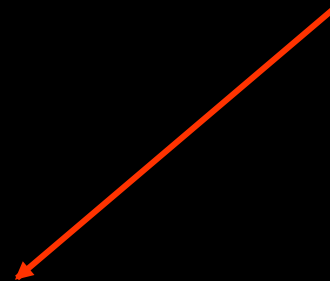
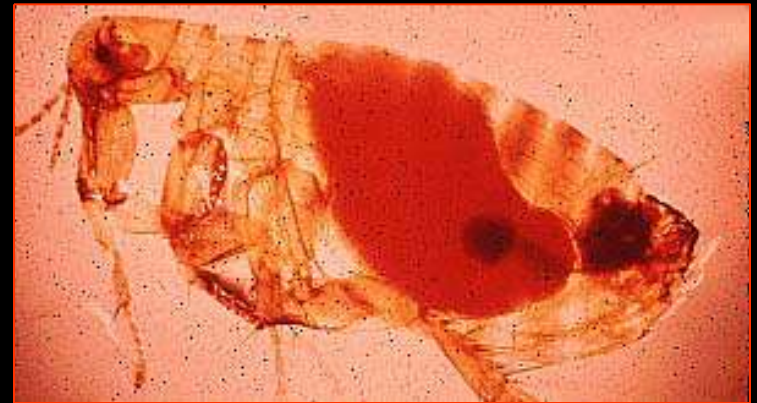
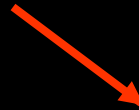


The Black Death



1347 - 1351

The Culprits



What caused the plague?

The question that you are probably thinking is this;

Q: Who or what caused the Black Death?

A: This is your answer!

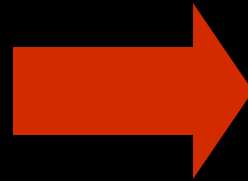


How was the plague transmitted?

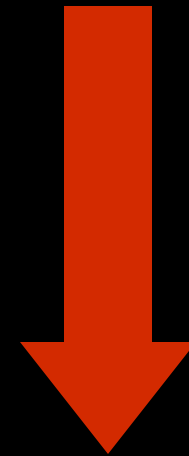
We now know that the most common form of the Black Death was the BUBONIC PLAGUE! This disease was spread by fleas which lived on the black rat. The fleas sucked the rat's blood which contained the plague germs. When the rat died the fleas jumped on to humans and passed on the deadly disease.

The Disease Cycle

Flea drinks rat blood that carries the bacteria.



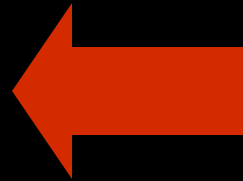
Bacteria multiply in flea's gut.



Human is infected!



Flea bites human and regurgitates blood into human wound.



Flea's gut clogged with bacteria.

The Symptoms

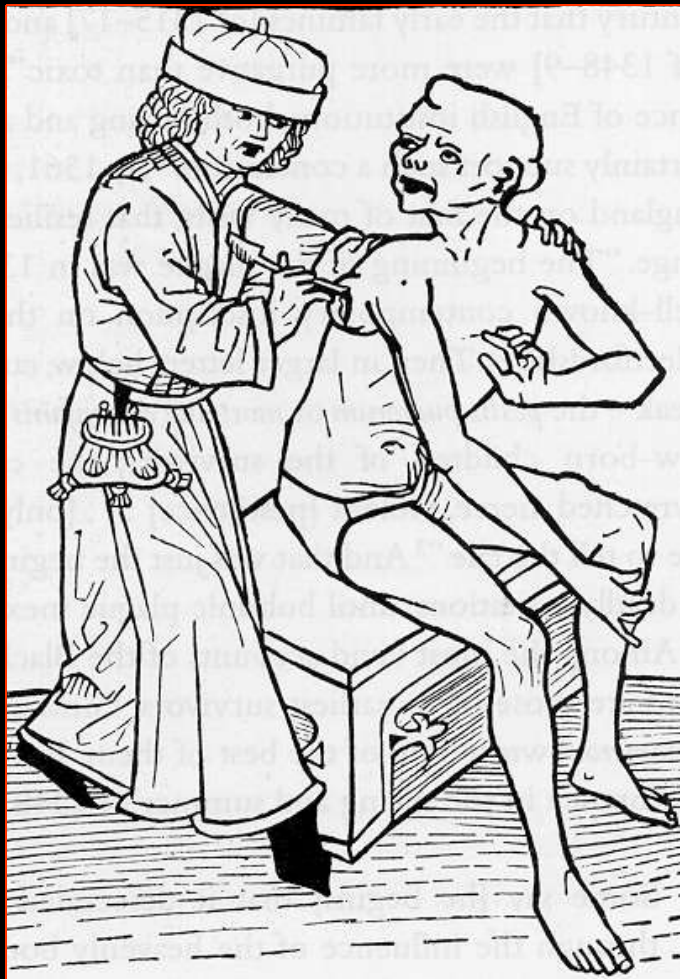


Bullous



Septicemic Form:
almost 100% mortality rate.

