

Short Essay Version #2

- Feedback from Version #1 on Moodle
- V2 due November 27th

Research Assignment Step #5

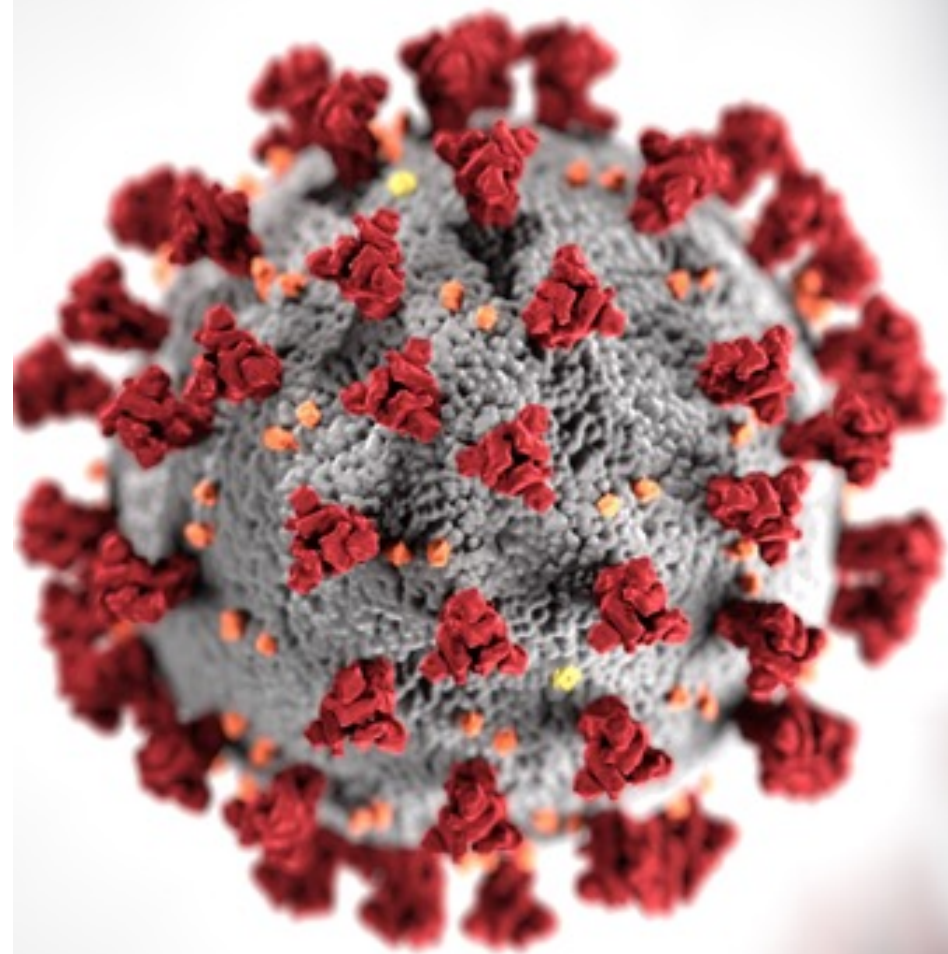
- Due December 4th

Research Assignment Step #4



The Black Death





COVID-19

CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019

