

Transcript of "Introduction to Ethics"

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Time frames: 2:10 – 49:22 & 1.09:18 – 1.13:51

Transcribed by Seanan Clifford

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**2:10 – 49:22**

Okay, so, today we have some special guests, so before we start I want to welcome you and I want to welcome Seanan Clifford to his class. I of course warned my students that they should not be shocked today, there will be many people.

This is a class in philosophy, so the first thing after welcome I want to say, is I don't know if this is good Korean, don't be afraid, don't be afraid of a class in philosophy, it may be difficult, but today I think, we can make it easy, so because as I understand it, you should take some notes and maybe make a presentation or something like that, so therefore I want to give you some help and tell you what we do in this class, so that you got an overview, why are we talking about the things that we talk about today. This might also be good for my students, it's always good to have a repetition and then they also know, oh yeah this is what we talked about, this is what we have to remember. So, the class title is "Introduction to Philosophy", but the focus of the class is introduction to modern western ethics, especially environmental ethics. That's the focus of the class.

General title: "Introduction to Ethics". Ethics means western philosophy of ethics but we want to focus on contemporary modern ethics and we want to focus on the problem of the modern lifestyle, the modern western lifestyle. What are the blessings of modern civilization, modern lifestyle? What are the basic ideas? Why do modern people behave and think the way they do and also what are the dangers of this lifestyle? So, therefore the

class has three parts, of course my students already know this. We have a general introduction of ethics at the beginning when we just speak of basic concepts of western ethics, what does philosophy of ethics mean in the west and in the second part of this class, not today, but of the whole semester, the second part is then what is western modernity? Today we will start, we will finish A today and start with B today. So, what does it mean, em modern lifestyle, what are the theories about modernity? What is the philosophical interpretation of modernity? What are ideas of modernity? Why are they modern? We will speak about this in the next weeks, starting today. Ah, yeah, what are the basic values of western modern lifestyle, basic ideas. And then, of course the third part probably after the midterm is going to be what can modern philosophical ethics say about the problems of modern lifestyle, especially based on how we treat nature, eh how um, whether or not our lifestyle is sustainable etc.

This is not a class in political science, it's not a class on technology; it's not a class on engineering. All of these fields, of course have to speak about em modern lifestyle, this is a class at the department of philosophy, which means any good philosopher always believes, people sometimes follow ideas, follow theories, so therefore we focus, yep on ideas, theories and world views. What are the ideas that shape modernity? How can they help explain em, what modernity is and then em, taking an ethical viewpoint, looking what dangers are in this lifestyle and what alternatives can we discuss. Okay, that's just to give you an orientation, ah we are right now here, we are the end of A and today we will move to B in this class. So, there are some things we talked about, this is just for my students here, so blue you can almost not see it because it's gone in the past...everything already, you will slowly start to remember it before the examine I guess. Here we spoke

about what is ethics in philosophy? Ethics in western philosophy has two parts, justification in concepts, justification of norms and rules and building ethical system where in the west its always should be one highest principle or maybe two highest principle. What is the most important value? Maybe freedom for example or maybe happiness for example. So western philosophers always try to give justifications, why is something good, why is something bad, how can we make arguments to show that certain behaviors, certain lifestyles are good and bad, but the other part is well, try to make a system, try to unify all the different um, rules, all the different values you have and choose one highest value or a few highest values and from there try to explain how a good life should work.

We have then spoken about two different styles of doing ethics in the west, we have said western tradition over the centuries, over the last 2,000 years actually, has developed many different ethics, almost every philosopher has his own ethical system, but we can classify them in two kinds of systems, one that starts from naturalism or common sense, what do people do, what is the nature of human, what are the evaluations that we make in tradition, in everyday life and from there try to clarify, eh what is meant by human nature, what is implied in our everyday life and another type of ethics, very simplified says, it's not important what people in everyday life do, it's not important what the common sense is, we should do ethics like mathematics. We shouldn't ask the people what is right or wrong, just like we don't ask the people what is true in biology or in mathematics, we must find something, eh like a foundation of ethics, not based in opinion, not based in common sense, but based in something like a logical field. So, we have talked about that.

