

Title: 나의 정체성, What in “ I ” (2)

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[00:00]

This is the title of this course, What is I?

I have an interesting answer to this question 'What is I' is I am a mortal being.

Some day I will die, and you will die, everybody will die

And suicide is a prevalent phenomenon in this country

노무현, 최진실, 박용하 and some students in KAIST committed suicide

And according to a new paper article, 42.6 people commit suicide a day in this country

And everybody contemplates committing suicide at least once in his life

I once thought about committing suicide and perhaps you won't thought about suicide

So I thought suicide is an appropriate topic to discuss in this course

These are the questions that we're try to answer today

Is suicide always immoral? If immoral, why immoral?

According to Thomas Aquinas, suicide is always immoral

He presented 3 arguments, to justify his view that suicide is always immoral.

And we will discuss that today

Some people claim that in some cases suicide is moral, it is morally admissible

and we want to know on what circumstances suicide is moral

I hope you are interested in these questions

If you are, today's class will be exciting to you

If not, today's class will be boring to you

To students who are scheduled to give a presentation on this topic, 김미정 and 김민지

Before students give presentations, let me check the attendance

I want to memorize your names

(Professor checking attendance)

I guess he was absent last week,

Does anybody know what's going on with 이택호?

Did he joined military? Did he drop this course?

(Professor checking attendance)

김미정 are you ready to give a presentation? Ok, let's go

Put your microphone near your mouth

Hi my name is 미정 김, the subject of my presentation is Question 1,

What is the first argument for the immorality of suicide?

How should one respond to this argument?

First of all, I will tell you what the first argument for the immorality suicide is.

As you know this argument was suggested by Thomas Aquinas

[05:00]

Aquinas provides the immorality of suicide with 3 arguments

That is about natural inclination

He argued that according to natural inclination everything natural loves itself

and resist hostile hosts. So suicide is contrary to natural inclination

Every actions against natural law are immoral. That is suicide is immoral.

This is the first argument of Aquinas

Now I will respond to this argument, I think it is not perfect

Next, my response to the first argument

I think this argument is not good for...

insisting on the morality of suicide

I will show you 2 reasons why I think it is not perfect

First, the criteria of natural inclination is ambiguous

Acquinas suggested that 'there is no suicide in nature' to support his argument.

however there are quite suicides in nature

According to our ... lemmings commits suicide

This is lemming

And pea aphids are 완두식물진딧물

And it also commits suicide to prevent from increasing of members their species

There are few more animal that kills themselves

No one can say that these organism's suicide is against natural inclination

Rather it shows that these organisms are naturally inclined to kill themselves in some situations

These cases raise a question whether suicide is contrary to natural inclination or not

And second, people's suicide is not always contrary to natural law

People are naturally inclined to be happy and avoid sufferings

For example, there was a very old man give 6 month to live by cancer.

He can not do anything because of unbarable pain so he lose also his own existence in despair

He thinks "I would rather die than live such meaningless and painful life."

Finally he decided to kill himself for avoiding sufferings

That is his eager to avoid suffering than for self-preservation

It is contrary to natural inclination in this situation

How about the opposite choice?

He will not be happy and worth living

According to this argument I think it is also against to natural inclination

In this case, he or she is eager to avoid suffering than for self-preservation

These are my ideas about the first argument

Finally my conclusion of this argument

I think this argument has some errors. Because some expression in this argument is vague

And it also make the mistake of hasty generalization

I also think that suicide is not a good solution by reason of one's own temporary problems

However we cannot define that all suicide is immoral by this premise

Thank you for listening my presentation

Free to ask if you have any question

[10:00]

No question?

(Student asking)

That's ok disagreement is good in this course

I guess the reasonable thing to say is that in certain situations suicide is the only way to avoid pain

But in other situations there is an alternative way to avoid pain

I think that is the reasonable thing to say

Ok other comments?

What do you think about 김미정's reaction to Thomas Aquinas?