676,479,747

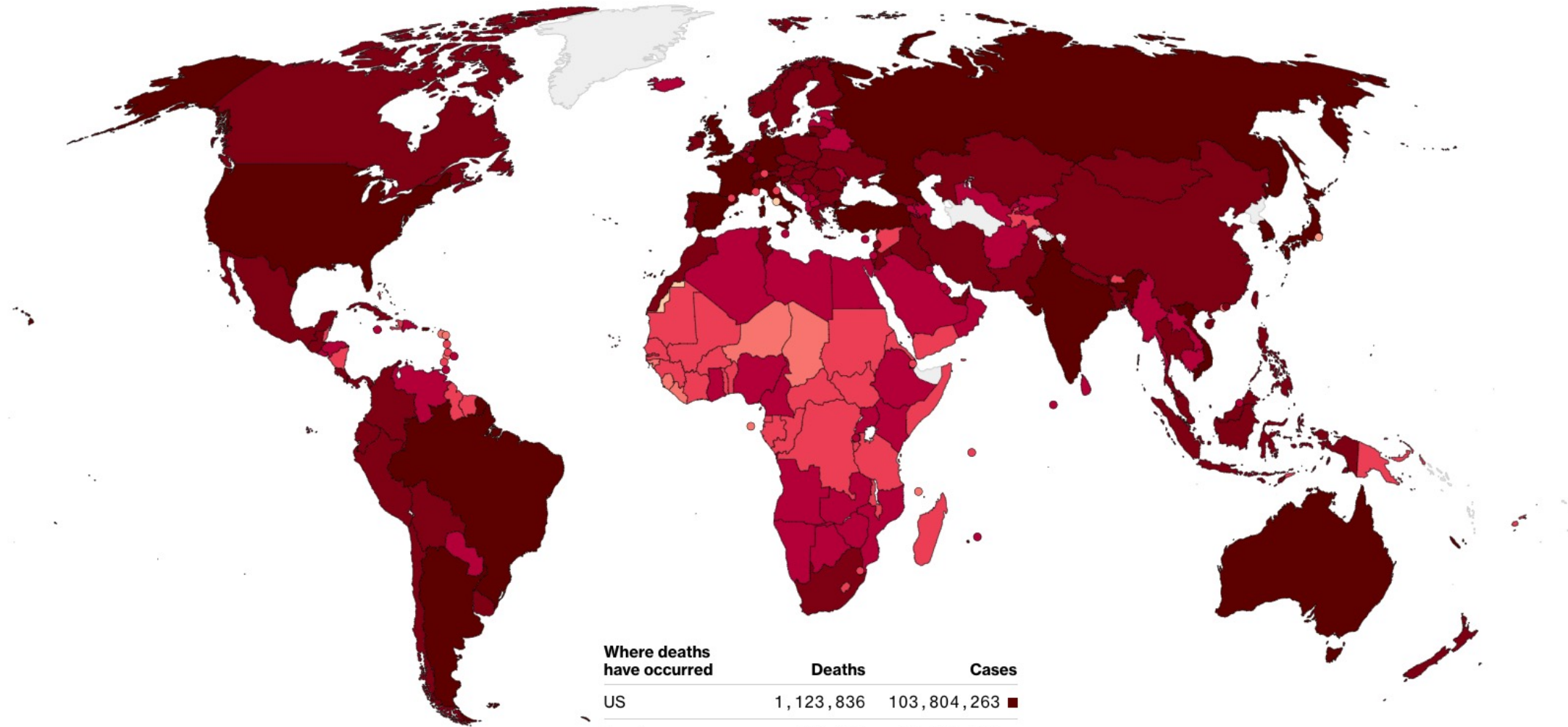
Confirmed cases worldwide

6,881,635

Deaths worldwide

Jurisdictions with cases confirmed as of March 10, 2023 at 5:21 AM PST

1-99 100-999 1,000-9,999 10,000-99,999 100,000-999,999 1,000,000-9,999,999 10 million or more



