

Government in the Middle Ages

Presented by Culture Talk

The Middle Ages- Europe

The Middle Ages refers to the period after the the fall of the Roman Empire and before the Renaissance. Throughout most of the medieval period, feudalism was the dominant system of government.



Introduction of Feudalism

William the Conqueror

Feudalism was first introduced to England, in the beginning of the 11th century, by William the Conqueror. After leading Norman soldiers to victory in the Battle of Hastings, (14th October, 1066), he crowned himself King William I and divided the land among the soldiers.

After dividing the land, William ordered a survey of everyone in England, compiling all of their property information in a book called The Domesday Book. This gave him details on everyone in England, their assets, and how much taxes they needed to pay to the Normans.

Feudalism

What was feudalism?

- Feudalism was the main social system in Medieval Europe
- People were:
 - Serfs
 - Merchants/Farmers
 - Knights
 - Nobles
 - Monarchs

The term "feudalism" wasn't used until hundreds of years after the Middle Ages. However, nowadays it is what's used to describe the social system



Monarchs: The monarchs owned the kingdom and everything in it



Monarchs

Nobles: Nobles served the king and owned land, providing shelter for knights, farmers, and serfs



Nobles

Knights: Knights fought and protected nobles and monarchs in return for money



Knights



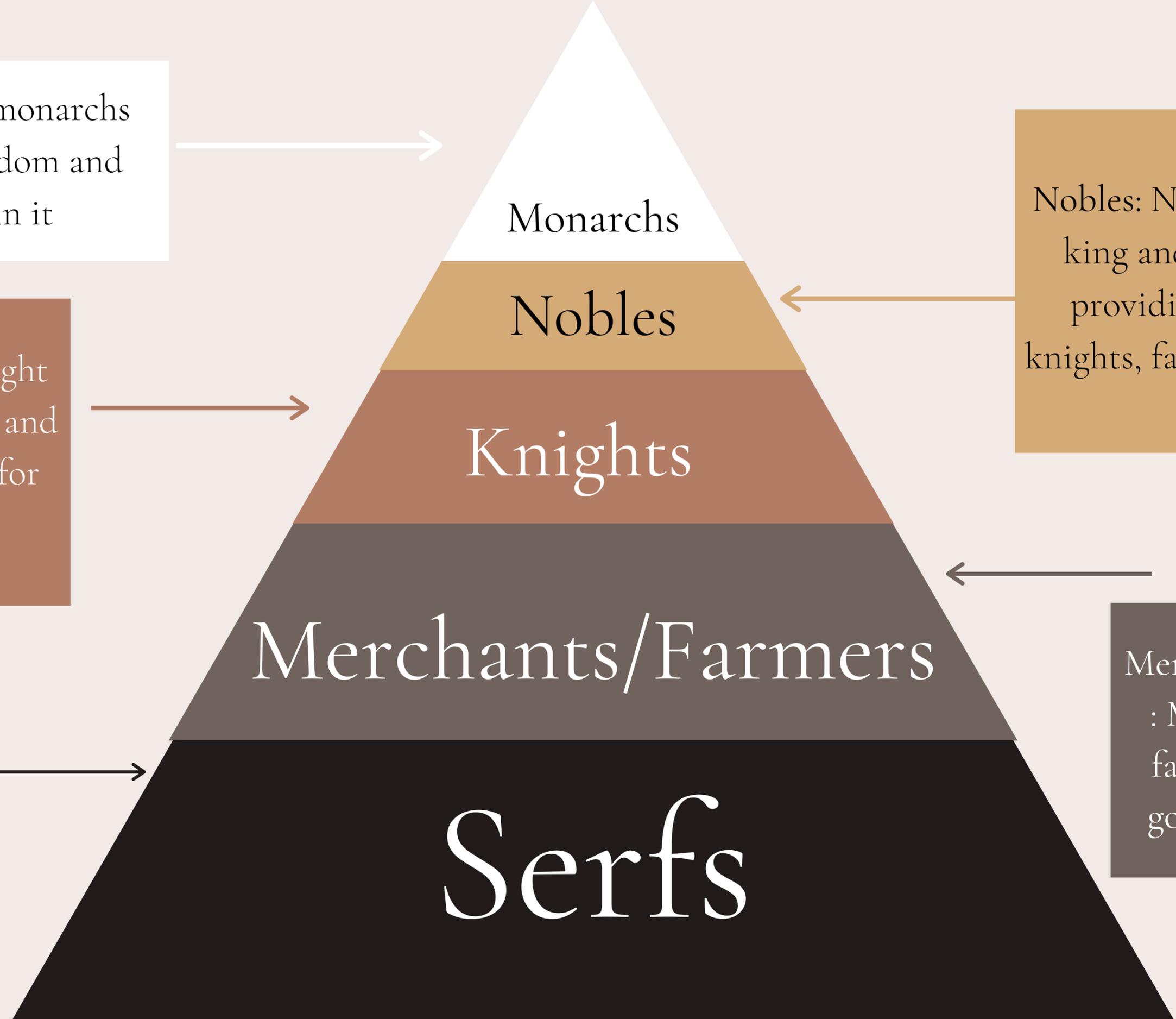
Merchants/Farmers

Merchants/Farmers : Merchants and farmers provide goods (ex. food)

Serfs: Serfs were peasants who worked on the land for farmers and nobles



Serfs



Serfdom

- Serfs in medieval Europe had almost no freedom.
 - were not allowed to leave their land
 - could not marry or change occupations without permission from their lord
 - oftentimes had to give away most of the food they harvested, leaving almost nothing for their own families



Government in Medieval Japan

Japan followed a similar model as the European feudal system; at the top of the chain was the emperor, followed by a shogun, which was the top warlord. However, often times, the shogun had more authority than the emperor. The shogun appointed several different warlords based on territory, which were known as daimyo. After daimyo were the soldiers, known as bushi, or more commonly: samurai. Anyone else were farmers, merchants, or peasants

Europe

- King
- Nobles/Lords
- Knights
- Merchants
- Serfs



Japan

- Emperor/Shogun
- Daimyo
- Samurai
- Merchants
- Peasants



The Ending of Feudalism

As the Black Death, which obliterated over 30% of Europe's population, struck, many manors were left deserted.

Europe's once stable economy collapsed, and nobles had either died or fled their lands. Recognizing the scarcity of food and other resources, the merchants and farmers who remained took this opportunity to demand higher prices and more freedoms from their lords.

By the end of the 14th century, serfdom was abolished. The ending of serfdom also meant that feudalism was over, and the Medieval Ages along with it.