I think 김미정 made an interesting claim that people have natural inclination to avoid pain

Thomas Aquinas might be right that we have a natural inclination to preserve ourselves, to protect ourselves

On the other hand, we also have natural inclination to avoid pain

and 2 natural inclinations conflict each other

And the question is which inclination should we follow?

Thomas Aquinas is silent about that question

It does not have an answer to that question

So, I guess 김미정's point is excellent

She made of an original criticism against Thomas Aquinas's argument

Ok your name?

And pessimist believe life is full of pain, life is not worth living

We should commit suicide

That's what pessimist believe.

What do you want to say to pessimist?

Any thought?

Suppose your friend is pessimist, then what would you say?

Would you follow him or her?

Oh you are right, life is not worth living.

If you conquer pain, suffering, then you become a mature person.

You become mentally mature person. You prove yourself.

Okay. That is interesting point.

Think about all the great figures and history.

They are the people who conquer suffering, difficulty, hardship and so on.

Other comments to 김미정?

Students asking.

Serious injury. Haha.

Students asking

I guess 우남백 is right, that if you commit suicide, your family members will feel sad.

Also 박재민 is right.

That under certain circumstances, suicide is permissible and you can talk about vegetable and many people claim it is permissible on human vegetable to commit suicide, actually human vegetable can't commit suicide oneself.

Others kill the human vegetable for example, doctor, doctor kills the human vegetable and human vegetable can't move his hand or leg so he can't commit suicide.

Let's move on to different issue.

Does anybody have reaction to discussion or comment on 김미정's presentation?

I forgot your name. Ah, 허지은.

Students asking

I guess her question is how do we know that the insects are really committing suicide or not.

Suppose it is true that insects are committing suicide.

Then I guess Thomas Aquinas is wrong.

He says every organism has the natural inclination to preserve itself.

김미정 says, look, we have some insects, they commit suicide

They have natural inclination to kill themselves.

[15:00]

But question is how do we know the insect are committing suicide?

Does anybody have an answer to that question?

How do we know that insects are committing suicide or not

So you agree that they are really committing suicide.

They don't consciously make decision they just commit suicide.

Okay. I leave that issue to scientist.

We can't decide whether the insects are really committing suicide or not.

Okay. Any other comments?

It looks there is no comments.

Thank you for the nice presentation.

Let's move on to second presenter.

Good morning ladies and gentleman, my name is 김민지, the second and last presenter

today.

I know you guys so ready to have lunch, however I would be glad if I give me a second to present.

My presentation is immorality of suicide especially on Thomas Aquinas's second argument in SUMMA THEOLOGICA.

This is little index for you guys

As you can see, first I'll introduce Thomas Aquinas' second argument.

Then secondly I'll talk about individual's role in community and their virtue.

And then I'll disprove one of objection in text book.

And conclusion follows next.

The paragraph on the screen is Thomas Aquinas' second argument.

Second, every part belongs to the whole in virtue or what it is.

But every man is part of the community, so that he belongs to community in virtue of what he is.

Such paragraph claims that every single individual has his or her one role and responsibility

Therefore suicide which can be the act of not being responsibility is against the virtue itself and also immoral

The most important question would be, does one's suicide actually damaging society?

As you guys all know, each individual has his or her one role in any community they belong.

To kill oneself means one is stopping further contribution to one society which is directly damaging the community.

Now, there is an objection to what I just said in text book.

The context state, Surely there are some cases in which a person is so incapacitated that he is no longer able to the welfare of others which means for someone who is no longer able contribute to the society his suicide does not damage society.

This objection has huge logical error.

Although suicide may not disturb someone in such condition from contribution suicide is self cause several harms

Let's say I'm incurable person, and I'm so ill that I can't make any contribution to society.

[20:00]

So doesn't matter if I'm alive or not. Amount of contribution the society is taking from me is nothing. It means zero or none.

So it seems like society has nothing to lose.

