

## **Introduction**

### **0.1. Cloning/Human Cloning: The Scenario**

The word 'Cloning' is not a new addition to the Dictionary. It is as old as primeval in history. Cloning is a term originally applied to a botanical technique of asexual reproduction.<sup>1</sup> The term 'clone' is used in numerous different contexts in biological research. In its most simple and strict sense, the term clone refers to a accurate genetic copy of a molecule, cell, plant, animal, or human being. The initial use of the term cloning is in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, in the field of botany which designates plant grafts. Here after the term 'Clone' eventually came to be used for micro-organisms as well. All the dictionaries commonly defined clones as an organisms derived from other organisms with the same genetic make-up.

The initial era of cloning started in 1952 with the work of the great biologists Robert Briggs and Thomas King in Philadelphia.<sup>2</sup> These scientists used frog eggs for their experiment because the eggs of frog are very large and readily accessible to manipulation. Again, the Cloning becomes a popular culture in the 1980s. In 1983, Devid Solter and James McGrath established a protocol for transferring nuclei from one mouse embryo to another.<sup>3</sup> During 1995, great scientists Dr. Ian Wilmut and Dr. Keith Campbell cloned successfully two mountain sheep, namely, Megan and Morag, from embryonic sheep cells. One year later, in 1996, the scientists also successfully cloned the first mammal Dolly, born from an adult somatic cell.<sup>4</sup> In fact, this was the beginning of the development, which had been accomplished for mammalian reproduction. However, after Dolly, many more mammals have been cloned through the use of SCNT. Some examples are deer, ferrets,<sup>5</sup> mules<sup>6</sup> other sheep, goats, cows,

mice, pigs, rabbits, a gaur, dogs, and cats. In 2005, two endangered gray wolves were cloned in Korea.<sup>7</sup>

## **0.2. Human Cloning and Religious Concerns**

It is observed that most of the religious thinkers who have recommend public policies on human cloning proposed either a simply ban on it or implementation of restrictive regulation. This was the views of not only Jewish and Christian faith traditions, but also African American, Buddhist, Hindu, Muslim, Islamic and Native American understandings.<sup>8</sup> The first phase began in the mid-1960s and it was continued upto the early 1970s, was formed by a context of extended choices and control of reproduction, the prospects of alternative, technologically-assisted reproduction, and the promotion of some modern biologists and geneticists of cloning is “chosen” genotypes. A second era of theological reflection on cloning humans began in 1978. There is another period of religious dialogue was developed in 1993, about the separation of cells in human blastomeres to generate multiple, genetically identical embryos. However, the Roman Catholic Church expressed strong opposition to this procedure. Catholic moral theologians invoked norms of individuality, dignity, and wholeness in condemning this research.<sup>9</sup> Last of all, the most recent phase of religious argument has come in the stir of the successful completion of cloning of Dolly, the sheep through the SCNT procedure, as the cloning of a human being once again appeared to be a upcoming prospect.

## **0.3. Human Cloning and the Ethical Concern**

The possibility of ‘human cloning’ has been followed from a very important idea of the popular imagination, which has started in the popular entertainment world since long period of time. For example, in the year 1979, a thriller novel, “*The Boys*

*from Brazil*,” subsequently made into a Hollywood film and depicted a Nazi war criminal, which raises a colony of young Hitler ‘clones’.<sup>10</sup> At that time some people thought that this new technology may evoke visions of Aldous Huxley’s novel “*Brave new World*”, where cloning people into different groups is a part of comprehensive programme of social engineering that deprives individuals of their freedom.<sup>11</sup> Huxley’s, unconventional claims and media speculation have certainly made an undesirable entry into the cloning related debate.

In this context, various public leaders of different parts of the globe including United States responded to the message about Dolly with urgent and strong condemnation of any attempt to clone human beings. In fact, different international organizations like UNESCO have a deep-rooted and well-articulated apprehension that research and clinical applications in biology and genetics remain reliable with an essential commitment to human dignity and human rights. Extending support to this some states like Argentina, Australia, Great Britain, Denmark, Germany, Spain etc. also have enacted laws prohibiting cloning human cloning.

