

Two Roads After Rome

Compare how political institutions shaped medieval European societies.

9.5a "Following the fall of the Roman Empire, divergent societies emerged in Europe."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two details showing centralized Byzantine power. Circle two showing local power in western Europe. Mark S beside a similarity.

Europe Takes Different Paths

- ① After the western Roman emperor was removed in 476, the eastern empire continued. Historians call it the Byzantine Empire. From Constantinople, emperors directed officials, armies, and tax collection. In the 500s, Justinian sought to recover former Roman lands and ordered Roman law collected and organized in what became known as the Corpus Juris Civilis. Empress Theodora advised him and exercised political influence. The empire preserved Roman institutions while changing over time.
- ② In parts of western Europe, local lords gained authority as royal power weakened or varied. Arrangements often called feudal involved lords granting fiefs, usually land or its income, to vassals in return for service. Military service was an important obligation. Lords also controlled manors, where peasants farmed and owed payments or labor. Many serfs were bound to the land. The Church linked regions through religion and organization. These arrangements developed over centuries and differed by place; they did not appear everywhere immediately after 476.
- ③ Both societies relied heavily on farming and preserved Roman and Christian traditions. Byzantine emperors maintained an imperial bureaucracy and tax system, though their power varied. In much of western Europe, authority was divided among kings and local lords. Constantinople was a major trade and government center, but rural villages were vital to the Byzantine economy too. Many western peasants lived on manors and owed dues to local lords, while towns and trade also existed. These are broad contrasts, not a rule that every place worked the same way.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE Use the passage

1 Explain one way Justinian strengthened Byzantine rule.

2 What exchange linked lords and vassals in feudal arrangements?

3 How was political power different in the Byzantine Empire and feudal western Europe?

4 How did Constantinople's role differ from the role of a western European manor?

3 YOUR TURN Your own words

Choose the Byzantine Empire or feudal western Europe. Write exactly three sentences explaining how its political arrangement helped maintain control. Include two details from the passage and explain how each detail supported control.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline two details showing centralized Byzantine power. Circle two showing local power in western Europe. Mark S beside a similarity. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Explain one way Justinian strengthened Byzantine rule.	He ordered a collection of Roman laws, the Corpus Juris Civilis. He also tried to restore former Roman lands.
2	What exchange linked lords and vassals in feudal arrangements?	Lords granted fiefs, usually land or its income, in return for service, often military service.
3	How was political power different in the Byzantine Empire and feudal western Europe?	Byzantium was centralized under one emperor and bureaucracy. In feudal western Europe, political power was divided among many kings and local lords.
4	How did Constantinople's role differ from the role of a western European manor?	Constantinople was a major trade and government center. A manor organized farming and payments or labor owed by peasants to a local lord.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The Byzantine Empire maintained control through centralized rule. The emperor directed officials, armies, and taxes from Constantinople, so decisions and resources could be organized from one center. Justinian's collection of Roman laws gave the government a common legal system to use across its territory.

Accept accurate explanations that use two passage details and connect each detail to maintaining control. For the comparison question, students must identify centralized Byzantine authority and divided feudal authority.