

The Plague

Video - Introduction to the Plague

1. Prince Henry was a plague prince
2. He lived through several plague outbreaks
 - a. He never caught it but many of his family members died
3. The Great Plague of the Black Death of the Pestilence or The Great Mortality
4. Second Plague pandemic 1320-1810
5. The plague kept coming back in waves, major outbreak every 10 years
6. 20 March 1345 - according to the medical faculty of the university of Paris, thought that it was a malignant conjunction of higher planets causing malignant air
7. Lots of contradictions as historians seldom agree with each other
 - a. This is because they are limited by the fragments of the past
8. Look at the history of the plague as a pandemic

Video - What was "The Plague"

1. One disease but 3 forms depending on the entry of the infection
 - a. Bubonic
 - i. Affected the lymphatic system
 - ii. Likely get the other two forms before dying
 - iii. 60% mortality rate
 - iv. Most common and survivable
 - v. 7-10 days of suffering
 - vi. Secondary septicemia or pneumonia develop
 - b. Pneumonic
 - i. Inhalation of bacteria
 - ii. Attacks lung tissue
 - iii. Secondary form is septicemia
 - iv. 90% mortality rate
 - v. 1-3 days to die
 - c. Septicemic
 - i. Rarest, but can be a secondary from
 - ii. Enters the bloodstream
 - iii. Hours to kill
 - iv. Nearly 100% fatal
 - v. Can be entirely asymptomatic until death as their blood would congeal leading to necrosis
2. Controversy as there were varied and contradictory symptoms
3. Differences in modes of contagion
4. High virulence plague
5. Some people think that it is an extinct plague, anthrax or a viral disease, ergotism theory
6. They are now DNA analysis of plague victims that say the plague was *Yersinia pestis* (modern bubonic plague)
7. However there were other epidemics of other highly contagious diseases such as smallpox were also present

Natural Habitat Routes

1. Lives of fleas on ground squirrels in central asia
 - a. transbailalian , tien shan, caspian and trans-caucasian focus areas
 - b. Tien Shan was where the development changes occurred in the strains of virus
2. This coincided with trans-continental trade routes it spread on the silk roads
 - a. However, the silk routes were in operation much before the plague
 - b. Only some evidence of local outbreaks in the area
3. Bacteria documented 3800 years ago
4. Specific to a certain rat flea
 - a. Grows in stomach until it can no longer eat its food, bites host to infect its blood
 - b. Infect humans if they run out of hosts
 - c. Under normal circumstances bacteria is limited and it is localized spreads

Onset of the Little Ice Age

1. Cold and wet weather oscillations
2. floods
3. Famines
4. Disease
5. Impact on rodents
6. Impact on humans in densely populated areas, like china
7. Mutated into 4 highly contagious strains
8. Combination of warmth and moisture were hospitable to the fleas, the hosts and the bacteria - populations grew
9. Unexplained transmission to domesticated animals
10. Zoonotic- requires a bite of an animal vector
 - a. However once the bacteria became airborne then contagion can occur from human to human
 - b. Contagion was possible from direct contact with other humans in addition to zoonotic

Video - The Great Mortality

1. The opening and deadliest stage of the pandemic
2. Before arrival the plague was in progress for 2 decades
3. 1320 and 1330s the plague was in china
4. Ground 0 is Tien Shan focus area
5. Then progressed through central asia and then north caspian and north east of the black sea
6. 146-1347 devastated asia minor
7. The plague raged in india

China

1. Hit first and the hardest
2. 1320's northern china lost 90% of the population
3. More devastating waves in 1350s and 1360s which are more in the south and killed 2/3
4. There was also a flooding

Plague Transmission - 1330s -1336

1. Central asia
2. Area of very dense populations

3. Great mortality arrived in Europe in 1347-1352
4. It established itself in port cities that were on major trade routes
5. Small pockets that were isolated and did not get it
6. There was not a linear progression
 - a. Generally flowed major trade routes and waterways
7. Winter months could offer some reprieve but then human-human transmission was in full swing
8. North Africa and the Middle East were as hard hit
9. Ibn Battuta and Ibn Khaldun both saw many in North Africa

How many died

1. Pope Clement VI said 23,840,000 people died but nobody knew what he was referring to
2. Estimates today think that 75-200 million
3. No figures that give the population
4. Contemporary estimate often exaggerate
5. Accurate information is highly localized and imperfect
6. Most records underestimated women, young children and propertyless poor
7. Were a lot of people that died in a short period
8. The loss of life differed between differing places
9. Estimate of 40-60% of total population (32-47.5 dead)
10. Mortality higher in densely populated cities
 - a. Italian cities 50-75%
11. Islamic world 30% - but this is likely too low
12. China between 50-90% but there is little evidence
13. Most common is 200 million globally but we do not know