Data as of March 2023

The Black Death

Effects & Conclusions

Origins and Transmission

Explanations & Reactions





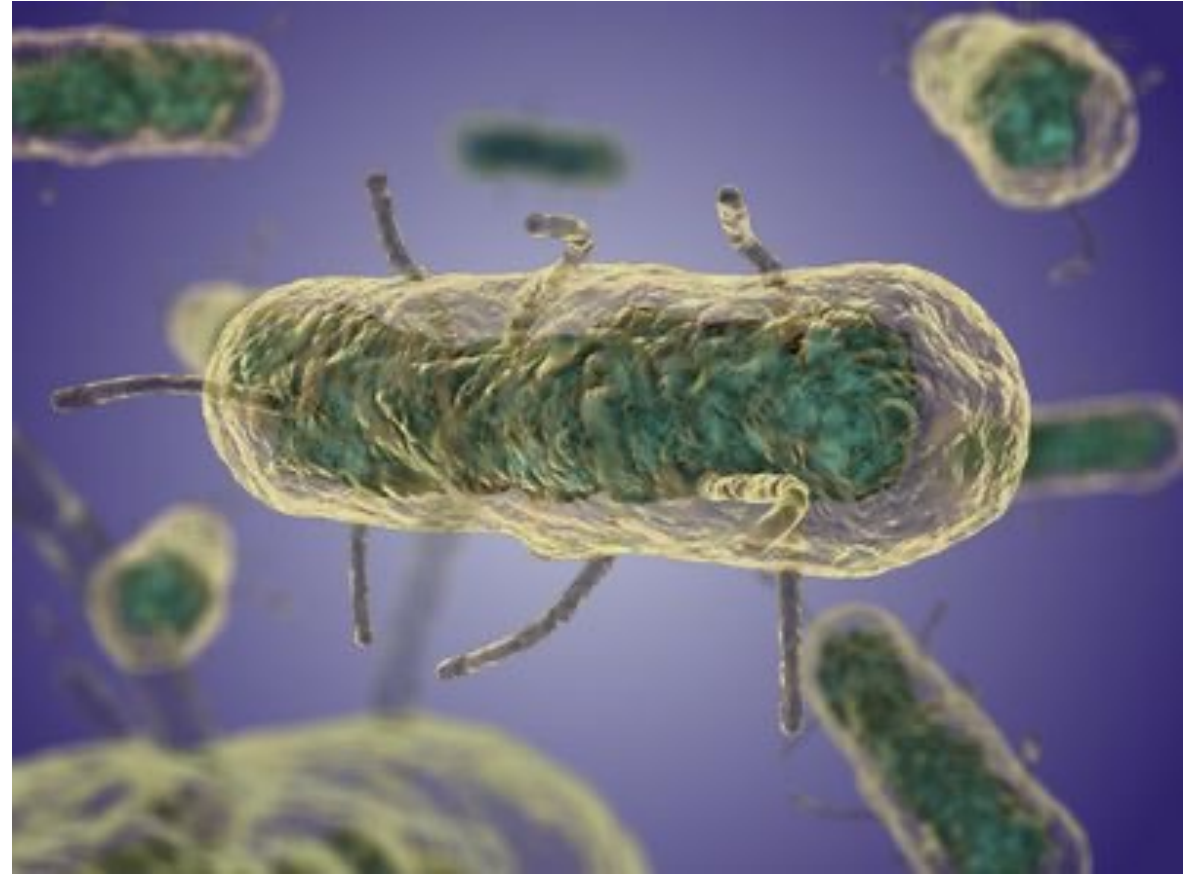
Origins and Transmission

Et commence le prologue de Jehan
Bartolomeus sur son livre de la

femme d'ouïssuoir

What is the Black Death?

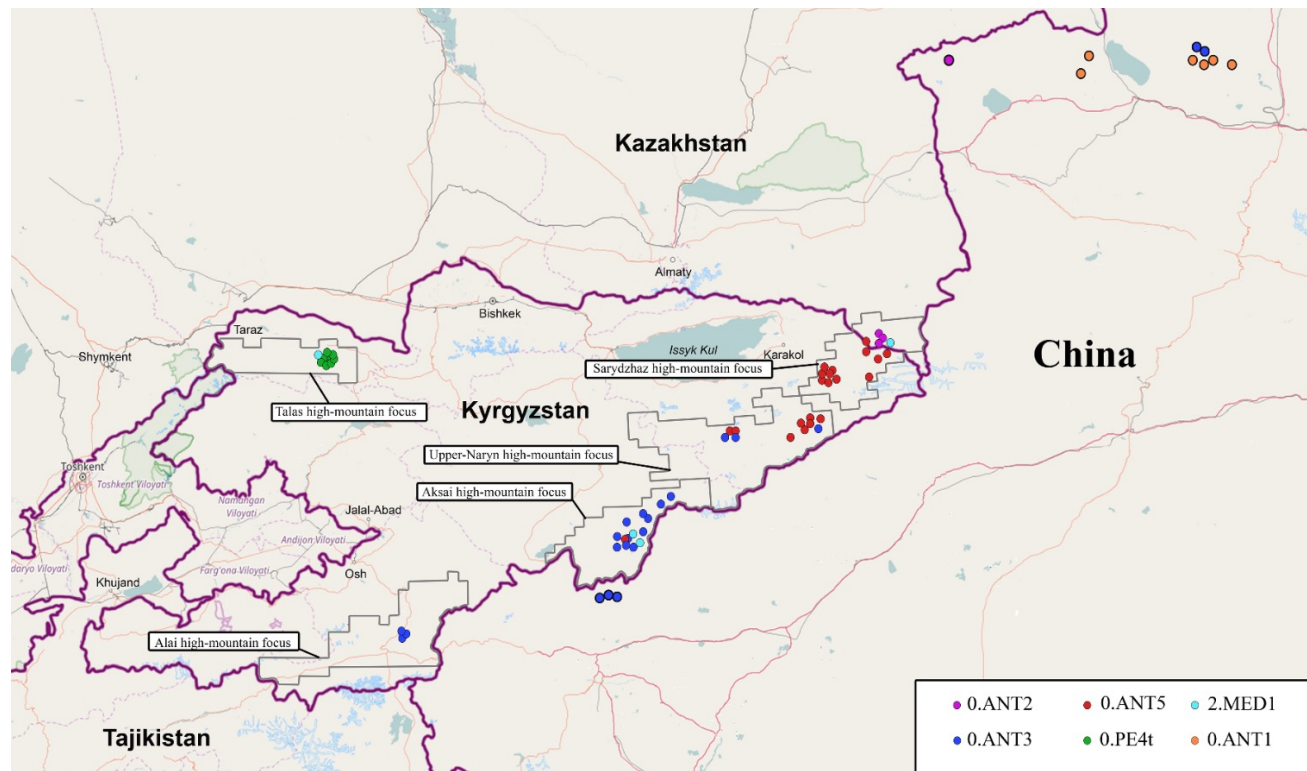
- epidemic/pandemic
- Bacterium *Yersinia Pestis*



