

Questions From a Worker Who Reads

By Bertolt Brecht

Who built Thebes of the 7 gates ?

In the books you will read the names of kings.

Did the kings haul up the lumps of rock ?

And Babylon, many times demolished,

Who raised it up so many times ?

In what houses of gold glittering Lima did its builders live ?

Where, the evening that the Great Wall of China was finished, did the masons go?

Great Rome is full of triumphal arches.

Who erected them ?

Over whom did the Caesars triumph ?

Had Byzantium, much praised in song, only palaces for its inhabitants ?

Even in fabled Atlantis, the night that the ocean engulfed it,

The drowning still cried out for their slaves.

The young Alexander conquered India.

Was he alone ?

Caesar defeated the Gauls.

Did he not even have a cook with him ?

Philip of Spain wept when his armada went down.

Was he the only one to weep ?

Frederick the 2nd won the 7 Years War.

Who else won it ?

Every page a victory.

Who cooked the feast for the victors ?

Every 10 years a great man.

Who paid the bill ?

So many reports.

So many questions.