Video - Plague as a Pandemic

1. Struck repeatedly from the 1320-1850
2. Bacteria has been around from 3,800 years
3. Third plague pandemic lasted from 1855-196
4. They had a confusing terminology - Great Mortality - Black Death (14th Century) - Plague/Great Plague
5. False comfort after the first one as they thought it was caused by crossed planets
6. Outbreaks could be a few dozen deaths to overwhelming calamities

Case Study

1. Using Constantinople as they suffered greatly
2. Petrarch to Boccaccio, 1463 - this was unheard of and never ceased
3. There were 22 outbreaks in Venice between 1357-1528
4. Mortality was 10-15% of the population in subsequent waves but the toll was often higher
5. 1-2% of the population dies each year
6. It returned 10 times during the 14th century
7. In the 16th century there were 6 major outbreaks
8. Many localized outbreaks with very high mortality
9. 17th century saw peak of ice age and pandemic
10. The outbreaks were getting longer

11. Constantinople had 8 major outbreaks over the century
12. Plague tapered out in the 18th century
13. Many areas in western Europe were spared
14. Many large outbreaks
15. Constantinople had 64 years of plague in the century
16. Mortality rate was kept between 1-5%
17. First half of the Nineteenth century
18. Beginning of the end
19. Third plague began in 1855 in China

Video - Doctoring the Plague

1. Medicine faced severe limitations
 - a. Did not understand the true cause of the plague
 - b. Ideology and traditions were held superior to empirical evidence
 - c. Abrahamic religions believed that only God could heal
 - d. Reject the concept of contagion
2. Hierarchy of causes theory
 - a. Universal cause - plague was a manifestation of God's will
 - b. Greater cause/Manifestation - alignment of planets cause a magnificent metaphysical miasma
 - c. Lesser cause/manifestation - natural disaster corrupted the air
3. Plague as a human illness
 - a. Miasma upset the human balance, cure was restoring the balance
 - b. External toxicity - patient was made ill by the environment, cure was naturalizing the poison
4. Most doctors treated the symptoms
5. Medical care
 - a. Preventive and prophylactic regimens - keep people healthy and give them strength
 - b. Dealing with symptoms
 - c. Trying to clean the system - blood-letting, sweating, medication
 - d. Environmental measures - attempt to ward off air-borne miasma
 - e. Applying proprietary inventions and exotic remedies
 - f. Very limited to no success, sometimes accidentally gave natural antibiotics
6. Blood-letting was the most common
 - a. Often used unsterilized tools
 - b. Found that the flow of blood was restricted, because of blood coagulation
7. Leeching - targeted phlebotomy
 - a. More effective and less dangerous
8. Lancing and acutorizing buboes
 - a. Cutting it open and evacuating liquid
 - b. Often resulted in further contamination
 - c. Cauterizing was burning it, a little safer but far more painful
9. Isolation and Quarantines
 - a. Control movement of those in contact with the sick

- b. Keep people away from others
- c. Plague doctors tried to limit the number of people in contact
- d. Weakness was that they did not reduce zoonotic transmission
- e. They burned their houses down
- f. Sometimes killed to prevent the healthy

Video - Divine Intervention

1. The valley of tears - that is all life was, a training and testing of the soul for the afterlife
2. Sudden death was dangerous as there was no church assisted peace with god
3. For reactions
 - a. Submit to the higher god and pray, we should not know
 - b. We are guilty so repent and beg for forgiveness
 - c. We are being punished for others wrongdoings so we should pray for mercy and punish guilty ones
 - d. Someones is committing a crime against us and needs to be punished, like the jews, punish the offenders
4. All governing divine will - without this nothing can take place
5. Leela - play of gods within the world
6. Thought there were the signs of the apocalypse as there was
 - a. All conquering pentulince
 - b. End of peace
 - c. Famine and profiting
 - d. Dealth
 - e. Saints call for vengeance
 - f. Earthquakes and landslides
 - g. Fire devastates the earth
7. People wanted percy so they begged through private prayer, pilgrimages, penance, penance as charity
8. Persecution of the jews
 - a. They supposedly poisoned the wells and had suppose immunity
 - b. Hundreds were destroyed despite the popes wish to protect them
 - c. 1370 - brussels massacre - attacks of jesus continued
9. People thought that the church had failed and that is why they were being punished
 - a. Morality and loss of qualified clergy
 - b. They sold indulgences
 - c. There was infighting within the church
 - d. Great schism - 1378-1417
 - e. Proto-protestant movements and the reformation

