

University of Colombo, Sri Lanka

Faculty of Arts

Special Degree Examination in Arts (English), Year 3, Semester II, 2016/2017

ENG 3268 – Poetry of the Victorian Era

Two Hours

Answer **THREE** questions, choosing **ONE FROM EACH PART**.

Part A

1. ***Either***

- a) In Elizabeth Barrett Browning's narrative poem *Aurora Leigh*, the protagonist claims that poets of the age have a responsibility to represent "[t]heir age, not Charlemagne's".

Discuss the role of the artist as envisioned in Barrett Browning's work, with reference to *Aurora Leigh* and two (2) other poems.

Or

- b) Elizabeth Barrett Browning's work is characterised by "a pronounced discontent with male chauvinism" and seeks to establish that "a woman poet could indeed come into her own against such prejudice."

Is this a fair assessment of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's poetry? Discuss, with detailed reference to *Aurora Leigh* and two (2) other poems by Barrett Browning.

Part B

2. ***Either***

- a) What are the complex functions of the dramatic monologue in Robert Browning's work? Discuss with close reference to **any three (3) poems** of your choice.

Or

- b) Discuss the significance of memory and memorialisation in Robert Browning's work with reference to **any three (3) poems** of your choice.

Part C

3. *Either*

- a) Would you agree with the view that Christina Rossetti's work subscribes to an "aesthetics of renunciation"? Discuss with close reference to **any three** poems by Rossetti.

Or

- b) While appearing to uphold Victorian gender conventions, Christina Rossetti's work offers "a critique of how women are framed and controlled in art and in society." Discuss the subversive potential in Rossetti's work in relation to **any three (3)** of her poems.