Okay, last time, this is where we stopped and this is what we finish today. We said, yet another way to classify the basic systems in ethics in the west is eh, to realize that there are three ethics., that we see again and again in western philosophy. And, last time I asked, why are there, oh two, two times ago actually, I asked why are there three ethics, so maybe my students want to be brave enough to say why are there three ethics? Any memory? You can speak English or Korean. I'm pretty sure the guest will understand the Korean answer. Why not five ethical system, why not seven, why not two? Why is it, that in the western tradition, always three types of ethics are competing with each other? Any memory? Anybody brave enough to say something?

They are focused on different aspects.

Right ahhm.

The first two are focused on...

That's the three types of ethics, so the idea is, it is clear that in ethics we speak about right or wrong and we speak about human actions, right we don't judge planets, we don't say its good that the sun is shining in ethics, or we don't judge animals, we speak about human life. So, we said, we speak about human lives. There are three ways where you could put your focus on. You could say, the most important thing in ethics is that you are a good man, that you are a good woman. Aristotle focuses on virtues. That is one ethics. When you speak about good or bad, we should not speak just about the actions, we should just not speak about the consequences, but we should ask: What does it mean to be a gentleman? What does it mean to be a knight?

What does it mean to be a wise man? We speak about the qualities of human beings.

Many traditional ethics are like that. Yet, the belief is, once we clarify how your character

should be, if you are a wise man, you will do wise actions. If you are a gentleman you will do kind actions. So, if we have good education of character, teaching people how to behave, everything else, good actions, good society, good consequences will follow. And, the paradigm for this ethics in Aristotle, Aristotle's ethics, which we call virtue ethics. Now of course I said, Aristotle also speaks about rules for actions, he also speaks about consequences, but his main focus, his starting point, where he has the most interest that is, are you a good man or are you a bad man and of course the same goes for woman, are you a good woman, are you a bad woman. What is a good character?

We said then, another paradigm, very simplified is Immanuel Kant and that's of course...that's my style of ethics, rules! Don't worry about character, if you are offensive, if you're friendly, if you're kind, no, it's not important, just follow the rules. Immanuel Kant say the most important part in ethics is, not what is a good character, what is a bad character, but what is a good action. But, you could also think at um, other religions, don't steal, don't kill, don't lie. These types of ethics give you a set of rules, certain actions you shouldn't do. Ah, some actions you must do, be honest. Kant thinks that is the most important part. Even a bad man can still follow the rules. You don't have to be nice, but if you always follow the rules, your acting is okay and then the society will be okay. Now we said it's a simplification because Kant also speaks about the fact that you must have a good intention, but let's keep things simple today, so simplified Aristotle main point was virtue, Kant main point was rules and then we have the other European tradition on this island far way in the north, the British tradition, John Stuart Mill and he speaks about consequences.

Here, the starting point of ethics was, if we talk about good and bad, the main question is not so much, do we have good people or do we have bad people. The main question is even not, are the actions good or are the actions bad, but are the results good for everybody? There is a slogan of this ethics, it is sometimes called consequentialism because it focuses on the consequences, sometimes called utilitarianism, a rule is useful, utility, useful if it brings a good consequences, so here the idea is, what is the result? So, we use this example, yeah, there is a tension obviously between these two philosophers. Kant would tend to say you should never lie, even if it gets good results, lying in itself is not good, try always not to lie. John Stuart Mill would say, well if by lying, like a white lie, you can achieve good consequences, of course not only for you, but for many people, then it can be justified to make an exception from the rule. So, focusing on virtues, on rules, consequences, today we will say values, state of affairs in the world, that are the three types of ethics.

He even said, yep John Stuart Mill says, if you are selfish and greedy, Aristotle would say... you're a bad man, eh that's not good. Christian philosophy would say, if you're greedy and selfish you're a bad man, there is something wrong with your soul, you should try not to be selfish. John Stuart Mill says, yeah you are a bad man, you cannot be my friend if you are selfish, but if selfishness leads to the fact that you are productive, you're always working because you want money, really that's okay, because then people will work hard and then maybe we will have a good income and then maybe we can solve the problem of poverty etc. So, he agrees it's not nice if you are greedy but if we look at the results, the greatest happiness for the greatest people. Some things, some white lies, some actions which are maybe not okay if you follow the rules,

which are maybe not okay if you look at the characters, they are okay. So we said it's, again and again in the western history, these three types of ethics appear. Do we think most important is eh the character, do we think the actions should be most important, or do we think consequences. And then of course, you have to discuss how you combine the three, ideally you would have a good character with good actions and good consequences, that would be the perfect, the perfect human...

