

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

Allister Lee<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Athenaeum Pontificium Regina Apostolorum

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Overall, this is a very interesting article that contextualises a dilemma that is pervasive in the medical field within the particular Indic culture and philosophy. The authors were able to present the case in a concise manner with sufficient background information that is pertinent to the topic. Also, in their comparison between the “doctor-patient relationship” and “king-subject relationship”, the authors were able to recognise the key differences between the two relationships (p.5-6). However, I am not sure how the latter could fully translate to the former given that key differences are quite stark and would break down the integrity of the analogy. Furthermore, it seems that this comparison points towards an idea of responsible paternalism, where the medic or king is not a tyrant and is responsive to the needs of the patient or the state, which could be an interesting concept to delve deeper.

A point that is also worth mentioning is the authors' quotation of Acharanga Sutra which “states that sorrow or pain is undesirable to every living being and hence, ... should not be subjugated or harmed physically or mentally, as either of them can cause pain.” (p.5) As a person that is not familiar with Ayurvedic medicine or Hinduism in general, I wonder if there is room for necessary pain or suffering given that many medical interventions often cause pain and suffering on patients but with the intention for a better therapeutic outcome.

Lastly, this article appears (intentionally or unintentionally) as a reflection of Western principlism through the lens of Indian philosophy, and by doing so, contribute to the body of knowledge that bridges the gap between the bioethics of the East and West.