

The middle ages from 1066 to 1485 assignment

[History](#)



English Society in the Early Middle Ages, 1066-1307 Book by Doris Mary Stenton; Penguin Books, 1952. 304 pgs The Middle Ages - 1066 -1485 The Middle Ages encompass one of the most turbulent periods in English History. Starting with the Battle of Hastings and the Norman Conquest - when William the Conqueror effectively took all of the lands from the Saxon English and gave them to French nobles. The English Middle Ages then saw the building of the great English castles, including the Tower of London, which helped the Normans to retain their hold on England.

The start of the Crusades and the knights of the Middle Ages, including the founding of the Knights Templar. The Domesday Book and the Magna Carta. The Kings and Queens of the Middle Ages including Richard the Lionheart and great Plantagenet Kings from Henry II (1154-1189) to Edward III (1327-1377). The Hundred Years War between England and France. The Medieval Kings and Queens of the Royal Houses of Lancaster and York and the Wars of the Roses. The Middle Ages Feudal System and the terrible Black Death which really did plague the period of the Middle Ages. The Middle Ages 1066-1485

It was very difficult for me to choose a topic, but I decided to write about this topic because it was the one that I liked best and was the easiest one to understand for me. I think it was because some of the points of The Middle Ages I learned when I was in college. But the points that took my attention during The Middle Ages were its beginning, a system called feudalism and the role of men and women during this period. The Middle Ages encompass one of the most turbulent periods in English History. Starting with the Battle of Hastings and the Norman Conquest.

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When Duke William of Normandy, better known as William the Conqueror effectively took all of the lands from the Saxon English and gave them to French nobles. there were some points that took my attention the The beginning of The Middle Ages was the murder of King Harold of England by Duke William of Normandy, better known as William the Conqueror. William is also referred to as “ William II” in relation to his position as Duke of Normandy. He also was a great soldier, he won a lot of wars. But I don't understand how he could kill King Harold if he were only a duke and supposedly the king had all the power in those times.

During his reign this king was very cruel. He killed a lot of innocent people just for reach his purposes. He brought Norman culture to England and changed many things in England such us: laws, language etc. One of the first bad things he made was the Domesday Book, which was published in 1086 and it is similar to a modern census by a government of today. According to this book people could be taxed based on an accurate assessment of what they owned and whatever this book said it was a law and there was no appeal. This was a new way of administrate.

But I disagree because the people worked very hard to have something in this king only came and took portions of what people own and that's not fair. Similarly to these times, everyday rich people have more and more money on the contrary poor people become poorer. The King William divided his land among his own followers. But he did it with a purpose not because he was a good person. The barons had to provide protection and economic support to him. These men and their families brought to England a new

social system known as feudalism. I have watched many movies about feudalism and I have noticed that it was based on exploitation.

And those times loyalty was very important and feudalism was a hierarchy of loyalties. It was a pyramid and everyone knew their place. The king was at the top after him were the barons then the landless knights and finally the serfs or slaves. But the emergence of the Feudal System affected many things of medieval society: a land-based economy, the judicial system and the lack of rights for the serfs and peasants. With system I think that the knights and serfs were the ones who suffered more. The slaves who worked the land were protected by the lords.

But they paid this protection by being always slaves and they belong to their master from the first day they were born until the day they died. Some years ago I watched a soap opera named " Xica da Silva" I am not sure if it was about this period but they were very cruel with slaves, especially the church, they had to serve their master the rest of their live. In my opinion life was short, hard and difficult for them. The main role of the knights was to fight and protect the interests of the landed classes because they were the vassals of the barons and the barons were the vassals of the king.

In the book *Knights in Armor* by the editor John D. Clare (1992), he says " Even the Kings had their sons knighted. " For me this is very strange because they could die in wars and the king could die without a heir. But being a knight it wasn't easy. If a boy wanted to be a knight, he had to train from an early age to become a warrior. This training was very strict. Once knighted he became a man with the title of " sir" and with all the rights of a

warrior. I think if had lived as a man in those times I had never wanted to be a knight. Nowadays knights are called soldiers.

Sometimes they fight for a good reason, for their countries, for their rights etc, but sometimes just for the greed and ambition of certain people like the war of The United States against Iraq. And I think the same happened in those times. Thanks God women did not fight in wars but I didn't like the role women had in medieval society either. They had no voice, no choice. A woman was subservient to man it could be her father, her brother or her husband. If a woman had nothing she could not get married. I can not imagine their lives.

For me to be married, have a husband and children is one the most important and beautiful things and some of these women could not come true this wish only for have no dowry. Any woman that was beaten into submission and disobedience was seen as a crime against religion. For men women were only good at childbearing, housework and fieldwork. Really I can't imagine living like that. This happened long time ago and it's a shame that a few years ago women in some countries lived similar to those women and in some countries they still living without rights.

Some years ago in Honduras women had no political rights; a woman had to marry with the man chosen for the parents. And she had to obey him for the rest of her life. Fortunately I wasn't born yet. In the book Elements of literature by the editors Moulton, Rolls, and Shaw (2003), the unit about The Middle Ages, the editors summarize that, " The feudal system did carry with it a sense of form and manners that permeated the life, art, and literature of

the Middle Ages. This sense of formalism came to life most fully in the institution of knighthood and in the related practice, or code, of chivalry. So feudalism produced at least something good. Feudalism influenced literature through Chivalry that gave rise to a new form of literature, the romance. Chivalry was a moral system that had many codes. If a Knight broke a code his position could be in danger. Some of these codes were to fear God and maintain His Church, to serve a lord, to protect the weak and helpless people, to live by honor and for glory, never to refuse a challenge from an equal, never attack an unarmed opponent among others.

One code that I didn't like was that a knight has to adore a particular lady not necessarily one's wife. I am not a jealous person but as a wife of one of these knights I wouldn't like it. . I think if ha it because gave rise to a new form of literature, the romance. The Code of Chivalry dictated that a Knight should be brave and fearless in battle but would also exhibit cultured Knightly qualities showing themselves to be devout, loyal, courteous and generous. Weapon