

## **An Attempt to Mediate the Conflicts between the Ethic of Inevitability and the Ethic of Inseparability in terms of Human Cloning\***

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### **Introduction**

The birth of Dolly, the cloned sheep in 1996, is like the symbol of the magnificent opening ceremony to enter upon the 'biotech' age. It means that we, human beings, come to have the omnipotent power to control over 'inside' nature of our own, to say nothing of 'outside' nature of us. By help of genetic technology, especially gene therapy, somatic cell nuclear transfer, and transgenic technology, we can exceed the limitations inherent of species.

Furthermore, now we expect that in no-distant future human beings can be made artificially by the bio-technicians, not begotten naturally by the parents. The famous movie <GATTACA><sup>1)</sup> describes the 'brave new world' where the asexually produced baby in the lab is called 'a man-child' and the sexually begotten baby in the womb 'the God-child'. But the movie challenges us that though a man-child is regarded as the designed baby and as much better than the God-child who may have some natural limitations, the God-child would eventually triumph over a man child, because he has the free will and the transcendent ability to make him to try to overcome his given condition. That's the human being as an opened and self-organizing system not as a closed and already organized system like a machine.

In the biotech age, we are faced with the question, "Which do you prefer, a promised perfect man-child or the God-child full of defect?" The problem is that we are so weak and greedy to be apt to incline toward perfectionism. And this is a shortcut to the dehumanization, as the movie <GATTACA> shows us and as the Genesis story in the Bible tells us. That's why a couple of days after the announcement of the Dolly in the February 27, 1997 issue of *Nature*, the March 3, 1997 cover *Der Spiegel* proclaimed in large capital letters, "Der Sundenfall"(the fall into Sin).

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1) GATTACA(1997) directed by Andrew Niccol is one of well-made futuristic story of a genetically imperfect man who eventually makes his seemingly inobtainable goal to travel in space come true.

## **Moratorium on Cloning of Human Beings and Korean Situation**

The former US president Bill Clinton barred federally funded researchers from cloning a person in March 1997 and proclaimed Voluntary 5-year Moratorium on Cloning of Human Beings, and then in June, the National Bioethics Advisory Commission (NBAC) issued a report (*Science NOW*, 9 June 1997) that called on professional societies to “comply voluntarily” with the federal ban. In response to the NBAC’s plea, the Federation of American Scientific Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB), a group of 14 scientific societies representing more than 52,000 biologists, adopted their 5-year Voluntary Moratorium in September 1997. In January 2003, the Society for Developmental Biology’s Board of Directors approved the extension of the original Voluntary Moratorium on Cloning of Human Beings for another 5 years. The Board declared that they oppose human reproductive cloning, defined as transferring the nucleus of any human cell into any enucleated oocyte (egg without the nucleus), and implanting the resulting product for intrauterine gestation and subsequent birth.<sup>2)</sup> The overwhelming public opinion is that human cloning is neither realistic nor morally defensible. But, on the other hand, there are several scientists and doctors such as Panayiotis Zavos, Severino Antinori, Richard Seed, etc. to continue to experiment in human cloning somewhere unregulated.

It is dishonor that Korea is well known for the developed level of infertility technology, though some thought it is honor, of course. The reason why it is thought to be dishonor is that the ‘bubble’ expansion of infertility clinics is resulted from the chronic desire to have our own babies, that is, in other words, Korean society is so blood-based family oriented that Korea becomes also notorious for sending (or selling) their children to be adopted by another paternalistic parents abroad.

Anyway, it is only the December 29, 2003 that Korean Assembly carried the Bill on Bioethics and Biosafety focused on banning of human cloning research, which took four years since the bill was submitted. However, the Bill is being criticized, because it was the result of easy compromising between the scientists’ community to insist to permit somatic cell embryo cloning research to catch up with the developed countries in this area, and the religious community to insist not to permit any embryo cloning research. Finally, the Bill defined that it would be immediately banned to clone human beings, but on embryo cloning research, it would be banned as a matter of principle, except conditionally permitted in cases of therapeutic cloning. Furthermore, the Bill defined that this regulation regarding somatic cell embryo cloning research would become effective from the January in 2005. It is clear that during the period until the effectuation of the Bill, an indiscreet embryo cloning research can be carried out. Therefore, it is estimated that the Korean Bill on Bioethics and Biosafety was contrived to evade being blamed as an ethically backward country without any limit of human cloning research.

