

Theme A Plurality of Lives

A few decades ago both the creation of new life and the discovery of extraterrestrial life would have been seen as science fiction. Today, the scientific community generally agrees that it is a question of when, not if, any of these endeavors will be successful. In spite of this, there are reasons to believe that we are ill-prepared for the challenges, as well as the opportunities, that the emergence of a plurality of lives – life with different origins – undoubtedly will create.

Research groups around the world are currently busy trying to invent new life in the laboratory or looking for extraterrestrial life. Further, medical science is moving in a direction of turning humans into what sometimes is described as post-humans. These areas have one thing in common, namely that they might, within our lifetime, provide us with a Second Origin of life. In the case of astrobiology, it might be a matter of life that is as old as earth life or older, but when discovered it would still be new to us. In the other cases, it would be a matter of inventing life that did not exist before.

The emergence of a plurality of lives will have profound effects on a wide range of issues that all depend on how we look at life, from how to frame research questions in chemistry, biology and astrobiology via legal and political questions, to philosophical and theological perspectives. Only a thoroughly interdisciplinary project can tackle the basic question behind all these challenges, that is, how will the emerging plurality of lives change how we conceive of and understand life?

For those interested in following the group's work there is a Facebook-group [here](#).

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