

## Britain and the Conquest of the Americas

*To what extent did the conquest of the Americas contribute to the industrial revolution in Britain?*

While it has long been my personal opinion that the wealth from the colonies and the input gained from business, agriculture and exports to the American was the fundamental reason for the industrial revolution and the growth of Britain as a European powerhouse, after reading the articles that opinion has certainly been shaken. It seems that there was a lot more going on during the times discussed and the colonization as well as the conquest of the Americas can not be considered the sole reason for the rise of Europe and the rise of Britain.

Hamilton (1929) gives the most detailed account of the relationship between the colonies and the colonial powers and he states that the conquest of the Americas was a catalyst and a cornerstone of the industrial revolution that took place in Europe but it was not the actual cause. He gives credit to the idea of capitalism and various technologies which came together during the time to allow industrial ventures to be more profitable than agricultural undertakings.

Capitalism itself was the result of several lines of thought converging together which had influences from the puritanical opposition to usury, the changing political structures which demanded peace for economic production and the idea of a nation state where relative peace could be maintained by following the religion of the head of the state. Hamilton (1929) discusses at length the ultimate creation from that age i.e. the limited liability stock company which resulted in huge economic gains for the crown as well as its owners.

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