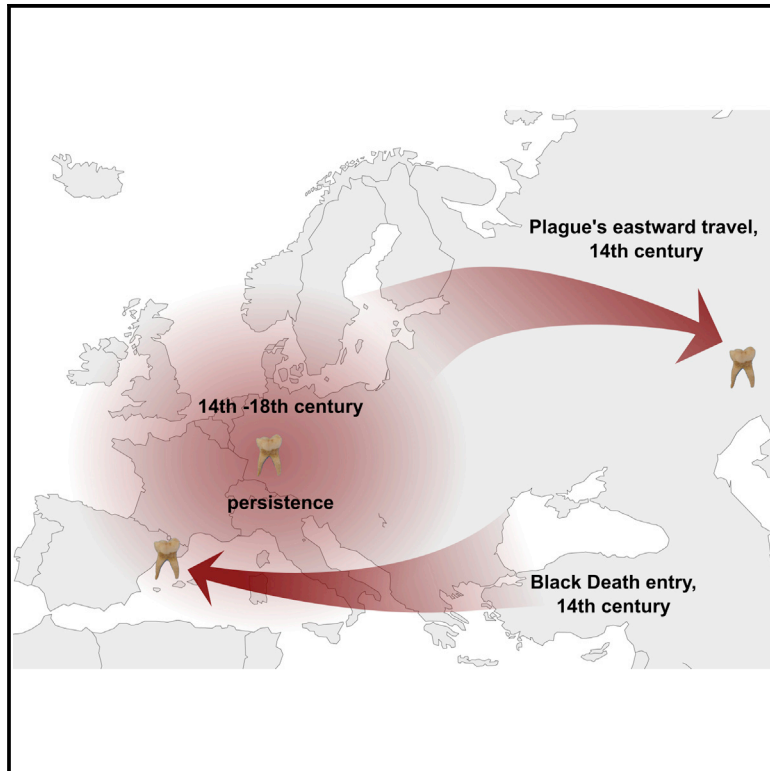


Cell Host & Microbe

Historical *Y. pestis* Genomes Reveal the European Black Death as the Source of Ancient and Modern Plague Pandemics

Graphical Abstract



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In Brief

Spyrou et al. have sequenced historical *Yersinia pestis* genomes from victims of the Black Death and subsequent outbreaks in Europe. Their data suggest a connection between the Black Death and the modern-day plague pandemic as well as the persistence of plague in Europe between the 14th and 18th centuries.

Highlights

- Three historical *Yersinia pestis* genomes from the second plague pandemic in Europe
- Low genetic diversity of the pathogen during the Black Death
- Indication for link between the Black Death and 19th century plague pandemic lineages
- Connection between post-Black Death outbreaks in Europe supports a local plague focus



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