

Ques: Dalhousie's predecessors had acted on the general principles of avoiding annexation if these could be avoided. Dalhousie acted on the principles of annexation if he could be so legitimately. His annexations were both of war and peace. Analyze.

ANS- The difference in the approach of Dalhousie and his predecessors should be explained in the context of the shift in British colonial interest. Up to the early 19th century, it was inspired by the objective of British commercial capitalism but after 1813 its main motivation was shaped up by newly emerged industrial capitalism in Britain.

The demand of commercial capitalism was the maximization of the collection of revenue and the investment of a substantial part of that revenue in trade. Therefore, the main objective of the company's government was to promote savings and with this purpose to avoid war and annexations as much as possible. That's why almost all the Governors-General from Warren Hastings to Earl of Minto were compelled to work on this chartered path.

But there was a shift in British policy after 1813. If India had to develop as a market for British manufactured goods, more and more regions should have been brought under direct control. Therefore, the policy of war and annexation was relentlessly followed after 1813.

Then, Dalhousie brought the policy of annexation at its pinnacle. Dalhousie was not ready to miss any opportunity to expand the empire. With this purpose along with the method of war he, adopted the specific ideological tool for further expansion of the British Empire. Through the recourse of war, he could annex Punjab, Sikkim, Lower Burma, and Berar.

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As unrestricted expansion through the war was not possible so he evolved new ideological positions like 'doctrine of lapse' and 'the doctrine of misgovernance. Based on the doctrine of lapse he could annex seven states to the British empire. Then perceiving the economic and strategical importance he could annex Oudh based on the doctrine of misgovernance.

In this way, Dalhousie to fulfill his objective took the recourse of war and peace both.

