

0. HUMAN DEVASTATION - Story Preface

1. HUMAN DEVASTATION

- 2. WHAT IS BUBONIC PLAGUE?
- 3. WHAT IS BLACK DEATH?
- 4. WHERE DID IT ORIGINATE?
- 5. MEDIEVAL EUROPEANS
- 6. MEDIEVAL PROFESSIONALS
- 7. PEOPLE FLEE
- 8. SOCIETY BREAKS DOWN
- 9. SCAPEGOATS

10. LIFE GOES ON

11. WAS IT JUST THE RATS?

HUMAN DEVASTATION



14th Century image of <u>funeral for plague victims</u> in the town of <u>Tournai, Belgium</u>. From the Chronicles of the Abbot of the Monastery of St. Martin the Righteous. Online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

It was 1348. Europe was <u>overwhelmed</u> by a pestilence that had already laid waste to Asia. Towns were especially <u>hard hit</u>.

In London, where houses were built side-by-side and rats flourished in the garbage people dumped into the streets, the plague quickly became an epidemic. Even the countryside was not spared. Hundreds of years would pass before Europe recovered from the total population loss.

<u>Giovanni Boccaccio</u>, who lost several family members to the plague's 1348 devastation in Italy, wrote what he observed in the <u>Decameron</u>:

What I am about to say is incredible to hear, and if I and others had not witnessed it with our own eyes, I should not dare believe it (let alone write about it), no matter how trustworthy a person I might have heard it from.

What did Boccaccio observe that made him warn us he was not exaggerating?

This pestilence was so powerful that it was communicated to the healthy by contact with the sick, the way a fire close to dry or oily things will set them aflame. And the evil of the plague went even further: not only did talking to or being around the sick bring infection and a common death, but also touching the clothes of the sick or anything touched or used by them seemed to communicate this very disease in the person involved.

Before the plague reached Italy (spread by bacteria-carrying ships from the Crimean town of Kaffa), it had wreaked havoc in Asia. The famous Arab historian, <u>Ibn Khaldun</u>, wrote that <u>annihilation</u> followed everywhere in its wake.

Civilization both in the East and the West was visited by a destructive plague which devastated nations and caused populations to vanish. It swallowed up many of the good things of civilization and wiped them out...Civilization decreased with the decrease of mankind.

Cities and buildings were laid waste. Roads and way signs were obliterated, settlements and mansions became empty, dynasties and tribes grew weak. The entire inhabited world changed...It was as if the voice of existence in the world had called out for oblivion and restriction, and the world responded to its call.

People in England, hearing rumors about a deadly plague, hoped to keep it at bay. Without knowing what it was, or how it was transmitted, any hopes to keep it on the continent were short-lived. It <u>entered the country</u> through the <u>port of Weymouth</u>.

Geoffrey le Baker, an Oxford cleric, tells us that even "the young and strong" were cut down:

But at last it attacked Gloucester, yea and Oxford and London, and finally the whole of England so violently that scarce one in ten of either sex was left alive. As the graveyards did not suffice, fields were chosen for the burial of the dead...A countless number of common people and a host of monks and nuns and clerics as well, known to God alone, passed away.

It was the young and strong that the plague chiefly attacked...This great pestilence, which <u>began</u> <u>at Bristol</u> on 15th August and in London about 29th September, raged for a whole year in England so terribly that it cleared many country villages entirely of every human being.

No matter the chronicler's country, the extent of <u>human devastation</u> was the same.

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at: <u>http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/HUMAN-DEVASTATION-Black-Death</u>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/HUMAN-DEVASTATION-Black-Death

Media Stream



Black Death Victims - Funeral at Tournai, Belgium Image of the funeral of plague victims - in Tournai, Belgium - source described above. Online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons. PD View this asset at: http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Black-Death-Victims-Funeral-at-Tournai-Belgium



<u>Spread of the Plague by Region and Year - 14th Century</u> Image online, courtesy Boston University, School of Public Health. View this asset at: http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Spread-of-the-Plague-by-Region-and-Year-14th-Century



People Overwhelmed by Disease

Image, courtesy Wikimedia Commons. Engraving (1515-16) by Marcantonio Raimondi. View this asset at: http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/People-Overwhelmed-by-Disease



OXFORD WORLD'S CLASSICS



A Contraction of the second se

<u>Giovanni Boccaccio</u> Image online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons. PD View this asset at: <u>http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Giovanni-Boccaccio</u>

The Decameron - by Giovanni Boccaccio

Image of book cover, courtesy Amazon.com. View this asset at: http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/The-Decameron-by-Giovanni-Boccaccio

<u>Ibn Khaldun</u> Image online, courtesy <u>liberal-international.org</u> website. View this asset at: <u>http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/lbn-Khaldun</u>



ibn khaldûn THE MUQADDIMAH

An Introduction to History

Translated from the Arabic by FRANZ ROSENTHAL

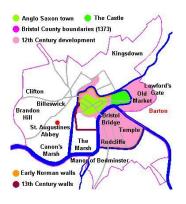
Edited and abridged by N. J. DAWOOD

Bollingen Series / Princeton



IT KILLED 30-50% OF THE COUNTRY'S TOTAL POPULATION







<u>The Muquaddimah</u> Image online, courtesy the <u>amazon.com</u> website. View this asset at: <u>http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/The-Muquaddimah</u>

Black Death Entered Britain Through the Port of Weymouth Image online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

Image online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons

View this asset at:

http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Black-Death-Entered-Britain-Through-the-Port-of-Weymouth

Location of Weymouth Where Black Death Entered England Map online, courtesy Saarland University (Saarbrücken, Germany). View this asset at:

http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Location-of-Weymouth-Where-Black-Death-Entered-England

Bristol Area in the 13th Century Image online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons. View this asset at: http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Bristol-Area-in-the-13th-Century

<u>People with Plague - Social Distancing not in Place</u> From *Omne Bonum* England (London); 1360-1375

British Library; Record Number: c6541-07; Shelfmark: Royal 6 E. VI; Page Folio Number: f.301 View this asset at:

http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/People-with-Plague-Social-Distancing-not-in-Place



HUMAN DEVASTATION View this asset at: <u>http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/</u>