

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON
MPHIL EXAMINATIONS
for internal students

The Philosophy of Locke

10:00-13:00, Monday 13th May, 2002

Candidates should answer THREE of the following questions.

Please avoid overlap in your answers.

1. EITHER (a) 'If there be any innate *Ideas*, any *Ideas*, *in* the mind, which the mind does not actually think on; they must be lodg'd in the memory' (*Essay*, I. iv. 20). Discuss the merits of this claim as an argument against innate principles.

OR (b) Does the wide variety of moral and religious beliefs described in Book I of the *Essay* provide good evidence against the existence of innate notions?
2. What kind of entity is a Lockean idea?
3. EITHER (a) What is the most plausible interpretation of Locke's claim that ideas of primary qualities are resemblances while ideas of secondary qualities are not?

OR (b) 'Locke's theory of perception is not wrong because it is a *causal* theory; it is wrong because it is a *representational* theory.' Discuss.

4. Did Locke think of substance as an unknowable, featureless substratum? Would such a conception of substance be compatible with the remainder of Locke's philosophy?

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5. What did Locke mean when he said that 'person' is a forensic term? Is it?
6. 'The former of these Opinions, which supposes these [real] *Essences*, as a certain number of Forms or Molds, wherein all natural Things, that exist, are cast, and do equally partake, has, I imagine, very much perplexed the Knowledge of natural Things' (*Essay*, III. iii 17). How, in Locke's view, had it done so? Was his own account in any way superior?
7. In what sense, if any, was Locke a nominalist?
8. 'Locke's claim that words signify ideas makes linguistic communication mysterious.' Discuss.
9. Is Locke's claim that we can have knowledge of real existence compatible with his account of knowledge as the perception of the agreement and disagreement of ideas?
10. In *Essay*, IV. xii. 10 Locke confessed that various considerations 'make me suspect, that natural Philosophy is not capable of being made a Science'. What did he mean by this? Given the circumstances in which he was writing, was he justified in being so pessimistic?
11. 'And he who will give himself leave to consider freely, and look into the dark and intricate part of each Hypothesis, will scarce find his Reason able to determine him fixedly for, or against the Soul's Materiality' (*Essay*, IV iii 6). 'I agree the more probable Opinion is, that this [human]

consciousness is annexed to, and the Affection of one individual immaterial substance' (*Essay*, II. xvii. 25). Are these passages consistent? Was Locke a non-dogmatic dualist, a secret materialist, or what?

12. Given that Locke thought that 'Morality is the proper Science, and Business of Mankind in general' (*Essay*, IV. xii. 11), why did he say so little about it in the *Essay*, or indeed anywhere else among his various writings?

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