**Spartacus Educational Classroom Activity**

**The Feudal System (Questions & Answers)**

<http://spartacus-educational.com/EXnormans3.htm>

This commentary is based on the classroom activity: [The Feudal System](http://spartacus-educational.com/EXnormans3.htm)

Q1: Explain why Earl Warenne (Source 4) produced an ancient sword when he was asked by the judges to show his warrant.

A1: Earl Warenne was making the point that his ancestor (William of Warenne) had obtained the family estates by taking part in the Norman invasion in 1066. He argued that his ancestors had "conquered their lands with the sword, and by the sword I will defend them."

Q2: Select a source from this unit where the author appears to support the feudal system. Also select an author who appears to be critical of this system. Explain your choices. Give reasons why these two writers had different opinions on this subject.

A2: In source 7 Bishop Fulbert of Normandy provides details of how the feudal system worked. It is clear from this extract that Bishop Fulbert expected the villein to always obey his lord. Bishop Fulbert owned a great deal of land and the feudal system gave him a high standard of living. Pope Gregory VII in source 6 appears to be critical of the power that the feudal system gave to kings. He wrote that the land had been won by "robbery, murder, in a word, by almost every crime in the devil" and this enabled them to "dominate over their equals". Pope Gregory appears to think that feudalism was an immoral system.

Q3: Compare the value of the sources in this unit in helping you to discover how long feudalism lasted in England.

A3: The dates of the sources in this unit indicate that feudalism was in operation in England between the 11th and 14th centuries. This is supported by Jean Froissart in source 8 who describes feudalism as a "custom" (custom means a "long-established practice").