■ Recent discoveries: paleogenetics

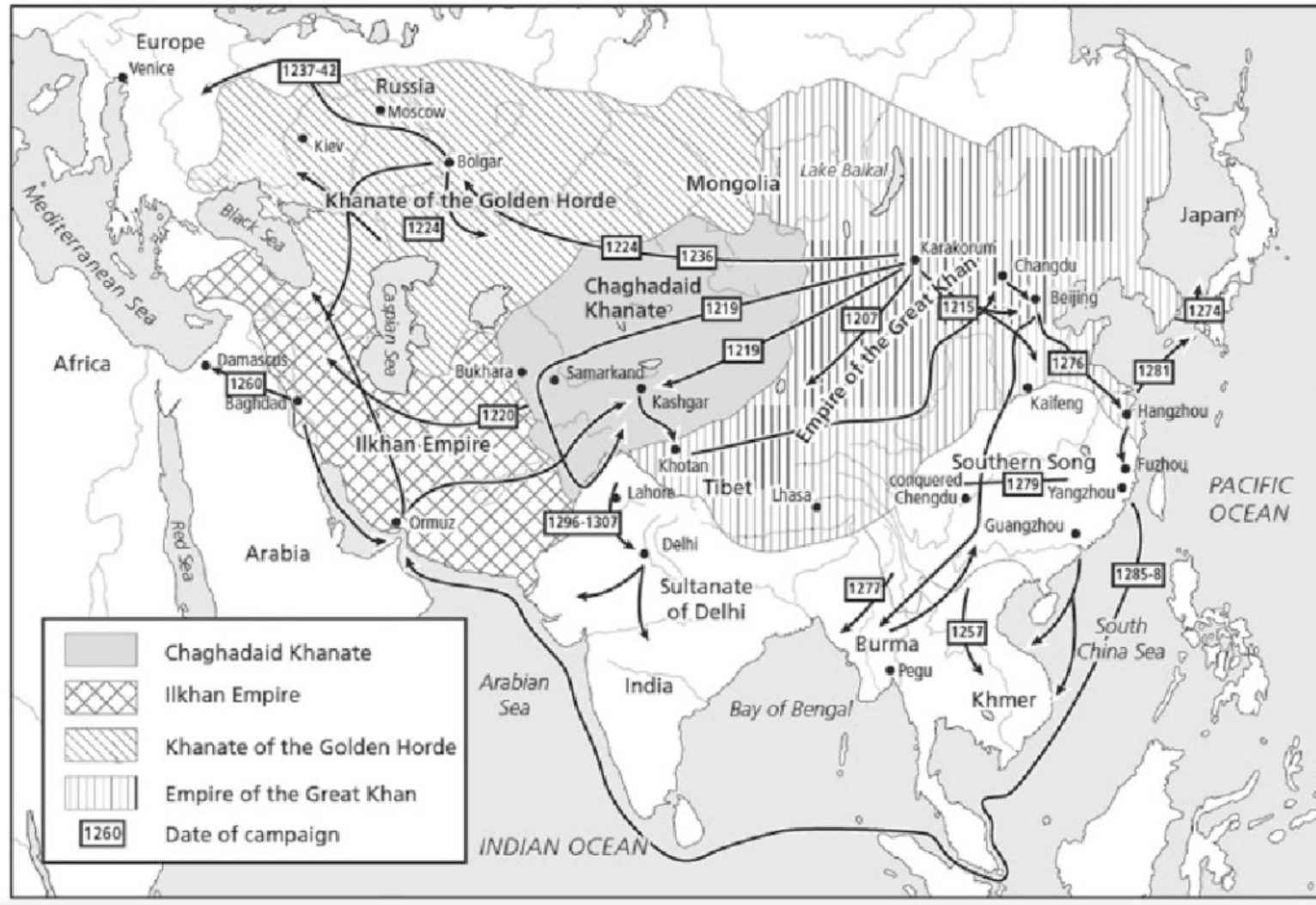
- 2001 - sequencing of genome of *Yersinia pestis*
- 2010 - genetic mapping of modern samples of plague
- 2011 - recovery of *Yersinia pestis* DNA from past victims

