

## **DISEASE & DEATH IN HISTORY: THE BLACK DEATH**

Huppert, George, *After the Black Death: A Social History of Early Modern Europe* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1986).

Rosen, William, *Justinian's Flea: The First Great Plague and The End of The Roman Empire* (NY: Penguin Books, 2007).

Tuchman, Barbara W., *A Distant Mirror: The Calamitous 14<sup>th</sup> Century* (NY: Ballantine Books, 1978).

Ziegler, Philip, *The Black Death* (Gloucestershire, UK: Alan Sutton Publishing Ltd., reprint 1998) Several books by William McNeill deal with disease and its impact on history.

### **EUROPE AT THE OUTBREAK OF THE BLACK DEATH**

POPULATION INCREASE FROM 10<sup>th</sup> CENTURY AGRICULTURAL REVOLUTION, BETTER DIET, LONGER LIFESPANS, HIGHER FERTILITY --YET ½ OF ALL CHILDREN BORN DIED BEFORE AGE 5.

#### **A. ITALY: MOST PROSPEROUS AREA OF WESTERN EUROPE**

Crusades altered international trade—bypass Constantinople--Venice, Florence/Pisa, Genoa send merchant fleets into the Black Sea for goods arriving from Eastern & central Asia. Huge financial resources; rise of international banking. Florentine *florin* is only money accepted anywhere in Europe

**Renaissance** in earliest stages: Giotto's masterwork in the *Arena Chapel*, Padova, completed around 1305, is regarded as one of the supreme masterpieces of the Early Renaissance. 1334 Giotto began work on the bell tower of Florence's new cathedral. **Siena began construction of what was meant to be the largest church in the world. Florence's new cathedral under construction.**

**Dante died in 1321.** *Divine Comedy* initiated vernacular literature as popular reading. Very critical of Church—pope in the *Inferno*.

#### **LARGEST CITIES IN EUROPE – MOST IN ITALY**

4 CITIES OF 100,000+ POPULATION: Paris, **Florence, Genoa, Venice**

8 CITIES OF 50,000+ POPULATION: Ghent, Bruges, Cologne, **Milan, Bologna, Rome, Naples, Palermo** (Rome's due almost entirely to Church-related personnel and their suppliers)

c. 20 CITIES OF 20,000—50,000 POPULATION: 5 in France, 3 in Spain, few in Holy roman Empire, **Most in Italy**

**England – only 2 cities with 10,000+ people: LONDON & YORK**

#### **ITALY SET TO BE WORST HIT OF PLAGUE SITES:**

- **BANK FAILURES IN FLORENCE:** Edward III of England borrowed money to conduct the 100 Years War – couldn't repay & his default brought crash of Peruzzi in 1343, Bardi in 1344, Acciaiuoli 1344
- **CROP FAILURES, FAMINE IN TUSCANY 1347**
- **WORKERS' RIOTS 1346-47**
- **ROME IN ANARCHY** Cola di Rienzi revolt *No effective local government*
- **EARTHQUAKE JANUARY 1348,** Just as plague hit. Quake hit from Naples to Venice, damage felt into Greece & Germany. *Plague initially*

*blamed on the earthquake – belief it had released sulfurous & other foul fumes from the earth's interior, poisoning the population*

## **B. RELIGION**

### **1. CHRISTIANITY WAS THE STATE RELIGION IN MOST OF EUROPE -- BUT VESTIGES OF PAGANISM REMAINED**

- Celtic observance of Halloween – Church adapted it as All Hallows' Eve
- Marriage & fertility customs & rituals
- Astrology

### **2. DECLINE OF PAPAL / CHURCH PRESTIGE & AUTHORITY, AVIGNON PAPACY [Distant Mirror, Chap. 2]**

- **POLITICAL 1085**, CHRISTIANS armies in Spain captured Toledo, capital of Moorish caliphate and center of learning. **ROMAN LAW** recovered, translated, re-introduced into western Europe. **ASSERTS PRIMACY OF STATE OVER RELIGION – ROMAN EMPEROR CONTROLLED STATE AND RELIGION.** Basis for conflict between Secular monarchs & Papacy.
- **SPIRITUAL 1305 Philip IV** (France) orchestrated removal/death of Boniface VIII. Made Clement V pope & moved papacy to Avignon 1309 Church bureaucracy changed dramatically. In Rome, church councils and College of Cardinals (new office) gained power with support from France's opponents. With papacy operating from Avignon & Rome, Papal bureaucracy became the world's largest government.

Philip IV also suppressed the Templars. Bullied Pope Clement V into authorizing heresy trials. Friday 13, 1307, secret round-up of Templars netted many men but not their treasury. 36 Templars died as result of torture used to extract "evidence"; some committed suicide. Grand Master Jacques de Molay confessed under torture (chronicler said he would have "confessed that he had slain God Himself" after the torture). De Molay finally executed in 1314, cursed Clement V & Philip IV. **ACCUSATIONS:** bestiality, idol-worship, denial of the sacraments, adoring the devil in the form of a huge cat, sodomy with each other & intercourse with evil spirits, spitting & urinating on the cross, and heinous sexual sins.

#### **▶ SIMONY RAMPANT, CLERICAL OFFICES BOUGHT & SOLD TO UNFIT MEN**

Boy of 7 made a priest

Bishop of Durham (England) at his own consecration in 1318 could not pronounce the word *Metropolitanus*. After fumbling it several times in Latin, he said in vernacular "Let us take that word as read."

#### **▶ \_ LAVISH LIFESTYLE OF PAPAL COURT**

Petrarch condemned Avignon as "that disgusting city", the "Babylon of the West", where prelates enjoyed "licentious banquets"

#### **▶ EVERYTHING WAS FOR SALE: benefices, wives, dispensations for marriages of close kin, pardons & indulgences (Chaucer's pardoner is repugnant schemer)**

**1350 DECLARED A JUBILEE YEAR** – Clement VI issued Bull of 1343 authorizing the 1350 event to draw pilgrims to Rome. Jubilee was begun in 1300 by Boniface VIII as money-making scheme, to be held at each century! Clement needed more money, so made it every 50 years!

► **NON-CELIBATE CLERGY**

mistresses, seductions, sired children. Nuns bore children. Boccaccio tells of sexual predators seducing noble women as well as nuns.

**ANTI-CLERICALISM EVIDENT:**

- 1326, London mob beheaded their Bishop, his naked body in the street
- 1338, Bishop of Constance attacked, put in prison
- Poverty movements denounced the worldliness of Church and Friars. *Fratricelli* tried to get Franciscans to return to the ideals of St. Francis – were denounced as heretics by the Church. 27 in Provence were tried by the Inquisition, 4 burned at the stake in 1318.
- Marsilius of Padua, 1324, wrote treatise asserting the supremacy of the state over the Church—denying the pope's right to crown the Holy Roman emperor.

**C. 100 YEARS WAR: ENGLAND vs. FRANCE, 1337–1453**

1294, Edward I & Philip IV declared war on each other **ONGOING CONFLICT**

Causes: English kings try to regain land in France  
Economic competition in Flanders

Course: Edward III takes English throne 1330 -- to recover French lands  
1337-1364 English ascendant – get SW France & Calais

**August 1346-August 1347 continuous English campaign in France.**  
English & French armies destroyed crops, homes, livestock, barns, etc.

Consequences

Devastation of France  
Centuries-long bitterness between the 2 nations

**D. SPAIN INVOLVED IN THE RECONQUISTA 800–1492**

Moors pushed into southeast corner of Iberian peninsula.

**E. GERMANY – DIDN'T EXIST: PART OF HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE**

**F. POPULATION AND ECONOMIC TRENDS**

- Steady population growth since Agricultural Revolution of 10<sup>th</sup> Cent. More land in production, fens drained, waterways channeled for drainage & irrigation.
- Division between rich and poor growing increasingly sharp. Luxury goods available to rich nobles & merchants. Disdain for the commoner, peasants.

