

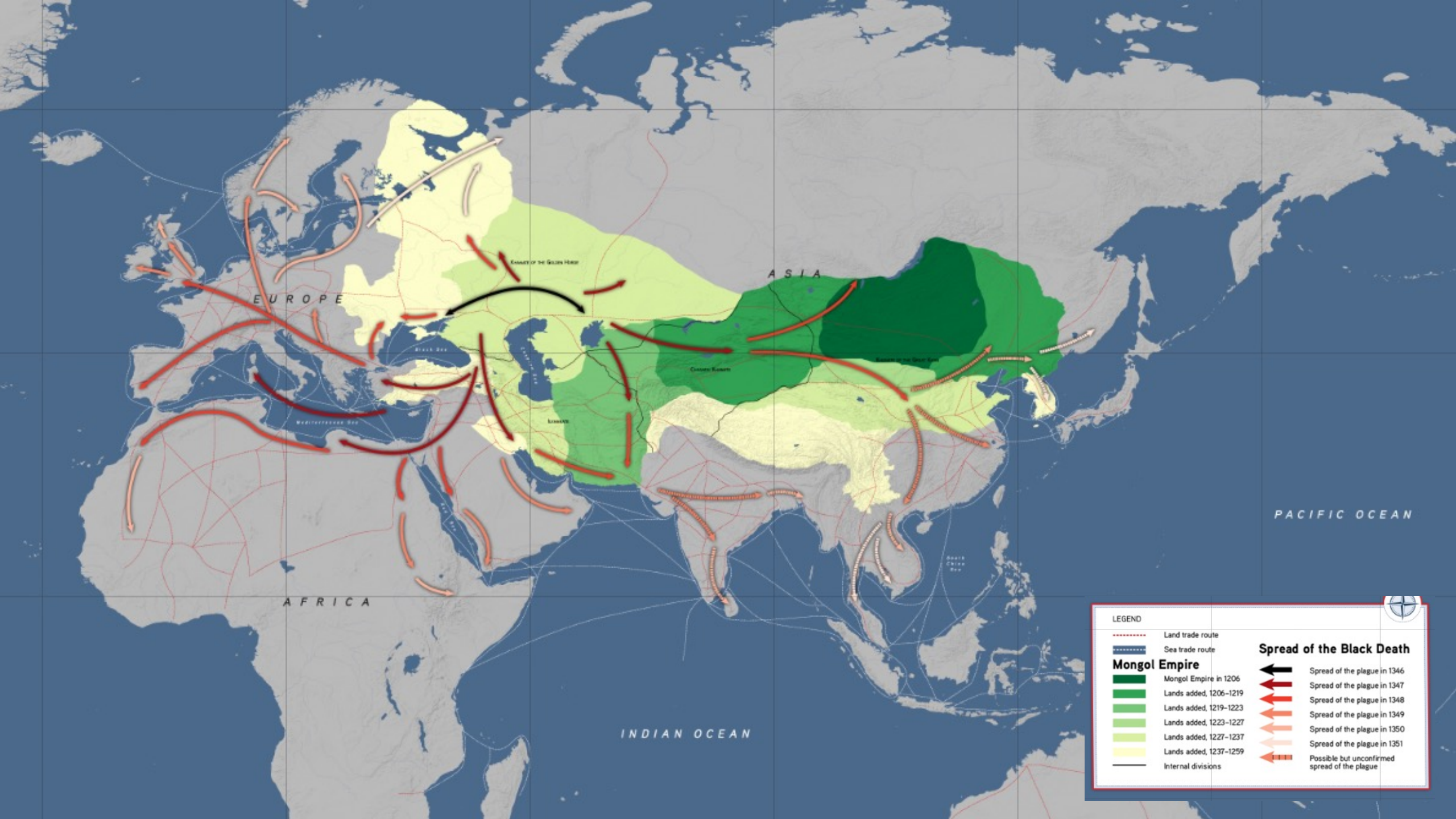
Short Essay V #1 returned on Friday:
make sure to contact the instructor
who marked it for you for help.

Research Assignment Step #4
returned November 20th

Online discussion board posts--make
sure to complete these BEFORE the
due date (every Sunday at midnight).



