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The Black Death and Its Influence on the English Society

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Z á s a d y p r o v y p r a c o v á n í :

Studentka se ve své práci zaměří nejprve na obecnou charakteristiku středověké Británie se zvláštním důrazem na životní styl a hygienické podmínky a jejich vliv na příčiny vzniku morových epidemií. Těžištěm práce bude analýza vzniku a šíření středověkých morových epidemií v Anglii a jejich socioekonomický dopad. Dále bude studentka zkoumat širší vliv "černé smrti" na chápání náboženství a víry a na celkový kulturní život anglické středověké společnosti, zejména na hudbu a umění. Charakteristika středověkých morových epidemií bude rovněž porovnávána s pozdější morovou ranou z období 17. století zobrazenou v díle Daniela Defoa. Kromě kulturní analýzy založené na výzkumu sekundárních zdrojů bude studentka využívat i textové analýzy primární literatury.

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Abstract

This bachelor paper analyzes the influence that 14th century plague - the “Black Death” had on medieval English society. First part of the paper illustrates general background of medieval people and provides fundamental information about the origin, spread and behaviour of Black Death. Attention is especially given to lifestyle and hygiene customs. Second part of the paper is focused on the irrevocable changes that the society was experiencing during the plague and closely interprets the socio-economic and cultural matters like art, literature, law, politics and approach to religion. Last part of the paper is devoted to comparison of medieval Black Death with the plague that surged in London in 1665 and examples are presented from Daniel Defoe’s *Journal of the Plague Year*. The theory on Black Death is interlaced with extracts from primary sources like Langland’s *Piers Plowman* or *The Chronicle of Henry Knighton*.

Souhrn

Tato bakalářská práce se zabývá morovou ranou, která zasáhla Anglii ve 14. století, zvanou "černá smrt" a jejím vlivem na tehdejší společnost. První část práce vykresluje obecnou charakteristiku středověké společnosti a poskytuje základní informace týkající se původu, rozšíření a působení černé smrti. Důraz je kladen zejména na životní styl obyvatel a hygienické podmínky. Druhá část práce je pak věnována rozboru socioekonomických i kulturních změn, kterým byli lidé nuceni čelit, a zobrazuje jejich odraz v umění, literatuře, právu, politice a hlavně přístupu k náboženství. V poslední části je středověký mor srovnán s morovou ranou v Londýně z roku 1665 a jsou poskytnuty „barvitě“ ukázky z *Deníku morového roku* od Daniela Defoa. Celá práce je doplněna citacemi z primárních zdrojů jako je například Langlandův *Petr Oráč* nebo *Kronika Henryho Knightona*.

Keywords: Black Death; medieval England; plague; pestilence

Klíčová slova: černá smrt; středověká Anglie; mor; nákaza

Název práce v češtině: Černá smrt a její vliv na anglickou společnost

CONTENTS

1. Introduction.....	1
2. Historical and Social Background of 14th century England.....	2
3. Brief Commentary on Main Sources.....	5
4. The Essentials of the Black Death	6
4.1. Causes of the Infection, Symptoms and Treatment	7
4.2. Spread of the Plague to England, Scotland and Ireland	11
5. Consequences of the Black Death: Society Upside Down.....	16
5.1. Religion and the Acceptance of Death.....	17
5.2. The Influence on Economy, Law and Politics	21
5.3. The Artistic Response	24
6. The Great Plague of London and Defoe’s “<i>Journal of the Plague Year</i>”	28
7. Conclusion.....	32
Resumé	35
Sources	40
Tables	42
Figures.....	43

LIST OF APPENDICES

Table 1: The Spread of the Plague around the British Isles.....	42
Figure 1: Map of the counties of England.....	43
Figure 2: Spread of the Black Death in the Old World, 1346-1353	44
Figure 3: The Dance of Death.....	45
Figure 4: London's Lamentation.....	45
Figure 5: The Poor Man's Friend	45
Figure 6: Monks, disfigured by the plague, being	46
Figure 7: Lancing of the buboes	46
Figure 8: A physician visiting a patient infected with plague.....	47
Figure 9: Dr Schnabel of Rome	47
Figure 10: Illustration of bubonic plague in the Bible (1411).	47
Figure 11: Death's Warning	48
Figure 12: Burning clothes.....	48
Figure 13: A wealthy townsman and the image of his own death	48
Figure 14: A mass for plague victims	48
Figure 15 and Figure 16: Dance of Death.....	49
Figure 17: 1st ed. of the <i>Journal of the Plague Year</i>	49
Figure 18: Londoners fleeing to the country.....	50
Figure 19: Prayers during the plague	50
Figure 20: John Dunstall: Effects of the plague in London	51

1. INTRODUCTION

In the middle of the 14th century, Europe seemed as if it was suddenly abandoned by God (Ancient Mysteries). It was attacked by the Black Death, the most devastating plague in human history. Leaving its deadly footprints on people's lives over the whole Europe, Middle East and North Africa, it maintained killing with no stops almost seven years. It became more than just a catastrophe; death turned into a nightmare of the inhabitants for the next three centuries. Though not striking with such virtue, it continued to besiege people until its final outbreak in London in 1665. Only in Europe lives of nearly 20 million people - a third of the population - were buried under the grounds, with death attacking no country harder than England. Strained to breaking point, it paid a death toll of a third of the population itself.

Black Death deeply affected all social values, finding its way to every corner of society. People were ravaged psychically, economically and socially. Images of skeletons and putrid corpses started to appear in paintings and people realized more than ever before that death was their everyday companion. Seeing that the death toll among priests and parishioners was not any lower than that of the ordinary human beings, it was becoming clear that religion was no shield against the disease. Many thought that the Day of the Judgement had come. Nothing was working properly, the sanitation collapsed and the political system was shaken to its foundations. People became so wretched with fear of infection that they abandoned their relatives and left them alone and hopeless with their disease. After this horrifying experience, death became the theme of everyday thoughts, which constantly reminded people of their universal mortality. The Black Death was not meticulous. It killed the wealthy, the poor, the young, the old, with no mercy. "[...] everyone was to some extent involved and paid the price of involvement (Ziegler 132)."

2. HISTORICAL AND SOCIAL BACKGROUND OF 14TH CENTURY ENGLAND

Although the introduction was taken from a more or less global point of view, the work from now on will be focused on England itself. Factors like social and economical state of England, demography and physical and mental conditions of the inhabitants are of significant importance, considering the impact of the Black Death. To start with the demographic essentials, the population of England in the first half of the 14th century had doubled. Thanks to warm weather and adequate moisture high-quality crops was produced. This generous food supply lowered down the death rate and in 1300 the population reached the peak of 6 million (Cantor 8). On the contrary, Ziegler states that the population did not get lower than 3,7 million, but also not higher than 4,6 million (227). Whatever the exact number of total population was, it can be safely said that the medieval society was at the crest of bloom and prosperity. However, at the beginning of the century there were some disastrous harvests, causing famine in England in the years 1311 and 1332. Ziegler mentions a chronicler who states that the poor started to eat dogs, cats, doves or even their own children (32). Between the year 1315 and 1319 the lack of sun weakened the production of salt by evaporation, and therefore conserving any kind of meat became more difficult. England was getting progressively overpopulated, and due to mentioned famines more and more mouths were becoming hungry.

Placing a closer look at the people themselves, it can be confidently said that they were sophisticated, many of them literate and considerably mobile. The society was very well organized and many towns had their own government. In London, a mayor and aldermen were chosen from among the richer citizens in order to assign them several duties such as keeping law and order, sharing out food in the times of shortage, arranging drainage and water supply and ensuring that the streets were kept clear of rubbish. People in the 14th century were of many professions, such as craftsmen, traders, smiths, carpenters, wheelwrights, coopers, tilers, goldsmiths, leatherworkers, glovers, weavers, fullers, dyers, tailors, millers, cooks, bakers, butchers or drapers (Chancellor 109 – 111). Such list can nothing but confirm that England was a vivid, developed and flourishing country. It was

full of pilgrims wandering from village to village and soldiers fighting and moving along the lands of France. Traveling by ships was extremely popular and fishing industry was well developed in the coastal waters. Selling fish or exchanging them for other goods was a great business, as well as moving on the roads and selling all kinds of imaginable goods. England also became a great exporter of wool and cloth and by 1347 reached “a level sufficiently high to lead the King to impose an export tax (Ziegler 118).” The wheat-growing and sheep-raising became considerably important in East Anglia and Southern Midlands. As Cantor adds, high-grade wool was baled and exported to the industrial textile cities of Flanders, and even further to Italy (Cantor 64). It is evident that England was gleaming with life, business and movement.

A fundamental phenomenon is the state of hygiene. It will be discussed throughout the paper, but a simple image of a typical urban and country household is upon the place. As Ziegler demonstrates, having for example beds in a typical house of poor was a real luxury and many times people slept on the floor, sharing the same room. Pigs, chickens and even ponies, cows or sheep would share the common residence in the countryside. As one can simply imagine, the dirt and inadequate sanitation of these shelters were preparing very good grounds for the seeds of death. Even if people would have realized that the sick needed to be separated from the healthy, in this case there was no solution. This is also the reason why the plague often killed entire households at once. The water that people were drinking was frequently polluted, especially in big cities like London or Bristol and thus people often suffered from diarrhoea, indigestion or similar difficulties, which helped the plague to bring them down on their knees even sooner. “The Thames was a polluted mess and cesspits within the city were a constant source of contamination,” adds Ibeji. However, it was not proved that it would be water or similar supply that spread the infection as well. In 1349, the King tried to do something about the bad state of the streets, but nearly all of its street cleaners had died of the plague.

Ziegler wittily concludes that the ideal environment for the rat is a warm and dirty place, so „the medieval house might have been built to specifications approved by a rodent council as eminently suitable for the rat’s enjoyment of a healthy and care-free life (152).“

As it will be further commented, one of the modes of transmission of the plague were rat flees and they go definitely hand in hand with the satisfaction of the rats.

Medieval England, a country with many ports, rivers, roads and lively cities and villages, was apparently a place that the plague was going to adore. The majority of professions mentioned earlier are connected with moving from one place to another, which is perfect for a plague to spread. The access to everything was simply too easy...

The topic of politics could be considered as the opposite of blooming. By looking at the 14th century, it was quite an oppressive age.

At its beginning and close were kings whose reigns ended in failure. In between, however, came the 50-year reign of the popular and successful Edward III. [...] But dominant factors of the age were war and plague. The increased scale, cost, and frequency of wars from the 1290's onward imposed heavy burdens on state and society. Conflicts between England and France continued intermittently throughout the century, those from 1337 onward being called the Hundred Years' War (Encyclopædia Britannica).

Distracted by wars, weakened by subalimentation and by struggle to gain a living from the less fertile land, the medieval peasants were ready to give up even before the catastrophe had started. Black Death did not need to be asked twice and in the year 1348 it became the gatecrasher of England. Moreover, it happened to be endemic so England had to fight with the disease again in the second half of the century (Ziegler 234). It kept its seeds in the grounds till its very last and cruel outbreak in 1665 in London. For a summary of how the Plague continued to spread through the British Isles in the 14th century see Table 1 in the appendices.

To conclude with the topic of medicine, the level was not as substandard as one might be thinking. As Cantor demonstrates, the doctors could amputate limbs and cauterize wounds in an effective manner. They had precise knowledge of herbal remedies for headaches, stomach aches or similar slight pains and possibly also for psychological depressions. However, in the face of an epidemic, they were absolutely helpless. Surprisingly five centuries later, although the doctors had for instance inoculation for small-pox or knew basis of antiseptic surgery, in the question of epidemics they were more

or less at the same despair as medieval doctors. The undeniable evidence is the Spanish Influenza from the year 1918 that has taken lives of fifty million people within one year (9).

