

[CFP: Panel on verticality in the history of science - ICHG2018, Warsaw](#)

Discussion published by Martin Mahony on Thursday, October 5, 2017

Up, down, round and round: verticality in the history of science

Work on the historical geographies of scientific knowledge is frequently presented in a register of horizontal movement: circulation, diffusion, migration, expansion; often coupled with the 'flat' ontologies of actor-network theory, or with the historiographies of European advance across two-dimensional maps of imperial geography. In this session, which we are planning to propose for the **International Conference of Historical Geographers** (Warsaw, 15-20 July 2018), we want to investigate what happens when we consider science in three dimensions.

Political geographers have recently urged more attention to the vertical as a dimension of power (Braun, 2000; Elden, 2013), while cultural geographers have explored questions of dwelling and elemental encounter in atmospheric and subterranean spaces (Adey, 2015; Jackson & Fannin, 2011). Drawing on this work, we suggest that the spatial turn in the history of science might be furthered through deeper engagement with questions of verticality. What are the particular characteristics of the sciences of height, depth and volume? How have scientists sought to overcome the epistemic, technical and bodily challenges of working at height or at depth? What would it mean to consider the field site as a three-dimensional space (Kohler & Vetter, 2016)? How has scientific knowledge contributed to the production of vertical territory - to the bounding of space and the claiming of ownership, rights and dominion? How have the reference frames of the vertical dimension been structured and understood?

Papers in this session could address these and related questions across field, laboratory and theoretical science, as well as regards the scientization of cultural and physical practices taking place in the vertical. We welcome papers addressing any time period.

Please send inquiries and abstracts of around 200 words to Wilko Hardenberg (whardenberg@mpiwg-berlin.mpg.de) and Martin Mahony (m.mahony@uea.ac.uk) no later than Monday 9 October.

PS. We are also reflecting about the opportunity to propose a further session at the meeting of the **European Society for the History of Science** (London, 15-17 September 2018), but no CFP has been issued yet. Thus if you can't make it for Warsaw, but are still interested in the topic

and would like to give it a go for London, please let us know.

Contact Email:

m.mahony@uea.ac.uk