- Craft guilds in cities developed, controlled education, production, founded hospitals, built churches & guild halls [London's is great –setting for Harry Potter]. Rich merchants & Guild members bought noble estates, married into the nobility, oppressed the poor more than the nobles.
- **JEWES** Targets of oppression and suspicion, especially because of their money-lending activities. Forbidden to own land in most of Europe. Church forbade usury as Christian practice, but it was okay for Jews to lend money at interest. They financed wars, trade, marriage contracts, construction projects.
- Expelled from England in 1290 (Edward I) Handful remained in banking & medicine, attached to foreign embassies. Relocated into Holy Roman Empire.
- Expelled from France in 1306 (Philip IV), but allowed to return by his son Louis X, with Louis getting 2/3s share of their business. Peasant protest called *Pastoureaux* attacked Jews in France, slaughtered almost all Jews from Bordeaux to Albi, despite the king's order that they were protected. Royal ordinance of 1321 made persecution of Jews and lepers official policy in France.
- Chivalry in full swing. Despite their higher social status, nobles lived in filth and had no privacy, just like their peasants.

## **G. CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS**

- 100 Years War English campaign in northern France, Aug. 1346-Aug. 1347, had devastated large area, left people without homes, food, livestock. French populace facing a winter without food, and uncertainty whether they would have enough seed to plant crops the next year: THEY HAD NO IDEA THAT A FAR WORSE ENEMY WAS HEADED THEIR WAY.
- **SERIES OF CROP FAILURES** --- TOO MUCH RAIN, TOO LITTLE SUN: 1315-19, 1332, 1345-48 ► Malnutrition pre-disposed populace to disease.
- EARTHQUAKE ACROSS ITALY JAN. 1348

## BLACK DEATH: 1347 – 1350

### *How can one “bug” do so much harm? Or was it all harm?*

Earliest recorded use of the term “Black Death” was in Sweden, 1555.

#### Plague

- caused by a bacterium PASTEURELLA PESTIS
- lives in the stomach of a flea X. CHEOPSIS
- feeds on the blood and lives in the fur of rodents, especially the Black Rat (*rattus rattus*).
- Black rat is native to Asia
  - likely entered Europe in the 1100s-1200s, on ships of Crusaders returning from the Holy Land
  - **Brown rat** native to Europe – both species present after mid-1200s
- Plague erupted in Central Asia in 1338-39 -- don't know why!
- Began spreading east and west, reached Crimea by 1346
  - Don't know why the rat population migrated
  - Likely **floods or droughts** in central Asia prompted their movement
- No contemporaries reported an increase in black rat population or increase in deaths of rats as one might suspect.
  - *Likely because Europeans were so accustomed to the black rat -- and to seeing large numbers of dead ones -- that nobody paid any attention to the animal or connected it to the Black Death.*
  - **Or, black rat population may not have been sole source of flea / bacterium:** fleas with a fully engorged stomach can live up to 6 months without a “host” – could have traveled in the cargo hold of a ship or in the clothing of a sailor. Fleas were common in European households of all socio-economic levels, so people would have paid little or no attention their presence

#### LIKE BLACK SQUIRRELS BEING COMMONPLACE TO PEOPLE IN NE OHIO, BUT AN ODDITY TO VISITORS

- **3 types of plague** -- William Rosen says mutations are like “typographical errors” – DNA sequence gets out of order. The pope's doctor at Avignon was the first person to identify different versions of the disease—by symptoms & how long it took to die.
  - **BUBONIC** in lymphatic system / nodes. Characterized by swellings called *buboes* (*Greek*) in neck, armpits, groin (origin of “boo-boo” for an injury?) – size of almond, walnut or egg to oranges and larger. Fever, pain from swollen skin. *Buboes* burst, spewed pus & blood onto walls, bedclothes, etc., leaving stench which could not be eradicated [smoke smell from a fire]. Urine was thick, turned black or red. DEATH in 4-7 days—a child or malnourished adult could die sooner. . Subcutaneous hemorrhages produced dark blotches on skin. People went insane from the pain and inflammation of nerve tissue. **Not spread from person to person – only by infested flea. 60–90 % fatal.** *Those whose buboes burst had good chance of surviving and remained immune to recurrent visits of plague.*

- **PNEUMONIC** in lungs. **100% fatal! Spread by contact with infected person!** Died in less than 2 days, often a few hours or even almost instantaneously. High fever, cough up blood which spread disease. *Scientists still do not know why exactly what causes the bubonic form to become pneumonic!* More evident in seaport cities, where foreigners and natives were packed into high-density housing.
- **SEPTICEMIC** in bloodstream. **100% fatal! Spread by contact with infected person or by a human-borne flea *Pulex irritans!***

Plague typically affected an area for 3-4 months, then seemed to move on (gave rise to idea of cloud of bad air). Abated during winter. After initial outbreak spread through Europe, 1347-1350, plague seemed to disappear as mysteriously as it had come. Broke out again in early 1360s and every few decades after that until nearly 1700. Last outbreak in England was London in 1665-6.

In 1300s there was no attempt to formulate a coherent description of the disease, its symptoms or patterns.

1. No concept of “scientific” studies at that time
2. Poor communication even within a region inhibited sharing information, basically prevented sharing info over large areas as between Italy and England
3. Many doctors died, were unable to contribute to any analysis of the disease

### **INTRODUCED INTO EUROPE LATE 1346**

1346 Rumor of plague in Asia reached Europe. Pope Clement VI at Avignon reported that 42,836,486 people had died in Asia. Europeans never imagined it would move westward. [# from Ziegler, 36; Tuchman gives 23+ million]]

October – December 1347, ships at Venice, Genoa, 12 landed at Messina (Sicily) brought infestation from Crimea. Rats & fleas lived in grain cargoes, sailors’ clothing, had plenty to eat. When deaths started in Messina, people drove the sailors and ships from their port –**REALLY SPREAD THE DISEASE MUCH FASTER AS SHIPS SAILED AROUND THE WESTERN MEDITERRANEAN**

Jan. – Feb. 1348 ships had carried plague to Florence, Marseille, North Africa

June-August 1348 plague hit Paris

DEATH STATISTICS - not entirely reliable, but reflect fantastic losses

- People didn’t keep accurate records
  - Observers were intent on making a point rather than being accurate— Plague was God’s punishment on sinful men, so more deaths made the sin and need for repentance greater!
  - WE DON’T EVEN HAVE AN ACCURATE OF THE CENSUS OF THE US IN 2010—with all our technology and personnel to collect the information
- Records have been lost through war, floods, fire, etc. England may have best records, as it didn’t suffer many of these events, and William of Normandy had established a census department to produce the *Domesday Book* in 1085—so government tried to keep real records of people, houses, livestock, etc.
- Many if not most observers thought the end of the world had come, so they used numbers borrowed from St. John’s mortality for the plagues in the Revelation.

*Rev. 6: 8* “I looked, and there was a pale-colored horse. Its rider was named Death, and Hades followed close behind. They were given authority over one fourth of the earth, to kill by means of war, famine, disease, and wild animals.” Other passages tell of 1/3 being killed in various judgments.

- Plague had very differing mortality impact on communities, even within sections of a large city
- MEDIEVAL MIND displayed a “chronic and intentional vagueness about figures. Example: 1371 English Parliament assessed a tax to raise money for the next phase of the 100 Years’ War ► Based the amount to be raised on 40,000 parishes, but there were actually less than 9,000 parishes in the realm.
- Even if population figures for before and after the plague could be ascertained, it would not reflect actual death tolls, for many people simply left a town trying to escape the disease—they may have died elsewhere or continued to live in a new locale
- **CARELESSNESS OR CASUAL USE OF LARGE NUMBERS AMY HAVE BEEN RELATED TO THE DIFFICULTY OF USING ROMAN NUMERALS FOR ALRGE NUMBERS AND CALCULATIONS.** Arabic # not in common usage until later in the Renaissance.

[current example of distorted perception -- foreigners think the US is horribly dangerous because there are so many murders, rapes, shootings, other crimes. Their impression is based on news – WHAT MAKES NEWS? THE BAD BEHAVIORS. So if you relied entirely on news for your impressions of society, it would be quite negative—you would think everyone was either a murderer or in imminent danger of being murdered. So people in 1347-50 saw deaths mounting, from a cause they could not identify, and made drastic conclusions.]

