

AP European History / DMACC HIS 113

Summer Assignment

Welcome to AP Euro! We're going to have a great year, but it can only get off to a good start if you come in prepared. Check out a textbook with me for the summer, keep an eye out for when our course is available on Canvas, and complete the tasks below before class starts. If you need anything, you can contact me via email at jason.danielson@dmschools.org or on Twitter as @jasonldanielson. I look forward to working with you this year!

Task 1: Read and take notes on chapter 12 (p. 379-411). Your reading notes may take whatever form works best for you, but the recommended format is a variation of Cornell notes, where the key questions from the first page of the chapter on the left and notes that help answer the questions on the right. On the left side, you can also include key vocabulary terms or concepts. (This should be familiar if you took APUSH at Central Academy; if you didn't, take notes any way you're comfortable and I'll take a look at them in the fall.) Regardless of format, you must read the chapters and take notes to keep up with the material in class.

Task 2: Read the primary sources corresponding to chapter 12 (found on the Central Academy website or by request when you check out your book). For all primary source homework readings, you must provide the following:

- Author's point of view: What is the author's perspective and/or opinion?
- Author's purpose: Why has the author created this document?
- Historical context: How does this document connect to broader events?
- Intended audience: Who was meant to see this, and why does that matter?

Primary Source Homework Readings: Chapter 12 (The Late Middle Ages)

Giovanni Boccaccio, *The Decameron: The Plague Hits Florence* (c. 1350)

The first wave of the Black Death began in the late 1340s. The disease spread rapidly, and contemporaries understood very little about it, although they did associate it with rats. The only effective countermeasures were quarantine and isolation. The infection, which spread along trade routes from Central Asia, killed some 75 million people. Even after the first incidence receded, plague returned to Europe in many subsequent outbreaks until the 1700s, with varying mortality rates. In this document, excerpted from his famous collection of novellas, the Italian writer Giovanni Boccaccio details the chaos unleashed in Florence as a result of the plague.

In the year then of our Lord 1348, there happened in Florence, the finest city in all Italy, a most terrible plague; which, whether owing to the influence of the planets, or that it was sent from God as a just punishment for our sins, had broken out some years before in the Levant [eastern Mediterranean]; and after passing from place to place, and making incredible havoc all the way, had now reached the west; where, in spite of all the means that art and human foresight could suggest, such as keeping the city clear from filth, and excluding all suspected persons, notwithstanding frequent consultations what else was to be done; nor omitting prayers to God in frequent processions: in the spring of the forgoing year, it began to show itself in a sad and wonderful manner; and different from what it had been in the east, where bleeding from the nose is the fatal prognostic, here there appeared certain tumors in the groin, or under the armpits, some as big as a small apple, others as an egg; and afterwards purple spots in most parts of the body; in some cases large and but few in number, in others smaller and more numerous, both sorts the usual messengers of death...

These accidents, and others of the like sort, occasioned various fears and devices amongst those people who survived, all tending to the same uncharitable and cruel end; which was to avoid the sick, and everything that had been near them, expecting by that means to save themselves. And some holding it best to live temperately, and to avoid excesses of all kinds, made parties, and shut themselves up from the rest of the world; eating and drinking moderately of the best, and diverting themselves with music, and such other entertainments as they might have within doors; never listening to anything from without, to make them uneasy. Others maintained free living to be a better preservative and would balk no passion or appetite they wished to gratify, drinking and reveling incessantly from tavern to tavern, or in private houses; which were frequently found deserted by the owners, and therefore common to everyone, yet avoiding, with all this irregularity, to come near the infected. And such at that time was the public distress, that the laws, human and divine, were not regarded; for the officers, to put them in force, being either dead, sick, or in want of persons to assist them, everyone did just as he pleased. A third sort of people chose a method between these two: not confining themselves to rules of diet like the former, and yet avoiding the intemperance of the latter; but eating and drinking what their appetites required, they walked everywhere with odors and nosegays [perfumes and small bunches of flowers] to smell to; as holding it best to corroborate the brain: for they supposed the whole atmosphere to be tainted with the stink of dead bodies, arising partly from the distemper itself, and partly from the fermenting of the medicines within them. Others of a crueler disposition, as perhaps the more safe to themselves, declared that the only remedy was to avoid it: persuaded, therefore, of this, and taking care for themselves only, men and women in great numbers left the city, their houses, relations, and effects, and fled into the country; as if the wrath of God had been restrained to visit those only within the walls of the city... I pass over the little regard that citizens and relations showed to each other; for their terror was such that a brother even fled from his brother, a wife from her husband, and, what is more uncommon, a parent from its own child.