3. BRIEF COMMENTARY ON MAIN SOURCES

Before beginning the main topic of the paper itself, it should be mentioned that the core of this paper is based mainly on three secondary sources written on the theme of the Black Death. Each of the books is written for a slightly different purpose and therefore includes different points of view on given matters of the Black Death.

First of the authors is Philip Ziegler, who is a prominent British historian and biographer. *Black Death* belongs to one of his first works, written in 1969. As he himself introduces, he does not insist on being called by the title of medievalist. He continues: “This, I hope, may excuse me for rushing in where even an angel or a Professor of Medieval History would fear to tread (preface).” He alerts that his book does not contain any original research and that it is rather an attempt to bring together the records of contemporary chroniclers, later historians and, what is interesting, a lot of PhD theses. Ziegler deals with the Black Death in England more thoroughly than elsewhere and that is why his book is so important for the upcoming analysis.

Second author is Ole J. Benedictow, a Norwegian historian and professor at the University of Oslo. His last book so far, *The Black Death, 1346-1353 : the complete history* (2004) is, as the name of the book already hints, a complete history of Black Death, including Asia Minor, the Middle East and North Africa. He concentrates more than others do on epidemiology, the territorial spread, mortality and demographic factors. The book contains a vast amount of numbers, calculations, tables, theories and notes. Benedictow frequently cites Ziegler and considers his book to be “still the best general study of the Black Death (preface).”

Third mentioned writer is Norman Cantor, Professor of History, Sociology and Comparative Literature at New York University. His book *In the Wake of the Plague : The Black Death and the World It Made* (2002) contains a good amount of valuable criticism

and brings a perfect image of medieval everyday life. Cantor, in contrary to Benedictow, criticizes Ziegler's book and denotes it as "highly readable and out of date (224)."

This paper collects together the facts from these main works on Black Death with the help of many other helpful sources that are mentioned throughout the chapters and obviously last, but not least, with the support of valuable primary literature.

4. THE ESSENTIALS OF THE BLACK DEATH

As the title already hints, this chapter is devoted to the general characteristics of the plague with the aim to provide basic important facts about it. It contains essential information such as why did people call the plague the "Black Death", what were the main symptoms of the illness and what were the possible causes of the plague. Special focus is placed on the fact of why the plague has spread so quickly and it is supported by the description of particular hygiene conditions of those times.

Many people believe the fact that the name "Black Death" came from the appearance of the symptoms. Just as David Ross specifies, the symptoms were called *acral necrosis*, in which sufferer's skin would blacken due to subdermal haemorrhages (Britain Express). Kelly informs that the generation who lived through the plague called it *la moria grandissima*: "the great mortality"(front flap). On the contrary, Benedictow explains that the name could have originated from the mistranslation of the Latin *atra mors*, where *atra* can mean both terrible and black. He further adds that "it has nothing to do with diagnostic symptoms, as persons seeking a rational explanation for this graphic name often believe" (3). Ziegler comments that there is no evidence of that the people were using the term Black Death at the actual time of the plague and adds that it has been firstly used in the 17th century, namely some time after 1665, in order to distinguish the 14th century plague from the Great Plague. Cantor notes that the term "Black Death" was not invented even until after 1800 and that medieval people would usually call it pestilence or plague (stroke), originating from Latin *pestis* or *pestilentia* or *plaga*.

4.1. Causes of the Infection, Symptoms and Treatment

People at the time of Black Death knew very little about hygiene, and even less about the existence of bacteria or viruses. The majority believed that the plague was God's punishments for their sins, as it will be further described in Chapter 5.1. Only a few men who knew classical Greek have thought the disease is spreading because of *miasma* which would be "corruption or pollution of the air by noxious vapours [...] caused by rotting, putrid matter, and which were spread by wind" (Benedictow 3).

As Benedictow further quotes, this miasmatic theory was illustrated on the writs from the king of England Edward III, where he complained about all the filth that was being thrown from the houses so that:

the streets and lanes through which people had to pass were foul with human faeces and the air of the city was poisoned to the great danger of men passing, especially in this time of infectious disease (4).

This short extract demonstrates that the people of medieval times did not have much idea neither of hygiene, nor how to keep some sort of public tidiness, even though there were some attempts as described in Chapter 2. Ziegler provides a similar illustration of the filthiness in London to such extent that some of the lanes were so filthy that they seemed more as drains than lanes and that finding chamber pots filled with human excrements on the passers-by was not an exception (152). This picture seems to be a little exaggerated but there is no doubt that in some corners of London it was not far from the truth.

Benedictow continues with a citation of another writ that has been sent by Edward III to the mayor and sheriffs of London in 1361. It represents one of the attempts of the king to prevent the society from miasma in human settlements.

[...] the air in the city is very much corrupted and infected, hence abominable and most filthy stench proceeds, sickness and many other evils have happened to such as have abode in the said city, or have resorted to it; and great dangers are feared to fall out for the time to come, unless remedy be presently made against it. We, willing to prevent such dangers, ordain, by consent of the present Parliament, that all bulls, oxen, hogs, and other gross creatures be killed at either Stratford or Knightsbridge (4).

In 1345, even before the outbreak of the plague, the council imposed penalties for polluting the streets and every person seen by a so-called “scavenger” was charged two shillings as a fine. This was a good step to relieve the town from stench that were infesting the city, most frequently by the butchers disposing the entrails of killed animals into the common gutters. Those got often blocked and unless a strong rain relieved the flow, they would stay overcrowded with such and other waste. Londoners were trying to do their best to maintain their hometown clean, but this system apparently did not manage to survive and as the writ from Edward III demonstrates above, it failed with the arrival of the plague.

Ziegler only confirms the already known fact: “Medieval man was equipped with no form of defense - social, medical or psychological - against a violent epidemic of this magnitude” (17). Miasma, which could be a perfect explanation for a common medieval man or woman, is from the current medical point of view highly improbable. Obviously, there were such stench as illustrated before, but those, although horrible, were not the transmitting the plague. The miasma made people to move from cities to isolated country areas, as was done by most of the English royal family, but the escape was due to the omnipresence of rodents not easy. Anyway, from the English statistics it seems that in the rich circles the mortality has not exceeded 25 %. For peasants, including parish priests it went from 40 to 50 % (Cantor 22).

A far more probable explanation for the cause of the medieval Black Death can be the so-called “Bubonic Plague”. It is caused by a bacillus carried by parasites on the backs of rodents, or more precisely rats. However, Cantor casts doubt on the fact that the Black Death was caused solely by Bubonic Plague. He goes along with the theory of a British zoologist Graham Twigg that there must have been another disease occurring at the same time, especially in England because he doubts the rats would be able to make such long journeys as travelling from port to port and village to village all the way through Europe. Moreover, he reveals that “the pestilence produced almost as high a level of mortality in the winter months as in the summer” and rat flees are usually not active during the winter. Cantor continues that certain mortality tales from the years around 1350 “frequently described death that occurred within three of four days of incubation [...] (13), without

fever and without the buboes. Even though the following fact is still a minority opinion, it is rapidly gaining supporters: “The Black Death involved or was even exclusively a rare virulent antihumanoid form of cattle disease, namely anthrax.” What supports this theory is that in 14th century there was a significant increase of cattle ranching, raising of herds of beef cattle on the open ranges and the small pasturages in southern farmlands (14). Cantor concludes: “What is most puzzling about the Black Death of the fourteenth century is its very rapid dissemination, a quality more characteristic of a cattle disease than a rodent-disseminated one (15). He quotes after Thompson that bubonic plague and anthrax probably coexisted during the 14th century. This is possibly the best explanation that science can currently provide. However, Ziegler and Dr Ibeji added a third presumable killer to the list: the septicaemic plague. This, like bubonic plague, is insect borne, but from a sick person a flea can easily infect itself and does not need a rat to provide fresh sources of infection. In this case the victim died long before the buboes have had time to occur. This could perfectly explain the doubts of why some people died before even having symptoms of the disease.

To provide a closer insight on the symptoms, the first stage of the infection is similar to flue, normally accompanied by high fever. “In the second stage, buboes – that is, black welts and bulges – appear in the groin or near the armpits” (Cantor 12). Some unlucky individuals even suffer them internally. The buboes grow as dark boils, which vary in size of one to ten centimetres and are all extremely painful and ugly. Many times diarrhoea and vomiting accompany this already dreadful disease. The incubation period, usually marked by fever, lasts two to eight days. The third stage of the plague is lethal respiratory failure, often connected with blood vomiting.

Striking is the description perpetuated by a contemporary welsh poet, Jeuan Gethin. He seems not only to be a poet; his descriptions could possibly function as a testimony to future doctors. It is an artistic description of the symptoms that everyone can vividly imagine while reading through his lines. As quoted by Ziegler (190):

[...] Woe is me of the shilling in the arm-pit; it is seething, terrible, [...] a head that gives pain and causes a loud cry, a burden carried under the arms, a painful angry knob, a white lump. It is of the form of an apple, like the head of an onion, a small boil that spares no one. Great is its seething, like a burning cinder, a grievous thing of an ashy colour. It is an ugly eruption that comes with unseemly haste.

Modern medical experience suggests that possibly if the bubo broke down and suppurated within a week and the disease did not come to the stage of respiratory failure, the victim could have survived – if he endured the agonizing pain, which accompanied the boils (Ziegler 27). If those individuals could be called as lucky is a matter of question – there was not much positive awaiting them.

Considering the treatment of the plague, medieval doctors have thought the disease came from the air, as already introduced. One of their attempts to save the sick was to propose a change of lifestyle. People were obliged to leave the windows closed and cover them with thick tapestries from the inside. Consequently, tapestry making became one of the finest artworks of those times. Rich people would even have special demands on elaborate embroidered narratives of their favourite scenes from popular romances. Cantor now points out the most important step backwards in medieval hygiene:

Frequent bathing was proscribed as dangerous by the medical profession: You opened your pores to the airborne disease. Europe entered the pungent no-bath era, which lasted until the disappearance of the plague in the mid-eighteenth century (23).

People would then instead of bathing use cologne or any similar scents every morning. This has become “the lifestyle common to the European nobility by 1400 and a legacy of the Black Death and medieval medicine” (Cantor 23).

For previous plagues, there were at least some remedies. For this one, it was clear to everybody that there was absolutely nothing. Many doctors tried their best and concentrated on the symptoms, making various pastes out of herbs and good smelling flowers, putting them on the painful buboes. They would often add the person’s own excrements or urine to the paste in good hope that what comes from the body could actually help to cure the body itself. The pope of Avignon was advised by his personal doctor to isolate himself between two lit fires and not come to contact with anybody. He survived. Apart from this case, the

doctors have realized very soon that all their other attempts to cure the disease were unavailing. People became abandoned hopeless with their faith and God (Ancient Mysteries).

