

# Black Death Natural And Human Disaster In Medieval Europe

## World History Series

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[The Black Death and the Transformation of the West](#) - David Herlihy  
1997-09-28

The Black Death was the great watershed in medieval history. In this compact book, David Herlihy makes bold yet subtle and subversive inquiries that challenge historical thinking about this disastrous period. As in a finely tuned detective story, he upturns intriguing bits of epidemiological evidence. And, looking beyond the view of the Black Death as unmitigated catastrophe, Herlihy sees in it the birth of technological advance as societies struggled to create labor-saving devices in the wake of population losses. New evidence for the plague's role in the establishment of universities, the spread of Christianity, the dissemination of vernacular cultures, and even the rise of nationalism demonstrates that this cataclysmic event marked a true turning point in history.

*The Encyclopaedia Britannica* - 2020-12-15

This book has been considered by academicians and scholars of great significance and value to literature. This forms a part of the knowledge base for future generations. So that the book is never forgotten we have represented this book in a print format as the same form as it was

originally first published. Hence any marks or annotations seen are left intentionally to preserve its true nature.

**The Black Death** - Therese Harasymiw 2021-07-15

As the COVID-19 pandemic has swept around the globe, people have looked to the past for other examples of deadly disease outbreaks. In the mid-14th century, an outbreak of bubonic plague, or the "Black Death," killed more than 25 million Europeans within a five-year span. Through informative maps, critical-thinking questions, and in-depth sidebars, readers learn the similarities and the vast differences between the Black Death, the 2020 pandemic, and other disease outbreaks in history. Understanding past pandemics enables readers to keep a level head when evaluating current and future outbreaks, reducing panic and leading to positive, effective solutions.

**Epidemics and Pandemics: Their Impacts on Human History** - Jo N. Hays 2005-12-12

Balancing current and historical issues, this volume of essays covers the most significant worldwide epidemics from the Black Death to AIDS. • Each of the 50 essays includes a bibliography for further reading on each subject and is cross-referenced to help the reader put the material into

context • Glossary defines terms such as pandemic, germ theory, and virgin soil epidemic • Visuals such as an illustration of a 17th-century costume worn to ward off the plague and a photo of a panicked father carrying a polio-stricken daughter dramatize the effect of epidemics • Maps illustrate the spread of major pandemics, such as influenza in 1918 • Sidebars feature source documents, such as an eyewitness account of the death of composer Frédéric Chopin or clergyman Cotton Mather's description of smallpox inoculation in 1721  
The Black Death - Robert S. Gottfried 1986

**The Diocese of Barcelona During the Black Death** - Richard F. Gyug 1994

Interdisciplinary Public Health Reasoning and Epidemic Modelling: The Case of Black Death - George Christakos 2006-09-24

This multidisciplinary reference takes the reader through all four major phases of interdisciplinary inquiry: adequate conceptualization, rigorous formulation, substantive interpretation, and innovative implementation. The text introduces a novel synthetic paradigm of public health reasoning and epidemic modelling, and implements it with a study of the infamous 14th century AD Black Death disaster that killed at least one-fourth of the European population.

The Black Death - Stephanie True Peters 2005

Describes the 1347-1351 outbreak of plague in Europe, known as the Black Death, which killed one out of three people and changed the course of European history.

**The Great Mortality** - John Kelly 2012-08-21

“Powerful, rich with details, moving, humane, and full of important lessons for an age when weapons of mass destruction are loose among us.” — Richard Rhodes, Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *The Making of the Atomic Bomb* The Great Plague is one of the most compelling events in human history—even more so now, when the notion of plague has never loomed larger as a contemporary public concern. The plague that devastated Asia and Europe in the 14th century has been of never-ending

interest to both scholarly and general readers. Many books on the plague rely on statistics to tell the story: how many people died; how farm output and trade declined. But statistics can't convey what it was like to sit in Siena or Avignon and hear that a thousand people a day are dying two towns away. Or to have to choose between your own life and your duty to a mortally ill child or spouse. Or to live in a society where the bonds of blood and sentiment and law have lost all meaning, where anyone can murder or rape or plunder anyone else without fear of consequence. In *The Great Mortality*, author John Kelly lends an air of immediacy and intimacy to his telling of the journey of the plague as it traveled from the steppes of Russia, across Europe, and into England, killing 75 million people—one third of the known population—before it vanished.

