

*BEYOND PATTISON CONFERENCE  
REMEDiE Project*

**Global bioethics: Religion, bioethics  
and the negotiation of value conflict**

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## What is this workpackage about?

- **global bioethical discourse regarding regenerative medicine, the balance of power within it and the regulatory policies that it legitimises.**

## Case study: Spain as a challenge

“Most countries with a strong influence of religion over ethical issues have failed to make advances” SAVULESCU

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**Is this valid for Spain?**

## 3 Cases

- IVF
- Stem cell research
- Genetic preimplantation diagnosis

# IVF

- Spain was one of the first countries in Europe having an act concerning IVF (1988) and it was an extremely liberal act.
- Act 14/2006 on Assisted Reproduction allows unmarried people, even a man or a woman alone to access to this technic. It also allows heterologous fecundation, post mortem fecundation, crioconservation of the embryos, etc.
- Donation of oocytes and sperm are permitted. Oocytes donation happens, in fact, frequently in Spain. Spain is the paradise for scientits who need eggs for research (300 private clinics, donors get “compensated” up to 1.400 euro per cycle). Spain: sun, bech and IVF.

# Stem cell research

- Act 14/2007 on Biomedical Research allows not only investigation with spare embryos, but also “therapeutic cloning”. Even the creation of chimaera and hybrids may be permitted.
- Bernat Soria, Stem Cell researcher on Diabetes became minister of health
- Human Embryonic Stem cell line Public banks (Barcelona, Granada)
- Egg cell donation for research ->Somatic Cell Nuclear Transfer projects admitted (Centro Felipe II, Valencia)
- Public Funding: Spanish Government, Autonomic Governments (Cataluña, Andalucía, Valencia, País Vasco).

# Genetic Preimplantation diagnosis

- GPD is currently practised in Spain.
- It is allowed for the following purposes:
  - Discovering diseases which will surely affect the offspring, such as Huntington, for instance or even those which have a high probability to do so, for instance cancer..
  - Determining the viability of the embryo.
  - Selecting embryos for therapeutic purposes (providing tissues, cells, etc).
- According to these criteria, embryos can be selected in order to avoid the transfer of some of them, which has created a serious conflict with the Catholic Church.

# Understanding Spanichs aproach: Provisional conclusions

- Regulatory history:
  - Biolaws start with Spanish transition to democracy (80")
  - Artificial Reproductive Technology Law, 1988 context of family structure revision
- Political impulse
  - Science as a means of modernizing the country: "Scientific nationalism"
  - Competition among Autonomies
- No public debate, except for the Catholic Church radicalism
- Spain is actually a World actor on the global tissue economy: how could this fact be explained in a context of a religious country, comparing it to similar cultural contexts as Italy that has adopted a very differente approach? Obviously, Savulescu's affirmation does not seem to be useful unless we think that Spain has give up being a Catholic country.