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## EUTHANASIA: THE MORALITY BEHIND

Debashri Banerjee

### ABSTRACT

**E**uthanasia is one of the swift processes of ending human life. A person, suffering from cancer or any others non-curable disease, can take its help. The term 'euthanasia' is made up of two different Greek words – 'eu' and 'thantos' that seems similar with 'good death'. Hence from the etymological sense 'euthanasia' stands for 'good death'. In this present dissertation our focus would be on the question whether any death can be good at all even though it is permitted by the ailing person. In this dissertation I want to focus upon the moral ground of using euthanasia keeping in mind the notions of medical ethics.

**KEYWORDS:** Euthanasia, active euthanasia, passive euthanasia, voluntary euthanasia, involuntary euthanasia, non-voluntary euthanasia.



### INTRODUCTION –

Life is the most precious gift bestowed on humans. However sometimes men become adamant to end it due to some unavoidable circumstances. Euthanasia is one of the processes of ending human life. A person, suffering from cancer or any others non-curable disease, can take its help. The term 'euthanasia' is made up of two different Greek words – 'eu' and 'thantos' that seems similar with 'good death'. Hence from the etymological sense 'euthanasia' stands for 'good death'. In this present dissertation our focus would be on the question whether any death can be good at all even though it is

permitted by the ailing person.

### Types of Euthanasia:

#### • Passive vs. Active Euthanasia:

But before entering into this topic let us start the discussion of different types of euthanasia. From one perspective the term 'euthanasia' can be divided into active euthanasia and passive euthanasia. In active euthanasia, with the consent of the ailing patient, a poisonous drug has to be injected in his body to end his life. Here the doctor (in most cases) assists to bring death to patients suffering from incurable diseases. However in passive euthanasia we have to assist to bring the death of a patient by declining to give him

proper medication necessary to save his life. For example, here the life-support system of the patient has to be removed that will bring his gradual death. Another disparity between the active and passive kinds of euthanasia is that the former brings instant death while the latter brings death gradually.

#### • Voluntary vs. Involuntary Euthanasia:

From another perspective the term 'euthanasia' can be divided into voluntary euthanasia, involuntary euthanasia and non-voluntary euthanasia. The first and foremost condition of voluntary euthanasia is that the patient has to suffer tremendous pain from incurable disease and so he himself decides to end his traumatic life. It has to be conceived that the patient has complete permission to end his life. Here the decision of the patient is mostly significant instead of that of his

family. On the other hand, when the patient is not ready to die but due to complicity of his disease there is no possibility of his survival then the family members or doctors can end his life. But there is very small border line between murder and involuntary euthanasia. In non-voluntary euthanasia the family members or doctors can decide to end the life any patient who is in incurable situation, e.g. in the case of a child or a patient in coma for long times. Mainly when the person is near to declare brain dead but his organs are working properly then the use of non-voluntary euthanasia seems mandatory according to the terms of medical ethics.

### MORALITY BEHIND EUTHANASIA:

Now let us try to evaluate the morality behind the concept of euthanasia. Whether it is moral or not? This is a grave question whose answer we have to seek through.

The first controversy arises regarding the etymological meaning of the term 'euthanasia'. Critics categorize all death as bad. Hence, in their opinion, no death can do good to the deceased person. Catholic persons are dead against the use of euthanasia. In most catholic countries it is a fearsome offence to commence. According to them, death cannot be decided. Just like birth is not decided death also has to be undecided. The decision of our death should be beyond our limitation. However in some sense their objection also seems right. Firstly, a person who is suffering from complicated disease or grave situation in life is most vulnerable in life. He has some kind of suicidal tendency to develop within. Secondly, an opportunist, may be a family member or a relative, can take the help of this situation to commit the murder of that ailing person while giving it a color of euthanasia. Lastly, overall an ailing person can try to use euthanasia as a way to get rid of his pain. Euthanasia is the easy way for that. Life is precious and following Bible the catholic countries ban the use of euthanasia bringing the abrupt end of human life. Hence the use of euthanasia is not welcomed at all to the catholic cities.

### CONDITIONS OF EUTHANASIA:

There are several conditions of applying euthanasia. Firstly, it should be applied only to those ailing person whose chance of recovery is near to nil. Secondly, the person should suffer tremendously unbearable pain from the grasp of which no recovery is possible till then. Thirdly, the ailing person must be fade up with the chance of recovery in near future and so will give his consent on the possibility of applying euthanasia over him. That means, he should be prepared to embrace death fearlessly. Fourthly, that euthanasia should bring peace to the ailing person instead of fortune to the family. That means, we have to use the boon of euthanasia keeping in mind to end the suffering of the patient. We should not use it as the murder weapon against him.

### CONCLUSION:

By the way we can say that the use of euthanasia is justified in some grave cases of medical ethics. For example, where the ailing person has no sign of life (e.g. in coma) or recovery there we can use euthanasia. In my view, we should not ban the usage of euthanasia but have to strictly limit it within the boundary of medical ethics. Also we have to be careful enough so that no misuse of this medical boon can ever taken place. Euthanasia is a boon and like every boon we have to use it carefully so that it will not transfer into curse very soon.

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