*Practical Medicine from Salerno to the Black Death* - Luis Garcia-Ballester 1994

From the eleventh century to the Black Death in 1348 Europe was economically vigorous and expanding, especially in Mediterranean societies. In this world of growing wealth new educational institutions were founded, the universities, and it was in these that a new form of medicine came to be taught and which widely influenced medical care throughout Europe. The essays in this collection focus on the practical aspects of medieval medicine, and among other issues they explore how far this new learned medicine percolated through to the popular level; how the learned medical men understood and coped with plague; the theory and practice of medical astrology, and of bleeding (phlebotomy) for the cure and prevention of illness. Several essays deal with the development and interrelations of the nascent medical profession, and of Christian, Muslim and Jewish practitioners one to another. Special emphasis is given to the practice of surgery and, the problems of recovering knowledge of a large proportion of medical care - that given by women - are also explored. This collection forms a companion volume to *The Medical Renaissance of the Sixteenth Century* (1985, edited by Andrew Wear, Roger French and I. M. Lonie), *The Medical Revolution of the Seventeenth Century* (1989, edited by Roger French and Andrew

Wear), *The Medical Enlightenment of the Eighteenth Century* (1990, edited by Andrew Cunningham and Roger French), and *The Laboratory Revolution in Medicine* (1992, edited by Andrew Cunningham and Perry Williams).

**The Black Death** - Emily Mahoney 2016-12-15

The Bubonic Plague terrorized Europe and North Africa in the 14th century, killing millions of people. Readers learn many fascinating facts about what became known as the "Black Death." They discover that the cause of the disease was unknown for most of the epidemic, and many unlikely things were blamed, including bad smells and occult rituals. Detailed sidebars and a comprehensive timeline augment the compelling text as it examines how the disastrous events of the plague were exacerbated by people's ignorance of scientific facts.

**Plague and the Poor in Renaissance Florence** - Ann G. Carmichael 2014-05-08

Originally published in 1986, this book uses Florentine death registers to show the changing character of plague from the first outbreak of the Black Death in 1348 to the mid-fifteenth century. Through an innovative study of this evidence, Professor Carmichael develops two related strands of analysis. First, she discusses the extent to which true plague epidemics may have occurred, by considering what other infectious diseases contributed significantly to outbreaks of 'pestilence'. She finds that there were many differences between the fourteenth- and fifteenth-century epidemics. She then shows how the differences in the plague reshaped the attitudes of Italian city-dwellers toward plague in the fifteenth century. This book will be of value to anyone with an interest in the history of the plague, Renaissance Italy and the history of medicine.

[The Black Death, Updated Edition](#) - Louise Slavicek 2021-04-01

In 1347, Europe was hit by the worst natural disaster in its recorded history: the Black Death. Now believed to be a combination of bubonic plague and two other rarer plague strains, the Black Death ravaged the continent for several terrible years before finally fading away in 1352. Most historians believe that the pandemic, which also swept across parts of Western Asia and North Africa, annihilated 33 to 60 percent of

Europe's population—roughly 25 to 45 million men, women, and children. This massive depopulation had a deep impact on the course of European history, speeding up or initiating important social, economic, religious, and cultural changes.

*Disasters and History* - Bas van Bavel 2020-10-31

*Disasters and History* offers the first comprehensive historical overview of hazards and disasters. Drawing on a range of case studies, including the Black Death, the Lisbon earthquake of 1755 and the Fukushima disaster, the authors examine how societies dealt with shocks and hazards and their potentially disastrous outcomes. They reveal the ways in which the consequences and outcomes of these disasters varied widely not only between societies but also within the same societies according to social groups, ethnicity and gender. They also demonstrate how studying past disasters, including earthquakes, droughts, floods and epidemics, can provide a lens through which to understand the social, economic and political functioning of past societies and reveal features of a society which may otherwise remain hidden from view. This title is also available as Open Access on Cambridge Core.

**Black Death** - Robert S. Gottfried 2010-05-11

A fascinating work of detective history, *The Black Death* traces the causes and far-reaching consequences of this infamous outbreak of plague that spread across the continent of Europe from 1347 to 1351. Drawing on sources as diverse as monastic manuscripts and dendrochronological studies (which measure growth rings in trees), historian Robert S. Gottfried demonstrates how a bacillus transmitted by rat fleas brought on an ecological reign of terror -- killing one European in three, wiping out entire villages and towns, and rocking the foundation of medieval society and civilization.

