

**UNIVERSITY OF LONDON**  
**M PHIL EXAMINATIONS 2005**  
**for internal students**

**LEIBNIZ**

Candidates should answer THREE of the following questions. Please avoid overlap in your answers.

1. How convincing a case did Leibniz make in favour of innate ideas?
2. Why did Leibniz maintain that this is the best of all possible worlds? How successfully did he resolve the difficulties generated by this claim?
3. Did Leibniz succeed in making room for human freedom?
4. What is Leibniz's predicate-in-notion account of truth? Is it compatible with the existence of contingent truths?
5. Why did Leibniz hold that each monad is a mirror of the whole universe? What would be the cost to him of abandoning that doctrine?
6. What was Leibniz's theory of the *vinculum substantiale*? Does it cohere in a satisfactory manner with the remainder of his philosophy?
7. 'In his formulations of the Principle of Sufficient Reason, Leibniz is less precise and consistent than a philosopher ought to be when he is dealing with a proposition to which he ascribes such immense importance' (A.O. Lovejoy). Discuss.
8. 'Each part of matter can be thought of as a garden full of plants or as a pond full of fish. But each branch of the plant, each member of the animal, each drop of the humours, is also such a garden or such a pond' (*Monadology*, § 67). What did Leibniz mean by this? What were his reasons for holding such a remarkable account of the natural world?
9. What were Leibniz's reasons for rejecting Newton's theory of absolute space and absolute time? How coherent is the account which he proposed as an alternative?
10. 'It is necessary to restore and, as it were, rehabilitate the substantial forms which are in such disrepute today, but in a way that makes them intelligible and separates their proper use from their previous abuse' (*New System*, § 3). Why did Leibniz think this was necessary? How did he propose to do it?

**TURN OVER**

11. Did Leibniz have good grounds for preferring his conception of God to Spinoza's?

**END OF PAPER**