

# Feudalism & Manorialism



# Cause: Response to Invaders

- Muslim Saracens attacked the southern coasts of Europe.
- The Magyars came from western Asia and attacked central Europe.
- The Vikings came from the north and attacked far and wide, raiding, pillaging, destroying cities and even defeating small armies.



### I Viking, Magyar and Saracen Invasions

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Saracen attacks	Viking bases	areas of Viking settlement: Danish
Magyar attacks	main Viking raids (with dates)	Norwegian
Viking routes	areas most affected by Saracen raiders (with dates)	Swedish
	areas most affected by Magyar raiders (with dates)	



# The Development of Feudalism

- Invaders posed a threat to the safety of the people, especially with no strong central government (now that Rome was gone).
- People began to turn to local landed aristocrats or nobles to protect them.
- This change led to the new political and social system called *feudalism*.



# The Development of Feudalism

- At the heart of this system was the idea of *vassalage*.
- It came from Germanic society, where warriors swore an oath to their leader.
- Landowners would give pieces of their land to others in exchange for military service.
- Therefore, a man who served a lord militarily was known as a *vassal*.



# Feudalism

- The relationship between lord and vassal was made official by a public act of homage of vassal to the lord.
- Loyalty to one's lord was feudalism's chief virtue.



# Feudalism

- Feudalism came to be characterized by a set of unwritten rules known as the *feudal contract*.
- These rules determined the relationship between lord and vassal.
- The major obligation of a vassal was military service, about 40 days a year.



# Feudalism

- The land the lord granted to a vassal was known as a *fief*.
- Kings had vassals who themselves had vassals who also had vassals.
- Feudalism became extremely complicated.

