

Power and the People – Factors Overview

War

The 1215 Magna Carta was in part a response to King John's unpopular wars with France.

Henry III lost major wars with France in 1230 and 1242.

Edward III then his grandson Richard II were involved in further unsuccessful war with the French who raided Sussex and the Isle of Wight in 1377 (taxes to pay for these wars sparked the Peasants' Revolt of 1381).

One reason for the English Civil War was problems after Parliament was recalled by Charles I in 1640 in the hope of getting support for war against the Scots. The Civil War itself, 1642-49 unleashed forces and led to change – including the execution of Charles I and abolition of the monarchy – that no-one had anticipated.

The Seven Years War (1756-1763) between Britain and France for control of American colonies led to the British demanding money from the colonies for their protection – provoking the Boston Tea Party and Declaration of Independence.

Women's service in WW1 is often seen as the main reason for them getting the vote in 1918.

The price of coal falling after WW1 is a key reason why coal-mine owners tried to reduce wages, prompting the 1926 General Strike.

Religion

The 1215 Magna Carta was in part a response to John falling out with the Pope over appointment of Stephen Langton as Archbishop of Canterbury.

Simon de Montfort was very pious and principled and was a friend of leading churchmen such as the Bishop of Lincoln.

The 1536 Pilgrimage of Grace was a protest against the Reformation and Dissolution of the Monasteries.

Charles I and William Laud (Archbishop of Canterbury)'s changes to the Church alarmed Puritans who feared they were making the Church Catholic again.

Many opponents of slavery, particularly Methodists and Quakers, were inspired by their religious beliefs. Similarly, Elizabeth Fry was a Quaker who played a leading role in reforming prisons.

Chance

It was perhaps chance that Prince Edward managed to escape, then to defeat Simon de Montfort at Evesham in 1265.

It was perhaps chance that the Black Death had killed so many peasants, leading to temporary increases in wages of survivors and that Wat Tyler got involved in the Peasants' Revolt, that rebels were able to release John Ball, to find and kill Hales and Sudbury and that the rebels dispersed after being addressed by Richard II at Smithfield.

It was perhaps chance that Robert Aske got caught up in the Pilgrimage of Grace and provided leadership for it; and that the revolt in Beverley gave Henry VIII the excuse to turn back on his promises to Aske.

It was perhaps chance that Emily Davison was killed by the King's horse at the 1913 Derby and that WW1 broke out, giving women the opportunity to prove themselves 'worthy' of the vote.

It was perhaps chance events that sparked riots in Brixton, spreading to Liverpool, Manchester and Nottingham in 1981.

Government

1215 Magna Carta was a response to the belief King John was governing without consent of barons or respect to traditional liberties.

Henry III's conflict with his barons in the 1250s and 1260s was provoked by his extravagance and arbitrary rule.

The unpopular government of Charles I, particularly during the 1629-1640 personal rule, caused resentment that led to more people questioning royal authority, and eventually to civil war.

The decisions to impose the 1351 Statute of Labourers, Sumptuary Laws and Game Laws and then to impose and increase the poll tax from 1377-1381 all contributed to the Peasants' Revolt.

Many in the American colonies resented continued attempts by the British to govern them.

The government passed Combination Acts in 1799 and 1800 banning workers from combining to force change.

The government resisted repeated attempts to extend the franchise in the early C19th, but eventually did pass the 1832 'Great' Reform Act and a further Reform Act in 1867 and introduced the ballot that made voting secret from 1872.

The 1832 Great Reform Act specifically forbade women from voting. But the government passed the 1918 Representation of the People Act giving women the vote in 1918 and the 1967 Abortion Act and the 1970 Equal Pay Act.

The government-appointed Samuel Commission recommended a 13.5% reduction in wages, prompting the 1926 general strike.

The government passed the 1927 Trades Disputes Act, banning sympathy strikes and mass picketing.

Margaret Thatcher's government played a key role in defeating the 1984-1985 miners' strike.

The government passed 1968 Race Relations Act, set up the Council for Racial equality in 1976, commissioned the Scarman Report into the 1981 riots and set up the Independent Police Complaints Authority in 1985.

Communication

Copies were made of the Magna Carta and distributed throughout the kingdom.

Word of the Peasants' revolt spread quickly in Kent and Essex.

Thomas Paine's 1776 the Rights of Man was widely distributed and read.

Chartists had their own newspaper and organised huge petitions.

Good communication was key to the successful campaigns on behalf of the Tolpuddle Martyrs and the Bryant and May match girls.

Women's suffrage societies used touring speakers, leaflets, pamphlets and a newspaper to get their ideas across. The more extreme tactics of the WSPU were widely publicised.

The TUC were able to coordinate the general strike in 1926, but government anti-strike propaganda, including the British Gazette newspaper, played a part in defeating it.