4.2. Spread of the Plague to England, Scotland and Ireland

The historians seem to agree on the fact that Black Death was striking from 1346 – 1353, concerning Europe, Asia Minor, the Middle East and North Africa. It reached Europe through Italy in 1347 and then within one year it touched the shores of England, where it continued ravaging till the year 1350.¹ “In October 1347, at about the start of the month, twelve Genoese galleys put in to the port of Messina [Sicily].” This is how John Kelly introduces his great book on great mortality. He right continues:

So begins, in almost fairy-tale fashion, a contemporary account of the worst natural disaster in European history [...] Almost no area of Eurasia escaped the wrath of the medieval pestilence. And along with people died dogs, cats, chickens, sheep, cattle and camels. For a brief moment in the middle of the fourteenth century, the words of Genesis 7:21 seemed about to be realized: “All flesh died that moved upon the earth.” (Kelly – front flap)

From Italy, the Black Death spread northwest across Europe heading to France, Spain, Portugal and England. In the latter case, once again the Black Death was hitting from the sea. As Ziegler assures, it will always be a guess of when exactly the Black Death came to England, just like where exactly it came from. The chroniclers and monks do not seem to agree on the same date – some mention early summer, some autumn and some even winter 1348. When Ziegler puts together these various accounts, he claims that the most likely picture of what actually happened is that a ship bearing a victim of bubonic plague arrived at Melcombe Regis (at present “Weymouth” as Benedictow adds on p.127) at the end of June, 1348. First time when a local inhabitant caught the disease was probably early July and the disease itself did not develop until August. After a quite complex analysis, he concludes that the outbreak took place few days before 24th July 1348.

¹ To easily follow the footprints of the plague see maps - Figure 1 and Figure 2

From Weymouth, the Black Death spread rapidly along the coast to the west and east. In the middle of 1349, there can hardly have been a village that was not visited by the Black Death. It soon came all the way around the Cornish peninsula and in an amazingly short time reached Bristol, the principal port of entry for the West Country with population close to ten thousand inhabitants (Ziegler 134). Death went along with the flow of the river Severn and swept into the town of Gloucester, which lays about 50 km north from Bristol. The inhabitants of Gloucester tried to defend themselves by shutting the gates, but not only that the infected rat flees would find their way around in either case, but also they needed ships with grain and other food supply to let in. Benedictow points out that the rivers and waterways affected significantly the way and speed of spread since boats and ships were the most common and efficient way in medieval times to move people and goods (131). This fact was already mentioned in Chapter 2.

“Through winter and summer, through flood and drought; against old and young, weak and strong; the disease went imperviously on its way” (Ziegler 136). In autumn 1348 it reached London, by far the largest and most prosperous city of England. “It had eighty-five parishes within its city wall with Westminster, Southwark and other outlying villages [...]” and between fourteen and eighteen thousand households, which could mean reaching the population of sixty or seventy thousand, counts Ziegler (119). Dr. Ibeji mentions the contemporary Robert of Avesbury, who narrated that the pestilence “grew so powerful that between Candlemass and Easter (2nd February - 12th April) more than 200 corpses were buried almost every day in the new burial ground [...]” He adds that this was in addition to the bodies already buried in other graveyards. Not long after this, a new cemetery had to be quickly opened by the Bishop of London, but it soon became so swamped that a local landowner, Sir Walter Manny, donated land nearby at Spittle Croft for a second cemetery.

What made things worse was the fact that London most probably hit by a combined attack of pneumonic and bubonic plague and not surprisingly it did not exclude the people from upper positions.

Two ex-Chancellors and three Archbishops of Canterbury all died in quick succession. A large black slab in the southern cloister of Westminster Abbey probably covers the remains of the Abbot of Westminster and 27 of his monks who were also taken by the plague. (Ibeji)

Continuing with the theory of Ziegler, after having some experience with the plague, somewhere around the year 1349, some cities have quarantined the most heavily touched areas. In reality, what they needed indeed was to isolate the rodents. These precautions in some places appeared effective but after March 1349, Black Death started to spread uncontrollably. The infection no longer proceeded from point to point but started to spread simultaneously all over the place, coming to Norfolk and Suffolk sooner than Cambridgeshire or hitting Warwickshire before Worcestershire for no reason (137). When plague reached Oxford all the schools must have been shut. The chancellor of Oxford contacted the King “showing that the university is ruined and enfeebled by the pestilence and other causes, so that its estate can hardly be maintained or protected” (252). Later, when the plague reached Cambridge, sixteen out of forty resident scholars died between April and August (171). The plague was sent eastwards to Sussex, Kent and East Anglia with no mercy. This part of land had the same history as any other, just as Ziegler quotes a contemporary monk of Rochester, William of Dene: “Men and women carried their own children on their shoulders to the church and threw them into a common pit.”(162). Deficiency of labourers and workers, idle lands and rotting hay in the fields, buildings falling into decay: this was the omnipresent matter of fact across the eastern part of kingdom, if not across the entire realm indeed.

Black Death continued to the north through Leicester and Nottinghamshire. Surprisingly, where one would imagine that the death rate in the high and thus healthy country would be lower, the reality was exactly the opposite. Demonstrative evidence is Lincolnshire (at the time of the plague divided into two archdeaconries – Stow and Lincoln). The death rate follows: Stow 57 % of beneficed clergy, Lincoln 45 %. The cause of such a high mortality level could be that Lincolnshire has a long coastline and therefore functioned as an invitation for ship-borne rats. Fifteen villages in Lincolnshire have disappeared after the Black Death (179).

On 28 July, 1348 the Archbishop Zouche of York heard the deadly news from Europe and sent out a warning. Exactly like the rest of the population, he put the blame on “the sins of men, who [...] forget the bounty of the most high Giver“ and prescribed the prayer, processions and litanies as a key to remedy (180). The inhabitants of Yorkshire had actually 10 months to prepare for the plague. “Faced with such a threat the temptation must have been great to eat, drink, be merry and do little else besides” (181). Many of them were hoping that the plague would not arrive to “their country”, awaiting a miracle to happen. Nevertheless, once they heard it came to Dorset they realized that their turn was next on the list. Just as it will be demonstrated later in similar cases, prayers nor litanies reverted the arrival of the Black Death. Between 42 % and 45 % of parish clergy died. The plague then continued towards Cumberland and Durham, seemingly in its pneumonic form due to cold Scottish weather. Chronicler Henry Knighton describes how the Scots went to fight the English, laughing at them and delighted that plague has spread in England and penalized the English for past offences:

The Scots, hearing of the cruel plague amongst the English, attributed it to the avenging hand of God, and took it up as an oath, as a common report came to English ears, and when they wished to swear they would say ‘By the filthy death of England’ (or in English: ‘Be the foul deth of Engelond’). And thus the Scots, believing God’s dreadful judgement to have descended upon the English, gathered in the forest of Selkirk ready to over run the whole kingdom of England. And a fierce pestilence arose, and blew a sudden and monstrous death upon the Scots, and some 5,000 of the died in a short time, and the rest of them, some fit and some enfeebled, prepared to make their way home, but the English pursued them and fell upon them, and slew a great many of them (Knighton 102-103).

As it is seen from Knighton’s account, about five thousand of Scots died while fighting with the infected English and those running back home either died on their way or brought the plague home with them. A chronicler named Androw of Wyntoun has recorded the suffering of Scotland. “In Scotland, the fyrst Pestilens, begouth, off sa gret wyolens, that it was sayd, off lywand men, the thyrd part it dystroyd then [...]“ (qtd. after Ziegler 199). If Androw was right, it seems that one third of the population of Scots died. It is difficult to guess how precise could the chroniclers be, but he was probably not too far away from reality.

It is not simple to analyze the effect that Black Death had on Ireland because of the lack of manorial records and other sources. However, mainly thanks to an Irish monk and chronicler, Brother John Clyn of the Friars from Kilkenny, at least some reference has been conserved. When the plague struck Clyn's monastery, it infected and ultimately killed every member. Clyn, the last survivor and infected himself, kept a journal in which he chronicled the deaths of every other person in his world. It was integrated to the Annals of Ireland. His testimony of the horrible plague, probably of pneumonic form, proceeds:

That pestilence deprived of human inhabitant villages and cities, and castles and towns, so that there was scarcely found a man to dwell therein; the pestilence was so contagious that whosoever touched the sick or the dead was immediately infected and died; and the penitent and the confessor were carried together to the grave; though fear and dread men scarcely dared to perform the offices of piety and pity in visiting the sick and in burying the dead; [...] The pestilence was rife in Kilkenny in Lent, for, from Christmas Day to the 6th day of March eight friars preachers died of it. Scarcely one alone ever died in a house. Commonly husband, wife, children, and servants, went the one way, the way of death (The Annals of Ireland 6).

As seen from his words, being lonely and full of despair waiting for his death to come and as some say, after burying the last of his brothers, he wrote:

And I, Friar John Clyn, of the Order of Friars Minor, and the convent of Kilkenny, wrote in this book those notable things, which happened in my time, which I saw with my eyes, or which I learned from persons worthy of credit; and lest things worthy of remembrance should perish with time, and fall away from the memory of those who are to come after us, I, seeing these many evils, and the whole world lying, as it were, in the wicked one, among the dead, waiting for the death till it come, as I have truly heard and examined, so have I reduced these things to writing; and lest the writing should parish with the writer, and the work fail together with the workman, I leave parchment for continuing the work, if haply any man survive, and any of the race of Adam escape this pestilence and continue the work which I have commenced (The Annals of Ireland 7).

Here is the narrative interrupted and continues with another handwriting: “Here it seems the author died” (7). According to the words of Dr Ibeji, it seems that the death rate in Kilkenny was nearly 100 %. John Clyn, as it is apparent from his words, believed that the Day of Judgement had come and was not sure whether anybody was even going to survive. One could perfectly understand of why he had this kind of disbeliefs since the plague and

death, as Horrox explains, were two of the four Horsemen of St John's Apocalypse and the fourteenth century had already experienced the ravages of the other two: famine and war (114). Clyn left the next pages blank, hoping that somebody would complete the story of the Black Death for future generations. However, these pages have showed to contain much more than the description of the upcoming days of plague's cruelty. For the surviving race of Adam, as Clyn wrote, the disease was finally dying out. The blank pages became the beginning of new history and new lives.

5. CONSEQUENCES OF THE BLACK DEATH: SOCIETY UPSIDE DOWN

The plague shook the wealthy, relatively well-populated, confident, even arrogant society of mid-fourteenth century to its foundations. "Rich urban people fled to country retreats and many have done better. But archbishops, great lords, and wealthy merchants also fell to the plague: it was a democratic disease" (Cantor 22).

Until the plague, the life of a poor man had not changed much since Saxon times. He went on with the tasks of ploughing, muckspreading, hedging, ditching and sheep shearing with respect to the time of the year. His wife was usually busy with household tasks or did light work about the manor, such as churning butter and cheese, brewing beer, or gleaning in the cornfield. The villeins gave gifts of fowls, eggs and pigs to their lord and paid to use his mill, ovens and winepress. Any villein who tried to run away was flogged and might have his tongue or ears cut off (Chancellor 109). The fact that peasants were working for the Lords throughout centuries in order to be able to pay rents of their smallholdings seemed perfectly normal. However, by the next generation, in the 1370s, the Black Death had caused a critical labour shortage and it seemed for a while that the peasants and labourers were having good opportunities ahead of them. Especially in rural areas, the peasants took advantage of the labour market operating in their favour to demand steep increases in wages from land-lords but aristocracy and gentry responded by using parliament to force through laws holding down workers' wages against the inflationary labour market. This governmental intervention was a prime cause of the outbreak of the

Peasants' Revolt of 1381 in Eastern England, the greatest proletarian rising before the eighteenth century (Cantor 24). This fact, along with the other striking aftermaths of the biomedical disaster that a medieval human being had to undergo, is further discussed in the following two subchapters.

5.1. Religion and the Acceptance of Death

How the people of Europe thought of death and afterlife is an issue that has been coming through various changes throughout the centuries. During the plague death became the everyday companion of human beings. This chapter is revealing how the mortuary practices were strained to change during the stroke of the plague. A big support was found in the book called *Death in England: An Illustrated History*, which is currently unique of its kind.

“Death has always been a preoccupation of medieval man; now it became an obsession” (Ziegler 132). Death was everywhere around; vigorous and omnipresent. As Rosemary Horrox explains, for a medieval commoner before the plague, deathbeds were public occasions. Family and friends were expected to come to the dying person, taking turns in watching for the changes, which alarmed that death was approaching.

