

Document E

"The law said that no woman might own more than half an ounce of gold nor wear a multicoloured dress nor ride in a carriage in a city or in a town within a mile of it, unless there was a religious festival [*Note: the law was passed to raise money in order to defend from Hannibal's attacks during the Second Punic War*]. The tribunes...said that they would not allow its repeal....The matrons, whom neither counsel nor shame nor their husbands' order could keep at home, blockaded every street in the city and every entrance to the Forum. As the men came down to the Forum, the matrons besought to let them, too, have back the luxuries they had enjoyed before, giving as their reason that the republic was thriving and that everyone's private wealth was increasing with every day. This crowd of women was growing daily, for now they were even gathering from the towns and villages. Before long they dared go up and solicit consuls, praetors, and other magistrates [officials]."

-- Livy, Roman historian, writing about an event sometime in the first century CE about an event that happened around 200 BCE

Document F

"Since at Rome there is no place for honest pursuits, no profit to be got by honest toil – my fortune is less today than it was yesterday, and tomorrow must again make that little less....It is that the city is become Greek...that I cannot tolerate; and yet how small the proportion even of the dregs of Greece! Syrian Orontes has long since flowed into the Tiber, and brought with it its language, morals, and the crooked harps with the flute-player, and its national tambourines, and girls made to stand for hire at the Circus. Go thither, you who fancy a barbarian harlot with embroidered turban."

-- Juvenal, Roman writer, about his friend's decision to leave Rome, 112 CE

Document G

"The defences of cities are made of stone. The postal stations and mile-stones on the roads are covered with plaster. There are pine and cypress trees and all kinds of other trees and plants. The people are much bent on agriculture, and practice the planting of trees and the rearing of silk-worms. They cut the hair of their heads, wear embroidered clothing, and drive in small carriages covered with white canopies... They are honest in their transactions, and there are no double prices. Cereals are always cheap. The budget is based on a well-filled treasury."

-- Fan Yeh, Chinese traveler, upon visiting the Roman city of Antioch, c. 150 CE