**ITALY: largest population in Europe, hardest hit by plague. 10-11 million population, at least 1/3 died, more in some areas**

**SICILY:** Messinese appealed to the Archbishop of Catania to send the relics of St. Agatha up to Messina to stop the plague. Catanians refused to let the relics leave their own city which needed to be protected from the plague. Archbishop rinsed the relics in water and personally carried the holy water to Messina, then led processions through the city – then a black doge with a drawn sword in its paws rushed onto the procession, breaking all the silver vessels and lamps and candlesticks with the pieces flying all over the area. *Michael of Piazza’s account mixes the factual with the fantastical, as do most chroniclers of the time.* Rabies was endemic in Sicily, so an attack by a mad dog would not be too farfetched Archbishop returned to Catania, but died of plague soon afterwards.

[Is it really any different today? How much of the content of election ads is fact and how much fantasy?]

**Florence** 55-70% of population, 45,000-65,000 deaths

*Compagnia della Misericordia* (founded 1244 to bury bodies of people who had been executed) gathered bodies of plague victims; ran out of coffins so put bodies in shallow pits – dogs dug up corpses and ate them.

**Pisa**, 500 people a day

**Siena**, more than half the population Hysterical fear gripped the city:

**Agnolo di Tura**: “Father abandoned child, wife husband, one brother another, for this plague seemed to strike through the breath and sight. And so they died. And no one could be found to bury the dead for money or friendship . . . and I buried my five children with my own hands, and so did many others likewise.” Attempt to appease God city government tried to regulate sin: legalized gambling was prohibited “forever”. When plague abated by the end of the year gambling returned.

**Guy de Chauliac** (pope’s physician): “A father did not visit his son, nor the son his father. Charity was dead.”

**Residents of some religious houses, such as the nuns at the municipal hospital (Hôtel Dieu) in Paris, tended the sick until the majority of sisters were dead**

**Bologna** 60% likely near accurate

**Naples** 63,000 in 2 months

**Venice** 2/3s of population. Doge Andrea Dandolo appointed panel of 3 noblemen to recommend measures to check the spread of the plague. They advised new burial sites remote from the city—one on an island that has since disappeared into the lagoon. Corpses had to be buried at least 5 feet under ground. Strict control of ships in and out of port—evaders threatened with burning the ship. Isolate people returning from the Orient for 40 days. ; Doctors died at greater rate than rest: 20 of 24 “disappeared”—many fled the city to avoid contagion.

Towns ran out of candles to burn at funerals

Government suffered as officials died—quorums could not be assembled

Courts ceased to function as judges died while the cases may have increased due to inheritance work.

## **FRANCE**

Avignon, 400 people a day died; 7,000 houses were left empty; 1 graveyard received 11,000 corpses in 6 weeks. (Ziegler, 47, churchman writing to friend in Bruges). Death rate **claimed** to be 62,000 (one chronicle asserted more than 100,000!), but the population was less than 50,000! Do know that **9 of 27 cardinals** died and **70 lower-ranking members of the papal staff**. Rolls of the Apostolic Chamber show that 94 of 450 members of the Papal Curia died—**just 21%**. The entire body of English Austin Friars died.

When grave-diggers were inadequate, dead bodies were thrown into the Rhone River [**with imaginable consequences—a wonder that cholera did not erupt in many places**]

POPE SPARED. His physician believed in the “hot” treatment, had fires built in the papal palace, the pope forced to sit between 2 blazing fires, wrapped in blankets, sweating profusely in July 1348. But did not get plague—heat kept the rats and fleas out of the papal apartments!



## **PLAGUE ENTERED NORTHERN FRANCE IN JULY 1348, BRIEF IMPACT BEFORE WEATHER TURNED COOLER, THE SUBSIDED DURING THE WINTER**

Paris, 800 day, 50,000 total – ½ the population. Struck young and old.

Givry, Burgundy, population was 1200-1500 (based on church and tax records). Records show 615 deaths in 14 weeks of plague attack. For the previous decade, less than 30 people died per year.

St Marie Lamont, 400 died, ½ the population

Killed Princess Joan, the daughter of Edward III of England, traveling through France to Spain to marry the son of the King of Castile

Franciscan monasteries in Carcassonne & Marseille all inhabitants died

Montpellier, 133 of 140 Dominican friars died

REPORTS OF ENTIRE VILLAGES DESERTED—all residents died or fled, livestock wandering loose, crops not harvested, roofs not freshly thatched, etc.

## **GERMANY *HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE***

- Vienna late autumn 1349. 500-600 a day died
- Abnormally large number of churchmen died. At least 35% of higher clergy, really unusual for high-ranking prelates. Church very short of personnel in 1349-50.
  - Sharp increase in number of plural benefices **One area, 1345-47, 39 benefices held by 13 men. 1350-52, 57 benefices held by 12 men.**
  - **Closing of many monasteries**
  - **Mass ordinations of young men, often poorly educated and untrained for work in the Church**

**SITUATION SETS STAGE FOR REFORM MOVEMENT TO SHAKE UP CHURCH. REFORMERS HAVE VALID COMPLAINTS, AND PUBLIC DISAFFECTED, WHILE CHURCH WAS TOO WEAK TO ROUSE EFFECTIVE OPPOSITION TO REFORM.**

## **ENGLAND best-preserved archives to document plague**

Plague arrived in June 1348 at Bristol, major port in the West Country. Bishop of Bath and Wells (Ralph of Shrewsbury) in Jan. 1349 sent pastoral letter that admitted many parishes had no one to hear confessions or administer last rites, and authorizing laymen and even women to do this service.

Somerset, loss of church personnel: institutions to new benefices were 9 in November 1348, 32 in Dec; 47 in Jan.; 43 in Feb.; 36 in March; 40 in April, down to 7 in June 1349.

Uncertainty and havoc in religious and political administration: Bishop of Lincoln had removed the abbot of Eynsham Abbey for an offense and appointed 2 men to administer the abbey. Both died. 2 monks sent to tell the bishop were appointed in place of the 2 dead men, but the 2 monks both died before they even got back to the abbey. Village of Tilgarsley belonged to

the same abbey, and in 1359 tax collectors reported that no tax could be collected there because no one had lived in the village since 1350.

Cuxham: only 2 men had been *reeves* (managers) of the manor between 1288-1349. March 1349 *reeve* died; his replacement died in April; his successor died in June. His successor died in July; 5<sup>th</sup> one died in July 1350. The lord of the manor gave up and rented his land out to individual farmers for annual rents.

Cambridgeshire, England, records of 3 villages reveal death rates of 47%, 57%, 70%.

Archbishop of Canterbury: John Stratford died in August 1348  
 Successor died in May 1349 before being officially installed  
 Successor died on 26 August 1349

LONDON estimates of deaths exceed the likely population  
 All 8 wardens of the Cutter's Company died, other guilds also lost leaders  
 27 monks and the Abbot of Westminster died

### **NO KNOWN CAUSE, PREVENTION, OR REMEDY**

Pope originally proclaimed that it was caused by bad air emanating from dead bodies. Medicine was still a branch of the Church—pope controlled who got medical training, what was taught. Mutilation of corpses was forbidden, so dissection not allowed.

**Favored view of scholars:** was caused by a poison cloud—[*early idea of bioterrorism*]

from fumes exuded by earthquakes of 1347-48 ► small quakes in 1347, big one in early 1384.

