was done to give divine approval to goods being sold.





Creating Markets for Goods:

• By the late nineteenth century, many manufacturers were printing calendars to increase the popularity of their products. Besides the images of the advertised products, these calendars had images of gods, important and renowned personalities and royal figures. They were hung in houses, offices and shops.

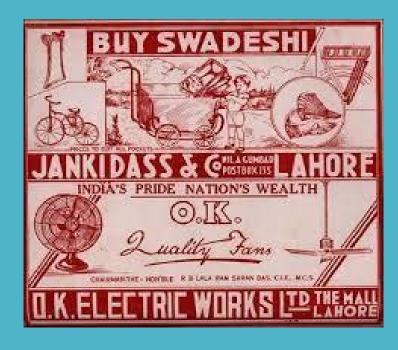
Creating Markets for Goods:

• Advertisements gradually became a tool for selling Indian products and began to carry nationalistic messages such as 'Use Swadeshi goods'.

Creating Markets for Goods:

Indian manufacturers advertised their products by giving a nationalist message. Advertisements became a vehicle of nationalist message of Swadeshi.





Creating Markets for Goods:

At the end we can say that in the 19th century, the era of industrialisation was based on advanced technological developments and establishment of several industries. However, small scale and handloom industries were still an important part of this period.

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