So, last time we stopped then, speaking about virtues.

Any questions by the way from the guests, from my students?

You can always interrupt me, you can always ask me questions. So, last time we spoke about virtues, what are virtues and in my class I have a special service because some people have a good English level, some have an okay English level and I want to include everybody, that means, usually at the beginning of a class I have a Korean summary of last time and I want to show it now to my students, so wow, finally you are away from English. So, I'll read out the English summary and my students can compare what I say in English and what they see in Korean and can learn some vocabulary in that way and can make sure that what they understood and what I said last time was um somewhat the same.

So, we spoke about virtues, the first type of ethics and we spoke about Plato and the way how he um, speaks about the virtues and we said Plato says there are four virtues. Eh, why? Because, according to Plato there are three parts of the human soul. Human soul has three parts, each part needs a regulation, so we need three virtues, plus one, then we have four.

The desire soul, which is related to the plant soul, we spoke about it last time, says that as like, oh sorry, as living organisms, we want to drink, we want to eat, eh we want replication, so that's the basic function of being alive. We want that, the animals want that, the plants want that. It's the lowest principle of life, life wants to stay alive. Well, you need a certain way to treat the emotions that come from this desire soul and you need a virtue, a quality, to do that, and that is moderation. The first basic virtue is moderation. Don't drink mekju everyday, don't eat ice-cream everyday, yeah, don't cheat on your wife too often, or moderation, control, not too often, never of course. Immanuel Kant, never. Okay, so moderation is the first virtue every civilized man should have. Second, then we have this soul, in the chest, the animal soul because we are plant, plus animal plus human mind. We also have the abilities of animals, we can see, smell, walk, kill. We have action. Perception, locomotion, action. And, we must also control our animal soul, the animal spirit and the virtue that allows us to do that is called courage. Courage means to follow your goal even if your emotion disrupts you. So today, we can mainly think about fear, courage means don't be afraid, eh don't run away out of fear, but for Plato it means everything. Don't be nervous, don't be lazy, overcome our animal instinct and stick to your goal. And what we call spirit. Stick to your goal, even if you're tired, even if you're fearful, we call this courage, eh in the Greek tradition.

So, next soul is then the human soul. Our intellect, we have one capacity that according to Plato that the animals and the plants don't have, we have this ability to ...and you can think about all kinds of things, so you need again, an ability to control your thoughts, don't study everything, don't believe everything the teacher tells you. Choose what is important, what is not important, wisdom. Wisdom is the third virtue. So eh, in Aristotle,

that is the human soul. Well, we said there are four virtues, the fourth virtue is justice and justice means that you give each part what it deserves, You must have a harmony in your soul. You cannot study everyday, you must eat, you must sleep, you must give your plant soul, water and food. Ah, you cannot just be brave and courageous and act, you must also think about when is it good to act, when is it good to fight, when is it good not to fight. So, make a harmony of all your parts of the soul, that is justice, but of course justice also means, make a harmony between your expectations and other peoples.

So, last time we said, western civilization has inherited four basic virtues from the Greek tradition, moderation...what else? Courage...courage and wisdom and then justice, so it could be very important in a test and very easy to memorize, moderation, courage, wisdom and then justice and then we said, well we have seven virtues in the west, how do we come up with seven? So, now we have four. What are the other three? The Christian virtues. Four Greek virtues if you want plus three Christian virtues. Christian virtues does not obviously mean my virtues, my name is Christian, of course the other tradition, and then we have seven virtues, so eh the Christian virtues I speak about them eh, in a moment. So, we have the four virtues, which are called cardinal virtues, they make you good and then the Christianity added three more virtues, faith, love and hope. We said, what is a virtue, a virtue is not a good action, it's not a duty, but it is a trace of your character. Eh, if you have these virtues, you will do good actions. If you have hope, you will be optimistic, you will do good actions. If you have moderations, you will be healthy, you will ah feel good, so you will do good actions. And we said in the same sense, the so-called seven sins, yeah we talked about the seven sins last time. Seven sins are not really sins, they are not bad actions, like being melancholic, ah for example, not

having hope, not having faith, not having courage. Ah, all of these sins are not bad actions, but there again is a state of your mind, a state of your personality that if you have it, it will lead you to bad actions, you are, maybe if you are pessimistic, eh you will not be cheerful enough to do good actions, you will not help others, so that was what we learned about virtues. I want to give you two more slides.