Stories, often true, of racial prejudice, spread quickly in minority communities and protests were either spontaneous or coordinated.

The economy

Henry III was always short of money and during the 1230s and 1240s the tax network widened.

Floods, drought and famine and an increasing gap between rich and poor were all factors behind the Peasants' revolt.

The Pilgrimage of Grace was strongest in the north where people felt economically disadvantaged, and one of their objections was to higher taxes.

The Stamp Acts imposed further customs and duties on the American colonies that they didn't think they should have to pay.

Efforts to extend the franchise in the C19th were in part a reaction to the industrial revolution, which had created unrepresented cities, industrialists and factory workers.

Chartists were most popular when the economy was at its worse – people sought representation as a means towards more equal distribution of wealth.

One reason for the abolition of slavery was that it was becoming uneconomic.

Trade Unions emerged in large-scale industries of the industrial revolution (a massive economic change), such as gas workers, dockers and transport workers.

Unions were weak in the Great Depression of the 1930s, but more powerful during economic recovery after WW2, into the 1970s.

There was large scale immigration after WW2 to meet Britain's economic needs.

Minority communities have generally lived in poor, overcrowded areas and minority groups often perform the lowest paid jobs and suffer most in times of economic hardship, including during the 1980s.

Ideas

1215 Magna Carta in part inspired by the idea people had been freer under English law before the Norman Conquest.

Henry III's barons' ideas were expressed in the Provisions of Oxford of 1258.

Having knights and burgesses (the Commons) represented in Parliament in 1265 was a new idea.

John Ball's idea that all were created equal and that serfdom should end gained popularity.

During the English Civil War (1642-1649) and Interregnum (1649-1660) new ideas emerged such as the Leveller's demand for manhood suffrage and Diggers believing all property should be held in common.

Thomas Paine argued American colonies should be independent from Britain; Samuel Adams coined the phrase 'no taxation without representation' and the American Revolution led to the spread of belief in democracy and basic human rights.

Ideas of the American (and 1789 French) Revolution, of representation, freedom and equality were adopted by many C19th reformers.

Trade Unions were motivated by the idea that workers needed to act collectively to improve wages and conditions at work.

The ideas that women were entitled to vote, control their bodies and have equal pay gained support through the C20th.

C20th workers were motivated by ideas that they should be well paid for their work and have rights in the work place.

The general strike was in part brought to an end because strikers were portrayed, but the TUC didn't want them to be seen, as revolutionary.

Margaret Thatcher had a lot of support in her actions against Trade Unions because it was widely believed they had become too powerful, and undermined democratically elected governments, in the 1970s.

The often well-founded belief that minority groups have been subject to discrimination by the police and in the work place has played a key role in provoking protest and government legislation.

Role of individuals

The 1215 Magna Carta was in part a response to King John's cruelty. Also, barons worked with Archbishop of Canterbury, Stephen Langton.

Henry III's rule prompted the barons' objections.

Simon de Montfort defeated Henry III at the 1264 Battle of Lewes and became known as the Father of Parliament because he invited knights and burgesses (the Commons) to the Parliament of 1265.

Key figures in the English Revolution included John Pym who criticised Charles in Parliament, Oliver Cromwell who ruled as Lord Protector and John Lilburne who challenged Cromwell in the Putney Debates.

John of Gaunt and Richard II made key decisions prompting the Peasants' Revolt; John Ball and Wat Tyler were key leaders of the Revolt itself.

Henry VIII, Thomas Cromwell and Anne Boleyn all played a role in causing the 1536 Pilgrimage of Grace; Robert Aske led it.

Thomas Paine, Samuel Adams and George Washington were all key players in the American Revolution.

C19th radicals and reformers included Major John Cartwright, William Cobbett, Henry 'Orator' Hunt, William Wilberforce, John Bright, Lord Shaftesbury and Elizabeth Fry.

George Loveless was the best known of the 1834 Tolpuddle Martyrs.

Annie Besant organised the successful strike of the Bryant and May match-girls in 1888.

Keir Hardie became the first Labour MP in 1892.

Millicent Fawcett, the Pankhursts and Emily Davison all played important parts in the campaign for women's suffrage.

Margaret Thatcher becoming the first female Prime Minister in 1979 was a very significant first.

Trade Unions had many charismatic leaders, perhaps most famously Arthur Scargill of the NUM (National Union of Mineworkers) that struck (unsuccessfully), 1984-1985.

The Brixton Riots were sparked by the treatment of Michael Bailey.

Lord Scarman's Report led to some improvements for minority groups, including the setting of the Independent Police Complaints Authority in 1985.

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Note: you would only need to use a small proportion of these points – or ones of your own – in your answer to the 16-mark question to do with causation.

Key to getting top level marks will be a conclusion demonstrating how different factors have different bearings at different times, and/or showing how different types of factor inter-link (synthesis).