But it's not. It is false promise with one-sided consideration on positive side.

Even if the positive effect the negative side is uncountable.

Since suicide is psychologically contagious, many other members in society may also kill themselves even some productive people.

Therefore promise of suicide causing damage to society can't be bear

So suicide is immoral.

This is my conclusion.

Suicide is immoral because it is damaging society.

I once have heard that nothing beside the mathematic is thorough which means that there is no true beside mathematics.

Though I believe my promise is completed theory without flaw, any objection would be welcome.

Okay. 김민지 agree with Thomas Aquinas. Good

Students asking

I guess you are right.

Suppose 이명박 commit suicide and 박명곤 commit suicide, we have two suicide but the magnitude of 이명박's suicide is different from the magnitude of 박명곤's suicide. That is true.

I agree with that.

Students asking

So you agree with 김민지. Suicide, damages community, so you should not commit suicide.

Okay.

I think magnitude of suicide is different for each human.

As our experience the past president suicide and students suicide in Kaist is different for each

human.

For our experience the student in Kaist is more effect

You don't care whether 이명박's suicide but you care..

He is much similar to me.

That makes sense to me.

Students asking

Japanese emperor order 카미카제 to commit suicide, what do you think about that kind of suicide.

That's 정재윤's question.

does it damage the community or not?

does anybody have response?

<student answering>

yeah

before others getting infected, I committed suicide

<student answering>

[25:00]

there must be a way to isolate infectious patient

question is ,, suppose that kind of patient suicide, is that kind of suicide good or bad? That is the question

suppose that person did not commit suicide, then he will infect other people and other people will die

nobody has the right to say "oh, you are infectious you have to die" nobody has a right to say

okay other comments?

<student answering>

okay because many people will agree with you especially ``. The author of the article we read will agree with you

okay other comments?

<student answering>

we should respect an individual's decision to commit suicide, right?

well,, some decisions are bad and some decisions are good and we don't have to respect bad decisions, bad response?

<student answering>

[30:00]

I guess your point is related to ``'s idea

life is a gift from god. We should enjoy the life, enjoy the gift from god

okay, possible response to that argument is what if the gift is bad?

I'm suffering a lot, I don't have a girlfriend, I don't have a job and I have a canser my life is horrible

the gift from god is bad

yeah that's true. So we have different outlooks about life

let me give you an analogy

이택호 gave me an apple. I guess all you guys know what an apple is. Apple is a kind of fruit, right?

He have me an apple as a present

and it turns out that apple is rotten

I cannot eat the apple

then, the reasonable thing for me to do is throwing away.

I should not eat it, right? Suppose my life is horrible

my gift, the present from god is bad

that's true

the point is somebody gave me a present and the present is low quality. Is bad then perhaps I can throw it away

I don't have to bear it

<student answering>

so begger's life and millionaire's life are all the same. Okay, interesting point

<student answering>

okay, fair enough

<student answering>

[35:00]

OK. 이철민.

[Student speaking]

Yeah. Yeah.

[Student speaking]

True.

[Student speaking]

Well, I can see things. OK.

That is a bliss.

God blessed me, and that's a bliss,

but other people can see things too.

That is 이철민's point.

So what is so great about my ability to see things?

[Student speaking]

김지예.

[Student speaking]

Yeah?

[Student speaking]

Depression. Melancholy. Depression.

[Student speaking]

Yeah.

[Student speaking]

OK.

[Student speaking]

Oh my... I guess I defended suicide too much.

OK. Any other comment?

OK. Last comments. You first, 박재민.

[Student speaking]

Trains. Railroads.

[Student speaking]

The Japanese.

[Student speaking]

[Student speaking]

[40:00]

He did not believe that he would die.

That's what she says.

[Student speaking]

Officer.

[Student speaking]

Grenade. Yes. A Grenade.

[Student speaking]

Yes.

[Student speaking]

That's a strong objection against Thomas Aquinas's second argument.

