

4TH SHORT COURSE ON 2010 WORLD HISTORY OF WATER MANAGEMENT

SEPTEMBER 13-17
DELFT, THE NETHERLANDS



Pont de Gard, France © Musée de la Ville de Paris

'World history of water management' is a fascinating subject, which is of critical importance for all water experts of hydraulic engineering, water management and environmental studies. This subject has benefited recently from the efforts by The International Water History Association (IWHA) and other international professional associations, such as The International Commission on Irrigation and Drainage (ICID). The contributions from IWHA presented in five international meetings have attracted the interest of a broad spectrum of experts from hydrologists to art historians. The activities of IWHA are supported, in part, by UNESCO's International Hydrological Programme (IHP), which is conducting various projects related to water history, cultural diversity and education, and is planning to publish a seven volume reference series on the "History of Water and Civilization" (HWC).

The 5-day short course was offered for the first time in September 2007, drawing upon historical experiences from different parts of the world on all continents and experts from IWHA — many of them involved in the UNESCO HWC project, — within the framework of cooperation among the International Water History Association, UNESCO-IHP, and UNESCO-IHE.

The 21st Century is witnessing the emergence of many approaches to the management of water resources. This makes it necessary to reflect upon the long-term viability of some of the approaches advocated. Although many developments may appear novel, they are often grounded in historical antecedents, have historical parallels, and are cast within scientific, social, cultural and intellectual traditions of various historical depths.

Water management has a long history, going back to the attempts in prehistoric times in response to seasonal changes in water availability. Water management was crucial during the transition from hunting-gathering to farming, and became yet more important with the emergence of cities, industrial towns, and administrative centres. Water management has never solely been a matter of technical intervention. It is embedded within a great diversity of cultural, social and political arrangements. Water management was important to ensure water supply to the places where water was needed when it was needed, as well as getting rid of excess water or polluted water. Water management was involved in protecting fields, cities and sacred places, as much as being involved in catering to domestic, agricultural, industrial and cultural needs.

Collecting and writing down the history of different kinds of water management and flood protection activities in various ecological settings and river basins of the world and recording good and bad experiences in the different domains of water management is essential for a proper assessment of our current endeavours. Being acquainted with a variety of practices and reflecting upon their consequences can be very useful for future planning and strategic thinking. It will also help us in developing a vision to inspire our current and future activities.

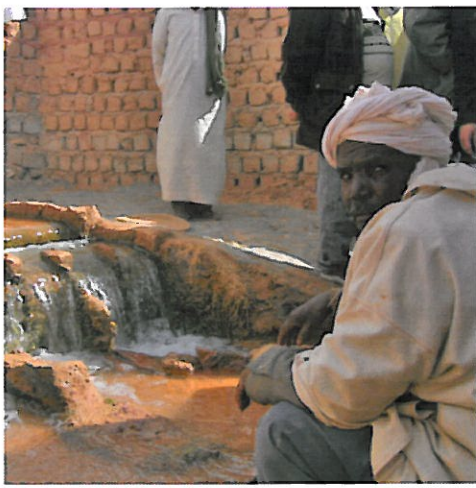
History has often been the domain of specialized historians, but water history touches upon many technical and specialized fields. Accordingly, historical case studies can be approached from different points of view by experts and scholars from different disciplines. Working together, engineers, anthropologists,

sociologists, psychologists, and philosophers, among others, can illuminate the past from different directions bringing out details and aspects that otherwise would escape someone from a different background.

In addition to acquiring an understanding of scientific discoveries and technological innovations, it is equally important to shed light on the social and cultural matrix of technical knowledge — namely the relation between a certain type of technology and the paradigm on which a civilization is based, or the way a certain population consider its relation with nature and natural resources. It is also of paramount importance to begin to appreciate from a more comprehensive perspective the cultural, legal and ethical aspects of water management within communities, between neighbouring communities, and among countries that share the same river basin or groundwater aquifer.

A historical approach is thus likely not only to inform us of the range of possibilities in water management, but also in developing norms and institutions, as well as paradigms of water management for sustainable development that take into account ecological parameters, cultural considerations, technical aptitudes and potentialities.





'One who
doesn't know
the history is
unable to plan
the future'

An old Chinese proverb

OBJECTIVES

The course aims at:

- providing a comprehensive overview of archaeological and historical developments in water management including water harvesting, water supply, transportation, delivery, treatment, hydraulic engineering and allocation (with contributions including the physical sciences, technology, ecology, engineering, organisation, politics, law and governance) in different parts of the world and various cultural contexts;
- developing an appreciation of the role of cultural dynamics involved in managing water resources, especially at times of perceived water scarcity, and
- comprehending the historical antecedents of our current paradigm of water management and what can be learned from historical case studies on the basis of the knowledge and experience of several scholars from different countries and from the exchange of experiences to be generated between the participants of the course and the experts.

PARTICIPANT PROFILE

Participants are invited from the different involved disciplines in water management and flood protection, for example staff of the ministries in charge of water management, of water-boards, of universities and colleges, of research institutes, of consultants and contractors and of agencies. The course will be held in English.

FEE AND REGISTRATION

The tuition fee for the short course is Euro 750. For members of the International Water History Association 50% discount, the fee is Euro 375. This amount does not include (hotel) accommodation. UNESCO-IHE student hostel accommodation might be available. Students can obtain a reduction upon request. The course can be accredited according to the standards of the European Credit Transfer System.

CONTACT PERSONS

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PARTNERS



ICID-CID



International Water
History Association



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



International
Hydrological
Programme

TENTATIVE PROGRAM

The lecturers in this programme are present or former Executive Council members of IWHA, lecturers at UNESCO-IHE or other higher education institutes and international experts from all around the world.

Day 1 | September 13, 2010

Welcome by the Organisers and Partners UNESCO-IHE, IWHA, UNESCO-IHP
Introduction by the Course Co-ordinator

1. A Historical Overview of the Cultural Dynamics of Water Management
2. Traditional water Harvesting Systems
3. History of Water Politics and Food Production
4. History of Water Management and Land Reclamation in the Netherlands

Day 2 | September 14, 2010

5. Ancient Irrigation Societies. The Nile: a Case Study
6. History of Water Management in Urban Contexts
7. A Historical Overview of Water Sciences and Technologies
8. Hydraulic Structures: a Historical Overview; Historical Dams
9. Early Hydraulic Systems: a Case Study
10. Water Politics and Food Production: a Case Study

Day 3 | September 15, 2010

Field visit on sites and structures of water management with historical background, in the Netherlands.

Day 4 | September 16, 2010

11. Water, Cultural Politics and Indigenous Water Rights
12. Cultural Practices and Technologies that Affect Water Management
13. Water and the City: a Case Study
14. Water Governance and Policies
15. The Modern History of Hydraulic Management of Rivers

Day 5 | September 17, 2010

16. Water and Health
17. Water and Art
18. History of Water and Civilization: the UNESCO Project
19. Water Ethics and Religion: a Historical Perspective

The programme is subject to change, based on the availability of lecturers.

We kindly request you to pass this information to your friends and colleagues who are potentially interested to follow our course.