After the last rites the dying waited for death, often with a crucifix held or placed before their eyes. As the moment of death approached, doors and windows would be opened so that the soul would not be hindered in making its escape” (Horrox 96-97).

Neighbours and friends would be informed by the summoning of the priest to perform the last rites, his passage through the streets with the Host marked by the ringing of a handbell. These peaceful and quiet days of decent burials were over. Such change in the mortuary practices was one the most shocking events of the Black Death. The fear of catching the infection when coming in close contact with the dead person caused that the priests would not visit the sick. People generally began to abandon the sick, “leaving them to die alone, like animals” (Horrox 97-98). A similar point of view offers Kelly in his intimate history of Black Death: *The Great Mortality*:

Bodies packed like “lasagna” in municipal plague pits, collection carts winding through the streets early in the morning to pick up the dead, desperate crowds crouched over municipal latrines inhaling noxious fumes in hopes of inoculating themselves against the plague, children abandoning infected parents-and parents, infected children. (Kelly front flap)

The simile he uses – bodies packed like lasagna - corresponds to Cantor’s claim that bodies of commoners were buried in mass graves, stacked lengthwise five layers deep. He bitterly adds that the stench initially rising from the grounds, when the archaeologists found one of those mass graves in central London, was reputedly unbearable (23-24). Here arises the irresolvable problem caused by the mortality of the Black Death: how to give the dead a decent Christian burial. As Ziegler claims, the Church insisted that all burials must take place in consecrated grounds. Surprisingly, in this case people seemed more concerned with hygiene than theology and insisted that the corpses should be taken outside the city walls (147). Like it was not enough problems already, since parish clergy were hit as hard as any group in society by the pestilence, there was a shortage of priests to administer last rites and preside over funeral services. Nor could gravediggers keep up with mortality. Inevitably, as it has been already commented, the solution was to engage in mass burials (Cantor 23).

As Ziegler narrates, three months before the plague struck Winchester, on 24th October 1348, the Bishop of Winchester had sent out warning orders to all the clergy in his diocese, informing them of the calamity that happened in Europe because of the pestilence. He mentioned the ceased joy, hushed pleasant sounds and banished notes of gladness all over the continent and alerted that this terrible plague began to afflict already the coasts of the realm of England. Like many others, the Bishop believed that God was punishing sinners by the means of sickness and premature death and that healing of souls should call off this upcoming sickness. Therefore, he ordained that the clergy shall:

exhort their flocks to attend the sacrament of penance; on Sundays, Wednesdays and Fridays to join in saying the seven penitential and the fifteen gradual psalms and to take part, barefoot and with heads bowed, in processions around the market place or through the churchyards, reciting the greater litany (Ziegler 145).

Nevertheless, this delayed penitence revealed itself to be inefficient. The plague struck the diocese of Winchester with unforeseen violence, causing the death of nearly 50 % of beneficed clergy.

Ziegler demonstrates another letter sent in January 1349 by Ralph of Shrewsbury, Bishop of Bath and Wells, to all the priests in his diocese. This letter now perfectly demonstrates the demoralization and crisis dominating in the infected areas:

The contagious pestilence of the present day [...] has left many parish churches and other livings in our diocese without parson or priest to care for their parishioners. Since no priests can be found who are willing [...] to take on the pastoral care of these aforesaid places, nor to visit the sick and administer to them the Sacraments of the Church [...] we understand that many people are dying without the Sacrament of Penance. These people have no idea what recourses are open to them in such a case of need and believe that [...] no confession of their sins is useful or meritorious unless it is made to a duly ordained priest.

He then advises all the rectors, vicars, parish priests and deans that either themselves or through some other person they should publicly command and persuade all men, particularly those who are sick or should be sick in the future that:

if they are on the point of death and can not secure the services of a priest, then they should make confession to each other, as is permitted in the teaching of the Apostles, whether to a layman or, if no man is present, then even to a woman. We urge you, by these present letters, in the bowels of Jesus Christ, to do this... (125)

The Bishop concludes with the warning that confessions must be kept in secret and breaking such law would mean committing a most grievous sin and incurring the wrath of Almighty God and of the whole Church. If there is no priest to administer the Sacrament of Extreme Unction, then, as in other matters, faith must serve as sufficient. It is apparent that the Bishop had to undertake a very serious relaxation of the normal rules. Until then, the confessions were always restricted only to the priesthood. Letting laymen and even women to hear confessions was the alarming demonstration of the emergency state in the history of the Church. The crisis has been more than flagrant.

From the point of view of a medieval person, people in general were possessed by the conviction of their guilt. Even though they were not very sure of what, there was a lot to

choose from. Ziegler provides quite a rich list of sins that the medievalists could perfectly be punished for: “lechery, avarice, the decadence of the church, the irreverence of the knightly classes, the greed of kings, the drunkenness of peasants; [...]“ (36). Henry Knighton, a contemporary chronicler, provides a picture of medieval tournament accompanied by a band of women dressed in a variety of the most luxurious male costumes. Such example could be one of the flagrant callings of why God sent his wrath on such sinners. With perfect details, he colourfully describes the tournament, ending with the “marvellous remedy” of plague sent by God.

[...] belts of gold and silver clasped about them, and even with the kind of knives commonly called daggers slung low across their bellies, in pouches. And thus they paraded themselves at tournaments on fine chargers and other well-arrayed horses [...] and wantonly and with disgraceful lubricity displayed their bodies, as the rumour ran. And thus, neither fearing God nor abashed by the voice of popular outrage, they slipped the traces of matrimonial restraint. Nor did those whom they accompanied consider what grace and outstanding blessings God, the fount of all good things, had bestowed upon English knighthood in all its successful encounters with its enemies, and what exceptional triumphs of victory He had allowed them everywhere. But God in this as in all things had a marvellous remedy to dispel their wantonness, for at the times and places appointed for those vanities. He visited cloudbursts, and thunder and flashing lightning, and tempests of astonishing violence upon them (Knighton 95).

In the late 14th century William Langland, probably a London cleric and traveller, made severe reference to the impact of the plague in *Piers Plowman* - a long, vague and disorganized spiritual allegory and social satire. The character of Langland as well as his works is still debated in the international scholarly organization for the study of *Piers Plowman*². The little that has been revealed about Langland is known also from this work itself. Langland, just like Henry Knighton confirms that the plague was a punishment sent from God. As he writes in Passus 5: “He preached that their pestilences were punishments for sin, and that South-West wind on a Saturday evening, was plainly a punishment for Pride, and nothing else” (line 13-15).

² <http://www.piersplowman.org/>

In the following extract is evident the lack of priests in the English parishes also after the plague. Just like the peasants after the plague (this topic is discussed in the following chapter) they started to look for an extra pay and abandoned their parishioners if there was a better place to go. As Langland comments – “silver is sweet”. It does not need further explanations.

Parsons and parish priests pleaded with the bishop,
Their parishes being poor since the time of the Plague,
To have licence to leave, and live in London,
And sing simniac Mass there (for silver is sweet).
Brethren and bishops, both masters and doctors,
Curates under Christ, their crown shaven in token
That they should all of them shrive their parishioners
And preach to them, and pray for them, and feed the poor –
(prologue, line 84 – 90)

5.2. The Influence on Economy, Law and Politics

Heritage, last wills, wages and rents become the most importantly discussed issues during and after the plague when speaking about the ordination, arrangement and financial matters functioning in society. “Warning of the end meant that earthly business could be brought to a tidy conclusion, and most medieval wills were made, or at least revised, on the deathbed” (Horrox 96).

As it has been sketched during the paper, the huge death toll among labourers paralyzed the functioning of the whole society. Some villages were entirely abandoned, many farmsteads changed into ruins and fields were left fallow. One curious example could be Abbot of Eynsham’s manor of Tilgarsley, where the collectors of the lay subsidy reported in 1359 that it was not possible to gather the tax because nobody had lived in the village since 1350. Many lands were committed to the village until another tenant was found.

The bonds of service were menaced to turning point. Shortage of labourers was felt everywhere, especially in the richer circles. Suddenly, many lords and ladies were left alone with not a single servant around. Surviving peasants started to see advantages and

opportunities in this shortage since they realized that they were in demand and that eventually they could perfectly ask for higher wages and cheaper rents. Sometimes the lords would have to pay them two, three or even four times higher amount of money than before the Black Death. However, the percentage of rise and further decline of prices depends on every area; it cannot be generalized. Ziegler provides an example of a Lincolnshire ploughman, who “refused to serve except by the day and unless he had fresh meat instead of salt” (238). Such deals were very rare, if not unthinkable before the plague. Many peasants were abandoning their current lords and searching others who would offer them better conditions if they were not satisfied, which was quite unimaginable before the Black Death. The landlords got thus into a difficult position. Finding themselves forced to pay higher wages and obtain lower prices for their produce because of the reduced demand and lowered prices of food, they increasingly tended to break up their possessing and let it off for a cash rent to the free-men or villeins of his manor.

However, the king’s response to this crisis was astonishingly prompt (Ancient Mysteries). The Ordinance (1349) and Statute (1351) of Labourers tried to set maximum wages at the levels of the pre-Black Death years, or more precisely on the 1346 level (Encyclopædia Britannica Online). It has gone so far that even commissions were set up around the country, fining people who were demanding more money for their work. However, it seems that the labourers ignored those just as if they never existed. As Henry Knighton confirms in his Chronicle: “from that day [publication of the Statute of Laborers] they served their masters worse than ever before [...]“ (121). The Peasant’s revolt of 1381 was a result of this social tension caused not only by the adjustments needed after the epidemic. This fact is very important to emphasize because many might think that the revolt was caused only due to the unfairness after the plague. The peasants were irritated long before 1348 but the Black Death “gave birth in many cases to a smouldering feeling of discontent, an inarticulate desire for change, which found its outlet in the rising of 1381” (Ziegler 250).

According to Benedictow, it should not be forgotten that the Black Death and later plague epidemics also deeply affected political developments, primarily because it reduced sharply the incomes that kings and noblemen received from their manors and estates. It was

in the king's own interest to keep the Hundred Year's war going. He used the opportunity to levy new war taxes, which ended in the pockets of the warrior class as remuneration for their services or as profits for the merchants who happily sold provisions to armies that were more or less on a constant war footing (6).

Another topic that felt a notable change during the plague was marriage and heritage. Before the plague, although the poor might have married whom they chose, richer families arranged marriages, which would bring money and lands to the family. Often the couple were only introduced to each other when their parents had already arranged the date of their wedding. Girls were married at twelve years of age or even younger (Chancellor 103). The relationship between generations and property were the main and possibly most interesting themes in the life of fourteenth-century gentry families. "Over this process of marriage, birth, death, and inheritance, the Black Death fell like a tornado sweeping across the countryside," says Cantor (125). Because the level of mortality was so high, the securities of many great families were threatened. Another family, very often distantly related, suddenly swallowed the estates that had taken generations to build.

Cantor denotes two kinds of people, who especially benefited from disputes brought by the Black Death. The first were the common lawyers, who made money "protecting, expanding and defending the gentry estates" (125). During the plague there was a real shortage of them and their fees were high, but if a family wanted securities, there was not another option than to pay and trust them. "They perforce got so expert in doing these things that they created a body of real estate law that is largely still in effect today," he adds. He wittily comments that if a body of a 1350 barrister was deeply frozen and defrosted today, he would only need a 6 month refresher course.