However, most of the scientific, legislative and religious organizations of that time opposed reproductive cloning. Even, a serious ethical concern has been developed by the future possibility of clones. When the U.S. President asked National Bioethics Advisory Commission to take up the issue of the cloning of human beings he admonished that “any discovery that touches upon human creation is not simply a matter of scientific inquiry, it is a matter of morality and spirituality as well.”<sup>12</sup> Furthermore, a United Nations declaration, which is co-sponsored by eighty-six countries in late 1998, signaled a broad worldwide opposition to research that would lead to human cloning.<sup>13</sup>

In this way, the debate of human cloning has reached a climax position in present day among all stages of people. The debate involves the scientists, legislators, religious leaders, philosophers and different international organizations of the world. Unfortunately of these diverse groups of people none of them thought harmoniously and worked together for a common objective. Over all, there was a general agreement comes out from this concern that human 'reproductive cloning' in particular, for the purpose of producing a human genetically identical baby of human being is absolutely unethical.

Yet, various objections to cloning via SCNT procedure are based on carefully expressed some philosophical principles, deep cultural commitments, or strong religious beliefs, which justify long-standing and careful consideration. These objections again repeat deeply apprehended beliefs about the value of human individuality and their personal autonomy, the meaning of family and the importance of a child, respect for human life and the ordinary world, and the safeguard of the honesty of the human kind.

In this way, the ethical considerations of this new technological development are rooted in the possible risk to human beings and to the prospective human beings. There are numerous fear that the risk of a diminished sense of identity and uniqueness of human being. There are also concerns with reference to a reduction or destruction of the value of family life. There are lots of appeals to human dignity and the questions raised when human dignity is threatened. Since, cloning is a complex and highly uncertain procedure; there should be definitely some major ethical issues in terms of human cloning. Here we can see some major ethical aspects of human cloning which can be discussed further. Therefore, the ethical understanding of

cloning, in particular with regard to human beings which honestly challenges its easy limitations.

#### **0.4. The Scope of the Present Study**

The present study discusses the issue of human cloning from an ethico-philosophical point of view. The scientific discourse on cloning would tell us that there are three different types of cloning- Embryo cloning, Adult DNA cloning or Reproductive cloning and Therapeutic cloning or Biomedical cloning. The present study makes an attempt to chart out definite ethical concerns with human cloning in all its forms.

The ethical problems generated by human cloning have been customarily grounded on the concept of autonomy in bio-ethics. The concept of autonomy,<sup>14</sup> sometimes also referred to as ‘self-determination’ or ‘respect for persons’, has played a central role in the modern field of bioethics. The ethical idea of autonomy tells us that how people’s personal experiences and values play the most important role in determining what is right and true for them. As a conceptual pillar of enlightenment modernity, the concept of autonomy has been the leading idea in defining human identity. It brings in the justificatory ground that we ought to respect an individual’s/person’s and people’s autonomy in their ethical decisions as a matter of principle.

The present study, as it explores into the theoretical insights of understanding human cloning from the ethical point of view, seeks to problematize the theoretical ground of the concept of autonomy which has been worked out in bioethics-ethics justificatory negotiations between their conceptual domains. The study argues that the concept of autonomy as the justificatory ground presupposes a corresponding

framework of human nature for further grounding. The study, therefore, intends to highlight from a distinct perspective the conceptual corridor that leads the ethical ideas that sustains the theoretical foundation of autonomy–human nature/person relation to a broader critical hermeneutic understanding of the concept of autonomy.

### **0.5. Justification of the Study**

The major (ethical) justificatory ground of the ethical reflectivity on human cloning is the concept of autonomy. As many contemporary ethicists point out the autonomy justification is simply an insufficient basis for justifying a practice like human cloning. An honest, complete autonomy-based evaluation of human cloning would have to consider the autonomy of all persons involved, including the people produced through cloning, and not just the autonomy of researchers and people desiring to have clones.

It becomes all the more true when we approach the concept of autonomy as relying on the concept of human nature/ person for further grounding. The grounding of the concept of autonomy in different frameworks of human nature makes further grounding inevitable in corresponding metaphysical frameworks which annuls and invalidates the philosophical claim of human autonomy and freedom.<sup>15</sup> The present study, along with the above mentioned view point/argument, assumes that scientific or other traditional metaphysical frameworks of human nature and the corresponding concept of autonomy are incapable of proposing a competent ethical framework to address the moral problems related with human cloning. Therefore, the present study problematizes the link between ethical framework and the concept of autonomy and the supportive dimension of human natures which sustain them in order to register a postmetaphysical concept of autonomy (as discussed by Habermas). The study looks

forward to further elaborate the postmetaphysical concept of autonomy from a hitherto unexplored angle and perspective of a new ethics of responsibility.

#### **0.6. The Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of the study are:

- To register the ethical understanding of the concept of human cloning.
- To critically disclose how the ethical grounding of cloning in the concept of autonomy ultimately rests on a corresponding framework of human nature.