Here, we need to remember that Korea ranked the first as using human cells in a cloning experiment, as an infertility researcher Lee Bo-yon interviewed with BBC news in the

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2) <http://sdb.bio.purdue.edu/SDBNews/CloneRes.html>

December 16, 1998. He reported that his research team at the infertility clinic in Kyunghee University hospital in Seoul had created the human embryo using an unfertilized egg and a cell from elsewhere in the body, both donated by a woman in her 30s which was last seen dividing into four cells before the operation was aborted. Dr. Lee said, "If implanted into a uterine wall of a carrier, we can assume that a human child would be formed and that it would have the same gene characteristics as that of the donor... We would not attempt to take the cloning experiment further until there was a social, legal, and moral consensus to support it"<sup>3)</sup>.

The other case of human cloning experiment was held in July 2002 in Korea. BioFusion Tech Inc., based in Daegu, an affiliate of the US-based company Clonaid, founded by a religious cult, the Raelian Movement, claimed that the woman was two months into the pregnancy with the implanted fetus. Kwak Gi-hwa, a spokesman for BioFusion, said that the company was not concerned by the Korean government's investigation, because at present Korean law did not ban human cloning and the procedure took place abroad.<sup>4)</sup> However, the announcement was under deep skepticism by the scientific community and no proof has so far been put forward. According to Clonaid's publicity, since this company began its operation in Korea in 2002, about 5,000 Koreans are believed to follow the Raelian cult and among them 8 Koreans are applied for cloning themselves.<sup>5)</sup>

From our Korean situation, we may observe that the technological development is dizzying fast, but the ethical development is shocking slow. The poverty of our ethics will eventually bring about the technological catastrophe. Hence it is our task to bridge the gap between the technological revolution and the ethical maturity before we rush in human cloning age. History tells us that we, human beings, has survived and evolved when we were succeeded in keeping the balance of our physical need and our spiritual need. Without profound consideration of what we are and how to live especially during periods of rapid social change, we have no hope to survive in the "post-human era"<sup>6)</sup>.

### **The Ethic of Inevitability**

The sensational news of Eve, the cloned female child who was produced by Dr. Brigitte Boisselier of Clonaid at the next day of Christmas in 2002, signaled the coming of the human cloning era, whether it is true or not. What is true with Eve might be that our generation is eagerly tempted to clone ourselves and has knowledge and power to clone an individual human if we really want to. But the critical problem is that we have no idea how to properly relate with our copy-men, therefore the present is not most opportune for attempting cloning human.

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3) <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/sci/tech/236089.stm>.

and also refer to his homepage <http://www.hitel.net/~bylee/index.html>

4) <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/asia-pacific/2153490.stm>

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/asia-pacific/2148864.stm>

5) [http://www.rael.org/int/korean/press/body\\_press.htm](http://www.rael.org/int/korean/press/body_press.htm)

6) Fukuyama F. *Our Posthuman Future: Consequences of the Biotechnology Revolution*. New York: Farrar Straus & Giroux, 2002.

On the other hand, pro-human cloning activists strongly believe that the development of human cloning is 'inevitable'. The means to replicate genetically identical young copies - clones - of a human person may be very nearly, and perhaps irresistibly, within the grasp of existing technology. The pronouncement of 'inevitability' seems to signify ethical finality.<sup>7)</sup> The ethic of inevitability states that if something is inevitable, there is no means of stop it. In the context of human cloning, those who are captured by the ethic of inevitability often say that if the human cloning research is inevitable to ensure the quality of human life, all resistant efforts are fruitless. In doing so, this ethical mood makes us to internalize the learned helplessness and fosters the cultured despair and renunciation among people who concern about safety and the violation of human dignity in the course of human cloning research, and the commodification and the compulsory killing of human embryos who would be created and harvested expressly for the stem cell research.

