Ancient Systems for Hydric Management and Social Implications

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In the Mediterranean region, ancient water harvesting systems are an integral part of cultural heritage. cisterns, wells, khettaras, aqueducts, qanats and fog gathering represent the knowledge, skills and values of ancient societies and have been used for millennia as a reliable source to ensure water supplies. They played a crucial role in sustaining life and developing prosperous civilizations around the Mediterranean basin. Many of these systems constitute remarkable technical feats and continue to be studied and admired for their ingenuity, efficiency and strong cultural, historical, technological, socio-economic and environmental impact.

At a time when scarcity of (clean) water is a significant global challenge affecting millions of people around the world, understanding ancient hydraulic systems can provide our modern societies with valuable lessons for sustainable water management and environmental management, and can also help us foster a sense of pride, connection and continuity within the Mediterranean community.

These topics were addressed at an Ripam 10.5 international conference Ancient Hydrologic Systems and Water Management in The Mediterranean Region, held in Piran on October 10th–11th 2024, in the context of the 16th EMUNI conference, organized by Polona Oblak (EMUNI University) and myself. This event is part of the RIPAM Network (Rencontres Internationales du Patrimoine Architecturel Méditerranéen, www.ripam.org), an initiative on architectural heritage gathering many Universities and experts on both shores of the Mediterranean Sea. Given the importance of the subject and the high scientific level of the presentations, the EMUNI University and IJEMS editors issues a call for papers to gather contributions that will be published in three

special-issue volumes named after the conference, with the following sub-titles:

I Ancient Systems for Hydric Management and Social Implications

II Water Systems and the Landscape: Study and Strategies for Conservation

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III Water, Ancient Hydraulic Systems and Climate Change

This first volume concentrates on the following facets:

- utilization of ancient management systems and its social implications,
- the sacred view of water and its careful management,
- careful water management by communities on both the northern and southern Mediterranean shores,
- Techniques for the knowledge of the knowledge,
- water in the landscape and how the landscape can be modified by the natural or artificial presence of water,
- how it is possible to increase knowledge of complex ancient hydraulic systems through the use of the most modern surveying technologies.