

Editorial Issue 1/2022: Valuing Water, Culture and Heritage

Carola Hein, Matteo D'Agostino, Carlien Donkor, Queenie Lin and Hilde Sennema

Over the past few decades, like-minded researchers, heritage professionals, field practitioners and activists have started to explore the value of water-related practices, objects and systems from a long-term and heritage perspective – going beyond their financial worth. This network of researchers, water managers, heritage professionals and activists from all over the world, with diverse backgrounds, ages and coming from different disciplines, sees the nexus of water culture and heritage as crucial to achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Meaningful collaboration within this growing network requires discussion of concepts, theories and methodologies and a shared knowledge of case studies.

The *Blue Papers* journal provides a platform for the growing network, with the first issues launched in time for the UN 2023 Water Conference in New York, 22–24 March 2023, which coincides with the Midterm Review of the UN Water Action Decade. A growing number of people have come to realize that valuing water needs to go beyond technological, political and economic changes. The conference provides the background for a broad exploration of the role that culture, heritage and social practices play in current water challenges, and those they can play to support future inclusive and sustainable development. This requires an advanced engagement with the social, cultural and intrinsic value of water, by creating a new embedded water awareness 2.0.

The first three issues of *Blue Papers* pursue this aim by gathering contributions from academics, practitioners and experts who challenge siloed thinking and stand-alone solutions and who reflect on how water, culture and heritage management practices – as well as the constellation of actors and organizations involved – have changed over time. Contributors point out the current challenges faced by water systems and their users and explore how new approaches, concepts and methods can be integrated to achieve sustainable development. Each issue has two parts: Part I sets the scene of the current water and heritage situation, discussing contemporary challenges in global and local contexts, and sharing new strategies from experts in various disciplines around the world; Part II presents working methodologies and case studies that illuminate past and present conditions and challenges.

This first issue, “Valuing Water, Culture and Heritage,” explores the complexity of connecting the themes of water, culture and heritage in Part I. Carola Hein reflects on the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through the lens of water and culture. Åse Johannessen argues for the need to integrate culture and heritage in water governance and social learning to boost the human ability to bring about needed change. Barbara van Koppen reflects on the role of customary water tenure

to achieve SDG 1, 2 and 5. Brian Davidson and Petra Hellegers dive into the difficulty of valuing water and heritage from an economic perspective. Neelke Doorn introduces water ethics to reflect on the trade-offs between economic and environmental concerns, and as something to prioritize. Arjan Conijn, Maarten Ouboter and Jeroen Oomkens argue that we need to add “Place” to the 5Ps (People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace and Partnership) of SDGs for sustainable water management. Jan Jorrit Hasselaar, Joana Tusznió and Marianna Strzelecka explore the emotional impact of climate change and ecological loss, introducing hope and grief as strategies for coping with and responding to the loss of water heritage. Akifumi Iwabuchi demonstrates how the global underwater cultural heritage of stone tidal weirs is not only a signifier of past tangible and intangible cultures, but also a critical guide to cultural and natural conservation for a sustainable future.

In Part II, contributors address methodological issues and provide insight with diverse case studies. Jean-François Vereecke and Sandrine Deveycx as well as Inge Bobbink, Amina Chouairi and Camilla Di Nicola share their respective innovative and integrative methodologies to analyze water ecosystems, their flows and spaces. Vera D. Damayanti, Punto Wijayanto, Kemas Ridwan Kurniawan, Hasti Tarekat Dipowijoyo, Jacqueline Rosbergen and Peter Timmer add their experience with the UNESCO Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) approach and their Quick Scan Method. Joanna Tusznió and Marianna Strzelecka exemplify the conceptual approach they presented in Part I through an analysis of the case of Sztola River in Poland. Massoud Ghaderian explores the relation between water and heritage through the lens of the qanat system. Michael Kloos analyzes Heritage Assessment as a tool to achieve inclusive and sustainable development for the World Heritage Site Bryggen in Bergen. Karen Young, Joanne Dahme, Ellen Freedman Schultz, Claire Donato, Victoria Prizzia and Theresa R. Stuhlman conclude the first volume as they present the history of the Fairmount Water Works in Philadelphia and reflect on the unique history of this early waterworks and its role today.