**The Black Death** - Robert Steven Gottfried 1983

Robert S. Gottfried is Professor of History and Director of Medieval Studies at Rutgers University. Among his other books is "Epidemic Disease in Fifteenth Century England."

*Geographies of Plague Pandemics* - Mark Welford 2018-04-09

*Geographies of Plague Pandemics* synthesizes our current understanding

of the spatial and temporal dynamics of plague, *Yersinia pestis*. The environmental, political, economic, and social impacts of the plague from Ancient Greece to the modern day are examined. Chapters explore the identity of plague DNA, its human mortality, and the source of ancient and modern plagues. This book also discusses the role plague has played in shifting power from Mediterranean Europe to north-western Europe during the 500 years that plague has raged across the continent. The book demonstrates how recent colonial structures influenced the spread and mortality of plague while changing colonial histories. In addition, this book provides critical insight into how plague has shaped modern medicine, public health, and disease monitoring, and what role, if any, it might play as a terror weapon. The scope and breadth of *Geographies of Plague* offers geographers, historians, biologists, and public health educators the opportunity to explore the deep connections among disease and human existence.

*Plague and Fire* - James C. Mohr 2004-11-15

A little over a century ago, bubonic plague--the same Black Death that decimated medieval Europe--arrived on the shores of Hawaii just as the islands were about to become a U.S. territory. In this absorbing narrative, James Mohr tells the story of that fearful visitation and its fiery climax--a vast conflagration that engulfed Honolulu's Chinatown. Mohr tells this gripping tale largely through the eyes of the people caught up in the disaster, from members of the white elite to Chinese doctors, Japanese businessmen, and Hawaiian reporters. At the heart of the narrative are three American physicians--the Honolulu Board of Health--who became virtual dictators when the government granted them absolute control over the armed forces and the treasury. The doctors soon quarantined Chinatown, where the plague was killing one or two people a day and clearly spreading. They resisted intense pressure from the white community to burn down all of Chinatown at once and instead ordered a careful, controlled burning of buildings where plague victims had died. But a freak wind whipped one of those small fires into a roaring inferno that destroyed everything in its path, consuming roughly thirty-eight acres of densely packed wooden structures in a single afternoon.

Some 5000 people lost their homes and all their possessions and were marched in shock to detention camps, where they were confined under armed guard for weeks. Next to the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941, the Chinatown fire is the worst civic disaster in Hawaiian history. A dramatic account of people struggling in the face of mounting catastrophe, *Plague and Fire* is a stimulating and thought-provoking read.

*Black Death* - Stephen Porter 2018-09-15

The definitive history of the virulent and fatal plague outbreaks that wiped out half of London's populations from the medieval Black Death of the 1340s to the Great Plagues of the seventeenth century.

*Epidemics and Society* - Frank M. Snowden 2019-10-22

A wide-ranging study that illuminates the connection between epidemic diseases and societal change, from the Black Death to Ebola This sweeping exploration of the impact of epidemic diseases looks at how mass infectious outbreaks have shaped society, from the Black Death to today. In a clear and accessible style, Frank M. Snowden reveals the ways that diseases have not only influenced medical science and public health, but also transformed the arts, religion, intellectual history, and warfare. A multidisciplinary and comparative investigation of the medical and social history of the major epidemics, this volume touches on themes such as the evolution of medical therapy, plague literature, poverty, the environment, and mass hysteria. In addition to providing historical perspective on diseases such as smallpox, cholera, and tuberculosis, Snowden examines the fallout from recent epidemics such as HIV/AIDS, SARS, and Ebola and the question of the world's preparedness for the next generation of diseases.

*The Black Death* - John Hatcher 2010-07

In this fresh approach to the history of the Black Death, John Hatcher, a world-renowned scholar of the Middle Ages, recreates everyday life in a mid-fourteenth century rural English village. By focusing on the experiences of ordinary villagers as they lived - and died - during the Black Death (1345 - 50 AD), Hatcher vividly places the reader directly into those tumultuous years and describes in fascinating detail the day-to-day existence of people struggling with the tragic effects of the

plague. Dramatic scenes portray how contemporaries must have experienced and thought about the momentous events - and how they tried to make sense of it all.

**The Black Death and the Transformation of the West** - David Herlihy 1997-09-28

Looking beyond the view of the plague as unmitigated catastrophe, Herlihy finds evidence for its role in the advent of new population controls, the establishment of universities, the spread of Christianity, the dissemination of vernacular cultures, and even the rise of nationalism. This book, which displays a distinguished scholar's masterly synthesis of diverse materials, reveals that the Black Death can be considered the cornerstone of the transformation of Europe.

