

Press Release

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“Science Social”: The New Podcast Series Exploring History, Science, and Society

What can a simple mask—that iconic object of the coronavirus pandemic—tell us about social equality? How does digitization change our lives and what researchers, or the public, know and understand? And what does China's growing scientific and technological influence mean for all of us? In the new "Science Social" podcast series, scholars from the Max Planck Institute for the History of Science join host Stephanie Hood with a cup of coffee to take a close-up look at what exploring topics around science, society, and history can tell us about wider current issues.

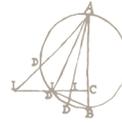
Delving into the wonderful and unusual hidden stories from the world of research, “Science Social” unpacks new ideas here and there that give us new perspectives. The podcast series is aimed at the general listener as well as students and academics across the sciences, social sciences, and humanities. Each episode seeks to deliver explorations of the connections between history, science, and society and their relevance to our everyday lives.

Inaugural Episode: “China on the Rise” with Anna L. Ahlers

China is well on its way to becoming a global leader in science. The country has become the world's largest producer of scientific articles, pours a staggering amount of money into funding research, and is home to scientists whose groundbreaking and sometimes controversial findings increasingly make international news. But if science needs freedom to thrive, how is this rise possible where an authoritarian political system limits rights and controls information on a wide scale? On the other hand, how is science used for political goals? In what way does science interact with societal values and ethical principles? And what does China's rise in science mean globally? Political sociologist and sinologist [Anna L. Ahlers](#) answers some burning questions on China's stunning ascent in “[China on the Rise](#),” the inaugural episode of the “Science Social” podcast series.

Next Episodes

Episode 2 focuses on the “[The Mask—Arrayed](#)” project, with scholars Carolin Roeder and Marianna Szczygielska exploring the material, technological, and cultural aspects of the most iconic artifact of the COVID-19 crisis: the face mask. What can studying this single object help us to learn about the materiality of the mask, about the pandemic, and about ourselves?



A third episode to be released in December 2020 will reveal new insights in digital humanities through the MPIWG's own open access resource, [Local Gazetteers Research Tools](#) (LoGaRT). The software enables researchers to search for, analyze, and collect data from digitized Chinese local gazetteers—major primary sources for the study of China's local history. Why is developing digital tools such as LoGaRT so important for the history of science and the humanities? And how does digitization change the work of historians as well as what we can know in a broader sense?

Listen

Listeners can tune in to “Science Social” on the MPIWG website, and find it on iTunes and Spotify. Click the subscribe button or give us a thumbs-up in your favorite podcast app, and don't forget to recommend the series to your friends and colleagues. Join us in each episode as we explore the big questions of science, socially!

Production and Credits

“Science Social” is produced by Verena Braun and hosted by Stephanie Hood at the Max Planck Institute for the History of Science. Music is produced by [Podington Bear](#).

Links

- MPIWG Mediathek: www.mpiwg-berlin.mpg.de/podcast/science-social-conversations-history-science-and-society
- Follow @MPIWG on Twitter: www.twitter.com/MPIWG
- Like MPIWG on Facebook: www.facebook.com/MPIWGBerlin
- Spotify: <https://open.spotify.com/show/5f7ec9NBwzfkaX8e5DqJwp>
- Apple: www.podcasts.apple.com/de/podcast/science-social-conversations-on-history-science-society/id1536730848
- Subscribe to MPIWG Newsletter: www.mpiwg-berlin.mpg.de/newsletter

About the MPIWG

Founded in 1994, the Max Planck Institute for the History of Science (MPIWG) in Berlin, Germany, is one of the more than 80 research institutes administered by the Max Planck Society. It is dedicated to the study of the history of science and aims to understand scientific thinking and practice as historical phenomena, with projects spanning globally and across all eras of human history.

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