Video - Dead and the Living

1. People who lived were scared
2. There were large pits of dead
3. Caring for the sick was seen as a social and religious obligation
4. Most sick were cared for in the home
5. Sick were also attended in sick houses, monastic infirmaries, public hospitals and plague hospitals

6. People were scared of staying and caring for the sick, so they abandoned them
7. In the pre-modern period - people were crowded and were chaotic
8. Plague hospitals were often makeshift
9. Permanent hospitals were very advanced and professionally run
10. Nuns often acted as nurses
11. Problem of
 - a. How to collect the dead
 - b. How to have enough coffins and graves, and burial spaces
 - c. Contamination
 - d. Availability of clergy
 - e. Quality of final services
 - f. Fears of the afterlife

Video - In the Shadow of Death

1. While alive people made provisions such as wills, inheritance laws, for your soul, and to be remembered
2. People tried to cope with life and hope for the best after death
3. Ordinary people had to pick up their lives after an outbreak
4. Status was defined by their birth
5. Peasants hoped for stability and an orderly progression through life
6. After an outbreak they
 - a. Dealt with it - depression and suicide were sins
 - b. Regrouped and resumed life
 - c. Attempt to benefit - asked for higher wages, more land, claim inheritance
 - d. Survivor's guilt
 - e. Resentments and the need to set things to rights
 - f. Fear of death and hope for the best in the afterlife
7. The elites were seen as dysfunctional as they could not impose acceptable order
8. The elites were at the heart of disorder and violence afflicting ordinary people
9. Dysfunction of authority leads to anger resulting in rebellion
10. Ideas of social and religious leveling, saw the plague as an equalizer
11. There were ideas of personal freedom and a direct line to the divine
12. Some benefits include
 - a. They got inheritance
 - b. Scarcity of labourers meant better wages
 - c. Decline in serfdom in western Europe
 - d. Disposable income
 - e. Golden age of the artisan
 - f. Had a standard of living debate
 - g. They had ideas of modernity
 - h. The Renaissance
13. Some consequences
 - a. Economic instability
 - b. Great depression of the middle ages
 - c. Rising cost of war and living nobility

- d. Discontent and violence
- e. Wars
- f. Oppression
- g. Growing gap between rich and poor
- h. Slipshod justice
- i. Beginnings of a second serfdom
- j. Poor and weak governments

The Age of Plague pg 440-441, 448-454

- 1. Ibn Battuta was a well traveled man
- 2. Cicero had many things but then the plague hit and they were so many deaths
- 3. The hardest hit societies were the ones that were the most ambitious
 - a. This was because they had the most contacts

Coming of the Age of Plague

- 1. A cold spell coincide with the beginning
- 2. 1320 pestilence spread across europe
- 3. Culminated in the 1340s
- 4. More occurrences of similar diseases were common until the 18th century
- 5. Hard to determine what this disease was
 - a. The language to describe has changed
 - b. Diseases change and they might have been particular to that period
- 6. Bubonic plague was likely one of them
 - a. rat -borne disease
 - b. Fleas that live on rats transmit it to humans
 - c. One of the first symptoms is death or swelling the size of brazil nuts ridged like grapefruit, jitters, vomiting, dizziness, pain and an inability to tolerate light follow
- 7. Described as sleeping with a great stench
- 8. Many symptoms describes such as lung problems, strange urine or spitting blood are not characteristic of the bubonic plague
- 9. Likely several diseases struck at once, such as mumps
- 10. Anthrax has also been suggested
 - a. Domestic animals would have been carriers of the disease
- 11. Plague was less penetrating in hot climates

Course and Impact

- 1. Reportedly came from central asia then to coastal places
- 2. Question if the disease found in china is even the same disease
- 3. Invaders through corpses at sailors during a war, all the sailors got it and then they brought it home
- 4. Many people died, up to 40% of the clergy and in some manors in england 70% of tenants died, southern france lost 4/5th of their population
- 5. Villages in sicily were abandoned
- 6. Living piled corpses in pits with quicklime to speed decomposition as graveyards ran out of space
- 7. Lots of deaths in central asia as well and china went from over 120 million to 10 million