The second group of beneficiaries of the plague were women of the gentry class. The common law had good means for protecting widows. Every widow had the right to dower one third of the income (but not capital) of her husband's estate until she died. Within forty days after husband's death she was supposed to leave the family mansion, but the mentioned third of the income would perfectly allow her to settle elsewhere. However, as Cantor points, a "favorite trick was simply to refuse the widow the entry to the dower, leaving her in anxious frustration and genteel poverty" (128). Then the heir's and widow's

attorneys would try to work out a stipulation giving the widow comfort but much less than she was entitled to by law. Furthermore, if there was such a case that the bride was wealthier than her groom, she was protected from abuse and impoverishment by prenuptial agreements.

As one can imagine, the ravaging of the plague caused that many families experienced extinction in direct succession. In such cases, the king might have taken the estate back into his demesne and possibly resell it to another family. If there were any alive cousins, they were allowed to inherit in such cases. However, this transaction required a heavy bribe to the royal government.

5.3. The Artistic Response

As mentioned before, the tradition in England ascribes to the Black Death the responsibility for the disappearance of many villages from the map, leaving the church, usually the only solidly constructed building, as a solitary monument to the past (Ziegler 139). Therefore, church building increased strongly and the building industry enjoyed a continuous boom in the Late Middle Ages (Benedictow 6). Death itself could be found everywhere, says Morgan, whether in the flourishing display of funerary monuments or in the decoration of surfaces, which so clearly engaged the English mind in the Middle Ages (125).

In paintings and story telling, it seems that after the Black Death there was a new obsession with death and the art of dying, often called as the “macabre art”. Horrifying images of death and decay started to appear. Skeletons and worms coming out of them became far more common than before the Black Death since people realized that Death was their constant companion more than ever before. One of the gentler examples is a small drawing illustrating John Ldygate’s poem, *Death’s Warning*: “My dredefull spere that ys full sharpe ygrounde, Doth you now, lo, here thys manace, Armour ys noon that may withstande hys wounde.”³ It demonstrates death as a grinning and armed attacker (Morgan 121). Nonetheless, it is very important to say that such paintings have not appeared until the

³ See the corresponding Figure 11

next century. Many skilled painters, sculptors and artisans died during the plague and it took a long time until somebody else, if at all replaced them.

Popular image, especially later in the 15th and 16th century, became the so-called Dance of Death or Danse Macabre. As Morgan describes, “a series of people, generally from all social ranks, are shown as skeletons or putrefying corpses leading their living selves towards the grave” (125). To provide some demonstrations, Figure 3 is an image of an 1814-16 painting made by Thomas Rowlandson where death is shown as a sculpture carrying a lid of feathers. It contrasts with the lack of death ritual afforded to poorer members of society, as seen in Figure 5, *The Poor Man’s Friend* (1845). Similar image comes from *London’s Lamentation* of 1641 shown on Figure 4, which is a work of propaganda contrasting the burials of plague victims in country and metropolis. A fragment of the Dance of Death in the parish church at Newar-on-Trent is depicted on Figure 13:

A wealthy townsman, his hand on a bulging purse, is mocked by the image of his own recently dead self with the stomach cavity emptied of its internal organs and bearing a carnation, a flower which symbolised human flesh (Morgan 127).

It is quite difficult to determine how we should take these images, as Morgan suggests. Asking whether Chaucer’s audience laughed at the word “fart” would be a similar case, he adds wittily. On many images wealthy are being worm-eaten and this should probably emphasise the fact that death was indeed the leveller of all. The sarcastic grin, usual for many skeletons representing death is clear without any comment. That death was really a companion of every member of society is seen well in Langland’s verse:

Death came driving after him, and dashed into dust
Kings and cavaliers and kaisers and popes;
Learned or unlettered, he let no man stand
That once he had hit, for he never stirred again
Many a lovely lady, and many knights’ lemans,
Dropped senseless, and died, from the bitterness of Death’s blows
(226, line 99-104).

There is no wonder that quite early after the plague also the images of dying people with detailed depiction of the symptoms appeared.⁴ Figure 6 shows a row of monks disfigured by the plague, blessed by a priest. This image comes from England, made during the years 1360–75 by James le Palmer (Wikimedia). Masses were held for plague victims, as depicted in a 14th century manuscript on Figure 14. Figure 10 illustrates the symptoms of plague, illustrated in the Bible. All these pictures have the faces of hopelessness in common, turning to God for a cure. Figure 7 is an image of a 15th century woodcut, showing a patient infected by the plague and a doctor, cleaning the patient's welt in the armpit. As said before, this remedy had not much of therapeutic effect. Figure 8 represents the same situation – a physician visiting a patient infected with plague. The physician shields his nose, as some of the other people bedside do. The doctors thought that if they covered their nose with a mask full of good smelling species like thyme, lilies or lavender, they would protect themselves against the corrupted air. If not for this reason, at least they estranged themselves from the smell of death. A famous image of a plague doctor is Doktor Schnabel from Rome (1656) - a picture of a doctor equipped for visiting patients afflicted with the plague, dressed in a waxed long cloak, face covered with a mask, eyes secured behind crystal, and pleasantly smelling spices in the long beak. With his rod he pointed at what should have been attended to. Though originally from German Paul Fürst, similar demonstrations come from England, just as demonstrates the image of Figure 8. Another thought of how to stop the spread of the Plague was to burn the clothes of the infected, as demonstrates Figure 12. Nor this was any helpful.

Some importance shall be placed on the influence on music even though said in general, it not easy to find any source that would mention direct impact that the Black Death had. It seems however, that people's attitude towards music must have changed in some way during the plague, seeing the surrounding depression and death all around them. Most of the music was heard in the Church, but secular music became popular as well. It included love songs, satire or even dramatics. Drums, harps and bagpipes were the

⁴ See Figures 6-10

instruments used because they were easy to carry. However, the sombre change in music demonstrated the grim reality standing around (Knox).

Before the Black Death, assures Knox, music was happy and frequently heard. During the plague, music was very bleak, if played at all. As mentioned before in chapter 4.2, some of the Yorkshire dwellers decided to enjoy their possibly last days and spend the rest of their lives in happiness with a jar of good beer and the sound of music in a tavern whilst waiting for the arrival of plague.

Cantor mentions one interesting example where a rhyme that children used to sing already in the 1500's can be still heard today:

Ring around the rosies
A pocket full of posies
Ashes, ashes
We all fell down (5)

He argues that the text carries symptoms similar to flu, skin discolouring and mortality caused by bubonic plague. Even though the content could be explained from a different point of view, he might not be far from the truth. He adds that children's games used to be a reflection of adult anxieties and efforts to pacify feelings of fright and concern at some devastating event. So say the folklorists and psychiatrists. The rhyme simply contains the two contraries of life and death or reality –life is something indescribably beautiful and reality inexpressibly horrible.

Some images of music connected with death were expressed in various paintings. Figure 15 demonstrates the popular image of the Dance of Death, entitled as the "Orchestra of Dead". "The scene is a fine example of the wild carnivalesque atmosphere emphasized in the popular motif of the Danse Macabre", describes Huber. She further quotes that the Danse may have been an ironic reference on the prohibition against dancing in graveyards. A similar image are the dancing skeletons, or the "Dance of Death" as the painting is called, from Hans Holbein the Younger, a German painter who moved to England in 1526. (Figure 16)

Many illustrations of the crisis during the plague come from the Great Plague of London. These will be profiled in the following chapter.

6. THE GREAT PLAGUE OF LONDON AND DEFOE'S "JOURNAL OF THE PLAGUE YEAR"

The Great Plague of London was the very last outbreak of the Black Death in England. More than three hundred years after the medieval Black Death, in 1665, perhaps the worst of the English epidemics so far broke out. It seems that the form of the plague was only bubonic though, transmitted by rats. The pneumonic form, which became the quick malicious killer in the medieval pestilence, was in this case extremely rare.

As many as 100,000 lives were lost before winter killed the fleas and the epidemic tapered off, confirms Anthony Burgess, a novelist and critic introducing Defoe's *Journal of the Plague Year*⁵. The number of the plague victims varies from source to source; those who do not want to be too precise mention 75,000 to 100,000, closely a fifth of the entire London's population. Ralph Houlbrooke numbers 56,000, apparently less than the others. Whatever the real number was, it is strikingly obvious that such death toll in London has never been counted before.

Probably the best testimony dealing with the Great Plague of London is the already appointed *Journal of the Plague Year*, written by Daniel Defoe. This book seems to be a perfect image of an ordinary London merchant with a passion for facts and a certain journalistic talent, writing down the day-to-day events from the plague year in London. "It is a rather cunning work of art, a confidence trick of the imagination," says Anthony Burgess (6). He rightly points out that Defoe was only five years old when the plague broke out and that it is highly doubtful that he would be able to make a sober adult factual book out of the fragment memories from his childhood. Nevertheless, Defoe was a professional writer and before writing this novel he consulted a good amount of reference works and people that have survived the plague.

His father, James Foe, had the same insight on the plague just like his medieval predecessors: The Plague and the Fire that came after were "God's vengeance on the wicked" (Burgess 8). To him the pestilence came as a blessing because a lot of the nearby

⁵ See Figure 17: The original facsimile of the title page of the first edition

shops were wiped out and he was finally able to become a butcher. Prosperity was a divine reward for virtue and steadfastness. His story could be compared to the stories of peasants that survived the medieval plague and finally could ask for a higher wage or eventually find a different master, though not for long, as described earlier in the chapter 5.2.

To uncover the plot of Defoe's *Journal* a little, the protagonist of the story is H.F., a saddler and dissenter from Aldgate. After various slighter and stronger outbreaks of the plague it comes to a moment when he shall decide whether to flee the city. The nobility and clergy have left already, settling down in their country mansions. [A perfect illustration provides the Czech version of Defoe's *Journal* on Figure 18, depicting gentry, noblemen, their servants and ladies with children running away from the city. Skeletons with a sandglass clock in their hand are present, counting the last minutes of the lives of the infected. Another image is on Figure 20 – the first two blocks showing mass flight by water and land.] H.F. observed that to travel out of the city, passes and certificates were necessary, “without these was no being admitted to pass through the towns upon the road, or to lodge in any inn” (29). If this was not one of Defoe's perfect fictions, it seems as a helpful arrangement with a clear aim to prevent from spreading the infection across the kingdom. Nevertheless, many people who hurried to obtain such certificate were already infected, but not yet with visible marks on their bodies. Thus, the physicians gave them the necessary permission and such individuals managed to infect others before even fleeing the city. Although such precautions probably had some effect on the speed of dissemination, from a global point of view it was not much helpful.

Despite the sound and repeated advising of H.F.'s brother – “Master, save thyself!” and general runaway of friends and neighbours, he decides to stay due to the accidents crossed every time he has chosen to go. These “particular providences”, which seem to be as “intimations from Heaven” somehow telling him that he will stay untouched by the disease, made him stay and become one of the closest witnesses of the plague horror (Defoe 30-31). Thus, he becomes a close observer of the Great Plague, noting down the weekly bills of mortality and tracing the footprints of plague in the streets. He comments in detail how people became “really overcome with delusions (45)” and predictive on the signs of heaven, seeing pestilence in the purely white clouds on the sky. Apart from the sudden

boom of fortune-tellers, astrologers, nativity calculators and similar magic professions that only drag money out of people's pockets; he describes the hordes of quack doctors who started to appear all over the place. People were madly running for various medicines and remedies; "storing themselves with such multitudes of pills, potions, and preservatives [...] that they not only spent their money but even poisoned themselves [...]" (Defoe 50). On the posts of many houses or street corners messages like "Anti-pestilential pills", "Incomparable drink against the plague, never found out before", "An universal remedy for the plague" began to flourish. It has gone so far that some quacks even summoned people to their houses for directions and advice, showing titles like these two:

'An Italian gentlewoman just arrived from Naples, having a choice secret to prevent infection, which she found out by her great experience, and did wonderful cures with it in the late plague there, wherein there died 20,000 in one day.' or 'Advice to the poor for *nothing*.'