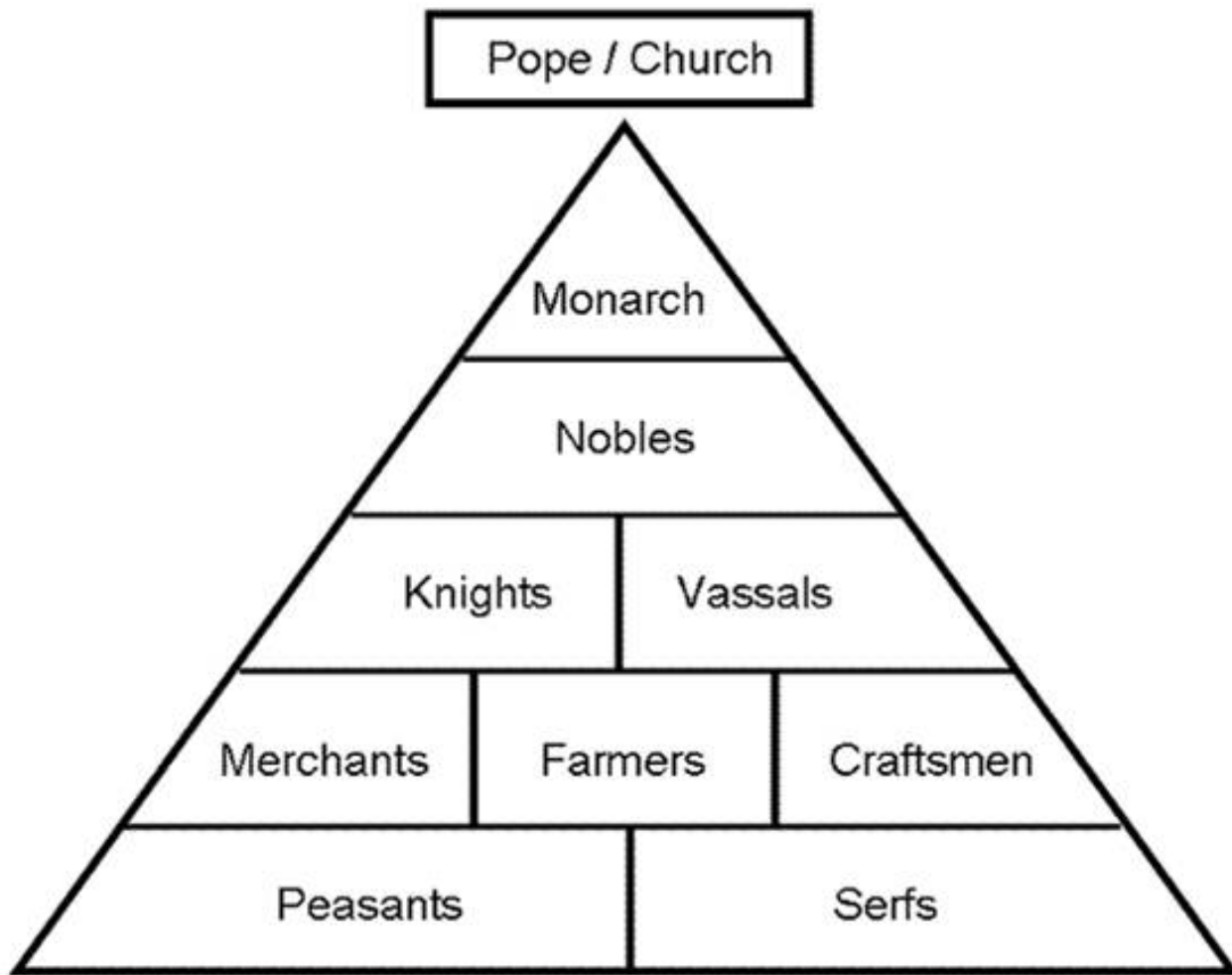


# Feudalism

- Medieval feudal system classifies people into three social groups
  - those who fight: nobles and knights
  - those who pray: monks, nuns, leaders of the Church
  - those who work: peasants
- Social class is usually inherited and the majority of people are peasants



# Feudal Hierarchy



# Feudal Roles

## How Feudalism Works

### **KING**

Provides money, army on demand  
Bestows land on his many Nobles



### **NOBILITY**



Provides military service  
and protection on demand

Bestows land on  
his many Knights



### **KNIGHTS**



Provides military service  
and food on demand

Bestows land on  
his many Vassals



### **VASSALS**



# Economics during Feudalism

- The number of people almost doubled in Europe between 1000 and 1300, from 38 to 75 million people.
- One reason is that increased stability and peace enabled food production to rise dramatically.
- Food production increased also because a climate change improved growing conditions and more land was cleared for cultivation.



# The New Agriculture

- Technological changes also aided farming.
- Water and wind power began to do jobs once done by humans or animals.
- Also, iron was used to make scythes, axes, hoes, saws, hammers, and nails.
- Advances such as the *carruca*, a heavy, wheeled plow with an iron plowshare pulled by animal teams made farming much easier.



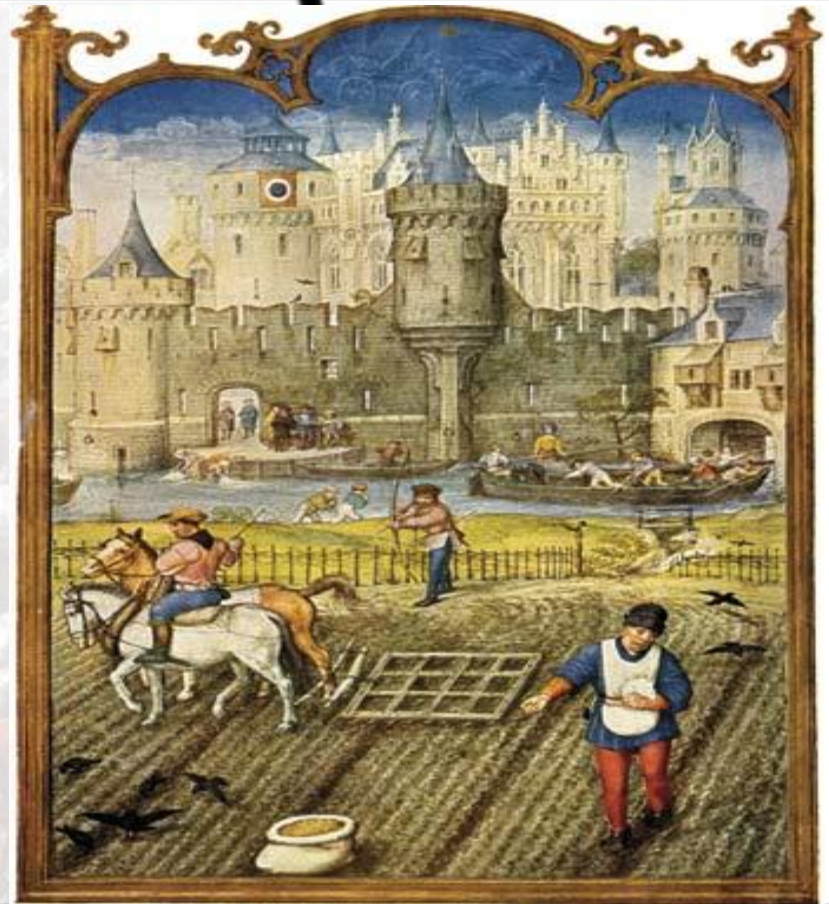
# The Manorial System

- Medieval landholding nobles were a military elite who needed the time to pursue the arts of war.
- Peasants worked the lords' landed estates on the fiefs of the vassals.
- These estates provided the needed economic support for the nobles.
- These agricultural estates were called *manors*.