**Living with the Black Death** - Lars Bisgaard 2009

Between 1347 and 1352 an unknown and deadly disease, only much later known as the Black Death, swept across Europe, leaving an estimated 30-50 % of the population dead. Contemporaries held various views as to what was the final, ultimate cause of this disaster. Many, probably most, thought it was God's punishment for the sins of humankind, others thought it was basically a natural phenomenon caused by a fateful constellation of the heavenly bodies. Recurrent plague epidemics racked Europe from 1347 to the early 18th century. Populations were repeatedly struck with more or less disastrous consequences but every time people recovered and resumed their activities. Their experiences made them try various measures to protect themselves and prevent outbreaks or at least to minimize the consequences. In short they were Living with The Black Death. This book deals with plague, particularly in Northern Europe, in various aspects: epidemiology, pattern of dispersion, demography, social consequences, religious impact and representation in pictorial art and written sources.

**The Black Death** - Joseph Patrick Byrne 2004

An ideal introduction and guide to the greatest natural disaster to ever curse humanity, replete with illustrations, biographical sketches, and primary documents. Presents medieval and modern perspectives of this disturbing yet fascinating tragic historical episode.

*Storytelling as Plague Prevention in Medieval and Early Modern Italy* - Martin Marafioti 2017-12-15

Through close readings of five Italian collections of novellas written over a 500-year period, Martin Marafioti explores the literary tradition of storytelling, and particularly its efficacy as a healing tool following traumatic visitations from the plague. In this study, Giovanni Boccaccio's Decameron provides the framework for later authors. Although Boccaccio was not the first writer to deal with pestilence or epidemics in a literary work, he was the first to unite the topos of a life-threatening context with a public health disaster like the Black Death, and certainly the first author to propose storytelling as a means of prophylaxis in times of plague. Marafioti goes on to analyze Franco Sacchetti's Trecento Novelle, Giovanni Sercambi's Novelliere, Celio Malespini's Duecento Novelle, and Francesco Argelati's Decamerone, following in its longue-durée the ups and down, structurally and thematically, of the realistic novella as a genre.

**The Black Death** - NA NA 2016-04-30

A fascinating account of the phenomenon known as the Black Death, this volume offers a wealth of documentary material focused on the initial outbreak of the plague that ravaged the world in the 14th century. A comprehensive introduction that provides important background on the origins and spread of the plague is followed by nearly 50 documents organized into topical sections that focus on the origin and spread of the illness; the responses of medical practitioners; the societal and economic impact; religious responses; the flagellant movement and attacks on Jews provoked by the plague; and the artistic response. Each chapter has an introduction that summarizes the issues explored in the documents; headnotes to the documents provide additional background material. The book contains documents from many countries - including Muslim and Byzantine sources - to give students a variety of perspectives on this devastating illness and its consequences. The volume also includes illustrations, a chronology of the Black Death, and questions to consider.

**Interdisciplinary Public Health Reasoning and Epidemic**

**Modelling: The Case of Black Death** - George Christakos 2005-06-24

This multidisciplinary reference takes the reader through all four major phases of interdisciplinary inquiry: adequate conceptualization, rigorous formulation, substantive interpretation, and innovative implementation. The text introduces a novel synthetic paradigm of public health reasoning and epidemic modelling, and implements it with a study of the infamous 14th century AD Black Death disaster that killed at least one-fourth of the European population.

*The Black Death, 1346-1353* - Ole Jørgen Benedictow 2004

The best introduction to the terrible international impact of the Black Death.

**Waiting for the End of the World?** - Christopher M. Gerrard  
2020-09-08

Waiting for the End of the World? addresses the archaeological, architectural, historical and geological evidence for natural disasters in the Middle Ages between the 11th and 16th centuries. This volume adopts a fresh interdisciplinary approach to explore the many ways in which environmental hazards affected European populations and, in turn, how medieval communities coped and responded to short- and long-term consequences. Three sections, which focus on geotectonic hazards (Part I), severe storms and hydrological hazards (Part II) and biophysical hazards (Part III), draw together 18 papers of the latest research while additional detail is provided in a catalogue of the 20 most significant disasters to have affected Europe during the period. These include earthquakes, landslides, tsunamis, storms, floods and outbreaks of infectious diseases. Spanning Europe, from the British Isles to Italy and from the Canary Islands to Cyprus, these contributions will be of interest to earth scientists, geographers, historians, sociologists, anthropologists and climatologists, but are also relevant to students and non-specialist readers interested in medieval archaeology and history, as well as those studying human geography and disaster studies. Despite a different set of beliefs relating to the natural world and protection against environmental hazards, the evidence suggests that medieval communities frequently adopted a surprisingly 'modern', well-informed and practically minded outlook.