A **bubo** (Greek *boubôn*, "groin") (plural form= buboes) is a swelling of the lymph nodes, found in an infection such as bubonic plague. It usually appears under the armpit, in the groin or on the neck. Many doctors believed that bursting them was the answer, although in the view of modern medicine this treatment is useless or in fact harmful. There are reports of people using hen feathers in order to burst lymph nodes. When lymph nodes are burst, the puncture site can leave a patient at higher risk for dangerous infection.

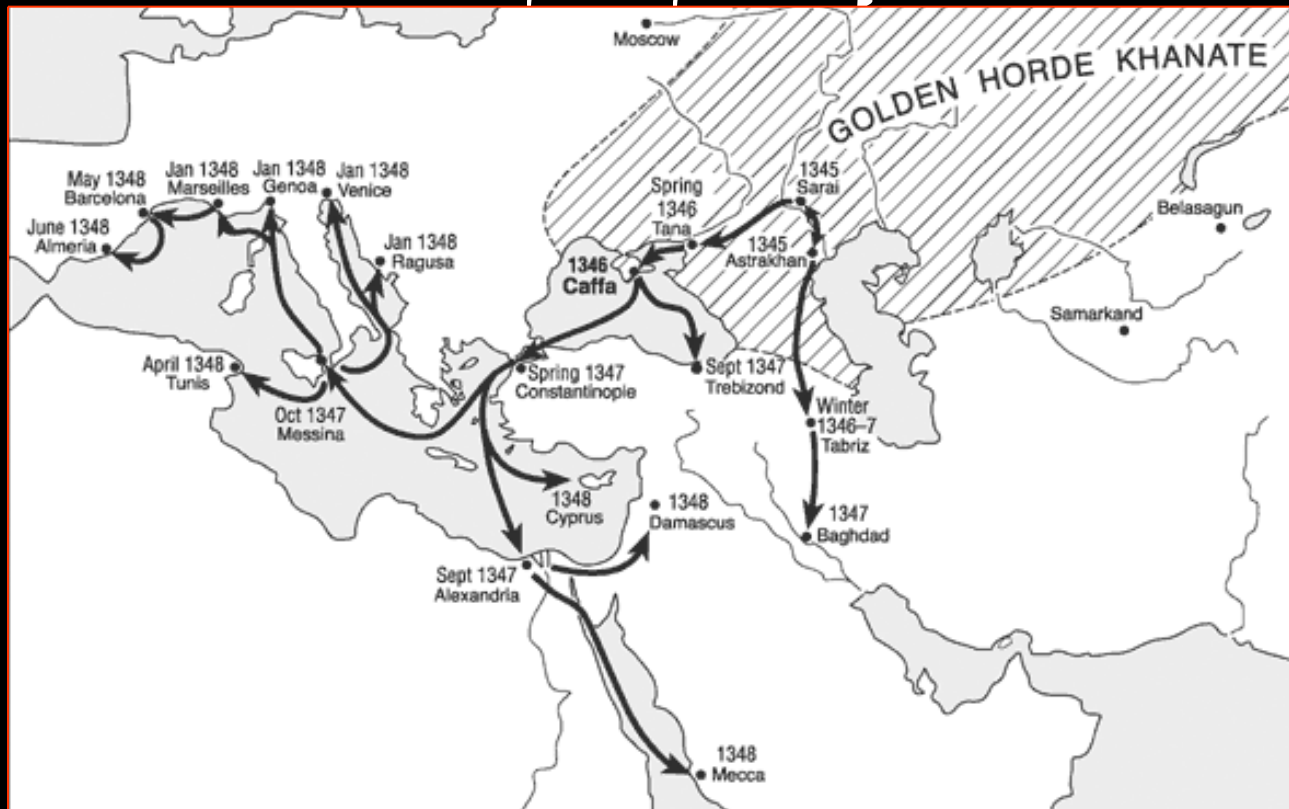


The Famine of 1315-1317

- ☠ By 1300 Europeans were farming almost all the land they could cultivate.
- ☠ A population crisis developed.
- ☠ Climate changes in Europe produced three years of crop failures between 1315-17 because of excessive rain.
- ☠ As many as 15% of the peasants in some English villages died.
- ☠ One consequence of starvation & poverty was susceptibility to disease.



1347: Plague Reaches Constantinople!



From the *Toggenburg Bible*, 1411



Medieval Art & the Plague



Medieval Art & the Plague



Bring out your dead!

