

ALTHOUGH THE DANCE OF DEATH THEME EXISTED BEFORE THE BLACK PLAGUE (ALSO CALLED THE BLACK DEATH), IT BECAME EVEN MORE SIGNIFICANT AS THE MYSTERIOUS ILLNESS SWEEPED ACROSS EUROPE, DECIMATING ITS POPULATION. IGNORANT OF THE DISEASE'S TRUE CAUSE (AN INFECTED FLEA CARRIED BY THE COMMON BLACK RAT), MANY PEOPLE OF THE TIME BELIEVED THAT THE PLAGUE WAS SENT FROM GOD AS A PUNISHMENT FOR THE SINS OF MANKIND. IN THIS WAY, THE BLACK DEATH BECAME ASSOCIATED WITH THE DIVINE ADMONITION ALREADY ATTACHED TO THE DANCE.