And finally,

- To highlight and formulate a post-metaphysical framework of ethics for grounding the ethical understanding of human cloning which is expected to offer a distinct and wider- in- import model of the ethics of responsibility.

#### **0.7. Methodology**

The present study is a concept-based, philosophical enquiry. Initially, it aims the conceptual description of the scientific-technological state of affair called human cloning and the ethical queries which emerge out of it. Secondly, the study attempts to translate the theoretical constructions which it descriptively aligns with the ethical understanding of human cloning into an interpretive conceptual framework. Therefore, methodologically, the present study resorts to conceptual assessment based on textual description and interpretation.

The textual and inter-textual engagement that the study indulges in is spread out into three fields of enquiry: Bioethics, Contemporary Western Ethical Theories and the Meta ethical and Philosophical Discourses on Morality and Human Nature. The literature/materials which constitute the data of the study are mainly texts available in English or translated into English.

In the present project, we have planned as per our convenience so that we can do justice to each of the proposed objective of the study. The present study has been divided into the five main chapters excluding ‘Introduction’ and ‘Conclusion’. A brief summary of the chapters is as follows:

### **0.8. The Course of the Argument Developed in Chapters**

The First Chapter titled, *Human Cloning and the Ethical Frameworks*, discusses primarily cloning from scientific and historical point of view. The word ‘clone’ has many connotations and is used to describe various different biological entities. Again, the term ‘cloning’ also refers to the production of genetically identical organisms via somatic cell nuclear transfer (SCNT).<sup>16</sup> The scientists classified cloning into three different types. These three types of cloning are namely, (1) Embryo cloning, (2) Reproductive cloning or Adult DNA cloning and (3) Therapeutic cloning or Bio-medical cloning.

The term “human cloning” is routinely used by the scientists to describe a kind of accepted and approved research. It also attempts to highlight the corresponding ethical frameworks which situate cloning as a moral challenge. When the moral challenge of cloning, particularly human cloning started to haunt the questions related with the scheme of life in general and the creativity involved in human natural evolution, the three broad ethical frameworks come to the force are virtue, consequentialist and deontological ethical frameworks. The Virtue ethics is an ethical approach which never emphasizes on rules, consequences and particular acts and places. Virtue ethics is one of three major ethical frameworks in normative ethics. Another very prominent ethical theory is consequentialism. According to this theory, an action is permissible if and only if the consequences of that action are at least as good as those of any other action available to the agent. Again the third common



ethical theory is deontological ethics. According to this theory, the morality of an act is evaluated not by its consequence. In a nutshell, these three frameworks represent some of the most influential ethical thinking from across human history and around the world today. In case of human cloning procedures considering the right course of action we intend gradually to think about the consequences which are arising from the different options.

In the Second Chapter titled, *Ethics and the Concept of Autonomy*, an attempt has been made to discuss how autonomy is important in the field of philosophy, particularly in ethics and bioethics. The concept of autonomy came into philosophical importance for the first time in the work of Immanuel Kant. Again, in the nineteenth century, John strut Mill, has contributed to the discussion on the normative significance of autonomy. The chapter takes this discussion of autonomy and moral decision to bioethics, which situates the ethical questions related with cloning from a more concrete applied ethical point of view.

There is a significant difference between the meaning and history of the concept of autonomy in moral philosophy and its appropriation in the normative and applied work of bioethics. This difference is often overlooked, and the deployment of autonomy in bioethics has usually been presented as the straightforward ‘application’ of a philosophically grounded concept and principle to particular cases or decision making situations. The principle of respect for personal autonomy is one among the most important moral principles in biomedical ethics. In this way the concept of autonomy becomes an unquestionably a central principle in bioethics.

Of course, there are certain ethical justifications for the implementation of cloning technique in terms of human beings. There are three deferent kinds of ethical justifications are mentioned in this context. They are Utility justifications, Autonomy

justifications, and Destiny justifications. The chapter ends the discussion showing how the concept of autonomy attains unequal importance in bioethics with its metaphysical and scientific ramifications.

