

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

BA EXAMINATION

for Internal Students

This paper is also taken by Combined Studies Students

PHILOSOPHY

Modern Philosophy from Bacon and Descartes to Kant

Answer THREE questions, at least ONE from Section A and ONE from Section B. Candidates taking the Optional Paper (I), The Philosophy of Kant, may NOT attempt questions from Section C, marked with an asterisk.

SECTION A

1. EITHER (a) Discuss whether Descartes succeeds in overcoming the

doubts of the First Meditation.

OR (b) Explain and discuss Descartes' use of sceptical arguments in

the Meditations.

2. 'The Cogito is not a syllogistic inference.' Is this true? If so, what kind of

inference is it?

3. EITHER (a) Analyse Descartes' 'wax argument'.

OR (b) Critically examine Descartes' view of the relation of mind

and body.

4. Discuss whether Spinoza proves the existence of an absolutely infinite substance.

5. With what justification can Spinoza hold that either thought or extension is an attribute?

6. EITHER (a) How should we understand Spinoza's doctrine that man is a
mode of substance?

OR (b) Is there any systematic justification in Spinoza's metaphysics

for holding that any mode of thought and any mode of
extension are one and the same?

7. How successfully does Leibniz maintain his view that there can be no
interaction between monads?

8. EITHER (a) Can Leibniz consistently hold that God was merely inclined
but not necessitated to create the best?

OR (b) 'Leibniz's doctrine that the predicate concept is
contained in

the subject concept is compatible with
contingency but not with human freedom.'
Discuss.

9. What arguments does Leibniz use to justify his belief in innate ideas? Are these
arguments convincing?

SECTION B

10. Despite what Locke says in Book I of the *Essay*, is he obliged by what he says in
Books II-IV to accept some form of innatism? Give reasons for your answer.

11. EITHER (a) What does Locke mean by 'immediately perceivable

secondary qualities'? What does he mean by 'mediately perceivable secondary qualities'? What does he think we can learn about the former by considering the character of the latter?

OR (b) What does Locke mean by saying that ideas 'resemble' things

in respect of their primary qualities, but not in respect of their secondary qualities? Is his view plausible?

12. Explain and discuss Locke's conception of material substance.

13. Expound and assess what you regard as Berkeley's best arguments against the existence of matter.

14. 'By the principles premised, we are not deprived of any one thing in Nature

[and] the distinction between realities and chimeras retains its full force'

(*Principles*, §34). Discuss critically Berkeley's account of 'real things'.

15. EITHER (a) Can Berkeley escape the charge that his God is nothing but a

'God of the gaps'?

OR (b) 'If it be a Spirit that immediately produces every effect by a

fiat, or act of his will' why, according to Berkeley, have the vast multitude of natural things 'that variety of internal

parts so elegantly contrived and put together' (*Principles*, §60)? Is Berkeley's answer to this question defensible?

16. EITHER (a) Is Hume's distinction between impressions and ideas one

of kind or of degree?

OR (b) 'Every simple idea has a simple impression, which

resembles it; and every simple impression a correspondent

idea' (*Treatise*, Book I, Part I, Section I). What defence does

Hume give of this principle and what use does he make of it?

17. 'Hume does not question the real existence of necessary connexion in the world but only our grounds for believing it.' Discuss.

18. 'A question naturally arises concerning this relation of [personal] identity;

whether it be something that really binds our several perceptions together, or

only associates their ideas in the imagination' (*Treatise*, Book I, Part IV, Section VI). What does Hume think holds the bundle-self together? Is his account defensible?

SECTION C

19.* Is Kant's view that space and time are 'forms of sensibility' plausible? Give reasons for your answer.

20.* Expound and discuss the Transcendental Deduction of the Categories.

21.* Discuss whether Kant is successful in his Refutation of Idealism.

22.* EITHER (a) Explain and discuss the Third Antinomy.

OR (b) Discuss the point of Kant's distinction between

Reason and Understanding.

END OF PAPER