# The Manorial System

- Increasing numbers of free peasants became *serfs*—peasants legally bound to the land.
- Serfs worked the lord's land, helped maintain the estate, paid taxes and rent, and were under the lord's control.
- By 800, probably 60 percent of western Europeans were serfs.



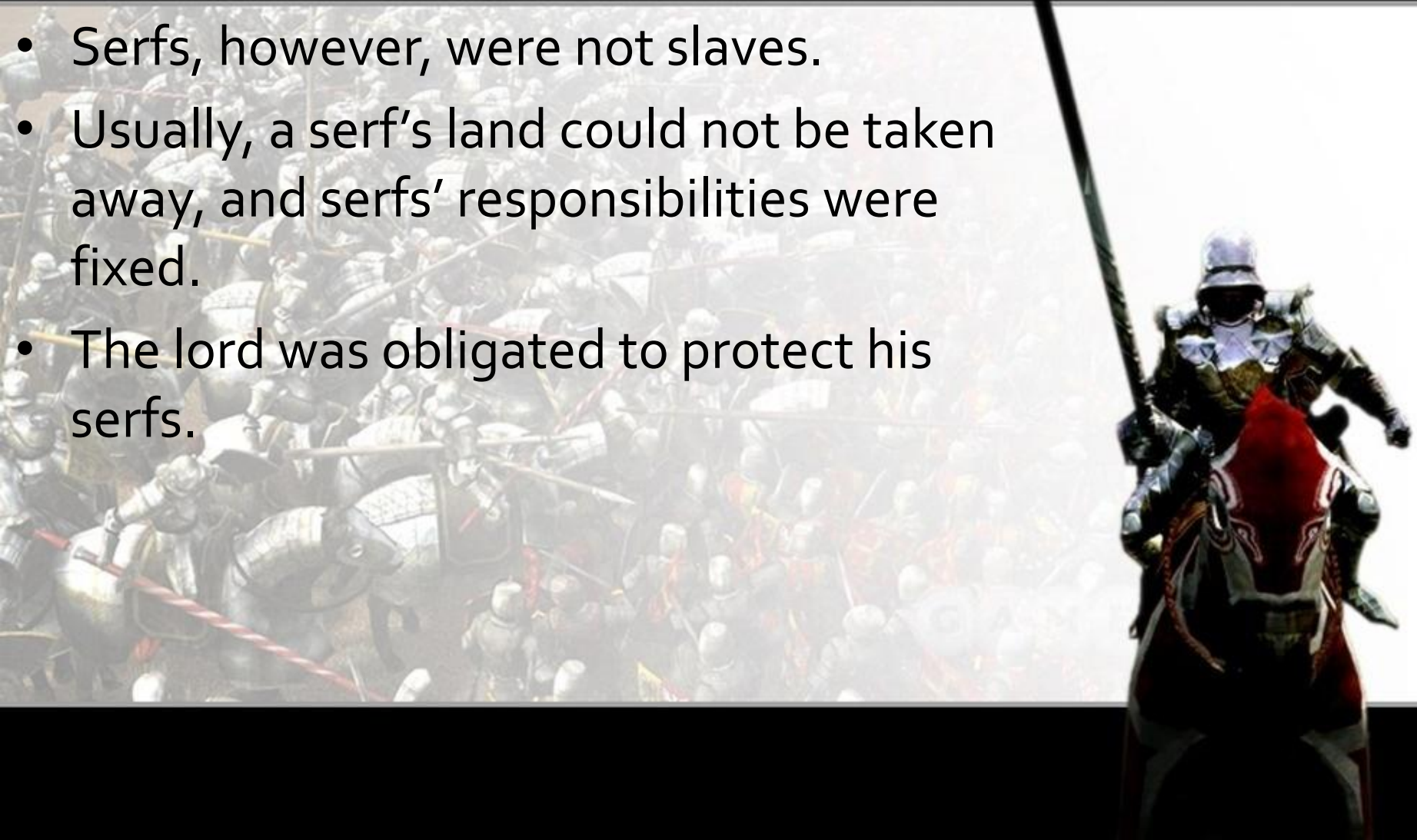
# The Manorial System

- Lords had a variety of legal rights over their serfs.
- Serfs needed the lord's permission to marry anyone outside of the manor and to leave the manor.
- Often lords had the right to try peasants in their own courts.