Alfonso of Cordova: “since air can also be infected artificially, as when a certain confection is prepared in a glass flask, and when it is well fermented the person who wishes to do that evil waits till there is a strong, slow wind from some region of the world, then goes into the wind and rests his flask against some rocks opposite the city or town which he wished to infect and, making a wide detour and going further into the wind lest the vapours infect him, pulls his flask violently against the rocks. When it breaks the vapour pours out and is dispersed in the air, and whoever it touches will die . . .” [Ziegler 11t]

Churchman at Avignon wrote to friend in Bruges: “Fish, even sea fish, are not commonly eaten as people say that **they have been infected by the bad air**. Moreover, people do not eat m, nor even touch spices, which have not been kept a year, since they fear that they may have lately arrived in the aforesaid ships. And, indeed, it has many times been observed that those who have eaten these new spices and even some kinds of sea fish have suddenly been taken ill”

ASTROLOGY A BIG INFLUENCE: Gentile da Foligno, physician at Bologna & Padua surmised that infection was “communicated by means of air breathed in and out” but assumed the air had been corrupted by planetary influences.

PHILIP VI of France asked medical faculty of University of Paris for analysis: determined it was caused by a triple conjunction of Saturn, Jupiter, and Mars in the 40<sup>th</sup> degree of Aquarius that had occurred on March 20, 1345. **This became the official, accepted scientific source of the plague.**

**Favored view of general public:** Act of God to punish people for their sins.

**Suggested treatments to ward off plague:**

- sit or lie perfectly still, but do not sleep during the day or immediately after eating
- don't sleep on one's back was dangerous because bad vapors could fall on the palate and nostrils, and flow directly into the brain!
- **Inhaling foul odors would drive out contaminated air that brought plague, so people were encouraged to inhale at public latrines—and reports are that many did just that**
- BLEEDING – BASED ON TEACHING OF GALEN, 2<sup>nd</sup> Cent. Physician.
- FLEEING TO THE COUNTRY –favored by nobles and wealthy who could afford to do so.

BD spread so fast that it exaggerated the terror, sparked peoples' desire for security & escape infection, caused social breakdown in family, community, etc. as people ignored the dying or fled from contagion. Peoples' efforts to escape to more distant area may have contributed to the fast spread of the Plague!

## CONSEQUENCES OF THE BLACK DEATH

### **3 CONSIDERATIONS:**

**A LONG-TERM EFFECTS MAY NOT BE FULLY MEASURABLE OR DESCRIBED**  
 PERSON CRITICALLY INJURED IN AN EVENT—WAR, RAPE, CAR WRECK, ATTEMPTED MURDER, BICYCLE ACCIDENT—MAY FULLY RECOVER PHYSICALLY BUT NOT RECOVER ENTIRELY FROM THE EVENT. SO AREAS THAT BOUNCED BACK FROM B.D. MAY HAVE SUFFERED HIDDEN AFTERSHOCK AND CHANGE THAT CANNOT BE TRACED DIRECTLY TO THE EVENT.

**DISTORTED PERCEPTIONS BY on-scene commentators** -- Just as many people think the US is horribly dangerous because there are so many murders, rapes, shootings, other crimes. Their impression is based on news – WHAT MAKES NEWS? THE BAD BEHAVIORS. So if you relied entirely on news for your impressions of society, it would be quite negative—you would think everyone was either a murderer or in imminent danger of being murdered. So people in 1347-50 saw deaths mounting, from a cause they could not identify, and made drastic conclusions.

### **HISTORIANS CHANGE THEIR VIEWS**

Perspectives change, new evidence emerges, old evidence is discredited, etc.

1. Before 1800s, historians virtually ignored Black Death, focused on war and politics as the substance of history
2. 1800s – late 20<sup>th</sup> Century, Black Death got more attention, as historians began including “social” history in their narratives and analyses. English historians, especially, viewed the BD as a crucial event that gave birth to “modern” man—secular, looking out for himself first, less dependent on the community, etc.
3. 1950s until now, historians have looked at years *before* the Black Death to see how conditions compare to the period *after* the BD. Have revised many earlier views that credited BD with huge changes in society, economic, politics, etc.

### **A. SOCIAL LIFE**

**Highest mortality among women** throughout Europe and also in **children in many areas**. Hinders reproductive capacity. Europe did not regain its 1347 population until late 18<sup>th</sup>-early 19<sup>th</sup> Century---450 years. Recurrent outbreaks of plague until 1666, wars, and migration to the New World were majors factors that slowed population recovery.

Along with countless unknown women, some notable women died:

Queen of France (Jeanne) & her daughter-in law, 1349

Queen of Aragon (Leonora), Princess Marie

Queen of Navarre (Jeanne, a daughter of Louis X)

Boccaccio’s mistress

Laura, beloved of Petrarch, in Avignon

Princess Joan, daughter of King of England, died while going to Portugal to marry the Crown Prince

Survivors suffered ongoing sense of hopelessness and helplessness, hindering recovery of society. Recurrent outbreaks of plague about every 10-15 years added to this social depression. Breakdown in relationships as people abandoned one another {Agnolo de Tura, et. al.} – may have contributed to reduced social cohesion.

## CONTEMPORARY OBSERVERS HAD 2 VIEWS OF POST-PLAGUE BEHAVIOR:

1. People abandoned decency and lived in lawlessness and debauchery, enjoy life while you can, for it will end soon! Indifference to the Church was frequently noted, non-attendance at services. **This also noted before the Plague!**
2. **Huge improvement in morals.** Many people who had been “living in sin” (not married) did get married –in church, as that was the only type of legal marriage. Some dice manufacturers stopped producing dice and began making rosary beads!

**MORAL IMPROVEMENT SHORT-LIVED. Evidence that even where morals improved immediately during or after the Plague, people soon reverted to pre-plague practices.**

## MARRIAGE

- Later age for marriages
- Legalized, state-run brothels to accommodate sexual appetites of single men
- Men did take advantage of young orphans to marry girls with rich dowries.

**LITIGATION** many properties without living owner or whose owner died intestate. Courts jammed with title disputes – too few lawyers and officials to handle the claims – and too few survivors who might be able to account for the wishes of the dead.

**SIENA – CONSTRUCTION OF NEW CATHEDRAL HALTED** (*social, economic, artistic impact*). Remodeling existing *duomo* but all work halted with only part of new nave & new “front” wall completed. Still unfinished. Local merchant recorded that survivors suffered “melancholy and grief” continuously. [seeing the unfinished cathedral every day would be like walking past the Twin Towers Ground Zero site daily]

## EDUCATION: Real alarm that learning would die. 12<sup>th</sup> Century had sparked huge increase in learning, founding of universities, helped lead into Renaissance of early 14<sup>th</sup> Century.

- 4 of the 30 universities in Europe closed forever
- Number of schools and places of higher learning increased
  - # of schools in the Diocese of York quadrupled between 1350-1500, though population remained fairly level – more children going to school
  - Bishop Bateman founded Trinity at Cambridge in Feb. 1350 to repair the appalling losses the clergy had suffered during the plague. Corpus Christi and Clare also founded in wake of plague.
  - 1441 Henry VI established King’s College at Cambridge, alluded to need to replace losses of the plague
  - Charles IV, HRE, founded new universities: Prague, Orange, Perugia, Siena, Pavia, Lucca
- **DEATH OF OLDER, EXPERIENCED SCHOLARS OPENED DOOR TO YOUNGER, LESS TRADITION-MINDED MEN WITH NEW IDEAS AND PRACTICES**
  - **Language of learning shifts to vernacular languages. Replacement teachers not skilled in Latin, so adopt vernacular instead. In**

England, reject Latin & French as tongues of learning and adopt English! Latin monopoly was broken, **national languages gained momentum.**

- **NATIONALISM ABETTED BY LANGUAGE**
- **Occurred in France & Italy, but strongest in England.**
  - 100 YEARS WAR ALSO A FACTOR IN NATIONALISM
- Emphasis shifts from “other worldly” to “this world” – HUMANISM & SECULARISM ► **both still relied on Christian teaching & perspective**
  - Pope Clement VI temporarily permitted dissections of human cadavers in hope of gaining knowledge to prevent or treat plague. Once the gate is open, impossible to return fully to pre-plague situations
- LAYMEN GAIN LARGE CONTROL OF EDUCATION
  - Pre-plague overwhelming majority of literate people were Church personnel: prelates, priests, monks, nuns ► decimation of their ranks opens way for laymen to become scholars/professors.
  - Emphasis on vernacular literature: Chaucer wrote *Canterbury Tales* in English. Dante had set precedent with *Divine Comedy*.
  - Religious studies still prominent, but patrons like the Medici in Florence promote secular curriculum, arts, medicine, challenges to traditional curriculum and faculty

