

Review of: "Conscientious objection to enforcing living wills: A conflict between beneficence and autonomy and a solution from Indian philosophy"

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¹ La Source - Institut et Haute Ecole de la Santé

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As the principle of autonomy gains ground, advance directives are playing an increasingly important role in medical practice, both in the West and in India. This article sheds welcome light on how this principle is taking root. However, effective implementation in medical practice is never a foregone conclusion, and vigilance on the part of the patient and/or his or her therapeutic representatives is always necessary. This article illustrates situations where the autonomy of the subject and the principle of beneficence/non-maleficence can come into conflict. The parallel drawn between the doctor/patient relationship and the monarch/subject relationship shows just how long and eternal the search for the right balance can be.

The insights gained from the Ayurvedic, Jain and Tirukkural traditions are interesting insofar as they provide an even better understanding of the conceptual evolution introduced by the principle of autonomy in its opposition to medical paternalism.