

## Juvenal's Satire III

*Juvenal (ca. 55-60? CE – 2<sup>nd</sup> c. CE) was a Roman poet who wrote satires critiquing Roman life, one of the reasons why Christians preserved these texts. This particular satire provides a fascinating glimpse into the urbanization of Rome, reflecting on the unwelcomed challenges of the burgeoning and overcrowded city.*

*If you have time, you should read the entire work; however, if you are pressed for time you need only read the sections listed below:*

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/ancient/juv-sat3eng.asp>

### § 1-9 Introduction

- Rome developed within a confined area, and when it could no longer sprawl outward the Romans built up. Note the assessment: “live in perpetual dread of fires and falling houses”

### §§ 58-125 Characterizations of Rome's Diversity

- What does Juvenal think about Greeks?
- Notice his reference to the Greeks' areas of interest and expertise.
- One gets the impression that Juvenal is not happy with the influx of Greek virtues and cultural expressions, one that may be corrupting the strength of Rome.

### §§ 126-163 Status Consciousness of Roman Elite Society

- Here Juvenal shows disdain for corruption that bases the truthfulness of testimony on a person's status.
- The impoverished have no real status in Rome, despite the fact they are Romans.

### § 190-211 Fear of Fires

- In antiquity, the poorer citizens lived on the top floors making it rather difficult to exit in case of a fire.
- Notice also the basic condition of many of the apartment houses.

### §§ 232-311 City Noises and Perils

- How many different ways can sleep be disrupted in this ancient urban center?
- Notice the problems one can encounter with drunken elite or robbers.
- How do these disruptions and perils compare to contemporary city life, such as in NYC?