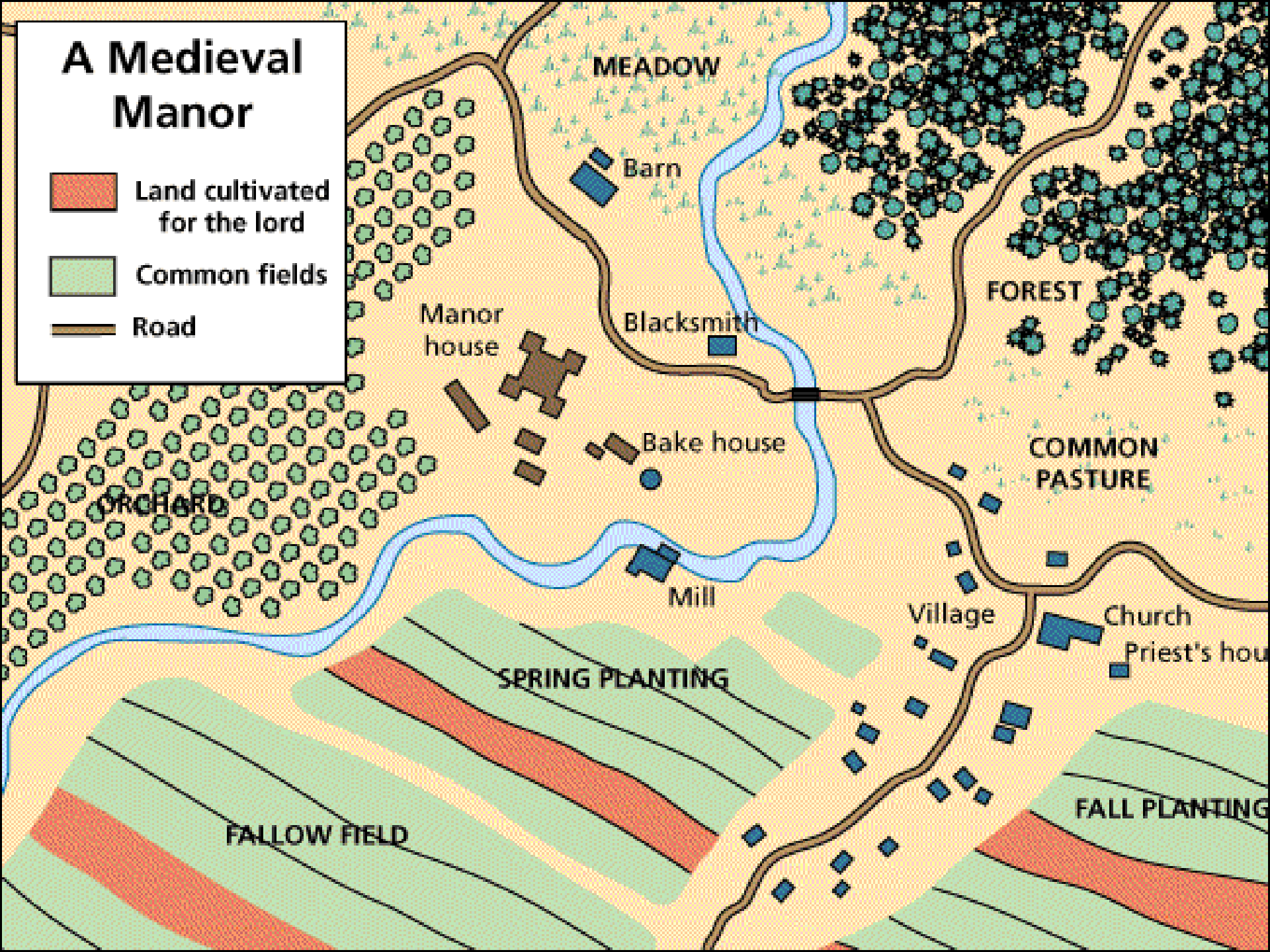
# The Manorial System

- Serfs, however, were not slaves.
- Usually, a serf's land could not be taken away, and serfs' responsibilities were fixed.
- The lord was obligated to protect his serfs.



