



Could a few fleas really change the world? In the early 1300s, the world was on the brink of change. New trade routes in Europe and Asia brought people in contact with different cultures and ideas, while war and rebellions threatened to disrupt the lives of millions. Most people lived in crowded cities or as serfs tied to the lands of their overlords. Conditions were filthy, as most people drank water from the same sources they used for washing and for human waste. In the cramped and rat-infested streets of medieval cities and villages, all it took were the bites of a few plague-infected fleas to start a pandemic that killed roughly half the population of Europe and Asia. The bubonic plague wiped out families, villages, even entire regions. Once the swollen, black buboes appeared on victims' bodies, there was no way to save them. People died within days. In the wake of such devastation, survivors had to reevaluate their social, scientific, and religious beliefs, laying the groundwork for our modern world. The Black Death outbreak is one of world history's pivotal moments.

Through profiles of merchants, peasants, priests, and kings, argues that despite devastation, the Black Death resulted in a scientific revolution, a new wave of art, and the emergence of independent farmers.

\*Includes pictures \*Includes accounts of the plague written by survivors across Europe \*Includes a bibliography for further reading "The trend of recent research is pointing to a figure more like 45-50% of the European population dying during a four-year period. There is a fair amount of geographic variation. In Mediterranean Europe, areas such as Italy, the south of France and Spain, where plague ran for about four years consecutively, it was probably closer to 75-80% of the population. In Germany and England ... it was probably closer to 20%." - Philip Daileader, medieval historian If it is true that nothing succeeds like success, then it is equally true that nothing challenges like change. People have historically been creatures of habit and curiosity at the same time, two parts of the human condition that constantly conflict with each other. This has always been true, but at certain moments in history it has been abundantly true, especially during the mid-14th century, when a boon in exploration and travel came up against a fear of the unknown. Together, they both introduced the Black Death to Europe and led to mostly incorrect attempts to explain it. The Late Middle Ages had seen a rise in Western Europe's population in previous centuries, but these gains were almost entirely erased as the plague spread rapidly across all of Europe from 1346-1353. With a medieval understanding of medicine, diagnosis, and illness, nobody understood what caused Black Death or how to truly treat it. As a result, many religious people assumed it was divine retribution, while superstitious and suspicious citizens saw a nefarious human plot involved and persecuted certain minority groups among them. Though it is now widely believed that rats and fleas spread the disease by carrying the bubonic plague westward along well-established trade routes, and there are now vaccines to prevent the spread of the plague, the Black Death gruesomely killed upwards of 100 million people, with helpless chroniclers graphically describing the various stages of the disease. It took Europe decades for its population to bounce back, and similar plagues would affect various parts of the world for the next several centuries, but advances in medical technology have since allowed researchers to read various medieval accounts of the Black Death in order to understand the various strains of the disease. Furthermore, the social upheaval caused by the plague radically changed European societies, and some have noted that by the time the plague had passed, the Late Middle Ages would end with many of today's European nations firmly established. The Black Death: The History and Legacy of the Middle Ages' Deadliest Plague chronicles the origins and spread of a plague that decimated Europe and may have wiped out over a third of the continent's population. Along with pictures and a bibliography, you will learn about the Black Death like never before, in no time at all.

A New History of the Great Mortality in Europe, 1347-1500

Hate and Compassion from the Plague of Athens to AIDS

History's Worst Plagues and the Heroes Who Fought Them

The Black Death: a Turning Point in History?

Medieval Europe's Medical Response to Plague

*The Complete History of the Black Death* Boydell & Brewer

*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.*

*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. • 300 A–Z interdisciplinary entries on medical matters and historical issues • Each entry includes up-to-date resources for further research*

*The bubonic plague is a disease spread by fleas that live on rats. Outbreaks of the disease killed millions of people. Read this book to learn more about the history of this infectious disease.*

*The Black Death, 1346-1353*

*The World the Plague Made*

*Encyclopedia of the Black Death*

*The Black Death in London*

*Rethinking the Black Death*

*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.*

*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.*

*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.*

*The Black Death Transformed*

*A New History of the Bubonic Plagues*

*A Personal History*

*History's Most Effective Killer*