The Third Chapter titled, *The Autonomy Question and the Concept of Human Nature* also attempts to associate or highlight the relationship between the concept of autonomy and the concept of human nature. Human nature is the general inherent character or innate disposition of humankind.<sup>17</sup> It is a unique concept which refers to the distinguishing characteristics, including ways of thinking, feeling and acting that humans tend to have naturally, independently of the influence of culture. The concept of human nature has been explored by philosophers of all ages. There are deferent philosophers and scholars of deferent period generally who are inclined to discuss about human nature based on the main schools of thought from the human history. In this chapter, an effort has been made to discuss different theories of human nature. It discusses Ancient Greek thoughts, Religious thought, Rationalist view, Empiricists View, Kant's view, Marxists thought, Existentialists thought, Modern empirical science thought, etc.

This chapter farther clarifies that human nature is a concept which breaks down the boundaries between the sciences and humanities. Social and political problems around the world exclaim something for a better understanding of human nature. If there is nothing inviolable about human nature, there is no reason why it should be radically changed. It means there should be with proper reasons and with proper caution. Finally, it is found that the questions surrounding human nature remain unresolved even today. It is also found that the complicated nature of the human experience lends us neither to a clear and convincing theory of human nature,

nor to a satisfactory moral philosophy, which according to most thinkers rests on corresponding metaphysical principles.

In the Forth Chapter titled, *The Concept of Metaphysically Grounded Human Nature* is therefore, provides a brief introduction to the concept of metaphysics and its historical development. Metaphysics is a discipline with a long history. Since the ancient period, philosophers have disagreed about the nature of metaphysics. Therefore, it is not easy to say what metaphysics is. In the period of eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the term Metaphysics was used mostly to include questions about the reality of the external world, the possibility of a priori knowledge, the existence of other minds and the nature of sensation, memory abstraction etc.

It also studies some of the important metaphysical theories which influenced the concept of human nature. The study includes the ancient and medieval thinkers aspired for the ontology of human being on the basis of the ‘cosmogonic’ metaphysics of human nature, Modern Philosophy as rationalism and empiricism fashioned themselves as ‘human mind’-centred metaphysics of human nature. Kant’s qualitatively differently linked human nature and metaphysics with the dialectic between the possible impossibility of the structure of human mind. When it comes to scientific or critical realism, it advocates that existence of object does not depend upon knowledge in any way, that object is possessed of qualities and is directly known. As the sciences concerned with humanity split up into more specialized branches, many of the key figures of this evolution expressed influential understandings about human nature. It also studies Charles Darwin gave, Sigmund Freud, E. O. Wilson’s arguments. The chapter also tries to study scientific understanding of metaphysics and its ground of human nature. The chapter ends with

the hint at invariable abidingness of human nature in the respective metaphysical principles.

The Fifth Chapter titled, *Towards an Ethics of Responsibility* brings to the fore the major concern of the study that how the underlying principle that ultimately leads the chain of justificatory arguments which takes off from human cloning, the moral and ethical challenges against cloning in the modern philosophy, ethics and science, which shares the same platform of a metaphysically induced concept of human nature, doesn't satisfactorily validate itself. Therefore, the study resorts to the Postmetaphysical arguments to argue along with them more contextual reframing of autonomy and related justificatory grounds.

Primarily the chapter attempts to sum up and show that the biggest concern in connection with human cloning is that the cloned human is "morally despicable", "repugnant", "totally inappropriate", as well as "ethically wrong, socially misguided and biologically mistaken". Cloning technique in general would violate the human dignity and individual rights. The instrumentation of human beings through the deliberate creation of genetically identical human beings is always contrary to human dignity. It is a parallel to misuse of both biology and medicine. Moreover, it has been pointed out that human or even cloning of any life form challenges the creative spontaneity of evolving life or the creative evolution. The chapter further discusses how the scientific, philosophical and ethical justificatory arguments for and against cloning, as it has been shown in previous chapters, are grounded to large extent on the concept of autonomy.

There are different justifications found on different ground for human cloning. Though, the justification for cloning appeals to the idea of autonomy in this postmodern age, in which people's personal experiences and values play the most

important role in determining what is right and true for them. To proceed with human cloning at this time, would involve a massive assault on the autonomy of all clones produced, whether they lived or died. This challenges autonomy claim as guiding ethical principle. Though it routes the contemporary discourses on cloning including science, fall back on a concept of human nature, integrated by an invariable metaphysical principles, the present study aims to argue that the 'metaphysical frameworks', as mentioned in the beginning, seeks a stance beyond static or objectivist metaphysics.