Natural Disasters in the Ottoman Empire - Yaron Ayalon 2015

Yaron Ayalon explores the Ottoman Empire's history of natural disasters and its responses on a state, communal, and individual level.

**Black Death in London** - Bernie Sloane 2011-05-02

The Black Death of 1348-49 may have killed more than 50% of the European population. This book examines the impact of this appalling disaster on England's most populous city, London. Using previously untapped documentary sources alongside archaeological evidence, a remarkably detailed picture emerges of the arrival, duration and public response to this epidemic and subsequent fourteenth-century outbreaks. Wills and civic and royal administration documents provide clear evidence of the speed and severity of the plague, of how victims, many named, made preparations for their heirs and families, and of the immediate social changes that the aftermath brought. The traditional story of the timing and arrival of the plague is challenged and the mortality rate is revised up to 50%-60% in the first outbreak, with a population decline of 40-45% across Edward III's reign. Overall, The Black Death in London provides as detailed a story as it is possible to tell of the impact of the plague on a major medieval English city.

*The Barbary Plague* - Marilyn Chase 2004-03-09

The veteran Wall Street Journal science reporter Marilyn Chase's fascinating account of an outbreak of bubonic plague in late Victorian San Francisco is a real-life thriller that resonates in today's headlines. The Barbary Plague transports us to the Gold Rush boomtown in 1900, at the end of the city's Gilded Age. With a deep understanding of the effects on public health of politics, race, and geography, Chase shows how one city triumphed over perhaps the most frightening and deadly of all scourges.

*The Black Death* - 2013-01-01

This series provides texts central to medieval studies courses and focuses upon the diverse cultural, social and political conditions that affected the functioning of all levels of medieval society. Translations are accompanied by introductory and explanatory material and each volume includes a comprehensive guide to the sources' interpretation, including

discussion of critical linguistic problems and an assessment of recent research on the topics covered. From 1348 to 1350 Europe was devastated by an epidemic that left between a third and one half of the population dead. This source book traces, through contemporary writings, the calamitous impact of the Black Death in Europe, with a particular emphasis on its spread across England from 1348 to 1349. Rosemary Horrox surveys contemporary attempts to explain the plague, which was universally regarded as an expression of divine vengeance for the sins of humankind. Moralists all had their particular targets for criticism. However, this emphasis on divine chastisement did not preclude attempts to explain the plague in medical or scientific terms. Also, there was a widespread belief that human agencies had been involved, and such scapegoats as foreigners, the poor and Jews were all accused of poisoning wells. The final section of the book charts the social and psychological impact of the plague, and its effect on the late-medieval economy.

#### **Writing Plague** - Alfred Thomas 2022-04-22

Writing Plague: Language and Violence from the Black Death to COVID-19 brings a holistic and comparative perspective to “plague writing” from the later Middle Ages to the twenty-first century. It argues that while the human “hardware” has changed enormously between the medieval past and the present (urbanization, technology, mass warfare, and advances in medical science), the human “software” (emotional and psychological reactions to the shock of pandemic) has remained remarkably similar across time. Through close readings of works by medieval writers like Guillaume de Machaut, Giovanni Boccaccio, and Geoffrey Chaucer in the fourteenth century, select plays by Shakespeare, and modern “plague” fiction and film, Alfred Thomas convincingly demonstrates psychological continuities between the Black Death and COVID-19. In showing how in times of plague human beings repress their fears and fantasies and displace them onto the threatening “other,” Thomas highlights the danger of scapegoating vulnerable minority groups such as Asian Americans and Jews in today’s America. This wide-ranging study will thus be of interest not only to medievalists but also to

students of modernity as well as the general reader.

