

In this project, which covers ethics, ontology, and philosophy of medicine, we plan to analyze normative and philosophical challenges stemming from medical and research-oriented interventions at the beginning of human life (in vitro fertilization, preimplantation genetic diagnosis) and the new technological advances regarding the medical and research-oriented interventions at the beginning of human life, e.g., CRISPR genome editing, a germ-line modification of the mitochondrial genome, vitro gametogenesis. Three main goals of this project, which has great scientific potential and enormous social relevance, are to analyze 1) normative regulations concerning these emerging technologies; 2) folk evaluative judgments regarding these technologies; 3) ontological commitments embedded in these regulations and judgments. The central hypothesis of this theoretical project states that these discrepancies in the regulations concerning medical interventions at the beginning of life can be attributed to different ways in which axiological, or more broadly philosophical, presuppositions are embedded in the normative regulations (e.g. legal, medical guidelines, court judgments, etc.) and evaluative opinions. In particular, the primary task of the PhD student shall be to evaluate how the distinction between “person-affecting” and “identity-affecting” interventions that is very often discussed by philosophers and bioethicists is relevant in the context of emerging reproductive technologies and to explain why it is usually claimed that person-affecting reasons are weightier.