Such tricks and lies were more than just fishing. Advising the poor for nothing was a great trick of giving a *free* advice to *buy* their irreplaceable medicine if they want to survive the plague. The poor did not have the money of course, so either they went to do some iniquity to obtain them somehow or left the physician even more depressed than before. Defoe vividly describes many people who went mad with fear and desperation running in the streets. A very freaky example is of those poor individuals, who "were infected and near their end, and delirious also, would run to those pits [common graves], wrapt in blankets or rugs, and throw themselves in, and, as they said, bury themselves." Such poor souls would expire before new earth was thrown upon them. "They were quite dead, though not cold," when it came to bury the others upon them (79). Similar atmosphere show blocks three and four on Figure 20; a coffined victim carried through a deserted square, and others buried by the cartload in newly dug pits (Houlbrooke 176).

Long passages are devoted to the practice of shutting up the infected houses. 'Orders conceived and published by the Lord Mayor and Aldermen of the City of London' were published. Briefly speaking, such orders were appointed to the so-called "*examiners, searchers, watchmen, keepers and buriers* for the persons and places infected [...]" (58). Each of them had special duties. *Examiners* were to control the sick in parishes that have

been assigned to them and in case of plague suspicion inform the alderman. *Searchers* were women sworn to make a detailed search whether the respective persons do die of the plague, or of what other diseases. Two *watchmen* were appointed to every infected house, one for the day, the other for the night. These had to guard that no person go in or out. Entire families thus became locked inside of their homes and obviously, this ensured that majority, if not all members of the trapped families, fell ill. For such cases ‘Orders concerning infected houses and persons sick of the plague’ were published. These concerned the *Sequestration of the Sick, Airing the Stuff, Shutting up of the House* or *Burial of the Dead*. Another arrangement was the publication of the ‘Orders Concerning Loose Persons and Idle Assemblies’. Such orders tried to restrict any public gatherings. All types of plays and feastings were prohibited. Tippling in taverns, ale-houses, coffee-houses, and cellars was strictly controlled, “as the common sin of this time and greatest occasion of dispersing the plague” (65). The narrator remained in the city until the plague was slowly dying and astonishingly managed to remain free of infection. In the end the city was spared from complete destruction, and the people of London slowly returned to their way of life. The story ends with a short poem, “coarse but sincere stanza of his own”:

A dreadful plague in London was
In the year sixty-five
Which swept an hundred thousand souls
Away; yet I alive! (256)

Just like during the medieval Black Death, the new outbreak more than 3 centuries later was at the same despair when attempting to provide explanations for the sickness. The doctors did not find any cure that would actually be helpful. Such a great number of quack doctors seemed not to appear during the medieval plague. People knew that the best thing to do was leave the city and wait until the plague disappears. There were of course those who stayed because had no options but not all of them were so lucky as H.F. It is remarkable that the government played a crucial part in the Great Plague, issuing the mentioned Orders, whose aim was to prevent the spread as much as possible. It seems everything was a bit more under control this time. Despite this fact, the mortality rate was of the similar ratio as the Black Death: one third of the population of London.

7. CONCLUSION

To begin with the summary of the theoretical conclusions, the title of the Black Death did not come from the era of the middle ages. It was probably invented some time during the Great Plague of London, in order to distinguish these two pestilences. Some say that the title reflects the symptoms – *black* buboes that were growing in the armpits and groins of the infected, others that it had nothing to do with them and the word *black* rather meant terrible and gloomy. What remains a mystery until today is the question of what precisely had caused the Black Death. Probably the best explanation so far is that it must have been a combination of insect borne bubonic plague, anthrax and septicemic plague. However, there are still some discrepancies in the theories.

The plague came from Middle East to Italy in 1347. Italy was a great exporter of goods and unavoidably, the rats infected with plague got on its ships. Italy perforce helped to disseminate the disease with speed that nobody expected. In 1348, meanwhile there was almost a third of population dead across the continent, England was still waiting, relying in its natural shield of waters. Not surprisingly, the plague hit exactly from the sea.

14th century England had perfect grounds prepared for the seeds of a plague. It was very well populated and apart from a few disastrous harvests causing famine at the beginning of the century, it was on the peak of bloom and prosperity. People were traders, pilgrims and merchants, moving across the land foot or on ships. Such movement across was one of the main factors that have certainly helped to spread the plague. Likewise, the poor hygiene conditions supported the disease since people stopped bathing, thinking that opening pores would help the infection to enter their body. Drainage systems in bigger cities were in a very bad state, often giving off unsupportable, putrid stench. Households themselves, especially those of the poor, were often shared with animals like pigs or ponies. Such conditions were literally inviting for the rats and their infected flees, causing that the plague was going to love the kingdom.

When speaking about medicine, the physicians were helpless on all accounts: in the medieval plague just as in the 1665 plague of London. Many remedies were attempted during both of the plagues but none of them were efficient. The best prevention seemed to

be the flight of the area before becoming infected. However, it is remarkable that the government has tried its best during the Great Plague. Various *Orders* concerning the plague were issued, with the aim to prevent the spread as much as possible. It seems as everything was a little more under control in this case. However, the mortality rate was of the similar ratio as the Black Death: one third of the population of London.

The Black Death was fair-minded. It afflicted the poor, the rich, the young, the old, women and men alike, no matter of what profession. The scale of death was becoming clear: shortage of labour force in all aspects of society. As priests died as any other terrestrials, religion felt its foundations shaking. Suddenly, there was no one to perform the last rites and confessions. In such emergency, the bishops allowed laymen and even women to hear them. People were desperate for purgatory as they thought that the plague was sent by God as a punishment for sins. Funerals were more or less changed into throwing of corpses to the common pits, many times away from the church in non-consecrated grounds.

It is necessary to remark, that the shortage of labour had also some positive consequences. The surviving labourers quickly realized that there were new opportunities ahead of them. Being aware of their sudden importance, they promptly asked for higher wages as the demand for labour has markedly increased. For a short time, the lords have tasted the bitterness of oppression and had to pay the peasants sometimes even a four times higher wage than before the plague. However, respond to such rebellion was incredibly quick and the issued Ordinance (1349) and Statute (1351) of Labourers has set the wages back on their pre-plague level. This was the last drop to the longstanding irritation of labourers and the 1381 Peasants' Revolt was the reply to such treatment.

High death toll caused many problems with heritage and the relations between generations and property became very interesting themes of life. Consequently, in the era of the Black Death, the foundations of real estate law were laid. Both lawyers and heirs amply benefited from the plague, if they survived. Special remuneration obtained the bereaved widows, who dowered one third of the income of their deceased husbands.

Influence of the Black Death was also felt in the artistic response. New obsession became the art of dying, called the "macabre art". Skeletons and corpses became the topic of many paintings, having a remarkable satiric grin on their faces. They were often placed

in contrast to the living bodies of the wealthy, emphasizing that death was indeed a leveller of all. In addition, many images of people defaced by the plague appeared, frequently accompanied by a physician. Roots of the Black Death in music have not been overwhelmingly proved. Some secondary sources mentioned transition to more depressive music, but these are not of significant importance. It seems that it had a more distant effect, for example on modern Black Death metal, characterized as music full of shrieking vocals. Its roots might perfectly be in the horror of the Black Death.

RESUMÉ

Černá smrt byla biologická katastrofa, která postihla Evropu v roce 1347. Mor zachvátil v podstatě celý kontinent a po roce byl přivezen i ke břehům Anglie. Úmrtnost byla nespočetná – podle většiny zdrojů vzala černá smrt životy více než třetině všech Evropanů s tím, že Anglie byla postihnuta obzvláště krutě. Narozdíl od některých částí Evropy ji totiž postihla plicní forma moru, která se přenášela kapénkovou infekcí, a tudíž se šířila daleko rychleji než pomocí krysích blech. Ani ty však nezhálely a mor roznášely svým smrtelným kousnutím neuvěřitelně hbitě.

Po obecném úvodu do problematiky a stručném výčtu následků, které černá smrt po sobě zanechala následuje druhá kapitola, která přibližuje obecnou charakteristiku středověké Anglie. Ta na sklonku 14. století procházela doslova populační explozí a podle Normana Cantora dosáhla až 6 milionů obyvatel. Je možné, že je tato cifra přehnaná, nicméně to nemění nic na skutečnosti, že Anglie byla na vrcholu rozmachu a prosperity. V první polovině století si však prošla několika hladomory a bylo znát, že zásob pro všechny začíná ubývat. Dále se kapitola zabývá samotnými lidmi. Většina z nich byla vzdělaná a cestování bylo na prvním místě oblíbenosti. Spousta z nich měla zajímavé profese a ve městech i vesnicích obchod jen vzkvétal. Anglie vynikala chovem ovcí a brzy začala exportovat vlnu do Evropy.

Jedním z důvodů tak rychlého šíření černé smrti byly také hygienické podmínky. Londýn měl v té době velké problémy s odpadem, protože ještě nebyly řádně vytvořeny kanalizace. Místo nich se ulicemi valily splašky, odpadky a podobně, a tak se městem často linul nesnesitelný zápach. Na vesnicích často lidé sdíleli příbytky se zvířaty, tedy alespoň ti chudí. V domech byl prach a velká nečistota a takové podmínky byly přímo rájem pro krysy a jejich nakažené blechy. Očista těla byla tehdy spíše sváteční a po příchodu moru byla prováděna ještě méně než dřív. Lidé zastávali názor, že by se jim po umytí otevřely póry v těle, a tím by byli citlivější k nákaze. Tato skutečnost bezpochyby také umožnila černé smrti útočit více, než bylo zapotřebí. Politická situace v Anglii nebyla také zrovna valná, neboť král byl zaneprázdněn válkou vedenou ve Francii.

Po stručné charakteristice životního stylu a hygienických podmínek anglické společnosti následuje třetí kapitola, ve které je čtenář seznámen s použitými zdroji. Téma mají samozřejmě autoři společné, ale každý z nich se ve své analýze ubírá jiným směrem. Phillip Ziegler a jeho kniha *Black Death* se stala jádrem této práce, neboť právě Ziegler se jako jediný zabývá pouze Anglií. Druhým významným autorem je Ole J. Benedictow, jehož kniha obsahuje velké množství epidemiologických a demografických analýz, výpočtů, tabulek a poznámek pod čarou. Jako skutečně jediná svého druhu se zabývá černou smrtí a jejím dopadem nejen na Evropu, ale také na Blízký Východ a severní Afriku. Třetím důležitým autorem je Norman Cantor a jeho kniha *Po stopách moru: Černá smrt a svět, který zrodila*. Cantor umožňuje nahlédnout na středověk okem jak pána, tak kmána, a nebo třeba arcibiskupa. Cenná je také jeho kritika ostatních děl.

Čtvrtá kapitola obsahuje základní teoretické informace týkající se černé smrti, jako například proč se jí říká *černá* smrt, a co ji vlastně způsobilo. Někteří uvádějí, že tento název vznikl z podoby černých podlitin, které se nemocným vytvářely v podpaží a na tříslech; Ole Benedictow však zastává názor, že tento název spíše pochází z latinského *atra mors*, kde *atra* může znamenat také hrůzu a černotu. Zajímavá je také skutečnost, že samotný název černá smrt vznikl nejdříve v 17. století, aby se nějakým způsobem odlišil tento středověký mor od pozdější rány, která vypukla v roce 1665 v Londýně. Soudobí lidé ji nazývali nákazou či morem. Dále pokračuje kapitola rozborem příčin vzniku černé smrti, jejich příznaků a marných pokusů o léčbu. Druhá část kapitoly 4, tedy část 4.2, se vydává po stopách moru přes Anglii do Skotska a nakonec i Irska. Zážitky z moru jsou názorně předvedeny v ukázkách kronikáře Henryho Knightona, nebo řádového bratra Johna Clyna.

