

SOURCE NOTES FOR “[HISTORIC EPIDEMICS: EYEWITNESS ACCOUNTS](#)” QUIZ
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“Behold, the Hand of Nergal is now in my country; he has slain all the men of my country, and there is not a (single) copper-worker.” **Amarna Letters EA 35**, trans. William Moran. [Source](#).

“...it first attacked the population in the Piraeus, which was the occasion of their saying that the Peloponnesians had poisoned the reservoirs... and afterwards appeared in the upper city, when the deaths became much more frequent.” **Thucydides, History of the Peloponnesian War 2.48**. Trans. Richard Crawley, Revised by Robert Strassler. [Source](#).

“On my arrival in Aquileia the plague attacked more destructively than ever before, so the emperors fled immediately to Rome with a small force of men. For the rest of us, survival became very difficult for a long time. Most, indeed, died, the effects of the plague being exacerbated by the fact that all this was occurring in the middle of winter.” **Galen, De Libris Propriis 3.3**. Trans. Rebecca Flemming. [Source](#).

“In the disease and contagion last year, so many of my kin and old friends met with misfortune — Xu, Chen, Ying, and Liu, all carried off at one time! What words can describe this sorrow?” **Cao Pi, “Letter to Wu Zhi.”** Trans. Burton Watson. [Source](#).

“And in the second year it reached Byzantium in the middle of spring, where it happened that I was staying at that time. And it came as follows. Apparitions of supernatural beings in human guise of every description were seen by many persons, and those who encountered them thought that they were struck by the man they had met in this or that part of the body...” **Procopius, History of the Wars, II.xxii**. Trans. H.B. Dewing. [Source](#).

“Since this April, Heijo-kyo and the surrounding area have suffered from the epidemic, and the number of deaths has continued to rise. The damage to the peasants in various provinces will no doubt be severe. Therefore, we will convey the above precautions to all provinces...” **Ruiju Fusensho, Note for June 26th, A.D. 737**. Trans. Google Translate. [Source](#).

“Wherever I turn my frightened eyes, their gaze is troubled by continual funerals: the churches groan encumbered with biers, and, without last respects, the corpses of the noble and the commoner lie in confusion alongside each other.” **Francesco Petrarca (“Petrarch”), Ad Seipsum, Epistola Metrica I, 14**. Trans. Jonathan Usher. [Source](#).

“In August illness spread. Blood came from our noses. Priests confessed us in our homes and brought us food. Doctors healed us. And then the bells went quiet, they did not announce funerals anymore, as if we had abandoned the church.” **Codex Aubin, 1576, folio 60r**. Trans. Charles Dibble(?) [Source](#).

“This day, much against my will, I did in Drury Lane see two or three houses marked with a red cross upon the doors, and “Lord have mercy upon us” writ there;” **Samuel Pepys, *Diary of Samuel Pepys*, June 7th, 1665.** [Source](#).

“We call the attention of the authorities to the fact that [the epidemic] has been introduced into this country from San Francisco. The cases may be few. But few as they are, they are dangerous...” ***The Daily British Colonist* 7.89 (March 26th, 1862).** [Source](#).

The Quiz Title Image ([Source](#)) is a 1656 engraving by Paulus Fürst (1608-1666) titled “Der Doktor Schnabel von Rom” (“Dr. Beak from Rome”). The accompanying poem, in a mix of German and Latin, pokes fun at plague doctors for incompetence and avarice. You can read more about Paulus Fürst [here](#), and about the image itself (including a translation of the poem) [here](#).

Dr. Doctor Schna- kel von Rom.



Vos Creditis, als eine fabel,
quod scribitur von Doctor Schnakel,
der fugit die Contagion,
et aufert seinen Lohn darvon.
Cadavera sucht er zu fristen,
gleich wie der Corvus auf der Myster.
Ah Credite, zihet nicht dort hin,
dann Romæ regnat die Pestin.

Quis non deberet sehr erschrec,
für seiner Virgul oder stecken,
quod loquitur, als wär er stumm,
und deutet sein Consilium.
Wie mancher Credit ohne zweifel
das ihm tentir ein schwarzen Teufel.
Marsupium heist seine Höll,
und aurum die geholte seel.

I. Columbina ad virum delineavit.

Paulus Fürst. Excudit.

Kleidung wider den Tod zu Rom. Anno 1656.
Also gehen die Doctores Medici dahin zu Rom, wann sie die ander Pest erkrankte be-
sühen besüchen, sie zu curiren und fragen, sich wider den Gift zu sichern, ein langes Kleid von ge-
wärtem Tuch ihr Angesicht ist verlarvt, für den Augen haben sie grosse Crystalline Brillen, wider
Naseneinen langen Schnakel willwolriechender Spreeren, in der Hände welche mit Hand schuhert
wol versehen ist, eine lange Kütze und darmit deuten sie, was man thun, und gebrauche soll.