Eh, many old ethical traditions speak about many many concrete virtues, all of these virtue ethics have the same idea that the good character will lead to good actions and uh it also says that therefore that these ethics are not so much about thinking, modern ethics is about thinking, what do I do in a certain situation, there is a conflict, what how can I make a rational decision? That's modern style ethics, giving you rules for thinking. The idea is, you need ethical training. Sometimes you have to think if you are in a bad situation you have to think what is good or bad, but really only the philosophers need to think. They do the job of thinking, then the teachers of ethics, they just teach you the virtues and then like playing the piano, when you do it everyday, um it becomes part of your personality. And, the same with ethics, don't think everyday what should I do, what is the right choice. Now if you have the good character, if you have a training, the good actions will follow from that.

Now, the last time, I spoke about a British gentleman and a British hooligan, I don't want to show you the slides again, but the two extremes. All cultures agree upon the fact that virtue means control your emotions. Yep, think about the British gentleman, who drinks his cup of tea like this. We spoke about children running around, but grownups who show in the way how they walk, that they no longer controlled by their emotions, you don't shout, you don't sit lazy, things like that. So, all cultures think that there has to be a way

to control your emotions. Why? Because, by doing that, you show to the world that your human soul is higher than your animal soul. Therefore, if people don't control their emotions, we are sometimes afraid. We think, oh they are animal people, maybe they cannot be trusted. So, uh we spoke about that. Okay, any questions about last week? Anything you'd like to add? Anything from my students? Okay.

Now, we have spoken about the virtues, now we still need to talk about the values and the rules for actions, but since we already spoke about rational ethics sometimes ago, I can be very short, I can summarize some of the things, eh that we have already done before. So, Aristotle's ethics speaks about virtues, building a good character. Immanuel Kant's ethics speaks about rules and those people who speak about consequences, well they must speak about values. Value is a state of affair that is worth striving for. It could be anything, peace, money, health um, stability, whatever you think is the state of the world that it is worth to make some effort to bring it about, that is your value. So, ah of course, if you want to speak about good consequences in ethics, you just know what are your values, what kind of consequences do you want to achieve. You want to achieve peace, you want to achieve wealth, you want to achieve happiness or whatever. Now, we have already spoken about this in the class. There is an important distinction. I'll give some Korean words here, between instrumental values and intrinsic values. Of course the idea is, there are many different values, we must make a harmony between them. We must find out what values are more important than other values, so I show you this man, well not a man, but this duck, so talk about duck, what is he doing? He likes to swim in money so for him, having money is intrinsic value. He just enjoys every morning bathing in the money. But, of course we would like to say, only a stupid capitalistic duck swims in

money, why do we want to have money? We want to have money because we spend it, right so money for us it's not, I hope, not a value in itself, but you want to have money because then you can buy you other things or you can have a life with less work. That would mean, having less work is your highest value and money is only an instrument on your way to get there. So, the idea is , okay we speak about values, then we must find a way to make a hierarchy of values, what values are at the top and eh what values are at the bottom. Yeah health for example is maybe both. We want to be healthy because we are healthy, we like not to be sick so it is an intrinsic value, a value in itself, but it could also be an instrumental value, if you are healthy, you can achieve other things, okay study hard, you can, I don't know party hard, you can have a family, so health is both, it is something we want for its own sake and something that we want because it enables other things. Other ideas for the highest value are friendship; we spoke about it two weeks ago. Yes, if you have a friend, it should not be an instrument. You should not say, I have a friend, so he helps me, he gives me money, he works for me like a slave. Once you find out your friend is a slave or your friend wants something from you, you say oh, this is not a friendship. We want friends because we want to have friends, its an intrinsic value, happiness etc.