Pátá kapitola se celkově zabývá následky, které za sebou černá smrt zanechala. Podkapitola 5.1 hovoří o změnách v náboženství, přístupu ke smrti a hlavně o výrazné změně v pohřbívání a s ním spojenými obřady. Umíralo totiž tolik lidí, že nejen že často chyběli kněží, kteří by vyslechli přiznání hříšníků nebo provedli poslední pomazání, ale nezbyl mnohdy čas ani na řádný pohřeb, a mrtvá těla musela být hromadně odvážena nejlépe za město do narychlo vytvořených masových hrobů, pokud ovšem nenastala krize posledního ražení, že by vymřeli i sami hrobníci.

Náboženství také zažilo změnu, kterou si nikdo předtím neuměl ani představit. V jedné kritické chvíli začal být nedostatek kněží do nebe volající a smrtelníci umírali jeden po druhém, pravděpodobně kvůli rozmohlé formě plicního moru. Nemocní většinou ani nestihli dospět do stádia, kdy se na těle vytvořily zmíněné podlitiny. Biskup v takovýchto naléhavých případech povolil lidem zpovídat se komukoliv, dokonce i ženám. Taková myšlenka by se ještě před černou smrtí pravděpodobně také počítala za hříšnou sama o sobě. Lidem ale opravdu nezbývalo nic jiného, pokud chtěli být vzati do nebe očištěni od hříchů a chyběli kněží a i čas. Pokud byl nemocný zanechán sám sobě na pospas, což se v době moru stávalo velice často, protože se lidé báli z důvodu nákazy k nemocným vůbec přiblížit, byly dokonce uznávány zpovědi sama sobě. Někteří kronikáři trpce uvádějí, že se rodiče báli přiblížit ke svým nemocným dětem a naopak. Bylo zřejmé, že se smrt dostala lidem až do morku kostí.

Kapitola 5.2 pak zmiňuje změny rázu finančního, právního a politického. Jak již bylo řečeno, černá smrt si nevybírala jen určitý typ obětí – na seznamu byli všichni, kdo jí vešli do cesty. A tak byla Anglie ochuzena o nesčetné množství sluhů, řemeslníků, dělníků, a v neposlední řadě sedláků a rolníků. Takový nedostatek byl samozřejmě pak znát ve všech sférách společnosti, ale nejvíce asi trpěli mocní a bohatí, kteří byli po celou dobu zvyklí mít na všechno lidi a často se pak ocitali v nesnázích s každou maličkostí. Na druhé straně pro takového rolníka nastala velice nadějná doba. Jak již bylo řečeno, dříve než mor vypukl, byla poptávka po práci daleko vyšší než nabídka a mnoho lidí zápasilo o práci u pánů a majetníků, byť za směšný peníz. Již v průběhu moru, a hlavně tedy po skončení, však nastala naprosto opačná situace. Nabízené práce bylo mnoho a asi by byli sami rolníci a jiní dělníci hloupí, kdyby takovéto chvíle nevyužili k vylepšení svého postavení. Najednou nastal okamžik, kdy si mohli sami vybrat svého pána, v případě nespokojenosti odejít za lepším a hlavně si vyžádat větší plat než před začátkem moru, neb si byli moc dobře vědomi, jak jsou nyní potřební. Král však dlouho nezačal a „přistříhl jim křídélka“ vydáním nařízení *Ordinance of Labourers* (1349) a později zákona – *Statute of Labourers* (1351), které se snažily posunout zpět mzdy pracovníků na úroveň před vypuknutím moru. Pokud byl pak pracovník přistižen při tom, jak žádá vyšší plat, byl okamžitě pokutován. Takové zacházení dovedlo rolníky a sedláky k velkému selskému povstání roku 1381.

Nelze však jednoznačně říci, že by černá smrt zapříčinila tuto vzpouru, ale je jisté, že předešlá nařízení již jen přilila poslední kapku do přeplněného poháru. Na druhou stranu je ale nutno podotknout, že zmíněná nařízení nebyla mířena výslovně proti rolníkům; snažila se také ochránit pány, kteří ke své práci potřebovali dělníky a nemohli si dovolit platit jim leckdy až čtyřnásobek částky ve srovnání s cenou před morem.

Další důležitou otázkou byly svatby a dědictví. Spousty významných rodů se ocitly znovu na nule, protože mnohokrát vymřelo tolik rodinných příslušníků a potomků, že nebylo dědice. Mnohdy se pak stalo, že veškerý majetek připadl státu, v lepším případě hodně vzdálenému příbuznému. Navzdory drtivé většině negativních účinků černé smrti se alespoň tato hrstka zbohatlíků, společně s krátkou spokojeností přeživších rolníků mohla radovat z důsledků ničivého moru. Byly také zavedeny speciální vdovské důchody, které umožňovaly zdědit pozůstalé manželce až třetinu výnosu statků po svém manželovi. Mnohé vdovy se tak staly zámožnějšími a šťastnějšími než kdykoliv předtím. Během moru si také přišli na své právníci, neb byli právě z důvodu všemožných dědických a pozemkových machinací více než žádáni. Právě v tomto období se natolik vyvinulo dědické, nemovitostní a majetkové právo, že se na ně angloamerické precedenční právo může dodnes odvolávat.

Kapitulu o změnách společnosti uzavírá podkapitola 5.3, pojednávající o vlivu černé smrti na umění a hudbu. Zdá se, že smrt se stala po skončení moru daleko častějším motivem než dříve a hlavně se malíři nebáli její morbidní podoby. Často se objevovala vedle jejího živého předchůdce v podobě kostlivce nebo těla bez orgánů, navíc se sarkastickým až výsměšným výrazem tváře. Autoři také ztvárnili mor v podobě nemocných, s detailně vykreslenými podlitinami způsobenými zánětem mízních uzlin, který mor způsoboval. Ukázky převážně anglických autorů jsou vyobrazeny v přílohách. Dalším tématem je pak mor a jeho vliv na hudbu. V tomto směru nebylo prokázáno mnoho kromě několika málo zmínek o tom, že hudba se po morovém útoku stala depresivnější a nebylo ji tak často slyšet jako dříve. Tuto skutečnost si však každý sám může domyslet. Zajímavou pak zůstává říkanka, kterou si děti zpívaly podle Cantora už od 16. století. Podle překladu Gerika Císaře by v češtině zněla asi takto: „Kolo kolem šípků, kapsy plné kvítků, do popele, do popele, uděláme bác!“ (12). Tato říkanka v sobě nese skutečnost protikladu života a smrti a pravděpodobně se odkazuje na hromadné umírání v době moru. Z tohoto

mála informací o hudbě však není možné určit, nakolik černá smrt hudbu skutečně ovlivnila.

V poslední kapitole této práce je středověký mor porovnán s nákazou, která zasáhla Londýn roku 1665. Toto řádění se stalo pro Anglii tím posledním. Kapitola je provázena bohatými ukázkami z *Deníku morového roku* od Daniela Defoa. Tato kniha se stala pravděpodobně nejlepším odkazem na tuto událost, avšak není lehké uhodnout, co je v knize dílem fantazie autora a co se skutečně stalo. Daniel Defoe mor sice zažil, ale jako pětileté dítě, a tak je málo pravděpodobné, že by čerpal jednoznačně z vlastní zkušenosti.

Knihla obsahuje podrobné týdenní soupisy mrtvých, počty pohřbů v jednotlivých farnostech a velice hrůzně popisuje nešťastné události, které se toho roku v Londýně udály. Dopodrobna popisuje i množství nařízení vydaných králem a opravdu se zdá, že podle svědectví knihy se Londýn na příchozí mor snažil připravit ze všech sil. Jeho důsledky se však nelišily od jeho středověkého prapředchůdce. I tento mor si s sebou odnesl třetinu obyvatel Londýna.

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TABLES

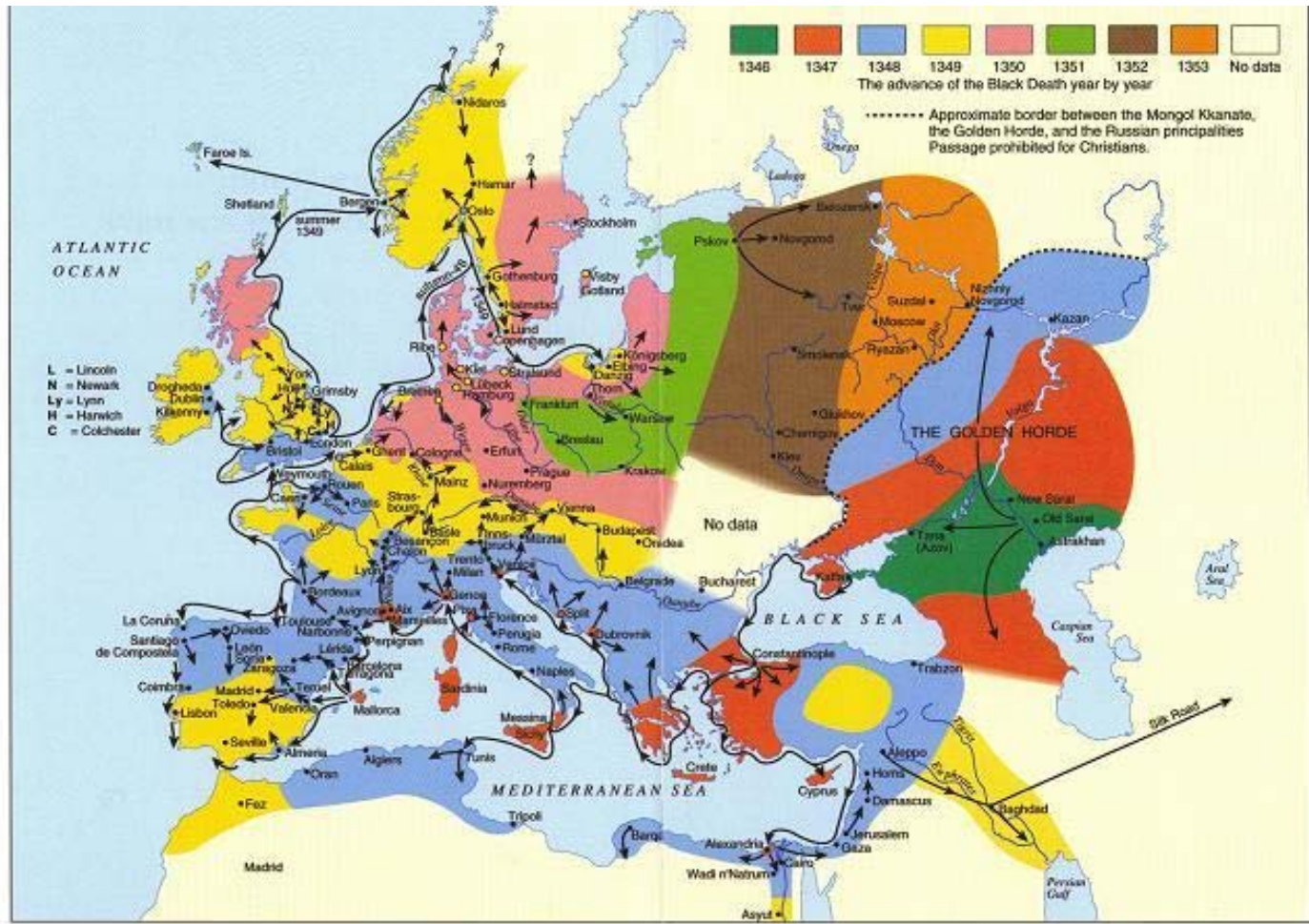
1317	Great Famine in England
May 1337	Declaration of the Hundred Years War by Edward III
June 1348	Black Death arrives at Melcombe Regis (Weymouth)
Aug 1348	Black Death hits Bristol
Sept 1348	Black Death reaches London
Jan-Feb 1349	Plague spreads into E. Anglia and the Midlands.
April 1349	Plague known in Wales.
18th June 1349	Ordinance of Labourers.
July 1349	Plague definitely hits Ireland.
Autumn 1349	Plague reaches Durham. Scots invade northern England and bring back plague with them.
Spring 1350	Massive outbreak of plague in Scotland.
Sept 1350	First pestilence dies out.
9th Feb 1351	Statute of Labourers.
1361-64	Second Pestilence: 'The Plague of Children'.
1368-69	Third Pestilence
1371-75	Fourth Pestilence (variously dated 1371 or 1373-5)
1381	The Peasant Revolt