But, the truth is that when we mention inevitability, it is likely that we refer to ourselves as a kind of machine such as a slavery robot, only performing automatically in accordance with the inputted information and yielding to the flow of determinism. In this sense, the ethic of inevitability is operated from a mechanistic and techno-centric worldview. As William P. Cheshire, Jr., MD and fellow at The Center for Bioethics and Human Dignity, pointed out, to choose the path of inevitability wherever it may lead is to reject ethics and responsibility. He criticized the ethic of inevitability as following<sup>8)</sup>:

First, just because a certain technology is available does not mean society ought to choose to employ it. As an example, death is inevitable, but that does not render the choice of death in advance rational.

Second, this language of inevitability appeals to the dogma of technological fatalism, which holds that if a conceivable technology is scientifically possible, then one ought to pursue it as a moral imperative - or at least permit others to practice - because in time it will be developed anyway. Pleas for restraint are unfairly accused of being 'anti-science'. In its overriding of choices with assertions of absolute destiny, technological fatalism squashes the distinction between judgments of 'can' and 'ought'.

Deterministic inevitability is oppressive by depriving the public of freedom to choose what is right and wrong and by degrading a human being to a means to achieve the technological end. The proponents of the ethic of inevitability in terms of human cloning claim that the purposes of their research are to create spare body parts to cure an incurable disease, to produce a child to help infertile couples, and to advance science to give benefits to our descents as well as our generation, so on. But, in each case there are other techniques available to achieve these goals, and therefore, "(human) cloning is not a necessary solution to any human tragedy"<sup>9)</sup>. Technology has sometimes used 'any' means to achieve the end of a

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7) The terminology of 'the ethic of inevitability' the authors mention here is borrowed from the article "Human Cloning and the Ethics of Inevitability" written by William P. Cheshire Jr. on website [http://www.cbhd.org/resources/cloning/cheshire\\_2002-01-25.htm](http://www.cbhd.org/resources/cloning/cheshire_2002-01-25.htm)

8) Ibid.

9) Evans AR. Saying No to Human Cloning. ed by Cole Turner R. Human Cloning : Religious Response. Westminster : John Knox Press, 1997 : 27.

desired product without permission by the public. It is clear that both the means and the end are of moral significance, especially in this time when the predicted risks of human cloning, both biological and moral, far outweigh the benefits for our generation and our descents.

Further, if informed consent is one of the basic and important principles of bioethics, the researchers of human cloning turn their back on accountability to open their work to public scrutiny and to give the public a reasonable chance either to support or to reject their research. Our strong belief is 'without responsibility, no freedom', that is, today's scientists can claim their freedom to research only when they commit themselves to the social responsibility. It is very time to expand the medical-ethical concept of 'informed consent' to the arena of the science, especially bio-technology.

### **The Ethic of Inseparability**

The ethic of inevitability comes from the technological imperative, whereas the ethic of inseparability from the very intuitional, spiritual awareness. Today we have also viewed that ethic of inseparability has been widely supported by diverse areas such as contemporary physics, ecology, feminism, eastern philosophy, and religion. It declares that all beings are interconnected, take account of each other, have part in each other as each other's very stuff. Catherine Keller, a well-known feminist theologian, wrote that the ethic which emerges from this nondualistic account of subject object relations approximates the sentiment which Shug in *The Color Purple*<sup>10)</sup> by Alice Walker summarizes as "if I cut a tree, my arm would bleed"<sup>11)</sup>. It is because Shug reached the feeling of being part of everything, not separate at all.

In that sense, the ethic of inseparability has its ground on Barry Commoner's "laws of ecology" which says: 1) life is an interconnected web, not a hierarchy, 2) all parts of the ecosystem have equal value, 3) there is no free lunch, 4) nature knows best, 5) healthy systems maintain diversity, 6) unity in diversity.<sup>12)</sup>

In terms of embryo cloning research, the ethic of inseparability would prohibit any procedure against the laws of ecology. First of all, it would like to point out that the whole process of human life development in pregnancy could not be spilt with any reference to the beginnings of personhood. So-called technological attempt to classify the consistent and sequent process of human life development and refer to the embryo until the stage of 14 days after fertilization as a lump of cells not a person has another goal behind it, that is, mainly to escape being condemned for killing a person. There is the dead angle zone in divided, used,

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10) Walker A. *The Color Purple*. New York : Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1982.