Officer Kang Jae-gu threw himself on a grenade, thereby saving his soldiers.

He committed suicide.

He knew that he would die if he threw himself on the grenade, and he died,

and we all believe that he is a hero.

So it looks like his suicide was moral.

Suicide - it is not the case that suicide always damages the community.

In certain cases, suicide promotes the interest of the community.

It makes the community happier.

OK. The last comment.

There was another hand raised somewhere here.

허지영.

[Student speaking]

OK.

[Student speaking]

So we should not commit suicide out of emotion?

Based on emotion?

[Student speaking]

So our decision to commit should not be based on emotion.

It should be based on careful thinking. OK.

We are running out of time, so I have to let 김민지 go back to her seat.

OK. We've talked about Thomas Aquinas's first argument, second argument...

Thomas Aquinas says suicide runs counter to our natural inclination to preserve ourselves.

Any act that runs counter to the natural inclination is wrong.

Therefore, suicide is wrong.

Feldman says lemmings have natural inclination to commit suicide.

Some depressed people are truly inclined to kill themselves.

김미정 made an interesting point.

I commit suicide in a stressful situation because I love myself.

[45:00]

In order to avoid pain, I kill myself.

My point: A psychopath, suppose 유영철.

유영철 is a serial killer, and he's at large.

He got out of prison illegally, and before he kills more innocent women, he kills himself.

Obviously, he went against his natural inclination to preserve himself,

but that kind of suicide might be permissible.

OK. We talked about kamikaze.

안중근 went against his natural inclination to preserve himself when he assassinated 이토 히로부미.

But this kind of suicide might be moral.

Now, here comes Thomas Aquinas' second argument.

Suicide always involves damaging the community.

Any act that involves damaging the community is wrong.

Therefore, suicide is wrong.

Feldman's objection: An old man is seriously ill.

He has an incurable disease.

There is no chance he will recover, and his disease is fatal.

That means he will soon die.

He is under a lot of pain.

His wife died earlier.

His children are all independent of him.

Suppose he does not have a family.

Feldman says suicide in such a case does not damage the community.

What do you think about Feldman's objection?

Do you agree with him?

김민지's reaction to Feldman was: Suicide is contagious.

This one's 김미정's.

The previous one was 김미정, not... That's right.

Suicide is contagious.

If a seriously ill patient is allowed commit suicide,
then a moderately ill patient might feel the pressure to commit suicide.

Also, you can say the old man made a lot of contribution to the society when he was young.

He was a useful person to the community when he was young.

He is now old.

He is not useful to the community, but he still deserves to live.

He does not have to commit suicide because he made a lot of contribution to the society when he was young.

Then that is a possible response to Feldman. OK.

Here comes Thomas Aquinas's third argument.

God alone has authority to decide about life and death. Suicide is sin against God, therefore it is wrong

Hume's objection was suicide is no different from other human actions, such as building houses, cultivating the ground and sailing upon the ocean.

So if suicide is immoral, so are these human activities, if these human activities are moral, so is suicide.

Okay, uh, What do you think about this?

God endowed us with free will, in other words God gave us free will.

With free will, we are entitled to decide about life and death. I can exercise my free will, and choose to die.

Free will is a gift from God, so let's use it and kill ourselves.

Good or bad?

Bad? Why bad? Uh, I forgot your name, your name is? Ah, 윤여천. Okay.

Uh? Ah, okay, that's right. I have free will, that does not mean I have a freedom to kill others, similarly I have a freedom but that does not mean I have a freedom to kill myself. That's an excellent response.

Okay. Other response? I guess that 윤여천 made an excellent point.

[50:00]

박재민? Yeah. You agree with 윤여천? Good.

I want to reponse with a popular argument for suicide. I guess many people embrace this argument.

I own my body, my body is my possession, is my property. My body is not yours, is mine.