Together, these articles comprise an issue that addresses water heritage challenges at a time of climate change, examining water-related values from diverse perspectives and underlining the importance of understanding past practices to plan sustainable futures.



Carola Hein is Professor History of Architecture and Urban Planning at Delft University of Technology, Professor at Leiden and Erasmus University and UNESCO Chair Water, Ports and Historic Cities. She has published widely in the field of architectural, urban and planning history and has tied historical analysis to contemporary development. Among other major grants, she received a Guggenheim and an Alexander von Humboldt fellowship. Her recent books include: *Oil Spaces* (2021), *Urbanisation of the Sea* (2020), *Adaptive Strategies for Water Heritage* (2020), *The Routledge Planning History Handbook* (2018), *Port Cities: Dynamic Landscapes and Global Networks* (2011).

Contact: C.M.Hein@tudelft.nl



Matteo D'Agostino is a researcher at Delft University of Technology, a member of the PortCityFutures research group, and currently affiliated with the UNESCO Chair for Water, Ports and Historic Cities. Matteo is a cultural anthropologist experienced in the analysis of perceptions and relational dynamics between public and private actors. His research focuses on understanding multiple structural, spatial and socio-economic factors as the basis for spatial planning and social interventions. Other interests include policy implementation for granting access to basic resources, such as water, and strategic reinterpretation of heritage by institutional and activist organizations.

Contact: M.DAgostino@tudelft.nl



Carlien Donkor is researcher at Delft University of Technology. She is also affiliated with the LDE PortCityFutures research group and the UNESCO Chair for Water, Ports and Historic cities. Carlien is trained as an architect with experience in design, construction, procurement and project management. Her master's thesis focused on the subject of integrated urban water design and how factors not only limited to climate change and urbanism pose a risk to the design and planning of historical water cities like Milan. Other interests include volunteer work.

Contact: C.E.Donkor@tudelft.nl



Queenie Lin is a PhD Candidate at History of Architecture and Urban Planning, Delft University of Technology, with a research focus on the sustainable preservation of climate-challenged Dutch overseas settlements in VOC Asia. She is currently working under the UNESCO Chair Water, Ports and Historic Cities and the PortCityFutures research group. She was also a PhD candidate of Cultural Heritage and Arts Innovation Studies, Taipei National University of the Arts, and that and her previous MA training in art and architectural history (University of Virginia, USA), conservation of fine art (Northumbria University, UK), and underwater cultural heritage certificate (UNESCO Foundation Course), equipped her for the professional experience in academia, museums, research institutes and thinktanks in Asia, America and Europe.

Contact: Y.F.Lin@tudelft.nl

Editorial Team



Hilde Sennema is a historian with a master's degree in architectural history. After working in the field of urban planning and heritage, she is now finishing her PhD on post-war reconstruction in port cities at the Erasmus University Rotterdam. Between 2018 and 2021 she wrote a weekly column in the Dutch newspaper *Financieele Dagblad*. In 2022 she joined the UNESCO Chair of Water, Ports and Historic Cities at Delft University of Technology to work as a researcher and lecturer. Besides port cities, her research interests include public-private relations in public space, and the cultural meanings and representations of water.

Contact: R.Sennema@tudelft.nl



Zuzanna Sliwinska is an Msc Architecture student, and currently an editor at independent periodical of the Architecture Faculty (*Bnieuws*) at Delft University of Technology. Zuzanna has professional experience in large-scale urban projects focused on sustainable manufacturing and food production. Her research interests focus on countryside conservation in fast-developing Asian countries with a focus on southern China. Her current master's thesis explores the potential of adaptation and persistence of cultural heritage among rural communities through the perspective of water-related practices in Northwest New Territories, Hong Kong.

Contact: Z.H.Sliwinska@student.tudelft.nl