Now how do values relate to norms and also here I want to summarize some of the things. By the way, this is from the German's children's book. All German children read this book from the eighteen hundred where you have all this drawing eh of, people telling you what to do and what not to do.

So norms, norms are rules that tell you what kind of action you should do, what

action is forbidden, what action is allowed. Now, obviously there should be a relation between norms and values. And sometimes, especially...sometimes forget that there is relation between also values. Now, a norm and a value means that the rule that people follow, should be a rule that leads to a value. So, for example a value could be health. I want to be healthy. Everybody wants to be healthy, that's a value, but you cannot make a rule – be healthy. What does this mean, be healthy? Wake up and be healthy. No, you can make a rule, eat kimchi everyday, or eat apple everyday or go to the doctor. These are concrete rules that tell you what to do and the rules have a justification because we believe they are related to a value. So why should we eat kimchi? Well it could be..., it could be in itself, but okay, one justification could be that is good for your health. So, if you want to be healthy, then follow this rule. So, you already notice something, values are usually abstract, they are global, we don't know how we can achieve the values, but rules are very concrete, eat an apple everyday. There's no room for interpretation in this rule. But values, like peace, if you want peace, well maybe everybody wants peace. Maybe everybody wants stability. Values are very global, very abstract, but then of course we can discuss what are the good rules that lead us here. So, norms should often be related to values and should have some relation to them.

Because I'm German I want to tell you a German story so that you understand that sometimes cultures decouple rules from values and I think this is very German, this is not Korean, this is what Germans do. Once there was a foreign student in my university. I'm a very old man. So, when I was studying, if you want to make an inter-library loan, you want to have a book, your library does not have the book, you

ask the library, can you send me a book from another university? So like, yeah, toady you can do it. So, back in the days, I'm an old man you could not do it with a computer, but you used a typewriter. You had to fill out a form, title of the book, name of the author, what library has the book and then you sign it, student ID and give it to the librarian and he looks at it and he says, okay, wait 7 days or 5 days, whatever and you get the book. Now there was a foreign student who wanted to have a book, so he was writing and he was filling out the form with a pen, not with a typewriter. The rule is you have to use the typewriter. So, he went to the German librarian and said, please sir, can I have this book? The German side he said... Why? You did not use a typewriter. Well, what did the foreign student say? He was a philosophy student. He asked, why? Why should I use a typewriter? Then the German had to think, oh you have to use the typewriter because then I can read it. So that's the... The German understood, yeah why did we make the rule, oh we make the rule because there is a value, if the students type, I can really read it. What did the foreign student say? I was standing behind him. He said, okay, can you read it? And then the German said, yes and then the foreign said yes, thank you. No, no, no and then cannot do it. So, okay, there was one short moment of realization, ah wait a minute, maybe the rule has to do with a certain goal, but then the German style is, yeah we understand, there is a goal, but still I can read it, you have a good handwriting, but please, you... So that's of course a silly way to think about rules, that you just follow the rules for the rules sake. Ideally, it would be uh more flexible in the rule, to understand this relation. So, if you ever study in Germany, be careful, always follow the rules. German people will wait at the red traffic light in the night

for one hour because it's a rule, even if they understand. My feeling is in Korea, red traffic light is a suggestion. It's more like, it's not really a rule, its eh, you should maybe stop, but it's okay, if you are, if you have a pizza and you bring it, it's okay, you can. So, that's a very different way, yeah thinking about values and then the rules are more flexible. We can change the rules as long as the goal, safety is there, it's okay, or German style, just wait for red light for one hour or something and then, maybe even if people ask you, you might remember why you do it, but still, you don't change it. So, here is one way to look at the relation, we have values on the one hand which you can call like goals or aims, we want peace, we want safety, we want health and as we said these are global goals, for example happiness. Yeah I can make a rule, be happy. Well you will say, I don't know how can I be happy. Or I can say, live a life that is meaningful, yeah that is a value but it's difficult to realize the value if you don't have the norm, how can I be happy. How can I live a meaningful life, how can I drive safe in the traffic, please give me some rules, yeah give me some norms or rules. So, norms or rules then are ways/means where we think they bring us closer to this, eh to the goals. And of course, that was the point of the story I was just telling you. In a certain sense, norms are meaningless without the value and if we just follow the rule for the sake of the rule, then you can immigrate to Germany and lead a happy life, but still you can maybe understand that sometimes, that's a bit strange.

