

Origins and development of the Parliament of England up to the end of 15th century

Abstract

This thesis is dedicated to the formation of the English parliament from the enactment of the Magna Carta to the onset of Tudor dynasty reign. It consists of an introduction, conclusion and 13 chapters; chapter 5 has also subchapters.

The first chapter describes the origins of parliament's formation and its connection to the Witan and Great Council. The second chapter is dedicated to the period of John's reign, which led to the rebellion of barons and following that, the enactment of the Magna Carta. Afterwards, it examines provisions of the Magna Carta and its significance for English society and the development of parliament at the time. It also refers to the growing importance of the Magna Carta over the course of following centuries. The third chapter is concerned with the period of Henry's reign when the key importance was the revolt of barons under the leadership of Simon de Montfort. Simon de Montfort in order to secure his position of power summoned a parliament which consisted of, among others, representatives of towns and boroughs as well as knights of shires. Fourth chapter addresses development of parliament during the rule of Edward I which in this regard followed footsteps of Simon de Montfort and continued to summon a parliament. Also, during this time parliament started to gain its classical form with regard to its representation and representatives of towns and shires began to be summoned regularly. This chapter also looks into abundant legislation created at the time. Fifth chapter and its subchapters analyse trends of parliament development in the fourteenth century, its composition, and electoral process of parliament members. It also addresses process of differentiation of both parliament houses and institute of parliamentary petitions. Sixth chapter deals with the reign of Edward II and development of parliament which, among other factors, thanks to the weakness of the ruler became more powerful at that time. Chapter 7 describes period of Edward III rule, continuing emancipation of parliament and statutes which were enacted during that time. It also pays attention to the activity of so called Good parliament from 1376 and application by that parliament of impeachment institute. Eighth chapter looks into reign of Richard II and his efforts to suppress influence of barons as well as parliament. Chapter 9 describes development of parliament in the fifteenth century and some of the statutes which were adopted at the time. Tenth chapter is concerned with the period of Henry IV's and Henry V's reign and relationship between parliament and these rulers. Chapter 11 analyses period of rule of weak monarch Henry VI which was

accompanied by social deterioration and incessant conflicts, but continued development of parliament yet. Twelfth chapter is dedicated to culmination of Henry VI reign which was beginning of the Wars of the Roses. Parliament was a mere tool in hands of fighting houses at that time. Chapter 13 is concerned with continuation of the Wars of the Roses and development of parliament from the ascension to the throne of York dynasty which contributed to the weakening of parliament to some extent given that York rulers tried to live on their own expenses.