Therefore, the study takes a decisive turn here to extend its investigation on the basis of a Postmetaphysical idea of ethics. They orient the engagement with the other at the ethico-political plane primarily, as 'concretizable' self critique through the right discourse of deliberative process/procedure of positive law. In the context of cultural critique the post-metaphysical intent claims the intersubjective unity of reason that sets an 'ideal critique situation' beyond the scattered local commitments of the various universes of discourse".<sup>18</sup> The study further goes across Habermas' effort to link morality with respect for autonomous agency, in following the dictates of impartial reason, and simultaneously following the dialogical willingness to listen, talk and respect other such agents. Habermas takes a dialogical approach to practical reason, as his discourse theory requires. Habermas's discourse principle articulates this dialogical requirement. Habermas's discourse ethics depends on some very strong assumptions about the capacity of persons for moral dialogue.

The participants of discourse raise arguments for the justification of problematized validity claims. The process of justification further requires a progressive radicalization in the levels of argumentation, which leads one from the context of action to the context of self-reflection. This self-reflective action is attained

through progressive radicalization in the levels of argumentation of both theoretical /truth justification as well as practical /normative correctness'.<sup>19</sup> The goal of rational reconstruction is not a translation of an originally unclear meaning. Instead, it looks for explicit knowledge of the deep structures and rules. It represents a universal know-how through the rational reconstruction of the species competence.

### **0.9. Towards the Conclusion of the Study**

By way of conclusion, which is the final chapter of the study and titled, *Conclusion: The Intent of the Ethics of Responsibility*, the study highlights a single point argument that since the moral and ethical arguments for and against human cloning as they are cast into an ethics-bioethics mould of the concept of 'autonomy-human nature-corresponding metaphysics' and makes fall into an ethical dilemma, which induces an irresolvable hermeneutic horizon between 'autonomy for' and 'autonomy against'. The concluding stance of the thesis, therefore, extends the above stance of the study to invoke the concept of the ethic of responsibility as the tenor of communicative and discourse ethics that can negotiate the 'ethics-bioethics' dilemma of 'autonomy for' and 'autonomy against' in situating the moral and ethical challenges of human cloning.

## Notes and references

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- 2 "Human Cloning: ethical issues". *United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization*. UNESCO, 2005. p.8.
- 3 Logston, Amy. *THE ETHICS OF HUMAN CLONING*. Final Draft. Saint Vincent College, January, 13, 1999. p. 2.
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- 10 "Human Cloning: ethical issues". *United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization*. UNESCO, 2005. p.11
- 11 Huxley, A. *A Brave New World*. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1955.
- 12 "CLONING HUMAN BEINGS" *Report and Recommendations of the National Bioethics Advisory Commission*. Rockville, Maryland. June, 1997.
- 13 United Nations Commission on Human Rights, *Universal Declaration on the Human Genome and Human Rights* (approved on 19 November 1998).
- 14 The word 'autonomy' comes from two Greek words, *auto* (meaning "self") and *nomos* (meaning "law"). Autonomy means one who gives oneself their own law. It is a concept found in moral, political and bioethical philosophy. One of the best known philosophical theories of autonomy was developed by Kant. Kant argued that autonomy is demonstrated by a person who decides on a course of action out of respect for moral duty. That is an autonomous person acts morally solely for the sake of doing "good". But, contrary to Kant, autonomy is not based on the capacity to judge one's interests in the light of fundamental ethical principles which are valid independently of the biography of an individual and which transcend the narrow horizon of its interests. In moral philosophy, autonomy is the ability to impose objective moral law on oneself. The appeals to autonomy literally signify that the self is its own ethical law that it generates its own standards of right and wrong. "Although in theory I should respect the autonomy of others as I live out my own autonomy, in practice an autonomous mindset predisposes me to be unconcerned about how my actions will affect others"
- 15 Thomas, Pius V. "The Critique of the Concept of Human Nature: The Postmetaphysical and the Postmodern", Unpublished paper, presented in the International Seminar on **Emerging Trends in Bioethics: The Indian Context**- from 7th to 10th January, 2011, Organized by The Institute of Philosophy and Religion, Little Flower Seminary, Sponsored by ICPR, Aluva, Kerala.
- 16 Nuclear transfer is a technique whereby an animal may be produced from a nucleus, originating from a single cell, that is transferred to an enucleated egg from which the genetic material had been

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removed. In 1938, Hans Spemann described the technique for the first time, in the history of science.

- 17 John K. Roth (Ed). *International Encyclopedia of Ethics*. London: Fitzroy Dearborn Publishers, 1995. p. 404.
- 18 Pius V, Thomas. 'Habermas and the Significance of the Depth Hermeneutics of Understanding', in *Assam University Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, Vol. V111, No.1, June, 2013. p.145
- 19 *Ibid.* p.140