Table 1: The Spread of the Plague around the British Isles¹

FIGURES



Figure 1: Map of the counties of England²



Map 1. Spread of the Black Death in the Old World, 1346-1353

Figure 2: Spread of the Black Death in the Old World, 1346-1353³



Figure 3: The Dance of Death⁴



Figure 4: London's Lamentation⁵



Figure 5: The Poor Man's Friend⁶



Figure 6: Monks, disfigured by the plague, being blessed by a priest. England, 1360–75.⁷

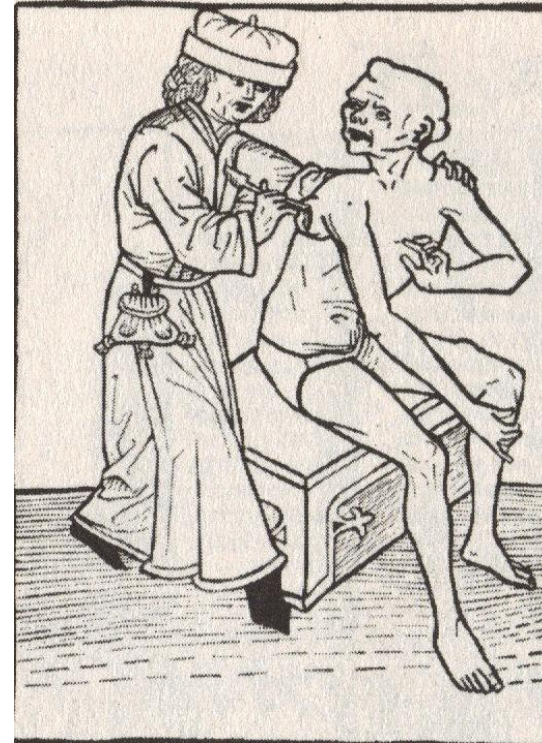


Figure 7: Lancing of the buboes⁸



Figure 8: A physician visiting a patient infected with plague.⁹



Figure 9: Dr Schnabel of Rome¹⁰



Figure 10: Illustration of bubonic plague in the Bible (1411).¹¹

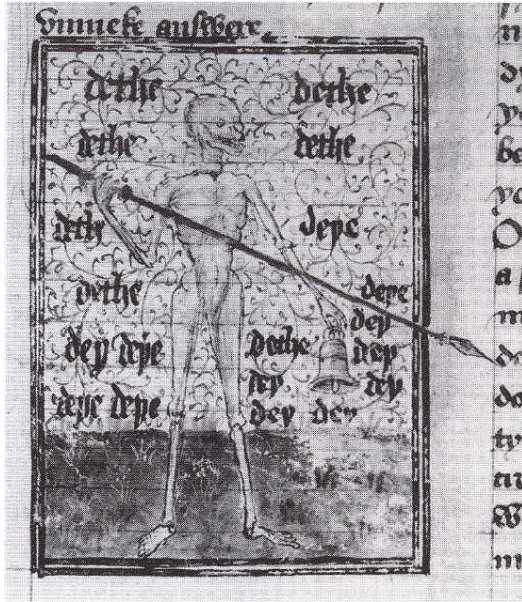


Figure 11: Death's Warning¹²



Figure 13: A wealthy townsman and the image of his own death¹⁴



Figure 12: Burning clothes¹³



Figure 14: A mass for plague victims¹⁵



Figure 15 and Figure 16: Dance of Death¹⁶

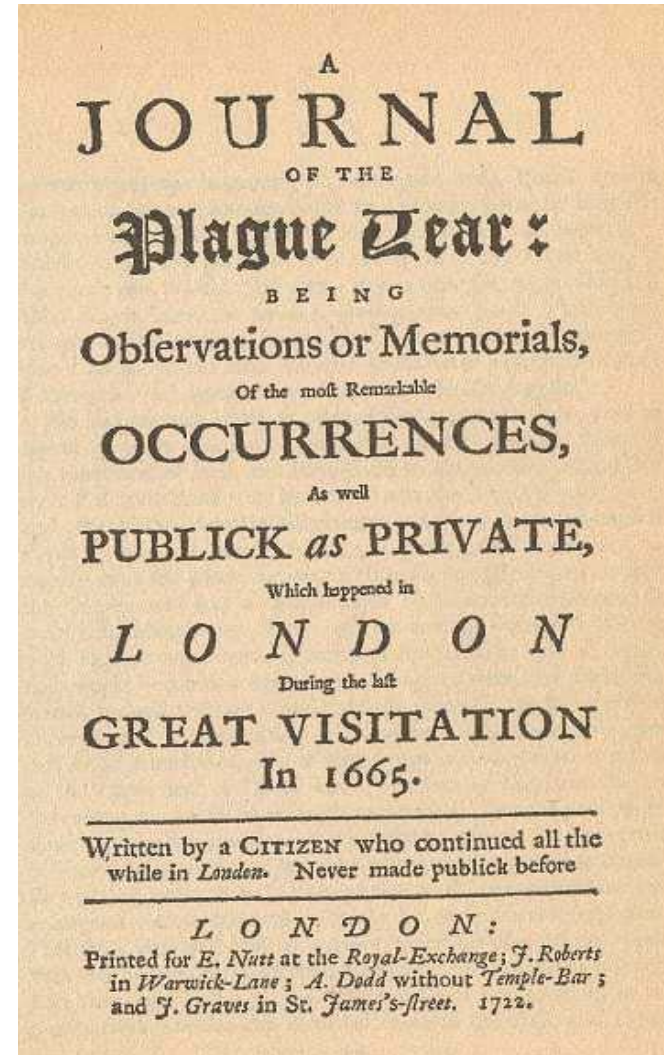
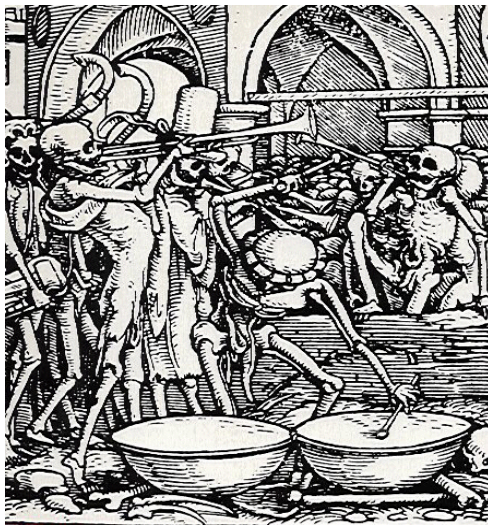


Figure 17: 1st ed. of the *Journal of the Plague Year*¹⁷

Figure 18: Londoners fleeing to the country¹⁸



Figure 19: Prayers during the plague¹⁹

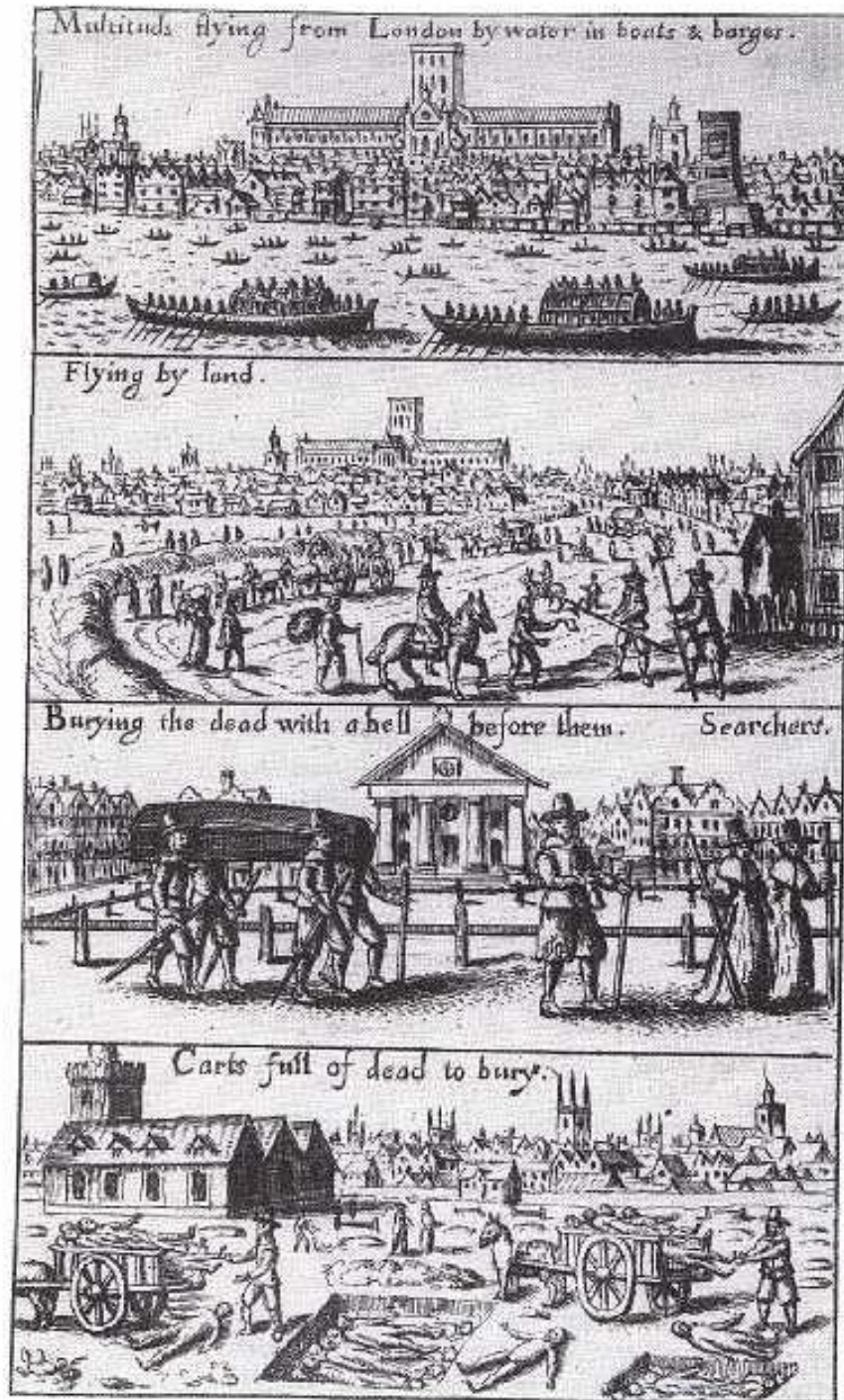


Figure 20: John Dunstall: Effects of the plague in London²⁰

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