11) Keller C. *Feminism and the Ethic of Inseparability*. eds by Andolson BH, Gudorf CE, Pellauer MD. *Women's Consciousness, Women's Conscience*. San Francisco : Harper & Row, 1985 : 260. The terminology of 'the ethic of inseparability' the authors mention here is borrowed from this article.

12) Barry Commoner is a biologist and environmentalist to alert us the hideous environmental costs of our technological developments. His 'laws of ecology' is shown in his famous book, *The Closing Circle : Confronting the Environmental Crisis* (Vintage/Ebury, 1972). Here the authors recited from the following : Merchant C. *Earthcare, Women and the Environment Movement*. *Environment* 23, June 1981 : 10-11.

exploited, and even victimized embryos. The ethic of inseparability would order us to protect life especially in the dead angle zone under the condition of voicelessness and powerlessness rather than to violate and destroy its right to live.

Abigail Rian Evans, an associate professor of practical theology at Princeton Theological Seminary, criticizes cloning fosters a reductionistic rather than a holistic view of human nature.<sup>13)</sup> The concept to clone any persons and even the desire to eliminate certain 'defective' genes through therapeutic cloning, no matter what characteristic is defective and who decide what is defective and excellent, reduces them to their biology and suggests that human beings are simply the sum of genes, lacking genetic uniqueness and individual identity. This belief is antithetical to what *A Universal Declaration on the Human Genome and Human Rights* made on 25th of July in 1997 insisted, "Everyone has a right to respect for their dignity and for their human rights regardless of their genetic characteristics. That dignity makes it imperative not to reduce individuals to their genetic characteristics and to respect their uniqueness and diversity"[Article 2].

If we respect the law of ecology saying 'nature knows best' or 'healthy systems maintain diversity', as Daniel Callahan proposed, it would be better to continue to trust willingly in natural selection by lottery which has been not so bad as we think, but imperfect.<sup>14)</sup> Meanwhile, the law of ecology 'there is no free lunch' leads us to consider that if human cloning is adopted sometime and somewhere, how much it cost all beings at present and in future. Those who have a sound economic sense will at least suspend and withdraw the transactions until the price is settled.

### **How to reconcile the Ethic of Inevitability with the Ethic of Inseparability**

Our collective consciousness of this biotech age seems to focus on "the selfish gene"<sup>15)</sup> full of desires of self expansion, savage competition, ruthless exploitation and deceit. So-called 'technology worshipers', either conscious or unconscious, welcome biotechnology with eager, on the basis of belief that it will enable us to have eternal life by 'fabricating' our body parts including genes.<sup>16)</sup> While the cloning researchers advocate that they are working to serve mankind, in actual fact it is often observed that they are indulged in fulfilling their ambition to be a hero in his own field. This heroism comes from the 'Prometheus syndrome' and brings about the 'Cowboy biotechnology'<sup>17)</sup> that invades and subjugates nature without any limitation. But, we know that the real hero never get the honor in his present day but revives in another time after decayed. Also, the traditional wisdom teaches that the real hero is not the type of person who is easily tempted to a commercial enterprise, but only right minded

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13) Evans AR. Saying No to Human Cloning. 1997 : 27.

14) Callahan D. The Genetic Revolution. eds by David Thomasma and Thomasin Kushner. Birth to Death : Science and Bioethics, Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 1996.

15) Dawkins R. The Selfish Gene, Oxford : Oxford Press, 1990.

16) Ramsey P. Fabricated Man : the Ethics of Genetic Control, New Haven : Yale University Press, 1970.

17) This terminology is coined by the authors from the given concept of 'Cowboy economics' which refers to the world market without any limit.

without self interests.

