

University of Colombo, Sri Lanka

Faculty of Arts

Special Degree Examination in Arts (English), Year 3, Semester 1, 2018/2019

ENG 3162 – Thematic Approaches to the Modern Novel

Two Hours

Answer two questions, choosing one from each part.

Part A

EITHER

1. A binary understanding of the roles of victims and perpetrators and a schematized understanding of national histories prove inadequate in light of the complexity of individual experience. To what extent does this statement apply to Rachel Seiffert's *The Dark Room*?

OR

2. "The primacy of the visual in *The Dark Room* draws on history and memory to try to account for an inherited past that has become part of cultural trauma and collective identity." With reference to the above quotation, discuss Rachel Seiffert's writing of one of the characters in the novel – Helmut, Lore or Micha.

Part B

EITHER

3. With close reference to the text, explore how Chinua Achebe both affirms and critiques colonial ethnographic discourse in *Things Fall Apart*.

OR

4. In what ways do the sites of 'traditional' masculinity and femininity in Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* signal either continuities or ruptures in history? Explore the intersections of gender, politics and temporality in the text.