# A Medieval Manor

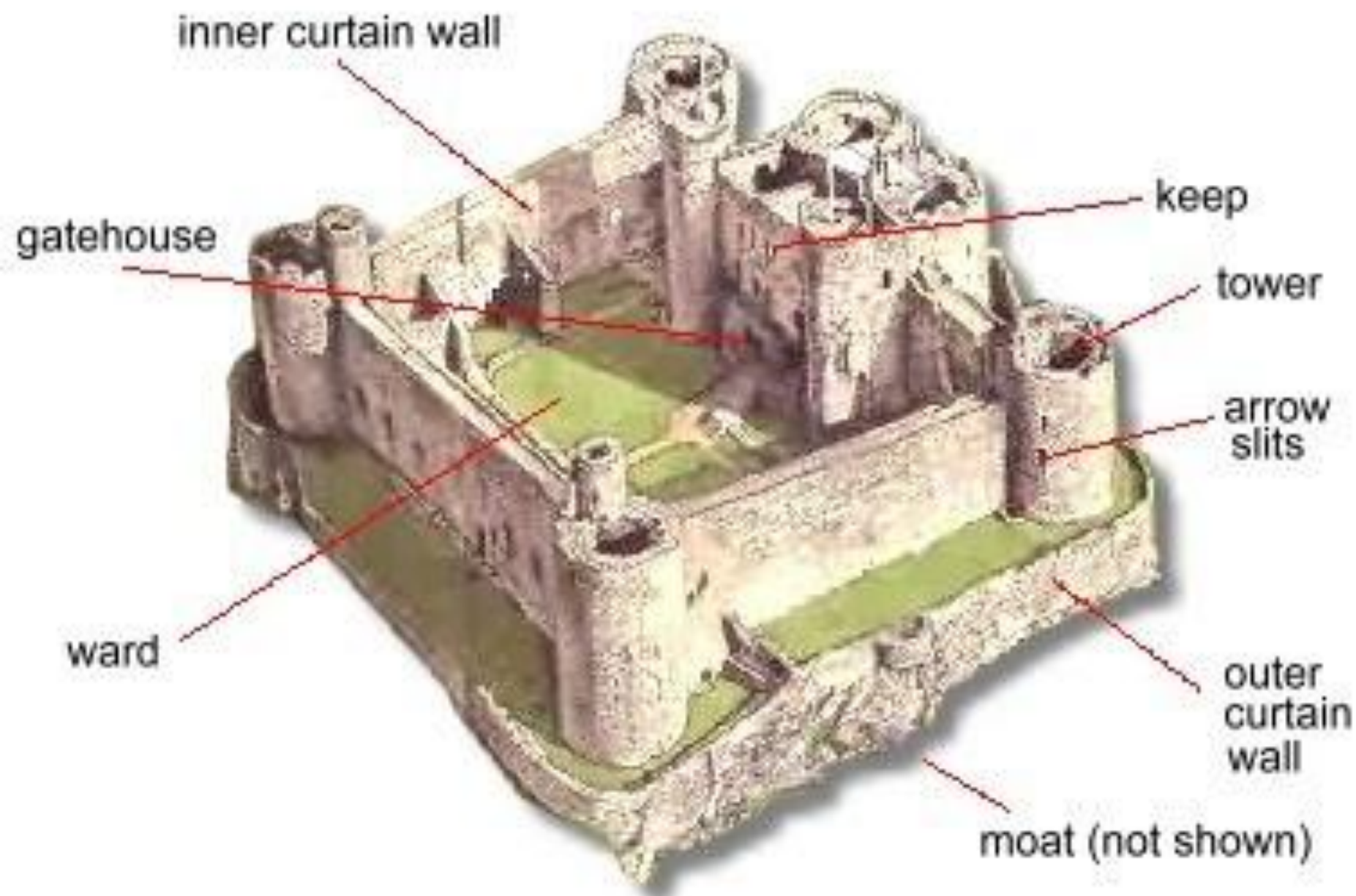
-  Land cultivated for the lord
-  Common fields
-  Road



# The Manor Evolves

- By 1100, large estate houses gave way to castles.
- Many people made their homes at the castles including the lord, his family, knights and other warriors and their servants.





**Harlech Castle, North Wales, built in 1283 AD**

# Warfare

- Castles were also fortresses, designed for defense.
- Castles were fortified with massive stone walls and guard towers.
- Many large scale battles took place at these castles.
- This type of warfare is known as *siege warfare*.
- These battles were usually very bloody.



# Siege Warfare

- Typically, siege warfare took place with an army surrounding a castle and cutting off food and supplies in attempt to capture it.
- If the people refused to surrender, they would assault the castle using a variety of weapons, such as catapults, battering rams, ballistas and siege towers.
- Defensively, the people in the castle would shoot arrows , pour scalding hot water or tar onto the attackers as well as launching projectiles of their own.

