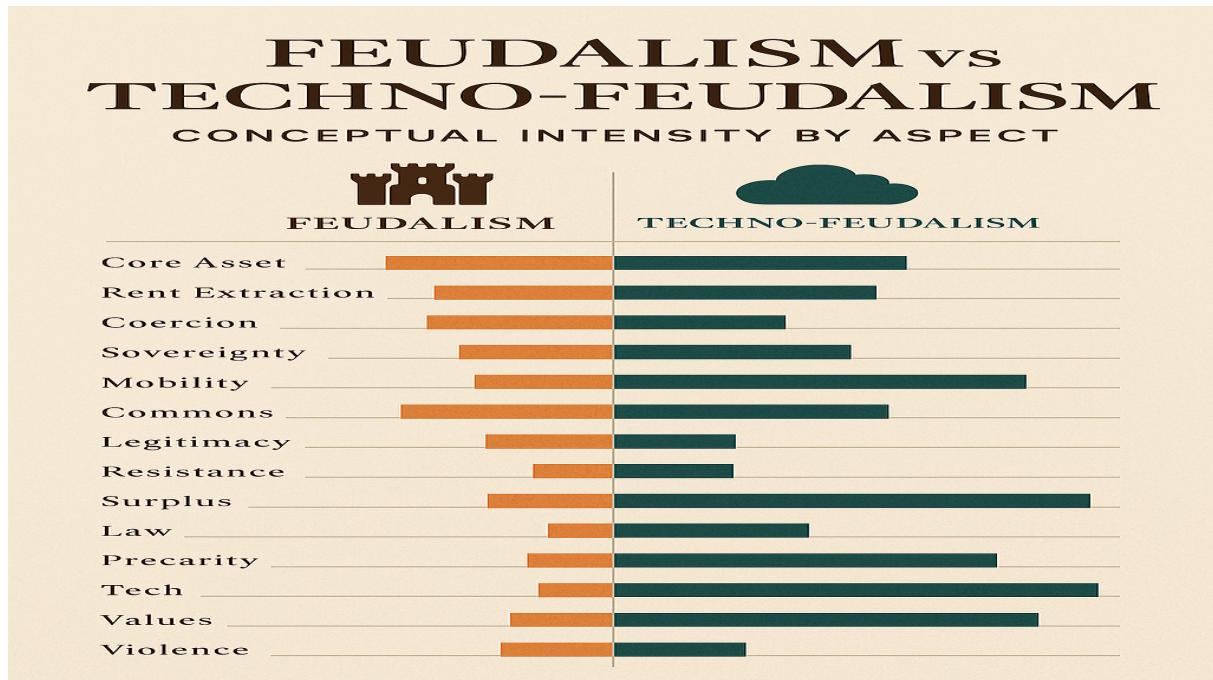


# Feudalism vs Techno-Feudalism — Digital Humanities Project

A public-facing essay on power, history, and the algorithmic present.

## Core Concept

This project investigates how the logic of feudalism—once rooted in land, lineage, and loyalty—has been reborn in digital form as techno-feudalism: a world ruled by platforms, data, and algorithms. History, it argues, has not ended—it has been re-encoded. Land became data, castles became clouds, and fiefs became platforms.



Conceptual Intensity (Canva)

## HISTORY REPEATING ITSELF IN A DIFFERENT FORM

	FEUDALISM		TECHNO-FEUDALISM
Basis of Power		Control over digital platforms	
Wealth Accumulation		Data monetization	
Dependents	Serfs	Users	
Economic Structure	Fixed obligations	Subscription economy	
System of Authority	Decentralized hierarchy	Centralized network	
Social Mobility	Limited	Minimal	

History Repeating (Canva)

## COMPARISON: FEUDALISM vs. TECHNO-FEUDALISM

↑ Power and Wealth Concentration	Digital oligarchs dominate the online marketplace
Feudal lords controlled estates and established a system of hierarchy dependency	Digital oligarchs dominate the online marketplace and centralize control of information
↓ Rights and Freedoms	Users are subject to the rules and exploitation of tech platforms' algorithms
Serfs were bound to the land and lacked political and economic autonomy	Users are subject to the rules and exploitation of tech platforms' algorithms
← Stability and Protection Peasants received security and subsistence from their lords	Big Tech obstructs competitors and stifles competition Big Tech obstructs competitors and stifles

Critical Comparison (Canva)

## **Philosophical Premise**

Drawing on Foucault, Marx, and Stiegler, this project shows how digital infrastructures replicate ancient systems of control. It echoes Varoufakis's thesis that capitalism has mutated into a techno-feudal order, while Zuboff's lens on surveillance capitalism explains how visibility itself becomes subservience.

## **Methods & Workflow**

Comparative datasets in data/ quantify fourteen dimensions; reproducible Python scripts in src/ generate charts; a Jupyter notebook in notebooks/ documents analysis. We also include TEI encodings of a medieval charter and a modern Terms of Service to expose continuity in coercive language.

## **Critical Interpretation**

Power has privatized itself under technological neutrality. Algorithms dictate visibility, access, and worth—echoing the lord's monopoly over land and labor. Feudal coercion was physical; digital coercion is algorithmic.

## **References (Selected)**

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