**Plagues and the Paradox of Progress** - Thomas J. Bollyky 2018-10-09  
Why the news about the global decline of infectious diseases is not all good. Plagues and parasites have played a central role in world affairs, shaping the evolution of the modern state, the growth of cities, and the disparate fortunes of national economies. This book tells that story, but it is not about the resurgence of pestilence. It is the story of its decline. For the first time in recorded history, virus, bacteria, and other infectious diseases are not the leading cause of death or disability in any region of the world. People are living longer, and fewer mothers are giving birth to many children in the hopes that some might survive. And yet, the news is not all good. Recent reductions in infectious disease have not been accompanied by the same improvements in income, job opportunities, and governance that occurred with these changes in wealthier countries decades ago. There have also been unintended consequences. In this book, Thomas Bollyky explores the paradox in our fight against infectious disease: the world is getting healthier in ways that should make us worry. Bollyky interweaves a grand historical narrative about the rise and fall of plagues in human societies with contemporary case studies of the consequences. Bollyky visits Dhaka—one of the most densely populated places on the planet—to show how low-cost health tools helped enable the phenomenon of poor world megacities. He visits China and Kenya to illustrate how dramatic declines in plagues have affected national economies. Bollyky traces the role of infectious disease in the migrations from Ireland before the potato famine and to Europe from Africa and elsewhere today. Historic health achievements are remaking a world that is both worrisome and full of opportunities. Whether the peril or promise of that progress prevails, Bollyky explains, depends on what we do next. A Council on Foreign Relations Book

#### **Doctoring the Black Death** - John Aberth 2021-09-15

This engrossing book provides a comprehensive history of the medical response to the Black Death. John Aberth has translated plague treatises that illustrate the human dimensions of the horrific scourge, including doctors’ personal anecdotes as they desperately struggled to understand

a deadly new disease.

**Black Death** - Sean Martin 2008-04-01

The Black Death is the name most commonly given to the pandemic of bubonic plague that ravaged the medieval world in the late 1340s. From Central Asia, the plague swept through Europe, leaving millions of dead in its wake. Between a quarter and a third of Europe's population died, and in England the population fell from nearly six million to just over three million. Sean Martin looks at the origins of the disease and traces its terrible march through Europe from the Italian cities to the far-flung corners of Scandinavia. He describes contemporary responses to the plague and makes clear how helpless the medicine of the day was in the face of it. He examines the renewed persecution of the Jews, blamed by many Christians for the spread of the disease, and highlights the bizarre attempts by such groups as the Flagellants to ward off what they saw as the wrath of God.

[Encyclopedia of the Black Death](#) - Joseph Patrick Byrne 2012-01-31

This encyclopedia provides 300 interdisciplinary, cross-referenced entries that document the effect of the plague on Western society across the four centuries of the second plague pandemic, balancing medical history and technical matters with historical, cultural, social, and political factors.

*The Black Death* - Philip Ziegler 2009-04-07

A series of natural disasters in the Orient during the fourteenth century brought about the most devastating period of death and destruction in European history. The epidemic killed one-third of Europe's people over a period of three years, and the resulting social and economic upheaval was on a scale unparalleled in all of recorded history. Synthesizing the records of contemporary chroniclers and the work of later historians,

Philip Ziegler offers a critically acclaimed overview of this crucial epoch in a single masterly volume. The Black Death vividly and comprehensively brings to light the full horror of this uniquely catastrophic event that hastened the disintegration of an age.

**The World the Plague Made** - James Belich 2022-07-19

A groundbreaking history of how the Black Death unleashed revolutionary change across the medieval world and ushered in the modern age. In 1346, a catastrophic plague beset Europe and its neighbours. The Black Death was a human tragedy that abruptly halved entire populations and caused untold suffering, but it also brought about a cultural and economic renewal on a scale never before witnessed. *The World the Plague Made* is a panoramic history of how the bubonic plague revolutionized labour, trade, and technology and set the stage for Europe's global expansion. James Belich takes readers across centuries and continents to shed new light on one of history's greatest paradoxes. Why did Europe's dramatic rise begin in the wake of the Black Death? Belich shows how plague doubled the per capita endowment of everything even as it decimated the population. Many more people had disposable incomes. Demand grew for silks, sugar, spices, furs, gold, and slaves. Europe expanded to satisfy that demand—and plague provided the means. Labour scarcity drove more use of waterpower, wind power, and gunpowder. Technologies like water-powered blast furnaces, heavily gunned galleons, and musketry were fast-tracked by plague. A new “crew culture” of “disposable males” emerged to man the guns and galleons. Setting the rise of Western Europe in global context, Belich demonstrates how the mighty empires of the Middle East and Russia also flourished after the plague, and how European expansion was deeply entangled with the Chinese and other peoples throughout the world.