

20 orbis terrarum certissima ratio est originis atque
 habitationis Indorum. Qua etiam ex re magis adducor ut
 putem hunc novum orbem occidentalem non multis abhinc
 annorum millibus habitatum, magisque ab hominibus
 silvestribus et palantibus, quam ab alia republica obitum
 25 (est), cum errore potius aut patriae angustiis novas sedes
 paulatim habitare coepissent, atque his assueti nihil nisi
 naturalis lucis ductum, eumque obscuratum, ac patriae
 fortassis gentilitiae aliquas consuetudines retinerent.
 Neque incredibilis est etiam si ex culta et bene morata
 30 republica profecti essent aliquando, tamen ipsa diuturnitate
 et desuetudine humana, paene omnia oblivione dele(vi)sse,
 cum tales esse in ipsa Hispania et Italia hominum greges
 praeter os et figuram hominis habentes praeterea nihil,
 notius fit, quam ut testibus egeat. Ita effectum est, ut
 35 immensus quidam barbarismus evaderet.

TRANSLATION

But it is easier to disprove false statements about the origin of the Indians, than to state anything certain about their (origin). For since among the Indians no letters are in use, (there is) no certain record of their ancestors: among our writers indeed scarcely any traces of this world may exist, to such a degree that they denied not only certain (specific) men, but even this land and this sky itself (to exist) on account of the nature of things; and he who promises that he is about to report (himself about to report) exactly certain and explored facts about the first origin of the Indians, and about the first habitation of this world, must necessarily be noted in fact (as a man) of great rashness. Generally however and probably from those facts which are discussed above, we are able to gather, that a race of men traveled (to have traveled) erratically to this new world little by little as time advanced,

the interconnection of lands helping greatly, and by navigation advancing by degrees, rather than either in some one naval preparation (prepared fleet) or a great shipwreck. Although also indeed that (men) arrived (to have arrived) partly by these (things) is not absurd. Since also there may be infinite regions, we may correctly think that innumerable other nations have been found (to have been found) and occupied in varying ways. But as I said, the nearness or continuity of the circle of lands of the region is surely the reason of (for) the origin and habitation of the Indians. From which fact also I am the more influenced that I think this new western world not by many thousands of years from (before) this time (to have been) inhabited, and more by woodsmen and wanderers than established by some state since by wandering rather or by the narrowness of (their) country they began little by little to inhabit new seats, and in these having become accustomed led by nothing except natural light (understanding), and that obscured, and perhaps they have retained some racial customs of (their) racial (tribal) fatherland. And it is not unbelievable even if at some time from a cultivated and well-mannered organized state they had started, nevertheless by long time and disuse, almost all human (remnants) themselves have been (to have been) destroyed by forgetfulness; since it has become better known, as does not lack witnesses, that there are (there to be) in Spain itself and in Italy such groups of men having nothing except the face and figure of a man. So it was brought about that a certain immense barbarism came to be.

GRAMMAR AND WORD USE QUESTIONS

1. In the first sentence we find *afferre*, and in the second we find *abstulerint* and *allaturum*. These come from two verbs that are both compounds of the base verb *fero*. Look at these words very carefully, and translate them.

Afferre "to report"; *abstulerint* "they denied"; *allaturum* "going to (about to) report."

2. In that very long second sentence *qui se profiteatur allaturum (esse)* is a subjunctive relative clause of characteristic with an embedded indirect statement after a verb which makes a statement. Translate this passage giving the indirect statement literally and then in good English.

He professes himself to be going to explain. He says that he will explain.