The Black Death



LEGEND

- ⋯⋯⋯ Land trade route
- - - - - Sea trade route

Mongol Empire

- █ Mongol Empire in 1206
- █ Lands added, 1206-1219
- █ Lands added, 1219-1223
- █ Lands added, 1223-1227
- █ Lands added, 1227-1237
- █ Lands added, 1237-1259
- Internal divisions

Spread of the Black Death

- ➔ Spread of the plague in 1346
- ➔ Spread of the plague in 1347
- ➔ Spread of the plague in 1348
- ➔ Spread of the plague in 1349
- ➔ Spread of the plague in 1350
- ➔ Spread of the plague in 1351
- ➔ Possible but unconfirmed spread of the plague

Black Death by the numbers

- Main outbreak: 14th century
- Appeared as early as mid-13th century and lasted until 18th century
- 30-50% of population killed in 14th century
- 25-50 million people died from plague in 14th century
- 200 million people worldwide have died from plague: 7th century to 21st century

Our focus today...

- Origins, symptoms, and transmission of Black Death: Collaborative research by historians, scientists, and archeologists (2001-2022)
- Why did the Black Death come to Europe? Contemporary explanations
- How did people react to the Black Death? What were its longer-term effects on society?



Origins and Transmission

Et commence le prologue de Jehan
Baptiste au Roy Louis septiesme

femme d'ouesnois

What is the Black Death?

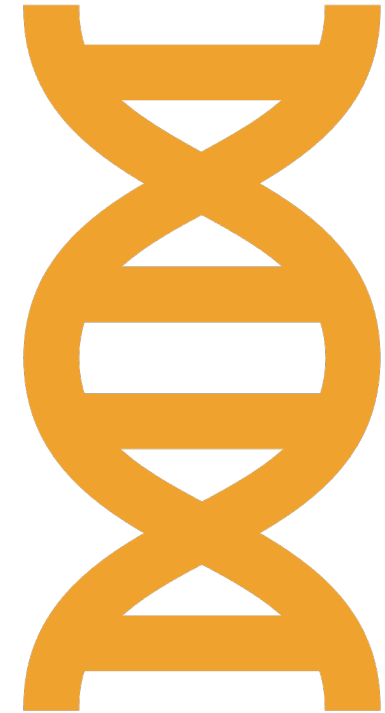
- epidemic/pandemic
- Bacterium *Yersinia Pestis*

