

Quetzalcoatl Gains Support

Quetzalcoatl has come to the great capital Tula as an immigrant teacher and prophet, and his speeches exhorting the people to respect all living things do not please the priests of the god Tezcatlipoca, who demanded war and blood sacrifice, including human hearts. Others, however, reacted differently.

Tālia fundēbat vehemens hortantia dicta
 Auribus arrectis vulgī sanctīque senātus,
 Persuādēns animīs commūnī intentus amōrī.
 110 Ille rudī cultū paucīs comitātus alumnīs
 Ībat et ērudiēns vulgus spem laetus alēbat.
 Dēmissa ad tālōs vestis tegit horrida villīs
 Prōcērum corpus, crīnēs iactantur utrinque
 Plūrimaque in pectūs undāns cadit hispida barba.
 115 Utque gradūs effert multō spectātus in urbe
 Indigenās mulcet mūnītō pectore dictis;
 “Bellua bella movet, feritās aliēna virīs est,
 Nec simul incēdunt hominis nātūra furorque.
 Victima nec pecus omne cadat fūmantibus ārīs
 120 Exta nec ēripiat vōtīvī corporis augur.
 Candida corda placent Superīs nōn tincta cruōre
 Hostia, sanguis alit caedēs mortālibus aegrīs.”

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These encouraging words he vigorously poured out
 To the (erect) listening ears of the common people and the holy council,
 Eagerly persuading their minds to common love.
 He in rude garb accompanied by a few close companions went about

And happily teaching he nourished the crowd with hope.
 A shaggy cloak (which was) let down to his ankles
 Covered his tall body, his hair was tossed on both sides,
 And a full, waving, hairy beard fell on his chest.
 And as he strode about (moved his steps), much watched in the city,
 He delighted the natives with words from his strengthened (strong) heart:
 “Wild beast(s) make war; savagery is foreign to men,
 Rage and the nature of man do not appear at the same time.
 Let not an animal nor a herd fall victim to the smoking altars
 Nor the priest rip out the entrails from (of) the consecrated body.
 Pure hearts please the One Above, not victims dyed with gore:
 Blood encourages slaughter for depraved mortals.”

GRAMMAR AND WORD USE QUESTIONS

1. The words *auribus arrectis* in line 108 may appear to form an ablative absolute. They do not, because they have a direct connection to the sentence. What metaphor do they form?

He says that the crowd has raised or erected ears, like listening animals. Vergil uses the same comparison in Aeneid 1.152: “conspexere, silent arrectisque auribus astant.”

2. How does this metaphor seem incompatible with the contrast in line 117?

Here the metaphor compares men to animals. In the later one he is making a clear distinction between men and animals.

3. Epic poets use many present and past participles as modifiers for nouns or noun substitutes. Translate *hortantia dicta; auribus arrectis; persuadens animis; erudiens spem; demissa vestis; undans barba*.

Encouraging words; with erected ears; persuading minds; teaching hope; a cloak let down or lowered; a waving beard.

4. Find and translate the two jussive (command) subjunctive verbs in lines 119–120.

Cadat “let it not fall”; eripiat “let him not rip out.”

5. Identify the metaphor in line 119.

He says that the altar is smoking with the blood of sacrifices.