

Referring to
examples, discuss
the factors



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There are many different factors that can cause power to shift between superpowers over time such as: resources, population, and economics, military and cultural. Superpowers are defined as: the capacity to project dominating power and influence anywhere in the world, sometimes in more than one region of the globe at a time. At the beginning of the twentieth century, the British Empire was the biggest global superpower. The British became a superpower during this time due to colonial rule. From colonisation they gained economically from the cheap raw materials. Maintaining colonial rule depended on military power.

But when Britain started to decolonise its Empires they lost the title of a superpower. This was due to : economic decline, Britain had overspent on war efforts and after WW2 was showing serious signs of economic ' slowdown'. Also loss of military influence after the war. Moreover many colonies fought for the allies with their own independent armies. One by one after the war, for a range of reasons most of the colonies became independent. So with this example we can see that the cause of power to shift was due to the war and the economic pressure it put on the British to lose its superpower status.

So we can see from British Empire, that was once a giant empire with vast areas of huge armies and thriving economies. However they lost their power of being a superpower due to economic problems and war. We can already see that economics and military have a large impact towards maintaining superpower. Military helps them keep control of their power against uprising and economic helps them pay for the military. So when Britain became in

debt due to ww2 it lost all its power. By 1900, the USA had taken over from Britain as the worlds largest economy.

By 1940, it was the worlds largest manufacturer of industrial and consumer good. Also the US military dominates global arms and defence spending. We can see how power had shifted between Britain now to the US due to, Britain's economic problems that caused it to loses its colonies and US with its high economy which caused the power to shift. China is an example of an emerging superpower; its economy has doubled in size every eight years since 1980. Since 2000, China has been the largest recipient of overseas investment, and now foreign-owned companies . 0% of the world trade since 2004 has been as a result of Chinas industrialisation. So here we can see that China has developed due to industrialisation, which has increased its power. China use to be a low-income country, so we can see from a low-income country to an emerging superpower how powers can shift over time due to many factors that influence the world. However even though China is an emerging superpower, it has come with some cost to the environment for example China has 16 of the top 20 most air-polluted cities in the world. The polluted air was blamed for over 4000 000 premature deaths in 2003.

Russia re-emerging as a global power, due to its natural gas and is the second largest oil producer after Saudi Arabia. Due to Chinese and Indian economies have led huge demand for energy and increased global energy prices. Russia now sees itself as an energy superpower. So we can see that Russia is trying to emerge as a superpower with the increasing need for energy. This can have an affect in changing superpower, for example the USA depends largely on Russia for its energy and if Russia stops supplying it

to the US they will have problems, which many lead them into not being a superpower anymore.

Power shifts between superpowers over time due to so many different reasons, such as cultural imperialism, industrialisation, military power, colonise, economics. If we look at Britain as an example, after the Second World War it lost its title as a superpower, because of the economic strain the war caused and loss of its military power. Or superpowers can change due to development in a country and their global influence such as China. Superpowers can shift over time, because some countries develop and take over old superpowers, China is emerging fast so we could see a change in superpower between China and America.