**Power, Authority and Legitimacy Revision Tasks**

**Task 1**

Describe the three aspects of Lukes’ theory on power. Give examples.

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| **Aspect of theory of power:** |
| **Description** |
|  |
| **Example** |
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| **Aspect of theory of power:** |
| **Description** |
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| **Example** |
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| **Aspect of theory of power:** |
| **Description** |
|  |
| **Example** |
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**Task 2**

Write a paragraph explaining how relevant Lukes’ theory of power is in the 21st century.

**Task 3**

Describe the three aspects of the Weber’s theory on authority. Give examples.

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| **Aspect of theory of authority:** |
| **Description** |
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| **Example** |
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| **Aspect of theory of authority:** |
| **Description** |
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| **Example** |
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| **Aspect of theory of authority:** |
| **Description** |
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| **Example** |
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**Task 4**

Write a paragraph explaining how relevant Weber’s theory of authority is in the 21st century.

**Task 5**

Write a paragraph that identifies the link between the concepts of power, authority, and legitimacy in the 21st century. Ensure that you include four separate, detailed analytical/evaluative comments that are supported by relevant examples.

**Task 6**

Read the essay below. **Mark it** as follows:

* K (knowledge descriptions/facts) **4 marks**
* Keg (knowledge examples) **4 marks**
* Analysis (comments need to reference the relevance of the theory or comment on how the K/Keg points link in some way to the question) **6 marks**
* Conclusions (4 new pieces of analytical commentary or evaluative statements/comparisons that are linked directly to the words of the question. Nothing that has already been credited in the main body can be credited again here) **4 marks**
* Structure (is there a line of argument in the introduction linked directly to the question? Is there any context? Is there a reference to the words of the question including Weber and Lukes references?). Is this line of argument sustained throughout the essay and does it match the conclusion? **2 marks**

**The concepts of Power, Authority and Legitimacy all remain highly relevant in the 21st century.**

**Discuss with reference to the ideas of Steven Lukes and Max Weber (20)**

Power is central to the modern society that we have created over hundreds of years, without people in power, the world as we know it would cease to exist. It is for this reason that many political theorists have attempted to understand how certain individuals gain more power than others and what they do with this power. This essay will explore the context of power with a focus on the work of Steven Lukes and Max Weber.

Steven Lukes attempts to explain the concept of power by using three faces/dimensions. The first face being decision making, this is an ‘open face’ or a power that can be seen to be used. This type of power us most commonly see in a democratic society. An example of this can be seen when a government proposes to introduce a new law, they produce a bill that will be debated in Parliament, discussed in the media and attract the focus on pressure groups, who may lobby the politicians. Eventually, the bill may be passed and it will become a law. This is significant because it shows the public who is in power, who they need to go to if they want something to change and what can be done to pressure the people in power to change.

The second face is the decision making face, also called the secretive face. This is power that is exercised behind closed doors. Lukes suggests that an important source of power is to set the political agenda as this will allow them to decide what will be discussed and more importantly, what shall not be discussed. Through this, he is stating that power is about preventing decisions from being made or limiting choices as well as making them. An example of this is that between 1979 and 1997, the conservative government refused to discuss the issue of devolution as they were opposed to it. The Labour government elected in May 1997 had made devolution the main aspect of its election manifesto in Scotland and subsequently held a referendum on the issue. The Scottish National Party, whose aim was independence, wanted a question in the referendum on independence as well as devolution, but the Labour government didn’t allow it as it was not part of their political agenda. This is significant as this type of power is key to how people react to certain situations and what they believe should be on a political parties agenda. Most people can accept this face of power as it is sometimes the most effective, for example, in dealing with issues such as diplomacy and national security.

The third and final face is manipulating desires, Lukes suggests that power can go further, and its third face is one in which power is exercised through manipulation. He argues that people in power can persuade the general population that the decisions being made are in their best interests and is what they want. An example of this is that some feminists would claim that women are persuaded that being a housewife and a mother is the best role for women in modern society, thus feeding into the misogynistic hierarchy that has been created. In reality, some feminists claim that women who occupy this role are being exploited by men for their own benefit. This is important as if people in power can manipulate the majority of people into thinking what they are doing is normal and in their best interests, this can cause them to become too powerful, thus meaning they could manipulate things in their favour. This face of power is not commonly seen in democratic countries because it is believed to be able to manipulate our desires which can end up going against our best interests.

Max Weber also attempts to explain power, he believes that the concept of power is made up of three branches, the first branch being labelled as ‘traditional authority’, this depends upon a belief in established customs and traditions. Those in authority expect obedience and loyalty on the grounds that established customs and traditions demand it. For example, the tradition of a hereditary monarchy demands that a new monarch commands as much obedience and loyalty as the previous monarch did. For example, the monarch, by convention, must give their assent to Acts of Parliament. Only Queen Anne in 1707 refused to give assent to a parliamentary bill. This is significant as it shows that traditional authority is still relevant and followed nowadays, it is ingrained within our culture and is viewed as being the norm for society. In this type of authority, a ruler typically has no real force to carry out his will or maintain his position but depends primarily on a group’s respect.

Weber goes on to further explain his theory in what he calls charismatic authority. This depends upon the special qualities of a leader. People are drawn to follow the leader because of the qualities they believe he or she has. Charismatic authority may die with the leader or continue to work through a group of chosen disciples. This is important as it shows that to become a leader people much be drawn to you, you must have slightly different thoughts than the people you are competing against for power in order to be respected. Hitler’s rise to power in the post-war economic depression of Germany is an example. A more current example could be Donald Trump, who during the Presidential race in 2016, coined a clarion call of “Lock her up” and “Make America Great Again”. Both of these campaign slogans (among others) were used with great effect to rally people behind his anti-Clinton message along with a commitment to improve the economic situation of millions of Americans mainly living and working in the so-called ‘Rust-belt’. This shows that Weber’s charismatic authority is important today and is a powerful political tool to gain support, loyalty and sometimes devotion.

He then finishes by explaining the final branch; rational-legal authority. This depends upon a formal set of rules which gives those who hold authority the right to direct and command others and to take decisions on their behalf. It has a moral dimension in that people have freely handed power over to another person (or other people). So a democratic government can be said to exercise rational-legal authority because the electorate hands over power to it through the ballot box (ie. through voting). This is important as it highlights that people in power need to be trusted by the majority of the public, without that support they face being stipped of their power. They should also be educated enough to make decisions on behalf of people. An example of this would be the use of a police force and judicial system in the United Kingdom. In this example, the social norm is for citizens to accept and abide by a formal set of laws and they understand that if they do not there may be consequences if they are caught and brought to trial in a court of law where their fate will be decided by a judge/jury.

In conclusion, it is clear that power has a significant affect on society as a whole, Steven Lukes and Max Weber explain power by breaking it down, their theories show that power, authority and legitimacy are all still very relevant within today’s society.