

Directions:

Read the following text and match each of the numbered items in the left column to its corresponding information in the right column. There are two extra choices in the right column. Mark your answers on the ANSWER SHEET. (10 points)

"Universal history, the history of what man has accomplished in this world, is at bottom the History of the Great Men who have worked here," wrote the Victorian sage Thomas Carlyle. Well, not any more it is not.

Suddenly, Britain looks to have fallen out with its favorite historical form. This could be no more than a passing literary craze, but it also points to a broader truth about how we now approach the past: less concerned with learning from our forefathers and more interested in feeling their pain. Today, we want empathy, not inspiration.

From the earliest days of the Renaissance, the writing of history meant recounting the exemplary lives of great men. In 1337, Petrarch began work on his rambling writing *De Viris Illustribus* – On Famous Men, highlighting the virtue (or virtue) of classical heroes. Petrarch celebrated their greatness in conquering fortune and rising to the top. This was the biographical tradition which Niccolò Machiavelli turned on its head. In *The Prince*, he championed cunning, ruthlessness, and boldness, rather than virtue, mercy and justice, as the skills of successful leaders.

Over time, the attributes of greatness shifted. The Romantics commemorated the leading painters and authors of their day, stressing the uniqueness of the artist's personal experience rather than public glory. By contrast, the Victorian author Samuel Smiles wrote *Self-Help* as a catalogue of the worthy lives of engineers, industrialists and explorers. "The valuable examples which they furnish of the power of self-help, of patient purpose, resolute working, and steadfast integrity, issuing in the formation of truly noble and manly character, exhibit," wrote Smiles, "what it is in the power of each to accomplish for himself." His biographies of James Watt, Richard Arkwright and Josiah Wedgwood were held up as beacons to guide the working man through his difficult life.

This was all a bit bourgeois for Thomas Carlyle, who focused his biographies on the truly heroic lives of Martin Luther, Oliver Cromwell and Napoleon Bonaparte. These epochal figures represented lives hard to imitate, but to be acknowledged as possessing higher authority than mere mortals.

Not everyone was convinced by such bombast. "The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles," wrote Marx and Engels in *The Communist Manifesto*. For them, history did nothing, it possessed no immense wealth nor waged battles: "It is man, real, living man who does all that." And history should be the story of the masses and their record of struggle. As such, it needed to appreciate the economic realities, the social contexts and power relations in which each epoch stood. For: "Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly found, given and transmitted from the past."

This was the tradition which revolutionised our appreciation of the past. In place of Thomas Carlyle, Britain nurtured Christopher Hill, E.P. Thompson and Eric Hobsbawm. History from below stood alongside biographies of great men. Whole new realms of understanding – from gender to race to cultural studies – were opened up as scholars unpicked the multiplicity of lost societies. And it transformed public history too: downstairs became just as fascinating as upstairs.

	[A] emphasized the virtue of classical heroes.
41. Petrarch	[B] highlighted the public glory of the leading artists.
42. Niccolò Machiavelli	[C] focused on epochal figures whose lives were hard to imitate.
43. Samuel Smiles	[D] opened up new realms of understanding the great men in history.
44. Thomas Carlyle	[E] held that history should be the story of the masses and their record of struggle.
45. Marx and Engels	[F] dismissed virtue as unnecessary for successful leaders.
	[G] depicted the worthy lives of engineers, industrialists and explorers.