

## Split over human germline modification illustrates ideological divide between Chinese and Western science

[China](#) is spending hundreds of billions of dollars annually in an effort to become a leader in biomedical research, building scores of laboratories and training thousands of scientists.

But the rush to the front ranks of science may come at a price: Some experts worry that medical researchers in China are stepping over ethical boundaries long accepted in the West.

Scientists around the world were shocked in April when a team led by Huang Junjiu, 34, at Sun Yat-sen University in Guangzhou, published the results of an experiment in editing the genes of human embryos.

Huang and his colleagues tried to modify a gene that causes a blood disorder called beta-[thalassemia](#). The experiment [failed in 85 embryos](#). Even so, to many in global science, it was [a line that should not have been crossed](#).

Scientists in the West generally abjure this sort of research on the grounds that it amounts to genetic engineering of humans. In any event, the technology is still in the earliest stages of development, and many scientists around the world have called for an international moratorium on research into human germline gene editing.

“I don’t think China wants to take a moratorium,” said Huso Yi, the director of research at the Chinese University of Hong Kong Center for Bioethics. “People are saying they can’t stop the train of mainland Chinese [genetics](#) because it’s going too fast.”

**The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis. Read full, original post: [A Scientific Ethical Divide Between China and West](#)**