Image: *Yersinia pestis* through a microscope

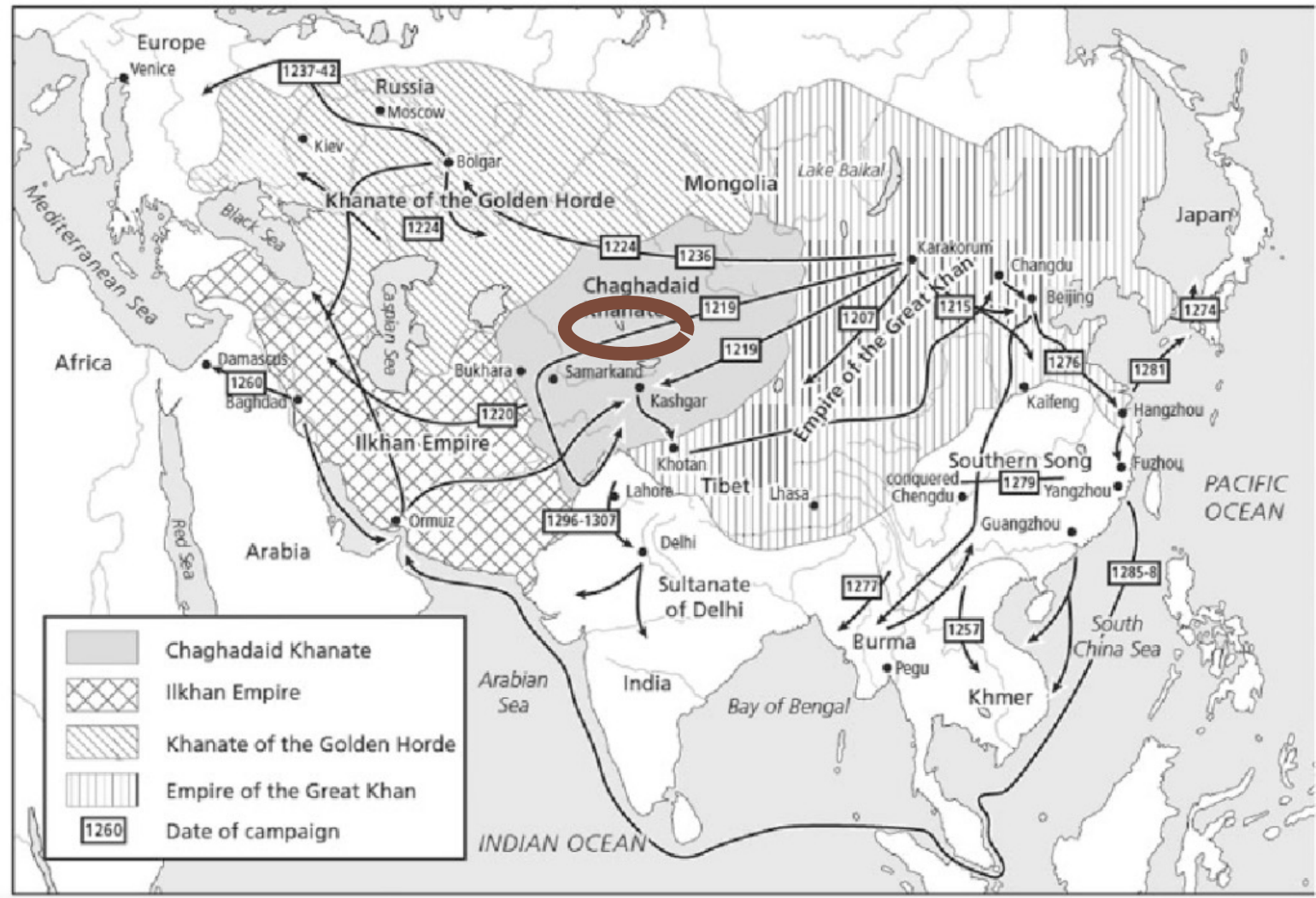


Recent discoveries: paleogenetics

- **2001** - sequencing of genome of *Yersinia pestis*
- **2010** - genetic mapping of modern samples of plague
- **2011** – recovery and sequencing of *Yersinia pestis* DNA from past victims
- **2021 and 2022** – study of *Yersinia pestis* on human immunity genes



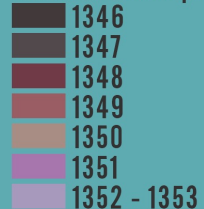
From Monica H. Green, “The Four Black Deaths”, *American Historical Review* 125.5 (December 2020): 1601-1631.



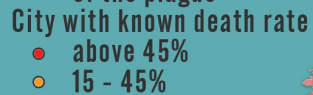
- Genetics = “biological archive”
- Song Dynasty (1218?)
- Tian Shan mountains in Kyrgyzstan
- Plague outbreak in Baghdad (1258)