Medieval Art & the Plague



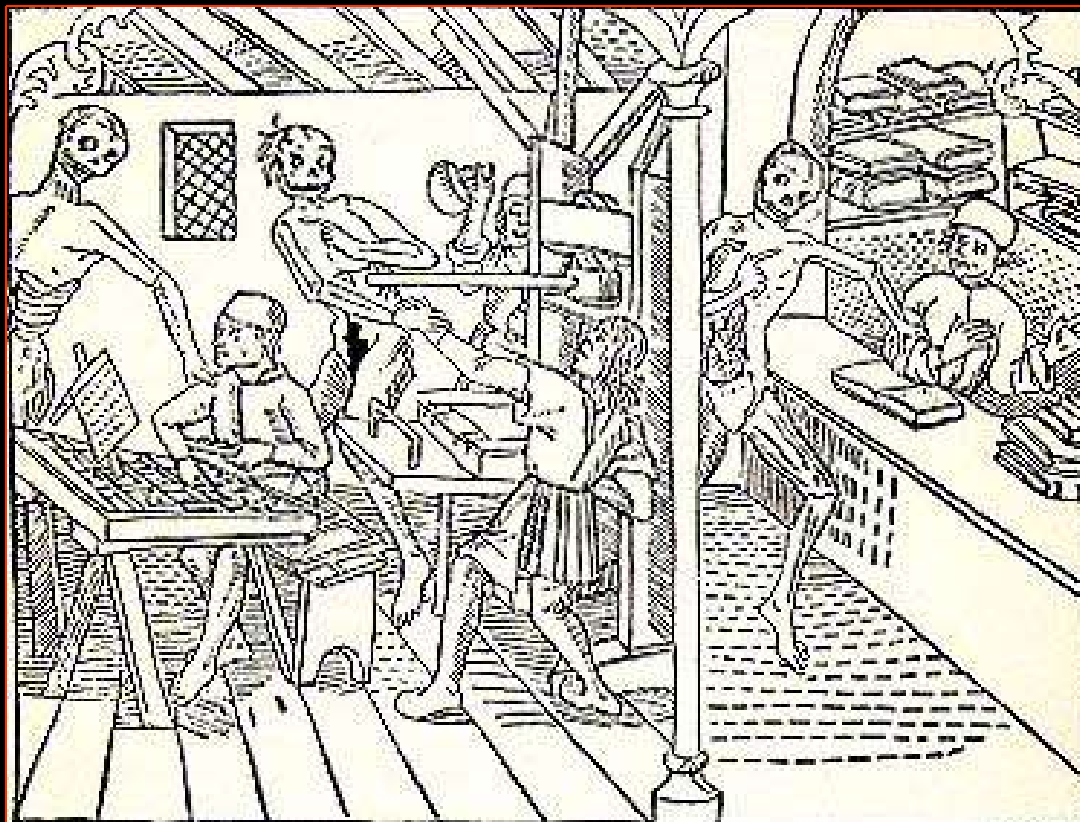
An obsession
with death.

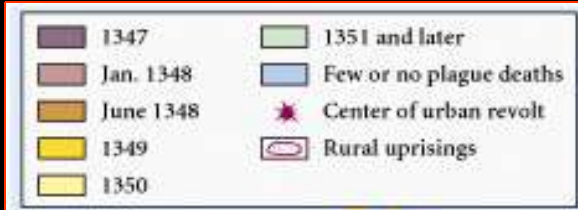


Boccaccio in *The Decameron*

*The victims ate lunch with
their friends and dinner with
their ancestors.*

The *Danse Macabre*





0 200 400 miles
 0 200 400 kilometers

Attempts to Stop the Plague



A Doctor's
Robe



"Leeching"

Attempts to Stop the Plague



Flagellanti:
Self-inflicted "penance" for our sins!

Attempts to Stop the Plague

Pogroms against the Jews



"Jew" hat



"Golden Circle"
obligatory badge

Cures?

- Medieval people did not know about germs causing disease. They did not understand that plague was spread by rats and fleas. They thought that people's bodies were poisoned.
- If the swellings burst and the poison came out people sometimes survived. It seemed sensible to draw out the poison.

Medieval cure number 1

The swellings should be softened with figs and cooked onions. The onions should be mixed with yeast and butter. Then open the swellings with a knife.

Medieval cure number 2

Take a live frog and put its belly on the plague sore. The frog will swell up and burst. Keep doing this with further frogs until they stop bursting. Some people say that a dried toad will do the job better.

Death Triumphant!: A Major Artistic Theme



A Little Macabre Ditty

“A sickly season,” the merchant said,
“The town I left was filled with dead,
and everywhere these queer red flies
crawled upon the corpses’ eyes,
eating them away.”

“Fair make you sick,” the merchant said,
“They crawled upon the wine and bread.
Pale priests with oil and books,
bulging eyes and crazy looks,
dropping like the flies.”

A Little Macabre Ditty (2)

"I had to laugh," the merchant said,
"The doctors purged, and dosed, and bled;
"And proved through solemn disputation
"The cause lay in some constellation.
"Then they began to die."

"First they sneezed," the merchant said,
"And then they turned the brightest red,
Begged for water, then fell back,
With bulging eyes and face turned black,
they waited for the flies."

A Little Macabre Ditty (3)

"I came away," the merchant said,
"You can't do business with the dead.
"So I've come here to ply my trade.
"You'll find this to be a fine brocade..."

And then he sneezed.....!

The Mortality Rate

35% - 70%

25,000,000 dead !!!