

A medieval manuscript illustration depicting a plague scene. In the center, a woman in a red and white striped dress kneels in prayer over a person lying on a stretcher. To the left, a man in a green tunic and purple cap pushes a wooden cart with a large wheel, carrying another person lying on a stretcher. To the right, a man in a red robe and blue hood stands near a table. The background shows a stone building with a wooden door and a window. The text is overlaid on the illustration.

Universitat de Lleida, Facultat de Lletres

Edifici Rectorat, Sala de Juntes, 2n pis

19, 20 and 21 June 2024

International Colloquium

**Epidemics and mortality
crises in Medieval and
Early Modern Europe (3)**

**Chronology and socio-demographic
and economic effects**

In memoriam of Marie Kelleher

Introduction

Studies of the Black Death and its demographic, social and economic consequences have focused more on the Black Death (1347-1351), thought to be the deadliest plague episode of the Middle Ages and early modern era, and the outbreaks that followed it in the second half of the 14th century. The precise chronology of the plague waves in the 15th and early 16th centuries remains uncertain, as do their demographic effects and the social bias of mortality.

There is a large body of literature on the demographic, social and economic consequences of the Black Death and subsequent outbreaks of bubonic plague, with geographical asymmetries (some regions have been studied much more than others) and widely divergent results. Data on the mortality rates of each plague outbreak in the different towns of the Crown of Aragon and Castile are very diverse and imprecise, making it impossible to reach conclusions on a regional or supra-regional scale.

The social bias of mortality seems to change from 1400 onwards. In well-studied cases such as Italy, it seems that the plague became increasingly socially exclusive, mainly targeting the poor, whereas the better-off could have learned to protect themselves against the plague. It also seems that some plague-related deaths affected women more than men. However, before 1560, the recording of deaths and burials was far from systematic, and the intensity and frequency of mortality, as well as the social bias in mortality, still raise many questions.

Very little is known about the economic consequences of epidemic mortality crises, although certain aspects have been studied, such as the impact of the Black Death on wage trends, on the living standards of the rural and urban population, and on seigneurial revenues. Nonetheless, some authors argue that the Black Death gave rise to a demographic regime shift in Europe that laid the foundations for the Great Divergence. Others attribute the origin of the Little Divergence to the plague.

Programme

19 June 2024

16h00

Welcome and Introduction

In memoriam of Marie Kelleher (1970-2024)

1st Session

Chairs: Marcelo Candido da Silva (Universidade de São Paulo) and Dominique Castex (PACEA, Université de Bordeaux - CNRS)

16h45

Dominique Castex (PACEA, Université de Bordeaux-CNRS) and Sacha Kacki (PACEA, Université de Bordeaux-CNRS / Durham University)

Des anomalies démographiques révélatrices d'une épidémie de peste au sein des populations archéologiques

17h30

Zdeněk Vytlačil (Univerzita Karlova - National Museum, Praha)

Isotope analyses in Justinian plague research: A case of Saint-Doulchard

18h15 Break

18h45

Sacha Kacki (PACEA, Université de Bordeaux-CNRS / Durham University)

Répercussions de la Peste noire sur l'alimentation des populations du Sud de la France : nouvelles données issues d'analyses isotopiques de séries squelettiques toulousaines

19h30

Timothy Newfield (Georgetown University)

When can we talk about smallpox? Non-plague epidemics and smallpox's prickly premodern past

20 June 2024

2nd Session

Chairs: Thomas Barton (University of San Diego) and Pere Verdés Pijuan (Institució Milà i Fontanals de Recerca en Humanitats – CSIC, Barcelona)

9h30

Marcelo Cândido da Silva (Universidade de São Paulo)

Epidemics and famines in the post-Roman world: towards a syndemic approach?

10h15

Joan Maltas Montoro (Universitat de Lleida)

Mortality crises before the Black Death in Catalonia (1300-1348): chronology and impact

11h00 Break

11h30

Pere Benito i Monclús and Albert Reixach Sala (Universitat de Lleida)

Assessing the chronology and impact of epidemics and mortality crises in Catalonia (1348-1530)

12h15

André Filipe Oliveira da Silva (CITCEM – Universidade do Porto / CIDEHUS – Universidade de Évora)

Filling a void: the challenges of 14th century Portuguese sources for the study of epidemics

13h00

Alberto Luongo (Università degli Studi di Roma Tor Vergata)

The socio-economic consequences of demographic decline in 14th century Italy: towards new chronologies

14h00 – Lunch

Excursion to Tàrrega

16h00 Transfer from Lleida to Tàrrega

17h00 Guided visit to the exhibition “Tragèdia al call. Tàrrega 1348” at the Museu Comarcal de l’Urgell-Tàrrega, Jewish quarter (*call*) of Tàrrega and house of the Jewish philosopher and physician of the 15th century Avraham Xalom

19h30 Back to Lleida

21 June 2024

3rd Session

Chairs: Alexis Wilkin (Université Libre de Bruxelles) and Pere Benito i Monclús (Universitat de Lleida)

9h00

Tim Soens (Universiteit Antwerpen)

The Black Death and the Commoner: differential experiences of plague in the late medieval Low Countries

9h45

Stef Espeel (Universiteit Antwerpen)

Disruption in patterns of production and consumption of large landlords during the plague episodes of 14th-century Flanders

10h30 Break

11h00

Davide Cristoferi (Université Libre de Bruxelles)

Agrarian change after the Black Death: labour regulations, fiscal policies and land consolidation in Florence and Siena (c. 1350-1430)

11h45

Laura Miquel (Universitat de València)

The Black Death in Tortosa: social inequality before and after 1348

12h30

Thomas Barton (University of San Diego)

Municipal Responses to Epidemics in Tortosa and the Baix Ebre at the end of the 14th century

13h15 – Lunch

15h00

Pablo Ortego Rico (Universidad de Málaga)

Recaudar los tributos y pagar las obligaciones en tiempos de peste: Castilla, ca. 1470-1509

Conclusions

15h45

Alexis Wilkin (Université Libre de Bruxelles)

Scientific organising committee

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Epidemics and mortality crises in northeastern Iberia, 11th-16th centuries: Reconstructing cycles, measuring effects, analysing responses (EPIDEMED), Project PID2020-117839GB-I00 funded by MCIN/AEI/10.13039/501100011033w



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