The Anonimalle Chronicle: The English Peasants' Revolt (1381)

Agricultural labor was traditionally carried out by the serfs, who were bound by tradition to fulfill their obligations to their lords. The high mortality rate of the plague, however, resulted in a labor shortage across Europe. Some peasants tried to act on this advantage and force the lords to end their serfdom. When their demands were not satisfied, peasants often rose up against their lords. In England in 1381, an unpopular tax on all adult males prompted thousands of peasants to revolt. As you read this account of the revolt, pay particular attention to the targets of the peasants' anger. What distinction did the rebels make between the nobility and the king?

And on that Thursday, the said feast of Corpus Christi, the King, being in the Tower [of London] very sad and sorry, mounted up into a little turret towards St. Catherine's, where were lying a great number of the commons, and had proclamation made to them that they all should go peaceably to their homes, and he would pardon them all manner of their trespasses. But all cried with one voice that they would not go before they had captured the traitors who lay in the Tower, nor until they had got charters to free them from all manner of serfdom and had got certain other points which they wished to demand. And the King benevolently granted all, and made a clerk write a bill in their presence in these terms: "Richard, King of England and France, gives great thanks to his good commons, for that they have so great a desire to see and to keep their king, and grants them pardon for all manner of trespasses and misprisions and felonies done up to this hour, and wills and commands that everyone should now return to his own home, and wills and commands that each should put his grievances in writing, and have them sent to him; and he will provide, with the aid of his loyal lords and his good council, such remedy as shall be profitable both to him and to them, and to all the kingdom." On this document he sealed his signet in presence of them all and sent out the said bill by the hands of two of his knights to the folks before St. Catherine's. And he caused it to be read to them... And when the commons heard the Bill, they said that this was nothing but trifles and trickery. Therefore, they returned to London and had it cried around the City that all lawyers, and all the clerks of the Chancery and the Exchequer and every man who could write a brief or a letter should be beheaded, whenever they could be found. At this time, they burnt several more houses in the City, and the King himself ascended to a high garret of the Tower and watched the fires. Then he came down again, and sent for the lords to have their counsel, but they knew not how they should counsel him, and all were wondrous abashed...

And by seven o'clock the King [went to meet the peasants]. And when he was come the commons all knelt down to him, saying "Welcome our Lord King Richard, if it pleases you, and we will not have any other king but you." And...their leader and chief prayed in the name of the commons that he would suffer them to take and deal with all the traitors against him and the law, and the King granted that they should have at their disposition all who were traitors, and could be proved to be traitors by process of law... And they required that for the future no man should be in serfdom, nor make any manner of homage or suit to any lord...

[Meanwhile, fighting between the nobles and peasants continued, and many lords lost their heads to the commoners.]

...And the King said to Walter, "Why will you not go back to your own country?" But the other answered, with a great oath, that neither he nor his fellows would depart until they had got their charter such as they wished to have it, and had certain points rehearsed, and added to their charter which they wished to demand... Then the King asked him what were the points which he wished to have revised, and he should have them freely, without contradiction, written out and sealed. ...there should be equality among all people save only the King, and that the goods of Holy Church should not remain in the hands of the religious, nor of parsons and vicars, and other churchmen; but that clergy already in possession should have a sufficient sustenance from the endowments, and the rest of the goods should be divided among the people of the parish.

Petrarca-Meister, *The Social Order* (c. 1515)

At first glance, this German woodcut seems to be a straightforward depiction of the traditional medieval society and political hierarchy, with peasants at the bottom, merchants and craftsmen at the next level, secular and clerical elites one level higher, and the pope and emperor at the top. That interpretation is challenged, however, by the peasants perched at the top of the tree, one with his foot on the pope's shoulder and the other enjoying a nap. Moreover, instead of presenting the various social groups as part of a collective, with each group playing its own distinct and necessary role, the branches create clear separations between the groups, giving the impression that each group occupies a world of its own. As you examine the woodcut, come up with your own interpretation. What connections can you make between the woodcut and the social and economic developments of the fourteenth century?

