

## Why Did the Feudal System Exist in Western Europe?

### De-centralized Power

There was not ONE powerful ruler, but hundreds of weak ones.

### Geography/Isolation

Western Europe was surrounded by mountains, oceans, and powerful empires.

### Transportation

In the early middle ages, there were few roads, and ships were not advanced enough for sea travel.

### Poverty

The feudal system kept everyone poor, with just enough resources to survive, not to trade.

## Why Did the Feudal System Eventually Go Away?

### Farming Technology

**Better farming methods led to more food. Fewer people had to farm, and could spend time doing other things.**

### Transportation

**Merchants from Italy made roads into Western Europe. Ships improved and goods could be transported by water.**

### More Jobs/Trade

**Fewer people farming and more people trading led to better jobs. People no longer had to be serfs.**

### More Wealthy People

**More trade led to a new class of people – wealthy merchants. Kings no longer needed lords for tax money.**