In this context, we need to listen to what Suzuki and Knudtson, in their 1989 book *Genethics*, suggested. Discussing the need for ethics to guide the new genetics, they advised that humility toward our scientific discoveries might be the most appropriate attitude. The greatest risk, Suzuki and Knudtson point out, arises from our *hubris*, our false sense of scientific mastery over our genes, while we ignore the still staggering limitations to our knowledge of human inheritance.<sup>18)</sup>

It is true that as Abigail Rian Evans suggested, ultimately, theology's contribution to the cloning debate revolves around what it means to be human. Our contemporary analysis of men and women eradicates our spiritual aspect or at best relegates it to the theologians.<sup>19)</sup> From the Jewish and Christian perspective, our vision of a human being is that of a unity of body, mind, and spirit made in God's image, created to live in relationship to God and other creatures. There is an inseparable relationship between the three parts of our nature. This kind of vision is quite different from the Greek understanding based on mind/body dualism, whereas it echoes with the traditional Korean folk belief that regards an unborn child in the womb as having the spirit, and that the spirit pervades every aspect of our life.

As the part something special and creative in our very being, as Genesis story speaks of the image of God, our spiritual nature motivates and enables us to search for meaning and purpose in life and provides an integrative force in relation to our mind and body. Spiritual courage, for example, may enable people to transcend physical handicaps and suffering and to interpret them within the context of a deeper positive meaning.<sup>20)</sup> This is why the attempt to make a 'perfect baby' will not necessarily get through.

Here, the sense of humility warns us to confront with our imperfect limitations by nature. Perfection will never be possible for us because it is only entitled to God and we are not like God and even should not 'play God'<sup>21)</sup>. Hence, the ethic of humility, which is well shown in the image of Jesus Christ in the Christian tradition, evokes us to decide not to involve in any project far beyond our humanness. We can count the ethic of stop-research proposed by Jacques Testart, the 'scientific father' of France's first test tube baby, Amandine, born in 1982, as a good example of humility.<sup>22)</sup> He said that there is no reason why we should stop research on 'genetic purification' through eliminating 'undesired' genes. As a specialist in reproductive biology, his commitment to a 'science contained within the limits of human dignity' is so much strong as he warns that because scientists should have no power to decide defining those limits, they must obey what the National Advisory Body on Ethics consisted of historians, philosophers, poets, etc., tells them. Further, he emphasizes that the questions of ethics must no longer be addressed exclusively at the national level, but

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18) Suzuki D., Knudtson P. *Genethics : The Clash between the New Genetics and Human Values*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1989.

19) Evans AR. *Saying No to Human Cloning*. 1997 : 28.

20) Ibid.

21) Peters T., Collins FS. *Playing God? : Genetic Determinism and Human Freedom*. London & New York : Routledge, 2002.

22) Testart J. *L'oeuf transparent*, Paris : Flammarion, 1986.

ultimately world level.<sup>23)</sup>

In correspondence with Jacques Testart, Leon Kass, the chairperson of the President's Council on Bioethics and professor in Chicago University, testified before US Congress in 2001 that human cloning must be prohibited in both reproductive and therapeutic cloning. Pointing out that it is time for us to learn "the wisdom of repugnance"<sup>24)</sup>, he proposed that in order to prevent the disaster in future, legislators must move quickly to proscribe not only the implantation and birth of human clones, but also the laboratory creation of cloned embryos intended only for use in research - regardless of the alleged benefits of such research.<sup>25)</sup> In conclusion, Kass stated in his Congressional testimony that, "Anyone truly serious about preventing human reproductive cloning must seek to stop the process from the beginning, at the stage where the human somatic cell nucleus is introduced into the egg".<sup>26)</sup>

Living spiritually in the post human era means to have a keen sense of our image, distorted, broken, and imperfect. This brokenness is labeled as sin in theological terms. We are all sinners who have a tendency toward evil, but at the same time, we are all co-creators who have the ability to choose what is good, because we are created in the image of God. That is why we have to stop cloning human in our own image. We need to keep in mind that living spiritually means searching for the meaning and purpose of being human. As a visitor or a roommate, we only coexist on earth with other fellows either living things or non-living things. We are not the owner of this *oikos*, earth house, and even we do not deserve having a position of stewards, because nature goes well without our interventions. Maybe it is the very time to have a break and to humbly listen to our kin fellows who arrived at earth a long time ago before we came, not carelessly trying to meddle in their natural process and to give great harms to them.