## **JEWS: VIRULENT ANTI-SEMITISM**

- **JEWS** Targets of oppression and suspicion, especially because of their money-lending activities. Forbidden to own land in most of Europe. Church forbade usury as Christian practice, but it was okay for Jews to lend money at interest. They financed wars, trade, marriage contracts, construction projects. Charged 20% interest, most of which actually into the treasuries of kings who charged for the privilege of allowing Jews to live in the realm.
- **Did not have citizenship in any country in Europe ► no civil rights!** Excluded from membership in any craft guilds. Could not sell many products: wheat, shoes, bread to Christians.
- **1190, in York, massacre of Jews, plunder their property**
- 1205 Pope Innocent III declared Jews were doomed to perpetual servitude as Christ-killers. 1215 he required all Jews ages 7-14 to wear a badge for identification—couldn't sneak into the educational system!
- St. Louis (Louis IX, 1226-70) had Talmud condemned as heretical book. 24 Cartloads were taken from synagogues and burned.
- Expelled from England in 1290 (Edward I) Handful remained in banking & medicine, attached to foreign embassies. Relocated into Holy Roman Empire.
- Expelled from France in 1306 (Philip IV), but allowed to return by his son Louis X, with Louis getting 2/3s share of their business. Peasant protest called *Pastoureaux* attacked Jews in France, slaughtered almost all Jews from Bordeaux to Albi, despite the king's order that they were protected. Royal ordinance of 1321 made persecution of Jews and lepers official policy in France.

**PLAGUE:** HYSTERIA ACCUSED JEWS OF POISONING WELLS -- INTRODUCING & SPREADING THE AGENT OF DEATH –whatever it was! Also accused of ritual murders of Christians.

- Spring 1348 Jews in Narbonne & Carcassonne burned
- **Pope Clement VI summer 1348 issued Bull that prohibited killing, looting, or forcible conversions of Jews without a trial.** Only in effect in Avignon & Papal States. Issued bull in September 1348 explaining that plague was killing Jews along with Christians, effort to stem hysteria.
- **Savoy, Sept. 1348,** conducted trials of Jews, used confessions gained through intense torture: 11 were burned alive, heavy fines placed on Jews who chose to stay in Savoy. Most apparently left.
- **Basle, Jan. 9, 1349** entire Jewish population of several hundred persons was burned, decree forbade Jews to live in the city for 200 years
- **Strasbourg Town Council opposed persecution of Jews ► citizens deposed the entire council and put in men who passed a measure to end Jewish habitation in the city. Feb. 1349 all Jews in Strasbourg, about 2,000 people, were herded into a burial ground and burned at stakes prepared for them – those who chose to convert were to be spared, but no record of any converting!**
- **Flagellant groups slaughtered Jews in Freiburg, Augsburg, Munich & other cities**
- **Erfurt – all 3,000 Jews in the city killed**
- **Brussels – entire Jewish population exterminated in Dec. 1349.**

#### **JEWS DID FIGHT BACK:**

- **Worms, March 1349: entire 400-member Jewish community burned themselves to death rather than fall into the hands of Christians [Masada]**
- **Frankfurt –am-Main same self-destruction**
- **Mainz – largest Jewish population in Europe—secretly collected weapons, Aug. 24, 1349, Mob attacked Jewish area; Jews killed 200 attacking Christians, retreated into their homes and set them on fire – all 6,000 Jews died**

#### **POST – PLAGUE YEARS -- anti-Semitism evident**

- Chaucer, Prioress's Tale relates how a child martyr was killed at Jewish hands
- 1394 **EXPELLED FROM FRANCE**
- 1516 Jews asked Venice for permission to settle in the city, as they had nowhere else to go. Council allowed them to move into an area that had been left vacant when the glassmakers were moved out to the island of Murano – fear that fires needed to produce glass were getting too dangerous to keep in the heart of the heavily-populated city. [like some people think that Kent State airport is dangerous because planes fly over populated areas] *Geto* was term for the furnace, so Jews were said to live in the *Geto*, *ghetto* in different Italian dialect. Venice claims origin of the term. Small area has tallest buildings in Venice, as Jewish population grew it had to expand upward rather than outward, so added more stories to existing buildings.

## **SLAVERY**

- African slave trade initiated by Arabs before advent of Islam in mid-7<sup>th</sup> Century. Muslims continued the practice.
- Slaves seen as way to supplement labor force after the Plague
- Slaves became status symbol of wealth and high social position
- Portugal introduced African slave trade to western Europe in late 1400s as they began exploring the west coast of Africa and around to India.
  - By mid-1500s 10% of population of Lisbon was black slaves
  - “ “ “ 3% of Portugese population was black slaves
- VENETIANS sold Africans and conducted white slave trade, bringing slaves from Black Sea areas.
- Most slaves were used in domestic jobs: servants, washerwomen, cooks, coachmen. Rape was common, and children of unions were considered slaves. Some records that slave/white children were educated and given free status.

## **B. ECONOMIC LIFE -- much overlap with political life**

As 19<sup>th</sup> Century historians began incorporating the Black Death into their view of the past, they tended to over-estimate its importance by only looking at society after the Plague, rather than comparing post-plague to pre-plague conditions.

- INITIAL DROP IN PRICES Merchants' shelves loaded with merchandise
  - ▶ few buyers ▶ “overstocked” sales!!!
- PRICES SOARED AFTER INITIAL STORES EMPTIED -- no replacement goods available, shortages of many items, including salt, cloth, cheese. By 1353-54 prices about at pre-plague levels
  - Especially hurts urban areas where people do not produce any of their own food!
- LOSS OF WORKERS HURT AT EVERY ECONOMIC LEVEL EXPERIENCED LEADERS AND SKILLED CRAFTSMEN LOST
  - LONDON All 8 wardens of the Cutter's Company & all 6 of the Hatters' Company died; other guilds also lost leaders
- PEASANTS died; their labor could not be replaced on estates of nobles
  - Grain not harvested
  - livestock roamed loose – dead animals weren't disposed of -- or were tossed into streams or wells!
  - Wolves invaded many villages to prey on the dead --- terrorized the survivors
  - Countless thousands of acres of land that had been cleared in previous 3 centuries was left uncultivated, returned to natural state.
    - Abbey of Ramsay in England
      - Less than 1/2 the acreage cultivated in of 1307 was under cultivation in 1400
      - 1307 had 5 plows 1400 only 1 plow
      - 1307 had 28 oxen 1400 only 5 oxen
    - Land was used to run sheep rather than row-cropping
      - Used less labor
      - Increased profits -- sheep for wool, milk/cheese, & meat



- Dikes on irrigation canals crumbled for lack of maintenance, along sea coast failed dikes allowed sea water to run in and infiltrate land that had been painstakingly built up for agriculture.
- 
- PEASANTS GAINED:
  - Labor shortage encouraged them to bargain for higher wages, lower rents, more land, move into better cottages of deceased tenants
  - Landowners reduced rents or even delayed collections for a year to entice tenants to take up jobs on their estates [like current practice of “tax abatements” to entice business to locate in a community]
  - **By 1353-54 many estates had been broken up into small holdings & leased to tenants. People who had been landless before the plague could get a plot, farm on shares with the landowner [SHARE-CROPPING].**
  - Greater mobility – choice of where to work and what work to do
- TOWN RESIDENTS GAINED:
  - Craftsmen, clerks, artisans, demand higher wages --- usually got them
    - Demands could backfire: Many workers refused to work unless paid higher wages. **England: 1351 Parliament passed a “Statute of Laborers”. Made idleness a crime!**
    - 1. **Every able-bodied person under age 60 must work for whoever required him**
    - 2. **No alms would be given to able-bodied beggars**
    - 3. **Vagrant peasants could be forced to work for anyone who claimed them**

**Down to the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, this law was the basis for “conspiracy” laws against labor in the long struggle to prevent unionization!**

4. **INEFFECTIVE IN CONTROLLING WAGES AND WORKERS.** 3 more laws in 1360s tried to strengthen enforcement, but led to open rebellion in 1381.

