**Social Structure**

Great Chain of Being in medieval times

In bastard feudalism, if a baron got too powerful, the King could be overthrown. Therefore, the King could form a bond with a Knight. This is known as bastard feudalism, where multiple bonds are made.

From the 15th Century

Citizens

Clergymen

Bishops

Peerage (Hereditary nobility) and Archbishops.

There were new social changes from 1348 as a result of the Black Death. Family members died and left inheritance land which meant more money for the surviving members. The surviving members could make enclosures out of fields and could keep livestock in them. This resulted in a growth of independent wealth. Because there were fewer citizens, peasants could demand better working conditions from their employers: this is known as the peasant rebellion. It basically meant the collapse of serfdom.

Feudal Dues (Tax on service) began to be used. This contributed to Henry’s income.

There were different types:

* **Custom dues** contributed to 1/3 of king’s income by 1509. The most valuable to Henry were on wool, wines, leather and cloth. Between 1485 and 1495, custom dues earned Henry about £33,000 a year. From 1495 to 1509, these increased to £40,000 a year. The increase was as a result of Henry updating the Book of Rates of custom duties to be paid in London.
* **Feudal dues** came from the earlier era but were used in Henry’s reign too.Henry was considered the feudal lord and those who owned land directly from the king were his tenants-in-chief. They owed their feudal lord dues.

For example, *wardship* entailed that when a minor inherited land Henry oversaw and took control of it until the minor became older. During that time, Henry took most of the profits. If this took a few years, Henry’s profits were lucrative. A king was also entitled to “relief” when the inherited land was transferred from his control. Although feudal dues were out of date, Henry continued to enforce it. In 1487, wardships provided Henry with just £350. By 1507, with a Master of the King’s Wards in place to enforce it, wardships were earning Henry £6,000 a year.