In this sense, living spiritually means having freedom, responsibility, and solidarity. We are free to choose what kind of human beings we want to be and what kind of future we want to open. We are responsible for taking care of our fellow friends who live together on earth and of our descendants who have rights to live with chance, diversity, and unpredictability that are innate characteristics of life itself, not in common with the kind of machine, standardized, homogenized, and programmed. And we must stand in solidarity with especially those who have no privileges of any physical and social conditions in our society. Solidarity is not a matter of agreeing with, of being supportive of, of liking, or of being inspired by, the cause of a group of people.<sup>27)</sup> Though all these might be part of solidarity, it goes beyond all of them. Solidarity has to do with understanding the interconnections among issues and the cohesiveness that needs to exist among the communities of struggle.<sup>28)</sup> As a scientist or a

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23) [http://www.france.diplomatie.fr/label\\_france/ENGLISH/SCIENCES/TESTAR/tes.html](http://www.france.diplomatie.fr/label_france/ENGLISH/SCIENCES/TESTAR/tes.html)

24) Kass L. *The Wisdom of Repugnance*. ed by Pence GE. *Flesh of My Flesh : The Ethics of Cloning Humans: A Reader*, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishing, 1998.

25) Bevington LK. *Cloning Humans : Leon Kass and Kevin FitzGerald on the 'Post Human Future'*. cited from [http://www.cbhd.org/resources/cloning/bevington\\_2001\\_winter.htm](http://www.cbhd.org/resources/cloning/bevington_2001_winter.htm)

26) *Ibid.*

27) Isasi-Diaz AM. *Solidarity : Love of Neighbor in the 1980s*. ed by Daly LK. *Feminist Theological Ethics : A Reader*. Westminster : John Knox Press, 1994 : 78.



public citizen, we can share our knowledge and power to serve those who are in need within the limits of human dignity.

All these ideas look to be so naive that they lose their social and legal binding power. Some may point out that it is the very limit inherent of so-called intuitionism. But it is also true that intuitionism has the most powerful force among any other ethical frameworks once it is practiced. With considerations of the importance of both the intuitional aspect of human mind and the institutional aspect of social structure, it is timely needed for all communities to create some kind of citizen's public channel to participate in the scientific process such as *Consensus Conference* or *Science Shop*. We, ordinary people, need to be stimulated and encouraged to exercise our rights to be informed about what is going on with science and to give our decision for or against the scientific process. By doing so, we should keep science from claiming for monopoly of rights to change our civilization, our planet and our humanity.

## Conclusion

Now facing many challenges of the biotechnology, we have the tasks to decide what it means to be human and to rethink what kind of humanness we need to develop. As searching for the desirable concept of a human being in the 21 century, it is helpful to be guided by the newly coined word "*Homo ecologicus*"<sup>29</sup>). *Homo ecologicus* as an ideal prototype of human beings recognizes that the present crisis of our culture is brought by our living style, and tries to overcome this crisis creatively according to the laws of ecology.

Different from any other beings, only we, human beings, ask ourselves who we are and for what we live because we are self-conscious. For this reason, ironically we can say that the true inevitability invites us to ethics in its true meaning. Deterministic inevitability refers to us as 'machine-men', but ethical inevitability leads us to the belief that good will ultimately prevail over evil. In this sense, those who choose to follow the ethic of inevitability would say that it is inevitable to do what is good and right, because we believe ultimately it will be of benefits to all, even though it takes time. Then, the ethic of inevitability will have in common with the ethic of inseparability.

It is our continuous mission to name us by our true names as human beings through building the bridge between science and religion and to learn each other.

**Key words** : ethic of inevitability, ethic of inseparability, moratorium on human cloning, laws of ecology, *Homo ecologicus*

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28) Ibid.

29) Meinberg E. *Homo Oecologicus* : Das Neue Menschenbild im Zeichen der eologischen Krise. Darmstadt : 1995.