[Sounds like current U.S. trying to “fix” illegal immigration, Medicare fraud, etc.]

- Paris, 1351 town council passed ordinance requiring guilds to loosen their restrictions so more men could be trained for specialized jobs; also fixed wages not to exceed 1/3 of level before the plague.

**NEW HISTORICAL VIEW ► late 20<sup>th</sup> Century comparing post-plague to pre-plague: RECOVERY FROM PLAGUE OUTBREAK IN 1347-51 WAS SURPRISINGLY FAST! THE RETURN OF PLAGUE IN 1361 WAS THE EVENT THAT REALLY BROUGHT DESPAIR AND CHANGE IN EUROPEAN LIFE.**

**C. POLITICAL LIFE inextricably woven into economic & military themes**  
**Many cities, towns, villages left without leadership, to manage during the plague or to rally people for recovery.**

Siena 4 of 9 Oligarchy council died

France 1/3 of royal notaries died, limits tax collections and record-keeping

London 4-time Lord Mayor died

Bristol 15 of 52 town council members died

RULING CLASS / MONARCHS, etc. – ACCUSTOMED TO GOOD LIFE FACED HAVING TO LIVE ON LESS TAX INCOME OR FIND WAYS TO KEEP INCOME AT PRE-PLAGUE LEVEL: **higher taxes on survivors or new sources of taxation.** Either strategy would be offensive to laymen and Church.

## **FRANCE** Nobility and Church are targets of protests

- France: *Jacquerie* 1358 peasants' rebellion. King raised taxes to pay for next round of 100 Years War, peasant mobs ravaged the countryside—burned barns and houses of nobles, cut throats of some nobles, raped wives and daughters of nobles, killed or maimed livestock
- France 1438 Charles VII (king from 1422-61, crowned with help of **Joan of Arc**) issued the Pragmatic Sanction of Bourges ► Gave the French Crown control to appoint bishops in French dioceses & to keep ecclesiastical revenues raised in France **in France**—not all sent to Rome (papacy returned to Rome in 1417).
- **JACQUERIE** revolt, May 1358. Since 1355 (100 Years War resumed) they had suffered immensely—houses & barns burned, women raped, no food, livestock destroyed, or stolen by the English **and** French armies. **Peasants paid the bulk of taxes ► nobles and Church were exempt from taxes, as they were supposed to support society in other ways! Couldn't pay their taxes, so were being evicted from manors or put in jail.** [like letting the richest levels of society avoid paying a proportionate tax!] Peasants in northern France began revolting, attacked noble families, killing and raping, burning manors, wreaking havoc. Nobles were busy with war at first so couldn't react quickly. Soon nobles began vicious repression, slaughtering peasants whether innocent or guilty of crimes. CONTINUING RESENTMENT OF PEASANTS, CLASS CONFLICT IN FRANCE –culminates in French Revolution when peasants / commoners outlawed the aristocracy & killed many nobles.

## **ENGLAND**

- English king forced to call parliament into session to approve new taxes to raise funds -- in mid-1340s, Edward III had defaulted on loans from Italian banks so couldn't get more money from them, forced to go to parliament.
  - 1215 King John compelled to sign *Magna Carta*, recognized barons right to approve new taxes
  - *Curia Regis* > great council of barons
  - 1295 Edward I convened *Model Parliament*: barons, churchmen, town men last group was basis for House of commons  
Decisions of representatives binding

**Edward III called 27 parliaments in 40 years:** 1337-77 (he died). Parliament matured and gained firm voice in government, **prevented England from developing absolute monarchy as France did.**

**1376 Parliament convened to approve new taxes to pay for next round of 100 Years War.**

- New men in House, replace those killed in war and plague
  - **Merchants who got seats, look at the business of war**
- Demand accountability of King's ministers: **introduce Impeachment:** House can accuse & remove king's ministers

- **1399** Parliament deposed the reigning King Richard II, bring in new dynasty also descended from Edward III

### **1381 peasants' revolt, murdered the Archbishop of Canterbury**

- **WARS OF THE ROSES**  
Lancastrians vs. Yorkists: rival Plantagenet lines  
With 100 Years War + Black death > devastation  
HENRY TUDOR takes throne 1485 – new dynasty

## **D. MILITARY / DIPLOMATIC CONSEQUENCES OF B.D. & 100 YEARS WAR cannot untangle from the political aspects of BD & War**

1364-1380 French ascendant

1364-1381 1380-1429 Renewed English invasions

1415 Henry V @ Agincourt, wins Normandy

1422 Henry VI (only one year old) proclaimed king of Eng. & France. 1430 9-year-old Henry crowned King of France in *Notre Dame* Cathedral, Paris. (assassinated in the Tower of London 1471)

### **1355 ENGLAND RESUMES THE 100 YEARS WAR**

THOUGH MANPOWER DEPLETED, both sides think they now have a great advantage, so determine to prosecute the war with greater zeal

- causes tax problems in both realms –political and economic fallout
  - stirs interest in new weapons: **artillery & gunpowder**. Kill more enemy with less effort [*why man developed atomic weapons*]. Gunpowder introduced from China in early 1300s, not much interest until after Plague. [*like penicillin not used much until World War II created need for large-scale use of antibiotics to treat wounds/infection*]

### **HINDERS / PREVENTS RECOVERY FROM BLACK DEATH**

- NOBLES ON BOTH SIDES ignored their estates, see **breakdown in local authority**. Boss is away fighting, possibly gets killed in war. Manager at home may enact policies that stir up rebellion among tenants / peasants
- English invasions of France were primarily for plunder – took everything they could get their hands on and what they couldn't haul away they burned or maimed livestock. Ravages of war – English massacre the town of Limoges and sacked many churches
- French King Jean used scorched earth policy to deprive English of supplies and booty—big help in ruining his own country. French peasants suffered horribly
- French managed to invade and pillage the southern coast of England
- ENGLISH RESORT TO USING COMMON SOLDIERS MORE EFFECTIVELY ►1415 Henry V @ Agincourt, wins Normandy
  - English use of commoners, archers spells the doom of feudal knights as core of army

### **VERY LONG-TERM CONSEQUENCE OF 100 YEARS WAR:**

**Constantinople falls to Muslims in 1453 without aid from western Europe which is so involved in the war. Sets up ongoing contest between “Christian Europe” and “Muslims”**

## **E. RELIGIOUS LIFE Church emerged richer but more unpopular**

### **PRE-PLAGUE DISSATISFACTION WITH THE CHURCH PERSONNEL & POLICIES ANTI-CLERICALISM**

**CHURCH OWNED VAST PROPERTY AND COLLECTED TITHES AS WELL AS OCCASIONAL “ASSESSMENTS” – the biggest landowner in France, England, Italy, and HRE.**

**CHURCH CONTROLLED EDUCATION, MEDICINE, LAW – ENTRY TO HEAVEN!**

- Kings of France and England, Dukes in Italy trying to gain supremacy in their realms—make Church subservient to secular ruler
- **NON-CELIBATE CLERGY** mistresses, seductions, sired children. Nuns bore children. Boccaccio tells of sexual predators seducing noble women as well as nuns.
- **PLURAL BENEFICES / ABSENTEEISM**
- **UNFIT PRIESTS & PRELATES**
- 1326, London mob beheaded their Bishop, his naked body in the street
- 1338, Bishop of Constance attacked, put in prison
- Poverty movements denounced the worldliness of Church and Friars. *Fratricelli* tried to get Franciscans to return to the ideals of St. Francis – were denounced as heretics by the Church. 27 in Provence were tried by the Inquisition, 4 burned at the stake in 1318.
- Marsilius of Padua, 1324, wrote treatise asserting the supremacy of the state over the Church—denying the pope’s right to crown the Holy roman emperor.

