

## PREFACE

The present study is an attempt to expound and examine the concept of “Mercy-Killing” which is also known as “Euthanasia” from its philosophical, moral and practical standpoints. The present endeavor uses the two terms ‘Euthanasia’ and ‘Mercy Killing’ interchangeably. This is a burning issue of our time. With the rise of advanced medical technologies, especially life-sustaining ones, the issue of euthanasia becomes the centre of disputes. People can be kept alive against their wishes or in states of pain. It is also possible to keep people alive who are in a persistent vegetative state. In cases like this, the use of medical technologies raises questions about the moral appropriateness of sustaining life or allowing someone to die. The issues associated with this debate are complex. There is a constant search regarding certain question like, what it is to be human, what is the purpose of life and whether or not life is a gift from God. The present dissertation tries to delve deep to the above questions.

The main text of the study has been divided into four chapters besides introduction and conclusion.

The first chapter traces the origin of the concept historically and how it has been developed and used in different periods of history. Besides it shows the different classifications of the practice and the concept of Brain Death.

The second chapter focuses on the ethical perspectives of the issue. In analyzing the issues, it brings out the question of morality and law associated with this practice. Besides it tries to present Kant’s moral theory, followed by different problems and other related issues.

Indian tradition of mercy-killing is the thrust of the third chapter. It discusses the different perspectives of Indian tradition like Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, Yoga, Islamic and others.

Critical observation is the main tune of the fourth chapter. By way of analysis and comments, this chapter tries to unveil how complex the problem is and how it affects the medical profession.

In spite of different kind of controversies the present thesis supports voluntary euthanasia. While supporting, it should be necessary to be cautious about the legalized aspects of voluntary euthanasia. This point has been thoroughly discussed in chapter four, section one. We are very much aware that there are certain merits and demerits of voluntary euthanasia, yet the present thesis supports the stand point of those patients who are lingering everyday, severe pains to get rid from this position. In fact there are a large number of patients all over the world who in the name of living, face a kind of unbearable pain every moment. The present thesis supports their standpoints morally. The society always gives importance to the misuse of voluntary euthanasia, but it is a kind of irresponsibility not to pay attention towards the voices of those helpless numb and weak people who are facing this unbearable pains everyday.