Part A (50%)

Choose ONE of the following passages and write a well-organized essay. In your essay, your have to:

a) Rephrase the main points of the passage in your own words.

b) Respond to the passage with your claim and support your claim with a developed argument.

c) Support your claim and argument with examples of literary texts or films.

1. Third-world texts, even those which are seemingly private and invested with a properly libidinal dynamic – necessarily project a political dimension in the form of national allegory: the story of the private individual destiny is always an allegory of the embattled situation of the public third-world culture and society. Need I add that it is precisely this very different ratio of the political to the personal which makes such texts alien to us at first approach, and consequently, resistant to our conventional western habit of reading?

2. The body is always under siege, suffering destruction by the very terms of history. And history is the creation of values and meanings by a signifying practice that requires the subjection of the body. This corporeal destruction is necessary to produce the speaking subjects and its significations.

3. Gender ought not to be construed as a stable identity or locus of agency from which various acts follow; rather, gender is an identity tenuously constituted in time, instituted in an exterior space through a stylized repetition of acts. The effect of gender is produced through the stylization of the body and, hence, must be understood as the mundane way in which bodily gestures, movements, and styles of various kinds constitute the illusion of an abiding gendered self.

4. Place identity, in this collage of superimposed spatial images that implode in upon us, becomes an important issue, because everyone occupies a space of individuation (a body, a room, a home, a shaping community, a nation), and how we individuate ourselves shapes identity.
Part B (50%)
Read the poem below and write two short essays in equal length to respond to the following questions. Solid evidence must be gleaned from the poem to support your view.

a) How does the poem look at rationality, among other things? What kind of tone and rhetorical approach/device has the poem adopted to treat rationality? What is the message of this tone and approach? (25%)
b) Based on all that you know about modernity, how has the poem made a comment on it? (25%)

Demolition
By Neil Rollinson

We can drop this building into a biscuit tin,
all forty storeys, everything’s planned,
down to the last inch; the pre-repairs,
the pattern of charges:
nitroglycerine, dynamite, RDX.

We study it for days,
from high ground or the tops of other buildings,
sorting our delay paths,
checking sequences from other jobs.
It’s an intuition. A sixth sense.
We take the whole thing down in our heads.

Then we begin:
control the velocity of failure,
let each part of the structure disintegrate
at a different speed—we can make it
walk down the road, like a zombie.
We can turn it around, drop it ten floors
then stop it, dead; waltz it out of a corner
then lay it down in the road,
like a golem tired of standing.

After it's done, we check the debris,
the fragmentation pattern, see how
neat we've been. This is downtown Baltimore
and you can't move for skyscrapers,
cars, pedestrians. There isn't a scar,
a stone out of place, hardly a stir of dust
and the birds are singing. It's like nothing
was there; like nothing had happened.