
Horrifying Effect Of Black Death

For the peoples of 14th century Eurasia, their world was thriving with no fear of any kind of damage to the incline of their societies. However, with no warning, the Black Death struck leaving possibly up to 200 million people dead. This plague, in some ways, has a mixed legacy. Even though the Black Death was horrifying and left Eurasia in extremely unstable societies, the epidemic surprisingly had some benefits. With so much death in the air, the benefits of the infamous bubonic plague were invisible during the outbreak. However, with deep thought and critical thinking, all aspects of the plague, good and bad, are more easily noticeable.

For the different regions of the vast territory known as Eurasia, the bubonic plague affected each one a bit differently. For example, although the plague stretched far and wide and killed millions of people, the death toll of each region varied drastically. For France and Spain, the death toll was closer to 75-85%; but for Germany and England, the death toll was closer to 20%. With different political developments, each region was affected differently by their own death toll rather than a neighboring region that had gotten the same death toll. For example, when the German peasants saw their friends and family dying because of the deadly virus, many of the peasants retreated to the eastern Harz Mountains, leaving entire villages deserted. These retreats not only affected Germany culturally but also politically. With no more villagers to tend to the crops, the lords of the villages lost authority and income. With no income, the monarchy would eventually be affected. Thus, the instability of German government was inevitable. However, this catastrophe was prevented by emphasizing on the creation of labor saving technology and the increased involvement in exportation to other countries. England, on the other hand, had lords who were in tremendous fear of their villagers retreating from the Black Death. In response, the lords enforced containment in order to keep the villagers from deserting their homes. With this strategy, the lords maintained their income and kept England's monarchy much more stable. Unfortunately, the villagers were not the only ones in fear of the plague. People of stature were also affected by the epidemic. Because of this, many lords left their kingdom in search of security. With this outcome, the peasant had no one to deliver their income too; now the peasants were more wealthy than once before.

By the end of the black death in 1353, peasants all around had realized their labor was worth more than they were being payed. With continuous increases in wages, many bureaucracies passed a law that no peasants wages could exceed more than the height of wages in 1347. When this law was passed, many countries revolted, such as the villagers of England did when the same treatment was inflicted onto them. The Black Death had a silver lining in some ways; such as, the revolt of the English villagers reset the ruler ship in England. The Black Death also sped up a socioeconomic change in England. For Germany, myths were created. Such as the legend of the "Pest Jungfrau," the plague angel, a spirit that manifested as a pale maiden with a blue flame spreading the contagion. Clearly Germany and England had both tragic and beneficial changes that were drastically different even though their death toll was similar. The main reason that the changes were different was because the two countries had different political developments. The different governments of the two countries yielded different changes to the regions. The death tolls of the Black Death did not affect how each country would change; the government was the seed of change and the plague was the water for that seed.