Editorial Issue 4 2018

Maurits W. Ertsen¹ · Ellen F. Arnold²

Published online: 21 February 2019
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In this last issue of 2018, the five papers all deal with the technologies of water. The first paper deals with mine waste, contamination, and institutional (non)responses in Minnesota. John Baeten discusses how in the early twentieth century, new iron-ore mining and processing technologies created new environmental challenges for Minnesota's iron mining communities. Economic benefits and environmental transformations both emerge from the archival records from the first legal case in Minnesota over surface water pollution from mine waste. Building on the response of communities and their negotiations with mining companies and the state, Baeten ends by showing how local heritage and state organizations remembered and memorialized these mining legacies.

The second paper takes us to tanks in South India. Aditya Ramesh shows how the decline of the number of tanks (water storage facilities for irrigation) in the British colonial period has been blamed on “modern” colonial policies and on problems from precolonial times. The article provides a much more ambivalent image, by arguing that tanks had a much more undefined ontological status, in terms of how maintenance policies and ecological changes produced them within the colonial economy. The third paper positions itself in the sub-continent too, in its discussion of the underground water supply system in Bangalore. Kuili Suganya and M. B. Rajani analyse maps that show a network of underground channels (karez) in Bangalore. With the help of geo-spatial data, ground validation, and historical records, they explore different traces of the karez network and its building principles and circumstances, finally leading them to question why these channels were labelled as “karez” in the first place.

The last two papers deal with underground channels as well, under the name qanat. The spread of qanats in Eurasia, which might have been the introduction of a new technology or the intensification/expansion of existing technology, is presented by Gideon Avni. The available data from excavated Early Islamic farmsteads in the Arabah and Jordan Valleys suggest that the expansion of *qanats* was associated with the new geo-political situation that was created by the Arab conquest and as such with a strong diffusion of new agricultural and irrigation technologies. In the final paper, Ramón Martínez-Medina, Encarnación Gil-Meseguer, and José María Gómez-Espín present an overview of qanats in Spain—where qanats are also known as *galerías con lumbreras*, *minados con espejuelos*, *viajes de*

✉ Maurits W. Ertsen
m.w.ertsen@tudelft.nl

¹ TU Delft, Delft, The Netherlands

² Ohio Wesleyan University, Delaware, OH 43015, USA

agua, or *alcavons*. They show why qanat technology promotes new ways of thinking about water provision in dry environments like Southeast Spain.

Together, these essays display the range of archival, physical, geo-spatial, and scientific evidence that can be brought to play in discussions of hydraulic technologies. They remind us that the systems were complex, and that thus observing and understanding them from a distance can introduce many challenges to modern scholars. By tackling economic, legal, socio-political, cartographic, military, and agricultural frameworks, these papers are an important reminder that water technology's history reaches beyond straightforward conversations about technological development and diffusion.

In this last editorial of 2018, we would also like to use the opportunity to thank all our reviewers, who have offered their time, ideas and suggestions for the manuscripts in our journal this year.

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