

Lesson 6

1. Describe two features of early feudal society in France.

Ans: Two features of early feudal society:

1. Early feudal society in France was based on the relationship of lord and peasants. The peasants had to offer labor in the service of their lords.
 2. The lord enjoyed special status. His order was supreme. Nobody could deny his order.
2. How was western European society divided?

Ans: Western European society was divided into three estates. These were:

1. The Clergy
 2. The Nobility
 3. The Peasantry
3. What were the duties of the serfs?

Ans: 1. The serfs had to do forced labour.

2. The serfs had to serve in their lord's army for 40 days in a year.

4. What were the two sections of Third Order?

Ans: Two sections of the Third Order were:

1. Free Peasants
 2. Serfs
5. Write a few restrictions that were imposed on the serfs.

Ans: Following restrictions were imposed on the serfs.

1. The serf can't leave the estate without the prior permission of their masters or lords.
2. They were prohibited from offering their prayers in the church.
3. They did not enjoy the right of education.

6. What is Manorial system?

Ans: The manorial system was essentially a local institution and a social-economic unit of a feudal society. In its simple form it consisted of the division of the land into self-sufficient estates, each presided over by the lord of the manor and tilled by residents of the local village that usually accompanied each manorial estate. The lord, who might be the king, an ecclesiastical lord, a baron, or any lesser noble, owed military protection to the peasants. The land remained in the lord's holding and was loaned to the person who cultivated it in return for services and dues.

7. What is the meaning of Feudalism?

Ans: The term Feudalism is the combination of two words - feudo and vassalism. Feudo is a German word which means "fief," a piece of land and vassalism means holding something from a supreme Lord. Thus Feudalism means that system of society where land holding is the basis of the whole society. In brief, Feudalism was a kind of social relationship between land and man - Lord protecting the man and the man doing service and reverence to the Lord.

8. What were the causes that led to the decline of feudalism in Europe?

Ans: From the eighth to twelfth century CE, feudalism prospered in Europe. There was a steep decline of feudalism in Europe. The following causes led to its downfall:

1. Rise of the powerful monarchies: Powerful monarchies paved the way for the decline of feudalism. It rose in France, Spain and England.
2. Rise of nationalism: Education spread in the nation. The spread of education aroused the spirit of nationalism among the educated middle class. But the feudal lords were quite opposed to nationalism. That was why the educated people turned against feudalism. They could not tolerate its

existence. They were to the side of their ruler and not with the lords. The result was that rulers became more and more powerful.

3. Rise of the middle class: New inventions encouraged trade and industry. The result was the emergence of the middle class in towns and cities. The middle class desired peace for the promotion of commerce, industry and crafts. They wanted to get rid of the nobles who were always engaged in constant wars.

9. Discuss the major drawbacks /defects of feudalism which prevailed in medieval Europe

Ans: The major drawbacks or defects of feudalism which prevailed in medieval Europe were as follows:

1. It divided the country into small fiefs held by the feudal lords. They were selfish. They cared more for themselves and ignored the interests of the country as a whole. Hence, feudalism gave a blow to national unity.
2. The central government became very weak. The feudal lords became more powerful and supreme. The vassals ignored the order of the king. The king was entirely dependent on feudal lords both for military and money. Sometimes they asserted their independence and king could not control them.
3. Feudalism encouraged rebellions and wars. The power of the lords was increasing day by day and the kings were becoming more and more weak. This encouraged rebellious tendency among the nobles. The nobles were also eager to get new lands. So there was constant warfare among them. It destroyed peace and security and created chaos and confusion in the society.
4. Feudalism was responsible for the defective military organization. Every lord organised his army in his own way. Their weapons and methods of fighting also differed as a result of national crisis.
5. Feudalism led to maladministration of justice. Every lord had his own court and laws. He decided the cases and punished the people for the same crime that varied from estate to estate.

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