By offering an ideological critique of the western civilisation in its modern phase, Gandhiji was effectively contesting the moral legitimacy of the Raj that rested on a stated assumption of the superiority of the west. Comment (15 marks)

The Western countries practised colonialism all over the world, including India, Africa, South America etc. They legitimised their rule by stating their superiority over the natives and claiming that it was not for their own good but for the benefit of developing and civilising the natives. This concept was termed as 'the white man's burden'.

Rea. In context of India, they believed that Indians lacked a
scientific temper, and believed in
superstition. They lacked an
trepreneurial spirit necessary for economic
development and were morally inferior
to the modern civilised western man.

Gandhiji Rebuttal

In his book ‘Hind Swaraj’, Gandhiji
challenged many of these views. He
claimed that the capitalist economy
was based on the concept of
infinite consumption of man and
the mass industrialisation that
followed was exploitative of village
and rural areas.

Although he accepted the benefits of
scientific developments, he saw them
fail to achieve their goal of bringing
basically comfort as man now lacked
happiness, and was infected with new
diseases.

On the separation of morality from
politics, he saw it as a tool of the
rich and array to further manipulate
and exploit the weak.

All these critiques manifested itself
in many forms during the freedom
struggle like the rise of Khadi and
swadeshi goods, the use of satyagraha
as a means to reflect truth and non-
vigilence. This showcasing the moral
strength of the Indians.

Gandhiji’s ideals and beliefs
and became the main
cornerstone that rallied millions of
Indians behind him and resulted
in India achieving independence.