So I can do whatever I want to do to my own body. Therefore, suicide is moral. If I want to destroy my body, I can do it. Why? Because it's my thing.

Think about this eraser. I can break this eraser into pieces, why?

Because this is my property. Similarly my body is mine. I can do whatever what I want to do.

Good argument or bad argument?

Bad? Okay. Then do you deny the premise or what?

Okay, good. So you reject this premise? You reject the second premise?

Ah, okay. You reject the first premise. Fair enough.

So my body is not completely mine. Ah, good.

I guess that point is reasonable.

You owe yourself to your parents and to your society.

It is not the case that my body is completely mine. My body is owned by me, by my parents and by my society. It is a common property.

My body is a common property. It is not only my property, it is shared by my parents and my society.

Now think about the food you ate this morning, you did not make food by yourself. The others in society make the food for you.

Also think about clothes you are wearing, you did not make clothes for yourself.

others in this society made a cloth for you.

So in a sense, you owe yourself to the society and without your parents you will not be around. So you owe yourself to your parents.

So your body is owned partially by your, your parents and by your society.

So a consent from your parents and society is required to destroy your body.

You should ask your parents "Is it okay for me to destroy my body?"

You should ask this question to your parents before you destroy your body.

Because you are damaging the common property, if you commit suicide without asking your parents and the community.

Good or bad? 이철민.

This line? Oh, you agree with the premise. Okay, okay.

Ah, yeah, that's right.

Okay, I like the point.

The second premise is in fact problematic. Okay.

김민지.

Parents cannot kill me although my body is partially owned by my parents, you know.

Why not, because you know my body is partially my property.

It's my thing. So if my parents want to kill me, they should have my permission first.

Okay. Now, another popular argument for suicide.

[55:00]

I would be better off dead than alive.

Therefore, suicide is a right choice.

Suppose you are under stressful situation.

You don't have a girlfriend, you don't have a job.

You don't have money, and you have a cancer.

you are under stressful situation, you don't have a hope at all.

So you believe, ah I would be better off dead than alive.

Therefore, suicide is a right choice. Okay, popular argument for suicide, let me respond to this argument.

Now, ah, 박명곤, which do you like, 짬뽕 or 짜장?

You prefer 짜장 to 짬뽕, right? you can say that because you tasted 짬뽕 and 짜장 before.

Suppose you did not taste 짬뽕 before. You never try the 짬뽕 before.

Then you cannot say "I prefer 짜장 to 짬뽕."

You cannot say that, right? You can say 짜장 is better than 짬뽕 only after you tasted both.

Now a problem is that nobody tasted death before.

Nobody experienced death before, first hand.

So nobody can say death is preferable to life.

Nobody can say that.

Or what do you think about this reply? You don't know what it is like to be dead. Nobody experienced, you never experienced death before, so you cannot say death is better than life. You cannot say that.

박명곤.

짜장 is expensive than 짬뽕.

Okay. We don't have, do you want to say 짜장 is more expensive than 짬뽕?

we don't have, I don't have enough money to buy 짜장, then we should choose 짬뽕.

Ah, that's an interesting point. Other reaction?

이철민.

Previous life?

Will you state the situation again?

짜장 tastes bad to me and I have 2 options available to me, 짜장 and 짬뽕.

짜장 tastes bad. I don't want to eat 짜장 and what?

That's right.

Okay there is a possibility that 짬뽕 is worse than 짜장.

I really don't like 짜장, it tastes really bad. Okay. I will grant that.

But 짬뽕 might taste worse than 짜장.

이택민? 이택호.

We don't have to experience both.

Okay, we can choose new, explore you territory, okay.

Ah, there is no english for these food, these kinds of food.

They are chinese food, we are international. Okay you can say these examples with apple and strawberry, if you like.

You taste it strawberry before but you did not experience apple before, which one do you choose?

You cannot say strawberry, you cannot say apple tastes better than strawberry.

Okay, other comments?

Okay, time is up, I hope you have a great lunch.