Where did the Black Death come from?



Source: Eroshenko, Galina A., et al. "Yersinia Pestis Strains of Ancient Phylogenetic Branch o.ANT Are Widely Spread in the High-Mountain Plague Foci of Kyrgyzstan." *PLOS ONE* 12, no. 10 (October 26, 2017): e0187230.
[https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0187230.](https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0187230)

From Monica H. Green, “The Four Black Deaths”, *American Historical Review* 125.5 (December 2020): 1601-1631.



- Genetics = “biological archive”
- Song Dynasty (1218?)
- Tian Shan mountains in Kyrgystan
- Plague outbreak in Baghdad (1258)

Spread of the Black Death



1346 1347 1348 1349 1350 1351 1352 1353

--- Approximate border between the Principality of Kiev and the Golden Horde - passage prohibited for Christians.

Land trade routes
Maritime trade routes

Mortality

- Some places: 50-90% mortality
- Western Europe: 25-30 million
- Eurasia: 200 million

Image source: Giles li Muisit's Chronicle, 1349-52. Written in Abbey of Saint-Martin, Tournai.



Black Death in Italy





Florence:
Giovanni
Boccaccio,
Decameron

A photograph of the facade of Siena Cathedral, showing its characteristic Gothic arches and brickwork. The image is dark, with the text 'Siena Cathedral' overlaid in white. The architecture features a series of large, pointed arches supported by columns, with a prominent tower on the right side. The sky is a deep blue, and the overall scene is dimly lit, suggesting dusk or dawn.

Siena Cathedral

Carriers and transmission



Mongolian marmot



Camel meat

Types of plague

- bubonic plague -> pustule/buboes -> esp. in lymph nodes
- pneumonic plague -> affected lungs; highly contagious; spread by coughing and sneezing; kill in 24 hours
- septicemic plague -> bloodstream; 100% mortality

Symptoms

- fever
- headaches
- vomiting
- skin lesions
- muscle spasms or stiffness
- restlessness
- delirium



Image: Surgeon lancing a bubo. Mural in the Chapel of St Sebastian, Lanslevillard, France (late 15th. c)

The Black Death



Explanations & Reactions



Origins and Transmission



Effects & Conclusions



Explanations & Reactions

Reasons

ASTROLOGY

“there was a major lining up of three higher planets in Aquarius [which] together with other prior conjunctions and eclipses [is] the present cause of the ruinous corruption of the air that is all around us, is a harbinger of mortality and famine and many other things...”

Faculty of Medicine. University of Paris, 1345.



Reasons

POISONING OF
WELLS

Jews accused of
poisoning wells



Reasons

DIVINE
PUNISHMENT



In Christian doctrine, God was often shown to punish humans when they misbehaved.

Image: Noah's Ark.

Reactions



- Isolation
- Drinking, feasting
- Extreme reactions: atonement, scapegoating

Scapegoating

Victims: Jews, lepers, prostitutes, clergymen (priests and monks), foreigners

Image: Jews being killed during plague pandemic.



The Black Death



Explanations & Reactions



Origins and Transmission



Effects & Conclusions



Effects & Conclusions

Socio-economic effects

- depopulation = scarcity of labour = better wages or landholding terms
- reaction by lords
- Peasant Revolts in England (1381) and France (1358)
- contraction of economy

Psychological impact

- More emphasis on reform of society and of religion
- More emphasis on order & control

THE GREAT TRANSITION

Climate, Disease and Society
in the Late-Medieval World



BRUCE M. S. CAMPBELL

