

The aim of this project is to develop a bioethics of space missions. So far in the broad field of philosophy and ethics of space mission, no author has proposed a concept of bioethics of space mission, focusing on the analysis of issues such as environmental ethics in space, justification for the implementation of different types of space missions, or emphasis on the priority of scientific space exploration. The goal of the project is to fill this gap in the current literature on philosophy of space mission. The project sets goals such as outlining a methodology for the bioethics of space missions, analyzing the main biomedical procedures possible in space such as human modification and genetic modification, comparing the space environment with the terrestrial environment in terms of similarities and differences and their moral implications, or finally it considers the rather controversial but discussed in the literature concept of biomodification of morality.

One of the issues explored in the project will be an analysis of the extent to which the justification for space missions can affect the moral status of applied biomedical procedures. For example, can we consider that controversial biomedical procedures can be applied to astronauts participating in missions aimed at building colonies in space, but not to those participating in such “trivial” missions as those aimed only at scientific research? Another important issue investigated in the project is whether the same procedure, considered controversial on Earth, retains the same status in space or whether its moral status changes.

The reason for taking up this subject, besides the mentioned lack of works devoted to bioethics of space missions, is the growing interest of many countries in space exploration. There is no doubt that humanity will be carrying out missions to the Moon and Mars in the near future. In addition to the obvious technical and medical challenges, these missions may raise ethical controversies about human health, interfering with human biology to increase the chances of survival. It is worth undertaking a study of the ethical specifics of space missions, but with a focus on humans and not, as before, on the space environment.

The most important expected result of this project is the development of a fairly comprehensive concept of bioethics of space missions. The results of the project will be published in a monograph at Oxford University Press.