### **INDULGENCES / TREASURY OF MERIT INTRODUCED**

INDULGENCE – a special forgiveness of sin for someone performing a holy act for the Church. During the Crusades, indulgences were given to those who went to recover the Holy Land from the Muslims. Forgiveness was based on one’s giving oneself to the holy purpose of Crusade.

1343 POPE CLEMENT VI issued a papal bull declaring 1350 a *Jubilee Year*. (Boniface VIII declared 1<sup>st</sup> Jubilee Year for 1300—to be every 100 years). Clement wanted to restore some of the grandeur of Rome, which had fallen into great decay. Earthquakes had caused many buildings to collapse, civil authority was weak, 3 main basilicas were in ruins (San Giovanni in Laterano, Santa Maria Maggiore, San Paolo fuori le Mura), many churches had no roofs or windows.

- To raise money for Rome’s “clean up, paint up, fix up campaign”, Clement offered indulgences **sold for money!** **Treasury of Merit** was declaration that the Virgin and the saints had actually done far more holy acts than they could possibly need for their own reward, so their excess holy acts were pooled the Treasury of Merit for use by less holy sinners. One could purchase an indulgence for varying periods of time in Purgatory—depending on how much money one had.

## **CHURCH EMERGES FROM THE BLACK DEATH RICHER BUT MORE UNPOPULAR**

### **A. REASONS FOR UNPOPULARITY**

#### **1. THE CHURCH GAINED GREAT WEALTH DURING THE PLAGUE:**

**From BEQUESTS AND SALE OF INDULGENCES** Bequests poured in from dying people or their survivors trying to secure a spot in heaven.

- A Paris church received 49 legacies in 9 months ► had received total of 78 in previous 8 years.
- Florence, Company of Or San Michele received 350,000 *florins* as gifts.

## 2. ACCUSATIONS THAT THE CHURCH HAD NOT DONE ITS JOB DURING THE PLAGUE

Many complaints against Church personnel:

- priests had run away to avoid contagion
- priests refused to come administer last rite unless they were paid high fees
- monasteries shut their doors to the suffering—the only source of medical services in many places
- Shepherds of God's flock were depicted as wolves devouring the flock.

**IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER THAT *BAD NEWS MAKES THE HEADLINES* -- *many priests, monks, nuns died serving their parishes & religious houses lost all their personnel caring for the sick, such as the municipal hospital in Paris.***

## 3. GREAT LOSS OF PERSONNEL IN PLAGUE EXACERBATES ALREADY BAD SITUATION

- Generally high-ranking Churchmen had lower than average mortality, but priests were about the same as general population—30-40% in most areas, higher in others. 50% of friars, monks, nuns died in many areas.
- 3 Archbishops of Canterbury in 1349-50
- England: York lost 39% of beneficed clergy; Bath & Wells 47.6%; Ely 48.5%; Exeter, Winchester, & Norwich 48.8%
- Germany may have lost as much as 60 % of priests, etc.
  - Will have huge impact of Church's ability to respond to Martin Luther in early 16<sup>th</sup> Century
- Church tried to replace lost personnel:
  - ordained priests in batches
  - many weren't trained for service or even literate
  - many entered the Church because they had lost their families in the plague and had no where to go or no one to care for them
  - Some new priests had wives still living
  - 60 under the age of 21 were appointed as being "better than nothing"
  - PLURAL BENEFICES (man having multiple parishes or positions to administer) increased – **but personnel shortage existed before the Plague. In 4 dioceses in England, before the plague 73.8% of parishes were served by "non-priests" who were not fully qualified to celebrate mass, perform marriages or administer Last Rites.**

Many parishes had no priests, many religious houses remained closed.

New economic opportunities, especially higher wages for laborers, drew men & women into secular vocations instead of resorting to a Church vocation.

## 4. EXAMPLES OF ANTI-CLERICALISM DURING THE PLAGUE

- Chief papal official in Rome was jeered in public, shot by a sniper while riding in a holy procession—arrow went through his hat—he quickly left for Naples, but died en route, allegedly poisoned!
- Citizens at Worcester, England, attacked the Priory of St. Mary, assaulted the monks and set fire to the buildings.
- **FRATICELLI** in Italy – Franciscan “Puritan” movement demanding that the Church hierarchy reform its moral and spiritual behaviors

Lack of personnel or fast turnover slowed Church’s ability to respond to anti-clericalism.

**John Wycliffe** [born c. 1330, in small village in Yorkshire; son of a squire with small manor. BA from Merton, Oxford, 1356. Doctor of Theology, 1372 or 3. Master of Balliol College] Product of post-plague education—growing use of vernacular instead of Latin.

## **2 key ideas:**

**1. Became convinced that the Bible should be in vernacular—late 1370s translated Bible into English** [he did New Testament, associates likely did the Old Testament]. Didn’t have a Greek version, so translated directly from Jerome’s Latin *Vulgate*, a literal translation, lacking consideration of differences between Latin and English grammar, difficult to read and understand, but it put the words of the Bible into any literate person’s hands! Finished by 1382, Archbishop of Canterbury summoned a council in London that condemned the English Bible as heretical. Ordered all copies of it destroyed. *Wycliffe had to leave Oxford, move to Lutterworth as priest.* Died Dec. 31, 1384.

ALL COPIES of Wycliffe’s Bible WERE HANDWRITTEN ► don’t know how many were produced in late 1300s; Today about 250 authentic copies survive. John Purvey revised Wycliffe’s Bible 1388-95, using English grammar and meaning rather than a word-for-word translation of the Latin.

**Vernacular Bible would break priests’ monopoly on spiritual truth. 1408, papal *Constitutions* forbade translating the *Vulgate* into a common tongue without permission and supervision of the Church—which meant not at all! *Vulgate* remained the authorized Catholic scripture until 1960s Vatican II allowed vernacular translations.**

- 2. Abolish the temporal power of the Pope.** Advocates King should rule over Church. Pope so corrupt he could not fulfill spiritual duties, and so many priests were ignorant and couldn’t read the Bible!
- 3. Return to earlier doctrines. Rejected** Transubstantiation, selling indulgences, praying to saints, pilgrimages to various shrines. Believed priests not the sole intermediary between man and God—Church is not absolute authority in spiritual matters.

Followers called Lollards persisted in preaching & promoting his ideas, kept them alive, ready for Reformation—set the stage for England’s break with Rome in 1530s.

Burned as heretic 1415 WITH JAN HUS

**CHAUCER** (1340-1400) *Canterbury Tales* London English Tales poke fun at Church, its practices & personnel. Reveals lessening influence on people’s thoughts and actions.

## **GREAT SCHISM 1378-1417**

- 1376 Pope Gregory XI returned papacy to Rome from Avignon**  
(great influence of Catherine of Siena) Died 1378
- 1378 Pope **Urban VI** elected. Tried to run over the cardinals who had become accustomed to managing Church business without the interference of the Pope. Pope ordered excommunication of cardinals who disagreed with him—created furor & rebellion in the *Curia*.
- Cardinals slipped out of Rome and elected a new pope – declared Urban's election illegal.
    - Cardinal Robert of Geneva (cousin of Charles V of France)
    - Took name Clement VII (1378-94), returned papacy to Avignon
  - 1378-1409 Two popes claimed rule over Christendom
    - Rival papal elections reflect national rivalries
    - 2 popes: excommunicate rival's supporters
    - double fees to Church to compensate

*Simony* & **Indulgences** pervasive, exorbitant  
Popes promoted war—hoped their king would win
- 1409 2 Colleges of Cardinals (from Rome & Avignon) convened a single Council and deposed both sitting popes and chose a 3<sup>rd</sup> man. Neither pope at Rome or Avignon resigned so there were 3 men claiming to be Pope until 1417.**
- 1414 Council of Constance elected Martin V (1414-31) succeeded in getting sole election as Pope in 1417; returned the Church to Rome permanently. NO REFORM OF CHURCH.