= 초록 =

## 불가피성의 윤리와 불가분성의 윤리 - 인간복제의 측면에서 갈등을 중재하기 위한 시도

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복제양 돌리의 출현은 인류 역사에서 하나의 분수령이 된다. ‘바이오테크’ 시대로 접어든 인류는 생명에 대해 전권을 휘두르는 무한한 능력을 소유하게 되었다. 그러나 운전도 할 줄 모르는 어린 아이에게 차 열쇠를 맡길 수는 없는 노릇이다. 돌리 출현 직후, 미국에서 인간 복제 연구에 대한 모라토리엄 선언이 나온 배경에는 그러한 우려가 깔려있었을 것이다.

우리나라의 경우, 생명공학기술은 세계 우위를 점하면서도, 생명윤리의식은 후진국 수준을 면치 못하고 있다. 윤리의식의 부재는 기술문명의 파국을 불러올 것이므로, 지금이야말로 ‘인간이후 시대’를 대비하여 올바른 인간관의 정립이 시급하다.

인간복제를 찬성하는 사람들은 어차피 언제 어디선가는 반드시 인간복제가 이루어질 것이라고 말한다. 그들은 여러 가지 이유를 들어 인간복제가 ‘불가피하다’고 강변한다. 이른바 ‘불가피성의 윤리’는 그것에 반대하는 모든 논변을 비웃으면서 사람들 사이에 무기력감과 체념을 유포시킨다. 그러나 우리가 이와 같은 불가피성의 윤리에 사로잡혀 소수의 과학엘리트들이 이끄는 대로 무분별하게 끌려간다면, 인간이 기계와 다를 바가 무엇인가? 현시점에서 우리에게서 숙명론적 혹은 결정론적 불가피성을 넘어서는 일이 우선시된다.

불가피성의 윤리가 과학기술적 정언명령에서 나온다면, ‘불가분성의 윤리’는 직관주의적 각성에서 나온다고 할 수 있다. 불가분성의 윤리가 지시하는 대로 만물의 상호연관성과 상호의존성을 깨닫고 나면, 카우보이식으로 밀어붙이는 영웅주의적 과학행위가 아니라 후세대와 지구생명에 더욱 민감한 책임적 과학행위에 헌신할 수 있다. 여기서 직관주의 윤리가 지속적인 사회적 구속력을 가지려면, 예컨대 현재 유럽 국가들에서 시행되고 있는 ‘합의회의’나 ‘과학상점’등의 시민참여기구가 제도화될 필요가 있다.

새로운 시대로 들어갈 때마다 우리는 인간이란 무엇이며 어떤 종류의 인간성을 키워야 하고 어떤 미래를 열어갈 것인지 끊임없이 고민해야 한다. 어쩌면 21세기에 요청되는 인간개념은 ‘호모 에콜로지쿠스’인지도 모른다. 호모 에콜로지쿠스는 생태학의 법칙에 따라 현재의 위기를 창조적으로 극복하기 위한 하나의 원형(prototype)적 개념이다. 호모 에콜로지쿠스는 기계론적 인간관에 기반한 결정론적 불가피성에 사로잡히지 않고, 오히려 만물의 불가분성을 존중하여 생명윤리에 헌신한다. 만약 우리가 어떠한 윤리적 선택을 함에 있어서 인간 이외의 다른 피조물과 후세대와 생태계 전체의 안녕을 준거로 삼을 수 있다면, 다시 말해, 불가분성의 윤리가 우리의 사고방식과 생활양식 전반을 이끄는 하나의 원천이자 방향이 될 수 있다면, 불가피성의 윤리는 불가분성의 윤리와 화해할 수도 있을 것이다. 왜냐하면 그 때 비로소 우리는 “내가 이것을 행하는 것이 불가피한 까닭은 이것이 만물의 불가분성을 해치지 않고 오히려 증진하기 때문이다”라고 말할 것이기 때문이다.

색인어 : 불가피성의 윤리, 불가분성의 윤리, 인간복제 모라토리엄, 생태학의 법칙, 호모 에콜로지쿠스

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