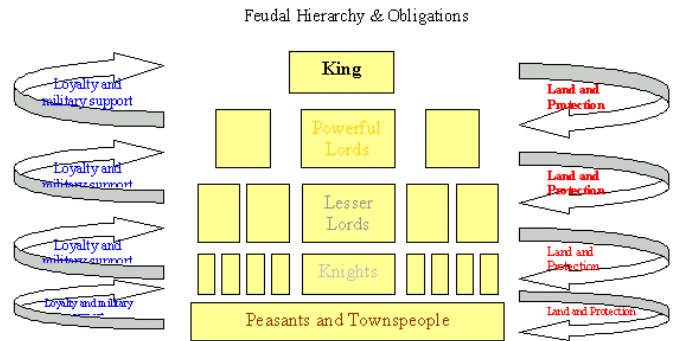


# Medieval Europe: Societal Structure in Post-Classical Era

## Human Environment Interaction

- Plagues
  - o Brought from Asia along silk road
  - o Spread by Merchants throughout Europe
- Little Ice Age
  - o Periodical cooling of Earth
- Agricultural Revolution
  - o De-Urbanization
  - o Three Field System
    - Fall Planting, Spring Planting, Fallow
      - One section of each belonged to the Lord
      - Church also had own lands



## Political Structure

- Europe goes from Politically intertwined system to fragmented fiefdoms
  - o Fiefdom: Land controlled by feudal lord
- Complex systems of loyalty and protection
  - o Vassalage: Service, fealty, and homage required by a lord
- Castles
  - o Developed early 11<sup>th</sup> century
    - Protection
    - Lord's display of power
    - Impose will of the Lords

## Social Stratification

- Kings
  - o In control of large areas of land that's divided among their vassals
- Lords
  - o Counts, Dukes, etc...
  - o In charge of own fiefdoms, but loyal to higher lords and kings
  - o Lived in Manors or castles depending on station
- Knights
  - o Professional soldiers
    - First arise at end of Viking age
    - Used as thugs to ensure loyalty to lord
- Merchants
  - o Not respected class
  - o Minimal amounts
- Peasants/Serfs and townspeople
  - o Peasants/Serfs

### The Song of Roland: Code of Chivalry (Summary)

- To fear God and maintain His Church
- To serve the liege lord in valour and faith
- To protect the weak and defenceless
- To give succour to widows and orphans
- To refrain from the wanton giving of offence
- To live by honour and for glory
- To despise pecuniary reward
- To fight for the welfare of all
- To obey those placed in authority
- To guard the honour of fellow knights
- To eschew unfairness, meanness and deceit
- To keep faith
- At all times to speak the truth
- To persevere to the end in any enterprise begun
- To respect the honour of women
- Never to refuse a challenge from an equal
- Never to turn the back upon a foe

- Tied to the land
- Completely at the will of the lord
- Used for basic labor, farming
- Craftsmen
  - System of apprenticeship
  - Townspeople
  - Blacksmiths, coopers, cobblers, bakers, etc...

## Influence of Christianity

- Monasteries became centers for culture
  - Political Centers
    - Took political lead of Pope
  - Economic Centers
    - Monasteries themselves amassed great wealth
  - Scholastic centers
    - Libraries
  - Development of new religious thought
    - Saint Benedict of Nursia
      - 529 C.E.
      - Established Monasteries all over Italy
      - New Religious doctrine
        - Est. laws for monks
      - Christianized Germans and Britons
    - Venerable Bede of Northumbria
      - Father of English History
      - Protector of Literature
  - Often forced on children
    - Families hoping to gain favor with God
- Cathedrals became centers for Urban life
  - Pope took complete control in Rome
  - Bishops and cardinals had high ranking in medieval society
- Division in the Church
  - Eastern vs. Western Theology
    1. Relationship of the Trinity
      - East favored God above all others
    2. Iconoclasm
      - Veneration of images in worship
      - East trying to outlaw
    3. Caesaropapism
      - Emperor in east with religious and political sovereignty
    4. Many smaller issues
      - Existence of purgatory
      - Divorce
      - Marriage of priests
      - Services in vernacular
- Schism
  - 1054 C.E.
    - Cardinal Humbertus and Patriarch Cerularius excommunicate on another
    - Created split between eastern and western Christendom that existed till 1956