## **SPARKS DEMAND FOR REFORM**

1. *Fratricelli* in Italy; Flagellants primarily in Holy Roman Empire (Germany/Austria)  
Flagellants formed bands under direction of a Master, bands moved from town to town, lay and clerical members scourged themselves and prayed for God's forgiveness. Participants usually signed on for 33 1/2 days (times of Christ's ministry on earth); could not bathe, shave, change clothes, have sexual intercourse without the Master's permission. Observers sopped up the blood and considered it holy, having healing power, etc. Became overtly antagonistic to the Church, claimed right to hear confessions & grant absolution, stoned priests who refused to participate in their processions, disrupted church services, ridiculed the Eucharist, looted churches. Strongest persecutors of the Jews.  
Suppression: October 1349, Clement VI issued Bull for their dispersal and arrest. University of Paris denied their claim of Divine inspiration. Most simply disappeared, vanished into the community.
2. **Conciliar Movement:** make councils primary church authority until 1870
3. Council of Constance 1415 asserted council had power directly from God, superior to Pope  
Burned Hus, after promising safety – burned Wycliff's bones  
Did restore unity for next 100 years
5. Papal prestige severely damaged
6. Mysticism gained strong appeal; pagan & folk traditions became more popular
7. Inquisition gains momentum: attack witchcraft & heresy  
makes neighbors suspicious, distrustful of one another

used to attack economic rivals

**PEOPLE VIEWED THE CHURCH AS HAVING HAD NO ABILITY TO AVERT THE PLAGUE OR TO DEAL WITH ITS IMPACT. *Was the plague an act of God? Was it a wanton act? Or was it not even from God, but just a natural occurrence? SUCH QUESTIONS AFFECTED PEOPLE'S THINKING: "THE ABSOLUTES OF A FIXED ORDER WERE LOOSED FROM THEIR MOORINGS"* Minds that opened to admit these questions could never be shut again. Black Death may have been the unrecognized beginning of modern man.** [Tuchman, p. 123]

**PROTESTANT REFORMATION PROTESTS AGAINST CHURCH HAD LITTLE HOPE OF PRODUCING REFORM – REFORM LITERATURE WAS ENTIRELY HAND-WRITTEN. IN 1456-8, PRINTING PRESS WITH MOVABLE TYPE WAS DEVELOPED, BY 1517 MARTIN LUTHER COULD SPREAD HIS IDEAS, ALONG WITH A COPY OF THE BIBLE IN GERMAN, VERY QUICKLY WITH PRINTED MATERIALS.**

## **F. RENAISSANCE – PARADOX OF 14<sup>TH</sup> – CENTURY EUROPE**

**Renaissance** in earliest stages: Giotto's masterwork in the *Arena Chapel*, Padova, completed around 1305, is regarded as one of the supreme masterpieces of the Early Renaissance. 1334 Giotto began work on the bell tower of Florence's new cathedral. **Siena began construction of what was meant to be the largest church in the world -- left with only side aisle of new nave completed and part of rear wall. STILL UNFINISHED.**

**Florence's new cathedral under construction**

**Dante died in 1321.** *Divine Comedy* initiated vernacular literature as popular reading. Very critical of Church—pope in the *Inferno*.

ARTISTS DIED IN PLAGUE – don't know how many of young people would have become notable artists, writers, etc.; how much greater the output of artwork would have been if plague had not occurred. **Sienese painters Ambrogio & Pietro Lorenzetti; Sculptor Andrea Pisano died in 1348.**

**NEW ART THEME: "DANCE OF DEATH"** depicts skeleton leading a person to death, or living people confronting skeletons. Major example is work by Francesco Traini in the *Camposanto* (graveyard) in Pisa, Italy.

**HUMANISM – emphasis on living in the here and now, "this world" focus instead of "other world / world to come" – large fallout from effects of Black death and peoples' need for measure of happiness in this life.**

A. Originated in Italy –urban, commercial culture

Decline of Papal authority/prestige during Great Schism allows atmosphere in which secular ideas, art, science, etc. flourish

B. Political

1. Nation-state: loyalty to particular nation—not Christianity

2. Monarchy is fully established – king over feudal nobility

Kings become sovereigns rather than suzerains

3. Theory: Machiavelli (1469-1527) *The Prince* (1513) advocated a strong, ruthless ruler to impose order

C. Economic

1. Coined money becomes standard medium of exchange



2. Capitalism emerges: “interest” allowed by Church
3. Cities gain dominance
4. Commerce brings education reforms: broader curriculum  
schools for girls “business” education

#### D. Religious/Scientific/Intellectual

##### 1. RELIGIOUS not anti-Christian -- more liberal approach

- Involve laymen
- Emphasis on how to live in this world –not just getting to next. MORALITY as important as Salvation. Less fear of questioning Church & its practices > Martin Luther

##### 2. SCIENTIFIC

- Exploration: Vattel, da Gama, Magellan, Columbus, Toscanelli
- Astronomy: Copernicus, Galileo, heliocentrism
- CLOCK INVENTED “MOTHER OF MACHINES”
  - Metallurgy
  - Introduced “time” –schedules, appointments, etc.
  - From clock towers to pocket watch
- Gregorian calendar 1582 Pope Gregory XIII
- Telescope Tycho Brahe
- Optics & eyeglasses developed (from Muslims)
- Medicine: Andreas Vesalius (1514-1564) 1<sup>st</sup> anatomical charts – refutes Galen, illustrated with woodcuts

##### 3. INTELLECTUAL

Humanism revolt against Scholasticism & detachment

Emphasis on man’s personality, intellect, life in this world

Not anti- or un-Christian > man lived on earth and would be in heaven so should enjoy both fully

Study classics, languages for ideal man/woman

Scholarship: Lorenzo Valla (1407-1457) proved “Donation of Constantine” a forgery

SCHOOLS RUN BY LAYMEN RATHER THAN CHURCHMEN

### PRINTING: DIFFUSION OF KNOWLEDGE

#### 1. PAPERMAKING LEARNED FROM CHINESE -- VIA ARABS

#### 2. PRINTING PRESS w/ movable type JOHANN GUTENBERG

Born in Mainz, c. 1395-1400, middle-class family. Trained as gem polisher & goldsmith. Mid-1430s began experimenting with “artificial writing”. Worked on invention secretly –no patent protection. 1442 he was heavily in debt from research expenses & lawsuits against him. Refused to tell the courts how he spent his money! He printed 24 editions of a Latin grammar, 4 calendars, and a German translation of a papal bull and a missal. Formed association with Johann Fust, who loaned him 800 guilders (master craftsman earned 20-30 per year), to begin printing the Bible. More loans until 1455, when Bible was finished—but before it was sold. Debt & interest total 2,026 guilders. Fust repossessed the press, Bibles, and printing shop. Gutenberg died destitute Feb. 3, 1468.

adapt wine press & screw

Metal-casting crucial: produce letters exact size & shape

Unique Ink contained copper & lead, not carbon

Standard process for 500 years

*By 1500 printed Bibles being sold in 17 European countries, 260 towns had presses, almost 40,000 different works were in print with more than 10 million copies in the market*

**GUTENBERG BIBLE IS THE MOST BEAUTIFUL PIECE OF PRINTING ART EVER PRODUCED.** Hand-illumination makes it a work of art as well as scripture. **47**

**authenticated copies extant** 12 on vellum, 35 on paper.

3. **BOOKMAKING** Aldus Manutius (1450-1515)

Aldine Press of Venice > 1<sup>st</sup> modern publishing house

3 innovations revolutionized reading habits

1. "Italic" type -- small but very readable
2. "Octavo" size book -- 6x9 inch sheet -- portable
3. Numbered pages—table of contents, index

4. **VERNACULAR TEXTS**

William Caxton (1422-1491) standardized English /London

*History of Troy* (1475) *Game and Play of Chess* (1476)

1<sup>st</sup> books printed in English in workshop at Westminster Abbey

F. **SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF RENAISSANCE**

1. center of society shifts from manor to town/urban life
2. Palaces replaces castles -- glass for windows
3. Vernacular languages become basis of national identity
4. leadership shifts to laymen from clergy
5. Middle class breaks out: rising wealth, political rights, ally of king against feudal nobles, source of king's revenue (taxes), foster education