

Encouraged by the elders, (when) he had scarcely been seated on the high throne

He ordered (the people) to rake the earth with plows and to place the seeds nourished by well-watered earth in the created (made) furrows. So he created (grew) the noble cacao, a drink more precious than the nectar of the skies,

And the native grain and the leafy cotton.

For tilling fields and gardens he established certain laws

And precepts favorable to the farmer.

GRAMMAR AND WORD USE QUESTIONS

1. Why is dactylic hexameter fitting for this poem's genre? (See Appendix 4, Latin Epic Poetry.)

It is the meter of epic poetry. As epics are long, narrative poems dealing with heroes and cultural values, the genre is appropriate for Cabrera's subject matter.

2. As the meaning of a Latin sentence is not tightly tied to word order, Latin poets often arrange words to form a picture. Horace named this *callida iunctura*—clever joining. *Divis notas dum conderet artes* is an example of this. How does it picture Quetzalcoatl?

He is in the middle of the arts that he is establishing.

3. Here are the first of many literary allusions in this work (brief and indirect references to persons or ideas that have literary significance. They are passing comments, not detailed descriptions).

Line 5 is very similar to *Aeneid* 1.5: *Multa quoque et bello passus dum conderet urbem* “also having endured many wars until he could found a city.”

Line 9 is very similar to *Aeneid* 6.853: *parcere subiectis et debellare superbos* “to spare the humble and war down the proud.”

Write down all four lines and compare them.

Multa quoque et bello passus dum conderet urbem—“also having endured many wars until he could found a city”

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Multa diu bello passus longoque labore

Cabrera adds that Quetzalcoatl also had long labor.

Aeneid 6.853