Villani on the Plague

1. Renaissance chronicler in France
2. Wrote a history of Florence
3. He fell victim to the plague, his brother continued his work but then also died of the plague
4. 1296 - after revolution they rebuilt Florence
5. 1299 - laid the foundation of the palace
6. 1334 - worked on the bell tower
7. Lot of black death, but it was worse in other places as well
8. Could catch the plague by going near the bodies
9. 1331 a fire broke out
10. There was a famine in Florence and a large part of Italy
11. Commune of Florence provided for the poor
12. Flood filled the streets

The Triumph of Death

"The Triumph of the Death" by Pieter Bruegel the Elder (1525/1530-1569). Bruegel completed the painting in 1565, shortly before his own death. At that point, the plague pandemic had raged on for more than two centuries, returning in major waves almost every decade since its first appearance and driving in the message of the inevitability of death and the fragility of human life.

Movie - The Plague

1. Some people thought it was a vengeance of God
2. Seemed like the end of the world
3. 1310 Tuscany Italy
 - a. Western civilization is becoming more prosperous
 - b. The church is strong, cities have grown, weather is good, trade grew, no major catastrophes
4. Global temperatures fall and crops fail
5. 1347 Mongolian Steppes
 - a. Spreads majorly from China and spreads westward
 - b. The Mongols conquered between Eastern Europe to China down to India
 - c. Increased trade which spread the plague
 - i. Take valuables off the people and then torch them, virus stays on loot
6. Famine, plague, war and death spread
7. 1340s war spreads and nobles see an opportunity to make money in escalating chaos
8. King Edward (England) wins at Calais (France sea coast)
 - a. Beginning of the Hundred Years War
 - b. Beats Philip 6th of France
 - c. He escapes to the countryside and ends up surviving the plague
9. Princess Joan is promised to Spanish prince of Castile 1347
 - a. This would expand Edward's power
 - b. Arribador comes from Spain from the prince to Joan
 - c. Many voyage with Joan to Spain to protect her and take her stuff
 - d. Joan does not survive and dies in Bordeaux

10. Pope Clement XI

- a. Church was still the highest power
- b. 14th century the facade begins to crack
- c. Priests were accused of abusing their powers and who were corrupt
- d. The french move the pope to avignon in france
- e. Most trusted advisor is deceliach his medical practitioner
 - i. He things that medicine is ruled by god
- f. He survives the plague

11. 1347 Lower Mongolia

- a. Caffa is the last stop for the mongols and a port city to go to india
- b. Mongols attack caffa
- c. Mongols get the plague
- d. They launch bodies into the town
- e. This gives the plague to the europeans
- f. First incident of plague warfare
- g. Plague is fairly slow moving but it spreads around europe quickly

12. 1347 Sicily

- a. Ships bring it into the ports
- b. They try to banish the ships but they already had the plague in their city
- c. People turn to god and bring mary back to the city from her shrine

13. Guy de Cheliac

- a. Pope clement has his surgeons to figure out a cure
- b. They blame an unusual alignment of planets that supposedly create a noxious vapor
- c. Guy de Cheliac came down with the illness
- d. Guy de Cheliac also survived
- e. Guy de Cheliac bases a text off of first hand observations
- f. Science becomes less theoretical

14. 1347 Venice Italy

- a. Merchant ships bring the disease home
- b. Did not have germ theory but knew that the plague spread from person to person

15. 1348 enters carcelles and barcelona

- a. Not sick for 2-6 days to that they could spread it further
- b. Rats get off the ship and spread it as well
- c. The disease gets to the pope and pope refuses to leave

16. 1348 Siena Italy

- a. Church has priest refusing to administer last rites to the dead
- b. To die without last rights is terrifying
- c. Church says that they could make confessions to each other rather than to the
- d. If more in the family got sick people would abandon their families
- e. Peoples faith was shocked
- f. People turned to religious zealots who had them ship themselves to mimic christs suffering because they did not know what else to do

