



Editorial

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Dear readers,

Last month, Maurits Ertsen, co-founder and long-time editor of this journal wrote to tell you of his departure from active editorship of the journal. I consider myself lucky to have worked with Maurits for many years. I learned much from his leadership and scholarship, especially from his ability to forge meaningful connections across disciplinary fields and regional and geographical differences. His deep interest in the materiality of the past and the tools modern people use to investigate that led to the journal engaging deeply with archaeologists, hydrologists, engineers, and other scientific experts. We hope that this engagement continues, in testament to Maurits's efforts and engagement

I remain engaged as co-editor of the journal. As a pre-modern scholar, I'm glad to have been able to help promote the work of scholars of the ancient and medieval world during my tenure, and I'm particularly proud that the first of our "topical collections," which allow us, moving forward, to link related articles together across the boundaries of traditional journal volumes, is a medieval one. We still plan on pursuing special issues, as these remain important scholarly venues for collaborative pursuits and for publishing collectively articles whose value is enhanced by co-collation with other similar pieces. The topical collections will be an additional way for researchers and teachers to find linked works.

As the website points out, this first collection, "Medieval Waters," brings together innovative approaches to medieval water history. It includes works from Europe and the Middle East from the transformation of the ancient Roman world to the dawn of early modernity, roughly the period 500–1500. Medieval societies developed many different approaches to water management, used water power as a source of energy and developed innovative hydraulic machinery. Medieval cultivation and land use is inconceivable without control over the supply and drainage of water from ecosystems. Medieval worlds are also characterized by the importance of religious beliefs and communities, their conflicts, contacts and relations, and all faith communities used water for as part of their religious ritual practices and their theology. These contributions remind us of the vibrancy of medieval understand-

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ings of water and the natural world, the variety of ways to deal with water and the importance of regional and local histories when considering how water systems and practices differ across time and space.

Of course, our biggest change is that I am welcoming a new co-editor for *Water History*-Martin Schmid, whose background in history and archaeology has made him passionate about water history. His approach to water is that of an environmental historian who lives in Vienna and thus on the Danube, a river that plays a certain role in both his academic and private life. Water, of course, does not only interest him in the form of rivers, and he is one of those environmental historians who, as John McNeill once put it, bravely move through space and time – from antiquity to the recent past. His professional home base is the Institute of Social Ecology in Vienna (which enjoys a certain reputation in the environmental and sustainability sciences) at a life sciences university. So, Martin's biography is a quite colorful stew, it represents an interdisciplinary diversity that will continue to find a good place in this journal.

I am delighted that Martin has joined the editorial team; we have worked together often in the past, and share an enthusiasm for the exciting ways that water history is growing as a field. We are committed to keeping up the strength, vibrancy, and values of the journal's almost decade of publication. We are also looking forward to helping to highlight the work and ideas of the next generation of water scholars, and in highlighting methodological innovations. We are always aware of how much it means when you put your ideas in our hands and thank you for sending us your work and ideas.

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