So, therefore in ethics, especially in everyday ethics, people very often speak about rules. That's how we teach our children, don't lie, don't steal, don't eat too much ice-cream and only if the child asks why, why should I not lie, well maybe then, I always

say, ask your mother or we try to give an explanation and then eh we start to think, wait a minute, what is the value, what is the justification? But, everyday ethics usually just gives you norms.

Think about the 10 commandments. There is no talk about values, just don't cheat, don't lie, don't murder, just a set of rules and when you think about it, okay, you can understand why this will lead to peace, this will lead, ah maybe to a stable society, you can think of some, some values, that are implied there.

Now the last point I want to make, which also summarizes some of our discussions, is that of course, you could have this picture, for every value we have one rule, but of course you also can have the picture that there is one value and there are many different ways to go there. There are many different ways to show friendship. Again, I'm living in Korea for 4 years. Whenever I go out for dinner with my Korean friends there's never Dutch pay. It was the first thing I learned here. I was invited by a colleague for a coffee and he paid the coffee for me. Of course I could not read Korean back then and so I was not fast enough to pay, but I was thought, oh I'm very clever, I can read the numbers yeah, 2,000 won 2,000 won, so I know, oh 4,000 won, so that means my coffee is 2,000. So, I did German style, after he pay, it's okay, here you go, and he looked at me shocked and said no, no, no you have to understand Korean culture, you don't pay your coffee and of course if you go to Germany and you invite everybody, people will look at you strange and say, is this your birthday, why, oh why are you inviting me. Of course Germans, like will look at...you had one beer and a pizza, I had two beer and a pizza, so I pay two beer and a pizza and you sort of Dutch pay, right. Now of course, what happens here is not that there are

different values, it's the same value, it's equality and friendship, but there are different ways to do it. Because of course, if I never pay in Korea, all or never, then at some point my Korean friends will say, wait a minute, maybe next time you should pay for everybody. So the idea is of course, if you meet many times, sometimes you pay, sometimes somebody else pays. While, in Germany it's always, let's divide it in one. The point I want to make is, this is not a difference in values. It is a difference in rules. The value is the same, it is friendship, generosity, fairness. They are not different values, Germans don't have a different value, they don't have fairness, they don't have friendship, they don't have generosity, no, of course not. It's the same value system, but the rules are different, so it's always important of course to keep in mind what some philosophers call contextualism. There are many philosophical debates, intercultural debates could profit from this insight. That's the idea that the everyday ethical rules are only rules on some rules that are right on average, like don't kill, don't steal, don't lie, but every class introduction to ethics, you ask the students, give me a list of ethical rules, don't steal, don't lie and of course you can always find an exception, you can always make a scenario where maybe in this case if you are starving, and there is some food, there is some medicine and this will rescue your family and you don't have money, well wouldn't you steal or not. So of course in every day life, we just start with the norms, but once we think about the fact that the norms represent higher values, we might be able to discuss exceptions and can say well, in a certain situation, killing is different from murdering, stealing is different from robbery. So, why, because the rules are just generalizations, they are right on average. In a normal situation don't lie, in a normal

situation don't steal, but you could think of situations where just because you want to establish a value, you want to save life, you want to save, protect somebody else, you might in fact have to think of other rules. So, the rules that we have in ethical systems are usually ways how we normally achieve values and I'm just making this point of course, different cultures have different rules, different forms of politeness but sometimes it can be the same value.