17. Gets to England

- a. Question of how to dispose of the dead
 - b. For a very high fee some people were willing to have contact with the dead
 - c. Mass graves
18. Doctors stop seeing patients to save themselves
19. flatulence
- a. Try to win god mercy by imitating the struggle of god
 - b. People flock to these people
 - c. Whip themselves and forsake things and go from city to city
 - d. Pope clement and other authority feel threatened by them
 - e. Bring out extreme violence of the flagellants movement
 - f. Dramatic displays are more compelling than the village priests
 - g. Claimed to do miracles
 - h. Plague showed institutions to be powerless
 - i. 1349 movement falls apart
 - j. They attract outsiders and start to party and attract women
 - k. Pope calls them to disband but nobody pays attention, has to be enforced by the military
20. Jews
- a. Jews needed express permission to go into the town
 - b. Look for someone that is responsible
 - c. Kill jews
 - d. As jews fled they went to Poland as they were less hostile towards them
 - e. King casimir the great gave some protection to the jews
 - f. Adamant and other Jews make false confessions to things like poisoning the wells
21. In Geneva and Venice people think that the plague is a curse from god
22. They have them clean up their act to combat sin
23. Pope put people in wooden boxes and they stop tolling the funeral bell
24. Plague pushes north to russia and scandinavia
25. Social stigma as people are very visible when they get the disease
26. Urban centers and religious areas suffered the most
27. Ibn adoon thought that evil things were ahead as the entire world had changed
28. New world order was shaped through violence and people looting
29. Allowed people to question god and authority
30. Italian farmers can grow more things as there is land left over from all that dies
- a. Grow orchards and luxury items
 - b. People could own land
 - c. Their diet then included vegetables and meat
 - d. Serfs no longer can harvest their field and nobles have to do it themselves
31. 1357 France
- a. Refuse to do farmwork so they use military force to loot cities
 - b. Guerrilla warfare is born as they have less men
32. 1357 Rome Italy
- a. Survivors come up with labour saving devices like the printing press

- b. Make mills
 - c. This makes up for less workers
- 33. Physiological transformation from everyone dying
 - a. Death is in a lot of their art
 - b. Increased individualism
 - c. This leads to the renaissance
- 34. Main theory is that it is a form of bubonic plague
 - a. Garbage on the streets had large rat and flea infestations
 - b. Fleas would bite people
 - c. Could infect people from coughing
 - d. Some question whether it is bubonic because there is rapid spread so another explanation is an ebola like virus or anthrax
- 35. Montpellier France
 - a. Exhume the bodies of plague victims to find out modern day
 - b. Look at the teeth of plague victims
 - c. Can examine tooth pulp to see what they had within them during death

Felipe Fernandez-Armesto, "The Age of Plague" Pg 454-461

Moral and Social Effects

1. The plague stirred up religious movements and political revolution
2. Stimulus to science
3. Blamed corrupt aid, irregular weather, decaying matter, and astrological influences
4. Quarantine was the only effective solution
5. Pope Clement VI declared the Jews innocent and planned to excommunicate anyone that harmed them
6. Society had apathy towards the Jews and those it could not assimilate
7. Tried to shift the Jews towards central and eastern Mediterranean
8. Widows got property ownership so more women owned property during the plague, as more men died
9. They broke estates up and had peasants farm as tenants, making the land more productive
 - a. In Poland and Russia opposite happened, became more tied to their lord's land
10. Governments respond to this disaster by raising taxes and limiting labour mobility (Statute of Labourers)
11. The idea of millenarianism - God would empower the poor to rise up
12. Mongols lost power
13. Plague offered more social mobility
14. Increase in free peasants and tenants as there was a form of rural capitalism

Giovanni Boccaccio's Description of the Plague

1. Sick were forbidden entry into the city
2. Came from the east where it had killed many people
3. Most who got it did not recover
4. Transferred the disease off of things sick people had touched
5. Animals could get it
6. Some people decided to lead a quiet secluded life without excess

7. Other people wanted to live life to the fullest while they were alive and drank greatly
8. Many people abandoned the city
9. Would walk with nice smelling bouquets of herbs
10. People would put dead bodies outside their house so funeral bearers could collect them in the morning, these people were paid handsomely
11. Worst during march and july

Main theme/link - religious motives, flagulence groups, attacks on jewish people, the church started off strong but then we see a fall of the church as a loss of its power, a lot of fear that makes people act crazy, the volume of death causes people to seek for someone to blame, the jewish people become their scapegoat

1. Bodily humours - four humors—blood, yellow bile, black bile, and phlegm
2. “Good Death” - respectful death that helped pass seamlessly into the after
3. Statute of Laborers - response to a labour shortage, which aimed at regulating the labour force by prohibiting requesting or offering a wage higher than pre-Plague standards and limiting movement in search of better conditions
4. The Decameron - document of life at the time
5. “Triumph of Death” - oil painting
6. Danse Macabre - universality of death: no matter one's station in life, the Danse Macabre unites all