

Student Essay on History of "The Black Plague"

History of "The Black Plague"

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Essay

1. What was the Black Death"

The Black Death; also called the "Bubonic Plague" was one of the worst natural disasters in history. In 1347 a plague came over Europe and killed many people. One third of Europe's population died. The plague was carried by fleas; they have the potential of spreading dangerous diseases to humans and other animals. Possibly, the first flea was borned in Africa and travelled by boat on the back of a rat to other countries of the world.

The Black Death began in the desert of Gobi in the late 1320 and went in Europe's direction. The first country touched was Cyprus in 1347 and then went to Sicily and to all over Italy. In January 1348 the plague spreaded to France and in September to England.

It took longer to reach the outside of Europe, Norway was hit in May 1349. The eastern European countries were not reached until 1350, and Russia not until 1351.

Because the disease tended to follow trade routes, and to concentrate in cities, first the cities of the south near the sea were first infected and then to northern Europe and finally to Russia.

The Path:

How was it transmitted"

In the beginning, the plague came from rats: not normal rats, but wild black rats.

Fleas are blood sucking parasites; so when a flea drinks rat blood (a rat that has the bacteria), he is infected. The bacteria in the fleas's gut multiplies and when the flea bites a human or other animal in an open wound, he is infected. The rat dies. The human dies. The flea lives a long and happy life. An infected person can be recognised by black bubbles on the body, a high fever and vomitting blood. The swellings continue to expand until they eventually burst, with death following soon after.

What did they do to stop the plague"

Although the government had medical workers try to prevent the plague, the plague persisted. Most medical workers quit because they were afraid to get the plague themselves.

People burned all kinds of food to cure the plague, for example: laurel, pine and lemon leaves.

The population loss:

It was the worst nature disaster of all time (in the Middle Ages) and killed many many people:

60% of Florence (city in France) 's population died in one year. Venice also lost 60% of its population in one and a half year; 500 to 600 a day sometimes.