Right um, if a German student says this to me...I would be shocked, the same action means, ah if I go to you, if you come to me and say hi, I'm also shocked. Why? Of course there is a way of greeting with the same value, show respect, but how you do it of course can be different. So, the point is not every difference in rules, is really a different in value. Not every different in rule is a different in value. That means, some of the plurality we see, not all of it, but some of the plurality that we see, that might be surprising, might point to pluralism, relativism. Some of it, in fact, actually is just one in the same value spelled out in a different way. However, there might be situations where in fact there are of course different values and not just different rules. So, we must distinguish contextualism from relativism. Relativism would say, let me repeat, contextualism would say, in given context, in a given situation, a given culture, this rule applies and then you get this value. In another culture and another context, another rule applies, but you get to the same value, friendship or respect, as we started. Em, rela...that was contextualism, you look at the context to explain the difference in rules and situations, um and relate them to the same values. Relativism is the theory that says there are no absolute values. It's not true that there is only a difference in rules, but in fact, certain cultures, certain times have very different

values and we cannot make a harmony out of them. So, please don't confuse contextualism and relativism, different views, contextualism just says the rules or the norms are different, but the values could be harmonized and relativism says no, we have differences, sometimes both in the norms and in the values. So, this way you can see that contextualism is in the middle of two views.

Abstract universalism would say every culture should follow the same rules and same values, you know the idea that everybody should have the same style of behavior, at least in some basic parts of life. Relativism would deny that claim and would say that there is no such thing as one set of rules that applies to many cultures, not even in certain parts. And you can then say, contextualism is a mixed view. You combine the two intuitions, you say, there might be some highest universal values, but still that doesn't mean that this translates to the same behavior, to the same lifestyle around the world. The same, even the same values could be expressed in very different plurality of instrumental values, plurality of concrete goals.

So, we will come back to the difference of absentism, relativism and contextualism later when we speak about Immanuel Kant, we will talk more about, so it's just I want to introduce the concepts today.

Okay, now finally we can speak about modern culture, but before we speak about modern life, any questions about virtues, questions about rules, values, yes sure...

**1:09:18 - 1:13:51**

So what is modernity?

Now, you have given me some feelings about western lifestyle and some we can now classify, some maybe, some more positive, if you think individualism is positive or you can say its more negative, if you put it closer to egoism, again less hierarchy, maybe that is good, but maybe that is related to less respect, so again, is this better, is this not better? We don't want to speak about better or not, we just want to speak about different and I want to give you some ideas about modernity that we are going to talk about in the coming weeks.

So, that's a famous movie, yeah, Modern Times, movie by Charlie Chaplin and if you, anybody saw the movie Modern Times, a famous movie, so em, what is modern times in this movie? In this movie, modern times is Machine life, it's the idea of becoming a slave to machines and there is this funny scene where he gets feed and drink by the machine and uh, a very famous movie. So, when we talk about theories of modernity, usually these are some of the ideas that come to mind as a definition of modernity. Some people say modernity can only be understood if you understand modern science. Modern western science is different from ancient science, different from medieval science, so the idea is once you understand that what happened in the European mind that leads to science, then you understand the other aspects. Other people say no, the most important thing that goes along with modern science is modern technology. The Greeks, the ancient Greeks were very clever, but they did not even have a steam engine. They didn't have a light bulb, you can ask yourself why? Why didn't they invent these kinds of things? So, like Charlie Chaplin, you

might say yes, not so much science, but the way, how we use science in technology defines what modern life is. Other people say no, if you speak to people in the political department, in history, they say modernity means the modern state. There is a different way to organize modern culture, its really different from the family lifestyle, the farming lifestyle, the medieval lifestyle and modernity means French Revolution, American Revolution, eh having a certain way of organizing political life and if you understand that, individualism, individual rights, participation, negotiation, vote etc., then you understand all the other aspects. Finally some people say modernity is secularization, modernity can only be fully understood if you understand that something happens with Christianity. Christianity was the main world view in the medieval time and then we had split of Christianity in two parts, reformation, catholic and protestants and people get less and less religious and maybe that is what modernity means.

Last but not least, some people say modernity is defined by a new way to do trade, a new way to do production; modernity is eh the time of capitalism. All of this is some slogans yeah, people in the west think about these slogans when they hear modernity. Of course, then they don't compare western lifestyle with non-western lifestyle, but with this slogans, people in the west compare what is new to an old traditional way of living. So, looking back at what we think about all times and saying what happened in modernity and because again and again this happens, I also put egoism there. Why? This is a class on ethics and therefore of course we have to look at em how much egoism can we find or can we not find there. Okay, any last questions. It's always dangerous to say last questions...