

Major

Moral Literacy Moral Choices

Max marks 20

2 hours

Answer all questions

1. The Bus Rapid Transit corridor in Delhi has been a subject of public debate during the last days (please see the attachment “BRT news and views”).

How do you persuade the planners, policy makers, politicians and technologists about the need for a moral point of view in the ongoing debate on the BRT corridor? How do you characterize such a point of view? How will you make a case to attract their attention to the moral dimension, which is irreducible to the technological, policy, or legal dimensions? Which aspects or principles would you focus on in order to make your case (eg. Common good, freedom of movement, fair distribution of resources, environmental consequences, etc.)? Why?

This question does not expect you to make an argument for or against the BRT. You should state and discuss the conceptual resources you will employ to initiate a discussion on the ethical aspects of this issue. Instead of answering the questions separately you may write a single essay responding to all of them. (8)

2. “An application of this principle would be as follows: if I am walking past a shallow pond and see a child drowning in it, I ought to wade in and pull the child out. This will mean getting my clothes muddy, but this is insignificant, while the death of the child would presumably be a very bad thing. The uncontroversial appearance of the principle just stated is deceptive. If it were acted upon, even in its qualified form, our lives, our society, and our world would be fundamentally changed”. (*Famine, Affluence, and Morality*, Peter Singer)

State the principle which Peter Singer is referring to. Do you agree with Singer’s view about this principle? Why? What are the implications of rejecting this principle for thinking about poverty?

3. “And some ancient Indian ‘materialist monks’ called the *samsaramocaka* (life relievers) who (apparently) used to go about cutting off people’s heads out of kindness uttering ‘I hereby release you!’ (Arindam Charabarti, *The End of Life: A nyaya-Kantian Approach to the Bhagavadgita*)

Assume that such monks existed. Do you think that their action is justified by the ethics of *Dharma*? Why? How does a Kantian respond to the claim of these monks? Do you think that the response from the perspective of the ethics of *Dharma* would be different from that of Kant? Discuss. (8)