

※ 注意：請於試卷內之「非選擇題作答區」作答

In the preamble to his 2009 book *Vie de lettré*, William Marx poses the guiding question of his study: "What is a *lettré*?" [the word is hard to translate from the French: certainly not simply someone who is literate, but not exactly a scholar or academic, much less a humanist – rather a member of the *litterati*, someone whose life is devoted to books, maybe a 文人, but which would include a contemporary literature professor - ideally]: "Someone whose physical and intellectual existence is ordered around texts and books: living among them, living from them, employing his or her own life to make them live and, of course, to read them." You are attempting to enter this life, to become a *lettré(e)*. This is a very strange thing to do! But what exactly does it mean? "*Litterati* form at the same time the basis of a civilization (they guarantee its continuity) and a destructive instance, a support and a menace: they permit the constitution of an order but participate in its contestation.... Such is the true role of the practice and teaching of literature today: to maintain active the double postulation of literature considered simultaneously as an expression of the real and as power of tearing away from this real; to allow oneself to be moved by these texts that have constructed our world, which *are us*, and at the same time are not us – or to demolish [that is, critique] them, which amounts to the same thing: we must leave open a door to negation – the difference between culture and entertainment precisely plays out here." Marx continues, "The *lettré* makes truth triumph against power. He [or she] alone guarantees the exactitude of sources, the authenticity of texts, the pertinence of original context, the manner of holding closely to original intention. Other interpretations and commentaries are necessary too, but they come *after*, and if the *lettré* has not done his [or her] job first, these interpretations, however brilliant, are meaningless..." But, he cautions, "Attention, however: scholarly reading (*la lecture lettrée*) is also interpretation, because everything is interpretation; but it is an interpretation where the interpreter effaces him- [or her-] self as much as possible behind the text. In other words, scholarly reading is distinguished from other types of reading by a particular ethical dimension: the "I" of the interpreter is loathsome [*haïssable*]. That there is not an ultimate truth of a given text is clear: but it is important to suppose a criterion of truth that renders certain interpretations more probable or more acceptable than others. In any case, the *lettré* thinks so." Or so William Marx thinks.

What about you? What do you imagine the role of a literary scholar – teacher and critic – to be? Based on your exposure so far not only to the literary texts which have appealed to you (or you would not be taking this exam), but also the approaches to them by teachers and critics you have encountered, what do you consider the role of the scholar or *lettré(e)* to be? Is it ideally neutral and self-effacing, the way Marx imagines? Or is this an old-fashioned approach we have fruitfully left behind? If you have any background so far in literary theory, how has this ideal been undermined since the "rise of theory" in the 60s and 70s? Why? If you have not had such exposure, still what do you envision being a *lettré(e)* will mean for you and your relation to literary texts? Is there an important difference between culture and entertainment? What is the nature of interpretation? What is the point of literary scholarship? Teaching? For that matter, what is the point of literature?

試題隨卷繳回