THE SPREAD OF THE PLAGUE IN EUROPE, 1346 - 1353

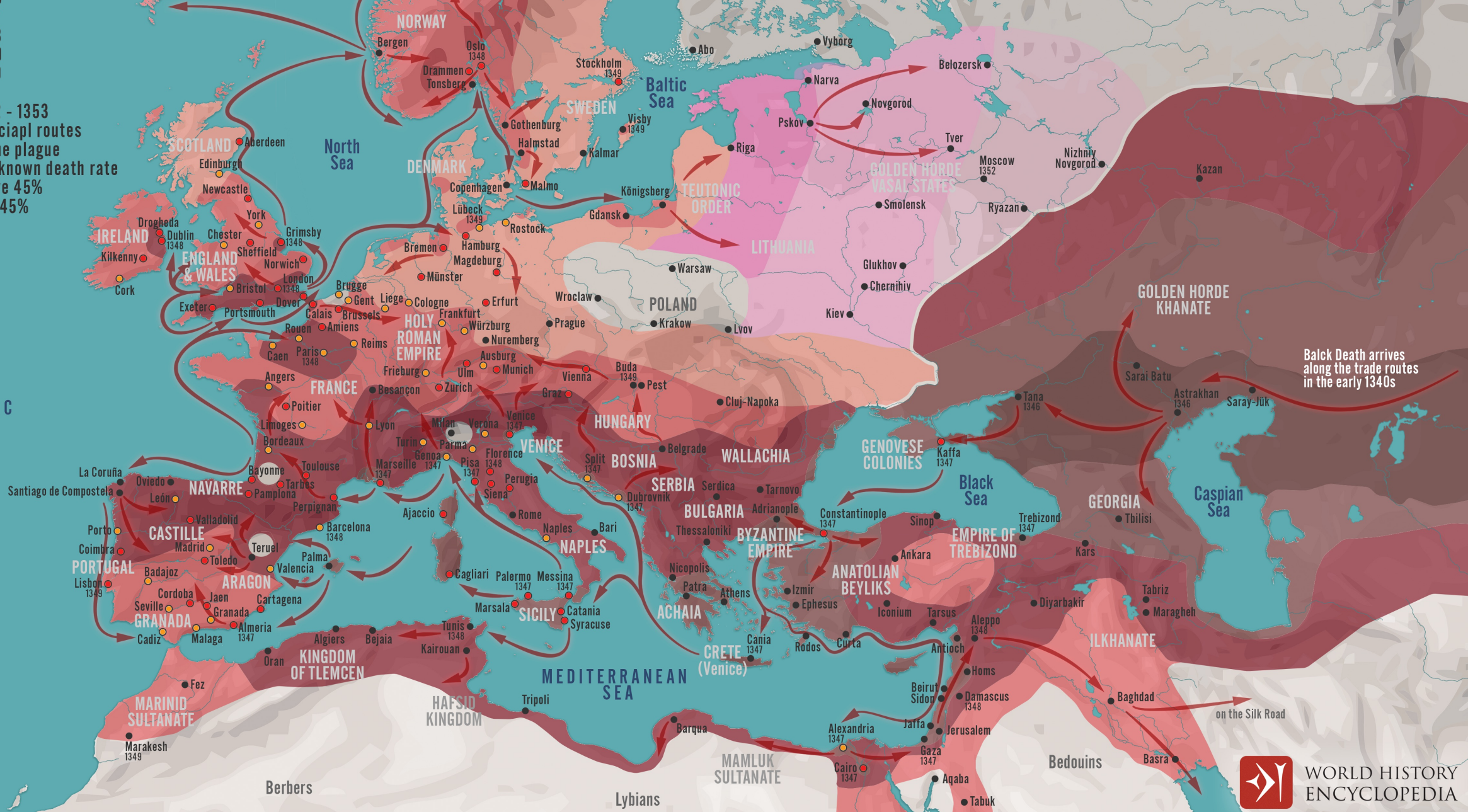
Advance of the plague:



Principi routes of the plague



ATLANTIC OCEAN



Balck Death arrives along the trade routes in the early 1340s

on the Silk Road

Mortality

- China: Hebei province 5 million (1334)
- Europe: 50% of population (1346-1351)

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



Black Death in Italy

- Path from January to March 1348
- Starts in Venice and Genoa in the north; Messina in the south





Florence

- Giovanni Boccaccio, *Decameron*
- Written in 1353
- 100 Tales written while people were trying to escape the plague in Florence

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)



Explanations & Reactions

DIVINE PUNISHMENT:

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



Reactions

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



Scapegoating

- Attacks on Jewish communities in 1348, especially in southern France and north-eastern Spain where there were significant Jewish communities
-




A historical painting depicting a village scene. In the background, a large fire consumes a building, with thick smoke rising. In the foreground, a large group of people is engaged in various activities, including running, carrying items, and working with tools. The scene is set in a rural area with thatched-roof buildings and bare trees. The overall atmosphere is one of chaos and distress.

Effects & Conclusions

**Bruce Campbell,
*The Great
Transition:
Climate, Disease,
and Society in the
late medieval
World* (2016)**

- 1270s to 1470s = "Great Transition"
- Changes in European human society because of environmental and human factors
- Famines and Black Death result in loss of up to 70% of European population from 1300-1470s



 Circuits of world trade, ca. 1300

0 500 1,000 miles
0 500 1,000 kilometers