

Feudalism & the Manor Economy



As a Young Historian, I will be able to...

- Describe the development of the political and social system of feudalism.
- Summarize the life of knights and nobles.
- Analyze how the economic system of manorialism worked and how it affected peasants and nobles.

Feudalism Develops

Medieval society began building a system of obligations between rulers & those they ruled

Feudal Contract- An exchange of pledges between lords & vassals. Lords protect vassals & vassals pledge loyalty.

Fief- An estate of land given to a vassal by a lord.

At the top of the Medieval Power structure stood the Monarch, then lords, then vassals

Nobles, Knights & Warfare

Nobles trained from a young age to become a [knight](#), or mounted warrior

Knights learned to ride & fight & the discipline of their weapon & armor care.

At the end of their training, a king would knight them in a public ceremony.

Many knights would compete in [tournaments](#), mock battles, to test their fighting skills

Castles & Noblewomen

Castles were large grade fortresses with high walls, towers, & moats.

War would often center around seizing a castle in order to command crossings or passes.

Noblewomen often took over duties while the lord was away in battle.

Eleanor of Aquitaine- Was a successful ruler as queen of France & later England.

Chivalry

Knights would adopt the code of Chivalry- a code that required them to brave, loyal, & true

This rule would apply to Nobles, but not commoners.

Chivalry would place women on pedestals & troubadours, wandering musician poets, would write songs about them.

Manorialism

Manor- The lord's estate that would 1 or more villages & the surrounding lands.

Manor System- Lord of the manor exercised legal & economic power over the peasants who lived on the estate.

Most peasants on a manor were serfs, people bound to the land but still not slaves.

Lords & Peasants

Peasants had to work a lord's lands several days a week & had to ask the lord for various rights

They had to pay a fee to the lord as well in products like grain or chickens

They could not leave the manor without permission, but they also could not be forced off

Self-Sufficient & Life as a Peasant

Peasants had all they needed from the manor from fields to water.

Men, women, & children would work long days from sun up to sun down.

Few peasants lived beyond the age of 35 due to hunger or disease

They would often celebrate special occasions & holidays via a feast.